

*Fictitious*

**Birds**

*in Japanese Art*



## Introduction

Birds have been depicted in the printed art of Japan for more than three hundred years. For most of this time artists chose to depict only real bird species, with one exception – the hō-ō bird shown in Figure 1. In Japanese mythology this fictitious species symbolizes the five virtues of obedience, purity, loyalty, justice and kindness. The number of fictitious bird species appearing in Japanese printed art has increased dramatically since 1950. The modern philosophy of art encourages artists to be inventive which likely accounts for this dramatic increase in fictitious species. Twenty examples of these fictitious birds are included in this virtual exhibition, with each fictitious species drawn by a different Japanese artist whose bird prints feature mostly fictitious rather than real species. For each print the artist's name is given along with print size, title (if any) and printing method. These twenty prints are part of the Reader Collection of Japanese Art.

Figure 1 - Hō-ō bird by Yoshitsuna Utagawa, included in Ehon Kachō Soroi (i.e., Complete Picture Book of Flowers and Birds)



1 Fictitious bird by **Yukio Fukazawa**, entitled bird, intaglio, 385 x 475 mm



2 Fictitious bird by **Hiroki Makino**, entitled standing bird, woodblock, 260 x 340 mm



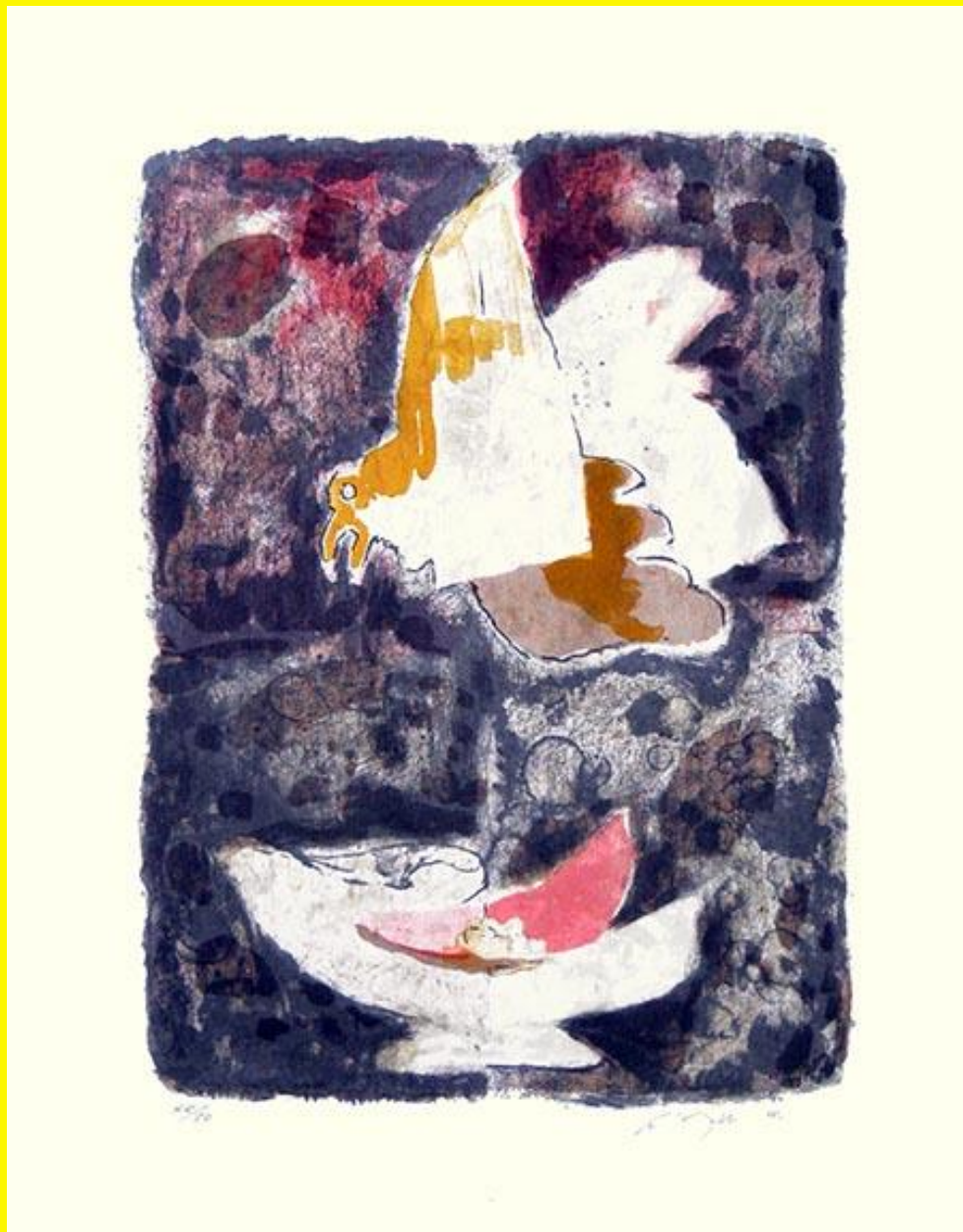
3 Fictitious bird by **Masuo Ikeda**, entitled a happy blue bird, lithograph, 165 x 230 mm



