

The Garden Path

A Community Effort

December 2023/January 2024



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HAIKU

The sound of no sound

Moisture and cold have arrived
at the point of snow

- Peter Kendall

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Christina Sjogren

Dear Members.

Starting in January, we set out to share stories from our 60 years and one trend became immediately obvious—Portland Japanese Garden quite literally would not have existed were it not for the remarkable passion, devotion, and generosity of our community. Once again, you have risen to support the Garden through our end-of-year fundraising campaign. Thank you for helping ensure Portland Japanese Garden will continue to be a treasured space for years to come.

When I was hired as CEO in 2005, I set to work surrounding myself with the best in their field—people who had a proven track record of leading organizations, had keen foresight, and had expert knowledge of Japanese gardens, culture, and history. How lucky was I that two such people existed here in Portland: Deputy Director Cynthia Johnson Haruyama and Chief Curator and Director of the International Japanese Garden Training Center, Sadafumi (Sada) Uchiyama. Now, after years of dedicated service to their community, Cynthia and Sada will retire from their positions at the end of 2023.

Cynthia has brought impeccable leadership as our Deputy Director, something that is only surpassed by her unwavering commitment and empathy. She has helped navigate the organization through major milestones, from the 2017 Cultural Crossing expansion to COVID-19 recovery to the renovation of the Japan Institute campus and was instrumental in our elevation as a global leader in cultural diplomacy, gardens, and nonprofit management.

Sada has served as Chief Curator since 2021, was Garden Curator from 2008 to 2021 and was a Board of Trustees Member before that. Sada is the embodiment of what a gardener should represent: selfless commitment and devotion to fostering something greater than himself that will outlast his lifetime. He has served our organization with this mindset and heartfelt dedication as designer, leader, teacher, advocate, and caretaker. Sada's impact transcends Portland Japanese Garden and has reverberated around the world.

While it is certainly bittersweet to bid farewell to Cynthia and Sada, they won't be going far. Cynthia will continue on a part-time basis guiding the Japan Institute campus remodeling project through its completion. Sada will take on the title of Garden Curator Emeritus and continue to be an invaluable faculty member at the International Japanese Garden Training Center of Japan Institute.

I am also excited for the future. Beginning in January, our Chief External Affairs Officer, Lisa Christy, will step into Cynthia's role, assuming the title of Executive Director of Portland Japanese Garden! For nearly a decade, Lisa has been a sterling leader in our organization, whose work has bettered the experience for our members and guests. As for physical Garden stewardship, we will continue to remain in excellent hands pertaining to maintenance, design, and oversight of garden spaces, with our Garden Curator, Hugo Torii. I am beyond delighted that we will have outstanding people here to help me guide the evolution of the Garden and Japan Institute. More on this transition can be read on page 6.

Here's to another exceptional year ahead. Onward!

With gratitude,

Steve Bloom

Chief Executive Officer

FRONT COVER Don Schwartz

BACK COVER Portland Japanese Garden

Member News & Events

New Year's Day

January 1

Start the new year right with a visit to Portland Japanese Garden. On January 1st, we open exclusively for those in the Golden Crane Recognition Society, Garden members, and their guests and will commemorate the holiday with a tranquil and refreshed atmosphere. There will be free hot tea served all day, free tours of the Garden, and traditional Japanese New Year's décor.

O-Shogatsu

January 7

During *O-Shogatsu*, people celebrate the start of a new year and hope for happiness and prosperity in the months ahead. Here at the Garden, we honor this special festival with *kadomatsu*, or traditional arrangements of pine, bamboo, and plum branches, and family-friendly activities and performances throughout the day.



Kadomatsu, traditional decorations made of bamboo, Japanese black pine, and plum displayed for New Year's.

Meg Nanna

New Exhibition Masterpieces in Miniature: The Art of Netsuke Sculptures

December 16 - March 4

Masterpieces in Miniature features Portland Japanese Garden's extensive netsuke holdings from The Netsuke Collection of James R. Coonan, Denise C. Bates, and Lurline C. Menzies and The Marian Plumb Miller Collection.

In addition to visiting this latest exhibition, members and those in the Golden Crane Recognition Society will have exclusive access to experience the art ahead of the exhibition's opening. For times and dates, go to japanesegarden.org/events

More about this exhibition and the miniature carvings it will feature can be read on page 10.

