

# Japanese Wood Culture and Promotional Activity for Education of Wood

Presented by Japan Wood Culture Society

- PART 1 . Mokuiku: Education of Wood in Japan
- PART 2 . “Traditional Crafts of Japan”  
and Edo Woodcut Print

# PART 1 . *Mokuiku*: Education of Wood in Japan



***Mokuiku***

**Education of Wood in Japan**

2021.1.18

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# 1. What is *Mokuiku*?

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# 1. What is *Mokuiku*?

*Mokuiku* is ...

**"Touching wood; Learning from wood; Living with wood"**

**A unique educational program of wood use that was developed to protect and hand over the lush Japanese greenary to the next generation.**



This is to introduce Japanese forest where *Mokuiku* concept came from, its historical background, its goal, and actual activities of *Mokuiku*.

木育ファミリー：「木育を知っていますか？」[http://www.mokuiku.net/2\\_mokuiku/2\\_mokuiku.htm](http://www.mokuiku.net/2_mokuiku/2_mokuiku.htm), (参照 2020-12-22)

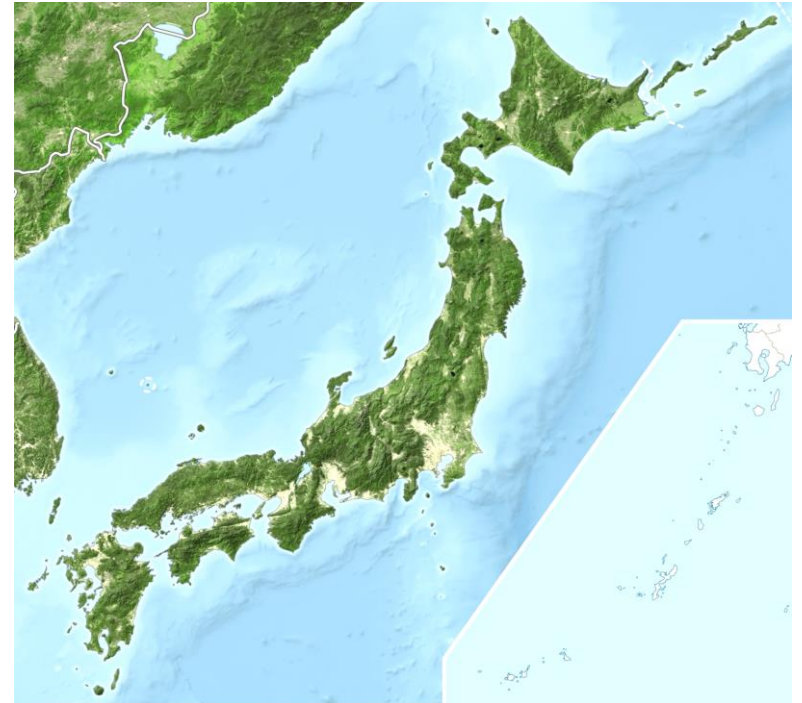
## 2. Japanese Forest that Created *Mokuiku*

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## 2. Japanese Forest that Created *Mokuiku* ①

### Lush Greenery Land of Japan

- Forest covers 70% of the land.
- Climate is temperate and humid, different from Korean peninsula and China on the same latitude.
- 1500 species of trees creates variety of natural beauty.
- There are many World Natural Heritage sites, thanks to the rich nature.



## 2. Japanese Forest that Created *Mokuiku* ②

### Rich Wood Culture Developed by Greenery

- Wood culture was developed with the feature distinctive of each region, as represented by the world oldest wooden building, *Horyuji* temple
- Those techniques and skills were developed utilizing characteristics of various wood species, which are highly evaluated in the world. In 2020, they were listed in an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO as “craftmanship of traditional building”.

... *Mokuiku* was born in such environment.





