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KAWAHARA KEIGA

STUDIO PAINTINGS

Guus Röell



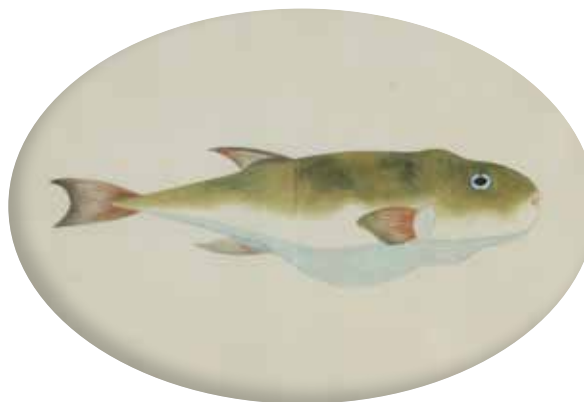
Guus Röell

KAWAHARA KEIGA STUDIO PAINTINGS

Japanese fish paintings

an album with paintings of popular types,
monthly festivities, and birds

a scroll with shunga paintings



Maastricht June 2020



KAWAHARA KEIGA'S STUDIO

Kawahara Keiga (1786-c.1860), also known by his family name as Toyosuke, was a Nagasaki painter from the late Edo period. Little is known about his life, but very much of his work has survived. Keiga was born in Nagasaki and became a pupil/assistant of Ishizaki Yūshi (1768-1846). Yūshi was the first Japanese painter to document the Chinese and Dutch presence in Nagasaki, as well as other foreigners, such as the Russian Rezanov. As inspector of Chinese paintings, he had access to Chinese and Dutch prints, paintings, drawings, and illustrated books that arrived at Nagasaki, giving him an insight into foreign painting techniques that were quite unusual to a Japanese artist of that time. Keiga, trained by Yūshi, was appointed “painter who was allowed to go in and out of Deshima” (*dejima de-iri eshi*) in 1823, the year Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796-1866) arrived at Nagasaki. Keiga had been working for the Dutch, commissioned by Jan Cock Blomhoff, warehouse master, second in rank after the Opperhoofd in Deshima from 1809 till 1813, and Opperhoofd from 1817 till 1823, and by Johan Frederik van Overmeer Fischer, secretary to Jan Cock Blomhoff, later warehouse master and secunde in Deshima. However, it was the scientist Siebold who engaged Keiga to work for him on quite a different scale. He meant to publish works on Japanese nature, culture, products of applied arts, and ethnographics, and had Keiga visually document Japan as completely as possible for his scientific work. To produce works in accordance with his Dutch clients orders, Keiga used various artistic techniques; detailed animal and plant paintings, monochrome Chinese ink paintings (*suibokuga*), and Nanpin-style hanging scrolls are found among his extant works. Keiga only very occasionally signed his work with his family name “Toyosuke” and apart from that, he had a studio in Nagasaki where assistants made copies after his works which Dutch mercantile employees who were working on the island, could order. About a thousand of his (or his studio's) works can be found in Leiden (National Museum of Ethnology, and Museum Naturalis in Leiden) and several hundreds in other museums and private collections around the world.

Siebold was sent to Japan by the Dutch Indian Government to carry out a comprehensive survey of Japan, later to be published in his *Fauna Japonica*, *Flora Japonica*, and *Nippon*. For the illustrations in these publications Siebold needed

Photo: View of Nagasaki Bay, **Kawahara Keiga** (1786-c. 1860), *Uit Verre Streken*, June 2017

precise paintings. Because Siebold thought it would be difficult to make progress in his research by relying on Japanese painters only, he requested the Governor General of the Dutch East Indies in Batavia to send a painter and a research assistant. In 1825 the painter Carl Hubert de Villeneuve and Heinrich Bürger, who would work as his research assistant, arrived in Japan. Villeneuve trained Keiga, and Bürger, a zoologist, physicist, chemist, mineralogist, and pharmacist, assisted Siebold in his studies of Japan. In 1826, both Keiga and Bürger joined Siebold on the court journey to the Shogun in Edo.

Siebold was forced to leave Japan in 1829, after the “Siebold Incident” in which he was accused of espionage for the Russians. For his involvement in the incident, Keiga was shortly imprisoned by the Tokugawa Shogunate. Later, in 1842, he was punished again, this time with life-long banishment from Nagasaki and Edo, for not complying with the censorship regulations. After 1842 nothing is known about Keiga’s whereabouts. After Siebold’s departure in 1829, Bürger continued to send him specimens, illustrations, and information of Japanese flora and fauna, to assist Siebold in his research. In a letter, dated December 1st 1831, sent by Bürger in Deshima to Siebold in Leiden, we find the following passage (written in a rather odd mix of German and Dutch):

“Gleich nach Ihrer Abreise von Japan, habe ich mich wie ich bereits im vorigem Jahre Ihnen geschrieben habe, mit Lust und Liebe an die Fische gemacht, mit dem gewünschten Erfolge dass jetzt bereits 400 Species, nach dem Leben durch Toyoske gezeichnet sind, wovon bereits 200 mit ausführlichen Beschreibungen von mir versenden sind, worunter Sie wahrscheinlich viel Neues finden werden. Ich habe mich punktlich an Ihre Instruction gehalten, und Alles bekannt oder unbekannt zeichnen zu lassen, um auf diesem Wege ein Ganzes zu liefern von allem was die japansche Seen und Flüsse an Fische ausliefert.”

(From: Tae Nofuji (2015). The Kawahara Keiga Animal, Plant, and Genre Paintings in Siebold’s Collection, *Proceedings of the International Symposium Siebold’s Vision of Japan*, p. 292.)

This shows that after Siebold left Japan, Bürger began working on a survey of fish, and had Keiga make life-like sketches of 400 species, 200 of which Bürger sent to Siebold along with detailed descriptions. These are found along with Bürger’s fish survey memos in the Siebold collection held in the National Museum of Natural History in Leiden. While these fish paintings do not have Keiga’s seal or signature, from this letter it can be gathered that it was indeed Keiga who painted them.

Regarding crustaceans, Bürger wrote:

“Die Krustazeen habe ich ebenfalls wie die Fische begonnen zu beschreiben und zeichnen zu lassen, voral im letzten Jahre wo die Fisch einzigzins seltener für mich geworden sind, Sie erhalten davon in diesem Jahre die erste Lieferung von 25 Beschreibungen mit Zeichnungen, welche Ihnen nach Ihrem Briefe zu ertheilen, wo sie mich noch darauf aufmerksam machen, sehr angenehm seyn wird. Die durch Ihnen in Japan gefundenen 80 Species Crustacean habe ich bereits auf 120 gebracht wovon de Duplicate, sowohl getrocknet als auf Druck in diesem Jahre versenden werden. Ich werde im folgenden Jahre damit fortfahren, und auch hier alles bekannt oder unbekannt durch Toyoske zeichnen zu lassen, und hoffe im nächstem Jahre Ihnen die wiederum eine Lieferung von 50 Species gezeichnet und beschrieben zukommen zu lassen.”

(From: Tae Nofuji (2015). The Kawahara Keiga Animal, Plant, and Genre Paintings in Siebold’s Collection, *Proceedings of the International Symposium Siebold’s Vision of Japan*, pp. 292-293.)

Here, Bürger states that he would like to send duplicates and samples of the crustaceans he had found, have Keiga draw them, and send Siebold illustrations and descriptions of 50 more species next year as well.

On Siebold’s request, Bürger had Keiga create illustrations, not only of fish and crustaceans, but also of reptiles to be send to Siebold. Again, no seals or signatures can be found on the crustacean and reptile images in the Museum of Natural History in Leiden, but from Bürger’s correspondence it can be gathered that the painter was indeed Keiga.

However, mammal images were a different story. While Keiga certainly did paint some mammals, it appears that Siebold did not think Keiga’s mammal pictures were good enough for his use in a scientific publication. In a report Siebold sent to the Governor General of the Dutch East Indies, dated December 2nd, 1825, he writes that Villeneuve was asked to provide pictures of mammals that the Japanese painter could not paint due to lack of this particular skill. These illustrations are also held at the Museum of Natural History in Leiden. Some include Villeneuve’s signature. In other words, Keiga and Villeneuve painted different subjects for Siebold, and the division of their roles matches the following descriptions found in the “Pictures” section of the “List of Accounts created in Japan between 1823 and 1828”, which was attached to a report that Siebold sent to the Governor General in Batavia:

40. Some illustrations of mammals in Japan that deserve the most attention: created by Mr. De Villeneuve.
41. Some reptile and mammal bone skeleton illustrations: Mr. De Villeneuve
42. Sketches of some fish and sea-dwelling organisms: created by the Japanese painter Toyosuke.
43. Japanese plants, or approximately 60 illustrations of Japanese plants that deserve attention: created by the Japanese artist Toyosuke.

Both Bürger and Siebold clearly thought very highly of Keiga’s paintings of fish, crustaceans, reptiles and plants. In a letter sent by Siebold to Bürger, dated December 22nd, 1830, Siebold writes: “Toyoske’s teekeningen van planten en visschen worden over’t algemeen zeer goed gevonden: laat hem dat zoveel mogelijk tekenen.” Here Siebold states that since Keiga’s plant and fish paintings are very good, he should be asked to paint these as much as possible.

In close cooperation with Siebold, Villeneuve and Bürger, the artist Keiga developed the skills to produce paintings that could be employed in scientific illustrated books on the flora and fauna of Japan, to be published in Europe by Siebold.

FISH PAINTINGS

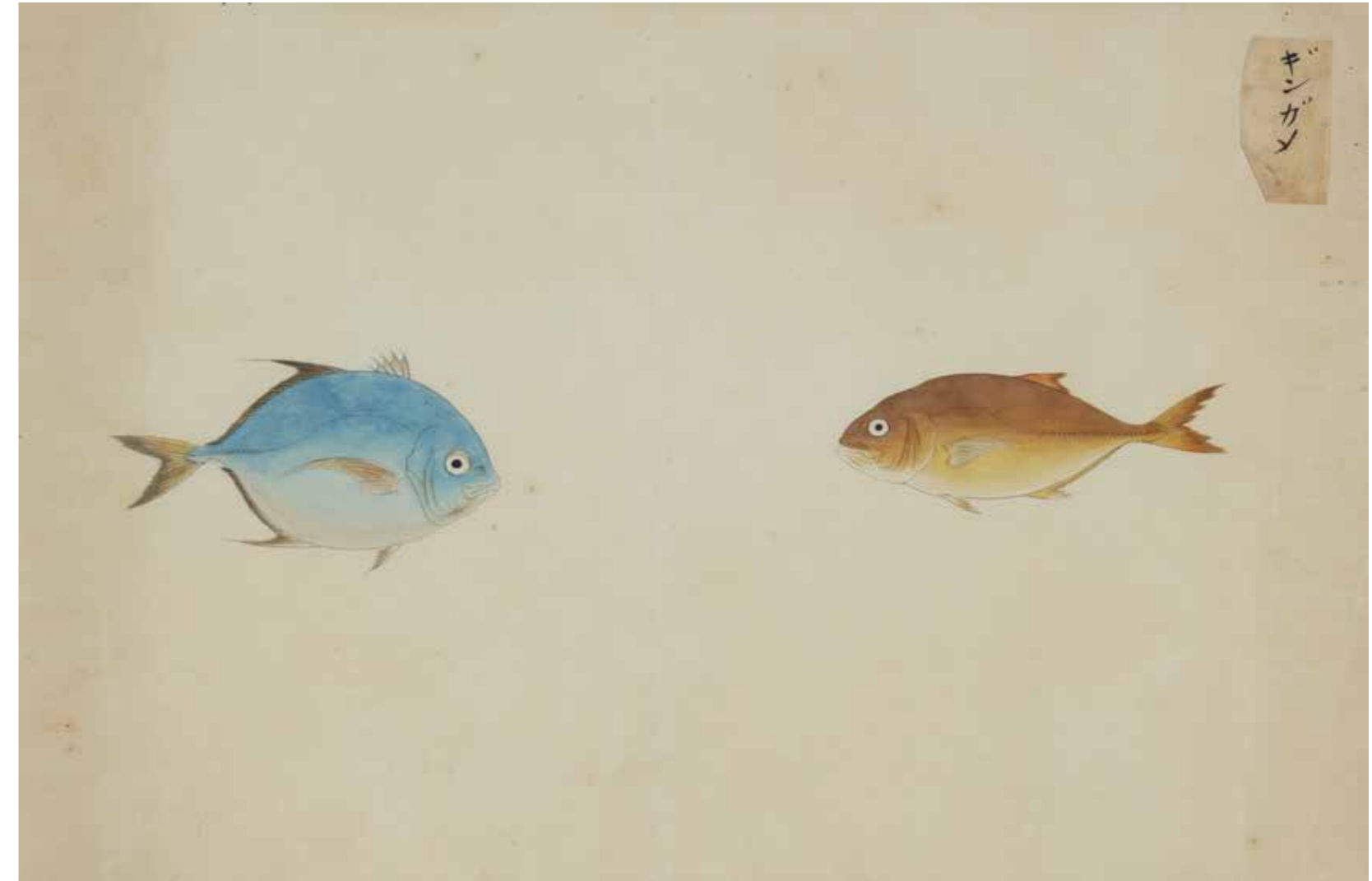
Edo period, mid 19th century

A group of twenty four paintings of Japanese fish with their names attached in Japanese katana syllabary script.

