

"The Kimono in Print: 300 Years of Japanese Design" is the first show devoted to examining the kimono as a major source of inspiration and experimentation in Japanese print culture, from the Edo period (1603-1868) to the Meiji period (1868-1912). This dialogue between print and kimono design is illustrated by approximately 70 Japanese prints, as well as a selection of illustrated woodblock printed books and paintings, primarily drawn from the Museum's 3,000 Japanese ukiyo-e woodblock prints from John Chandler Bancroft (1835-1901) gifted in 1901. Central to The Kimono in Print is a one-of-a-kind contemporary wedding kimono by Chiso, the important 465-year-old, Kyoto-based kimono house. The Worcester Wedding Kimono is the first ever kimono commissioned as an artwork for an art museum. Celebrating the 120th-anniversary of WAM's transformative acquisition of the Bancroft collection, the contemporary wedding kimono reflects the Museum's vision for Japanese art in the 21st century.

The commission of a kimono as an artwork, rather than for a specific client or occasion, gave Chiso and its designer significant creative space to give form to their outlook regarding the present and future art of the kimono. Inspired by the New England foliage and Worcester's famed seven hills, Chiso's Senior Designer Mr. Imai Atsuhiko incorporated the iconic maple leaf throughout the kimono design, as well as seven textile techniques, ranging from newly developed to endangered ones. Documentary photographs of the process, as well as a video demonstrating many of Chiso's signature techniques, are included in the exhibition. The Worcester Wedding Kimono reveals in stunning detail Chiso's continuing commitment and aspiration to Japanese beauty and steadfast dedication to innovation, design, and creativity-in the present and for the future. Learn more about Chiso and their centuries-old contributions to kimono design and artistry in the virtual exhibition **Kimono Couture: The Beauty of Chiso**.