

September 11, 2018

## Tetsuro Komai: A Pioneer of Modern Japanese Copperplate Prints

**Venue:** Yokohama Museum of Art

**Dates:** October 13 (Sat.), - December 16 (Sun.), 2018

Komai Tetsuro (1920-1976), a pioneer of modern copperplate printmaking in Japan, gained renown both at home and abroad for the profound and poetic world envisioned in his prints. In black ink on white paper he expressed a cosmos of endless wandering amid reveries and madness, one that seems all the more fascinating in the current digital era.

While focusing on copperplate prints, Komai also interacted extensively with poets and musicians, and in his works as a member of the cross-disciplinary art group Jikken Kobo (Experimental Workshop) and his illustrations for poetry collections, he reached across boundaries between media and genres. The formation of Komai's vision was also influenced by his love of Western art and great admiration for Odilon Redon in particular.

The multifaceted nature of the artist and new, unexplored charms of his works are highlighted in this exhibition, which resembles a tapestry where the chronological development of Komai's work form the warp, and his influences and connections with other artists the weft. One hitherto little-known aspect revealed here: the artist as a colorist, in vibrant color monotypes from the Fukuhara Yoshiharu Collection of the Setagaya Art Museum. A total of about 210 of Komai's works appear, including his prints and illustrations for poetry books, as well as about 80 works by related artists, in a fertile and fascinating creative landscape of organic connections among diverse genres of art.

### Sections

1. Encountering Copperplate Printmaking
2. Emerging along with Postwar Art
3. Connecting with the Avant-Garde
4. Studying in France and Reemerging from "Ruins"
5. Inspiring and Inspired by Poetry
6. Longing for a World of Color



Komai Tetsuro  
*Title unknown*, ca.1971  
Monotype (multicolored), 16.7×17.5cm  
Setagaya Art Museum (Fukuhara Yoshiharu  
Collection)  
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## Highlights

### 1. The many faces of Komai, wizard of corrosion, on view all at once

The phrase “copperplate printmaking” encompasses a variety of techniques. Komai employed myriad techniques so as to achieve a wide range of creative expression with many seemingly contradictory effects simultaneously, including subtle gradations and sharp lines, precise renderings and fantastic abstract forms, stark monochromes and pictures brimming with color. Komai was an incomparable master of unique uses of corrosion, in works that seem to stimulate the olfactory as well as the visual sense. These visceral pieces are all the more gripping in our sterile digital era. The exhibition traces the evolution of Japanese copperplate printing pioneer Komai in six sections, from his earliest to his latest works.

### 2. Intersections of Art, Music and Literature

Komai participated in the intermedia avant-garde art group Jikken Kobo in the 1950s, collaborating with composer Yuasa Joji on a work for the Auto Slide projector and producing 3D art objects. From the late 1950s to 1970s he worked with many poets including Ooka Makoto and Ando Tsuguo on illustrations and covers for poetry collections. This exhibition showcases Komai’s transcendence of boundaries among genres, and illuminates the power of his art, which extends to other areas such as literature and music.

### 3. View of the artist as a critic, and pairings of Western art and Komai’s works

Komai was not only well versed in the history and techniques of printmaking, but also had extensive knowledge of Western art history. His work was influenced by that of Western artists like Redon, Paul Klee and Joan Miro. Komai also contributed many critical texts about the artists he admired to art journals, and by reading these we can discover his own artistic vision. For this exhibition we have read through Komai’s writings, and have paired his works with those of his favorite Western artists to enable interpretation of what he absorbed from them and how his own original ideas evolved.



Komai Tetsuro  
*Portrait of Mrs. R*, 1971  
Aquatint and etching, 25.5×21cm  
Yokohama Museum of Art  
©Yoshiko Komai 2018/ JAA1800116



Komai Tetsuro  
*Yellow House*, 1960  
Deep etching and aquatint  
21.1×16.1cm  
Setagaya Art Museum (Fukuhara  
Yoshiharu Collection)  
©Yoshiko Komai 2018/ JAA1800116



Odilon Redon  
*Two Dancers*, n.d.  
Oil on canvas, 44.5×30cm  
Yokohama Museum of Art  
(Donated by Mr. Sakata Takeo)

## Admission

<b>Adults</b>	<b>¥1,500 ( 1,300/ 1,400)</b>
<b>University and high school students</b>	<b>¥ 900 ( 700/ 800)</b>
<b>Junior high school students</b>	<b>¥ 600 ( 400/ 500)</b>
<b>Children under 12</b>	<b>Free</b>
<b>Seniors (65 and older)</b>	<b>¥1,400</b> *ID required. Only available at ticket counter in the museum.

\*(/)=Advance / Group of 20 or more.

\*For a group of 20 or more, reservation is required in advance.

\*Free Admission on November 3(Sat.).

\*Advance tickets are available until October 12 (Fri.), 2018 at the Museum Shop, through Seven-Eleven ticket or eplus ticket.

\*Visitors with disability and one person accompanying them are admitted free of charge.

(Please present certificate at the entrance.)

\*The ticket also gives admission to the Exhibition of the Museum Collection for the same day.

## General Information

Title: *Tetsuro Komai: A Pioneer of Modern Japanese Copperplate Prints*

Dates: October 13 (Sat.) - December 16 (Sun.), 2018

Open hours: 10:00-18:00

\*Open until 20:30 on November 23 (Fri.), 2018

\*Admission until 30 minutes before closing.

Closed: Thursdays

Venue: Yokohama Museum of Art

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