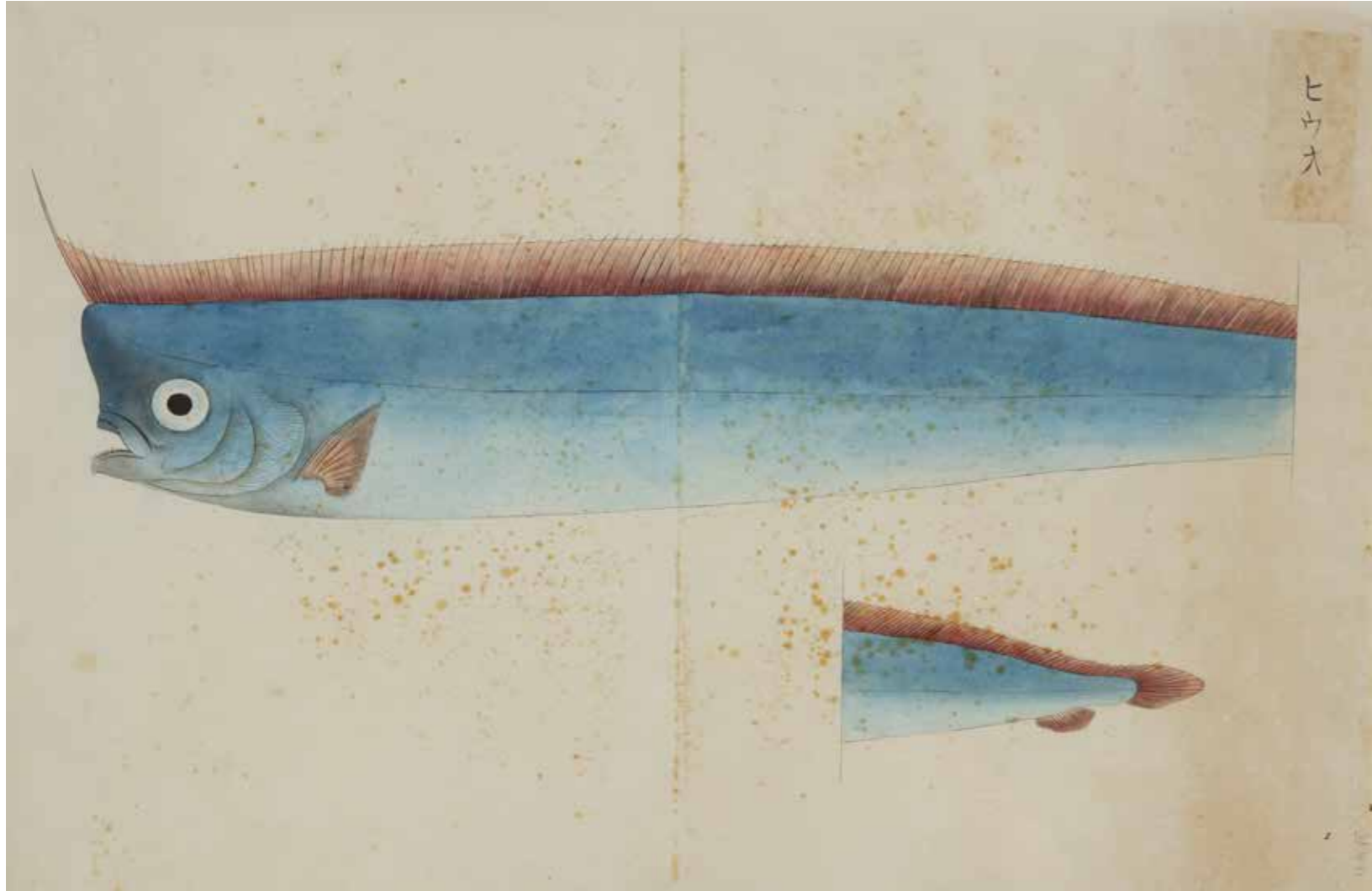
Ink and colour on Dutch paper (Van Gelder & Co).

26 cm x 41.5 cm

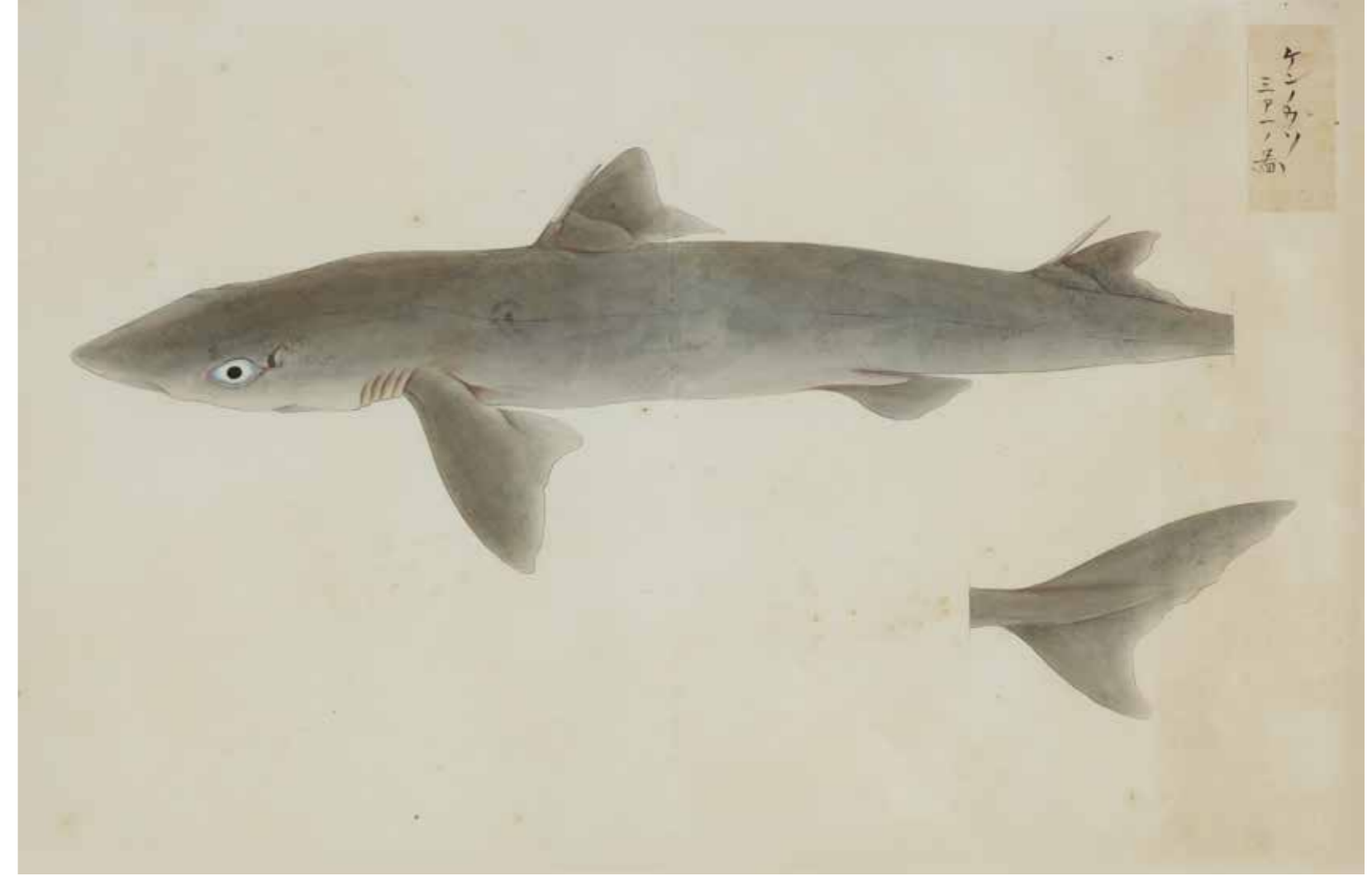
Two earlier sets of fish paintings by Ishizaki Yūshi (1768 – 1846) and Kawahara Keiga (1786 – c. 1860) are in the collection of the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden (inv. 360-4983/1. Fisher collection). Drawings kept in Keiga's studio in Nagasaki could be copied to order by his assistants. In the collection of the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden, there is a self-portrait by Keiga working, either as assistant of Yūshi or with two assistants of his own in his studio. It is known that Siebold gave Keiga Dutch paper by Van Gelder & Co to work on. The present set of fish paintings on Van Gelder & Co paper consists of copies of original Keiga paintings, copied by his assistants or followers.



Japanese name: ギンガメアジ English name: **Bigeye Trevally**



Japanese name: アカナマダ English name: **Crestfish**



Japanese name: ツノザメの仲間と思われるが和名無し English name: **Picked dogfish**



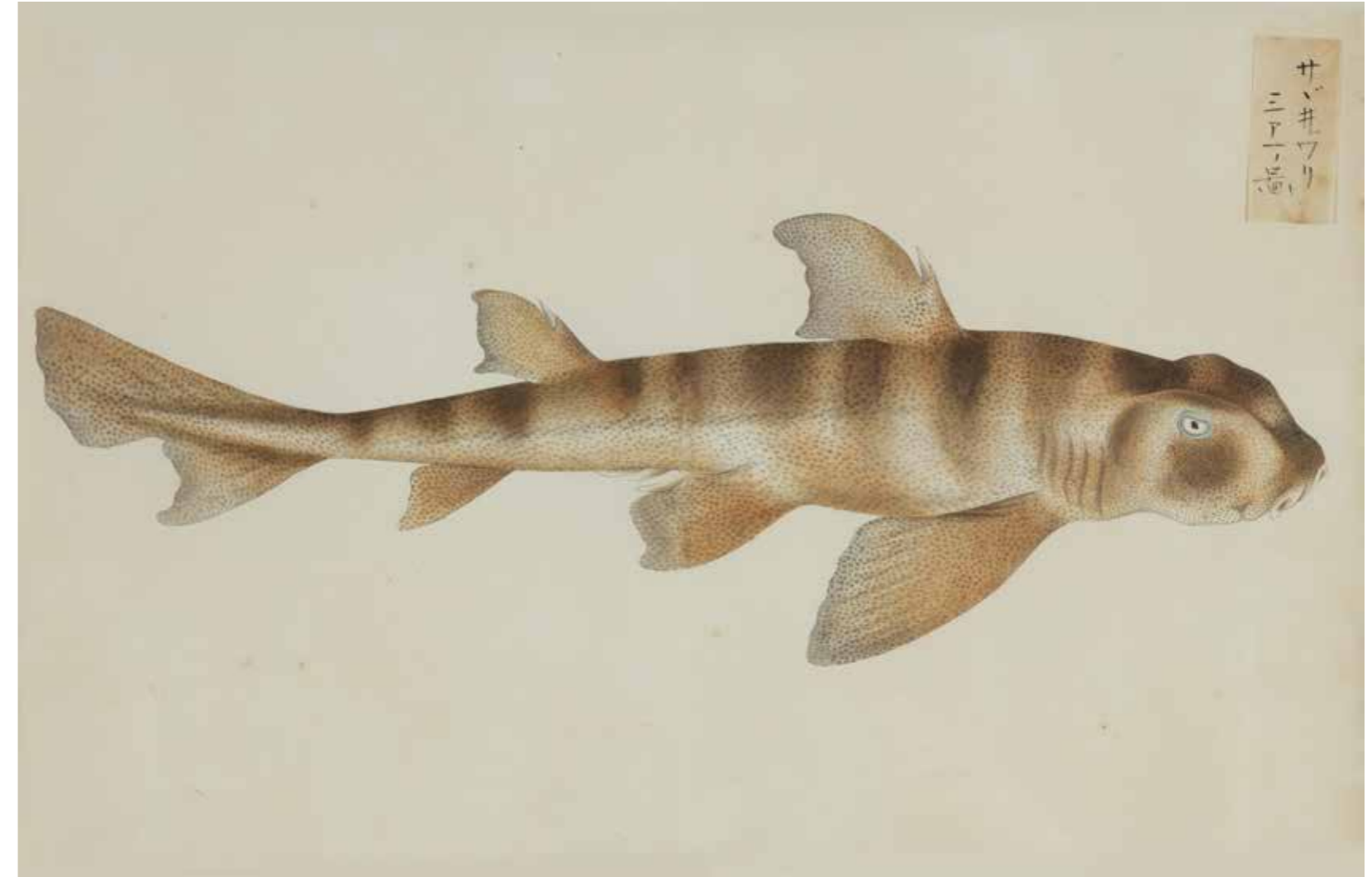
Japanese name: カサゴ English name: **False kelpfish**



