

Sakura News

Ikebana International

Volume 65 Issue 2

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International
President

Miho Okawara

I hope your New Year 2021 started well. It is early February now, and it has been about a month since the second emergency for surging coronavirus infections was declared in Japan. It was announced to extend the period of emergency for another month or so, and it seems that this situation will continue for a little longer.

Under such circumstances, I would like to start by expressing my sincere gratitude to the medical professionals and essential workers, and my heartfelt sympathy to those who have been infected by the coronavirus.

Just yesterday, on February 5th, we had the I.I. Headquarters Online New Year Gathering, and we were honored to have been able to connect with approximately 2800 members/viewers from all over the world – online – in new normal way. I am grateful to all the members who took time out of their busy schedules to join this event. Although this online gathering was a success, it was held as a "last ditch effort" under the pandemic situation. As such, I therefore hope it will be the "first and last" one. I have such mixed feelings about it.

In this issue of Sakura News, I would like to change the subject a little and write about something I have been thinking about for a long time, my "ikebana story" – my personal thoughts on ikebana.

There are many theories about the origin and history of ikebana. According to one source, ikebana originated from "Yorishiro," meaning to believe in divine spirits residing in natural objects. Japanese society, with its mixture of Shinto and Buddhism, lived with customs coming from both religions. One was the custom of holding evergreen trees up high to invite the gods during Shinto rituals, and with the arrival of Buddhism, which was a foreign religion, the practice of offering flowers to the Buddha was added, and this is how ikebana developed into what it is today. When I read this in a book, I thought, "This is convincing, as ikebana uses a lot of branches and trees, unlike Western-style flower arrangements."

It also reminded me of a scene which was part of my daily routine at my parents' house. There were both a small Shinto altar and a Buddhist altar there, and my mother prayed at both of them every morning. No matter what time of the day it was, my mother never missed her morning routine, praying in front of the Shinto altar, then standing in front of the Buddhist altar and praying again. The sound of the bell she was ringing with a bar there was the sound of greeting to the gods that I heard every morning while I was eating breakfast. This is a nostalgic memory for me. I don't think there are many families doing this anymore nowadays, but when I was a child, I put our hands together at both the Buddhist altar, which is a monotheistic religion, and the altar of polytheistic Shinto, and I think that this act was a common scene of Japanese families living with both Buddhism and Shintoism.

Today, I live in a house which has been somewhat "modernized," and like many others, it has neither a Shinto nor a Buddhist altar. However, I have a Japanese alcove in my house, which is

notorious among my family as a useless space, but I try to keep flowers in the alcove as much as possible. I love the snipping sound of the ikebana scissors cutting the flowers, and I dare to cut them extra number of times in water just to hear that sound. One day, I realized that the cutting sound meant the same as the sound of the bell on the Buddhist altar for me, which brings peace of mind. It was an eye-opening moment for me when I realized that handling and arranging the branches probably were the actions with the same significance for me as my mother prayed at the Shinto altar.

I had always been aware of the deep spirituality of ikebana, but when I realized that my act of ikebana might be similar to the Japanese way of praying to the gods in our life, I felt a deep emotion. We don't commonly have a Shinto altar or a Buddhist altar in our houses anymore, but as I listen to the sound of the scissors while cutting and arranging the branches and flowers, I may be praying just as my mother did ringing the bell at the Buddhist altar.

I have come to believe that, wherever we are, through the act of doing ikebana, we sublimate ourselves by praying to the god we believe in. For me, ikebana is more than just flower arrangement. I think, for the members of Ikebana International, too, ikebana is a form of self-expression with output on a higher spiritual level. At the same time, I think it is also a deep input work to reflect on oneself deep inside. In this Sakura News Vol. 65 Issue 2, I put aside the gloomy news of the Coronavirus pandemic for a while to invite you, the readers of this Sakura News, to a "profound world of ikebana." I know that each and every one of you has your own thoughts about ikebana, meaning that every member has her/his own different 'ikebana story.' I would love to hear your own thoughts on ikebana if there is a chance someday.

Last, but not least, I wish each and every one of you good health and happiness, and I continue to devote myself to ikebana and to my role as International President until the end of my term. I believe that the time will come when we will be able to enjoy ikebana together. Until then, please stay in good health.

