



# ASHES OF REFLECTIONS

## FABIO TRUFFA

From **Hiroshige** to the **Silk**

Venice, Museum of Oriental Art,  
19 November 2022 - 8 January 2023









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Exhibition curated by **Marta Boscolo Marchi**

**Modern works inspired by Hiroshige. (1797-1858)**

After the sculptural creations made for the centenary of Akira Kurosawa and the melodies composed under the guidance of Steve Lacy, I never would have imagined that my life would be absorbed again by something as big and dangerous as a sponge. A sponge that drinks up thoughts and memory and at the same time gives back a big reward in the form of a great passion for

the Japanese world.

I never imagined that the marks of weariness and disappointment would be etched on my face so early. But my quest for life, colour, and joy turned these wrinkles into roads that led me to a great artist named Hiroshige.

This profound performer of the Japanese landscape was exemplary in representing the mutability of the seasons. And it is

precisely four of his seasons that I am presenting here at the Museum of Oriental Art in Venice, with six paintings inspired by six prints and then sewn onto silk shantung dresses made by the designer Marco Truffa. Four of them are dedicated to the seasons, and two to the states of the soul and the changing of the seasons, from death, the destructive wave to rebirth, the departure.

In conclusion, I offer for the visitors' contemplation, the two main forces of nature that create, destroy, and transform - the feminine one (life, youth, heroism), represented by the work dedicated to *Tomoe Gozen*, and the masculine one (the end, wisdom) in the memorial portrait of the master Hiroshige.

**Fabio Truffa**





# 秋

## AUTUMN

SCENT OF  
MAPLE TREES  
MUSICAL NOTE: E  
KAIHŌ  
THE MAPLES  
OF MAMA  
THE TEKONA SHRINE  
THE TSUGI BRIDGE

A long bordeaux silk  
shantung redingote.

Roads embroidered on maple leaves fall and stain the earth continuing their paths. Summer dreams, devoid of illusions, flee to a life already past. In Japan, the maple tree stands for change, for transformation as a respectful tradition, and enriched at the same time with new points of view. In my journey I too have experienced significant change, which I tell through this dress.

Hiroshige, *Mama's Maples, Tekona Shrine and Tsugihashi Bridge* (真間の紅葉手古那の社継はし *Mama no momiji Tekona no yashiro Tsugihashi*), 1858 from the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo* (名所江戸百景 *Meisho Edo Hyakkei*), woodcut.

Position in room 4





# WINTER

SCENT OF PLUM  
BLOSSOM  
MUSICAL NOTE:  
C MAJOR  
JIHEN  
ŌDENMACHŌ  
STORES WITH  
COTTON GOODS  
IN ŌDENMACHŌ

A long white silk redingote.

The sound of footprints freshly left by the geisha in the snow emanates a longing to know the warmth of an embrace. In search of pleasure, the man raids the scent and lets himself go to the woman. She abandons her dream of love instead. White as snow, the plum blossom is a symbol of hope in Japan. The reason is that it blooms at the end of winter, trusts adversity and speaks of awakening. Through this work, I would like to express my emotional winters freely and remind everybody that the hope of receiving warmth again will always be there.

Hiroshige, *Shops with cotton goods in Ōdenmachō* (大てんま町木綿店 Ōdenmachō momendana) 1858, from the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo* (名所江戸百景 Meisho Edo Hyakkei), woodcut.

Position in Room 4











春

## SPRING

SCENT OF IRIS  
MUSICAL NOTE: D  
SHŌJO  
A GARDEN  
THE IRISES  
OF HORIKIRI

A long ivory silk shantung  
redingote.

The iris opens its virgin flowers to the world for the first time. It is ready to give away the mystery it hides within to the first bee that gently caresses its dew-soaked leaves. In Japan, there is a belief that Iris has the power to purify the body and mind, and for this reason, it is the symbol of purity. With this work, I recount the innocence that has fascinated me in the Japanese pictorial world.

Hiroshige, *Horikiri's Iris Garden* (堀切の花菖蒲 *Horikiri no hanashobu*), 1857, from the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo* (名所江戸百景 *Meisho Edo Hyakkei*), woodcut.

Position in Room 4



# 夏

## ESTATE

SCENT OF WISTERIA  
MUSICAL NOTE: A  
SEISHI  
A BRIDGE  
SUDDEN  
DOWNPOUR  
SUL PONTE SHIN  
ŌHASHI AD ATAKE

A long yellow silk shantung  
redingote.

