

## GLOSSARY

Basho (1644–1694). Matsuo Basho, Japanese poet. Considered one of the greatest writers of haiku poetry. His insightful and expressive haiku describing the natural world are widely enjoyed. He is especially known for haiku based on his travels, such as those that appear in *Narrow Road to the Deep North* (*Oku no hosomichi*) from 1694.

bodhisattva (Japanese: *bosatsu*). An enlightened being within the hierarchy of Buddhism, with boundless compassion, who postpones his own complete salvation to save others.

Buddha (ca. 563–483 BCE). The historic Buddha is the Indian sage Siddhartha Gautama, also known as Sakyamuni or the “sage of the Sakya kingdom.” As Buddhism developed, the term “buddha” evolved to include other awakened beings who had achieved perfect enlightenment, such as Amida of the Pureland sect of Mahayana Buddhism.

cloisonné. A technique for decorating surfaces using enamels and metals. Designs are usually carved onto a metal base, and the indentations are filled with enamels. The object is then fired in a kiln.

*hatqa*. Paintings that combine haiku verses with associated imagery.

haiku. A form of Japanese poetry written in three lines composed of 5-7-5 syllables. Popularized by poets such as Matsuo Basho (1644–1694), haiku often have references to nature. Also known as *hokku* or *haikai*.

Izo (Sanskrit: *Ksitigarbha*). This *bosatsu* or bodhisattva is revered in Japan as the savior of beings in hell, travelers, warriors, and especially children. He is usually shown in the guise of a young monk with a shaved head, carrying a staff and a wish-granting jewel.

nirvana (Japanese: *nehan*). State of enlightenment or Absolute Reality attained when all illusions and desires are extinguished.

palanquin. An enclosed carrier with extended poles for carrying by two or more bearers.

parinirvana. “Beyond nirvana.” The final nirvana or the death of the Buddha. It is not a sorrowful event but a release from the cycle of death and rebirth.

*renga*. A form of Japanese poetry that was especially popular in the 14th century. Literally meaning “linked verse,” *renga* are composed by linking together verses that are written by different authors.

tatami. Woven straw mats traditionally used to cover floors in Japan. Tatami mats are of uniform size and shape, each measuring approximately 71" × 35 ½", and have either brocade or black cloth borders. Room sizes in Japan are often discussed in terms of number of tatami mats. Contemporary homes tend to combine tatami, wood, or carpeted flooring.

tokonoma. Raised alcoves in traditional Japanese rooms with tatami mat flooring, where hanging scrolls and flower arrangements are enjoyed. Tokonoma were originally found in Buddhist temple rooms but by the 14th century had become an integral part of Japanese residential architecture.

Zen. A sect of Mahayana Buddhism founded by the Indian patriarch Bodhidharma. It was introduced in Japan around 1200 by the monk Eisai (1141–1215). The Rinzai, Soto, and Obaku schools of Zen are practiced in Japan.