IKENOBO
IKEBANA
SHIMPUTAI STYLE

Sen’ei Ikenobo

SHUFUNOTOMO CO., LTD.
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Ikenobo Ikebana has a history of over 500 years. Ikebana arrangements throughout this long history have expressed not only a love of beautiful flowers, but a love of branches and non-flowering plants as if they were, indeed, just as beautiful as flowers. Regardless of the historical period, people with deep and refined artistic sensitivity have been drawn to the essential beauty of life. Against a backdrop of the changing life styles of passing generations, each age has seen new ikebana styles created to suit the tenor of the time.

In *shoka shimputai*, the style presented in this book, the choice of which materials to use from among the many available is up to the arranger. The arranger also decides which materials to combine and how to use them. Attention is given to the colors, shapes, and expressiveness of the materials, and two or three varieties are used in composing an arrangement. One variety functions as the main material, while a second material responds to the first. The relationship of these two materials is the basic compositional theme of *shimputai*.

The overall impression is of simplicity, but the concise, close interaction between two main materials results in each emphasizing the qualities of the other. Their lines create space, and their movements are filled with the essence of life. Much emotion is expressed here: life’s strength, sharpness, tension, and many other unexpected qualities. The result, in fact, can go far beyond what we might first have imagined. *Shoka shimputai* enables a search for expressiveness that speaks to the contemporary spirit.

We discover new beauty each day in the feelings that come from carefully observing flowers and branches. Ikebana’s beauty lies in the joy of arranging, in experiencing the beauty of space where an arrangement is displayed, and, through an arrangement, being able to share the emotions we have felt with others.

At the request of Shufunotomo Co., Ltd., I have been happy to arrange the work in this volume, including step-by-step photos of the arranging process. I hope that this book will acquaint many people with the beauty of *shoka*, and that readers will sense the deep joy that comes from arranging Ikenobo Ikebana.

Sen’ei Ikenobo
The History of Ikebana

Ikebana began as *kuge*, one of the traditional offeratory decorations placed before an image of Buddha. For a *kuge* arrangement, floral stems inserted in a vase were given standing, upright form in order to express the sense of uprightness or propriety.

Japan's natural setting also influenced the beginnings of ikebana. Southwest Japan is forested with broad-leaved evergreen trees, the northeast by broad-leaved deciduous trees, and areas near the seashore by evergreen pine. The Japanese view of nature was shaped by observing the four seasons in this natural setting; the year-round green of evergreens suggested life's perpetuity, while the falling leaves and sprouting buds of deciduous trees suggested life's renewal.

From this view arose the belief that spirits resided in trees and, especially, that the gods visited and inhabited evergreen trees. Upright evergreen branches were used during religious rites as an invitation to the gods to come and rest in those branches. The power of a god was believed able to lessen or exorcise the diseases and calamities of daily life.

Thus *kuge*, religious beliefs associated with trees, and customs of appreciating flowers which first appeared in about the 10th century were all important factors contributing to the birth of ikebana.

In the palace architecture of the nobility, flowering cherry or other blossoms inserted in vases were first appreciated on outside porches, and then later displayed indoors after the development of lighting. From the 10th through the 14th centuries, games popular among the emperor and nobles using cards or flowers and branches, and the popularity of poetry contests with floral themes also exerted considerable influence on the birth of ikebana.

In the Muromachi period (early 14th-late 16th centuries) architectural design developed into the *shoin* (study or drawing room) style favored by the samurai, including an *oshibi-ita* as a place for display. Precursor to the *tokonoma* (formal alcove) of today, an *oshibi-ita* was an elongated board, placed in front of a wall on which a Buddhist painting, rather than formal Buddhist image, was displayed. An incense burner decorated the center of the board, with *kuge* on the left and a candlestick on the right, forming a three-part decoration called *mitsugusoku*. The *kuge* portion of *mitsugusoku* gradually developed into *tatebana*, an early ikebana style in standing or vertical form.

The *Kao-irai-no-Kadensho*, part of the Ikenobo family collection, is the oldest extant ikebana manuscript, postscript dated 1486. This scroll depicts over 40 ikebana arrangements, with accompanying explanations. Next oldest is the *Sendensho*, the original manuscript of which is not extant, but a copy dated 1536 and described as the teaching of master Senji Ikenobo is said to have passed through the hands of seven earlier masters beginning with Fu-amid in 1445.

Historically, the name Ikenobo first appeared in *Hekizan-nichiroku*, the ancient diary of a high Kyoto Buddhist priest. The entry dated February 25, 1462, records that many people vied for the chance to view several dozen branches placed in a golden container, an arrangement by master Senkei Ikenobo. Senkei is considered the actual founder of Ikenobo, followed by Senjun, and Senno, master of the *tatebana* style. Senno and Senji, mentioned earlier, are thought to have been the same person.

*Tatebana*, a simple style with two or three stems inserted vertically in a vase, developed in the late 1500s into a style with seven main stems. In the late 1600s further development resulted in the impressive and magnificent *rikka* style, a nine-part form with three-dimensional character. *Rikka* was well-suited for display in the splendid quarters of the samurai. *Rikka* style was for
lated during this period by masters Sen'ei, Senko I and Senko II, and high-ranking disciples Shugyoku and Daijuin.

In the 1700s, in place of the shoin-style quarters of the samurai, a newly prosperous merchant class favored more refined quarters with a number of smaller rooms in the sukiya style. Rikka continued to be arranged as before, but the influence of nageirebana (an ancient style, less formal than rikka) was felt in the development of shoka, a new style more suited to everyday life. Masters Senjo and Senmyo Ikenobo were active during this early period of shoka.

Senjo Ikenobo was also famous for his calligraphy, painting and poetry. In ikebana he compiled several collections of rikka arrangements and formulated the shoka style. The Soka Hyakki (1820), a collection of 100 of Senjo's shoka rendered by artists Keibun Matsumura and Seiki Yokoyama, holds our interest even today, not only because of how suitably each floral material is arranged, but also because of the tone of graceful refinement. The beauty of the early shoka was one factor influencing the creation of the modern shimputai style.

Tatebana, rikka, nageirebana, chabana (flowers for the tea ceremony), shoka shofutai (traditional shoka), nageire (a modern, informal style), moribana (a modern, spreading style), free style and shoka shimputai (the contemporary shoka style which is the subject of this book), are all styles which have evolved from the historic background of ikebana and Ikenobo explained above. The character of ancient nageirebana is contained in present-day nageire, while chabana is now
included in free style, an ikebana with no set form. For each age, place or occasion, there has thus been a suitable ikebana style.

The origins of shoka shimpatai lie in early shoka prior to the establishment of traditional shoka shofutai. The essence of Ikenobo shoka form is that the line of stems at the mizugtwa (base of the arrangement) should be slender, appearing as one stem when viewed from the front. This form expresses the strength of life through plants, as they pierce the surface of the soil and grow upward with the plant energy of all life itself.

Today, we have fewer opportunities to observe plants growing in a natural environment, and we select most of our floral materials at a flower shop. Horticultural advances have produced varieties less influenced by seasonal or other natural factors. Imported, brightly-colored, and large horticulturally-improved varieties are readily available. In addition, the modern Japanese home now blends Japanese and Western styles in both its design and decoration. There are strong tendencies to appreciate the beauty of floral materials from a different point of view than in the past, enjoying them not only for their natural forms, but in combinations that bring out the beauty of the unique shapes, colors, and qualities of flowers, leaves, and stems.

With these circumstances in mind, 45th generation Ikenobo Headmaster Sen'ei Ikenobo created shoka shimpatai in 1977. Shoka shimpatai is composed centering on the interaction of two main parts, sbu and yo, with a third ashirai (completing, or assisting) material supporting the interaction of sbu and yo.

