1. Address of Historic Resource

Street Address: Lansdowne and Horticulture Drives
Associated Address: 4301 Lansdowne Drive

Postal Code: 19131
Councilmanic District: 5

2. Name of Historic Resource

Historic Name: Shofuso Japanese House and Garden
Common Name: Japanese Exhibition House; The Tea House

3. Type of Historic Resource

Building          Structure          ✓ Site          Object

4. Property Information

Condition: ✓ Excellent          Good          Fair          Poor          Ruins
Occupancy: ✓ Occupied          Vacant          Under Construction          Unknown
Current Use: Interpretive Museum; Arts and Culture
Offices: 5070 Parkside Avenue, Suite 2104
Philadelphia, PA 19131

5. Boundary Description

Within the boundaries of Fairmount Park, Shofuso occupies the parcel of land flanked by Horticultural Drive to the north and east and Lansdowne Drive to the south. It is located just east of Belmont Avenue and west of the Schuylkill River (Fig. 1).

The contemporary Japanese dwelling and its gardens exist within the context of its historical past – situated in the heart of what were once the Centennial Exposition grounds – but not on the exact location of either of the Japanese structures built for the 1876 Exposition. Instead, Shofuso today stands about 1,500 feet west and slightly south of the 1876 Japanese Dwelling and just around 250 feet north of the Expo’s Japanese Bazaar and Tea Room. The current site represents over a century of Japanese cultural presence in Fairmount Park (Fig. 2).

In 2012, Friends of the Japanese House and Garden and the City of Philadelphia restored two original Centennial
 Expo “comfort stations,” or restroom facilities, to be used as extensions of the Shofuso property. The newly completed Sakura Pavilion lies just 75 yards northeast of Shofuso, on the northern side of Horticultural Drive.

**6. Description**

The Japanese House, occupying approximately 1.2 acres in West Fairmount Park, is intended as an interpretation of traditional 16th and 17th century Japanese dwellings. The house is built in the Shoin style that incorporates the non-symmetrical layout, sliding interior doors (fusuma) for space division, and an accessible teahouse (chashitsu) which were characteristic of estate living over 500 years ago. Architect Junzo Yoshimura exercised his creative liberties to merge multiple inspirations of Japanese Shoin homes of that time period; so although the home is not an exact replica of any particular structure from Japan, it does reflect the primary needs and preferences of traditional housing in Japanese culture. What has emerged from Yoshimura’s vision is an open and flowing space that contains the necessary elements for residents to live comfortably but without excess. A relationship between the natural environment and the built structure is evident throughout the home, most clearly felt through the sliding doors which open up all rooms to the outside gardens and engender a holistic sense of movement throughout. In this, the home embodies its given name, Shofuso, or Pine Breeze Villa.

**STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS & DESIGN OF SHOFUSO**

The main house – built in Nagoya, Japan in 1953, pieced together in New York City in 1954, and reconstructed in Philadelphia in 1958 – consists of two main rooms, a gallery entrance, a functional kitchen, and space for storage and pantries (Fig. 3). The main living quarters step out onto a dry veranda (chumon), which is surrounded by a wet veranda (nure-en) to lend protection against the elements without disrupting the residents’ view of nature (Fig. 4). The wet veranda as well forms a bridge that connects the main house to the semi-detached tea house and bath. The tea house – which has a private entrance through the tea garden – includes a pantry and room dedicated to the ceremony, while the bath progressively includes a main room and toilet. Although the property in Fairmount Park is larger than the courtyard of the Museum of Modern Art where Shofuso first stood, the organization and structure of the house is exactly the same.

Shofuso’s interior is intentionally unassuming, with a traditional lack of western furniture and clutter. Décor is limited to items directly related to the needs of everyday living – prayer, ceremony, eating, and resting. Instead, the space is defined by the rice straw mats (tatami) of 3 by 6 feet that cover the floor (Fig. 4.2). Per Japanese tradition of measuring the home by the number of mats it contains, Shofuso is a 29 mat home – 15 mats in the first room, 10 in the second room, and 4 in the tea ceremony room. It is shielded from the outside by two sets of doors: a wooden outer door and an inner sliding screen door. This arrangement enables each room to open up to other rooms as well as the gardens, and creates the feeling of openness throughout the house. However, the

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design also increases accessibility from the outside, which has lead to security problems and damage to the interior. The fusuma especially have been the target of vandalism since Shofuso’s installation in Fairmount Park. Following a comprehensive preservation plan in 2005, Tokyo-based artist Hiroshi Senju created 20 screens in the style of his Waterfall series to replace the destroyed fusuma. The installation of his screens in 2007 coincided with the completion of Shofuso’s restoration project (Fig. 4.3).

The exterior of the home is more intricate and ornate in its architectural design than the minimalism of the interior. The roof itself is designed to convey the symbolism of protection, as well as provide shelter. Though constructed from the same Japanese Cypress (hinoki) as the structural skeleton and most detail work of the house, the roof is out of proportion with the rest of the house – much larger than dictated by necessity (Fig. 4.4). The purpose is to “produce the effect of greater density, stimulating the sense of shelter.” In addition to expressing protection, the roof is a paradigm for traditional forms of Japanese carpentry. The art of constructing the roof using inch-thick strips of hinoki secured in place by bamboo nails requires immense skill (Fig. 4.5). Although the method is practiced by few craftsmen in contemporary society, a master roofer was employed to replicate the process during a 1999 roof restoration project – preserving the art of the method as well as the physical structure.

ASSOCIATED STRUCTURES

The main house – the structure built in Japan which first graced New York City before reaching West Fairmount Park – and its surrounding cultural landscape are the sole foundation for the Japanese House and Garden’s inclusion in the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. In addition to the historic dwelling, Shofuso’s property includes five additional structures which lend to the modern interpretation of the site’s heritage. The first is the Guard House that sits immediately north of the main house within the confines of the main wall. Not original to the building or its design, the Guard House was built during the 1958 reconstruction in Philadelphia to serve as storage and a ticketing office. The house mimics the key design elements of Shofuso’s exterior, though the configuration of the interior is based on mid-century American functional needs. The second structure is a small storage shed also within the wall, directly west of the main house, built sometime after the 1950s installation to hold materials used for garden and pond maintenance.

