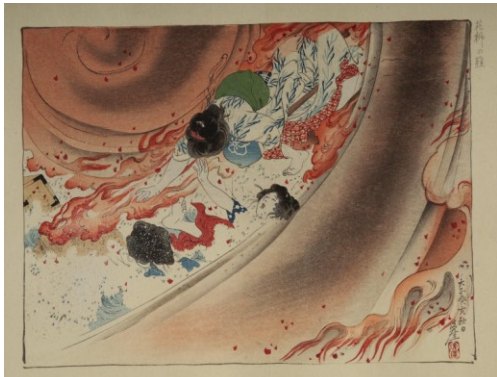


MILLS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
MILLS COLLEGE ART MUSEUM
DATE: May 27, 2009**

PRESS CONTACTS: Lori Chinn, Curatorial Coordinator, Ichinn@mills.edu, 510.430.3340
Abby Lebbert, Publicity Assistant, alebbert@mills.edu, 510.430.2164



Disaster in Karyu-Gai (at Yanagi Bridge). Japanese, c.1923.
Woodblock print. Collection of the Mills College Art Museum.

Reverberations:

***Japanese Prints of the 1923
Kanto Earthquake***

**Exhibition Dates: June 17 - August 2, 2009
Opening Reception: June 17, 5:30-7:30 pm**

The Mills College Art Museum is pleased to present *Reverberations: Japanese Prints of the 1923 Kanto Earthquake* curated by Deborah Stein and the Mills College Museum Studies Workshop, on view from June 17 through August 2, 2009. A public reception will be held on June 17 from 5:30-7:30pm with a walk-through with the curator at 6:00pm. A family printmaking workshop will take place on Sunday, June 28 from 3:00-5:00pm with a film screening of Hiroshi Teshigahara's *Woman in the Dunes* on Wednesday, July 22 at 7:00pm.

According to the Stein, "*Reverberations* is a collective effort to examine how art and natural disaster intersect in complex ways. Over the course of nine months, I worked with a team of dedicated students to research an unknown and unpublished set of prints in which we discovered a powerful response to a horrendous catastrophe."

The Japanese woodblock prints featured in *Reverberations* were created in response to the great Kanto earthquake that took place on September 1, 1923, devastating many cities in the Kanto region of Japan, including Tokyo, Yokohama, and Chiba. Immense fires aided by strong winds engulfed the cities and destroyed lives, homes, and businesses in a matter of days. After the earthquake and its aftershocks had abated and the fires were quelled, the surviving citizens had to rebuild their lives in the wake of their ruined cities.

The Kanto earthquake was a significant part of the history of woodblock prints in Japan, as many print shops, including the famous Watanabe print shop, lost their respective equipment and blocks from the quake and fire. Like the rest of the citizens, artists and publishers had to begin anew. In the years following the earthquake, artists created works to document the disaster, as well as the rebuilding of their cities.

The prints featured in this exhibition were commissioned as a set to be executed by a number of different artists. These works convey multiple levels of emotion and a visceral intensity. As an historical and art historical reference to life and art in modern Japan, the works exemplify a wide variety of print styles and practices during the Taisho Era. This visual response to natural disaster

constitutes a record of despair and renewal specific to this period; yet, it is also a strikingly familiar record of human suffering and survival that resonates with the Bay Area's own experience with destruction wrought by earthquakes. *Reverberations* offers insight into tragedy and loss, making available experience of disaster in a way that scientific data and photographs cannot.

The Museum Studies Workshop is a course taught in the Art History Program at Mills College, encompassing both the theoretical and practical study of museums in historical and contemporary contexts. This year, the Museum Studies Workshop has been taught by Adjunct Professor Deborah Stein, who worked with seven Mills College students to create the present exhibition.

The Mills College Art Museum, founded in 1925, is a dynamic center for art that focuses on the creative work of women as artists and curators. The museum strives to engage and inspire the diverse and distinctive cultures of the Bay Area by presenting innovative exhibitions by emerging and established national and international artists. Exhibitions are designed to challenge and invite reflection upon the profound complexities of contemporary culture.

Public Programs:

Sunday, June 28, 3:00-5:00pm
Family Printmaking Workshop

Wednesday, July 22, 7:00pm
Film Screening of Hiroshi Teshigahara's Woman in the Dunes

Museum hours are Tuesday-Sunday 11-4pm and Wednesday 11-7:30pm. Admission is free for all exhibitions and programs. Docent tours of the exhibition are available by appointment. Please call 510.430.2164 for additional information. For more information: <http://www.mills.edu/museum/>

**Mills College Art Museum
5000 MacArthur Boulevard
Oakland, CA 94613**

###