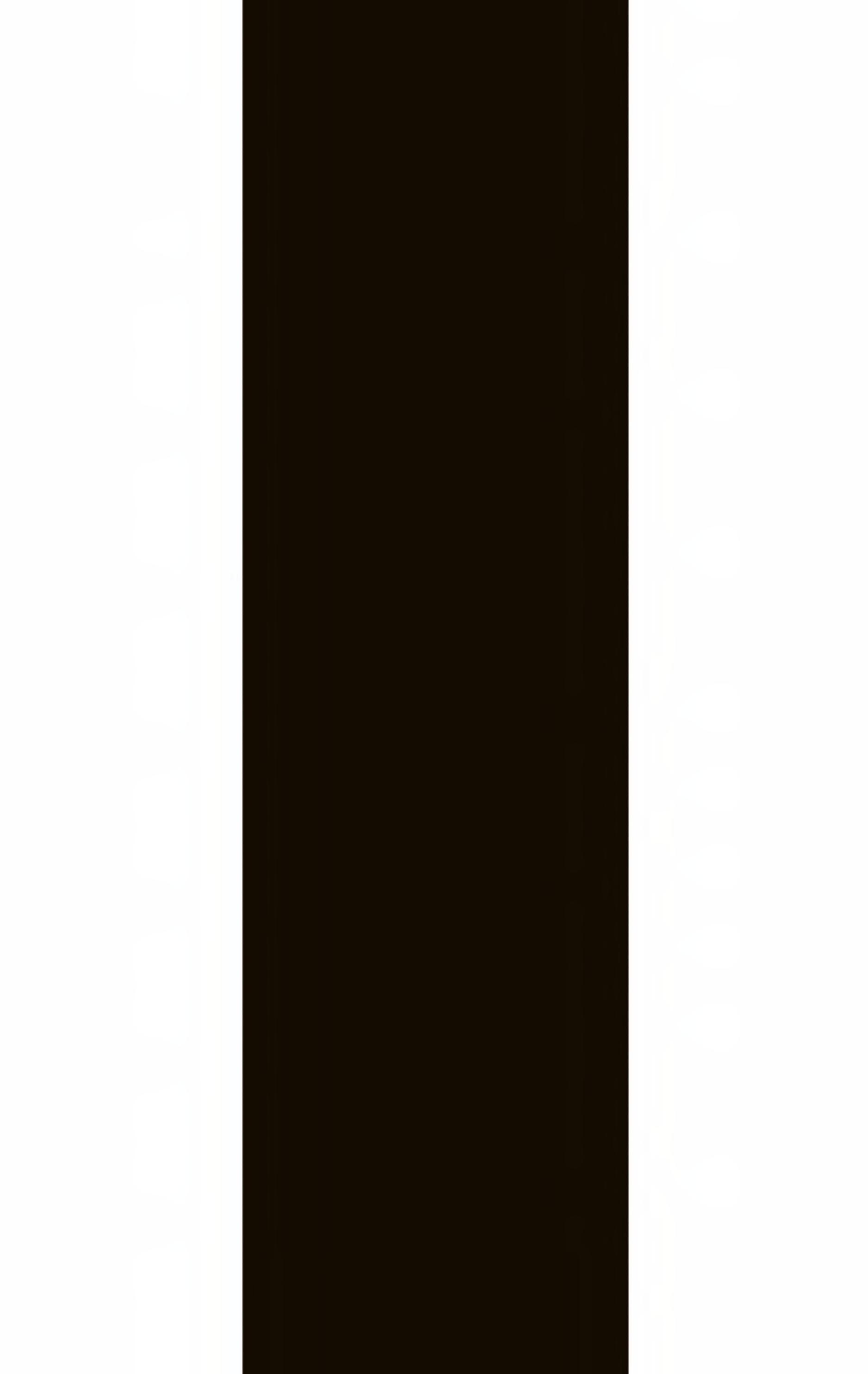


For copyright reasons, the frontispiece and all other illustrations in this volume have been blacked out. We are in the process of applying for permission to reproduce these illustrations electronically. Once permission is gained, the illustrations will be made available. We apologize for the inconvenience.



THE OLD TEA SELLER

This portrait of the eccentric Zen figure known as Baisaō, “the Old Tea Seller,” 1675–1763, was painted by his friend Ike Taiga, 1723–1776, one of the great painters and calligraphers of the Edo period. Although forty-eight years his junior, Taiga formed a close friendship with Baisaō during the years that Baisaō lived as a roadside tea-seller in Kyoto.

Taiga portrays Baisaō seated beside his brazier awaiting customers, his teapot simmering on the fire, and “Senka,” his bamboo cabinet, at his side. Above the portrait Baisaō has inscribed a verse describing his life as a tea seller.

*Roaming free and easy, enjoying
The natural shapes beyond the world
This elderly man of eighty years
Is steeped in poverty and need.
He escapes starvation—barely,
Thanks to a coin-tube of bamboo;
A small house with a tiny window
Provides all the shelter he needs.
Outside, carts and horses pass,
Annulling both the noise and quiet;
Inside, cheerful talk at the fire
Vanishes thoughts of host and guest.
He resides beneath a row of pines
Beside a temple of guardian sages
Where the pine breeze sweeps clear
The dust of worldly fame and profit.*

Baisaō signs his verse *Sanpi*, or “Three Not’s,” *Dōnin* (Dōnin means “man of the Way”). In another of his verses (see pp. 121–122), which may be said to express his basic religious standpoint, he declares that he is “not a Buddhist, not a Taoist, and not a Confucianist either.” If Baisaō was eighty years old when he inscribed this verse, it would mean that the painting was done in 1755, when he was living near the Shōgo-in temple (the “temple of guardian sages”) in Okazaki village, where he had transferred his residence the previous year (see p. 199, n. 38).

Reproduced courtesy of the Idemitsu Art Museum, Tokyo