
The Team

The people behind Portland Japanese Garden

Steve Bloom, Chief Executive Officer

Under Steve Bloom’s leadership, the Portland Japanese Garden has seen strong institutional and programmatic growth. He oversaw the completion of a \$37 million expansion of the Garden and its facilities designed by renowned architect Kengo Kuma, created a curatorial department, expanded and improved programs in culture, art, and education, established an International Japanese Garden Training Center, formed an International Advisory Board, and has dramatically increased the Garden’s national and international visibility and recognition.

In 2015, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced it was awarding the Foreign Minister’s Commendations in Honor of the 70th anniversary of the End of World War II. The award was given to individuals and groups with outstanding achievements in the promotion of friendship between Japan and the United States. Bloom was awarded this prestigious recognition along with only 27 other individuals.

Bloom was a 2008-09 Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellow in Japan, sponsored by Hitachi, and concurrently served as Visiting Scholar at Tokyo University of Agriculture. Following his fellowship in Japan, Bloom led an effort to create the North American Japanese Garden Association (NAJGA) of which he served as its Founding Board President. Presented by Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler, Bloom is the recent recipient of the “2017 Portland Award” recognizing greatest overall contribution to the promotion of Portland’s visitor industry. In 2018, on the occasion of its 100th Anniversary, the Garden Society of Japan bestowed Honorary Membership to Bloom in recognition of outstanding achievements in the promotion of Japanese Gardens worldwide.



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Sadafumi Uchiyama, Garden Curator

Sadafumi (Sada) Uchiyama is the Garden Curator at the Portland Japanese Garden. Uchiyama is a third generation Japanese gardener from southern Japan where his family has been involved in gardening for over a century. Prior to his appointment as the Garden Curator in October 2008, he also served as a Vice President on the Board of Directors and continues to serve on advisory committees for the Portland Japanese Garden. Devoted to fostering relations between Japanese gardens in Japan and those outside of Japan, Uchiyama served as one of seven founding members and the Secretary of the International Association of Japanese Gardens (IAJG) from 1996 to 2000. Stemming from his involvement with the IAJG and his vast knowledge in the field of Japanese gardens, he was invited to speak at the 5th International Symposium on Japanese Gardens in Tokyo in September 2007. Since then, Uchiyama has been working on the development and establishment of the North American Japanese Garden Association (NAJGA) beginning in 2009. He was elected to serve as a Charter Member of the NAJGA Board and its Editorial Board.



As evidence of his interest to give back to the community, Uchiyama has taught landscape design courses and lectured on Japanese gardening at colleges and other public gardens in various parts of the countries. One may find his written contributions in the Journal of Japanese Gardening, Garden Design, Fine Gardening, Inspired House, Luxe Magazine as well as magazines and professional journals in Japan. As the Garden Curator of the Portland Japanese Garden, Uchiyama is actively engaged in ongoing public education and regularly speaks at horticultural societies, garden clubs, and schools and professional conferences in Japan and throughout the US.

In addition to his background as a gardener born and trained in Japan, Uchiyama is also a registered landscape architect in Oregon and California with a BLA and MLA from the University of Illinois. He has been practicing landscape architecture throughout the US. The traditional apprenticeship in Japanese gardening combined with the formal training in Western landscape architecture allows him to design and build a unique and wide range of private and public landscape projects. His representative projects include the renovation of the Osaka Garden, the site of the 1893 Great Columbian Exposition at Jackson Park in Chicago (2000- to date), and the Shofu-en of the Denver Botanic Gardens (2001-20012). Most recently, he completed Shoun-Kei Japanese garden at Sarah Duke Gardens at Duke University, NC. (2015) and currently working on the Rolex Headquarters in Dallas, TX. in collaboration with Kengo Kuma (2015 to date).

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Akihito Nakanishi, Curator of Culture, Art, and Education

Akihito Nakanishi is a cultural leader and public diplomacy expert with 19 years of experience in government relations, public communication, artistic exchanges, and cultural programming in Japan.

