THE GYOGENJI CHRONICLE

JULY 2026

THE GYOGENJI TEMPLE IS OPEN

The name GYOGENJI means in Japanese: The source of Daily Practice. The Temple is a unique spiritual place where meditation, ecology and art meet in a deep and harmonious way under the guidance of zen master Beppe Mokuza Signoritti. We are looking forward to welcoming you!

8xmille Unione Buddhista Italiana

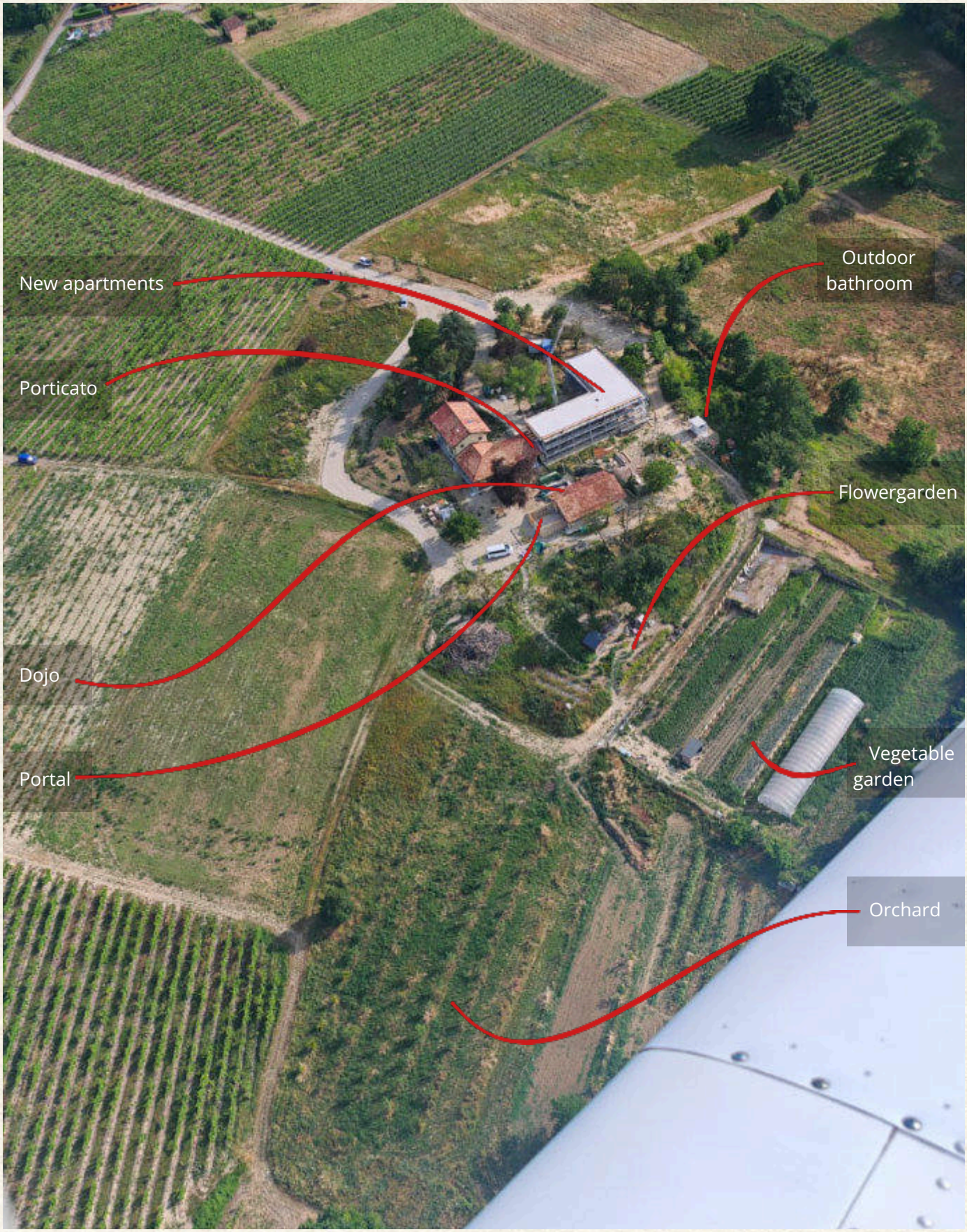
Tempio Zen Gyogenji

Visit us: www.zentemple.it

A FLYING START

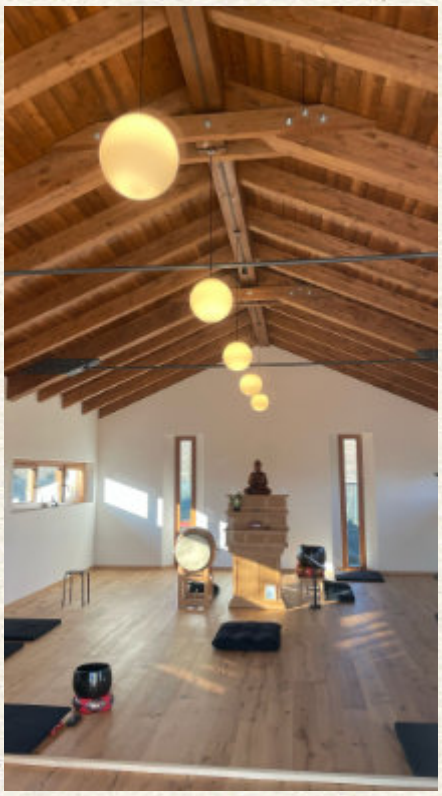
After months of continuous work, the sangha wanted to thank master Beppe Mokuza for his boundless and unwavering dedication and energy. They offered him a scenic flight over the Temple. Beppe himself piloted the plane for half an hour!

In 2026, the Temple got off to a flying start after the opening and the relocation of master Beppe Mokuza and two monks to the Temple. Immediately, a whirlwind of activities began: we finished at lightning speed The Porticato, the Portal of the dojo, the outdoor toilet and shower and started the preparations for an outdoor brick oven. New gardens have also been laid out, and the Vegetable Garden has produced vegetables and fruits and flowers were grown. From March we could organise the first workshops in the Temple. And on top of that we participated in several social projects, one of them a local project with schools from Costigliole and Isola d'Asti. It is a pleasure to update you in this new edition of the Chronicle!


