

## ART IN THE GARDEN 2016 AMERICAN BONSAI: THE UNBRIDLED ART OF RYAN NEIL

"It's *bonsai*. As in 'bone' and 'sigh.'"

But, artist Ryan Neil said he's loosened up over the years on the issue of pronunciation.

"Bonsai" is a Japanese word, but the context for cultivating trees in shallow containers originated in China as an art form known as *penjing*. *Penjing* was a practice rooted in Buddhism that connected man to the environment and brought the spirit of wild places closer to home. It migrated to Japan with Buddhism, as a spiritual practice, and slowly evolved into *bonsai* under the influence of Japanese culture.

That connection of man to the environment is at the heart of the second Art in the Garden exhibition of the year (May 21st through June 19th). Titled *American Bonsai: The Unbridled Art of Ryan Neil*, the exhibition focuses solely on American species of trees, designed to directly reflect the character of American culture and the landscapes in which our culture has been formed.

"Much the same way *penjing* evolved into *bonsai*, we are witnessing another evolution in the way we use these tiny trees to express and embody our own American landscape and the spirit of American culture," said Mr. Neil.

Ryan Neil was born and raised on the Western slope of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado. He became fascinated with the landscape and its fantastic array of wind-swept trees. Mr. Neil obtained a degree in horticulture then went to Japan where he undertook a six year apprenticeship with *Bonsai* master Masahiko Kimura, the most revolutionary figure in contemporary Japanese *bonsai*.

In 2010, Mr. Neil settled in Oregon to begin cultivating his art form of *bonsai*. His company *Bonsai Mirai* is an innovative American *bonsai* garden and school—a creative place that reflects the unbridled culture of its new home in the American West.

"Fifty percent of the creation of a beautiful tree comes not from the artist, but from the tree's response to the artist. I'm only a small part of the



Photo: Chris Hombecker

May 21-June 19, 2016  
Outdoor Courtyard  
Regular Garden Hours  
Included with Garden Admission

Golden Crane Society Opening Reception  
Friday, May 20, 5:30-7:30pm  
Golden Crane Society Members Only  
RSVP: (503) 542-0281

Continued on page 2



**Dear Garden Members,**

If you've recently been to the Garden, you've seen that the Cultural Crossing Village is taking shape! Steel beams are framing the new buildings at the top of the hill, while the LEED-certified storm water filtration tanks that have been placed underneath the parking lot are entirely concealed. Beginning soon, you will see features of the new gardens that will be home to thousands of new plants and trees:

from ground-cover dwarf bamboo and native trilliums to young Japanese maples, pines, and northwest firs.

In this Cultural Crossing project, the invisible is as significant as the visible:

- 30,000 tons of dirt have been removed to make space for the Village
- 24 geothermal wells, each 300' deep, have been drilled to naturally provide heating and cooling in the new buildings, significantly reducing our carbon footprint
- A large vault buried 20' underground will provide the mechanics of a new cascading water feature on Kingston Avenue that will welcome all visitors to the Garden and Washington Park
- Just inside the Antique Gate, the transformation of removing the invasive English ivy from the hillside has begun.

What is becoming more and more visible each day however is the careful thought and thorough planning that has gone into each element of design to ensure beauty, functionality, environmental stewardship, and relevance to the life of the individuals who will use and enjoy it for decades to come.

Yet none of this would add up to the actual Cultural Crossing without the generous support of you: our members, volunteers, and friends from near and far. **Campaign Chairs Dorie and Larry Vollum and President of the Board of Trustees Cathy Rudd have asked you, our wonderful members, to strive toward achieving a \$1,300,000 members goal.** Together with the other fundraising efforts of the Board of Trustees, the Campaign Cabinet, and our staff—your participation will enable the Garden to fully raise the \$33.5 million project goal. Many of you have already responded and responded most generously. As of March 31, you had collectively donated \$224,743. **We thank you for each and every gift!**

**For those of you who haven't yet made a gift, we ask you to join us.** Next year, when we celebrate together the new cultural village and beautiful gardens, we will also honor the invisible pulse that runs through the original Garden and the Cultural Crossing – the generous support from you, ensuring the Garden's gifts will be enjoyed for generations to come.

Yours in gratitude,

Steve

## ART IN THE GARDEN 2016 AMERICAN BONSAI: THE UNBRIDLED ART OF RYAN NEIL

*Continued from page 1*

greater conversation that is going on continually in each tree's life that I have a hand in," said Neil.