Inclement Weather

Throughout winter, the Garden may close due to ice and snow. Please check our website for information before visiting during periods of inclement weather: japanesegarden.org

The Year in Festivals 2024

In addition to *O-Shogatsu*, you can experience a year of Japanese celebrations with Portland Japanese Garden's annual cultural festivals. Further details as well as registration information will be available closer to each event date and will be announced in our weekly newsletter.

Hina Matsuri, The Doll Festival

March 3, 2024

The Doll Festival is a special time to pray for the growth and happiness of girls. It is also called *Momo no Sekku*, or "Peach Blossom Festival." Visitors can appreciate a traditional display of dolls representing the Emperor and Empress with members of the Imperial Court. The event will also feature storytelling, songs, and a family-friendly *ikebana* workshop.

Kodomo no Hi, Children's Day

May 5, 2024

Children's Day is observed in Japan as a day to honor all children in the hopes that they will grow up healthy and strong. Cloth carp streamers, or *koinobori*, are flown to bring good fortune to children. Come to the Garden with your family to listen to *taiko* music performed by children, participate in a scavenger hunt, create origami projects, and satisfy your curiosity about *koi*.

Tanabata, The Star Festival

July 7, 2024

The Star Festival commemorates the one day a year the star-crossed lovers Vega, the Weaver Star and Altair, the Cowherder Star meet in the sky. Visitors can write a wish to add to the colorful display of *tanzaku*, or wish strips, hanging from bamboo in the Garden's Crumpacker Family Bamboo Allee. Visitors can also hear the *Tanabata* story and listen to a *taiko* performance.

Tyler Quinn



O-Bon, The Spirit Festival

August 16 & 17, 2024

O-Bon, the Spirit Festival, is an important Buddhist festival to honor ancestors and pray for the souls of the departed. The souls of the ancestors are believed to return to the world from beyond. The Garden's O-Bon event features chanting of the Lotus sutra, reading the names of the departed, and the quiet reverence of toro nagashi (lantern floating). This event is reserved exclusively for members.

Bon-Odori, Summer Festival

August 31, 2024

A highlight of summer festivals in Japan is the bon-odori (盆踊り / Bon dance). Come gather as a community, learn some dances, see people dressed in yukata, and hear and feel the sound of taiko drums.

O-Tsukimi, Moonviewing

September 16, 17, & 18, 2024

During Moonviewing, people gather to appreciate the moon's beauty and pray for good fortune and an abundant harvest. At this festival, one of the most beloved at the Garden, guests anticipate the moonrise with a cup of tea and an opportunity to compose haiku as *shakuhachi* and *koto* music wafts through the air.

Jonathan Ley





Sadafumi Uchiyama, Chief Curator and Director of the International Japanese Garden Training Center.

Nina Johnson



Cynthia Johnson Haruyama, Deputy Director.

Jonathan Ley

Celebrating a Legacy and Embracing a New Chapter

Portland Japanese Garden to See Transition in Leadership

Portland Japanese Garden has always espoused a stewardship mindset, motivated by the knowledge that it was built to last centuries and have its future led by successive generations. At the end of 2023, Portland Japanese Garden will see the retirement of two key figures who have led the organization for more than a decade: Sadafumi (Sada) Uchiyama and Cynthia Johnson Haruyama. Uchiyama has served as Chief Curator since 2021, a title he was bestowed after having served as Garden Curator beginning in 2008. He has also served as Director of the International Japanese Garden Training Center. Johnson Haruyama has served as Deputy Director since 2012.

Holding degrees in law from Columbia University and East Asian studies from Princeton University, Johnson Haruyama had previously led two other beloved Portland attractions, Hoyt Arboretum and Lan Su Chinese Garden, before being appointed to her position at Portland Japanese Garden. Not long after having assumed the role of Deputy Director, Johnson Haruyama was tasked with managing the capital campaign and planning logistics and operations for the Garden's \$37.5 million Cultural Crossing expansion project, a multiple award-winning success that doubled the acreage of the institution's footprint and added four new buildings in a space not so easily modified. Her grounded perspective, tenacity, and ability to connect with others through her empathy was also crucial when the COVID-19 pandemic jeopardized the long-term future of the Garden. Johnson Haruyama helped not only steer the organization's 140 staff through uncharted territory but also navigate a repeated whiplash of adjustments to its operations. Recently, she has been once again shepherding a monumental task in the form of Japan Institute, overseeing the renovation project on its Forest Parkadjacent campus.

