

## **Large Boat *Ema***

This large and detailed *ema* (pictorial prayer plaque) is one of Kinpusenji Temple's lesser-known treasures.

The plaque depicts elaborate scenes of day-to-day life in the Edo period (1603–1867).

Toward the top of the plaque, dock workers are shown carrying and stacking straw containers of rice, which greatly resemble scenes portrayed in popular ukiyo-e block prints from the middle of the Edo period. Meanwhile, on the deck of a boat, a boy entertains patrons with a dance to the sound of popular instruments of the time such as a drum and shamisen. Below deck, cooks and servers are busy in a steamy kitchen, warming up sake. In the bottom-right corner, it is possible to make out a mobile tea-stand owner making a cup of green tea for a kimono-clad customer.

The plaque has been designated an Important Cultural Property and provides a glimpse into life in Japan at the time.