Mr. Neil's work channels the craftsmanship and discipline of this ancient Japanese art form while reflecting the untamed landscape of the American West. The exhibition will feature about a dozen of these living art pieces with trees ranging from 100 to 500 years old.

"I've learned over the years that I can get where I want to go with a tree much faster if I let the tree dictate the pace and the direction," said Neil.

When asked why she wanted to showcase Mr. Neil's work, Diane Durston, the Arlene Schnitzer Curator of Culture, Art & Education, said, "Bonsai Mirai bridges cultures with Ryan's innovative approach to the art of bonsai. The word *mirai* (pronounced mee-rye) means "the future," and that's clearly where he is going!"

*A special thanks to exhibition sponsor Vasek and Travers Hill Polak and family, in honor of the Ellie Murrah Hill Bonsai Terrace opening in the new Cultural Village of the Portland Japanese Garden in 2017. Additional support provided by The Autzen Foundation.*

### WHAT IS BONSAI?

*Bonsai* is the art of recreating nature in miniature and the horticultural practice of limiting a tree's growth through cultivation in a shallow tray. The confined container restricts the tree's rate of growth and feeding proportions leading to a finer growth that is more spread out. Any species of plant can be used to create bonsai, but typically practitioners look for species that have naturally small needles or leaves so the proportions of their creations are believable.



## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERSHIP

With Special Presentation Cultural Crossing Campaign:  
a Generational Community Investment

May 9, 2016

6-8pm

World Forestry Center, Miller Hall

Reservation required, space is limited

Reserve your complimentary tickets online at

[japanesegarden.com/events](http://japanesegarden.com/events) or call (503) 542-0280

Steve Bloom, CEO will moderate a panel discussion *Cultural Crossing Campaign: a Generational Community Investment* with Dorie Vollum, Community Philanthropist; Gwyneth Gamble Booth, Chair PGE Foundation, and Barb Hall, Executive Director, Harold & Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation. In addition, we will honor outgoing Board members, elect new board members to the Japanese Garden Board of Trustees, reflect on highlights from 2015, and look towards the year to come. For information on board nominees or to learn more about absentee voting please visit [japanesegarden.com/events/annual-meeting/](http://japanesegarden.com/events/annual-meeting/).

## TWILIGHT HOURS FOR SUPPORTING AND SPONSOR MEMBERS

May 19, 2016

7-9pm

Portland Japanese Garden

Supporting & Sponsor Members and Guests

No reservations required

The Garden is pleased to invite Supporting and Sponsor Members to experience the Garden in its evening beauty. Join us for refreshments on the Pavilion veranda and enjoy the quiet twilight hours in the Garden. Your guests are welcome.



Photo: Jonathan Ley

## MEMBER TEA AND EXHIBITION TOUR

May 28, 2016

8-10am

Portland Japanese Garden

Members and Guests

No reservations required

Join us during this special Member-Only Hours for tea, coffee, and a light continental breakfast on the East Veranda. Docents will be available on the Overlook to answer questions and talk about the Art in the Garden Exhibition, *American Bonsai: The Unbridled Art of Ryan Neil*. See the Cover Story for details on this exhibition.

## PHOTOGRAPHER MEMBER SPECIAL HOURS

May 31, 2016

6:30-8am

Portland Japanese Garden

Photographer Members and Guests

No reservations required

Photographer Members and their guests are given special early-morning access to the Garden. Capture familiar landscapes at their most serene: illuminated in quiet solitude by dawn's first light.



## AMERICAN BONSAI: THE UNBRIDLED ART OF RYAN NEIL DEMONSTRATIONS

May 22, 2016

1-3pm

Portland Japanese Garden

*Demonstration 1: Ponderosa Pine—the icon of the West and the aesthetics of American bonsai.*

Viewing included with Garden admission

Exhibition open during regular garden hours

May 29, 2016

1-3pm

Portland Japanese Garden

*Demonstration 2: Rocky Mountain Juniper—redefining the natural line.*

Viewing included with Garden admission

Exhibition open during regular garden hours

June 5, 2016

1-3pm

Portland Japanese Garden

*Demonstration 3: Colorado Spruce and Coastal Oak—using aesthetics to express environment in design.*

Viewing included with Garden admission

Exhibition open during regular garden hours

BONSAI



## CULTURAL CROSSING: ANSWERING YOUR QUESTIONS

Spring has come to Washington Park and hopefully most of you have had a chance to visit the Garden since we reopened while continuing to work around construction. For many of you, these return trips—and the crowded parking lots you encountered when making them—have inspired questions about our Cultural Crossing expansion project. That’s why we’re continuing to address Member questions about the construction and expansion. Below are answers to some of the questions we heard most often in April.

