



7125 A pair of fusuma (sliding doors) painted in ink on a buff and sunago (sprinkled gold) ground with tokusa (horse tail) in gilt moriage (raised design). The hikite (handles) are in the form of usagi (rabbits). The reverse of each door is decorated with two shikishi (poem slips).

Japan 20th century Taishō period

Dimensions: H. 26" x W. 20³/₄" (66cm x 52.5cm) each

Tokusa (equiseta, horsetails, scouring rush) has long been associated with the rabbit, which is said to use this silica-rich plant to polish the disc of the moon. The plant alone or a combination of equiseta with the rabbit is found in a variety of artistic formats.

Usagi (hare or rabbit) and moon are often linked together in East Asian folklore. Japanese legends describe the shadows on the surface of the moon as hares pounding mochi (sticky rice) cakes while an ancient Chinese-Taoist tale tells of a hare that resides in the moon and pounds magic herbs in order to make the elixir of eternal life. In Japan the full moon and the hare have become associated with autumn as this is when the moon is deemed to shine brightest.

