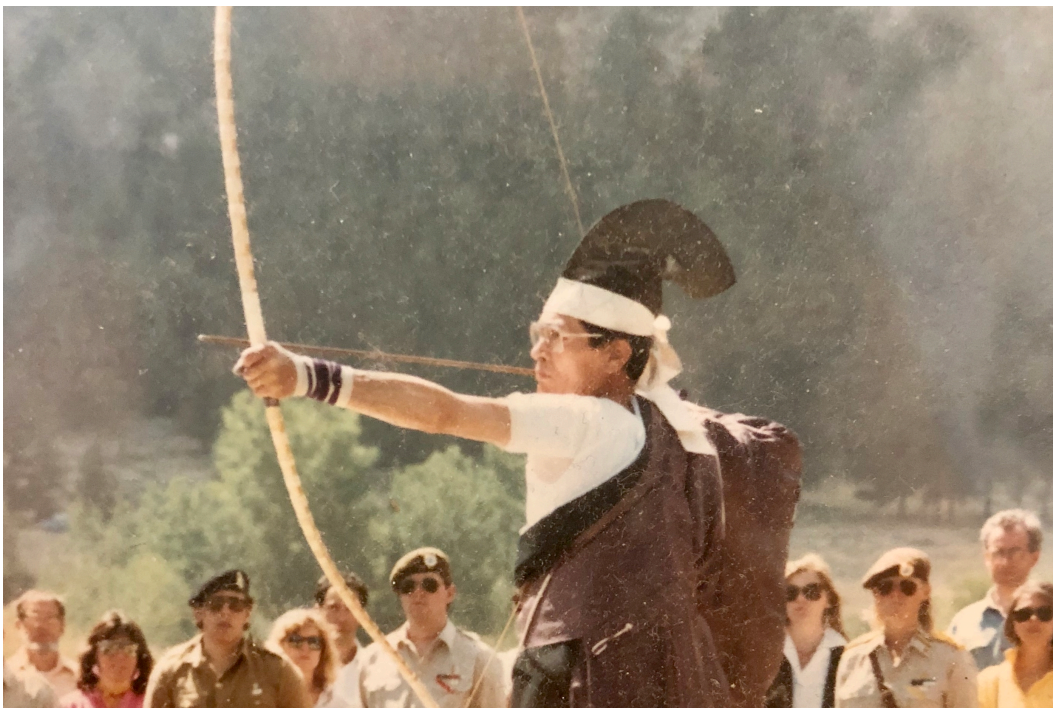


Kyudo (Way of the Bow) Introduction

Shibata Sensei was born in Kyoto, Japan, in 1921, into an ancient samurai family. At the age of eight, he began to learn bowmaking and the discipline of Zen archery—kyudo—from his grandfather, the 19th in a hereditary line of master bowmakers and archers dating back to the 16th century. Drafted into the army at age 20, Shibata Sensei



Caption

was captured by the Russians in 1945 and spent three years in Soviet internment camps. He returned to Japan in 1948, married, and after his grandfather's death in 1959 assumed the full title of Kanjuro Shibata XX, with its responsibilities for imperial bowmaking, teaching kyudo, and ritual service. He retained the title until 1994, at which

time it was conferred on Shibata Sensei's son-in-law Nobuhiro Sensei, whom he trained.

Shibata Sensei gradually became concerned with the transformation of kyudo in modern Japan from a meditative discipline to a competitive sport. Thus he eventually separated himself from the mainstream Japanese kyudo association and in 1980 accepted an invitation from the Vidyadhara, Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, to teach kyudo and warriorship to his students in Colorado and at his other North American centers. Finding the students eager and receptive to his way of teaching kyudo, Shibata Sensei returned annually until deciding in 1985 to settle permanently in the United States. After he passed away in 2013 his title became Sendai or “the one before”.

Sendai loved giving instruction to the younger generation especially the children entering into the Rites of Passage program at the age of 8 to 11. These children were given instruction early and allowed to preform a first shot much earlier than adults are allowed to. He often referred to the practice of Kyudo as heart washing and was quite patient and calm when instructing the younger students.