The floral material whose impression most strongly conveys your intention in making the arrangement is sbu; yo is the material selected to respond to sbu. Shoka shimpatai is distinguished from traditional shofutai in that the arranger freely creates the form of shoka shimpatai depending on the characteristics of the floral materials themselves.
THE FORM OF SHOKA SHIMPUTAI

Note: In the following explanation, the romanized word yo appears as part of two different pairs of words, for which the original Japanese character differs even though the romanized spelling is the same. It is thus important to note which word yo is paired with in the sentence. If yo is paired with the term in (negative, dark, or subdued qualities), yo is referring to the contrasting qualities of floral materials, such as brightness, tallness, or largeness. On the other hand, if yo is paired with the term shu (the main part of shimpuitai), then yo is referring to the second part of shimpuitai, the part which responds to shu, as detailed below.

The origins of shimpuitai lie in the very earliest shoka arrangements. In shimpuitai, however, there is added creativity in the design, and the arrangement is adapted to the needs of contemporary living environments and modern floral materials.

The standard form of traditional shoka shofutai is described by the relationship of three main stems, called shin, soe, and tai. In shimpuitai, however, the yo (positive qualities such as brightness, strength, largeness) and in (opposite, or negative qualities such as subdued color, delicacy, or smallness) characteristics of two main materials form the arrangement's central theme. A third asbirai material supports the interaction of the two main materials. The first main material in shimpuitai is called shu, while a second material which responds to shu is called yo.

In traditional shoka shofutai, the tip of the shin stem is centered over the mizugiwa (line of stems at the base of the arrangement), thus determining the overall form of the work. In shoka shimpuitai, however, the two main materials are used in a way recalling early shoka, with the form of the arrangement freely determined by the characteristics of the materials themselves.

The shu material gives the strongest impression, chosen for its color, or the line of its stem, or any of a number of qualities that best fit the intention of the arranger. The yo material is chosen for qualities that correspond, or respond to, shu. Just as in traditional shoka shofutai, the in (shady, negative) and yo (sunny, positive) portions of shimpuitai can be determined by the surrounding environment; in shimpuitai, however, in and yo are not set ahead of time. In and yo are determined by the arranger's intention as well as the surrounding environment.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF SHU AND YO

Shu and yo respond to each other, working in unison with their stance or relationship to each other described as follows:

1 Brining energy and tension to the mizugiwa
At the mizugiwa, the basal portion of the arrangement suggesting where stems pierce the soil's surface, the stems of shu and yo act as one. The strength of future upward growth is hidden here, in a posture that expresses both resilience and tension.

2 Giving a sense of stong, upward movement and balance
As shu and yo rise from the mizugiwa, they can display upward movement, or varied movement spreading to the side. In any case, the shu and yo stems respond to each other, presenting an over-
all impression of upward growth.

3 Providing harmonious rhythm

Sbu and yo show differences in length and shortness, largeness and smallness, brightness and darkness, and in their postures and movements; this results in a sense of harmony and rhythm. In general, the sbu and yo materials face each other, but depending on the combination of materials they may face opposite directions as long as overall harmony is achieved.

THE FUNCTION OF ASHIRAI

Asbirai is added when sbu and yo alone seem incomplete. In traditional sboka shofutai, asbirai stems support specific parts of the arrangement, but in shimputai the asbirai effectively supports the entire arrangement. The asbirai can function on the upper, middle, or lower level of shimputai, and when it is at the front of the arrangement on the lower level it is called nejime (stems completing the base of an arrangement) the customary term for a stem in this position. The main possible functions of asbirai in a shimputai arrangement are as follows:

1 Adding needed qualities to the characters of the main materials
If sbu and yo function primarily on the upper or middle levels, asbirai on the lower level can provide needed color or variation in form. If sbu and yo function on the upper and lower, or middle and lower levels, an asbirai on the middle or upper level respectively supports the main materials and tends to clarify the overall motif of the work.

2 Bringing in and yo into balance
If sbu and yo are both leaning in the same direction, asbirai can be placed in the opposite direction to bring the whole work into balance. If the relation between the in and yo qualities of sbu and yo is not clear, asbirai can clarify the relationship between the two main materials.

3 Heightening contrast
If sbu and yo are similar materials, or even if different they still lack contrast in color or form, the asbirai material can provide effective contrast.

4 Setting the overall scene of the work
If the main materials lack a seasonal feeling, a seasonal flower can be chosen as asbirai. The addition of a stem of a water plant to land flowers, or of a stem of a land flower to water plants, can suggest a natural setting for the entire work.

Step-by-step guides to arranging
The placement of stems on the kenzan (pin frog; needle point holder) seen from above, is indicated at the right of each sketch as follows:

1 stems of sbu  2 stems of yo  3 stems of asbirai
Part 1
Spring
1. The Colors of Spring

Materials: Queen Anne's lace (shu), Spiraea cantoniensis (yo), solidaster (ashirai)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

How the forms of shu and yo are used in the composition of shimputai is very important. The interesting nature of this work comes from how the curving spiraea stems respond to the straight rising lines of Queen Anne's lace. Just two flower colors, white and yellow, convey the feeling of early spring in a carefree manner.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1. Four stems of Queen Anne's lace are placed to emphasize their straightness, with unnecessary flowers and side stems removed. Care is taken in varying the stem heights.
2. Unnecessary spiraea leaves are removed so that the curving stems are clearly visible. The spiraea is placed so that its branches spread left and right.
3. Solidaster is added on the lower level, with the flowers grouped lightly together.
2. Shining with White

Materials: *gypsophila* (*sbn*), California poppy (*yo*),
striped bulrush (*asbirai*)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

In *shimputai* it becomes possible to use *gypsophila* as the main material, *sbn*. Orange poppies stand out against the white, and their slight number heightens the effect of the white *gypsophila*. Softness alone, however, is not enough. The piercing strength of an accent of striped bulrushes tightens the whole arrangement.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Several *gypsophila* stems are used to give a spreading impression. Care is taken that the flowers do not crowd each other or present a heavy feeling.

2. To heighten the effect of the poppies and their color, two flowers each are placed on the middle and lower levels, clearly defining these areas of the arrangement.

3. The bulrush stems are given different heights and placed to emerge from among the *gypsophila* flowers.
3. Humming

Materials: magnolia (sby), Spiraea thunbergii (yo), kerria (ashirat)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

It appears that everything unessential has been removed from the straight magnolia stems. Flowing lines of the spiraea's side stems present a complimentary rhythmic feeling, lines of a musical staff askew, as if someone were humming lightly. A single kerria blossom responds as if it were just beginning to hear spring's soft melody. This work has a playful mood.

**Method of arranging** (using a kenzan)

1. Straight branches of purple magnolia are carefully chosen so that flowers will be positioned on the upper and lower levels of the work, giving a clearly rhythmic impression.

2. The spiraea is also selected for rhythmic characteristics.

3. Care is taken that the lines of each material and the positions of its flowers do not overlap those of any other material, so that rhythms are harmonious.
4. Combining Curved Lines and Surfaces

Materials: flowering cherry (s bu), alocasia (yo),
dogwood (asbirai)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

Although natural flowering cherry branches are quite varied in
color, the stems chosen here are gently curved, extending
upward as if gracefully continuing the two straight lines on the
vase. Leaves are used as surfaces, and the striped leaves here
show beautiful responsiveness to the gently curved branches.
Since interest is centered on the upper level, dogwood on the
lower level brings the work into balance, tightening the lower
level and strengthening the seasonal impression.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 Gently curved stems of flowering cherry are chosen as s bu.

2 Leaves of alocasia, one taller and one shorter, are placed to
respond to the curved lines of the cherry branches.

3 A relatively large number of dogwood flowers is used, balanc-
ing the strength of the upper level of the work.
5. A Breath of Spring

Materials: *bulbinella* (*sbus*), *Iris ochroleuca* (*yo*), liatris (*asbirai*)
Container: wide-moutheed pottery vase

As *sbus*, *bulbinella* stems show natural, strong, upward growth. Iris leaves extend upward as *yo*, expressing their own inner strength and creating harmony between the two materials. The *asbirai* of liatris adds color and tightens the base of the arrangement. Each material extends up with strength suggesting new growth and the breath of spring.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)
1. The flower spikes of *bulbinella* should be as straight as possible. Flowers are placed on the upper, middle, and lower levels.

