

Special Exhibition

National Treasures of To-ji Temple: Kukai and the Sculpture Mandala

Following the relocation of the capital to Kyoto, To-ji temple (Kyo-o-gokoku-ji temple) was established alongside Sai-ji temple as a state-sponsored institution meant to ensure divine protection for the country. Around this time, the Japanese priest Kukai travelled to Tang-dynasty China to study the newly-established teachings of Esoteric Buddhism. In 823, Emperor Saga granted Kukai control of To-ji following his return from China. Kukai made this temple the focal point of Shingon Esoteric Buddhism, with the year 2023 set to mark the 1,200th anniversary of the establishment of this influential religious sect.

The objects of Esoteric Buddhism associated with Kukai are also of immense artistic quality, with their rich variety and expressiveness holding an exceptional position among the Buddhist art of Japan. This comprehensive exhibition will present cultural properties handed down at To-ji, with a focus on the numerous treasured articles associated with Kukai himself. The Lecture Hall of To-ji houses Kukai's sculpture mandala, a three-dimensional representation of the pantheon of Shingon Buddhism. This exhibition will feature an unprecedented 15 of the mandala's 21 sculptures, including 11 National Treasures and 4 Important Cultural Properties. Other magnificent sculptures and paintings, as well as works of calligraphy and decorative art representing the pinnacle of artistic expression in Esoteric Buddhism will also be displayed. We invite you to witness these priceless objects, passed down together with the teachings of Kukai for nearly 1,200 years at To-ji temple.

Exhibition Title	National Treasures of To-ji Temple: Kukai and the Sculpture Mandala
Period	Tuesday, March 26 – Sunday, June 2, 2019
Venue	Heiseikan, Tokyo National Museum (Ueno Park) Ueno Park 13-9, Taito-ku, Tokyo, 110-8712 http://www.tnm.jp/
Hours	9:30–17:00 (last entry 30 minutes before closing) *Fridays and Saturdays until 21:00
Closed	Mondays and Tuesday, May 7 (however, <i>National Treasures of To-ji Temple</i> will be open to the public on Monday, April 1, while all exhibitions will be open on Monday April 29 and May 6)
Admission	Adults: 1600 (1400/1300) yen University students: 1200 (1000/900) yen High school students: 900 (700/600) yen Junior high school students and under: Free * Prices shown in parentheses indicate advance and group (more than 20 persons) discount tickets. *Persons with disabilities are admitted free with one accompanying person (please present an ID at the ticket booth). *Advance tickets will be on sale at the museum ticket booths (during museum opening hours excluding the last 30 minutes) and other major ticketing agencies from Tuesday, January 15 to Monday, March 25, 2019. *Early discount tickets will be on sale for 1200 yen at the museum ticket booths (during museum opening hours excluding the last 30 minutes) and other major ticketing agencies from Saturday, December 1, 2018 to Monday, January 14, 2019.

Access	10 minutes' walk from JR Ueno Station (Park exit) and Uguisudani Station (South exit) 15 minutes' walk from Keisei Ueno Station, Tokyo Metro Ueno Station and Tokyo Metro Nezu Station
Organizers	Tokyo National Museum, Kyo-o-gokoku-ji Temple (To-ji Temple), The Yomiuri Shimbun, NHK, and NHK Promotions
With the Special Cooperation of	Daiwa Securities Group
With the Sponsorship of	NISSHA
General Inquiries	03-5777-8600 (Hello Dial) Available daily from 8:00-22:00 in Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese and Spanish
Exhibition Website	https://toji2019.jp
Media Inquiries	National Treasures of To-ji Temple: Kukai and the Sculpture Mandala Public Relations Office (OHANA Co., Ltd.) TEL: 03-6869-7881 E-mail: toji2019@ohanapr.co.jp
* The exhibition will only be held at Tokyo National Museum	

Highlights

1. The exhibition gathers together 15 Buddhist statues from To-ji's Kodo Lecture Hall. It will also feature the largest ever sculpture mandala.

Kukai installed a three-dimensional mandala comprising 21 Buddhist statues in To-ji's Kodo Lecture Hall in order to represent the essence of Esoteric Buddhism in visual form. This exhibition will feature an unprecedented 15 of these statues. Eleven are National Treasures and these will be arranged in a new sculpture mandala that visitors will be able to appreciate from every angle.

