

# Suiseki

Yûraiseki

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For judging stones, the Japanese Art of Stone appreciation knows various categories. A nice stone that has been well kept in the garden „yôseki“ and shows a beautiful and elegant aged surface „hadaai“ and color „koshoku“ is called a „suiseki“. A suiseki, which has been elected to be displayed at one of these important exhibitions in Japan is called „meiseki“ (mei = famous, seki = stone). A suiseki which has been in the collection or possession of famous people or a stone of historic relevance is called „yuraiseki“ or „yuraisishi“. The stone depicted in this article is considered a „yuraiseki“.

This stone belongs to the category of the landscape stones „sansuiseki“, stones suggesting a landscape. Literally it can be understood as a distant mountain stone „tôyamaishi“ or an island stone „shimagataishi“ in the ocean, depending how it is displayed „tokozari“ in the alcove „tokonama“. Such stones

shall have a well balanced and quiet „nadarana“ shape with soft slopes, not disturbing the eyes of the viewer. This stone has a very beautiful purple color called „murasaki“. The white quartz inclusions are called „ryûgan“ dragon's eyes. The white spots remind the viewer of the last snow of the season and therefore the name of this stone is „san setsu“. The large spot in the center also reminds the viewer of the reflection of the moon „tsugi“ in a full moon night.

The effect of the stone is the best, if presented in a „suiban“, a tray made of ceramic, respectively a „dôban“ a tray made of bronze, or copper, filled with off white or ivory color shell sand. The best such sand is said to be found in „kamogawa“ Kamo river in Kyoto. The advantage of this kind of sand is, that it doesn't change color or darkens when poured with water.

Ibigawa-Murasaki-Ryûgan-Ishi mei „Zan Setsu“  
Over 100 years ago as the stone was in the collection of Prince Tokugawa Iemitsu he wrote: „kono ishi wa mangetsu hansha shite imas“  
„This stone is reflecting the full moon



During the presentation in the tokonama „tokokazari“ the stone is poured with clear rain water. The process of the evaporating water allows the observer to think of an island or mountain in the morning, the dew of night gradually disappearing.

Stones that have been maintained for many years in the Garden „yôseki“ can be kept moisture especially long. This ability is called „mizumôchi“ and such stones „mizumôchi no ii ishi“.

The carved pedestal „Daiza“, was made of „sitan“ Indian mahogany. This wood due to its hardness, texture and color is considered as the ideal material for the production of Daiza.

The protection or packaging box „bako“ was made of wood Pawlonia „kiri“ and is over 100 years old. On the cover a previous owner has written in ink: „Ibigawa Ishi mei Zan Setsu“ (ibi river name lingering snow). Several years ago I was advised to have completed a second Kiribako, to preserve the stone in the old box, since the old box has become very valuable. Kiribako be used for storage of almost everything.

Kiri is very light, soft and flame retardant wood. Objects are often stored in the Kiribako wrapped in orange cotton cloths. Some think this has religious character. In fact is, however, that the small beetles, who like to eat wood, do not like this color.



On the following pages, you will see pictures of the different sides of the stone. The stone is „ubu“ natural and unworked. Ubu is a term used for Japanese Swords and means „not reduced“. Swords were previously cut off on the handle end, shortened to adapt the blade length to the new owner.





Above you see a picture of the underside or bottom of the stone. It is apparent that the underside is slightly lighter in color than the top. This comes from the fact that we turn the stone the bottom exposed to the sun just for one day in a month. This proves the experts that the stone was well maintained „yō-seki“ over the years

木石飾りの真髓

一雨會木石譜

水石飾りの真髓

一雨會木石譜



主石 揖斐川石 銘「残雪」

(27×15×4)

水盤 峯雲・青銅地紋外縁切足楕円

卓 紫檀継棧中卓

屏風 白鳥の子四枚折

敷物 青氈

席主 小島和雄

主石は洋上に浮かぶ島嶼とも、遠山形とも受け取れる。

月あかり反映する島影などを彷彿とさせ、形姿はゆったり、そしてのびやか。

地紋入りの峯雲作の薄手水盤は、これを品よく受けている。

卓の選定もよく、これも三位一体の文人調飾り。