

SELLING SHISEIDO

COSMETICS ADVERTISING & DESIGN IN EARLY 20TH-CENTURY JAPAN

BY GENNIFER WEISENFELD

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INTRODUCTION



An elegantly dressed European woman delicately holding a single camellia blossom lies luxuriously on a chaise longue. Her lissome figure showcases a gorgeous sleeveless blue-patterned dress cascading luxuriantly off the chair onto the floor. This could describe a French image of a stylish Parisienne in her boudoir, but it is, in fact, a late 1920s Japanese advertisement for the whitening peroxide toothpaste sold by the cosmetics company Shiseido. There is no Japanese company whose advertising design better represents the aesthetic of cosmopolitan chic seen throughout the visual sphere in early 20th-century Japan than Shiseido. The Shiseido cosmetics company opened its Western-style pharmaceutical business in Tokyo in 1872 and a few decades later, under the banner of its stylish camellia logo and signature arabesque designs, emerged as one of the leading cosmetics manufacturers in Japan, a position it still holds over a century later. ¹



Shiseido's camellia logo (left) was originally designed by Fukuhara Shinzo and revised to its current form by Yabe Sue in 1924.

Detail of logo (left) taken from wrapping paper designed by Yabe Sue, 1924 (below)

[sh01_1925_e015_AdDesign]

Shiseido's signature arabesque designs appeared in various media such as posters, magazines, and wrapping paper.

Poster for Shiseido perfume, 1926 (below left)

[sh01_1926_e024_PosterPerf]

Magazine ad, white powder cream, 1929 (below right)

[sh01_1929_e033_MagazineAd]





The arabesque style is woven into the cover image (left) and masthead (right) of Shiseido Geppō, Shiseido's customer magazine.

Shiseido Geppō 40
magazine cover, January 1928

[sh02_GP_1928_01_4001]

Shiseido Geppō 44
magazine cover, May 1928

[sh02_GP_1928_05_4401]

While cosmetics may not have garnered the level of scholarly attention paid to other economic sectors, it was without question a critical part of Japan's burgeoning consumer market. It provides an unparalleled window into the changing contemporary ideals of beauty and taste, not to mention being a valuable indicator of cultural trends in health and hygiene.

Shiseido's innovative product and promotional production tells a distinctive story about Japan's experience of modernity, including the impact on national culture of mass market consumerism, urbanization, and changing gender roles. As Kathy Peiss has convincingly argued, "beauty culture" should not only be understood as a type of commerce, but also "as a system of meaning that helped women navigate the changing conditions of modern social experience" as they increasingly entered public life. ²

It is not an overstatement to say that Shiseido and other consumer product manufacturers had a large hand in shaping the cultural landscape of modern Japan. They were not only innovative in terms of their product development and manufacturing, but also in their pioneering work in advertising design and marketing, which shaped the visuality of the public sphere. This period saw the dawn of modern commercial design around the world and Japanese corporate sponsors were in an international and inter-cultural dialogue with their colleagues around the world, particularly those in Europe and the United States.

Fukuhara Shinzo: Art, Photography & Design

Shiseido was originally founded by Fukuhara Arinobu, but it was Arinobu's son and the company's second president Fukuhara Shinzo (1883–1948) who was the primary initiator of Shiseido's pronounced aestheticization of its commercial activity after he returned from study abroad in 1913.



*Shiseido's second president
Fukuhara Shinzo (1883–1948)*

Having spent several years in the United States and Europe (1909 to 1913), Shinzo was intimately familiar with the vibrant advertising and design culture abroad, particularly the decorative, lyrical aesthetic movement of art nouveau that later developed into the more geometric, exuberant design styles of the art deco or style moderne movement inspired by the machine age. Fukuhara Shinzo brought this international sensibility to his work at Shiseido, dedicating extraordinary human and financial resources to the company's design. He was one of a number of Japanese company presidents during this generation of corporate entrepreneurs who had daily, hands-on involvement in the construction of his firm's corporate identity and marketing strategies, but he stands out among them for his pronounced dedication to art and aesthetics. It is no coincidence that he is also recognized for his pioneering work in Japanese pictorialist photography as well as for his important sponsorship of modernist Western-style painters working in Japan.

Shinzo was devoted to the arts throughout his life, beginning with studies in neo-traditional style Japanese painting (*nihonga*) under the well-known painter Ishii Teiko and expanding to watercolor and oil painting studies under Hakubakai (White Horse Society) painter Kobayashi Mango. Through his artistic connections, he soon became friends with prominent Western-style painters such as Ishii Hakutei as well. It was through this circle of acquaintances in Japan and later abroad that he developed his life-long passion for photography.

BEAUTIFUL WEST LAKE

BY
SHINZO FUKUHARA



*Photographs by Fukuhara Shinzo
plates 1, 11, rotogravure edition
from Beautiful West Lake:
The Light with its Harmony, 1931*

Shinzo is equally well-known in the history of Japanese photography for his pictorialist photography work and his role as founder of several highly influential photographic societies: *Shashin Geijutsusha* and the *Nihon Shashinkai*.³ This photography work frequently graced the pages of the company's public relations publications like *Shiseido Monthly* (*Shiseido Geppō*).

*Shiseido magazine with cover
photograph by Fukuhara Shinzo*

Shiseido Geppō 38, 11/1927

[sh02_GP_1927_11_3801]



But perhaps more importantly for the corporate history of Shiseido, several of Fukuhara's artist friends worked as consultants to the company's design division, most prominently Kawashima Riichirō, who was trained at the prestigious Corcoran School of Art and the National Academy School of Fine Arts in the United States and was later based in Paris.

While in the United States, Fukuhara worked with pharmaceutical industry market leader Burroughs and Wellcome in Yonkers, New York and at the time of his departure, he received from the company president William Gallagher and his mentor James Brien a parting gift of a sample of each of the company's products, which became a valuable reference resource for the Shiseido company upon his return to Japan.

Bottles and Bodies

Over the years, the Shiseido Company has introduced a staggering array of products including most prominently: scented skin toners, hair styling balms, toothpaste, white and tinted face powders, perfumes, vanishing and cold creams, and soap. The earliest Japanese manufacturer of toothpaste (1888), the company touted the ostensibly higher quality of its merchandise in comparison to other generic goods that sold for just two to three *sen* a piece while Shiseido's new product (Fukuhara Sanitary Tooth Powder) was offered at a price point more than ten times higher at 25 *sen*.⁴ One advertisement for the product buttressed this claim of higher quality by announcing that Shiseido's toothpaste had received honorable mention at one of Japan's Domestic Industrial Expositions (*Naikoku Kangyō Hakurankai*). The company's fashionable locale in the Ginza district and its stylish product packaging were thus also critical value-added elements of the brand identity that promoted Shiseido's Western-style products over cheaper generic competitors.



The packaging of these products was as distinctive as their print publicity, and it was often showcased in advertisements. The graceful curves of the glass bottles of toners and lotions, and their elegant labels, are both scopically and tangibly inviting.

Euthrixine newspaper ad (left)

Hanakatsura (later Hanatsubaki), 1905
[sh01_1905_a011_MagazineAd]



五 せ 銀十四金價九個一

をる

品粧代座銀堂生資

Sometimes the bottles are presented alone and other times they are arranged in groups. The sensuality of the bottles is highlighted in aesthetic display compositions.

Magazine Ad, 1931 (right)

[sh01_1931_d002_no8928_MagAd]

銀座化粧水
 植物精液に酒精を加へた液から蒸して出た化粧水
 銀座ホマード
 植物油類で毛髪を整へるよくと潤滑のホマード
 銀座水白粉
 自然の白くする特殊のから水白粉と云ふ
 銀座粉白粉
 化粧にも化粧直しにも宜いのよもも白粉と云ふ
 銀座固焼白粉
 造り固焼用の白粉も潤滑も自由につく固焼白粉と云ふ
 銀座クリーム
 ベーシヤンクリームに少量の酒精を加へた皮膚の柔まらしたクリーム
 (定 價 各 五 十 銭)



Bottles arranged in groups (left)

Shiseido Geppō 35,
 back cover, 8/1927

[sh02_GP_1927_08_3502]



Potions & Power The Jogakusei's Cosmetic Arsenal

A new female type of the Meiji period, the jogakusei (female student) was recently empowered with state-mandated compulsory access to basic education, and her emerging public position and modern femininity clearly demanded a powerful new cosmetic arsenal.⁵

In one well-known early image a young female student with a fashionable coiffure dressed in the standard school uniform wields an oversized bottle of Eudermine cosmetic toner that is nearly as large as she is. The stylish bottle with crowning bow that matches the jogakusei is a metonym for the girl herself.

Eudermine newspaper ad, 1907

[sh01_1907_a014_MagazineAd]



The jogakusei was just one new emerging Japanese female type of the modern period, which included “the new woman” (atarashii onna), the “working woman” (shokugyō fujin), the café waitress (jokyū), the housewife (shūfu), and the “modern girl” (moga), all of whom were important consumer targets for Shiseido products.



Gibson Girl, ca. 1900
by Charles Dana Gibson
(near left)

Magazine ad, 1914
Shiseido (far left)

[sh01_1914_a018_MagazineAd]

Shiseido advertising images of women from around the 1910s show a clear stylistic reference to the widely popular American Gibson Girl who was known for her wit, charm, and beauty, as well as her spirited independence (an example above). The 1914 Shiseido ad at the left in particular evokes the Gibson Girl's signature head tilt and upswept hairstyle (hisashigami).

From the 1920s, the Euro-American icon of the rebellious and sensual Flapper with her short sleek hairstyle, elegant shift dresses, visible makeup, and public cigarette smoking became a prominent stylistic inspiration for Shiseido imagery and modern girl fashion around the world.



In other later images, hands literally reach into the containers in the picture to touch the products—an invitation to the consumer to do the same. Like their containers, cosmetic creams themselves were sensuous, and the tactile sensations they provided were part of the pleasurable embodied experiences linked to the desires and fantasies of cosmetic consumption. Cosmetics containers were also a beauty accessory that enhanced the visual appeal of a woman's dressing table or vanity and their display value (not to mention their symbolic value as indices of cultural capital) was an important marketing consideration for manufacturers.

*Shiseido Cold Cream
magazine advertisement, Fujōkai, 1934*

[sh01_1934_d005_11323_MagAd]

Color was a central design element of Shiseido's product line. Although Shiseido's formal cosmetics division was not established until 1916, Shiseido launched its cosmetics line nearly twenty years earlier in 1897 with the scented skin toner Eudermine priced at 25 *sen* per bottle. Eudermine, meaning "good skin" in ancient Greek, was sold in an elegant corked glass bottle with a red ribbon and the liquid itself was a vibrant red, evoking the image of wine, and hence prosperity and vitality. A 1915 print ad for Eudermine even touted it as "Shiseido's red cosmetic water."

Eudermine bottles

[Eudermine_bottles]

*Eudermine magazine
advertisement for
"Shiseido's red cosmetic
water," 1915*

[sh01_1915_e001_poster]



The color of Eudermine was graphically accentuated in a striking 1925 poster designed by Yabe Sue that juxtaposes its tall slender red profile with the shorter, more curvaceous lily white container of peroxide vanishing cream (color poster below). From its inception, Eudermine was promoted as a product beneficial for the health and beauty of one's skin that could be applied under white powder (which would also help women avoid the poisonous effects of lead in powder) and would help prevent sweat in the summer, making one "smell like an angel (as one played outside in the gardens)." Eudermine has been one of the company's most enduring products and is still sold today, now known internationally as Shiseido Eudermine Revitalizing Essence.

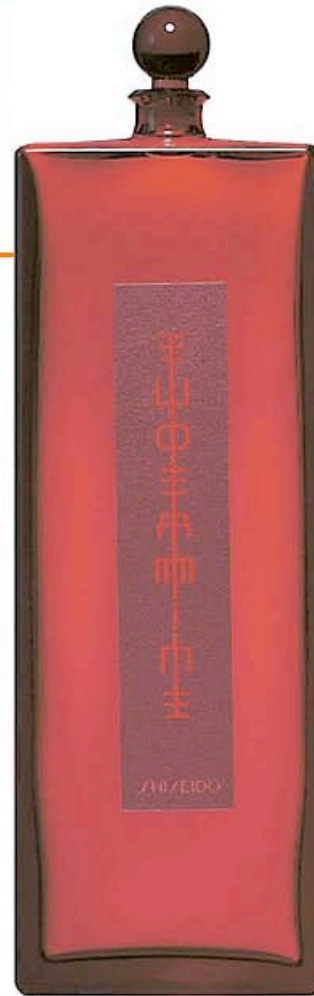


Eudermine and Peroxide Cream poster, 1925, by Yabe Sue

[sh01_1925_e005_poster]

Eudermine Revitalizing Essence, designed by Serge Lutens. The typography evokes archaic Chinese seal script, but is actually a mirror image of the word "EUDERMINE" in roman block type, written vertically.