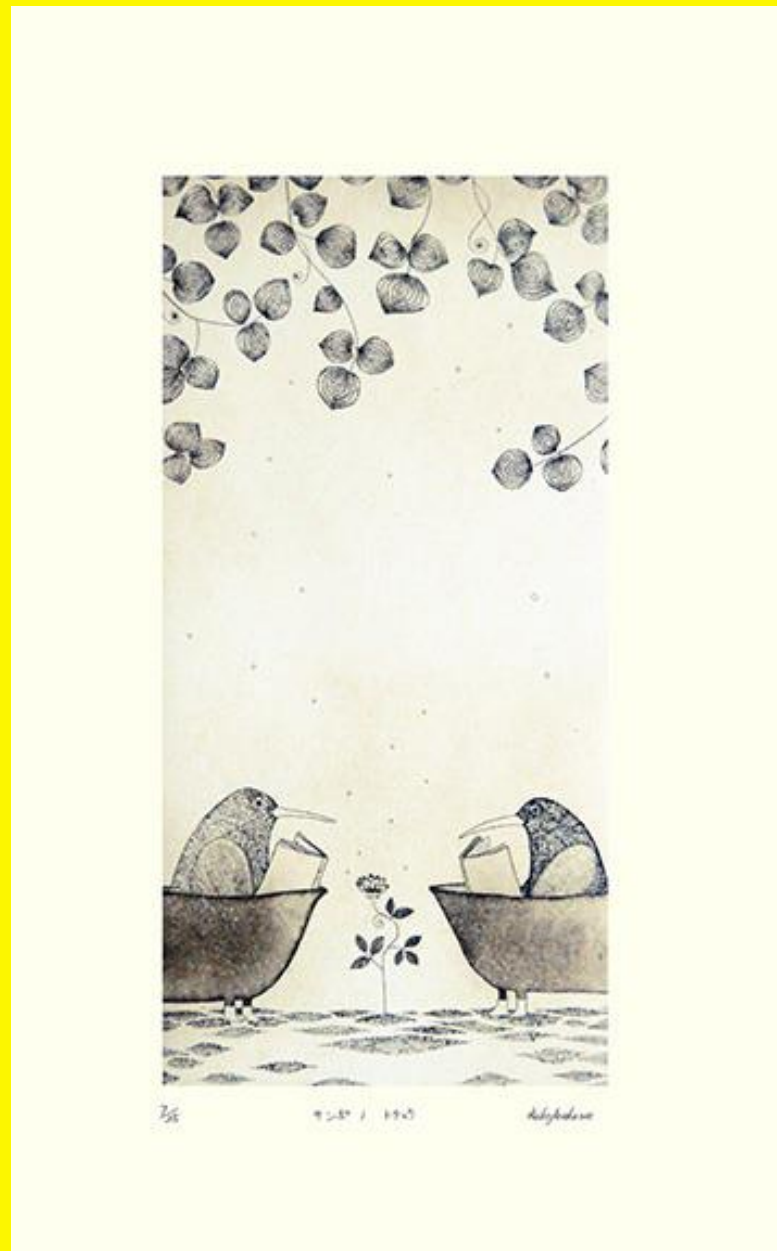
4 Fictitious bird by **Fumiko Odajima**, entitled MELODY II, woodblock, 140 x 140 mm



