

Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*)  
by Tamami Shima

*Imaginative*

Modern  
Japanese  
Bird Prints

## Introduction

Birds have appeared in the printed art of Japan for more than three-hundred years. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries birds were used primarily as symbols of human traits and seasons of the year. Each species had its own symbolic association so artists drew birds with sufficient accuracy to allow viewers to identify the particular species depicted and thereby recognize the artist's intended message. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries birds were used much less often as symbols. Artists drew birds in a more imaginative way because it was less necessary that viewers recognized the species depicted. In addition, the modern philosophy of art encourages artists to use their imagination and express themselves in a novel, creative way. Seventy examples of imaginative modern Japanese bird prints are included in this virtual exhibition. They are part of the Reader Collection of Japanese Art which includes more than one thousand Japanese bird prints published between 1950 and the present day.

The prints included in this exhibition were chosen to illustrate the following seven ways of drawing birds in an imaginative way:

**False color** - The artist intentionally changes the bird's actual colors. Four examples are included here: domestic fowl (prints 1-2), cranes (prints 3-4), owls (prints 5-6) and pigeons (prints 7-8).

**False color and distorted shape** – The artist intentionally changes both the bird's color and shape such that neither matches any real bird species. Six examples are included here (prints 9-14).

**Texture** - The artist adds texture to the picture in one of four ways; namely, embossing the bird's surface features (prints 15-16), chequering the bird's surface features (prints 17-18), adding a patterned picture background (prints 19-20) or using multiple birds to create a pattern (prints 21-24).

**Unexpected view** - Instead of presenting the viewer with the typical side view or front view of a bird, the artist provides one of the following four unexpected views: back (prints 25-26), top (prints 27-28), stacked (prints 29-30) or multiple (prints 31-34).

**Unfamiliar objects** - The artist adds imaginary objects to the picture (prints 35-40).

**Unexpected familiar objects** - The artist adds a familiar object not normally associated with birds to the picture; for example, a ball (prints 41-42), books (prints 43-44), a plant (prints 45-48), an animal (prints 49-50), humans (prints 51-62) or a landscape (prints 63-64).

**Humorous text** - The artist adds a humorous title or poem to the picture (prints 65-70).

In the exhibition below the following information is given for each print: primary imaginative feature, bird's name (if real), artist's name, printing method and print size.



1 **False color** – domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) by Masahiko Saga, digital print, 300 x 420 mm



2 **False color** – domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) by Masao Ohba, screenprint, 195 x 265 mm



3 **False color** – crane (*Grus sp.*) by Tadashi Nakayama, woodblock print, 320 x 820 mm



1958 T. Nakayama

4 **False color** – crane (*Grus sp.*) by Shin'ichi Yoshizu, screenprint, 440 x 330 mm

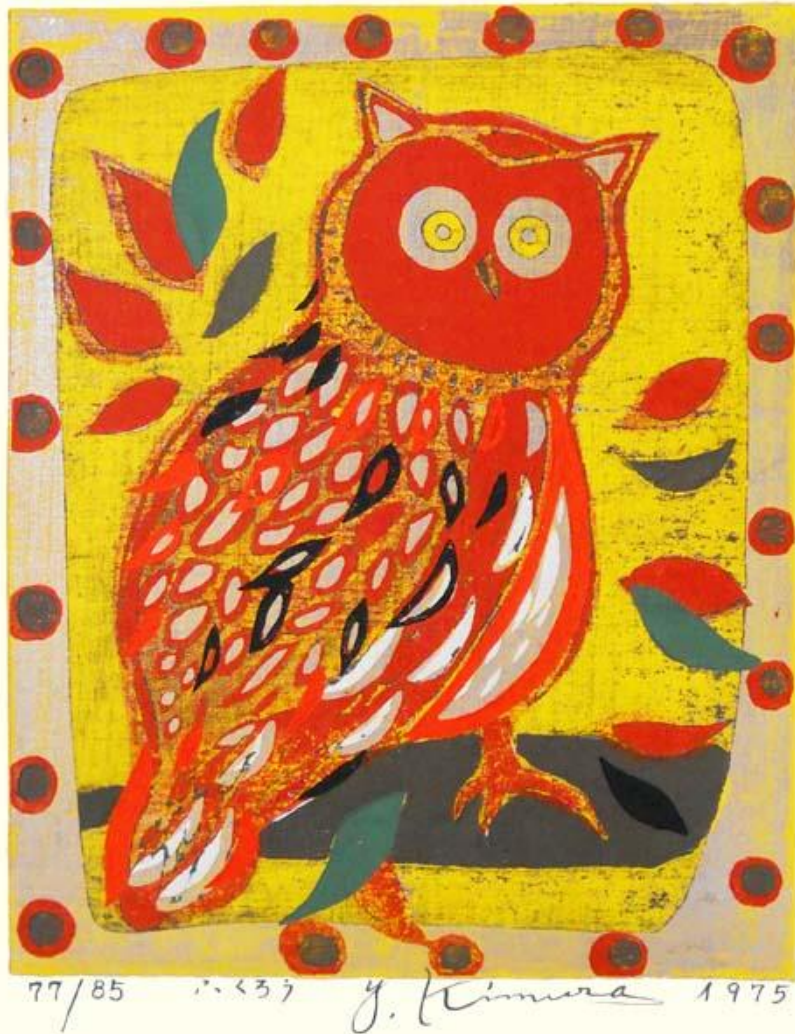


Y. 40

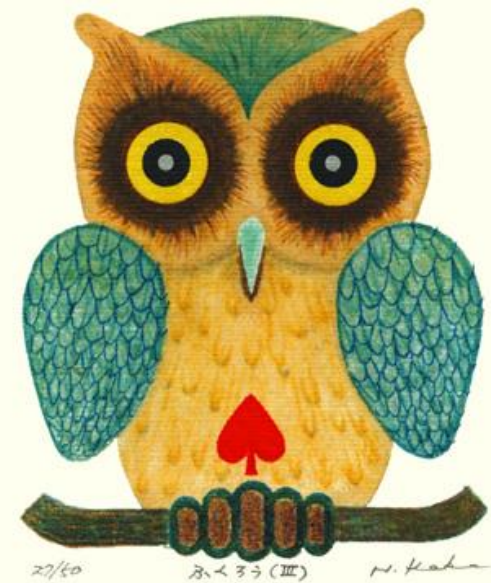
Shin'ichi Yoshizu



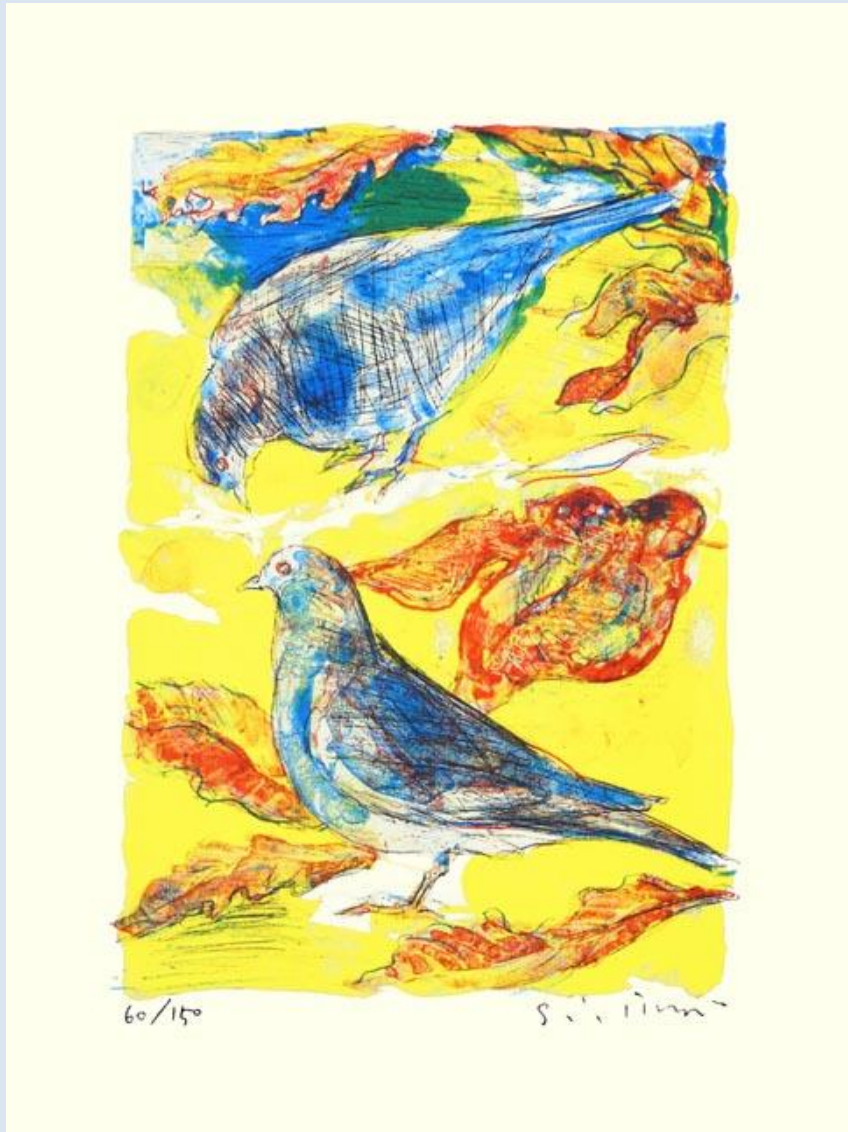
5 **False color** – scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by Yoshiharu Kimura, woodblock print, 320 x 370 mm