Uchiyama, a fourth-generation Japanese-born gardener with multiple degrees in landscape architecture from the University of Illinois, served as Vice President on Portland Japanese Garden's Board of Trustees before becoming a member of the organization's staff leadership in 2008. An internationally recognized and award-winning *niwashi* (master gardener) who has received a Foreign Minister's Commendation from the Foreign Ministry of Japan, Uchiyama conceived of, championed, and shepherded the creation of the Portland-based International Japanese Garden Training Center, a globally unique educational institution that combines authentic and traditional Japanese landscape architecture and design apprenticeship with more accessible and modernized, instructor-driven coursework in English. His tireless and passionate advocacy of Japanese gardens was instrumental in the development and establishment of the North American Japanese Garden Association (NAJGA) in 2009. Uchiyama's prolific and creative work can be seen beyond Portland; his consultation and leadership has influenced the design of Japanese gardens, including those in Denver, Chicago, Dallas, and Osaka, Japan.

While Johnson Haruyama and Uchiyama will be retiring, they will remain an active and integral part of the organization. Johnson Haruyma will transition into a part-time role guiding the Japan Institute campus remodeling project through its completion, and Uchiyama will take on the title of Garden Curator Emeritus as well as continue to be an invaluable faculty member at the International Japanese Garden Training Center of Japan Institute.

Simultaneous to Johnson Haruyama and Uchiyama's departures will be the promotion of a Garden leader who has been with the organization for nearly a decade. Chief External Affairs Officer Lisa Christy will be appointed Executive Director of Portland Japanese Garden. Physical Garden stewardship will continue to be overseen by the organization's Garden Curator since 2021, Hugo Torii. Torii and Christy will continue to report to CEO Steve Bloom, who has led the organization since 2005. Ahead of this transition, Uchiyama and Johnson Haruyama sat down to look back upon their journey with Portland Japanese Garden. To read their thoughts, go to japanesegarden.org/looking-back



Hugo Torii, Garden Curator. 🖸 Jonathan Ley



Lisa Christy, incoming Executive Director of Japanese Garden beginning in 2024.

Nina Johnson



An aerial view of Portland Japanese Garden in 1964. The elevated clearing is where the Flat Garden would be constructed. © City of Portland (OR) Archives AP/6519

Before There Was a Garden, There Was an Idea

The First Steps Portlanders Took in Creating Portland Japanese Garden

Portland Japanese Garden is a paradox. In sunlight or in fog, when breezes are gentle or when they rush in with fervor, when the trees of summer showcase every spectrum, wavelength, and hue of green or bejewel themselves in the rubies and citrines of autumn, every perspective of the Garden appears to have been laid out by cosmic design, not the hands of humankind. And yet, this meticulous presentation of nature only exists because of the people who shape it and the land they foster is only available to them because of the work of the Portlanders who came before.

Portland Japanese Garden is perched atop a hill in Washington Park, a site that was once the home of the Portland Zoo (now known as the Oregon Zoo). In 1954, the city issued a nearly \$4 million bond to finance the Zoo's new home, about a half-mile southwest of the Garden on the grounds of the former West Hills Golf Course, and in 1959 it opened to great success. The question remained what to do with the land left behind—fortunately, there were idealists who had a vision for what it could become.

The late 1950s had seen a renewed effort to repair the American-Japanese friendship strained by the tragedies of World War II, a bloody and prolonged conflict abroad and the catalyst for inhumane treatment of people of Japanese ancestry across the U.S. It was not a simple matter. While peace treaties had been signed and *Issei* (first generation immigrants from Japan) and *Nisei* (second generation) had been released from their concentration camps, the tensions of war still loomed large in Portland.

However, those of Japanese descent showed great resilience and partnered with their allies to start the long process of reconciliation. One significant milestone in this endeavor was the establishment of the Portland-Sapporo Sister City Friendship in 1959, one of the earlier such relationships forged between a Japanese and American city. The next would come in 1960 from one of the great champions of the creation of Portland Japanese Garden--the Japan Society of Oregon.