The third and fourth associated structures are situated outside of the walled complex and along Horticultural Drive, about 75 yards northeast of Shofuso. Originally conceived as “comfort stations” for the Centennial Exposition in 1876, these nearly identical structures were restored by Friends of the Japanese House and Garden, in collaboration with the Fairmount Park Commission, to serve as Shofuso’s cultural and educational annex. These historic structures underwent a full restoration – structural stabilization, exterior rehabilitation, and interior adaptation – in 2011 to become what are now collectively known as the Sakura Pavilion.

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3 Andrews, Personal Interview, 19 June 2012.
The oft-referred to wall surrounding half of the property stands as the Shofuso’s final related structure (Fig. 4.6). The wall is a replica of the one designed to encircle Shofuso when it first stood in the courtyard of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Builders reused the designs from 1954, although not the materials, to reproduce the built landscape of the exhibition. As such, it is in the same category as the first three associated structures: important in their association to Shofuso and its history but not original components of the historic house.

The wall had been subject to neglect and incorrect conservation in the past; however, the structure has received a recent lime wash treatment to maintain its condition and restore the proper method of care intended by its designer, Yoshimura. Ornamental black iron fencing was installed in 1993 to fill the void left by the wall – which does not fully encircle nor protect the main house. This strategy was first suggested by the house’s original architect, Junzo Yoshimura, in 1970 during an assessment of the site.⁵

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

More than a structure, Shofuso refers to the physical system of symbiotic elements that amount to the Japanese landscape in Fairmount Park. One of the most fundamental aspects of this ecosystem is the series of gardens that define the site. The house itself is bounded on all sides by three gardens designed by Tansai Sano in 1957. The Courtyard Garden is a visitor’s first encounter, beginning in the space between the Garden Entrance in the wall and the Family Entrance of the house (Fig. 4.7). Populated with hedges of Japanese Holly and tall Sugi, a conifer known as the national tree of Japan, the Courtyard Garden wraps around the house’s eastern elevation and into the Viewing Garden.

This second – and largest – garden is landscaped to highlight the Koi Pond at its center (Fig. 4.8 & 4.9). Lower lying plants such as azaleas and yew surround the water while large evergreens and Hinoki Cypress exist at the periphery of the garden.⁶ Sano worked off of the foundation of the Japanese garden created by Y. Muto for the Nio-Mon Temple Gate in 1909. He rebuilt one of the two islands and its accompanying footbridge and added a waterfall down to the pond at the northeast corner of the Viewing Garden. Sano landscaped a stone path along Shofuso’s eastern edge from which a visitor might observe the garden and feed the koi. The narrow juniper and azalea lined path is accented with authentic Japanese lanterns before wrapping south to the Tea Garden (Fig. 4.10).

The final garden surrounds the entrance to Shofuso’s Tea House, and is divided by the stream feeding into the Koi Pond from Centennial Lake located across Belmont Avenue. It is populated by Japanese maples, more Hinoki, and “various perennials.”⁷

The combined effect of these gardens is picturesque, with a naturalistic aura masking the large degree of control.

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⁵ Taniguchi, ibid.
⁷ Ibid.
and oversight that went into its creation. Japanese landscaping is an obedient art form, reflecting the basic canons of gardens which came before. Shofuso’s grounds reflect the convergence of three distinct forms – Shinden (pond and island garden), Roji (tea garden), and Tsuboniwa (courtyard garden) – designed with respect to the suggested tenets of each garden. These interpretations are faithful to the principles of the original styles, though adapted to fit the existing environment and perpetuate a sense of balance between the house and the landscape. Sano’s design – considered the preeminent landscape plan by all of Shofuso’s restoration projects since its inception in 1957 – is a manifestation of the fundamental elements of a traditional Japanese garden. By adapting conventional design methodology to the existing topography of Fairmount Park, Sano created a distinct yet authentic cultural environment in Philadelphia.

7. Significance

Period of Significance: 1876-1976

Date(s) of Construction and/or alteration: 1909 (landscape designed by Y. Muto); 1953 (Shofuso constructed in Japan); 1957-58 (Shofuso reassembled in Philadelphia; landscape redesigned by Sano)

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Yoshimura, Junzo (architect); Sano, Tansai (landscape architect); Y. Muto (landscape architect)

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: Okumura, Isao (master carpenter); Nakajima, Kenji (landscape restoration)

Original Owner: City of Philadelphia

Other Significant Persons: Morris, John; Converse, John H.; Vauclain, Samuel; Drexler, Arthur; Senju, Hiroshi

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

(A) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,

(B) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,

(C) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,

(D) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,

(E) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural

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development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,

✓ (F) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,

✓ (G) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,

✓ (H) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,

✓ (I) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or

✓ (J) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

OVERVIEW

While the Japanese House has stood at the same location in West Fairmount Park for over five decades, Japanese culture has been embodied in the park through one medium or another for more than 130 years. The physical structure of the Pine Breeze Villa represents less than half of the lifespan of Japanese influence on the park; and yet, the building symbolizes the enduring tradition of international cooperation and a mutual respect of culture, arts, and society between the United States and Japan. In this sense, the Japanese House transcends its own longevity and signifies one of the more prolific – if unexpected – diplomatic relationships in Philadelphia’s history. And yet, Shofuso is more than just a Japanese House. It is also the gardens, the artifacts, and the incorporated structures that, along with the house, define the holistic imprint of Japanese heritage in Fairmount Park today.

At the time of its reconstruction in Philadelphia in 1957, Shofuso was the first Japanese cultural site realized in North America following the adversarial relationship between the nations in World War II. The house was essentially a cultural peace offering – made by Japan, accepted by New York, and perpetuated by Philadelphia – and its inclusion into Fairmount Park marked a particularly brazen division of political and cultural ideologies. Constructing a traditional 16th and 17th century Shoin style Japanese dwelling in one of America’s most historically patriotic cities was sure to make a strong statement for the acceptance of craftsmanship and tradition over contemporary politics.

The architectural design of Shofuso is itself a hybrid that reflects the contrasts between the two nations and the potential for harmony embedded in their collaboration. Though the design was largely influenced by the centuries-old Shoin-Zukuri style guest house of Kojo-in, he was clear that Shofuso was not intended as a replica of such buildings. Shofuso, instead, conjured the Shoin design ideology as a foundation and was modified for its

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9 Dr. Kendall Brown, Letter of Support to the Friends of the Japanese House and Garden (California State University Long Beach, Art Department, 28 February 2012).
placement in the American environment and for the understanding of American visitors.\textsuperscript{10}

Yet at its core, Shofuso is a tranquil echo of the Fairmount Park’s cultural past juxtaposed against the modernization of American society. The house and its grounds reflect the permanence of nature as it endures the vacillations of humanity; and in doing so, the Japanese House and Garden emanates the ethos of traditional Japanese sentiment.

