

Garyukyo

The line of stepping-stones winding across the pond is named Garyukyo, literally “hidden dragon bridge,” since the meandering placement of the stones evokes the curving line of a dragon’s back. The reflection of the sky and clouds in the water adds to this imagery, making the stones seem like the form of a dragon soaring through the heavens.

The stones are cut from pilings that once supported bridges over the Kamo River in Kyoto. The bridges were constructed in the sixteenth century but replaced in later centuries by larger bridges.

The use of stone recycled in this way is a defining feature in the work of Ogawa Jihei VII, the landscape designer who created the West, Middle and East gardens here at Heian Jingu.