



A Book of Fans

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The National Gallery in Prague has in its collection a unique Japanese illustrated manuscript of *ógi no sóshi*, a genre of *waka* poems illustrated in fan-shaped pictures, which blossomed from the late Muromachi to the early Edo period. The Prague Book of Fans, with 120 poems, is the largest such book extant in the world.

This facsimile of an ancient illustrated manuscript of *waka* poetry reveals hitherto unknown aspects of Japanese traditional culture at the close of the sixteenth century, after the end of a century of destructive civil wars. The illustrated fans contain both classical *waka* poetry and poetry with close affinity to *renga*, *haikai no renga*, and Noh drama. The introductory text, from specialists on three continents, sheds new light on a literature and art that were instrumental in the renewal of the country in the Momoyama period. The literary quality of the translations and the beauty of the illustrations will be welcomed by both academic and general audiences around the world.

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