New apartments
Porticato
Dojo
Portal
Outdoor bathroom
Flowergarden
Vegetable garden
Orchard

THE BUILDING PROJECT

THE DOJO



Installing lamps in February to make the dojo ready to organize workshops.

The first sewing atelier in the dojo in March

TEMPIO ZEN
Gyogenji

- FUKUDENKAI -

SETTIMANA DI CUCITURA

24 - 29 MARZO 2026

PROGRAMMA

Evento diretto dal monaco
Mauro Eido

Per la partecipazione è suggerita
una donazione libera di almeno
50€ al giorno a titolo di rimborso
spese ed include i pasti

INFO E PRENOTAZIONI
dojo@bodai.it
+39 333 6526474 - Mauro Eido

TEMPIO ZEN GYOGENJI
Strada santo Stefano 23-26
Castiglione D'Asti 14035

A sumi-e workshop in May

THE PORTAL OF THE DOJO

From start in April...

... to finish in June

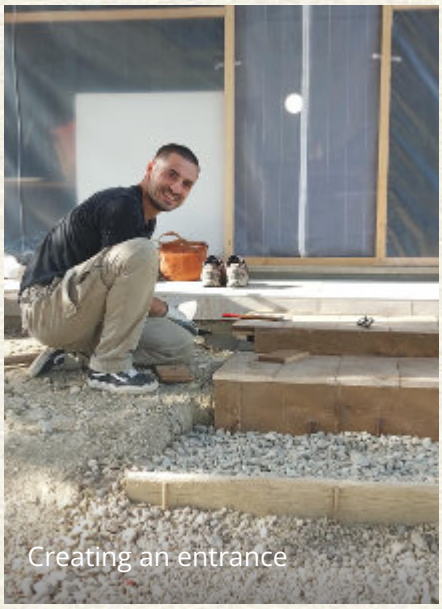
THE SOUND OF ZEN: BUILDING THE WOODEN HAN

The Han is the wooden instrument struck at the beginning of meditation to indicate to practitioners that it is time to reach the dojo and take their places for zazen. We have built a new wooden structure, also using materials salvaged from old houses demolished on the temple grounds, with a focus on continuity, care, and reuse.

