



# Sangetsu North America

Newsletter Number 19  
Autumn 2017

## Director's Report:

I am happy to report that I have started teaching again. This follows a year and a half after my husband's stroke and I became his chief caregiver. Mark has now partially recovered and we are both praying for full recovery in the future.

With the tremendous help of several of my students, we have continued our weekly arranging at the Tucson Johrei Center. Our Saturday mornings together have been incredibly joyful. Rev. and Mrs. Ajiki often stop in to critique and encourage our work.

I started teaching a couple of June and July beginning classes, (ten students). What medicine! I've now moved on to my former intermediate class, (five to six students) though we meet monthly instead of weekly for now. I have also partially resumed some of my responsibilities as Sangetsu Director. The Sangetsu ad hoc committee now has a full leadership role in the decisions and direction of Sangetsu and this has left me feeling much relieved and grateful.

Sangetsu has given me a rock to cling to. Thank you for keeping us in your hearts, and for continuing your good work.

Terry Quinn



## SANGETSU REPORT NAC SPRING 2017

Sangetsu North America continues to spread Meishu-sama's heart of beauty in approximately 8 areas around the United States and Canada through regular monthly

or semi-monthly classes. Sangetsu teachers and students have displayed arrangements in approximately 16 Ikebana shows, have put on many workshops and demonstrations, and in places have participated in creating and distributing mini-arrangements to the public. They have also continued to bring beauty to our Johrei Centers and gatherings through regular arrangements for altars and elsewhere.

Our current teacher roles includes 6 Professors, 5 Assistant Professors and 25 Instructors--some of whom are inactive. In June, examinations were offered in Los Angeles for 1 Profesor, 3 Assistant Professors and 6 Instructors, so our teaching staff continues to expand. A number of our teachers are very active in representing Sangetsu in various other Ikebana organizations, bringing our school and Meishu-sama's philosophy into greater notice and appreciation in the world of Ikebana throughout North America.

We have noticed the differences in teaching that are arising in Japan—where students have been surrounded by Ikebana all their lives-- and have come to a clear consensus that we need to continue to teach the basics of arranging here in North America for the foreseeable future. We also see the need to standardize and clarify some of our teaching practices and requirements, to insure that all students are given the same opportunity to grow and improve their art. We feel the need for ongoing education—particularly for new instructors in the art of helping students learn to see beauty in the new way that Sangetsu offers.

Our goals for this new year include a deeper investigation into the many possible ways to improve our effectiveness as a School in spreading Meishu-sama's philosophy through the beauty of flowers. We will be looking particularly into improving our arranging and teaching skills as a whole. We also will look to find and explore new ways to bring Sangetsu to North America, to raise the consciousness of our two countries and help pave the way for peace.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lorna McMurray  
Sangetsu North America Coordinator

## Glorious Greens (*you don't just eat 'em*)

by Terry Quinn

One of the basic principles of Sangetsu flower arranging involves the use of green materials. Sometimes the stunning beauty of flowers detours our arrangements and the flowers grab center stage. The greens we select provide the basic structure and focus of a Sangetsu arrangement.

I have had Rev. Ajiki and Michi ask me "Who is the boss in this arrangement and what are you trying to show?" A good double-barreled question.

You can avoid this pitfall by choosing your greens and arranging them first. What style is suitable with the greens, what vase is appropriate and what flowers dance with them all?

Greens out your back door are best. I don't know where you live, but out here in the desert, hunting greens can be daunting. Yes, I've wandered into places I probably shouldn't.....but as I tell my students.....I try to remember to ask the plants for permission before I cut, and pretty much they say go ahead!

Rev. Ajiki has often mentioned that the green materials give our arrangements a vitality.....that nature is living in the forked leaf and the woody branch. Our founder said "It is not necessary that we rearrange nature, just add a few touches. It is beautiful as it is, as it manifests life." Arrange your green materials and leave a place for



the flowers. Make your flowers secondary in your arrangement. "As if painting a picture."

I'll try to take my own advice.

## Ikebana Activities March-July 2017

L. Ancilla Armstrong

As part of my volunteer work with assisted living facilities for seniors in Broward County, Florida, I demonstrated at New Horizon Bay, Tamarac and Premier Five Star, Sunrise, during March and July and provided one workshop at Horizon Bay in May. At both the demonstrations and the workshop, I provided a brief overview of Ikebana. Participants expressed their appreciation and had lots of questions. The five persons who participated in the workshop were very proud of their creations, as shown in the attached photo. One remarked that it was the first time that she had done anything that made her so happy.



