



KYOTO NATIONAL MUSEUM

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NEWSLETTER

JANUARY TO MARCH 2015

Feature Exhibitions

The Treasures of Gakuen-ji Temple in Shimane
Hina Matsuri and Japanese Dolls
Masterworks of Kongō-ji Temple, Osaka

Feature Exhibition

An Ancient Temple of the San'in Region

The Treasures of Gakuen-ji Temple in Shimane

January 2–February 15, 2015

Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Gallery1F-2

In 2012, the Kyoto National Museum presented *The Grand Izumo Exhibition*, a special exhibition commemorating the 1300th anniversary of the ancient chronicle *Kojiki* as well as the major rebuilding of Izumo Taisha Shrine. Izumo is home to the grand shrine and is a place often mentioned in ancient mythology, for which reason it is closely associated with Japan's native Shinto faith. The 2012 Izumo exhibition, however, examined not only the Shinto culture of this region but also its Shinto–Buddhist syncretic religion as well as its Buddhist culture from ancient times through the medieval period. With the generous cooperation of numerous shrines and temples as well as the Shimane prefectural government and the Shimane Museum of Ancient Izumo, the museum was able to introduce the spiritual culture of this part of Japan to numerous visitors.

While *The Grand Izumo Exhibition* may have done something to break down the perception of Izumo as a purely Shinto area, it by no means penetrated the depths of Buddhism in Sai'in, the region in which Izumo is located. This exhibition of treasures from Gakuen-ji helps to rectify this deficit.

Gakuen-ji is a Tendai sect temple in Shimane prefecture. It is hailed one of the sacred places in Japan in a late Heian period (circa 1180) anthology entitled *Ryōjin hishō* (*Songs to Make the Dust Dance on the Beams*), which was selected by Retired Emperor Goshirakawa. This reference tells us that by the late twelfth century, Gakuen-ji was already famous as a sacred site and temple among the people of Kyoto. (Continued on next page.)



Seated Female Deity
Gakuen-ji Temple, Shimane Prefecture

Feature Exhibition

Hina Matsuri and Japanese Dolls

February 21–April 7, 2015

Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Gallery 1F-2

The Kyoto National Museum, welcomes spring this year with a revival of its beloved annual exhibition of Japanese dolls, after a six-year hiatus during the rebuilding of the museum's new wing. This year's selection includes emperor and empress dolls (*dairi bina*) and other *hina* dolls displayed on red felt, sometimes on multi-tiered altars. It also features palace dolls (*gosho ningyō*) and Saga dolls (*saga ningyō*), both representing children, as well as tiny Kamo dolls (*kamo ningyō*), with their simple but lively charm.

Hina dolls are associated with the Doll Festival, or *hina matsuri*, which takes place on March 3rd each year. Though widely considered to be an ancient ritual, the tradition of displaying and celebrating dolls on a specific day dates only to the early 1600s, in the Edo period. The Doll Festival originated as a purification rite that took place on the third day of the third month each year. Dolls originally functioned as *katashiro*—inanimate substitute representations used to absorb impurities and evils from actual people. These representations could then be floated away or otherwise destroyed, taking human pollutants with them. It was during the Edo period that such ritual objects were transformed into the luxurious figurines we know today.

Some types of Edo period *hina* dolls are named after the time periods with which they are associated, as in the Kan'ei dolls (*kan'ei bina*, named after the Kan'ei era, 1624–1645) or

Kyōhō dolls (*kyōhō bina*, after the Kyōhō era, 1716–1736). The *jirōzaemon bina* dolls are named after a Kyoto doll maker, Jirōzaemon, who is credited with their design. The *Kokin dolls* (*kokin bina*) are considered to be a new Edo period innovation, while the courtier dolls (*yūsoku bina*) faithfully represent the costume and hair conventions of the aristocracy. This extensive selection of dolls offers you the opportunity to look carefully at differences in their details, including facial expressions, gestures, and costumes.

The highlights of the exhibition this year are the large central *hina* altars with pavilions—exemplifying a now-rare display style formerly found in Kyoto, Osaka, and other areas of the Kansai region. One of these is a newly donated ensemble commissioned for a baby girl in the year 1844. The significance of the Kyoto National Museum's collection should be evident from the high quality of the works on view. We hope that its appeal will extend to visitors of all ages.