[EudermineRevitalizingEssence_bottle]



Skin care would form the mainstay for many cosmetics manufacturers around the world and advertising promoted the notion that beauty began with the skin. In the 19th-century United States, there was already a fundamental distinction drawn between skin improvement (products that fostered a good complexion) and skin masking substances (makeup), with the former constituting part of a hygienic regimen critical to the morally invested notion of general bodily cleanliness.⁶

Scented hair tonics and oils for both men (*fuketori kōsui*) and women (*sukiabura*) were among Shiseido's most successful early cosmetic products. The company launched Hana Tachibana (Western brand name Laurine) for men and Ryūshikō (Western brand name Mellazerine) for women sold at 60 and 50 *sen* respectively and capitalized on the growing concern among Japanese that their hair oil was deemed malodorous by resident Westerners who complained of the smell.

Many of the products played on the imagery of the Ginza. Ryūshikō, for instance, evoked the image of the willow tree in the first character of its name to associate with the newly planted willow trees that lined the streets of the district. Hana Katsura (Western brand name Euthrixine), renamed in Japanese Hanatsubaki (Camellia) around 1909, was a scented hair oil for women that sold for a pricey 40 *sen* per bottle. Hanatsubaki was made of pure camellia oil and was advertised as not making hair sticky or dirty. One advertisement from 1911 touted that Hanatsubaki "vastly improves the nutrition and shine of your hair; does not cause cowlicks (*kami no kuse*), and helps keep hair's good color until old age." The product, it claimed, is "better than conventional/pre-existing products, does not cause dirty odors, keeps hair's beautiful shine, stops hair from falling, and does not harm skin."⁷

Most Shiseido products had two brand names; one Japanese and one Western rendered in romanized letters. These are among the earliest domestically produced Japanese cosmetic products that used romanized Western brand names; Shiseido did this to appeal to consumers who were looking for imported goods. Thus it is no surprise that Shiseido benefited enormously from the marked decrease in imported goods to Japan after the beginning of World War I in 1914, which caused Japan's economy, particularly the domestic production of consumer goods, to surge.

In 1906, Shiseido launched the first Japanese skin-colored powder called Hana Oshiroi (later renamed Yayoi Oshiroi). It was a non-lead based face powder which was considered healthier, as the poisonous effects of lead were already known in Japan, but lead-based cosmetics were not officially prohibited until 1931. Tinted face powders were exceedingly rare in prewar Japan and Shiseido pioneered them early on with a series of colors under the brand name Poudre de Riz.

The female entertainers (geisha) who worked in nearby Shinbashi and who were loyal Shiseido customers particularly liked the green and purple powder colors because they were thought to flatter the complexion under electric lighting. The powder packaging also diverged from the conventional round or cylindrical packages and used a tasteful octagonal container with the company trademark inlaid in gold that showed the nine leaves of the camellia blossom (see below). Gradually, as Japanese cosmetic practices changed over time and moved toward a greater naturalism, the traditional thick white cosmetic foundation (*o-shiroi*) ceased to be used for daily wear. 8



Poudre de Riz, 1917
Maeda Mitsugu, designer

Modern Colour Face Powder, 1932
Yamana Ayao, designer
[sh05_1932_bk048_powder]

Shiseido also produced five different varieties of cold creams for cleansing and softening the skin: vanishing cream (peroxide-based cream); smoothing cream; cold cream (rolling cream, which was considered the first real cold cream sold in Japan); Tsuya Bijin Cream; and Shinbashi Shiseido cream. An emulsion of water and fat that derives its name from the cool sensation it leaves on the skin, cold cream has been around for centuries, but it came to the fore in 20th-century cosmetics production as the single most fundamental and important facial care product for keeping skin sanitary and protected against both the elements and the harmful effects of makeup.



*De Luxe skincare brand, 1932
Maeda Mitsugu, designer*

The foremost brand name in cold creams from the 1910s was Pond's Cold Cream, produced by the Pond's Company (which later merged with Chesebrough Manufacturing to become Chesebrough-Ponds and is now owned by Unilever).⁹ Pond's Cold Cream was often marketed in tandem with the company's other best-selling product—Pond's Vanishing Cream—under the copy "Every normal skin needs these two creams."



This poster advertising cold cream and vanishing cream (a dual system of cleaning and protection) shows links between Shiseido's marketing strategies and international practices.

*Cold Cream and Vanishing Cream, 1927
Maeda Mitsugu, designer*

[sh05_1930_c023_poster]

Hence, cold cream became tied to the normative image of a healthy body and was promoted as an everyday staple of skin hygiene. By the 1920s, however, due to sharp dips in sales, Pond's and many other brand name products augmented this marketing tactic to re-brand their cold creams as upscale, high-class cosmetics to benefit from an increasing boom in luxury designer products. The advertisements featured wealthy and prominent individuals such as members of European royalty, socialites, and celebrities to tout the high quality of the product. Shiseido joined the market around this time and its cold cream and vanishing cream products were launched as complementary upscale designer products; products that were the core of a woman's beauty regimen and the lynchpin to her success in marriage, and consequently, her long-term happiness.

“Good Looks Depend On the Skin”

One 1922 American advertisement for Daggett & Ramsdell's Perfect Cold Cream, “an invaluable accessory of the well appointed dressing-table,” was so bold as to exclaim not only that “good looks depend on the skin,” but also that “a woman's happiness depends largely upon her looks. And her looks depend on her skin. The fastidious woman gives diligent attention to her skin because she realizes that it is the most vital feature of her appearance.”

The image displays two vintage advertisements for cold cream. On the left is a 1945 Pond's Cold Cream advertisement featuring a woman's portrait and a testimonial from a doctor's daughter. On the right is a 1922 Daggett & Ramsdell's Perfect Cold Cream advertisement featuring a woman's portrait and a testimonial about skin care.

Pond's Cold Cream magazine ad, 1945

She's Engaged!
SHE'S LOVELY!
SHE USES
POND'S!

Prominent Doctor's Daughter to wed Navy Captain's Son
The engagement of Frances Hutchins to Ensign Elliot Carroll Andrews has been announced by Dr. and Mrs. Anna F. Hutchins, Southley House, Md.

...has her honey open hair, full blue eyes and a "rightly famous" complexion.

...stunning, healthy skin, whose ... Frances looks, is one of the ... (state) old houses near Annapolis— ... it's very natural that she is marry- ... ing into the Navy.

She's another engaged girl, with ... all "will-smooth" Pond's look that ... set seems to belong to romance.

"I like Pond's Cold Cream better ... than any I've ever used," Frances ... says. "It looks simple, harmless—and ... certainly gives my skin perfectly ... and help."

How's she say she uses Pond's Cold ... cream. She smooths away soft ...

Pond's all over her face and throat ... and part "with good look like part" ... to help soften and remove dirt and ... make-up, Tansies all off.

She steers with new Pond's for ... extra cleansing and softening— ... of her Pond's covered fingers. "This ... twice-over cleansing leaves my skin ... so soft and smooth," she says.

The Pond's Cold Cream Frances ... uses—every night, every morning, and for ... many more women prefer Pond's to any ... other face cream in any price. Get a big ... box today!

Daggett & Ramsdell's Perfect Cold Cream
The Kind That Keeps

Good Looks Depend On the Skin

A woman's happiness depends largely upon her looks. And her looks depend on her skin. The fastidious woman gives diligent attention to her skin because she realizes that it is the most vital feature of her appearance. D. & R. Perfect Cold Cream gives a warm healthy glow to the skin and brings that knowledge of looking her best which is a satisfaction to any woman.

A large jar of D. & R. Perfect Cold Cream is an invaluable accessory of the well appointed dressing-table. Its pleasing fragrance makes massage a delight. As a cleanser and beautifier it is unexcelled.

Now sold at pre-war prices.
Tubes, 10c, 25c, 50c. Jars, 35c, 50c, 85c, \$1.50.

TRY IT FREE—Write for free tube of this perfect skin cleanser and complexion beautifier. Daggett & Ramsdell, Dept. 1227, D. & R. Building, New York

Pond's Cold Cream magazine ad, 1945

[sh06_1945_PondsColdCream_MadAd]

Daggett & Ramsdell magazine ad, 1922

[sh06_1922_DaggettRamsdell_MagAd]

By the 1940s, the connection between cold cream use and marriage was unmistakable, as evidenced in a regular 1940s Pond's campaign under the caption "She's Engaged! She's Lovely! She uses Pond's," such as the 1945 advertisement featuring socialite Frances Hutchins. Other advertisements touted cold cream as the key to restoring a youthful complexion by returning a healthy glow and radiance. Cold cream could nourish a woman's "under skin," while vanishing cream protected and enhanced the look of her outer epidermis. A repeated claim was that two creams were needed for a woman's "two skins." Together with face powder and rouge, cold cream was part of "the trinity of beauty," according to Coty cosmetics.

Perfumes enhanced Fukuhara's cultivation of a "rich" aesthetic for Shiseido's brand image. En route back to Japan from his time in the United States, he toured Europe, which included a stop in Paris, the world center of perfume production at this time. Here he viewed the annual Paris fashion parade and was able to make important site visits to the factories of three of the major French perfume makers: Houbigant, Roger & Gallet, and Coty.

Shiseido marketed over 50 varieties of floral perfume, so many that contemporary journalists referred to Shinzo as "*Hana no Fukuhara*" (Flower/Nose Fukuhara) referring playfully both to his largish nose but also to his role in developing floral perfumes. In 1919, Shiseido introduced two new perfumes with fashionable packages designed by in-house designer Yabe Sue: Ume no Hana (Plum Blossom; WOO-ME in English on the label); and Fuji no Hana (Wisteria). These were followed in quick succession by a series of different floral scents. ¹⁰

Shiseido perfumes, ca. 1918–21
Ume no Hana (Plum Blossom,
WOO-ME in English on the label) &
Fuji no Hana (Wisteria)
Yabe Sue, designer
[sh06_perfume3_WooMe]



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COSMOPOLITAN GLAMOUR

Rich Rewards: Images of Transnational Beauty

Early on, Fukuhara Shinzo seized on the term “rich” in Shiseido’s advertising copy to connote the luxury, elegance, glamour, and stylishness he hoped to associate with the company’s products. This image of richness was visually amplified in advertisements through colorful illustrations of exotic women of leisure in gorgeous dream interiors. These cosmetics advertisements sold a total cosmopolitan lifestyle of elegance. Although this lifestyle was largely unattainable for most Japanese consumers, it represents a constructed aspiration that clearly appealed to the large number of consumers buying Shiseido products who were willing to pay a premium for the company’s purportedly higher quality goods and this self-styled image.

Richness was synonymous with “deluxe,” which even became a separate Shiseido skincare line launched in 1936 that had “De Luxe” penned in romanized script calligraphy framed by delicate arabesques on the advertisements and packaging (see De Luxe skincare bottle images in the Introduction). The word deluxe was also written in Japanese on advertisements as *saikōhō*, the acme or peak, with the attending *katakana* gloss of “*dorrukusu*.”

Shiseido’s advertising is populated by a dazzling array of elegant women from around the world and from across the ages, spanning from classical antiquity until the present. Early Taishō-period print advertisements from around 1914 for Shiseido’s scented hair oil Hanatsubaki (Camellia) feature historical images of local beauties from Japan’s imperial heyday, the Heian period (794 to 1185), associated with literary classics such as *The Tale of Genji* and *The Tale of Ise*, which would have been immediately familiar to the entire populace.

With their dramatic porcelain-white powdered skin and layered opulent robes, these imperial court beauties proudly display their unbound long flowing black hair (*taregami*) that is the central visual feature of these images and becomes an exaggerated compositional device for foregrounding the product and its application.

Hanatsubaki hair oil (right) newspaper ad, 1911

[sh01_1915_a019_MagazineAd]



Magazine ad, 1916 (above) Shin Engei

[sh01_1914_a017_MagazineAd]



Harkening back to these classical images would not only have tapped into sentiments about authentic Japanese beauty and taste (neither Chinese nor Western in origin), but would also evoke positive associations with Japan's majestic imperial legacy, already a common trope in Meiji-period politics and public culture.



Magazine ad, 1916 (above)
Shin Engei

[sh01_1914_a017_MagazineAd]

Just a few years later in 1916, however, the feminine ideal featured in the advertisements was markedly updated to the contemporary, showing a Japanese woman with a more decidedly 20th-century upswept coiffure (*sokuhatsu*) and trendy kimono.

Hanatsubaki hair oil ad (right)
Shin Engei magazine, 1916

[sh01_1916_a021_MagazineAd]



The woman's modish style is mirrored in the distinctive stylized blocky typography used for the product name, clearly inspired by art nouveau graphics, and the advertisement's bold editorial layout indicates the form of a modern armchair with the sweep of a single curved line that also provides a delicate visual frame for the product featured below.



Examples of art nouveau fonts that display a similar modulation of line to the Hanatsubaki logo in the Shiseido advertisement above.

