



NORTH AMERICAN OHARA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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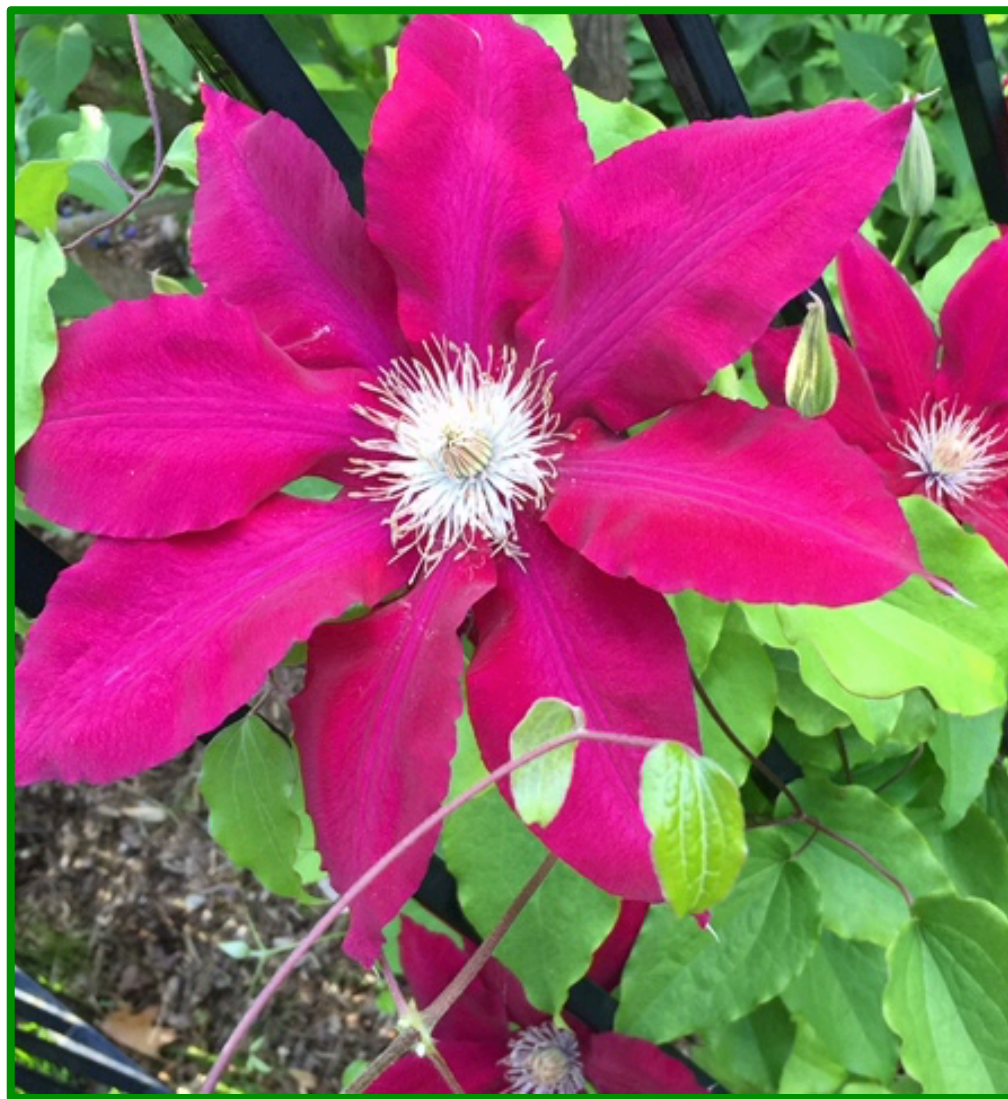
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JUNE
2021

SUMMER EDITION

Welcome to the Summer Edition of the newsletter. We hope this newsletter finds everyone well, and looking forward to warmer weather and longer sunshine filled days.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

GREETINGS FROM GRACE...



Dear NAOTA Members,

This year started off tentatively with a glimmer of hope for better times. That hope has snowballed, and, now, midway through the year, it feels like we are moving towards a happier “new normal.” This summer will be marked by joyous reunions everywhere.