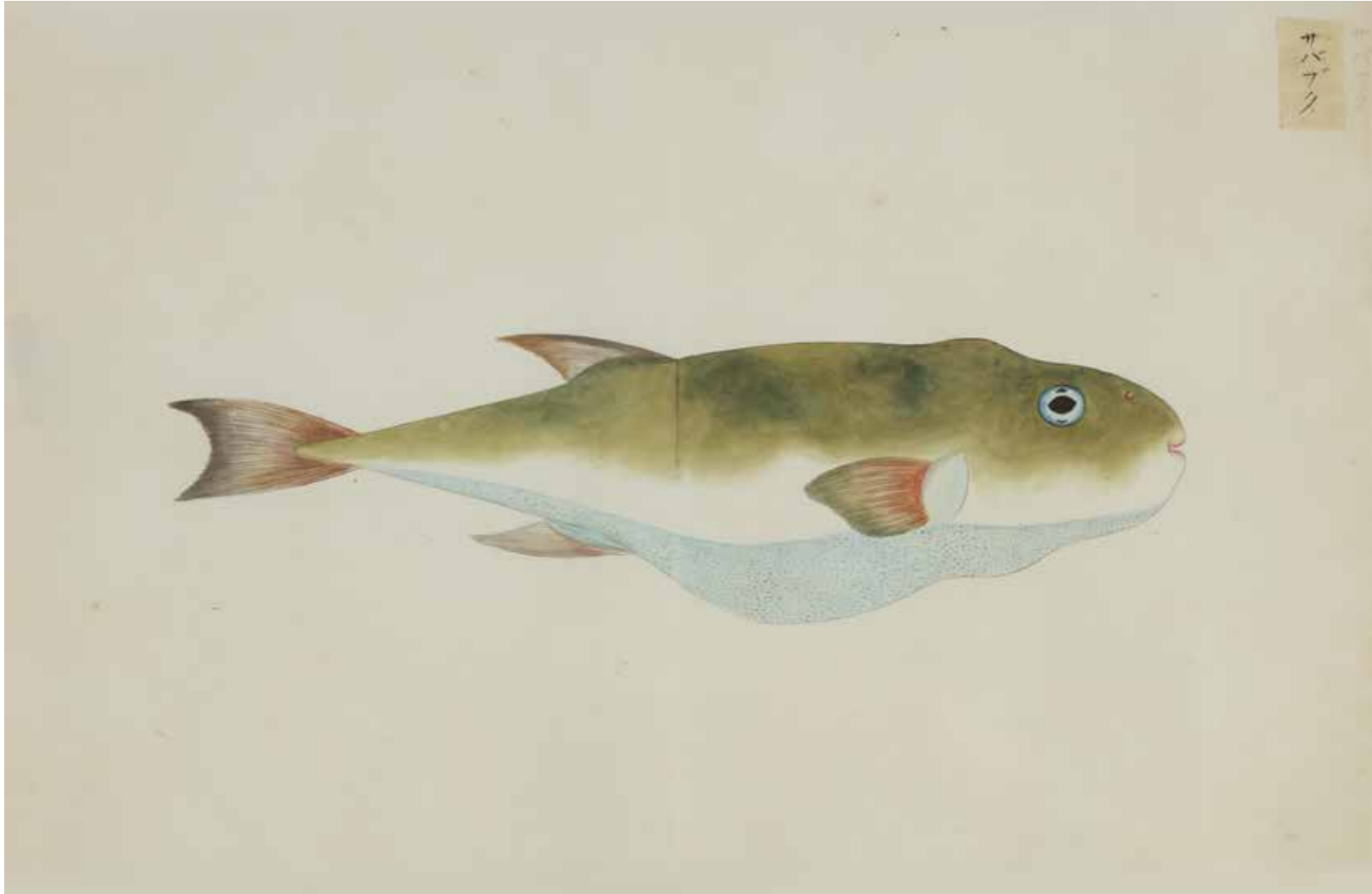
Japanese name: キントキダイ と思われる English name: **Red bigeye**



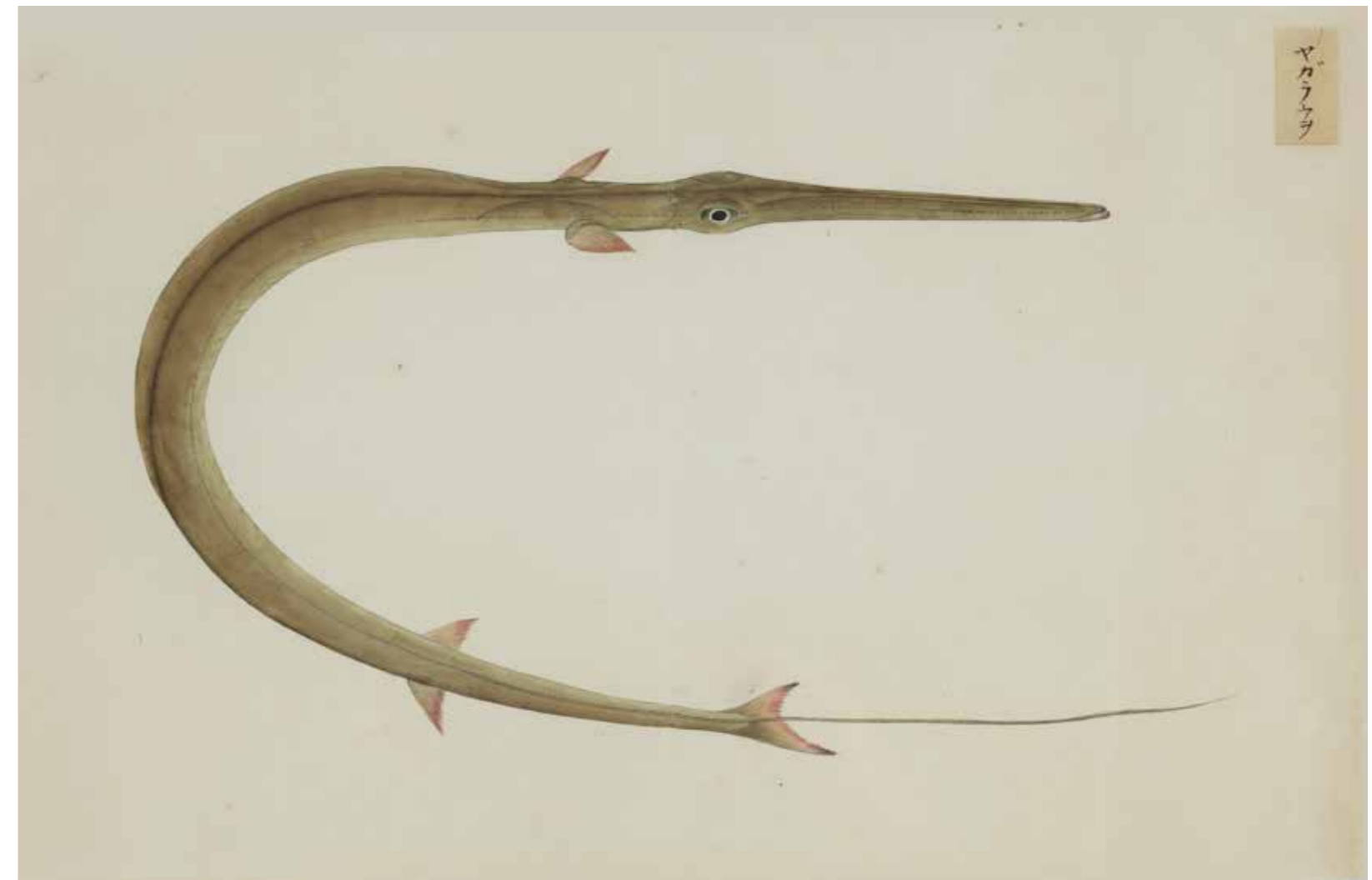
Japanese name: ハガツオ と思われる English name: **Striped bonito**



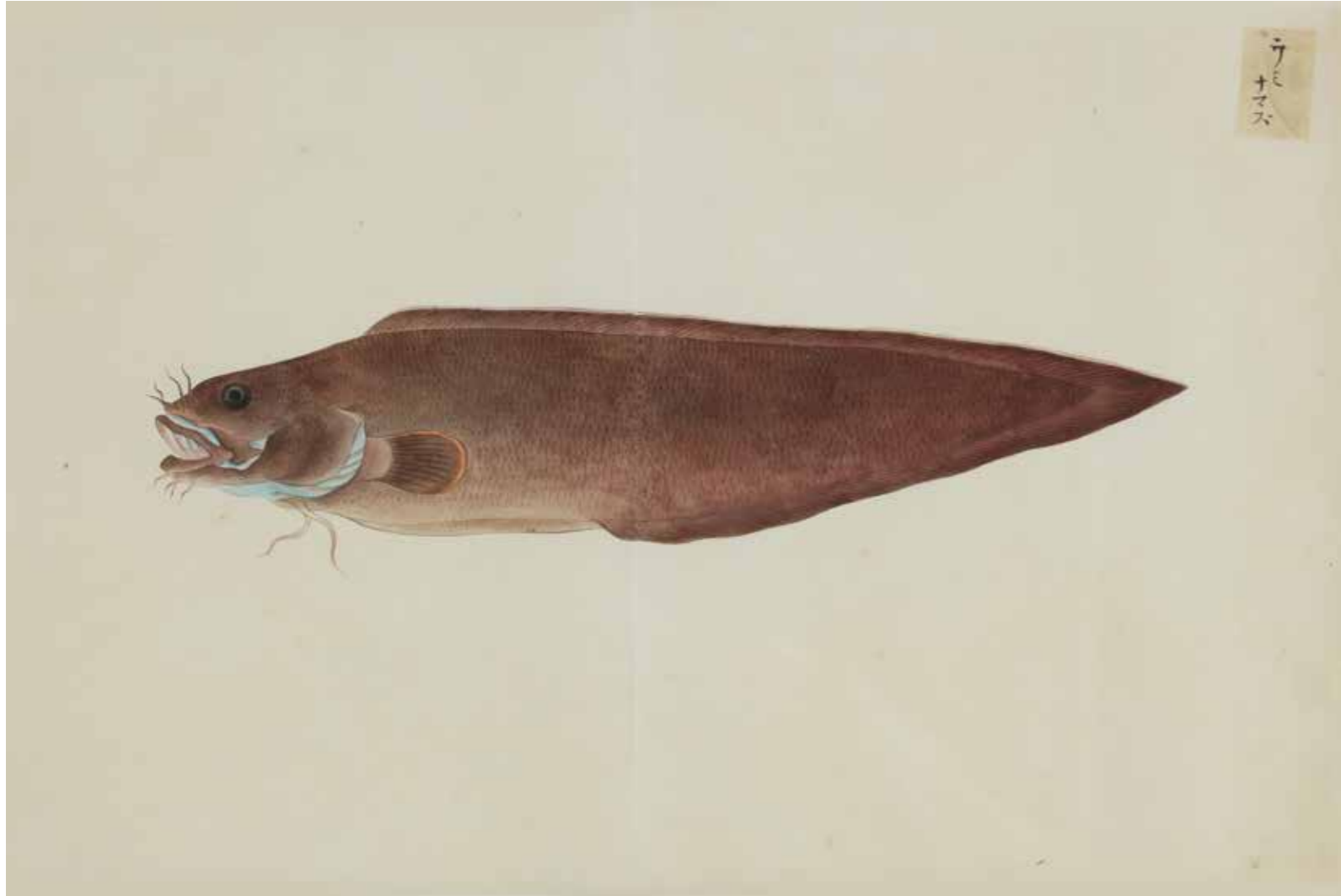
Japanese name: ネコザメ English name: **Bull-head shark** (Sazaiwari)



Japanese name: サバフグ English name: **Smooth blowfish (blaasop)**



Japanese name: アオヤガラと思われる English name: **Bluespotted cornetfish**



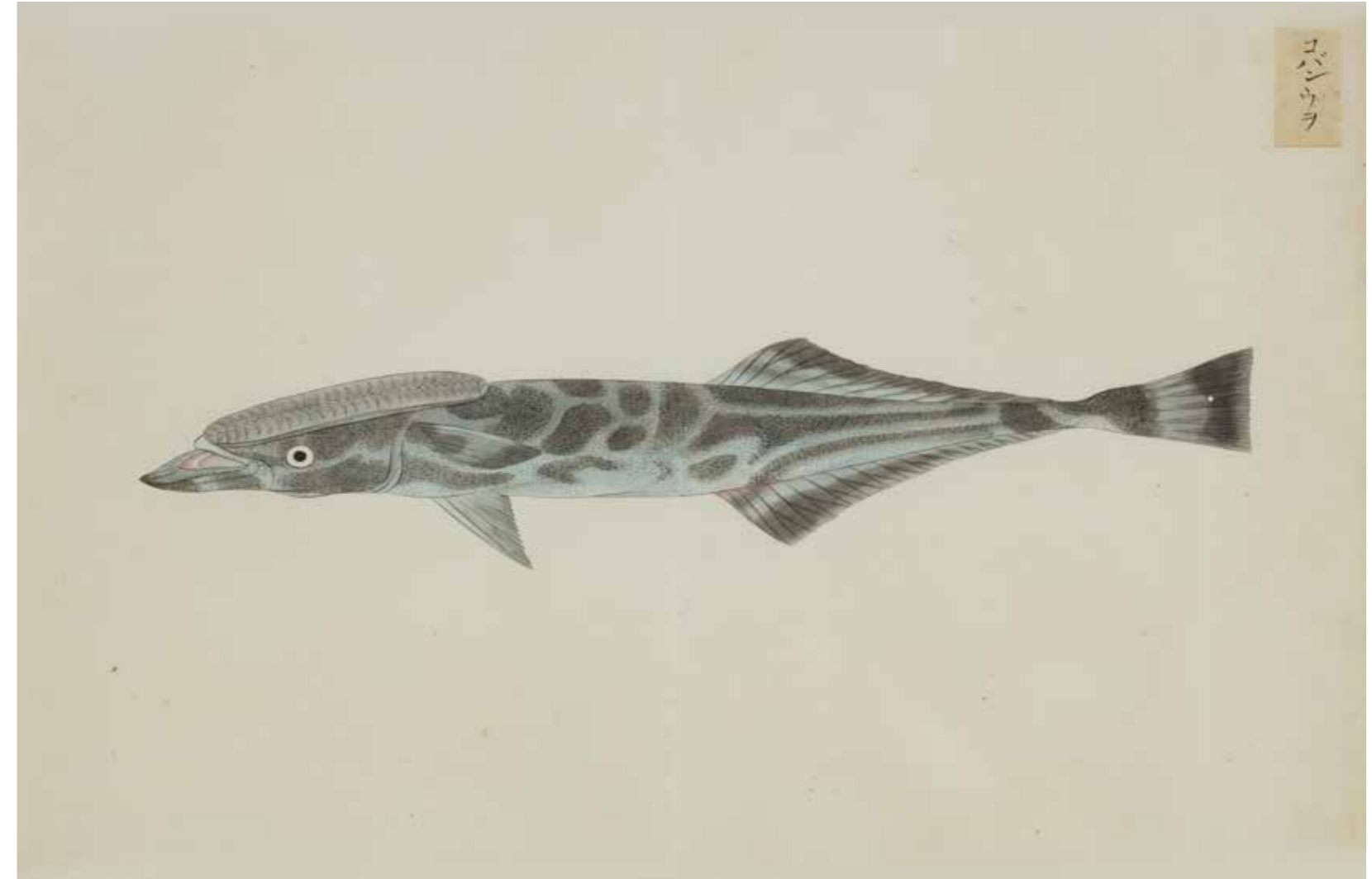
Japanese name: イタチウオ English name: **Goatsbeard brotula**



