

Owls and a hawk by Shiko Munakata



Japanese

Sōsaku Hanga: Bird Prints

Introduction

Sōsaku hanga (i.e., creative art print) is the name given to a style of Japanese printed art that was first practiced in the early 1900s. This style was then new in two ways. First, artists “created” new objects by intentionally changing the shape and (or) color of real objects in an attempt to distance themselves from traditional Japanese artistic styles in which objects were drawn in a more true-to-life way. Second, artists tackled all three steps in the process of making a woodblock print (i.e., drawing the picture design, transferring the design to a block of wood and then printing the design). Previously the artist had only provided the picture design. This design had then been passed to another person who was skilled at transferring the design to the surface of a block of wood (i.e., block cutter) and finally on to a third person (i.e., the printer) who was skilled at adding ink to the surface of the woodblock, followed by a piece of paper, and rubbing the back of the paper to transfer the design to paper. By taking complete control of the printmaking process the sōsaku hanga artist could be creative not only at the design step in the process but also in the block cutting and printing steps as well.

Birds were one of the many objects chosen for depiction by sōsaku hanga artists. The first sōsaku hanga bird print was made in the late 1920s by Un’ichi Hiratsuka. During the next fifty years an additional forty-five sōsaku hanga artists made about 750 bird prints. Examples of the bird prints made by thirty sōsaku hanga artists are included in this virtual exhibition. These examples were chosen from sōsaku hanga in the Reader Collection of Japanese Art. For each of the thirty prints, the following information is provided: name of the bird(s) depicted, if identifiable, artist name, print title, if any, and print size.

Additional Reading

Keyes, Roger. 1988. *Break with the Past: the Japanese Creative Print Movement*. University of Washington Press, Seattle.

Merritt, Helen. 1990. *Modern Japanese Woodblock prints, the Early Years*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

Volk, Alicia. 2005. *Made in Japan, the Postwar Creative Print Movement*. University of Washington Press, Seattle.

1 Unidentified bird by **Un'ichi Hiratsuka**, print entitled fairy tale bird, 145 x 180 mm



2 Unidentified bird by **Fujio Nishitani**, 180 x 240 mm



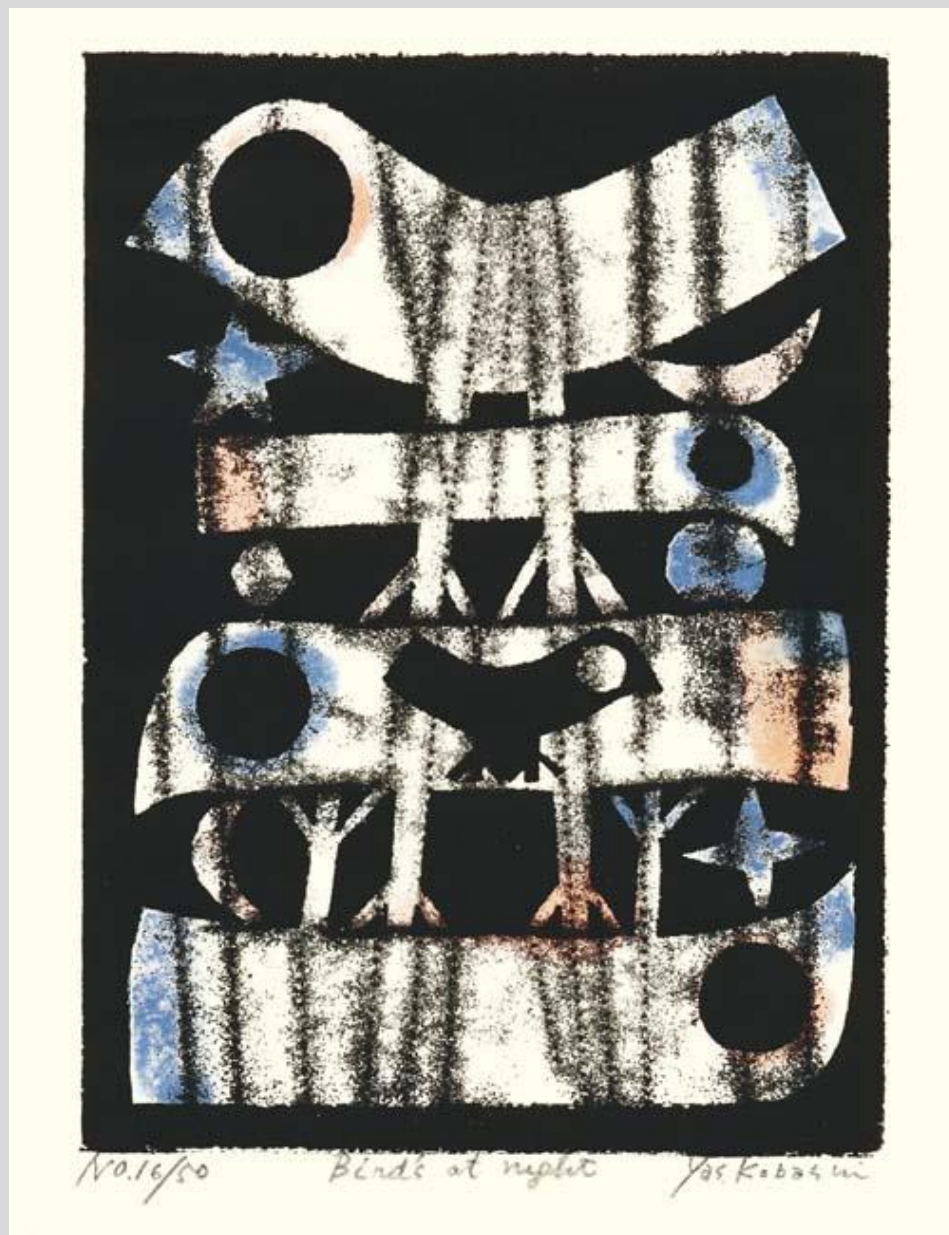
3 Unidentified bird by
Yoshio Kanamori, 110 x 75
mm



