



7706 An eight-fold paper screen painted in ink and colour on a gold leaf ground depicting various flowers of the four seasons with tanzaku (poem slips) by Kagawa Kageki (1768-1843)

Japan 18th / 19th century Edo period

Each poem slip signed Kageki

Dimensions: H. 119.5cm x W. 405cm (47 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 159 $\frac{3}{4}$ " )

The flowers and grasses on the screen include:

yamabuki (kerria), tanpopo (dandelions), sakuraso (Japanese primrose), sumire (violet), utsugi (deutzias), botan (peonies), kakitsubata (irises), nadeshiko (pinks), ajisai (hydrangea), keshi (poppies), kikyō (Chinese bellflower), hagi (bush clover), ominaeshi (patrinia), kiku (chrysanthemums), fuyo (cotton rosemallow), fujibakama (fragrant eupatorium), susuki (Chinese silver grass), shion (aster), rindo (Japanese gentian), suisen (narcissus) and omoto (Japanese sacred lily).

Tanzaku are rectangular sheets of paper used for calligraphic poems or paintings. Since the mid-Heian and Kamakura periods, such papers, termed shikishigata, were inscribed with poetic calligraphy and attached to the upper portions of screens or sliding door panels. Their verses coordinated with the paintings to which they were affixed. Often these slips are highly decorated with mica or coloured patterns overlaid with gold or silver cut into small pieces or sprinkled like dust.

Kagawa Kageki (1768-1843) is a Japanese poet of tanka (Japanese short poems), active in late Edo period. He was born in Tottori prefecture and liked reading and calligraphy from an early age. At the age of 15 he is known to have completed the contemporary translation of Hyakunin isshu, a classical Japanese anthology of one hundred poets compiled by Fujiwara no Teika (1162-1241), At 26, he moved to Kyoto and was adopted by the poet Kagawa Kagemoto (1745-1821). In Kyoto, he changed his name

to Kageki and served the Tokudaiji Family, one of aristocratic families of the imperial court. He attended many aristocratic utakai (poetry reading gathering) where participants read tanka poetry on a common theme in front of an audience. Each poem slip on this screen has a theme at the top of the sheet and it is possible that these poems were read at one such poetry meeting.



