

NEWSLETTER



Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai

**Cesar Ordonez,
CBS Artist**

**Next meeting July 17, 2025
Bamboo Room**

LA Arboretum
301 North Baldwin Avenue
Arcadia, CA 91007

Please bring something for the raffle

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July 17, 2025, Cesar Ordonez, CBS Artist



Cesar Ordonez started doing bonsai in April 2019 after a shohin juniper caught his eye! He studied with David Nguy the first year of his bonsai journey and is now studying with Peter Tea. After noticing what thrives in his area, he started collecting olives!

Cesar says, "I feel like this is just the beginning, I look forward to continue learning much more in the coming years, applying that to my future trees, continue collecting trees, and eventually start on having my own little garden/nursery someday."

He is giving a workshop and a talk at the Rendezvous in October on Sumo Olives.

June 19, 2025, Demo - Debra Maury-Melitz, Kusamono talk & workshop.

As always Debra gave us a well organized and interesting talk with a workshop at the end. Her knowledge of Kusamono, it's relationship to bonsai trees and trends is phenomenal.



Here are some of the plants she brought for us to make a Kusomono and a cart filled with all the supplies for each workstation. She uses rice bowls (\$5) and fork, spoon, and knife (\$2) from Ikea to manipulate the soil and plants into the bowl. She has found that these utensils are best to use. She donated all the supplies, pots (bowls) for the workshop.

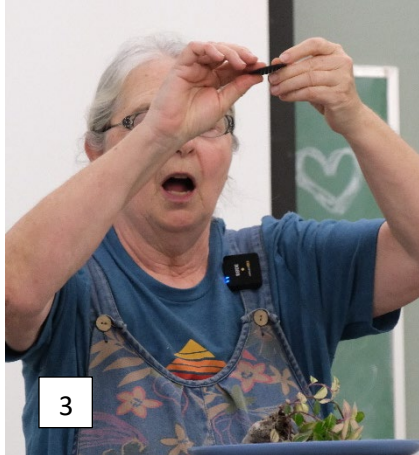


1



2

One of the first things she said was that what she was showing us is her form of Kusomono. She has modified some of the techniques that she was taught. Like the photo on the left, Debra rolls each plant in gauze. If it will be a stand-alone arrangement, she would put a piece of plastic screening on the bottom and put a layer of gauze around all (3,4). Also using this method, muck can be added in

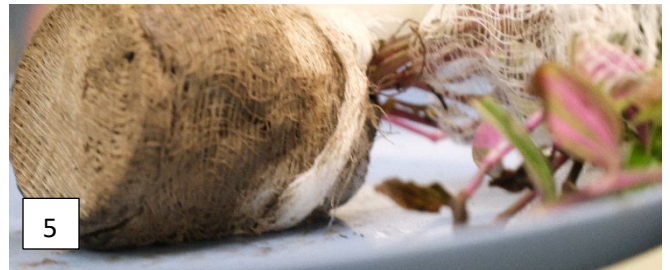


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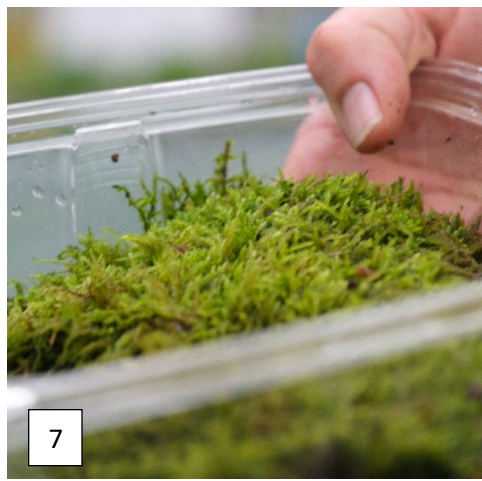
layers separated by the gauze (5). This is much easier, more controlled, and less messy than rolling the plant root ball in muck. Note with each layer of gauze, she sprays water over the



5



6



7



8

gauze.

