

Construction of the Garden of Ichigo Ichie – Hachi's Japanese Garden in Manchester, England: 1994 to Infinity

We relate to the gardens in Japan and visualise them by the very mention of their name, Kinkakuji, Ginkakuji, Ritsurin Koen, Saihoji, Ryoanji and my all time favourite the gardens of the Adachi Museum of Art, and that is why I thought, why not name my garden? Instead of saying "Joe Daly's (Hachi's) garden", I thought to name it something Japanese and while reading the book that I bought at the Adachi Museum which is all about this stunningly beautiful garden, I came across a passage written by Adachi Zenco's grandson where he describes "The Beauty of Ichigo Ichie" (pronounced each-ee-go

each-ee-ay) which means "to hold each encounter as precious and make the occasion perfect, a particular moment will only exist once". He went on to describe that an all too familiar view within the garden has a heart-stopping freshness, as if seeing it for the first time. This changes from day to day and from moment to moment and when seeing it at a certain time of day or season, or in different weather or light, this is when you realise that the garden is alive and living each season through. What a lovely thought that is, what better reason to name my garden "Ichigo Ichie"

Hachi's Garden (Ichigo Ichie) has so far taken 15 years to construct (evolve): sharp intake of breath - "15 years" I hear you say "it didn't take that long to build the Sento Gosho (Kyoto Imperial Palace) Gardens". Hachi's excuse for this marathon build is his devotion to a little known form of tea ceremony that regularly overshadowed the construction of the garden. As you know the tea ceremony (cha-no yu) is revered in Japan and is carried out within its many tea gardens (cha niwa). Hachi's ceremony took place mostly at weekends within a local Manchester shrine known as the "Jolly Butcher" where,



unlike the Japanese ritual of drinking green tea from little cups, Hachi's local shrine serves pint glasses of an intoxicating tea (?) known as John Willie Lee's Bitter (well Hachi claims it's tea). Further delays to the garden's construction were due to the boss monk (landlord of the Jolly Butcher shrine) enticing Hachi to stay within the grounds of the shrine to participate in a local ritual known as ATs or "afters", where the shrine gates are locked to allow the assembled devotees to drink more tea.

The first six months of the build saw the site transformed by taking out three unwanted Hazel trees, the erection of a perimeter fence and the excavation of a 2000 gallon Koi pond. As the work progressed Hachi meticulously updated a journal noting which photographs he had taken at each stage of the build: dates, times and which frame on the camera related to which part of the construction, (no digital cameras at that time). Unfortunately, Hachi's claim to be a top line photographer were dispelled as some six months later when he came to take the film to be processed and found that the film had not wound on to the reel, OOPS! Hence there is no early footage of the construction of Hachi's garden and this hiccup has been described very eloquently by a noted scribe, namely Hachi's Dad, Bert-san who affectionately says of his loving son Hachi "you can't educate pork".

Over 8 tons of rocks were imported into the garden, most of which went into the construction of the two waterfalls and the area around the ponds - the first of which was built in 1994 and the second only two years ago. The original pond has this year been relined and the waterfall has yet to be modified to create a different cascade.

Over the last 25 years Hachi has collected some 50 different named varieties of Japanese Maples, some are planted within the garden, others are Bonsai, and the rest are in pots. Most trees were purchased as 1 year old grafted plants from a firm called "Barthelemy" in Dorset and sent through the post to Manchester packed inside tubes and cardboard boxes, (not one loss). Others were bought and transported in the same manner from Westonbirt Arboretum, and the latest purchases were from "Hippopottering" a Japanese Maples Nursery in Yorkshire. Other plants within the garden consist mainly of Pines, Azaleas, Rhododendrons, Bamboos, Ferns and *Pieris*.

So that Hachi could spend more time in the garden and less time at the Jolly Butcher Shrine Hachi's friends Ichi Ni and Shichi came up with the idea of renovating the



Construction of the Garden of Ichigo Ichie continued...

ancient tea house (chamise) that was already within the grounds, (Bert-san's old shed). Hachi loved this idea as he would then not have to travel to the Jolly Butcher Shrine and would therefore be closer to his bed (futon) for as Hachi has found on many occasions John Willie Lee's tea has a tendency to cause a temporary paralysis in the legs and a drooping of the lower jaw (isn't that funny how tea could do that)?

