

## **Sliding Wall Panel Paintings by Tawaraya Sotatsu**

The most striking feature of the Main Hall is a group of paintings on 12 sliding wall panels (*fusuma*) that were created by Tawaraya Sotatsu (c. 1570–1640). Sotatsu co-founded the Rinpa school of painting and is known for his opulent, dynamic works.

The paintings depict pine trees and rocks against a brilliant background of gold leaf and are remarkable in several ways. The trees are all rendered in fine detail, with individual twigs and needles clearly depicted. At the same time, the alternation of pine trees and rocks creates a grand visual rhythm that permeates the work as a whole. Sotatsu's decision to give the pines individual characters, with each one older than the last when viewed in a counter-clockwise fashion, gives drama and a lively progression to the painting. The aged look of the pine trees may reflect the fact that pines have traditionally been associated with longevity in Japan.

The principal object of worship in this room is a statue of Amida, the Buddha of infinite light. The guardian lions (*shishi*) painted by Kano Sanraku (1559–1635) are displayed alongside the Buddhist altar.