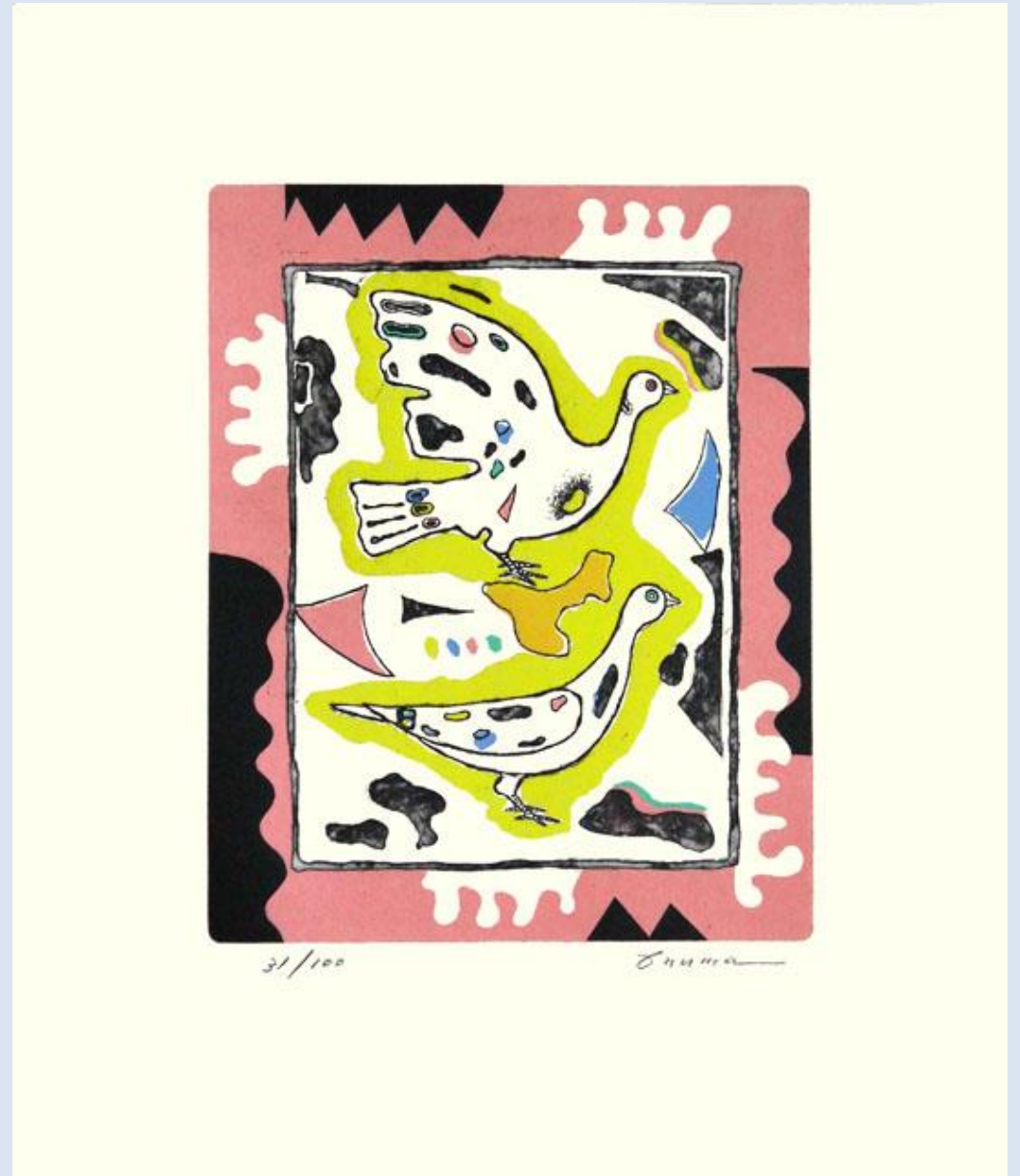
6 **False color** – scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by Hiroshi Kabe, screenprint, 155 x 200 mm



7 **False color** – pigeon (*Columba livia*) by Shingo Imai, lithograph, 270 x 360 mm



8 **False color** – pigeon (*Columba livia*) by Teruo Ōnuma, lithograph, 360 x 420 mm





9 **False color and distorted shape** – unknown bird by Kunihiro Amano, woodblock print, 170 x 230 mm



47/120 K. Amano

10 **False color and distorted shape** – unknown bird by Ay-ō Iijima, screenprint, 250 x 175 mm



ay-ō '83



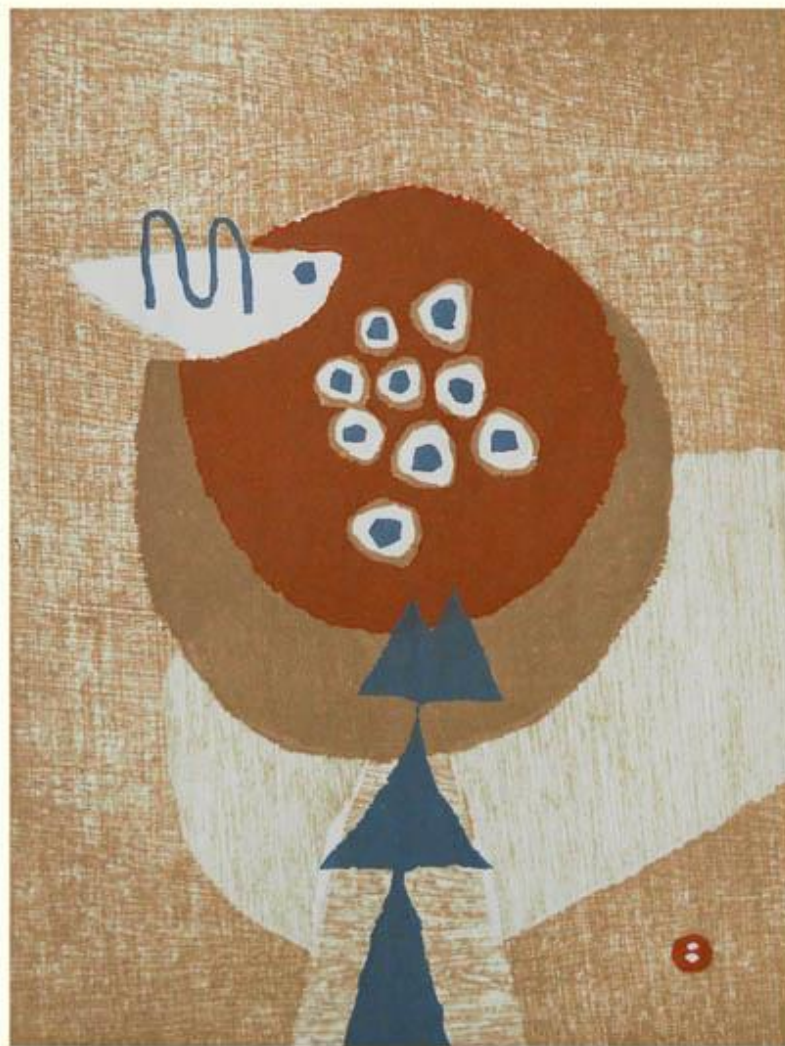
ay-ō '83

11 **False color and distorted shape** – unknown bird by Fumio Fujita, woodblock print, 320 x 445 mm



鳥 三羽 1945

12 **False color and distorted shape** – unknown bird by Umetarō Azechi, woodblock print, 285 x 385 mm