Illustrated instructions on how to do such contemporary "all back" hairstyles that tied into advertising imagery were featured regularly in Shiseido's free, consumer directed public relations publication *Shiseido Monthly* (*Shiseido Geppō*) from its inception in 1924 along with articles on current fashions for the body and the home reinforced the company's constructed image of a particular beauty ideal.



Shiseido Geppō, 11/24 (p. 3) "all back hairstyle" instructions

Another page in this issue (p. 5) features popular trends in ladies gloves, a discussion on photography written by Fukuhara Shinzo himself, and instructions on how to brew coffee at home.

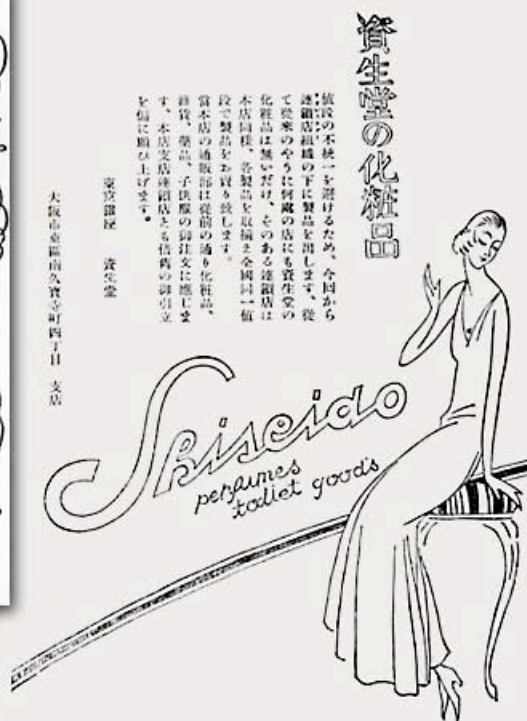
[sh02_GP_1924_11_0103]

The diversification of ideals of beauty moved both diachronically and internationally, showing female figures with Western-style curly hairstyles and flapper-era dresses.



Shiseido products magazine ad, 1923 (above)

[sh01_1923_a041_MagazineAd]



Shiseido cosmetics magazine ad, 1924 (right)

[sh01_1924_a045_MagazineAd]

At the same time, familiar classical images of Japanese imperial beauties were joined in the 1920s by recognizable classical images of Greco-Roman antiquity; other symbols of enduring beauty, but this time from the Western tradition. In one advertisement for whitening toothpowder, an elegant black and white figure of a Western classical beauty is displayed seated leisurely on a semi-reclined chair with attendant decorative amphora vase by her side clearly admiring her visage in a handheld mirror.

Shiseido peroxide whitening toothpowder (right), magazine ad, 1926

[sh01_1926_a054_MagazineAd]



On the cover of Shiseido's in-house public relations journal *Chainstore*, a Roman beauty holding a mirror is heralded by two flying cherubs draping a fluttering scarf around her.

Chainstore 31, March 1930 (left)

[sh02_CS_1930_03_1]



Or in another poster (below) for Peroxide Cream with cucumber, Diana, the legendary Roman goddess of the hunt, who is associated with nature, chastity, athletic grace, and beauty, is accompanied by a leaping deer and stands poised with bow and arrow under a classical edifice.

Shiseido peroxide and cucumber cream poster, 1927

[sh01_1927_c009_poster]





Even Renaissance beauties rendered in the famous painting styles of the Italian masters were invoked to sell liquid face powder.

Shiseido liquid powder poster, 1926

[sh01_1926_e026_poster]

Female figures from other historical periods and geographical places abound, ranging from the grandiose, corseted hoopskirt ball gowns of the age of Marie Antoinette to the modern flapper with her short bobbed hairstyle and luxurious furs.



Chainstore 17 cover, July-August 1928 (top left)

[sh02_CS_1928_07_1]

Peroxide cream poster, 1927 (top right)

[sh01_1927_c007_poster]

Almond Milk poster 1926 (left)

[sh01_1926_e019_poster]

Eau de Neige liquid white face powder poster, 1927 (below)

[sh01_1927_c001_poster]





While it is unclear whether the images were keyed to particular products, as the product line was diverse and ever-expanding during this time period, there is certainly a clear association between representations of Japanese women and hair products, speaking specifically to the coiffure and hair treatment issues of women locally. But when it comes to products of a clearly Western origin, such as face creams that were evoking images of an exotic cosmopolitan lifestyle abroad, the use of Western women from a variety of periods and places was common. Either way, the message was consistent; Shiseido cosmetic products promote beauty and elegance that are both timeless and freshly contemporary. They contribute to a worldwide, universal aesthetic of beauty that is cosmopolitan and transnational.

*Shiseido
Cosmetic
poster, 1933
(right)*

[sh01_1933_c035]



*Lemon Cream poster, 1933
(above left)*

[sh01_1933_c032_poster]

*Cream Shadow poster,
1933 (right)*

[sh01_1933_c033_poster]





Unhindered by the restrictions of history, Shiseido could bring Marie Antoinette and the chic, kimono-clad modern Japanese "New Woman" (*atarashii onna*) into conversation; as they both gaze into a small hand-held mirror, clearly engaging in a conversation about beauty. 11

Shiseido Cosmetics, poster, 1930

[sh01_1930_e035_poster]

Mirroring the Gaze

The gaze is a visual centerpiece of Shiseido advertising, which exhibits women gazing at themselves in the mirror for self-inspection, or showcases mirrors reflecting their images to an external audience—implying the general gaze of society, but also more specifically the inquisitive gaze of women and the sexualized gaze of men.



Eudermine and Cold Cream Poster 1926

[sh01_1926_e020_poster]



Chainstore 7, January 1928, cover

[sh02_CS_1928_01_1]

While a woman may ostensibly use cosmetics for her health and well-being, fundamentally she is encouraged to use it to look better, and hence be more appealing to the opposite sex as well as to her female competition. A successfully beautiful woman, then, as evidenced in one 1927 Shiseido Cold Cream poster (below), can enjoy a fantasy life of leisure based on the widely circulated images of the French colonial imaginary that includes attentive servants (presumably colonial subjects from North Africa) who offer an array of beauty products in the evening after the woman has returned from a night of elegant socializing.



Implicit in the image is the message that the woman is supported by a wealthy husband, whom she has attracted through her diligent beauty regimen; yet she lives an unencumbered life of luxury.

Cold Cream poster, 1927 (left)

[sh01_1927_c010_poster]



Shiseido advertising encourages the consumer to examine her skin (*o-hada o o-shirabe-kudasai*) and reinforces this through images of the scrutinizing gaze.

Chainstore 20, March 1929, cover (left)

[sh02_CS_1929_03_1]

Shiseido New Mix Toothpaste poster, 1927 (below)

[sh01_1927_e030_poster]



The female consumer subject must monitor her own beauty through attentive inspection, and by using "scientific Japanese" products like Shiseido's "perfect oil-based cream," she can strengthen and nourish the three layers of her skin "from the core to enliven the outer visible layer."



Shiseido Cold Cream magazine ad, 1939
[sh01_1939_d009_3_MagAd]

Shiseido Skin Lotion magazine ad, 1939
with copy "Examine your skin"
[sh01_1939_d010_7_MagAd]

Along with advertisements targeted at younger women, some clearly address “middle-aged women” (*chūnen no gofujin*) who are told that they can look like they are in their 20s again. Despite the traditional veneration of age and wisdom in Japan, clearly the cult of youth already prevalent in Euro-American advertising was well implanted by the 1920s. In an advertisement for Shiseido Hormoline cream, the world’s first skin cream enriched with female ovarian hormones, launched in 1934 and targeted at middle-aged women seeking to turn back the clock, just the mirror and its reflected visage are shown, implying the substitution of the subject with the consumer herself as she presumably gazes at her own potentially younger looking reflection.



Shiseido magazine ad, 1936
 [sh01_1936_d006_no1167_MagAd]

In this process, she is also deracinated from an Asian woman to a Western woman, something that was common throughout Japanese consumer advertising of the period. This was not a denial of Japanese-ness or Asian-ness, but rather a wishful affirmation of the mutability of consumer identity and the ability of commodities to enable self-fashioning that was not subject to national, racial, cultural, or even historical limitations.

The Modern Japanese Woman as Consumer-Subject

Shiseido’s promotional aesthetics were part of an emerging, worldwide culture of beauty that was elegant, freshly contemporary, cosmopolitan, and transnational. Despite the emphasis on images of leisure, Shiseido advertising sought to appeal to a broad range of women consumer-subjects, from working women to bourgeois housewives. Here, selected covers from Shiseido Graph magazine—published from 1933 to 1937—feature a vivid array of independent women in chic, contemporary scenes.



*Selected covers from Shiseido Graph magazine, 6/1933–9/1937
(top six are front & back cover spreads; lower four are front covers)*

On viewing images of a potentially disturbing nature: [click here](#).

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SELLING SHISEIDO
COSMETICS ADVERTISING & DESIGN IN EARLY 20TH-CENTURY JAPAN
BY GENNIFER WEISENFELD

Introduction

Cosmopolitan
Glamour

Marketing Beauty

Luxury & Thrift
in Wartime

Sources
Resources

MARKETING BEAUTY

The Design Division, Marketing & Display

Inculcating customer loyalty was the job of the Shiseido design division (*ishōbu*) established in 1916, in charge of both product design and advertising design. From 1917 the design began to reflect a professionalization of production and a more distinctive company look. The volume of advertising continued to increase throughout this period, growing markedly from 1934, when the division was renamed the “advertising design division” (*kōkoku ishōbu*) and a trained specialist in advertising copywriting was hired. Despite several name changes over the years to the more wartime nomenclature of “advertising dissemination division” (*senden fūkyūbu*) in 1941 to the slightly more neutral “advertising culture division” (*senden bunkabu*) after the war in 1952, and then finally to the simplified “advertising division” (*sendenbu*) in 1957, which has remained until the present, it has been customary within the company to refer to it throughout by the original name of “the design division” because there has been a consistent emphasis on design.¹²



Ironically, despite Fukuhara’s enormous contribution to the development of advertising design in Japan, he did not like the word “advertising” (*kōkoku*), a sentiment actually shared by many of his contemporaries around the world who thought of ad men as snake oil salesmen, or even worse, as “hidden persuaders,” as Vance Packard later labeled them in 1957, who used devious subliminal tactics. Fukuhara argued that his ultimate goal was to enhance the company image and not to advertise commodities; consequently he felt that by illuminating the inherently attractive features of a product it would elevate the image of the company. While Fukuhara was clearly ahead of his time in understanding the associative dynamics of brand construction, his earnest statements overlook the fact that these attractive features were not just based on the product’s inherent quality and functionality but they also accrued through packaging, display, and print promotion, which was in effect advertising. In spite of Fukuhara’s ardent claims that “the product speaks for itself,” it is clear from the company’s investment in design and advertising that it did not.

The company in-house image-makers who worked closely with Fukuhara such as Yabe Sue, Maeda Mitsugu, and Yamana Ayao now rank among the best-known Japanese commercial designers of the 20th century. The original division staff included several graduates of the prestigious Tokyo School of Fine Arts (*Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō*) and their work reflects a deep knowledge of world art history as well as contemporary fine arts practices. The division also grew to include copywriters and marketing specialists. On several occasions Shiseido raided the advertising divisions of other major corporations; for instance, it hired away Fukuhara's friend Matsumoto Noboru from advertising innovator Mitsukoshi Department Store in 1917. The two had met in New York where Matsumoto worked for the Simpson, Crawford & Simpson Department Store while attending night school in commercial science (also called economic science) at New York University. Matsumoto was a veteran businessman and added a level of professionalism to the division. The division substantially expanded its personnel and activities the next year in 1918.

Following the lead of health and beauty industry pioneers abroad like Proctor & Gamble and Lever Brothers, Shiseido inaugurated new marketing initiatives that included the establishment of Shiseido Parlour in the fashionable Ginza district in Tokyo, a stylish retail store with a soda fountain serving ice cream and a beauty salon. Purveying an aesthetic of cosmopolitan elegance and luxury, Shiseido also quickly expanded its reach through the development of a chain store network of retail affiliates throughout the nation and the expanding Japanese empire. Fukuhara stressed the fact that the chain store network standardized goods and prices so a consumer could buy the exact same product anywhere and pay the exact same price for it. Other Japanese companies such as Morinaga Confectionary Company (Morinaga Seika) were similarly developing chain store networks. Morinaga's was known as the Morinaga Beltline. And like Morinaga, Shiseido cemented its chain store network's shared corporate identity and values through the circulation of engaging public relations publications such as *Shiseido Monthly* (*Shiseido Geppō*) launched in 1924 (later renamed *Shiseido Graph* [1933 to 1937] and then *Hanatsubaki*), which was a free giveaway geared toward customers, and *Chainstore* (later renamed *The Chainstore Research* [1935 to 1939], *The Chainstore* [1938 to 1939], and then *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater* [1939 to 1941]), which was an in-house organ that communicated practical product and promotional information to chain store affiliates.