2. Iris leaves are arranged as if they were the natural leaves of *bulbinella* flowers.

3. Reddish-purple liatris is placed as an accent on the lower level.
6. Natural Forms

Materials: yellow calla (shu), weeping willow (yo),
          freesia (asbirai)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

The yellow calla is from a potted plant. A natural leaf-and-flower
cluster has been cut and placed, as is, as shu. Using this natural
form results in a fresh impression. A curving weeping willow
stem responds to the straight calla stems and makes us aware of
a large volume of space. Freesia reiterates the form of the calla
and the curve of the weeping willow, and helps to emphasize the
function of each material.

**Method of arranging** (using a kenzan)

1. The flower and its surrounding cluster of leaves are used as is.
   Special care is given to the directions of both the flower and its
   leaves.

2. Leaves remain only at the tip of the willow, allowing the curve
   of its line to be clearly expressed.

3. A single freesia is placed carefully so that its function will be
   readily apparent.
7. Swaying Stems

Materials *fritillaria* (*shu*), striped bulrush (*yo*), fern (*ashirai*)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

There are many kinds of curves in natural plant stems. Here, gently curving stems of *fritillaria* are used as *shu*, and striped bulrush responds with the strength of its own straighter stems. *Ashirai* is usually a material of different character, form, or color than either *shu* or *yo*. Here, however, gentle ferns lend complimentary support to the *shu*, and at the same time the ferns’ dark green color expresses its own strength as *ashirai*.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. *Fritillaria* is used not only on the upper level, but also placed on the lower level to complete the *mizugiwa*.

2. Bulrushes are placed taller than the *fritillaria* in order to express strong upward extension.

3. Leaves remain only at the tips of the ferns. The fronds are placed to harmonize with the *fritillaria*. 
8. Making a Connection

Materials: Japanese fatsia (*shu*), pansy (*yo*), bulrush (*ashira*)
Container: pottery compote

Fatsia leaves, with their broad surfaces, are used as *shu*. As a contrast to this strength, *yo* is arranged with charming and delicate small-flowered pansies. Each material has its own unique character, as if upper and lower parts of the arrangement were each involved in its own separate conversation. A single bulrush stem connects the two parts, bringing them into conversation with each other.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Fatsia leaves, one larger and one smaller, are placed on the upper and middle levels. The back sides of both leaves show beautiful vein patterns.

2. Several pansies and their leaves are grouped on the lower level, completing the *mizugiwa*.

3. Although only one bulrush is used, it should not be too prominent, and its height and position are considered carefully.
9. The *Mizugiwa* and Flowers that Hang Down

Materials: wisteria (*shū*), freesia (*yo*), *Iris ochroleuca* (*ashirai*)
Container: pottery compote

In *rikka*, even if wisteria is used on the upper level it will not be placed low in the arrangement, since it would drop below the *mizugiwa*. In *shimpūtai* it is possible to use wisteria on the lower level, but care must be taken that arranging only cascading or hanging materials does not detract from the beauty of the *mizugiwa*. Here, as a contrast to the freely-flowering wisteria, a single straight stem of freesia extends far into the upper level of the work, as if responding to a cluster of wisteria blossoms. Iris leaves provide a visual connection between the pink and white flowers, and tighten the work overall.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. The wisteria flower clusters should not be too large, and care is taken that they do not all face in the same direction.

2. The tall freesia has a small flower head, and a single open blossom.

3. Iris leaves bring the spaces described by the two main materials into harmony.
10. Remembering the Iris Festival

Materials: *Iris kaempferi* (Japanese iris) (*shu*), *Iris ochroleuca* (*yo*),
flax (*asbirai*)
Container: white porcelain vase with design

Early in the season, leaves of the Japanese iris are still weak. Here, rather than just serving as substitutes for Japanese iris leaves, the leaves of *Iris ochroleuca* actively contribute their own energy, helping to emphasize the strong upward movement of the Japanese iris. Fennel is an herb reminding us of the season, and of the traditional collection of herbs on May 5th, the Festival of the Irises.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)
1. Three stems of budding Japanese iris, without leaves, are placed on the upper and middle levels.
2. Six *Iris ochroleuca* leaves are varied in height, and some leaves curve toward the side.
3. A very slightly curved stem of fennel balances *shu* and *yo*.
11. Inner Nature

Materials: magnolia (*shiu*), Japanese fatsia (*yo*), kerria (*asbirai*)
Container: tall pottery vase

In *shimputai* we pay close attention to the inner, essential nature of each material. The arrangement is formed according to this inner nature. Curving, angular branches of white magnolia extend strongly to the left. In contrast, the smoothly rising line of a fatsia stem pulls toward the right. The white magnolia is stronger, however. Kerria, rising from the *mizugtwa*, adds strength to the right side and balances the whole work.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. In order to bring out the strongly directional character of the stems, select branches of magnolia whose flowers are still in bud.

2. The fatsia leaf spreads horizontally, emphasizing its movement toward the right.

3. Kerria tightens the *mizugtwa*. Its rightward extension supports the movement of the fatsia leaf.
12. A Sudden Spring Wind

Materials: wisteria (shu)
   *Spiraea thunbergii* (yo)
   striped alocasia (ashirai)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

Wisteria vines extend up and to the left. As if to bend the wisteria even more, *spiraea* extends broadly to the left, and the *ashirai* of alocasia leaves follows this movement. Although the branches seem to have been disturbed by a sudden spring gust, the alocasia leaf at the *mizugiwa* appears to be pressing back to the right, giving the entire work visual stability.

**Method of arranging** (using a kenzan)

1 A variety of wisteria with small flower clusters is chosen, with the vines extending lighty toward the left.

2 To emphasize the line of the *spiraea* stem, flowers and leaves are removed, except for those near the stem's tip.

3 The surface character of the alocasia leaves is lessened by pinching off some parts of the leaves, as if they had been eaten by an insect. These leaves bring balance to *shu* and *yo*.
13. Life’s Resilient Energy

Materials: weeping cherry (satu)
          wisteria (yo)
          weeping willow (ashirai)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

This arrangement combines three hanging or cascading spring materials. It is extremely difficult to balance a work composed only of hanging varieties but here the feeling of fresh, resilient energy and life in each branch enhances the beauty of the scene. Cutting, and then giving a point to the tip of the main willow stem suggests that the stem has the strength for future growth.

**Method of arranging** (using a kenzan)
1. The *satu* of weeping cherry is a branch with freely cascading stems.
2. The *yo* of white wisteria is arranged on the middle and lower levels, but care is taken that the flower clusters do not touch the water’s surface.
3. The tip of the main weeping willow stem is broken off to a point. The slender willow stems rise to the upper level before cascading down, with leaves removed from the cascading portions to emphasize the curving lines.
Materials: *Philodendron selloum* (*shu*), *curculigo* (*yo*),
rape blossoms (*asbirat*)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

A philodendron leaf with complex surface form is *shu*, while subtle contrast comes from the simple surface form of the *curculigo* leaf as *yo*. Although each of these tropical materials lacks a specific seasonal character, the *asbirat* of rape blossoms gives the entire work a feeling of spring freshness.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. The direction of the philodendron leaf on the upper level is considered carefully.

2. The *curculigo* on the middle level spreads left and right, as if holding the *shu* stem in place.

3. At the *mizugiku*, two stems of rape blossoms, one taller and one shorter, tighten the entire work.
Materials: *Spiraea cantoniensis* (shu)  
*calathea* (yo)  
golden stick (asbira)  
Container: hanging pottery vase

*Spiraea*, a cascading material, is quite naturally chosen as shu for this hanging container. Tradition suggests that a hanging material should cross the suspending chain on only one side of the container, a custom that has been followed here. While keeping in mind the beauty of the *sboka* form, this modern adaptation of a hanging arrangement derives its contemporary feeling from combining the differing colors of dark red *calathea* and golden stick.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. To give clear expressiveness to the *spiraea* stems, leaves other than those at the stem tips are removed as much as possible.