U. AZECHI



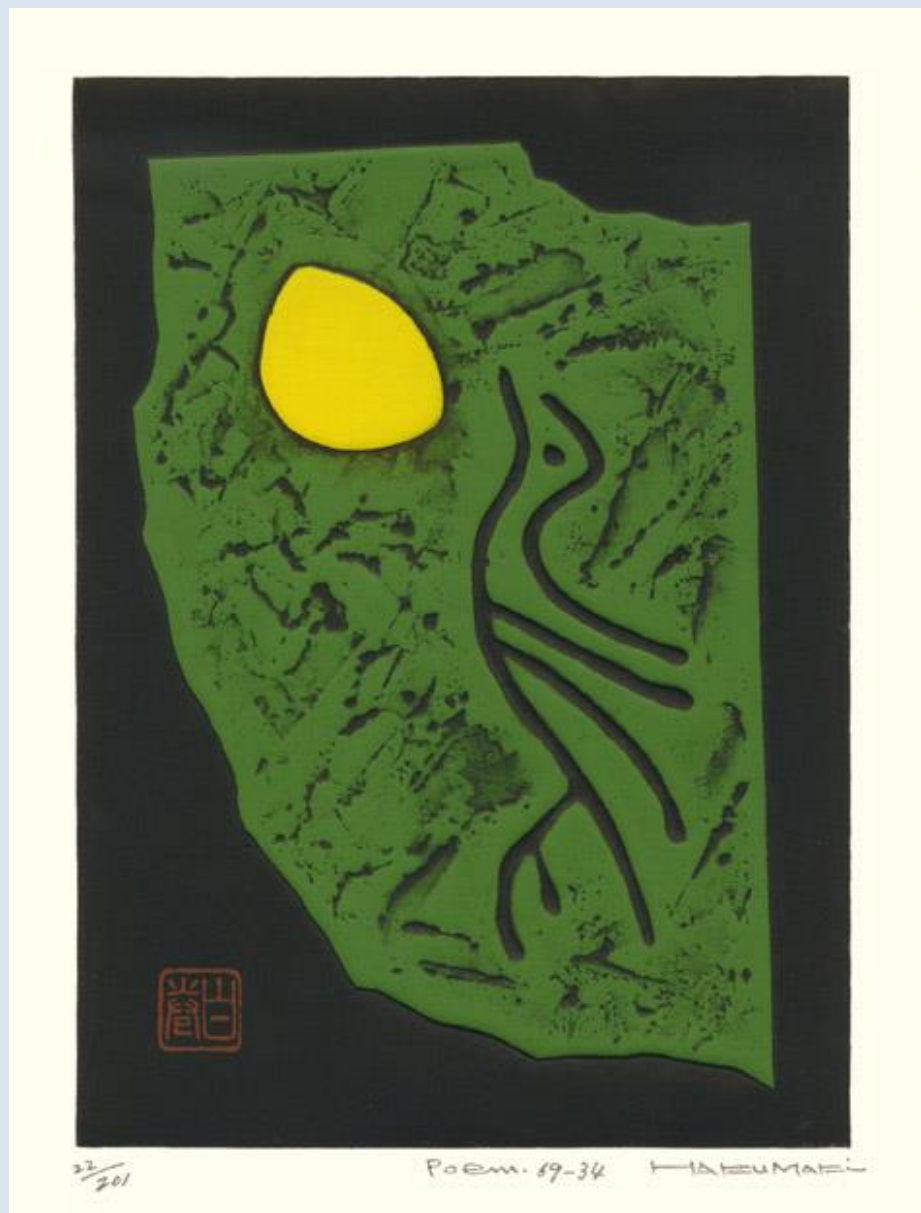
13 False color and distorted shape – unknown bird by Masanari Murai, lithograph, 570 x 760 mm



14 False color and distorted shape – unknown bird by Takeji Asano, woodblock print, 400 x 295 mm



15 **Texture** – unknown bird by Haku Maki, woodblock print, 170 x 220 mm



16 **Texture** – unknown bird by Yutaka Takayanagi, screenprint, 170 x 120 mm





17 **Texture** – scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by Masasuke Chiba, screenprint, 300 x 600 mm



18 **Texture** – unknown bird by Toyohide Akiyama, woodblock print, 240 x 310 mm

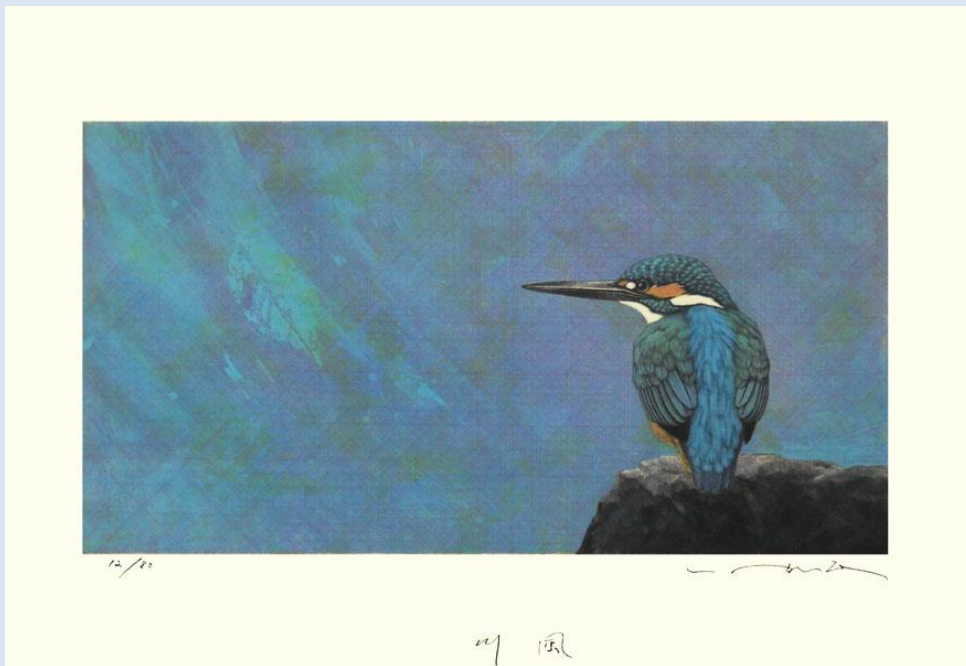


Ap. 1999 79年十月  
Toyohide Akiyama

19 **Texture** – duck (*Anas sp.*) by Susumu Yamaguchi, woodblock print, 585 x 370 mm

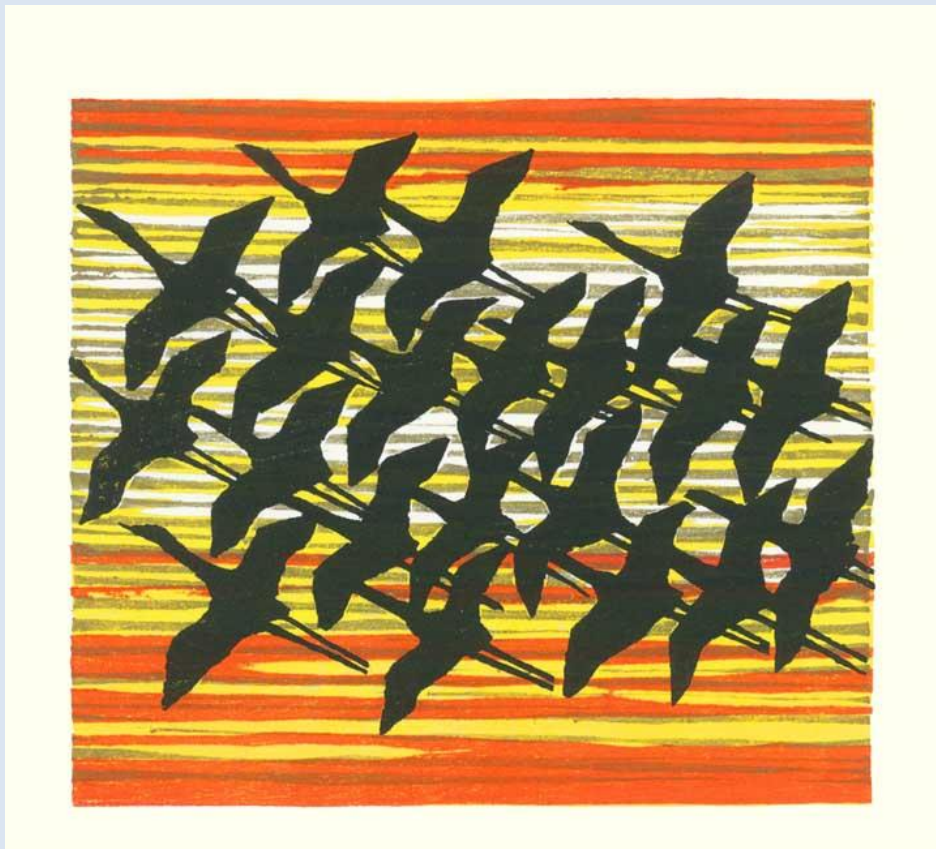


20 **Texture** – common kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) by Tadashi Ikai, intaglio print, 440 x 300 mm

