

# PLUGGED IN

FUN FOR KIDS

A COOPERATIVE PROJECT OF THE SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS AND THE EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE, PUBLISHED MONTHLY TO PROMOTE LEARNING AMONG YOUNG READERS IN NATURAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY AND ART

## This Month's Theme: Japanese Art & Culture

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art invites you to view the special exhibition, *An Enduring Vision – 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> Century Japanese Painting from the Gitter-Yelen Collection*, and the Museum's permanent collection.

Bring this page with you to receive free admission for you and your family. Remember, Sundays are always free.

### Screens of Edo

This beautiful six-fold screen, *Dancing Figures*, is one of many screens, scrolls and paintings on view through July 17th. These paintings belong to a couple who live in New Orleans and have been collecting Japanese art for many years.

This period of time in Japan is called "Edo," but it is also the name of the most

important city of the time, Edo, which is present day Tokyo. The Edo period in Japan (1615-1868) was a time of peace and plenty. People could afford to surround themselves with beautiful things, like the ones in this exhibition, and were eager to support the artists who made them.



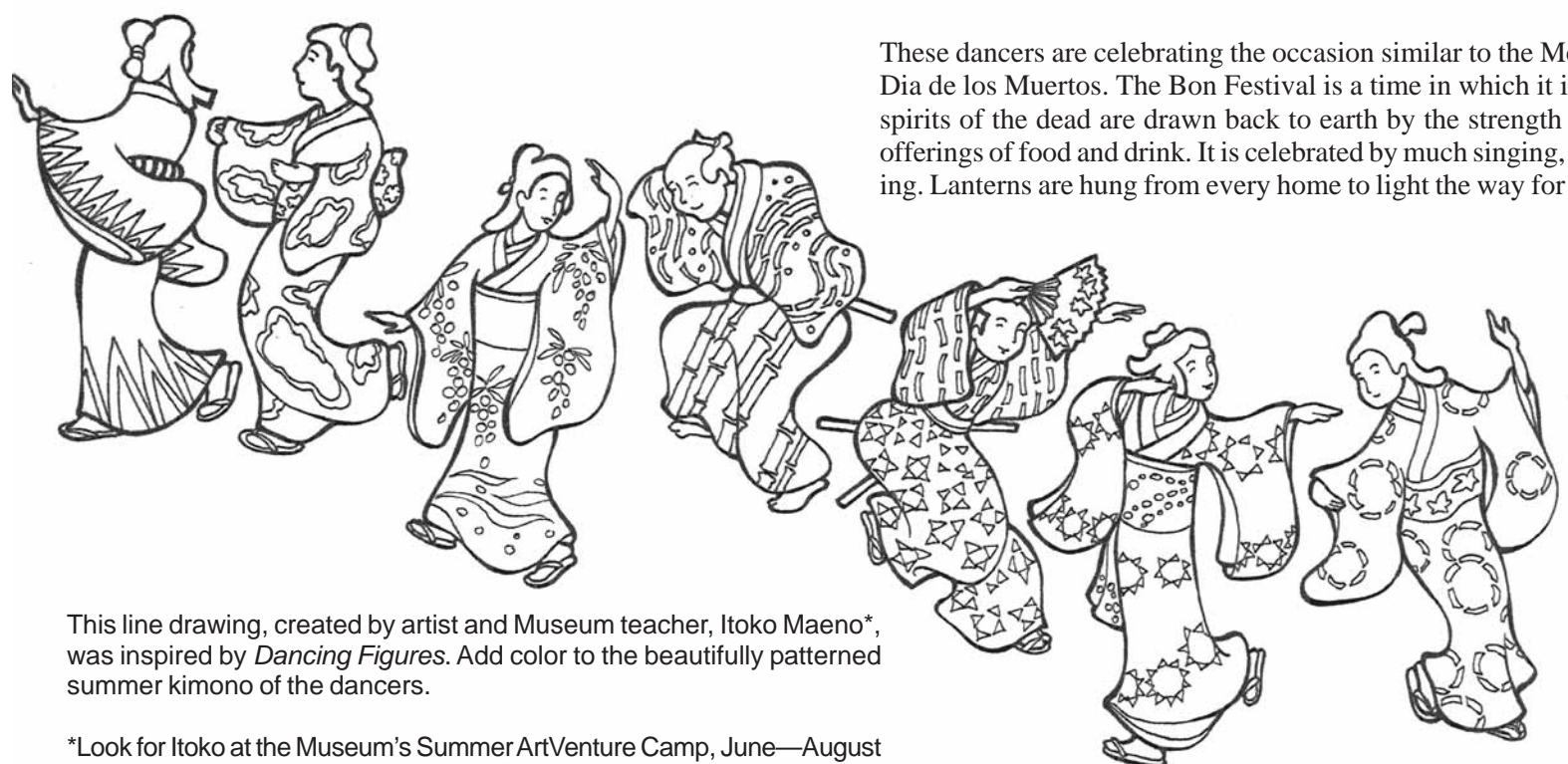
Kamisaka Sekka (1866-1942), *Dancing Figures*. Single six-fold screen: ink and color on gold leaf. Gitter-Yelen collection.

#### Taking a Closer Look at Dancing Figures Looking for Gold!

Screens like this were used as decorations but they also served a practical function as room dividers. The bright gold background, typical of many of these screens, was not only lovely to look at, but also reflected light—brightening up dark spaces! Can you think of other reasons why artists might have used gold in their works of art?

This screen was made by an artist named Kamisaka Sekka, who also designed textiles. Notice the many colors and patterns he included in his design. If you look closely you can see chrysanthemums and autumn grasses. Use these clues to try and guess what time of year it is.

### Festival of Lanterns or Bon Festival



This line drawing, created by artist and Museum teacher, Itoko Maeno\*, was inspired by *Dancing Figures*. Add color to the beautifully patterned summer kimono of the dancers.

\*Look for Itoko at the Museum's Summer ArtVenture Camp, June—August at the Ridley Tree Education Center at McCormick House.

These dancers are celebrating the occasion similar to the Mexican tradition of Dia de los Muertos. The Bon Festival is a time in which it is believed that the spirits of the dead are drawn back to earth by the strength of family ties and offerings of food and drink. It is celebrated by much singing, feasting and dancing. Lanterns are hung from every home to light the way for the dead to return.

### Dancing and Festivities

This woodblock print, from the Museum's permanent collection, shows a different view of the Bon Festival. What do you see in this work of art that reminds you of Kamisaka Sekka's screen?

The dance these young men are doing is called *bon odori*; it is traditionally performed around a wooden tower built for the occasion. The young dancers clap hands and sing songs, moving to the rhythm of *taiko* drums. How would you feel dancing around the tower under a full moon with family and friends?

In this print, the boys have their hair gathered into tight vertical rows and wear robes with simple geometric patterns. If you were to design a kimono to wear, what patterns would you choose?

Tsukioka Yoshitoshi (1839-1892), *Moon on the Bon Festival*. From the series *One Hundred Aspects of the Moon*. Gift of Carol L. Valentine.



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Page by Julie Lee and Patsy Hicks, Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

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