

On March 26, 2022, the North America Chapter of Saga Goryu Ikebana joined Chapter 1 in their 65th Founders Day celebration at the Columbia Country Club. David Komeiji, assisted by Susan Kasa, Caleb Hendrickson, Rumiko Fadden, and Tomoko Okuyama, presented ikebana of the Saga Goryu School.



Mr. Komeiji is head of the Ikebana Saga Goryu-North America Chapter, based in Portland, OR. He strives to promote the Saga Goryu ideals of creating peace and beauty within one's immediate surroundings and within the larger realm of existence, keeping alive the artistic traditions and philosophical beliefs that frame the basic human desire and responsibility for harmony.

The title for the presentation was *Mado* (Window): View into the Universes.

This year's *Odai* (theme word) is *Mado*. *Odai* is selected by the Imperial Household and revealed at the annual New Years' poetry reading event - *Utagai Hajime*, held at the Imperial Palace.



Mado is an object that invites the opportunity for an individual to view the external surroundings as well as see (from the outside) the interior spaces. In some traditional Japanese homes/tearooms, there are round windows providing a different frame of view from a standard square or rectangular borders.

An *Enso* is a single-stroke circle done by Japanese calligraphers. It reflects the Zen Buddhist idea of 'truth,' a path to personal insights. The Buddha (enlightened one) and the universe are represented in a symbolic circle. The *kanji* (Japanese characters) are traditionally written as one-yen (*Yen*) - Origination/Path (*Sou*). As a homophone (same sound), the idea of the shape of a 1 yen coin (*En*) and *Mado* (window) can be read as sou – so the *ensou* we are referring to is "window into one's own mind." (Calligraphy courtesy of Rumiko Fadden).



Nine arrangements were presented. Four traditional Saga Goryu styles and the contemporary versions of those designs and a larger *mukaebana* (welcoming arrangement).



The first arrangement was a 7-leaf *Seika* using aspidistra. The arrangement reminds the creator and viewer that we have individual responsibilities to be part of creating harmony (or solution).

The general shape of the arrangement is an asymmetrical triangle consisting of *Tai* (Body), *Yo* (Action) and *Tome*



(Bind), where the Tai and Yo join at the tome to make a single point of origination.

The contemporary version is called Inoribana (prayer flowers), recalling hands pressed together in prayer. The materials were delphinium and sunflower.



The second traditional arrangement was a Heika. Heika is comprised of Tai (body) and Tome (join/ bind) with weeping mulberry, lisianthus and mini carnations. When the Tai is securely stabilized, the tome and other supporting pieces will be stable. The underlying idea is if your body is centered, grounded, in balance... then life with its challenges will not take you off-center.



Sai no hana is the elegant, contemporary version of heika, accenting a beautiful line. A whaleback and a pink calla lily flower were used in the arrangement.



The third traditional arrangement was a Moribana using maple branches, fritillaria and azalea. The elegance of the maple was highlighted by activating the empty space within the arrangement.



A more playful contemporary version of Moribana is the Omoibana (thoughtful flowers) arranged with yellow irises and pink sweet pea.

The fourth traditional arrangement was the semiformal Shogonka (offertory arrangement), using juniper, yellow chrysanthemum, purple hydrangea and ruscus. It depicted the need for a kind, human heart to integrate the six great elements of the universe into a harmonious arrangement.



The large arrangement - *Mukaebana* - reminded the viewer of the *ensou* and its significance. Materials used were cherry branches, cherry branches with buds, pink delphinium, black pine, curly willow, yellow chrysanthemums, Star Gazer lilies and the non-perishable items were white fans and a 1400 strand gold and silver *mizuhiki* (paper string) decoration. Each element was intentionally chosen. As a commemoration of Chapter No. 1's 65th Founder's Day, the knotted (musubi) gold and silver *mizuhiki* decoration was used to symbolize being 'tied' together/bound in friendship and as a general good wish for all who attended. The fans - Suehiro - wished prosperity to all. The plant material, local cherry branches paired with yellow chrysanthemums, signified wishes for continued good relations between the US and Japan. The pine at the base of the arrangement was a wish for longevity. The curly willow (unryu yanagi) represented the mythical cloud dragon, and the red and white (*kouhaku*) of the stargazer lilies acknowledged the celebratory nature of this event. Within the large arrangement is a variation of a *seika* using southern magnolia. It represented a person, reminding us that we are part of the universe.



David concluded the program by thanking the members of Chapter 1 for the use of their containers, allowing him to gather material in various gardens and the warm display of hospitality from everyone. He went on to express his appreciation to the Japan Foundation of New York for their support in helping to bring the event to fruition.



It was a pleasure for the Saga Goryu- North America Chapter team to share their understanding and art of their school and to meet and chat with attendees during lunch.

