



NORTH AMERICAN OHARA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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WINTER EDITION

DEC
2021

Welcome to the Winter Edition of the newsletter. We trust you enjoyed the autumn colors and are looking forward to enjoying the festive season with your loved ones. Stay safe.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

GREETINGS FROM GRACE...



Season's Greetings!

As 2021 draws to a close, many of you will be in the midst of preparing for festive gatherings with family and friends. Despite the lingering uncertainty, the mood is decidedly more cheerful and upbeat compared to this time last year. Even the holiday lights appear to twinkle brighter.

NAOTA is grateful to Headmaster and Professor Kawakami for conducting a fantastic fall workshop for us! The step-by-step explanations on Free Expression and *Shohinka* are especially valuable, as we've had little chance to study them before. The follow-up Q&A is on page 11.

Grandmaster Kayoko Fujimoto is featured in the eponymous article on page 7. Fujimoto Sensei's distinguished ikebana career spans decades during which time she has mentored a countless number of students and inspired the community with her beautiful ikebana. Sensei continues to teach and demonstrate on a regular basis, even virtually.

I hope that the virtual events presented in 2021 helped to enhance your study of Ohara School ikebana at a time when in-person learning was difficult. As a reminder, the above-mentioned fall NAOTA workshop, as well as the earlier spring version and Nishi Sensei's 2020 holiday demonstration, do not expire, which means you can watch them as many times as you would like. Let me know if you've misplaced any of the links; I will gladly forward it to you.

Please look out for the following important information that will be emailed/sent to you in the coming months:

- Membership renewal form
- Registration information for the 19th NAOTA Conference to be held in Toronto, Canada, from Oct. 3 to Oct. 7, 2022
- Details about the Fifth NAOTA Virtual Exhibition scheduled for late January/early February. The theme is Free Expression.

Yoko Tahara, who took on the role of NAOTA's webmaster in 2005 (16 years ago!), will "retire" from this position at the end of February. We are grateful to Yoko for creating our website and maintaining it for close to two decades; she is currently in the process of

redesigning it. Yoko was also our photographer at many past conferences. Thank you Yoko-san for all that you have done for NAOTA!

It is now my privilege to make a very important announcement. The Headmaster has appointed Mr. Russ Bowers as the next president of NAOTA effective March 1, 2022. Congratulations to Russ and the incoming Board!

President	Russ Bowers
Vice President, East Coast	Alice Buch
Vice President, West Coast	Jackie Zhang
Treasurer	Beth Bowers-Klaine
Secretary	Susan Hirate
Membership	Saskia Eller
Newsletter	Carol Legros
Website	<vacant>

There's still work left for me to do, so it's not *sayonara* just yet, but I close my last newsletter message by expressing my sincerest gratitude to all of you for your continued support and interest in NAOTA. It has truly been an honor to serve as your President over the past (almost) two years. I would also like to extend my deep appreciation to Ingrid, Katey, Russ, Susan, Alice, Saskia, Yoko and Carol for their advice, dedication and hard work over the past two years.

My very best wishes to you and your family for a happy, safe and peaceful holiday season.

Grace

(Honolulu Chapter)

THE TRADITIONAL METHOD



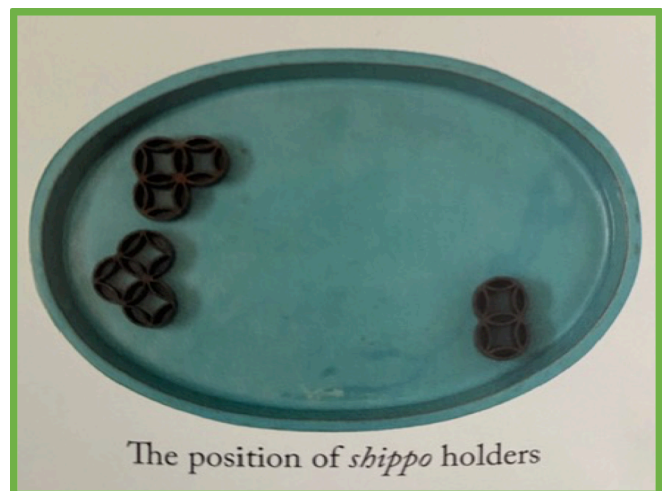
NANDINA WITH BERRIES

CHU-KEI (MIDDLE VIEW)

This Traditional Method discussion below is republished from the book entitled "The Traditional Ikebana of the Ohara School" by Houn Ohara. English Translation 2019, with permission from The Ohara School of Ikebana Headquarters. Note that this arrangement is a Landscape moribana (Shakei).