The workshop by our Headmaster and Kikuchi Sensei was a very special educational event for NAOTA. The wonder of technology: we were able to study directly with eminent Senseis in Japan from the comforts of our homes. The follow-up Q&A with Headmaster and Prof. Kikuchi can be found on page 11. Thank you to those who sent in questions. We can all learn from them. A reminder that the video does not expire, so you can continue to view it. I believe the Spring workshop inspired many of our members, as reflected in the beautiful array of seasonal arrangements on display in the *Spring into Early Summer 2021* Virtual Katen.

This issue's **Meet the Grand Master** features Grand Master Hisako Shohara of Los Angeles. Shohara Sensei has been an invaluable and prominent member of NAOTA since its founding days; her contributions to our organization are deeply appreciated. Shohara Sensei's illustrious ikebana career is described starting on page 5.

In May, the Northern Ohio Chapter held an in-person workshop led by Grand Master Ingrid Luders (see page 15). With restrictions easing, activities are resuming. The newsletter is a wonderful place to share your Chapter/Study Groups' activities with the NAOTA community. We'd love to hear from you; please send in your news to Carol.

The advent of summer is a good time to learn how to arrange *mizu-mono*, or plants that grow in/near the water. Please turn to page 3 to study how calla lily is arranged in the Traditional Method. For those with a green thumb, find growing tips for clematis that is another popular Ohara School material.

Finally, please take a moment to read about NAOTA's Education Fund that financed our spring workshop on page 13.

After an unusually cool spring, summer is suddenly upon us in Hawaii. The ocean glistens, and vibrant colored flowers dot our landscape. As we say here, “lucky we live Hawaii.” But I also cannot wait until the day I can hop on an airplane for a happy reunion with my ikebana friends.

Enjoy your summer, safely.
Warmest Aloha,

Grace

(Honolulu Chapter)

THE TRADITIONAL METHOD



SHAKEI MORIBANA (LANDSCAPE)

KIN-KEI (NEAR VIEW)

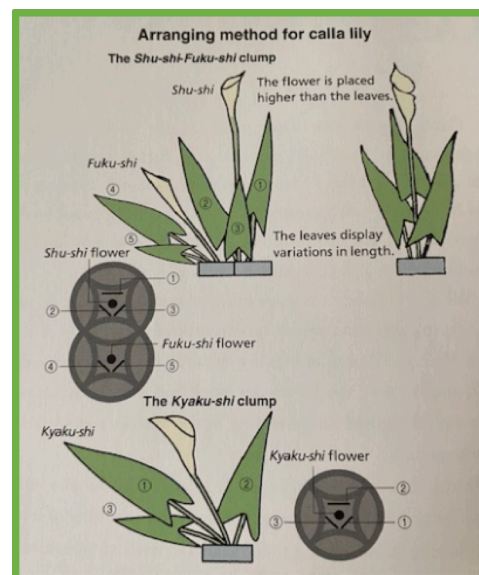
This Traditional Method discussion below is republished from the book entitled “The Traditional Ikebana of the Ohara School” by Houn Ohara. English Translation 2019, with permission from The Ohara School of Ikebana Headquarters.

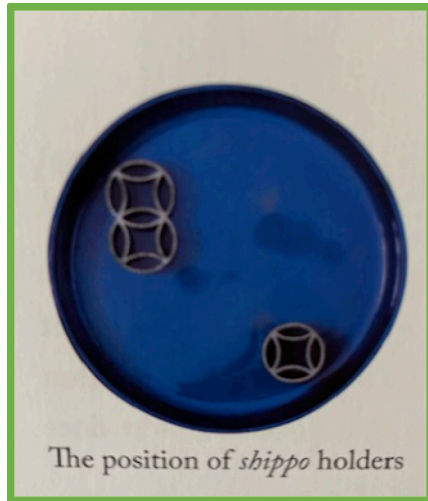
Calla lily has long been used in the *Shakei Moribana* (Landscape Arrangement) of *mizu-mono*. Strictly speaking, it is not a water plant but a member of the taro family. However, it has been customarily treated as a water plant because of the impression of the flower, which is actually a spathe, and the plant's preference for growing in marshes.