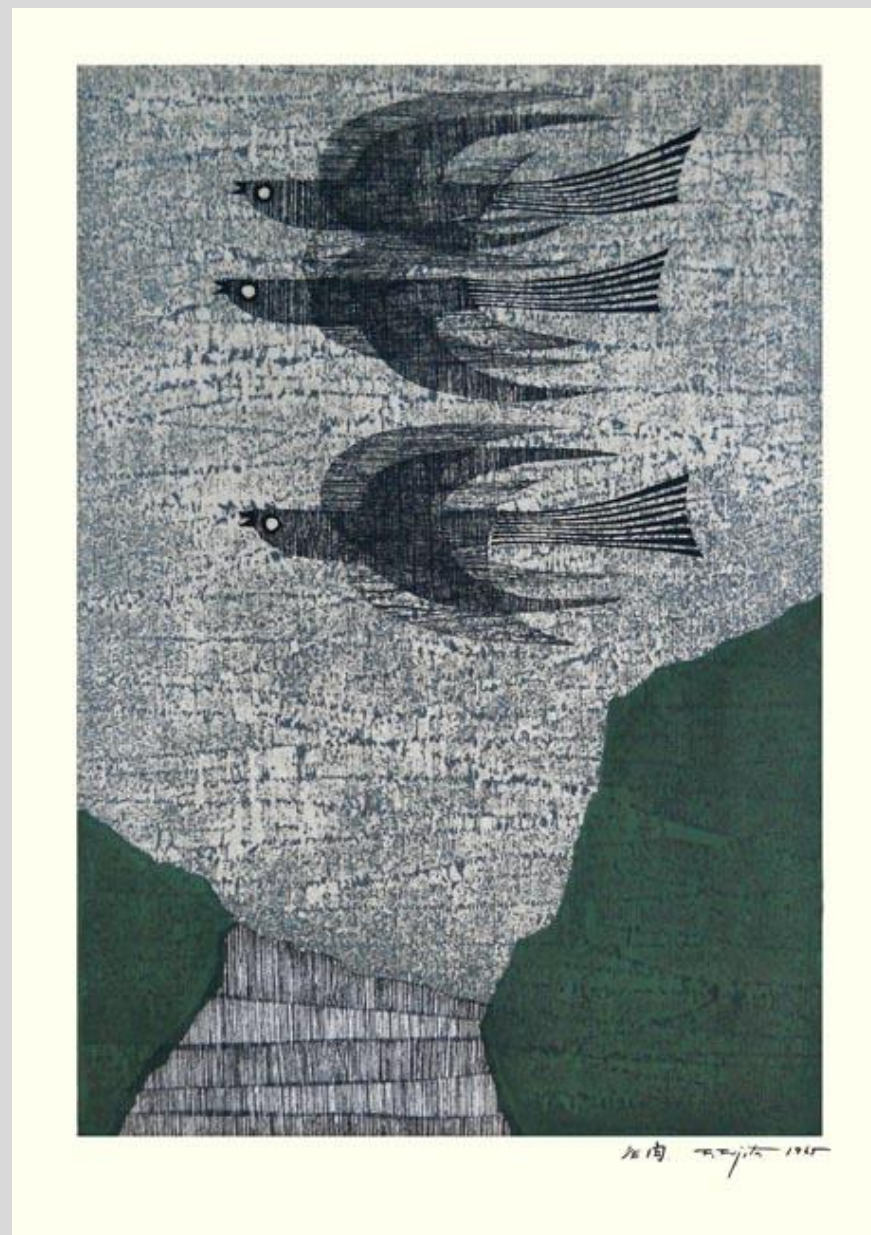
4 Unidentified bird by
Takeji Asano, print entitled
bird and fruit, 400 x 295 mm