Moss (7) is added over the last layer of gauze/muck and held in place with waxed heavy linen thread (8,9). (You can also use dental floss.) Note there is no moss on the bottom of the muck/gauze combination. To protect the plant during manipulations, a half width piece of gauze, called rebar? is wrapped around the top part of the plant. This gauze is removed from the top part of the plant when wrapping is finished. I didn't count the number of layers of gauze Debra used but it was at least 3 layers.

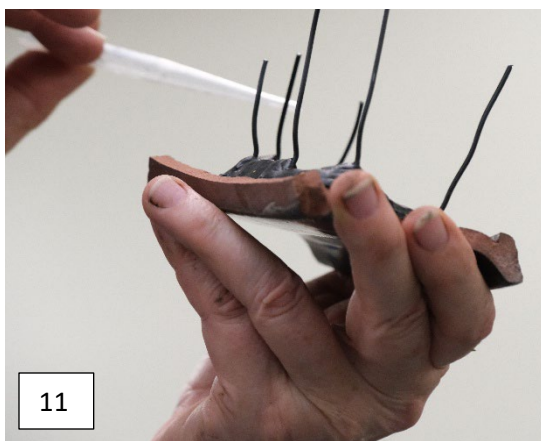
This moss is not sphagnum moss, and it is not the same kind that is used to moss your trees for a show. It is a different variety.



9



10



11



12



13

You can repurpose broken pottery or tile pieces to be used in Kusamono. You can use 2-part epoxy, or Fix It glue to add wire. To add a drainage hole to hard ceramics, you can use a drumel, a diamond bit (13), a drop of oil or water and eye protection. Terra cotta requires a concrete bit. Watering is done via a

pipette (11&12). Pipettes are available from Amazon, cheap, 100 for \$6.



Last, she showed us some other plants that can be used. On the left she holds a fern, wrapped in gauze, and on the right, she holds a mint. The mint was cute because it can grow in many directions and is very hardy.

Marcus Juniel visited us to show what he made at the Santa Anita Bonsai meeting.



Plants used today for group Kusamono

- *Carex oshimensis* 'Carfit01' (Everest Variegated Sedge)
- *Pelargonium* varieties
- *Equisetum scripoides* (Miniature Horsetails)
- *Tradescantia fluminensis laekenensis* 'Rainbow' (inch plant-leaves are an inch apart on the stem or Spiderwort- sap which dries into web-like threads when a stem is cut)
- *Lysimachia nummularia* (Creeping Jenny)
- *Erodium reichardii* 'Bishop's Form' Pink flower (Storksbill)
- *Pilea depressa* (Dwarf Baby Tears)
- *Crassula pellucida ssp. Marginalis* (Little Missy Sedum- reclassified as a Crassula)
 - Attached to a plastic pipette

Useful Plants for Kusamono

Moist environment

Tall grasses or other tall plants

- Curly willow
- Horsetails (*Equisetum hyemale*)
- Japanese Blood Grass (*Imperata cylindrical*)
- Fairy lily (*Zephyranthes carinata*)
- Sedges (grasslike plant with triangular stems)
- Salvia

Medium grasses or plants

- Mondo grass (*Ophiopogon japonicas*)
- Eleocharis radican (*Fiber Optic Spikerush*)
- Miniature Horsetails (*Equisetum scripoides*)

Vine-like

- Miniature Ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*)
- Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)
- Dwarf Baby Tears (*Pilea depressa*)

Flower plants

- Pelargoniums
- Erodiums
- Dandelions
- Plants commonly used for fairy gardens

Seeds

- Forget-me-nots
- Common annuals
- Common Wheat (*Triticum aestivum*)

Moss (find locally)

Dry environment

Tall grasses or other tall plants

- Tall grasses (Fountain grass)
- Mexican Star Flower (*Milla biflora*)- corm
- Sedges
- Salvia
- Lavender
- Iris

Medium grasses or plants

- Mondo grass (*Ophiopogon japonicas*)
- Eleocharis radican (*Fiber Optic Spikerush*)
- Aloe
- Wild lilac (*Ceanothus spp.*)

