

## ON MAY 20, GHOSTS, DEMONS & MONSTERS VISIT TURNER AUCTIONS + APPRAISALS IN JAPANESE PRINTS

### Online Auction Features Over 110 Lots from the Estate of Edward S. Stephenson

**SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, CA, April 28, 2023** – Turner Auctions + Appraisals is very pleased to present Ghosts, Demons and Monsters, the Collection of Japanese Prints from the Estate of Edward S. Stephenson on Saturday, May 20, 2023. With a focus on the supernatural, this online auction features over 110 Japanese woodblock prints collected in post-war Japan by an award-winning Hollywood production designer. Never exhibited before, these works are by famed 19<sup>th</sup>- and early-20<sup>th</sup>-century woodblock artists, including Yoshitoshi, Kuniyoshi, Yoshitsuya, Kunisada, Kunichika, Yoshiku, and others. Two 19<sup>th</sup>-century Japanese watercolors complete the sale.

Turner Auctions + Appraisals begins its online auction on Saturday, May 20, 2023, at 10:30 am PDT; sale items are available for preview and bidding now. The online auction will be featured live on multiple platforms: LiveAuctioneers, Invaluable, Bidsquare, the Sale Room, Lot-tissimo and Turner Auctions + Appraisals' free mobile app, which can be downloaded from the App Store or Google Apps ("Turner Auctions"). All are easily accessed through 'Upcoming Auctions' at the company's website:

[www.turnerauctionsonline.com/upcoming-auctions](http://www.turnerauctionsonline.com/upcoming-auctions).

#### About Edward S. Stephenson and His Collection

Born in Iowa, Edward S. Stephenson (1917-2011) moved with his family around age six to Glendale, in Southern California. Inspired by early motion pictures, young Edward

decided at age 11 he wanted to pursue theater and production design. After high school, he attended the Pasadena Playhouse College of the Theater and after graduation began working in theatrical design.



Like many other young men, his career was interrupted by World War II. Serving in the U.S. Air Force, he was stationed in Guam, Texas, and, for seven years, in Japan. He was appointed civilian Director of Entertainment and Music for the Commander in Chief, Far East and Supreme Commander, Allied Powers; in this role, he headed the military's post-occupation entertainment services, when entertainment for GIs was said to be a "necessary supplement to the basic needs of food and shelter." Much of his time was spent at the Tokyo Takarazuka Revue building, later renamed the Ernie Pyle Theater for the Pulitzer Prize-winning author who was killed in Okinawa. Known as the "Radio City Music Hall of the East," this was the hub for American-style entertainment in Japan and indeed all of Asia. It was here that Mr. Stephenson plied his trade of production and theater design, including a performance of "The Mikado" that was attended by the Japanese royal family.

After the service, Mr. Stephenson spent a short time in New York, then returned to Southern California in the early 1950s. From his time in Japan, he sent the second largest shipment of Japanese artifacts back to the U.S.; the largest was sent to Gump's, the renowned retailer in San Francisco. (Photo, Edward S. Stephenson)



Upon his return to Los Angeles, Mr. Stephenson began working in production design in live television, a career that spanned five decades and numerous accolades. He received three Primetime Emmy Awards for production design and/or art direction -- for *An Evening with Fred Astaire*, for *The Andy Williams Show*, and for *Soap*. With Norman Lear and Bud Yorkin, he worked on numerous shows, including *Maude*, *Sanford & Son*, *Good Times*, and the pilot for *All in the Family*. He also worked with Witt-Thomas-Harris on *Golden Girls*, *Empty Nest*, *Blossom*, and others.



In 1978, he found time to launch Hollywood Studio Gallery, the entertainment industry's leading prop house for art and wall décor, with 50,000 pieces available for rent. Today the company is owned and run by Mr. Stephenson's daughter, Tara Stephenson-Fong, herself a noted set decorator and winner of an Art Directors Guild (ADG) award, along with numerous Emmy and ADG nominations. Mr. Stephenson retired in 1994.

While collecting his entire adult life, Mr. Stephenson seems to have been first bitten by the bug when he was in Japan after the war; trading, for example, a carton of cigarettes for a samurai sword. The intriguing woodblock prints he collected have a dramatic and powerful visual focus – on ghosts, demons, and monsters, whose myths and legends pervade Japanese culture. Several prints in the sale include the *Bakeneko*, the fearsome cat monster "that inspires fear and respect through legends, art and Japanese folklore."

According to Tara, her father always had a fascination with the occult, the macabre, the unexplained, so his attraction to these supernatural woodblock prints is not surprising. Because he felt the prints were precious, they have been kept in storage, not on display. He also collected European military armor, the subject of a



future sale at Turner Auctions + Appraisals. Mr. Stephenson loved art and architecture: “He saw something beautiful and wanted to have it – and he didn’t know how to do anything small.” Now, over the years, Mr. Stephenson’s collections have been sorted out, awaiting the right time and the right person, and are now going up for sale. Tara says she hopes the artworks “find a good home with good people.” Those passionate about supernatural Japanese prints are sure to find their spirits lifted.

