

# PRESS RELEASE

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## 17TH-CENTURY JAPANESE SCREENS FROM SEATTLE ART MUSEUM COLLECTION TO UNDERGO MAJOR CONSERVATION

Funding for conservation provided by Bank of America Art  
Conservation Project



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SEATTLE, WA - The Seattle Art Museum announced today that an important pair of 17th-century Japanese screens from the collection will undergo major conservation work, thanks to funding from the Bank of America Art Conservation Project.

*Scenes in and around the Capital* (75.38.1 & 2), a pair of six-panel Japanese screens from the Edo period (1603–1868), present a charming view of daily life in Kyoto using ink, color, and gold. The screens depict residents and visitors moving about the city—including the imperial castle—and into the countryside. The screens were already in fragile condition when acquired by the Seattle Art Museum in 1975; it's now crucial that structural conservation take place to preserve the screens and prevent future damage.

*Scenes in and around the Capital* will be conserved using traditional Japanese methods and materials. New internal wooden lattice frames will provide support and address damaging stresses. Degraded mounting papers and fabrics will be replaced, and old surface repairs will be removed and surface damages reintegrated. The screen hinges have undergone temporary treatments over the decades, but these comprehensive repairs are urgently needed to stabilize the screens and help to reduce the risk of further degradation.

Because the project requires highly specialized conservation skills, SAM's Chief Conservator Nicholas Dorman has engaged Tomokatsu Kawazu, President and Head Conservator of Studio Sogendo, a private conservation studio in California, to conduct the conservation treatment. Mr. Kawazu has extensive experience with Japanese art and is one of few individuals in the United States who holds a diploma from the Japanese Agency of Cultural Affairs, qualifying him to work on Japanese National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties. The screens will be prepared at SAM, then head to Studio Sogendo in the spring. Conservation work will take approximately two years to complete.

SEATTLE  
ART  
MUSEUM

“It is a privilege to work with Bank of America to conserve *Scenes in and around the Capital*,” says Nicholas Dorman, SAM’s Chief Conservator.

“Conservation of this splendid painting has been a preservation priority for us for some time, but the significant expense and logistical challenges of projects like this, typically put them out of reach of our normal operating budget. The Bank of America program is one of only very few initiatives that provide conservation project support for major treatment projects and we are indebted to them for choosing to partner with SAM once again as we preserve our collections for generations to come.”

Asian art is one of the SAM’s strongest and most comprehensive collecting areas, with an entire location—the Seattle Asian Art Museum—dedicated to its display. *Scenes in and around the Capital* is part of the museum’s more than 3,400-piece collection of Japanese art and artifacts. It is an example of the type of artistic treasures that will be further protected following the completed renovation of the Asian Art Museum, currently underway.

Launched in 2010, the Bank of America Art Conservation Project provides grants to nonprofit museums throughout the world to conserve historically or culturally significant works of art that are in danger of deterioration. To date, the project has provided grants to museums in 29 countries supporting over 100 conservation projects.

In 2012, Bank of America funded the restoration of Jackson Pollock’s *Sea Change* (58.55, 1947), a cornerstone work in the museum’s permanent collection. *Sea Change* is currently on view at the Seattle Art Museum as part the installation *Big Picture: Art After 1945*.

“Globally, Bank of America is one of the leading supporters of the arts because we believe the arts matter,” says Anthony DiBlasi, Seattle market and Washington state president, Bank of America. “Across the Puget Sound, we support giving a voice to multicultural experiences and sharing stories that showcase how the arts contributes to our thriving economy—from local consumer spending and revenue generation for local businesses, to job creation and regional tourism. We’re honored to be working with SAM to help conserve *Scenes in and around the Capital*, so that it will continue to inspire and educate future generations.”

**Image credits:** *Scenes in and around the Capital*, second half 17th century, Japanese, ink, color, and gold on paper, 67 7/8 x 149 3/4 in. Purchased with funds from Mildred and Bryant Dunn and the Floyd A. Naramore Memorial Purchase Fund, 75.38.1& 2

## ABOUT SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

As the leading visual art institution in the Pacific Northwest, SAM draws on its global collections, powerful exhibitions, and dynamic programs to provide unique educational resources benefiting the Seattle region, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. SAM was founded in 1933 with a focus on Asian art. By the late 1980s the museum had outgrown its original home, and in 1991 a new 155,000-square-foot downtown building, designed by Robert Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates, opened to the public. The 1933 building was renovated and reopened as the Asian Art Museum in 1994. SAM’s desire to further serve its community was realized in 2007 with the opening of two stunning new facilities: the nine-acre Olympic Sculpture Park (designed by Weiss/Manfredi Architects)—a “museum without walls,” free and open to all—and the Allied Works Architecture designed 118,000-square-foot expansion of its main, downtown location, including 232,000 square feet of additional space built for future expansion. The Olympic Sculpture Park and SAM’s downtown expansion celebrate their tenth anniversary in 2017.

From a strong foundation of Asian art to noteworthy collections of African and Oceanic art, Northwest Coast Native American art, European and American art, and modern and contemporary art, the strength of SAM’s collection of approximately 25,000 objects lies in its diversity of media, cultures and time periods.