



The 47 Ronin Samurai Art by Kunisada Ukiyo-e Master Specials

By Utagawa Kunisada

Shinbaku Books. Paperback. Condition: New. 128 pages. Dimensions: 10.9in. x 8.3in. x 0.5in. The story of the 47 ronin - a band of samurai who became masterless after the enforced seppuku (ritual suicide) of their daimyo, Asano Takumi-no-Kami Naganori - is a legend which stems from a true historical episode of deadly revenge during the period 1701-1703. This tale remains one of the most enduring myths in Japanese culture as an exemplar of bushido, the samurai code of honour, which demands loyalty and glorifies vengeance and death. The story of the 47 ronin became widely popularized in Japan through the stage play Kanadehon Chshingura (Treasury Of Loyal Retainers), written by Chikamatsu Monzaemo and Takeda Izumo in 1748. As the popularity of woodblock prints (ukiyo-e) increased in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Chshingura became a favoured subject for many of the art-forms leading practitioners, including Utamaro, Toyokuni I, Hokusai, Hiroshige, Kuniyasu, and a young up-and-coming artist named Gototei (later Utagawa) Kunisada. Kunisada returned to the subject of the 47 ronin in 1864, at the age of seventy-nine, with a new series of 48 prints (including an additional ghost samurai). Despite this advanced age, the images he produced rank amongst the...



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