For the past few years Family Camp has the good Fortune after Sendai passed away, to have instruction provided by his late wife, caregiver and translator, Caroyln Kanjuro.

With Carolyn's passing just a few months ago here are some resources from her and Sendai to share with the Family Camp community.

In 2010 Sendai gave instruction on a program he was overseeing in Vermont.

Welcome Message from Shibata Sensei XX

For thirty years now we have been practicing kyudo together in the West. Sports, budo, these are easy. But kyudo is meditation from the traditions of India, the Avadhuti mandala. It's a lot of work, difficult! Now, there are many young people who want to do meditation practice. One hopes for an easy theme or message. But it's not easy to deliver this. It's easy to say 'meditation.' But this is a matter of each of you cleaning your own hearts. In any case, this trouble continually arises, again and again, one practices and hopes for the target.

*In the cold winter, you have no stove.
In the hot summer, no air conditioning.
This is meditation.*

Hitting the target is good. Not hitting the target is good. We have seven coordinations and five tastes. These five tastes are five aspects of good balance. You come to the platform with so much hope, to hit the target, to have a good form. Within the five tastes we have yuki no metsuke, the falling snowflake. When you see this what are you seeing? There is so much eagerness, various hopes. Instead, let's have a slow, gentle discussion together.

Genki de!

June 2010, Karmé Chôling, Vermont

The Three Vows

Rei gi o tadashiku subeshi

We will uphold excellent manners.

Shin gi o omonzubeshi

We will be honorable.

Chusetsu o toutobubeshi

We will be loyal.

The Three Vows

Rei gi o tadashiku subeshi

We will uphold excellent manners.

In examining the written symbol for 'manners', the character on the left is the same as the word for 'kimono' and indicates bowing. The top right character means 'straight' or 'balance', in the sense that one is well composed and also not tricky, not sideways, but direct. The lower right character means 'mame' or 'beans'. This refers to the fact that one's good manners should not only appear on occasion, just as one would not eat only one bean or a couple of beans. Rather, there should be countless expressions of good manners, all the time, continuously, from the beginning to the end of one's life.

When bowing, one doesn't bow with the body only, but with the whole heart. This, too, is simply good communication.

Shin gi o omonzubeshi
We will be honorable

Omondzu means "weighty". Your word should be strong as steel, hard as stone.

Your teacher might ask, "When will you come to practice?" Or, "when will you return?" This is a very important point! Don't just slip in and out. People need to have higher quality discussion, clearer communication. What you do is in relation to others, so you should not merely follow your own self-interest.

Chusetsu o toutobubeshi
We will be loyal

The strength of our kyudo family is not based on 'I like this person; I don't like that person'. Rather, it comes from having a bigger mind that transcends our likes and dislikes. By cutting the hopes of ego, we do not give up on each other. This loyalty has nothing to do with what happened in the Second World War. The old historical pacts that led to war were not pacts of true loyalty. Those were temporary agreements based on the ambition of ego. True loyalty is an unwavering heart born from great aspiration.

Carolyn kept a blog with memories of Sendai and the link is below:

<https://www.tenyearsonestep.com>

I couldn't possibly begin to cover everything that Sendai relayed nor could I do it with Carolyn's elegance. I've provided below links to videos and demonstrations to give the viewer a more accurate description and example for what heart washing really looks like.

Sending you all love and health in this crazy time! Here's to gathering in person in the land we live so much for 2021!

Mikayla

Footage of the Dojo in Boulder with Sendai instructing

<https://youtu.be/bKWNa7toeFE>

Carolyn with Sendai

https://youtu.be/Mni7_cJLAzY

Sendai teaching at Karame Choling and a brief history of Kyudo

<https://youtu.be/fBgkXcKh2hg>

Elephant magazine interview with Sendai in Boulder

<https://youtu.be/AdYgbmPSHrA>

Sendai's cremation in 2013 at SMC.

<https://youtu.be/1FTRNGxq0rM>