

Kyoto National Museum Exhibitions and Gallery Rotations

The Kyoto National Museum generally holds two major special exhibitions per year that bring together important art objects related to a particular topic that are on loan from other institutions. During the rest of the year, thematic exhibitions consist of works owned by or entrusted to the museum. Due to the vast range of the collection and the need to preserve and protect the museum's treasures for future generations, items from the permanent collection are not kept on continuous display. Instead, a wide variety of works are newly installed every month or two in thematic exhibitions.

These regular rotations prevent damage from overexposure. Rotation also helps assure that visitors will discover something new on every visit. This promise of splendid serendipity might even be related to the Japanese term *ichigo ichie*, meaning "once in a lifetime." The phrase, which can be traced back to the tea master Sen no Rikyu (1522–1591), stresses that no moment in life can be repeated, and that every gathering is singular and precious. Seen in this light, each trip to the Kyoto National Museum becomes a unique experience to be treasured.