

Honolulu Museum of Art

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‘LIGHT FROM SHADOW’ ILLUMINATES USE OF GOLD IN JAPANESE ART

Exhibition featuring some of the museum’s most important Japanese works celebrates 30th anniversary of luxury resort Halekulani; opens Feb. 6

HONOLULU, HAWAII (Jan. 29, 2014)— Of all the materials used in the arts, perhaps none is as sumptuous, and carries as much significance as gold. Organized in honor of the 30th anniversary of the elegant Halekulani luxury resort, the exhibition *Light From Shadow: Gold in Japanese Art*, opening Feb. 6, includes several of the most important Japanese works of art in the Honolulu Museum of Art’s collection, ranging from early Buddhist art to later Japanese paintings—all rich with gold. The exhibition will be on view through June 1.

“Gold holds a special place in the arts of Japan, and this exhibition includes some of the finest, most historically important works of art in the museum’s collection, several of which are on the same level as designated National Treasures in Japan,” says Shawn Eichman, curator of Asian art at the Honolulu Museum of Art. “The exhibition will be a rare opportunity to see the exquisite, innovative ways in which Japanese artists have worked with gold to convey spiritual significance, social status and opulence.”

In Japan, gold has had a close connection with the imperial court since antiquity. The introduction of Buddhism added new layers of meaning: sutras described the Buddha, who came from a noble background, as having skin of gold, which immediately found resonance with the royal associations of the precious metal already familiar to the Japanese elite. Gold was used generously in Buddhist art for depictions of the highest deities, first in sculpture and later in painting. A superb example of gold in Buddhist painting is the museum’s *The Descent of Amida*, done during the full flowering of Buddhist art during the Kamakura period (1185–1336), which makes extensive use of the intricate cut-gold (kirigane) technique for extremely fine details.

Over time, gold also came to be used for secular paintings, especially on screens. The use of gold on screens served a practical function; the rooms of traditional wood frame buildings often were quite dark, and gold backgrounds on screen paintings

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808-532-8700

www.honolulumuseum.org

Honolulu Museum of Art
Spalding House
2411 Makiki Heights Drive

Honolulu Museum of Art
First Hawaiian Center
999 Bishop Street

Honolulu Museum of Art
School
1111 Victoria Street

Honolulu Museum of Art
Doris Duke Theatre
Entrance on Kinau Street

introduced a reflective surface that added light. Gold was used in many different traditions of painting, including the genre paintings that formed the foundations for later ukiyo-e, of which the museum's 17th-century *Merrymaking Under the Cherry Blossoms* is an especially fine and early example.

The exhibition design will present the artwork in a dramatic manner, with the gallery left almost dark, each piece lit from below, allowing the gold to glow in the crepuscular light.

"The Halekulani has been an incredible partner of the museum for many years. Their support of the arts—from the visual arts to music—is one of the reasons cultural programs in Honolulu are world class," says Stephan Jost, director of the Honolulu Museum of Art. "It is an honor to be able to recognize their longtime commitment with an exhibition as luxurious and sophisticated as the resort itself."

"In celebration of Halekulani's benchmark 30th anniversary, we are honored to partner with the Honolulu Museum of Art on this culturally significant special exhibition," says Peter Shaindlin, chief operating officer, Halekulani Corporation. "Our sponsorship of *Light from Shadow* demonstrates not only our wonderful partnership with the iconic museum over these many years, but as importantly, it reflects Halekulani's long-standing legacy of commitment and promotion of arts and culture in our community."

About Halekulani

Celebrating its 30th Anniversary in 2014 as one of the world's finest and most acclaimed independent luxury hotels, Halekulani has received more than 500 accolades, awards and honoraria since its inception in 1984. The Waikiki Beach hotel is home to SpaHalekulani, consistently top-ranked by institutions such as *Condé Nast Traveler* and *Forbes Travel Guide*. Halekulani's fine dining restaurant, La Mer, is Hawaii's longest ranked AAA-Five Diamond Restaurant. Halekulani is managed by the Hotels and Resorts of Halekulani, a brand management division of the Honolulu-based Halekulani Corporation, which also manages Waikiki Parc Hotel. Halekulani is a member of The Leading Hotels of the World and is aligned with Tokyo's legendary Imperial Hotel. For reservations and information, please contact a travel planner, call Halekulani at (800) 367-2343 / (808) 923-2311 or visit the website (www.halekulani.com).

About the Honolulu Museum of Art

One of the world's premier art museums, the Honolulu Museum of Art presents international caliber special exhibitions and features a collection that includes Hokusai, van Gogh, Gauguin, Monet, Picasso and Warhol, as well as traditional Asian and Hawaiian art.

Located in two of Honolulu's most beautiful buildings, visitors enjoy two cafés, gardens, and films and concerts at the theater.

In 2011, The Contemporary Museum gifted its assets and collection to the Honolulu Academy of Arts and in 2012, the combined museum changed its name to the Honolulu Museum of Art.

Locations:

Honolulu Museum of Art: 900 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu Museum of Art Spalding House: 2411 Makiki Heights Drive
Honolulu Museum of Art School: 1111 Victoria Street
Honolulu Museum of Art at First Hawaiian Center: 999 Bishop Street
Honolulu Museum of Art Doris Duke Theatre: 901 Kinau Street (at rear of museum)

Website: www.honolulumuseum.org
Phone: 808-532-8700

Hours:

Honolulu Museum of Art: Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sun. 1-5 p.m.; closed Monday.
The Honolulu Museum of Art Café: lunch only, Tues.-Sat., 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Honolulu Museum of Art Spalding House: Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sun. noon-4 p.m.
Spalding House Café: lunch only, Tues.-Sat. 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Admission (permits entry to both museums on the same day):
\$10 general admission; children 17 and under are free.

Admission is free to: shop, cafés, Robert Allerton Art Library, and the art school

Free days: First Wednesday of every month

Bank of Hawaii Family Sunday: The museum is free to the public on the third Sunday of the month, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., courtesy Bank of Hawaii.