



In July 2008, Bessie *Banmi-sensei* installed *Bansho* Ricardo Carrasco as the 2nd Generation Headmaster of *Banmi Shofu Ryu*. *Bansho* Ricardo-sensei was one of her students in her first classes in 1972 in Taiwan, and received his initial teaching certificate in 1974.

Since then, they continued working together for over 40 years, their last creation shown during the 2008 North American Regional Convention held in Monterey, California. Upon installation, *Bansho-sensei* launched a 5-year plan, a formalization of their shared vision, but until then, not combined nor communicated to the entire family, and only to a handful of Ikebana communities. The 5-year plan includes this brochure, a book on driftwood and *Banmi Shofu Ryu kaden* (not so secret methods), a website, and an aggressive education initiative called *Hashi Series*. The mission of *Banmi Shofu Ryu* is to preserve, grow, teach and communicate the legacy of its *Banmi Sensei* aligning with the motto, "Friendship across the Globe through Flowers and Driftwood."

For 5 years, *Bansho* Ric and *Banmi* Bessie-senseis hosted an annual *Banmi Shofu Ryu* workshop in Florida. From December 2008, the annual event it was changed to the Bessie *Banmi* Fooks Memorial Annual Workshop, now a festival.



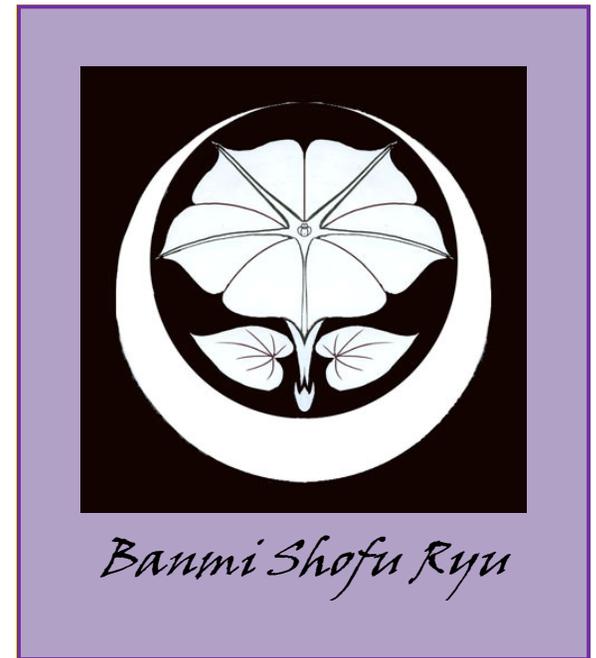
Bansho Ric-sensei inspects a heirloom driftwood before the 2008 *Banmi Shofu* annual workshop.

In 1996, they refined the *Banmi Shofu Ryu* curriculum, based on the translation of a Japanese manual of flower arrangement handed down from *Bansui Ohta-sensei*. *Bansho-sensei* uses it to teach *Banmi Shofu Ryu* to students and prospective teachers. The curriculum dovetails with levels of *Banmi Shofu Ryu* study.

Banmi Shofu Ryu is open to developing talent and Chapters in various locations, and offers various models of teaching, teacher training, demonstrations, and exhibitions which are negotiable according to student expertise and venue needs. For more information, go to the *Banmi Shofu Ryu* website or contact *Bansho* Ric-sensei by e-mail, traditional mail, or phone.

Dr. *Bansho* Ricardo Carrasco
Headmaster & Professor
Banmi Shofu Ryu of Ikebana

730 South Ranger Boulevard
Winter Park, FL 32791
Telephone & FAX: 407-672-1339
E-mail: info@IkebanaBanmiShofu.com
www.IkebanaBanmiShofu.com



*Friendship across the Globe through
Flowers and Driftwood*





Classic Banmi Shofu Ryu design created by Bessie Banmi Sensei for a Honolulu Hale exhibition.

Ikebana is the ancient Japanese art of arranging flowers, documented as far back as 1486. The art, and the companion discipline of *Kado*, (way of the flower) evolved from the ritual of randomly thrown floral offerings to the spirits of the dead in the birthplace of Buddhism – India. When Buddhism came to Japan during the 6th century via China, the practice came along with it. By the 10th century, temple priests, who were primarily responsible for floral offerings started the use of containers. Soon, the aristocracy took a liking for *Kado*, transforming it from its religious purpose into a domestic, albeit royal aesthetic.

By the 15th century, Ikebana achieved its status as an art form, while retaining its symbolic, philosophical, and spiritual underpinnings. The first teachers and students came from the religious and aristocracy, but now, Ikebana is practiced at all levels of Japanese and Western societies. Various Ikebana schools started when personal expression, business with the Western world, and adaptation to different home settings came into the picture. By 1936, there were 500

schools in Japan. Today, there are about 5000 ikebana schools all over the world.

Roots of *Banmi Shofu Ryu* of Ikebana

Banmi Shofu Ryu originated from *Shofu Ryu*, which, like all other schools had its roots from the first school of Ikebana – *Ikenobo*. *Shofu Ryu* appealed to European taste because of its clever adaptation of traditional *Kado* principles to new conditions. Its name translates to pine or living breeze, and *Shofu* creations express a spirit of naturalness, as effortless as the wind on the pines on a summer day; they show both fluidity of line and fidelity to the way plants grow in nature.

Bessie Banmi-sensei in a 1962 vintage photo in Japan



In 1962, Bessie Yoneko Banmi Fooks, 1st Generation Headmaster of *Banmi Shofu Ryu* took her first lessons in Japan, and because her creations took a naturalistic form, her Ikenobo Sensei referred her to *Bansui Ohta*, then *Shofu Ryu*

Headmaster. During *Bansui Ota-sensei's* frequent visits with her daughter in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, *Banmi Bess-sensei*, then living on the island nation, continued to study with her. In 1972, she received her Professor's certificate, and authorization to establish *Banmi Shofu Ryu*. She started teaching in Tainan, Taiwan, and began exhibiting and demonstrating *Kado* during *Ikebana* International world and regional conventions for close to 50 years, and wherever her and her husband's work with the US Department of Defense Dependents Schools took

her family – Japan, Germany, Turkey, Philippines, among many. Her body of work highlights the hallmark of *Banmi Shofu Ryu* – employing the use of driftwood, not as an artifice, but as a way of connecting with the spirit of driftwood in creating a floral design. The driftwood pieces she used came to life as they infused floral arrangements with their living spirit. Driftwood is featured in the school's identity graphic, together with the rising moon and happiness *kanji*, shown in the previous page.

"In evolving Banmi Shofu Ryu, I used natural materials in simple lines provoking movement and symbols that in turn achieved serenity and tranquility; I could view the designs from any angle. They were simply the end product of a process that connected me spiritually with plant and driftwood materials. This has been my experience that began in Japan years ago; I continued to learn from Bansui Ohta Sensei, and transplanted what I absorbed in Japan to Hawaii and to the many places in the world where I traveled and connected with friends who love flowers," (Banmi Bessie Fooks, 2005)



New Year Honolulu Luncheon Exhibition, 2005.