Here is information on the upcoming online sale (please see online auction and lot details in the online catalog):



**Lot 101: 19th Century Japanese Watercolor.**

Artist: Unknown. Series:

Warriors. Date: c. 1890s. Medium: Watercolor. Dimensions: 24 x 30 in. (approx.). Condition: Overall good. Estimate \$800-\$1,200. (Photo, top left)



**Lot 41: Artist: Tsukioka Kinzaburo YOSHITOSHI (1839-1892).** Series: Taira no Kiyomori and skulls in snow, from the series Shinyo Rokaisen. Date: 1882. Medium: Woodblock (triptych). Dimensions: 14 x 9 in. Condition: Trimmed, thinning, and stained with light fading. Estimate \$600-\$800. (Photo, top right)



**Lot 34: Artist: Tsukioka Kinzaburo YOSHITOSHI (1839-1892).** Series: The new forms of the thirty-six ghosts. Date: 1890. Medium: Woodblock. Dimensions: 14-1/2 x 9-1/2 in. Condition: Good. Estimate \$400-\$600. (Photo, middle left)



**Lot 55: Artist: Kuniyoshi UTAGAWA (1797/98-1861).** Series: Asakusa Okuyama ikiningyo (Life-sized dolls exhibited at Asakusa Okuyama). Date: c. 1854-57. Medium: Woodblock (diptych). Dimensions: 15 x 10-1/4 in. Condition: Overall good example. Estimate \$600-\$800. (Photo, lower right)

**Lot 53: Artist: Kuniyoshi UTAGAWA (1797/98-1861).** Series: The actor Ichikawa Kodanji IV as the Ghost of Asakura Togo. Date: c. 1851. Medium: Woodblock. Dimensions: 14-3/4 x 10-1/4 in. Condition: Overall good, light fading. Estimate \$2,000-\$3,000. (Photo, bottom left)



**Lot 11: Artist: Yoshiku UTAGAWA (1833-1904).** Series: Ghost of Kohada, One Hundred Tales. Date: 1890. Medium: Woodblock. Dimensions: 10 x 7-1/2 in. Condition: Good color and condition. Estimate \$300-\$500. (Photo, top left)

**Lot 35: Artist: Tsukioka Kinzaburo YOSHITOSHI (1839-1892).** Series: One Hundred Aspects of the Moon. Date: 1886. Medium: Woodblock. Dimensions: 14 x 9-1/2 in. Condition: Good. Estimate \$400-\$600. (Photo, right)



**Lot 43: Artist: Kuniyoshi UTAGAWA (1797/98-1861).** Series: Fuwa Banzaemon, Nagoya Yamasaburo and Takagi Umanosuke. Date: 1852. Medium: Woodblock (triptych). Dimensions: 13-1/2 x 9-1/4. Condition: Trimmed with small losses to top left center panel, fading. Estimate \$300-\$500. (Photo, lower left)



– PREVIOUS IMAGES –

**Lot 49: Artist: Toyohara KUNICHIKA (1835-1900).** Series: Actors Onoe Kikugoro V and Ichikawa Danjuro IX in the roles of Okiku's ghost and Aoyama Tessan performing in the play The Dish Mansion at Banshu. Date: c. 1892. Medium: Woodblock Vertical triptych. Dimensions: 28 x 9-1/4 in. Condition: Slight oxidation. Estimate \$1,000-\$2,000. (Photo, page 1, right)

**Lot 42: Artist: Tsukioka Kinzaburo YOSHITOSHI (1839-1892).** Series: Tengu (mountain goblins). Date: c. 1852. Medium: Woodblock (triptych). Dimensions: 13-1/2 x 9-1/2 in. Condition: Overall good, backed, faded, small holes, trimmed. Estimate \$800-\$1,200. (Photo, page 1, left)

**Lot 68: Artist: Kuniyoshi UTAGAWA (1797/98-1861).** Series: Cat Witch (two). Date: c. 1849-53. Medium: Woodblock (two triptychs). Dimensions: 14-1/2 x 10-1/4 in. Condition: Backed, faded, trimmed, wormholes, and small repairs. Estimate \$300-\$500. (Photo, page 2, left)

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#### **Additional Sources:**

1) <https://exhibitions.lib.umd.edu/crossing-the-divide/entertainment/ernie-pyle-theatre>)

2)

[https://japanavenue.com/blogs/japan/bakeneko#:~:text=Evil%20creature%2C%20the%20Bakeneko%20\(%E5%8C%96%E3%81%91,the%20spirits%20of%20Japanese%20folklore.\)](https://japanavenue.com/blogs/japan/bakeneko#:~:text=Evil%20creature%2C%20the%20Bakeneko%20(%E5%8C%96%E3%81%91,the%20spirits%20of%20Japanese%20folklore.))

**ABOUT TURNER AUCTIONS + APPRAISALS**

Based in South San Francisco, Turner Auctions + Appraisals was founded by Stephen Turner to expand and complement the capabilities of Stephen G. Turner Associates, an auction and appraisal consulting firm founded in 2004. Turner Auctions + Appraisals presents online auctions in diverse categories of personal property ([www.turnerauctionsonline.com](http://www.turnerauctionsonline.com)). Among them are Fine Arts, Decorative Arts, Asian Arts, Toys, Jewelry, Militaria, Ethnic Arts, and others. The company offers a range of auction and appraisal services for buyers, sellers, and collectors. Online auctions are held several times a month. Working with leading live and online auction houses on the West Coast since 1991, Turner is a professional appraiser of personal property and seasoned auctioneer. His areas of expertise include fine art, decorative arts, antiques & residential contents. The company welcomes consignments and appraisals.

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