(By Yamakawa Aki, Senior Curator of Textiles, translated by Melissa Rinne)



Kamo Dolls
Kyoto National Museum



Hina Altar with Pavilion
Kyoto National Museum



Important Cultural Property
Standing Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva
Gakuen-ji Temple, Shimane Prefecture

(Continued from previous page.) Among the treasures preserved over the centuries in Gakuen-ji is a Standing Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva sculpture (Important Cultural Property) with an inscription dating it to 692, as well as a ninth-century finial from a priest's staff (not on view), which was discovered on the temple grounds in a cave devoted to the mountain deity Zao Gongen. Such works tell us that Gakuen-ji was established as a monastery from the early part of the Heian period (794–1185). The name Gakuen-ji isn't mentioned in writing, however, until the Kamakura period, when it appears in the 1213 *Mandate to Gakuen-ji from the Administrative Office of Mudō-ji on Mt. Hiei* on view in this exhibition. This document states that, upon the order of Retired Emperor Gotoba, the government official in Izumo province must allocate a large parcel of land to Gakuen-ji, to be divided into two precincts. The North and South Gakuen-ji precincts will be under the administration of the temple Mudō-ji on Mt. Hiei in Kyoto, to which each precinct must submit half the annual rice taxes.

With this mandate, Gakuen-ji effectively became a branch temple of Mudō-ji and an official member of the network of Tendai sect temples. Thereafter, Gakuen-ji joined Daisen-ji and Sanbutsu-ji in Hōki province as one of the three major temples of the San'in region.

This exhibition features various artworks from the temple including Buddhist and Shinto sculptures, some designated as Important Cultural Properties of the national or prefectural government. Most of these works are on view at the Kyoto National Museum for the first time, allowing us to consider Tendai Buddhist connections between Kyoto and Izumo in ways that were not covered in *The Grand Izumo Exhibition*. At the same time they reveal to us the fascinating history and appeal of Gakuen-ji Temple.

(By Suekane Toshihiko, Associate Curator of Metalwork, translated by Melissa Rinne)

Feature Exhibition

Masterworks of Kongō-ji Temple, Osaka

March 4–29, 2015, Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Galleries 1F-1, 1F-3, 1F-5

The temple formally known as Amanosan Kongō-ji is part of the Shingon sect of Esoteric Buddhism and said to have been founded by the priest Gyōki (668–749). In the late Heian period, it was revived by the priest Akan (1136–1207) and became one of an elite group of “Hachijō-in” temples under the sponsorship of Imperial Princess Hachijō-in Akiko (1137–1211), the third daughter of Emperor Gotoba. Later, in the Nanbokuchō period (1333–1392), when the imperial court divided into Northern and Southern Courts, these Hachijō-in temples became part of the Daikaku-ji line of temples, which were associated with the Southern Court. During the 1300s, Emperor Gomurakami even resided temporarily at Kongō-ji for a time. Such events are extremely important when considering the history and artworks of this temple.

Among the artworks owned by Kongō-ji are four National Treasure handscrolls of the *Engishiki* (lit., “Procedures of the Engi Era”), a National Treasure double-edged sword, and a very significant pair of early screens, *Landscape with Sun and Moon* (Important Cultural Property). Other outstanding works include manuscripts and documents, paintings, arms, and armor. Many of the manuscripts have been studied recently by scholars of Japanese literature. This exhibition shares the results of such recent research as it introduces the art and history of this significant Osaka temple.

(By Akao Eikei, Senior Curator of Buddhist Manuscripts; translated by Melissa Rinne)



Important Cultural Property
Landscape with Sun and Moon, detail
Kongō-ji Temple, Osaka

