

## Room 6: Calligraphy

### *Record of the Imperial Bequest to Hōryūji (Hōryūji Kenmotsuchō) and Record of Hōryūji and Biography of Prince Shōtoku (Kokon Mokurokushō)*

#### **N-5: Record of the Imperial Bequest to Hōryūji (*Hōryūji Kenmotsuchō*)**

In the year 756, Empress Kōken donated the possessions of the late Emperor Shōmu to 18 temples, including Tōdaiji, in prayer for the repose of his soul. This document records the objects donated to Hōryūji temple.

#### **N-18: Record of Hōryūji and Biography of Prince Shōtoku (*Kokon Mokurokushō*)**

In the first half of the 13th century, the monk Kenshin compiled this record of Hōryūji temple and the biography of Prince Shōtoku, who oversaw the completion of the temple, into two volumes.

#### **N-19: Transcription of Record of Hōryūji and Biography of Prince Shōtoku (*Kokon Mokurokushō*)**

This copy of *Kokon Mokurokushō* (N-18) was created in the Muromachi period (1392–1573).

## **Room 6: Textiles**

### **Various Weaving and Dyeing Techniques**

Hōryūji Temple was established during the Asuka period (593–710) and has remained a lively complex with an active monastic community up to the present. This exhibition focuses on embroidered Buddhist images, and gives an overview of the various dyeing and weaving techniques that have been passed down through treasures from the Asuka (593–710) to the Nara (710–194) period. The textile collection from the Hōryūji Temple presents a wide variety of techniques, including embroidery, compound weave, tapestry weave, ikat, and tie-dye. The works here show the meticulous handwork of the makers.

#### **N-32-2, N-32-5: Embroidered Buddhist Image**

These sash-like narrow pieces of silk show celestial figures with their heavenly robes fluttering high up above their heads. The designs are outlined, and skillful embroidery is rendered within, using firmly twisted threads. With this embroidery technique, the intricate design appears the same on both sides.

#### **N-32-1: Embroidered Buddhist Images**

These narrow strips of silk show heavenly beings with fluttering garments, using embroidery. It likely comes from legs of a banner that hung in temples for decoration. Appropriate for a hung banner that flutter in the wind, the embroidered design appear on both sides. Hung in the temple, the embroidered heavenly figure would have literally danced in the air on the banner leg.

#### **I-336-106: Embroidery with Bead Roundels**

These fragments of embroidery in chain stitching originally formed the shape of a large roundel. This type of pattern originated in distant Western Asia, indicating large-scale cultural exchange in ancient times.

#### **I-336-1: Hanging Decoration for Banner Canopy with Deer**

This triangular decoration once hung from a canopy. The core is made of Japanese paper, and the surface layer shows a deer-like animal painted in ink mixed with chalk on red, twill-weave fabric.

#### **N-312: Cloth Fragment with Onion Flowers and Geometric Patterns**

Using a technique called the tapestry weave, this textile renders geometric patterns of crosses and triangles as well as a pattern that look like onion flowers. This pattern of onion flowers on tapestry weave is also found in textiles from Western Asia. In China and Japan, where Buddhism

flourished, this onion-flower design was interpreted as wish-granting jewels.

#### **N-46-2: Cloth Fragment with Lions and Animals**

The pattern of this warp brocade features stylized faces of Chinese lions with open mouths flanked by sacred wish-granting jewels and other animals. The animals have round color patches and flame-like decorations.