Nandina is a typical material used in the *Chu-kei* (Middle View Depiction). Its leaves spread in all directions like an umbrella; so the arrangement should make the most of this characteristic of the plant.

Since nandina grows straight up, it is arranged in the *Chokuritsu-kei* (Upright Style). Because of its spreading leaves, the measurement of the principal stems is slightly longer than the standard. Moreover, if the *Fuku-shi* (Secondary) slants at the standard angle, that will spoil the plant's natural, upright appearance; the appropriate slanting angle for the *Fuku-shi* is at around 30 degrees.



First, place two nandina branches at the *Shu-shi* (Subject) and the *Fuku-shi*. Then, place another branch, which is shorter than the *Fuku-shi*, at the *Chukan-shi* (Filler) at the base of the *Shu-shi*. This *Chukan-shi* nandina creates variation in length among the three branches, besides playing the role to avoid a large open space in the composition.

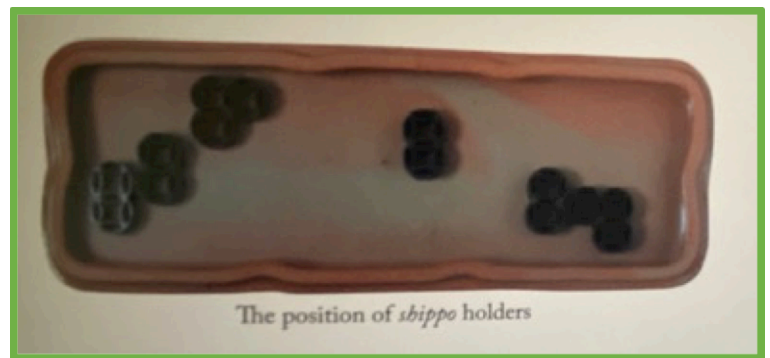


The leaves of the three nandina branches should not bump against each other nor cross in the limited space of the *suiban*. Thus, it is necessary to trim some side branches and leaves before arranging without spoiling the typical appearance of the plant.

Two stems of small chrysanthemum are gathered at their cut ends and are placed as the *Chukan-shi*. Likewise, three stems of small chrysanthemum are placed as the *Kyaku-shi* (Object) and its *Chukan-shi*. Club moss is spread out as wide as possible for a winter scene, leaving only a small surface of the water.

In recent years, it has become difficult to obtain winter chrysanthemum, and small chrysanthemum is often substituted for winter chrysanthemum. Thus, from now on, small chrysanthemum is considered as a material in the basic combinations of the *Yoshiki-hon-i*.

Nandina, if arranged in a narrow and small *suiban*, tends to stand out too much for its wide-spread leaves. In order to maximize the effect of its character in the *Chu-kei*, a large, rectangular *suiban* shown in the example or a large, oval one is better to use.



In the example, three branches of nandina are used for the *Shu-shi*, *Fuku-shi*, and *Chukan-shi*, and two for the *Kyaku-shi* and its *Chukan-shi*. Because of the characteristics of spreading leaves, the *Shu-shi* and *Fuku-shi* branches cannot be placed too close at their bases; a harmonious relationship between them is furnished by the *Chukan-shi* nandina in the group.