CULTURAL PRESENCE IN FAIRMOUNT PARK

The interpretive timeline of Japanese cultural presence in Fairmount Park may be broken down into three distinct eras: the Centennial, the Temple Gate, and Shofuso. These eras represent the three physical manifestations of Japanese heritage in Fairmount Park and attest to the longevity of Japan’s cultural presence in Philadelphia. Though the version of the Japanese House which stands today has garnered its own historic merit over the past six decades, the history perpetuated by its presence contributes to Shofuso’s identity and significance as a heritage site.

\textit{Centennial Exposition} | Japan officially accepted the invitation to participate in the Centennial Exposition in 1874. A mere three years after Japan ended the \textit{han} system and adopted a central governance structure,\textsuperscript{11} the nation had begun to modernize rapidly and the reestablished imperial government sought to show the progress Japan had made toward westernization on a global scale.\textsuperscript{12} The Centennial Exposition thus became a platform of sorts, a venue to re-introduce Japan to the rest of the industrialized world. In 1876, representatives of the Japanese government reached Philadelphia with artifacts of modern industry and cultural influence to fill their allotted 17,000 square feet of display space in the Main Exhibition Building, and the plans for not one, but two traditional Japanese buildings.\textsuperscript{13}

Japan filled over 17,000 square feet of display space in the Main Exhibition Hall, not including the additional exhibits at Agricultural Hall. Hundreds of displays brought the new, modern Japan to America; however, the exhibits did not appeal to visitors as the Japanese government had hoped. While Japan sought to show the Expo how similar their country had become to other industrialized nations, western attendees preferred the notion of Japan as an exotic foreign nation.\textsuperscript{14} Thus the two Japanese buildings – a dwelling and a bazaar – became the country’s biggest attractions at the Exposition due to their traditional and unfamiliar architecture, designs, and


\textsuperscript{11} \textit{N.B.}: Japan underwent a drastic economic and social evolution in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century due to an overhaul of its political system. In 1868, the Meiji Restoration ended \textit{Shogunate} rule in Japan, initiating the country’s era of modernization and westernization. By 1871, the \textit{han}s were officially disbanded and the imperial government took control of the country. This progression of events marks the nation’s entry into the global sphere via industrialization.

\textsuperscript{12} Taniguchi, \textit{ibid}.


\textsuperscript{14} Taniguchi, \textit{ibid}.
decorations.

Japan’s structures were located almost three-quarters of a mile away from each other on the Exposition grounds (Fig. 5.1). The dwelling, “designed to illustrate Japanese architectural work and the interior arrangement of their dwellings,” was located on the western edge of the park just northwest of where the main fountain once stood (Fig. 5.2).\(^\text{15}\) The Japanese Tea House and Bazaar stood more centrally with respect to the rest of the Exposition, located east of the dwelling at the junction of the Agricultural Avenue and the Avenue of the Republic (Figure 5.3). This second structure functioned as a sort of souvenir shop for the Japanese exhibits throughout the Exposition and conducted traditional tea ceremonies. More importantly, the bazaar contained within its courtyard the first example of a Japanese garden in America.\(^\text{16}\) Both the dwelling and the bazaar were razed when the Centennial Exposition came to a close, but their year-long tenure in Fairmount Park would prove to be the foundation for the presence of future Japanese cultural resources in Fairmount Park.

**Nio-mon Temple Gate** | The second era of Japanese culture in Fairmount Park would not have been possible without the occurrence of two seemingly unrelated events after the Centennial Exposition. First, at some point between 1878 and 1894, an unknown designer developed a small pond leftover from the Centennial into an undocumented Oriental pond that would later become known as the Lotus Pond. Second, two executives of the Baldwin Locomotive Works visited the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1904. The two unremarkable events would converge in 1905, when the 300-year-old Japanese Buddhist Temple Gate, purchased by John H. Converse and Samuel Vauclain at the 1904 Purchase Exposition, would find a permanent home at the mysterious Lotus Pond in Fairmount Park.

Converse – then serving as the President of the Fairmount Art Association – and Vauclain bought the Buddhist temple at the close of the 1904 Purchase Exposition as a gift to the Art Association (Fig. 5.4). The Art Association, in turn, bequeathed the structure and its assets to the Fairmount Park Commission, tasking the Park Commission with the site’s maintenance. In 1905, the Nio-mon Temple Gate was brought to Philadelphia and assembled at the edge of the pond in West Fairmount Park already known to locals as the Japanese Garden (Fig. 5.5).\(^\text{17}\) The site stood immediately north from the arrangement of the Japanese Bazaar and Tea House in 1876, and while not the exact location of its predecessors, the proximity to the former bazaar helped facilitate a strong association between the landscape and representations of Japanese architecture. Its placement in this location also marked the first intentionally permanent Japanese structure in the history of Fairmount Park.

The “Pagoda,” as the Temple Gate was affectionately known to Philadelphians, soon became a staple of the Fairmount Park landscape. It graced postcards, set the background for picnics, and later became a well-known spot for late night rendezvous (Fig. 5.6). Quickly, however, the Buddhist temple became a frequent target of

\(^{15}\) *Authorized Visitor’s Guide*, 1876.


thievery and vandalism. Reports of damages emerge as early as 1909, when the glass eyes of the temple guardian statues were stoned.\textsuperscript{18} The building, unsecured and unprotected at all times, enticed such defacement that the collection of valuable Japanese artifacts which came with the structure were moved to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.\textsuperscript{19} By 1936, the condition of the Temple Gate had so badly deteriorated that the Works Progress Administration commissioned a comprehensive restoration of the structure. Despite the successful restoration of both the Temple Gate and the garden, the Pagoda continued to suffer damage due to a lack of security. Eventually, the Park Commission was forced to remove an outdoor staircase to eliminate any access to the second floor of the building following a particularly injurious case of vandalism in 1947.

