Kikuya residence’s study, known in Japanese as a *shoin*, was built around 1651 as the primary reception area for honored guests. The current structure is a late twentieth-century reconstruction. The *shoin* looks out onto a traditional Japanese garden designed in the *karesansui* (dry landscape) style.

　In the center of the garden is the *kago-oki-ishi*, a large, flat stone on which a *kago*, or palanquin, would be placed. A guest important enough to merit such transport would have first entered through the *onarimon* to the garden’s left and could then enter the *shoin* from the wooden veranda. The veranda is made from zelkova wood, a luxury item that lower-class townsfolk were forbidden to use. The veranda was usually covered with cedar boards, but when important visitors came these would be removed to reveal the zelkova boards underneath.

The garden’s plants are selected and arranged so that the garden will remain beautiful throughout the year. The maples light up in red and yellow in the autumn, while the pine are a rich green in all seasons. The stones are positioned to make the garden seem larger to a viewer seated in the *shoin*.