### 3. How *Mokuiku* was Developed?

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### 3. How *Mokuiku* was Developed ①

#### Requirement of Kyoto Protocol and Potential of Forest

- In order to prevent the global warming, the world first international agreement was established, in which each nation was obliged to take a concrete action for reducing CO2 emission.
- Function of forest to absorb CO2 was recognized as one of the CO2 reduction measures.

#### Kyoto Protocol (1997)

To prevent global warming, Japan shall reduce 6% of CO2 emission by 2012, in which 3.8% shall be absorbed by forest.

### 3. How *Mokuiku* was Developed ②

#### Disasterous Reality - Forest Devastation

- 
- 80% of the planted forest in Japan: already "Green desert"
  - Self-sufficiency rate of wood in Japan: 20% only

Because:

- Large-scale artificial forests planted after the WWII were left unmaintained and grew as "unhealthy forests".
- Domestic wood were not used in the Japanese market so that forests were not properly managed.

### 3. How *Mokuiku* was Developed ③

## Start-up of Wood Use Promotion by Government Forest Administration of Japan

- 2005: *Kizukai* promotion
- 2006: *Mokuiku* promotion

*Kizukai*: Protect forest as well as global environment by using more wood from forests.

*Mokuiku*: Measures to spread among people and facilitate the *Kizukai* promotion activities.

\* 2006年 閣議決定された「森林・林業基本計画」にて「木育」の促進が明記、翌年2007年 閣議決定された「木材産業の体制整備及び国産材の利用拡大に向けた 基本方針」にて「木育」の具体的な記述が明記された  
林野庁ホームページ. 「『木育』の推進について ～木材の利用促進に向けた取組み～」 [https://www.rinya.maff.go.jp/j/kensyuu/pdf/seika\\_2010\\_07.pdf](https://www.rinya.maff.go.jp/j/kensyuu/pdf/seika_2010_07.pdf)  
(参照 2020-12-22)



## 4. Objectives of *Mokuiku*

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## 4. Objectives of *Mokuiku* ①

*Mokuiku* was started for environment conservation, which has expanded its scope and goals to more diversified fields.

1. *Mokuiku* to protect environment
2. *Mokuiku* to inherit wood culture
3. *Mokuiku* to utilize wood in daily life
4. *Mokuiku* to stimulate economy
5. *Mokuiku* to enrich children's minds

木育ラボ. 「木育とは？」. <https://www.mokuikulabo.com/about>, (参照 2020-12-22)

## 4. Objectives of *Mokuiku* ②

### 1. *Mokuiku* to protect environment

- Wood contributes to **Carbon Fixation**  
Wood conserves carbon in it so that the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the air is reduced.
- Wood is **Eco Material**  
Energy consumption for material production is much lower for wood compared to other materials.
- **Conservation of natural environment** by use of wood  
Forest is able to protect natural environment as “green dam” by properly cutting and using planted trees.

## 4. Objectives of *Mokuiku* ③

### 2. *Mokuiku* to inherit wood culture

- *Mokuiku* aims at preserving the world leading wood processing techniques of Japan and handing them over to the next generation.





## 4. Objectives of *Mokuiku* ④

### 3. *Mokuiku* to utilize wood in daily life

- Wooden products are gradually disappearing from the people's daily life in Japan. *Mokuiku* aims at recovery of the life with wood and use of these wooden products.



## 4. Objectives of *Mokuiku* ⑤

### 4. *Mokuiku* to stimulate economy

- By using trees grown in our country, reinvigorate forests and forest industry, which eventually revitalize regional economies of mountain villages and *Saroyama* areas.



## 4. Objectives of *Mokuiku* ⑥

### 5. *Mokuiku* to enrich children's minds

- Mokuiku is to facilitate development of sensitivity of children by use of wooden toys and providing woody spaces, which directly stimulate children's five senses.



## 5. Activities of *Mokuiku*

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## 5. Activities of *Mokuiku* ①

Let us introduce some examples of *Mokuiku* activities.

1. "Wood Start Declaration": by Tokyo Toy Museum
2. "*Mokuiku* Baby Square": in Tokyo Toy Museum
3. "Robo-ky"(wooden robot toy):  
by Akinori Yamashita, Pro.Emer., Shimane Univ.