The company similarly engendered customer loyalty through: consumer clubs (for example, the *Hanatsubaki-kai* or The Camellia Club, established in 1937) and member coupon books; 13 giveaways of highly sought after seasonal promotional items like hand fans, compacts/vanity cases, wallets, and decorative kimono obi sash clasps designed by well-known artists like *mingei*-affiliated ceramicist Tomimoto Kenkichi; handsomely designed specialty publications like calendars, beauty charts, personal diaries, and detailed beauty manuals and application diagrams; direct marketing forms like brand logo imprinted postcards and match box labels.

Customer Loyalty Programs

Consumer Clubs

*Coupon books, Camellia Club
(Hanatsubaki-kai), 1937(left)*

[sh02_AT_3_26_01]

*Pamphlet, Camellia Club
(Hanatsubaki-kai), 1939 (right)*

[sh02_SB_3_30_01]



Promotional Items

Shiseido, Uchiwa fan, 1932

*A Shiseido soap and toothpaste signboard
are visible against the Ginza nighttime view.*

Yamana Ayao, designer

[sh02_SB_1932_178_fan]



*Hanatsubaki-kai
Commemorative Wallet 1938*

[sh02_SB_1938_024_camclub]

*Shiseido Handbag-style
vanity case, 1937*

[sh02_SB_1937_181b_case]

*Hanatsubaki-kai Commemorative
Gift, obi sash clasp, 1939-40,
Tomimoto Kenkichi designer*

[sh02_SB_1939_187_broach]

Speciality Publications

Home Calendar, 1931 (right)

[sh06_1931_HomeCalendar]

Shiseido Beauty Chart, 1936

[sh06_1936_ShBeautyChart]

*A Woman's Diary (Gofujin nikki),
1931-32 (2 page spreads and cover)*

[sh06_1931-32_WomansDiary]





Shin Kesho (New Cosmetics), mini 3-pack pamphlet beauty manual directed to chain store, with interior design advice (cover and inside). Yamana Ayao, designer, 1932

[sh06_1932_BeautyManual]



Direct Marketing

Shiseido match box labels (above)

[sh02_SB_3_31]

Shiseido postcard (right)

[sh02_SB_1935_3_01_04]

Promotional Events and the "Miss Shiseidos"

Hands-on educational initiatives were implemented through the attractive and stylish female sales associates known as "Miss Shiseidos," who toured the country for seven months in 1934 giving beauty advice and demonstrations (advertised as *kindai biyōgeki* or beauty fashion shows).



Show window promotional display from Kōbe Mitsukoshi department store shows photographs of a whole array of Miss Shiseidos applying various types of makeup. Shiseido Graph 11, June 1934

[sh06_1934_StoreDisplay]

Kindai biyōgeki or beauty fashion shows featuring "Miss Shiseidos," 1934

[sh06_1934_BeautyDemo]



A 1930s film clip from Shiseido's archives captures a Shiseido promotional event that took place in the Ginza where a group of "parasol girls" (often called "mannequin girls" at the time), clad in fashionable flowing chiffon dresses with trendy Marcel wave hairstyles, carried parasols emblazoned with the Shiseido brand-name and the product name "Shiseido soap."



The parasol girls were led by a young woman intriguingly costumed like the Victorian-era nursery rhyme shepherdess Little Bo Peep. In her checkered bonnet and dress, replete with white apron, Little Bo Peep carries a basket of flowers and promotional materials, perhaps products samples, while leading the stylish public parade of Shiseido ladies through the bustling streets of Ginza to the Shiseido store, garnering curious stares by passersby along the way. The women's outfits stand in striking contrast to the still predominantly kimono-clad women in the streets around them. While unmistakably representatives of the new public social category of the "working woman" (*shokugyō fujin*), the parasol girls and the Miss Shiseidos could also be identified with the divergent personas of the militant modern girl (*modan gāru* or *moga*) or the educated middle-class housewife who embodied the "good wife wise mother" (*ryōsai kenbo*) ideology. The group enters the Shiseido store and then reappears in front to pose.



A Shiseido promotional event in the Ginza where a group of models carrying parasols with the Shiseido brand-name are led by another young woman costumed like the shepherdess Little Bo Peep.

[sh06_1930s_MsShiseidos]

While ostensibly child-like and innocent in character, perhaps even maternal in her apron-clad uniform of fanciful domesticity, the Bo Peep shepherdess is also potentially sexualized as she is easily conflated with the perennially sexy image of the French maid (and in light of the current Japanese fad for "Maid Cafés" with waitresses dressed in precisely this kind of attire, the association does not seem so far-fetched). Bo Peep, along with the liberated feminine icons represented by the Shiseido ladies, is clearly exotic and enticing as well as beautiful.



Innocent and enticing images of Little Bo Peep from the turn of the century, Euro-American (above)

Maid café uniform, Tokyo (right)

[sh06_1930s_LittleBoPeep_collage]



Actress Hosokawa Chikako dressed in Kao promotional costume, ca. 1931 (left)

[sh06_1931_HosokawaChikako]

A similarly logo-costumed salesperson is part of a New Kao Soap promotional event in a department store in the Kantō region (probably Matsuzakaya), ca. 1931 (below)

[sh06_1931_NewKaoSoapEvent]



In addition to regular seasonal holiday promotional events, including Western holidays like Christmas and Mother's Day, many Japanese companies invented special promotional days that featured attractive giveaways. Shiseido regularly sponsored "Shiseido day."



The sustained production and distribution of promotional goods that functioned as both educational, "how-to" information, and as eye-catching advertising, was the critical marketing backdrop that supported these publicity strategies. This included detailed instructional beauty manuals (*biyō yomihon*) that expounded on a range of topics such as invigorating facial massage, manicures, rapid makeup application for women on the go, makeup for social events and entertaining, Japanese-style makeup, perfumes, and bathing practices.



Shiseido beauty manual (Biyō Yomihon), May 1937

Given out to members of the Hanatsubaki-kai, explains: face massage, speed cosmetics (for women on the go), makeup for social visits, "Japanese-style" makeup, social entertaining, makeup, manicures, perfumes, and bathing.

[sh06_1930_ShiseidoBeautyManual]



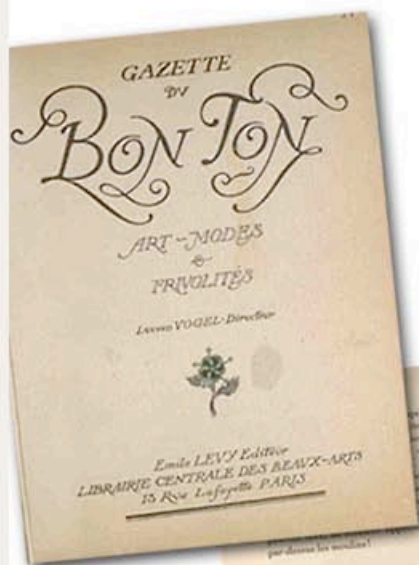
Three Dimensional makeup Beauty Techniques Sheets (Rittai Bishōhō Mekiyappu sheet), 1934

[sh06_1934_3D_MakeupSheet]

Shiseido also distributed evocative single-sheet images of women's faces with detailed instructions for the "three dimensional" application of cosmetics, including diagrammatic arrows that imply a systematization of beauty practices purportedly akin to other scientific processes.



All of these promotional materials were carefully designed and art nouveau was the bedrock of Shiseido's aesthetic program. Its wild and uninhibited use of lines, highly decorative style, poetic lyricism, and strong sense of individualism were carried through all spheres of the company's advertising.



Through his friend Kawashima Riichirō, based in Paris, Fukuhara was able to receive regular installments of the French haute-couture fashion journal *Gazette du Bon Ton: Art-Modes et Frivolités* (published from 1912 to 1925), which focused on art nouveau/art deco aesthetics and featured designs by well-known illustrator Georges Barbier among others.



Gazette du Bon Ton

[sh06_1930sC_ GazetteduBonTon]

Kawashima also sent copies of *Femina*, *Coiffé*, and *Vogue*, which provided rare and valuable design ideas for Shiseido when such publications were not readily available to other Japanese companies through book importers like Maruzen.

The camellia was chosen as the company logo around 1915, replacing Shiseido's earlier hawk emblem, because the flower was associated with one of the company's most popular products, Hanatsubaki camellia scented hair oil. Fukuhara felt that the camellia logo expressed the freshness and newness of the company's products and the Taishō period in general. It was also clearly much more feminine. Where the hawk, rendered in a detailed engraving style more akin to Meiji trademark images, implied strength and vigilance (in quality), the camellia conveyed an aromatic, gentle femininity. Yabe Sue was in charge of revising the camellia logo based on Fukuhara's original design. He simplified the shape of the leaves, reduced the number of leaves to seven, and gave the overall formal design an organicism and lyricism in the curvy outer contour lines of the logo. Gradually, all of Shiseido's products were registered under this trademark and it became the company's signature logo.

Beautiful, winding arabesque patterns enveloping images of fashionable women and stylized decorative applications of the signature camellia and the camellia logo were just some of the distinctive motifs that pervade Shiseido's promotional visual vocabulary in print advertising, posters, packaging, and the built environment, contributing to the construction of its unique corporate identity.



Chainstore magazines, 2/1928 & 6/1929, contain posters for use in show window displays that feature stylish women sheathed in arabesque patterns.

[sh02_CS_1928_02_2] [sh02_CS_1929_06_2]

The Female Form

Shiseido designers also experimented with the plastic malleability of the female form, abstracting and attenuating the figures featured in their advertisements to give them a sinuous and sensuous quality that is decidedly non-naturalistic. Long attenuated fingers, hands, arms, and legs make the body lithe and willowy; it also does not accord with any realistic body image, least of all the Japanese one.



Early Summer & the Season for Perfume
magazine ad, 1919 (left)

[sh01_1919_a024_MagazineAd]



Hanatsubaki, October 1936 (right)
Yamana Ayao, designer

[sh03_HT_1936_10_004]

Through the course of the 1920s, this highly mannerist style developed from the more naturalistic organicism of art nouveau to the decidedly more abstract and graphically stylized forms of art deco, although the line between these two styles is not clearly drawn and they coexisted throughout the prewar period.

In particular, Yamana Ayao's stylized depictions of beautiful women for Shiseido are full of lightness and grace. His virtuosic pen and ink drawings highlight the expressiveness of line, the evocative abbreviation of form, and put a strong emphasis on the billowing gowns and sinuous curves of the body.



Designs by Yamana Ayao:

Chainstore 38, back cover,
October & November, 1930 (left)

[sh02_CS_1930_10_2]

Shiseido White Powder Cream
magazine ad, 1933 (right)

[sh01_1933_c042_MagazineAd]



Designs by Yamana Ayao:

*Cold Cream and Vanishing Cream
magazine ad, 1937 (left)*

[sh05_1937_c051_MagazineAd]

*Hormoline Cream magazine ad,
1937 (right)*

[sh05_1937_c050_MagazineAd]



Yamana minimally describes the facial features of his female figures and he intentionally accentuates their large haunting eyes to draw in the viewer. His individual graphic style became closely associated with Shiseido all the way through to the early postwar period.



Designs by Yamana Ayao (above, left to right)

Cold Cream magazine ad, 1936

[sh01_1936_c044_MagazineAd]

Chainstore 41, February 1931, back cover

[sh02_CS_1931_02_2]

Perfume, magazine ad, 1937

[sh01_1937_c047_NewspaperAd]

*Magazine ad that uses camellia leaves for the
figure's eyes, 1938*

[sh01_1938_c056_poster]



Photography & the New Bauhaus Style

By the 1930s, Shiseido editorial design was clearly influenced by new typographical and photographic layout techniques being developed in Europe at design schools like the Bauhaus in Germany. The marked increase in the use of photography and the appearance of photomontage are clear indicators of this.

In Shiseido's small-size beauty manual and product catalogue *Yosooi (Makeup)*, which was circulated through the chain stores in 1932, designers Maeda and Yamana collaborated with innovative commercial photographer Ibuka Akira to produce an engaging composition of line drawings and photomontages featuring different categories of Shiseido products. In *Yosooi*, photographs of modish young women are dynamically interspersed with cosmetic products, luxury items (such as champagne), and associative text fragments in English reading "smart woman," "chic," and "modern" to produce a nonlinear promotional narrative linking beauty practices and lifestyle.



Oyosooi (Makeup)
small-size
pamphlet, 1932
Maeda Mitsugu &
Yamana Ayao,
designers, Ibuka
Akira,
photographer

[sh06_1932_Oyosooi]

Ibuka Akira also wrote for the photography journal *Photo Times* as well as in Shiseido's *The Chainstore Research* on new techniques in commercial photography, and he was an early champion of the use of photomontage for commercial purposes.

The Chainstore Research 8, Feb. 1936
[sh02_CS_1936_02_1]



Shiseido Graph

When *Shiseido Geppō* became *Shiseido Graph* in 1933, the magazine shifted to a photographic pictorial format. The cover designs feature contemporary Japanese women engaged in a variety of modern upscale leisure activities: skiing, hiking, swimming, bicycling, driving, boating, camping, fishing, playing tennis, golfing, and even flying airplanes.