## Reports from Vancouver

**So Jung Choi:** I have three students whom I teach twice a month at the Johrei Center. I started in July and continue to do so. Hopefully more students will join in the fall.

On the first weekend of August, I did a demonstration with Professor Joan Fairs at the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Powell Street Festival. I demonstrated a basic moribana and a broad surface and mass arrangement. We both used material from Joan's townhouse grounds.

In September, I am planning on displaying at the VanDusen Garden in Vancouver at the annual Early Mum Show.



Above arrangement is a freestyle done by one of So Jung's students. Picture on the right is So Jung demonstrating at the Powell Street Festival.



The Spring Show was on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Five members of Sangetsu displayed and I did the demonstration. (See Mayumi's translation of a newspaper article about it.) The following day was the Rhododendron Festival in Burnaby. Cecily Chang of Ikenobo and I made arrangements throughout the day and displayed them. Kimberly Cooke came by to help for a while, and made a couple of ikebana. (Picture above is Kimberly with her arrangement at the Spring Show. So Jung and Mayumi also displayed.)

### Mayumi Ichino:

I continue to have Sangetsu classes at the Vancouver Johrei Centre twice a month throughout the year. During the summer months, flowers flourish. We take these flowers and even weeds for our arrangements. I can't tell you enough about the joy of going out to the garden in the early morning to be greeted with flowers, trees, birds and fresh air!

### Joan Fairs:

Since our last newsletter, Sangetsu in the Vancouver area has been very busy...we participated in "Winterruption" on Granville Island in February. Sangetsu displayed at the Granville Island Broom Company. Beth MacLaren, Kimberly Cooke and I made early spring arrangements there. On March 25<sup>th</sup> the Contemporary Art Gallery in downtown Vancouver had a visiting artist from Toronto who installed a large work incorporating ikebana and a quilt she made with a saying by the head of Sogetsu School. Two Sogetsu members from Vancouver and one of my students and I created ikebana. My two were the more conventional style, while Sogetsu was Sogetsu...The show was open to the public just for one evening, but it was well attended, and the viewers were intrigued to find flowers and greenery at every turn.

Sakura Days; Japan Fair at the VanDusen Botanical Garden was held on April 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. All things Japanese, with the focus on cherry blossoms and Japanese street food was available. A small Ikebana display including four schools, with three arrangements each was in an indoor space, shared with local artists' paintings of cherry blossoms. Mayumi Ichino, So Jung Choi and I displayed there, incorporating branches of cherry blossoms.

June was a busy month of flowers for me, with classes on-going for Beginners and Continuing students, until the summer break. Three special projects for an event planner—including ten ikebana using origami flowers were created. I also arranged flowers for a funeral and a wedding. In the middle of the month, I travelled to Los Angeles to work with Helena Arouca and Valeria Brinkers to put on a seminar and examination for ten candidates of varying levels.

July only had one ikebana event, which was a workshop at the Burnaby Art Gallery with six participants. It was held outside in a shady part of the beautiful gardens, and each person later continued their day drawing and painting their arrangement.



On the first weekend of August, the 41<sup>st</sup> annual Powell Street Festival took place. This event showcases all things Japanese, including food carts, crafts, as well as the arts. So Jung and I demonstrated and Kimberly Cooke, and Fei Chui also displayed. This area of Vancouver has been known as "Japan Town", where the first Japanese immigrants settled over a hundred years ago.

## Vancouver Shinpo May 18, 2017

Vancouver Ikebana Association Spring Ikebana Show; 43 displays by Ikenobo, Kado Sumi, Sangetsu-ryu and Sogetsu-ryu

Being blessed with sunny weather, the Vancouver Ikebana Association (VIA) hosted a Spring Ikebana Show on May 6<sup>th</sup> at the Allen Emmott Centre in Burnaby, BC. Consul General of Japan, Asako Okai and her husband Mr. Okai attended the opening ceremony along with 40 invited guests. After the ribbon cutting, the show was open to the general public.

