

## **Central Golden Hall**

### **Statue of Kisshoten**

#### **Important Cultural Property**

A deity of beauty, prosperity and wealth, Kisshoten represents an incorporation of Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of beauty and good fortune, into the Buddhist pantheon. According to an inscription on its pedestal, this image was carved in 1340 by the sculptor Kankei. It was enshrined in Kofukuji's Central Golden Hall behind the central altar facing north with its back to the back of the principal icon. Until the destruction of the Central Golden Hall in 1717, the image served as the principal icon for the Kisshoe (Lakshmi Rite) to pray for peace and prosperity in the New Year.

Kisshoten is seated on a throne wearing a colorful wide-sleeved robe and elaborate jeweled crown. The left hand holds a wish-fulfilling jewel in the palm, while the right hand stretches out as if beckoning. Enshrined inside the statue are mandalas drawn with ink on paper, as well as sets of the five grains and five precious objects. The inside panels of the doors of the shrine feature paintings of Bonten and Taishakuten, originally Indian deities, while the back panel features a painting of a white elephant scattering wish-fulfilling jewels from a vessel held in its trunk. The doors of the shrine are opened only on the first seven days of the year.