

Photo: Adachi Museum of Art

The beautiful Japanese gardens of the Adachi Museum of Art, voted the best in Japan out of approximately 1,000 sites in the country for 21 consecutive years by a Japanese garden specialty magazine published in the United States, continue to fascinate people around the world. The appearance of the gardens changes with the seasons. Kanno Ayaka, the person in charge of the museum's public relations, told us about the special appeal of the gardens when they are covered with snow.

(Text: Morohashi Kumiko)

The Snowy Japanese Gardens of Adachi Museum Fascinate People Worldwide

The Adachi Museum of Art, located in Yasugi City, Shimane Prefecture, in the Sanin region on the Sea of Japan side of western Honshu, the main island of Japan, was opened in November 1970 to exhibit the works of art collected over many years by Adachi Zenko, an entre-

Photo: Adachi Museum of Art

The Dry Landscape Garden creates a spacious ambience against the backdrop of the mountains in the distance.





Photo: Adachi Museum of Art

The *Living Framed Painting* in which the museum window frames the scenery and gives it the appearance of a painting

preneur from the same city. The original collection included more than 120 works by Yokoyama Taikan, a prominent Japanese-style painter, from the early to late years of his life. Currently, these works are now featured in the museum's collection that represent the museum. Apart from these, it holds ceramics, wood carvings, lacquerware, and contemporary Japanese paintings totaling 2,000 pieces. In addition, the gardens on the museum grounds are magnificent.

"The museum's Japanese gardens cover an area of approximately 165,000 square meters surrounding the museum building. A stroll through the exhibition halls offers visitors the opportunity to enjoy a variety of garden views from different vantage points and angles, such as the Moss Garden, the Dry Landscape Garden,¹ the Pond Garden, and the White Gravel and Pine Garden.² In order to keep these Japanese gardens in the best condition at all times, the museum has a gardening department that is unique among art museums in Japan, with dedicated gardeners who tend to the gardens every day, 365 days a year. In addition to the gardeners, the entire museum staff cleans the gardens every morning before the museum opens. This diligent care and maintenance is one of the reasons for the museum's worldwide reputation."³

One of the great appeals of Japanese gardens is that the highlights change with the changing seasons.

"The main garden, the Dry Landscape Garden, is designed to appear majestic and more expansive than it actually is by incorporating the distant natural mountains in the background as part of the garden scene. Furthermore, the concept of representing Yokoyama Taikan's works in the design of the gardens is truly unique to the Adachi Museum of Art. For example, the White Gravel and Pine Garden was inspired by Taikan's painting *Beautiful Pine Beach*, and the design of the Kikaku Waterfall was based on Taikan's work *Waterfall in Nachi* (both in the collection of the Adachi Museum of Art). Adachi Zenko famously said, "The garden is also a picture." In keeping with his words, the museum features such elegant and ingenious highlights as the *Living Framed Painting*, in which

the frame around a large window serves as a picture frame, and the *Living Hanging Scroll*⁴ created by cutting out a portion of an alcove wall so that the part of the garden seen through the opening can be enjoyed as a landscape painting."⁵

The scenery of the gardens is especially beautiful when they are covered with a blanket of snow.


"Several times during the winter season, visitors can enjoy the view of the gardens covered in snow. The light snow typical of the humid climate of the Sanin region gives the snow-dusted Japanese gardens the appearance of an ink painting.⁶ On snowy days, time passes quietly in serenity, delighting the eye with a different atmosphere than usual. Visitors who venture to the Adachi Museum of Art in winter, when it is covered in snow, will be rewarded with unforgettable views." 



Photo: Adachi Museum of Art

A pond where only carp swim, in the garden covered with snow and immersed in serenity.

1. A type of Japanese-style garden that recreates a natural landscape of mountains and rivers using rocks, white gravel, and other materials, without water.
2. The Japanese coastal landscape of white sandy beaches and verdant pine trees is called *hakusa-seisho*, which literally means "white sand and green pines." The Adachi Museum of Art has recreated the world of Yokoyama Taikan's masterpiece *Beautiful Pine Beach* in the form of a garden.
3. The gardens of the Adachi Museum of Art were ranked number one in Japan by *Sukiya Living Magazine: The Journal of Japanese Gardening*, a US magazine dedicated to Japanese gardens.
4. Hanging scrolls are calligraphic works or paintings mounted on fabric or paper with rollers made of bamboo, wood, or other materials and hung in a *tokonoma* (alcove) or similar space. The most common type (*shakugohaba*) is 54.5 centimeters wide and 190 centimeters long.
5. One of the themes of oriental painting. In the broad definition of the term, it refers to landscape painting. Paintings of this style depict natural scenery, such as mountains and rivers.
6. An oriental painting style. It uses only black ink, without color. In ink painting, the artist applies gradations of ink and modulates the amount of moisture to create a sense of light, shade and volume.