



KYOTO NATIONAL MUSEUM

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NEWSLETTER
JANUARY TO MARCH 2020



Feature Exhibitions
The Many Hats of Rats!
Paintings from the Kyoto Imperial Palace:
The Shishinden
Shinto Deities and
Guardian Lions and Lion-Dogs

New Year's Feature Exhibition

The Many Hats of Rats!

January 2–February 2, 2020, Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Gallery 1F-2

2020 is the Year of the Rat according to the Chinese zodiac. In fact, the rat is the first animal in the twelve-year cycle. Why are rats and mice, which are more commonly thought of as pesky varmints portrayed so positively on works of art?

In Japan, the mouse (rat) has been regarded as a divine messenger making it an auspicious animal. Originally, the mouse was associated with the deity Ōkuninushi, since Japanese myths tell that a mouse saved this deity's life. When Daikoku, the god of wealth with Hindu origins, was brought into Japan, he was identified with Ōkuninushi because the Chinese characters for Ōkuni could also be pronounced "Daikoku." Hence the mouse became the messenger of this syncretic god. In addition, mice are prolific breeders, making them a symbol of fertility. Moreover, during the Edo period (1615–1868), rats and mice were popular pets. Manuals on breeding rare species were widely circulated and produced some calm rats and mice that like people. In the Japanese court, a New Year's event to bolster longevity was held on the First Day of the Rat (*hatsune*). This is elegantly described in "The Warbler's First Song" (*Hatsune*), a well-known chapter from *The Tale of Genji* (11th c.), which itself inspired numerous celebratory artistic motifs.

This exhibition celebrates the New Year with outstanding representations of this robust yet charming creature.

(By Nagashima Meiko, Chair of the Department of Education; edited by Fabienne Helfenberger)



Netsuke: Mouse Holding Candle
Signature: Okatomo (dates unknown)
Kyoto National Museum



The Tale of Genji Album: "The Warbler's First Song" (*Hatsune*), detail
By Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539–1613)
Kyoto National Museum. Important Cultural Property

Feature Exhibition

Paintings from the Kyoto Imperial Palace: The Shishinden

January 2–February 2, 2020, Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Gallery 2F-4

The Ceremonial Hall (Shishinden) is considered the most important building on the imperial palace grounds, which came to serve as official building for enthronement and state ceremonies sometime after the mid-Heian period (794–1185).

The panels from the Shishinden in this exhibit, depict *Thirty-two Chinese Sages* and are installed behind the platform of the emperor's throne (*takamikura*). The paintings portray thirty-two sages that are said to have lived between the Shang dynasty (ca. 1750–1045 BCE) and Tang dynasty (618–907), in China. They are associated with ethical rule and can be placed within the tradition of moral paragon painting. The center panels feature a pair of guardian lion and lion-dog, and an auspicious turtle.

Today, while most of the wall panels found at the imperial palace were newly painted during a major reconstruction project in 1855, the *Thirty-two Chinese Sages* panels date to 1792, two years after the Ceremonial Hall was completed. Please take a good look at the nine panels from the Ceremonial Hall displayed on this rare occasion.

(By Fukushi Yūya, Associate Curator of Early Modern Japanese Painting;
translation by Fabienne Helfenberger)



Guardian Lion and Lion-dog, and Auspicious Turtle from the Shishinden, Kyoto Imperial Palace
By Sumiyoshi Hiroyuki (1755–1811)
Imperial Household Agency, Kyoto Office

Feature Exhibition

Shinto Deities and Guardian Lions and Lion-Dogs

January 2–March 22, 2020, Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Gallery 1F-1

How did the early Japanese represent the *kami*, their indigenous Shinto gods? When shown in human forms, these deities were often represented as refined aristocrats, but they are also shown as armor-wearing figures with fierce expressions or in other ways. Typically, the Shinto shrines dedicated to such *kami* are guarded by a pair of lion and lion-dog. The lion, on the right, has its mouth open, while the horned lion-dog on the left has its mouth closed. These guardian animals were depicted in various ways that changed over time. This exhibition features rare early statues of Shinto deities and protective beasts, giving visitors a unique opportunity to view sacred representations that differ from Buddhist images.

(By Asanuma Takeshi, Chair of the Department of Cooperation and Education; translation by Melissa M. Rinne, edited by Fabienne Helfenberger)



Pair of Guardian Lions (*Shishi*)
Daijō Shrine, Shiga. Important Cultural Property



Seated Deity Daishōgun (Great General)
Daishōgun Hachi Shrine, Kyoto. Important Cultural Property

Thematic Exhibitions in The Collection Galleries

3F-1 Ceramics

Ceramics of Japan and East Asia

January 2–March 15, 2020
(Closed March 17–22, 2020)

3F-2 Archaeological Relics

The Ancient Origins of Tottori and Hyogo Prefectures

January 2–March 15, 2020
(Closed March 17–22, 2020)

2F-1 Illustrated Handscrolls

The Phantom Genji Scrolls

January 2–February 16, 2020

In Commemoration of the Restoration Completion; The Founder's Hall of Chion-in Temple (National Treasure)

Featured Art Work: *The Illustrated Biography of Priest Hōnen Handscrolls* (National Treasure)
February 18–March 22, 2020

