



# NORTH AMERICAN OHARA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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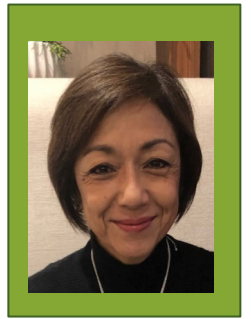


SEPT  
2021

## AUTUMN EDITION

Welcome to the Autumn Edition of the newsletter. We hope everyone has enjoyed the beautiful summer weather and bounties from our gardens.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



## GREETINGS FROM GRACE...

The sun is rising later and dusk arriving earlier as we approach this year's autumn equinox. I hope you've had a pleasant summer!

I start my message with an exciting announcement. I can now confirm that the next NAOTA conference will take place next year in Toronto, Canada, as originally planned. The dates are October 3 to 7, 2022. We are honored that Headmaster Hiroki Ohara and Associate Professor Akihiro Nishi will be our instructors. Led by Conference Chair Ming-Li Wu and Vice-Chairs Ida Li and Mitzi Yau, our host Toronto Chapter has started preparations. There are many details that have to be worked out under the "new normal" but we are moving forward with cautious optimism. Further information including registration details will become available early next year. Please stay tuned!

In the meantime, you can look forward to another valuable learning opportunity this fall. The Headmaster and Professor Kawakami will conduct a second virtual seminar for NAOTA members. The format will be similar to the spring workshop. We will email you the link to the recording as soon as we receive it, which we expect will be in November.

This September newsletter features articles about chrysanthemum, a flower emblematic of the season. I should mention that all the flowers that have graced the cover pages are from the garden of our editor Carol Legros. She is also the author of "Let's Get Digging." Thanks, Carol, for sharing your garden's bounty and growing tips with us!

Please turn to page 6 to meet Grand Master Akiko Bourland. Over her decades-long ikebana career, Sensei has inspired countless students and her community with her vast knowledge, passion and talent. We are fortunate and honored to have so many trailblazing Grand Masters among us who selflessly share their knowledge and have done so much to foster Ohara School ikebana in North America.

NAOTA recently received two generous donations to our Education Fund. We are extremely grateful to the generosity of an anonymous donor and the family of the late Grandmaster Katsuko Fujikado-Lee, who kindly donated the proceeds from the sale of Sensei's valued possessions to our Fund. I would like to acknowledge Ingrid Luders who organized the fundraising, as well as Alice Buch and Yuko Maeda-Wain of the Washington DC Chapter for transporting the items to Cleveland.

It takes a village. Thank you to all of you and the Board for your continued support.

Toward the white clouds  
Chrysanthemums by the road  
Breathing their scent

*Tagami Kikusha 1755-1828*

*Grace*

(Honolulu Chapter)

# CHRYSANTHEMUM FESTIVAL

*Choyo no Sekku*, or Chrysanthemum Festival, takes place on September 9<sup>th</sup> and is one of the five seasonal festivals called *sekku* that is celebrated in Japan.

- January 7                      *Jinjitsu*        (Seven Herbs)
- March 3                        *Jyoshi*         (Girls' Day)
- May 5                          *Tango*         (Children's Day)
- July 7                         *Shichiseki*   (Tanabata)
- September 9                 *Choyo*         (Chrysanthemum)

Since ancient times in China, chrysanthemum was believed to be an elixir for longevity, good health and fortune. The flower was introduced in Japan from China around the 5<sup>th</sup> century, together with the belief in its auspicious qualities. The origin of the Chrysanthemum Festival in Japan can be traced back to the Heian Period (8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> C). The aristocracy would hold chrysanthemum-viewing parties in formal gardens or in their homes, while drinking *kiku* sake infused with chrysanthemum petals. Flowers were covered with special silk gauze to soak up the evening dew, and the cloth was then used to cleanse the body. Chrysanthemum petals were placed inside pillows in the belief that their fragrance would ward off evil spirits.

Although the Chrysanthemum Festival is not as widely celebrated today as some of the other seasonal festivities, the flower continues to be highly esteemed in Japan. The chrysanthemum is the symbol of the Emperor and the Imperial Family. It is used in the Imperial Seal and the Emperor's position is known as the Chrysanthemum Throne. Chrysanthemum exhibitions are held throughout Japan during October and November. The elaborate displays showcase prized chrysanthemum grown specifically for these events.



In the Ohara School, chrysanthemum is used across the entire curriculum. It is one of the materials that is arranged in the Traditional Method (see pages 4 - 5). The flower is considered one of the "Four Gentlemen" (*shi kun-shi*) that is a theme of *Bunjin-cho* Ikebana. (The other "gentlemen" are orchid, bamboo and plum blossom). The colorful, decorative flowers are popular as materials for *Rimpa-cho* arrangements.