On July 29, 1960, during a meeting of Japan Society's Board of Directors in the York Room at the Benson Hotel, the proposed area of what would eventually become Portland Japanese Garden was outlined. Later in December of that year, Society Board President Don Bates, a local leader who was

among those most vociferous in the desire for a Japanese garden, would see his enthusiasm grant the formation of a garden tremendous momentum when he earned the support of Portland Mayor Terry D. Schrunk and Portland Parks Bureau Superintendent Harry Buckley. As reported by author and historian Bruce Taylor Hamilton, Bates shared why he was so eager for the old Portland Zoo to become a Japanese garden:

"Some had visited...gardens on the Pacific Coast and Eastern Seaboard. Not one offered the possibilities for development as did this particular site in Portland. Traditional buildings and the Japanese mastery of the miniature garden vistas presented in this spot a magnificent opportunity for Portland's citizens."

It is easy to understand his vision now, but in the 1960s it required some creative thinking. Below the beauty of its Douglas firs, the view was dominated by mud and concrete. Some even thought the idea of it being rescued from this desolation was "hopeless." In 1961, the City of Portland, recognizing the invaluable contribution such a space could make for Japanese-Oregonian relations and the great serenity and beauty it could provide its populace, decided to lease the land for \$1 per year to the organization that would run the Garden. All that was needed was the organization.

One year later, the Portland City Council created the Formal Japanese Garden Commission to oversee the establishment of a Japanese garden. Mayor Schrunk appointed its members from Portland's robust roster of peace-minded civic leaders, including future Garden Board President Philip Englehart, Japan Society of Oregon President John Fulton, Japanese Ancestral Society President Tom Tamiyasu, and Japanese Consul Katsuma Urabe.

The Commission would then draft by-laws and articles of incorporation, and in 1963 held their very first meeting in the conference room of the Portland Parks Bureau under its new name: the Japanese Garden Society of Oregon, the official name that Portland Japanese Garden retains to this day. Within their first year the Japanese Garden Society formalized what had only previously been an agreement in principle—to retain the services of the Japanese professor the Japan Society had been in touch with a few years prior, Takuma Tono. To see what happened next, one only needs to stroll the Garden.

With 60 years and 12 acres, the enormity of Portland Japanese Garden's scope and impact may seem too challenging for any one person to accomplish. It is. It required a community effort to build the Garden and it remains a community effort to keep it open. And Portland Japanese Garden always will be open, so long as there are people who understand even a barren and desolate place can be made beautiful and that animosity cannot stand against the power of hope.



A 1960s pamphlet produced by the Japanese Garden Society of Oregon. City of Portland (OR) Archives AP/6519

For our 60th anniversary we highlighted stories on our history in every issue of *The Garden Path!* To read everything published here and online, go to japanesegarden.org/60years.

Thank you for following along and celebrating our milestone with us in 2023!



Masterpieces in Miniature

Portland Japanese Garden Exhibits Expanding Netsuke Collection

Twenty-five years ago, Marian Plumb Miller donated 105 miniature masterpieces carved from ivory, wood, and antler, making Portland Japanese Garden home to a collection of *netsuke*. Netsuke (pronounced nets-keh) were personal fashion accessories that also served a purpose: overcoming the lack of pockets in traditional men's clothing by helping hang small items from a *kimono* sash. What started as simple accessories evolved into beautiful and complicated sculptures created in a variety of exquisite materials over a span of more than 200 years during Japan's Edo period (1603-1868). Once the practical considerations were met, artisans had diverse subject options for their netsuke carvings, drawing ideas from plants and animals in the natural world, scenes from daily life, and popular stories featuring historical heroes, folklore characters, and magical creatures.

In 2022, the Garden's collection dramatically expanded with a generous gift of more than 200 pieces from The Netsuke Collection of James R. Coonan, Denise C. Bates, and Lurline C. Menzies. With so many tiny treasures to share with the public, the Garden sought out Peter Doebler, the Kettering Curator of Asian Art at Dayton Art Institute, to curate an exhibition featuring both never-before-seen netsuke as well as pieces not displayed since 2010. Our winter exhibition, *Masterpieces in Miniature: The Art of Netsuke Sculptures* explores new stories and subjects to deepen our appreciation for these little wonders. Doebler notes:

"Whenever I encounter netsuke, I end up with a smile on my face. It is easy to overlook netsuke since they are so small, and having an exhibition dedicated to the subject encourages guests to really pay attention...Gazing closely at a netsuke, I often sense the artist grasped the essence of the subject and distilled that into a piece of wood or ivory smaller than a golf ball, creating a unique object that has a life of its own."