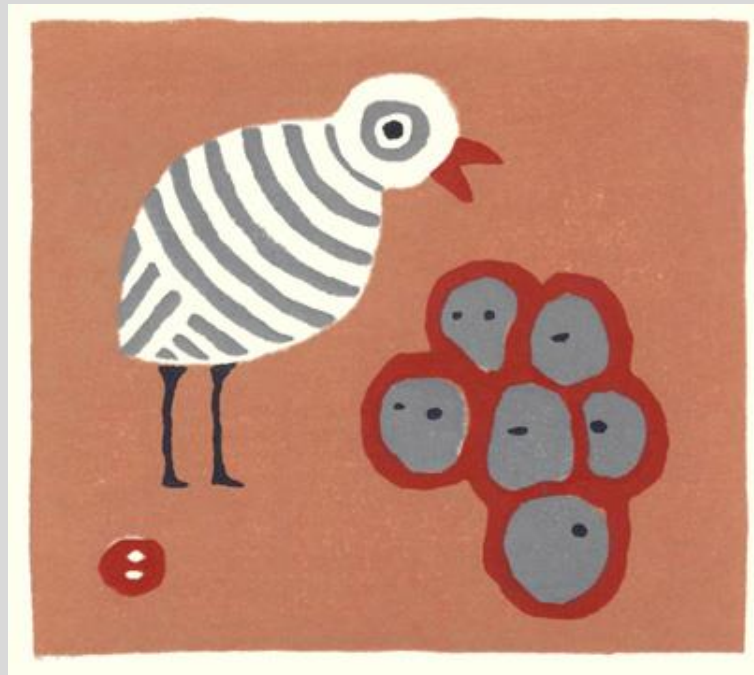
5 Unidentified bird by **Yasuhide Kobashi**, print entitled birds at night, 195 x 255 mm



6 Unidentified bird by **Fumio Fujita**, print entitled bird picture, 320 x 445 mm



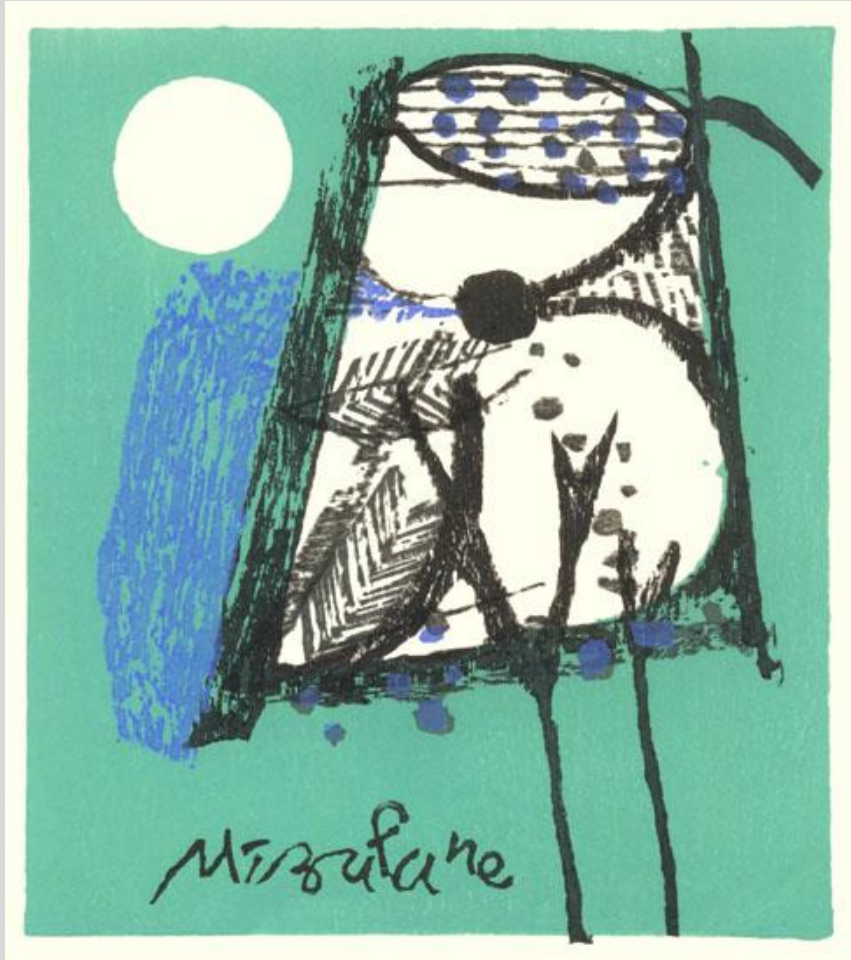
7 Unidentified bird by
Umetarō Azechi, 130 x 110
mm



