

Koshoden Lecture Hall

This lecture hall is a recent addition to Zojoji's grounds, constructed in 2000, and is particularly noted for the artistic treasures housed in the third-floor hall. The vast, 108-tatami-mat space is used for the final stage of training for ordination as a Buddhist priest. The hall is opened to visitors on special occasions, so they may view the coffered ceiling with its many colorful paintings.

Most of Zojoji Temple's artworks were destroyed in fires and air raids. In 1997, Zojoji began commissioning artists in Japanese traditional painting to create works to be installed in the coffered ceiling. The theme is "flowers of the four seasons," and 120 of the country's most prominent artists contributed their work, creating a new temple treasure for present and future generations.

In addition, the *fusuma* sliding doors are decorated with a panoramic rendering of a landscape on a gold background, with blossoming flowers from each of the four seasons. On the reverse side, a monochromatic *suibokuga* ink painting of mountains incorporates the grain of the wooden doors.

The wide variety of flowers and related scenes are the highlight of this space, and flower lovers will enjoy identifying Japanese flora ranging from spiderworts, peonies, morning glories, hibiscus, chrysanthemums, and cherry blossoms.