### **Will the parking lot be gone forever?**

The Garden’s parking lot will continue to be used as a construction staging area until early 2017. This could change depending on staging needs, the sequence of construction, and the Garden’s need. After that, it will be returned to a parking lot for Garden guests.

### **Will the new parking lot have the same number of spaces?**

The original parking lot held 34 general use spaces and 2 handicap stalls. In order to make room for the new Admission Building, a publicly-accessible Water Garden, and shuttle pull through the new lot will include 29 spaces and 3 handicap stalls.

### **Will there be handicapped parking at the top of the hill when the project is complete?**

Yes, the expansion plans include two additional handicapped parking spots on the edge of the Cultural Village, near the new Shuttle drop-off.

### **What should I do if I can’t find parking?**

While the Japanese Garden parking lot is temporarily closed for construction, parking is often available on Sherwood Blvd past the Children’s Playground and soccer fields. It’s about an 8 minute walk to the garden from these parking spaces. Parking payment is required year round. When parking, note your space number and pay at any meter using coins, Visa, MasterCard, or the Passport Parking app on your mobile phone, using zone 400.

### **What public transportation options are available to reach the Garden?**

Fortunately, the Garden is served by several methods of public transport:

- Explore Washington Park offers a free shuttle that links the Garden to the Washington Park MAX station, as well as the other park attractions. In May, the shuttle runs weekends between 9:00am-7:00pm. In June, it switches to a daily schedule.
- TriMet’s Blue and Red MAX Lines stop Washington Park MAX Station near the Zoo. From there you can hike, bike, or ride the free shuttle to the Garden.
- On weekdays, TriMet’s Bus Line-63 connects the Garden to the Providence Park and Washington Park MAX Stations. The Line-63 will run 7-days a week starting this September

### **When will the new Wildwood Trail connector be ready?**

Once all the construction is done in spring 2017, we can start constructing and landscaping the new trail. We expect it to be complete by Fall 2017.

### **Why can’t the new Wildwood Trail work be done sooner?**

Since a section of the new trail will run alongside the service road, all expansion construction must be complete before work on the trail can begin to ensure everyone’s safety. In addition, the large construction equipment and staging areas along the road must be removed before the road can be repaved and the trail finalized.

**If you have a question about the Cultural Crossing project,  
please email us at [marketing@japanesegarden.com](mailto:marketing@japanesegarden.com)**

## THE CASTLE WALL STORY: THE FINAL CHAPTER

*One of the standout structures visitors can see when visiting the Garden is the Castle Wall at the west end of what will be the Cultural Village. Nearly twenty feet high and 185 feet long, the Castle Wall at the Portland Japanese Garden stands as a monument to what many hands can accomplish, working together. This is the final chapter of a multi-part series telling the stories of the people, traditions, and stones that make up this one-of-a-kind creation*

### THE CASTLE WALL INDEX

- ❖ 1,000 tons of granite
- ❖ Traveled 240 miles
- ❖ To be measured, marked, split, feathered, faced, cut, chiseled, and stacked
- ❖ Totalling 3,400 man-hours
- ❖ Communicating in 3 languages
- ❖ Led by 15 generations of craftsmanship
- ❖ To be 185 feet long
- ❖ And 18.5 feet tall
- ❖ Resulting in 1 castle wall (plus a bonus retaining wall!)
- ❖ A first of its kind for North America

By the numbers alone, this project is remarkable. But numbers don't quantify the heart and commitment that has driven this project from the start. It is the can-do spirit articulated in the words of everyone involved that bring this special project to life.

### COMING TOGETHER

At the time he was asked to take on the Castle Wall project, Suminori Awata, a 15th generation stone mason, didn't know much about the Portland Japanese Garden. But when Sada, the Garden's Curator, described what he envisioned, Awata-san did not hesitate to say yes. "I have been learning this craft since I was very young. My family has been stone masons for 300 or 350 years; they built around 80% of the stone walls in Japan. My father and I both learned our family's trade by watching my grandfather. As an adult, I've been repairing walls my family built and have built walls for large houses and shrines. But I've never built anything of this size. To do so for a Japanese Garden in the United States is the opportunity of a lifetime."

