

Statue of Eleven-Faced Kannon

Important Cultural Property

Statue of Eleven-Headed Kannon
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Kannon, also known as the bodhisattva of mercy, is believed to protect people from illness and help them secure food and wealth. The eleven heads set atop the statue's main head have a range of expressions, including anger, compassion, and, on the back, laughter. The main head of this Kannon is remarkable for its lively expression and large eyes. There are several interpretations of why there are eleven heads, including the belief that the lower ten represent the stages on the path to enlightenment, while the uppermost represents buddhahood.

The statue is believed to have been created in the tenth century during the Heian period (794–1185). Standing 360 centimeters tall, the trunk of the statue and its pedestal were carved from a single cedar log. Its left forearm and the eleven small heads are made from separate pieces of wood.