

Zen

So what is it?

- “Zen,” is beyond definition and logic. It is at the same time a particular teaching of Buddhism and a state of mind.
- Stresses direct experience and being “in the moment” - emphasis on manual labor and meditation.

So what is it?

MU!!!!!!!



The second most Zen thing ever



ENSO

- The epitome of Zen simplicity in art is the enso
- The enso is a black circle, almost always done in a single, quick stroke on paper or a piece of wood
- The empty circle represents the emptiness of all reality



The most Zen thing ever

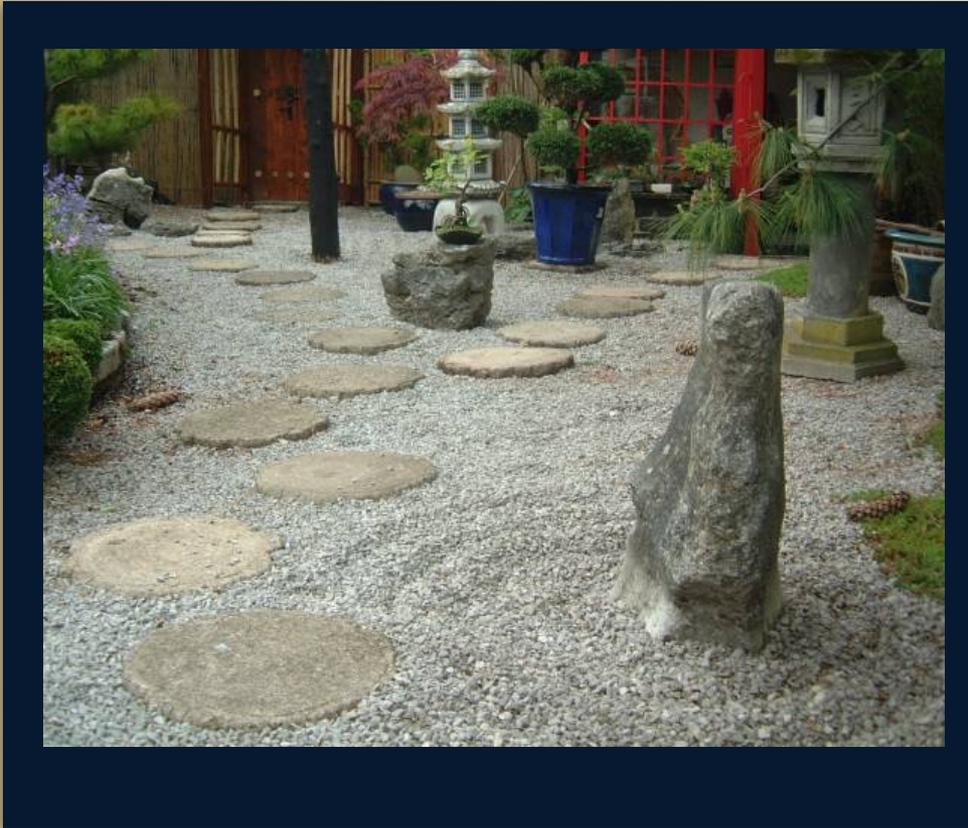
**A good Zen Buddhist knows that
“most Zen” is non-sense!**

History of Zen

- Zen Buddhism developed within Mahayana Buddhism
- It was developed first in China then in Japan



