

Taschen  
HIROSHIGE & EISEN. THE SIXTY-NINE STATIONS ALONG  
THE KISOKAIDO (I GB E)

Andreas Marks, Rhiannon Paget

Hiroshige

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## HIROSHIGE & EISEN. THE SIXTY-NINE STATIONS ALONG THE KISOKAIDO (I GB E)

### Station to Station

#### **A historic trail through the heart of Japan, by two legendary woodblock artists**

The Kisokaido route through Japan was ordained in the early 1600s by the country's then-ruler Tokugawa Ieyasu, who decreed that staging posts be installed along the length of the **arduous passage between Edo (present-day Tokyo) and Kyoto**. Inns, shops, and restaurants were established to provide sustenance and lodging to weary travelers. In 1835, renowned woodblock print artist **Keisai Eisen** was commissioned to create a series of works to chart the Kisokaido journey. After producing 24 prints, Eisen was replaced by **Utagawa Hiroshige**, who completed the series of **70 prints** in 1843.

Both **Eisen and Hiroshige were renowned print practitioners**. In *The Sixty-Nine Stations of the Kisokaido*, we find the artists' **distinct styles as much as their shared expertise**. From the busy starting post of Nihonbashi to the castle town of Iwamura, Eisen opts for a more muted palette but excels in figuration, particularly of **glamorous women**, and relishes **snapshots of activity along the route**, from shoeing a horse to winnowing rice. Hiroshige demonstrates his mastery of landscape with **grandiose and evocative scenes**, from the **peaceful banks of the Ota River to the forbidding Wada Pass and a moonlit ascent between Yawata and Mochizuki**.

Taken as a whole, *The Sixty-Nine Stations* collection represents not only a lively woodblock practice, including **bold compositions and an experimental use of color**, but also a **charming tapestry of 19th-century Japan, long before the specter of industrialization**. This new TASCHEN XL edition revives the series with due scale and and splendor. Sourced from the **only-known set of a full run of the first edition of the series**, it ensures optimum quality for this legendary publication. A perfect companion piece to TASCHEN's *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*, it is **at once a visual delight and a major artifact from the bygone era of Imperial Japan**.

#### **The editor:**

**Andreas Marks** studied East Asian Art History at the University of Bonn and obtained his PhD in Japanese studies from Leiden University with a thesis on 19th-century actor prints. From 2008 to 2013 he was director and chief curator of the Clark Center for Japanese Art in Hanford, California, and since 2013 has been Mary Griggs Burke Curator of Japanese and Korean Art, Japanese and Korean Art Department Head, and director of the Clark Center for Japanese Art at the Minneapolis Institute of Art.

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