Source: [Kameidotenjijin.or.jp](http://Kameidotenjijin.or.jp)

# THE TRADITIONAL METHOD



## THREE VARIETY ARRANGEMENT OF CHRYSANTHEMUM

### --- SHIKISAI MORIBANA YOSHIKI-HON-I

*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.*

The Three-Variety Arrangement of chrysanthemum is a typical *Shikisai Moribana* of elegance, and at the same time, it is an excellent example to explain the basic structure of the *Shikisai Moribana* (Color Scheme Arrangement).

Chrysanthemums are one of the most widely available of all ikebana materials, and thanks to the progress in cultivation, they can be used throughout the year today. However, there is also a persistent tradition that regards the chrysanthemum as an autumn flower, not to mention the Chrysanthemum Festival in September.

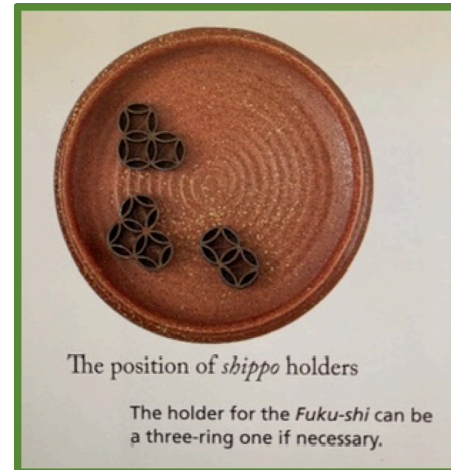


There are two aspects to keep in mind in the arrangement of chrysanthemum; one focuses on the colorful beauty of the flower rather than a sense of the season, and the other respects its natural elegance as an autumnal flower. This Three-Variety Arrangement of chrysanthemum combines both aspects in an expression of strikingly colorful beauty and grace.

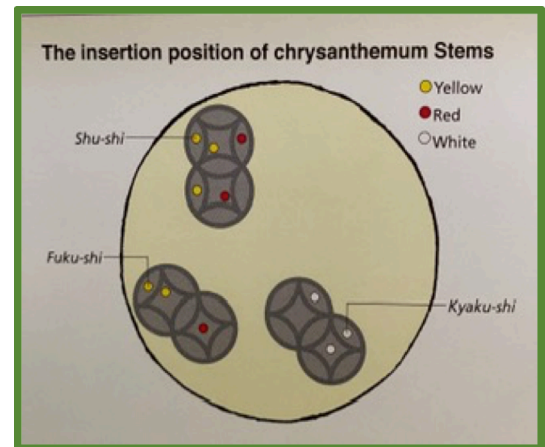
There are many ways of classifying chrysanthemums, but in ikebana they are broadly divided into large, medium, small, winter, and wild varieties. Among them, medium chrysanthemums are used for the Three-Variety Arrangement. Medium chrysanthemums come with a single bloom, and double blooms.

For the sake of elegance, single-bloom chrysanthemums are used in three different colors. As a rule, the Three-Variety Arrangement of chrysanthemum is composed with five yellow flowers as the *Shu-shi-Fuku-shi* (Subject-Secondary) group; three red ones as the *Chukan-shi* (Fillers); and three white ones as the *Kyaku-shi* (Object) and its *Chukan-shi*. They are always arranged in the *Chokuritsu-kei* (Upright Style) with the principal stems placed according to the standard measurements and angles.

There are no special rules for all the *Chukan-shi* stems, but their lengths and angles shown in the example are the general standard, and their positions, which produce the most beautiful sense of balance, are those indicated in the diagram. The three red *Chukan-shi* flowers are arranged to link the yellow *Shu-shi-Fuku-shi* flower group with the white *Kyaku-shi-Chukan-shi* flower group.



Therefore, the red ones should not spread horizontally from the left to the right; instead, they extend from the front to the back, creating a great sense of depth in the composition. Moreover, in the completed arrangement, there is more distance between the *Fuku-shi* and the *Kyaku-shi* than the one between the *Shu-shi* and the *Fuku-shi*.



It is very important to observe the flowers closely. Although the petals of the flowers are clustered in a circular form, careful observation reveals that each flower rests on its stem in a unique position from which the flower looks most beautiful. The chrysanthemum is positioned so that this best view of the flower is visible from the front of the arrangement.

When arranging chrystanthemums, there is a tendency to become captivated by the beauty of the flower alone, but the true beauty of the chrysanthemum appears only in harmonious relation to the leaves. Thus, the flowers should be placed with enough space between them to allow for a moderate display of leaves. As already mentioned, yellow, red, and white are the standard colors for the Three-Variety Arrangement of chrysanthemum.

