



NORTH AMERICAN OHARA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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2020

WINTER EDITION

Welcome to the Winter Edition of the newsletter. We hope this newsletter finds you well, and ready to enjoy the festivities of the season with your family members. Stay safe and well.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

GREETINGS FROM GRACE...



Season's Greetings! I hope this message finds you in good health and spirits.

2020 has been a truly extraordinary year. The Headmaster's innovative and spectacular Seattle demonstration in February feels like it took place light-years ago. At the time, we marveled in a dream-like fashion at the prospect of a fusion between ikebana and technology. In retrospect, however, the Headmaster was prescient. Technology suddenly became a critical part of our daily lives, something that we would lean on to ensure we remain connected, safe and sane.

While nothing can replace being together and learning in person, embracing technology has been the next best thing, enabling us to continue studying ikebana and bringing our community together during the pandemic. Words and phrases like "Zoom," "online," "virtual," and "are you on mute?" have entered our ikebana lexicon. I feel like we have gotten to know each other through the Virtual Katen. We've had the chance to enjoy many ikebana demonstrations from Japan and across the world.

Please enjoy the articles in this newsletter; I hope you'll find them to be educational and informative. And don't forget to watch the YouTube presentation of the festive Holiday Ikebana Virtual Katen. The link can be found on page 10.

I am grateful for your words of encouragement and steadfast support of NAOTA during this challenging year. I also want to extend a personal thank you to the Board for helping me steer NAOTA through these unprecedented times.

Nature marches to its own tunes, and ikebana continues to be a shining light, bringing us joy no matter the circumstance. Hope is on the horizon. Let's approach the new year with optimism.

Your Board – Katey, Russ, Alice, Susan, Ingrid, Saskia, Carol, Yoko and I – wishes you a peaceful and happy holiday season.

Warmest Aloha,

Grace

(Honolulu Chapter)

THE TRADITIONAL METHOD



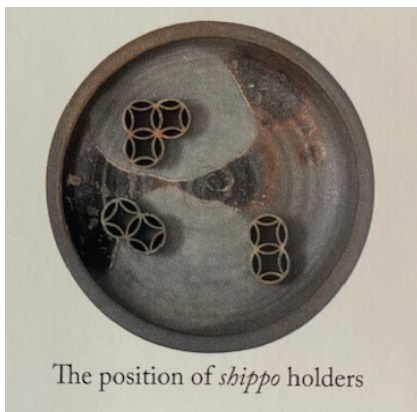
FALLEN PINE-NEEDLE ARRANGEMENT

KIN-KEI (NEAR 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.

The use of dry pine needles makes this arrangement quite unique in *Moribana*. While club moss and mountain fern are used to cover the field or other types of land, dry pine needles are used to enhance the depiction of a scene in the alley of a tea house or in an old temple garden.

The arrangement of dry pine needles is a close-up view of very particular parts of land in the *Kin-kei* and is arranged only in winter. Thus, it can be called a small landscape arrangement, not by its scale but by its subject matter. Moreover, the use of dry pine needles is very effective to depict a natural scene in a near view because of their dark hues that readily evoke a feeling of cold winter. As stated above, dry pine needles are not ground covers, so they are never placed to cover the entire *suiban*, they are always used together with club moss.



Dry pine needles that have fallen to the ground tend to be not tidy nor clean; so they are not used in their natural state. The following preparation is necessary before arranging them. First, remove all foreign substances from the collection of pine needles. Then, place them in a bowl and pour boiling water over them. Cover the bowl and let it stand for about ten minutes. The steaming process will produce needles of an extraordinarily beautiful color. Be sure to prepare needles in this way for the Fallen Pine-Needle Arrangement.

Small short needles are the most ideal, but with long needles, cut them roughly to the appropriate length with a pair of scissors. Then, mix them well with both hands to create a tangled, fluffy pile of needles. It is in this piled form that the needles are arranged.

The piled needles are placed as the *Chukan-shi* in a suitable position in the *suiban*. Then, club moss, which has been cut and gathered together, is arranged around the piled needles. This is the typical treatment of fallen pine needles, and it depicts a silent winter scene in a garden where dry pine needles are piled densely on a bed of brilliant green moss.



In the Fallen Pine-Needle Arrangement, Japanese ardisia is placed as the *Shu-shi* (Subject), *Fuku-shi* (Secondary), and *Chukan-shi* (Filler) as well as the *Kyaku-shi* (Object) and its *Chukan-shi*. Ardisia with berries is arranged long and tall, emphasizing its natural appearance; and ardisia with only leaves is arranged short and low.

Materials : Japanese Ardisia, club moss, dry pine needles

Although these stems of ardisia as a whole are treated short, they are still placed in varied heights to form the basic structure of the floral style. In this most close-up depiction among the *Kin-kei*, their variation in height enhances the view of the piled needles as the main theme of the work.

