



Dream Spectres: Extreme Ukiyo-e: Sex, Blood, Demons, Monsters, Ghosts, Tattoo (Ukiyo-e Master Series)

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UKIYO-E - "images from the floating world" - were the most popular art-form of 19th century Japan. Like modern-day manga, these prints could be mass-produced and were admired by people from all sectors of society; and as in manga, the art of ukiyo-e included significant sub-genres dealing in violence, erotica and horror.

With unflinching images of weird sex, bloody carnage and grotesque, demonic ghosts and monsters, "Dream Spectres" is a powerful collection of the extremes of ukiyo-e, featuring the work of such artists as Yoshitoshi, Ekin, Kunichika, Yoshiiku, Kunisada, Hokusai, Kuniyoshi, Yoshitsuya, Hiroshige, Kyosai, and Chikanobu.

"Dream Spectres" features over 170 amazing full-colour images, including the complete Eimei Nijuhasshuku ("28 Blood Atrocities") of Yoshitoshi and Yoshiiku, and ranges in content from bondage and bestiality to decapitations, demons and designs for classic irezumi (body tattoos). This is Japanese art not only at its extremes of imagination, but often at its most highly accomplished and innovative.

This new, revised, enlarged and expanded edition of "Dream Spectres" is presented in large-format and full-colour throughout.

The Ukiyo-e Master Series: presenting seminal collections of art by the greatest print-designers and painters of Edo-period and Meiji-period Japan.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This mind-roasting volume is without question one of the standout books of 2010." -- fright.com

"Dream Spectres is one of the best art books of 2010." -- Rue Morgue magazine

About the Author

Jack Hunter is author and editor of over 20 previous books on cinema, including EROS IN HELL and MOONCHILD, as well as the counter-culture classics FREAK BABYLON and CHAPEL OF GORE AND PSYCHOSIS.

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Ghosts (yurei) have always played a prominent part in Japanese folklore. Although the majority of ghosts are female - due to the perceived strong passions of women - there are also some notable male ghosts. Male ghosts tend to fall into one of two categories - either a warrior who was killed in battle and cannot pull himself away from the historical events in which he figured (these appear mostly in Noh theatre), or an onryo (a vengeful ghost who returns from purgatory to avenge the wrongs done to them in life). Famous examples of male ghosts include the peasant leader Sakura Sogoro, and the painter Kohada Koheiji.

Sogoro was a village spokesman who was crucified, after watching his family butchered, for daring to complain about taxes to the daimyo, lord Hotta Kozuke. His vengeful ghost was said to have returned to haunt Kozuke's castle until the overlord's wife and son died from fright, and Kozuke himself went mad. Kohada Koheiji was a painter who was killed by his wife and her lover. The popular writer Santô Kyôden (also known as the ukiyo-e artist Kitao Masanobu) developed the Koheiji story further in his novels, Kohada Koheiji and Fukushû Kidan Asaka-numa (Bizarre Tale of Revenge at Asaka Marsh). As vengeance, Koheiji returns to haunt the murderous couple while they are in bed together inside mosquito netting.

The female ghost is perhaps the most recognizable figure in Japanese horror culture, and appears in several differing types; the cat-ghost vampire, the seductress ghost who initiates a post-death love affair with a living human, the ubume or mother ghost who died leaving her children behind and returns to care for them, the yuki-onna or snow-lady, the lethal yurei who suffered badly in life or was murdered by their lover, and whose powerful emotions of jealousy, sorrow, or rage at the moment of death brings them to seek terrible revenge. This last phantom is the one made known globally at the turn of the 20th century through the success of Japanese ghost films such as Ringu ("The Ring") and Ju-On ("The Grudge"). Their traditional appearance - long black hair in disarray over the face, white skin and white burial clothing - goes back to the very first ukiyo-e images of such creatures, of which the original is said to be Maruyama Okyo's painting of the ghost of Oyuki, from 1750. (Oyuki was Okyo's mistress, a geisha who died young; Okyo saw her ghost in a dream one night and was inspired to create this seminal image.)

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