2F-2 Buddhist Paintings

Twelve Devas Screens and the World of Esoteric Buddhist Rituals

January 2–February 16, 2020

In Commemoration of the Restoration Completion; The Founder's Hall of Chion-in Temple (National Treasure)

Featured Art Work: *The Illustrated Biography of Priest Hōnen Handscrolls* (National Treasure)
February 18–March 22, 2020

2F-3 Medieval Paintings

Three Friends of Winter: Pine, Bamboo, and Plum in the Arts

January 2–26, 2020

Wall Paintings from the Yōtoku-in of Daitoku-ji Temple I

January 28–February 24, 2020



Thirty-two Chinese Sages from the Shishinden, Kyoto Imperial Palace, detail
By Sumiyoshi Hiroyuki (1755–1811)
Imperial Household Agency, Kyoto Office



2F-3 Medieval Paintings

Wall Paintings from the Yōtoku-in of Daitoku-ji Temple II

February 26–March 22, 2020

2F-4 Momoyama-Edo Paintings

Paintings from the Kyoto Imperial Palace: The Shishinden

January 2–February 2, 2020

Artists' Sketches

February 4–March 22, 2020

2F-5 Chinese Paintings

Muqi Fachang and Related Painters

January 2–26, 2020

Portraits of Eminent Priests

January 28–February 24, 2020

The Peony: Flower of Wealth and Honor

February 26–March 22, 2020

1F-1 Sculpture

Japanese Sculpture

Shinto Deities and Guardian Lions and Lion-Dogs

January 2–March 22, 2020

Special Viewing in Commemoration of the Restoration Completion: Seated Bodhisattva Jizō (Kṣitigarbha) from Zenpuku-ji Temple, Maizuru City

January 2–February 16, 2020

1F-2 Feature Exhibition

The Many Hats of Rats!

January 2–February 2, 2020

Hina Matsuri and Japanese Dolls

February 15–March 22, 2020

1F-3 Calligraphy

Travel in the Early Period

January 2–February 9, 2020

Famous Works from the Matsumoto Collection

February 11–March 15, 2020

1F-4 Textiles and Costumes

Dyed and Woven Motifs:

Wearing Costumes of Classical Literature

January 2–February 2, 2020

Dyeing and Weaving Techniques: *Katazome* Stencil Dyeing

February 4–March 15, 2020

1F-5 Metalwork

Metalwork of the Muromachi Period II

January 2–February 9, 2020

The Beauty of Cloisonné

February 11–March 15, 2020

1F-6 Lacquerware

Celebratory Lacquers for the New Year:

The Minoya Collection

January 2–February 9, 2020

Lacquered Cosmetic and Toiletry Implements

February 11–March 15, 2020

Upcoming Exhibition

Special Exhibition

Kannon Worship:

The Thirty-three Pilgrimage Sites of Western Japan

April 11–May 31, 2020, Heisei Chishinkan Wing

Cover: **Thirty-two Chinese Sages** from the Shishinden, Kyoto Imperial Palace, detail, by Sumiyoshi Hiroyuki, Imperial Household Agency, Kyoto Office. **Guardian Lion**, Daihō Shrine, Shiga, Important Cultural Property. **Netsuke: Mouse Holding Candle**, Signature: Okatomo, KNM. **The Tale of Genji Album: "The Warbler's First Song" (*Hatsune*)**, detail, by Tosa Mitsuyoshi, KNM, Important Cultural Property.

ADMISSION

January 2–March 22, 2020:

Adult ¥520 (¥410)

Univ. Student ¥260 (¥210)

*Admission is free for youths of high school age and below, seniors over 70, visitors with disabilities and one caretaker, and for Campus Members including faculty. Please show I.D.
*Fees in parentheses are for groups of 20+.

March 24–April 9, 2020:

Admission to the Museum Gardens and Outdoor Exhibits

Adult ¥260 (¥210)

*Outdoor exhibits only. Admission includes a guide booklet to the Kyoto National Museum gardens and outdoor exhibits.
*Admission is free for university students and below, seniors over 70, visitors with disabilities and one caretaker, and for Campus Members including faculty. Please show I.D. The guide booklet is not provided with free admission.
*Fees in parentheses are for groups of 20+.

HOURS

January 2–March 22, 2020:

Tue., Wed., Thu. and Sun.

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

Fri. and Sat. (except March 6, 7, 13, 14)

9:30 am–8:00 pm (Entrance until 7:30 pm)

March 24–April 9, 2020:

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

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 on April 10, 2020.

Partially closed during the following dates:

March 17–22, 2020

The 1st floor galleries (sculpture gallery and feature exhibition gallery) and painting galleries (2nd floor) are open for viewing. The 3rd floor galleries and other 1st floor galleries are closed for exhibition installation.

March 24–April 9, 2020

Outdoor exhibits are open for viewing. The galleries are closed. We apologize for the inconvenience.

ACCESS

VIA JR OR SUBWAY

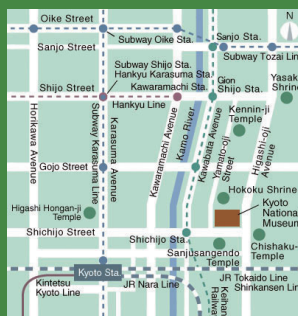
Get off at Kyoto Station. From bus platform D2 in front of the station, take City Bus #206 or #208 to "Hakubutsukan Sanjusangendo-mae" bus stop. One-minute walk to the Museum.

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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