Japanese aesthetics often strive to communicate the essence of a thing. The artist or craftsperson trains for decades to work in harmony with their materials. Japanese gardens, with the gardener's careful attention to each plant, have this quality, incorporating both calculated and accidental growth to highlight the natural essence of the landscape as a whole. Doebler observes, "I admire Portland Japanese Garden's intentional efforts to weave visual art exhibitions and other cultural activities into the fabric of the Garden, because you see that some of the spirit that inspires it is also manifest in other forms of Japanese culture, like netsuke."

Masterpieces in Miniature: The Art of Netsuke Sculptures is on display in the Pavilion Gallery from December 16, 2023 through March 4, 2024.

2024 Art Exhibitions

In 2024, Portland Japanese Garden's exhibitions will focus on the wealth of Japanese culture collected by our community close to home as well as Portland's sister-city relationship with Sapporo, Japan all set within the peaceful and carefully curated landscape of the Garden. Mark your calendars as we share a preview of what to expect in the upcoming year.

Sapporo Sister City Photography Exhibition

March - June, 2024

Celebrating 65 years of the Portland and Sapporo Sister City relationship, the Pavilion Gallery will welcome the work of Hokkaido-based photographers who have captured stunning visuals of their home to share with the people of Oregon.

Quiet Reflections (of Hokkaido): Photography by Sandra Chandler

March - June, 2024

We are thrilled to feature a selection of photography by Portland Japanese Garden Board of Trustees Member Sandra Chandler throughout the Jordan Schnitzer Japanese Arts Learning Center in celebration of Oregon's cultural ties with the Japanese prefecture of Hokkaido. Chandler has traveled the world using her designer's eye to explore minimalist compositions artfully captured from nature. This exhibition will showcase the essence of the beautiful winter landscape of Japan's northernmost island, a part of the world renowned for its flora and wildlife.



"Winterview" February 2023. Lake Kussharo, Teshikaga, Kawakami-Gun-Koshimizu. Sandra Chandler

Kintsugi Art Exhibition

September - December 2024



Kintsugi by artist Naoro Fukumaru.

Naoro Fukumaru

Portland Japanese Garden receives support from the Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency funded by the State of Oregon and the National Endowment for the Arts.

DECEMBER 2023/JANUARY 2024



Caryl Stern, Chief Impact Officer at LionTree and former CEO, UNICEF USA, delivering her keynote address.

3 Jane Kratochvil

Promoting Peace Within Our Own Communities

Japan Institute Holds Peace Symposium in New York

Japan Institute's Peace Symposia series is the signature programming of the organization's International Exchange Forum. These symposia, which have taken place in global capitals such as Tokyo and London, inspire conversations about peace through the lens of cultural diplomacy by exploring the interplay between and convergence of landscapes, architecture, and arts.

On September 21, the United Nations' International Day of Peace, Japan Institute held its third Peace Symposium at Japan Society's headquarters in New York, New York. Global thought leaders presented on topics related to the symposium's theme of "The Intersection of Culture, Art, and Nature." The following captures some highlights of the program through quotes:

"Peace is not merely the absence of conflict. It's a state of harmony, understanding, and cooperation. Peace is not passive. It requires active engagement and dialogue. It's about respecting diversity and seeking nonviolent solutions to conflict. Peace is not achieved overnight. It requires patience, empathy, a willingness to listen to different perspectives. And as global citizens, we have a responsibility to promote peace within our own communities and way beyond."

- Caryl Stern, Chief Impact Officer at LionTree & Former CEO, UNICEF USA

"I feel that the creative process of art itself is a process of peacemaking... The process of creating an artwork is to accept all the forms and colors that appear on a surface to create harmony and to create a well-balanced world. ... Having studied the history of art around the world, I feel that artists have depicted light in times of darkness, openness in times of need, and the harmony of different values in times of war. I believe that art is about pointing out the failures of our times and preserving them through images, showing the world as we would like it to be."