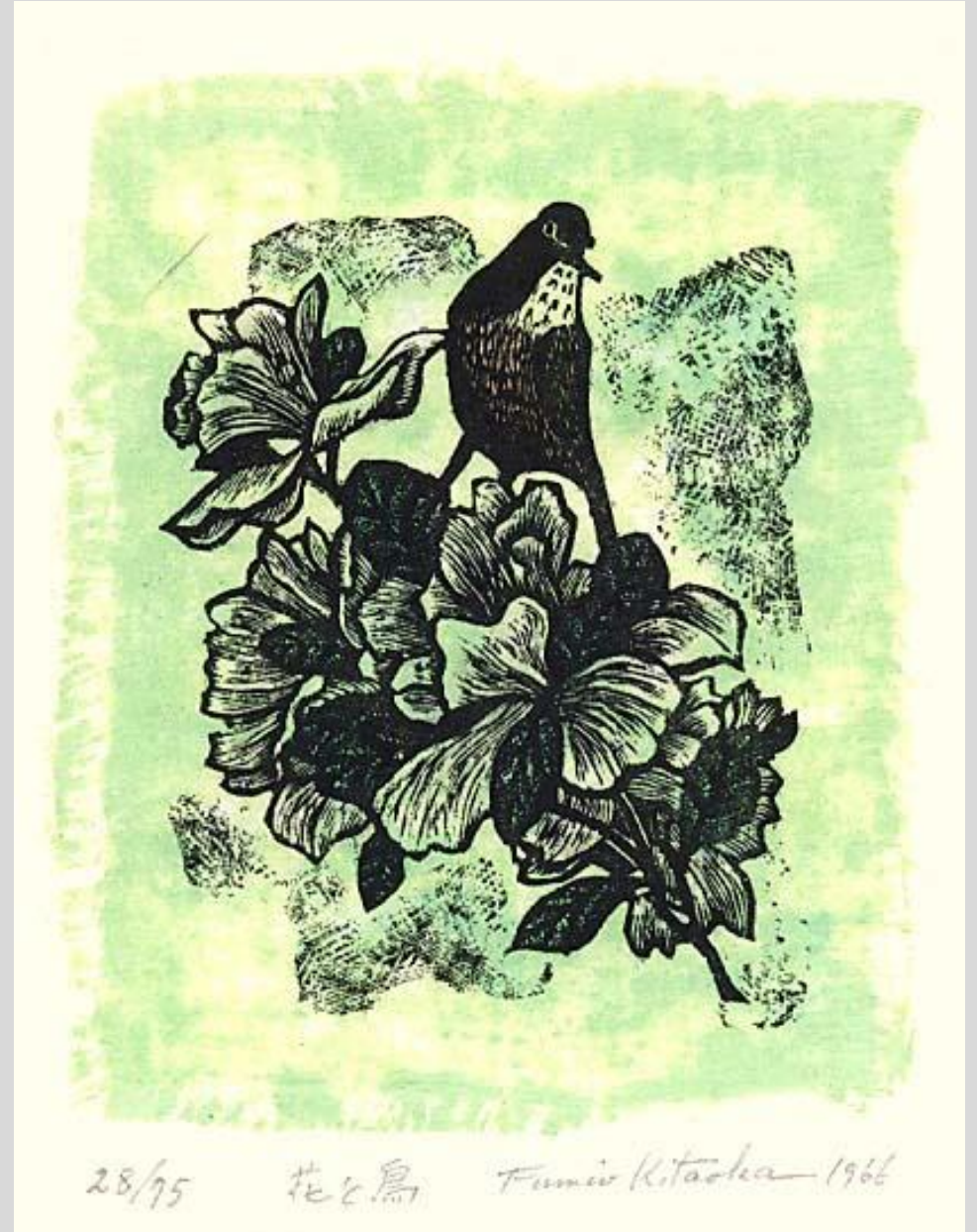
8 Unidentified bird by
Hideo Hagiwara, 175 x 125
mm



