

Ikebana: The Art of Japanese Flower Arranging

A Rare Opportunity to study Ikebana (Ikenobo School) with a Japanese teacher will be offered at the Black Mountain Center for the Arts, located in the old City Hall at 225 W. State Street. Emiko Nishiwaki will teach a series of four lessons on Wednesdays in April, the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th from 10 am – noon; the class is limited to 12 students. To register call 828/669-0930.

Ikebana is art of Japanese flower arranging. Ikenobo is the oldest and largest school of Ikebana in Japan. Sen'ei Ikenobo, the forty-fifth generation Ikenobo Headmaster of the Ikenobo school, states, "Like a poem or painting made with flowers, Ikenobo's Ikebana expresses both the beauty of flowers and the beauty of longing in our own hearts. Ikenobo's spirit has spread not only in Japan, but throughout the world. It is my deepest hope that the beauty of Ikenobo will increasingly serve as a way of drawing the world's people together." (source: www.ikenobo.jp/english/index)



photo credit: Asheville Citizen-Times

The instructor for this series, Emiko Nishiwaki, is professor second grade of the Ikenobo School of Ikebana, headquartered in Kyoto, Japan. She taught Ikebana to people of all ages for thirteen years in Japan before she came to Western North Carolina in August of 2007.

Nishiwaki began studying Ikebana in 1986 with Master Fujii, Aichi, Japan. She was allowed to arrange flowers freely for five years before beginning traditional Ikebana lessons. Because of her unconventional training her Ikebana style is unique. She sometimes makes arrangements with unusual flower containers made of aluminum or a ball made from strings.

However, she studied the more traditional advanced Rikka form of Ikebana with a special teacher in Kyoto for a year in 2006. The Rikka style is a formal style with a vertical orientation in a tall, narrow-mouthed vase. Its three branches represent heaven, man, and earth.

Emiko has been working as a Japan Outreach Coordinator at Western Carolina University since August 2007. This Japan Outreach Program is supported by the Japan Foundation, an affiliate association of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It helps to increase awareness and knowledge of Japanese culture. The Black Mountain Center for the Arts is pleased to be able to participate in furthering this exchange of culture.

The cost for the four lessons is \$120 plus a one-time fee of \$40 for floral materials. Students should bring gardening scissors, a small bowl deep enough to cut stems into and if you have one, a kenzan. The classes will include history and hands-on instruction.

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