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Japanese Folding Screen

Japanese Folding Screen, *Tale of Genji*
Edo Period (1600–1868)
Private Collection
Chicago, IL

Japanese folding screens have been traditionally used as seasonal and moveable decorative furniture placed on the floor. However, in the West the screens are commonly displayed on walls by hanging the wooden frames originally attached to the screens. This display method creates physical damage to the screens such as broken hinges and large tears across the entire panel. This particular screen depicts a famous 11th–century Japanese novel, *Tale of Genji*, written by Murasaki Shikibu. The screen was produced in the traditional manner of folding screen production. ICA paper conservators mended and reinforced the damaged areas without deconstructing the original complex structure, and toned losses of the original painting and gilding media.

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