9 Unidentified bird by **Rokushū Mizufune**, 110 x 125 mm



10 Unidentified bird by **Fumio Kitaoka**, print entitled flower and bird, 165 x 240 mm



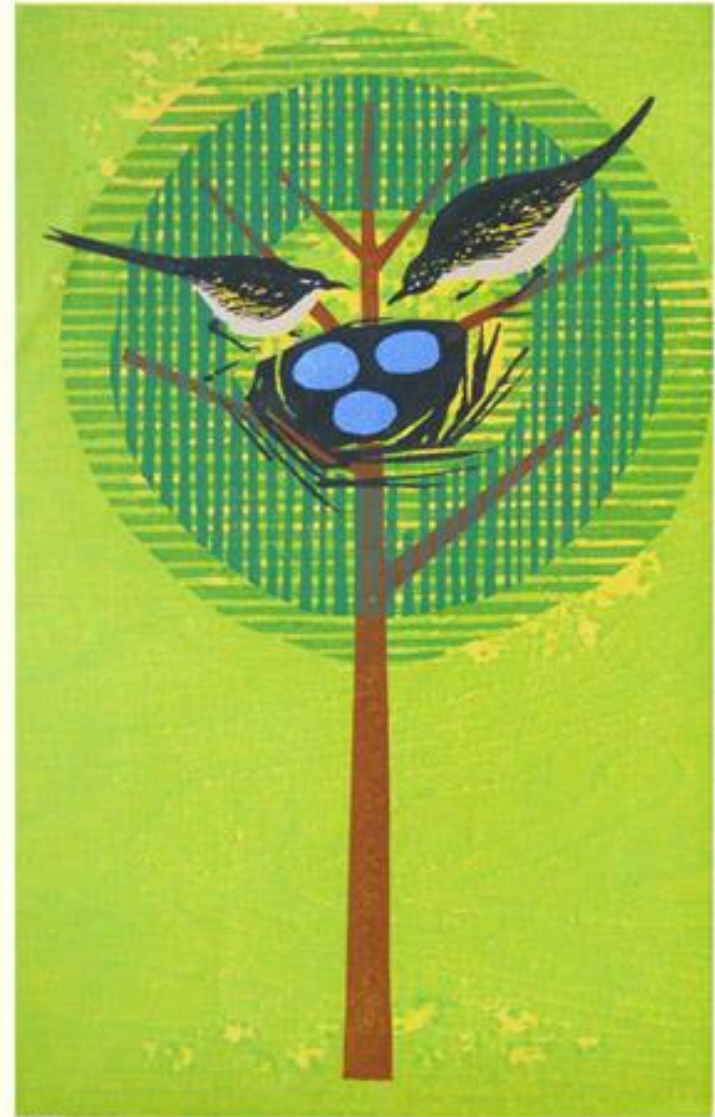
11 Unidentified bird by **Tamami Shima**, print entitled resting birds, 425 x 585 mm



resting birds

Tamami Shima

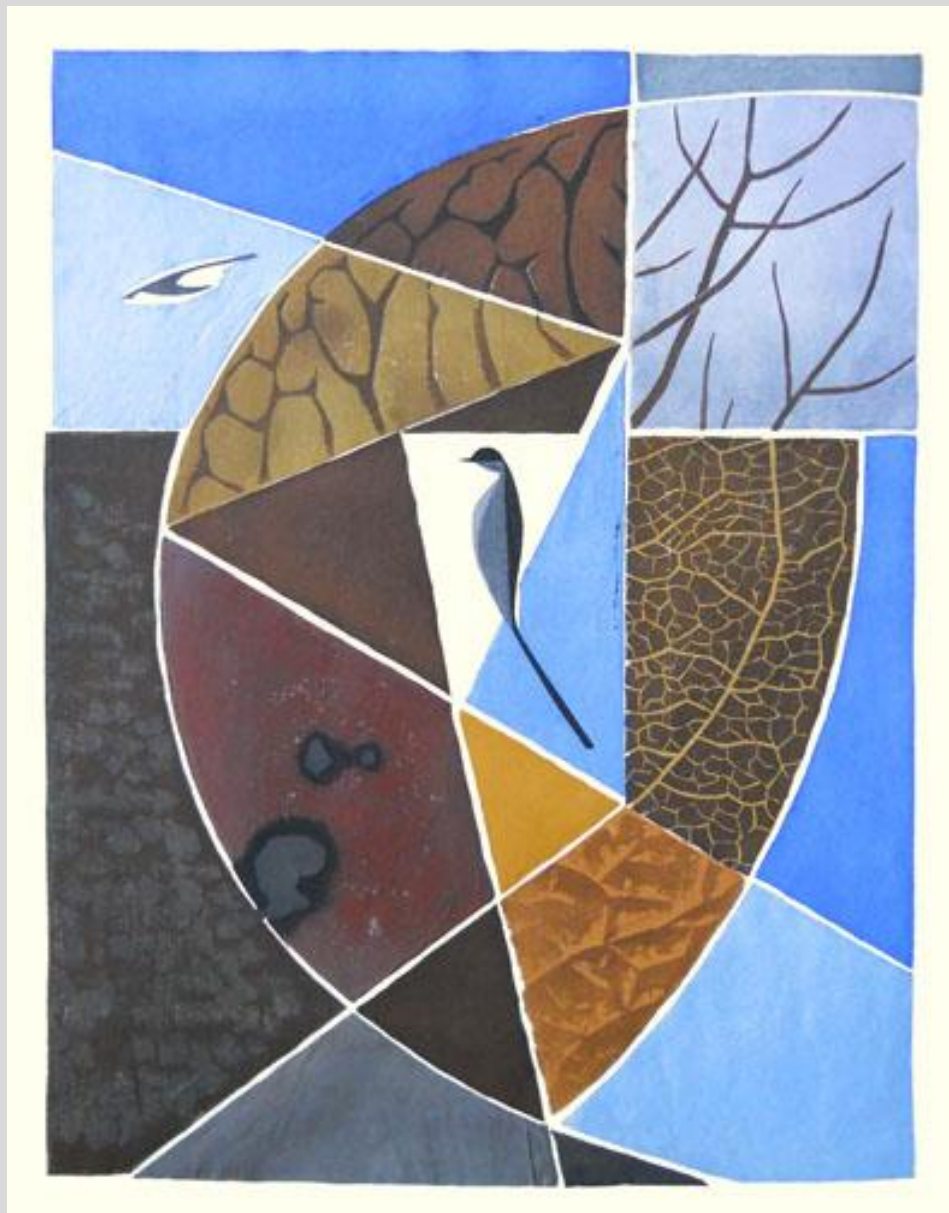
12 Unidentified bird by **Shirō Takagi**, print entitled small birds, 285 x 425 mm