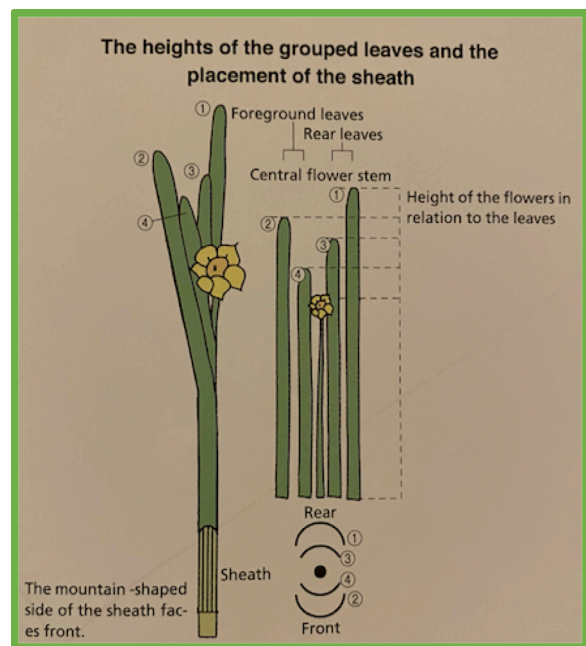
If all the five nandina branches are placed upright, the work will not be an arrangement in the *Chokuritsu-kei*, even though they are placed in differing heights; thus, especially the *Kyaku-shi* needs to be placed slightly slanting forward to create variations among the branches.

As the accompanying material, a total of seven narcissi are used for a large oval *suiban*. They are all treated as the *Chukan-shi*. First, place one narcissus at each base of the *Shu-shi*, *Fuku-shi* and *Chukan-shi* nandina in different heights. Then, place two narcissi at the foot area of the *Kyaku-shi* and its *Chukan-shi*.

With these five narcissi being placed at the bases of the nandina branches, the central area of the composition is wide open; thus, two more narcissi in different heights are added to the position slightly off-center toward the *Kyaku-shi* group. These two should never be placed in the center, since that will divide the composition into two parts and spoil the overall view. They should be placed slightly in off-center which is either toward the group of the *Shu-shi* and *Fuku-shi*, or toward the *Kyaku-shi* group, depending on the overall balance.

Narcissus is treated with the correct method of leaf grouping.

In this arrangement in the *Chu-kei*, narcissi are taller than those in the arrangement in the *En-kei* (Far View) arrangement, but shorter than ones in the *Kin-kei* (Near View) where narcissi are used with their natural heights. However, one of the two *Chukan-shi* narcissi near the center is arranged exceptionally tall in order to create a good balance with, as well as a pleasing variation against the nandina branches.



In this rectangular *suiban*, club moss may be spread out entirely without showing the water at all.

MEET THE GRAND MASTER



INTRODUCING KAYOKO FUJIMOTO

Grand Master Fujimoto was born in Osaka, Japan in 1926. She began to study ikebana as a high school student in the Mishoryu School of Ikebana, and in 1948 switched to study in earnest at the Ohara School of Ikebana in Tokyo under Suiha Masuko just a year after she and her husband Reverend Hogen Fujimoto married in Tokyo, Japan.

In 1952, Sensei began her teaching career by giving private lessons to a small group of women. A year later, she along with her husband and two sons moved to the United States. Although Sensei started her teaching career in 1952, her teaching blossomed once she moved to United States as she began teaching at the Bowles Buddhist Women's Group as well as in Fresno California. Within 10 years, she found herself teaching in 6 cities within California including Oakland, San Francisco and San Mateo. To this day, she continues to teach in some of these cities. As a teacher, she has great satisfaction in watching her students improve their ikebana skills over time. In her own words, "Their accomplishment is my joy". During these pandemic times, Grand Master has adapted in order to carry on teaching her students. Despite her 95 years of age, once monthly she holds a lesson/class using the online Zoom technology, and twice monthly she holds classes in person in a local Community Center. Bravo!



When asked if she had any hints, tips or advice for us all, Grand Master suggested that when we do the Ushiro Ike (demonstrating by arranging from the back), it is good to practice the demo in front of a mirror and watch the mirror carefully to help in determining how and where to place the materials. Of course, before starting the demonstration, we should study and carefully check the materials gathered for the demonstration.

The Ohara School of Northern California Chapter was founded in May of 1964 upon the visit of Headmaster Houn Ohara to San Francisco. The officers were appointed by Headmaster and Kayoko Fujimoto was appointed as Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary.

In 1967, Grand Master Fujimoto became the chapter President and remained as such until 1998. It was during her presidency, in 1988, that she was granted her Grand Master certification. These decades were busy times for Sensei as she also became a founder and charter member of another organization – the Ikebana Teachers Federation – and served as its President on 4 separate occasions from the 1970s through to the 1990s.

