

Events

Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan (22)

"Making and utilizing light: from illumination to architecture and art"



Poster of the small exhibition

A small exhibition in the Kansai-kan, entitled "Making and utilizing light—from illumination to architecture and art," was held from August 17 to September 19, 2017. It featured approximately 100 different books and magazines related to light, lifestyle, and culture, focusing our attention on the history of illumination. In this article, we will introduce part of the exhibited content.



Displays of the exhibition

From traditional forms of lighting, such as torches, candles, and kerosene lamps, to modern ones, including incandescent lamps, fluorescent lamps, and light emitting diodes (LED), this exhibition told the story of how the development of lighting technology has brought comfort and convenience to our lives. It also showed how illumination has had a great influence on our culture and our values. In fact, illumination has of late become a popular feature of many buildings and streetscapes in places throughout Japan.

The exhibition provided an overview of the history of illumination and explored how illumination has changed both our lifestyles and the landscape in which we live. Some of these publications contain examples of artwork featuring techniques that utilize silhouettes as well as the interplay of shadow and light. Others show how the use of natural as well as artificial light is now a significant feature of contemporary architecture. Visitors enjoyed the potpourri of books and magazines, each with a distinct perspective on light and illumination.



Lighting in ancient times: the development of lamps and lanterns



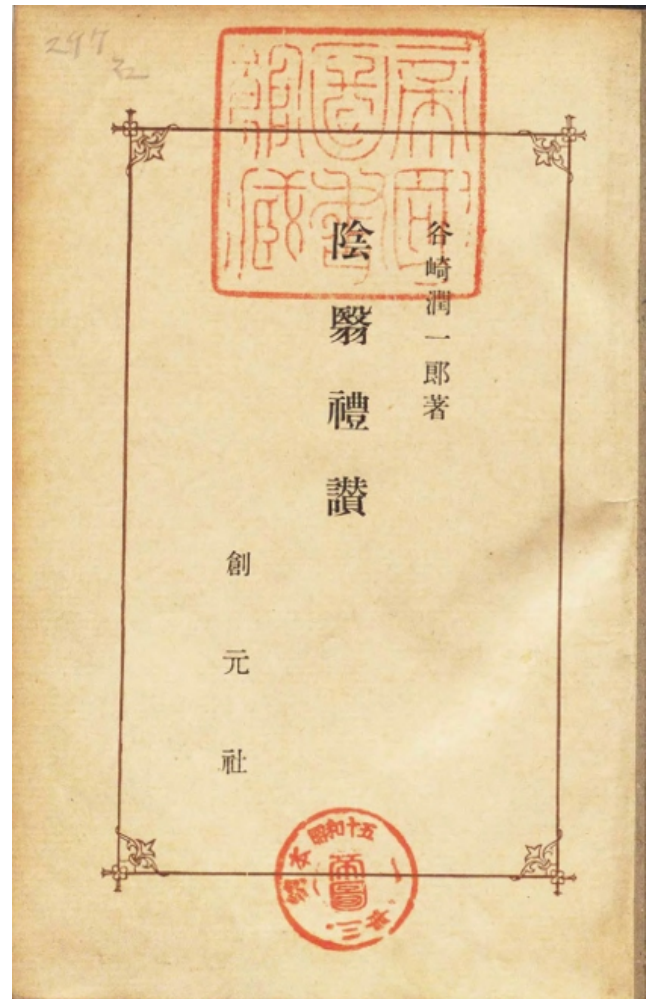
Hi no mukashi

Edited by Yanagita Kunio
Published by Jitsugyo No Nihonsha in 1944
NDL Call No. 380-Y53 ヲ

* Available in the [NDL Digital Collections](#)

Yanagita Kunio is an eminent Japanese folklorist, who studied the history of lamps and lanterns as well as cultural practices concerning light. This book explains different techniques used in olden times to bring light to darkness.

Lighting in modern times: street lights and the changing streetscape

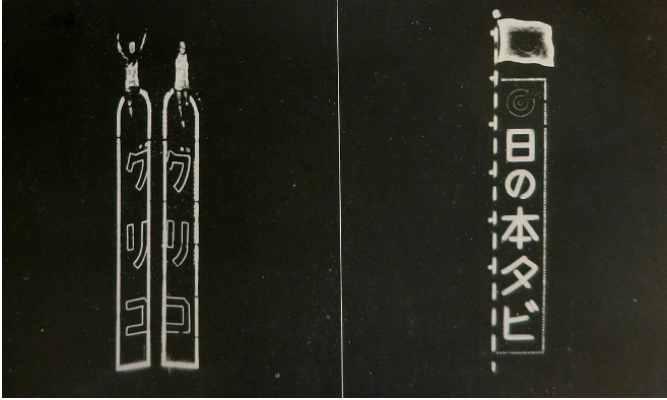


In'ei raisan

Edited by Tanizaki Jun'ichiro
Published by Sogensha in 1939
NDL Call No. 787-35

* Available in the [NDL Digital Collections](#)

In this collection of essays by the well-known Showa-era novelist and essayist Tanizaki Jun'ichiro, the author asserts that the interplay of shadow and light produced by traditional Japanese lighting, such as paper-frame lanterns or candlesticks, is deeply connected with a Japanese sense of beauty that contrasts with Western approaches to bright lighting.



