

TIMELINE IKEBANA SCHOOLS

Ino no imoko was sent to china to learn about the Chinese culture including Buddhism.

The custom of placing flowers on the altar began when Buddhism was introduced to Japan by way of Korea in about **593**.

Simple arrangements of flowers, called *kuge*, mostly lotus without stems as offertory to the Great Buddha. There usually would be a bronze incense burner, a candlestick and a vase like container to hold some lotus (not brass items like we see here).

These offerings were the precursors of tatehana, standing flowers, an early form of ikebana.

Tatehana done by Laura Felt (Ikenobo). Materials: willow, wax flower, carnation, cedar, crocosmia and freesia.

In the Heian period (794-1192 (Kyoto was the capital)), apart from altar offerings, the practice of enjoying flowers displayed beautifully in a vase also became popular. Poems, novels and essays from that time contain many passages that describe the appreciation of arranged flowers.

In the Kamakura period (1192-1333), the samurai class seized governing power from the aristocrats, causing great changes in Japanese society as a whole. The *shoin zukuri* style of architecture first appeared at this time. The *tokonoma* (a small, sacred alcove at the side or end of the room for receiving guests) was an important new element in this architectural style. And flowers in a vase were often, if not always, the key decorative element in the *tokonoma*.

Tokonoma in place – hang scroll

During the Muromachi Period (1333-1573), ikebana is born. Ikebana patterns and styles evolved quickly. By the late 15th century, flower arrangement practice had become widespread and appreciated by ordinary people, not just the imperial family and the upper classes. That marked the beginning of an art form with fixed requirements. Rules were prescribed and materials were combined in specific ways.

IKENOBO

Symbol is tachibana Mandarin orange flower – the evergreen citrus symbolizes things eternal

Ike meaning pond and *bo* meaning a priest's hut; the *no* is a connector. Ikenobo is the name of the family that has headed this school for 45 generations.

Rikka meaning “standing flowers” is a formal upright style with its roots in early religious floral offerings; later Rikka portrayed the beauty of a natural landscape.

In 1523, the Ikenobo School formulated the principles of *Rikka* arrangements by naming the seven principal branches used in that type of arrangement. During the Momoyama period (16-17th century), many magnificent castles were constructed. During the same period, noblemen and

imperial retainers devoted much time to creating large decorative *Rikka* floral pieces. The *Rikka* style was considered the most appropriate form of decoration for Japan's castles.

Official date celebrated (555 years) **1562** AD Ikenobo School was established.

DEMO: Yuki Ikenobo, the Iemoto Designate, talked about the evolution of ikebana, mentioning the 555-year history of Ikenobo Ikebana. There were five very large bowls in which groups filled palm leaves, banana leaves, red sister, ginger and heliconia. This arrangement was based on the morning "Flower and Sword" expressing the tropical nature of Ryukyu, the original name of Okinawa. Next, about ten assistants, one at a time, placed their plant material for a *Rikka shimputai*. Finally, structures of vines appeared. While four tyco drums played, children and adults put flowers and giant bleached palm fronds; to a background of sounds of the ocean and men and women dancing.

SAGA GORYU

The Daikakuji Temple was originally the detached palace or villa of Emperor Saga. In 876, his daughter designated that his villa be converted to a Shingon Sect temple. The roots of Saga Goryu Ikebana can be traced to Emperor Saga and his Palace. From the chrysanthemum island within the Osawa Pond of his villa, he gathered chrysanthemum flowers and placed them in his Imperial vase creating initial ikebana.

In Saga Goryu Ikebana, before arranging flowers, the arranger calms him/herself by reciting a Buddhist sutra. The school's motto in practicing ikebana is "to unite flowers and religion".

Every arrangement clearly illustrates the traditional foundation of Saga Goryu, reflecting the philosophy that every plant, even a single blade of grass in the field, is a precious manifestation of life. Further, mankind and human society are purified by the living nature from the natural world.

DEMO: Buddhist singing greeting to Gods for successful II Convention. The head teacher of the school made an arrangement offertory to the Gods in the center in a bamboo container the most formal style. On the left a scenic arrangement made to music and bird sounds of a mountain view and on the right a near, water view nourishing Mother Nature with a mangrove section and a lot of baby's breath. In the middle an arrangement with flowering cherries, wisteria and many pink peonies which was then raised up on a red traditional cart.

The Monoyama period was, in general, notable for its excessive decorative style. However, this period gave birth to the tea ceremony and an emphasis on rustic simplicity. This resulted in a new style of minimalist ikebana for the tea ceremony room called *chabana* that contrasted sharply with Monoyama excesses.