# MEET THE GRAND MASTER



## INTRODUCING AKIKO BOURLAND

Akiko Bourland was born in Gotemba City, Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan in 1929. In 1948, she graduated from the Yamakita Kanagawa Prefectural Women's School. While in school, she was introduced to the art of flower arranging as a member of the Ikebana Club. Due to her interest in creating natural beauty using flowers, she began formal training on the principles of the Ohara School of Ikebana, with Instructor Ms. Komatsu-Sensei in Yokohama. She realized then how much she enjoyed creating arrangements that emphasize nature and the natural beauty of flowers. By 1968, Akiko Bourland received her Ohara School Instructor Degree from the Sasebo Chapter (Japan) of the Ohara School of Ikebana.



In 1970, Akiko Bourland moved to San Diego, California, where her career quickly accelerated. She has dedicated her life to teaching and promoting the principles, traditions, and philosophies of the Art of Ikebana. For decades, she has promoted the art of Ikebana and Japanese Culture within the United States and abroad. In 1973 she founded the San Diego Ohara chapter of Ikebana, serving as President for 35 years and growing it to be the largest chapter in North America. Sensei Bourland has been an Instructor of Floral Art for the San Diego Community College District for 50 years, as well as an active member of Ikebana International for over 50 years. Not only has she written an Ikebana book entitled "*Ikebana - Harmony through Flowers*" (in 2000) but she has conducted workshops and demonstrations throughout North America. During these Covid-19 pandemic months, she has mastered new technology such as Zoom to provide instruction and online critique to her students, as well as extending her reach to wider areas of the world including Europe and Scandinavia.

1996 was a very special year for Sensei Bourland as she received the Grand Master Degree from the Headmistress of the Ohara School in Japan, Wakako Ohara. This is also the same year in which she presented a One-Woman Ikebana Exhibition called "*Concepts for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Festivity of Flowers*" at the Handlery Hotel in San Diego, California. The Grand Master created over 50 arrangements while incorporating

Japanese artifacts throughout the exhibition. The exhibition was open to the public and attended by thousands of people.

Over the years she has received many teaching awards including “lifetime” credentials for teaching Adult Classes in Floral Design from a local college. In 2002, Grand Master Akiko Bourland became a founding member of the North American Ohara Teachers Association (NAOTA), and in 2007 she was Chairman of the NAOTA Conference held in San Diego.

When it comes to teaching, Grand Master Bourland says that since English is not her first language, she sometimes finds it is difficult to explain in words how to critique her student’s arrangements. This is particularly a challenge now when teaching online via Zoom. However, the most effective way, she feels, to teach Ikebana is to enhance communication with the use of figures/diagrams, real-time demonstrations, and provide hands-on critique. Based on the arrangements created by her students, she finds that they clearly understand the principles and are happy with this teaching approach.

To ensure a smooth and successful demonstration, Sensei recommends laying out the containers and floral materials in the correct order before the demonstration. This requires that the demonstrator practice the style(s) to be presented and has a clear understanding of the order and combination of materials to be used for each arrangement.

Many ikebana practitioners have a love of gardening, and while Grand Master Bourland does not garden as a hobby, she does have plantings in her yard that she uses in flower arrangements. One of her favorite floral materials to use in arrangements is Willow, something she happens to have in her yard. Not only is Willow easy to grow but its branches are easy to shape and can be used for almost any style. Her favorite flower to use in arrangements is the Camelia, a native flower of Japan that symbolizes the beauty of the Japanese garden.

The Bunjin style of arrangement highlights the ancient Asian tradition of Ikebana. Grand Master loves this style because of its simplicity and eloquence. She enjoys using simple materials, emphasizing smooth vertical lines articulating eloquence in a tall vase that differs from any other styles.

Looking back through her Ikebana career, Grand Master recalls two Ikebana moments that are most memorable. The first is her exhibition in 1996, mentioned earlier, entitled **Concepts for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**. She was privileged to have received commendation letters from the Governor of California, the Mayor of San Diego, Consul Generals of Japan, and the Ohara School of Ikebana.

The second memorable Ikebana moment was at the Ohara School of Ikebana, San Diego Chapter’s 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event in 2008. Professor Namba and Professor Yokohigashi

(both from the Ohara School of Ikebana, Tokyo Headquarters) provided a demonstration, and at that time Director of the International Division, Ms. Wakako Ohara, attended this event. They were very impressed and happy to witness that the San Diego Chapter had one of the largest membership within the Ohara School. Over 300 people attended their demonstration and participated in the Chapter's celebration.

While Grand Master plans to retire in 2021 from teaching in the local San Diego Community College system, we hope to continue seeing her participating in Ohara School of Ikebana workshops, shows and conferences.



# MATERIALS CONDITIONING TIPS



## AUTUMN SEASON

Last year, Tanaka Sensei graciously offered to share her hints and tips on conditioning materials. While the original materials list is long, we have selected a subset of materials that are commonly found and used in the autumn season within North America.