The Nio-mon Temple Gate entered its final years with the promise of another restoration. Yet in 1955, after funding had been secured and scaffolding erected around the entire structure, the building burned to the ground in the middle of the night. Given the site’s history, the incident is often mistakenly cited as arson. However, the official records from the Fire Department list the cause of the fire as merely “a carelessly discarded cigarette.”\textsuperscript{20} Regardless of the cause, the demise of the Temple Gate hit the city hard. A steep loss of an estimated $25,000 in physical and cultural value had occurred overnight. A testament to public interest, newspapers at the time continued publishing stories of “one of Philadelphia’s best known and loved landmarks” for months after its destruction.\textsuperscript{21} The fire created a void in Fairmount park; but within a year of the temple’s demise, the City would be on track to secure its replacement (Fig. 5.7).

\textit{Shofuso} | The opportunity to maintain Japanese culture in Fairmount Park came about in 1955 with the close of the Modern Museum of Art’s “House in the Museum Garden” exhibit. In 1953, the museum commissioned a traditional Japanese dwelling as the last of three large scale installations to be erected in the Midtown Manhattan courtyard. An international committee – including Arthur Drexler, Curator and Director of the Department of Architecture and Design at the museum, John D. Rockefeller III, philanthropist and President of the Japan Society, and a series of Japanese experts on architecture, design, and culture – informed the design of the building after two months of exploratory visits to Sho’in temples and palaces in Kyoto, Nara, and Nagoya.\textsuperscript{22} The completed house, Shofuso, was later formally presented by the Japanese government to the museum in an “effort to strengthen relations between the United States and Japan, weakened by the recent world war.”\textsuperscript{23}

Built in Japan in 1953 and shipped in sections to New York the following year, the house was disassembled in 1956 for its transition to the City of Philadelphia. By 1957, workers had begun reconstructing Shofuso in Fairmount

\textsuperscript{18} Taniguchi, \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{20} Thomas W. Hoffer, Lieutenant Assistant Fire Marshal “\textit{City of Philadelphia Memorandum}” to Battalion Chief and Acting Fire Marshal W.J. Eckles, (Fairmount Park Commission Archives, 1955).
\textsuperscript{21} Evers, 1996.
\textsuperscript{22} Ozawa, 7.
\textsuperscript{23} Taniguchi, \textit{ibid.}
Park; and in 1958, just five years after its pre-fabrication in Tokyo, Shofuso opened its doors to visitors at its permanent home in Philadelphia.

ACQUISITION OF SHOFUSO

The Japanese House and Garden was displayed at the Museum of Modern Art in New York for two seasons spanning 1954 and 1955, garnering such interest that it became the most successful of the three “House in the Museum Garden” exhibitions, attracting well over 223,000 visitors (Fig. 6.1). Yet the building lacked a future plan and by the close of the exhibit in the summer of 1955 it still had not procured a permanent exhibition site. The America-Japan Society, the liaison between the Japanese government and Shofuso’s curators, sought to place the house with an organization associated with arts, culture, or education. The Society also worked to keep Shofuso on the east coast, “where there were less Asian influences,” and “it was hoped that the House would better serve to educate the public on Japanese art and culture.” It was around this point in late 1955 that the City of Philadelphia was recognized as a principal competitor in the search for Shofuso’s new home. Philadelphia proposed Shofuso’s installation in Fairmount Park, which beyond its association with the Philadelphia Art Museum also serendipitously featured a site outfitted with a landscape of Japanese gardens that had been recently vacated by its previous occupant – the Nio-mon Temple Gate. By January of the coming year, Philadelphia had received an official offer from the Museum of Modern Art for the acquisition of Shofuso.

Officially, Philadelphia did not purchase Shofuso but received it as a joint gift from the Museum of Modern Art and the America-Japan Society. Yet with the 1956 transaction, the City was charged with the future maintenance of the home’s physical and cultural values. Reconstruction of the dwelling in Philadelphia began 1957, benefiting from the talents of Japanese craftsman replicating the construction work in New York in 1954 (Fig. 6.2). The finished house opened to the public in October of 1958, restoring the physical aspect of Japanese cultural history to West Fairmount Park for just twenty-five cents per visitor (Fig. 6.3). Unlike the New York iteration, the Shofuso in Philadelphia was not fully furnished or decorated. Most of the objects featured inside Shofuso at the Museum of Modern Art were donated to various institutions and private curators, leaving the house bare save three scrolls, a hibachi, and two vases. However, the landscape scene fusuma by Higashiyama Kaii remained with the house and were able to lend a decorative element to Philadelphia’s otherwise austere house (Fig. 6.4). These original features no longer exist due to decades of theft and destruction, and have since been replaced by contemporary screens by Hiroshi Senju.

24 Taniguchi, ibid.
25 Ibid.
28 Taniguchi, ibid. (N.B.: Inventory of objects from the exhibition listed in Appendix C of Taniguchi’s “Historical Narrative of Shofuso.”)
ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Traditional Japanese architecture has long been perceived in the United States as modern, from its early appearance at the Centennial Exposition to the mid-century showing of Shofuso in New York. Many modern American architects, including Frank Lloyd Wright, drew heavily from Japanese precedents to inform the design of American dwellings with a Japanese consciousness.\(^{29}\) As a Japanese dwelling designed for the American consciousness, Shofuso perpetuates this interplay between modern American and historic Japanese architecture.

For all of Shofuso’s idiosyncrasies, the most fundamental peculiarity is its physical design (Fig. 7.1). While most Japanese architecture in America today is a reflection of the Sukiya style applied to teahouses in Japan, the Shoin-Zukuri style was employed for the design of Shofuso as it was determined to better represent the nation’s architectural traditions.\(^{30}\) Shoin-Zukuri, the architectural style that emerged as the Japanese aristocracy yielded power to the warrior class between the 12\(^{th}\) and 16\(^{th}\) centuries, was selected for the design of Shofuso to introduce traditional Japanese architectural elements to the American public.\(^{31}\) The final product of Yoshimura’s design captures the integrity of Shoin-Zukuri, with modifications inspired by the need for practicality in the American context.

In its most stringent form, Shoin-Zukuri architecture is defined by four main interior components that reflect the domestic necessities of warriors and scholars: an attached desk (shōle); a staggered self (chigai-dana); an alcove (tokono-ma); and an ornamental doorway (chōdai-gamae).\(^{32}\) It is also notable for its subdivision of interior spaces by fusuma, and the placement of tatami throughout the entire structure. Kojo-in, an early 17\(^{th}\) century reception or guest house located just east of Kyoto, served as the primary inspiration for the Shofuso’s Shoin-Zukuri identity (Fig. 7.2).