Chabana made with iris leaves and blue iris flowers and placed in tokonoma.

Chabana emerged in tandem with the rise of *wabi-cha* around the **Momoyama period**. **Sen Rikyū** is considered the most influential person in the development of *wabi-cha*, and is also credited as the originator of the accompanying *nageire* mode of flower arrangement, which is characterized by freedom and spontaneity in expressing the natural beauty of the material.^[4] Among the statements

attributed to him, the first one in the set of seven known as "Rikyū's Seven Precepts" (*Rikyū shichisoku*) concerns chabana.^[6] It goes, "The flowers [Chabana] should be such as they are in the moor."^[7] In the history of ikebana, the *nageire* style was added to the more stylized *Rikka* arrangement around the end of the 1600s, as influenced by chabana.^[8] This new style had fewer rules and appealed to those who were searching for a more simple and natural look. Early tea masters used the *nageire* style until it further divided into the *seika*, pure chabana, and tea flower styles. The chabana style, with no formal written rules, became the standard style of arrangement for Chanoyu.

By 1600, the religious significance of ikebana had diminished, and the resulting floral arrangements gradually became a decorative lay art. In the Edo period (17th-19th centuries), the simplicity of the *chabana* developed into the *nageire* or "thrown-in" style. This less-structured design led to the development of the *seika* or *shoka* style, characterized by a tight bundle of stems that forms a triangular three-branched asymmetrical structure, in a tall container; and to the "bunjin-bana" or literati arrangement, featuring containers and floral materials depicted in Chinese paintings and literature, and favored by elegant members of intellectual society.

MISHO

Misho School was established in 1807 in Osaka. The founder, Ippo Mishosai conducted his own ikebana philosophy based on Yin-Yang and the five elements, as well as Eastern thoughts.

Diagram of circle and square and triangles and a photo of the very stylized three-point arrangement.

He explained about the harmony of reality and shaped reality. He expressed his philosophy to the defined figure of flowers. This is the Kakubana the classical form of Misho School. The circle expresses the dynamic and limitless nature of heaven while the inside square defines the four seasons and four directions of earth. The straight line in the middle represents human beings. Bisecting the four-cornered figure forms two triangles. In the triangle, three branches are arranged. The tallest expresses heaven, the medium one -- human being and the shortest -- earth. This idea is the fundamental principle through which a deep appreciation of the harmony between nature and human being is expressed.

DEMO: The Iemoto explained about the circle and square etc. then did a very traditional arrangement with four bamboo to express this. With a piano music background he used fifteen containers called "Fugi" to create the sacred mountain using witch hazel, forsythia, and azalea. His third and final arrangement was very interesting. It had wisteria vines, cherry blossoms, urn containers and red acrylic. Then, the Iemoto turned on some switches to electrify the arrangement.

Publication in 1891 of Josiah Condor book, the first ikebana book in English, titled "The Flowers of Japan and the Art of Floral Arrangement"

KORYU SHO-OH-KAI

Established 1912

The floral art called Koryu was begun around the middle of the Edo Era; the arrangements were used for the Tokonoma of a traditional Japanese home. The style of Ikebana that is used now by the Koryu Sho-oh-kai School is a modern art that developed from that original traditional Koryu style. A principle of the modern style is to have the floral and plant material maintain their own originality as much as possible, and leave to the arranger's free feeling and artistic sense as to how to do Ikebana in harmony with the space where the arrangement is displayed.

DEMO: First, Rihoh Semba made a seika arrangement to honor guests with the three basic lines for heaven, man and earth using cherry blossom and pine and spruce. He explained the bamboo container with two windows plus the top opening as mountain (top) and small village (the top hole with black around it) and the bottom hole the water scene. This sounds like a landscape design to me. "Ikebana is emotion, passion, fire in the soul".

In the mid 1800s, when the centuries-old Shogunate system collapsed and Meiji-era modernization resulted in the overhaul of Japanese social, economic, political systems, the art of Ikebana likewise was revolutionized. New, non-indigenous and lavishly colored floral materials from around the world entered Japan's ports, revitalizing the ancient art and stimulating the development of new styles, most notably the "moribana" style — an arrangement placed in a flat container, or "suiban."

OHARA

The symbol is a bellflower in stylized form.

