

Basic Detail Report



Events of the Four Seasons and Taro, the Peach Boy

Date

19th century

Primary Maker

Kawanabe Gyôsei

Medium

Handscroll: ink and colors on paper

Description

The scroll is a medley of thirteen scenes which depict "the human comedy," a favorite subject of the artist. The first nine sections seem to have seasonal references, while the last four illustrate the beginning of the old story of Taro, who was found in a peach, adopted by an elderly couple, took a demon king's treasures from him, and gave them to his foster parents. A brief description of each scene follows: 1. A man chases a dog carrying a mackerel in his mouth. 2. Two gesticulating seated "oni" make fun of their traditional enemy, "Shoki", the demon queller, while he sleeps. 3. A group of playing children with "origami" (folded paper figures) mimic the Bon festival. 4. A child with a lot's-foot leaf on his head pulls along another similarly coiffed child riding on an eggplant. 5. Three children tease a blind masseur (anma) by dangling a crab at the end of a pole above his head. 6. A gesticulating child runs after a Shinto priest outfitted with a "tengu" mask and a spear, and ahead of him a lower-class Shinto priest carries a tray on which he has collected coins wrapped in paper. A farmer carrying a sheaf of rice looks back them. 7. A child jumps at a tiny red sea bream (tai) dangling at the end of a fishing line held by Ebisu. 8. A man with two baskets of rice-cake balls (mochi) throws them to children who scuffle over them. 9. Two children gesticulate at three street entertainers while a man with a lantern carries an unidentified object on his shoulder. 10-13. An old woman finds a peach in a stream, carries it home and shows it to her husband. Taro emerges from it and they are bowled over with surprise. Dominant colors throughout the scroll are red, blue and brown over white background; the contours are in gray ink.

Dimensions

Image: 10 3/4 x 247 3/4 inches (27.3 x 629.3 cm)