We received a gift of a suspended wooden instrument for striking, originating from the French Zen Temple La Gendronnière founded by Zen Master Taisen Deshimaru. We are deeply honoured to welcome such a significant element to the temple, which represents a precious link with La Gendronnière and the living tradition of Zen.

THE PORTICATO

Closing open space in February



Creating an entrance

Laying the floor in March

The Porticato during the first sumi-e workshop in May with more than 30 participants

CONSTRUCTING SIX NEW APARTMENTS AND FOUR ROOMS FOR RESIDENTS AND GUESTS

February

April

June

PLACING OUTDOOR TOILET AND SHOWER

Arrival of the shower

Installing the unit

Connecting the water

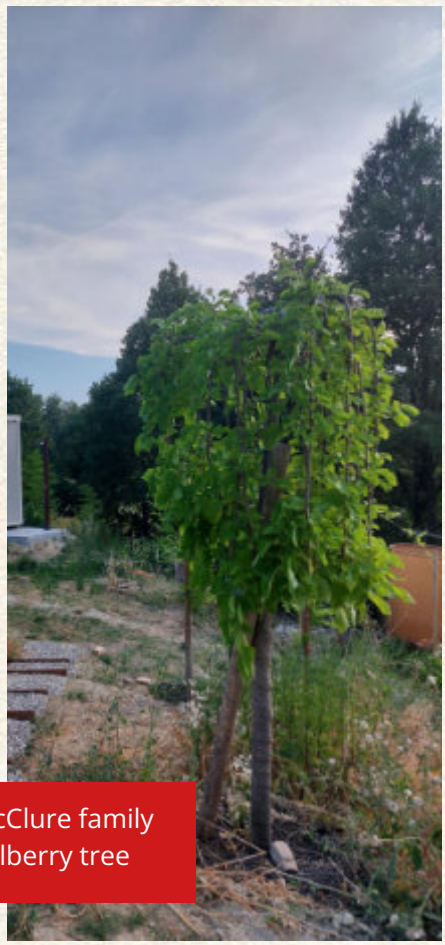
Ready for use

THOSE WHO GAVE

The Temple is receiving many generous gifts of people in Italy, The Netherlands, France and many other countries. We are very grateful for your support and in this edition we want to highlight some of them:

"Our stay in Gyogenji was a memorable time. It gave us the opportunity to learn about ourselves and the path of Zen. As parents we also like to pass on our wisdom to our children, so we like to adopt a mulberry tree for its lifetime. In the hope that one day they will come by to say hello to the tree.

FAMILY DE HOOP-McCLURE



The De Hoop-McClure family adopted the mulberry tree

BUILDING AN OUTDOOR BRICK-OVEN FOR BREAD AND PIZZA

Several people donated generously and financed the costs of a professional outdoor brick oven.

During the summer the oven will be built and we invite all of you to share a pizza with us: FATTO IN CASA!