Immediately after Awata-san signed on, his team of assistants was assembled. Matt Driscoll (O'Driscoll Stone, Petaluma, Ca.) and Kyle Schlagenhauf (Green Man Builders, Arcata, Ca.), were selected, as was Ed Lockett, owner of Stone Sculptures, Inc., and his team of six assistants. Finally, Sada and the Portland Japanese Garden gardeners took turns contributing to shaping & placing the stones.

### THE LANGUAGE OF STONE

Although Awata-san speaks no English, Mr. Driscoll says it's not necessary. "He's a brother of stone. We all have a connection that doesn't need words." Instead, Awata-san communicates through eye contact and subtle gestures. Mr. Schlagenhauf said, "[Awata-san] represents 300 years of service, humility, and no compromising,"



Photo: Bruce Foster

### REPURPOSED SURPLUS

In the end, the monumental Castle Wall project was completed quickly and quietly. Originally scheduled to be completed at the end of April, the wall ultimately wrapped up nearly a month early—despite a winter of record rainfalls in Portland.

Awata-san and his team of assistants were already looking ahead. Throughout the building process, the team dedicated themselves to saving time and materials. This led to a small surplus of labor and stone making it possible to create another stone wall face, now visible at the north end of the lower parking lot.

When asked how the team was able to accomplish this, Mr. Lockett replied, "In a big project like this, I've seen a lot go wrong. But this project - we had an incredible team and it all just came together. Everyone was dedicated to making this. And what folks may not realize is that Sada's attention, commitment and work—that is what really drove this project."

### MORE TO DO

When asked what his grandfather would say about this project, Awata-san reflected for a moment and responded, "At first I think he would be very surprised that I was doing a project in America. But once he got over that, I think he would point out ways it could be better. He would say 'There is always more to do.'"

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**To read about the process from start to finish and see more photos, check out our blog at [culturalcrossing.com/stayupdated](http://culturalcrossing.com/stayupdated) and click on "Castle Wall" under "Editors Picks."**



## THE CAMPAIGN FOR A CULTURAL CROSSING

Contributions received through March 20, 2016



The Cultural Crossing project is supported by individuals, businesses and foundations—here in Oregon, across the country, and from Japan. The Board of Trustees and Campaign Chairs Dorie and Larry Vollum have challenged our 8,300 members to raise \$1,300,000. Many members have already given to support the new gardens in the Cultural Crossing project. Thank you for your support!

**We hope you will join us. Every gift makes a difference!**

### \$5,000,000 and above

Arlene Schnitzer in honor of Jordan D. Schnitzer's 20-year service to the Portland Japanese Garden

### \$2,000,000 to \$4,999,999

Anonymous

### \$1,000,000 to \$1,999,999

Anonymous (2)  
State of Oregon Lottery Bonds  
The Harold & Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation  
Drs. Calvin and Mayho Tanabe

### \$750,000 to \$999,999

The Collins Foundation  
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### \$500,000 to \$749,999

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### \$250,000 to \$499,999

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## CULTURAL CROSSING: OUR MEMBERS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Last March, we challenged our members to raise \$1,300,000. With the other fundraising work that the trustees and staff are engaged in, we are confident about raising the remaining funds needed for the project, provided that you, our generous members, come together to meet this \$1,300,000 goal.

Many of you have already responded with your generous support and we thank you! At the heart of our Garden are its plants, the core ingredient for any Garden. **Would you consider a gift in honor of the many new trees, shrubs, and plants being added as part of the Garden's expansion?**

Red Pine — \$2,500

Japanese Oak — \$1,000

Lace Leaf Maple — \$500

Northwest Natives — \$250

Black Bamboo — \$100

Trillium — \$50

**To contribute online, please visit [culturalcrossing.com/donate](http://culturalcrossing.com/donate).**

# CULTURAL/CROSSING

## THE CAMPAIGN FOR A CULTURAL CROSSING

### CONTINUED

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## PULLING TOGETHER TO PRESERVE NATIVE PLANTS

For several hours on a sunny day in late March, a half dozen horticulture volunteers joined our gardeners and staff to help pull English ivy from the west hillside.