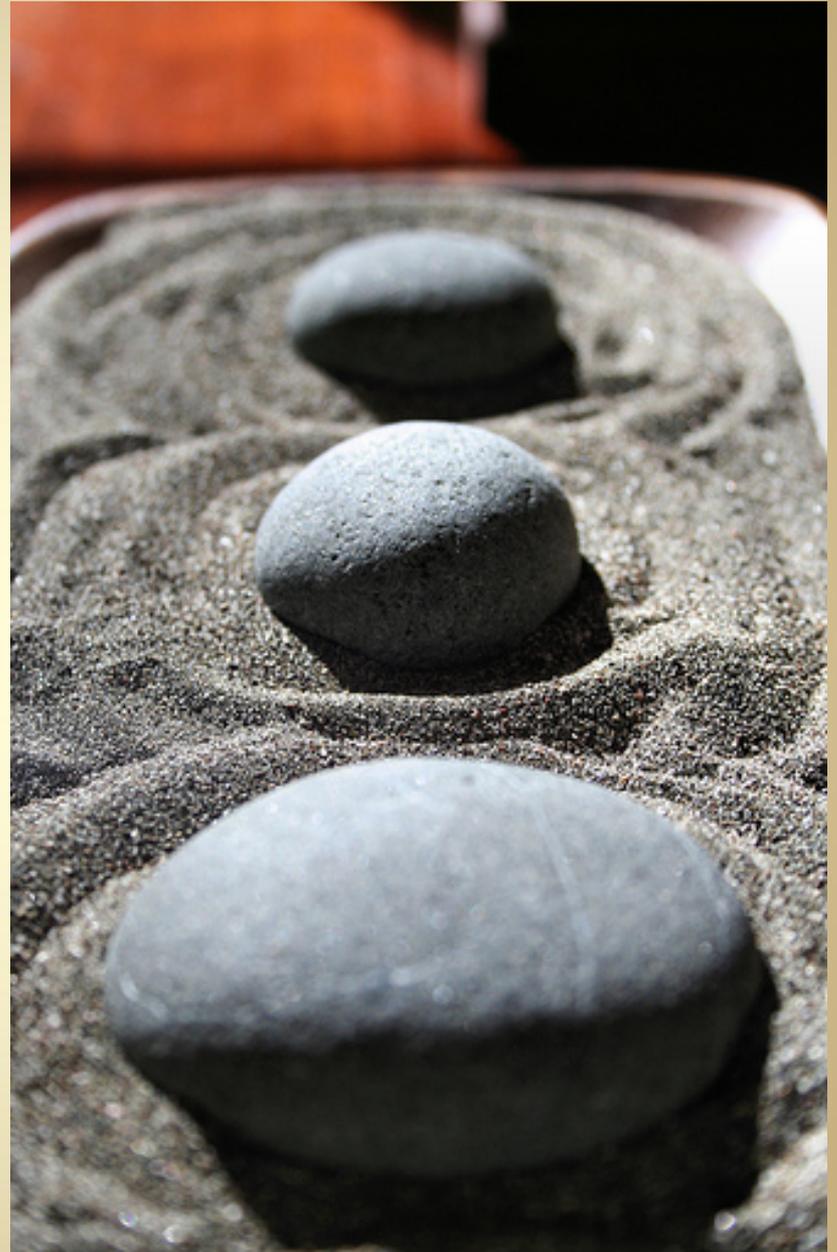
Focus



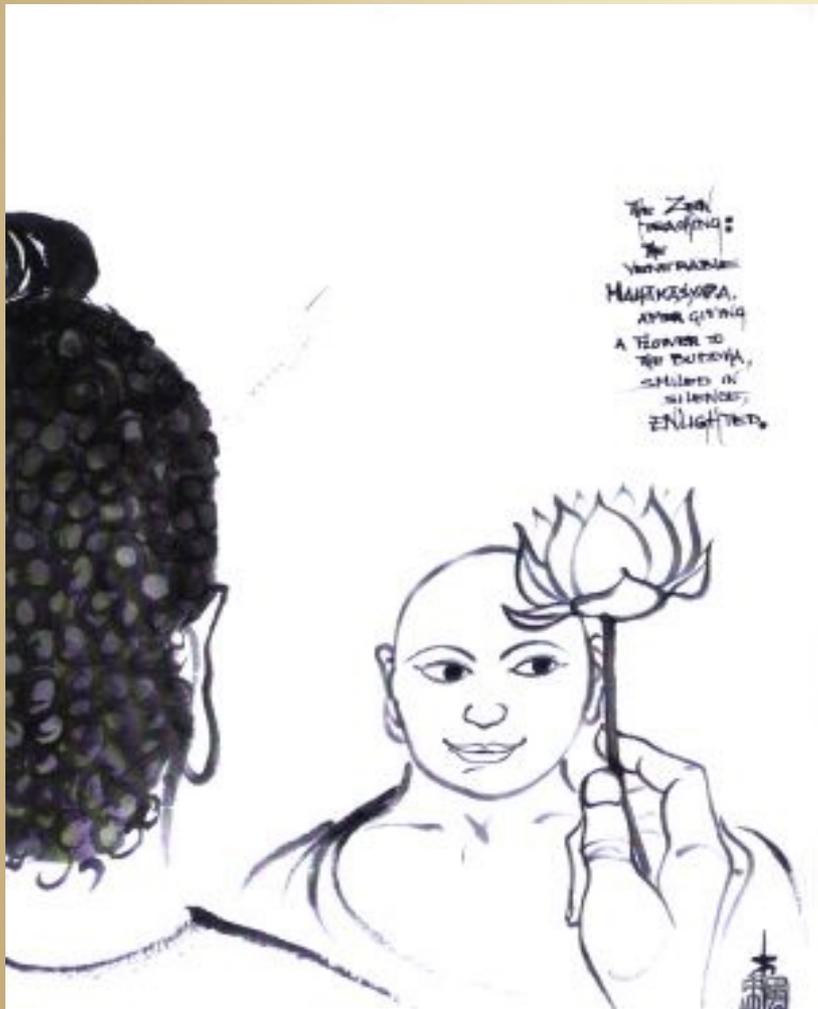
- The focus of Zen is the experience of enlightenment
- It rejects devotion to Buddhas and bodhisattvas
- Those practicing Zen seek to clear the mind in order to discover the simple truth that is at the heart of things.