Shiseido Graph
13, cover,
August 1934
[sh02_GR_1934_08]



Shiseido Graph
24, cover, July
1935
[sh02_GR_1934_08]



Shiseido Graph
38, cover,
September 1936
[sh02_GR
_1936_09]

Although Shiseido's consumer base included many working women, they are not the subject of these images, which instead conjure up visions of independent wealth—certainly an aspiration with which all could identify if not experience directly. Only a few covers show women within the home, and these are also highly idealized images of modern middle-class domesticity. In the 1934 December issue, a Japanese family (four children and just their mother) is shown in their living room at Christmas-time with a decorated tree in the background, a lavish meal on the table, and one daughter playing the piano. Positioned behind the seated mother, the viewer is given the mother's perspective and is encouraged to identify with her empathically as she imagines herself in this homey scene. 15



Shiseido Graph
17, cover,
December 1934
[sh02_GR
_1934_12]

The photographic and montage aesthetic of the magazine evoke a strong cinematic association that is reinforced by the use of female subjects, both Western and Japanese, who look like movie stars. It also corresponds to the magazine content, which regularly featured short commentaries on Hollywood starlets like Janet Gaynor, Sylvia Sydney, and Carol Lombard. ¹⁶ On the second issue of the magazine, the mysterious face of a blonde Western film actress (a Marlene Dietrich type) emerges through a diaphanous layer of roses; on the cover of another issue, a dramatic close-up of a stunning Japanese modern girl (perhaps a Miss Shiseido) with bobbed haircut, jaunty hat, and eye-catching makeup underscores a similar smoldering sexuality.



Shiseido Graph
2, cover,
August 1933
[sh02_GR_1933_07]





Shiseido Graph
5, cover,
November 1933
[sh02_GR_1933_10]



The cinematic eye is highlighted on another cover that features an expressionistic montage of replicated female figures (two Miss Shiseidos discussing "movie makeup" while touring the P.C.L. film sound studios outside Tokyo with actress Chiba Sachiko) in horizontal bands that look like film strips.



Shiseido Graph 15, cover, October 1934 (with enlarged detail)

[sh02_GR_1934_10_1511]

A symbol of the precision mass production of the machine age and the reproduced mass culture of modernity, the replicated image is used on several other covers. One features the repeated image of a female skier whose replication evokes images of synchronized chorus line dancers such as the famous Tiller Girls, whose almost mechanistic precision dancing was identified by German theorist Siegfried Kracauer as part of the mass spectacle or "mass ornament" of modernity. Period cartoons of the Tiller Girls even showed them rolling off Henry Ford's mass production line. A later issue of Shiseido Graph includes a photograph of just such a chorus line of indistinguishable bathing suit-clad dancers identified as the Sona Brother's "1934 Fashion Review."¹⁷



Shiseido Graph
7, cover,
February 1934
[sh02_GR_1934_02]

Shiseido's montages extended to replicated images of commodities where the modern face color powder tins, rouges, and cosmetic tubes are conversely substituted for the commodified human form of the Tiller Girl.



Products such as the cheek blush and Shiseido Modern Colour Face Powder, seen at right, are multiplied in the collage above.

Shiseido Graph 26, cover,
September 1935

[sh02_GR_1935_09_2614]



Shiseido Graph also implicitly pointed to the connection between modern women and the modern metropolis by pairing images of women and modernist architecture.



Shiseido Graph 8, cover, March 1934 (with enlarged detail)

[sh02_GR_1934_03_0811]

Chainstore Magazine

The in-house *Chainstore* magazine also radically shifted its editorial design to a photography-based, montage aesthetic around 1935 when it changed its name to *The Chainstore Research*. The first issue from July 1935 shows a modern typewriter with hands typing on the keyboard and a graph of the company's profitability in the background. The image extends from the front to the back cover, where we see that the hands are typing on Shiseido LTD letterhead.



The Chainstore Research 1,
July 1935 (front and back covers)
Note the graph of the company's
profitability on the left.

[sh02_CS_1935_07_1] [sh02_CS_1935_07_2]

Later issues pick up on the cinematic
montage aesthetic.

The Chainstore Research 16,
October 1936

[sh02_CS_1936_10_1]

An array of modernist still life photographs of company products are aesthetically laid out in the pages of a number of issues. Some of the most formally innovative uses of photomontage in Shiseido's advertising are evident in a series of playful, abstract compositions promoting Shiseido soap.



Issues of Shiseido Geppō

June 1929

[sh02_GP_1929_06_5702]

April 1929

[sh02_GP_1929_04_5502]

August 1929

[sh02_GP_1929_08_5902]

December, 1929

[sh02_GP_1929_12_6302]



Paradoxically, even though soap was the company's best-selling product, Fukuhara saw it as a commodity of the past with fewer possibilities for development. This was in sharp contrast to some of Shiseido's domestic competitors like Kao who foregrounded soap as their signature product and championed it as a modern staple commodity for a hygienic future.



Shiseido Soap packages, 1929–1930s
October 1936

[sh06_1929-30sC_soaps]

Still, Shiseido's soap promotion displays a parallel innovative sensibility to Kao, and certain compositional and thematic similarities show an awareness of Kao's pioneering print advertising. For example, the cover of the March 1936 issue of *The Chainstore Research* features a striking montage of the company's industrial technology and female factory workers producing Shiseido soap with abstract reddish-orange shapes and arrows highlighting the dynamic, fragmented composition. 18



Cover & detail of collage with female factory workers and machines, *The Chainstore Research*, March 1936

[sh02_CS_1936_03_1]

A comparable black-and-white montage image promoting Kao soap appeared in the *Yomiuri Shinbun* several years earlier in February 1931 in advance of the launch of "New and Improved Kao." It read, "double-time production day and night!" is preparing for "the approaching day of New and Improved Kao's arrival." Rows of apron-clad female workers with their heads bowed intently on work expand across the page in a seemingly endless assembly line. Shooting vertically out of the mass of women is a surging arrow that encompasses the machinery of mass production, appearing as if it is actually producing the women as well. The arrow simultaneously reads as a visual emphasis of the product's elevated purity asserted to the left. As company workers (but also as women and mothers), by association the Kao female employees attest to the product's quality. 19



Kao soap advertisement, Yomiuri Shinbun, 26 February 1931

[sh06_1931_KaoSoapAd]

As briefly touched on earlier, typography was also a burgeoning area of modern design and corporate advertisers took a great interest in the expressive possibilities of letterforms. 20

The curvaceous logotype for the romanized Shiseido name stretches out the "S"s luxuriously as if to mirror the recumbent posture of many of the female figures in the print advertising. It provides an elegant stylized flourish.

*Shiseido match box label
October 1936*

[sh06_matchboxes_history1_87]



In contrast, Shiseido's Japanese logotype in a *minchō*-style typography is more staid and rectilinear with little modulation in line..

Shiseido match box label
October 1936

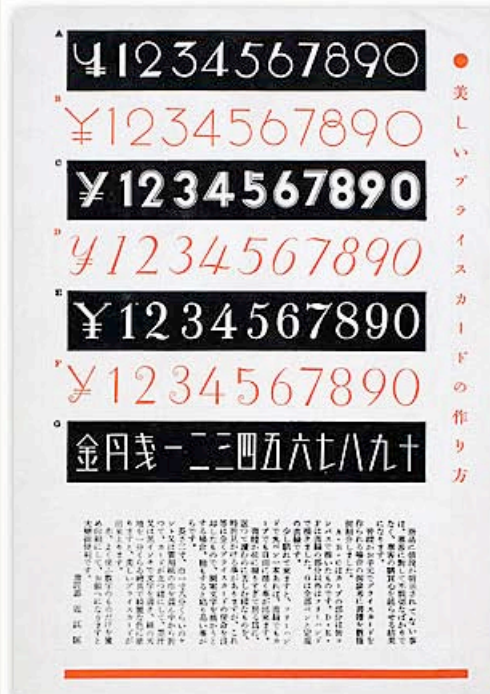
[sh06_matchboxes_history1_87]



The company's various magazines offer a plethora of practical information on the application of display lettering. *The Chainstore Research* (August 1937), for example, provides a list of different numerical typographies to enable chain store retailers to produce "beautiful price cards" for products. 21

The Chainstore Research 26, August 1937

[sh02_CS_1937_08_2]



The November 1937 issue highlights the use of different expressive letterforms for promotional sales signage: the sample signs read, "Shiseido cosmetic products for your gift-giving needs," (*ozōtō-yō*); "Large customer appreciation sale"; "Sale commemorating our tenth anniversary"; "Buy your *O-seibō* gifts here"; and so forth. 22

The Chainstore Research 29,
November 1937

[sh02_CS_1937_11_2]



Show Windows

Fukuhara stressed that good products displayed in a good environment would speak for themselves. But regular designs produced for display in show windows (*chinretsu mado*) and within the chain store retail environment again demonstrate the significant interventions Shiseido made to enhance the visual appeal of their commodities.



Undoubtedly, this is why the company included mock-ups and charts of product displays in almost every issue of their *Chainstore* internal public relations journals. Illustrations and diagrams were combined with detailed discussions of how different show window designs improved product visibility.

The detail enlargement at left shows a photograph of a product display and accompanying diagram of how to set it up, on the cover of the first issue of Chainstore, July 1927

[sh02_CS_1927_07_1]



Shiseido show window (above)

[sh04_1929_showwindow]





Shiseido show window (above)

[sh04_1929_showwindow]

Stylish show windows visually enhanced the street view of the storefront and interior product displays contributed to the overall impression of the retail environment, which surely boosted the Shiseido brand name.

Shiseido store front (right) with arched display window

[sh04_015]



Show window display (below) The Chainstore Research, December 1935

[sh02_CS_1935_12_1]
[sh02_CS_1935_12_2]



These displays were treated like theatrical stages upon which the company's products would perform. Fukuhara Shinzo had a special stage set built exclusively to exhibit just his perfume products. He was also very particular about limiting the number of products shown at one time so that they exuded a sense of capaciousness. This required that associates constantly rotate different products into the window.

Displays changed regularly, in fact weekly, and were often keyed to seasonal themes. For example, December and January issues would spotlight Christmas and New Year's themed displays. One year designers keyed the themes to the chapters of *The Tale of Genji*. In August 1922, Fukuhara even sponsored an instructional event on set and lighting design run by theater professionals Hijikata Yoshi and Imamura Kazuo. This was run in the evening to maximize the visual demonstrations of lighting effects. 23

We can get a good sense of how chain store retailers combined promotional posters and product displays through the many featured sample arrangements that ran in *Chainstore*.

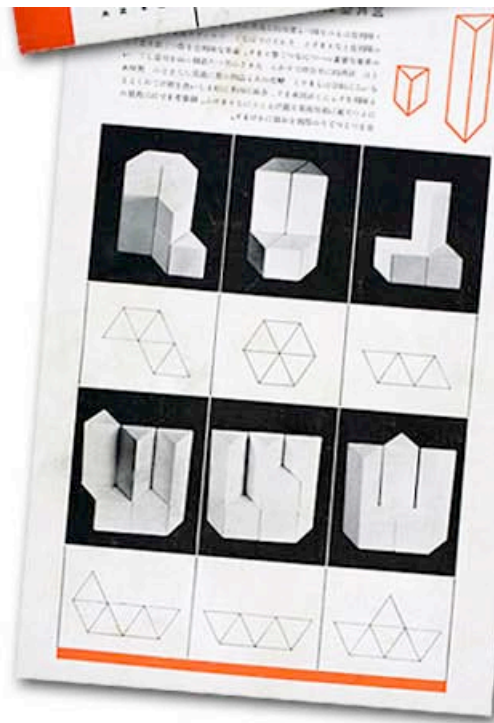


Image of a poster of the type used in show window displays (left) Chainstore, back cover, March 1930

[sh02_CS_1930_03_2]

One Shiseido example of pyramidal modular display props and the varied sculptural assemblages they could form was even reminiscent of the abstract formal exercises in the Bauhaus foundation course.