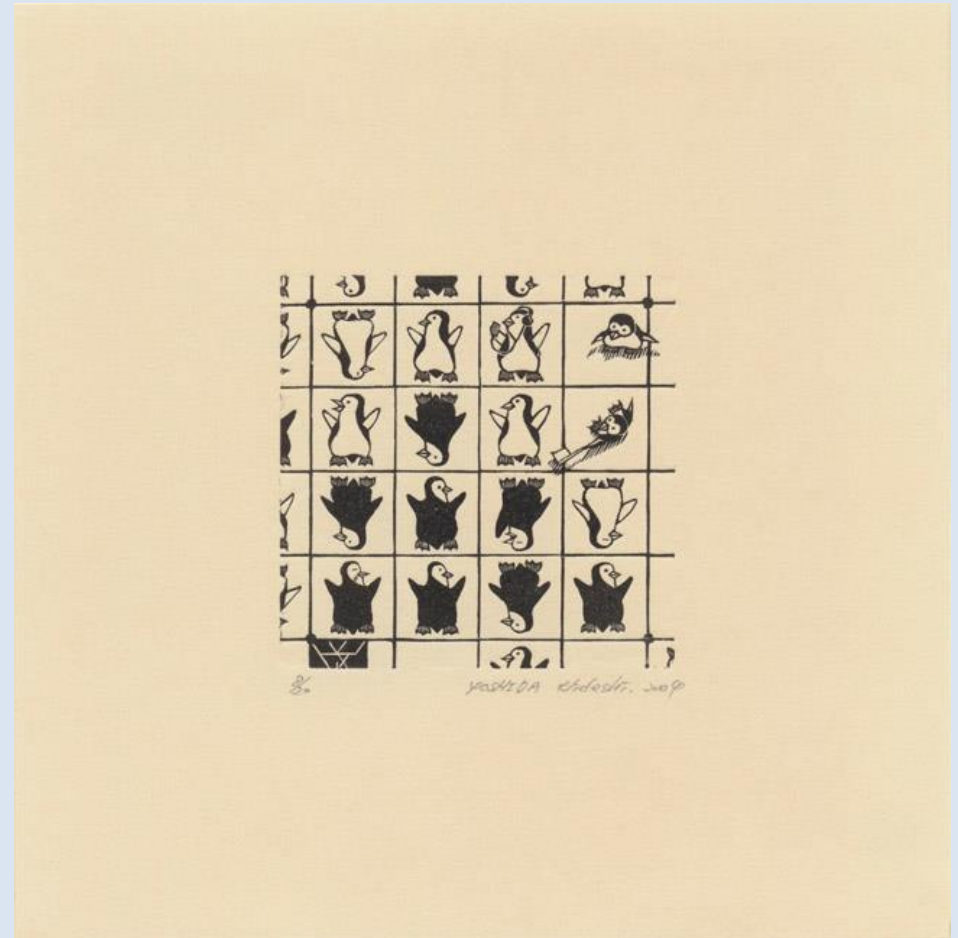




21 **Texture** – crane (*Grus* sp.) by Fumio Fujita, woodblock print, 190 x 170 mm



22 **Texture** – penguin (Family Spheniscidae) by Hideshi Yoshida, woodblock print, 150 x 150 mm



23 **Texture** – swan (*Cygnus* sp.) by Tōshi Yoshida, woodblock print, 280 x 405 mm



Toshi Yoshida

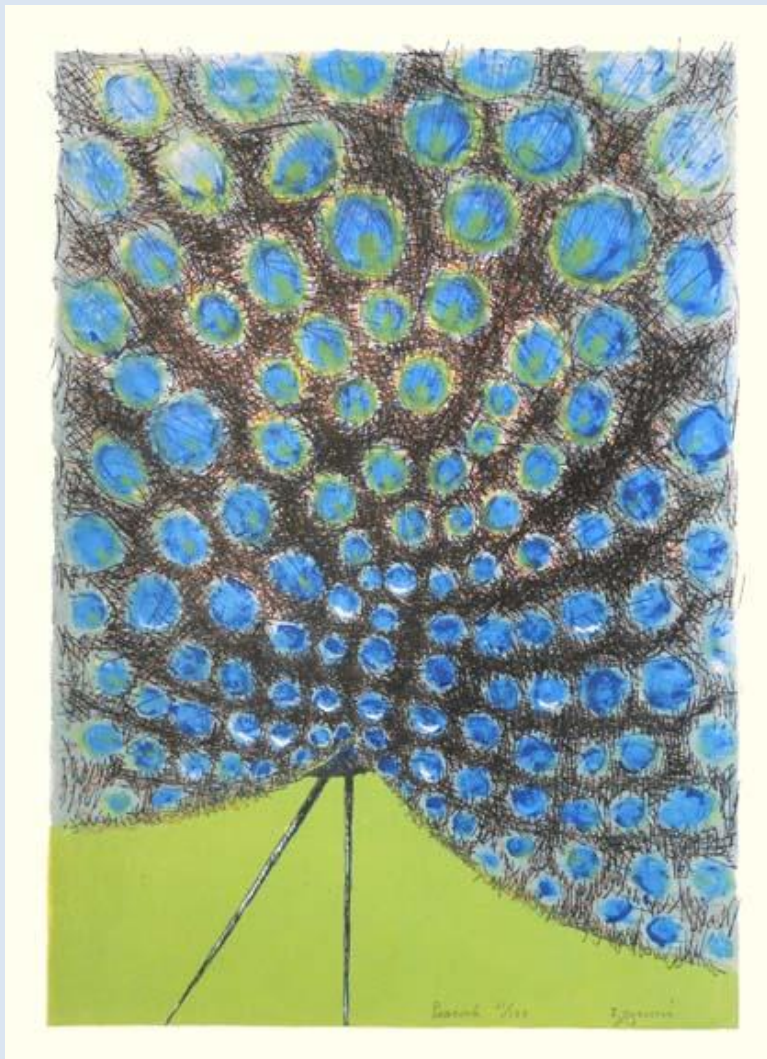
24 **Texture** – goose (*Anser* sp.) by Ray Morimura, woodblock print, 135 x 155 mm



Ray Morimura '05 30



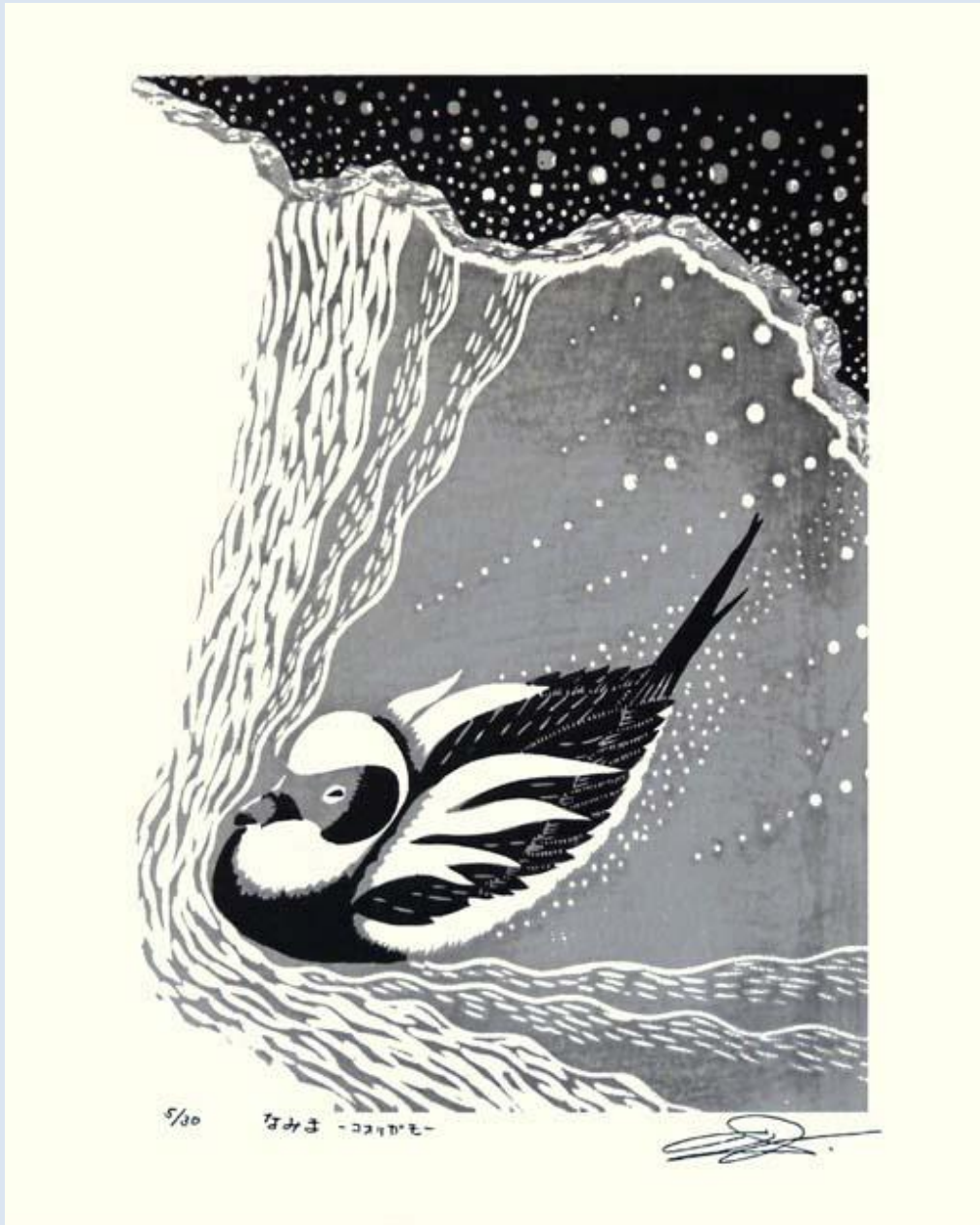
25 **Unexpected view** – peafowl (*Pavo* sp.) by Shigeru Izumi, lithograph, 300 x 420 mm