2. The longer *calathea* leaf leans slightly to the right, balancing the leftward movement of the *spiraea*.

3. On its short stem only the blossom of golden stick is used, its role in the *mizugiwa* clearly defined.
Part 2

Summer
1. Fresh, Growing Leaves

Materials: Japanese banana (*shu*), gloriosa (*yo*),
Queen Anne’s lace (*asbira*)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

Light seems to filter through the thin, rounded leaves of Japanese banana, giving a feeling of relaxation and freshness. Gloriosa, with its twisting petals, responds to the natural and relaxed form of the banana leaves. Tension between *shu* and *yo* is softened by using Queen Anne’s lace, a flower lacking a strong impression of its own, as *asbira*.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Banana leaves are carefully selected and balanced according to stem length and leaf blade size.

2. When placing gloriosa flowers, pay close attention to where the leaves are positioned.

3. The Queen Anne’s lace is used very short and confined to one area, with the color of its flowers just visible.
2. Beautiful Leaf Shapes

Materials: anthurium (shu), alocasia (yo),
spathiphyllum (ashirai)
Container: deep, flaring pottery vase

Many broad-leafed tropical materials have uniquely shaped leaves, and when used in combination, subtle variations in their shapes and colors can be emphasized. Here, alocasia leaves (yo) are larger and give a stronger visual impression than the anthurium (shu). Shu is not necessarily the largest material in an arrangement. Shu is, rather, the material toward which the arranger has the strongest feeling. To give an overall sense of strength, multiple stems of both anthurium and alocasia are used.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 Paying close attention to variations in length, anthurium flowers and leaves are inserted near the center of the kenzan.
2 Careful attention is given to the directions that the two alocasia leaves face.
3 White spathiphyllum is effective in giving a more bracing impression amidst the overall relaxed feeling of the broad leaves.
3. Floral Materials with Movement

Materials: striped, and slender-leafed eulalia (shu), hibiscus (yo), liatris (asbirai)
Container: broad-mouthed pottery vase

Shimputai basically uses three kinds of materials. Two different but related materials, such as striped eulalia and slender-leafed eulalia, are sometimes counted as a single material. It is often said that shu and yo should be contrasting in quality and character. Here, the strong, spreading movement of eulalia stems (shu) is contrasted and counterbalanced by hibiscus (yo).

**Method of arranging** (using a kenzan)
1. The two varieties of eulalia are inserted close together on the kenzan, and close attention is paid to the directions of the spreading leaves.
2. Hibiscus braces the mizugiwa, and its surrounding leaves are carefully adjusted.
3. One long and one short spiked liatris are placed to bring shu and yo into harmony.
Materials: hydrangea (*shu*), heliconia (*yo*), *lisianthus* (*ashirai*)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

Unlike traditional *shoka shofutai*, where the essential natural character and seasonal feeling of the materials are most important, in *shimputai* there is the enjoyment of freely combining materials on the basis of their colors or forms. Here, a stem of hydrangea with pronounced slanting movement is braced at the *mizugiwa* by the emergence of heliconia. The color of *lisianthus* is effective in bringing *shu* and *yo* into balance.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. All leaves are trimmed from the hydrangea except those that help to emphasize the lines of the stems.

2. In contrast to the upward and spreading movement of hydrangea, heliconia (*yo*) at the base of the arrangement provides strength and stability.

3. *Lisianthus* moves in harmony with both *shu* and *yo*, and careful attention is given to its stem length and its point of insertion on the *kenzan*. 
5. Spreading Left and Right

Materials: striped and slender-leafed eulalia (shu), gloriosa (yo), delphinium (asbirai)
Container: tall, funnel-shaped pottery vase

The strength of the two varieties of eulalia (shu) divides, as each variety spreads left or right. Gloriosa tightens the base of the arrangement as yo, as if it were the source of the spreading eulalia stems. Considering the forms and colors of shu and yo, a purple flower partially hidden from view is chosen as asbirai.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 Inserted together at the base, equal numbers of stems of two kinds of eulalia, one with striped and the other with slender leaves, give the right and left sides of the arrangement similar visual strength.

2 In contrast to the many stems of shu, yo is a single blossom centered at the base of the eulalia stems.

3 Only a few blossoms of the asbirai are visible, centered behind the eulalia.
6. Corresponding Angles

Materials: caladium (shu), St. John's wort (yo), heliconia (asirai)
Container: tall pottery vase

One enjoyable possibility in shimputai is to create interesting spaces by making use of corresponding angles among the floral materials themselves, or between the floral materials and the vase. Two caladium stems positioned with a V-shaped angle and their pointed bract-like flower, are used as shu. Curving stems of St. John's wort as yo are placed to respond to shu. The pointed heliconia as asirai displays lines similar to the V-shape made by the caladium leaf stems.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)

1. The two caladium leaves are placed so that both a front and a back surface are visible. The angles are such that the stems and leaves extend from front to rear.

2. Unnecessary leaves and side stems are trimmed from the yellow-flowered St. John's wort to emphasize its function as yo.

3. The lines of the pointed heliconia flower cross those of the caladium leaf stems, helping to emphasize the similar lines and angles.
7. The Beauty of a Single Flower

Materials: hibiscus (*shu*), philodenron (*yo*),
*Spiraea japonica* (*asbira*)
Container: tall pottery vase with gold design

One traditional *shoka* teaching discusses the arranging of a single flower and a single leaf. From this teaching we realize that the ancient ikebana masters were moved by the beauty of even a single blossom. Here, a short stem of hibiscus as *shu* expresses the feeling of tranquility that this flower has given us. Compared to the tranquil *shu*, *yo* is selected for its contrasting impression of movement. The distinct contrast between *shu* and *yo* is softened by *asbira*.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1 A perfectly fresh flower and leaves are placed to give a distinct impression as *shu*.

2 The *yo* leaf is placed to show its curving stem, with the leaf blade spreading from side to side like an umbrella over the hibiscus flower.

3 Tiny white *spiraea* flowers clarify the spatial relationship between *shu* and *yo* and bring their distinctive impressions into harmony.
Materials: *ananas* (*shu*), striped bulrush (*yo*), gloriosa (*ashirat*)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

In *shimputai*, the *shu* material can be just a flower, or a flower and its leaves. The color, shape, and number of stems of *shu* are determined by considering how *shu* and *yo* will be arranged to respond to each other. There can be contrast, or correspondence between *shu* and *yo*. Contrast or repetition of qualities brings into being the space encompassed by ikebana.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. *Shu* is placed to emphasize the contrasting qualities of its curved leaves and straight flower. The prominent flower stands straight on the *kenzan*.

2. Striped bulrushes as *yo* reiterate the straightness of the *shu* flower stem. Repeating this straightness lets us see the contrasting strength of the flower and delicacy of the bulrush stems.

3. The height of the gloriosa and position of its curving petals are decided with respect to the *shu* leaves.
9. Growing Quietly

Materials: lotus (shu), ananas (yo), striped eulalia (asbiral)
Container: round pottery vase

The shu is composed of two open lotus leaves, two lotus buds, and one tightly-furled leaf. Although lotus roots grow on the muddy bottoms of ponds, lotus never loses a sense of purity, with the leaves unfurling as they grow quietly upward. Pointed flower buds and furled leaves suggest further upward growth, as does the ananas flower. Curving eulalia stems provide a natural setting for shu and yo, softening the energy of the upward movement.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 Two tall, open leaves are placed at almost the same height. A tightly furled leaf is placed shorter, emphasizing the contrast in heights. Two lotus buds are then placed at different heights, shorter than the furled leaf.

2 Care is taken that the tip of the ananas flower is at a height different than either of the lotus buds.

3 One eulalia leaf is pinched off, while the other describes a large arc, harmonizing with shu and yo.
10. The Sharpness of *Shu*

Materials: *Philodendron selloum* (*shu*), oleander (*yo*),
Spanish broom (*asbirai*)
Container: tall pottery vase

The character of philodendron placed firmly as *shu* establishes it as the main actor on stage, impressive in its own right from the moment it is placed in the vase. *Yo* has its own distinct impression, as does *asbirai*. Each plays an important role, and none could be removed from the completed arrangement.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Strength comes from the straightness of the stem and the volume of space under the spreading leaf blade. The stem is inserted upright on the center of the *kenzan*.

