

## Coming Soon to the Digital Gallery of Horyuji Treasures at the Tokyo National Museum

### All New Interactive Exhibits from March 10, 2026!

The National Center for the Promotion of Cultural Properties (CPCP) and the Tokyo National Museum (TNM) are pleased to announce groundbreaking updates to the Digital Gallery of Horyuji Treasures. An all new lineup of interactive exhibits is slated to launch March 10, 2026.



[1] New Digital Gallery of Horyuji Treasures Logo



[2] Conceptual Rendering of Visitors Interacting with New Exhibits (Left: Digital Book; Right: Digital Wall)

Nestled among trees on the western edge of TNM's grounds, the Gallery of Horyuji Treasures houses sacred Buddhist works of art. Many are over a thousand years old and are too fragile to be placed on permanent display. To remedy this, an interactive exhibition space called the Digital Gallery of Horyuji Treasures was installed on the gallery's mezzanine floor in January 2023. The digital gallery helps visitors more fully understand the collection through unique digital displays and theoretical reconstructions of how treasures originally looked. Since its inception, the digital gallery has been innovating new ways to appreciate the Horyuji Treasures, using interactive content and replicas to bring history to life.

In March, the gallery will feature two new digital exhibits that offer the most interactive experiences yet to explore the highlights of the Horyuji Treasures in the TNM collection. The new exhibits are equipped with intuitive interfaces that respond to visitors' gestures, ensuring even those with limited knowledge of Japanese art and the Horyuji Treasures can enjoy them. Designed with inclusivity in mind, the exhibits are accessible to people of all abilities, including wheelchair users and children. Digital content is available in English, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean.

Planning & Supervision: Tokyo National Museum, Center for the Promotion of Cultural Properties  
Digital Content Creation: Sabia Inc.

#### ❖ **Exhibition Corners: The Digital Gallery of Horyuji Treasures has three new exhibition corners.**

- NEW!** 1. Digital Wall: Tap to Explore the Horyuji Treasures
- NEW!** 2. Digital Book: Flip through the *Illustrated Catalogue of Treasures*
- 3. Theoretical Reconstructions: *Gigaku* Masks and Costumes \*Continuous Exhibition Corner



[3] Map of the Digital Gallery of Horyuji Treasures



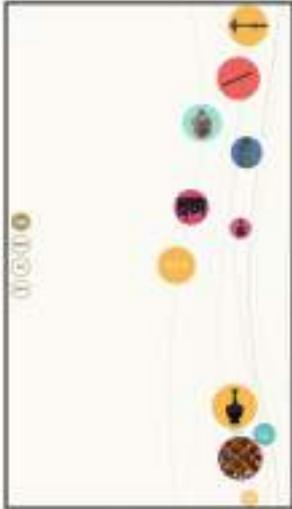
[4] Conceptual Rendering of the New Exhibition Space in the Digital Gallery of Horyuji

NEW!



New Corner 1. **Digital Wall: Tap to Explore the Horyuji Treasures**

**Highlight: Learn the Secrets of the Horyuji Treasures with Quizzes and Hidden Episodes**



The digital wall is an immersive touch-panel experience using massive 86-inch monitors. Tap one of the floating orbs to select a masterpiece and examine it in detail by rotating and zooming in on HD images. Hidden episodes, quizzes, and other activities enhance the experience beyond simply viewing images.

Reliefs adorn the spaces between the monitors. 3D and UV printing were used to create touchable displays of close-up views of treasures' designs. The printed models let visitors use their sense of touch to better appreciate the striking designs and forms found in these historic works of art.

[5] Home Screen of the Digital Wall

The digital wall intentionally incorporates sight, sound, and touch to offer a multisensory experience of the Horyuji Treasures.

### ❖ Expert Tips from Curators and Developers



Looking at Buddhist statues and *gigaku* masks from different angles creates different viewing experiences. In exhibition rooms, visitors have to squat or stand on their tip toes to find a better angle, but with 3D images, the desired viewing angle is never further than your fingertips.

–Maruyama Shiro, Sculpture Curator, Deputy Director General of the CPCP

[6] Zoom in on the digital wall: *Gigaku* masks are only on view Fridays and Saturdays, but at the digital wall, visitors can explore each mask in detail any day of the week.



The design transforms the gallery's straight lines and light shades of gray into an intellectual playground. The space is meant to evoke a sense of wonder and heighten the thrill of discovery as visitor explore the exhibits.

–Kambe Chika, Curator of Development & Design, CPCP

[7] Tactile wall reliefs: Try to guess which treasures these reliefs are based on while running your fingers along the contours and patterns.

NEW!



