


NEWSLETTER  
APRIL TO JUNE 2024



# KYOTO NATIONAL MUSEUM

Vol. 161

Special Exhibition  
The Legend of Sesshū  
Birth of a Master Painter

Feature Exhibition  
Commemorating the 430th Memorial of  
Toyotomi Hidetsugu and  
Zuisen-ji Temple

Special Exhibition

# The Legend of Sesshū Birth of a Master Painter

April 13–May 26, 2024, Heisei Chishinkan Wing

Sesshū (1420–1506?) is revered as perhaps the most important painter in the history of Japanese art, often hailed as a “saint of painting” (*gasei*). The fact that six of his works have been designated National Treasures testifies to the extraordinary recognition that this medieval artist has received in the modern era. Nevertheless, the veneration of Sesshū today is not based solely on contemporary assessments of his artworks; it is also rooted in a longstanding tradition of acclaim cultivated over centuries.

This exhibition delves into the evolving status of Sesshū by tracing how his works were received in early modern Japan, from around the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries. During the Momoyama period (1573–1615), the Unkoku and Hasegawa schools proudly identified themselves as artistic successors of Sesshū. In the Edo period (1615–1868), artists of the preeminent Kano school considered Sesshū’s body of work as the cornerstone of their own signature painting style. Sesshū’s artistic charisma inspired not only these major schools of Chinese-influenced ink painting (*kanga*) but also a diverse array of painters who went on to explore new aesthetic frontiers.

The reception of Sesshū itself is a complex phenomenon that can only be comprehended through multiple perspectives. This exhibition explores the myriad factors that, over time, elevated Sesshū to the highest echelons of the Japanese art world and solidified his status as a legendary master painter.

(By Fukushi Yūya, Curator of Early Modern Japanese Painting)



National Treasure  
**Autumn and Winter Landscapes**, left scroll  
By Sesshū Tōyō (1420–1506?)  
One of a pair of hanging scrolls; ink on paper  
Tokyo National Museum



**Mount Fuji, Miho no Matsubara, and Seiken-ji Temple**  
Attributed to Sesshū Tōyō (1420–1506?)  
Hanging scroll; ink on paper  
Eisei Bunko Museum, Tokyo



**Mount Fuji and Miho no Matsubara**, left screen  
By Soga Shōhaku (1730–1781)  
One of a pair of six-panel folding screens; ink and light colors on paper  
Miho Museum, Shiga



**Landscape**, left screen  
By Kano Tan'yū (1602–1674)  
One of a pair of six-panel folding screens; ink on paper  
Chōfuku-ji Temple, Kyoto



**Pair of Cranes, Bamboo, and Plum**  
By Itō Jakuchū (1716–1800)  
Hanging scroll; ink and colors on silk  
Idemitsu Museum of Arts, Tokyo  
On view April 30–May 26, 2024



Important Cultural Property  
**Birds and Flowers of the Four Seasons**, right screen  
By Sesshū Tōyō (1420–1506?)  
One of a pair of six-panel folding screens; ink and colors on paper  
Kyoto National Museum



**Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove**, right screen  
By Hasegawa Tōhaku (1539–1610)  
One of a pair of six-panel folding screens; ink and light colors on paper  
Ryōsoku-in Temple, Kyoto

## Feature Exhibition Commemorating the 430th Memorial of Toyotomi Hidetsugu **Toyotomi Hidetsugu and Zuisen-ji Temple**

June 18–August 4, 2024, Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Galleries 1F-2-4

Toyotomi Hidetsugu (1568–1595) was born as the nephew of the military ruler Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and gradually rose to the position of *kanpaku* (chief adviser to the emperor). However, Hidetsugu grew apart from his powerful uncle over time and was eventually forced to commit suicide. Calamity also befell Hidetsugu's wife and children: they were executed on the Sanjō Gawara riverbank in Kyoto along with all his other family members. Zuisen-ji Temple was built at this site to mourn the souls of Hidetsugu and his family. This exhibition commemorates Toyotomi Hidetsugu's 430th memorial by showcasing artworks related to his family, which are still preserved at Zuisen-ji to this day.

