

Room 6: Painting & Calligraphy
*The Illustrated Biography of Prince Shōtoku and Folding Screen
with Sutra Transcriptions*

**N-2: Illustrated Biography of Prince Shōtoku; Important Cultural Property;
By Kōzuke no Hokkyō and Tajima no Bō**

Prince Shōtoku (574–622) is one of the most celebrated figures in Japanese history, mainly for his role in promoting Buddhism after its introduction from Korea in the 6th century. This work depicts approximately seventy events from the prince's life in a flowing composition across four panels, grouping the events by season. The seasons are discernable through natural scenery, including plum and cherry blossoms, wisteria, autumn foliage, and snow-capped mountains.

When this work was being repaired, an inscription was discovered on the backing paper stating that the painters Kōzuke no Hokkyō and Tajima no Bō created this work in the year 1305. In 2010, it was designated as an Important Cultural Property.

N-3-3: Folding Screen with Sutra Transcriptions

These sutra transcriptions (copies of Buddhist scripture) were originally attached to a set of folding screens that also included Buddhist paintings. Some of these transcriptions and paintings have been remounted on individual pieces of backing paper, though one of these screens is preserved in its original form. The transcriptions are mainly from the *Large Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, with some particularly notable ones dating back to the Nara period (710–794).

Room 6: Textiles

Monks' Robes Associated with Prince Shōtoku

This gallery is currently exhibiting two *kasaya*, a type of robe worn by Buddhist monks across Asia. The first is a “robe of rags,” called *funzō-e* in Japanese, with the first character, *fun*, literally meaning “excrement.” This is meant to indicate that the rags used to make the robe were so tattered and soiled, they may as well have been thrown away at the latrine before they were cleaned and sewn together. Allegedly, the buddha Shaka, the founder of Buddhism, stipulated that monks who had cast off their worldly desires should wear these robes made of rags.

Kasaya held special significance as they were passed down from master to disciple and symbolized the legitimate transmission of Buddhist teachings from older to younger generations.

The robes on display here are indeed very plain and humble, but are nevertheless impressive examples of the Buddhist traditions and treasures passed down for over 1,400 years at Hōryūji Temple.

N-34: *Funzō-e* (Monk's Robe)

Rather than being made from silk, this robe is made of hemp-fiber scraps in different shapes and colors that were combined, sewn together, and finished with a border. The colors are faded, as though the fabric has been washed many times. Though most textile works in the Collection of Hōryūji Treasures are fragments, this rare example retains its original form. A storage box created in the Edo period (1603–1868) for this robe is inscribed with the words “Prince Shōtoku’s *Funzō-e*,” indicating that this robe was traditionally believed to have belonged to the prince himself.

N-35: *Kesa* (Monk's Robe)

The *kasaya* originated in India as a robe worn by early Buddhist monks. It spread across Asia and was eventually introduced to Japan by Chinese Buddhists. Square and rectangular pieces of cloth are first sewn together into long strips surrounded by a border. These long strips are then sewn together to make the *kasaya*. The number of strips used indicates the purpose of the robe. Robes made with five strips serve as work clothes; those with seven are for daily wear; and those with nine to twenty-five strips are donned as formal wear. Comprised of seven strips, this particular robe was for daily wear and, according to temple legends, was allegedly worn by the Indian monk Bodhidharma.