5 Fictitious bird by **Kazu Wakita**, entitled bird and fruit bowl, lithograph, 400 x 505 mm



6 Fictitious bird by **Keiko Arakawa**, entitled walking on the way to home, intaglio, 305 x 485 mm



7 Fictitious bird by **Kunihiro Amano**,  
entitled morning 30, woodblock, 230 x  
175 mm



morning 30 18/120 K. Amano

8 Fictitious bird by **Keiko Minami**,  
intaglio, 570 x 380 mm



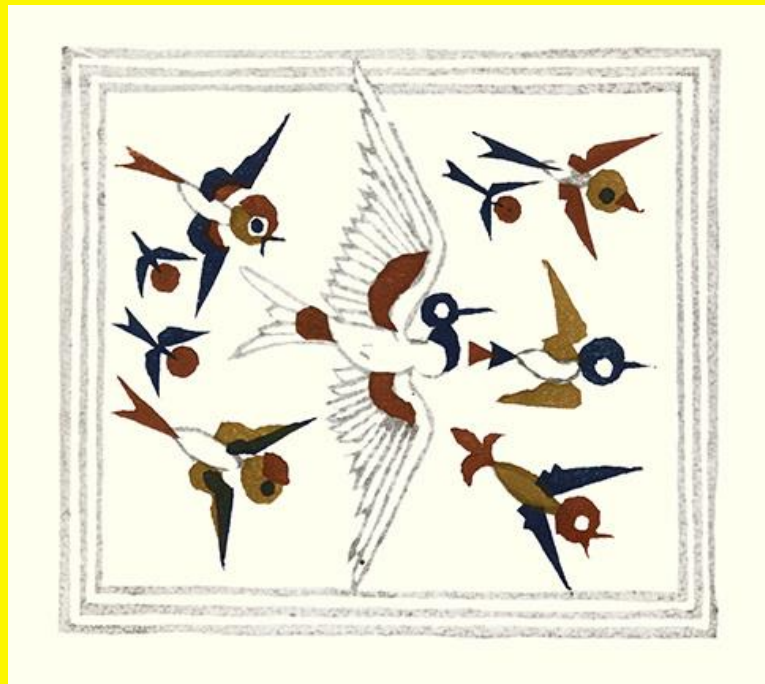
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Keiko Minami

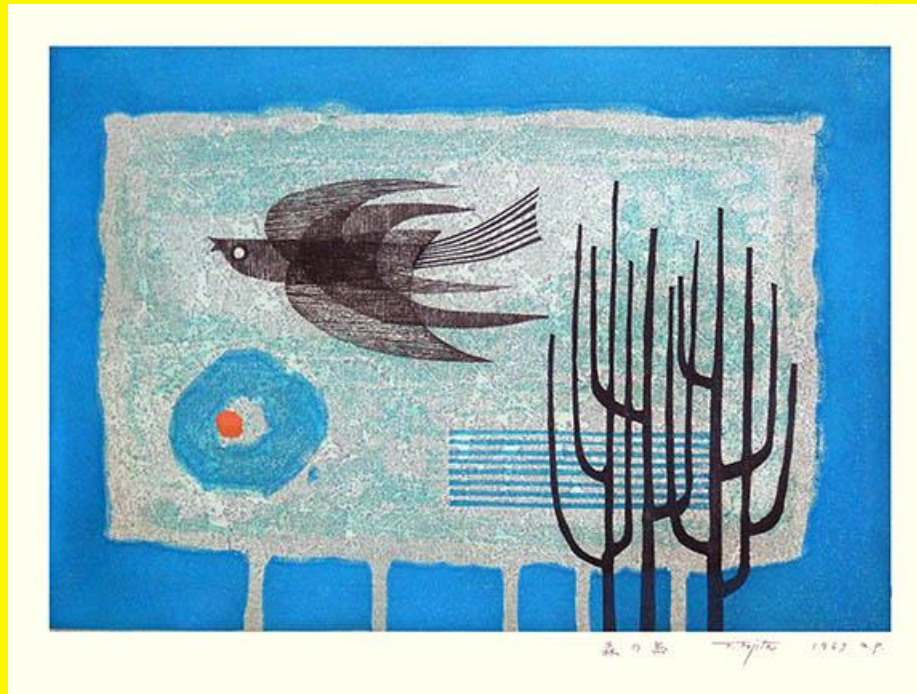
9 Fictitious bird by **Hideo Hagiwara**,  
woodblock, 175 x 125 mm