### Fifty second anniversary

About one year ago, Consul General Okai arrived at her post in Vancouver and her first official duty was to attend the VIA Spring Show. Commenting that a big flower arrangement on the stage was popular at the reception for the celebration of Emperor's birthday last December, she wished the Spring Show success and thanked VIA members for their efforts to carry on the tradition of Japanese culture. After her speech, she viewed each display attentively and chatted with VIA members.

VIA celebrates its fifty second anniversary this year. According to the president of VIA Kuniko Yamamoto, VIA has 80 members but requires more members, as most of the current members are aging.

### Flowers are alive and fascinating

Forty three arrangements were displayed by schools of Ikenobo, Kado Sumi, Sangetsu-ryu and Sogetsu-ryu. It is not an easy task to bring in large branches as well as vases, baskets and attachments for displays. Preparing the venue for the show and setting up arrangements began the afternoon before the show. No one could stop flowers changing their shapes as they responded to the temperature of the room. Rie Yamazaki from Kado Sumi explains, "Tight buds yesterday opened up perfectly today. On the contrary, I had to replace lilies and tulips this morning as they opened up too much overnight. Flowers are fascinating because they are alive."

### Each school has its own unique character

Demonstrations given at 13:30 and 15:30 attracted a large audience. Each school used similar materials such as tulips, dogwood and azalea from the garden. Yet, outcomes were so different. Audience members were involved actively in demonstrations with questions such as "What are the major differences

among different schools?" and "How long do we need to study?"

Some members started taking pottery lessons to make vases for arrangements and another member composed Haiku poems, being inspired by the arrangements. Joan Fairs states, "Please understand the unique characteristics of each school; find your favorite style and start taking lessons."

Written by Louise Akuzawa, Vancouver Shinpo reporter  
Translated by Mayumi Ichino

## Sangetsu North America Seminar and Exams

**On June 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> 2017, SNA conducted a seminar and exams for ten candidates from Canada and various parts of the United States. Here are some observations and comments from one of the candidates and the two Professors, who tell us about the weekend in Los Angeles.**



### Mayumi Ichino Assistant Professor Vancouver Canada

I took the Sangetsu exam for the assistant professor at the Los Angeles centre in June. My gratitude is for the many people who worked hard to help us have this opportunity. We could not have done this without their help.

In order to prepare myself for the exam I read books regarding Sangetsu. I came across a book "Transformation Through Flowers: Spiritual and Physical Healing" by Kathleen Lemler. What she said in the book inspired me so much and I was totally absorbed by the book.

According to Kathleen, "Korinka is not a set style. It seeks to manifest the artist's spirituality and creativity through the flowers while adhering to the laws of nature. The simplicity of its design speaks of truth that is demonstrated in nature." These short sentences say everything about Sangetsu and Korinka. My focus has shifted to simplicity when I make arrangements.

Although it was an exam, I just enjoyed myself making arrangements. I also enjoyed meeting with people who came to LA to take exams and talking with them. I am very grateful for having Sangetsu as a part of my life.



I would like to share a picture of Korinka I made in LA.

Joan Fairs Professor

Vancouver BC

First of all, I would like to say that this weekend would not have been possible, if not for e-mail, the notes and advice from Reverend Ajiki and the late director Kathy Lemler, the guidance from Terry Quinn in Tucson and the cooperation of Helena Arouca in Virginia and all the work of Valeria and Leonard Brinkers of LA to get everything put together!

E-mails flew back and forth for at least four months. Ideas and suggestions were put forward and considered. This being the first time that Helena and I were in charge of putting together the seminar and exams, it was a real challenge! If not for Valeria's tireless organizing and the help of her husband Leonard, we couldn't have managed, since they got together all the floral material and the food and other supplies.

At last the weekend for the seminar and exams arrived. The ten candidates came from Florida (Marcelo), Vancouver Canada (Mayumi, Kimberly and So Jung), Montana (Lorna), and the rest from the Los Angeles area. New friends were made and we reconnected with old acquaintances. We even celebrated Valeria's birthday!

We found that the timing of some of the activities could be improved, and the scoring of the exams adjusted, but with the great team work that we had, we accomplished a successful seminar and exam. By the way...everyone passed! New Professor is Valeria Brinkers; three new Assistant Professors are Leonard Brinkers, Mayumi Ichino and Lorna McMurray. Successful Instructors are: Lisa DeJong, Julie Wolfe, Virginie Pesch, Marcelo Dos Santos, Kimberly Cooke and So Jung Choi. Congratulations to all!