While Yoshimura was faithful to Kojo-in’s principles in his design of Shofuso, he took liberties with the style by adding a kitchen, bathhouse, and teahouse to the main Shoin-Zukuri structure (Fig. 7.3). These three rooms would not have been included in 16\(^{th}\) century Shoin-Zukuri dwellings intended for entertaining guests; but as Shofuso was intended as a functional and holistic representation of Japanese dwelling, the rooms were included in Yoshimura’s final product. These additions drew from a variety of resources for inspiration for they lacked a precedent in Shoin architectural form. The kitchen, for example, was modeled after one found in a Kyoto farmhouse from the 18\(^{th}\) century. Favoring expression over practicality, the bathhouse rejects standard form through its inclusion of a slatted-window that would not have been compliant with traditional bathhouses of any kind.\(^{33}\) And the teahouse is built in the Sukiya style, was inspired by a 19\(^{th}\) century Zen sub-temple found in Kyoto (Fig. 7.4). However,


\(^{30}\) Ozawa, 8.

\(^{31}\) Ibid, 57.

\(^{32}\) Ibid, 8.

\(^{33}\) Ibid, 64.
Shofuso’s rooms simultaneously exude a sense unity in form, the deviations and anachronisms of its design masked by the prevailing harmony of Yoshimura’s vision.

Yoshimura made additional modifications to Kojo-in’s Shoin-Zukuri precedent in his design to Shofuso in order to enable the new dwelling to better adapt to the exhibition milieu (Fig. 7.5). Shofuso is notably smaller, both in width and height, than its Kyoto counterpart as such a large dwelling would not fit in the courtyard of the Museum of Modern Art if it were also to include a traditional Japanese garden. Yoshimura also exaggerated the pitch of the hinoki bark roof as a symbolic gesture to Manhattan’s skyline.  

**EVOLUTION OF THE GARDEN**

Throughout a century of change, the one consistent, tangible aspect of Shofuso’s heritage is the landscape on which it rests. Yet the current pond and garden design of the Japanese House is actually the third generation of traditional Japanese garden design to exist on site, having undergone two transformations to support the aesthetic flow of newly installed architectural elements since its creation at the end of the 19th century. Like the Japanese House itself, the gardens’ significance arises as much from its current form as it does from its historic evolution through time. However, unlike the historic timeline of the architecture, the landscape is not rooted in the Centennial Exposition. Its foundations can be theoretically traced to an earlier cultural anomaly in Philadelphia: a Chinese garden. While the Japanese garden was a novelty to early Philadelphians, the concept of a ‘pleasure garden’ was well established by the end of the 19th century. In 1827, John Haviland’s Chinese Pagoda and Labyrinth Garden opened in the Spring Garden neighborhood and introduced Americans to the idiosyncrasies of exotic gardens from the Far East (Fig. 8.1). Although the venture ultimately proved financially unsuccessful, Philadelphians were primed for this type of cultural experience by the time the first Japanese garden emerged on the other side of the Schuylkill River.

When Japanese culture finally did reach Philadelphia through the Exposition, the emphasis was on the built architecture and spatial arrangement as opposed to the landscape design. The Exposition is credited with providing the first example of a Japanese Garden in the United States, but the small scale of the design is no match to Haviland’s Chinese labyrinth or the future versions of the Japanese gardens in Fairmount Park in the 20th century. Any Japanese landscaping in the Exposition was done to emphasize the primary feature – the house. Lithographs of the Japanese Bazaar and Tea Room from 1876 show only scant landscaping confined within the triangular plot allocated to the Japanese Government (Fig. 8.2), whereas illustrations of the Japanese Dwelling depict no traditional forms of garden design (Fig. 8.3).

The Centennial Exposition, however, contained one key aspect that would unintentionally set the tone for future

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34 Ibid, 61.
37 Lancaster, 1963.
cultural development of the area—a water feature. A small pond was installed just north of the Japanese Bazaar as an element of the general Exposition design. Though most buildings were torn down at the close of the Centennial, the landscaping remained, and this pond became the anchor for Japanese development and historic foundation for Shofuso’s 20th century gardens.

The first generation of Oriental garden design following the Centennial emerged sometime between 1878 and 1894. The first pond and garden remains undocumented in the Fairmount Park Commission’s archives to this day. There are no records of a designer, workers, or financial backing for the endeavor. Even the timeframe of its installation is an estimate, based on known reports of park conditions before and after that period. All that is known of the Lotus Pond and Garden is that by the time the Fairmount Art Commission was gifted with the 300-year-old Nio-mon Temple Gate, a garden had already been established. The site was chosen for the display of the Japanese relic, apropos because “‘the bed of sacred Lotus,’ […] was, in 1905, known as an old Japanese Garden.”

In the years following, the prominent Japanese garden designer Y. Muto restored the pond and redesigned the gardens to accompany the new Nio-mon Temple Gate (Fig. 8.4). His design was not fully realized until 1909, four years after the Temple Gate was installed at the edge of the Lotus Pond, due to funding restraints. Receiving no financing from the Fairmount Park Commission to complete the design of the Japanese compound, Philadelphians John H. Converse (financier of the Temple Gate acquisition) and John Morris (of the Morris Arboretum in Northwest Philadelphia) donated private funds to support Muto’s design (refer to Fig. 5.4). His second-generation landscape, known as the Temple Gate Garden, closely resembles the one in existence today. Some of the most recognizable features of the third-generation design, such as the island accessed only by footbridge and the waterfall into the contemporary Koi pond, were basic tenets of Muto’s design (Fig. 8.5).

Muto’s garden did not fare well over the course of the Temple Gate’s fifty-year presence at the current site of Shofuso. The garden was fully restored in 1936 by the Works Progress Administration, but by the time the Temple Gate burned down in 1955, the garden features had all but disappeared and the Lotus pond had nearly filled in with the surrounding earth (Fig. 8.6). Yet the landscape once again played a vital role in the acquisition of Japanese artifacts in the following year, when the Museum of Modern Art in New York chose Philadelphia as the recipient of their final showcase of the “House in the Garden” exhibit – Shofuso. The traditional Shoin dwelling was bequeathed to Fairmount Park at no cost to the City, due to the then 75-year presence of Japanese culture in the park. Of the two sites identified as viable locations for Shofuso’s permanent home, the plot containing the desolate former Temple Gate Garden and dry Lotus Pond was selected for the “appropriate continuation of

38 Evers, 1996.
39 Evers, *ibid*.
40 Tanigchi, *ibid*.
41 Tanigchi, *ibid*.
42 Furlong and Montgomery, *ibid*. 
Japanese tradition” in Fairmount Park. With this decision, work began on what would become the third – and final – generation of garden design.