Unchin Ohara studied Ikebana of the Ikenobo School under his father. He developed a wholly new style that used low, wide containers, probably designed from Bonsai style containers. These flat, shallow containers permitted a more casual arrangement that soon progressed to the natural scenery moribana that was to change the whole future of Ikebana. These landscape arrangements portray the mountain or far view (trees), the valley or middle view (bushes) and the garden or near view (flower); three different perspectives.

1898 Unchin Ohara had the first exhibition of Ikebana in the moribana style. Koun Ohara formalized the establishment of the school in 1912.

Scalene triangles.

Moribana opened up Ikebana to the people.

Ohara was the first school with women teachers.

DEMO: Hiroki Ohara doing his first demonstration for Ikebana International in traditional dress. First arrangement with pandanus tree, 60 Kg "my policy is to not carry anything heavier than my scissors". Large wood branches and underground roots of Cyprus trees

began to look like a jungle in Okinawa. Added were agave plants, dracaena trees, bougainvillea plants in pots (the official flower of “Naha”), and giant monstera. The next arrangement included “pink sensation”, bleached fan palm three per side, occidium orchids in bunches. After this beautiful stage filling arrangement, there were Okinawan dancers to honor the spirits and a fabulous lion (two women inside) to entertain the audience.

World War I shattered social structure and ushered in the modern era, with artistic experimentation in virtually all fields, including ikebana. Free-style arranging appeared around 1925, influenced by the avant-garde art movement in Paris. Ikebana became a modern, abstract sculptural art, incorporating non-botanical materials, sometimes to the complete exclusion of plant material.

SOGETSU

The symbol for the school is Grass Moon.

Established 1927 (Beginning of Showa Period 1926) the school has developed many new forms-- all are based on the concept that ikebana is an art form most closely related to sculpture. Some innovations which are departures from traditional styles are the creation of arrangements without containers, the use of withered plants and materials, the development of free-style forms, the use of artificial materials and in general the development of the concept of the unity of flower arrangement with sculpture.

The Sogetsu School is noted for the beauty of its lines.

When Sofu turned eighteen, he rebelled against his father Wafu and invented an ikebana of his own. Seven years later, he founded a new school called Sogetsu, meaning grass and moon. What he did was to take the radical step of removing flower arrangement from the traditional *tokonoma* within whose confines ikebana had been bound. But Sofu, seeing that ikebana was capable of far greater variations, sought to make it a more spontaneous art. The motto of Sogetsu to this day is based on Sofu’s vision: “Ikebana has to evolve corresponding to the times, in any space, with any material”.

DEMO: First huge wooden piece which was a mass of nailed sticks with bare trees and palm fronds. Then a blue glass vase made by Akane, the Iemoto, for the blue sea of Okinawa, adding branches of Japanese hemlock painted blue, yellow statice in bunches – contrast of two colors – yellow Gloriosa lily in two shades, white hypericum, leaves removed and “wild cat orchid”. Next, two heavy iron containers, pandanas, travelers tree, red heliconia, philodendron, and round fans which opened up. Then, the large arrangement so big and so much material with bamboo

Susan arrangement: White tripod ceramic container with weathered wood inserted into opening. Viburnum all green and green hydrangea.

Chiko School- not at convention, but charming. Story of little boy who lives in the mountains where there is still snow (small white pebbles) and his parents decide to take him to the big lake, down the mountain, perhaps the Lake at Hakone. He sees a carp and steps into the water and a large carp swoops under him to give him a ride. Arborvitae,

azalea branches of just leaves, spirea with one white flower, white stones to represent snow still in the mountains, yellow stones made to look like water using a feather; a landscape of sorts with greens for the mountain view and the sand for water in the near view.

ICHIYO

Symbol is one leaf "Ichiyo".

Founded in 1937 in Tokyo by Meikof and his sister Ichiyo Kasuya.

Philosophy: the concept that an arrangement must fit the environment in which it is displayed and the individual arranger's emotions and character are to be expressed in the arrangement. Not just flowers, but the arrangement is considered to be an art of human communication.

Current Iemoto since 1983 is Akihiro Kasuya, son of Meikof, who came here three years ago for the II North American Regional Conference, is famous for his bamboo arrangements of balance.

DEMO: The Iemoto started with seven bamboo poles upright, opened up in the middle, a vine placed in the middle in a metal basin; he added curly willow, dracaena, flowering branch and red ginger. Meanwhile the son, Iemoto Designate worked on a mass of woven material, inserting baby's breath, into a koun (cloud) inserting a vine, asparagus fern, yellow occidium orchids, gloriosa lily attaching bamboo to the bottom. The famous balancing bamboo.

Balancing bamboo with orange oriental lily and bear grass.