New Corner 2. **Digital Book: Flip through the *Illustrated Catalogue of Treasures***  
**Highlight: TNM's First Digital Book—Experience the Wonder the Treasures Inspired in the 1800s**



[8] Interactive digital book display

The exhibit “Flip through the *Illustrated Catalogue of Treasures*” marks TNM’s first foray into digital books. Virtually no digital books have been introduced in Japanese museums. As such, this groundbreaking exhibit proposes a new way to engage with cultural heritage in museum settings.

The book is based on *Illustrated Catalogue of Treasures*, a historical text documenting an exhibition held in Edo (now Tokyo) in 1842 of treasures brought from Horyuji Temple in Nara. Using real paper pages, the book superimposes 3D models and images of the Horyuji Treasures in TNM’s collection over the original text’s some 180-year-old illustrations.

This intuitive viewing experience features animations and sounds that play automatically in response to visitor actions, like turning pages and touching images.

The digital book transcends the limits of a physical gallery experience, taking visitors on a journey through time as they make and share new discoveries while comparing renderings of the gallery’s treasures in the 1800s with how they look today.

❖ **Expert Tips from Curators and Developers**

This kind of digital book is almost without precedent in Japan. The book materials and projection angles are the result of repeated testing, creating a visually engaging experience that allows visitors to compare how the treasures look today with illustrations produced in the 1800s.

–Takahashi Minako, Chief Curator of Planning Division, CPCP



Corner 3: Back on View  
 Theoretical Reconstructions: *Gigaku* Masks and Costumes

TNM and the CPCP produced theoretical reconstructions of the *gigaku* mask *Gojo* (“Woman of Wu”) and *Karura* (Skt. *garuda*) in 2019. A skirt and upper garment were added in 2021 and have been on view since 2023.



[9]

[9] Reproduction of *Gigaku* Mask: *Gojo*. 2019. Tokyo National Museum.



[10]

[10] Reproduction of *Gigaku* Costume (*Mo*). 2020. Tokyo National Museum.

【On view from March 10th】



[11]

[11] Reproduction of *Gigaku* Mask: *Karura*. 2019. Tokyo National Museum.



[12]

[12] Reproduction of *Gigaku* Costume (*Ho*). 2021. Tokyo National Museum.

## PRESS RELEASE

The third corner of the Digital Gallery of Horyuji Treasures features one mask and one costume on view for six months at a time. The mask *Gojo* and the skirt will be on view beginning March 10, 2026.

- \* The original *gigaku* masks in the Horyuji Treasures were collectively designated a National Treasure in 2025.
- \* For conservation purposes, the original *gigaku* masks are only viewable on Fridays and Saturdays in Room 3 of the Gallery of Horyuji Treasures.
- \* The original *gigaku* costumes are not currently scheduled for exhibition.

Learn more about *gigaku* masks and costumes on the CPCP's YouTube channel.



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### Event Overview

Name: Digital Gallery of Horyuji Treasures

Venue: Mezzanine Floor, Gallery of Horyuji Treasures, Tokyo National Museum (13-9 Ueno Park, Taito City, Tokyo)

Dates: From March 10, 2026 (Theoretical reconstructions are rotated every six months.)

Hours: 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

\*Open until 8:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. \*Last entry 30 minutes to closing.

Closed: Mondays (Open when Monday is a holiday and closed the following non-holiday weekday)

\*Opening dates and hours align with the TNM Collection (regular exhibition).

Admission: The digital gallery is part of the regular exhibition. Visitors may enter with a ticket to either the TNM Collection or the special exhibition on view (same-day entry only).

Organizers: Tokyo National Museum, Center for the Promotion of Cultural Properties.

Additional Assistance: Horyuji Temple

### ❖ Gallery of Horyuji Treasures



[13] Exterior View, Gallery of Horyuji Treasures, TNM

Located near the imperial court's ancient capital in Nara, Horyuji is one of the oldest Buddhist temples in Japan. It was constructed in the early 600s at the behest of Prince Shotoku.

In 1878, the temple presented over 300 of its treasures to the imperial household. In 1964, the Gallery of Horyuji Treasures first opened at TNM as a dedicated space to preserve and exhibit the treasures. The current gallery\* was built in 1999.

\* Designed by Taniguchi Yoshio. Awarded a prize by the Architectural Institute of Japan in 2001.

### ❖ Center for the Promotion of Cultural Properties



Established in 2018 within the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, the CPCP is tasked with developing innovative programs that encourage public engagement with cultural properties. Its vision is to create a society in which people from all walks of life think about and contribute to preserving cultural properties for millennia to come. CPCP's mission is to make cultural properties accessible to as many people as possible.

