



Hinazuru of the Chojiya, kamuro Kocho and Tsuruji, from the triptych New Year's Day in the Yoshiwara

Date

18th century

Primary Maker

Katsukawa Shuncho

Medium

Color woodblock print

Description

It is the custom, on the first day of the year, for people to visit each other with special greetings and bearing presents. The triptych represents three groups of geisha women from different houses visiting each other. Each group is shown in front of the house which it is visiting. the main porch pillar of every house is decorated with traditional New Year's ornament: bamboo cane and pine

twigs tied with rice straw. The bamboo and pine are symbols of longevity, the rice straw of the new life of spring. (The Japanese New Year was in our month of April.) The guests are already settled in this print and are accepting sake from a special ceremonial New Year's cup, the "OTSOSO" All of the women are wearing particularly beautiful ceremonial dresses, and have their OBI (sash) tied in front in very complex fashion. Tying the OBI in front is the special mark of a geisha in formal dress. It may also be noted that geisha of the same rank from the same house tend to dress alike. The round ornament on the sleeves is the MON or family mark, whose use, however, seems to be rather flexible.

Dimensions

15 x 10 inches (38.1 x 25.4 cm)