Helena Arouca Professor

Virginia

Hello all

I would like to share the exciting experience we had in June 2017 in Los Angeles, CA. This was the first time I planned an exam and I was blessed with help from Terry, Joan and Valeria. A lot goes into it, especially when it is your first time!

After I got all the planning done and approval by Terry, I started thinking about the candidates. I discovered a pleasant blessing; seeing how well trained they all were! Thanks to Valeria, Joan, Ancilla and Mayumi! Job well done. The arrangements were spectacular, unique and showed the love each one of the candidates had for the flowers.

I would also like to thank Rev. Sanjay and Rev Richard for the use of the church and the Kenmore "Hilton"!

Let's welcome the new professor, assistant professors and instructors!

### **News from the San Francisco area**

The Sangetsu classes continue at the San Francisco Johrei Center with Jill Owen as instructor, on the first and third Saturday each month.



We also had a delightful workshop at the annual Johrei Conference in July, led by Reverend Howard Doi and myself. In June there was a one-day flower arranging activity at Marin Montessori School, producing beautiful arrangements for their graduation ceremony.

Pictured is a freestyle arrangement by one of my students, Anita Law.

Suki Davis continues to teach twice a month in Mill Valley. Suki has breast cancer which has spread to her lungs. She is at home and her family is with her. Although she is still teaching the class, her activities are limited. She wanted people to know. Johrei would of course be appreciated. We wish her well.

### Sangetsu North America Ad Hoc Committee—on Task

As you undoubtedly know, due to a serious family purification, our Director, Terry Quinn, asked to be relieved of her active duties in the spring of last year. Rev. Ajiki asked the Executive Committee in Tucson to find a swift solution so that she could hand off her Sangetsu responsibilities as quickly as possible. After much discussion, the idea of creating an ad hoc committee of 3 to 5 people was agreed upon—initially to serve for one year while Terry’s situation clarified itself.

Helena Arouca was unanimously selected to act as Ad Hoc Director, assisted by Ancilla Armstrong, Patricia Dickson and Lorna McMurray. Marta Vergara agreed to serve as liaison with the Tucson headquarters, Karey Karam continued her duties as Treasurer and Joan Fairs continued editing and producing the Newsletter. Terry Quinn agreed to assist in an advisory capacity, along with Rev. Ajiki. Since then, the Ad Hoc Committee has had a number of online meetings, using Zoom Conferencing, as well as working through emails and phone calls, in order to handle immediate business concerns. Lorna was asked to serve as the SNA Acting Representative at the NAC Meeting this spring. In May, we were overjoyed when Terry agreed to serve another 2-year term as Director, with the Ad Hoc Committee continuing to serve as her back-up henchwomen.

This November the committee will come to Tucson for four days to work with Terry on updating our policies, improving our curriculum and teaching, and re-envisioning the mission and goals of Sangetsu NA that we may better serve in the spreading of Light through the art of flower arranging. We are looking forward as well to arranging flowers together in between discussions of policy, guidelines and budget development. We are counting on the beauty of the flowers to inspire and refresh our hearts, as we plan for the future of Sangetsu here in North America. Wish us well!

By Lorna McMurray

### Report from Mamiko Matsushita

Mamiko has 5 to 6 students who come to her home on a monthly basis, in the Seattle area.

She also makes arrangements for the Altar Room, and has made an arrangement in the Tea Room in the Seattle Japanese Garden on June 10<sup>th</sup>, see the next two photos.



To celebrate Paradise on Earth day on June 16<sup>th</sup>, Briana Metting made the left arrangement, and student



Rie made the one on the right.

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**Excerpt from “The Movement to Make a Paradise of This Earth Through Flowers” by Mokichi Okada**

There is no need to tell you what a refreshing effect a single flower can have when displayed in the corner of an office, or on a desk in a study. Ideally, I would like to see flowers displayed even in such places as detention centers and prison cells. Their presence would no doubt have a great salutary effect on the mental state of the inmates. By creating a world in which flowers can be found wherever there are people, we can eliminate much of that which is hellish in present society.

(May 8, 1949)