**PRESS RELEASE: Supplemental handout for the March 2026 reopening of the Digital Gallery of Horyuji Treasures.**

For both interactive exhibits:  
Planning & Supervision: Tokyo National Museum, Center for the Promotion of Cultural Properties  
Digital Content Production: Sabia Inc. <https://sabia.co.jp/>

**◆Digital Wall: Tap to Explore the Horyuji Treasures**

**■What Is the Collection of Horyuji Treasures?**

The Collection of Horyuji Treasures consists of over 300 works originally belonging to Horyuji Temple in Nara. The temple presented the collection to the imperial household in 1878, and the works were placed under government ownership in the postwar period. The collection is currently housed and exhibited in the Gallery of Horyuji Treasures at the Tokyo National Museum.

The digital wall presents 3D models and HD images of some 140 sculptures, ritual tools, decorative arts, and other objects in the Horyuji Treasures on immersive 86-inch monitors. Visitors can zoom in and rotate images to explore works at their leisure, examining details that would be impossible to see on the artifacts in person.



[14]



[15]

[14] [15] Treasures viewed on the digital wall



[ 16 ]



[17]

[16] [17] One-scene theater clips on the digital wall: The Horyuji Treasures' *gigaku* mask collection was just designated a National Treasure in 2025. The clips introduce key features of the characters the masks are meant to represent.

**■Behind-the-Scenes: 3D Imaging**

The digital gallery's 3D images were created using photogrammetry, a 3D scanning method that reproduces the physical dimensions of an object through photographs taken from a variety of angles. The Collection of Horyuji Treasures contains a considerable number of extremely old and fragile works from the 7th and 8th centuries. Certain objects have qualities that make them difficult to accurately measure using photogrammetry, like reflective or thin materials and areas with minimal color variation. To overcome these challenges, the team made original modifications to lighting equipment and the image-generation process.

Over 800 photographs were taken to capture each object's form and coloration, resulting in exceptionally precise 3D images with around 10 million polygons (surface faces) and point clouds of nearly 30 million points.

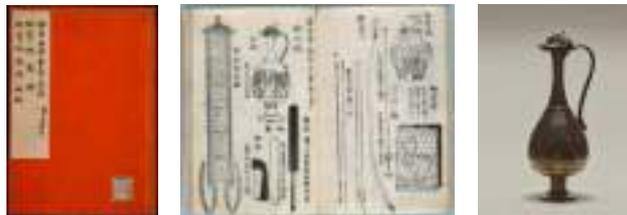
**PRESS RELEASE: Supplemental handout for the March 2026 reopening of the Digital Gallery of Horyuji Treasures.**

**◆Digital Book: Flip through the *Illustrated Catalogue of Treasures***

**■What is the *Illustrated Catalogue of Treasures*?**

The *Illustrated Catalogue of Treasures* and *Supplement to the Illustrated Catalogue of Treasures* are part of *Catalogue of Temple Statues and Sacred Treasures*, a text similar to a modern exhibition catalogue. The publication contains images and object descriptions to document treasures from Horyuji Temple exhibited in Edo (now Tokyo) in 1842. The main catalogue and its supplement describe over 85 temple treasures with illustrations by the *ukiyo-e* artist Utagawa Kuninao (1795–1854).

Of the treasures listed, 79 are currently in the TNM’s collection and can be explored in the digital book.



- [Left] *Catalogue of Temple Statues and Sacred Treasures* which includes *Illustrated Catalogue of Treasures* and *Supplement to the Illustrated Catalogue of Treasures*. Tokyo National Museum.
- [Center] Illustrations of *Temple Banner with Canopy for the Kanjo Ceremony* (National Treasure) and *Dragon-Head Pitcher* (National Treasure) inside *Illustrated Catalogue of Treasures*.
- [Right] *Dragon-Head Pitcher* (National Treasure). Tokyo National Museum.

**■Behind-the-Scenes: Producing the Digital Book**

Using a depth-sensing camera, this special device has its own motion-sensing system to make projected media respond automatically when a visitor turns a page or touches the surface of the paper. This intuitive, gesture-activated exhibit makes it possible for anyone to examine the relationship between this 19th-century text and the treasures passed down to present day simply by moving their hands in natural ways.

The size, angle, and installation height of the book interface follow universal design principles to make it accessible to everyone, including wheelchair users and children. Projection methods and mechanical part placements were repeatedly tested to create an optimal viewing environment free from light source and device component interference.



[18] Designed to be free from light source and device component interference.



[19] On interactive pages, a character named Young Prince Shotoku introduces the treasures’ key features.  
\* Young Prince Shotoku was designed/provided by KDDI Corporation (au Design Project).

Check out these clips of our two interactive displays in testing!



PRESS RELEASE

**PRESS RELEASE: Supplemental handout for the March 2026 reopening of the Digital Gallery of Horyuji Treasures.**

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【Public Relations Materials】

The PDF data for this release and the numbered PR images featured in this release can be downloaded from the URL/QR code below.

※ User registration required only for the first time

<https://service.press-camp.jp/pcamp/event/763>

Download period: Until  
the end of March 2026



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