One approach to the production of ukiyo-e paintings
— from the painting scroll "Genre Scenes of Asakusa"
in the National Museum of Japanese History —

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The painting scroll "Genre Scenes of Asakusa" from the collections of the National Museum of Japanese History is a ukiyo-e painting scroll depicting customs of the day, beginning with boat rides on the Sumida River, past the Komagata-do, up the main path and into the grounds of Senso-ji (Asakusa Temple). It is estimated that this scroll, which was strongly influenced by the Hishikawa School, was produced some time between the latter part of the Genroku period (1688-1703) through the Hoei period (1704-1711). The depiction of painters' stalls in Namiki-cho, temple town of Senso-ji is noteworthy as a portrayal of one approach to the production of Ukiyo-e paintings adopted at that time.

The scroll depicts an artist in the process of painting in their wide-open stalls facing the coming and going of visitors to the temple, and people looking on interestedly at the work of the artist that are leaning against a fence erected in front of the stalls.

There are other examples like this scene in which artists allow onlookers observe them at their work in popular places like in front of the gates or inside the grounds of temples and shrines. One such example is that of Yamazaki Joryu who, during the Kyoho period (1716-1735), was active in the grounds of Shiba-shinmei shrine and whose work featured women and young girls. Other examples may be found from later periods, and documents and authentication have shown that these are similar in nature to calligraphic works and paintings.

In the midst of the artists' stalls in the painting scroll "Genre scenes of Asakusa", there are paintings of beautiful women on the walls in the Kaigetsudo style. This genre of painting of beautiful women in which modulated lines are used with effect to produce formulaic poses is extremely appropriate for paintings that are produced spontaneously in front of onlookers. It has been conjectured that the style of Ando, the creator of the Kaigetsudo style, suggests that he was originally a painter of votive pictures, and there are examples showing scenes in which votive pictures are being painted for visitors in front of the gates of temples and shrines. Ando is thought to have created his style during the Hoei period, and he is said to have lived in Suwa-cho in Asakusa. One possible conclusion is that the figure of Ando producing a painting has been superimposed as one of the artists in the painting scroll "Genre scenes of Asakusa". Even if this isn't the case, the scroll is valuable as a painting suggesting one approach to the production of Ukiyo-e paintings in the early Edo Period.

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