Japanese name: アカエイ English name: **Whip stingray**



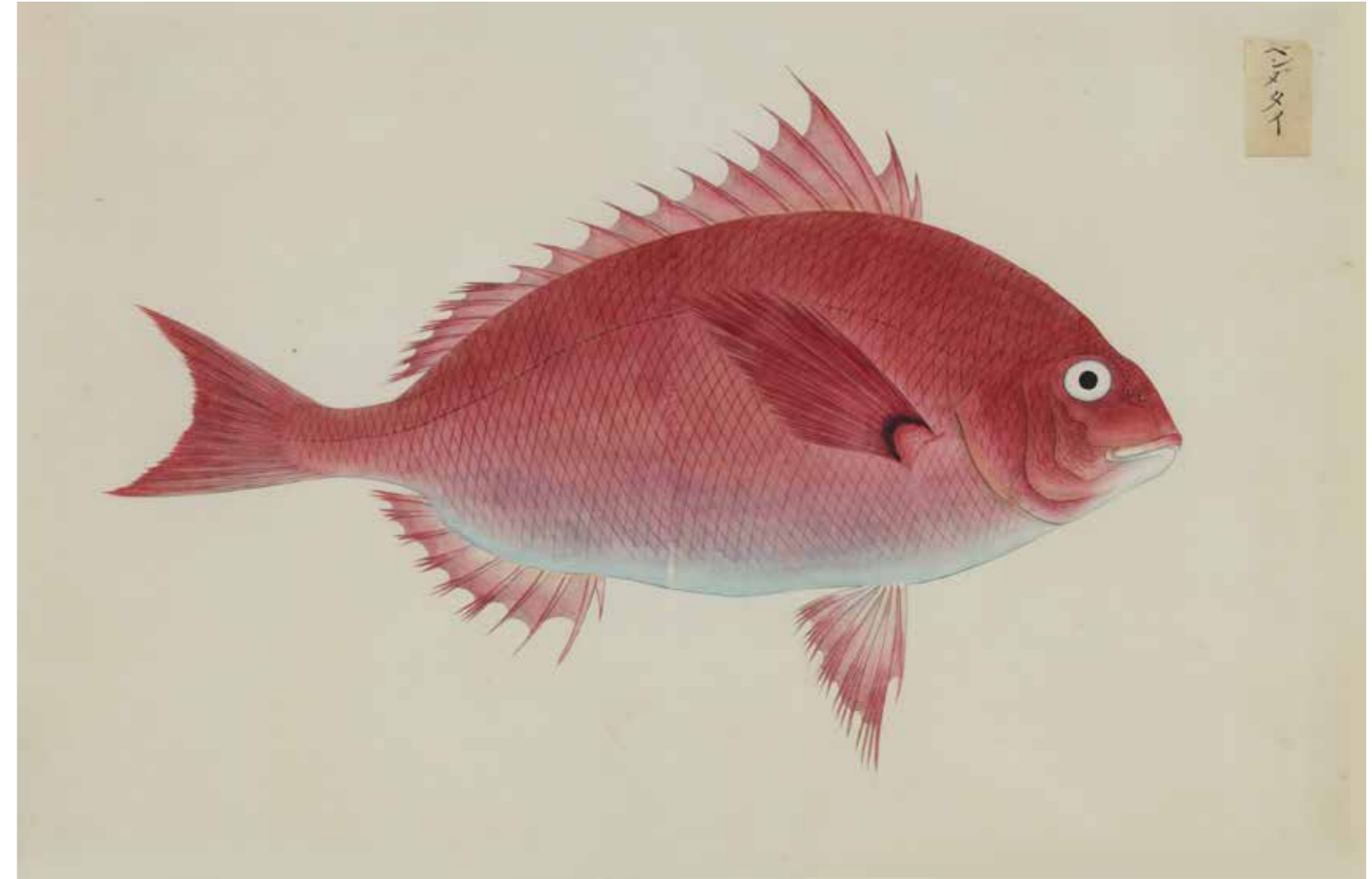
Japanese name: イトヨリダイ English name: **Golden threadfin bream**



Japanese name: コバンザメ English name: **Live shark sucker**



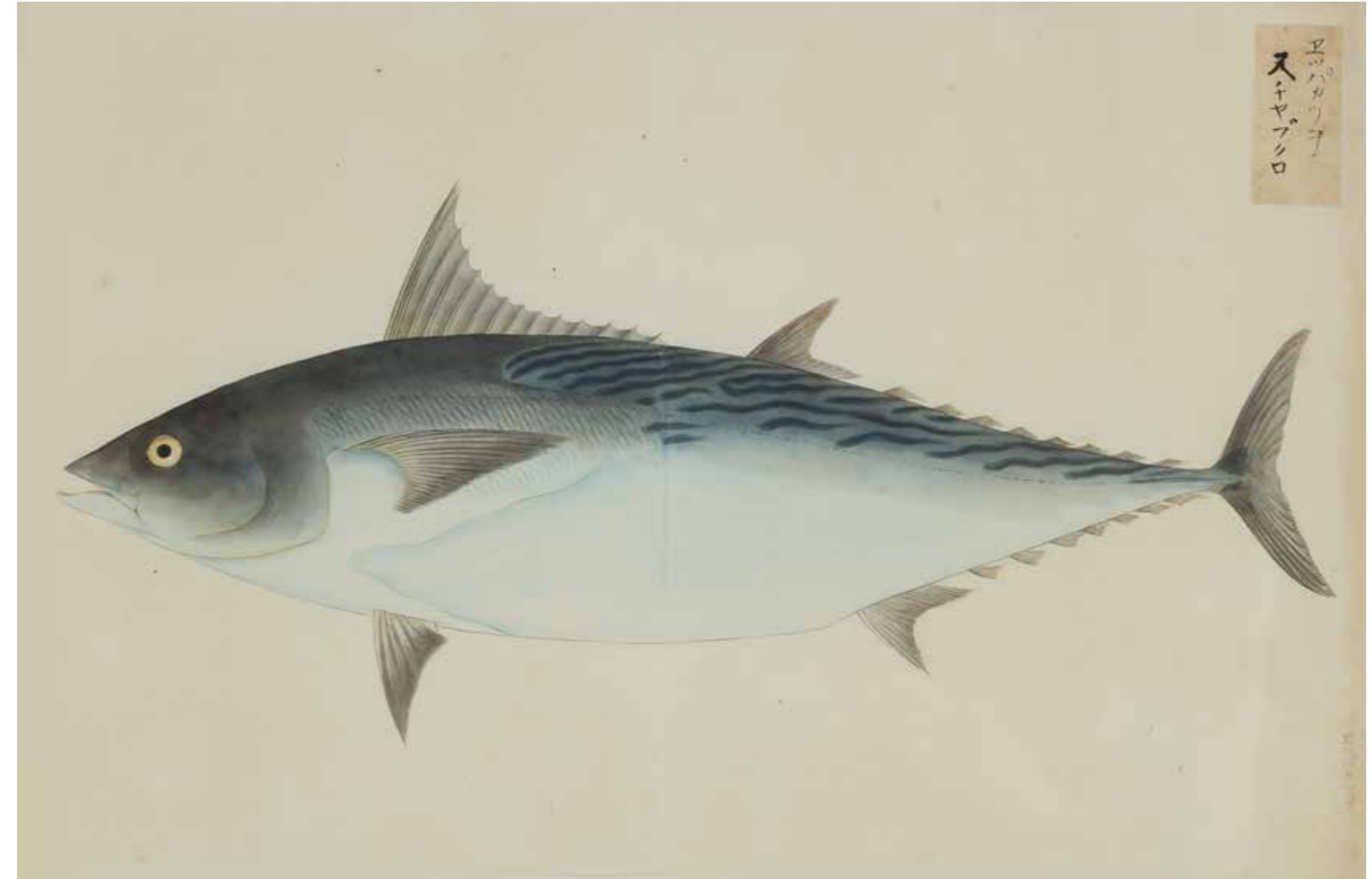
Japanese name: ブダイ English name: **Japanese parrotfish**



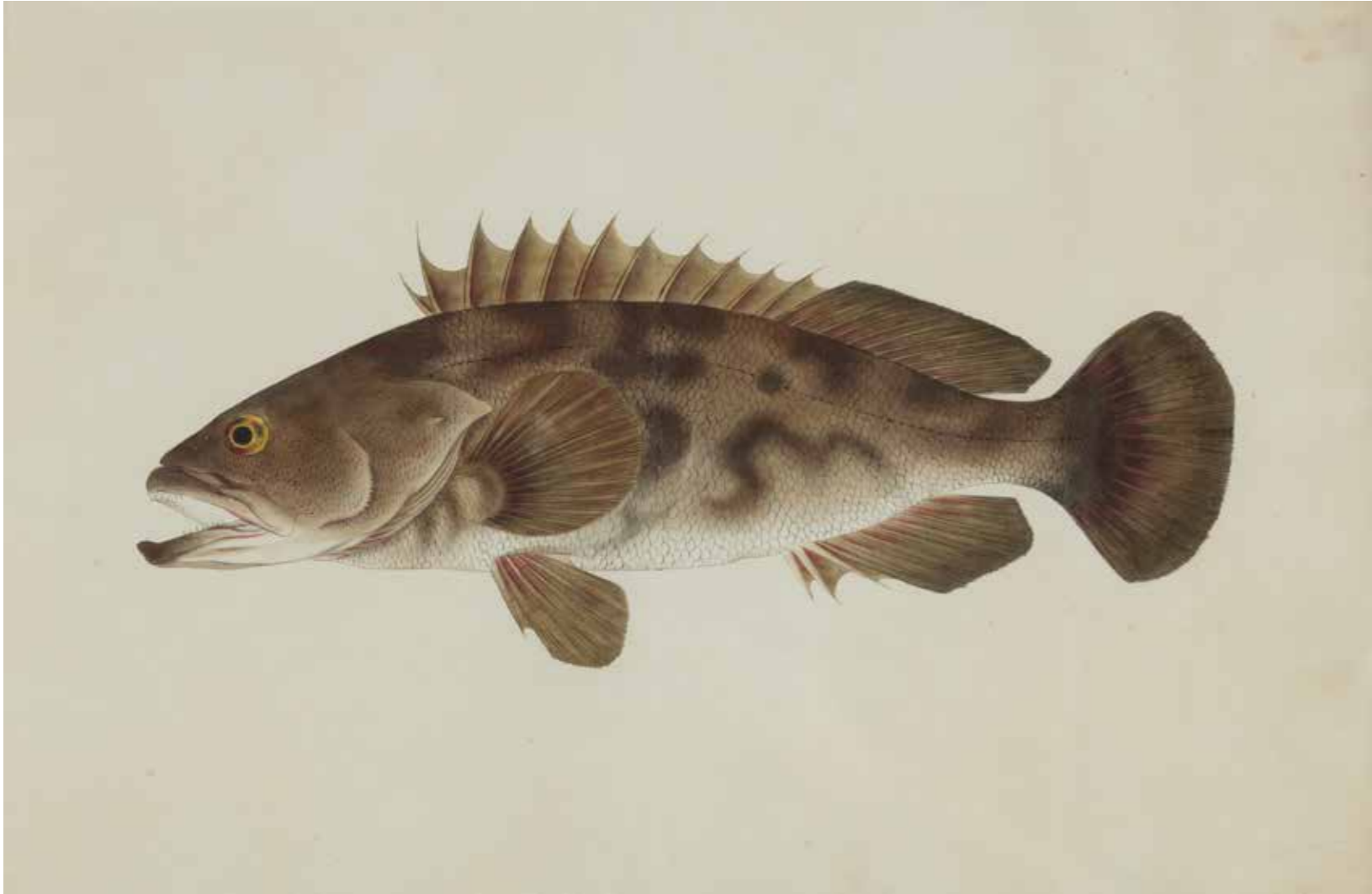
Japanese name: マダイ と思われる English name: **Red seabream**