While the flower retains water very well, the leaves do not, and these days, a cultivated variety, spotted calla lily, is widely used. Both the flower and the leaves of this variety retain water well, and because the leaves are small and compactly shaped, they are well suited for arranging in the *hito-kabu-zashi* (one-clump method).

In the *Yoshiki-hon-I*, calla lily is arranged in the *hito-kabu-zashi* like pond lily and water lily, using a fixed number of leaves and flowers, but without a rolled leaf. The basic composition of the single *Shu-Fuku* (Subject-Secondary) clump consists of five leaves and two flowers, and the standard number for the *Kyaku-shi* (Object) clump is three leaves and one flower.





For the *Shu-shi* group, the leaves are gathered on three sides of the central flower stalk and, as a rule, arranged in the large opening of a two-ring *shippo* holder. For the *Fuku-shi* group, a large leaf of the size used behind the *Shu-shi* flower is placed long and slanting forward in a way typical of the *Fuku-shi* stem. Another leaf is positioned low and faces forward consolidating the appearance of the base.

As a rule, the flower is taller than the leaves. But in this composition, in which the *Shu-shi* and *Fuku-shi* form a single clump, the *Fuku-shi* flower is placed lower than the leaves, about a half the length of the *Shu-shi* flower, in order to create variation within the clump. It is very important that the flower here does not slant too far forward.

The *Kyaku-shi* clump is composed of three leaves surrounding the flower in the center. One of the leaves is placed long and slanting forward in a way typical of the *Kyaku-shi* stem.

In arranging the leaves of calla lily, it is important to use them in varied heights. Another important point is that while the *Shu-shi*, *Fuku-shi*, and *Kyaku-shi* flowers are referred as the principal stems, it is actually the leaves placed in those positions according to the basic rules of the floral form that perform the function of the main stems. Thus, the leaf behind the *Shu-shi* flower, the leaf that emerges slanting forward to the left of the *Fuku-shi* flower, and the leaf that slants forward and to the right of the *Kyaku-shi* flower should all be larger than the other leaves.



As with pond lily, calla lily is not arranged alone but combined with a tall material as the *Chukan-shi*. In the example, three stems of bulrush are placed; the appropriate number of the stem is two or three, never more than that. They are gathered at the base and placed in the vertical opening in the rear on the right side of a two-ring *shippo* holder.

MEET THE GRAND MASTER



INTRODUCING HISAKO “SHOFU” SHOHARA

Shohara Sensei was born in Kobe, Japan, and started studying ikebana in middle school in Kobe around 1942. Her aunt encouraged her to study Ohara School of Ikebana because there was an Ohara sensei near her home. She studied tea ceremony from the same teacher as well.



In 1957 she moved to Los Angeles with her husband and children. Shortly after Mrs. Shohara arrived in LA, she helped to found the Los Angeles Overseas Chapter of the Ohara School of Ikebana in 1958. She served in various leadership positions including Vice President from 1968 to 1980 and President from 1981 to 2005. Mrs. Shohara's dedication to the Ohara School of Ikebana earned her many certificates and in 1993, she was granted the honor of the Grand Master degree.

Since 1960, Shohara Sensei taught private lessons and community service extension classes at Los Angeles City Community College (LACC), Harbor City Community College, and Beverly Hills Adult education program. Having taught at LACC for over 40 years, Mrs. Shohara received a Lifetime Certificate for Teachers of Adult Education from the Los Angeles Community College District.

Beginning in 1996, for a period of 10 years, Mrs. Shohara served as the President of the Los Angeles Ikebana Teachers Guild, an organization comprised of instructors from various Ikebana schools including Ikenobo, Ohara, Sogetsu, and Shofu Schools. In 2015, she became the first president of the newly formed Ikebana Teachers Association of Southern California. She has since retired from that post.

On the topic of teaching students, Sensei says that since the Ohara School has many varieties of arrangements, it is important and difficult to teach the rules. It takes time and commitment from the students to learn the rules for all of them. To become a confident demonstrator, Sensei says, we must practice, practice, practice, and be sure to practice arranging from the backside of the arrangement.