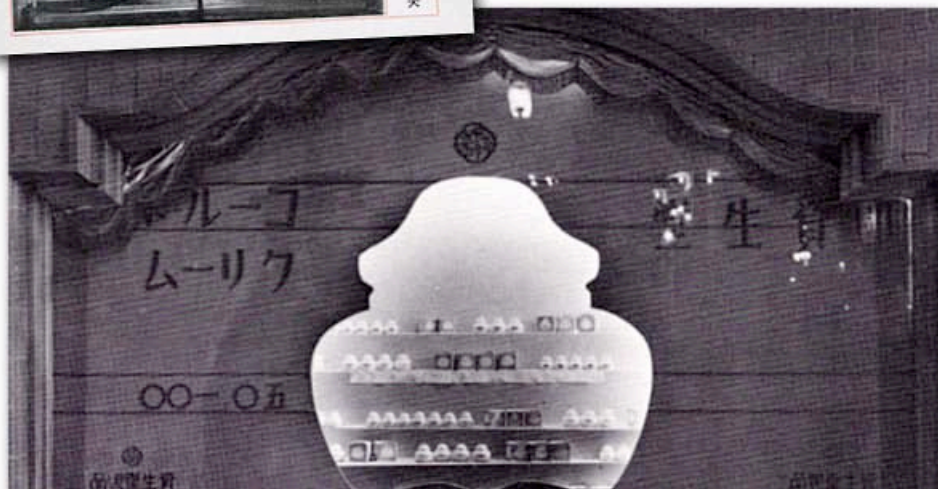
The Chainstore Research 24,
June 1937, back cover
[sh02_CS_1937_06_2]



Some of the more interesting formal designs published in the magazines include the May 1936 show window display that animated the commodities by using the cut-out profile of the cold cream container to display goods on tiered shelves inside, which could then be illuminated at night to make the container appear to glow from within.

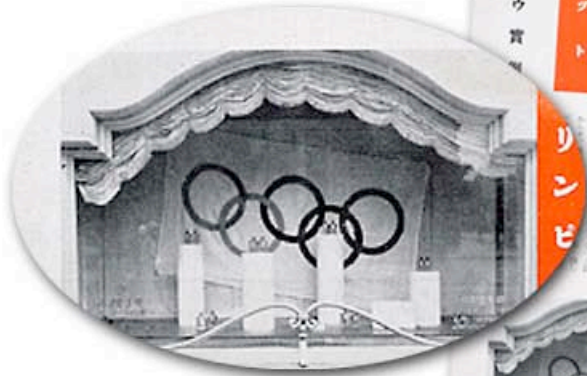
Day & night lighting, Shiseido Parlour window, designed by Yamamoto Takeo. The Chainstore Research 11 back cover, May 1936
[sh02_CS_1936_05_2]

Photograph of Shiseido show window with dramatic lighting (detail below), designed by Yamamoto Takeo. Shiseido Parlour window, 1936
[sh04_1936_showwindow_lr]





Display designs were also attuned to world events as evidenced by the inclusion of an Olympic themed display in September 1936 to commemorate the sporting events that were taking place in Berlin that year (see detail below).



The Chainstore Research
September 1936, back cover and detail

[sh02_CS_1936_09_2]

The Retail Environment

The retail environment was critical for Shiseido as the company took on the role of retailer as well as manufacturer, which naturally directed its attention and energies to developing points of purchase and the storefront, such as its elegant cosmetics division store opened in 1916.



Shiseido cosmetics division store, opened in 1916. A curtain covers the show window in this photograph.

[sh04_020]

Already in 1902 the company had opened a fountain that sold sodas and ice cream on the American drugstore model. It was the first in Japan. This establishment combined a pharmacy with cosmetics as well as the fountain. It soon became a "famous site" (*meisho*) in the Ginza cityscape. It was also known as a popular destination for *Shinbashi* geisha who frequented the fountain and contributed to the place's attraction for onlookers. Other customers included upper-class women, politicians, civic officials, and prominent businessmen and their families. The fountain was later renamed Shiseido Parlour.

In the early 1920s, Fukuhara Shinzo commissioned architect Maeda Kenjirō, a graduate of the architecture section of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and a school friend of his younger brother, to redesign the Shiseido building facade. Maeda had apprenticed with American architect Frank Lloyd Wright, who was in the midst of building the now renowned Imperial Hotel in Tokyo.

Maeda squared the Shiseido building's round pillars and covered them along with the rest of the lower façade in white tile. The second floor above was painted, providing a striking visual contrast in texture and color. This renovation manifestly transformed the building from a Meiji edifice to a trendy Taisho establishment. ²⁵ Shiseido invested heavily in stylish architectural design for all of its stores and the interiors provided an equally elegant experience.

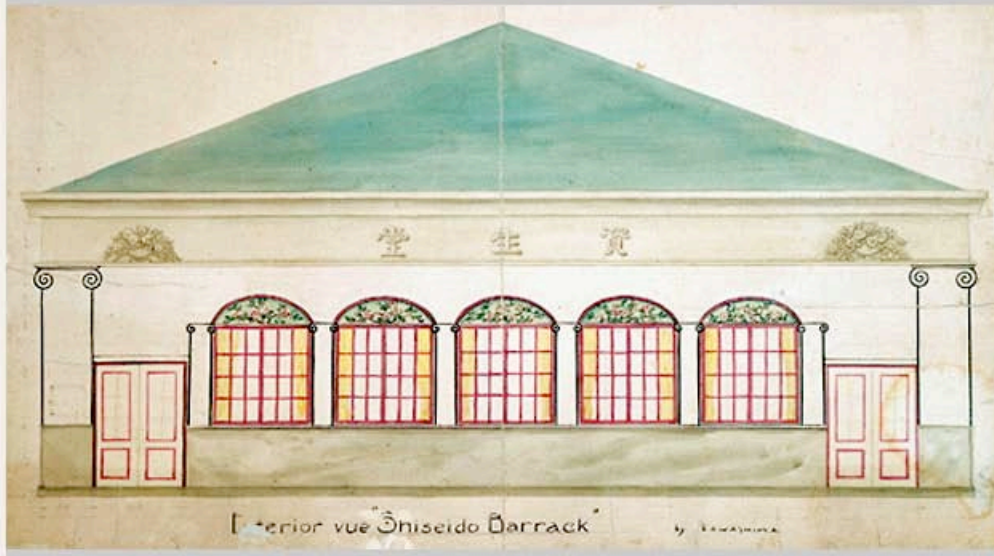


The photo shows the squared, white-tiled pillars of the redesigned Shiseido Parlour building in Ginza, ca. 1920.

[sh04_1920c_
Shiseido_Parlour]

“Shiseido Barrack”

Kawashima Riichirō's designs convey the stylish temporary quarters of Shiseido's Barrack Café following the 1923 earthquake.



Top: exterior

[sh04_1923_034_BarrackDesign.jpg]

Above: interior (detail)

[sh02_T_066_kawashima]

Right: interior wall mural

[sh02_T_068_kawashima]

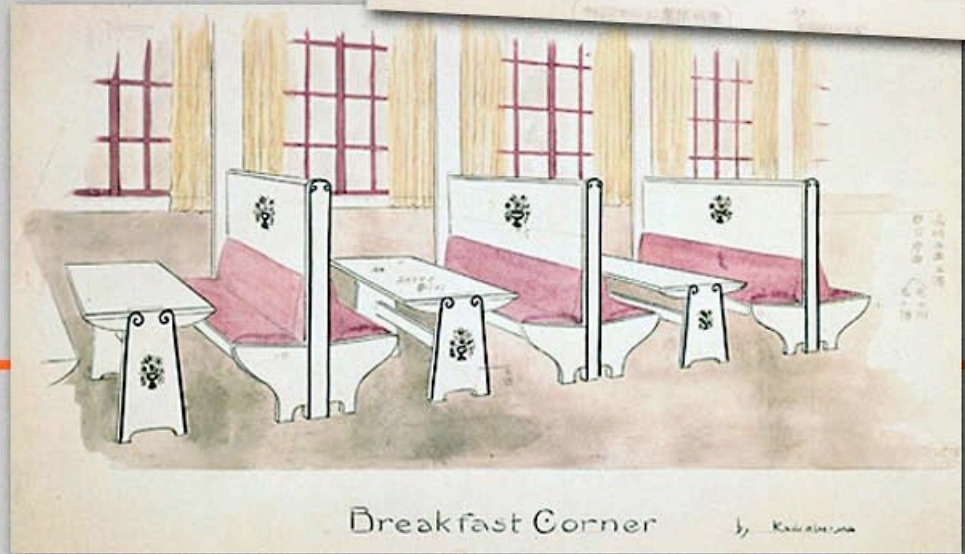
Below: breakfast corner

[sh02_T_070_kawashima]



Below: breakfast corner

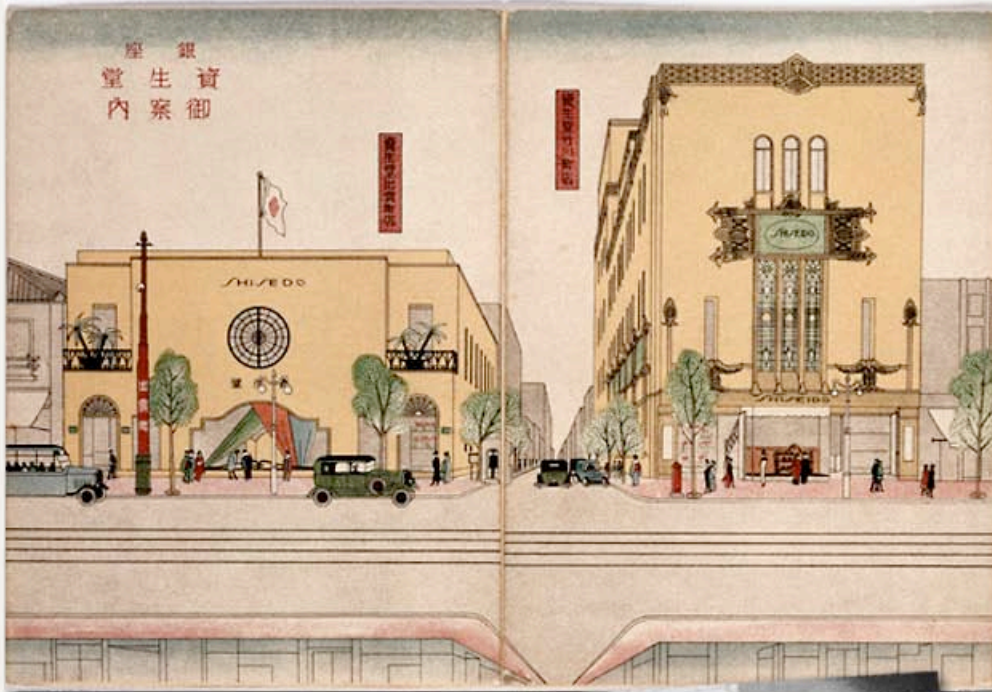
[sh02_T_070_kawashima]



A photograph of Shiseido's barrack café, which integrated a pharmacy and cosmetics counter. Designed by Kawashima Riichirō, it had two entrances with five windows in between

[sh06_1920c]

Maeda Kenjirō was also commissioned by Fukuhara to design Shiseido's elegant new post-earthquake art deco parlour (left) and retail building (right), the opening of which was heralded with a colorful illustration in Shiseido's *Ginza Guide*.



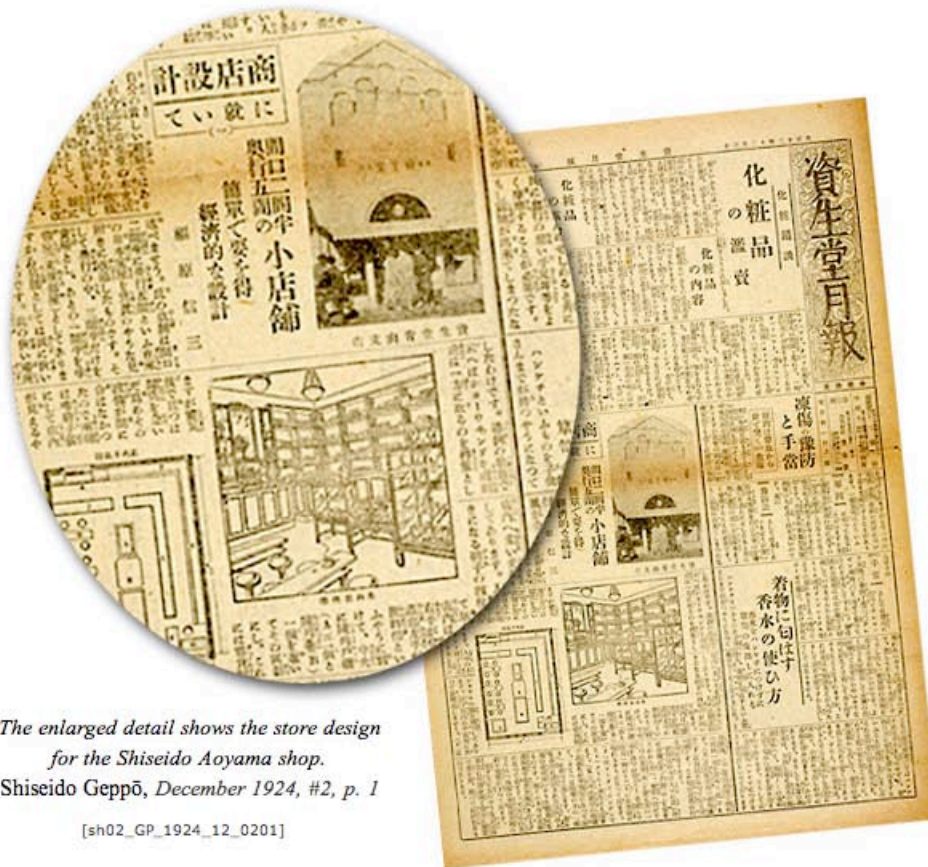
Above top: Announcement for reopening of Shiseido Parlour (left) and Store (right) Ginza Shiseido Guide, (Go-annai), 1928. Architect: Maeda Kenjirō

[sh04_1928_002_pamphlet]

Above: Photograph of Shiseido Parlour interior, ca. 1928

[sh04_1934c_010_parlor]

As Shiseido continued to expand its retail venues, new stores were publicized to both consumers and employees in *Shiseido Geppō*, including illustrations of the storefront, layout and display design.