2. The exhibition will recreate a scene of the Goshichinichi Mishiho ceremony being performed at To-ji. It will also feature the greatest treasures of Shingon Esoteric Buddhism

The Goshichinichi Mishiho is the Shingon school's most important Esoteric ceremony. This annual seven-day ceremony was established by Kukai to pray for the protection of the state. A number of items associated with this ceremony have been passed down through To-ji's 1200-year history. These include *Implements for Esoteric Rituals*, a National Treasure that Kukai brought back from China, and the *Gilt-Bronze Stupa-shaped Reliquary*, an Important Cultural Property. These treasures will be on display alongside a recreation of the hall where the ceremony is carried out. This will also be a valuable opportunity to view the entire sets of *The Twelve Devas* and *Five Great Wisdom Kings*, two National Treasures that date back to 1127. (These works will be rotated)

3. The exhibition will showcase several valuable Ryokai Mandalas. Visitors will be able to step inside the world of To-ji's mandalas

To-ji is a treasure trove of Esoteric Buddhist art. Its huge collection of mandalas has earned it the moniker 'The Mandala Temple.' This collection includes six Ryokai Mandalas (Mandalas of the Two Realms) that have been designated National Treasures or Important Cultural Properties. This exhibition features a number of these mandalas, including the *Sai-in Mandala (Den Shingon-in Mandala)*, a National Treasure and the oldest extant example of a colored Ryokai Mandala, the *Kohon*, one of the largest mandalas in Japan at nearly 5 meters long, the *Genrokuhon*, and the *Shiki Mandala*.

Chapter 1: Kukai and the Goshichinichi Mishiho Ceremony

Kukai was 31 when he travelled to China to study Esoteric Buddhism. He stayed there for around two years to complete his training before returning to Japan in 806. He was then given To-ji in 823 and he made the temple the central seminary of Shingon Esoteric Buddhism. To-ji has preserved several of the paintings and craft works that Kukai brought back from China. It also houses examples of Kukai's writings, including *Letters*, his most accomplished piece of calligraphy. Kukai also established the Goshichinichi Mishiho, a seven-day ceremony held at the Imperial Palace every New Year, though it is now held at To-ji. It is the Shingon school's most important Esoteric ceremony and its rituals remain closely-guarded secrets. This chapter introduces the Goshichinichi Mishiho by recreating a scene of the ceremony being performed at To-ji.



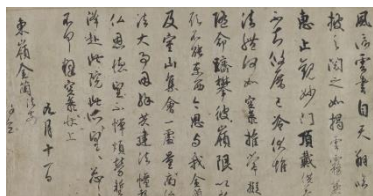
Kukai was born in Sanuki Province (modern-day Kagawa Prefecture). He travelled to China to study Esoteric Buddhism. Upon his return to Japan, he founded the Shingon school and he used To-ji Temple and Mount Koya as a base to promulgate the teachings of Esoteric Buddhism. Kukai had been taught that objects played a crucial role in promoting an understanding of these teachings, so he subsequently oversaw the creation of several mandalas and statues, for instance. Kukai himself became an object of reverence and he was given the posthumous name Kobo Daishi. He is also renowned as a master calligrapher.

Important Cultural Property

Kobo Daishi (Dangi Honzon) (detail)

Kamakura period, 14th century

On exhibit: Tuesday, March 26 – Sunday, April 21



This is a collection of three letters written by Kukai to the Buddhist priest Saicho. It is named *Fushinjo* in Japanese after the characters used in the opening sentence of the first letter. From the accompanying donation letter, we know the letters were originally housed at Enryaku-ji Temple before being donated to To-ji during the Nanbokucho period. As well as being a precious primary source for the study of Heian-period Buddhism, the letters also hold a valuable place in the history of calligraphy as representative examples of Kukai's writing during his later years.

