

Traditional New Year painting – Coconut harvest (Vietnamese: Hái dừa)

Southeast Asian Collection

Accession Nr.: 86.30.1 

Type: woodblock print

Date of production: second half of the 20th century

Place of production: Bắc Ninh province, Đông Hồ village, Vietnam, Southeast Asia

Materials/Techniques: paper, coloured woodblock print

Dimensions: height: 34.4 cm
width: 25.7 cm

In this picture taken at the Đông Hồ workshop in Vietnam, a young man is handing down nuts picked from a coconut tree, which the girl under the tree is gathering into her skirt. The upturned skirt allows you to see the girl's bare legs, which are usually covered by traditional trousers or a long skirt.

Despite the strict Confucian morals, young people were allowed to live together out of wedlock during many festivals in the countryside, and children born of such unions were welcomed by families. The image is a reference to this tradition, and because of its erotic content it was considered to bring fertility, good harvests and abundance, and thus may have been included in New Year's images.