2. Using reddish oleander flowers in addition to the brighter yellow oleander leaves gives *yo* necessary depth and character.

3. Slender stems of Spanish broom, with only one flower remaining, move in harmony with the *shu* stem.
Materials: sunflower (sбу), striped eulalia (yо), dahlia (ashirai) 
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

In the past, summer country gardens were filled with brightly blooming sunflowers, dahlia, and zinnias. Today, however, many flowers are available year-round and lack a seasonal feeling. In this arrangement, sunflowers are faced backward, strengthening the impression of a summer garden.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 Two sunflowers are selected for the beauty of their flower heads and green leaves, one placed taller and the other slightly shorter.

2 Contrasted to the sunny image of the sunflowers, eulalia suggests a summer breeze.

3 The dahlia works to harmonize sбу and yо and tightens the mizugiwa.
12. *Shimputai*—A Non-Traditional *Shoka*

![Shimputai Arrangement](image)

Materials: lily (*shu*), *Iris ochroleuca* (*yo*), lotus bud (*ashibai*)
Container: bronze vase

In traditional *shoka*, called *shoka shofutai*, the form of the arrangement takes precedence. In *shoka shimputai*, however, the essential character of the floral materials, and how they are used in the arrangement, work together to create the form. *Shoka shimputai* is thus non-traditional in that its form is not pre-determined.

In this *shimputai*, the lily’s upward movement and graceful line are made apparent by removing most of its leaves, except those at the tip of the stem. Slender iris leaves complement the upward movement of the lily as if to urge it to bloom further. The lotus bud provides additional color and luster.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. The lily stands firmly on the *kenzan*, with only a few leaves remaining at the tip of the stem.

2. The slight rightward curve of the iris leaves suggests a vast space on the right side of the arrangement.

3. A lotus bud at lower left brings the upper and lower, as well as right and left sides, of the work into balance.

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13. Thinking Carefully About Materials

Materials: *Iris laevigata* (*shu*), hydrangea (*yo*),
*lychnis* (campion flower) (*asbi* or *asbira*)
Container: round pottery vase

In general, *shimputai* uses two or three kinds of floral material
and is composed of at least three stems. Each material plays its
own role, and its beauty and function in the arrangement should
be clearly apparent. This beauty should not, however, be superfi-
cial or overly composed. A work comes to life depending on
how carefully you consider the floral materials. In this arrange-
ment, responsiveness of the upward-moving stems of *shu* and *yo*
helps to convey an impression of cooling refreshment and grace.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Using the iris with its full, natural stem length helps to empha-
size the tall, graceful beauty of the flower. Leaves from natural
clusters are recombined to form the leaf groups at the *mizugiwa*.

2. The color and form of the hydrangea are chosen to comple-
ment the graceful impression of the iris.

3. The gentle voice of a small campion flower completes the
arrangement.
Materials: blackberry lily (sбу and ashirai), globe thistle (yo and ashirai)
Container: tall pottery vase

The graceful movement of a stem of blackberry lily catches our interest, as do the stems and leaves of all ikebana materials. In shimputai, however, how materials interact is more important than their particular forms or shapes. Shimputai usually uses three kinds of materials, but just two are used here. These two materials are varied in form, and each fills two functions in the arrangement.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 To emphasize the strong, upward movement of the blackberry lily as sбу and to create good balance between the upper and lower parts of the stem, leaves spreading too far to the side and branching stems are removed.

2 A globe thistle whose flower hangs down provides contrasting movement to the sбу.

3 Since the tips of both sбу and yo move to the right, a larger globe thistle flower is placed slightly left of center as ashirai, tightening the mizugiwa. An additional blackberry lily bud also serves as ashirai, providing color balance.
15. The *Shu* Material

Materials: cattails (*shu*), *curculigo* (*yo*), clematis (*ashirai*)
Container: tall pottery vase

The largest or tallest material in *shimputai* is not always the *shu*. The inner qualities of a material determine its function. Here, the fresh, broad leaves of *curculigo* serve as an effective contrast in bringing out the beauty of the slender cattails. Clematis helps to emphasize the upward movements of *shu* and *yo*, providing color and visual balance, and helping to harmonize the whole.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. The cattail seed heads are removed and only the leaves used, so that their graceful upward movement will be shown.

2. After considering the number of cattails and their heights, the *curculigo* height is set to create good balance.

3. The clematis placement, the number of its leaves, and the directions the leaves face are all important. Most important, however, is that the *mizugiku* be straight and slender. This is the essence of life as expressed in *shoka*. 
Part 3

Autumn
1. Signs of Autumn

Materials: toad lily (*shu*), Japanese bittersweet (*yo*),
burnet grass (*ashirai*)
Container: tall pottery vase

Subtle color variations in the drying tips of toad lily leaves suggest the end of this year's growth and the change of the season. Toad lily as *shu*, and two stems of bittersweet as *yo* strengthen the feeling of seasonal withering. Burnet grass as *ashirai* is placed in the space between *shu* and *yo*. Together, the three materials speak of winter's approach.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Gaps between the leaves on the stem of toad lily strengthen the feeling of withering.

2. Some bittersweet berries are removed so that the branch will not appear heavy, and care is taken so that the stems give a clean, clear impression.

3. The feeling of drying and winter's approach is strengthened by using only a small amount of burnet grass.
2. The Transformation of Yellow

Materials: spider chrysanthemum (sбу), oak (Quercus aliena) (yo),
         yellow iris (Iris pseudacorus) (asbirat)
Container: flaring glass vase

Plants display many different colors, but although the word “yellow” might describe both a flower and a leaf, the hues of yellow are different in each case. The fresh yellow of spider chrysanthemums with their dark green leaves as sбу is contrasted by the complex, many-layered yellow of the oak leaves at the mizugиwa. Yellow iris leaves, partially drying, show subtle variation in their coloring. The varied shades of yellow in different floral materials create a sense of enjoyment in this work.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1. Two stems of spider chrysanthemums are arranged at different heights, with some of the leaves removed to reveal the lines of the stems.

2. Responding to the two tall chrysanthemums, two stems of oak at the base of the arrangement tighten the mizugиwa.

3. Two iris leaves are used, with the longer placed to harmonize with the yellow spider chrysanthemums.

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3. The Beauty of Corresponding Forms

Materials: blackberry lily (shu), fennel (yo), burnet grass (asbirai)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

The blackberry lily seed pods as shu show upward movement, while fennel flowers as yo show a complimentary upward yet spreading form. Both are used on the upper level, with the corresponding forms of seeds and flowers creating visual rhythm. Additional rhythm between the brown buttons of burnet grass and the blackberry lily seeds bring shu and yo into beautiful harmony. Responding to all of these, two backberry lily leaves on the lower level brace the entire work.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 Unnecessary leaves and side stems are removed from the blackberry lily so that the seed pods will be more visually effective. Two leaves at the base move in concert with the dividing lines of the taller stems.

2 By placing blackberry lily and fennel flower clusters at similar heights, their similar forms are emphasized.

3 Burnet grass is placed after considering the balance of shu and yo.
4. Autumn Clarity

Materials: *Cornus officinalis* (*shu*), *hamamelis* (Japanese witch hazel) (*yo*), camellia (*asbirai*)
Container: tall pottery vase

As *shu*, lines of *cornus* with bright red berries extend to the sky. Witch hazel leaves as *yo* provide a contrasting surface quality. The *asbirai* of camellia provides a single white point at the *mizugiwa*. Lines, surfaces, and points contrast and interact, bringing clarity to the spaces they describe and suggesting a feast of autumnal beauty.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)
1. Lines of *cornus* branches and their berries are emphasized by removing all leaves except for those near the tip and base of the stems.
2. The witch hazel leaves are very important in that they will respond to *shu*. Great care is taken in their placement.
3. White camellia brings visual stability to the *mizugiwa*. Several dark green leaves are used, and the flower is faced in the same direction as the witch hazel leaves.
5. The Contrast of Curved and Straight Lines

Materials: hydrangea (*shu*), cockscamb (yō), areca palm (*ashirai*)
Container: pottery compote

How *shu* and *yō* will respond to each other is one of the main points of *shoka shimpūai*. Here, a branching stem of hydrangea as *shu* describes bending and arching curves. Hydrangea clusters on the upper level and cockscamb on the lower level are both infused with autumn color. Their forms and colors create visual rhythm. By sharp contrast, three straight leaves of areca palm as *ashirai* emphasize the curvature of the other stems.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Since curving lines are to be the main point of the arrangement, the hydrangea is selected carefully. Only one or two leaves are left near the bases of the flowers.