Kyoto oosaka kobe akari no meisho

Compiled by Shomei Gakkai Shomei Chishiki Fukyu Inkai
Published in 1933

NDL Call No. 特 253-930

* Available in the [NDL Digital Collections](#)

Although the pictures in this book are all monochrome, they illustrate the streetscapes and interior lighting of well-known places in Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe early in the Showa era. Included are the Minami-za Theater in Kyoto, the outer walls of the Osaka Castle donjon, and street lamps in the Motomachi area of Kobe city. Shown above are photos of the Glico neon sign near the Shinsekai intersection and the Hinomoto-tabi neon sign near Nagahori bridge, both of which were in Osaka city.

Lighting in the present day: lighting technology and design

Hikari jiku (Light+space+time)

Edited by Ishii Motoko

Published by Kyuryudo in 2009

NDL Call No. ND269-J14

The author is a well-known illumination designer who has worked on many projects both in Japan and around the world. This full-color book contains numerous photographs of some of the many projects she was involved in between 2001 and 2008. Well-known examples of her work include the illumination for the 50th-anniversary celebration of Tokyo Tower, lighting design for the Aichi World Exposition in 2005, and the Project Commemorating 150th Anniversary of Japan-France Friendship "La Seine — Light Messages from Japan, Paris."

Light and Culture: art, entertainment, and more

Wayan

Edited and Published by Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan
(Tokyo National Museum) in 2010

NDL Call No. Y111-J1892

Wayang is the Javanese word for shadow and also refers to traditional Indonesian puppet theater, which has been

designated an intangible cultural property by UNESCO. This book features *Wayang* puppets owned by the Tokyo National Museum. Of particular note are the brightly colored puppets made from buffalo skin that are used in *Wayang Kulit* shadow theater.

Light and Architecture: incorporating natural light into architectural design

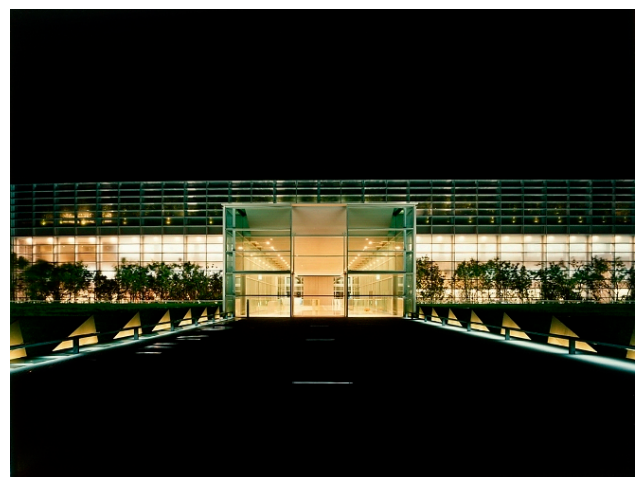
Kokuritsu kokkai toshokan kansaikan no kenchiku

(The architecture of the Kansai-kan of the National Diet Library)

Edited by Toki Fumio in 2003

NDL Call No. UL521-H3

This booklet includes many pictures, illustrations, and drawings which introduce the design concept, sketches, candidate models, and interior rendering of the NDL's Kansai-kan, where this exhibition was held. The design of the Kansai-kan was the subject of an architectural design competition held by the Ministry of Construction (now the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport), and this exhibition features the primary design drawings, which illustrate many of the attractions of Kansai-kan building.



Night view of the Kansai-kan

(Translated by Tomoaki Hyuga)

- [Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan \(20\) "Robots are evolving! - from myth, mechanical dolls to the latest robots"](#) (No. 209, December 2016)
- [Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan \(18\) A collection of living creatures from all times and places: real, virtual and extinct creatures](#) (No. 202, October 2015)
- [Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan \(17\) Tomorrow's dinner will be a full-course meal: Find the recipe you want to cook](#) (No.199, April 2015)
- [Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan \(16\) Dreams of Space, from the ancient view of the universe to the Hayabusa Project](#) (No.196, October 2014)
- [Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan \(15\) Modernization of Japanese sake and domestic production of Western liquor](#) (No.193, April 2013)