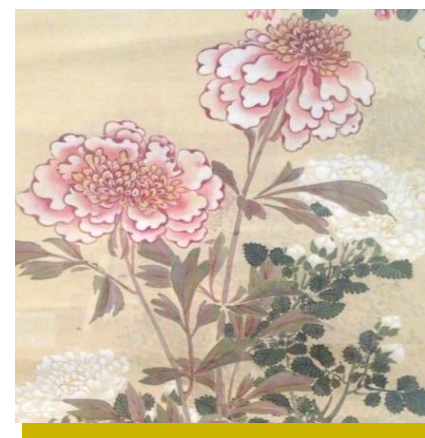


Izuhara Makoku, *Flowers of the Four Seasons*

Anna delos Angeles
ARTH383 Fall 2012



Izuwara Makoku, *Flowers of the Four Seasons*

Pair of hanging scrolls
Ink and color on silk
Edo period, 1825-50



Research Questions

- How might Makoku's Buddhist background have affected his painting style? What "range of cultural activities" did he engage in and how might that have affected his style?
- What was the nature of his relationships with the other two of the "authoritative trio of Nagoya-born painters," Yamamoto Baiitsu and Nakabayashi Chikuto?
- What do the flowers of the four seasons symbolize and how do they interact in these two scrolls? What effect does that achieve?



Izuhara Makoku

- Buddhist monk from Nagoya, which possibly encouraged his “more reserved, less commercially directed life”
- Did not go on to become a prominent artist
- No definite relation to Baiitsu and Chikuto
- “Range of cultural activities”?



Chikuto and Baiitsu

- Minor branch of Nanga painters in Nagoya
- Studied under the same mentor
- Seemingly different backgrounds from Makoku: Chikuto the son of a doctor associated with a wealthy businessman, and Baiitsu son of a carpenter
- Chikuto became the Nanga School's main theorist
- Baiitsu pushed the boundaries a bit more





The Nanga School

Background

- “Southern School”
- Japanese equivalent of Chinese literati painters of Yuan, Ming and Ching dynasties
- Well-versed in Confucianism, Chinese poetry, calligraphy, and painting
- Emphasis on individualism
- Rejection professional schools like Kano and Tosa painters
- Appealed to people of different classes

The Nanga School: Style

“intuitive, individualistic ... often deliberately amateurish and quasi-awkward ... dependent for its expressive force on distinctive, sometimes calligraphic brushwork, repetitions and distortions of form, and other essentially abstract means” (Cahill 10)



“If birds and flowers are painted by one in whose brush resides the skill of awakening change, the painting will cause the viewer to cherish the moment depicted and, becoming involved with the picture, will take pleasure in the workings of nature.” – Chikuden

- Additive process: buildup of forms and texture; flattening of space (Moes 72, 77)



- ◆ Somewhat awkward composition
- ◆ Calligraphic strokes
- ◆ Repetition and distortion
- ◆ Attention to detail; realism to an extent
- ◆ Layering of pigments and textures
- ◆ Scale
- ◆ Flattened picture frame



+ *Prunus*. Winter

- ◆ Endurance, hope, transience
- ◆ First to bloom in late winter/early spring, also among first to lose its flowers
- ◆ Stylistic arrangement of flowers



Peony: Spring

- ◆ Wealth and honor
- ◆ Flower buds





Magnolia:
Spring and
Osmanthus:
Summer

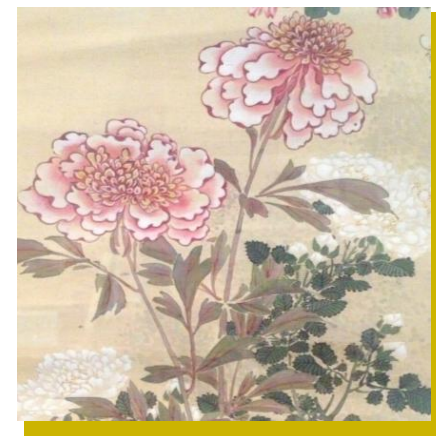
◆ Mixing motifs





Lotus: Summer and Chrysanthemums: Autumn

- ◆ Mixing motifs
- ◆ Lotus: purity, integrity, success
- ◆ Chrysanthemum: escape from troubles, in praise of quietness



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