## 5. Activities of *Mokuiku* ②

### 1. “Wood Start Declaration” by Tokyo Toy Museum

- Entrusted by government Forestry Agency, the museum organized various events for people to familiarize with wood since 2010, including “*Mokuiku Caravan*” and “*Mokuiku Instructor training*”.
- At present, 51 municipalities, 27 companies and 21 nursery schools have declared “Wood Start”, who are currently working on many *Mokuiku* promotion activities.



## 5. Activities of *Mokuiku* ③

### 2. “*Mokuiku* Baby Square” in Tokyo Toy Museum

- Using 10 Japanese cedars from various regions for flooring, walls and benches.
- The square provides a safe and relaxing playing ground for both babies and their parents.



“J. cedar playing ball”



## 5. Activities of *Mokuiku* ④

### 3. “Robo-key” (wooden robot toy):

by Akinori Yamashita, Prof. Emer., Shimane Univ.

- A kit of wooden robot that can be freely assembled by children and their parents.

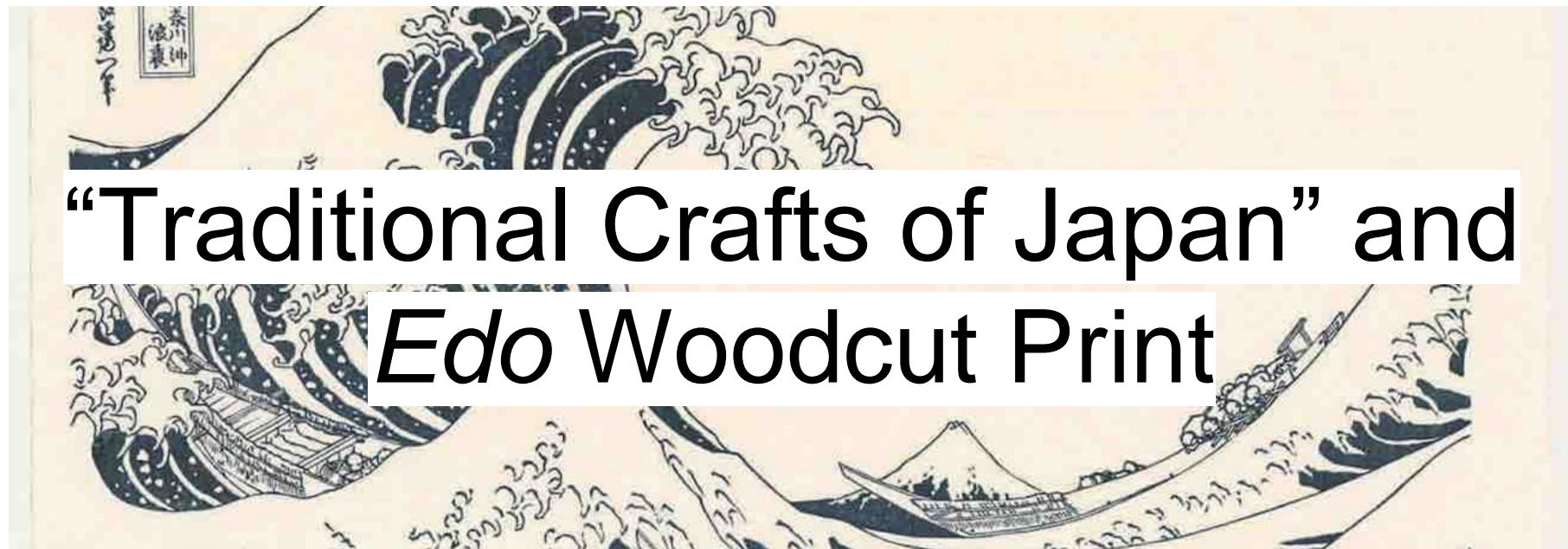




# Reference Material

- 『木の国の歴史-縄文から江戸への木の文化を探る』 by Shoji Nakajima, Ribun Shuppan Co., Ltd., 2018, 234p
- 「木育とは？」 by Mokuiku Lab., <https://www.mokuikulabo.com/about>, (ref. 2020-12-22)
- Website of Forestry Agency 『木育』の推進について ～木材の利用促進に向けた取組み～」 [https://www.rinya.maff.go.jp/j/kensyuu/pdf/seika\\_2010\\_07.pdf](https://www.rinya.maff.go.jp/j/kensyuu/pdf/seika_2010_07.pdf). (ref. 2020-12-22)

## PART 2 : “Traditional Crafts of Japan” and *Edo Woodcut Print*



# “Traditional Crafts of Japan” and *Edo Woodcut Print*

2021.1.18

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# Preface

- Japan has traditionally been called “country of wood” as its rich forest resources developed high-quality wood processing techniques. It is “Traditional Crafts of Japan” program that is preserving the history of wood processing and is still now improving the techniques.
- This presentation is to introduce a tip of Japanese culture by explaining “Traditional Crafts of Japan” program established by government and *Edo Woodcut Print*, one of the traditional crafts designated under this program.

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# 1. Traditional Crafts of Japan

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# 1. Traditional Crafts of Japan

## 1. What are “Traditional Crafts of Japan”?

Different from traditional crafts in general, they are craft works designated by government under a Japanese law.

... In 1960's, Japanese traditional craft industry was facing a serious situation. To revitalize the industry, Japanese government formulated “Law for Promotion of Traditional Craft Industries” in 1974 as a promotional national scheme, in which “Traditional Crafts of Japan” were defined.



伝統的工芸品産業振興協会. 「伝統的工芸品とは」 <https://kyokai.kougeihin.jp/traditional-crafts/>, (参照 2020-12-23)  
伝統的工芸品産業振興協会. 「法律（伝産法）」 <https://kyokai.kougeihin.jp/law/>, (参照 2020-12-23)