In friendship through flowers
Miho Okawara
International President

Great Success! Online New Year Gathering

Midori Murayama, *International Second Vice-President and Chairperson of NYG*

Headquarters held the first "Online New Year Gathering" via YouTube Live and Zoom on February 5, 2021. Honorary President of Ikebana International, Her Imperial Highness Princess Takamado honored us by sending her New Year greetings. Also we very much appreciate the contribution of Ikebana International Supreme Advisers; 45th Headmaster of Ikenobo Sen'ei Ikenobo, Headmaster of Ohara School Hiroki Ohara, Iemoto of Sogetsu School Akane Teshigahara, Headmistress of Chiko School Kosen Naruse, Headmaster of Ichiyo School of Ikebana Naohiro Kasuya, Iemoto of Misho-Ryu Keiho



Hihara, Headmaster of Ryuseiha Kashu Yoshimura, Head Teacher of Saga Goryu Mika Tsujii and Headmistress of Shinpa Seizan School Kogetsu Kamijo

This big event consisted of three parts: HIH Princess Takamado's New Year Greetings, Iemotos' messages and ikebana arrangements to celebrate the New Year and a slideshow of photos of chapter activities from 98 chapters in the world.

We discussed long and hard about how and at what time to distribute this program so it could be viewed by as many members as possible across the world. We finally decided to use both Zoom and YouTube Live and YouTube was released for 24 hours. During the preparation work, we received a lot of encouragement and messages "looking forward to it!" from many chapters.

We received many chat messages on YouTube Live and Zoom and we were happy to hear live reaction from members. We felt that we were able to become one with I.I. members in the world through ikebana. It is really Friendship through Flowers! We were moved to be able to share such a good time with you via online communication in the difficult social situation due to COVID-19.

In response to many requests from chapters, HQ has decided to make a DVD of the New Year Gathering 2021. We expect that your purchase of DVD would help HQ's fund raising activities. For detailed information such as price, how to place an order, etc., please check our website. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Midori Murayama at i.i.secondvp@ikebanahq.org.

On behalf of HQ, I would like to express our deepest gratitude and emotion to everyone and chapters for your cooperation. Thank you very much ♡

We received the following question to Iemotos from Miami Chapter: **What do you believe are the most important values imparted to the person who studies ikebana?**

The answer from:

45th Headmaster Sen'ei Ikenobo, Ikenobo:

For people learning ikebana, to feel the emotion and spirit inherent in plants is at the core of ikebana and it will be the most valuable thing for us to learn. For example, the curve of each chrysanthemum's stem is different. It is because they all live their life to the fullest, and so it is important to sense it. We are impressed by the inner character of each plant and express it as ikebana. Such an ikebana work will move people's heart by its elegance and dignity. Although following form is important, the beauty in ikebana is not only about form. By facing living flowers and plants, we can learn something important.

Iemoto Hiroki Ohara, Ohara School of Ikebana:

Creating ikebana requires an understanding of the life force of the flower you have in your hand as well an awareness of your inner self. To bring a plant material to life in an ikebana arrangement, it is important to respect what it is telling you.

Put aside how you want to arrange the flower, and instead, try to understand how the flower wants to be arranged. This is the key to creating a beautiful arrangement. Of course, techniques are important. But ikebana is more than that. It is also about discipline and contemplation that help you grow as an ikebana artist.

Iemoto Akane Teshigahara, Sogetsu School: Joy of creating.

Headmistress Kosen Naruse, Chiko School:

The most important principles for people learning ikebana are:

Make the most of the appearance of the flowers and other plant materials (do not alter their natural form). Treat all plants as if they were alive.

After the arrangement is finished, keep it well watered. Change the water every two or three days, and freshen the cut ends. When you are starting to make an arrangement, always place the container on a mat.

Be grateful to nature for nurturing plants (and crops in general).

Membership Report

Noriyo Nagasaki, *International Third Vice-President*

I would like to express my gratitude to you all for renewing and registering your membership under the very difficult situation prevailing throughout much of the world at the present time.

As of January 31, 2021, the total number of members is 6,329, which seems good taking the pandemic into consideration.

However, this is 10 percent lower than last year. At least 7,000 plus members are required for the smooth running of the organization. As you know, I.I. relies on the goodwill of volunteers to cut costs and operate effectively. As mentioned in the last Sakura News, about 80 percent of the actual operating expenses of I.I. is covered by membership dues.

In the midst of the difficult situation of the coronavirus pandemic, please share the wonderful power of ikebana with your friends and neighbors and ask them to join us. Your kind cooperation and continued support will lead to the further prosperity of Ikebana International. Let us expand our circle of members under the motto, Friendship through Flowers.

