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迦諾迦伐蹉 (*Seated Nahan Ganakgabeolcha*),

late 1600s–early 1700s

Korea, Joseon dynasty (1392–1910)

wood, polychromy

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Museum purchase: Helen Foresman Spencer Art Acquisition Fund, 2012.0092

This sculpture depicts one of the original disciples of the historic Buddha known as *nahan* in Korean. *Nahan* were holy men of Buddhism who attained freedom from ignorance and suffering. Dressed in tenth-century-style monk robes known as *kasa*, the delicate painting of the patterns on his clothes date to the early 16th century and are well-preserved. Pages from sacred texts or sutras that were placed inside a small cavity in the head as part of the sculpture's use in rituals are still intact.

Originally, this *nahan* would have been part of a large sculptural assemblage most likely consisting of 16 *nahan*. This group would have been enshrined in a Nahanjeon or “Hall of Arhats” as part of a larger temple complex. Together, the 16 statues would have flanked a central triad composed of the historic Buddha Śākyamuni, the future Buddha Maitreya, and the past Buddha Dīpankara. An inscription on the base of this sculpture (右一 *woo li*) indicates that it was positioned as the first sculpture to the immediate left of the central triad. The number two 二 carved on the base of the sculpture indicates that this sculpture depicts the *nahan* known as Ganakgabeolcha, called Kanakavatsa in Sanskrit. Believed to dwell in Kashmir, Kanakavatsa is often referred to as the “happy arhat,” demonstrated by his smiling face.



Tap the web icon in the Spencer Museum's app to see images of the inside of this sculpture.

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Satoru Hoshino

born 1945, Niigata Prefecture, Japan

Frozen Cloud II-8, 2004

stoneware, black slip

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Gift of the artist, 2018.0161

Frozen Cloud is a contemporary contrast to the older, more traditional ceramics in this exhibition. Artist Satoru Hoshino emphasizes the essence of clay and its earthy origins in his work. The spiral movement of *Frozen Cloud* embodies motion that can be observed in many natural phenomena, from the rotation of the sun to the movement of a typhoon or hurricane.

The artist wrote about how a natural disaster that destroyed his studio changed his understanding of clay:

“My approach to clay changed completely after I experienced the natural disaster of a landslide in 1986. Until then, clay had been a material with which to embody the ideas and images already in my mind. Since then, however, the clay has become not simply the material from which a work is derived, but something that lies before me as a force of nature, an existence that overwhelms trivial intentions. The clay has a life and energy of its own; by excluding small thoughts, it forces me into a symbiotic relation with it.”

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after **Maruyama Ōkyo** (1733–1795)

born Anafuto, Tamba province, Japan; died Kyoto, Japan

Longevity Triptych, 1782, Edo period (1600–1868)

ink, color on silk

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Gift of Jay Gates, Director, Spencer Museum of Art, 1984–1987, 2012.0608.a.b.c

In this triptych, or three-part painting, longevity is represented by different animals. In the center panel, the elderly god of longevity has a long white beard and leans on a white deer, a symbol for youth. The left panel depicts turtles, which are revered for their long lifespans. Some of the turtles depicted in Japanese art, known as *minogame*, are so elderly that they have seaweed growing on their shells. The right panel depicts cranes, which are the constant companions of immortals and symbolize luck as well as longevity. East Asian folklore has many tales about cranes, including the Japanese story *The Crane Wife*.



Tap the web icon in the Spencer Museum's app to watch an animated telling of *The Crane Wife*.

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Jung Do-Jun

born 1948, Jinju, South Gyeongsang province, Republic of Korea

Heaven, Earth, Man, 2011

ink, color, rubbing on paper

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

credit line, 2019.0128

The fundamental components of vowels in the Korean writing system known as Hangeul are represented in this work by the dot (Heaven), vertical line (Earth), and horizontal line (Man/Human).