In 2002, the North American Ohara Teachers Association (NAOTA) was formed. Shohara Sensei has been an active valued contributor to the organization. Being one of only a few Grand Masters here in the United States, she assists the various visiting Ohara Professors with critiquing arrangements at the NAOTA annual seminars.

Sensei says that out of all the Ohara arrangements, her favorite is Realistic Landscape Moribana because it allows her to freely express her personal sensitivity in the composition. She is an avid gardener who grows plant materials for the sole purpose of using them in Ohara arrangements. The varieties of materials are too many to list, but here are just a few: Japanese maple, Chinese magnolia, ornamental pear, ornamental plum, camellia, quince, pomegranate, loquat, spirea, kerria, forsythia, pine, juniper, regular and black bamboo, dracaenas, Japanese iris, bearded iris, bittersweet vine, variegated ginger, bletilla orchid, pampas grass, rohdea, bird of paradise, azalea, palm, geranium, and bromeliad. Chinese Magnolia is Sensei's favorite floral material because the branches have interesting character. In the spring it has buds and flowers and in autumn, it has attractive seed pods.

Mrs. Shohara has dedicated six decades leading and participating in many community and cultural activities to spread goodwill and friendship through ikebana, and she has been recognized for her contributions and dedication by various groups. In 2003, she received Woman of the Year award from the Japanese American Citizens League and Southern California Japanese Women's Historical Society. She was inducted as a Lifetime Member of the Ohara School of Ikebana in 2011. In 2015, Mrs. Shohara was invited by the Ohara School's Headmaster Hiroki Ohara to participate in a major exhibition in Tokyo commemorating the 120th Anniversary of the Ohara School. A year later, in 2016, she was

conferred the Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation in a ceremony conducted by the Consulate General of Japan.

In the Fall of 2019, the Government of Japan announced that they would bestow The Order of the Rising Sun, Silver Rays, for distinguished contribution to promoting the Japanese culture, to Mrs. Shohara, advisor to the Ikebana Teachers Association of Southern California and the Los Angeles Chapter of the Ohara School of Ikebana. Mrs. Shohara traveled to Japan with her daughters to receive the award from the Emperor of Japan.

The most memorable moment for Sensei was when she was granted the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Ohara School. She traveled to Japan with her whole family to visit the granite wall at the Ohara Center in Kobe where her name was inscribed.

While retired from various leadership and adult education positions, Mrs. Shohara remains an active member in Ikebana circles continuing to teach and participating in many ikebana exhibitions and Ohara demonstrations.

MATERIALS CONDITIONING TIPS



SUMMER SEASON

Last year, 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 Summer 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.

	Material	Treatment
1	Anemone	Cut in water
2	Aster	Cut in water or dip in alcohol
3	Azalea	Cut in water
4	Bougainvillea	Dip in peppermint oil or cut in water
5	Calla Lily	Cut in water, then rub in salt or ash
6	Canna	Cut in water or dip in alcohol
7	Carnation	Cut in water
8	Clematis	Cut in water or dip in peppermint oil
9	Columbine	Dip in alcohol or cut in water
10	Cosmos	Cut in water or rub in salt or dip in boiling water
11	Dahlia	Dip in boiling water or peppermint oil
12	Dogwood	Cut in water
13	Fern	None needed
14	Flax Lily	None needed
15	Gentian	Dip in alcohol; cut in water
16	Geranium	Cut in water then burn cut end; use potted flowers immediately after cutting
17	Gladiolus	Cut in water
18	Hibiscus	Dip in alcohol, cut in water
19	Hollyhock	Cut in water
20	Honeysuckle	Dip in peppermint oil; cut in water
21	Hydrangea	Dip in alcohol or boiling water for 5 minutes; or apply alum; or burn the cut end, then dip in alcohol
22	Larkspur	Cut in water
23	Nasturtium	Cut in water
24	Rose	Cut in water
25	Sunflower	Dip in alcohol, or soak in red pepper solution; or dip in boiling water about 5 min; or cut in water
26	Thistle	Cut in water or dip in alcohol ; or dip in peppermint oil after cutting in water, or dip in boiling water
27	Toad Lily	Cut in water
28	Wisteria	Dip in alcohol or acetic acid; or cut in water then dip in alcohol
29	Zinnia	Cut in water