Logo of Traditional Crafts of Japan

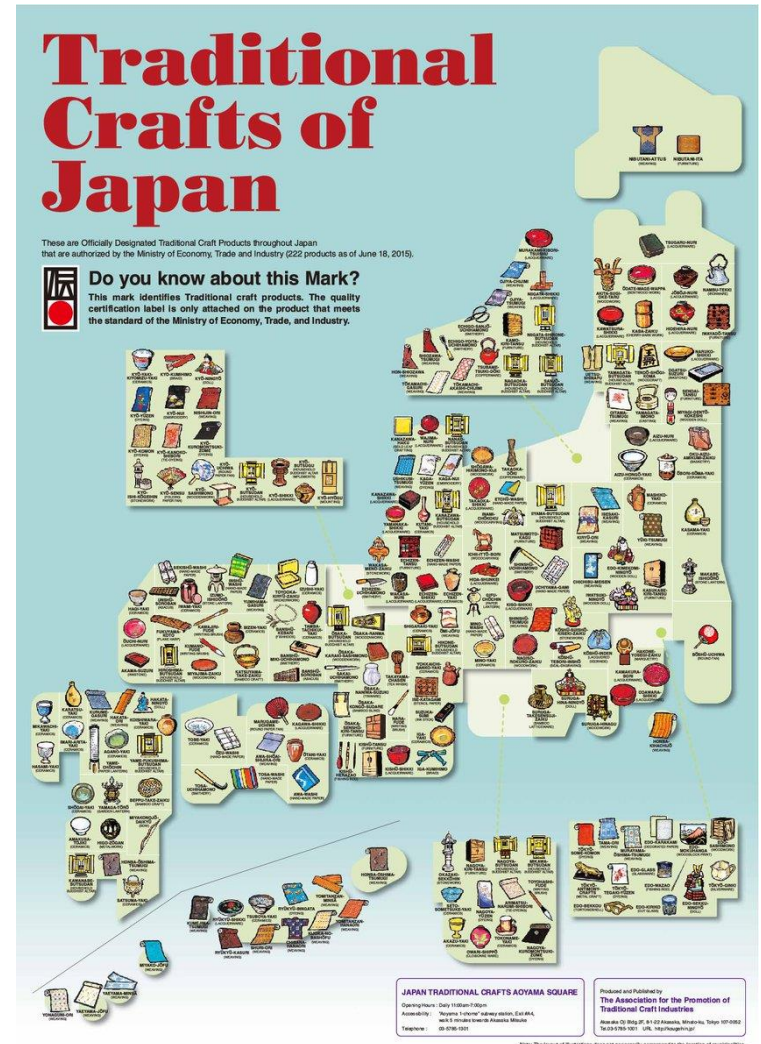
# 1. Traditional Crafts of Japan

## 2. Items designated

- 235 items in total  
among them, 32 items are wood  
and bamboo products

(as of March, 2020)

- Hakone Yosegi-zaiku
- Kamakura-bori
- Wajima-nuri
- Suruga Tekesennsuji-zaiku
- ..... etc.



# 1. Traditional Crafts Japan

## 3. Requirements

... To be designated as “Traditional Crafts in Japan”, it is required to satisfy the following conditions.

1. those mainly used for daily life
2. main production process be done manually
3. manufactured using traditional\* techniques
4. materials are those traditionally\* used
5. manufactured in a specific region

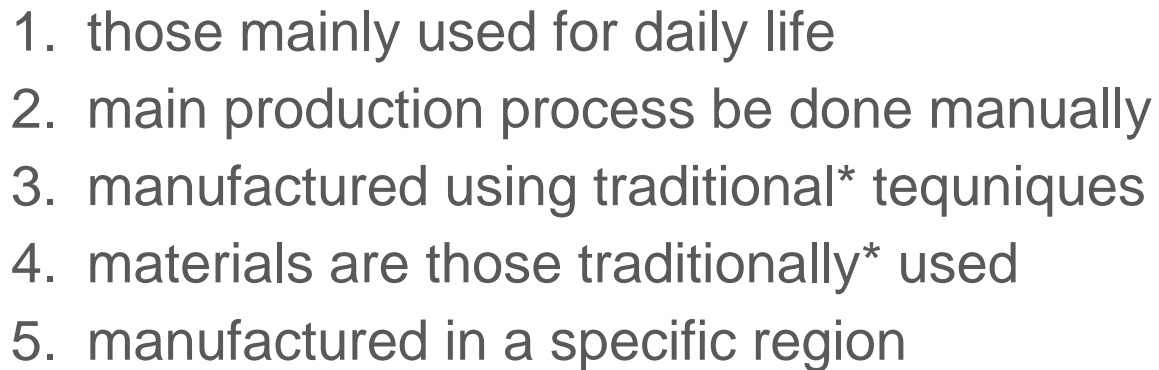
\* “traditional(ly)” here means successively for about 100 years or more.



# 1. Traditional Crafts Japan

## 4. Harsh reality

...However, it is now difficult to satisfy all these requirements.

- 
1. those mainly used for daily life
  2. main production process be done manually
  3. manufactured using traditional\* techniques
  4. materials are those traditionally\* used
  5. manufactured in a specific region

- **Lifestyle change**
- **Handy & cheaper industrial products**
- **Aging of craftsmen & decreasing successors**

... *Edo* Woodcut Print is no exception, which is also facing this harsh reality. We will introduce *Edo* Woodcut Print in the next part.

## **2. *Edo* Woodcut Print**

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## 2. Edo Woodcut Print

### 1. Outline

- A root of Japanese printing technology that flourished in *Edo* period, which is represented by *Ukiyoe* printing.
- Crafts produced by division of labors: painters, carvers and woodblock printers who work under a publisher's plan.
- Developed for information magazines and advertisement media in *Edo* period.
- In *Meiji* period, a printing machine, that enabled fast and mass printing, was introduced from Europe to Japan, which caused a drastic change.
- *Edo* woodcut print has been succeeded mainly for articles of taste, not for practical use, such as gifts, souvenirs and interior goods.