*Most cut plant material retains its freshness by the simple method of absorbing water upward through the stems, and most of the preservation methods are merely encouraging this process. The 5 different preservation methods (described in the September 2020 newsletter) include : Cutting Under Water, Increasing the Area of Absorption, Heating the Stems, Using Water Pump, and Chemicals.*

	<b>Material</b>	<b>Treatment</b>
1	<i>Bell pepper</i>	<i>None needed</i>
2	<i>Birch</i>	<i>None needed</i>
3	<i>Canna</i>	<i>Cut in water or dip in alcohol</i>
4	<i>Chestnut</i>	<i>None needed</i>
5	<i>Cosmos</i>	<i>Cut in water or dip in alcohol</i>
6	<i>Daisy</i>	<i>Cut in water</i>
7	<i>Evening primrose</i>	<i>Rub salt into cut end</i>
8	<i>Hawthorn</i>	<i>Cut in water</i>
9	<i>Lemon bottlebrush</i>	<i>Cut in water</i>
10	<i>Lily</i>	<i>Cut in water</i>
11	<i>Nandina</i>	<i>None needed</i>
12	<i>Nasturtium</i>	<i>Cut in water</i>
13	<i>Phlox</i>	<i>Cut in water</i>
14	<i>Sumac</i>	<i>None needed</i>
15	<i>Yellow pond lily</i>	<i>With pump, inject tannic acid diluted 100 times; or inject thinly diluted acetic acid; or inject water into stem of flower and leaves</i>

# LET'S GET DIGGING



## AUTUMN MATERIAL - CHRYSANTHEMUM

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

The Chrysanthemum is a fairly forgiving plant to grow in your own gardens. They come in such a beautiful variety of colors – from white and yellow at one end of the color spectrum to various shades of orange, pink and red. And the range of flower head sizes are from small one inch diameter flowers (in clusters) to large single heads 3” or more in size. The plant is fairly compact in nature and if it’s happy, it will be bushy with lots of flowers on each stem. Depending on the specific species, some can grow as tall as 24” while others may be a bit shorter.

In terms of where in the garden they grow best? Full sun it is! The soil needs to be fairly moist so if your soil does not retain moisture well you may need to water it a bit more often especially on hot summer days. Alternatively, add some mulch to the soil to help keep the moisture provided to us by Mother Nature when she decides to grace us with rain.

Once they settle in, they will bloom profusely until the first frost. Over the years, a single plant can spread out taking up more space in the garden bed. If it’s too large, consider dividing it in early spring. Once it breaks ground in the spring and is only a few inches tall, you’ll be able to see the footprint it takes in the garden. Dig up a clump from the garden, and take a sharp knife to cut the clump into smaller pieces as desired. Replant the pieces elsewhere in the garden, or swap with your gardening friends. Better yet, put them in pots and share with your friends and family. Happy planting !



# TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOP

In June this year, Grand Master Ingrid Lüders held a two-day Teacher Training Workshop at her home in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. She shared wisdom from her years of teaching experience to enhance the participant's ability to demonstrate different Ohara arrangements and to better critique their student's designs. Ingrid stressed the importance of teaching so that the art of ikebana can be learned and enjoyed by more people.



*Sharon Strom & Judith Hanson*



*From left to right : Marjorie DaVanzo, Ellina Khramova, Beth Bowers Klaine, Mary Rawlings, & Yuko Wain*



# ANNOUNCEMENTS



## SPECIAL CERTIFICATE RECIPIENTS

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The following NAOTA members are recipients of special certificates awarded by Headmaster Ohara Hiroki this year. Warmest congratulations on your achievement!

### First Master

- Sibbie Wilson

### Associate First Master

- Carolyn Alter
- Lorian Roberts

### Second Master

- Ursel Dougherty
- Vivian Fu
- Eiko Reuer
- Beth Bowers-Klaine



## CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

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The Toronto Chapter had their 47th Annual Spring Show in June this year. As with most other chapters, the ongoing restrictions and lock downs related to the pandemic prevented a public show from being held in the usual form. So this year, the annual show was presented as a Virtual Exhibition. Sasayama Takuya, the Consul-General of Japan in Toronto, was kind enough to open the virtual exhibition with a greeting.

To locate the Annual Spring Show video posted in Youtube, use the following link :  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lyl3Yrc44kA>

Thanks to Ming-Li Wu, Toronto Chapter President, and her son Matteo who worked together to create the video.



## OFFICIAL OHARA SCHOOL LOGOS

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



## HOW DO WE REACH YOU?

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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](mailto:saskiaeller@outlook.com)** so that you may continue to receive correspondence from NAOTA without disruption.



## SUBMIT MATERIAL FOR THE NEWSLETTER

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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](mailto: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