

Museum Collection Exhibitions in
The Collection Galleries

1F-1 Sculpture

Kyoto's Sculptures of Buddhist and Shinto Deities

January 2–March 23, 2025

1F-2

Feature Exhibition

**Serpentine Delights:
Celebrating the Year of the Snake**

January 2–February 2, 2025

Feature Exhibition

Celebrating the Japanese Doll Festival

February 15–March 23, 2025

(Closed February 4–14, 2025)

1F-3 Calligraphy

Ink Traces: Calligraphy by Zen Priests

January 2–February 9, 2025

Indigo Blue Sutra Manuscripts:

Ornamenting the Buddha's Sacred Words

February 11–March 23, 2025

1F-4

Feature Exhibition

Yamashiro Smiths of the New Era:

Blades of the Mishina and Horikawa Schools

January 2–March 23, 2025

1F-5 Metalwork

Special Viewing

Rediscovered Swords:

Masterful Blades That Transcend the Ages

January 2–March 23, 2025

1F-6

Feature Exhibition

Yamashiro Smiths of the New Era:

Blades of the Mishina and Horikawa Schools

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Upcoming
Exhibitions

Special Exhibition Commemorating Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai

Japan, an Artistic Melting Pot

April 19–June 15, 2025

Heisei Chishinkan Wing

Special Exhibition

**Song and Yuan Buddhist Painting:
Early Chinese Masterpieces in Japan**

September 20–November 16, 2025

Heisei Chishinkan Wing

Cover: *The Poetry Contest of the Twelve Zodiac Animals*, Vol. 1, detail. Important Cultural Property. Tachi (*Slung Sword*) Blade. Inscription: "Kuniyasu." By Kuniyasu. Important Cultural Property. *Noh Costume*, Surihaku (*Woman's Narrow-Sleeved Inner Robe*) with *Triangle Scales*, detail. Kyoto National Museum. *Deep Vessel with Perforated Rim*. Kyoto National Museum. *Hina Dolls*, *Jirzaemon Type*. Irie Hakō Collection, Gift of Irie Yūichirō. Kyoto National Museum.

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

ADMISSION

January 2–March 23, 2025:

Admission to the Museum Collection Galleries

Adult ¥700 Univ. Student ¥350

Admission is free for high school students and those under age 0–17 and for visitors with disabilities with one caregiver. Please show ID.

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

December 3–28, 2024, and

March 25–April 17, 2025:

Admission to the Museum Gardens and Outdoor Exhibits

Adult ¥300 Univ. Student ¥150

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

HOURS

December 3, 2024–April 17, 2025:

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)

CLOSED ON MONDAYS

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

*The museum will also be closed December 29, 2024 to January 1, 2025.

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.

KYOTO NATIONAL MUSEUM

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KYOTO
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Vol. 164

Feature Exhibitions

Serpentine Delights
Celebrating the Year of the Snake

**Yamashiro Smiths of the
New Era**

Blades of the Mishina and Horikawa
Schools

**Celebrating the
Japanese Doll Festival**

Special Viewing

Rediscovered Swords
Masterful Blades That Transcend the
Ages



Feature Exhibition Serpentine Delights Celebrating the Year of the Snake

January 2–February 2, 2025, Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Gallery 1F-2

2025 marks the Year of the Snake in the Chinese zodiac. How do you feel about snakes? Are they cute, mysterious, or perhaps a little creepy?

Throughout history, people have been both fascinated and frightened by these long-bodied creatures. In many cultures, snakes have been seen as deities of water and symbols of abundance, believed to possess special powers.

As you explore this New Year's exhibition, please feel free to take a worksheet and enjoy discovering the many types of snakes slithering throughout the galleries!
(Mizutani Aki, Curator of Education)



Important Cultural Property
The Poetry Contest of the Twelve Zodiac Animals, Vol. 1, detail
One from a set of three handscrolls; ink and colors on paper



Important Cultural Property
Catalogue of Early Chinese Characters (Zhuanti wenti), detail
Handscroll, ink on paper
Bishamon-dō Temple, Kyoto

Feature Exhibition Yamashiro Smiths of the New Era Blades of the Mishina and Horikawa Schools

January 2–March 23, 2025, Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Galleries 1F-4 and 6

Swords made prior to the Keichō era (1596–1615) are known as *kotō* (lit. "ancient swords"), which were followed by *shintō* (lit. "new swords"). Production of these new *shintō* blades emerged during the process of rebuilding Kyoto, which had been ravaged by various wars, and spread throughout the country, ultimately culminating in a new golden age of Japanese smithing.

