

Katsushika Hokusai

Hokusai was a Japanese artist, painter and printmaker of the Edo period. He is best known as author of the woodblock print series *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*.



Key facts:

Katsushika Hokusai was born in Edo, now known as Tokyo.

He is thought to have learned art from his father who was a prominent mirror-maker.

He began painting around the age of 6. At the age of 14, he was taken in as an apprentice to learn the art of wood carving and went on to become a highly influential ukiyo-e artist in his own right.

He used many different names over his long career. He produced his most influential work after the age of 60 and died at the age of 89.



Self-portrait (1839)



1: *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* (c. 1829 – 1833)



10: *Below Meguro*

The Great Wave is the first of a set entitled *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji*, which Hokusai produced some time between 1823 and 1831. The series actually has 46 prints since he added a further 10 when the set proved immensely popular.

Ukiyo-e

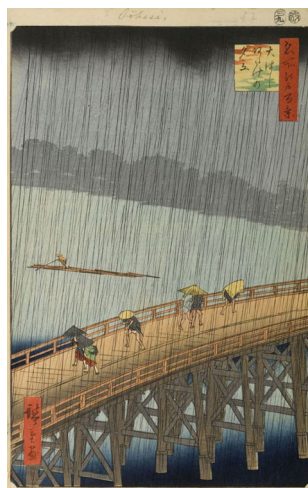
The term *ukiyo-e* means "pictures of the floating world".

It is a style of Japanese painting which flourished from the 17th to the 19th Century.

Some *ukiyo-e* artists painted their artworks but most of the work was created using woodblock prints.

Woodblock prints were cheaper to buy because they could be reproduced. Many were exported to Europe.

Ukiyo-e art greatly influenced 19th Century artists such as Degas, Monet and Van Gogh.



Hiroshige, *Sudden Shower Over Shin-Ohashi Bridge and Atake* (1857)



Van Gogh, *Bridge in the rain* (after Hiroshige) (1887)