

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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## JAPANESE HOUSE IN MUSEUM GARDEN TO MOVE TO PHILADELPHIA

Workmen will soon begin dismantling the Japanese Exhibition House in the Museum of Modern Art Garden and preparing it for a journey by truck to Philadelphia's Fairmount Park, where it will be re-assembled with a new garden setting and remain permanently on view. The Japanese gardens and pools of the original exhibition will be retained by the Museum as a setting for outdoor sculpture.

Presented to the Museum two years ago by the America-Japan Society of Tokyo and private citizens in Japan and the United States, the house attracted more than 223,000 visitors while it was on view in New York during the summers of 1954 and 1955. Title is being transferred by the Museum to the Fairmount Park Commission of Philadelphia because that 3,500-acre park offers an unusually beautiful natural setting, and the Commission has an outstanding record of maintaining and displaying historic houses. The new site on Lansdowne Road, formerly used for a Japanese pagoda, has a stream and a lake. Japanese gardens will be designed especially for this new site under the direction of Junzo Yoshimura, leading Japanese architect who originally designed the house and garden.

Mr. Yoshimura will supervise the removal and re-assembly of the house, which will be completely dismantled for transportation. As the Fairmount Park Commission does not expect to reconstruct the house until August, the parts will be temporarily stored in Memorial Hall in Philadelphia.

Officials of the Museum and of the Japan Society expressed their gratification that the house, an authentic recreation of a 16-17th century Japanese mansion will be kept on permanent display for the public by the Fairmount Park Commission. Fairmount Park is one of the largest and finest public parks in the country, providing a beautiful site accessible to thousands of residents of the Philadelphia area and visitors to the city. Also, as the custodian of more than a dozen American houses of historic and architectural interest, the Park Commission has had a great deal of experience in maintaining and exhibiting buildings.

The house consists of two large living rooms, an attached pavillion for the

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bath and tea ceremony rooms, a kitchen and connecting verandas. It was exhibited by the Museum under the direction of Arthur Drexler, Curator of the Department of Architecture and Design, to illustrate the relevance of classic Japanese architecture to problems of contemporary Western architecture. The house was first partially assembled in Japan by Mr. Yoshimura in 1953, then dismantled and the parts shipped in crates to New York, where it was re-assembled in the Museum garden.

The Japanese House was the most popular of the three exhibition houses presented by the Museum. Among the thousands of New Yorkers and visitors from other parts of this country and abroad who removed their shoes and shuffled over the mat-covered floors in paper slippers provided by the Museum, were students, government officials, housewives, professional men and women, film stars and visiting diplomats and officials including the Prime Minister of Japan, Shigeru Yoshida. Three telecasts were made from the house and dozens of professional and amateur photographers took still pictures there.

In accepting the house on behalf of the Fairmount Park Commission, Mr. Charles Thompson, President of the Commission, said:

"It gives us indeed great pleasure to accept the Japanese House from the Museum of Modern Art and to establish once again in such a splendid fashion the link with Japan in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park. This section of the Park was the site in 1876 of the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, when so many countries brought their treasures to Philadelphia and in artistic appreciation established this young republic firmly in the family of nations.

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Photographs and further information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Publicity Director, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, N. Y. Circle 5-8900, Ex. 203