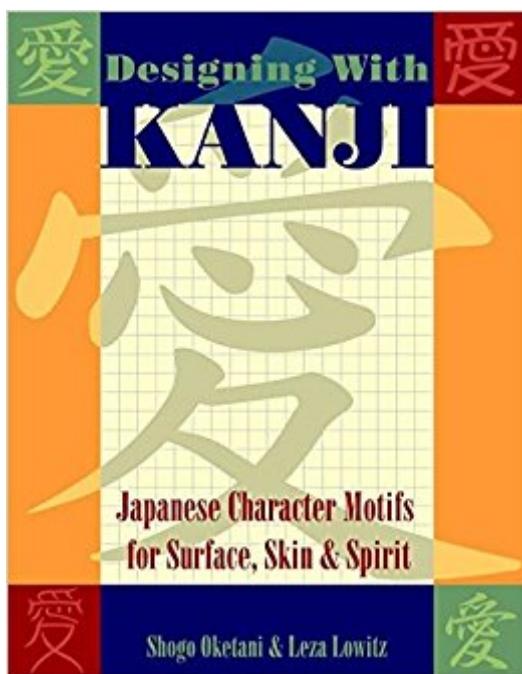


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# Designing With Kanji: Japanese Character Motifs For Surface, Skin & Spirit



## Synopsis

Japanese kanji characters combine meaning with beauty and thus offer a unique medium for artistic expression. But if you don't know the language, how do you find characters that say what you want and are not just a "kanji cliché"? You can start here. This attractive book has over one hundred thirty kanji presented in a simple format for easy use. For example: Post the kanji for kenshin on a mirror to remind you of your "devotion" to your studies. Embroider bussho on a meditation cushion to help you reflect on "Buddha nature." Tattoo the name Zatoichi on your upper arm as homage to your favorite blind swordsman hero. Show your "love" with a card decorated by ai. Pick from Warrior, Heart, Nature, and Spirit categories to find the characters that express your sentiments best. Each entry includes historical or etymological background, often with unusual "kanji facts." Then trace, photocopy, or even stencil the clear letterforms displayed in several different kanji "fonts" to get just the effect you want. Included is an introduction to kanji, writing tips, and a special supplement on Zodiac kanji (great for birthdays!). "People are always fascinated by different cultures, and we continue to be awed by the wonderful ways in which East and West have mingled in culture, lifestyle, design, art, and aesthetics. We hope this book will enrich your own experience of kanji in art and design and help you bring your creative gifts to bear in fresh, new ways." •from the Authors  
Introduction Shogo Oketani and Leza Lowitz are writers and translators who live in the San Francisco Bay area.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Designing with Kanji is an ode to the Eastern typographic element, a clip-art book and a short but focused history of the Japanese language itself. Tattoo artists, designers and those in need of selected 'spiritual ideograms' will enjoy this book." Northwest Asian Weekly, December 27, 2003

Leza Lowitz is an award-winning writer and translator, and Director of Sun and Moon Yoga Studio in Tokyo.

I have been an admirer for Oriental Culture, and willing to understand Chinesse and Japanese writing. This book is an excellent source which explains a lot of Kanji symbols, and has several notes about interesting facts about it. I recommend it to all people looking to introduce themselves into this enigmatic and wonderful language. Antonio Sobalvarro

Easy to read, follow, and use right away. Shows formal, modern, flowing, and stylish character sets. Describes the root, meaning, and nature of common Japanese words and phrases. The calligraphy is excellent. I only wish it was longer and more encompassing. Among other things I use this book as a supplement to Write Your Name in Kanji text by Nobuo Sato to write the characters more elegantly. Lawrence Kane Author of Surviving Armed Assaults, The Way of Kata, and Martial Arts Instruction

How lucky I was this holiday season to have received Designing with Kanji: Japanese Character Motifs for Surface, Skin and Spirit by Shogo Oketani and Leza Lowitz. From the beautiful cover to the exquisitely illustrated text Stonebridge Press has done it again! Oketani and Lowitz have taken an art form that is little understood in the United States and have made it accessible. I have always been drawn to "Asian things" in my home from artifacts to flower arranging, and the Kanji calligraphy and historical background helped me clarify my fascination with the genre. I had no idea there were other Kanji fonts such as modern and stylish for instance. I particularly appreciated the poetic description of each illustrated Kanji and the little Kanji Facts interspersed throughout the book. I have no tattoos and am not expecting to get any in the near future however, this book is for anyone wishing to understand the Japanese "character".

The collaborative effort of journalist and translator Shogo Oketani and Tokyo-based writer, editor, translator, and yoga instructor Leza Lowitz, Designing With Kanji: Japanese Character Motifs For Surface, Skin & Spirit is a simple and elegantly illustrated guide to common kanji (Japanese written

words), that can be used to embellish a variety of art mediums ranging from tattoos to stationery, mugs, T-shirts, or just about anything else that has a surface. A representative selection of kanji are presented on a grid background, in a variety of fonts, to simplify their transferences and incorporation into the art of one's choice. Designing With Kanji is enthusiastically recommended as a fine and useful designer's aid.

What a great book! The presentation of multiple styles definitely caught my eye as I fanned through the book the first time; I was hooked! The introduction is very well written, and each page thereafter imparts a wealth of information that is simply a joy to read. I love "power" words - single words that encompass my thoughts and feelings - and kanji characters are a beautiful way to express them. I found 'Designing with Kanji' in my effort to design my next tattoo. When I did not find exactly what I was looking for in the book, I contacted Leza and she promptly responded with the characters I needed. Great book - great woman!

I found this book to be like all StoneBridge Press books well written and a beautifully made. The text and illustrations are clear and well-presented. I am studying Japanese and my instructor recommended this book to me as fun way to study some kanji. I am not exactly in the market for a tattoo at the moment, but my daughter has found one in this book she would like to get. I have seen other books of this type, but IMHP this is the best. Well-worth the purchase.

We had recently seen "The Last Samuri" so I was in the frame of mind to learn more about Japanese history and culture. I found this book on the Breakfast table one recent morning. The introduction and explanation of Kanji was clear and concise. This book provided a great beginning to the subject of how a culture influenced a language and how a language influenced a culture. I couldn't put it down for an hour or so. I'll refer to it often.

Exciting and enlightening book on Japanese Kanji! This book is an invaluable resource for decorative artists, jewelers and crafts people alike. I use this book often as inspiration for my jewelry designs and paintings. Hundreds of illustrations combined with descriptive and historical definitions make this a wonderful resource for anyone interested in the Japanese language.

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