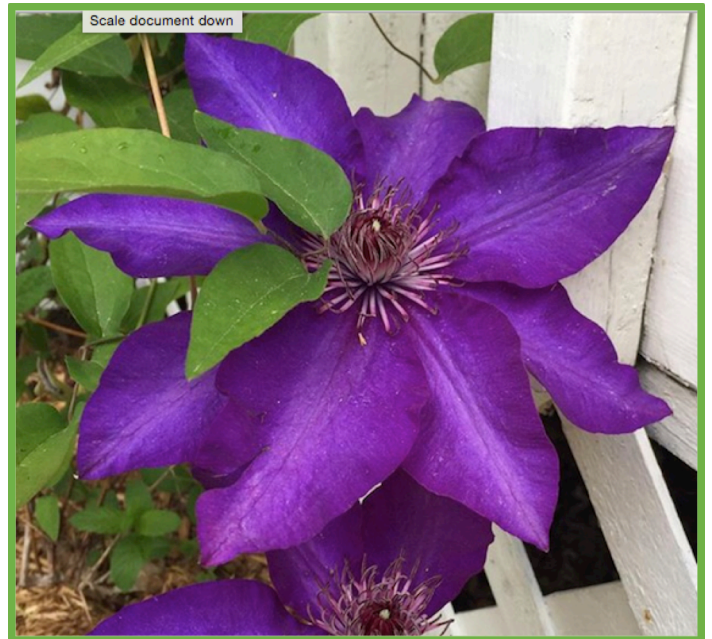
LET'S GET DIGGING



SUMMER MATERIAL - CLEMATIS

Welcome to the summer issue of *Let's Get Digging* article where 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.

Today we will discuss the Clematis climbing flower, a perennial garden plant that is fairly easy to grow provided it is located in the appropriate place in your garden. If it is happy, it will provide gorgeous blooms all summer until autumn. If you visit your garden center looking for Clematis, at least here in the north, most of the clematis species prefer full shade or part shade. A handful, however, actually can take full sun and strong heat. If you opt for the full sun clematis, be sure that the soil at the base of the clematis is protected from the strong summer sunshine and heat. I have found that the easiest way to provide the shade is to plant a sun loving Hosta plant near the base of the clematis, so that the Hosta leaves provide the necessary shade.



Clematis 'Jackmanii'

In the north, the Clematis is also considered a “tender” perennial meaning it needs to live in a place that offers a bit of protection from the worst that winter has to offer. Typically a south-west facing area against a wall or in a protected corner is best. If

there is no natural wire fencing nearby for it to climb upon, then install a trellis or obelisk so it has space to climb.

Clematis flowers typically grow on “old growth” meaning that the oldest part of the vine produces the newer shoots of vine as well as the flowers. If the plant is a bit out of control or overgrown, or you believe it has ‘dead’ vines, wait until spring when you can see the new leaves starting to push out. That’s the safest way to “see” which part of the vine is truly dead. Sometimes it is difficult to see this because the entire vine looks brown and “woody”. Always start at the “ends” or tips of the vine, as the ends are often finer/thinner and likely to have died in the winter. Keep trimming from the ends, closer to the main thicker part of the vine and eventually you will cut at a point where the vine is green and alive. Stop there. Continue with all the ends, until you’ve trimmed appropriately. Make sure it has stability and sufficient space on a trellis or fence for climbing, and then stand back because once it starts to bloom, the waterfall of blooms will be eye popping !

SPRING 2021 WORKSHOP



Q&A WITH HEADMASTER & PROFESSOR KIKUCHI

Headmaster & Professor kindly agreed to take questions from viewers regarding the three arrangements presented in the Spring Workshop — Heika, Rimpa, and Landscape. Below are the questions submitted, along with the responses.