2. Three stems of cockscamb are placed near each other in a cluster, positioned to cover the point where the hydrangea stem divides.

3. The three palm leaves are positioned after considering the balance between upper and lower levels of the work.
6. Form and Color

Materials: maple (shu), salvia (blue sage) (yo), barberry (ashirai)
Container: tall pottery vase

Maple takes on autumn tints in the high mountains first, moving gradually down to lower hills. This natural progression is mirrored here in the shu, with red leaves on the upper level and green leaves on the middle level of the work. In response to brilliant colors on the upper level, blue sage, with its green leaves and reddish-purple flowers, is chosen by contrast for the lower level. The rounded barberry leaves contrast with the incised leaves of maple, and provide further color variation.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 A maple branch with brightly-tinted leaves is used tall, while a branch whose leaves are still green is placed on the middle level at the rear of the first branch. A third, short branch with red leaves stands upright at the far rear.

2 Blue sage is placed after considering height and color balance.

3 The ashirai of barberry responds to the branch of maple whose leaves are still green.
Materials: flowering quince (*shu*), chrysanthemum leaves (*yo*),
   eulalia (miscanthus) (*asbirai*)
Container: tall pottery vase

Stems of quince as *shu* extend into the clear sky, their flowers
fitted with the feeling of life and seeming to float on air. Two
chrysanthemum leaves respond firmly to the energy of the quince
stems. If we were to compare *shu* and *yo* to husband and wife,
*asbirai* would function as a child binding the family together.
Here, the lines of quince stems are emphasized through contrast
provided by yellowing tips of eulalia leaves.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)
1 A quince stem is chosen after deciding where flowers should
   be positioned to function most effectively in the arrangement.
2 Chrysanthemum leaves spread left and right, visually supporting
   the quince flowers.
3 The eulalia leaves are placed lightly in support of the quince.
8. The Ebb and Flow of Life

Materials: eulalia (*suyu*), *Philodendron selloum* (*yo*),
balloon flower (*asbirat*)
Container: tall pottery vase

Withering eulalia leaves taking on more color, and the fleecy pal-
lor of a eulalia plume suggest the approaching end of the life
cycle and an atmosphere of deepening autumn. The withering
eulalia is *suyu*, while an evergreen philodendron leaf spreading
tall and to the right provides contrast. The spreading philoden-
dron and contrasting eulalia plume speak of the ebb and flow of
life. The balloon flower recalls the season just passed and brings
the strong and weak qualities of *suyu* and *yo* into harmony.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Curved and upward-moving leaves of eulalia and a seed
plume are combined and placed on the center of the *kenzan*.

2. The philodendron suggests the form of life at its fullest. The
leaf stands next to, and slightly taller than the eulalia.

3. The balloon flower at the *mizugawa* brings together the func-
tions of *suyu* and *yo*.
Materials: gloriosa (shu), curculigo (yo),
Japanese beautyberry (asbira)
Container: tall pottery vase

In shimputai the largest material is not necessarily shu; shu is the material whose form gives the strongest impression. Even one gloriosa flower on the lower level has a visual impact strong enough to balance a taller yo and asbira. Compared to the unmoving strength of the shu, the curculigo displays upward movement. The line of the Japanese beautyberry stem is placed as a contrast to the yo surface.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 A gloriosa blossom functions as shu. Choose a flower having both good form and good petals.
2 The curculigo leaf is placed to show the beauty of its upward moving form.
3 To show the stem line of the Japanese beautyberry, leaves and most of the berries are removed, with just enough berries remaining to suggest a hint of purple.
10. Yielding

Materials: hydrangea (shu)
cosmos (two colors) (yo)
galax (asbira)

Container: low, wide-mouthed pottery vase

This shimputai is divided into two groups. Hydrangea is used as shu for both groups, the larger group (okabu) on the left, and the smaller group (mekabu) on the right. Curving and bending hydrangea stems create spaces filled with life and energy. Two colors of cosmos as the yo of the larger group respond to the shu of the smaller group, and to the muted color of the hydrangea. Cosmos buds in the smaller group respond in their own way to the form of the large hydrangea above. Colored galax leaves as asbira on the lower level establish the character of the smaller group, and their surfaces provide a relaxed balance to the colorful cosmos flowers.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 Select hydrangea stems whose curves suggest bending and flexibility. Only a small number of leaves are left on the stems.

2 Open cosmos flowers predominate in the larger group, while the smaller group utilizes cosmos buds and leaves.

3 Galax leaves tighten the mizugiwa.
11. Contrast with the Vase

Materials: privet berries (shu)  
globe amaranth (yo)  
galax (ashirai)  
Container: glass vase

In ikebana the vase should have sufficient visual weight with respect to the flowers. The vase and floral portion of the arrangement can be either complimentary or contrasting in color or form. Here, stems of privet berries display a contrasting delicacy when compared to the visual weight of the vase. Gracefully curved stems of globe amaranth provide visual impact. Part of the galax leaf has been removed so that the yo on the lower level will be visible. This subtle technique also helps to balance the delicate character of the glass container.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 Only a few privet berries are left on the stems, and the remaining leaves are in a position where they will visually respond to yo.
2 The globe amaranth blossoms are placed so that they and the privet leaves support each other visually.
3 A small portion of the galax leaf is removed so that the shorter globe amaranth flower is just visible.
12. Strength Spreading and Rising

Materials:  fan palm (*shu*), eulalia (*yo*), *Iris ochroleuca* (*asihrai*)
Container: tall pottery vase

A fan palm displays a large surface, but by removing the center portion of a frond the resulting image is of a surface that spreads from side to side. Compared to the spreading strength of the *shu* surface, eulalia displays a strong, gracefully rising line. Iris leaves support this rising line, adding beauty and slender upward movement to the *mizugiwa*.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. A portion of the fan palm is torn with the fingers and removed.

2. Special attention is given to the directions of the eulalia leaf tips. The eulalia plumes are placed with respect to various stages of the drying leaves, with a younger plume on the upper level and a drying plume below.

3. Iris leaves with yellowing tips are selected. These are placed after considering the colors of the eulalia leaves, creating overall color harmony.
Materials: flowering quince (*shu*), toad lily (*yō*),
*Iris ochroleuca* (*asabirai*)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

A gently curving branch of quince is chosen for *shu*. A stem of
toad lily whose upper portion is straight is chosen as *yō*, respond-
ing to *shu*. Toad lily leaves which tighten the base of the arrange-
ment are also part of *yō*, but yellowed leaves are chosen for this
position. Yellowed iris leaves reflect the yellow of the toad lily
leaves and contribute to overall color harmony.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)
1 Quince expresses the calm of autumn. Only a small number of
blossoms are used, contributing to the quiet autumnal mood.

2 Spaces are left between leaves on the upper portion of the
toad lily stem, while a larger number of yellowed toad lily leaves
brace the base of the arrangement.

3 Iris leaves with autumn coloring are placed in the space
between *shu* and *yō*. 
Materials: autumn anemone (*shu*), Japanese witch hazel (*yo*),

*Gomphocarpus fruticosus* (*asbira*)

Container: tall pottery vase

*Shimputai* is greatly affected by visual responsiveness between the vase and floral portion of the work. Here, white autumn anemones are placed on the upper level and a reddened witch hazel leaf on the lower level. The witch hazel leaf, seen slightly from the side and with only a portion of its surface visible, looks up to the *shu*. *Gomphocarpus* seed pods are used on the lower level as *asbira*. The bottom of each pod faces forward so that its roundness is emphasized. Subtle relationships of form and color create visual rhythms among the floral materials.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Seeing the stem line of the autumn anemones is important so that the relationship to materials on the lower level will be clear.