Large brushstrokes are layered on top of a rubbing from the *Hunminjeongeum* (*The Proper Sounds for the Instruction of the People*). This 15th-century text was composed by King Sejong (reigned 1418–1459) to teach those who were illiterate in Chinese characters (Hanja) to easily read and write Korean.

Artist Jung Do-Jun's father, Jung Hyun-Bok (1909–1973), also a renowned calligrapher, began instructing his son in the Chinese classics from an early age. Later Jung apprenticed under Kim Chong-Hyun (1921–2006), widely considered one of the greatest Korean calligraphers of the 20th century.

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Watanabe Gentai (1749–1822)

active Japan

武陵桃源 *Buryô tôgen* (*Wuling's Peach Blossom Spring*),

late 1700s–early 1800s, Edo period (1600–1868)

inorganic pigment, silk

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Museum purchase: R. Charles and Mary Margaret Clevenger Fund, 1998.0707

The *Peach Blossom Spring*, a story by Chinese poet Tao Yuanming (365 CE–427 CE), became the classic expression of longing for a timeless, peaceful utopia. Countless references to it appear in poetry and painting throughout East Asia. The fable concerns a lost fisherman who discovers a spring surrounded by fragrant peach blossoms that leads to a cave. The cave is a portal to an isolated valley, within which is a small village separated for generations from the outside world. People there live in harmony and simplicity. The fisherman remains in the village for a few days and then leaves to get his family and return to the idyllic spot. Unfortunately, he is never able to find the mysterious spring again.

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attributed to **Zhu Xi** (1130–1200)

born Yuxi, Fujian province, China; died Jianyang, Fujian province, China

Calligraphy with Accompanying Commentaries, 1130–1200, Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279)

ink, paper

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Gift of Dr. William P. Fenn, 1977.0024

Zhu Xi was a renowned philosopher and scholar best known for founding Neo-Confucianism, a school of philosophy that values learning and rationalism. This calligraphy was probably not brushed by Zhu Xi, but it conveys the sentiment of a scholar who is ready to retire from service.

Translation of the inscription:

The government has retroactively bestowed great honors on me.

However, I have longed to retire among woods and streams.

I also am aware of my untrammelled temperament from the past to the present.

Hui-weng

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Chen Shaomei (1909–1954)

born Henshan, Hunan province, China; died Beijing, China

Cultivating Longevity in a Mountain Pavilion, 1940,

Republic of China (1911–1949)

ink, color on paper

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Gift of Stan and Patsy Wisdom, 1991.0156

This painting was a gift from the artist to a friend on their 60th birthday. The inscription on the painting includes a birthday greeting for the recipient and a poem that leads the viewer through the painting's various layers.

Translation of the inscription:

*The clouds and mists are good for longevity, The rays of sunlight
are splendid at twilight; The drifting water blocks the boat on the
Shan River,*

*Where there is a famous mountain, There is a Peach Blossom
Spring.*

*In the painting, an ocean of spring,
In the mountain, a scene of paradise;
On the peak and in the valley,
Gather together the young and the wise;
All unaware that blossoms and birdsong,
Are prevailing over the Chan Temple on Mimo Cliff.*

Longevity, or a long life, is an important concept in Chinese culture and an appropriate theme for a 60th birthday present. Respect for one's elders is another important value in Chinese culture. Therefore longevity—or even immortality—are frequently depicted in art.

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Fūgai Ekun (1568–1654)

born Hijishio, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan; died Lake Hamana, Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan

Daruma crossing the river, late 1500s–early 1600s, Momoyama period (1573–1615) or Edo period (1600–1868)

ink on paper

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Museum purchase, 1984.0135

Inscription by Tetsugyu (1628–1700):

The water in the Liang River becomes shallow,

There is no place to moor a large boat.

Watch him go by on a single reed—

His legacy continues to increase and increase.

