

An **A-Z** of Japanese Garden  
Terms

Robert Ketchell's series continued

**Kitamura Enkin.**

The author of "Tsukiyama Teizoden" (The Creation of Hill Gardens), published in 1735. Kitamura collected the knowledge of his time on garden building, as well as "setting down here what I have been taught by masters of former times". He also included sections on raising koi carp, the cultivation of moss and the training of pine trees. He had first hand knowledge of much of the information. A final section of the book was devoted to illustrations of existing gardens of note, such as Kinkaku-ji, Saiho-ji, and Daisen-in.

**Kitayamadono**

A grand estate laid out to the west of Kyoto during the Kamakura era (1185-1392), for Kistune, head of the Saneuji branch of the Fujiwara clan. The garden, constructed around a large sheet of water, was probably the last great Heian-style lake garden. The lake was fed via a cascade, 40 feet in height, featuring a Carp stone at its base. This is an upright stone set at the base of the falls, and refers to an allegory of Chinese origin, depicting man's struggles to achieve transcendence. The story speaks of the struggles of a golden carp ascending the rapids of the upper Yellow river, in order to become a dragon, thus gaining immortality. The lake, originally dug out in 1224, still exists for it became incorporated into the gardens of the Golden Pavillion (Kinkaku-ji), likewise the cascade remains.

**Karekomi.**

The practice of clipping shrubs achieved great popularity in the 17th and 18th centuries. Usually shrubs would be formed into rounded shapes, though flat topped forms were also developed. Azaleas have been widely used for this purpose. The plant forms take on the role more usually prescribed to stones in the composition. In some gardens stones and shrubs are used together - such as at Tofuku-ji Hojo and Chisahaku-in, whereas at Daichi-ji and Shoden-ji, the plant forms completely supercede the use of stones. Kobori Enshu was a master of the use of karikomi. His gardens at Daichi-ji and Raikyu-ji are two masterpieces of the art. At Daichi-ji Enshu depicts the legend of the Treasure Boat, complete with its seven gods, partially enclosed by rising and falling hedges representing the sea. The great blocks of planting become as thick, dense, strokes of a calligraphers brush, invested with much movement and energy, and yet perfectly in balance. At Raikyu-ji, Enshu created an extraordinary scene which depicts Mt. Horai and ocean waves, utilizing camelia and azalea.



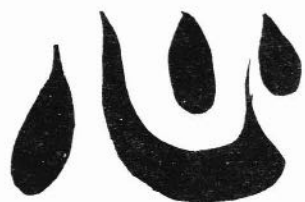
**Katsura Rikyu.**

Created between 1620 and 1660, the 'Detached Palace of Katsura' features one of the great gardens of the world. The palace created on the bank of the Katsura river, lying to the west of Kyoto, was begun by Prince Hachijo no Miya Toshihito and completed by his son Noritada. The grounds to the palace cover about 14 acres. At the heart of the garden is a lake of approximately 2 acres, with a highly convoluted shoreline and several islands. Water was brought into the garden from a nearby river, though because of the low lying nature of the land, there are no cascades in this garden higher than a few inches. The garden around the lake takes the form of a stroll garden (Kaikyū Shiki Teien), an elaborate series of paths and bridges (16 originally) create an everchanging series of vistas and set piece views. There were originally five tea houses in the garden, each with its separate views. One finds at Katsura a blend of the Heian 'Shindenzukuri' style, infused with the spirit of the tea garden (Cha niwa). There is an almost palpable sense of longing for the past glories of the aristocratic court society, overlain as it is with a new aesthetic arising out of the world of Tea. The subtlety of the overall design prevents the garden from becoming trite or sentimental. The particular style of architecture at Katsura (Shoin) allows for an unrivalled penetration of the architectural interiors by the external spaces of the garden. Having gone through a long period of decline, Katsura has been sensitively restored since the 1960's so visitors can now again enjoy one of the great marvels of garden art.



**Kawaramono**

In the social order of medieval Japan, the lowest 'caste' were known collectively as 'kawaramono' (literally - Riverbank people). This group performed the most menial tasks in society and also undertook much of the heavy labour involved with the construction of gardens. They were, in time, to become the first professional landscape gardeners. Most spent their lives as anonymous gardeners, though Yoshiro, a kawaramono of foreman status, was given the title Kentei (Excellent Gardener) in 1618 in recognition of his 23 years working on the garden at Sambo-in, south of Kyoto, for the Shogun Hideyoshi. He was also praised for his work by emperor Goyozei.



Kanji for KOKORO or SHIN, spirit or heart

**Konchi-in**

One of the sub temples within the Nanzen-ji complex, headquarters of Zen shu sect of Rinzai Buddhism, in the eastern part of Kyoto. the gardens at Konchi-in are interesting in that there is documentary evidence linking their creation to the work of Kobori Enshu. The attribution of gardens to various famous figures is often based on heresay rather than historical fact, and one should be a little wary of such designations.

The main garden features two strong rock groups, one a Crane Island and the other a Turtle Island. Both are symbols that recall images of immortality. The two rock groups are contrasted in their style of arrangement: the Tortoise Isle being predominantly horizontal whereas the Crane Isle emphasises the vertical plane. The backdrop to the arrangement is the rising hillside, densely planted with trees and shrubs clipped into rounded forms. A second garden to the east of the Hojo has a pond in the shape of the character for Heart ('Shin') \* or Spirit, laid out more in the style of a stroll garden. This garden is not attributed to the work of Enshu. \* see diagram

**Korakuen**

There are two gardens known at Korakuen, one in Tokyo and the other at Okayama on the Inland Sea, some four hundred miles from Tokyo. The Okayama garden, begun in 1687, covers about 22 acres in extent and was conceived as a stroll garden. The central lake is

is broad and open in character, covers several acres and contains three islands, low, rounded and covered by grass with a few stones and trimmed trees. One island, reached by an arched bridge, has a Tea House. The garden once contained rice fields and small farms as part of its scenery. The only elevated ground is a hillock created in 1863. Stone arrangement is sparsely used, as was the prevailing aesthetic for gardens of this type.

Tokyo's Koraku-en was also a garden laid out in the grand manner. Built by the vice Shogun Tokugawa Yorifusa, the period of construction began in 1629 and the garden was eventually to cover sixty three acres. Since the garden was being built at a similar period to that of the Katsura Palace near Kyoto, inevitably Katsura was a stylistic influence. A very large lake was created out of the marshy ground and stones were transported over huge distances to the site. Cascades, hills and an extensive network of paths were created. Another feature of the garden is the deliberate attempt to recreate scenic beauty spots in the garden - a device copied from Katsura. At a later date, scenic views of places in China were also added and eventually there were to be more than thirty such scenes within the garden. At this time Edo (Tokyo) was developing as the seat of government, being the homeland of the ruling Tokugawa family, and the garden may be seen as a deliberate attempt to create something of the cultural glory of the old capital, Kyoto. Both gardens are now open as public parks, though inevitably at a slightly smaller scale than in their heyday.