26 **Unexpected view** – peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) by Kōhei Wakatsuki, intaglio print, 395 x 305 mm



27 **Unexpected view** – long-tailed duck (*Clangula hyemalis*) by Izumi Fujita, woodblock print, 320 x 400 mm

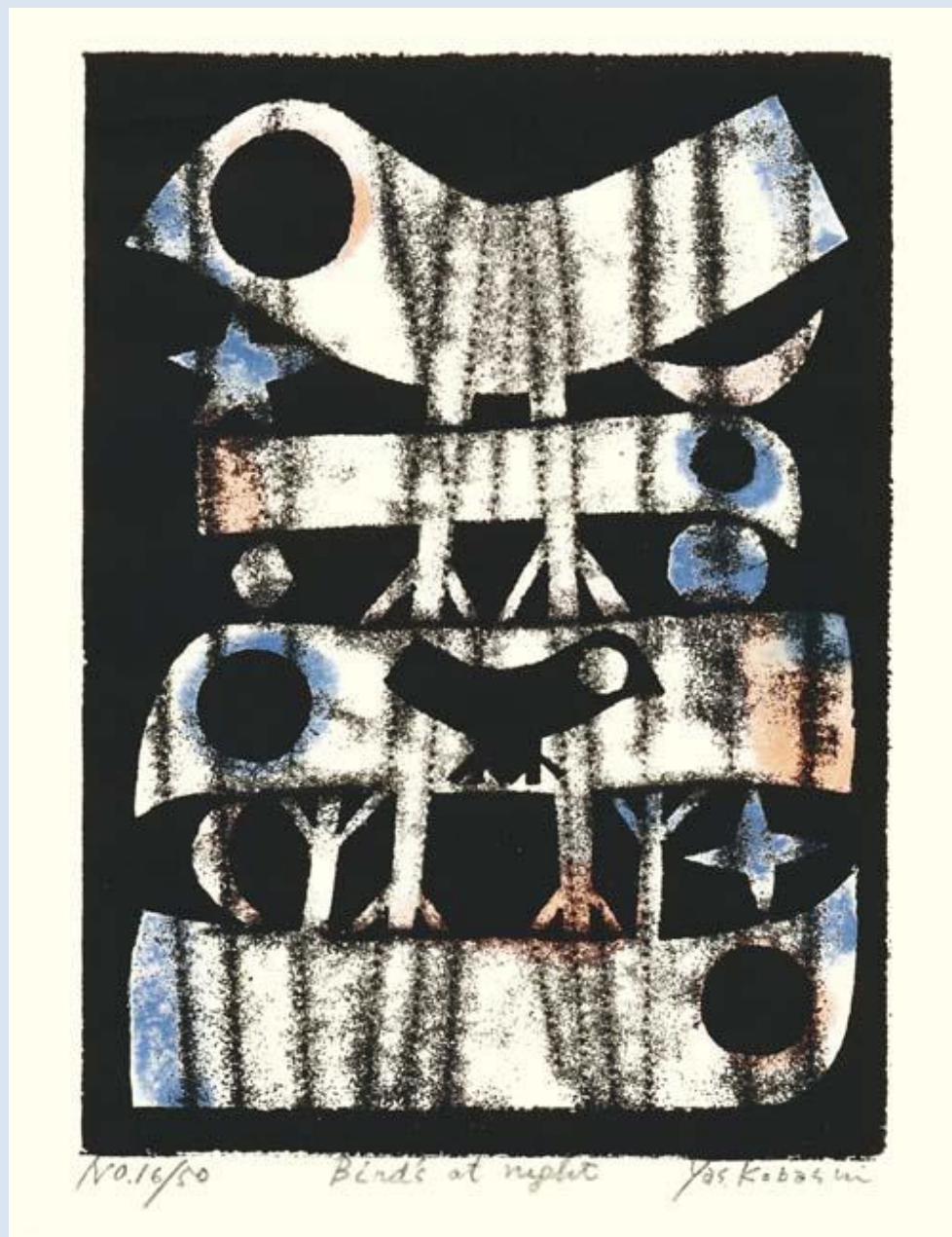


28 **Unexpected view** – Japanese white-eye (*Zosterops japonicus*) by Hidetaka Yamanaka, intaglio print, 255 x 310 mm

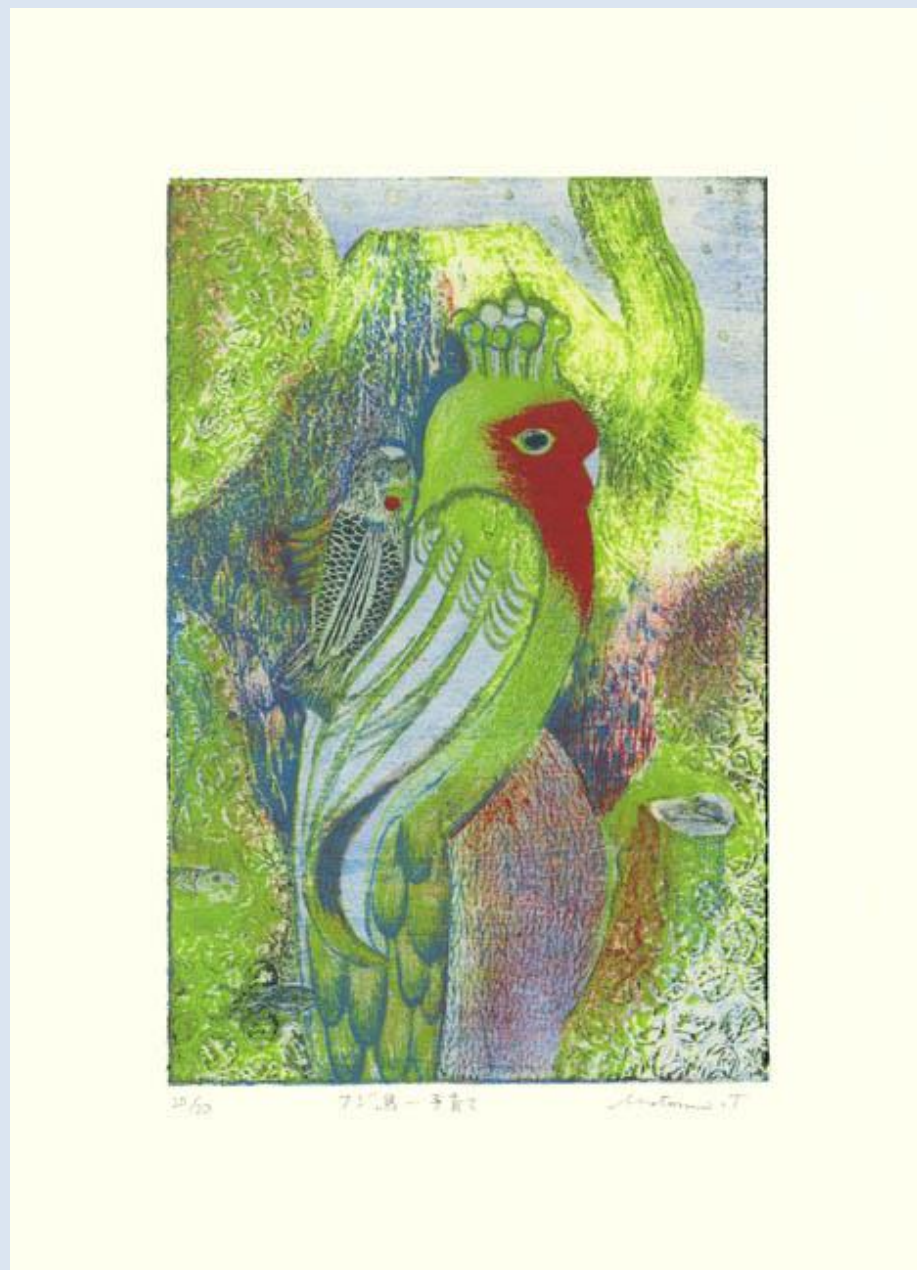




29 **Unexpected view** – unknown bird by Yasuhide Kobashi, woodblock print, 195 x 255 mm



30 **Unexpected view** – Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*) by Motomi Tsunoda, lithograph, 210 x 295 mm



31 **Unexpected view** – pigeon (*Columba livia*) by Kōzō Inoue, screenprint, 120 x 170 mm