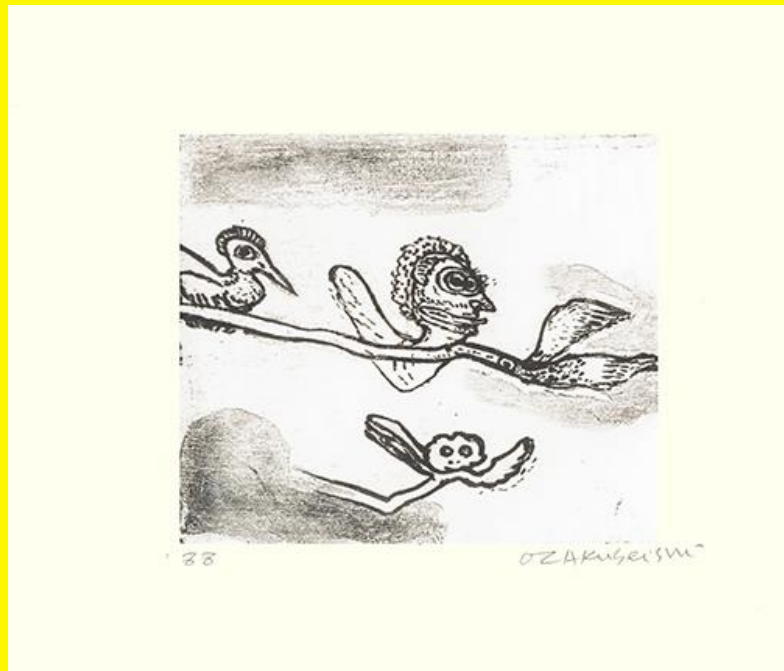
10 Fictitious bird by **Takeo Takei**,  
woodblock, 145 x 125 mm



