

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Kabuki: Japan's Dynamic Theatre in Prints

March 26 – June 15, 2015

Curated by Barry Till

### AGGV brings a taste of Tokyo to Victoria this spring

Victoria, BC—Springtime in Victoria is reminiscent of another city on a beautiful, large Pacific Ocean island—Tokyo. The cities both seemingly wake from winter with the blooming of Japanese cherry blossoms, and this spring the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria will bring a little more of Tokyo to Victoria.

Opening March 26, the AGGV presents *Kabuki: Japan's Dynamic Theatre in Prints*, an exhibition celebrating Kabuki theatre, the classical dance-drama that originated in Tokyo in the 17th century.

"Kabuki theatre is known for its very stylized drama and elaborate makeup," says Barry Till, AGGV curator of Asian Art. "It became a common form of entertainment in the registered red-light district in old Tokyo where a crowd of various social classes would gather under one roof—something that happened nowhere else in the city."

The Kabuki stage provided exciting entertainment with new music and dance performed by famous male actors. The stage features a walkway extending into the audience and via which dramatic entrances and exits are made. Performances went from morning until sunset, and the area around the theatres was lush with shops selling kabuki souvenirs, especially woodblock prints, which were collected like movie posters.

*Kabuki: Japan's Dynamic Theatre in Prints* runs through June 15 and features more than forty 19th and 20th century portraits of actors from the Gallery's extensive collection, including works by masters of the Japanese wood print and painting art form, ukiyo-e.

The AGGV is teaming with Pacific Opera Victoria to kick off the exhibition and welcome spring with an evening of opera, art and cocktails. *happening (spring) cocktail party* will feature performances by singers from POV's upcoming production of *Madama Butterfly*, as well as a Curator's Tour of *Kabuki*.

Guests will also be treated to a signature cocktail and delectable hors d'oeuvres. *happening (spring) cocktail party* takes place Friday, March 27, from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Tickets are \$35 and are available at the AGGV or <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/happening-spring-cocktail-party-tickets-15919201761>

For more information, visit [aggv.ca](http://aggv.ca) or call 250-384-4171.

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