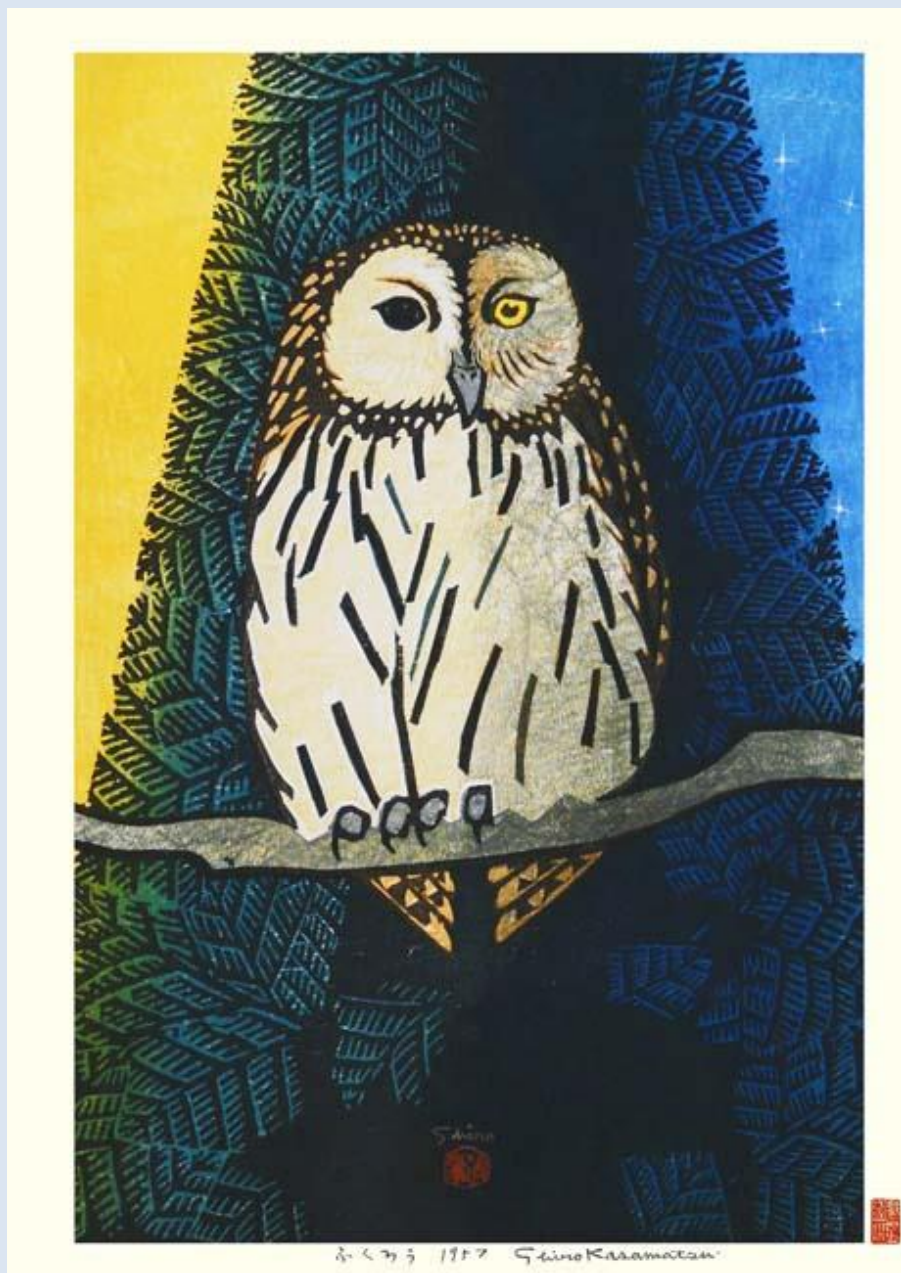


32 **Unexpected view** – gray wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*) by Akira Fujie, intaglio print, 375 x 265 mm





33 **Unexpected view** – day-night view of a Ural owl (*Strix uralensis*) by Shirō Kasamatsu, woodblock print, 285 x 405 mm



34 **Unexpected view** – four seasons view of a brown-eared bulbul (*Ixos amaurotis*) by Shirō Kasamatsu, woodblock print, 290 x 410 mm





35 **Unfamiliar object** – unknown bird by Tamami Shima, woodblock print, 530 x 840 mm



36 **Unfamiliar object** – crane (*Grus* sp.) by Yuji Watanabe, woodblock print, 715 x 575 mm



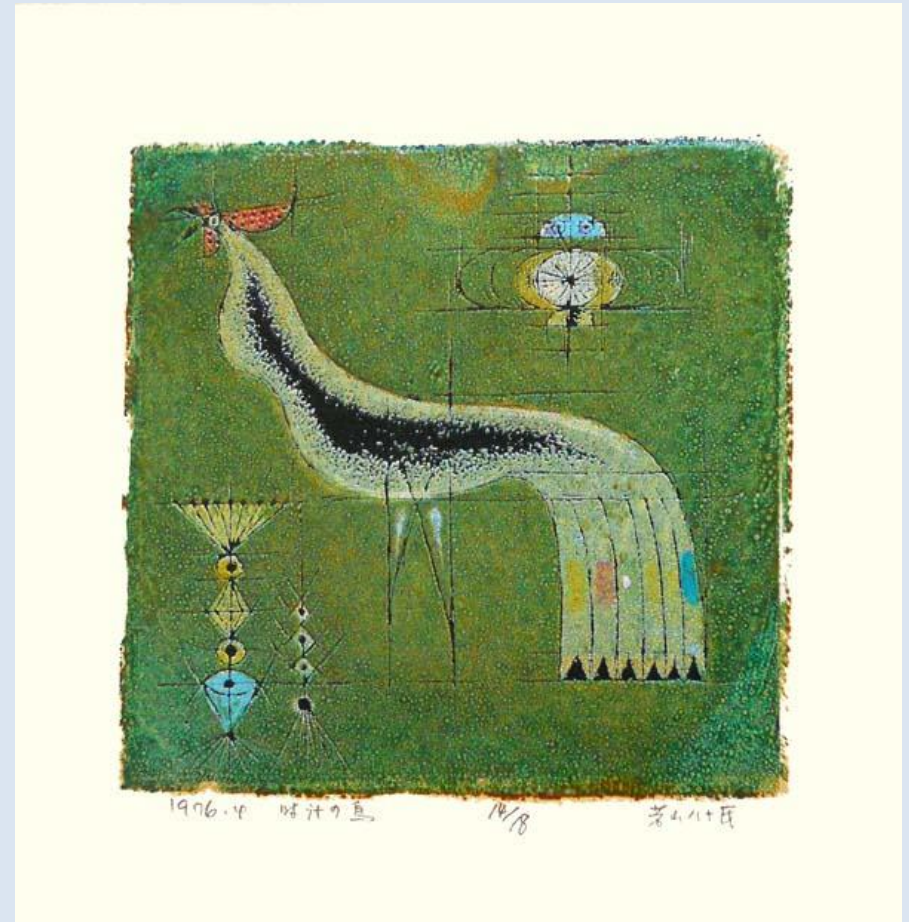
1990 鶴川 (鳥) 1/10 Yuji Watanabe



37 **Unfamiliar object** – owl (*Strix* sp.) by Fumiaki Fukita, woodblock print, 605 x 470 mm



38 **Unfamiliar object** – domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) by Yasoji Wakayama, screenprint, 270 x 280 mm



39 **Unfamiliar object** – unknown birds by Gō Yayanagi, screenprint, 420 x 570 mm

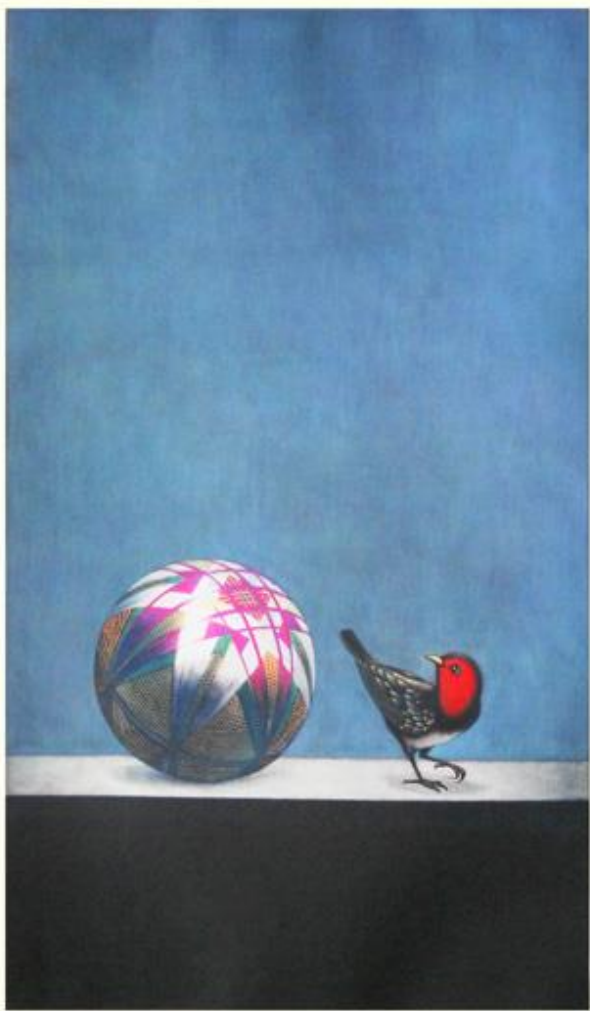


40 **Unfamiliar object** – short-tailed albatross (*Phoebastria albatrus*) by Kōsuke Kimura, lithograph, 400 x 440 mm