The enlarged detail shows the store design for the Shiseido Aoyama shop. *Shiseido Geppō*, December 1924, #2, p. 1

[sh02_GP_1924_12_0201]

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SELLING SHISEIDO
COSMETICS ADVERTISING & DESIGN IN EARLY 20TH-CENTURY JAPAN
BY GENNIFER WEISENFELD

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LUXURY & THRIFT IN WARTIME

So how did this “rich” cosmopolitan consumer culture fare with the rise of militarism in the 1930s and in the face of wartime scarcities, mounting governmental rationing, and anti-luxury campaigns? Images of nationalistic sentiment such as the Japanese *hinomaru* flag only started to appear in Shiseido publications gradually from around 1935.

By October 1937, the year the war in China began, more overt images of wartime mobilization became evident as exemplified by the cover of that month's *The Chainstore Research* that featured the image of a young wife packing up Shiseido soap bars in “comfort bags” (care packages; *imon bukuro*) for soldiers fighting on the continent in which the silhouettes of airplanes are visible behind her.²⁷ She looks confidently at Japan's rising sun flag placed in the upper right-hand corner of the composition, which is suggestively contiguous with the journal's masthead and visually associated by color through the use of red for both the sun and the title.



“Comfort Bag” or care package (imon bukuro) for soldiers, ca. 1937

[sh06_1937c_bag]

A woman packs a “comfort bag” for soldiers in this wartime issue of The Chainstore Research 28, October 1937

[sh02_CS_1937_10_1]

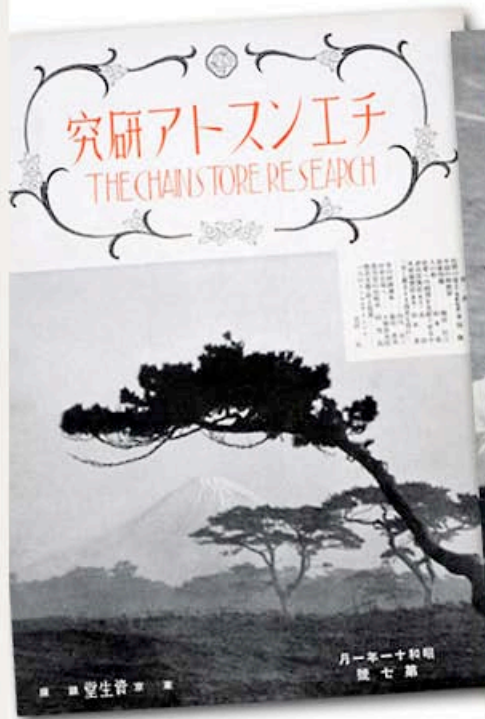
The bag itself displays the *hinomaru* sun of Japan's national flag and together with the label “comfort bag” on the bottom may have had a wartime slogan such as “eternal good luck in war” (*buunchōkyū*) printed on it. These comfort bags were profitable retail items that were even sold at upscale department stores like Mitsukoshi. Clearly manufacturers were interested in having their goods included as comfort items for the troops.

Two months later in December, the cover image of *The Chainstore Research* featured a group of women in aprons (*kappogi*) wearing banners for the Greater Japan Women's National Defense Association (*Dai Nihon Kokubō Fujinkai*).²⁸ It was groups such as these that nationally spearheaded preparation and sending of comfort bags. School children were also an important part of this effort. Images of wartime nationalism in advertising were both direct and indirect: Japanese troops on the frontline were featured on the cover of the September 1939 issue of *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater*.



Women wear banners for the Greater Japan Women's National Defense Association. The Chainstore Research 30 cover, December 1937
 [sh02_CS_1937_12_1]

A photograph of Japanese troops on the frontline featured on the cover of Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater vol. 1, no. 9, cover, September 1939
 [sh02_CS_1939_09_1]



Mount Fuji was an important national symbol during wartime.

The Chainstore Research 7 cover, January 1936

[sh02_CS_1936_01_1]



Women wield bamboo spears as part of their wartime training.

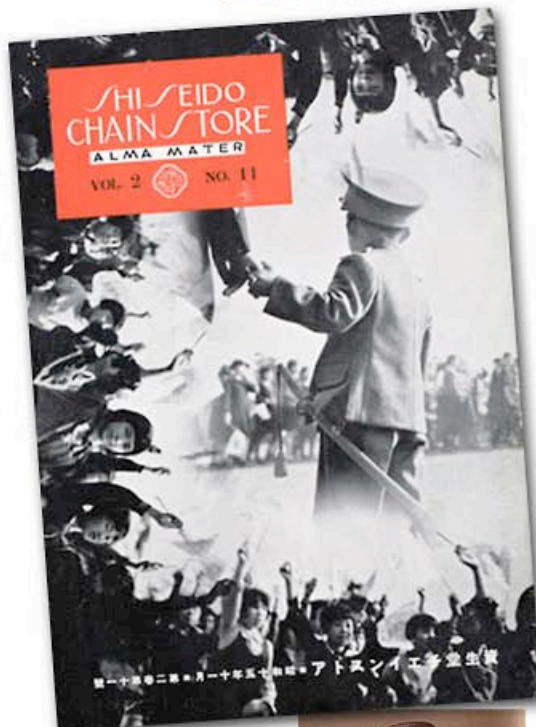
Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater vol. 2, no. 3, cover, March 1940

[sh02_CS_1940_03_1]

These politically reactionary images could, however, still be rendered in an experimental aesthetic idiom like montage, as seen in the cover image of the November 1940 issue of *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater* that features a border of cheering schoolchildren waving national flags surrounding the central photograph of a small boy holding his mother's hand in a soldier's uniform with his back to the viewer.²⁹ He is dressed up for the seven-five-three (*shichi-go-san*) rite of passage festival traditionally held in mid-November when parents prayed for their children's health and happiness.

Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater vol. 2, no. 11, cover, November 1940

[sh02_CS_1940_11_1]



Although traditionally children wore kimonos for this celebration, in the wartime period boys wore military uniforms. Reinforced by the enlarged figure of the boy and his superimposition over the purposeful parade of people in the background, the image (on the *Chainstore* cover above) asserts the child as Japan's national pride and the future of its military.

Child in uniform for 7-5-3 festival, Japan, ca. 1940



At the same time, in the same October 1937 issue discussed above, Yamana Ayao's elegantly dressed female figure on the back cover of the journal continues the company's image of luxury and beauty.



The Chainstore
Research 30
front & back
cover
December 1937

[sh02_CS_1937
_12_2]

In September 1938, the Japanese government issued a series of anti-luxury edicts, which was part of an effort to reduce consumption and boost household savings to support the war effort. One of the most well-known wartime slogans, "Luxury is the enemy" (*zeitaku wa teki da*) appeared soon after the government issued its "Regulations Restricting the Manufacture and Sale of Luxury Goods" in July 1940.³⁰ Yet surprisingly, until well into the war years, commercial manufacturers skillfully balanced patriotic practicality and conservation with capitalistic luxury and consumption.

Like many consumer products manufacturers, cosmetics companies faced a particular challenge during the wartime years, as they needed to straddle the line between staple good and luxury item. Shiseido did not want to abandon its hard-won deluxe brand image, but it also could not continue to promote wasteful luxury in the face of state ideological injunctions to the contrary. The selling points of health, high quality maximizing efficacy, and patriotic national production were put forward as compensatory features.

A magazine advertisement for "Shiseido Deluxe Cosmetics" that ran in the popular journal *Housewife's Companion* (*Fujin no Tomo*) in 1940 clearly tries to have it both ways. It exhorts consumers to show their patriotism by partaking in the "pride of pure national production" (*jun kokusan no hokori*), with "national production" glossed in katakana as "Nippon" (Japan) to the right, that offers products superior to imported goods.



Right above this copy, however, sits the elegant English script reading "deluxe" alongside the image of a stylishly dressed woman in a jauntily tilted pert hat that was clearly keeping pace with international fashions from the mid 1930s through the early 40s.

Shiseido Deluxe cosmetics (above left) magazine ad, 1940

[sh01_1940_d013_5_MagAd]

Shiseido Deluxe cosmetics (above right) magazine ad, 1940

[sh01_1940_d014_6_MagAd]

Shiseido Deluxe cosmetics (right) magazine ad touting "deluxe cosmetics born in Japan" 1940

[sh06_1940_ad]



Other promotional materials took a similar approach promoting national production, deluxe quality and international style. A fashionable woman in a colorful hat and bow is featured prominently in a poster designed for a show window display. In *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater* retailers are given several options for setting up this poster as a backdrop to product display.



A pink hat and bow adorn the stylish woman in this 1940 cosmetics poster. Instructions for placing it in a show window appear to the right.

[sh01_1940_e045]

Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater, vol. 2, no. 5
back cover, May 1940
(right, with enlarged detail)

[sh02_CS_1940_05_2]



A Year of Chainstore Covers

October 1937–September 1938

Covers from *Shiseido's Chainstore* between October 1937 and September 1938 show the array of subjects—from filmmaking (11/37) to homefront wartime activities (10/37 & 12/37)—the publication featured. Designs encompass both traditional and contemporary styles, and women are represented in a variety of ways: as homemakers, in patriotic wartime efforts, engaged in traditional arts, and as independent “modern” women—both glamorously cosmopolitan and down to earth. The journal title also changed over the course of the 12 months from “The Chainstore Reseach” to simply “The Chainstore.”



The Chainstore Research and The Chainstore
 Shiseido publication, covers, 12 issues: October 1937–September 1938

Recycling Luxury

While the term “deluxe” was still clearly in evidence in 1940, by September of that year *Hanatsubaki* magazine stopped publishing to conserve precious resources. For similar reasons, the company also changed its containers from glass to ceramics, cardboard, and aluminum, depending on the product. 31



Container recycling campaign

Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater (right)
vol. 2, no. 6, back cover, June 1940

[sh02_CS_1940_06_2]

Shiseido was also able to join in the mobilization effort by spearheading a consumer campaign to recycle their empty cosmetic containers.

Container recycling campaign

Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater (left)
vol. 2, no. 9, back cover, September 1940

[sh02_CS_1940_09_2]



Empty Container recycling ad, 1940s (above)

[sh06_1940C_1_RecyclingAd]

Empty Container recycling poster, 1940s (left)

[sh06_1940C_3_RecyclingPoster]





Under the slogan, "Recycle empty containers for victory," the company magazines showed its customers how and where to recycle. Different varieties of collection boxes, which were distributed throughout cities, were illustrated in the August 1940 issue of *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater*. 32

Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater
vol. 2, no. 8, back cover,
August 1940

[sh02_CS_1940_08_2]

Again, the reactionary and restrictive ideological context of this recycling effort did not entirely restrict its creative mode of expression, as evidenced in the playful editorial layouts using cut photographs of piles of recycled containers for the contours or actual shapes of bottles with the copy "One container can be the power of Asia."



The detail (above right) shows bottles and jars collaged into shapes of Shiseido products in ads part of recycling campaigns.

Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater, (above) vol. 2, no. 11, back cover, November 1940

[sh02_CS_1940_11_2]

Empty container recycling ad, 1940s (right, detail above)

[sh06_1940C_2_RecyclingAd]



Another strategy the company used to negotiate the anti-luxury ordinances was to tie its products to the morality messages of the wartime spiritual mobilization movement. A newspaper advertisement from 1941 for Shiseido shampoo told women that "dirty hair makes a dirty spirit/mind!" (*kami no yogore wa kokoro no yogore!*). The illustration shows a clearly Western-looking woman gazing upward as if for spiritual guidance as she strokes her long hair. It does not emphasize the beautifying aspect of the product, which might be linked to vanity and luxury, but rather promotes cleanliness (as next to godliness).