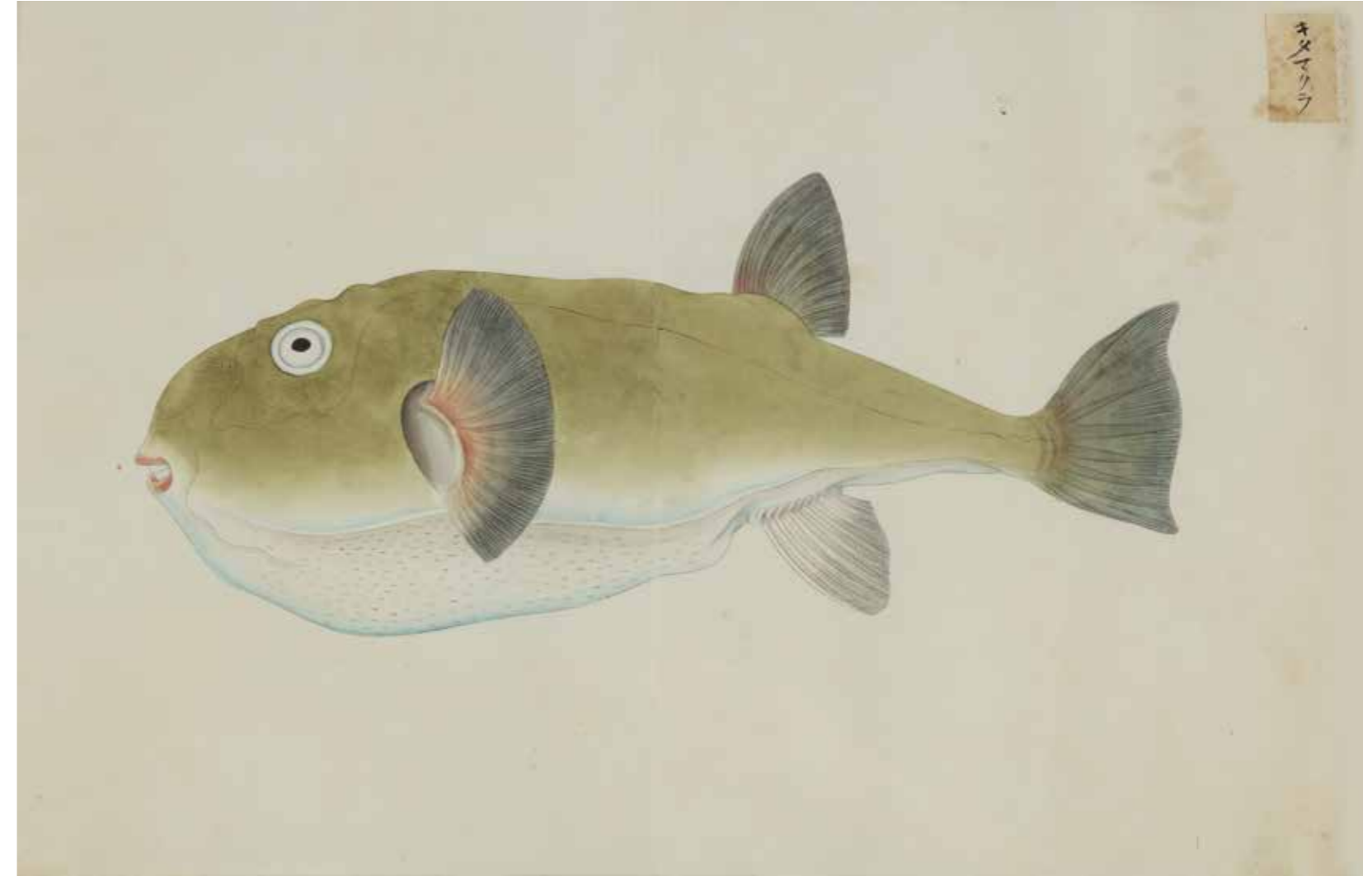
Japanese name: アンコウ English name: **Blackmouth angler**



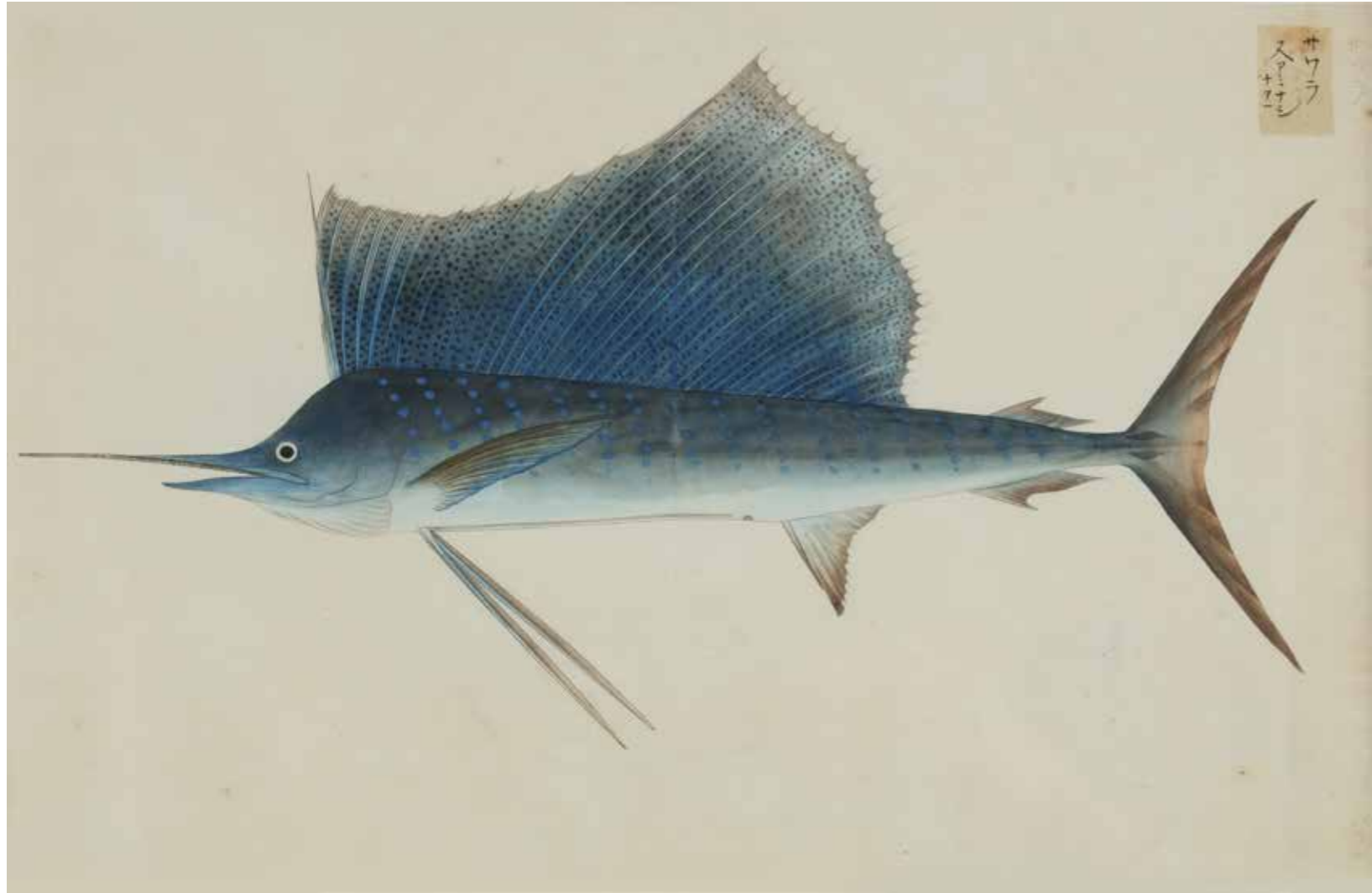
Japanese name: スマ English name: **Kawakawa**



Japanese name: クエ English name: **Longtooth grouper**



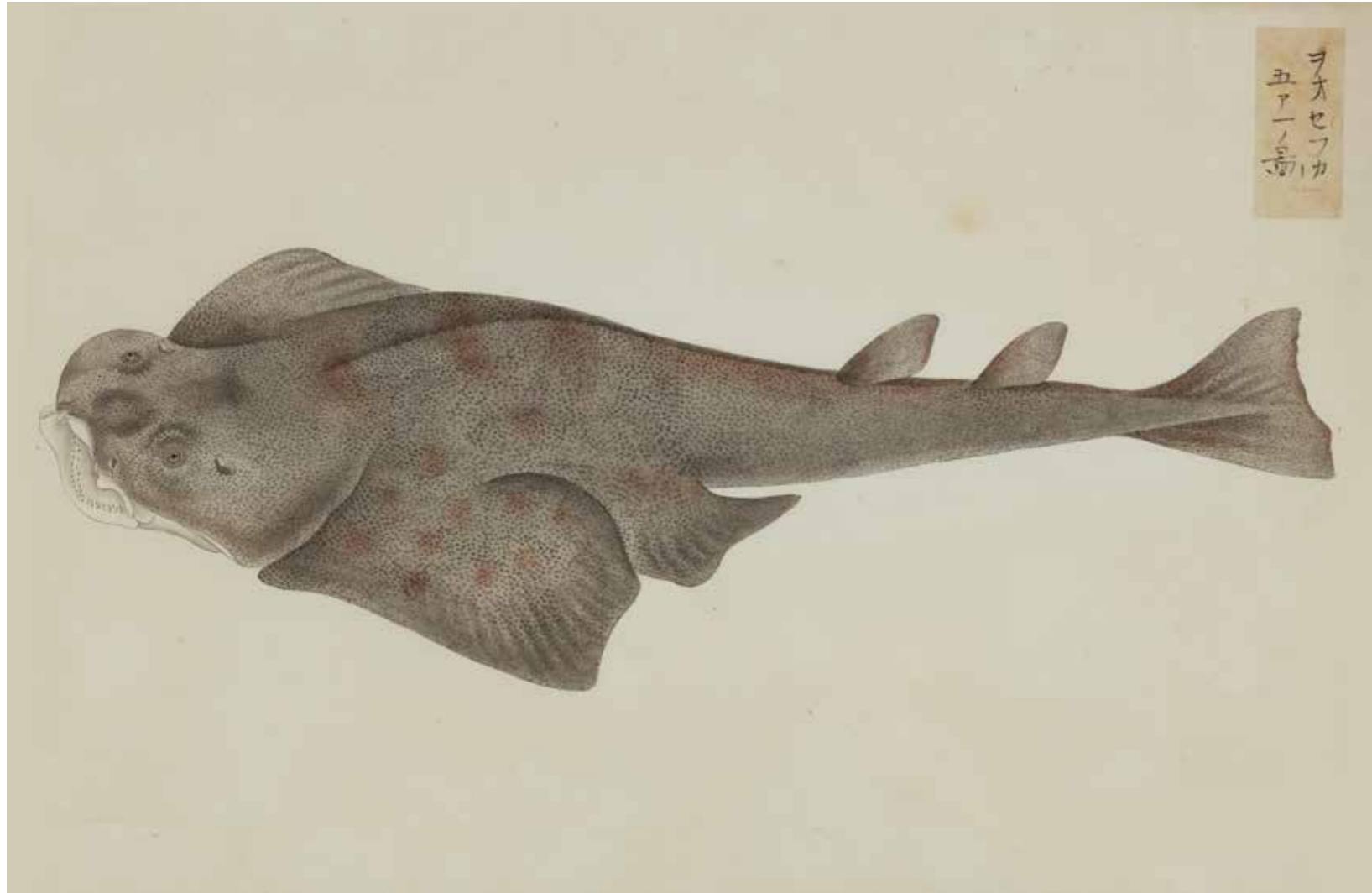
Japanese name: トラフグ English name: **Japanese pufferfish**



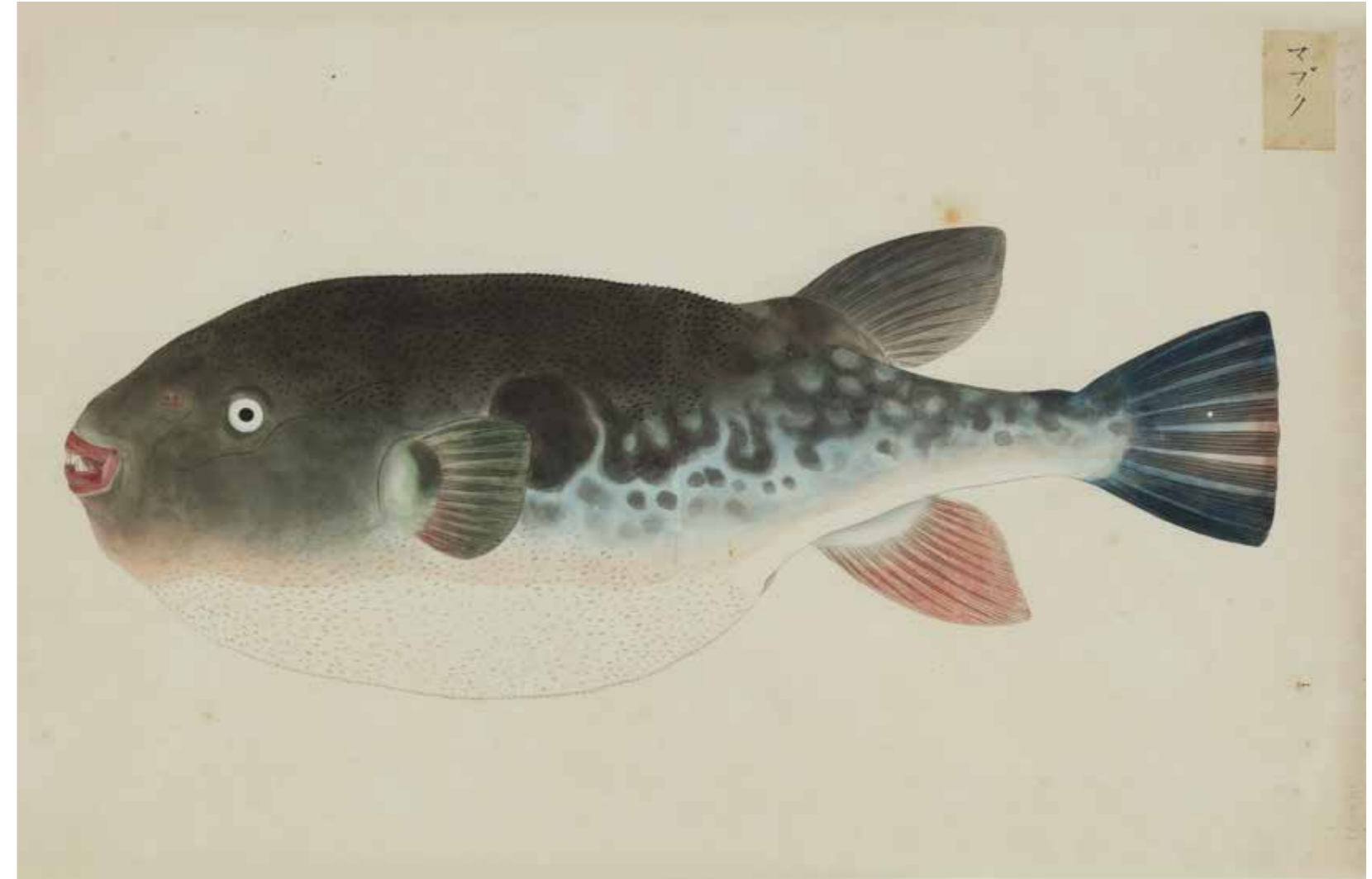
Japanese name: バシヨウカジキ English name: **Indo-Pacific sailfish**



Japanese name: ホウボウ English name: **Spiny red gurnard**



Japanese name: カスザメ English name: **Japanese angelshark**



Japanese name: 紫色のフグ English name: **Purple puffer**



Japanese name: プリ English name: **Japanese amberjack**





The artist's atelier. Either Ishizaki Yūshi or Kawahara Keiga with two assistants (from the Siebold collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. RV-1-1039.)