The work in the following photo (round *suiban*) is a five-variety arrangement with narcissus as the main material.



Two narcissus groups, assembled according to the strictly-fixed rule of leaf grouping, are placed with one as the *Shu-shi* and the other as the *Chukan-shi* beside the *Shu-shi*. Use not only flowers but also buds in the narcissus groups. These groups are placed low in order to be harmonious with the pine needles, *Adonis amurensis*, and Japanese ardisia.

Materials: Narcissus, Adonis Amurensis, Ardisia, club moss, dry pine needles

Adonis amurensis is usually obtained in a pot. Remove the plant with roots together from the pot, and divide the roots to make the plant into an appropriate size for use. *Adonis* with washed roots is arranged in the *Fuku-shi* position. Japanese ardisia is placed as the *Kyaku-shi* and *Chukan-shi*. Dry pine needles are arranged like a mound as the *Chukan-shi*. Lastly, club moss is laid out rather thickly across the *suiban*, by making clear edges where the club moss and pine needles meet.

The work in the following photo (rectangular container) is a variation of the arrangement of fallen pine needles. It is composed with *Ardisia crenata* as the *Shu-shi*, *Adonis amurensis* as the *Fuku-shi*, and narcissus as the *Kyaku-shi*.



The arrangement of fallen pine needles is a *Shuko-bana* suitable for a small room or study for the New Year.

Other examples of Fallen Pine Needle arrangements may be found in the Kikyo Magazine #322.

The discussion below on Shakei Moribana, Shizen-hon-i is republished from the Kikyo Magazine (English Translation) #322 from December of 2016, with permission from The Ohara School of Ikebana Headquarters.

Examples of *Shakei Moribana Shizen-hon-i* (The Realistic Method) Arrangements



Shizen-hon-i - Near View Depiction

This work is a Shizen-hon-i arrangement. It is not the depiction of a moss garden, but a field where fallen pine needles drift against the foot of wild rose. The warmth of a sunny spot in the winter field is expressed by the colors of quince, chrysanthemum, and the berries of wild rose.

Materials: Rosa multiflora, quince, small chrysanthemum, ground pine (*Lycopodium obscurum*), fallen pine needles

Container : Round, hard-fired earthen *suiban*



Shizen-hon-i - Near View Depiction

This work also composed in the Shizen-hon-i, depicts fallen pine needles being piled at the foot of *Rhodea japonica*. *Rhodea japonica* is placed in a clump as it grows in nature, unlike the one in the Yoshiki-hon-i. Narcissus, however, is placed according to the leaf-grouping method in the Yoshiki-hon-i. The small narcissus clump on the right side of the tall one is without a flower, depicting the beginning of its growth. As we have seen in the two works, it is much freer to depict nature in the Shizen-hon-i.

Materials: *Rhodea japonica*, narcissus, Japanese ardisia, ground pine (*Lycopodium obscurum*), fallen pine needles

Container: Oval white *suiban*

FROM THE MAIL BAG....



NON-PLANT MATERIALS

In the Ohara school of Ikebana we use primarily fresh organic materials in our arrangements, or dead/dried versions of those materials (dried grasses, seed pods, etcetera), with the exception of Sculptural style arrangements where wood and man made materials are allowed. In the past I have seen photos of arrangements where pheasant or peacock feathers have been used, or dried branches have been spray painted white or silver. What are the general guidelines for using other non-plant materials in our arrangements?

Dear member,

Thank you so much for submitting this question which I would like to address in two parts. When referring to organic materials, it is better to write that we use primarily fresh natural floral and branch material. The word "organic" has different connotations. Please remember also that in Ohara School we don't refer to Sculptural Style but to Sculptural Arrangement.

In reference to peacock or pheasant feathers, it is helpful to consider the deeper meaning these had for Chinese scholars. In China, the landscape is an image of the Universe, and Nature for the Chinese represents the cosmic order. Flowers, birds and other materials of nature - such as feathers of peacocks and pheasants, two highly revered birds in Chinese society - are considered part of this cosmic order. When presented in paintings or used in floral displays they convey auspicious wishes or coded messages that these Chinese scholars tried to convey. This is the reason you can find them in Bunjin Cho arrangements. Also, when you do a Bunjin Cho arrangement - preferably done on a board - you can integrate items used or admired in a scholar's studio. (Please refer to the pictures of Bunjin Cho arrangement.)

— Ingrid Luders, Past President



If you have a burning question, please send it in email to the newsletter editor, carol_legros@hotmail.com and we will pick a question from our virtual "mail bag" for each newsletter.

