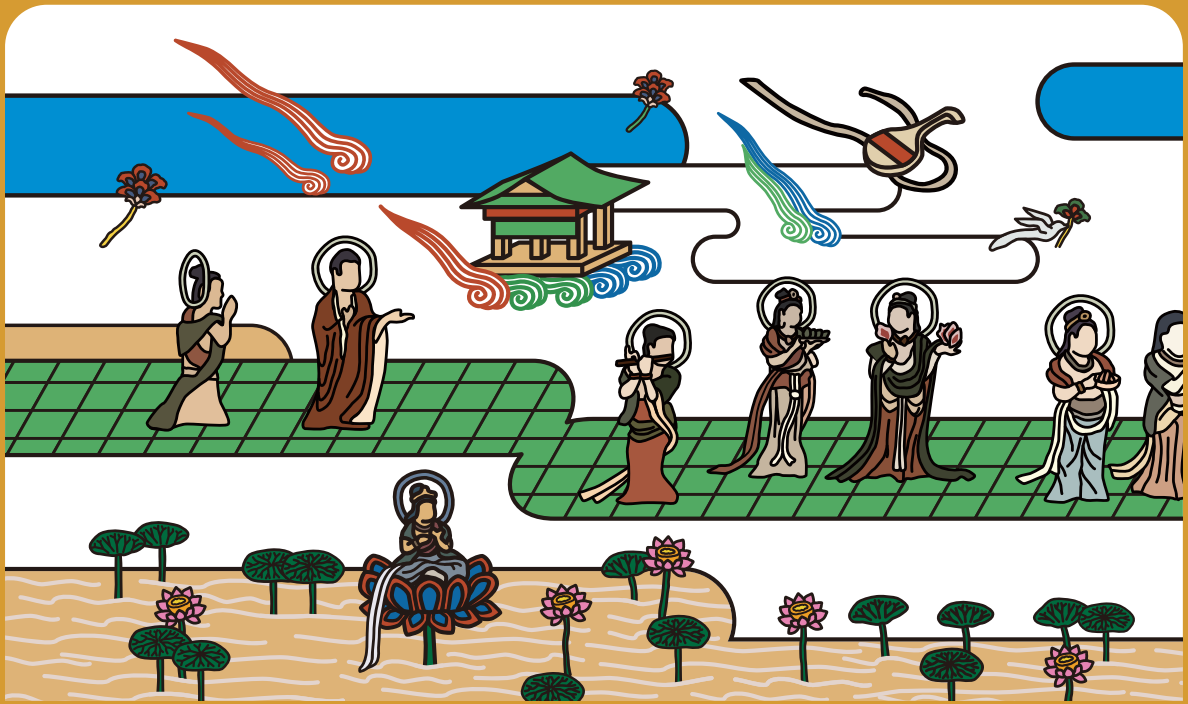


# Motifs Decorating the Land of the Buddhas

Let's find them in the galleries!



Buddhas are said to reside in the Pure Land, a virtuous world of beautiful radiant light.

Since the old days, people have longed to see the Pure Land for themselves. To recreate the brilliant majesty of the Pure Land, designs of plant and animal motifs were placed around images of Buddhist gods. They shine brightly, as they were made with rainbow-colored shells as well as gold and silver.

# Let's find the Motifs Decorating the Land of the Buddhas!

## 1 Can you find these motifs in the exhibition rooms?

Check the box when you spot one.

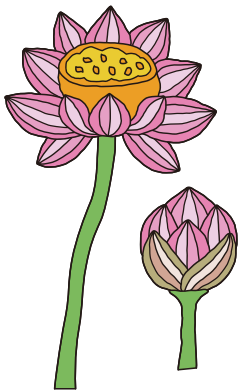
The motifs may have different colors, or they may be combined with other patterns.

Explore these rooms: Room 11 on the 1st floor and Room 3 on the 2nd floor of the Japanese Gallery (Honkan)

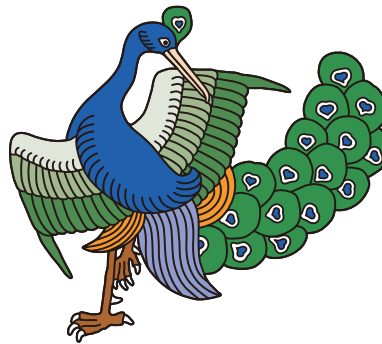
## 2 When you find a motif, think about the following questions and discuss them with your friends and family.

- What kind of object featured the motif?
- What other designs or motifs did the object have?
- Which one is your favorite motif?

### ○ The Lotus



Lotus flowers symbolize purity. They are a popular motif found on many works. For example, Buddhas often stand or sit on pedestals shaped like lotus flowers. Gods called "bodhisattvas" sometimes hold lotus buds.



### ○ Peacocks

Peacocks are renowned for how they unfurl their beautiful plumage like a fan. Peacocks can eat venomous snakes and poisonous insects, so people believed they could eradicate misfortunes and suffering. Some Buddhist gods are depicted riding on peacocks.

### ○ Hōsōge Flowers



Hōsōge flowers are imaginary flowers with large petals. Like lotuses, they represent the beautiful flowers that bloom in the land of the Buddhas. In this illustration, they are combined with a plant pattern called *karakusa* vines.



### ○ Kalaviṅka

Kalaviṅka is a fantastical bird with a beautiful melodious voice. It resides in the Pure Land and has the upper body of a human and the lower body of a bird. It holds a basket of lotus petals or a musical instrument.