Shiseido Shampoo newspaper ad copy "dirty hair makes a dirty spirit/mind!" does not promote beautifying qualities, but rather cleanliness (as next to godliness), 1941

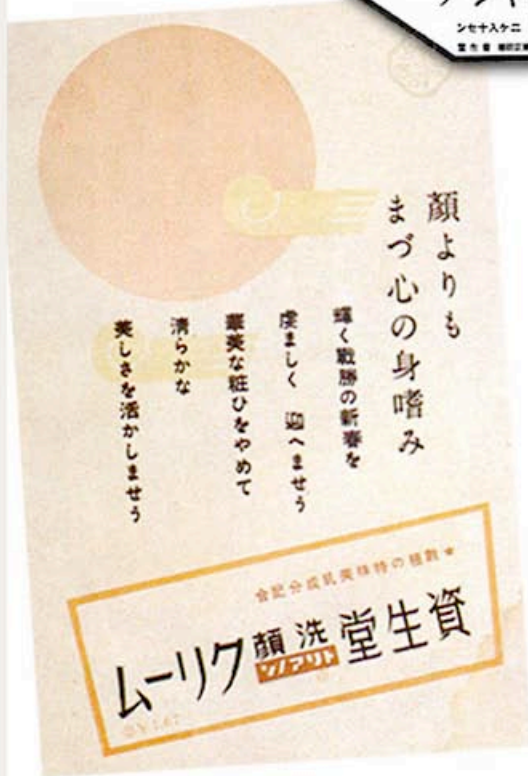
[sh06_1941_4]



Another 1943 ad for Shiseido face washing cream with the national emblem of the rising sun was clear to emphasize priorities while still accentuating the importance of cosmetic hygiene practices. It read, "Before thinking about your face, first be mindful of the appearance of your spirit/mind (*kao yorimo mazu kokoro no midashinami*). 33

Ad for Shiseido Face Washing Cream, 1943

[sh06_1943_FaceWashingCream]



Other Shiseido products were similarly promoted; toothpaste was endorsed for keeping teeth and gums healthy (rather than for making them beautifully white). In a toothpaste ad from 1943, children brushing their teeth exclaim, "We are the best teeth brushers in Greater East Asia," with the text written in uneven *katakana* lettering to imitate a child's handwriting that makes it appear as if the two figures are speaking the copy.



ハミガキ

Enlarged detail (above) shows children brushing their teeth from Shiseido toothpaste magazine ad, 1943 (left)

[sh06_1943_5_ToopasteMagAd]

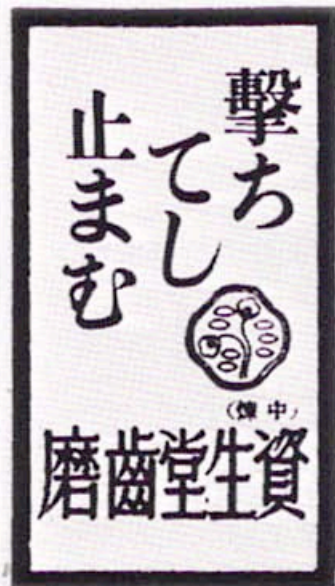


Shiseido toothpaste
magazine ad:
"Ensure your chewing
power for the
final battle" 1943

[sh06_1943_5_ToopasteMagAd]



A 1942 ad celebrating the fall of Singapore with a floral framed score for the "Singapore Victory Song" (to be sung throughout the nation until the Americans and British were defeated) was accompanied by the catchphrase "healthy teeth proud nation" (*kenba hōkoku*). *Genmai* (brown rice) for meals was put forward as a good method for polishing teeth in addition to using Shiseido toothpaste (1943). Moreover, the high quality of Shiseido toothpaste, a 1942 ad touted, ensured that you only needed a little to be effective, so it was, in fact, the more economical (*keizaiteki*) choice. Another way Shiseido endorsed its cosmetics was their practical effectiveness against medical ailments; for example, vanishing cream was good at soothing chapped skin (*are dome*) as well as providing valuable protection under light cosmetics. The company continued to diversify into a range of products, including: Hifumoto cream to heal skin wounds and burns (1942); Asia-brand shoe polish for men's shoes; and ball-point pens, which were marketed as "culture weapons" (*bunka no heiki*).

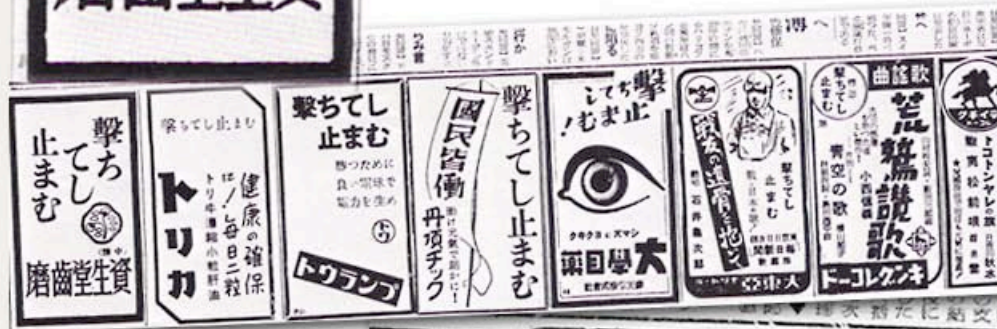


Visually the advertisements display a marked graphic simplification in terms of composition and color from the early 1940s, both responding to government publishing regulations and due to a desire not to look ostentatious during a time of national sacrifice.

This image below shows a range of ads for different products, with Shiseido on the far left (enlarged in the left detail). The wartime slogan "Fight to the Bitter End" (Uchite Yamamu) appears. The government restricted the amount of advertising space companies could have, so newspaper advertisements were only two or three lines each.

Ads from Asahi Shinbun newspaper, March 1943

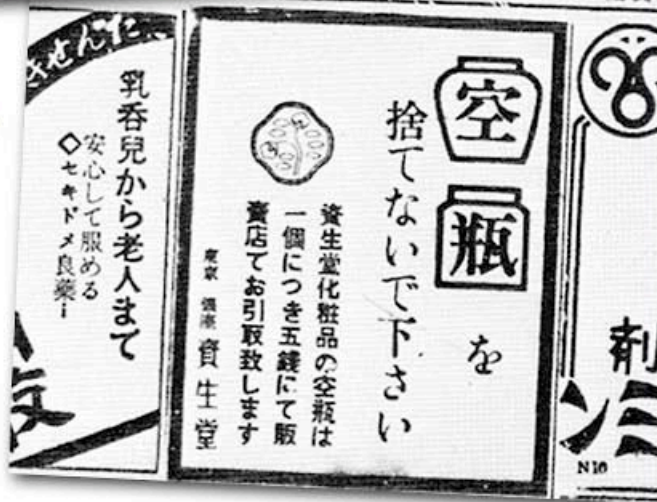
[sh06_1943_Asahi_NewspaperAd]



The ad at right encourages consumers to recycle their empty cosmetic jars ("Please do not throw away your empty jars"—Shiseido is offering 5 sen back to people who return the jar).

Ad from Asahi Shinbun newspaper, February 1944

[sh06_1943_Asahi_NewspaperAd]



Yet even within the stripped down wartime palette, it is evident that designers developed creative approaches to their editorial layouts maximizing the three colors of black, white, and red in eye-catching simple compositions.



And Yamana Ayao's elegant muted blue camellia package design for Shiseido toothpaste was still attractive in aluminum.

Shiseido toothpaste aluminum container, ca. 1943 Yamana Ayao, designer

[sh06_1943_7_ToothpasteContainer]

Style, sophistication, and a certain cosmopolitan elegance would not be entirely abandoned by manufacturers or the consumer public even during the dire circumstances of the final years of the war, as women clung to their Shiseido lipstick, even when it had to be sold in chunky wood containers.

Shiseido lipstick with wood containers, ca. 1943

[sh06_1943_8_ShiseidoLipstick]



A note from Shiseido Co., Ltd.

Given the value, age, and cultural background of these materials, we have not altered original phrases or images that may seem inappropriate in light of our awareness of human rights today.

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Footnotes

1. Shiseido began producing cosmetics in 1896.
2. Kathy Lee Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture*, 1st Owl Books ed. (New York: Henry Holt, 1999), p. 6.
3. Fukuhara learned the chemical techniques of photography from Hirano Ikkan, a true Renaissance man, who, after returning from his studies in Germany, took up black-box photography as well as oil painting. Displaying a wide range of skills, Hirano is even credited with being the first Japanese to manufacture genuine perfume. Fukuhara published some of the photographs he took in Paris in June 1921 in an issue of the Shashin Geijutsusha's magazine *Shashin Geijutsu* (Photographic Arts) under the title "Paris and the Seine, Part I." The following year in March, he published a separate volume of 24 of the works under the title *Paris and the Seine*. Shiseido, *Shiseido Senden Shi*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Tokyo: Shiseido 1979), pp. 12-13, p. 15, Fuku Noriko et al., *Shinzo and Roso Fukuhara: Photographs by Ginza Modern Boys 1913-1941* (New York: SEPIA International Inc., 2000).
4. Fukuhara Arinobu's stewardship of the pharmacy at the prestigious and modern Tokyo Hospital, founded by Doctor Takagi Kanehiro, inestimably contributed to consumer confidence in the Fukuhara name.
5. Inoue Mariko, "Kiyokata's Asasuzu: The Emergence of the Jogakusei Image," *Monumenta Nipponica* 51, no. 4 (1996).
6. Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture*, pp. 16-17.
7. Shiseido, *Shiseido Senden Shi*, p. 21.

8. Shiseido also marketed two liquid white powders: Blanc de Perles and Eau de Neige. *Ibid.*, p. 22, pp. 34-35.

9. <http://www.unilever.com/ourbrands/personalcare/Ponds.asp>

10. Shiseido promoted the popular European trend of putting an open bottle of perfume in one's drawers to infuse one's clothing with scent rather than apply the scent to a handkerchief. *Shiseido Geppō* 2, December 1924, p. 1

11. For an in-depth discussion of the new woman and the modern girl, see: Barbara Hamill Sato, *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

12. Shiseido, *Shiseido Senden Shi*, p. 10.

13. The Hanatsubaki-kai and its coupon books were introduced in *Shiseido Graph* 43, February 1937, pp. 18-19.

14. Ibuka Akira, "Shōgyō Shashin," in *Shinbun Shashin, Shōgyō Shashin*, pp. 13-58, (Tokyo: Shinkōsha, 1935).

15. *Shiseido Graph* 17, December 1934, cover.

16. "Ginpa o kōshite," *Shiseido Graph* 3, September 1933, p. 9; *Shiseido Graph* 5, November 1933, p. 9.

17. "Ryūkō no gōka" (Trends in Luxury), *Shiseido Graph* 10, May 1934, p. 14.

18. *The Chainstore Research* 9, March 1936, cover.

19. For a discussion of Kao soap advertising design, see: Gennifer Weisenfeld, "'from Baby's First Bath': Kao Soap and Modern Japanese Commercial Design," *The Art Bulletin* LXXXVI, no. 3 (2004).

20. See Gennifer Weisenfeld, "Japanese Modernism and Consumerism: Forging the New Artistic Field of Shōgyō Bijutsu (Commercial Art)," in *Being Modern in Japan: Culture and Society from the 1910s to the 1930s*, edited by Elise K. Tipton and John Clark (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000); and Gennifer Weisenfeld, "Japanese Typographic Design and the Art of Letterforms," in *Bridges to Heaven: Essays on East Asian Art in Honor of Professor Wen C. Fong*, edited by Jerome Silbergeld and Dora C.Y. Ching (Princeton: P.Y. and Kinmay W. Tang Center for East Asian Art, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University in association with Princeton University Press, forthcoming).

21. *The Chainstore Research* 26, August 1937, inside back cover.

22. *The Chainstore Research* 29, November 1937, inside back cover.

23. Shiseido, *Shiseido Senden Shi*, p. 48.

24. For a discussion of this compendium and commercial art trade journals of the period, see Weisenfeld, "Japanese Modernism and Consumerism: Forging the New Artistic Field of Shōgyō Bijutsu (Commercial Art)."

25. Shiseido, *Shiseido Senden Shi*, p. 47, p. 49.

26. Gennifer Weisenfeld, "Designing after Disaster: Barrack Decoration and the Great Kantō Earthquake," *Japanese Studies* 18, no. 3 (1998).

27. *The Chainstore Research* 28, October 1937, cover.

28. *The Chainstore Research* 30, December 1937, cover.
29. *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater* 2, no. 11, November 1940, cover.
30. Sheldon Garon, "Luxury Is the Enemy: Mobilizing Savings and Popularizing Thrift in Wartime Japan," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 26, no. 1 (2000).
31. Shiseido, *Shiseido Senden Shi*, p. 167.
32. *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater* 2, no. 9, August 1940, back cover.
33. Shiseido, *Shiseido Senden Shi*, p. 179.

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[John W. Dower](#)

Project Director

Ford International Professor of History

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Project Director

Professor of Linguistics

Kochi Prefecture-John Manjiro Professor of Japanese Language and Culture

[Ellen Sebring](#)

Creative Director

[Scott Shunk](#)

Program Director

[Andrew Burstein](#)

Media designer

In collaboration with:

Gennifer Weisenfeld

Associate Professor

Art, Art History & Visual Studies

Duke University

Author, essay: "Selling Shiseido: Cosmetics Advertising & Design in Early 20th-Century Japan"

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