Rain penetrates the earth nourishing the roots of newly sprouted wheat. The bridge creaks under the quick footsteps of passersby. In Japan, there are nearly fifty ways of signifying rain. Through Hiroshige's art, I discovered that there are many points of view to see and perceive only one thing. That is exactly what I want to show through this work.

Hiroshige, *Sudden Shower on Shin-Ōhashi Bridge at Atake* (大はしあたけの夕立 *Ōhashi atake no yūdachi*), 1857, from the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo* (名所江戸百景 *Meisho Edo Hyakkei*), woodcut.

Position in Room 4









波

## THE WAVE

SCENT OF  
CHRYSANTHEMUM  
MUSICAL NOTE:  
C MINOR  
SHIKKE  
SEA  
THE SEA OF SATTA  
IN THE PROVINCE  
OF SURUGA

A long electric blue silk  
shantung redingote.

The boat floats as the wild wave overhangs the shore in the unkempt sea. The strength of the soul remains intact, and the spirit flies lightly like a carefree flock in the blue sky.

The chrysanthemum, in Japan, is a symbol related to strength and endurance. The point that struck me most in this Hiroshige print is the strength between two opposites. The wave and the hill create a visual frame in the painting, and at the same time, the destructive nature of water and earth builds unexpected balance. I would

like to dedicate the story of this dress to persistence.

Hiroshige, *The Sea off Satta in Suruga Province* (駿河薩夕之海上 *Suruga Satta no kajō*), 1858, from the series *Thirty-six Views of Fuji* (富士三十六景, *Fuji Sanjū-Rokkei*), xilografia policroma

**Position in Room 8**



# 出陣

## DEPARTURE

SCENT OF  
RED PEONY  
MUSICAL NOTE: B  
KAZAN  
MOUNT FUJI  
THE ŌTSUKIPLAIN  
IN THE PROVINCE  
OF KAI

**A long green silk shantung  
redingote with the work  
displayed on the front.**

The countryside sparkles under the sun's rays blurring the panoramic view of the mountain. The traveller armed with such hope shortens the distance to the desired destination with his gaze. The Japanese consider the peony the queen of flowers for its beauty and elegance. It also symbolises courage. Through this dress frame, I express my courageous desire to discover Japan, where I have not yet been. It remains a pure utopia or a broken dream or...?

Hiroshige, *The Ōtsuki plain in the province of Kai* (甲斐大月の原 *Kai Ōtsuki no hara*)1858, from the series *Thirty-six Views of Fuji* (富士三十六景, *Fuji Sanjūrokkei*), woodblock print.

**Position in Room 4**









# 已御前

## TOMOE GOZEN

CHERRY SCENT  
MUSICAL NOTE: F  
JOSEI  
THE HONORABLE  
TOMOE  
TAMING THE HORSE

A silver-coloured silk shantung dress for a samurai woman with an image inspired by Tsukioka Yoshitoshi's Tomoe Gozen sewn on the breast.

In traditional Japanese society, strictly male-dominated, a heroic bracket is the figure of a female samurai whose deeds have entered legend. The very fact that her name appears, as the only notable female figure, in one of Japan's most important epic poems, Heike Monogatari, testifies to her relevance in the collective imagination. Legends narrate: *Tomoe was exceptional beauty, with white skin, long hair, and charming features. She was an extremely gifted archer and, as a swordswoman, worth a*

*thousand men, ready to face a demon or a god on horseback or foot. She could handle untamable horses with superb skill traversing steep slopes.*

I chose to depict this character on my dress because I wanted to connect the past and the present of young people. *Tomoe Gozen* is present in many Japanese anime that have spread Japanese culture worldwide. It was essential for me to show young people the genuine traditional legend from which their beloved heroine was born.

Tsukioka Yoshitoshi, *Tomoe Gozen*, 1875-1876, from the series *Mirror of past and present beauties* (古今比女鑑 *Kokon hime kagami*), woodcut.

Position in room 3





博重画

# KIMONO HIROSHIGE\*

PINE SCENT  
MUSICAL NOTE: G  
OTOKO  
ARTIST

As a finale, I present the commemorative portrait of Hiroshige by the painter Utagawa Kunisada on the back of a Prussian blue male kimono.

Hiroshige was a master in depicting atmospheric agents that pervade the scene, succeeding like no other, among the protagonists of *ukiyo-e*, in constructing images in which the mutability of the seasons creates an engaging poetic feeling. This approach to life constitutes the cultural background of every Japanese. However, it is uniquely Hiroshige who can receive credit for disseminating a synthesis of this tradition through a figurative language sophisticated in concepts to a vast audience.

