

LeeseXemplaar

Katsumi
Yamasaki
Dialogue with Flowers



Katsumi Yamasaki

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P E L C K M A N S



Preface

The title of Katsumi Yamasaki's book, *Dialogue with Flowers*, points us directly to its heart: the idea that true artistic expression begins with equality. Yamasaki approaches nature as an equal partner. His work is rooted in sincerity, humility, and a deep respect for the natural world.

He doesn't just design with flowers – he listens to them. And yes, I believe he really can hear them speak. A man who swims with dolphins, communicates with them, and understands their rhythms is surely just as attuned to the language of plants. This book is the product of a highly sensitive soul – someone who invites us to dive deep and learn how to observe and transform what nature offers us.

Yamasaki's sensitivity extends far beyond flowers. He takes in the texture of a vessel, the tone of a glaze, and the shape of a container as if each holds a message waiting to be heard. His work teaches us to sharpen our senses, to be more emotionally and visually aware. Letting ourselves be guided by his pieces becomes a kind of soul training.

Notice how water is used – not just as a necessity but as a design element. Explore the connection between the vessel and the flowers he selects. Take in the care and contrast in every detail. How does he achieve such depth and harmony? How does he receive all these signals? By spending time with a container. With a flower. The most precious gift we humans can give is time. Time, which equals love. To spend time with a flower is to dive into its essence – to discover its story, its beautiful name, and then tell that story in a setting. His colour combinations are always subtle – led by the colours of the flowers themselves and underlaid with muted earthy tones to anchor and enhance the vibrancy of the floral hues.

These are the study steps he offers us: start with botanical knowledge and the essential elements of water, textures, and colours, then study balance. The element 'one', the design with a single stem, develops into the beauty of many in his 'formations', finally leading to a composition. Interestingly, he seldom speaks of forms and lines – the usual main design factors – again a sign that his interest lies in the more hidden silent aspects of a material.

At its core, Yamasaki's art is about appreciation. Please watch closely how each detail connects to another: how plants bend gently toward the water, or reach across to a neighboring vessel. His compositions are in conversation. In flower design, we often talk about repetition. But Yamasaki takes it further. He allows the materials themselves to interact, to communicate. That is what makes his work feel so alive.

And perhaps that's the true essence of flower design: if our flowers come alive, then our work has succeeded in enabling the flowers to speak to the viewer, the customer, the student or the human we offer our creations to.

Gabriele Wagner-Kubo

Chigasaki City, Japan, June 2026



Mizu Water

Water is the elixir of life. It flows through every living being, connecting us all in its natural cycle. Without water, there would be no life. As a floral designer, one of the key aspects of my work is to secure a water source for my cut flowers, plants, and foliage. I see water as a vital lifeline for my creations. Each material and flower has its own unique needs when it comes to water – something that I must carefully consider when arranging them. It is my responsibility to listen closely to their requirements and incorporate them into my compositions.

This not only ensures the longevity of my designs but also allows me to express my creativity in finding different ways to provide water while enhancing the beauty of the blooms. Sometimes, I choose to make the water source a visible part of the arrangement, or I intentionally use the reflections in water as part of the design, while other times I prefer to conceal it or give the illusion that it isn't there at all. This adds another layer of artistry to my designs and showcases the versatility of flowers as living works of art.





Prosthechea cochleata, *Clematis*, *Begonia rex*, *Nelumbo nucifera*, *Masdevallia*