We have had some enquiries about the delivery schedule for I.I. magazines. Under normal circumstances, it is as follows. The first issue of the fiscal year is dispatched by surface mail in the middle of November, the second in March and the third in July. It usually takes from one to three months for the Asia region, two to three months for Europe and the North America regions, and about four months for the Middle East, Africa and South America regions.

Unfortunately, the postal services have been badly disrupted by the pandemic with long delays and in some cases the suspension of services. We strive hard to expedite magazines. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us member@ikebanahq.org or i.i.thirdvp@ikebanahq.org

Sakura News can be read
on our homepage.

Visit I.I. Website <http://ikebanahq.org>

Log in to Members' Only page, password: 1956sakura

I.I. Magazine

Yoko Ueda, *Publication Director*

Kumiko Inoue, *Publication Manager*

To date, we have been receiving considerable feedback from members to our questions in the Sakura News, Vol. 65-1 about our magazine.

We are delighted to know that, according to the feedback, many of you look forward to receiving the magazine and cherish it, that the magazine becomes the source of inspiration for your ikebana creation and learning, and that you enjoy the various Japanese culture and artforms through the magazine. We also realized the members think of the magazine as an important membership benefit.

We truly appreciate your useful feedback and would like to take your opinions into consideration, when possible, in our future production of the magazine.

As we informed you in the Sakura News 65-1, the current publisher will close their business by the end of this operational year. However, please be assured that a new publishing/editing company we will outsource the work to has now been decided on, and we will continue to publish the magazine maintaining the same quality as much as possible. We hope the future magazine will be enjoyed by our members as much as it has always been.

Although we try our best to deliver the magazine to the members as quickly as possible, please understand that the current pandemic may cause a delay in mailing and delivery as there are cases where we have to change the mailing method. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

Announcing the Postponement of the 12th World Convention

Miho Okawara, *International President*

I would like to inform you of the postponement of the 12th World Convention, originally scheduled for May 2022, and that it has been rescheduled to May 1-4, 2023, about one year later, because of the coronavirus pandemic. The venue will remain the same, at Hotel New Otani. Your kind understanding is highly appreciated.

The 12th World Convention

Wienia Sato, *Convention Director*



New schedule of the Ikebana International 12th World Convention

Last year was exceedingly difficult for everyone, with many countries in lockdown, cultural activities and tourist traffic suspended, and the battle against the coronavirus infection still ongoing. Needless to say, this infection has changed our daily life radically. Eating, learning, traveling and playing amongst crowds of people – those commonplace things are no longer taken for granted.

After long consideration and to ensure that large numbers of overseas members can participate in a safe and secure environment, we have decided to postpone the Ikebana International 12th World Convention for one year. Therefore, the **12th World Convention** will be held **May 1 - 4, 2023**. As soon as the ensuing situation permits, the COC committee will resume their work on the convention and provide you with detailed information through the I.I. website.

We hope that by the time of the rescheduled world convention, we will be able to interact with each other directly, in person, while admiring the art of Ikebana, which itself is a powerful medium of communication. Ikebana has an intrinsic appeal when people and flowers, and people and people exchange thoughts with each other in real life and it touches our minds and hearts.

We wish you good health and the ability to achieve real happiness to live comfortably. And we really hope and look forward to seeing you all at the 12th World Convention.

Thank you for your continuous strong support and assistance.

Future Regional Conferences

Nobuko Sakata, *International First Vice-President*

Very unfortunately, due to the postponement of the 12th World Convention, HQ and committees of Asian, North and Central American and European Regional Conferences have to reschedule the dates of conferences. We are positive and determined to hold the conferences. However, the circumstances of COVID-19 change very fast and it is too unpredictable to confirm the dates at this moment. As soon as we confirm the dates, we will inform you of the latest news. Please check our website from time to time. Your understanding and cooperation are very much appreciated.

Donation

Reiko Inumaru, *Treasurer*

We gratefully acknowledge donation from Ms. Stephanie Tomiyasu, Past International President of Ikebana International:

JPY10,000 in memory of Ms. Georgine du Quesne van Bruchem,
Castillon du Gard Chapter #225

On behalf of Ikebana International Headquarters, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your continued support.

Important Banking Information

Reiko Inumaru, *Treasurer*

PayPal Private Limited

Unfortunately, due to legal and regulatory constraints, PayPal Private Limited is unable to process donation payments for non-registered charities and nonprofit organizations (NPOs), political party/organizations, religious institutions, personal/organizational fundraisers, etc., in countries

under its jurisdiction. Accordingly, we ask that all donations sent to Japan, be made by bank transfer.