EDWARD GRÖSSER'S ALBUM

An album with 66 original watercolour paintings on European paper of Japanese people of all walks of life, Japanese festivities in the twelve months of the year, and birds of Japan, by painters in Kawahara Keiga's studio, circa 1855-1864. Oblong folio bound in Western style half-calf. The leather cover is imprinted with European Jugendstil decoration and imprinted and gilt with "ALBUM." The leather spine is restored, but the inside of the album is in original and good condition.

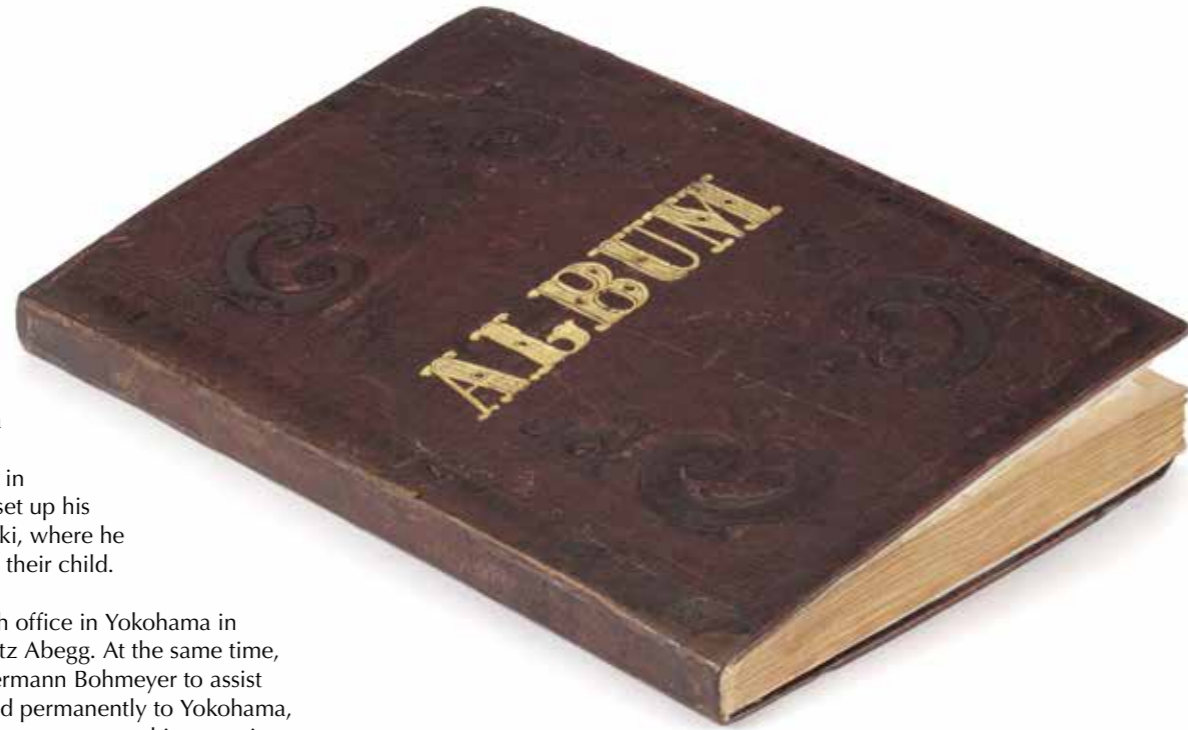
Album: 21.6 x 14.7 cm.

Forty-four pages show illustrations of Japanese types, such as high- and low-ranking samurai, upper- and lower-class women, merchants, farmers, craftsmen, musicians, and beggars. Twelve pages show twelve different Japanese "monthly festivities" during the course of the year, and another ten depict birds of Japan.

After 1842, Keiga was banished from Nagasaki and Edo and therefore could not overlook any longer the work that was done in his Nagasaki studio. A painting by his hand, signed and dated 1860, indicates that he was still alive by then, but his whereabouts are not known. When he died and where his grave would be is also not known.

Apparently, Edward Grösser, according to his stamps on the first two pages of the album, commissioned the illustrations in the present album to the Keiga atelier, when he was in Deshima. Beyond doubt, quite a few of the paintings are based on model drawings by Yūshi and Keiga, kept in the workshop since Ishizaki Yūshi handed his over to Kawahara Keiga around 1823. It is interesting to note though that the painting style of the successors in the Keiga workshop is at times quite different from the much more detailed paintings that were made in the 1820s, the days of Blomhoff, Fischer, and Siebold, when Keiga himself and his assistants were still working under the direct control of their patrons. This is especially noticeable in the group of paintings illustrating the twelve monthly festivities, that are rather reminiscent of Western-style watercolour practice. The paintings of the Japanese characters of different walks of life and those of the birds are closer to the earlier date works of the Keiga workshop, when Keiga himself was active in Nagasaki.

Edward (or Everhard) Grösser was from Prussia but nothing seems to be known about his early life, before he travelled to Nagasaki in 1853, by way of Holland, to work for a Dutch firm in Deshima. In 1854 he founded his own company at No. 17 in Deshima under the name "Grösser & Co", being one of the very first Prussian businesses in Japan. By the fall of 1862, Grösser had set up his headquarters at No. 30 Oura in Nagasaki, where he came to live with his Japanese wife and their child.



By early 1864, Grösser opened a branch office in Yokohama in partnership with the Swiss merchant Fritz Abegg. At the same time, he brought in the German merchant Hermann Bohmeyer to assist him in Nagasaki. In 1865 Grösser moved permanently to Yokohama, leaving Bohmeyer and Otto Schuffenhauer to manage his operation at No. 30 Oura in Nagasaki. Grösser's first warehouse in Yokohama was completely destroyed by the great fire of 1866. In 1869 he moved to a stone house he had built at Lot # 180 in Yokohama; this house was later destroyed during the earthquake of 1923.

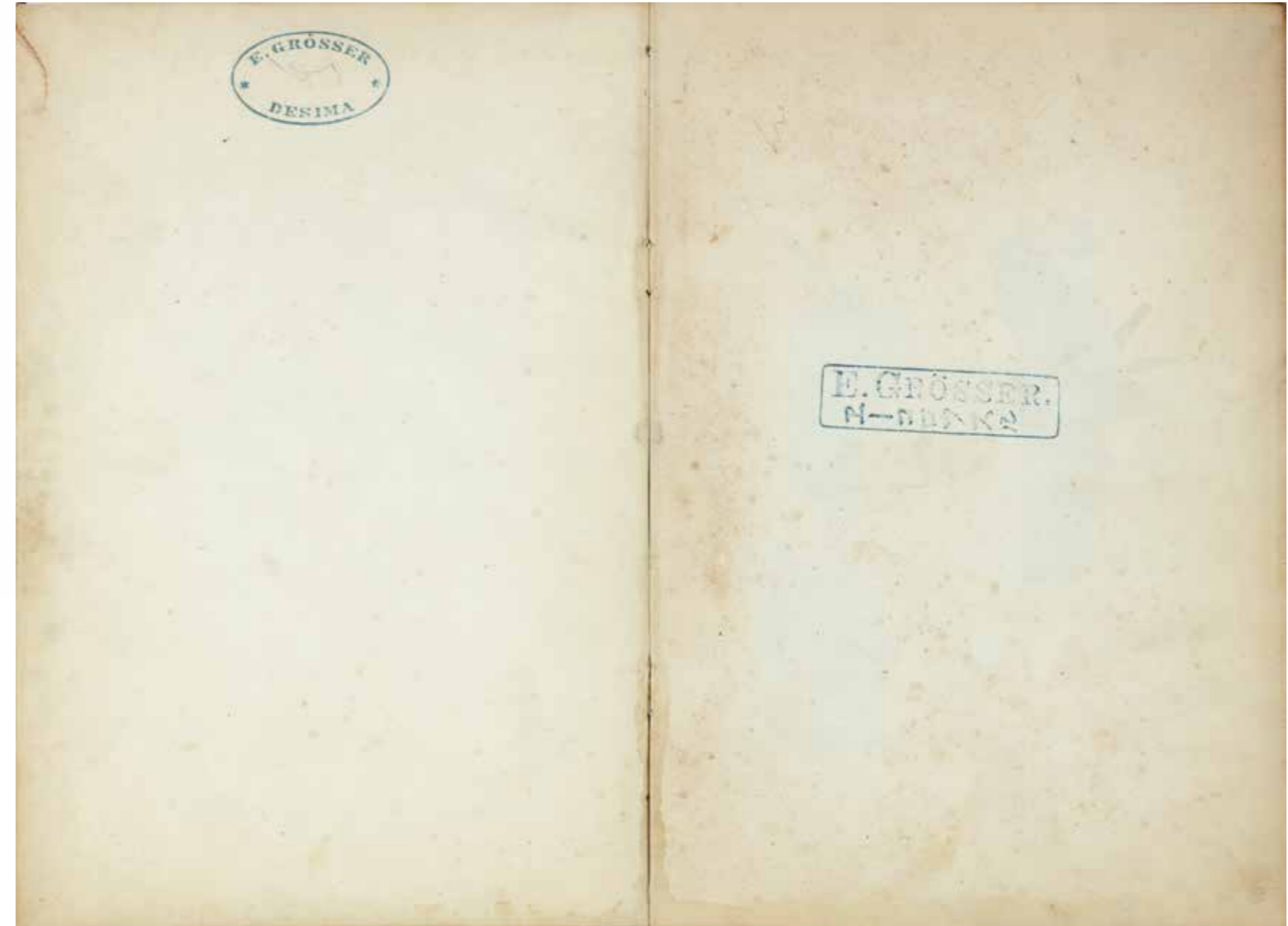
Around 1870, Edward's brother Fritz moved in at Lot # 180 and Edward slowly withdrew, leaving the business to Fritz. The focus of Grösser's business was the import of metals, textile dyes, paints and cement. They also represented some insurance companies and manufacturers, and were known as exporters of glassware.

Edward now moved to London and established the Trading Company E. Grösser & Co, 38 Lime Street in London. He never really felt at home in London, and commuted between London, Bremen and Japan. He died in 1916 in Bad Oeynhausen, Germany.

The present album Edward Grösser apparently ordered from Keiga's studio, when he was based in Nagasaki between 1855 and 1864, that is more than ten years after Keiga himself had been banished from Nagasaki and around the time of Keiga's death.

JAPANESE TYPES

The Album starts with a group of twenty-two double-page illustrations of Japanese of all walks of life, some of which can be directly associated with line drawings by Kawahara Keiga, kept in the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden, whereas there are also similarities in some more worked-out paintings by Keiga in the collections of Blomhoff and Fischer.



