

## From Wild Ginger to Chrysanthemums - Shiroshoin Ichi-no-ma (First Room), Ni-no-ma (Second Room)-

The original murals of the Ninomaru-goten Palace at Nijo-jo castle were created by Kano-school artists during major renovation of the castle in 1626, in preparation for a visit by Emperor Gomizunoo (1596–1680). This year's exhibitions, entitled "Age of Nijo-rikyu Imperial Villa"Series, focus on the Imperial Villa period of Nijo-jo castle and introduce the roles and situations around the murals of Ninomaru-goten Palace at the time.

### Nijo-jo Castle becomes Nijo Imperial Villa

In Keicho 8 (1603), Nijo-jo Castle was founded by Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616), who established the Edo Shogunate, and in Kan'ei 3 (1626), it underwent major renovations including westward expansion of the castle area for the Imperial visit of Emperor Go-Mizunoo (1596-1680). In October of Keio 3 (1867), the 15th Shogun Yoshinobu (1837-1913) expressed his intention to return political power to the Imperial Court in Ninomaru-goten Palace, and with the Court's acceptance, the 250-year era of the Tokugawa Shogunate came to an end.

In Meiji 17 (1884), Nijo-jo Castle became an Imperial villa, a separate residence for the Emperor, and its name was changed to Nijo Imperial Villa. This changed the master from the Tokugawa family to the Emperor. Through the 30s of the same period (around 1900), Ninomaru-goten Palace was repaired by the Imperial Household Ministry to make it suitable as an Imperial palace. The decorative metal fittings of the Tokugawa family crest "Mitsuba-Aoi" (Wild Ginger) on the gables of the Ninomaru-goten Palace which boasted an overwhelming size and expressed the castle's master, were changed to the Imperial family crest "chrysanthemum," symbolically showing the change of power to those who visited Nijo-jo Castle.

Furthermore, the palace of the Katsuranomiya family (Katsuranomiya-goten Palace) that was north of Kyoto Imperial Palace was relocated to the Honmaru of Nijo Imperial Villa in Meiji 27 (1894) and became Honmaru-goten Palace. Accompanying this, a carriageway was developed from in front of the Karamon gate, crossing the inner moat via the West Bridge, and wells and toilets were secured around the palace. The Honmaru-goten Palace was prepared to be the center of Nijo Imperial Villa.

### Shiroshoin of Nijo Imperial Villa

Shiroshoin, located in the innermost part of Ninomaru-goten Palace, was called the "Goza-no-Ma" during the Edo period and was used as the Shogun's living quarters. Therefore, unlike the other two audience halls, Ohroma and Kuroshoin, fusuma sliding doors are fitted at the border between the upper and lower sections. This makes the First Room a which is the upper section, a separate 15-tatami room.

After becoming Nijo Imperial Villa, Shiroshoin became the living quarters of the Emperor, the new master. Throughout the Ninomaru-goten Palace, the Mitsuba-Aoi crest of the former masters, the Tokugawa family, was scattered on decorative metal fittings, and the Shiroshoin was decorated similarly. However, the Mitsuba-Aoi was not suitable for the Shiroshoin where the new master, the Emperor, would relax comfortably. Therefore, in preparation for welcoming Emperor Meiji, in Meiji 19 (1886), only in the Shiroshoin, the Mitsuba-Aoi on the corner metal fittings of the coffered ceiling and the edge metal fittings of the chodaigamae decorative doors were changed to chrysanthemum by covering or replacing them. Also, although the exact date is unknown, the drawer pulls on the fusuma sliding doors were replaced with ones bearing the chrysanthemum crest.

At this time, care was taken to ensure that the size of the chrysanthemum metal fittings matched that of the Mitsuba-Aoi. Even now, we can confirm that some of these chrysanthemum metal fittings that were attached at that time seamlessly hide the Mitsuba-Aoi.

time seamlessly hide the Mitsuba-Aoi.

The Shiroshoin welcomed Emperor Meiji the next year, Meiji 20 (1887).

### Murals in the First and Second Rooms of Shiroshoin

Unlike the gold-leafed murals that adorn other buildings, the Shiroshoin is decorated with ink wash murals. Using a technique called bokuga tansai, which involves partial coloring, a lakeside landscape is depicted from an overhead view, creating a calm atmosphere. This lake is the actual West Lake, a famous place in Zhejiang Province, China, and West Lake paintings have been a favored subject of ink wash paintings in Japan since the Muromachi period, representing one of the most representative subjects. Ink wash sansui- zu (Chinese-style landscape) paintings are often painted in the most formal places, and it is thought that the West Lake scene was painted in response to the formality of the First and Second Rooms of the Shiroshoin.

A snow landscape is painted on the odoko (large alcove) (displayed at the front) of the First Room. Snow is expressed by sweeping thin ink in the background and leaving the base exposed. In the far right of the picture, a rocky mountain with a temple pagoda and pavilion stands tall, and in the center of the picture, a watchtower by the water is depicted. Inside, two literati are seated in front of a screen painted with a sansui-zu, looking out over the wide lake surface.

On the tobutama sliding door next to the tsukeshoin (built-in table) (displayed on the left), a cliff by the water is shown in the center, with houses surrounded by trees above, and a person sitting on a covered platform under pine trees by the water, catching fish.

On the fusuma sliding doors bordering the Second Room (displayed on the left), two noble figures accompanied by a child advancing next to a pavilion and a tower gate surrounded by a waterside grove are depicted in the foreground, while a pavilion visible between mountain shadows and a grove is depicted in the background. We can see what appears to be the Su Causeway or the Bai Causeway, characteristic causeways of West Lake.

On the south side of the Second Room (displayed on the right), a mansion surrounded by willows is depicted. To the right on the water surface, there is a boat carrying a literati heading towards the mansion, and in the courtyard of the mansion, a man who appears to be the host is seen welcoming guests, while in front of the gate, a woman holding a baby and a child can be seen.

On the west side of the Second Room (displayed on the right), small figures are drawn into the landscape with a pavilion and bridge. On the bridge, a monk-like figure is riding an ox, and on the tobutama sliding door to the left, a noble figure and attendant resting in a gazebo are depicted.

Except for the chigaidana (staggered shelves), every scene has water at the bottom, creating a view that spreads throughout the room as if looking at the shore from a boat floating on the lake.

Also, on the small fusuma sliding doors above the chigaidana (displayed at the front), Nadeshiko (Pinks) are painted. It is thought that at some point, these small fusuma sliding doors were reversed so that the back side became the front, and they were remounted.

The painter of these murals is said to be Kano Naganobu (1577-1654).

Junko Furiya (Assistant Curator, Nijo-jo Castle)