41 **Unexpected familiar object** – Japanese robin (*Erithacus akahige*) by Ushio Takahashi, intaglio print, 355 x 535 mm



27/26 今 櫻 (2) Ushio Takahashi

42 **Unexpected familiar object** – great hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*) by Waichi Hayashi, woodblock print, 265 x 295 mm



Waichi Hayashi a bird Waichi Hayashi

43 **Unexpected familiar object** – scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by Yoshiharu Kimura, woodblock print, 335 x 375 mm



44 **Unexpected familiar object** – scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by Makiko Hattori, intaglio print, 155 x 170 mm



6/80

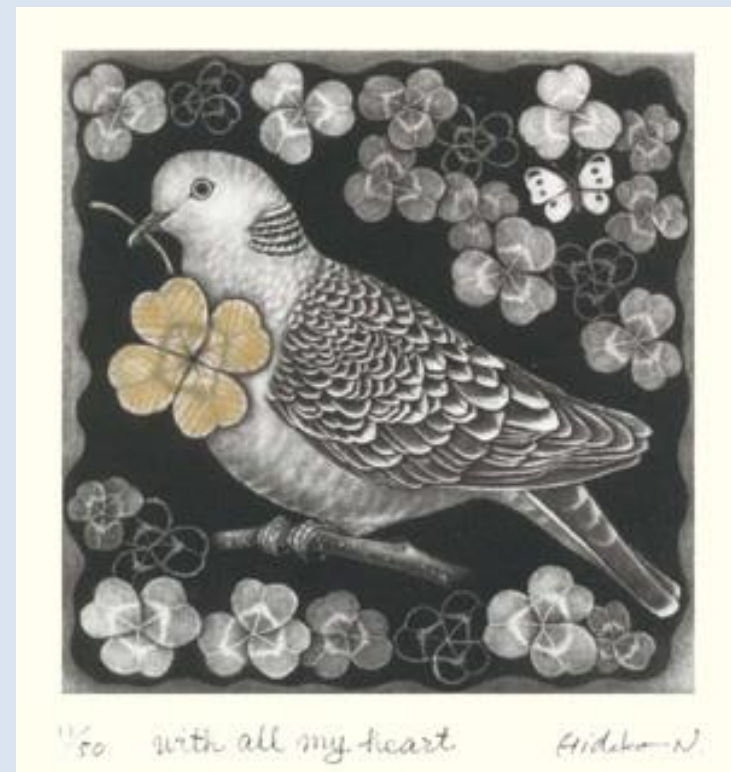
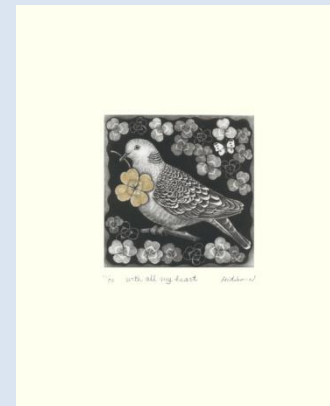
Makiko



45 **Unexpected familiar object** – unknown bird by Motoi Ōi, screenprint, 560 x 760 mm



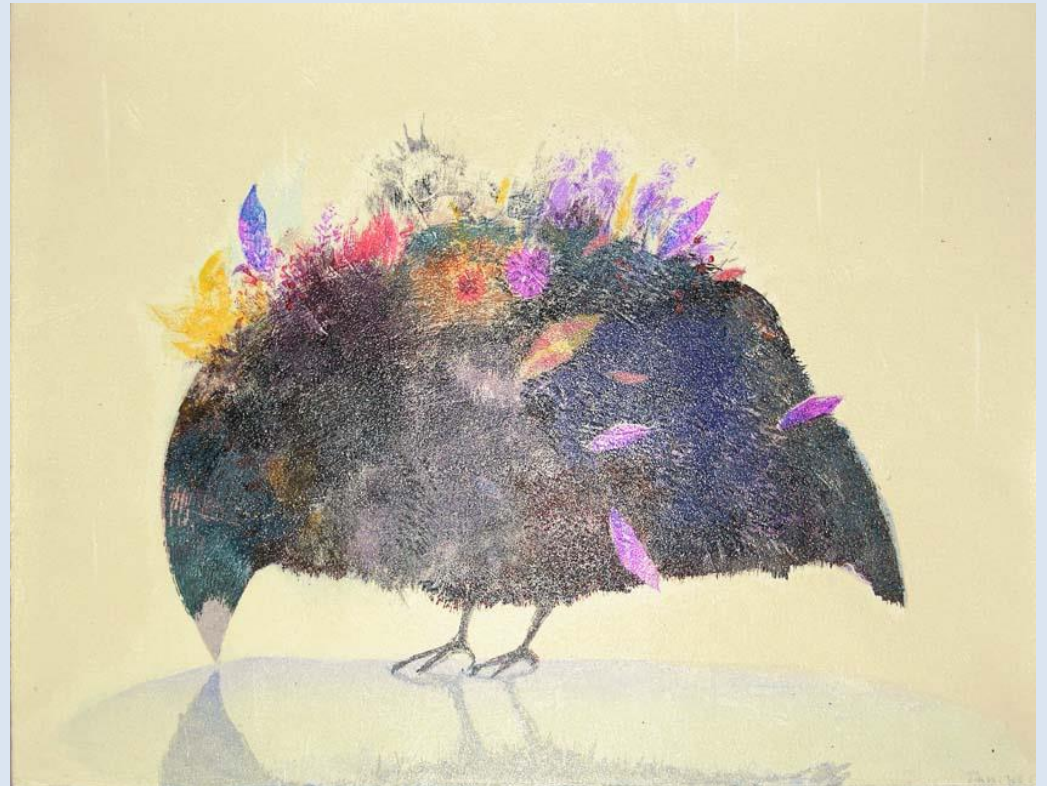
46 **Unexpected familiar object** – oriental turtle-dove (*Streptopelia orientalis*) by Hideko Nagahama, intaglio print, 200 x 250 mm



47 **Unexpected familiar object** – northern lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) by Mitsuru Nagashima, intaglio print, 340 x 505 mm



48 **Unexpected familiar object** – large-billed crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*) by Naoko Tanikawa, screenprint, 460 x 350 mm

