

Press Announcement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RE: Koya Abe, The British Museum, **Recent Acquisitions**

DATES: December 2010 – February 2011

The **British Museum** has recently acquired several works by contemporary visual artist **Koya Abe**, including *Mechanism of Impression* from the *Digital Art Chapter One* series, along with *After the Bather*, *After Andrea Doria as Neptune*, *After Young Man Beside the Sea*, and *After the Toilet of Venus* from Abe's *Digital Art Chapter 5: Analogies* series.

The prints now in the collection of the British Museum are composed of imagery sourced from European master paintings and Japanese ukiyo-e (woodblock) prints. A keystone for the group of prints, *Mechanism of Impression*, places Monet's paradigmatic *Impression, Sunrise* within Hiroshige's round window of Edo era Japan (*View from Massaki*). *Mechanism of Impression* also functionally serves as a conceptual starting point for the *Digital Art* series and is a foundational marker for the inter-cultural relationships and examinations of art, technology, and history that often form the basis of Abe's artwork.



Koya Abe, *Digital Art Chapter One: Mechanism of Impression*, 2000, digital image; archival inkjet print



Koya Abe, *Digital Art Chapter 5 Analogies: After the Bather*, 2008, digital image; archival inkjet print

The *Analogies* series consists of western art masterpieces that have been digitally “tattooed” with masterworks of Japanese art, particularly ukiyo-e imagery. The initial print on view in the museum galleries, *After the Bather*, incorporates Kuniyoshi's *Sakata kaido-maru and a Carp* as a tattoo on the body of Ingre's *The Bather*. The additional prints in the *Analogies* group similarly represent the tattooing of subject figures with Japanese imagery. Abe explains this process, which resulted in his decision to “tattoo the history of western art,” as a means of examining perceptions of society, culture, history and art.

The prints supplement the British Museum's Japanese art collection and Abe hopes that the display of his artwork will “contribute to a broader view of art and provide an opportunity for people to consider cultural interaction and the dynamic of cultural balances.”

After the Bather will be on display in the British Museum's upper floor Japanese Galleries through mid-February 2011. Additional information about the prints, including comments by the curator, can be found in the [British Museum's online collection database](#). Abe's statements about the projects, including those relating to the *Analogies* series and *Digital Art Chapter One*, can be viewed at www.koyaabe.com.

MEDIA

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Press-ready images are available for news/media purposes upon request.

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Collection Database: [Research](#) > Search the collection database > Search: Koya Abe

Resource Information:

- *View from Massaki*, (from the series *A Hundred Views of Edo*), Utagawa Hiroshige, 1857
- *Impression, Sunrise*, Claude Monet, 1872, collection of Musée Marmottan Monet
- *The Bather*, also known as the Valpinçon Bather, Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, 1808, collection of the Louvre Museum
- *Sakata kaido-maru and a Carp*, Utagawa Kuniyoshi, circa 1837, collection of the British Museum
- *Andrea Doria as Neptune*, Bronzino (Agnolo di Cosimo), circa 1550-55, collection of the Pinacoteca di Brera
- *Menamizu (kanmachimatsuriyataitenjo-e)* Katsushika Hokusai, 1845, Hokusai-kan (Japan)
- *Young Man Beside the Sea*, Hippolyte Flandrin, 1864, collection of the Louvre Museum
- *Ding Desun and a Snake*, Utagawa Kuniyoshi, 1827-30
- *The Toilet of Venus*, Diego Velázquez, circa 1647-51, collection of the National Gallery, London
- *Oniwakamaru and a Carp*, Utagawa Kuniyoshi, circa 1847-50



Koya Abe, *Digital Art Chapter 5 Analogies: After Andrea Doria as Neptune*, 2008, digital image; archival inkjet print



Koya Abe, *Digital Art Chapter 5 Analogies: After Young Man Beside the Sea*, 2008, digital image; archival inkjet print



Koya Abe, *Digital Art Chapter 5 Analogies: After the Toilet of Venus*, 2008, digital image; archival inkjet print