



woodblock print, ink and color on paper

**Description**

Issued when he was just fifteen, Yoshitoshi’s earliest published work is a scene from the war epic The Tale of the Heike. Realizing the impending defeat of his clan, the leader of the fleet, Taira no Kiyomori (1118–81), bound himself to an anchor and plunged into the sea. On the seabed, the human faces of the defeated Taira warriors are transformed into the shell patterns on the backs of local crabs. A pastiche of several of his teacher’s earlier designs, this triptych was very popular, and its production testifies to the confidence his teachers and associates had in the young Yoshitoshi’s abilities.

**Dimensions**

Oban Triptych: 112.5 × 25.3 cm (44 5/16 × 9 15/16 in.) Oban (each): 37.5 × 25.3 cm (14 3/4 × 9 15/16 in.)

**The Heiki Clan Sinking into the Sea and Perishing in 1185**

**Date**

6th month 1853

**Primary Maker**

Tsukioka Yoshitoshi

**Medium**