2. The witch hazel leaf is positioned so that its edge is seen.

3. Large and small *gomphocarpus* pods at the *mitugita* are placed in a way that emphasizes their roundness.
15. The Rhythm of Straight and Curved Lines

Materials: balloon flower (*shu*), bittersweet (*yo*),
burnet grass (*asbirai*)
Container: wall-mounted glass vase

*Shimputai* expresses harmonious visual rhythms among the vase and floral materials, and between *shu* and *yo*. In this work we feel rhythmic tension between the long straight line of the vase, the short curved line of the balloon flower, and the long curving line of bittersweet. The *asbirai* of burnet grass balances the strong curves of *shu* and *yo* and softens their contrast.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. A naturally curved balloon flower, showing the effects of wind and rain, is selected.

2. A broadly arching stem of bittersweet is important here. Side stems and berries which detract from this broadly curving line are removed.

3. The height, number of pods, and angle of the burnet grass are all considered carefully.
Part 4

Winter
1. Especially in Winter

Materials: miniature butterfly orchid (sBu), Japanese banana (yo), fern (ashirai)
Container: funnel-shaped pottery vase

Orchids can be arranged regardless of the season, but their beauty is especially appreciated in winter when few other flowers are available. Thinking of orchids almost as winter flowers, they are used here as sBu. Yellowed Japanese banana leaves convey a feeling of the winter season, and are selected as yo. Ferns, whose dark green shows the energy of life even in wintry mountains, are placed as ashirai, heightening the seasonal feeling.

**Method of arranging** (using a kenzan)

1. One orchid stem is used taller, while a second shorter stem is placed at the mizugiwa.

2. In contrast to the straight orchid stems of the sBu, two Japanese banana leaves spread more to the side.

3. The fern is placed in a way that helps to emphasize sBu. The height of the stem is such that it seems to be providing protection from the winter cold.
2. Warmth in the Chill of Winter

Materials: *kuma* bamboo (*shu*), Japanese allspice (*yo*),
camellia (*ashirai*)
Container: bronze *ichimonji*

In the vast loneliness of winter mountains *kuma* bamboo shows
winter's withering effects, and is chosen here as *shu*. Japanese allspice,
which flowers with winter's arrival, is used as *yo*, and red camellia
as *ashirai*. The fragrance of the allspice, and the fire in
the camellia's red flowers work to suggest both warmth and tran-
quility.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1 Two stems of bamboo are inserted, one taller stem with with-
ering leaves, and a second stem just touched by the season, about
half the height of the first.

2 A slanting, upward moving stem of allspice is chosen to
respond to *shu*.

3 Two blossoms of red camellia suggest the warmth of a flame
and, at the same time, complete the base of the arrangement.
3. Flowers to Welcome the New Year

Materials: Japanese allspice (*shu*), arrow bamboo (*yo*),
           pine (*asbirai*)
Container: round, wide-mouthed pottery vase

Welcoming the new year brings a natural feeling of renewal. This
is expressed here by choosing an upward-moving stem of all-
spice as *shu*. Arrow bamboo, with its dark green leaves and
straight stem provides a contrasting and bracing impression as *yo*.
For *asbirai*, shoots of young pine suggest the cold, sparkling air
of the new year and a feeling of congratulations.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. An allspice branch whose lines show considerable movement
   is chosen.
2. To express new resolve, bamboo is placed taller than the all-
   spice.
3. Pine tightens the base of the arrangement.
4. Harmonious Beauty

Materials: narcissus (*sdu*), nandina (*yo*), *kuma* bamboo (*asbirai*)
Container: tall pottery vase

*Sdu* and *yo* are the two most important parts of *shimputai*; with the addition of *asbirai*, harmonious beauty is created by materials of contrasting character. Here we see the beauty and clarity of a single narcissus blossom and its straight green leaves, and clusters of small red nandina leaves and their red berries. The rising line of bamboo responds to both *sdu* and *yo*, increasing the expressiveness of the entire work.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)
1 A single narcissus with its surrounding leaves is placed so that the flower faces forward and the white sheath at the base of the stem is visible.

2 To emphasize the berries, all nearby nandina leaves are removed. The stem is placed in proximity to the narcissus flower in order to heighten the contrast of red and white.

3 Bamboo extends up and to the right, at about the same height as the narcissus, responding to both the narcissus and the nandina.
5. The Preciousness of Small Things

Materials: cyclamen (shu), fern (yo), gypsophila (ashirai)
Container: tall pottery vase

We sense preciousness and fragility in small things. In addition to the beauty of each cyclamen flower and leaf, we feel how precious life is in something so small and solitary. This small life, as if about to embark, is encouraged by the fern. Gypsophila heightens the impression of preciousness.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 A short cyclamen leaf and flower bud are placed at the mizugiwa, and an open flower is inserted to their rear.

2 A taller fern with leaves stripped from the lower portion of the stem extends to the right, while a shorter fern stands straighter.

3 Only two or three gypsophila flowers are used.
6. The Quiet World of an Ink Painting

Materials: *Paphiopedilum* orchid (*shu*), Japanese banana (*yo*), bear grass (*ashirai*)

Container: round, wide-mouthed vase

Pale light and little sound... winter stillness. An arrangement of only yellow and green reminds us of the subtle shades of gray and black in an ink painting. In this work the orchid functions as a point, the banana leaves as surfaces, and bear grass as lines. Each material displays its own uniqueness, and yet all work harmoniously to create the beauty of quiet color shading.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. The orchid is centrally placed on its short stem, grouped together with its leaves.

2. The use of two banana leaves, in different stages of yellowing, suggests the passing season. One leaf is placed taller, the other shorter.

3. Responding to *shu* and *yo*, six dark-green bear grass leaves are each inserted separately alongside the orchid and banana. Their lengths are varied considering overall balance of the work.
7. Signs of Spring

Materials: red, and white flowering plum (suzu), camellia (yo), pussy willow (ashirai)

Container: tall pottery vase

Shimputai can be composed on the basis of the shapes or colors of plant materials, without specific consideration of the season or particular conditions that have affected the plant's natural growing form. It is possible, however, for shimputai to express a traditional seasonal feeling. Here, stems of red and white flowering plum give a lively impression as suzu, with camellia responding as yo. The contrast of red and white shows our happiness at spring's approach. Pussy willow buds as ashirai also seem to be waiting for the arrival of spring.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)

1. The red and white flowering plum branches each have two main side stems. These are positioned so that red and white flowers are divided to the left and right sides of the work.

2. A partially open white camellia has sufficient visual strength to respond to suzu, and is important in tightening the mizugiwa.

3. A short stem of pussy willow as ashirai softens the contrast between suzu and yo.
8. Reverberating Colors and Forms

Materials: paulownia (*shu*), *Spiraea thunbergii* (*yo*),
goodyera orchid (*ashirai*)
Container: tall flaring pottery vase

In winter, purplish seed pods stand out starkly on bare branches
of paulownia. On a neighboring stem, small buds covered with
yellowish-brown down anxiously await spring's arrival. *Spiraea*
as *yo* gives an impression of delicacy and responds to the
paulownia buds. The color of the *ashirai* orchid is similar to the
somber color of the dried seed pods. This is a quiet, yet deeply
interesting work, with a theme of reverberating colors and forms.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Showing variation, stems of paulownia with both dried seed
pods and buds are selected for *shu*.

2. Two stems of *spiraea* provide delicacy and softness. The
impression is strengthened by removing flowers and leaves from
several portions of the stems.

3. An orchid is placed at the *mizugiwa*, responding to the dried
seed pods of paulownia and tightening the work overall.
9. An Arrangement of Two Materials

Materials: narcissus leaves (*sбу*), pussy willow (*yо*),
narcissus flower (*asbirai*)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

*Shimputai* is usually composed of three different kinds of materials. Here, however, leaves and flowers of narcissus, although one material, are considered separately as *sбу* and *asbirai*. Pussywillow is used as *yо*. In this arrangement, leaves function as the main material, with a branch in a supporting role. This relationship of leaves and branches, the opposite of that seen in traditional arrangement, is possible in *shimputai*.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Four long, and two short narcissus leaves are used as *sбу*.