The ivy is an invasive species in the Pacific Northwest and does damage by encircling plants and tree trunks, leaving nothing uncovered. Shrubs shrouded in ivy may eventually die because light can't reach their leaves. The weight of the extra vegetation also weakens the plant it grows on, making it more susceptible to disease.

The ivy pull was expected to take several days, but, thanks to the dry weather, our team was done in a matter of hours. In an effort to prevent further erosion, the long-term process will be spaced out over a matter of months or even years.

"English ivy is a big problem in the Northwest and prevalent throughout the whole park. We want to restore the native forest and help prevent erosion, so we'll be planting native plants on the hillside instead," said Senior gardener, Adam Hart.



Photo: Tyler Quinn



Photo: David M. Cobb

BRONZE CIRCLE

\$10,000-\$24,999

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TRIBUTE GIFTS & DONATIONS January 21, 2016 through March 20, 2016

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## GOLDEN CRANE LEGACY MEMBERS

Golden Crane Legacy Members have named the Garden as the ultimate beneficiary of a planned gift. We are grateful to the following people for letting us know of their plans to support the Garden in this thoughtful way.

Anonymous	Elaine West Durst	David L. Mitchell &
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Mary Dickson	Ron & Polly Wall Lauser	
Mrs. Margueritte H. Drake	John & Lisa Lehman	

We are grateful to the following individuals and families for their generous estate/bequest gifts received by the Garden:

Nancy B. Beamer	Noel Jordan	James W. Skog Trust
Clarence Bobbe	James J. Kesler	Toya Family Trust: George,
Stanley L. Davis Trust	Duke Mankertz	Sonoya, Georgene,
Stanley W. Greenhalgh	Ms. Beverly Merrill	and Evelyn
Elizabeth Anne Hinds	Jack O. Rickli	David E. Wedge
	Jeanetta Sautter	

If you would like to include the Garden in your estate plans, or if you have already done so and would allow us to list you as a Legacy Member, please contact Development Director Tom Cirillo at (503) 595-5225 or [tcirillo@japanesegarden.com](mailto:tcirillo@japanesegarden.com)

## GLOBAL AMBASSADORS

Including Global Ambassador Members and Sponsors of our 2014 New York Launch Event

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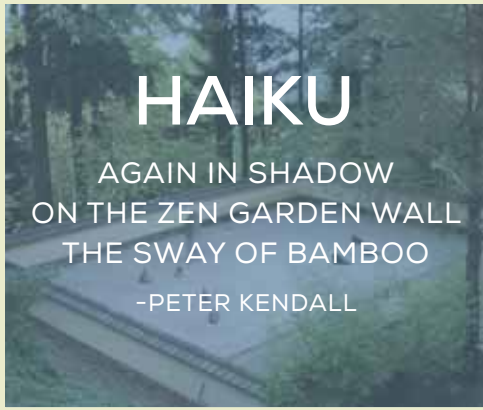
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Photo: David M. Cobb



Photo: Gordon Denton



# HAIKU

AGAIN IN SHADOW  
ON THE ZEN GARDEN WALL  
THE SWAY OF BAMBOO

-PETER KENDALL

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## VOLUNTEER PROFILE: LEE LUSTBERG

Lee Lustberg doesn't like sitting still. The former art teacher turned jewelry maker turned catering sales manager never had time to tend her own garden when she lived and worked on the East Coast. But since arriving in Portland in 2009, she's been flexing her green thumb and feeding her artistic spirit at the Portland Japanese Garden as an avid volunteer and Member.

Lee works with the Hort Support team once a week, taking on any number of tasks with enthusiasm. But what Lee loves most is the opportunity to learn something new. Her favorite assignment was helping Garden Technician Frank Tree reconstruct fences in the Tea Garden—a project she took so seriously that she practiced the wrapping and tying techniques with a piece of rope at home ("really an art form in itself, and not as easy as it looked!" she recalls).

Her attention to detail and affinity for art is evident in speaking with Lee about Art in the Garden. When asked about a favorite exhibition, she provides a list of many from previous years, citing the paintings and prints of Toko Shinoda (February 2013) and *Rediscovering Lacquer* (June 2014) as being particularly captivating.

After six years of enjoying experiences at the Portland Japanese Garden, Lee is excited about what the future holds.