In May the hardware to build the oven arrived

We already started the construction by laying the foundation

LIVING INTERDEPENDENCE WITH NATURE AND ECOLOGY

THE VEGETABLE GARDEN AND ORCHARD

Planting in April

Growing in May

HARVEST FROM MARCH

Carrots

Cauliflowers

Broccoli, fennel and pumpkins

HARVEST FROM MAY

Zucchini

Artichokes

Cherries

HARVEST FROM JUNE

Potatoes

Garlic

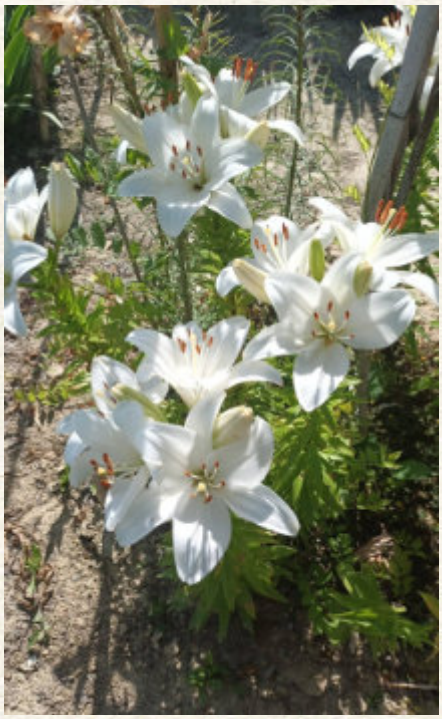
Tomatoes

The garden is designed to offer flowers from March till October – so every month new flowers will share their beauty with us. We like to pick some of them to place them near the Buddha on the altar in the dojo, so that during zen meditation we are immersed in their fragrance and presence.

FLOWERS IN APRIL

FLOWERS IN MAY

FLOWERS IN JUNE



FLOWERS IN JULY

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS

SUMI-E AND ZEN MEDITATION WORKSHOP IN THE NETHERLANDS IN FEBRUARY 2026

In this five-day residential workshop in Allardsoog, in the north of the Netherlands, we hosted 58 participants from The Netherlands, France, Denmark, The United States, England, Italy and Germany. They all practiced Sumi-e painting, zen meditation and samu, voluntary work for the community such as cooking, serving food, cleaning, shopping and arranging flowers. There was also a shop where we offered sumi-e artwork, zen attributes like incense and oryoky sets (eating bowls and ceremonial cloth to contain them), as well as our agricultural produce from the Temple like honey, tea, wine, garlic and sunflower seeds.

The sumi-e workshop

The boutique

The kitchen team and the service team

Service of three meals a day

Master Beppe Mokuza directed two zazen-sessions a day as well as several ceremonies

FEEDBACK OF SOME PARTICIPANT

"Today I really have to 'land'. It was so delicious. I told my son that lately I've been completely out of touch with the world. He replied: I want to find something like that too, something that makes me completely out of touch with the world...The organization was great, as was the atmosphere among the people. Next year I already have plans to... Good luck in everything you do.

MARTHA

"It was definitely an inspirational workshop, so I'm looking forward to next year. The beautiful green enso with the beautiful message about making tea is now in a nice place, near my brushes, and the tea I bought is delicious. I hope you arrived well again, green greeting.

ANNEKE

"It was a very unique educational and inspirational experience to be a part of and that incredibly kind people I was able to meet, thank you for that

RITA

"It was a pleasure

SJAAK

"I want to thank you again for the wonderful workshop. I learned a lot, and it will be a while before I can process all this. But I look back on a wonderful week. I wish you all the best and enjoy your beautiful monastery, the surroundings and your beautiful garden.

GERRIT

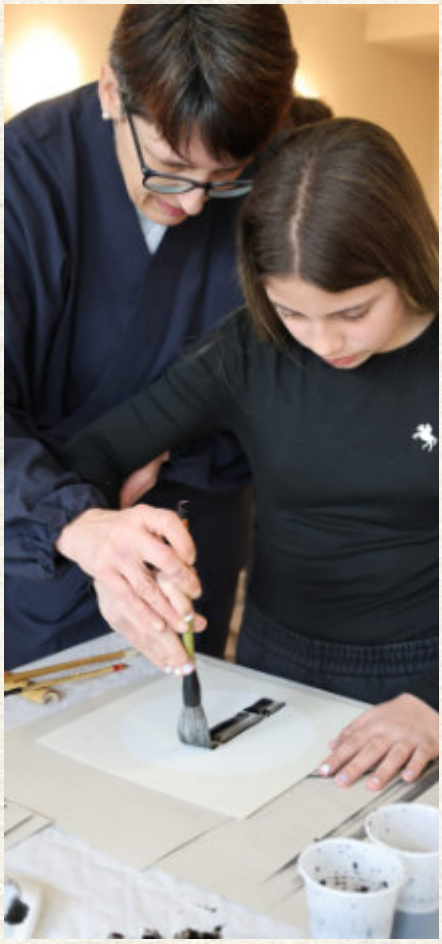
SCHOOLPROJECT “INNER ARCHITECTURE” IN COSTIGLIOLE D’ASTI FROM MARCH TILL JUNE

The Interior Architecture® Program, conceived by the master Beppe Mokuza, arrived in the schools of Costigliole d'Asti as an educational proposal dedicated to schoolchildren from 12–15 year old.