2. To avoid detracting from the delicacy of the narcissus leaves, a pussy willow stem of gentle character is chosen as *yо*. Its height is about half that of the narcissus.

3. A narcissus flower serves as *asbirai*, establishing the relationship of *sбу* and *yо* and bringing these two main parts together. Only one narcissus blossom is used, so that the impression will not be too strong.
10. Reminiscent of *Rikka*

Materials: flowering plum (*shu*)
camellia (*yo*)
*Spiraea thunbergii* (*asbirai*)
Container: tall pottery vase

Freely spreading branches of red flowering plum give a strong, masculine impression. These stems are used here in a manner more reminiscent of *rikk*a than of *shoka shofutai*. Red camellia as *yo* firmly balances the *shu*. White *spiraea* as *asbirai* softens the vividness and strength of the two red materials, and increases the overall expressiveness of the arrangement.

**Method of arranging** (Using a *kenzan*)

1. Two stems of red flowering plum are chosen, one extending upward and the other slanting to the side.

2. Two stems of red camellia brace the base of the arrangement. Open flowers are used for colorfulness and visual strength.

3. Tall, relatively straight stems of *spiraea* are used.
11. Shadow Play

Materials: *gypsophila* (*shu*)
*Philodendron selloum* (*yo*)
cyclamen (*asbirai*)

Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

Although it can be difficult to use *gypsophila* as a main material, it is used here as *shu*. The philodendron leaf is placed directly behind *shu*, with the two materials fusing together. The image is of a pretty shadow play, with cyclamen tightening the arrangement and providing overall harmony.

**Method of arranging** (using a *kenzan*)

1. Attention is given to carefully lining up the *gypsophila* stems, while allowing the stems to spread freely at the top.

2. The philodendron leaf is positioned so that it spreads in a way similar to the *gypsophila* and so that the green leaf and white flowers interact visually.

3. *Asbirai* is a cyclamen whose petals are partially white. This effectively creates harmony with the other white flowers in the arrangement.
Materials: flowering plum shoots (shu), camellia (yo),
*Spiraea thunbergii* (ashirai)
Container: pottery compote

Plum shoots, like suckers on a large branch, lengthen rapidly.
Two of these shoots are used as shu, showing strong upward
movement. At the base of the arrangement, three white camellia
blossoms as yo respond to and balance the movement of shu.
The *ashirai* of *spiraea* responds to both shu and yo, and by con-
trast strengthens and softens the strong impression of the plum
shoots.

**Method of arranging** (using a kenzan)
1 Two plum shoots, one taller and one shorter, stand straight in
the arrangement.

2 Since the mouth of the vase is quite broad, camellia flowers
and leaves are given considerable visual weight, tightening the
*mizugiwa*.

3 Relatively straight stems of *spiraea* are placed to compliment
the plum shoots.
13. Completed by the Vase

Materials: weeping willow (shu), paulownia (yo),
Chloranthus glaber (asbirai)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

The simplicity of the lines of weeping willow lends elegance to
the branches. The lines of paulownia are also uncomplicated, and
are placed to compliment the shu. As asbirai, chloranthus, with
its green leaves and red berries, completes the base of the
arrangement. All three materials hug the center line of the work,
resulting in a concise yet beautiful expression. Keeping in mind
the vase’s curved design, however, allows us to bring out the full
beauty of this arrangement.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1 A branch of weeping willow is chosen, remembering that the
portion of the stem that comes at the base of the arrangement
needs to stand straight. The stem line should give the impression
of upward movement.

2 A paulownia stem with buds is positioned so that its line fol-
lows the line of the willow.

3 Several smaller chloranthus stems complete the base of the
work.
14. The Possibilities of Shimputai

Materials: bear grass (shu), cyclamen (yo), Chlorantbus glaber (asbirat)
Container: trumpet-shaped pottery vase

Much of the interest of shimputai composition comes from being able to use plants in ways different from the traditional usages of the past. For example, choosing bear grass for shu becomes possible in shimputai. Through contrast, the delicate bear grass helps to bring out the beauty of cyclamen as yo. For asbirat, only the yellow berries of chloranthbus are used. Each of these contrasting materials effectively brings out the beauty of the others.

Method of arranging (using a kenzan)
1. The slender bear grass stems often need to be inserted in clusters on the kenzan, but care is taken to give expressiveness to each stem.
2. In completing the base of the arrangement, the directions of the cyclamen flower and leaf are carefully adjusted.
3. Use only a few chloranthbus berries so that they are barely seen.
Materials: flowering plum shoots (shu)
budding plum branches (yo)
plum flowers in full bloom (asbirai)
Container: wide-mouthed pottery vase

Although shimputai is usually arranged using three different varieties of plants, a one- or two-material arrangement is possible if the materials are considered carefully. In this work flowering plum shoots are shu, while an older branch with budding flowers is used as yo. For asbirai, open white plum blossoms are positioned at differing heights. Contrasts in this arrangement create a noble and beautiful impression.

**Method of arranging** (using a kenzan)
1. Four plum shoots are placed at different heights.
2. Budding branches are placed at about the same height as the shorter plum shoots, and in harmony with the shu stems.
3. Open flowers complete the mizugiwa and support both the plum shoots and the budding branch. One imagines a natural plum tree in bloom.
THE SPIRIT OF IKEBANA

On a day in the winter of 1974, I stood near the construction site of the Ikenobo Building, watching workers excavating the relics buried under the ground. The excavation survey lasted for about eight months and during this period I often visited the site to see the digging work. The site was the place where the successive heads of the Ikenobo school had lived, and with the progress of the excavation appeared the ruins of the residences of my ancestors. Old flagstones, ponds, foundation stones, kitchen ranges...all of these remains showed the signs of the fires which had burnt down the Rokkakudo, the wooden temple standing on the site, several times. I noticed that the location and scale of the old residences emerging from several different layers were different from one another. The roofing tiles, daily utensils, coins and other relics unearthed caused me to conjure up vivid pictures of the life of my forebears. Yes, in each of these different layers, Senjo, Sen'yō, Senko, Sen'ei, Senno and other heads of the Ikenobo school had lived! I felt as though I had come much closer to my ancestors. And at the same time, the words they wrote in their books of secrets reached my ears just as if in their own voices, and I was deeply impressed.

"I have often heard about the people's traditional custom of putting flowers in a vase, but what they praised was the beauty of flowers only. They just arranged flowers and other plants in a vase with no appreciation of their real fūkyo (charm and taste). Our school of ikebana attempts to reproduce in a room the natural shape of plants grown in hills and fields and at the waterside. We decorate rooms with flowers and leaves making the most of their good characteristics..."

The opening sentences of Obnaki, one of the books written by my ancestors, flashed upon my mind just like a revelation from Heaven. Until that time I had arranged flowers just as I liked, putting whatever ideas seemed good to me into practice. Now a change was coming into my philosophy of ikebana.

In those days, I was much interested in bright colors of flowers, sharp contrast, and the stimuli and resistance generated among objects of different characters as a direction for modernized ikebana. But the observation of the excavation site suddenly turned my thoughts toward fūkyo. What I saw there was the sort of fūkyo which you would find in the areas surrounded by buildings, or in complex and awkward personal relations, too. You can find it in the mind which has become aware of the passing of time and the vicissitudes of life. If you look at carefully, you will notice the trace of fūkyo on the spot left on the wall of a building. Needless to say, you can clearly find it in the flowers and plants you see and use in your daily life. After that, I gave up the idea of making a new form out of flowers and began to try to make good use of their existing forms.

What we attempt to create using the natural form of plants is harmony or wa filled with fūkyo. Wa is the situation where two or more different things are unified into harmony. I wish to establish this wa in my ikebana in the simplest form, yet in a manner showing the process of creation and growth of life.

Sen'ei Ikenobo
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