

Yoshida Fujio (1887–1987)
born and died Tokyo, Japan

1. *Flower A*, 1953
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0130

One of Fujio’s earliest self-carved and printed woodblocks, *Flower A*, translates her abstract flower paintings into print form. Deep red shapes at the center suggest petals encircled by curving pink and mauve lines that spiral outward against yellow rays. Blending natural imagery with abstraction, the composition may suggest sunlight and motion. Created in the early 1950s, it marks Fujio’s vibrant return to independent creative work after years devoted to supporting her husband, artist Hiroshi Yoshida.

2. *Myōga (Ginger)*, 1954
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0132

Yoshida Fujio (1887–1987)
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1. *Nasturtium*, 1954
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0131

2. *Flowering Kale (Hobotan)*, 1953
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Lucy Shaw Schultz Fund, 2023.0001

3. *Ladyslipper Orchids*, 1954
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Lucy Shaw Schultz Fund, 2023.0002

As seen in these three prints, the technical constraints of woodblock printing led Fujio to reinterpret floral subjects through simplified, linear forms. Moving away from painterly depth, she embraced the expressive potential of line, color, and rhythm. The resulting compositions—defined by flattened planes and bold contours—radiate a quiet yet insistent vitality, as if each bloom were illuminated from within. Through this process, Fujio discovered a new visual language that merged modern abstraction with natural form. Her stylized flowers convey both harmony and dynamism, capturing not the appearance of nature, but its underlying pulse—a renewal of creative energy that mirrored her own artistic resurgence in the early 1950s.

Yoshida Chizuko (1924–2017)
born and died Yokohama, Japan
Seascape (Winter Sea Prose), 1951
oil, canvas
Museum purchase: R. Charles and Mary Margaret Clevenger Fund, 2008.0039

Inspired by winter visits to the seas of Shizuoka Prefecture, where jellyfish drift in coastal waters, Chizuko created this lyrical abstraction. Thin, flowing brushstrokes and scratched lines suggest the movement of marine life, while overlapping hues evoke the play of light on gently splashing waves. Combining Japanese sensibility with postwar modernism, Chizuko transformed the natural rhythms of the sea into a dynamic visual language—merging the surface and depths of the ocean in a vibrant expression of energy and transformation.

Yoshida Chizuko (1924–2017)
born and died Yokohama, Japan
Butterfly A, 1953
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0033

In *Butterfly A*, Chizuko translates her early explorations in modern abstraction into the medium of woodblock printing. Trained in Western-style painting and influenced by postwar avant-garde circles in Tokyo, she balanced disciplined structure with lyrical motion. Transparent layers of gold, ochre, and red intersect with a single sweeping line, evoking the fluttering rhythm of wings. The composition’s delicate geometry and subtle shifts in tone convey both grace and restraint, reflecting Chizuko’s evolving synthesis of Japanese aesthetics and international modernism.

Yoshida Chizuko (1924–2017)
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Sounds in the Night, 1953
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0034

In *Sounds in the Night*, Chizuko translates the energy of postwar Tokyo’s avant-garde circles into rhythmic abstraction. Bold intersecting lines in black, orange, and blue pulse against overlapping planes of indigo and violet, suggesting sound waves or flickering lights. Created the year she married fellow artist Hodaka Yoshida, this dynamic print reflects both her engagement with modernist ideas and the Yoshida family’s collective creative awakening in the early 1950s.

Yoshida Chizuko (1924–2017)
born and died Yokohama, Japan

1. *Mambo A*, 1956
woodcut, mica
Museum purchase: R. Charles and Mary Margaret Clevenger Fund, 2008.0040

2. *untitled (blue abstraction)*, 1956
color monotype
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0133

This rare monotype, created by applying ink and paint to a smooth surface, embodies Chizuko’s improvisational approach—melding movement, sound, and abstraction. Her embrace of spontaneous rhythm and layered transparency marked a striking departure from the painterly realism of her father-in-law Hiroshi Yoshida. Her work, along with that of her mother-in-law Fujio and daughter Ayomi, established a multi-generational lineage of women printmakers who redefined the possibilities of modern Japanese art.

