

## English translation of Northwest Post Article

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### **Sogetsu Mercer Island Branch held “The 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event”**

#### **Ikebana Arts Demonstrated in the Rich Nature**

Sogetsu Mercer Island Branch held its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary event on April 24<sup>th</sup>, at the Embassy Suites in Bellevue. Mrs. Eikou Sumura, a master instructor of Sogetsu Headquarters, was invited as a special guest and conducted Ikebana demonstration.

Workshop was held on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> at South Bellevue Community Center. More than 100 people attended the events locally and from Hong Kong and Canada. The events were both social and educational gathering of arts of Ikebana.

“Mercer Island Branch has 33 members. We enjoy the rich nature in Seattle area. We hope to continue long-lasting activities that nurture everyone’s creativity, personality and talents.” said Mrs. Mitsuko Hakomori, prior to the opening of the event. Mrs. Hakomori was appointed as Director by the third Iemoto Hiroshi Teshigahara in 1990 and has been leading the branch since then.

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#### **Interview**

### **“Communicating your passion through flowers – Attractiveness of Kado (Ikebana)”**

#### **Mrs. Eikou Sumura, Ikebana Artist**

Sogetsu School is one of the three major schools of Ikebana, and known as the most popular in the West. Mrs. Eikou Sumura is Riji of Sogetsu Headquarters (Master Instructor), and has been actively promoting Ikebana worldwide since 1991 as a delegate in Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We interviewed Mrs. Sumura prior to the event.

- What is the difference in people’s attitude toward Ikebana among countries like Japan, US, and Eastern Europe?

I don’t see any significant differences. Rather, I perceive people’s passion toward Ikebana. People see Ikebana not merely as arrangement of flowers but as a form of art.

- When you arrange flowers, do you feel anything from flowers?

By touching plants, I feel not only the season, but also energy. I feel energized. Each time I touch flowers I receive full of energy or “chi”, and my inspiration is stimulated. It seems that people who are involved in Ikebana all remain young and full of life.

- What message would you like to send through Ikebana?

That you express yourself to the full through plants. Enjoy plants. Observe the plants closely, look in the eyes, and you encounter the plants at the very instant. You express your feeling of that very moment.

- What do you mean by arranging while communicating?

Different plants have different faces and expressions. It is important to arrange with flexibility capturing the plant's faces. You should not presume only a certain image of the plant, but you approach the plant closer.

- Would you please describe Ikebana as art?

I think it's the most luxurious form of art. When you arrange flowers, you are showing not only flowers but the beauty of the whole space through flowers. Just like paintings, you can convey your message through Ikebana. For example, I finish installment in a large hall. Later, somebody visits the hall. Even though I'm not present, I know that the person is receiving my message through my flowers. I'm enjoying communication with people that I can't see, and that's so wonderful.