

### **Gasen-dō Hall**

The Gasen-dō Hall is a small, unassuming building tucked away in a grove of Japanese maples near Hōjō Pond in the southwest corner of the temple grounds. The hall was donated in 1914 by distinguished artist Suzuki Shōnen (1848–1918), the second-generation head of the Suzuki school of art. The hall's interior and ceiling are decorated with artwork by Shōnen's eldest son, Suzuki Shōsen (1872–1925), and Sekiguchi Yuki (1923–2008), a landscape artist who was active during the period following World War II. Art from the Suzuki school is most immediately identifiable by the “loose”

brushwork adopted from *nanga*, or paintings in the Southern Chinese style.

The ceiling, painted by Shōsen, features a rendition of a heavenly dragon (*tenryūzu*), a motif that is said to protect the temple from fire. Images of heavenly dragons can be seen at many temples in Kyoto, including at Tenryūji Temple, where a version was painted by Shōnen. The front section of the hall's interior bears a painting of the mountains where Amida Buddha is said to descend from the Pure Land. The image is flanked by a pair of paintings titled “Moondrops” (*Tsuki no Shizuku*, right) and “Shadows” (*Kage*, left). All three pieces were painted by Sekiguchi. The hall is closed during most of the year, but from November to early December the doors are opened for a special exhibition of the artwork.