3. *Mambo B*, 1956
woodblock print
Museum purchase: R. Charles and Mary Margaret Clevenger Fund, 2008.0041

In the early 1950s, Chizuko began translating the rhythms of modern music—especially mambo and jazz—into bold visual forms. Influenced by her participation in Onchi Kōshirō’s (1891–1955) creative print seminars and her marriage to fellow artist Hodaka Yoshida in 1953, she helped shift the Yoshida family legacy from representational to experimental art. In dynamic works such as *Mambo A* and *Sounds in the Night*, syncopated lines and vibrant color harmonies evoke the pulse of Latin dance and postwar modernism.

Yoshida Chizuko (1924–2017)
born and died Yokohama, Japan

1. *Mediterranean Sea*, 1960
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0135

2. *Impressions from India*, 1960
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0134

3. *Swirl*, 1966
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.136

Shortly after their marriage in 1953, Chizuko and Hodaka embarked on a transformative artistic journey abroad. Between 1957 and 1958, the couple traveled through India and Europe—including stops in England, France, Spain, and Italy—accompanied at times by Hodaka’s mother, Fujio. This global itinerary inspired Chizuko to create works such as *Impressions from India* and *Mediterranean Sea*. This exposure to diverse landscapes, cultural artifacts, and modernist visual traditions became a key catalyst in evolving her distinctive style of abstract, nature-infused printmaking.

Yoshida Chizuko (1924–2017)
born and died Yokohama, Japan

1. Reef B, 1974
color woodcut, blind embossing, metallic pigments
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0137

2. Reef C, 1974
color woodcut, blind embossing, metallic pigments
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0138

Chizuko often turned to water and sea imagery to express rhythm, movement, and sensory experience. Her *Reef* series (1970s), inspired by aerial views of Australia’s Great Barrier Reef, merges magazine images with woodblock techniques to evoke coral formations and oceanic depth. In *Reef C*, a lightly embossed female figure emerges from the waves. Combining embossing, metallic pigments, and *bokashi* (gradations of tone), Chizuko transforms natural phenomena like water into rhythmic abstractions—a motif later explored by her daughter Ayomi.

Ayomi Yoshida
born 1958, Tokyo, Japan

1. White Marks C.R., 2001
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0146

In *White Marks*, Ayomi carves hundreds of precise oval impressions into plywood blocks, then prints these forms in rhythmic repetition across the sheet. Drawing on her family’s storied woodblock print tradition—and influenced by Buddhist notions of impermanence—she transforms traditional technique into a shimmering field of marks that simultaneously suggests terrain, texture, and time. The work invites a contemplative encounter with surface, repetition, and the tactile legacy of printmaking.

Yoshida Chizuko (1924–2017)
born and died Yokohama, Japan

2. Western Suburb of the Metropolis in the Rainy Season, 1995
from *One Hundred Views of Tokyo: Message to the 21st Century*
color woodcut, color photolithography
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0140

3. Landscape C Spring Evening, 1976
color woodcut, color photolithography, metallic pigments
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0139

Chizuko often wove personal experience into her prints, balancing emotional depth with reflections on urban transformation. In *Landscape C Spring Evening*, rows of cabbages recall the farmlands that once surrounded her Mitaka home in the 1960s, now lost to urban sprawl. In *Western Suburb*, she overlays photolithography with woodblock printing to depict Shinjuku’s dense skyline softened by rain and pastel light—a meditation on memory, nature, and modernity’s relentless expansion.

Yoshida Chizuko (1924–2017)
born and died Yokohama, Japan
Season B, 1985
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0141

Butterflies became one of Chizuko’s most celebrated and enduring motifs. Beginning in the mid-1970s, she explored their poetic delicacy through rhythmic abstraction and luminous color (see *Butterfly A*). Later, she wryly admitted that she continued making butterfly prints because they were in high demand—an acknowledgment of their lasting appeal. Blending traditional and contemporary techniques, Chizuko transformed the butterfly’s fleeting presence into vibrant compositions that merge nature’s transience with her own refined sense of abstraction.

Yoshida Chizuko (1924–2017)
born and died Yokohama, Japan
Rondo, 2005
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0142

Rondo, the final print Chizuko created, takes its title from a musical form defined by recurring themes—an apt metaphor for her lifelong engagement with rhythm and flow. Since the 1950s, music had shaped her approach to abstraction. *Rondo* brings that journey to a lyrical close. After her passing, her daughter Ayomi recognized the composition’s source: the view from her mother’s bedside window—a quiet, personal landscape that completes the circle of her life and art.