HOLIDAY TRADITIONS



KADOMATSU

In Japan, as in many other countries, flowers and plants play important roles over the holidays. *Kadomatsu* is a traditional Japanese decoration for the New Year made of pine and bamboo, together with plum branches and/or other symbolically auspicious materials. The word literally means “gate pine” and is always displayed in pairs in front of homes.

Kadomatsu is a custom that can be traced back to ancient Japan, where objects or sacred places were selected as *yorishiro* to welcome ancestral spirits and deities. Trees, especially noble evergreens, were often selected for this purpose. Traditionally, *kadomatsu* was placed in front of homes to wish for blessings for a good harvest and good fortune.

The combination of pine, bamboo and plum, collectively called *sho-chiku-bai*, represents longevity, prosperity and steadfastness, and is considered a harbinger of good fortune. The *meigo gadai*, or symbolic theme, of Chinese literati paintings using these three materials would be *Sai Kan San Yu*, or Three Friends in Winter. Pine, bamboo and plum are often arranged together in *Bunjin-cho Ikebana*.

There are regional differences in the design and materials used for *kadomatsu*. Typically, however, the center of a *kadomatsu* is made from three bamboo poles of different heights. The tip of the bamboo may be cut diagonally or straight. Pine branches are bound together to the three bamboo poles often with straw, and sprigs of plum or other flower branches are added. Some designs use ornamental kale and nandina, as well as citrus branches, all considered equally auspicious New Year plants.

Kadomatsu is displayed anywhere between December 13 and 28 and is usually removed on January 7.



Photo Source: Kadomatsu Japan

MATERIALS CONDITIONING TIPS



WINTER SEASON

Tanaka Sensei has 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 Winter 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 newsletter) include : Cutting Under Water, Increasing the Area of Absorption, Heating the Stems, Using Water Pump, and Chemicals.

	Material	Treatment
1	Amaryllis	Cut in water
2	Anthurium	Cut in water
3	Babies breath	Cut in water
4	Carnation	Cut in water
5	Cockscomb	Cut in water
6	Cymbidium orchid	Cut in water
7	Eucalyptus (blue gum)	Cut in water
8	Fern	None needed
9	Holly	None needed
10	Japanese Bittersweet	None needed
11	Monstera	None needed
12	Palm	None needed
13	Persimmon	None needed
14	Pine	None needed
15	Poinsettia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dip in alcohol or boiling water, OR....• Cut in water and burn the end
16	Rose	Cut in water, or Burn the cut end
17	Sanseveria	None needed
18	Snapdragon	Cut in water
19	Strelitzia (bird of paradise)	None needed
20	Torch ginger	Cut in water
21	Yucca	None needed

ANNOUNCEMENTS



HOLIDAY IKEBANA VIRTUAL KATEN

The **YouTUBE** version of NAOTA's third Virtual Katen is ready! To view, click on the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwwszJv-EYg&feature=youtu.be>

Please feel free to share this with your friends, family, students and others in your ikebana community. Enjoy!



IN MEMORY....

Master Martha Dominguez of the Ohara School of Ikebana, Toronto Chapter passed away on December 7 in her hometown in Ecuador after a 2-year battle with cancer.

Martha was an ikebana practitioner for over 25 years and she took every opportunity to participate and volunteer at events held by the Chapter and the Toronto Japanese Garden Club. Her passion for Ikebana remained with her during the last tough years and she brought her enthusiasm to Ecuador to teach at every opportunity in her hometown.

Martha will be missed in our circle of friends.



PUBLICATIONS – MAGAZINES

The new **Ohara-ryu Soka magazine** was launched in January of this year. The Headmaster's message and sections on ikebana arrangements are translated into English. The magazine with this partial English translation is available **only in eBook format** viewed on your smartphone or tablet. To download the app, search for "Ohara" in the App Store or Google Play, and select the purple icon bearing the Ohara School logo.



小原流eBooks
Magazines & Newspapers

Note: The English translation version must be purchased monthly. Annual subscription is not available.



PUBLICATIONS - 2021 CALENDAR

The Ohara School calendar for 2021 is available for purchase while supplies last. For further information, please contact the Ohara School Sales Department directly at: shuppan@ohararyu.or.jp

Please note: shipment of Ohara School items to North America continues to be delayed due to ongoing postal service restrictions.



PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Due to concerns about internet identity theft, the Board has decided to remove all personal information from the NAOTA website. Effective immediately, teachers are listed by name only on the website. Enquiries will be forwarded to the relevant sensei by our webmaster Yoko Tahara.

NAOTA does not send email or text to our members soliciting funds; any such email should be treated with suspicion and deleted immediately. The perpetrators are becoming bolder and sophisticated in their methods, so please remain vigilant.



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: saskia@rochester.rr.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