This is what I have tried to convey through my work.

Kunisada, *Memorial Portrait of Utagawa Hiroshige*, 1858, woodcut

Position in room 1





\*In collaboration with  
**KIMONOFAMINIA**



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灰

# FABIO TRUFFA

Fabio Truffa was born in Sanremo on March 4, 1960, into a peculiar family. His mother participated in the first experimental theatre shows in Rome, while his father opened Whisky a gogo, Italy's first disco, in Sanremo. He studied painting and sculpture with Sardinian artist Nicola Marotta and then continued his artistic studies in Alghero. It was in Sardinia that while painting, he became pas-

sionate about music, playing tenor sax in the town band. Following the teaching of his masters, he combines the colour of light and painting with musical notes. Unfortunately, his career has been interrupted by eye injuries sustained during a fight in which he defended his father. During this same period, he discovered the beauty of Japanese culture and became particularly fascinated with

Japanese cinema. He identifies with "Dersu Uzala," the protagonist of Akira Kurosawa's film of the same name, who goes blind after murdering a tiger. A few years later, he organized an exhibition at the Cinema Farnese in Rome to celebrate the centenary of the great Japanese director's birth by presenting wood-based sculptures, covered with woollen threads and chenille, dedicated to his films.





It was the beginning of a new path that led him to exhibit first in Milan at the event “Threads Between the Tides”, and then in Paris in a group show of artists from all over the world.

Over the years, Fabio specialized in painting clothes inspired by Japanese masks of the ancient Nō theatre in collaboration with his twin brother, a designer, and using silk shantung fabrics as “canvases of a

tale.” In 2018, at Santa Severa Castle, he participated in the exhibition *“Japonized. Tales of a fashion journey”* with Anna Rotella, Mauro Caracuzzo, Comme des Garçons, Isley Miyake and Yohji Yamamoto. In the same year, the kermesse was a spin-off of the Institute of Italian Culture in Japan entitled *“Kimonomania: Young Italian Designers Pay Tribute to Kimono”*. In 2019, again at

the Santa Severa Castle, Fabio participated in the exhibition *“Angels and Demons: When Fashion Showcases Provocation and Transformism,”* presenting a silk dress once again depicting the demons of Nō theatre. The event travelled to Modena, Racconigi, Gorizia, Venice and Seoul. In recent years, Fabio devoted passion and study to the art of Utagawa Hiroshige. For two years in a

row, Fabio’s Hiroshige-inspired creations were chosen as the prizes for the Asian Film Festival in Rome at Cinema Farnese. In 2022 during the exhibition curated by Rossella Menegazzo, *“Natural Selection of Japanese Posters”*, at the Institute of Japanese Culture in Rome, he exhibited a portrait of Hiroshige linked to the audio-visual presentation of the exhibition.

# THE MUSEUM OF ORIENTAL ART IN VENICE

The Museum of Oriental Art in Venice holds one of the largest collections of Japanese art from the Edo period (1603-1868) in Europe, Chinese and Southeast Asian works. Since 1928 it has been housed in the extraordinary Palazzo Pesaro, owned by the City. The owner of the collection is Enrico di Borbone, who made a long journey around the world between 1887 and 1889, acquiring more than 30,000 works, many of which became state property. In the seven rooms devoted to Japan, one can now admire the wea-

pons and parade armour that belonged to the feudal lords of the Edo Period (1603-1868), lacquer saddles and stirrups, a rare lady's sedan chair, paintings on paper and silk, and silk dresses with precious embroidery. As many as two rooms are devoted to lacquer objects from wedding trousseaus of wealthy aristocratic families made using the technique of gilded lacquer. The works belong mainly to the Edo Period (named after the capital, Edo, today's Tokyo) or Tokugawa, named after the shogunate lineage that ruled

the country's fortunes for more than 250 years, ensuring the archipelago a period of relative peace and characterized by almost complete isolation. There is no shortage of older works as well, such as a pair of wooden statues from the Kamakura period (1185-1333) or blades from the Muromachi period (1392-1568). The Chinese section displays jades and porcelain from various manufacturers and a precious painted scroll. The room devoted to Southeast Asia features Thai silverware and porcelain, Burmese lacquer ar-

tefacts, rare kris, batik textiles, and leather puppets from the wayang, the Indonesian shadow theatre. Some works in the collection are displayed on a rotating basis.