- Hiroshi Senju, Artist



"Today's theme, 'Peacemaking at the Intersection of Culture, Art, and Nature,' requires a deep sense of unity. As the UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization] constitution says, since wars begin in the minds of man, it is in the minds of man that the defense of peace must be constructed. Though, we first have to replace the word 'man' with 'people.' We have to start constructing the defensive peace by deepening our sense of unity, which easily comes when art and culture gathers us together. In this regard, Japanese art is the great connector, leaving intentional space for artists and viewers to partake in reflective contemplation, offering a chance for dialogue."

- His Excellency, Ambassador Osamu Yamanaka, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations

"As I've been a mediator, I've come to see that there are many truths. And that part of getting to peace is understanding, sharing our truth, having it be heard and understood, and then listening to somebody else's truth and making a shift in perspective. And maybe at the end of your mediation session, your restorative practice, your facilitated dialogue, you realize, 'Okay, we are not going to see eye-to-eye here.' That's okay too, right? Because you have come to better understand yourself and them."

- Ayanna Behin, Director of Training & Conflict Consulting, New York Peace Institute

"We have adopted forest bathing in [Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden in South Africa], *shinin-yoku*, which is basically the positive effects of nature on human health and wellbeing. It was a concept that we hadn't really heard of, but through engagement with other communities, we've heard about this. And I think using trees as a space for improving psychological and physiological conditions, lowers your blood pressure, just walking in a forest. I think these spaces are very critical for enhancing better lifestyles and conditions."

- Christopher Willis, Chief Director of National Botanical Gardens, South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)

"I was very interested to listen to a variety of speeches today and comments particularly on the indirect relationship between parks, gardens, and peacemaking. It's not self-evident. And what I came away with was that it is not an issue of time, but an issue of space. ... There is this kind of meditative reflective impetus that is created by gardens. The more that people use gardens and they become part of not just someplace you visit, but someplace you live, there is the opportunity to be reflective. And in that reflection, there is the possibility of peace or the determent of conflict."

- Robert Lear, Senior International Producer, Global Arts Corps

Moderator Thomas Hill, Panelists Ayanna Behin, Christopher Willis, and Robert Lear, and Portland Japanese Garden and Japan Institute CEO Steve Bloom.

Jane Kratochvil



THE GARDEN PATH



To see this list online, go to japanesegarden.com/support-your-garden For corrections, contact development@japanesegarden.org

Cumulative giving to the Annual Fund from August 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023

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Matya Gimro

Thank you





Chicago Community Foundation §















































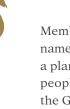
If you would like to make a donation or have any questions about the Golden Crane Society, please contact Claire Eisenfeld, Director of Philanthropy, at (503) 542-0281 or ceisenfeld@japanesegarden.org.



Portland Japanese
Garden



Tyler Quinn



Members of the Phoenix Legacy Society 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 enduring way.

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 Society Member, please contact Claire Eisenfeld, Director of Philanthropy, at (503) 542-0281 or ceisenfeld@japanesegarden.org.

PHOENIX

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Path to Peace Campaign for Japan Institute

Recognizing all those who have made a gift in support of our *Path to Peace* Campaign for Japan Institute from January 1, 2018 through September 30, 2023, helping us be a leading global voice for cultural understanding, in pursuit of a more peaceful, sustainable world.

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Tom Crouse & Kay Enokido

GIFT IN HONOR OF KATE COMSTOCK'S 65TH BIRTHDAY

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GIFT IN MEMORY OF LLOYD & LAVERNE TORCHIO

W. Curtis Schade & Jacquie Siewert-Schade

THE GARDEN PATH



Nobel Peace Center Executive Director Kjersti Fløgstad walks the Garden with CEO Steve Bloom. Fløgstad was a keynote speaker at Portland Japanese Garden's 60th Anniversary Gala in Portland. 💿 Jonathan Ley



Julie Gursha





Japan Institute Artist-in-Residence Rui Sasaki standsnext to her work in the Pavilion Gallery. This piece was part of an exhibition at the Garden titled, Subtle Intimacy: Here and There. The exhibition was funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Jonathan Ley

A Year in Photos

In 2023, Portland Japanese Garden celebrated its 60th anniversary here in Portland, Oregon and around the world. Here is a look at just some of the amazing moments from the year.