Vine-like

- Miniature Ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)

Flower plants

- Erodiums
- Lantana
- Aloes
- Silver Squill (*Ledebouria socialis*)

Ground covers

- Creeping Elfin thyme
- Sedum or Crassula

Seeds

- CA Natives

Tanpopo (Dandelion) "Urban Yamadori"

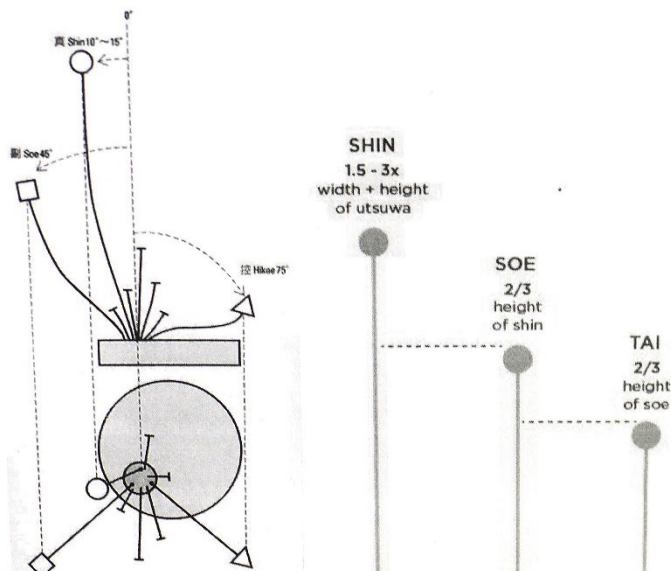
During an interview, John Naka was asked, "Which was his best bonsai?"

He replied, his Tanpopo.

Ikebana (Sogetsu School Style)

Moribana is the most basic style in ikebana

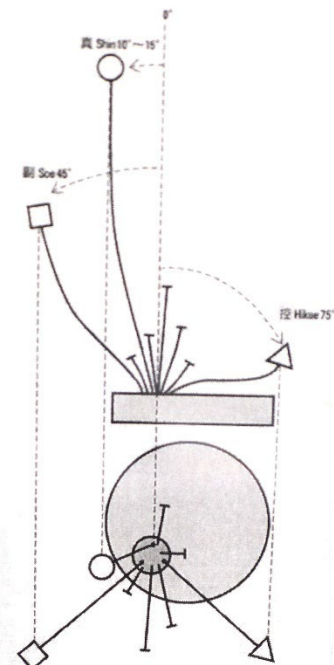
"Sansai" (the three basic elements of the universe)



From a textbook of ikebana floral design by Sakai, of the Sogetsu School

Photo Credit: <http://surelysimple.com>

"Sansai" (the three basic elements of the universe)



Moribana style in ikebana



Here Debra is showing us how she waters the Kusomono. She has two containers of water. She dips the entire pot into the first container of water until the bubbles stop, lifts it up to drain, then repeats twice. This first basin of water is considered “dirty”. Then for the final watering, she uses a new container of water (the red bucket).

Aftercare

- Keep in the shade
- For the first 2 weeks, submerge pot
- Water as needed once the plantings have stabilized 🌱
- Keep moss moist (Moss is sensitive to poor water quality)
- Keep the Kusamono cleaned up (Replace dead plants).
- Balance the number and type of plants
 - Do not let one plant take over
 - Replace plants that do not thrive for your conditions

My Muck Recipe

Peat	~60%	Keeps the muck acidic
New Zealand sphagnum moss (cut up)	~30%	Keeps the muck together You got to do something with these
Fine Akadama	~5%	
Worm castings	~5%	Fertilizer

- Add enough water and mix until the components somewhat hold their shape.
- Add potters clay that has been formed into 1-2" balls. Mixture should be easily squeezed through your fingers). Mix clay and dry components together.
- Add enough clay until the muck is firm enough to hold its shape.
 - Depending on where you will use the muck, you may not add as much clay.
- Age muck for at least a month.
- Must wear gloves because of the possibility of Sporotrichosis, a fungal disease associated with sphagnum moss.