**Special thanks to the director Marta Boscolo Marchi and all the staff: Antonella Cioffi, Ado Braido, Patrizia Casini, Elisa Assunta de Concini, Gaetano Greco, Lucio Novello, Linda Rosin, Laura Tonetto. A heartfelt thanks to Rosella Menegazzo and Roberta Novielli.**



## MORGANA SNC

In the centre of Rome near Piazza Navona, this colourful and joyous boutique offers a collection of different and entertaining dresses. Initially, the clothes were designed and conceived by designer Luciana Iannace. In recent years she has dedicated her passion and imagination to please many customers, always using precious fabrics, including antique lace. Her sons, twin brothers Marco and Fabio Truffa, have continued the tradition.

Fabio develops various collections with hand-painted garments inspired by the ancient

Japanese art of Noh theatre. He takes cues from different aspects of Japanese art to create clothes that become works of art, unique pieces worn with pride.

Marco designs romantic and seductive women's dresses with a fast, comfortable and practical style using materials that sculpt the body. At the same time, his works engage patterns of paintings in an eccentric style.

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## KIMONOFLAMINIA BY FLAMINIA PIROZZI

KimonoFlaminia was born in 2009 out of a great love for Japan, which led to business connections with Japanese suppliers who guaranteed garments of the highest quality in condition, materials used and manufactory. Then came the search for other items of great value such as vintage paintings and panels, Buddhist statues, Japanese art objects, and especially kokeshi dolls, true works of art in wood made and decorated by the hands of master craftsmen. Over the years, there have been many collaborations with theatre, television and film

costumeries, various advertising agencies and bookshops of major Japanese-themed exhibitions. Even today, there is a renewed love for Japan and its fascinating culture. Each time a new item takes part in the collection after careful selection. Domo arigatō gozaimasu! (Thank you very much!)

**[www.kimonoflaminia.com](http://www.kimonoflaminia.com)**









## COLLABORATORS

### MARCO TRUFFA

#### STYLIST

Marco Truffa was born in the city of flowers and had a very eventful childhood. Waves carried him from Sardegna to boarding schools where he could not express himself. The desire to fly and escape from a suffocating reality made him travel paths full of emotions reaching new desired goals. In the alleys of Rome's historic centre, he found in his workshop Morgana, an outlet and expression for his creativity and visions for the world. Moving from knitwear with handmade components and pleated dresses topped with lace to inventions with pieces from the past.

### DENITZA STEFANOVA

#### COORDINATOR

Denitza Stefanova was born in Sofia, Bulgaria, where she first approached the stage. She was called by the famous Bulgarian choir "Bodra Smiana," where she sang, as a soprano, from 1992 to 2000. Her path shifted to acting, and from 2000 to 2008, she was part of the national youth drama company "Slavianska beseda." She graduated with honours in film directing from the New Bulgarian University, also doing an Erasmus semester at DAMS in Turin. In Rome, she graduated in acting from the Academy of Film and Television in Cinecittà, with a scholarship obtained as the best

actress "Alida Valli." She has worked in the film industry from 2008 to the present day. For the last thirteen years, she has been living in Rome and doing various artistic activities, including as a casting director for the film Europa by Haider Rashid and editor for the documentary Fuoco Sacro by Antonio Castaldo. From 2010 to 2012, she organized film festivals, collaborating with Cinema Farnese and also with the festival "Golden Linden" for new European cinema in Bulgaria. From 2019 to the present, she is the production coordinator for the film company 8 Production in Rome.

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## COLLABORATORI

### PATRIZIA VENANTI

MODISTE

Patrizia Venanti was born in Rome. She has been working in the fashion field for 35 years. She has collaborated with several names and currently creates and collaborates with the Morgana store in Rome since 2018. She is a dressmaker and an expert in ready-to-wear, haute couture and bridal.

### MARCO SOELLNER

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Marco Soellner is involved in editorial graphic design. He has worked as an art director for many years and has always been interested in photography both as an author and as an editor. His primary activity, however, remains music. For about twenty years he has been playing the guitar and singing in Klimt 1918, a shoegaze/post-rock/dream pop band with which he has released four albums and toured Europe far and wide.

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### CHARLES CHESSLER

FOTOGRAFO\*

Charles Chessler is an NYC-based photographer with a passion for people. He works with actors, authors, musicians and business people and loves all of it. Charles loves Italy and is always very happy when he is working there. He is also passionate about wildlife and conservation and works in South Africa with the wildlife conservation non-profit, Wild Tomorrow Fund.

\*Model:  
**Silviya Stanoeva.**

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陈圣虫