## 2. Edo Woodcut Print

### 2. Production system

...Different from *Sosaku Hanga* (creative print), which does not purpose reproduction, *Edo* woodcut print is produced by division of labor among craftsmen specialized in each specific skill.

- Publisher (*Hannmoto*):  
make a plan of the product and coordinate the painter, carver and printer.
- Painter (*Eshi*):  
design and make a sketch (*hanshita-e*)
- Carver (*Horishi*): carve woodblock (*hangi*)
- Printer (*Surishi*): print out the picture



## 2. Edo Woodcut Print

### 3. Representative painters ①

- Hokusai KATSUSHIKA (1760-1849)  
...Well known painter who created an image of “wave” with its daring composition, which was introduced to the world.  
Main works: *“Fugaku 36-kei”*, *“Chie no Umi”*, etc.





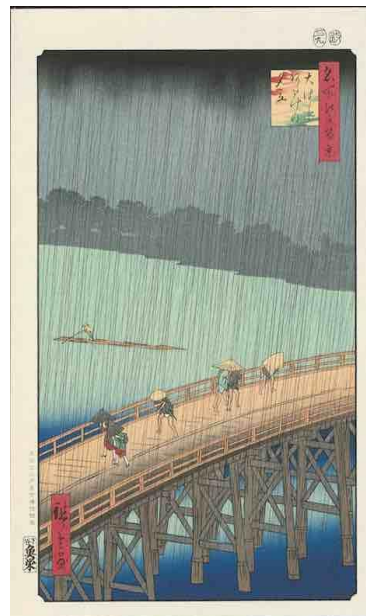
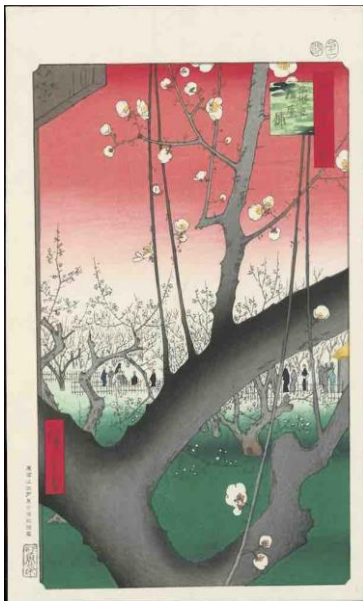
## 2. Edo Woodcut Print

### 3. Representative painters ②

- Hiroshige UKAGAWA (1797-1858)

...An expert in painting landscape who was skillful at painting scenery with full of atmosphere.

Main works : *"Meisho Edo 100-kei"*, *"Tokaido 53-tsugi"*, etc.



## 2. Edo Woodcut Print

### 3. Representative painters ③

- Utamaro KITAGAWA (1753-1806)  
...A painter who had no much in painting  
“*Bijinga*” (beautiful woman), who led the  
fashion of Edo.

Main works: “*5-nin Bijin Aikyo Kurabe*”,  
“*Fujinsougaku 10-tai*”, etc.



## 2. Edo Woodcut Print

### 3. Representative painters ④

- Sharaku TOSHUSAI  
(birth/death dates: unknown)  
...A mysterious painter who pop up with a spectacular *Yakusha-e* (Kabuki actor's print), and 10 months later, suddenly disappeared.

Main works: “*San-daime Ohtanioniji no Yakko edobei*”, “*Ichikawa Ebizo no Takemura Sadanoshin*”, etc.

東京国立博物館. 「三世大谷鬼次の奴江戸兵衛」

[https://www.tnm.jp/modules/r\\_collection/index.php?controller=dtl\\_img&size=L&colid=A10569.471&t=&lang=ja](https://www.tnm.jp/modules/r_collection/index.php?controller=dtl_img&size=L&colid=A10569.471&t=&lang=ja), (参照 2020-12-23)





## 2. *Edo* Woodcut Print

### 4. Materials and challenges ①

To produce *Edo* woodcut print, materials are indispensable, in addition to craftsmen. Recently, however, it is difficult to procure same materials as the past in accordance with the change of time.