Thematic Exhibitions in The Collection Galleries

3F-1 Ceramics

Kyoto Ware

January 2–March 8, 2015

Chinese Ceramics

March 17–31, 2015

*Ceramics Gallery will be closed March 9–16

3F-2 Archaeological Relics

Bronze Mirrors of the Kofun Period

January 2–April 19, 2015

2F-1 Illustrated Handscrolls

Emaki of the Muromachi Period

January 2–February 8, 2015

Illustrated Handscrolls of Narrative Literature

February 10–March 15, 2015

Muromachi Handscrolls of Temple and Shrine Legends

March 17–April 12, 2015

2F-2 Buddhist Paintings

Shinto-Buddhist Syncretic Paintings

January 2–February 8, 2015

Parinirvana: Death of the Buddha Paintings

February 10–March 15, 2015

Spring Equinox and the Pure Land

March 17–April 12, 2015

2F-3 Medieval Paintings

Animal Imagery in Medieval Ink Paintings

January 2–February 8, 2015

Medieval Fan Paintings

February 10–March 15, 2015

The Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers

March 17–April 12, 2015



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2F-4

Momoyama-Edo Paintings

Momoyama and Edo Period Wall and Door Paintings

January 2–February 8, 2015

Eighteenth Century Wall and Door Paintings

February 10–March 15, 2015

Paintings of Merrymaking by Master Artists

March 17–April 12, 2015

2F-5

Chinese Paintings

The Brilliance of Chinese Bird and Flower Painting

January 2–February 8, 2015

Chinese Paintings with Auspicious Imagery

February 10–March 15, 2015

Song and Yuan Taoist and Buddhist Figure Paintings

March 17–April 12, 2015

1F-1 Sculpture

Japanese Sculpture / Esoteric Buddhist Sculpture / Masterworks of Asian Sculpture

January 2–April 12, 2015

Feature Exhibition

Masterworks of Kongō-ji Temple, Osaka

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1F-2 Feature Exhibition

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1F-3 Calligraphy

Calligraphy by Zen Priests

January 2–February 1, 2015

Sutra Manuscripts of the Nara Period

February 3–March 1, 2015

Feature Exhibition

Masterworks of Kongō-ji Temple, Osaka

March 4–29, 2015

1F-4 Textiles and Costumes

Auspicious Textile Patterns

January 2–February 8, 2015

Japanese Children's Clothing

February 11–March 22, 2015

Shibori: The Art of Tie-Dyeing

March 25–April 26, 2015

1F-5 Metalwork

Swords from the Naga Fujikazu Collection

November 18, 2014–March 1, 2015

Feature Exhibition

Masterworks of Kongō-ji Temple, Osaka

March 4–29, 2015

1F-6 Lacquerware

Japanese Export Lacquers: Nanban and Kōmō Wares

November 26, 2014–January 12, 2015

Makie Lacquers of the Edo Period

January 14–February 22, 2015

Lacquered Cosmetic and Toiletry Implements

February 24–April 19, 2015

Upcoming Exhibitions

Special Exhibition

Kano Painters of the Momoyama Period Eitoku's Legacy

April 7–May 17, 2015

ADMISSION

Adult ¥520 (¥410)

Univ. Student ¥260 (¥210)

(Admission is free for youths of high school age and below)
(Fees in parentheses are for groups of 20+)

*These fees are for admission to the Collections Galleries only.
Special Exhibitions require separate admission fees, which include admission to the Collections Galleries.

HOURS

9:30 am–5:00 pm (Entrance until 4:30 pm)

*During special exhibitions, these hours are extended until 6:00 p.m. Tuesday–Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday, and until 8:00 p.m. on Friday. Admission ends thirty minutes before closing time.

CLOSED ON MONDAY

*When Monday is a national holiday, the museum remains open on Monday and closes the following Tuesday.

*The Museum will be closed December 24 (Wed.) to January 1 (Thu.), 2015.

ACCESS

Via JR or Subway

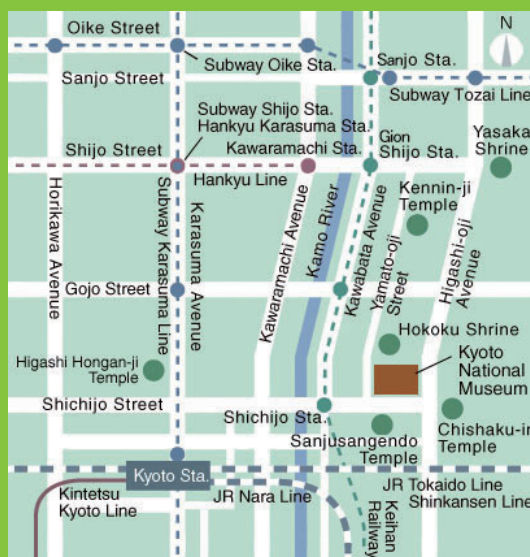
Get off at Kyoto Station. From bus platform D2 in front of the station, take City Bus #206 or #208 to "Hakubutsukan Sanjusangendo-mae" bus stop. One-minute walk to the Museum.

Via Keihan Railway

Get off at Shichijo Station. Walk east along Shichijo/Nanajo Street (about seven minutes) to the Museum.

Via Hankyu Railway

Get off at Kawaramachi Station. Walk east over the bridge to the Keihan Railway Gionshijo Station. Take Osaka-bound Keihan train to Shichijo Station. Walk east along Shichijo/Nanajo Street (about seven minutes) to the Museum.



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