Personally, she's looking forward to this summer's *Bending Nature* bamboo exhibition—perhaps not surprisingly, since she is quick to liken bamboo artistry to her favorite fence reconstruction project. She's also getting ready to see Japan for the first time with fellow Garden Members this month, as part of our first-ever Member Tour: *Discovering Japan and the Gardens of Tokyo, Kanazawa, & Kyoto*.



Photo: David M. Cobb



## THE WAY OF TEA: UNDERSTANDING THE TEA GARDEN

Photo: David M. Cobb



▲ The Portland Japanese Garden is privileged to have an authentic, handcrafted tea house and exquisite roji tea garden. **Every third Saturday at 1pm and 2pm members can witness an authentic presentation of *Chado, the Way of Tea, in the Kashintei Tea House*.** The passage here is part of an ongoing series that examines this practice of stillness, simplicity, and grace.

*“An unpainted, weathered gate, slightly ajar, is a guest’s first sign of welcome to a tea gathering. Water has been sprinkled about, an indication of the host’s readiness for his guests. The other guests arrive at about the same time, pass through the outer gate and enter the entryway where they change their shoes and take off their wraps. After proceeding to a waiting room they are served small cups of hot water.*

*The guests then move to a sheltered waiting arbor on the edge of a small garden. Quiet and unpretentious, modeled after a mountain trail, the simple stone pathway leads the guests through the compactly arranged trees, shrubs, and moss. The function of the garden is only to lead guests to the tea hut. In so doing, the guests leave the mundane world and have an opportunity to relax and free their minds from worldly matters.*

*As the garden suggests a mountain trail, the tea hut suggests a simple mountain hermitage. Everyday materials, unpainted wooden posts and lintels, wattle walls, and thatched or bark roofs allow the structure to blend unobtrusively into the surroundings.”*

---

With these words from his book *Tea Life, Tea Mind*, Soshitsu Sen, then Grand Master of the Urasenke School of Tea, introduced his family’s 400-year-old practice of *Chado, the Way of Tea*, to the West in 1979.

## FROM THE GARDEN GIFT STORE

### KIRIKO, TEXTILES THAT TELL A STORY.

This month the Garden Gift store is pleased to bring you fabric accessories from local retailer, Kiriko. These Northwest Portland-based accessory designers are inspired by Japanese fabrics and the traditional techniques used to make them.

Like many of Kiriko’s offerings, the pocket squares, scarves and clutches on sale at the gift store are made using *kase-zome* fabric. This hand-made cloth is produced in Hiroshima, Japan using traditional methods.

To achieve a rich, vibrant color throughout, the fabric’s threads are dyed before weaving. Craftspeople submerge the threads in dye tanks by hand, before laying them to dry naturally in the sun. This process is repeated until the desired color is reached.

The machines used to weave the cloth are also unique. Each of the century-old machines is controlled manually. The fabric’s patterns and designs are created by skilled craftsman who have devoted their lives to mastering this *kase-zome* weaving technique.

Visit the Garden’s Gift Store to see (and feel) the tradition and mastery in these Kiriko textiles. Or order them online at [store.japanesegarden.com](http://store.japanesegarden.com).



[store.japanesegarden.com](http://store.japanesegarden.com)



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Photo: David M. Cobb

Photo: Tyler Quinn

**Member Only Hours:**

Tuesday–Sunday: 8-10am

**Spring/Summer Public Hours:**

March 13–September 30

Monday: Noon-7pm

Tuesday–Sunday: 10am-7pm

**Fall/Winter Public Hours:**

October 1–March 12

Monday: Noon-4pm

Tuesday–Sunday: 10am-4pm

**Public Tour Schedule:**

Daily at Noon

**Free Shuttle Schedule:**

A free shuttle bus from our parking lot to the Admission Gate available Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

**Helpful Numbers:**

Main Gate . . . . . (503) 223-1321

Membership Services . . . . . (503) 796-9180

Development . . . . . (503) 542-0281

Garden Gift Store . . . . . (503) 223-5055

Events Department . . . . . (503) 542-0280

Garden Tours and Volunteers . . . . . (503) 223-9233

**Street Address:**

611 SW Kingston Avenue, Portland, OR 97205

[japanesegarden.com](http://japanesegarden.com)

**HELP THE GARDEN GO GREEN-ER**

If you'd like to receive your copy of the *Garden Path* electronically, email [membership@japanesegarden.com](mailto:membership@japanesegarden.com).

Thank you for helping the Portland Japanese Garden conserve resources and reduce its environmental impact.