National Treasure

Letters (First Letter)

Heian period, 9th century

On exhibit: Tuesday, March 26 – Sunday, May 19



This is a set of implements for esoteric rituals. It comprises a five-pronged bell and a five-pronged vajra club on a ritual tray. In Esoteric Buddhism, sets like this were placed on temporary altars during ceremonies. These implements are thought to be part of a set that Kukai received from his master Huiguo before returning to Japan. As such, they were venerated as sacred objects from Kukai's travels in China and were used for important rituals, including the Goshichinichi Mishiho ceremony held in the Shingon-in hall at the Imperial Palace. They are still used today in the Goshichinichi Mishiho ceremony, now held at To-ji's Kanjo-in hall, and they are still highly treasured as implements once belonging to Kukai.

National Treasure

Implements for Esoteric Rituals

Tang period, 9th century

Chapter 2: The Treasures of Esoteric Buddhist Art

Shingon Esoteric Buddhism differs substantially from older Buddhist orders in terms of its objects, rituals and way it decorates statues and temples. One representative example of Shingon art is the Ryokai Mandala (Mandala of the Two Realms). This depicts the Esoteric Buddhist universe and it features a multitude of Buddhas, bodhisattvas, vidyarajas and devas, all centered around Dainichi Nyorai (Mahavairocana). Shingon art also places importance on iconographies that provide detailed examples of how Buddhas, bodhisattvas and mudra hand signals should be depicted. A further characteristic of Esoteric Buddhism is the use of chiming instruments during rituals. This chapter introduces Ryokai Mandalas and several other masterpieces of Esoteric Buddhist art from To-ji's collection.



This is the oldest extant example of a colored Mandala of the Two Realms. The influence of Indian painting can be seen in the vivid colors and the portrayals of the faces and bodies, for example. It is also known as the Den Shingon-in Mandala because it was said to have been used in the Shingon-in hall at the Imperial Palace. However, a recently-discovered inscription written during a previous restoration reveals that this was actually used in To-ji's Sai-in hall.

National Treasure
Mandala of the Two Realms (Ryokai Mandala): Sai-in Mandala (Den Shingon-in Mandala)
Heian period, 9th century
On exhibit: Tuesday, April 23 – Monday, May 6

Chapter 3: The History of Religious Practice at To-ji

To-ji Temple was built when the capital relocated to Heiankyo, as Kyoto was formerly known. It has since collected a multitude of treasures over its 1200-year history. These reveal a lot about the history of religious practice at the temple. This exhibition features a number of these objects, including: A *Standing Bishamon Ten (Vaisravana)*, as featured in the legend of Rajomon; objects associated with the worship of relics related to Kukai; objects associated with the worship of Hachiman; and calligraphic works and ancient manuscripts, as epitomized by the *Toboki*, the official record of To-ji's history and treasures.



This unconventional statue of Bishamon Ten (Vaisravana) was made in China during the Tang period. It is characterized by its high waist, slender build and Central Asian armor. The image became an object of worship, with replicas made in various regions throughout Japan. It is said this statue was installed at Heiankyo's Rajomon gate to watch over the capital.

National Treasure
Standing Tobatsu-Bishamonten (Vaisravana)
Tang period, 8th century

Chapter Four: The World of Mandalas

Mandalas originated in India as a way of portraying the Buddhist universe. By presenting the complex worldview of Esoteric Buddhism in visual form, mandalas aided the propagation of the religion, so their usage subsequently spread throughout Asia. Kukai was initiated into the secrets of the Ryokai Mandala (Mandala of the Two Realms) by his mentor Huiguo in Changan. In the *Goshorai Mokuroku*, a list of objects that he brought back from Japan, Kukai spoke about the power of images. Esoteric Buddhism was deeply profound and difficult to understand using words, he wrote, but “pictures can help show the way to enlightenment.” This philosophy is perfectly encapsulated in the three-dimensional 21-statue Sculpture Mandala in To-ji’s Kodo Lecture Hall.



To-ji’s Kodo Lecture Hall houses 21 statues, include the Five Buddhas, the Five Bodhisattvas, the Five Great Wisdom Kings, Bonten (Brahma), Taishakuten (Indra) and the Four Heavenly Kings. This is thought to be a three-dimensional representation of the worldview contained in the Kongocho-kyo (Skr. Vajrasekhara Sutra), a key text in Esoteric Buddhism. Most of the statues were consecrated in 839 (Jowa 6). This exhibition will feature an unprecedented 15 of these statues.

