Woodblock print - Ashinoyu

Object: Woodblock print
Place of origin: Japan (made)
Date: 1847-1850 (made)
Artist/Maker: Utagawa, Hiroshige, born 1797 - died 1858 (artist)
Ibaya Senzaburo (publisher)
Materials and Techniques: Colour print from woodblocks
Credit Line: Webb Bequest
Museum number: E.4845-1919

Public access description

This 'uchiwa-e' (rigid fan print) design by Hiroshige is one of a complete set of six. They are owned by the V&A and show the seven hot springs of Hakone. Hakone is situated in the south-western corner of Kanagawa Prefecture about 40 kilometres from Mount Fuji. It was the 10th post-station along the Tokaido Highway. City dwellers wanting to escape the noise and bustle of Edo (modern Tokyo) could reach it quite easily. Hakone is still one of the most frequently visited resorts in Japan.

Many inns were built around Hakone’s hot springs. These were a popular subject for ‘ukiyo-e’('pictures of the floating world') artists. They created paintings and woodblocks for the popular urban market. This particular print shows the bathhouse and surrounding complex of guestrooms of the well-known Matsuzakaya Inn at Ashinoyu, which still exists today. The name of the inn appears on the paper lantern in the foreground. Ashinoyu remains a popular spa, and people still take the waters to help alleviate high blood pressure, women’s illnesses and skin problems.

Descriptive line
Woodblock print, Utagawa Hiroshige I; ‘Ashinoyu’, from the series ‘Depictions of the Seven Hot Springs of Hakone’; fan print, Japanese, 1847-1850

Physical description

Dimensions
Height: 220 mm approx., Width: 290 mm approx.

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URL
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O85876/ashinoyu-woodblock-print-utagawa-hiroshige/