Under the direction of Tansai Sano, Shofuso’s landscape designer for the Museum of Modern Art’s small courtyard, the gardens were redesigned around the installation of the Japanese House (Fig. 8.7). Sano’s work revived Y. Muto’s original concept to fit the larger house structure and was completed in the fall of 1958 (Fig. 8.8). However, in just under twenty years, the gardens would once more suffer the effects of overuse, negligence, and vandalism (Fig. 8.9). In 1976, as part of the Bicentennial Restoration project, Japanese garden architect Ken Nakajima was brought in to develop a restoration plan devoted exclusively to the garden and landscape (Fig. 8.10). His work revitalized Sano’s design, but without regular maintenance the gardens were in poor condition by the early 1990s. Nakajima’s efforts thus followed the pattern of each of Fairmount Park’s Japanese gardens, joining the cycle of creation and neglect, deterioration and restoration.

Shofuso’s gardens have been labeled a preservation priority in recent years. Following the completion of yet another comprehensive restoration project in 2000, the Friends group turned their attention to long-term planning and preservation for the site. The Ito Shofuso Plan of 2005 cites the preservation of the garden – and more specifically, Sano’s design – as the top priority along with the conservation of the house itself. Shofuso recently acquired a McLean Contributionship Grant for a ‘Historic Landscape Restoration’ project, which will focus on conserving the pond and gardens “using the 1957 plan by landscape architect Tansai Sano as [the] guide.” The garden plan is to be as restorative as it is preventative, establishing a strategic care plan for the future of the third generation garden in keeping with the design aesthetic intended by Sano.

ARTISIANS

The Four Craftsmen | When the City of Philadelphia acquired the Japanese House from the Museum of Modern Art, it was understood that the Museum would be making the decisions. The Fairmount Park Commissioners were informed in a letter from a City attorney that Philadelphia “won’t get the house unless we comply with the museum’s conditions,” and thus conceded to the Museum’s judgment throughout the acquisition of Shofuso. It fell to the Museum to arrange for the workers who would lead the installation in Philadelphia; and although Fairmount Park would supervise the work on site, the Museum was to arrange “the services of four Japanese craftsmen, including a master carpenter, two roofers, and one landscape designer.”

Isao Okumura was hired as the master carpenter in charge of the reconstruction in Philadelphia. He had worked in

43 Tanigchi, ibid.
46 Furlong and Montgomery, ibid.
Nagoya on the house’s construction in 1953 as an apprentice to the first master carpenter of Shofuso, Heizaemon Ito, before travelling to New York to assemble Shofuso in the Museum’s courtyard. He was joined in Philadelphia by Siichi Sawada and Kichinosuko Morikowa, the two men practiced in the craft of constructing the hinoki bark roof, and another veteran of the New York installation – landscape gardener Tansai Sano.

The workmen themselves were not named in the contract for the Shofuso acquisition, but their job titles and salaries were clearly stated. However, the most important condition of the contract with respect to the workmen is its final stipulation, which prohibits racial discrimination of any kind throughout the duration of the project. Though the inclusion of anti-discrimination clauses has become a mandatory practice in the 21st century, such a request would have been uncommon when the contract was written in 1957. The contract between two American parties displayed a remarkable tolerance of foreign cultures amid the exchange of heritage artifacts and deference for the craftsmen who were responsible for Shofuso.

**Junzo Yoshimura** | Many people helped to build Shofuso, but only one man is responsible for its design. Junzo Yoshimura, a Tokyo-born architect, both developed the house’s design aesthetic and oversaw its construction in Nagoya and installation in New York. Yoshimura had been trained in architecture by the Tokyo National University of Fine Art and Music before joining an American architecture firm in Tokyo in 1931 (Fig. 9.1). After the war, he taught architecture at the Tokyo National University of Fine Art and Music while establishing an architectural practice under his own name. And by 1953, he had been chosen by Arthur Drexler, Director of Architecture and Design at the Museum of Modern Art, to design Shofuso for the “House in the Museum Garden” exhibit (Fig. 9.2). He drew inspiration from private homes around Nagoya and Kyoto in Japan, combining the strongest details to develop his own contemporary design. As described by Dr. Hiroyasu Fujioka, Head of the Architecture Department at Tokyo Institute of Technology, “Shofuso is not a replica...but a reflection of architect Yoshimura’s creativity and his keen sense of proportion and aesthetics.”

Despite his involvement in the Japanese House’s installation in New York, Yoshimura did not participate in the reconstruction of the house in Philadelphia. Following Shofuso’s exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art, Yoshimura resumed his teaching in Tokyo, becoming a professor in 1962. He also continued designing buildings with strong Japanese influences for American clients; and his major works – all concentrated in New York state – include the Motel on the Mountain (1956) in Suffern, the Teahouse at John D. Rockefeller’s Pocantico Estate (1964) in Tarrytown, and the Japan Society Building (1971) in New York City (Fig. 9.3).

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48 Taniguchi, *ibid.*

49 Furlong, *ibid.*


51 Taniguchi, *ibid.*

52 “Junzo” Biography, *ibid.*

53 Taniguchi, *ibid.*
Yoshimura did eventually return to Shofuso in 1970, summoned by vandalism concerns. Asked in a letter from Fairmount Park to recommend an appropriate fencing method to secure the property, Yoshimura traveled to Philadelphia to conduct a full assessment of the house’s conditions and security needs. Finding the house in poor condition at the start of what would soon become its decade of defacement, Yoshimura advocated for “wrought iron pickets set in concrete, which would better protect Shofuso, but still allow the House to continue to be seen from Lansdowne Drive.” His suggestions were never realized due to funding constraints, and the property would experience escalating vandalism leading up to the arson of 1974.

Tansai Sano | Fairmount Park’s final Japanese landscape design came from Tansai Sano, a 17th generation garden architect from Kyoto, Japan (Fig. 9.4). Sano was first involved with Shofuso in designing the courtyard for the “House in the Museum Garden” exhibit in New York, working within the confines of the small urban space. In preparation for the American installation, Sano drew inspiration from the traditional gardens around his home in Kyoto and the formal Japanese capital city of Nara. He then worked with stone and sand brought from Japan to develop Shofuso’s small environment, integrating foreign elements into the local landscape.