Deities in To-ji’s Kodo Lecture Hall

*This image is for reference and may differ from the actual exhibition.

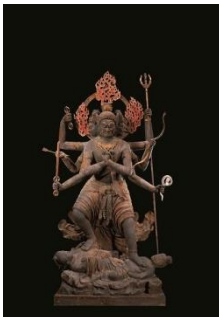


Clad in armor and wielding a ritual club as a weapon, this deity is charged with protecting Buddhist law. The gods Indra and Brahma (Bonten) originally came from Brahmanism, but they were incorporated into Buddhism and are often depicted as a pair. In the Sculpture Mandala, Taishakuten is placed on a Buddhist altar to the west. He sits in a relaxed manner on an elephant. This portrayal is different from other depictions seen in Japan up until the Heian period. It is actually more reminiscent of Indian sculpture and it was probably made based on new knowledge bought over by Kukai. The Five Buddhas and Five Bodhisattvas sit on lotus pedestals now, but they may also have originally sat on the backs of animals.

National Treasure

Taishakuten (Indra) Riding an Elephant

Heian period, dated 839 (Jowa 6)



The Five Great Wisdom Kings stand on a Buddhist altar to the west of To-ji’s Kodo Lecture Hall. Gozanze Myoo (Trailokyavijaya) is placed in the south-east to preside over the East.

Esoteric Buddhism originated in India. Wisdom kings (Skt. vidyaraaja) were given fearsome appearances borrowed from other deities to demonstrate the superiority of Esoteric Buddhism over Hinduism. It was believed Gozanze Myoo also defeated gods from other religions and converted them to Buddhism. This is why he is depicted standing on the Hindu god Shiva and his wife Parvati.

The fact this complex sculpture has survived in one piece is probably because it was made by skilled artisans steeped in the traditions of the ateliers run by the government during the Nara period (8th century).

National Treasure

Standing Gozanze Myoo (Trailokyavijaya)

Heian period, dated 839 (Jowa 6)



The Four Heavenly Kings stand on Buddhist altars in the four corners of To-ji's Kodo Lecture Hall. Jikokuten (Dhrtarastra) is placed in the south-east to watch over the East. He exudes power as he leans forward towards worshippers with engorged features. The vigorous stance radiates dynamism, as do the clothes as they flutter backwards. The entire sculpture, including the demons, is carved from a single block of lumber that has not been hollowed out. A supreme mastery of wood carving is apparent in the deeply-scored garment pleats and the closely-packed armor, for example. The Jikokuten and Zochoten (Virupaksa) statues are particularly well-crafted, perhaps owing to their positions of the front of the mandala.

National Treasure
Standing Jikokuten (Dhrtarastra)
Heian period, dated 839 (Jowa 6)



The Four Heavenly Kings stand on Buddhist altars in the four corners of To-ji's Kodo Lecture Hall. Zochoten (Virupaksa) is placed in the south-west to watch over the South. He strikes a fearsome pose with his bulging eyes and rippling muscles. He stands upright and unmoving on the backs of two demons, his fearless face gazing to the left. This marks a stark contrast to Taishakuten (Indra), with the two statues combining wonderfully to form a dyad of movement and stillness. However, both have well-built physiques and exuberant coloring. Copper nails have also been placed in the eyes and covered with lacquer to create a sense of striking intensity. This is a representative example of how the Four Heavenly Kings were depicted during the early Heian period (9th century).

National Treasure
Standing Zochoten (Virupaksa)
Heian period, dated 839 (Jowa 6)

Ticket Information

Official Online Tickets

<https://www.e-tix.jp/toji2019/>

< **Early Discount Tickets** > <https://www.e-tix.jp/toji2019/#haya>

< **Advance Tickets/On-the-day Tickets** > <https://www.e-tix.jp/toji2019/#tsujo>

< **Souvenir Set Tickets** >

Advance Ticket with Kaiyodo Figurine of Taishakuten (limited to 1,000 tickets)
7,500 yen (including tax)

On sale: From Saturday, December 1, 2018 until all tickets are sold

Vendors: Ticket Pia (P Code: 769-375), Lawson Tickets (L Code: 31371) and e+.

