

The Asian aesthetic has been an important part of my life since 1976 when I went to Japan as part of an international examination team (to examine branches of multinational banks) with the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC). I was staying at the Okura Hotel in Tokyo at cherry blossom time where an ikebana master was arranging cherry blossoms for a large centerpiece arrangement in the lobby. I watched transfixed as she meditatively placed the branches into a lyrical arrangement; it was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen. Later on that same trip, the gardens of Kyoto were the inspiration behind a lifelong love of gardens.