We apologize for the inconvenience this might cause, and thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Payment Options

All payments to Ikebana International must be **in Japanese Yen net of any bank charges.**

1. CREDIT CARD – PAYPAL ON I.I. WEBSITE

For Membership Dues and Online Shopping

PayPal Handling Charge: +5%

- 1) Credit Card: Visa, Master Card, American Express, etc.
- 2) PayPal Account Transfer: account@ikebanahq.org

2. MONEY TRANSFER – MIZUHO BANK, LTD

For Donation, Membership Dues

Receiving Bank Charge: + JPY 4,000 / Transfer

Bank Name : MIZUHO BANK, LTD. Kudan Branch.
2-4 Kanda Jimbo-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0051, JAPAN

Branch Number: 532

Account Name: Ikebana International

Account Number: 0719019

Swift Code: MHCBJPJT

Special Note:

The remitter is requested to pay all bank charges levied by **the sending bank** and any charges applied by **intermediary banks** in addition to **the receiving bank** charge of JPY4,000.

3. MONEY TRANSFER – JAPAN POST OFFICE

As of March 2020, Japan Post Office terminated the international money transfer services. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

In Memoriam

Mr. Haruhiko Ishikawa

Honorary Adviser to Ikebana International, Mr. Haruhiko Ishikawa passed away on 15 August 2020, at the age of 78.

He was the eldest son of Dr. Kazuo Ishikawa, Honorary Adviser and one of the important contributors to the founding of Ikebana International. Succeeding his father, Mr. Ishikawa became president of Shufunotomo Co., Ltd., and in 1982 he accepted the position of Honorary Adviser to Ikebana International.

He was president of Nihon Shuppan Club and an adviser to Japan Ikebana Art Association (Nihon Ikebana Geijutsu Kyokai).

Ikebana International would like to express our deep gratitude to Mr. Ishikawa for his longtime support.

Ms. Georgine du Quesne van Bruchem

Caroline Sui Lin Kerneis, Ikebana International Paris Chapter

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our cherished member, Georgine du Quesne van Bruchem.

Georgine was a member of Ikebana International since 1981 and founder of Chapter #225 of Castillon-du-Gard. She mastered the art of Ikebana from Ichiyo School of Japan, and affiliated to Ikebana International Paris as Flower Adviser.

Renowned for her extraordinary passion for Ikebana, promoting exhibitions, conferences, ending with memorable cocktail parties at her residence, she made many friends far and wide.

Honorary Citizen of Castillon-du-Gard, Georgine was multi-talented and author of several Ikebana art books including *Ikebana pour Shakespeare*, *Ikebana pour Vincent van Gogh*, *Ikebana s'inspire de la Bible*.

We shall remember Georgine for her inexhaustible energy, infallible enthusiasm and optimistic spirit.

Georgine was the perfect definition of our motto Friendship through Flowers.

In Memoriam, October 2020 - January 2021

Washington D.C. #1	Ms. Mary Corley	Rochester #53	Ms. Judith Tucholski-Zon
Washington D.C. #1	Ms. Jean Kariya	St. Petersburg #65	Ms. Hideko Hearn
Los Angeles #4	Ms. Reiko Kawamura	Geneva #143	Ms. Laura Bruno
Houston #12	Ms. Mary Bray	Traverse City #165	Ms. Patricia Martel
Dallas #13	Ms. Elizabeth F. Cuniberti	Traverse City #165	Ms. Maxine Meach
Cleveland #20	Ms. Ann Case	Germany-South #174	Ms. Marianne Sikora-Schoeck
Cleveland #20	Ms. Meg Collings	Kobe #181	Ms. Sophie Cheng
Cleveland #20	Ms. Linda B. Johnson	Karachi #204	Ms. Azra Syed
Hong Kong #24	Ms. Chiu-Mei Jane Wang	Toronto #208	Ms. Lois R. Orkin
Sydney #36	Ms. Judith McCulloch	Paris #219	Ms. Maryse Lenfant
Buenos Aires #40	Ms. Sara Garcia Fernandez	Portugal #220	Ms. Eneida Souza Forte
Buenos Aires #40	Mr. Carlos Pimentel	Castillon du Gard #225	Ms. Georgine du Quesne van Bruchem
Rochester #53	Ms. Fudeko Maruyama		

Our thoughts and prayers are with their families and friends.