Throughout her career, Grand Master has participated in numerous exhibitions and held demonstrations for the organizations with which she was affiliated including the Suiyo Flower Club, the Ohara Northern California Chapter, NAOTA, the Ikebana Teachers Federation and Ikebana International San Francisco Bay chapter to name a few. With decades of experience, Grand Master says that she likes all the styles of Ohara arrangements. But, if she had to pick one or two as favorites, she would choose Hanamai, Free Expression, and Sculptural Arrangements because these styles allow her to express her own feelings freely.

Grand Master proclaims that while she is not a good gardener she does enjoy watering her gardens to keep them growing through the seasons. She loves many floral materials, but one of her favorites is the Camellia known as Single petal-tsubaki, Yabutsubaki, & Shiratama-tsubaki. Her other favorite includes red roses.

In 2008, the Ohara School of Ikebana awarded Sensei the title of **Honorary Lifetime Member** for her many years of outstanding contributions and dedications to the Ohara School by promoting the School's art of ikebana. Shortly afterwards in 2010, the Emperor of Japan awarded Sensei the **Order of the Rising Sun, Golden and Silver Rays "Kyoku Jitsu Sou Kou Sho"** for her many years of service to ikebana and promoting the traditional culture of Japan.

With a lifetime of many special ikebana moments, Grand Master says that one of her most memorable times is the time that 3rd Headmaster Houn Ohara took her around during the testing day at Tokyo Chapter's Workshop. She said, "I watched Headmaster while he worked. He took his time to check and judge each arrangement. I was most impressed with his sincere and thoughtful comments on each of the arrangements. I felt very lucky to be a member of the Ohara School under the Headmaster and promised myself to study under his guidance."

Indeed it seems she has done just that, and so much more.

LET'S GET DIGGING



WINTER MATERIAL – AMARYLLIS BULB

In the winter issue of *Let's Get Digging* article the “gardeners” in our NAOTA membership share their experience with a specific plant that you might want to consider planting in your own gardens.... the Amaryllis.

The Amaryllis is a bulb, originating from the tropics, that can only reside in your garden year round if you live in Zone 8 through Zone 10. For most of us that reside in areas where we experience cold winters, it is a flower that we grow indoors and enjoy for a few weeks while it blooms. Often times we give and receive these bulbs as Christmas gifts as they show up in the local stores around Christmas time.

The bulb needs to be planted such that the crown or “shoulders” (about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ of the bulb) is exposed above the earth in the pot. These bulbs like to be crowded in their pots and do not like sitting in damp/wet soil, so the good news is that you don't need a lot of soil or a very large pot. If your bulb comes with the soil, you're good to go. If not, make sure that the soil is a good mix of compost, loam, and perlite or sand. It needs reasonable drainage.

Place it in a location with bright light, but no direct sunlight. Keep it moderately moist, give it a bit of plant food, sit back and watch the show. Most bulbs produce between 2 and 4 blooms throughout the early winter. *Hint: If you want a longer show time, once your stalks are tall, start up a second bulb in another pot. Continue the same with additional bulbs.*



Once the blooms are done, cut the stalks down. The remaining leaves should continue to thrive if you fertilize the plant occasionally and continue to keep it moderately moist.

When Spring rolls around, take the amaryllis outdoors and leave it in a shady area throughout the day to begin getting it acclimatized to the outdoors. Slowly introduce it to a bit of sunshine every day, keeping it longer and longer in the sun each day until it can remain outside over night as well. I've planted mine in the garden once the night temperatures are mild enough. Throughout the summer keep your eye on it to ensure it gets appropriate water and occasional feedings just like any other plant. It should thrive and grow more leaves. Ideally the bulb should be out doors for at least a few months. During this growth period it will store up all the energy it can, which should result in a healthier bulb that in turn should provide more flowers in the coming autumn/winter season.

Once early autumn arrives, slow down on the watering. The leaves should begin to brown and die off. Cut the old leaves off. All that should remain is the bulb.