In 1957, the Museum designated Sano once more as the head gardener for the house’s permanent installation in Philadelphia. His work in Fairmount Park drew from past designs of the landscape, restoring and highlighting the pond (filled in by the mid-20th century), and cultivating a path around the water’s edge. The Sano Plan also intended to forge a visible relationship between the new installation and Philadelphia’s past by developing a view of the Centennial Exposition’s 1876 Memorial Hall through the trees. Referred to as Shakkei (“borrowed scenery”) in traditional Japanese garden design, the technique allows for the incorporation of exterior vistas into the garden through the strategic placement of framing devices such as tree trunks. Poor maintenance of Sano’s grounds in its early years has led to overgrowth that still obscures the view today. However, a 2012 preservation project led by the Friends of the Japanese House and Garden proposes to return to the 1957 plan and recover such features as the historic vista.

Although various features of Sano’s landscape have been restored, replaced, obscured, or simply lost over time, his traditional design from the mid-20th century remains the most influential document for modern interpretation of the grounds. Adherence to Sano’s vision has enabled past and present preservation endeavors to restore vitality to the aging landscape and reclaim the original integrity and importance of the Japanese gardens.

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54 Ibid.
55 Ibid.
56 N.B.: Refer to Figure 8.8 in the appendix for the Sano’s Landscape Plan of 1957.
57 Andrews, Personal Interview, 19 June 2012.
58 Albright and Tindale, 35-6.
Y. Muto | Simply described as “a capable Japanese gardener” by the Fairmount Park Art Association, Y. Muto is a rather elusive character in the history of Shofuso. Little is known of his life aside from his work designing private Japanese gardens along the East Coast, especially for the Morris family in Northwest Philadelphia. It appears that Muto was a frequent collaborator in the development of Morris’s Compton estate – now known as the University of Pennsylvania’s Morris Arboretum – designing the Japanese Hill and Water Garden in 1905 and the Japanese Overlook in 1912 (Fig. 9.5). He created the Temple Gate Garden the same year that he completed that first garden for Morris, who would later become one of the private backers for the Japanese garden in Fairmount Park. Muto disappears from American records after the completion of the Temple Gate Garden in 1909, only to reemerge around 1911 as the designer of the Maymont Japanese Garden in Richmond, Va., and again in 1912 for the design of Morris’s Japanese Overlook. The Compton estate appears to be his final work in North America.

In spite of the deficiency of information on Muto’s life and gaps in his professional timeline, his landscape architecture is renowned. Both gardens which he created for the Morris estate remain today, as does the Maymont Japanese Garden (Fig. 9.6). And though the garden at Shofuso today emphasizes more of Sano’s work than Muto’s, vestiges of Muto’s Temple Gate Garden persist in the Japanese House’s historic landscape.

Hiroshi Senju | Hiroshi Senju is the most contemporary of Shofuso’s artisans. A Tokyo-based artist with traditional training, Senju designed twenty screens for Shofuso in 2007 to replace the originals that have been damaged over the course of fifty years. Senju is said to have been inspired to design the second wave of fusuma in the style of his ongoing Waterfall series after visiting Shofuso. The modern works created using traditional artistic techniques were intended by Senju to be “reflexive material expressions that make manifest the transience of experience.” In doing so, his fusuma stand out aesthetically while blending into the house’s historic past.

PRESERVATION OF INHERITED CULTURE

The story of Shofuso’s significance is incomplete without accounts of the various preservation endeavors throughout the years. Beyond the typical maintenance of heritage properties, Shofuso has also required restoration to offset the damage inflicted by years of vandalism. For nearly twenty years after the dwelling was installed in West Fairmount Park, the site was regularly targeted by thieves and vandals. This period of consistent defacement reached its apex in 1974 when the house was deliberately set on fire (Fig. 10.1). Without intervention, Shofuso appeared to be heading toward the same fate as its predecessor, the iconic Nio-Mon Temple Gate.

In 1975, the Fairmount Park Commissioners began to plan for the restoration of the site (Fig. 10.2). While the Commission and the City of Philadelphia were unable to fund the project, Shofuso was gifted $500,000 from the

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59 Commissioners of Fairmount Park, excerpt from The Book of Fairmount Park Art Association – 50th Anniversary (1871-1921), 168. (Fairmount Park Commission Archives).

60 Harry Kollatz, Jr., “From the Mountains to the Sea,” in Richmond Magazine, (April 2012).

61 Amy, Michaël and Rachel Baum, Hiroshi Senju, (Milan, Italy: Skira, 2009).
America-Japan Society, the Japan Federation of Employers’ Associations, the Japan Committee for Economic Development, the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, and the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations to cover the costs of restoration. In 1976—a century after the first Japanese architecture made its mark on West Fairmount Park’s landscape—work began on the Bicentennial Restoration of the Japanese House and Garden (Fig. 10.3). The project was the first comprehensive restoration of the site, which countered both the damage to the house as well as to the cultural landscape. A separate plan for the restoration of the gardens, created by landscape architect Ken Nakajima, placed an emphasis on the maintenance of the cultural landscape and reestablished the importance of the landscape to the identity of the house (Fig. 10.4).

The Bicentennial Restoration not only restored the aesthetic integrity of the Shofuso, but brought awareness to the dwelling’s need for protection and conservation (Fig. 10.5). The Friends of the Japanese House and Garden formed eight years after the restoration as a supportive non-profit entity. Today, the group is responsible for the daily maintenance of the city-owned site (Fig. 10.6). The Friends group and the City of Philadelphia has perpetuated the culture of preservation at Shofuso, leading to minor restoration projects to large-scale plans such as the 2005 Nobuo Ito Preservation Plan. In the coming years, onsite conservation will focus on the gardens,reviving Sano’s original 1957 designs and rectify anomalies—both natural and manmade—that have emerged on the cultural landscape over time.

CONCLUSION

Shofuso constitutes a unique facet of Philadelphia’s abundant historic stock, embodying a heritage both foreign and native to the City of Philadelphia. The dwelling recalls past narratives beyond its own sixty years, from the preserved architectural styles and craftsmanship of 16th and 17th century Japan to the memory of Philadelphia’s prominence on global sphere in 1876 with the Centennial Exposition—and, subsequently, its participation in the emergence of the American nation a century prior. The structure reflects decades of cultural cooperation between two nations and stands as a testament to the struggles of conserving both the physical and abstract qualities of a heritage site. On just over an acre of land in the National Register district of Fairmount Park, Shofuso’s complex contains centuries of stories about art, nature, nations, and people. Yet at its core, Shofuso is simply a resilient piece of charismatic architecture that exudes Japanese culture in the birthplace of the American nation and exemplifies the endurance of a well-built home at one with its environment.

