



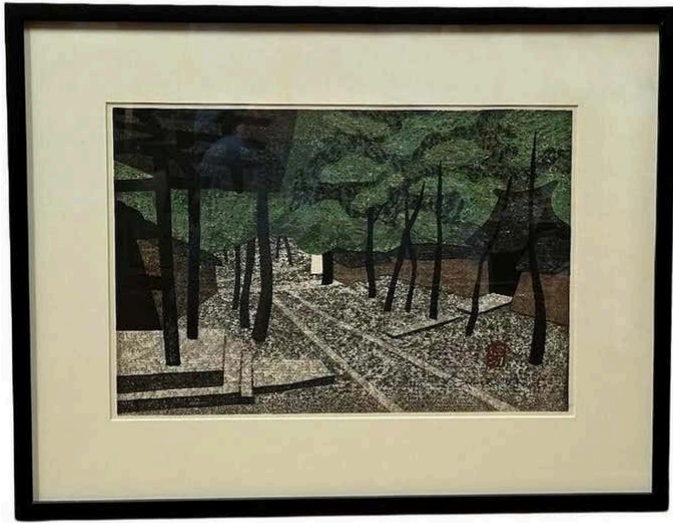
Daitokuji Temple Wood Block by Kiyoshi Saito -
Limited Edition

As low as **\$1,250**

In stock

SKU

LU654314152352



Details

As a component of the broader ukiyo-e tradition, woodblock prints (known as Hanga) showcase an evolution from craft to a significant art form. Among the myriad printmakers, Kiyoshi Saito (1907 – 1997) is a luminary known for his innovative contributions to the Sōsaku-hanga movement. A fusion of innate talent, technical expertise, and acquired mastery propelled him on a creative journey celebrated worldly between simplicity and elegance, where subject matter, technique, and meaning converge to unravel Japanese cultural mysteries.

His portrayal of Daitokuji Temple epitomizes technical prowess and poetic expression facilitated by this approach. The temple, a sprawling walled complex in northern Kyoto, features distinctive trees and stones carved into the ground, with gravel alleys raked in precise patterns. The minimalist emphasis on textures and tones from the ground to the trees celebrates the wood's natural grain, echoing the philosophy of Japanese aesthetics, wabi-sabi, where beauty resides in imperfection, impermanence, and incompleteness.

Woodblock printing demands meticulous attention to detail. Saito manages every stage of the print, from conception to execution, as a creator rather than just a diligent craftsman. Beyond excellence, Saito's work resonates with us through its dreamy undertones—the interplay of light and shadow, complex textures, and details nuanced by the unpredictability of this technique. The result is a visual, rhythmic Haiku. Saito aims to represent his visual world accurately, evoking its beauty in its most modest form, magnifying the natural wear and tear of time and the attraction of things that have lived.

Encounters with influential figures in the Japanese art world marked Saito's formative years. He studied Western-style oil painting at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts under Kiyokata Kaburagi, a prominent artist and ukiyo-e revivalist. Exposure to



traditional and modern techniques enabled Saito to develop a unique artistic vision, blending traditional Japanese aesthetics with contemporary sensibilities.

One of the significant turning points in Saito's career came in 1932 when he encountered the works of Shiko Munakata, a renowned woodblock print artist. Munakata's bold and expressive approach to printmaking profoundly impacted Saito, leading him to embrace a more individualistic and experimental style. Saito drew inspiration from Munakata's use of simplified forms and bold lines, which became defining characteristics of his artistic expression.

Saito's artistic style underwent further transformation during a visit to Europe in the 1950s. Exposed to the works of Western artists, including the German Expressionists and the Fauvists, Saito incorporated elements of Western modernism into his prints. He experimented with color and composition, moving away from the traditional Japanese woodblock print conventions and pushing the boundaries of the medium.

Throughout his career, Saito's prints often depicted landscapes, traditional Japanese architecture, and scenes of rural life. His compositions displayed a harmonious balance of form, color, and texture, frequently achieved through meticulous carving and printing techniques.

His work can be seen at the Cincinnati Art Museum, Greater Victoria Museum, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Denver Art Museum, Art Institute of Chicago, Tikotin Museum of Japanese Art, and many others.

I added a picture of the matching lithograph that you can find in another listing.

REFERENCE NUMBER: LU654314152352

PERIOD: Mid-20th Century

CONDITION: Excellent

MEASUREMENTS: Height: 17" Width: 22" Depth: 0.5"

COUNT: 1

MATERIAL: Woodcut

CREATOR: Kiyoshi Saitō