

## Gakudo, Votive Tablet Display Hall

The Gakudo is where votive offerings from worshippers, including tablets inscribed with prayers and wishes called *ema*, which have a horse painted on them, are displayed. Originally, live horses were offered to the gods. Later, these plaques with a painting of a horse were offered in place of an actual horse.

There have been two Gakudo at Shinshoji. This is the second, built in 1861. The first building burned down in a fire in 1965. Many of the important *ema* that were displayed in the first Gakudo are now preserved in the Reikokan as valuable cultural properties. The stone statue of the famous Kabuki actor Danjuro Ichikawa VII (1791–1859), who dedicated the first Gakudo to Naritasan Shinshoji Temple in 1821, was relocated after the fire.