(By Yamakawa Aki, Deputy Chief Curator)



**Tale of Lord Hidetsugu**, detail  
Handscroll; ink and colors on paper  
Zuisen-ji Temple, Kyoto



**Deathbed Waka Poem**  
Hanging scroll; ink on paper  
Zuisen-ji Temple, Kyoto

Museum Collection Exhibitions in  
**The Collection Galleries**

**3F-1 Ceramics**

**Utensils for the Tea Ceremony: *Chaire* Tea Containers**

June 25–September 8, 2024  
(Closed June 18–23, 2024)

**3F-2 Archaeological Relics**

***Haniwa* of People and Animals**

June 25–September 8, 2024  
(Closed June 18–23, 2024)

**2F-1 Illustrated Handscrolls**

**National Treasure Handscrolls:**

***The Illustrated Biography of Priest Hōnen*, Part I**

June 18–July 28, 2024

**2F-2 Buddhist Paintings**

**Arhats: Japanese Paintings of Buddhist Sages**

June 18–July 28, 2024

**2F-3 Medieval Paintings**

**Ink Paintings from the Kantō Region, Part I**

June 18–July 28, 2024

**2F-4 Momoyama-Edo Paintings**

**The Kyoto Kano School: Works by Kano Sansetsu**

June 18–July 28, 2024

**2F-5 Chinese Paintings**

**Paintings by Qing Dynasty Artists in Japan**

June 18–July 28, 2024

**1F-1 Sculpture**

**Buddhas and Bodhisattvas**

June 18–September 8, 2024

**1F-2-4**

**Feature Exhibition**

**Commemorating the 430th Memorial of Toyotomi Hidetsugu  
Toyotomi Hidetsugu and Zuisen-ji Temple**

June 18–August 4, 2024

**1F-5 Metalwork**

**Special Viewing**

**Commemorating the Completion of Conservation  
*Dōmaru* Armor with Blue Lacing**

June 18–August 4, 2024

**The Conservation of Japanese Art: Metalwork**

June 18–August 4, 2024

**1F-6 Lacquerware**

**Lacquered Tableware for Gods and Humans**

June 18–July 28, 2024

**Upcoming  
Exhibition**

**Feature Exhibition**

**Commemorating the Acquisition of the Ueda Collection  
The Artistry of Esoteric Buddhist Iconography**

**August 7–September 8, 2024**

**Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Galleries 1F-2, 3**

Cover: *Autumn and Winter Landscapes*, left scroll, detail. By Sesshū Tōyō. Tokyo National Museum. National Treasure. *Pair of Cranes, Bamboo, and Plum*, detail. By Itō Jakuchū. Idemitsu Museum of Arts, Tokyo. On view April 30–May 26, 2024. *Landscape*, detail. By Kano Tan'yū. Chōfuku-ji Temple, Kyoto. *Landscape of the Four Seasons (Long Landscape Scroll)*, detail. By Sesshū Tōyō. Mōri Museum, Yamaguchi. National Treasure.

English translations written by Melissa M. Rinne, Senior Specialist, and Chloe Pearce, Research Fellow.

**ADMISSION**

**April 13–May 26, 2024\***

Special Exhibition Admission

**Adult ¥1800 (¥1600)**

**Univ. Student ¥1200 (¥1000)**

**High-School Student ¥700 (¥500)**

Fees in parentheses are for groups of 20+.

Admission is free for junior high school students and younger (age 0–15), and for visitors with disabilities plus one caregiver. Please show ID.

Admission is reduced by 500 yen for Campus Members (including faculty) able to produce ID.

\*During special exhibition periods, all visitors must pay special exhibition admission.

**March 26–April 11, 2024 and**

**May 28–June 16, 2024**

Admission to the Museum Gardens and Outdoor Exhibits

**Adult ¥300 Univ. Student ¥150**

Admission is free for high school students and younger (age 0–17), for seniors over 70, for visitors with disabilities plus one caregiver, and for Campus Members including faculty. Please show ID. Guide booklet is provided with paid adult admission only.

**June 18–September 8, 2024**

Admission to the Museum Collections Galleries

**Adult ¥700 Univ. Student ¥350**

Admission is free for high school students and younger (age 0–17), seniors over 70, visitors with disabilities plus one caregiver, and for Campus Members including faculty. Please show ID.

**HOURS**

**March 26–April 11, 2024 and**

**May 28–September 8, 2024**

**Tuesdays–Thursdays, Saturdays–Sundays**

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

**Fridays**

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

**April 13–May 26, 2024**

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

**CLOSED ON MONDAYS**

\*The museum will remain open from Monday, April 29 through Monday, May 6. On Friday, April 12 and Tuesday, May 7, the museum will be closed.

**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 the "Hakubutsukan Sanjusangendo-mae" bus stop. Walk about one minute 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 Kyoto-Kawaramachi Station. Walk east over the bridge to the Keihan Railway Gion-Shijo Station. Take an Osaka-bound Keihan train to Shichijo Station. Walk east along Shichijo/Nanajo Street (about seven minutes) to the museum.

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