

# Suminagashi

The Ancient Art of Japanese Marbling

# Background information

- Suminagashi translates to “ink-floating”
- It is the Japanese technique of decorating paper with inks
- It originated in China over 2,000 years ago and was practiced in Japan by Shinto priests as early as the 12<sup>th</sup> Century
- You may have also seen this technique referred to as paper marbling



- Japanese Sumi-e inks were originally used, dropped carefully to float on a still water surface and then blown across to form delicate swirls, after which the ink was picked up by laying a sheet of white rice paper atop the ink covered water



# Materials

- Opaque ink will produce the most vibrant prints whereas transparent inks create a very faint image
- Using an absorbent paper without sizing is key so the pigment absorbs into the surface
- Sometime a dispersing agent will help the ink float on the surface. Traditionally Japanese pine-resin was used



- The final Suminagashi print is considered a MONOPRINT
- A monoprint is a form of printmaking that has lines or images that can only be made once. This is unlike other forms of printmaking where there would be editions of the same print.





# Other examples of Suminagashi used today