To the left, a samurai in an over-kimono followed by his assistant carrying an umbrella and his hat; to the right, two samurai in official *hakama* with their assistants, one of them engaged in a discussion with a crouching townsman.



detail

To the left, a girl playing battledore and shuttlecock, *hanetsuki*, a popular pastime around New Year, and a child holding a shuttlecock; to the right, two high ranking ladies with their kimono tucked over their head, followed by a maid-servant holding up a parasol.



detail

A husband scolded by his wife for having a love affair. His lover hiding behind the screen.



detail

To the left, a procession of boys holding banners and one beating a metal gong; to the right, two men carrying a large drum and a third hitting it, apparently based upon a design for a festival in the fifth month, a children's boat race, *okapeeron*, also called *seiraen*, cf 360-7793 in the Blomhoff collection and 360-4305 in the Fischer collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, both being part of two different sets of paintings depicting the festivities in the twelve months.



detail

To the left, a geisha on her way to a party, an assistant carrying her *shamisen* in a black lacquered case; to the right, a family heading for a shrine on the thirtieth day after the baby's birth, in order to give the newborn child a name, the men holding a box with a present for the shrine (cf. 360-4279 in the Fischer collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden).



detail

Peasants harvesting and enjoying melons, *tōgan*, one of them using his straw hat to keep himself cool.



detail

To the left, a woman taking *shamisen* lessons, a three-stringed banjo-like instrument, with a blind teacher; to the right, a woman returning a borrowed umbrella with thanks, to a restaurant or teahouse.



detail

A police man pointing at one of two actors specializing in female roles, *onnagata*, accompanied by a woman and a servant of the theatre (cf. 360-4343 in the Fisher collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden).



detail

To the left, two itinerant musicians playing the flute, *yokobue*, and the banjo-like three-stringed shamisen, directly based on the line drawing in the Siebold collection (inv. no. 1-4483-15), where they are identified as "Blind musicians," *mekura* (see also cf. 360-7798 in the Blomhoff collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden); to the right, a blind man and a woman gathering kindle-wood. The figure of the man is based on a line drawing in the Siebold collection, being identified as "A blind man," *zato* (inv. no. 1-4483-15). The woman with the bundle of wood is based on a line drawing where she is identified as a "Woman from Yase," *Yaseonna*, after a village near Kyoto, inv. no. 1-4483-2; see also 360-988 in the Blomhoff collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden.



detail

To the left, a fisherman holding a smoking-set inscribed "careful with fire" returning home, followed by his wife breast-feeding their infant and carrying a basket of fish on her head, and their son holding a turtle on a leech (cf. 360-4328 in the Fisher collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden); to the right, two fishermen with their catch in bamboo-plaited baskets, a design directly based on the line drawing in the Siebold collection where they are identified as "Fishermen," *ryōshi*, inv. no. 1-4483-5.



detail

To the left, a woman vending tea in the street and a man carrying two buckets of rice on a yoke over his shoulder; to the right, a peasant carrying two buckets of greens on a yoke over his shoulder and a peasant with a hoe over his shoulder, lighting his pipe by making fire from his flint-box.



detail

To the left, a medical doctor and his servant shouldering a box of necessities, *hasamibako*, quite similar to the line drawing in the Siebold collection identifying him as "A doctor," *isha*, inv. no. 1-4483-16, and see also 360-4341 in the Fisher collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden; to the right, a lower rank samurai in discussion with another samurai and a monk.



detail

To the left, a lower rank samurai secretly visiting a woman; to the right, a young samurai being instructed by his teacher.



detail

To the left, a blind masseur, *ama*, and two mendicant priests; to the right, a traveller wearing a straw hat and holding a walking stick, and a vendor of New Year poems.



detail

To the left, a dog barking at a limping man and another man with a bundle of wood over his shoulder looking on; to the right, a begging woman and her son addressing a vendor of straw sandals.



detail

To the left, a woman putting cotton on a stick and a woman looking on; to the right, a woman spinning a cotton thread.



detail

To the left, a girl standing on the back of a man-servant, hanging a poem on a *tanzaku* slip onto a branch of flowering cherry; to the right, a middle class woman about to write a poem on a *tanzaku* poetry slip, her maid-servant holding an inkstone.



detail

To the left, carpenters at work, one with a drill, a so-called *mawari kiri*, a tool actually introduced into Japan by the Dutch, and another sharpening the blade of his plane on a wetstone; to the right, three (night watch) men using different means to attract attention: a small bronze gong, a drum, and a pair of wooden clappers, *hyōshigi*.



detail

To the left, a man holding a parasol and a man in the disguise of a mendicant monk, *komusō*; to the right, two town's women.



detail

To the left, a woman dragging her drunk husband home; to the right, travellers, one of whom is dragged into an inn by a prostitute, based on a line drawing in the Siebold collection where he is identified as "A traveller," *tabibito*, the woman being identified as "A low class prostitute," *sōka*, inv. no. 1-4483-13, and see also 360-4345 in the Fischer collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden.



detail

To the left, a woman enjoying the company of her two young children; to the right, a woman interrupting her writing to play with her cat.



detail

To the left, two coolies carrying loads on their shoulders, one with baskets of charcoal; to the right, a vendor of rice and a man delivering meals from a restaurant.



detail

FESTIVITIES IN THE TWELVE MONTHS

A first set of paintings of the festivities in the twelve months was commissioned by Blomhoff to Ishizaki Yūshi in the early 1820's. In a subsequent set, part of the compositions as well as some isolated figures were based on Yūshi's original designs. Later, Fischer would commission two somewhat different series of paintings on the twelve months' festivities to Keiga, and also Siebold commissioned a series of "festivities" paintings to Keiga. All of the paintings from these five different sets are in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden.

The model drawings for these earlier series were apparently still available in the Keiga atelier in Nagasaki for the painter of the present set to be used as models. The paintings in the present set are made by one and the same artist, working in a rather loose and sketchy style. At the bottom of the sheets are faded, unreadable notes in pencil.

We should realize that the first month in the lunar calendar in use at the time corresponds rather with our February or even part of March. The Gionsan festival, for example is set here in the sixth month, whereas it is presently celebrated from 23 to 29 July, and the Nagasaki Kunchi festival is placed in the ninth month, whereas it is nowadays celebrated each year from 7 to 9 October.



The First Month: A courtesy call on the occasion of the New Year; the woman offering something to eat and her daughter bringing a cup of tea to three lower-ranking samurai coming to pay their respect to their superior.

Boys are playing outside at the New Year decorations of pine and bamboo, *kadomatsu*. To the left the traditional New Year decoration of a lobster upon three circular ricecakes, *kagamimochi*. The composition is reminiscent of

Yūchi's painting in the Blomhoff collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. 360-7789.



The Second Month: A curving road with a large number of *torii* gates leading to a Shinto shrine in the distance. In the foreground a boy flying a kite over the rice fields, a popular pastime,

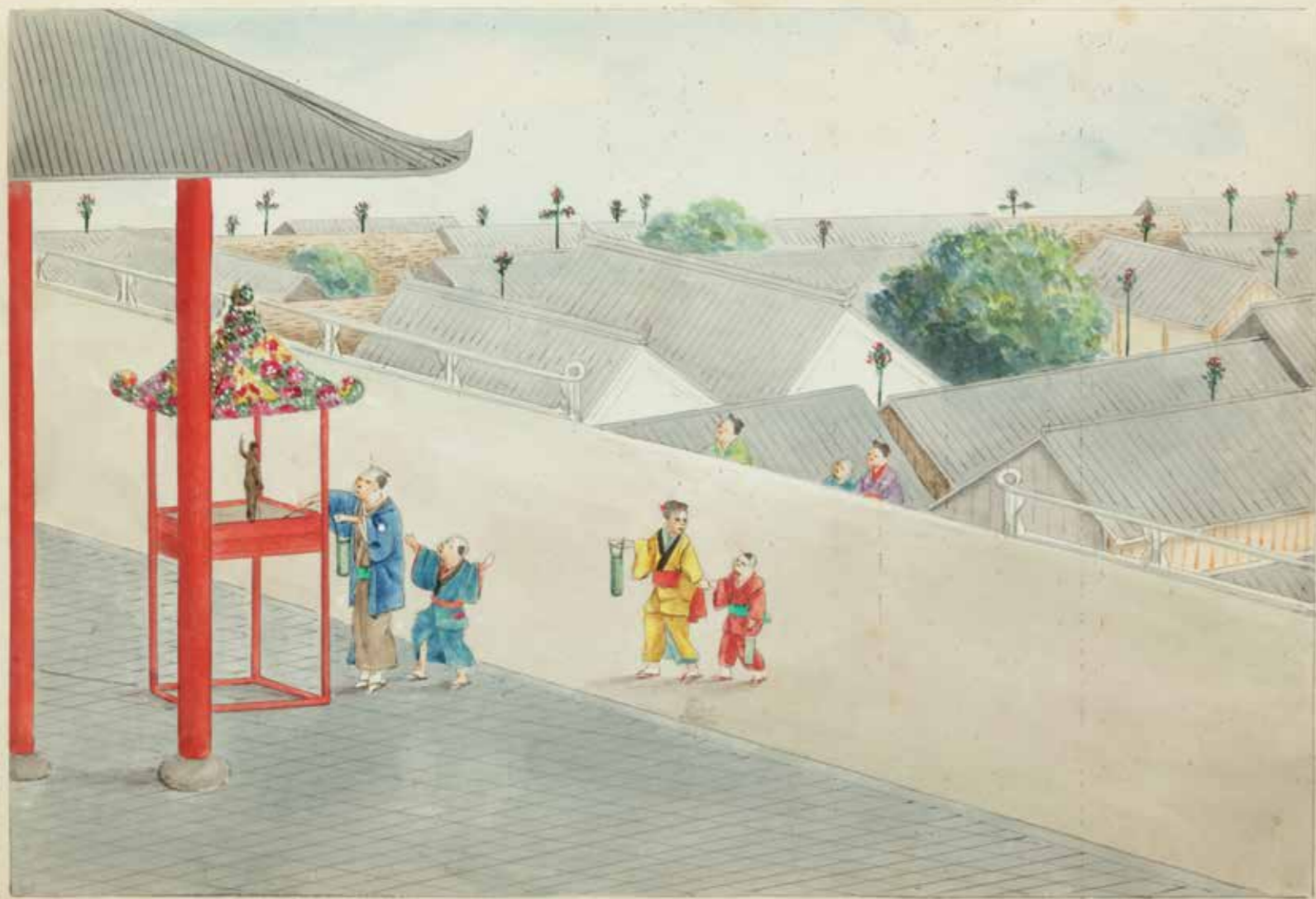
traditionally done in Nagasaki on the 25th day of the second month and on the 10th day of the third month. The figures of the kite flying boy and the other boy pointing out the kite to his

little brother, are directly copied after Yūshi's painting in the Blomhoff collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. 360-7790.



The Third Month: The Girls festival, *hinamatsuri*, celebrated on the third day of the third month, with an arrangement of a group of puppets on a platform covered with a piece of red material. The lady of the house is making an ikebana

arrangement. The girl in the foreground left is literally copied after a Yūshi painting in the Blomhoff collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. 360-7791.



The Fourth Month: People visiting a temple on the eight day of the fourth month to celebrate the birthday of Buddha, *kanbutue*, also popularly called the Flower Festival, *hanamatsuri*. It is

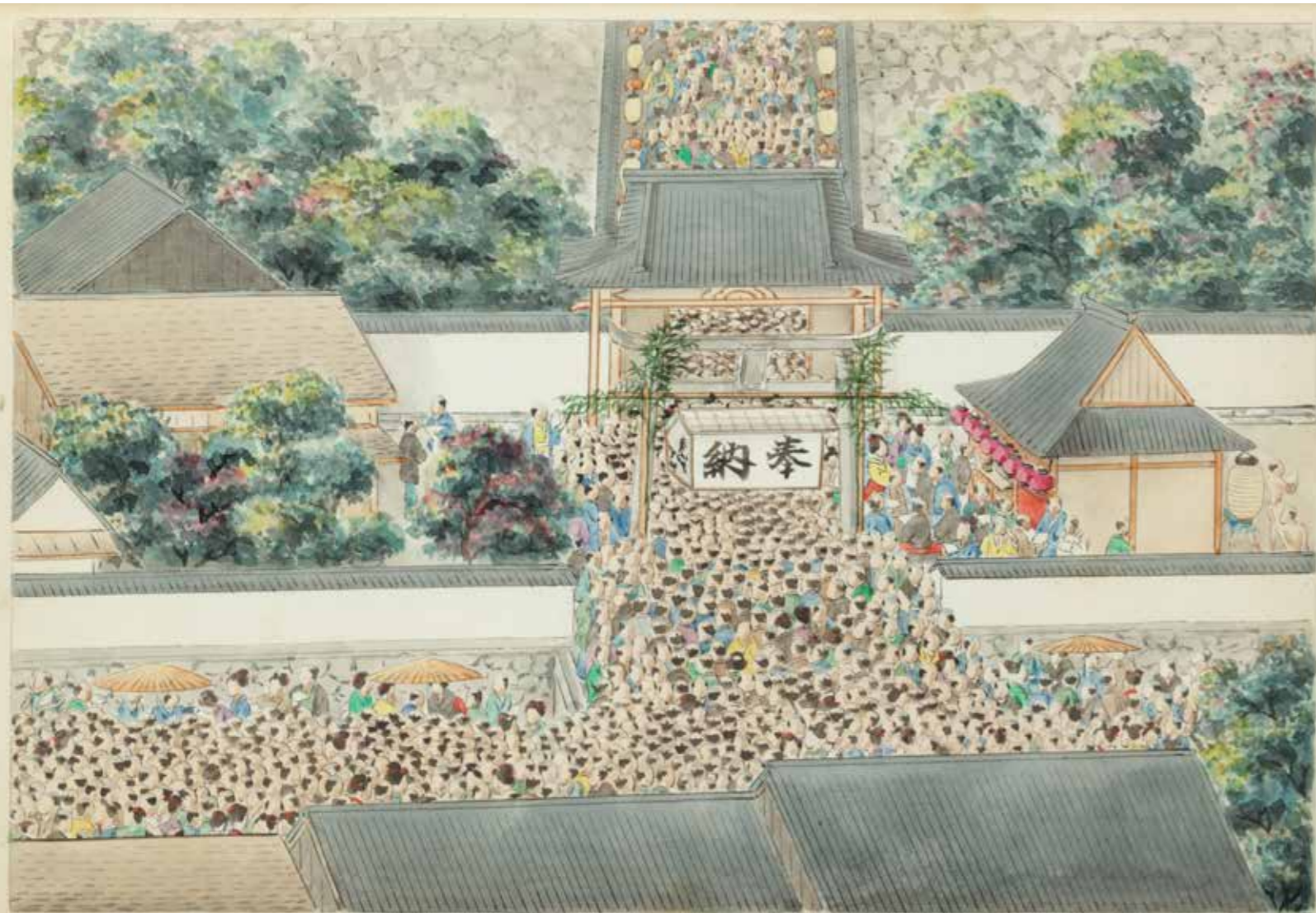
customary to pour sweet tea over the head of a standing Buddha image presented under a flower-roofed display, the *hanamidō*. The composition is reminiscent of the Yūshi painting

in the Blomhoff collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. 360-7792.