Typically depicted with glaring eyes and his hands tucked into his robe, the image of the monk Daruma evokes serious Zen Buddhist practices as well as a sense of humor, inviting viewers to laugh at the unpredictability of this world. This painting recalls an episode from Daruma's life when his dedication to spreading Buddhism propelled him across the Yangtze River in China on a thin reed. Like Daruma, artist Fūgai Ekun was a monk, but did not find satisfaction in temple life and became a hermit, living alone in caves in northern Japan and trading his paintings for food and supplies.

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attributed to **Gekko**

active late 1700s to early 1800s, Japan

Oiwa (Lantern Ghost), early 1800s, Edo period (1600–1868)

ink, color on silk

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Charles and Mary Margaret Clevenger Art Acquisition Fund,

2010.0025

In this hanging scroll, the lantern ghost Oiwa appears formless, fading into the dark background and obscured by her long messy hair. The story of the lantern ghost first appears in a 19th-century Japanese Kabuki play. In the story, Oiwa is betrayed and poisoned by her husband Iyemon and turns into a vengeful ghost who haunts her husband relentlessly. Wherever he goes and whatever he does, Oiwa's disfigured face appears before him. When the story of Oiwa was first performed in 1825, lanterns were already a motif associated with ghost stories. This motif was creatively employed by Kabuki actors, who played Oiwa emerging from a burning lantern. In Japan, ghost stories like this are often told at the height of summer heat in order to cause a terror-induced cold sweat.

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Twenty-Four Beauties, circa 1736–1795

China, Qing dynasty (1644–1911)

ink, color on paper

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

William Bridges Thayer Memorial, 1928.0154

This Chinese handscroll is an example of so-called “beautiful women” painting that featured famous historical and legendary female figures. For example, viewing the handscroll from right to left, the 18th beauty holds a cloth-covered *qin* zither, a musical string instrument, and most likely represents Zhuo Wenjun, a second century BCE heroine who left her wealthy family to pursue a romance with the famed and destitute scholar Sima Xiangru. While some of the women can be identified, most are idealized representations who not only are physically beautiful but possess talent and virtue as well. Depicted with slender figures, oval faces, and sloping shoulders, which exemplify the ideal beauty in late-imperial China, individual attributes such as a musical instrument, book, or sword, associated each woman with literary or artistic cultivation.

Use the touchscreen in this exhibition to view the entire scroll.

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Karasumaru Mitsuhiro (1579–1638)

born and died Kyoto, Japan

Tōkōki (Memoir of an Eastern Journey), late 1500s–early 1600s

ink, paper

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Museum purchase: Helen Foresman Spencer Art Acquisition Fund, Barbara Benton Wescoe Fund, 1989.0001

This scroll is a poetic record of artist Karasumaru Mitsuhiro’s journey between Kyoto and Edo (present-day Tokyo). It opens with the passage: “Around the 20th of the first month, I departed for Tokyo...and crossed the Nagabashi bridge at Seta,” followed by two poems and a dramatic rendition of the Nagabashi bridge in the village of Seta just outside Kyoto.

Mitsuhiro was a high-ranking courtier and a leading poet of the early 17th century. He combined the calligraphic traditions of several important schools to produce his own lively style that recalled the aesthetics of the Heian period (794–1185), such as dyed papers decorated with silver and gold and calligraphy written in the native cursive style. The text, drawings, and poems on this scroll recount Mitsuhiro’s journey along the 307-mile Tōkaidō (Eastern Sea Route) leading from Edo, the home of the shogun, to Kyoto, the site of the emperor’s palace.

Use the touchscreen in this exhibition to view the entire scroll.

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Qingming Festival on the River, 1600s

China, Ming dynasty (1368–1644) or Qing dynasty (1644–1911)

ink, color on paper

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Gift of Dr. and Mrs. George A. Colom, 1986.0090

This 18-foot-long handscroll is a later copy of a famous 12th-century painting by Zhang Zeduan of the same title that is now in the Palace Museum in Beijing, China. The handscroll depicts the bustling activity of an urban environment in China during Qingming, an important early-spring festival also known as the Tomb-Sweeping Festival, when people visit the tombs of their ancestors to clean the gravesites, pray, and make ritual offerings. Everyone is rushing around the city making hasty preparations for the festival.