The bulb is now ready to have some “nap time” or dormant time. Bring the pot indoors, or if you planted the bulb directly in the garden then dig it up, clean off the bulb and dry it out for a day or two. Place the bulb in a cool dark room – think basement or cold room if you have one. The bulb should remain in this spot for at least 8 weeks. If you want the bulb to begin blooming around the Christmas season, the dormant period for the bulb should be through September and October and into early November. Once the time has passed, plant the bulb again and place it a bright warm location in your home and start watering it. Enjoy !



AUTUMN 2021 WORKSHOP

Q&A WITH HEADMASTER & PROFESSOR KAWAKAMI

Headmaster & Professor kindly agreed to take questions from viewers regarding the arrangements presented in the Autumn Workshop – Free Expression, Traditional Method - Three Variety Chrysanthemum, and Shohinka. Below are the questions submitted, along with the responses.

FREE EXPRESSION

1. What is the difference between Free Expression and Free Style?

Free expression includes both ikebana in which the natural appearance of materials are altered (conventional Free Style) and ikebana in which the natural appearance of plant materials are emphasized without being bound to any floral type. Since it is a free expression, it is possible to create a work that includes both elements.

Please refer to "Ohara-ryu Ikebana Classification List." (attached below)

小原流いけばな 分類一覧 The Ikebana of the Ohara School		
かたちや花型のあるいけばな Ikebana Based on Forms/Styles	花意匠 Hana-isho	
	花奏 Hana-kanade	
	盛花 (3花型) Moribana (3 Styles)	
	瓶花 (3花型) Heika (3 Styles)	
かたちや花型のないいけばな Ikebana Not Based on Forms/Styles	盛花 Moribana	※押し口が面で構成されていること Materials are positioned across a plane.
	瓶花 Heika	
	花舞 Hanamai	
	琳派調いけばな Rimpa-cho Ikebana	
	文人調いけばな Bunjin-cho Ikebana	
	小品花 Shohinka	
	自由表現 Jiyu Hyogen (Free Expression)	<div> 植物としての姿を生かした型のないいけばな The natural appearances of plant materials are emphasized without being bound to any floral style. </div> <div> 植物の姿を変貌させたいいけばな The natural appearances of plant materials are altered. </div>
	造形いけばな Zokei Ikebana (Sculptural Arrangement)	<div> ※上記6表現のいずれにも含まれないもの Not categorized as any of the above six expressions </div> <div> ※従来の自由創作に該当する Formerly called Jiyu Sosaku (Free Style) </div> <div> ※植物素材にこだわらず、自由な発想でつくる創作いけばな A creative type of ikebana where any material, plant or non-plant, can be arranged freely. </div>

[自由表現の定義] Definition of Jiyu Hyogen (Free Expression)
自由表現とは、花材の植物としての姿を生かした型のないいけばな、および、その姿を変貌させたいいけばなのこと
Jiyu Hyogen (Free Expression) is ikebana that brings out the intrinsic beauty of materials.
It is not based on any floral form or style. The natural appearances of plant materials are emphasized, or they may be altered.

2. Can dried/stripped wood, fruits, or vegetables be used for a Free Expression arrangement?

Dried or stripped wood:

It is possible to use any material that can find the beauty of ikebana, such as dried wood, stripped wood, dried materials, and bleached materials. In doing so, we recommend that you consider the dynamic between the materials and between the materials and the container.

Fruits and vegetables:

I think you can use it as long as the shape and color complement the work itself and make it more interesting and beautiful. It is important to make a careful selection.

3. What is the difference between a Free Expression arrangement in a tall vase that emphasizes the natural characteristics of materials and *Heika* that does not adhere to a specific style?

It is basically the same. Especially in the case of Heika, the harmony between the vase and the flowers is very important. By clearly understanding the individuality of the flower materials and the characteristics of the vase, while making the best use of both, the arrangement becomes a work of dignity and elegance.

4. Is it permissible to create a Free Expression arrangement without using a container?

To create a Free Expression arrangement it is necessary to use a container. In the case of not using a container, it becomes a Zokei ikebana (sculptural arrangement).

5. Headmaster sprinkled water in the first Free Expression arrangement. Are there rules or other suggestions for the use of water in a Free Expression arrangement?