HEIKA CHOKURITSU-KEI (UPRIGHT STYLE)

Question: In his arrangement, the Headmaster used Solomon's Seal as the Object, and lily as the Filler. Is the reverse possible? If so, how many lilies would be used in the object group? And how would Solomon's Seal be positioned?

It is possible to switch the materials. However, considering that the Kyaku-shi (Object) of Chokuritsu-kei (Upright Style) is slanted strongly toward the front, it is usually easier to use a Solomon's seal as the Kyaku-shi. However, if the cocotte lily is reasonably small and light, then it can be possible to set it at the extreme angle toward the front of the vase.

There are no prescribed rules on how many stems are to be used but make sure that the Chukan-shi (Filler) does not have a stronger impact in the design than the Kyaku-shi. Solomon's seal leaves vary in size so using two or three of them is better.

RIMPA-CHO

Question 1: In the demonstration, Professor Kikuchi inserted the main flower (peonies) first. But in the Iris presentation (viewed on Peatix), Professor Kawakami inserted cherry branches first. How do we determine which material should be inserted first?

Choose the main flowers first. For this arrangement, I chose peonies and cherry blossoms as the main flowers. I happened to place the peonies first. However, the order is not important as long as you start with your main materials before moving on to supporting materials.

Question 2: Is it permissible to use an even number of materials in a Rimpa-cho arrangement?

It is alright to use an even number of materials because this arrangement depicts the painting. If using three materials is not enough to represent artistically then you can add another material.

Question 3: It is difficult to obtain proper Rimpa-cho materials where I live. What factors should we take into account when choosing substitute materials? Can you please recommend suitable substitutes for late spring/early summer Rimpa arrangements?

Using flowers which are originally from Japan is a general rule to arrange Rimpa-cho Ikebana. However, there are many flowers that are difficult to get even in Japan and, in such cases, using flowers of the same family as a substitute can be a practical way to match with other materials.

For instance, one could use dahlia instead of chrysanthemum, because both are in the same family. If you want to use lilies, there are so many different kinds of lilies to choose from that it is easy to find one from your local area. Iridaceae family (rabbit ear iris, Japanese iris, wall iris, German iris), hydrangeas and lilies are easy to find when in season during late spring and early summer.

SHAKEI MORIBANA SHIZEN-HON-I (REALISTIC METHOD, LANDSCAPE MORIBANA)

Question 1: In regards to the variety of materials used, should it be an odd or even number?

Usually we use odd-numbered materials for this type of arrangement, but driftwood and dried flowers are not always counted. If those are included, then the total number of materials will be even.

Question 2: Professor Kikuchi mentioned at the beginning of the demo that Realistic Landscape has no fixed rules. She also mentioned that the structure should have five branches. Could Sensei please explain why she used five branches?

When we arrange the Keisha-Kei (Slanting Style) or Chokuritsu-Kei (Upright Style) in the suiban, we use five branches of the main material. Usually, it is better to use at least five branches. However, if the branches are very thick, use fewer branches.

Question 3: Professor Kikuchi mentions Subject materials. My understanding is that in Realistic Landscape there is no Subject, Secondary, or Object. Could Sensei please clarify?

The material we choose at the beginning to make the frame is considered to be the main material. The frame we make from the main material creates a space where the flowers we choose as the focus can bloom among the groundcover and other elements.

Question 4: What other materials are appropriate to use as ground cover in Realistic Method arrangements? (Club moss is difficult to find overseas.)

Try to use a groundcover material from moss family, fern family, dianthus barbarous, parsley or any other similar material.

EDUCATION FUND

A few years ago, the founder of NAOTA suggested we start a fund called the Donation Fund to finance activities for members, including those who were not able to attend our conferences.

Then the world as we knew it was changed by the pandemic. We had to forego our yearly conferences and in-person classes. No more popping across the border between the US and Canada, which remains closed. How then, do we keep our NAOTA members informed and inspired? After much brainstorming, the board arranged for Headmaster and a professor from the Council of Ohara Professors to prepare a three-arrangement workshop specifically for NAOTA members. We also discussed how to finance the workshop. Should we ask our members to pay individually? How many members would view this workshop? How do we split the cost between viewing members? Suddenly it dawned on us that we could use the Donation Fund to pay for this educational event. We could run the virtual workshop as a gift to the membership and test the waters for this new concept.