For 10 years, Nakanishi served as the Cultural Affairs Specialist at the United States Embassy, Tokyo, where he oversaw a wide spectrum of embassy involvement in cultural, creative, and educational activities designed to enhance mutual understanding between the United States and Japan. In addition to being the principal advisor to the Mission's Cultural Attaché, he also served as a cultural advisor to Ambassadors with the responsibility of directly overseeing some of the Ambassadors' cultural and education projects such as "Ties Over Time" (under Amb. John V. Roos) and "International Poetry Exchange Project" (under Amb. Caroline B. Kennedy).

Prior to working for the Embassy, Nakanishi worked for three years as Program Director at one of the major media corporations in Tokyo, followed by a role as Exhibition Director for four years at a family-owned museum. Drawing upon this extensive knowledge of the arts, he has worked as an independent art director, producing exhibitions and art fairs (Art Photo Tokyo 2016), co-producing literary events and festivals (Tokyo International Literary Festival, 2012-2018), writing dossiers for arts events in specialty publications and newspapers (Bijutsu Techo, Kobe Shimbun), while running his own non-profit organization for regional revitalization and youth empowerment, *echovisions*.



For his work at the Embassy, Nakanishi has received multiple State Department Awards including the State Department Meritorious Honor Award (May 2010), U.S. Embassy Japan Eagle Award (October 2011), and the U.S. Mission Japan Honor Award (October 2016).

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Cynthia Johnson Haruyama

In her role as Deputy Director, Cynthia Johnson Haruyama has managed the Cultural Crossing campaign from its inception, oversees implementation of the Strategic Plan, managed the start-up and launch of the Japanese Garden Training Center, liaises between the Garden and City bureaus, and is currently working on several new long-term initiatives. She also serves as the Japanese Garden's representative to the Explore Washington Park Board of Directors in the role of Board Vice President.

Previously, Haruyama has been in senior management positions for several of Portland's public gardens. She served as the Executive Director of Lan Su Chinese Garden (2008 – 2012) and earlier she was Executive Director for Hoyt Arboretum (2001 – 2008). At both gardens, her first task was financial turn-around followed by a focus on visitor experience, long-range planning, capital renewal and replacement, and Board development. At both Lan Su Garden and Hoyt Arboretum, Haruyama re-started moribund fund development programs and raised significant funds for annual operations and major capital projects.



Haruyama's interest in non-profit management and public gardens began after practicing corporate and business law with Davis Wright Tremaine followed by her role as General Manager and Sales Director for garden equipment manufacturer, A.M. Andrews Co.

In 2001, she and her family lived for a year in her husband's hometown of Kagoshima, Japan and travelled extensively in Japan, especially in southern Kyushu. Throughout her time in Japan, Haruyama visited many of Japan's famed gardens, and observed regional variations in gardens ranging from Kyoto to Kyushu and the Ryukyu islands.

Haruyama graduated with honors in East Asian Studies from Princeton University. Her law degree is from Columbia University in New York.

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Dorie Vollum

Dorie Vollum is a long-time arts advocate in the city of Portland. As Chair of the RACC Public Art Advisory Committee, she helped to set goals and provide curatorial guidance for the selection, placement and maintenance of the works of art acquired through the Percent for Art Program. She currently serves on the advisory committee that governs the Howard Vollum Scholarship Fund at the Oregon Community Foundation that grants scholarships to NW Native Americans enrolling in math, engineering, science, and computer science programs.

For Trimet she served on the Portland Mall Art Advisory Committee that advised on the re-siting and addition of work to the Trimet mall between 5th and 6th. As a founding board member of PICA she was also the chief organizer of many of the Dada Balls that served as fundraisers for the organization.

At Reed College, Vollum served on the committee to promote public interaction and art lectures for the Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery.



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