Around the tea house Hachi has erected a deck (Nure-en) beside which is placed an Oribe lantern into which is carved a figure of the Buddha. Oribe lanterns were first produced in the Momoyama Period (1568 to 1599) by Warlord Furuta Oribe. Beside the lantern is a tsukubai water basin arrangement, containing a granite Zeni Gata water basin, which is a copy of the original style water basin that is within the Ryoanji Temple in Kyoto. This



Zeni or "antique coin" basin has Kanji letters carved into the stonework that roughly translate as "I just know contentment" implying that one should not allow desires to escalate (source: Create your own Japanese garden. Mehta / Tarda)

2009 saw Hachi develop a dry landscape (Kare-san-sui) area, within which there is a raked gravel lake, three stone bridges (ishibashi), and two moss covered islands. This area is viewed through a gateway consisting of two brick built spiral pillars joined by an archway into which the heads of two Japanese Warlords are used either side as the keystones. On top Hachi has constructed a brushwood roof, topped with a bamboo ridge, and to the sides of the spiral pillars there are two brushwood roofed "Sode Gaki" style fences (sleeved fence) that are seated on a course of 100 year old red engineering plinth bricks which came from the boundary wall of the now extinct Salford Docks. Hachi was building the Copthorne Hotel on what is now Salford Quays when he obtained them: in Japanese this is known as Mitatemono or an old object reused in a new way (that reminds me, I must use Ichi Ni (Steve Wright) in my garden more often).

The dry lake is edged with water worn Cornish Cobbles which have a earthy hue to them, these cobbles stop the moss covered artificial mountains or hillocks (tsukiyama) from washing into the gravel within the lake. The hillocks are planted up with different varieties of Pines, along with *Buxus*, Maples and Azaleas within moss which Hachi has watered every day since it was first planted within the mounds. We could possibly exchange mosses within the Society to see what variety of moss will grow within certain micro climates in our gardens. In Japan it is easier, for example at the To-ji Market in



Kyoto numerous species of mosses were on sale in trays, unfortunately one is not allowed to bring any plants home. Hachi plans to keep the planting on the mounds small with regular pruning and clipping, so as not to lose the effect of a miniature landscape.

2009 also saw the erection of the bamboo thatched roof gate (Kaya-mon) that was featured in *Shakkei* Volume 16 Number 1, September 2009, from the gateway to the tsukubai, a row of stepping stones (tobi-ishi) are set within gravel. Between the gateway and the tea house

there is a five tiered, six foot high Stupa (pagoda), the five tiers representing the five natural elements of the universe - Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and Metal. The top tier contains nine rings, relating to the nine heavens of Buddhism, and atop the rings there is a carved lotus which is the symbol for Buddha. The Pagoda is sat upon a stone plinth within a raised mound, adding more height to the Stupa. A new waterfall was finished to the second Koi pond and the filter system was positioned and plumbed in. All in all 2009 was a busy year for Hachi, but the end is nigh. Oh Yeah! Watch this space.



Hachi's wish is to have his ashes spread within the gardens of the Adachi Museum of Art in Japan but, as anyone who has been there will know, as a leaf drops to the ground, it is swiftly swept up. Therefore to be one step ahead of the sweeper upperers, Ichi Ni and Shichi are in training to spread Hachi's ashes. Like the plot in the film The Great Escape, Hachi will be hidden in the turn ups of their pants and a judicial shake of the leg will put Hachi amongst the raked gravel for eternity. But if Shichi and Ichi Ni get it wrong and spread Hachi within reach of the sweeper upperers there is every chance



Hachi's final resting place will be the Matsue Municipal Tip. The only current stumbling block to this subtle plan is the continuous arguing of Ichi Ni and Shichi as to who is going to be Steve McQueen on the big day.

So from Hachi at Ichigo Ichie it's Ja Mata, Kampai and Sayonara.

Joe Daly (Hachi)
Text and Photographs