small birds

Shirō Takagi

13 Azure-winged magpie (*Cyanopica cyana*) by **Tomoo Inagaki**, 440 x 560 mm



14 Crane (*Grus* sp.) by **Tadashi Nakayama**, 440 x 660 mm



15 Dove (*Columba livia*) by
Makoto Ueno, 635 x 485
mm



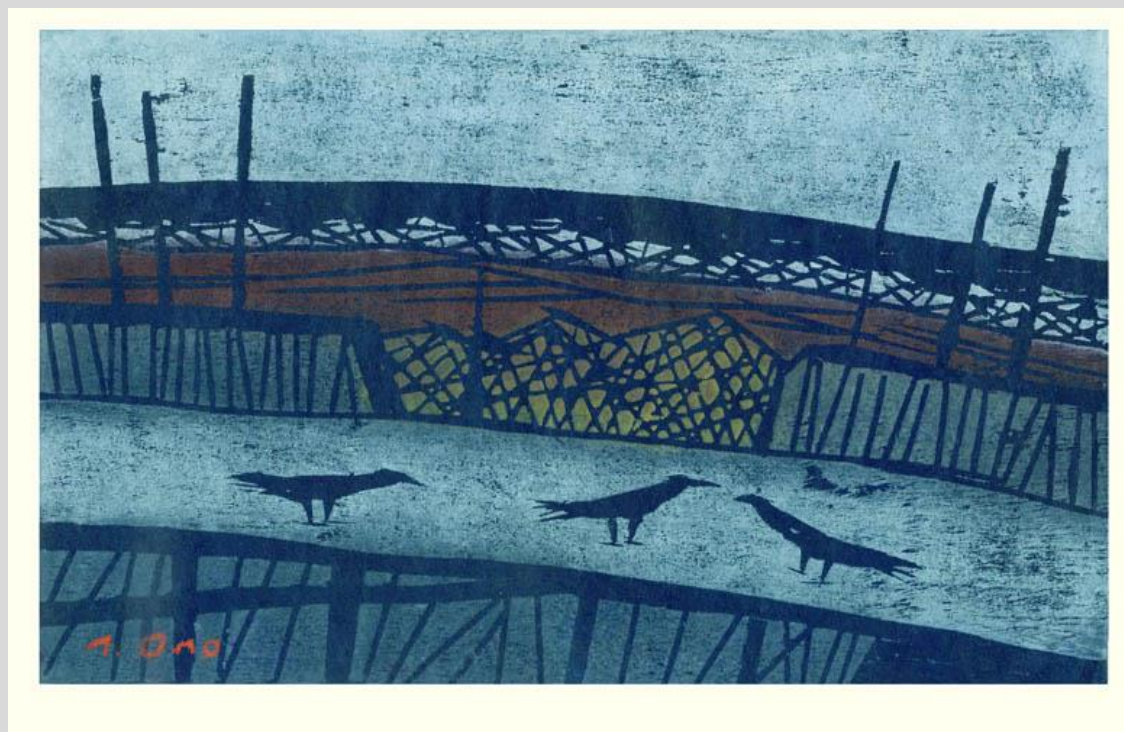
16 Dove (*Columba livia*) by
Kunihiro Amano, print
entitled dove, 385 x 280
mm



