

WFWPI Virtual Cafe Explore the Beauty of Nature and Create Ikebana with No Limits

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June 24, 2022



"Explore the Beauty of Nature and Create Ikebana with No Limits" is the motto of Mrs. Hiromi Fujikawa, who instructed an ikebana online class at the Women's Federation for World Peace International's regular bi-monthly event "WFWPI Virtual Cafe" on Friday, June 24.



Mrs. Hiromi Fujikawa is a certified instructor of the Sogetsu School, one of the top-ranked schools of Ikebana in Japan. She is the founder of Atelier Shuka and a Sogetsu School ikebana instructor, who continues to develop her unique artistic style through various exhibition projects. Educated in Japan and having lived in England, Turkey, and the United States, she has a deep understanding and appreciation of Japanese Ikebana and Japanese culture. While a student at the University of the Sacred Heart in Tokyo, she began training in ikebana under Kumiko Kato, one of the prestigious apprentices of Hiroshi Teshigahara (3rd President of the Sogetsu School). For 19 years as an assistant to Kumiko Kato, she has arranged flowers for TV programs and exhibitions. After moving to London, England, she became an ikebana instructor and began teaching private classes, which spread by word of mouth. While living in

Michigan, USA, she had the opportunity to teach students of various backgrounds and ages, and has continued to teach in English and Japanese since returning to Japan. She has exhibited her work at the Sogetsu Ikebana Exhibitions in Tokyo and London. In summer 2021, she appeared in a Microsoft Teams commercial in the U.S., introducing Tokyo and Japanese culture using Teams.



This cozy and fun Ikebana class consisted of an introduction to Ikebana and arranging practice, as well as a "Best Ikebana Composition" contest chosen by the instructor. The online class attracted 25 participants from around the world. Mrs. Fujikawa introduced the basics of Ikebana and how to create elegant compositions using seasonal flowers. She explained, "While painting is an artistic expression created with a brush on a canvas, Ikebana is a three-dimensional form consisting of plants arranged in a vase. Ikebana begins with a close observation of the material. It expresses beauty through the power of nature, but with the help of human hands. Flowers are often given as a token of affection or respect, but once you understand the appeal of Ikebana, it takes on a new dimension of liveliness and value."



After the presentation, participants had time to create their own flower arrangements using local flowers. Every piece was unique, and the instructor was also impressed by the various colors and characters expressed in the compositions.

A young woman from Italy, who attended with her Japanese mother, said that it was the first time she had learned about her mother's culture, especially the depth of Ikebana and that it was a fun and productive mother and daughter time together.

Another participant from South Africa said, "I learned a lot because I realized that Ikebana is not as difficult as I thought it would be. I felt a great sense of satisfaction after I finished arranging the flower."

The climax of the event was a short floral competition for the "Best Ikebana Competition" by the participants. The most beautiful arrangements were voted by all participants. The winner was Mrs. Haruyo Yap from the Netherlands, the runner-up was Mrs. Rumiko Takahashi, and the third place went to WFWP Amsterdam, which participated as a team.



The WFWPI Virtual Café is a casual educational online gathering bi-monthly gathering intergenerational and international audiences to explore important issues and questions, encourage everyone to contribute, connect diverse perspectives, listen together for insights, and share collective discoveries. Beginning in 2020, WFWPI offered various sessions on flower arranging, origami folding, peace gold bell quiz shows, photography and videography master classes, cooking and baking classes, fun games, fundraising, healing therapy, fashion, health, and much more. WFWPI looks forward to the next Virtual Café in August!

