



Katsushika Hokusai (October or November 1760–May 10, 1849)[1] was a Japanese artist, ukiyo-e painter and printmaker of the Edo period. In his time, he was Japan’s leading expert on Chinese painting.[2] Born in Edo (now Tokyo), Hokusai is best-known as author of the woodblock print series Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji which includes the iconic and internationally recognized print, The Great Wave off Kanagawa, created during the 1820s.

While Hokusai’s work prior to this series is certainly important, it was not until this series that he gained broad recognition and left a lasting impact on the art world. It was also The Great Wave print that initially received, and continues to receive, acclaim and popularity in the Western world.



Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (July 15, 1606 – October 4, 1669) was a Dutch painter and etcher. He is generally considered one of the greatest painters and printmakers in European art history and the most important in Dutch history.[1] His contributions to art came in a period that historians call the Dutch Golden Age.

Rembrandt’s greatest creative triumphs are exemplified especially in his portraits of his contemporaries, self-portraits and illustrations of scenes from the Bible. His self-portraits form a unique and intimate biography, in which the artist surveyed himself without vanity and with the utmost sincerity.[1]

In both painting and printmaking he exhibited a complete knowledge of classical iconography, which he molded to fit the requirements of his own experience; thus, the depiction of a biblical scene was informed by Rembrandt’s knowledge of the specific text, his assimilation of classical composition, and his observations of Amsterdam’s Jewish population.[4] Because of his empathy for the human condition, he has been called “one of the great prophets of civilization.”