The special workshop became available to all NAOTA members and was a huge success. The board realized that this model has great appeal to our members, and decided that the Donation Fund can be used to pay for future virtual workshops and similar educational events. Its name was changed to the Education Fund.

What do workshops do? They educate our teachers and students, so that they can improve their skills, share that knowledge with others and spread the joy of Ohara ikebana around the world.

Anyone who would like to support events that educate and inspire us is welcome to make a donation to the Education Fund. If you would like to recognize a teacher or friend within NAOTA, what better way than to make a donation in their name. Any and all support will be greatly appreciated.

Under US Tax law, NAOTA is a public charity (a 501 (c) (3) organization). All contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by U.S tax law. If you would like make a gift, please send in a check, payable to North American Ohara Teachers Association, to:

Alice Buch, NAOTA Treasurer
1222 N. Evergreen Street
Arlington, VA 22205-2550

You will receive an acknowledgement of your contribution.

For overseas members, we will gratefully accept contributions in US Dollars. Please note that NAOTA is only designated a charity under US tax law, and the contribution is not likely deductible in your home country.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration. Please contact Grace gracesekimitsu@gmail.com if you have any questions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



OUR NEW SUB-GRAND MASTER

Like many of you who heard the news, I have been very excited that Headmaster Hiroki Ohara has granted the Sub-Grand Master title to our NAOTA President Grace Sekimitsu.

I first met Grace in 2015 during the 14th NAOTA Conference hosted by the Ohara Honolulu Chapter, when she translated for Associate Professor Yokohigashi during his Demonstration. From experience I can say translating from Japanese to English is one thing; to translate “Ikebana” is quite a different story. To do it right one not only must know the School Curriculum but also its deep philosophical roots in order to convey the right feeling an Ikebana arrangement aims to transmit. Watching and listening to Grace I immediately realized that she had absorbed the essence of the Ohara School.

It came as no surprise to me that Grace received her First Master Degree in 2014 after her Ikebana studies in England, Honolulu, Chicago, New York and Tokyo. In recent years Grace has been Headmaster’s translator and invaluable assistant on many occasions - the NAOTA Conferences and his Seattle appearance for “Ikebana and Technology” among them. Grace is busy serving as Vice President for the Ohara Honolulu Chapter, is a member of the board of I.I. Chapter 56 and is an excellent Ikebana instructor.

Grace has many outstanding virtues: she is diplomatic and kind; a very good listener who can easily communicate on any subject; even tempered allowing her to transmit calm and serenity in trying situations; and an excellent leader as she has demonstrated as President of NAOTA in these difficult pandemic times.

My sincerest congratulations to Grace on being awarded this milestone in Ikebana by Headmaster and my warmest wishes for continued success in teaching and representing the Ohara School in all things Ikebana.

– Ingrid Luders



CLEVELAND WORKSHOP

On Friday, May 21, 2021, Northern Ohio Ohara Chapter held a workshop at the Cleveland Botanic Garden. Grand Master Ingrid Luders was the sensei. Because of pandemic restrictions, the Cleveland Botanic Garden only allowed nine members to attend the workshop, but it was a joy to do an in-person workshop again. All of the attendees were vaccinated and the gathering felt very safe.

The morning and afternoon workshops were a Moribana Slanting Style and a Heika Slanting Style. This allowed the participants to see the connection between these slanting arrangements.

The morning session was a Moribana Slanting Style using Ti Leaves, Astringia and Roses. The afternoon session was a Heika Slanting Style using fantail willow, a lovely rose variety called Quicksand, and Eriosteman Pink (Australian Wax Flower).



Here's hoping that all of the Chapters and Workshops will be able to return to in-person workshops. --- *Alice Buch*



IN MEMORIAM

Paul Kazuo Tamae passed away on February 1, 2021 in Torrance, California. He was a member of the Los Angeles Chapter.



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