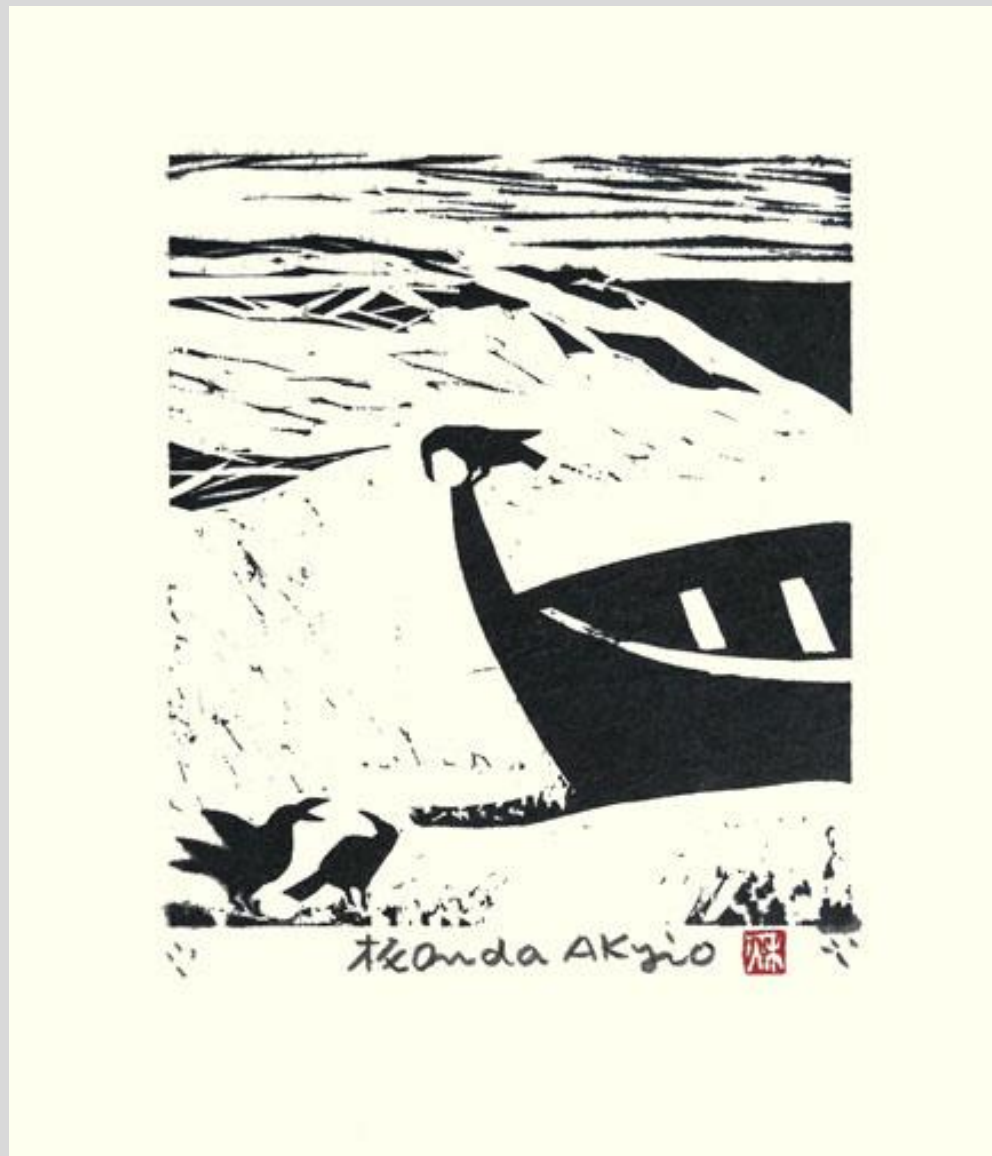
17 Dove (*Columba livia*) by
Jun'ichirō Sekino, 180 x 140
mm