Use the touchscreen in this exhibition to view the entire scroll alongside an older version.

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follower of **Dai Jin** (1388–1462)

born and died Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, China

Literary Gathering in the Orchid Pavilion, 1500s–1600s, Ming dynasty (1368–1644) or Qing dynasty (1644–1911)

ink, color, silk

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Museum purchase, 1970.0077

This handscroll illustrates one of the most famous literary gatherings in East Asian history. On the third day of the third lunar month in the spring of the year 353 CE, calligrapher Wang Xizhi hosted a gathering of 42 poets at the Orchid Pavilion, a small gazebo near a stream in southeastern China. The poets engaged in a popular literary game of the time. They seated themselves on the banks of the stream as servants placed small cups of wine on lotus leaves and floated them downstream. If a cup came to rest near a poet, he was obliged to drink and compose an impromptu poem.

Use the touchscreen in this exhibition to view the entire scroll.

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Japanese Ghosts

In Japanese prints ghosts conjure images of revenge and violence. According to some Japanese religious beliefs, when people die of natural causes they become spirits, traveling to an eternal world. If they die of unnatural causes they become ghosts, lingering in the human realm. Often, ghosts enact revenge on those responsible for their untimely deaths. Prior to the 17th century, stories about vengeful ghosts, called *onryō* 怨霊, portray them as subversive forces that threatened political authority by causing famine, epidemics, or natural disasters. In other stories, ghosts appear as Buddhist examples of excessive desire, an obstacle to achieving enlightenment. However, by the beginning of the Edo period (1600–1868), images of *onryō* had taken on an entertaining quality, vividly portrayed in popular Kabuki plays and dramatically depicted in Japanese color prints.

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Kita Busei (1776–1856)

active Japan

badger and rabbit, 1831, Edo period (1600–1868)

color woodcut

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

William Bridges Thayer Memorial, 0000.1569

Translation of inscription:

*As rabbits run among
the clouds in mid-autumn,
the moonship will be finished.*

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Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839–1892)

born Edo (present-day Tokyo), Japan; died Tokyo, Japan

Priest Raigō of Mii Temple Transformed into a Rat, 1891,

Meiji period (1868–1912)

color woodcut

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Museum purchase: Weare-West Fund, 1984.0036

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Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839–1892)

born Edo (present-day Tokyo), Japan; died Tokyo, Japan

Spirit of General Tamichi as a Great Snake, 1880,

Meiji period (1868–1912)

color woodcut

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Gift of H. Lee Turner, 1968.0001.213

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Utagawa Yoshikazu

active 1850–1870, Edo (present-day Tokyo), Japan

Minamoto no yoshitsune taira no tomomori no rei ni au zu (Meeting of Minamoto no Yoshitsune and the ghost of Taira no Tomomori), circa 1851–1853, Edo period (1600–1868)

color woodcut

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Museum purchase: R. Charles and Mary Margaret Clevenger Fund, 1999.0203.a,b,c

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Shunbaisai Hokuei

active circa 1824–1837, Japan

Kohada Kohaiji Mitate Nyōbō Asaka Iwai Shijaku II (Ghost of Kobata Kohaiji), circa 1831, Edo period (1600–1868)

color woodcut

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Gift of H. Lee Turner, 1968.0001.162

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Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861)

born and died Edo (present-day Tokyo), Japan

Nissaka (The Nightly Weeping Rock), circa 1845–1846, Edo period (1600–1868)

color woodcut

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Gift of H. Lee Turner, 1968.0001.064

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Utagawa Yoshitaki (1841–1899)

