



A Floral Artist Fusing Japanese and Western Styles

Nicolai Bergmann from Denmark is a floral artist based in Japan who creates floral arrangements in a fusion style of “East meets West.”

SATO KUMIKO



Bergmann’s work incorporating a Japanese flower vessel



Bergmann’s work fuses European style floral arrangements with Japanese flower vases

DANISH-BORN Nicolai Bergmann is a floral artist who creates works that express a fusion of “East meets West,” boldly blending European-style floral design with traditional Japanese flower vases and other vessels made of materials such as lacquerware or ceramics, and producing exhibits that combine staggeringly innovative ideas with the attention to detail found in Japanese craftsmanship. Bergmann’s artworks have been highly acclaimed both in Japan and overseas. Nicolai Bergmann Flowers & Design operates in ten locations in Japan, including the flagship store in Tokyo’s popular fashion district of Minami Aoyama, and the brand has expanded its reach to Denmark, Los Angeles and Seoul. Today, Bergmann is one of the most popular floral artists in the world.

Bergmann was born in Dragør, a town near Copenhagen surrounded by greenery. His father was a wholesale dealer of potted plants while his grandfather ran an apple farm. Raised in this environment, he went on to enroll at the National Business College of Denmark, becoming a certified florist at the age of 19. After graduating, he took a



trip to Japan.

“I only chose Japan because my father happened to have contacts there, but I enjoyed that experience and fell in love with Japanese culture,” says Bergmann. He returned to Japan at the age of 21 and spent the next seven years working at a local flower shop in Tokyo to gain experience.

Bergmann made a name for himself with the release of his Flower Box in 2000. It was a totally innovative concept: a box made of paper tightly packed with fresh flowers.

“I was asked by a PR representative of a certain brand to deliver 600 bouquets of flowers to be presented as gifts to guests at a press event. Given the large number of flowers, they had to be arranged in a form that allowed them to be stacked and stored. That’s how I came up with the idea of the flower box. New ideas always come about as a result of challenging situations,” says Bergmann.

In 2001, he established Nicolai Bergmann Flowers & Design, taking the business global. Japan remained his creative base, however, and Bergmann continued with the “fusion” approach of blending European-style floral design with Japanese traditions. A notable example of this enduring style was the 2014 exhibition at Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine in Fukuoka Prefecture, which he recalls as “the most memorable event.” Says Bergmann, “The scale of the event grew with each subsequent exhibition in 2016 and 2018, to the point where flower installations were exhibited simultaneously at four neighboring shrines. A local community of more than a hun-

dred volunteers was formed to assist with the event. I believe my exhibitions have set Dazaifu Tenmangu on a new path in its history.”

In April 2022, after eight years in the planning and preparation, Nicolai Bergmann Hakone Gardens will open in Hakone, Kanagawa Prefecture. Visitors arriving at the vast site will be greeted by the sight of a walking path that meanders and makes the most of the original terrain. Along the path will be flowers selected and planted according to a plan devised by Bergmann that shows them at their seasonal best based on the artist’s deep appreciation of the Japanese climate. Also displayed at various locations around the area will be floral art and objets created by Bergmann.

Speaking of his aspirations for the future, Bergmann says, “I have always

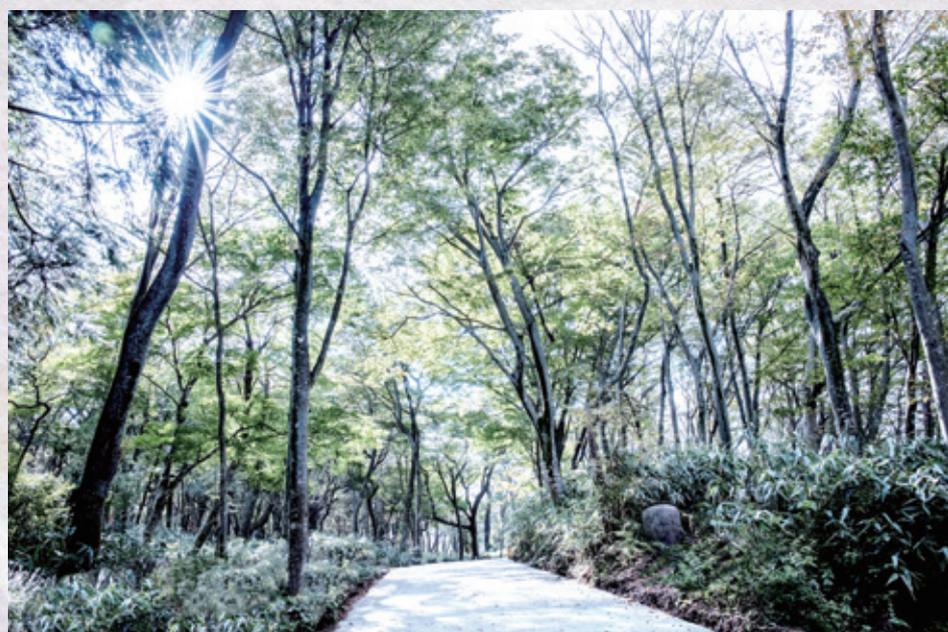
1 Bergmann’s signature Flower Box packed tightly with colorful flowers

2 Bergmann’s work exhibited at Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine in Fukuoka Prefecture in 2018

3 A work by Bergmann using orchids, exhibited at Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine in 2018

sought to make an impression as a flower artist on the customers who come into my flower shops each day. Nicolai Bergmann Hakone Gardens extends that desire to the great outdoors. I hope to plan a variety of other events.”

Bergmann’s Flower Box was a delightful surprise. Anticipation is mounting to see what kind of floral art he will show us next in Hakone, in his stores, and at future events. 



Nicolai Bergmann Hakone Gardens opens in Hakone in April 2022