Joey Adelman won the juniper donated by Ray Blasingame and Kelly Lui won the Kusomono donated by Mike Kelly.

It was a fun evening with a lot of trading of plants and pots. Thank you, Debra, for the wealth of information and all the supplies and details.

Announcements

Refreshments will be provided by Ken Bross, Kelly Lui and Michael Roberts.

Ben Oki Scholarship. It is my great pleasure to announce the winners of the 2025 Ben Oki Scholarships Cindy Che Dennison from Orange County CA and Brandon Herwick from NY. Congratulations to the winners. It was tough making the choices this year as there were so many good applications. Thank you to everyone who applied, if you didn't get it this time try again next year. Robert Pressler, California Bonsai Society

July 26, 2025, Christmas in July, dinner and white elephant exchange, 6pm at the home of Tom and Caroline Lau. Please remember to RSVP. Please see flyer.

July 28, 2025, Third Quarter Zoom series featuring Nao Tokutake, 6:30 – 9pm (PDT). He will discuss bonsai pot making in terms of the contrasting cultural and technical approaches between Japan and America. Link will be sent out later. Please see flyer.

August 16, 2025, Kofu Kai annual benefit auction, in the large hall at Anaheim United Methodist Church, 1000 S. State College Blvd., Anaheim. Drop off auction items from 5 PM, auction starts at 6:30

August 16 & 17, 2025, John Y. Naka Memorial Exhibit Bonsai Show, George J. Doizaki Gallery at the Japanese American Community Cultural Center (JACCC), 244 So. San Pedro St. in Little Tokyo, 10am to 4pm. The Naka Memorial Exhibit is a juried exhibition where jurors will help select the best trees out of the submission pool. Details can be found at <https://nakamemoralexhibit.com>.

September 14, 2025, Larry Ragle Foundation Scholarship. Applications now open to four \$500 scholarships available to bonsai club members in Southern California. To apply please send an email to larryrayglefoundation@yahoo.com, with your name, club membership and phone number. Winners will be announced at the San Diego Bonsai Club meeting on September 14, 2025. Please see flyer.

October 24-26, 2025, GSBF Bonsai Rendezvous, 9:00 AM – 5pm, 9:00 AM – Oct 26, 2025, 1:00 PM, Mission del Oro Hotel, 13070 CA-33, Santa Nella, CA 95322, USA

Biennial GSBF event. Headliners, Suthin Sukosolvisit and Mauro Stemberger will host BYT workshops on Friday. Multiple workshops will be held Friday and Saturday. Vendors all three days. Free educational seminars and BYB hospitality hours. Live and silent auctions. Registration for the convention and workshops will open on June 9, 2025 at 9am. For more information, www.gsbfbonsai.org

***Date change, November 14-16, 2025, Kofu Bonsai Kai annual exhibit at the Bowers**

Museum in Santa Ana. Set up is on Thursday November 13 setup and the show is the 14 - 16. Contact Carol Upston to show a tree.

New ZOOM Link. Baikoen meetings will continue to be recorded live and zoomed by Tom. Here is a new link. We will be streaming our meetings live to everyone. However, it is not interactive. We encourage people to either watch the recording on YouTube or join us in person.
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/8328571089?pwd=1Fqg0SeV9vFT5RaF5vf3pyeVUAIYoE.1>

Tom's videos: If you have missed any of the videos that Tom has produced, here is the link to view all of them. https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=baikoen+bonsai+club

SAVE THE DATE!

Baikoen Bonsai Kenkyukai presents the 61st Winter Silhouettes Exhibition, January 17 & 18, 2026. LA Arboretum, 301 North Baldwin Ave, Arcadia, CA 91007, 10am to 4:30pm.

Baikoen Demo Schedule – 2025

July 17, 2025	Cesar Ordonez, CBS Artist
August 2025	No Meeting
September 18, 2025	Ryan Pitts
October 16, 2025	Tom Vuoung
November 20, 2025	Seth Nelson, CBS Artist
December 2025	No Meeting