

This is a brief outline for guides to use for configuring their own tour connecting the floral presentation and the object Mt. Akiba Gongen.

Gongen Meaning: Incarnation

Gongen is a concept ( hoji suijaku)

Theory: Buddhist deities choose to appear to the Japanese as native KAMI in order to save them. Based upon the Mahayana Buddhist thought of Upaya.

Akiba Gongen= Protector against fire

Portrayed as a figure with elements of SHINTO beings called “tengu”

Tengu fearsome protectors of forests worshipped in Shintoism as small KAMI

Taught swordsmanship

Seen as both good and bad

Tengu alternate name: Heavenly Dog

Original form a hybrid between human and dog came to earth from a fire Meteorite

Evolved into a bird-human, beak like nose, wings, feathers, sharp claws

Considered a mischievous supernatural being. Renowned swordsman, taught martial arts. Live in trees and mountains

Reincarnated spirit of one who was proud and arrogant in life

Large part of culture in 20th-21C. Many of these deities appearing as anime and video games. Helpful in retaining Japanese folklore KITSUE

This Gongen is dressed as a Buddhist Monk, holds a double edged sword and a rope

He rides a white fox or dog and has the ability to fly.

Tengu and female counterpart Dakini can be good or demonic

Dakini's were women warriors or witches who eventually develop into higher sorts of beings

Japanese Dakiniten became integrated and absorbed with native agricultural deities

Indian Dakini also ride a white fox and are night flyers

Akihabara (Mt. Akihia)

Shortened to Akiba after a local shrine in the District Chiyoda ward in Tokyo Japan

Akiba in Japanese means ‘autumn leaf’ or autumn leaves which are a euphemism for FIRE

Mt. Akiba Gongen gifted to M.I.A by CLARK CENTER FOR JAPANESE ART & CULTURE (acquired ?)

Importance of this Deity in Japan 17th C

During the Edo and Meiji periods (1603-1912)

fires were a constant threat to the thousands of people living in densely populated cities of Edo (Tokyo) and Osaka.

This information, in great detail, can be found in the following link <https://charamana.com> 2022/07/19.

DRESSED by Nature TEXTILES OF JAPAN

There is a short video of the installation with a brief description of the textiles worn by the firefighters of that period.

Edo period folklore heroes and mythological beasts worked alongside firefighters in battling blazes. (Symbolically of course) Firefighters in Japan were revered as protectors of the city and its residents.

This floral presentation integrates different aspects of the Shinto /Tengu.

A dweller of the forest/ profusion of different greens. Treefern, Aspidistra and Lilygrass

Flame like flora: Psittacorum

Sword like flora: Freesia

An additional small vessel containing a figure carrying out a child to safety from the wooded blaze.

I intend to talk about the firefighters and their costumes of the Edo period. Also projecting further into the firefighters of this country and their similar commitment to community and the preservation of property and life itself

Questions or concerns please contact [mbullercabral@gmail.com](mailto:mbullercabral@gmail.com)

This information is not for QR access. Thx MBC