

## Kaijusenji Temple: Pair of Standing Eleven-Headed Kannon Statues

The main hall enshrines the principal deity of Kaijusenji Temple, a consecrated Buddhist statue of Kannon, the beloved Buddhist avatar of boundless compassion. An Important Cultural Property, this Standing Eleven-Headed Kannon statue was made in the Heian period (794–1185).

The sanctuary houses another Standing Eleven-Headed Kannon statue, which is also an Important Cultural Property dating to the Heian period. This sculpture is 45.5 cm in height and is carved from a single piece of wood. Its rounded features are reminiscent of a carving style from an era even earlier than its creation. Viewed from the front, the hip is twisted left and the right knee is somewhat bent.

From the side, its upper body leans back slightly while the right hand is somewhat extended from the elbow. This posture provides the impression of movement as though Kannon is trying to move its right arm and leg forward. This composition may point to the intent of the sculptor to draw a vital sense of movement out from a single, stationary piece of wood. The statue is now part of the Nara National Museum collection.