If you want to arrange a flower as a living flower, it is important to put water in the suiban in the same way as in normal ikebana. If you want to change the appearance of the plant, you can improve the effect by spraying water or using water in part of the container to remind the viewer of the relationship with water as part of the work. Either way, water is an important factor in any ikebana work.

TRADITIONAL METHOD, THREE VARIETY CHRYSANTHEMUM

1. It is difficult to find the correct type of chrysanthemum for this arrangement overseas. Can we combine single flower chrysanthemum with smaller multi-headed chrysanthemum? In this case, what type would you recommend?

Nowadays, there are various types of single flower chrysanthemums and smaller multi-headed chrysanthemums overseas. Large-flowered mums, anastasia, and ping-pong mums come in a wide variety of colors, so I think they are ideal for chrysanthemum moribana and Rinpa-cho ikebana. Single flower mums are ideal in terms of expressing a noble appearance. If single flower chrysanthemums are not available, please combine the colors and forms of smaller multi-headed chrysanthemums. There are various types such as Fusha type and ping-pong type. Also, smaller multi-headed chrysanthemums need to be well trimmed. Please enjoy the beauty of the chrysanthemum's dignity and color while choosing the material with your own eyes.

2. Does red or the darkest color always have to be in the middle?

The standard flower colors for the three chrysanthemums are yellow, red, and white. In the middle of an arrangement, red and darker colors look tighter overall.

3. Professor Kawakami explained how to measure the approximate lengths of the yellow and white filler mums against the subject, secondary and object. Are there any guidelines on measuring the lengths of the red filler chrysanthemums?

There is no rule as to the length of the filler's stem. I would like you to pay attention to the inflection of the height and the vertical, horizontal and diagonal arrangements with the balance of the yellow mums on the left side and the white mums on the right side. If the red mums are a bud, they are easier to balance by making them a little longer.

SHOHINKA

1. Can we use materials that are indigenous to our geographic region such as desert or tropical materials?

Please challenge yourself using the plants that are indigenous to your region.

2. Can Shohinka be created in a small suiban?

I think it is possible even in a small suiban. For Shohinka, it doesn't matter you decide on a container and then choose matching flower materials, or if the flower materials are decided first and then you choose a matching container. By all means, please enjoy Shohinka with a combination of material that suits the container.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



IN MEMORIAM

It is with a heavy heart that we announce that Hodo-Michiko Mizoguchi of the Toronto Chapter passed away in November of 2021. She was 88 years old.

Mizoguchi Sensei was past president of the Ohara School Toronto Chapter and a central figure in the Toronto ikebana community. As a long-standing NAOTA member, she participated in many conferences over the years. We extend our deepest sympathies to her family and the Toronto Chapter.



NAOTA WEBSITE

Our web production chair Yoko Tahara is in the process of redesigning the NAOTA website. We are looking for volunteers to join her to work on creating the new site.

Experience in website design and/or use of graphics software such as Adobe Photoshop would be helpful. Please contact Yoko at ytahara08@gmail.com if you are interested.



OFFICIAL OHARA SCHOOL LOGOS

We have received a selection of official Ohara School logos from Headquarters for our use. Please contact Grace at gracesekimitsu@gmail.com who will be happy to send them to you.



HOW DO WE REACH YOU?

We collect your contact information whenever you renew your membership, so that we may contact you throughout the year, whether by email or postal mail, with news or information on the NAOTA organization, as well as regular newsletters.

If you have recently moved, or had reason to change your email address or phone number, please do not wait until renewal time to let us know there is a change. At any time throughout the year, **send your updated contact information to Saskia Eller at: saskiaeller@outlook.com** so that you may continue to receive correspondence from NAOTA without disruption.



SUBMIT MATERIAL FOR THE NEWSLETTER

If you have any articles or information you would like to share with all the NAOTA members, please submit to the newsletter editor Carol Legros at **carol_legros@hotmail.com**. Please respect the deadlines for submission, if you want to be sure that the material is published in the upcoming newsletter. If you miss the deadline, it will be held and put in the following newsletter.

<u>Newsletter</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
March	Feb 1
June	April 1
September	August 1
December	November 1