- Wild cherry tree for woodcut (*hangji*)

As it is rigid and oily, wild cherry is suitable for precise engraving and durable when used for printing many times.

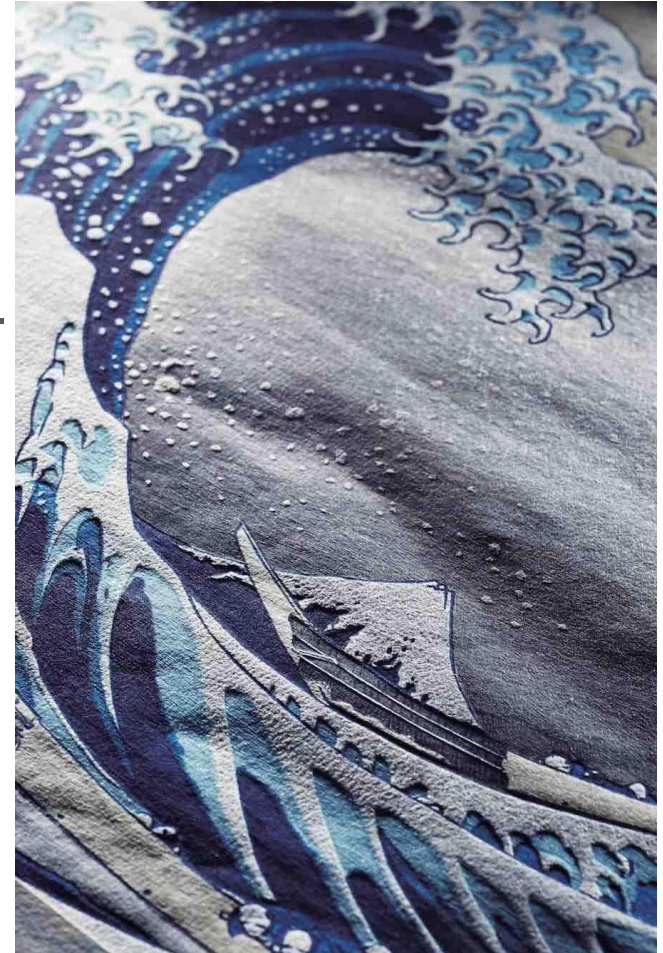
→ Now it is difficult to procure wild cherry because of the slow down of wood use in general in Japan.



## 2. Edo Woodcut Print

### 4. Materials and challenges ②

- *Echizen kizuki bousho* for printing paper  
High quality *washi* (Japanese paper)  
hand-made using *Kozo* (paper mulberry) .  
As the fiber is long, this paper is durable  
when printed with many different colors,  
which is the characteristics of *Ukiyoe*.  
  
→ Now it is difficult to procure the paper  
due to aging of the craftsmen, lack of their  
successors, and sharply decreasing *Kozo*  
tree planting.



## 2. *Edo* Woodcut Print

### 5. Toward succession of culture ①

As the time changes, new problems come up in front of us. We are continueing our challenge to the problems in order to preserve and hand over the inherited culture to the future generations.

- Education

Provide opportunities for children to study and experience traditional craftworks and *Edo* woodcut print independently and with a help of public subsidies.



## 2. *Edo* Woodcut Print

### 5. Toward succession of culture ②

- Reproduction

Reproduce *Edo* woodcut prints produced in *Edo* period by the current woodcut print craftsmen, in order to hand over the old skills to the next generation.

- Lectures/Demonstrations Overseas

Giving lectures and demonstrations not only in Japan but overseas as well in order for more people in the world to know *Edo* woodcut print.



**We would be pleased if this presentation  
could help you have some interest in  
Japanese wood culture.**

**Thank you very much!**