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**PRESS RELEASE
KABUKI. THEATRE, PRINTS, FAN CULTURE
23.10.2026–2.5.2027**

In autumn 2026 we invite you to discover the fascinating world of the Japanese kabuki theatre.

With its spectacular fusion of dance, music and finely honed dramatic skills, kabuki has been captivating audiences since the early 17th century. Its plays tell of love and jealousy, loyalty and honour, treacherous murders and family dramas. Beyond the stage, kabuki theatre also gave rise to a brand-new stardom culture where the attention of the public centered on the (male) actors who played both male and female parts.

At the same time an urban visual culture emerged in the major cities of Japan, with the woodblock print as its dominant medium.

The exhibition *Kabuki. Theatre, Prints, Fan Culture* assembles woodblock prints from over three centuries and various collections. It not only provides in-depth insights into the world of kabuki theatre but also reveals the diversity of artistic expression in the Japanese art of printing.

Artists such as Tōshūsai Sharaku (active in 1794–1795), Utagawa Toyokuni (1769–1825) and Utagawa Kunisada (1786–1865) were masters at capturing the charisma of famous actors, immortalising their striking poses and dramatic moments on stage in artistic images; in the 20th century it was Natori Shunsen (1886–1960), a representative of *shin hanga*, who created impressive actor portraits. The works of these artists still fascinate us today and preserve the fleeting moments of kabuki as presented on the stage.

Also on display are exquisite textiles that showcase the extraordinary splendour and outstanding craftsmanship of the stage costumes. Excerpts from contemporary kabuki productions make an actual theatre experience part of the visit to the exhibition. In this way the world of kabuki is approached from various directions, and brings to life the interplay between theatre, visual art and fan culture over the centuries.

Our thanks go to



Kabuki
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The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication

Klaus Frieze, Hans Bjarne Thomsen and Museum Fünf Kontinente (eds.), with contributions by Ryo Akama, Annegret Bergmann, Klaus Frieze and Hans Bjarne Thomsen and introductory words by Uta Werlich: *Kabuki. Schauspiel, Drucke, Fankultur*, Schnell und Steiner Verlag, Regensburg 2026.

Opening times

Tue–Sun, 9.30am–5.30pm

For times on public holidays see www.museum-fuenf-kontinente.de

Admission charges for the special exhibition

Adults €6, reduced €5.

All admission charges can be found on our [Website](#)

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