



## ***Samurai* explores one of Japan's most pervasive cultural icons**

**Adelaide, Australia:** The Art Gallery of South Australia today announces *Samurai*, an exhibition featuring over 100 works of art from AGSA's Japanese collection that portray the pervasive influence of the samurai in Japan from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

Russell Kelty, Curator, *Samurai* and Associate Curator, Asian Art at AGSA, says, 'The culture and identity of the samurai are often understood in one particular context: as ferocious and loyal warriors who lived by a strict moral code.'

Kelty continues, '*Samurai* seeks to redress this by presenting the complexities of their cultural influence and their transformation into a global phenomenon.'

The expansive display of textiles, lacquer, ceramics, metalware, screens, scrolls, prints and swords, will open from Friday 24 July and highlight exemplary works from AGSA's collection, some of which will be on display for the first time.

Samurai – meaning 'to serve' – originally referred to regional warriors tasked with guarding the provincial estates of the aristocracy based in Kyoto. Their ascension marked a distinct transition in Japan and for over 600 years the samurai class ruled the archipelago. Their patronage of the arts and cultural pursuits remain inextricably woven into the fabric of Japanese art and society.

AGSA Director Rhana Devenport ONZM, says, 'This exhibition honours the prevailing cultural impact of the samurai as both masters of art and war and heralds AGSA's longstanding commitment to representing the fertile and influential cultural histories of Japanese art.'

An online resource titled ***Samurai Transformed: warrior, culture, class, commodity***, supported by The Japan Foundation, will accompany the exhibition and is available on the AGSA website, [here](#).

# AGSA

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Russell Kelty, Associate Curator, Asian Art, will be presenting an online talk on **Tuesday 28 July** to introduce *Samurai*.

*Samurai* is on display from **24 July** | Free entry.

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## **IMAGES:**

<https://files.artgallery.sa.gov.au/ftp/marketing/MEDIA/Exhibitions/Samurai%20images%20for%20media.zip>

Image caption: Kobayashi Kiyochika, Japan, 1847 - 1915, *Taira no Tadanori (1144–1184) resting under a cherry tree*, 1884 (Meiji 17), Tokyo, woodblock print, ink and colour on paper, triptych; d'Auvergne Boxall Bequest Fund 2013, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, photo: Stewart Adams.