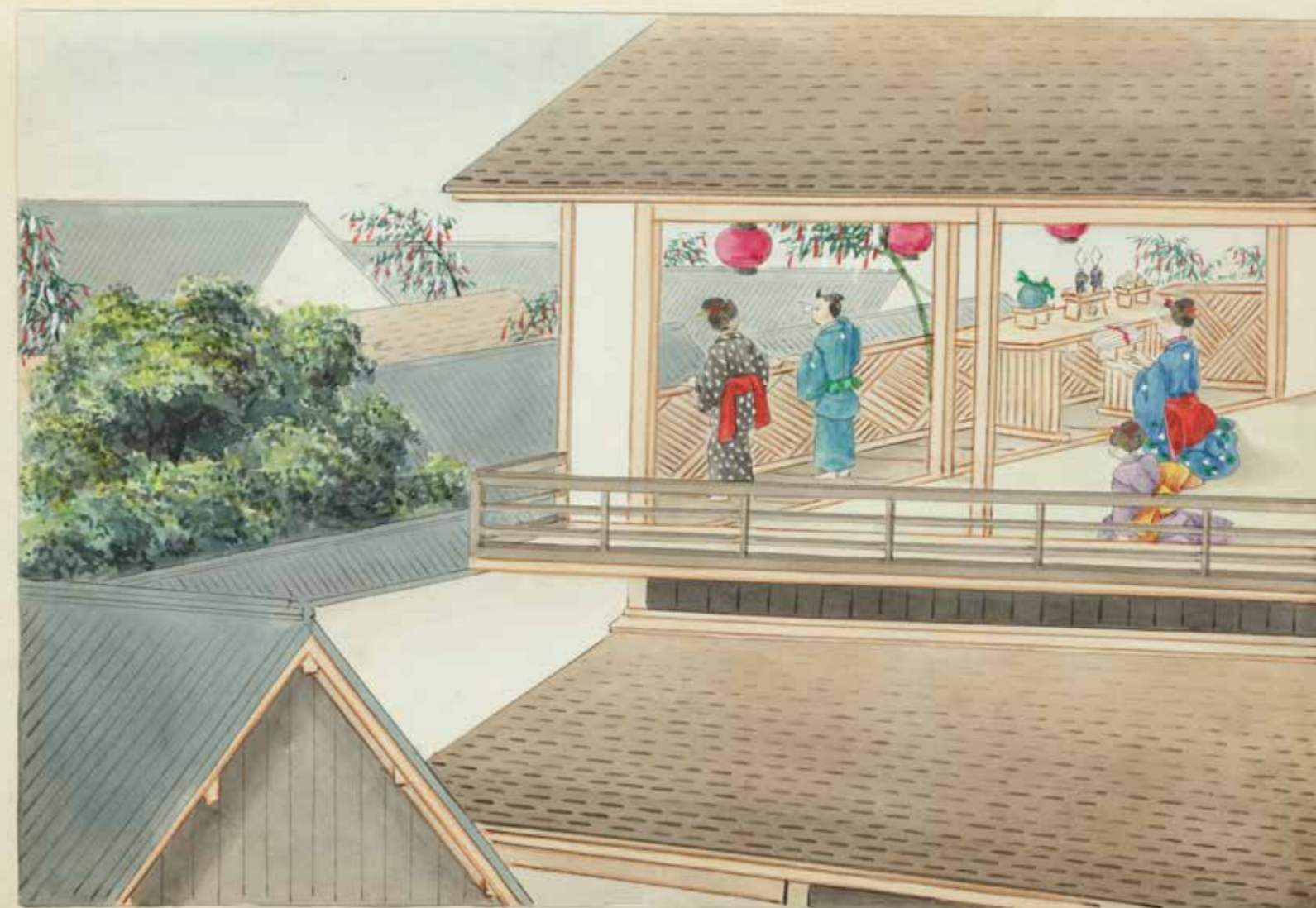
The Fifth Month: The Boys Festival, *tango-no sekku*, celebrated on the fifth day of the fifth month, with carp streamers and banners hanging from poles, and a martial display of wooden lances, a halberd, and an axe. The design is

most similar to the Keiga painting in the Fischer collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. 360-4304.



The Sixth Month: A large crowd gathering at the Genōji Temple for the *Gionsan* or *Gione* summer festival, starting from the first day of the

sixth month, enjoying its culmination from the thirteenth to the fifteenth day.



The Seventh Month: The Weaver's or Star festival, *tanabata*, celebrated on the seventh day of the seventh month as the two stellar combinations of Herdsman, *Altair*, and the Weaver, *Vega*, meet like two lovers, generally

being separated by the Milky Way. On the occasion, people write poems on slips of paper that are tied to stalks of bamboo attached to all the houses.



The Eight Month: a moon viewing party, *tsukimi*, with friends gathering for drinks and something to eat, enjoying and making offerings to the autumn full moon, the man at the right is

about to write a poem on a *tanzaku* poem-slip, the man at the left is having a massage of his back. Somewhat similar to the Keiga paintings in both the Fischer and the Siebold collections in

the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. nos. 360-4317 and 1-4480.



The Ninth Month: The *Kunchi* Festival, celebrated exclusively in Nagasaki from the seventh to the ninth day of the ninth month. Here we see a woman dancing, as part of the performance of the Yoriaimachi quarter, mostly housing brothels, its name figuring on the

large *kasaboko*. In the Edo period, with a few exceptions, most of the eight quarters of the city would only partake in the festival once every seven years. However, the Yoriaimachi quarter is an exception, performing each year, so that it is difficult to date the painting to a year. The

festival is still one of the highlights in the city of Nagasaki, drawing huge crowds when it takes place from 1 to 9 October. The painting is quite similar to the *Yūshi* painting in the Blomhoff collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. 360-7797.



The Tenth Month: A craftsman plastering the winter hearth used in the tea ceremony when it is reopened in the tenth month, a tea master giving instructions. The lady of the house looks

outside at a fantastic downpour. The design is most similar to the Keiga painting in the Fischer collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. 360-4357.



The Eleventh Month: The *Shichi-go-san* festival when families of five-year old boys, and girls aged three, and seven year old children are taken to local shrines by their parents to give thanks and pray for blessings. For the occasion, both girls and boys dress up in their finest

clothes, the boys wearing the formal *hakama* trousers and *haori*. The design of this painting is most similar to the Keiga painting in the Siebold collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. 1-4480-14.



The Twelfth Month: The year-end's market, *Toshi no ichi*, with people selling whatever one would need for the New Year's celebration. In the foreground in the centre two men even carry

a large pot on a burning stove. The trees leaned against the wall are also part of the New Year's decorations of pine and bamboo, *kadomatsu*. The design is somewhat reminiscent of the Keiga

painting "Vendors of New Year's articles" in the Siebold collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. 1-4480-1.

JAPANESE BIRDS

A number of quite naturalistic depictions of Japanese birds, in some cases copied after paintings that Yūshi originally made for Blomhoff (presently held in the collection of the National Museum of Natural History, Naturalis, Leiden), and some copied from the Fischer collection in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. 360-4982-a/d.



A **shrike**, *mozu*, and a **winter wren**, *misosazai*



Japanese male pheasant, *kiji*
quite similar to the Yūshi original in the Fischer Collection
in the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inv. no. 360-4982-c



Left: **meadow bunting, *hoojiro***
right: **rustic bunting, *kadiradak***



Red-crowned crane, *tancho*



White-naped crane, *manazuru*



Male mallard, *magamo*



Female mallard, *magamo*



Kingfisher, *kawasemi*



Upper: **eurasian jay**, *kakesu*
below: **great tit**, *shiyukara*



Golden pheasant, *kinkei*

SHUNGA

Shunga, “spring pictures” by an unidentified Nagasaki painter
Edo period, first half 19th century.

A set of eight erotic pictures of Dutchmen and Japanese women engaged in sexual encounters at the Dutch trading-post of Deshima. Originally these “spring pictures” were painted in ink and colours on paper, the present paintings are copied after the originals in pen, ink and colour on silk, and mounted as a scroll.

Length of the scroll 227 cm., height 29.5 cm. The individual images measuring 19.3 x 23.5 cm.

Originally, there seem to have been at least fourteen images of Dutchmen and Japanese women. In view of the considerable detail of the interior and the furniture of the Dutch settlement, the original painter must have been familiar with life in the Dutch trading-post, so it might have been Keiga, *dejima de-iri eshi*, the (only) painter who was allowed to go in and out of Deshima. Fukuda Kazuhiko dates the original paintings to the Buyonseï period, 1818-30 (*Genshoku – Ukiyoe no higiga*, vol. 3 Tok: Haga Schoten, 1980, p. 154).

Shunga, erotic pictures have long been popular in Japan. They testify to an attitude to sexuality and eroticism quite different from attitudes in Europe, and are classified amongst the *ukiyo-é* pictures, pictures of the “floating world” or “cheerful world”. Almost all the great *ukiyo-é*

artists produced erotic pictures as well. Although forbidden by the government, they were tolerated and sold unsigned under the counter. They are estimated to form up to fifty percent of all *ukiyo-é* production. Western visitors to Japan of the late nineteenth century were surprised at the seemingly relaxed attitude to nakedness and sexuality. The shunga pictures, and mixed hot-water baths, are manifestations of this attitude.

In the late Edo period, Japanese hosts could receive their guests proudly showing their collection of Shunga paintings. Francis Hall (1822-1902, living in Japan from 1859 till 1866) described shunga as “vile pictures executed in the best Japanese style”. He was shocked on two separate occasions his Japanese hosts and their wives proudly showed him shunga pictures at their homes.

For a long time, the prints and paintings of Japanese art with erotic content did not find their way into the collections of museums. Only recently, one was able to admire “spring pictures,” including works by the renowned *ukiyo-é* artists Katsushika Hokusai and Kitagawa Utamaro, in a number of museum exhibitions, for example in the Museum of Jerusalem in 2005, in the British Museum in 2013, and recently the first Shunga Exhibition in Japan was held in the Mejirodai’s Eisei Bunko Museum in Tokyo. Private collectors, though, have since long been collecting and enjoying shunga pictures.





A Dutchman in a red jacket, his trousers unbuttoned, making love to a Japanese woman seated in the veranda, *engawa*, surrounding the house. A so-called Raffles chair is seen to the left. The typical lattice

work of decorative pillars around the veranda is known from several paintings by Kawahara Keiga of both the Opperhoofd's house on Deshima, as well as the large house in the garden with the billiard table on the ground

floor. A detail of another copy on paper of this picture is illustrated in Fukuda Kazuhiko, *Genshoku – Ukiyoe no higiga*, Vol. 3, Tokyo: Haga Shoten, 1980, p.153.



A couple of a Dutchman and a Japanese woman in a Western-style bed with curtains opened to show them engaged in cunnilingus and a full view of the man's erect phallus. The

woman, her head rested on a Western-style cushion, raises her left hand to her face, as if to hide her embarrassment.



A Dutchman and Japanese woman in a Western-style bed with curtains opened to show them engaged in a sexual encounter. They are partly covered by a blanket with a *karakusa* decoration and in the foreground a

Gouda clay pipe is put aside next to a Dutch brass "pijpkomfoor" (bouilloire).



A Japanese woman in almost complete dishabille enjoying sex with a Dutchman in his underwear. Their having a good time is suggested by the woman's curled toes and closed eyes.



A Dutchman making a Japanese woman interrupt her needlework to have sex instead, and kissing the woman's ear, the woman's sewing-set seen to the left. Behind them is a stool and some wine bottles in a cupboard,

indicating a Dutch interior in one of the houses on Deshima. Another copy of this picture is illustrated in Fukuda Kazuhiko, *Genshoku – Ukiyoe no higiga*, Vol. 3, Tokyo: Haga Shoten, 1980, p. 154.



A couple of a Dutchman in a black jacket and a Japanese woman in a Western-style bed with curtains opened to show them engaged in a sexual encounter. The woman is probably a prostitute from the Maruyama

licensed quarter, as is indicated by the *mon* of her house, a stylized ivy leaf, seen on her sleeve.



A Dutch clerk engaged at Deshima assaulting a Japanese woman who is apparently not pleased or at least surprised by his

unexpected action. Behind them the desk of the clerk with a book, some sheets of paper, an inkpot and a sandpot.



A Dutchman and a Japanese woman, with curled toes, making love in the large garden house of Deshima, the billiard table seen to the right and the cues suspended on the wall to the left. The man is still wearing his hat

and just unbuttoned his pants. Interestingly, a so-called "pillar print," *hashirae*, mounted as a scroll, is hanging on the wall.



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Cover
Bluespotted cornetfish / two itinerant
musicians

Title page
Smooth blowfish

This page
Upper: eurasian jay, kakesu
below: great tit, shijjukara



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