18 Large-billed crow
(*Corvus macrorhynchos*) by
Tadashige Ono, print
entitled shallow beach, 235
x 155 mm



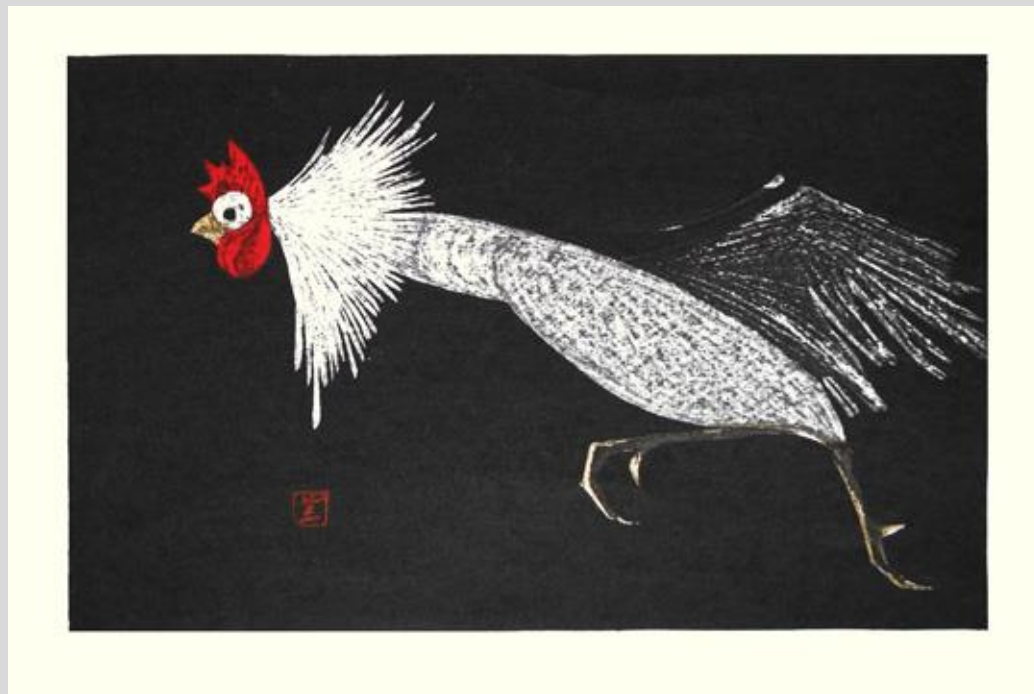
19 Large-billed crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*) by **Akyio Onda**, 300 x 340 mm



20 Large-billed crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*) by **Yoichi Nakano**, print entitled crow (B), 180 x 180 mm



21 Domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) by **Kaoru Kawano**,
430 x 285 mm



22 Domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) by **Tomikichirō Tokuriki**, 410 x 270 mm



23 Domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) by **Shun'ichi Kadowaki**, print entitled self-carved woodcut rooster, 240 x 275 mm



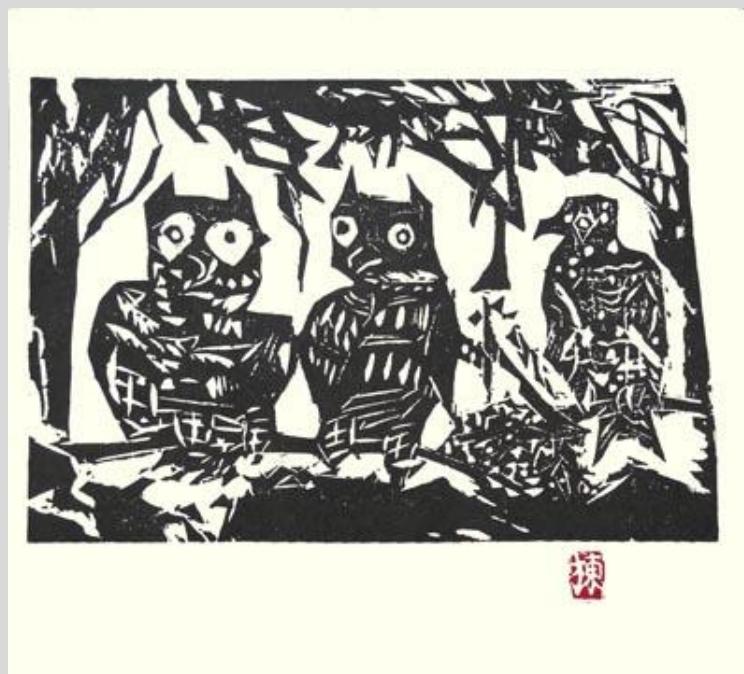
24 Scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by **Manjirō Asaka**, print entitled owl, 280 x 400 mm



25 Scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by **Masahiro Hayashi**, print entitled smile bags of paradise, 640 x 480 mm



26 Scops owl (*Otus* sp.) and hawk (*Accipiter* sp.) by **Shiko Munakata**, 340 x 310 mm



27 Ural owl (*Strix uralensis*) by Kan Kozaki, 200 x 250 mm



28 Scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by Iwao Akiyama, print entitled winter wind, 250 x 300 mm



29 Scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by
Morikazu Maeda, 150 x 125
mm



30 Scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by
Yoshiharu Kimura, print
entitled scops owl, 370 x
335 mm



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