11 Fictitious bird by **Fumio Fujita**,  
entitled forest bird, woodblock, 410 x  
305 mm

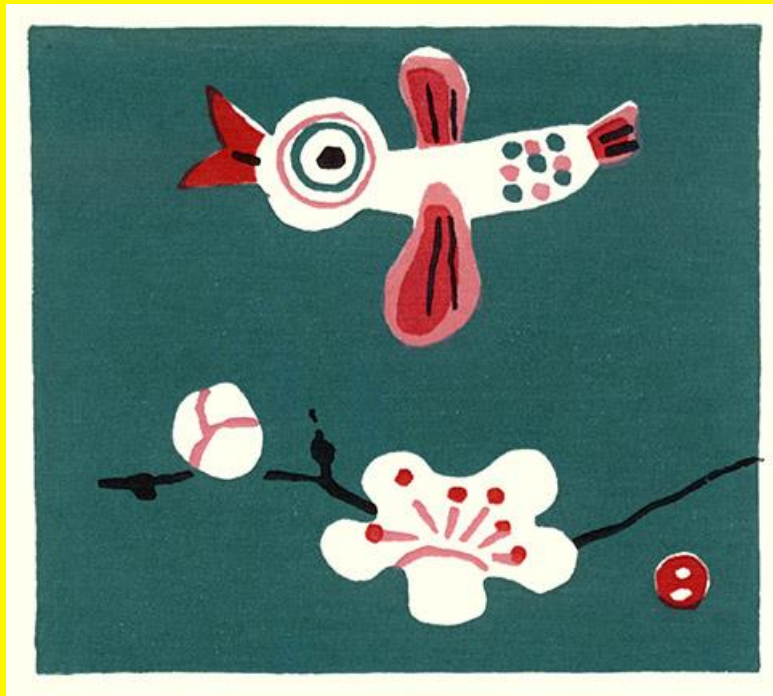


12 Fictitious bird by **Seishi Ozaku**,  
intaglio, 260 x 210 mm





13 Fictitious bird by **Umetarō Azechi**,  
woodblock, 130 x 110 mm



14 Fictitious bird by **Gorō Kumagai**,  
woodblock, 145 x 120 mm



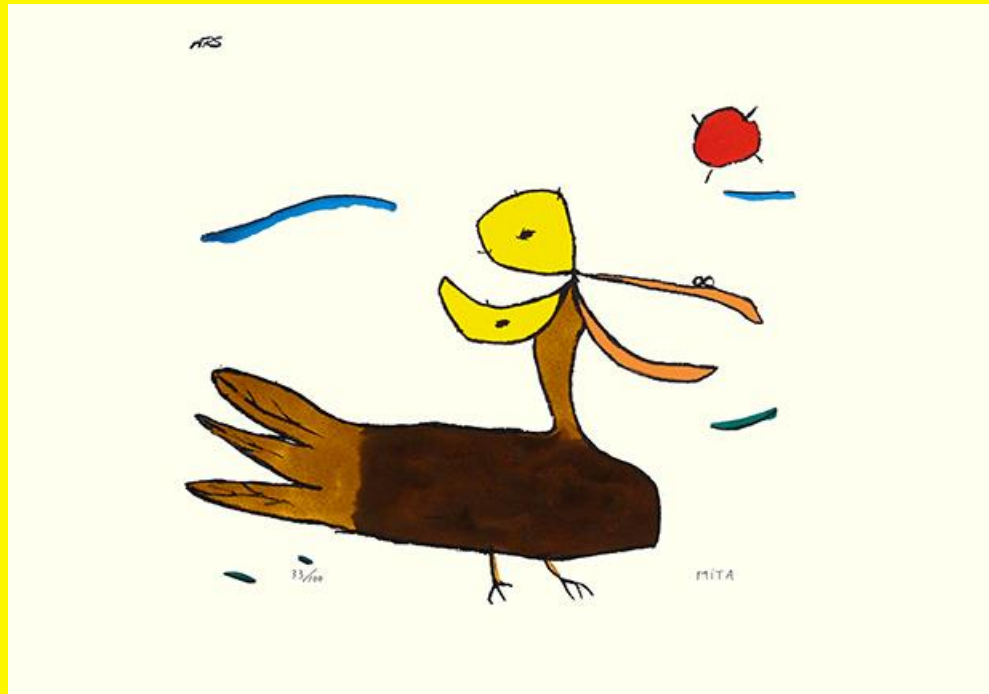
15 Fictitious bird by **Ay-ō Iijima**,  
entitled sings B, woodblock, 170 x 120  
mm



16 Fictitious bird by **Chieko Ishida**,  
woodblock, 160 x 120 mm



17 Fictitious bird by **Yoshikane Mita**,  
entitled bird in the countryside,  
lithograph, 500 x 350 mm



18 Fictitious bird by **Takeji Asano**,  
entitled bird and fruit, woodblock, 400  
x 295 mm



19 Fictitious bird by **Teruo Emori**,  
entitled nest, screenprint, 275 x 195  
mm



20 Fictitious bird by **Kōzō Inoue**,  
entitled egg a bird ?, screenprint, 325 x  
250 mm



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