

The Eisei Bunko Collection

Eisei Bunko Museum was established in 1950 by Moritatsu, the 16th head of the Hosokawa family that formerly ruled over the vast Higo-Kumamoto domain and was authorized as a public interest incorporated foundation in December 2009. Moritatsu's intention was to preserve and carry out research of his own art collection as well as the numerous artworks and historical materials that were handed down through the family for generations.

The name "Eisei" is a combination of "Ei" of Eigen-an and "Sei" of Seiryuji (Shoryuji) Castle, both deeply connected to the history of the family. Eigen-an is a sub-temple of the Kyoto Kenninji, where successive generations from Hosokawa Yoriari (1332-91), the founder of the clan and a military commander during the Nanbokuchō period, to Mototsune (1482-1554) are buried. Shoryuji Castle was the residence of Hosokawa Fujitaka (Yusai 1534-1610), who is revered as the first generation of the modern line of the Hosokawa family.

Eisei Bunko Museum is located in a verdant area of Mejirodai in Bunkyo-ku, where visitors can enjoy the traditional landscape of Musashino. The suburban residence of the Hosokawa family was formerly located in this area, and the museum building had been previously used as "*kaseijo*" (administrative office) before renovation in the early Showa period.

The museum holds nearly 94,000 items of artworks and documents related to the 700 year history of the Hosokawa family and Moritatsu's private art collection including 8 National Treasures and 32 Important Cultural Properties. The collection consists of various objects such as arms and armor, textiles, paintings, calligraphic works, ceramics, lacquer works, sculptures, historical documents, and modern Japanese paintings, and is highly appreciated as a valuable historical resource worldwide. Research and studies of the collection continue to be carried on today with certain objects entrusted to Kumamoto University (about 58,000 items) and Keio University (about 28,000 items).

EISEI BUNKO MUSEUM

Address

1-1-1 Mejiro-dai, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo
Telephone 03-3941-0850
<http://www.eiseibunko.com/>

Directions

From Mejiro Station (JR):

Take 白(shiro) 61 bus bound for Shinjuku Station West Exit to Mejirodai 3chome bus stop and walk for 5 minutes.

From Zoshigaya Station F10 (Tokyo Metro Fukutoshin Line):

Take 白(shiro) 61 bus bound for Shinjuku Station West Exit to Mejirodai 3chome bus stop and walk for 5 minutes.

From Waseda Station (Toei Streetcar Arakawa Line): Walk for 10 minutes.

From Edogawabashi Station Y12 (Tokyo Metro Yurakucho Line): Walk for 15 minutes from 1a Exit.

From Waseda Station T04 (Tokyo Metro Tozai Line): Walk for 15 minutes from 3a Exit.

Dedicated to the 260th anniversary of the birth of Ryokan
Ryokan : Poet with the heart and spirit of the Japanese

This exhibition, commemorating the 260th anniversary of Ryokan's birth, attempts to portray the poet's humanity and view of life by displaying calligraphic works he created throughout his life.



①Ryokan ②Entsuji ③Gogoan ④Otoko Shrine

Ryokan was a renowned poet and calligrapher of the Edo period who lived as a mendicant priest. Born the eldest son of the Tachibanaya family that served as village head of Izumozaki in the Echigo Province, Ryokan initially entered the family business, but failing to achieve any success, he became a Buddhist priest at the age of eighteen. He was inspired by Kokusen who was visiting Echigo, and followed him to his temple, Entsuji at Tamashima in Bicchu Province (current Okayama Prefecture). After ten years of ascetic practice, he made a pilgrimage around Yoshino, Koyasan and Ise, subsequently returning to his home village in Echigo again and stayed in huts at Gogoan or Otoko Shrine on the hillside of Mount Kugami. Ryokan never ran a temple or desired fame but cherished all living beings and lived with the bare minimum. He spent his days just playing with children, having conversations with friends, composing Japanese or Chinese poems, and creating calligraphic works.

Ryokan's extremely simple attitude to life and his unique calligraphic works are still highly esteemed by people of all walks of life. This exhibition displays about 100 works from one of the best collections of Ryokan's calligraphic arts and explores the appeal of Ryokan, a beloved poet with the heart and spirit of the Japanese.

