

Dwelling in Stillness: Queering Landscape, Time, and Animacy in Hiroshige's *Evening Snow at Hira*

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Abstract

This paper examines the queer potential embedded in Ando Hiroshige's woodblock print *Evening Snow at Hira* through an integrated analysis of queer temporality, animacy, and non-anthropocentric aesthetics. Drawing on Lee Edelman's critique of reproductive futurism and Elizabeth Freeman's notion of chrononormativity, it argues that Hiroshige's suspended landscape resists linear, heteronormative time by presenting a frozen, cyclical moment that denies developmental narrative and foregrounds stillness over progress. The print redistributes agency to the non-human, as snow and landscape eclipse the passive, indistinct human figures. Through close visual analysis informed by Mel Y. Chen's theory of animacies and Sara Ahmed's queer phenomenology, the essay shows how the image reorients the viewer's relation to space, shifting attention from human-centred narrative to atmospheric detail and dispersed perception. Hiroshige's abstraction and minimalism thus invite not straightforward interpretation but dwelling—a queer inhabitation of time and space that resists teleology. By situating the print within both Edo-period visual culture and comparative Western Romantic conventions, the paper demonstrates how the work unsettles assumptions about time, nature, and subjectivity. Ultimately, *Evening Snow at Hira* becomes not only an object of art historical inquiry but a visual enactment of queer relationality, opening up alternative modes of perceiving stillness, animacy, and co-existence beyond heteronormative scripts.

Keywords: animacy; hiroshige; japanese art; queer temporality; visual culture