Actor Nakamura Shojura as Mitsukuni, circa 1880s, Meiji period (1868–1912)

color woodcut

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Museum purchase, 1983.0030

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bojagi (wrapping cloth), late 1800s

Korea, Joseon dynasty (1392–1910)

silk

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Museum purchase: Helen Foresman Spencer Art Acquisition Fund,
2013.0021

Bojagi were used as wrappings for important gifts, such as on the occasion of a wedding, or during Buddhist rituals. The patchwork quality indicates that they were made by commoners, but the intricate stitching demonstrates the maker's great skill. The tradition of using *bojagi* dates back to antiquity, but flourished in the Joseon dynasty.

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Yoshida Hiroshi (1876–1950)

born Kurume, Japan; died Tokyo, Japan

Misty Day in Nikkō, 1937, Showa period (1926–1989)

color woodcut

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Bequest of R.C. Moore, 1974.0032

In this print, religious travelers dressed in traditional white clothes visit a group of Buddhist and Shinto shrines in Nikkō, Japan. The shrines at Nikkō were constructed in honor of the powerful military ruler Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616), who was later worshipped as the god Toshō Daigongen or the “Great Deity of the East Shining Light.” The artist who made this print is especially well-known for his skill in creating atmospheric effects, as seen in the trees that fade into the mist behind the shrine.

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white rat with daikon, 1800s, Japan,

Edo period (1600–1868) or Meiji period (1868–1912)

ink, color on paper

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Gift of Jay Gates, Director, Spencer Museum of Art, 1984–1987,
2012.0573

According to the Chinese Zodiac, 2020 is the year of the rat. The white rat eating a daikon radish is associated with Daikoku, the god of good fortune.

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Konoike Tomoko

born 1960, Akita, Japan

獣の皮を被り 草の編みもの *Kemono no kawa o kaburi kusa no amino (Donning Animal Skins and Braided Grass)*, 2011

mirror, wood, Styrofoam, aluminum

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Museum purchase: R. Charles and Mary Margaret Clevenger Art

Acquisition Fund, 2017.0048.a,b

Invisible, untouchable

Only from the rising smoke did I know their whereabouts

Nourished by the forest, and dying for its sustenance

Their faint voices swallowed up by the mist

Oh, you creatures of the wild

The forest is deep, the vegetation thick

—Konoike Tomoko, *Donning Animal Skins and Braided Grass*

In ancient times, densely forested mountains carpeted the Japanese archipelago. These alpine forests teemed with wolves such as the large Hokkaidō wolf in the north and its smaller cousin the Honshū wolf in the south. Today both species of native Japanese wolves are extinct. This mirror-encrusted sculpture revives the spirit of the vanished Japanese wolf. Walking on six legs, it gleams like an otherworldly apparition or a mutant clone. In Japanese legend, the wolf embodies the “spirit of the mountain.” Similarly, within Konoike’s art, the wolf operates as a potent symbol infused with mythic qualities.

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Konoike Tomoko

born 1960, Akita, Japan

mimio-Odyssey, 2005

single-channel black-and-white video, DVD, 11 min 30 sec

Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas

Museum purchase: Helen Foresman Spencer Art Acquisition Fund,
2010.0194.01.a

Konoike Tomoko's animated work *mimio-odyssey* evokes a fairytale, but it deliberately lacks a conventional, linear narrative structure with a beginning, middle, and end. Konoike remarks that the absence of plot and narrative devices grants her work metaphorical force.

This animation centers on the white, plush fuzzle named mimio, who is a creature existing between innocence and evil, in a zone between humans and animals. As mimio wanders through an ancient forest, it is joined by a six-legged wolf and a knife-wielding fairy. The animation blends material from indigenous Japanese sources, such as *noh* drama and Shinto, the traditional religion of Japan, with modern-day imagery of cities and technology. The result is a world caught in circular time that dissolves distinctions between human civilization and the realm of nature.

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