Concepts

- Zen means meditation
- Zen takes its name from the seventh step of the Noble Eightfold Path- dhyana (meditation)
- In Chinese the word is chan
- In Japanese the word is zen



Mahakasyapa



- Legend: the Buddha was teaching on a mountain.
- He held up a flower to teach (show) a truth rather than speaking it
- No one understood except Mahakasyapa
- The Buddha chose him as his successor
- Mahakasyapa established a line of Zen patriarchs

Bodhidharma

- According to other legend: Bodhidharma brought Zen to China
- Zen developed mainly in China
- He is often shown sitting in meditation.
 - He meditated for so long that his legs became withered.



2 sects of Zen

SOTO

- School of gradual awakening
- Values meditation
- Emphasizes the day-to-day practice of zen, zazen
- Zazen means seated meditation



RINZAI

- School of sudden awakening
- Stricter school
- Emphasizes the experience of awakening called satori in Japanese
- It employs the spiritual exercise known as the koan as the primary means of bringing about satori.



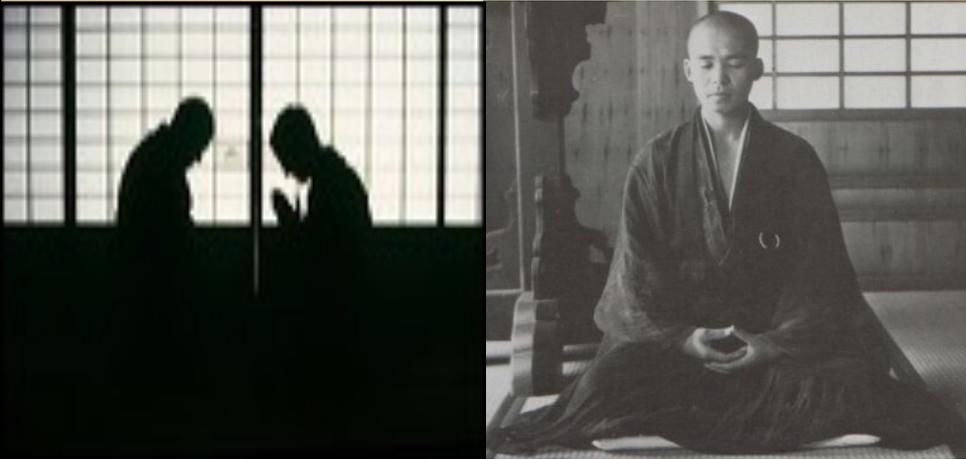
Soto: terminology

—Zazen means seated meditation

- Normally done for several hours in the morning and evening.
- It involves sitting in silence with one's back straight and centered, keeping the body still, and taking deep and regular breaths
- The monks sit in rows in the lotus posture
- If ever a monk becomes sleepy or lacks concentration, an appointed attendant delivers a blow to the back with an “encouragement stick”
- This blow is intended not to harm the monk but to refresh and focus him, and is received with a gesture of gratitude



Rinzai: terminology



- **Satori** is an enlightenment experience that brings an awareness of the unity of oneself with the rest of the universe.
- Similar to Nirvana but it is NOT the same as nirvana because it is not permanent
- The **koan** is designed to frustrate the thinking process
 - A koan is a question (puzzle) that cannot be easily answered using logic
 - It demands pondering
 - The master presents the student with a koan and the student meets with the master during different meetings to present his answer. These meetings are called **dokusan**
 - Sometimes a good answer to a koan needs not be a verbal response but rather an appropriate action- lifting up a hand, taking off a shoe, holding up a flower, or raising an eyebrow



- Zen masters who are deemed competent to teach others

Roshis

Influence on Japanese culture

- Zen became the prominent religion behind the Samurai in Medieval Japan.
- Japanese sense of beauty in simplicity have mirrored Zen attitudes.

