



Japan: Courts and Culture



THE QUEEN'S GALLERY, BUCKINGHAM PALACE

This exhibition explores British royal encounters with Japan over a period of 350 years.

From samurai armour sent to James I in 1613, to a Coronation gift for HM The Queen in 1953, Japanese treasures have reached the British Court through trade, travel and treaties.

Each object on display reflects materials and techniques particular to Japan. Uniquely, many were commissioned or presented by the Japanese Imperial Family. Together, they reveal the ceremonial, diplomatic and artistic exchange linking the two courts of East and West.

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日本

这里展示了**350**年来英国皇室与日本的交往历史。

从**1613**年送给詹姆斯一世的武士盔甲，到**1953**年馈赠英国女王的加冕贺礼，许多来自日本的奇珍异宝通过贸易、人员往来以及两国签订的条约，走进了英国皇室。

每一件展品都反映了日本特有的材料和技艺。尤其独特的是，这些珍品当中许多都是由日本皇室委托制作或赠送的。它们是东西方两个皇室之间礼仪、外交和艺术交流的见证。

T R A D E

From the 1630s, Japan's military rulers (shōguns) isolated the country from the outside world to reduce foreign influence. For 200 years, the Dutch were the only Europeans permitted to trade directly with Japan. However, demand for exotic Japanese goods remained high in Europe, where the secrets of porcelain and lacquer manufacture were not yet known.

Despite these restrictions, royal collectors such as Mary II (1662–94) and George IV (1762–1830) acquired Japanese art via Dutch and Chinese traders, assembling some of the finest examples in Britain. Costly imports of furniture and porcelain became an established feature of royal interiors, representing luxury and cosmopolitan taste.

Japanese wares were also adapted and imitated by European artists, who freely imagined a distant and mysterious land.

贸易

为了减少外部世界对日本的影响，从十七世纪三十年代开始，日本的军事统治者（幕府将军）实施了对外封闭政策。200年来，只有荷兰人是唯一获准与日本从事直接贸易的欧洲人。然而，由于当时的欧洲尚不知晓瓷器和漆器的制作秘籍，对于充满异国情调的日本商品，需求依然有增无减。

虽有诸多限制因素，玛丽二世（1662-1694）、乔治四世（1762-1830）等皇室收藏家，仍能通过荷兰和中国的商人获得日本艺术品，将其加入英国最精湛的艺术珍品之列。昂贵的进口家具和瓷器成为英国皇家室内装饰不可或缺的特征，象征着奢华和国际品味。

日本的器皿也受到欧洲艺术家的青睐和模仿，他们以天马行空的艺术想象力，在其作品中展现那片遥远而神秘的土地。

Japan's seclusion came to an end in the 1850s, and the country returned to direct imperial rule in 1868. The new Emperor Meiji (1852–1912) encouraged rapid modernisation along western lines.

Members of the British and Japanese royal and imperial families soon made their first diplomatic visits. Queen Victoria's son, Prince Alfred, was the first royal visitor to Japan. Imperial gifts of the highest quality – such as swords, textiles and screen paintings – entered the Royal Collection for the first time.

As artists began to travel between the two nations, Japanese craftspeople displayed metalwork and enamel at international exhibitions with considerable success. Works by them and by Imperial Household Artists were choice gifts for British jubilees and coronations.

人员往来

闭关自守的日本幕府时代于十九世纪五十年代结束，**1868**年恢复了直接的帝国统治。新上任的明治天皇（**1852-1912**）鼓励日本西线一带快速实现现代化。

英国和日本两个帝国皇室很快进行了首次外交互访。维多利亚女王之子阿尔弗雷德王子是第一位访问日本的皇室贵胄。佩剑、精美织品、屏风等最高规格的帝国礼物首次进入了皇家收藏。

随着艺术家们开始在两国之间旅行，日本手工艺人亦在国际博览会上展示金属品和珐琅制品，颇获成功。他们的制品以及皇室艺术家的作品成为了英国重大庆典和加冕典礼的首选礼物。

By the early twentieth century, the royal and imperial families of Britain and Japan enjoyed a uniquely close relationship. The two nations saw themselves as ‘Island Empires’ of East and West. Exchanging honours and insignia became an important symbol of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance signed in 1902.

Exhibitions of Japanese art indicated a growing interest in Britain’s new ally and more than 8 million people visited the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition in London. Among them was Queen Mary, consort of King George V, who was a devoted collector of Japanese art.

In this period, ancient rituals such as calligraphy and incense appreciation were maintained at the Japanese court. At the same time, painters, printmakers and photographers pioneered new styles combining European and Japanese techniques.

In 1975, HM The Queen became the first reigning monarch of the United Kingdom to make a State Visit to Japan.

Japanese works of art today adorn the walls of more than a dozen current and former royal residences, as they have done for centuries. Together they demonstrate the vibrant artistic exchange that has long united our two courts and cultures.

条约

到了二十世纪初，英国和日本皇室之间已建立了独特的紧密关系。两国各自视自己为东西方的“岛屿帝国”。互换荣誉和徽章成为了1902年签订的《英日同盟条约》的一个重要标志。

日本艺术展更是彰显了英国民众对新的盟国日益高涨的兴趣，1910年在伦敦举办了日英博览会，参观人数高达八百余万，其中包括乔治五世国王之妻玛丽皇后，她是日本艺术品的一位忠实收藏家。

这一时期的日本宫廷，还保留着书法、鉴香等古老的仪式。与此同时，画家、版画家和摄影师还开创了兼具欧洲和日本技巧的新风格。

1975年，英国女王成为第一位对日本进行国事访问的英国在位君主。

今天，与几百年前一样，在英国的十多个皇宫和皇家寓所的室内装饰画中，日本艺术家的作品依然屡见不鲜。这些艺术作品共同见证着两国皇室交往和两国充满活力的文化艺术交流的悠久历史。