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62 Taniguchi, ibid.
63 N.B.: Refer to Figure 7.9 in the appendix for the scope of Nakajima’s 1976 Landscape Restoration Plan.
8. Major Bibliographical References


Brown, Dr. Kendall. Letter of Support to the Friends of the Japanese House and Garden. California State University Long Beach, Art Department, 28 February 2012.


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*All images courtesy of the author, 2012.*

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1 Michaël Amy and Rachel Baum. Hiroshi Senju. (Milan, Italy: Skira, 2009).
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*Image courtesy of the Friends of the Japanese House and Garden*

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*Image courtesy of Yuichi Ozawa, from Story of Shofuso: A Cultural Bridge between Japan and the United States, Friends of Japanese*

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*Drawing courtesy of the Free Library of Philadelphia, Print and Picture Collection*

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*Image courtesy of the Friends of the Japanese House and Garden*
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*Image courtesy of the Fairmount Park Commission Archives*

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*Image courtesy of the Friends of the Japanese House and Garden*
Interpretive Timeline | Japanese House and Garden

1874 | Japan accepts invitation to participate in the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia

1876 | The Centennial Exposition opens with a large Japanese cultural presence. The nation’s government was one of nine foreign nations to construct buildings for the fair, with two independent structures: a traditional Japanese dwelling by the Catholic Total Abstinence (C. T. A.) Fountain, and a bazaar and tearoom near the Main Exhibition Building.

1877 | Most exhibition buildings are torn down at the conclusion the expo, including the Japanese structures.

1878-1894 | The oriental-themed Lotus Pond and Garden are developed during this period just east of where the Japanese Bazaar once stood.

1904 | A 300-year old Nio-mon Temple Gate is exhibited during the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. The gate was purchased by Philadelphian visitors Samuel Vauclain and John H. Converse at the close of the expo and donated to the Fairmount Park Art Association, who in turn gave the gate over to the Fairmount Park Commission.

1905 | After debating the financially feasibility of including the temple gate as a park of the park’s landscape, Fairmount selects the site of the Lotus Pond and Garden for Nio-mon.

1905-1906 | The two-story Buddhist temple gate is installed where the Centennial Medical Department once stood for the 1876 expo.

1909 | A Japanese Garden designed by Y. Muto finally receives funding by Morris and Converse. G. Muto develops a garden for the temple gate and restores the Lotus Pond.

1909 | The site’s future legacy of vandalism is already apparent as early as 1909, at which point Morris writes to the Fairmount Park Art Association requesting gates to protect the historic structure

1936 | Following decades of neglect and insufficient maintenance, the gate is completely repaired through a WPA project.

1947 | The gate endures severe vandalism which causes the park to remove the sole access staircase to the second floor.

1953 | Shofuso, or “Pine Breeze Villa,” is built in Japan for MoMA’s The House in the Garden exhibit series. A gift of the America-Japan Society of Tokyo for the US, it stands a goodwill gesture from Japan to the US to help strengthen relations after WWII.

1955 | MoMA exhibit closes, Shofuso’s fate is undecided. The America-Japan Society mandated that the structure be kept on the east coast – which had fewer cultural influences from Asia – and be used by either a museum or university for similar exhibition and educational purposes.

1955 | The Nio-mon Temple Gate is destroyed in a fire.
1955 | The America-Japan society selects the site of the now former Nio-mon Temple Gate for Shofuso. The surviving gardens and Lotus Pond provide an apt setting for the dwelling and the inclusion of Shofuso is deemed “an appropriate continuation of Japanese tradition on the site.”

1956 | An official offer is made to move Shofuso to Philadelphia’s Fairmount Park; building is dismantled for transit.

1957 | Tansai Sano, the original landscape architect for the MoMA exhibit, develops landscape plan for Shofuso’s gardens in Philadelphia.

1958 | Shofuso opens to the public on October 19, 1958, lacking the furnishings and decorations present throughout the MoMA exhibit. Visitors could only view the rooms from outside, as the park did not have the resources to replace worn tatami.


- 1970 | Shofuso architect Yoshimura visits the site to assess the property and recommend options for security. He advocates for wrought-iron fences that protect the site without obscuring the building from the main drive; however, these proposals are rejected a few years later due to lack of funding.

- 1971 | Vandals damage the shoji and fusuma.

- 1974 | Three separate incidents result in torn shoji and fusuma, broken vases, and arson.

- 1980 | A scroll and bamboo screen are stolen from the building, and in a separate act of looting the hibachi is stolen.

1972 | Fairmount Park designated as a National Historic District; Shofuso is listed as a contributing structure.

1976 | Bi-Centennial Restoration project, costing $500,000, is funded by six independent organizations – the America-Japan Society, the Japan Federation of Employers’ Association, the Japan Committee for Economic Development, the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, and the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations – as a gift to the City of Philadelphia. In addition to repairs, the restoration project also installed a chain link fence around the property and ordered 24 hour on-site guard security.

1976 | Ken Nakajima develops a comprehensive preservation plan for Shofuso’s landscape as part of the Bi-Centennial Restoration.

1982 | Friends of the Japanese House and Garden is formed as merely a supportive entity. Today, the group is responsible for the management of the city-owned site.

1993 | Friends of the Japanese House and Garden enable the inclusion of a 5’3 ornamental black iron fence to project Shofuso, more in keeping with Yoshimura’s recommendation than the chain link fence from ’76.

1999 | FHJG raise funding to repair the original hinoki (Japanese Cypress) roof.
2005 | FHJG contracts a team to assess the condition of the house and develop a long term plan for its maintenance. The team, led by FJHG Vice President Nobuo Ito, creates the *Shofuso Preservation Plan* as a reference manual for immediate and future conservation needs.

2007 | Large scale restoration work is completed according to Ito’s Preservation Plan.

2007 | Japanese artist Hiroshi Senju’s designs and installs 20 *fusuma* – as a part of his *Waterfall* series – to replace damaged and vandalized screens.

2012 | The restoration of two original Centennial buildings is completed by FJHG in partnership with Parks and Recreation. Renamed the Sakur* a Pavilion, these sites serve as an extension of Shofuso and will provide space for associated activities.

2012–2013 | Planned restoration of Sano’s 1957 garden landscape.