

I. Cherishing the Arts of Japan

Murayama Ryohei (1850–1933) was born into a samurai family in the Ise Tamaru domain (today Tamaki-cho in Mie Prefecture). From a young age, he enthusiastically studied Japanese swords and began his collection by acquiring swords. In 1879, at the age of twenty-eight, he founded the Asahi Shimbun. In the 1880s, he started his art collection, as if in response to the movement towards the protection of cultural properties at the time. From around 1897, he became interested in *chado*, the traditional art of tea, and during the Taisho period (1912–1926), he completed his collection for the most part.

Since Murayama did not discuss his collection publicly, little is known about it. The works he amassed, however, inform us that he built his collection because he loved art. This exhibition traces the formation of the Murayama Collection through the masterworks most closely connected to Murayama Ryohei and through other objects that tell the story of his collecting.