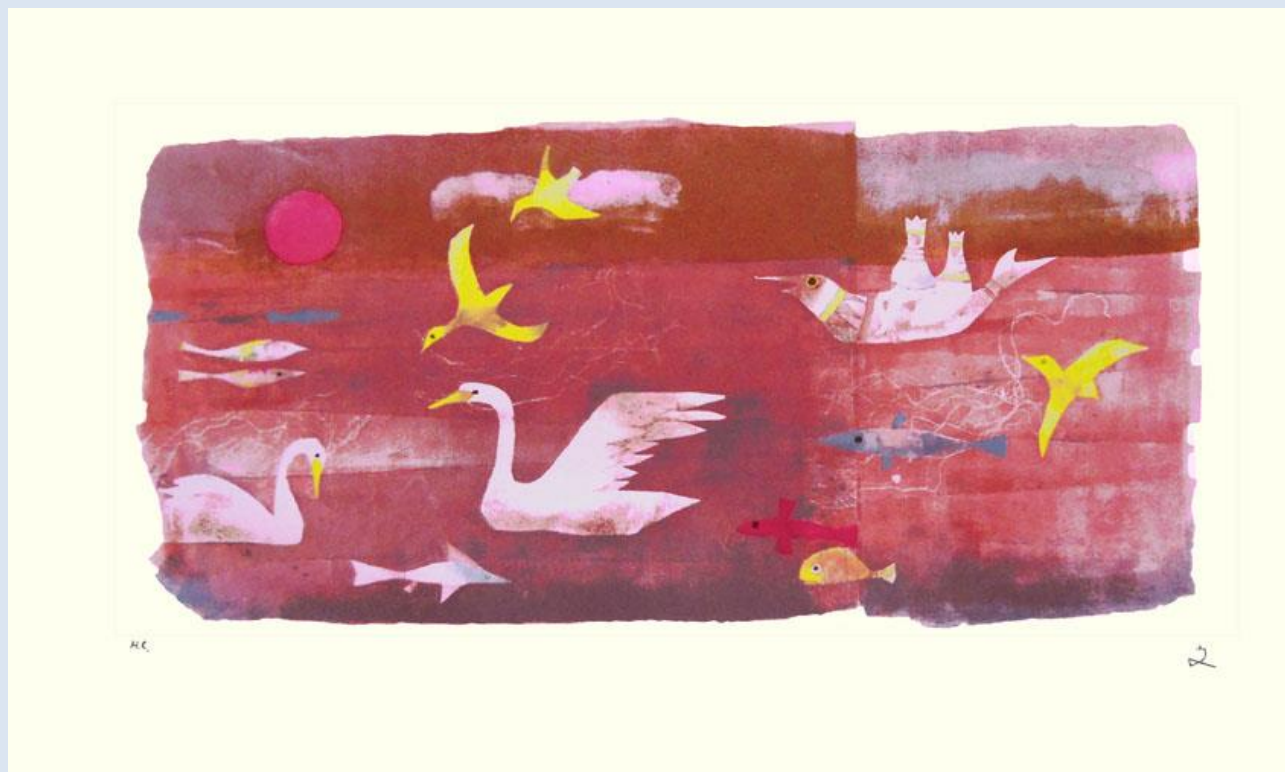




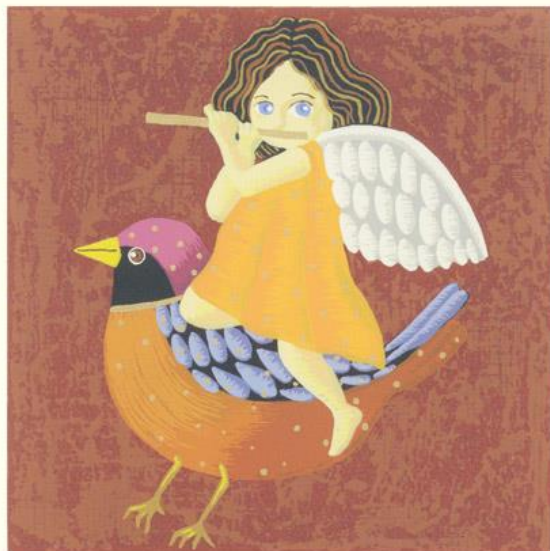
49 **Unexpected familiar object** – large-billed crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*) by Hiroko Ikezumi, woodblock print, 240 x 320 mm



50 **Unexpected familiar object** – swan (*Cygnus* sp.) and unknown birds by Fumiko Hori, screenprint, 645 x 375 mm



51 **Unexpected familiar object** – Daurian redstart (*Phoenicurus aureus*) by Masumi Ozawa, screenprint, 135 x 165 mm



149  
250 *Ride on the Bird Masumi Ozawa*

52 **Unexpected familiar object** – unknown bird by Masao Yoshida, intaglio print, 615 x 480 mm



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1990 Yoshida M.



53 **Unexpected familiar object** – unknown birds by Akiko Ohba, woodblock print, 180 x 175 mm



54 **Unexpected familiar object** – unknown birds by Shiho Murakami, intaglio print, 100 x 150 mm



55 **Unexpected familiar object** –  
unknown bird by Kazu Wakita,  
lithograph, 500 x 405 mm



56 **Unexpected familiar object** –  
unknown bird by Koichi Sakamoto,  
intaglio, 380 x 285 mm



飛鳥 (A)



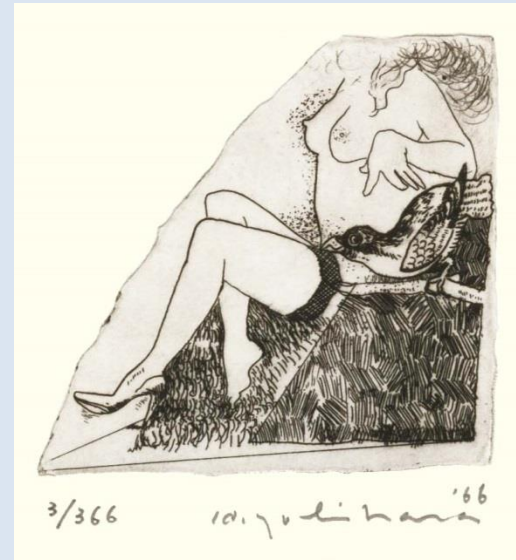
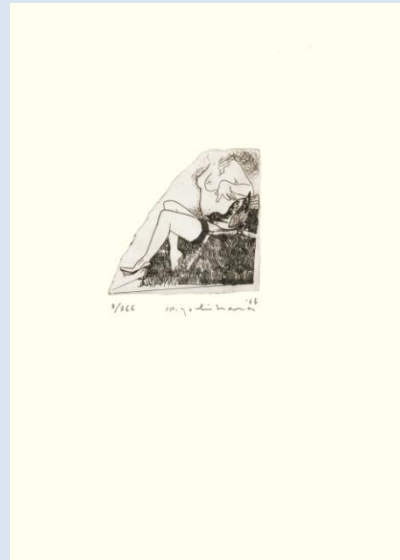
57 **Unexpected familiar object** –  
dodo bird (*Raphus cucullatus*) by  
Hideshi Yoshida, woodblock print,  
150 x 150 mm



58 **Unexpected familiar object** –  
pigeon (*Columba livia*) by Seishi  
Ozaku, intaglio print, 465 x 320 mm



59 **Unexpected familiar object** –  
parrot (Family Psittacidae) by  
Hideo Yoshihara, intaglio print,  
165 x 225 mm



60 **Unexpected familiar object** –  
cassowary (*Cassuarius* sp.) by  
Tamiji Kitagawa, intaglio print,  
250 x 215 mm





61 **Unexpected familiar object** – woodpecker (*Dendrocopos* sp.) by Kaoru Kawano, woodblock print, 265 x 405 mm



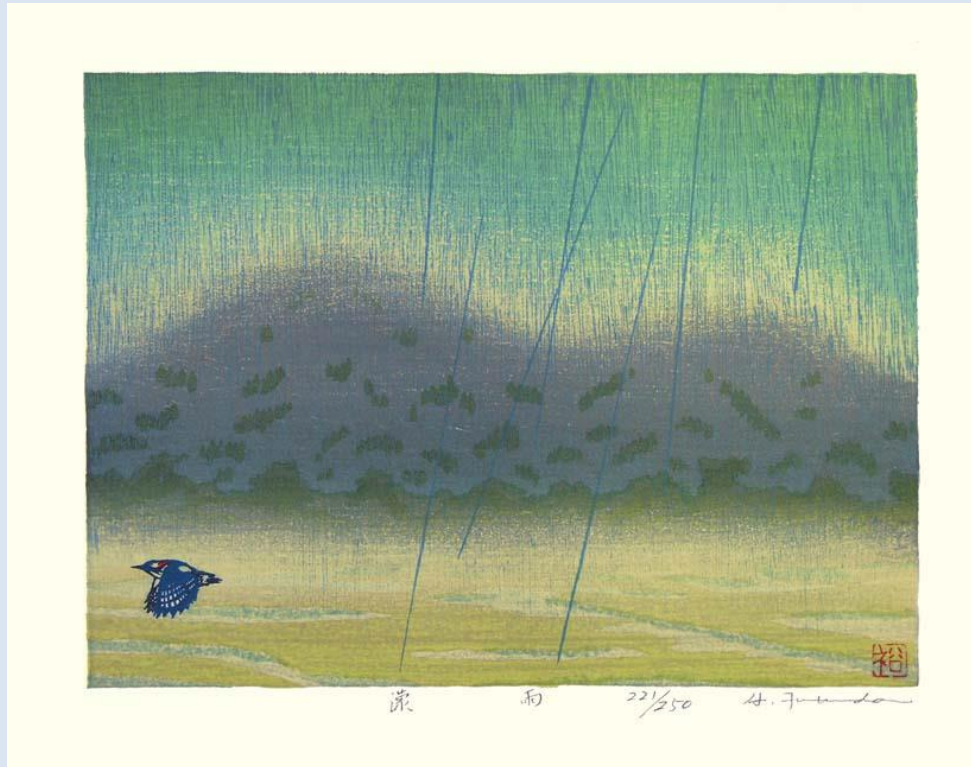
62 **Unexpected familiar object** – unknown bird by Umetarō Azechi, woodblock print, 125 x 105 mm



63 **Unexpected familiar object** – owl (Family Strigidae) and unknown birds by Masaki Shibuya, woodblock print, 160 x 110 mm



64 **Unexpected familiar object** – greater-spotted woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*) by Hirokazu Fukuda, woodblock print, 325 x 250 mm





65 **Humorous text** – owl (Family Strigidae) by Masaki Shibuya, woodblock print entitled “I came to play”, 110 x 140 mm



66 **Humorous text** – narcissus flycatcher (*Ficedula narcissina*) by George Ueda, screenprint entitled “talk about ...”, 200 x 135 mm



67 **Humorous text** – owl (Family Strigidae) by Iwao Akiyama, woodblock print with poem “owl and I, we are not together but both of us cannot sleep”, 360 x 460 mm



68 **Humorous text** – owl (Family Strigidae) by Iwao Akiyama, woodblock print entitled “holiday for the hunters”, 455 x 305 mm





69 **Humorous text** – Ural owl (*Strix uralensis*) by Kiyoharu Yamada, woodblock print with poem “I don't need a posthumous Buddhist name, you can't tell who is who”, 290 x 380 mm



戒名 8/100 1997  
Kiyoharu Yamada

70 **Humorous text** – scops owl (*Otus* sp.) by Kan Kozaki, woodblock print with poem “leaves are falling down, I am tipsy and falling apart”, 235 x 320 mm