* These are advance tickets sold together with a Kaiyodo figure (Taishakuten Riding an Elephant) that will only be sold at the venue (figurine price at the venue: 7,200 yen)

* The 'Advance Ticket with Kaiyodo Figurine of Taishakuten' will include one ticket to the exhibition (general admission) and one voucher that can be exchanged for the figurine.

* The voucher can be exchanged for the figurine at designated shops within the venue during the period of the special exhibition 'National Treasures of To-ji Temple: Kukai and the Sculpture Mandala.'

Prototype produced by Takashi Kinoshita Eiichiro Matsumoto

Figurine size: H. 130mm (including plinth)

< **Early Discount Tickets** >

1,200 yen (including tax)

On sale: Saturday, December 1, 2018 to Monday, January 14, 2019

< **Advance Tickets** >

On sale: From 10:00 on Tuesday, January 15 to Monday, March 25, 2019

Ticket Agencies

*Fees may apply

*Tickets are not available through Seven Tickets

Official online tickets

Internet purchase: <https://www.e-tix.jp/toji2019/>

Tokyo National Museum

On sale at museum ticket booths (during museum opening hours excluding the last 30 minutes)

Ticket PIA

P Code: 769-375

Internet purchases: <http://w.pia.jp/t/toji2019/>

Telephone reservations: 0570-02-9999 (24 hours; service unavailable each Tuesday and Wednesday from 02:30 to 05:30 due to system maintenance)

Direct over-the-counter purchases: Please purchase tickets at Ticket Pia stores or by using the multi-use copiers located in 7-Eleven convenience stores throughout Japan.

e+

Internet purchases: <http://eplus.jp/toji2019/>

e-tickets (smart tickets)

Direct over-the-counter purchases: Please purchase using the Famiport terminals located in Family Mart convenience stores throughout Japan.

Lawson Tickets

L Code: 31371

Internet purchases: <http://l-tike.com/toji2019/>

Telephone reservations: 0570-000-777 (operators available from 10:00 to 20:00)

Direct over-the-counter purchases: Please purchase by inputting the L Code in the Loppi terminals located in Lawson convenience stores throughout Japan.

CN Playguide

Internet purchases: <http://www.cnplayguide.com/toji2019/>

Telephone reservations: 0570-08-9999 (operators are available from 10:00 to 18:00 every day)

Rakuten Ticket

Internet purchases: http://r-t.jp/toji2019

Yahoo! Ticket

Internet purchases: <http://r.y-tickets.jp/toji2019>

JTB Leisure Ticket

Direct over-the-counter purchases: Convenience stores (Seven-11, Lawson, Family Mart, Circle K Sunkus, and Ministop)

Application form of press approved images Att. PR Office FAX : 03-6869-7801

Press approved images may be used only for the purpose of announcing the exhibition. The use of images after the exhibition and/or secondary use of images are prohibited.

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- ❖ Media using approved images for the purpose stated above must send drafts to the public relations office in charge in advance for approval prior to printing.

A copy of publications/DVD is requested to be forwarded to the exhibition public relations office.



1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toji Pagoda
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deities in To-ji's Kodo Lecture Hall (This image is for reference and may differ from the actual exhibition.)
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Treasure Standing Tobatsu-Bishamonten (Vaisravana) Tang period, 8th century
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Treasure Implements for Esoteric Rituals Tang period, 9th century
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Treasure Letters (First Letter) Heian period, 9th century On exhibit: Tuesday, March 26 – Sunday, May 19
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Treasure Mandala of the Two Realms (Ryokai Mandala): Sai-in Mandala (Den Shingon-in Mandala) Heian period, 9th century On exhibit: Tuesday, April 23 – Monday, May 6
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Treasure Taishakuten (Indra) Riding an Elephant Heian period, dated 839 (Jowa 6)
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Treasure Standing Jikokuten (Dhrtarastra) Heian period, dated 839 (Jowa 6)
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Treasure Standing Zochoten (Virupaksa) Heian period, dated 839 (Jowa 6)
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	National Treasure Standing Gozanze Myoo (Trailokyavijaya) Heian period, dated 839 (Jowa 6)

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