Former Consul General Masaki Shiga of the Consular Office of Japan in Portland with Curator Emerita Diane Durston and Chief Curator Sadafumi Uchiyama at a special event honoring honors both received from the government of Japan.

Nina Johnson



The Natural Garden's restored machiai. This project was made possible through the generous support of 250 donors, a matching grant from the Oregon Heritage Commission, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, and Dorothy Piacentini.

Portland Japanese
Garden



Garden Curator Hugo Torii, Chief Curator Sadafumi Uchiyama, CEO Steve Bloom, and Board President Drake Snodgrass reveal the wooden plaque on the Nezu Gate, named in honor of Koichi and Mihoko Nezu.

Nina Johnson



Dr. Joshua Walker, President of Japan Society, speaks at the 2023 Annual Membership Meeting.

Nina Johnson



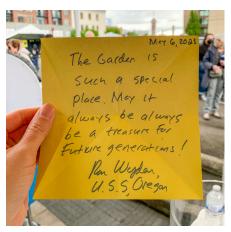
Hugo Torii, Garden Curator of Portland Japanese Garden, gives Japan Institute Artist-in-Residence Takahiro Iwasaki a guided tour of the Garden.

Portland Japanese Garden



Ken Katsurayama







U.S. Senator Ron Wyden writes a message of peace at the Garden's booth at Oregon Rises Above Hate's event held during Asian American Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Month in May.

Portland Japanese Garden

Portland Japanese Garden
Board of Trustees Member Dorie
Vollum chats with Chief Curator
Sadafumi Uchiyama during
the Garden's Conversations
with the Chief Curator event in
September.

Nina Johnson



INFORMATION

Chief Blender of Suntory Whisky, Shinji Fukuyo, leads a whisky tasting during In Praise of Time, an event celebrating Suntory's 100th anniversary, in partnership with Multnomah Whisk{e}y Library.

Nina Johnson







Longtime KGW-TV anchor Brenda Braxton as Master of Ceremony at Portland Japanese Garden's 60th Anniversary Gala at Portland Art Museum.

Jonathan Ley



GRAMMY-nominated musician Andy Akiho (right) performs at Portland Japanese Garden's 60th Anniversary Gala at Portland Art Museum alongside Sean Dixon (left) and Marylin de Oliveira.

Jonathan Ley

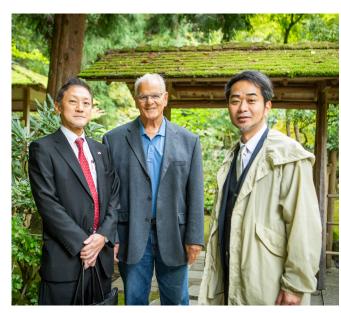
On Veterans Day, Portland Japanese Garden offered free admission for active military personnel, military veterans and their families who accompanied them. Veterans Day at Portland Japanese Garden was sponsored this year by The Oregonian.

Portland Japanese Garden



Left to right: Fumito Miyake, Minister, Public Affairs Section, Embassy of Japan in the United States, Drake Snodgrass, Portland Japanese Garden Board of Trustees President, and Junichi Sumi, Deputy Consul General, Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle tour the Garden.

Jonathan Ley



Portland Japanese Garden's 60th Anniversary Gala co-chairs performing the ceremonial opening of a sake barrel (Kagami-biraki), left to right: Gary Reynolds, Sue Reynolds, Bart Eberwein, Jill Eberwein.

Jonathan Ley



60TH ANNIVERSARY FUN FACT | DID YOU KNOW...?

Throughout 2023, we've shared photography that has helped illustrate in vivid detail the incredible transformation of an old, abandoned zoo into Portland Japanese Garden. These photos, catalogued by former Board of Trustees President Ed McVicker (2009-10), were often taken by William "Robbie" Robinson (1917-2011), former Head Gardener for Portland Parks and Recreation and an instrumental figure in the construction of the Garden, seen below. Aside from his photography, Robinson helped procure many of the plants and stones throughout our landscape and in 1981 convinced his colleagues to keep the Garden open year-round rather than close for winter. In recognition of his efforts to foster "civilization, friendship, and peace," Robinson was awarded the Order of the Sacred Treasure, Sixth Class, by Japan's Emperor Hirohito in 1985.

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