This exhibition introduces blades by the luminary Mishina and Horikawa schools, each based in Yamashiro province (present-day Kyoto). These masterworks exemplify the elegance and dynamism of *shintō* swords.

(Suekane Toshihiko, Curator of Japanese Metalware)

Tantō (Dagger) Blades

By Kunihiro (dates unknown). Forged steel.
Left; inscription: "Fujiwara no Kunihiro, a resident of Hyūga province / A day of the 8th month of Tenshō 17."
Gift of Matsui Hideo. Kyoto National Museum
Right; inscription: "Shinano no Kami Kunihiro, a resident of Hyūga province / An auspicious day of the 2nd month of Tenshō 19."
Gift of Katō Kiyonobu. Kyoto National Museum



Textile with Lions, Snakes, and Flowering Plants, detail
Stencil-dyed and hand-painted cotton (chintz) with gold
Kyoto National Museum



Noh Costume, *Surihaku* (Woman's Narrow-Sleeved Inner Robe) with Triangle Scales
Silk satin with pasted metallic foil
Kyoto National Museum



Deep Vessel with Perforated Rim
Earthenware
Excavation site unknown
Kyoto National Museum



Left
Important Cultural Property
Tachi (Slung Sword) Blade
Inscription: "Kuniyasu"
By Kuniyasu (dates unknown). Forged steel
On view January 2–26

Right
Important Cultural Property
Tachi (Slung Sword) Blade
Inscription: "Yoshikage, resident of Osafune in Bizen province."
By Yoshikage (dates unknown). Forged steel
Gift of Matsui Hideo
Kyoto National Museum
On view January 28–February 24

Special Viewing Rediscovered Swords Masterful Blades That Transcend the Ages

January 2–March 23, 2025, Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Gallery 1F-5

Three magnificent swords designated as Important Cultural Properties have recently come into the collection of the Kyoto National Museum. The blades were crafted by master smiths representing key regions of sword production—Yamashiro, Bizen, and Bitchū. Yet these swords are relatively unknown, as they have not been exhibited to the public for nearly a half century. This special viewing celebrates the reemergence of these masterpieces, while showcasing the Kyoto National Museum's efforts to protect and preserve Japan's extraordinary cultural heritage.

(Suekane Toshihiko, Curator of Japanese Metalware)

Feature Exhibition Celebrating the Japanese Doll Festival

February 15–March 23, 2025, Heisei Chishinkan Wing, Gallery 1F-2

The Japanese custom of displaying *hina* dolls on the third day of the third month began in the Edo period (1615–1868). The Doll Festival (*Hina Matsuri*) is known as a day to pray for the health and happiness of girls, but it originated as a ritual of purification, when the accumulated defilements from the daily lives of actual children would be transferred onto surrogate figurines. These were eventually linked with child's play and evolved into the elaborate *hina* doll sets displayed in the home.

This exhibition traces the evolution of *hina* dolls in Kyoto, beginning with styles popular during the Edo period and culminating in lavish doll sets featuring elaborate palace structures.

(Yamauchi Maiko, Curator of Textiles, Costume, and Japanese Dolls)



Hina Dolls, Standing *Yūsoku hina* Type
Wood with shell white (*gofun*), silk, cotton, ink, pigments, et al.
Kyoto National Museum

Museum Collection Exhibitions in The Collection Galleries

3F-1 Ceramics
Ninsei and Kyoto Ware: Ceramics
Techniques of Omuro Kiln Fragments
January 2–March 16, 2025
(Closed March 18–23, 2025)

3F-2 Archaeological Relics
Japanese Sue Ware and Korean Ceramics
Archaeological Artifacts of Japan
January 2–March 16, 2025
(Closed March 18–23, 2025)

2F-1 Illustrated Handscrolls
Shrines of Hachiman and Itsukushima
January 2–February 9, 2025
Words Within Images:
The Intertwining of Text and Illustration
February 11–March 23, 2025

2F-2 Buddhist Paintings
Twelve Devas Screens and the World of Esoteric Buddhist Ritual
January 2–February 9, 2025
Parinirvana: Picturing the Death of the Buddha
February 11–March 23, 2025

2F-3 Medieval Paintings
The Beauty of Pine, Bamboo, and Plum
January 9, 2025
Paintings of Agriculture
February 11–March 23, 2025

2F-4 Momoyama–Edo Paintings
Japan's Women Painters
January 2–February 9, 2025
Artists' Sketches
February 11–March 23, 2025

2F-5 Chinese Paintings
The Prosperity and Paintings of Yangzhou, the "Salt City": *Landscape with Pavilions* by Yuan Jiang and Wang Yun
January 2–February 9, 2025
Paintings by Qi Baishi from the Suma Collection
February 11–March 23, 2025