Ayomi Yoshida
born 1958, Tokyo, Japan

1. Surface K.O. (Kanda River in Ochiai), 1987
woodcut
Museum purchase: Lucy Shaw Schultz Fund, 2025.0032

2. Kanda River – Around Inokashira, 1997
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0145

3. Surface K.I. – 3 (Kanda River at Inokashira), 1987
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0143

4. Surface K.Y. – W.C.B. (Kanda River at Yanagibashi), 1987
color woodcut
Museum purchase: Letha Churchill Walker Memorial Art Fund, 2025.0144

A central motif in Ayomi’s work is the Kanda River, a modest yet historically rich waterway that threads through western Tokyo. The Kanda winds past schools, shrines, and train tracks, as well as through neighborhoods including Mitaka, home of the Yoshida family. For Ayomi, it is deeply personal. As a child in Shinjuku she played along the Kanda’s banks, and when her family moved to Mitaka in the late 1960s, she was delighted to find the Kanda nearby once more.

The river became the focal point of her *Surface* series (1980–1990s). Ayomi walked its entire length, photographing reflections under changing light to capture the dialogue among water, sky, and city. The initials in the titles refer to different parts of the river. “K.I.” refers to the Kanda River in Inokashira (upper stream), “K.O.” stands for the Kanda River in Ochiai (middle stream), and “K.Y.” refers to the Kanda River in Yanagibashi (lower stream). These images became the basis for layered woodblock prints that emphasize texture, repetition, and fragmentation. Through this process, Ayomi transforms the Kanda River into a meditation on memory, time, and the fluid boundaries between nature and urban life.

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Yoshida Fujio (1887–1987)

A pioneering painter and printmaker, Fujio Yoshida's career spanned a century of transformation in Japan. Trained in both Nihonga (Japanese-style painting) and Western-style oil painting, she exhibited widely at national art salons and helped shape Japan's modern print movement. Married to Hiroshi Yoshida (1876–1950), a leading *shin hanga* (New Prints) artist, Fujio initially worked alongside him producing lyrical floral still lifes and landscapes. Yet she also pursued her own path—exploring abstraction and the expressive potential of color and form. Family stories recall her secret experiments with her sons Toshi (1911–1995) and Hodaka (1926–1995) in the attic, defying Hiroshi's opposition to abstraction. After Hiroshi's death in 1950, Fujio's art blossomed into vivid, dynamic compositions that reflect postwar modernism's emotional intensity. Her life and work embody both the constraints and creative resilience of women artists in modern Japan, paving the way for later generations of Yoshida women.

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Yoshida Chizuko (1924–2017)

A leading figure in Japan's postwar print movement, Chizuko Yoshida forged an independent artistic identity within the celebrated Yoshida family. Born in Yokohama and trained in Western-style oil painting, she was inspired by international modernism and Japan's *sōsaku hanga* (creative print) principles, which emphasized the artist's direct engagement in every stage of printmaking. After marrying Hodaka Yoshida, son of Fujio and Hiroshi, in 1949, she pursued her own experimental path, producing lyrical abstractions that blend woodblock, stencil, and collage techniques. Her prints of the 1970s and 1980s reveal a refined sensitivity to color, texture, and rhythm, often drawing on imagery from nature and her travels. Active in international exhibitions and a leader in women's art organizations, Chizuko championed visibility and opportunity for women artists in Japan. Through her inventive fusion of technique and advocacy, she transformed modern printmaking into a vehicle for both artistic and social expression.

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Ayomi Yoshida

The youngest in a distinguished line of artists, Ayomi Yoshida has redefined the possibilities of Japanese woodblock printing through her experimental approach to material, space, and perception. Trained in traditional techniques yet unbound by convention, she transforms carved blocks and printed surfaces into immersive environments that engage both sight and touch.

The daughter of Chizuko and Hodaka Yoshida and granddaughter of Hiroshi and Fujio Yoshida, Ayomi grew up surrounded by art and the rhythms of creative work. Her large-scale installations—composed of thousands of hand-carved woodchips or printed elements—extend the logic of printmaking into the architectural realm, dissolving boundaries between two and three dimensions. In both intimate works on paper and monumental spatial compositions, Ayomi explores memory, time, and sensory experience, offering a contemporary interpretation of the Yoshida family's enduring dialogue between innovation, tradition, and artistic inheritance.

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