The project brings together art, awareness, the environment and nutricious food practices, offering personal and collective growth. We organised a training course for teachers and involved about 120 students from the middle schools of Costigliole d'Asti and the fifth grade of Isola d'Asti. The project was supported by the Italian Buddhist Union.

In line with a Buddhist vision based on interdependence, the project combined art, aimed to develop attention, listening to others, awareness, and care for the environment. The first phase of the program is dedicated to Sumi-e, the centuries-old art of Japanese ink painting, understood as the practice of presence and awareness of the gesture. Through the brush, the breathing and silence, students learn to relate to themselves, to others and to the world around them. As the Buddha teaches, there is no "I" separate from the world: care for the other is also care for oneself.

In autumn, the program will continue with the part dedicated to nature, the environment and care of the territory. A visit to the Temple is scheduled by 120 schoolchildren and their teachers.



Some impressions of the artwork in schools with children, teachers and the organizing team

FESTIVAL DELL'ORIENTE 2026

BRINGING ZEN PRACTICE ACROSS ITALY

From February to May 2026, our Sangha took part in several editions of the Festival dell'Oriente, one of the largest cultural events in Italy dedicated to Asian traditions, spirituality, arts and practices. Travelling across the country, from Rimini to Brescia, Torino, Rome, and Como/Milano, we had the precious opportunity to meet thousands of people. Like a red line connecting these cities on the map of Italy, the practice of Zen and Sumi-e travelled with us, creating encounters, dialogue and moments of shared presence.

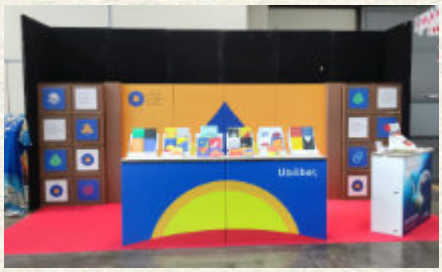
The planned Festivals from September - December 2026 are shown by the blue line

At each event, we built a Sumi-e stand where visitors could discover the traditional Japanese art of ink painting. Hundreds of people took part in short, guided workshops, learning how topaint a bamboo or decorate a fan with brush, ink and attention. For many, it was their first contact with this practice — simple, silent and deeply expressive.

Alongside the Sumi-e activities, many visitors also experienced zazen, the seated meditation of the Zen tradition. Sitting together, even for a short time, allowed people to discover the importance of posture, breathing and silence in the middle of a very lively and crowded festival.

Another meaningful moment was the distribution of small bracelets and Zen sayings written on cards, while a Zen monk recited a sutra. This simple gesture touched many people and created a bridge between ritual, teaching and everyday life.

We were also present with the stand of the Italian Buddhist Union, distributing hundreds of flyers and copies of the UBI magazine, helping to share information about Buddhism in Italy and the many activities connected to the Dharma.



These months of travelling, teaching and meeting people were a great effort, but also a great joy. The Festival dell'Oriente reminded us how much interest there is today in authentic spiritual practice, silence, art and inner peace. For our Sangha, it was a way to bring the heart of Zen into the world!

MEET THE SANGHA

FROM EIHEIJI TO SŌJIJI

In May 2026, Alessandro DoRyu Sarotto (49), one of the resident monks of the Temple, travelled to Japan to take part in the Zuise ceremony, moving from Eiheiji to Sōjiji, the two main monasteries of the Sōtō Zen school. Eiheiji was founded by Dōgen Zenji, who brought the Sōtō Zen tradition from China to Japan in the 13th century. Sōjiji was later founded by Keizan Zenji, who helped spread the tradition widely among the people.

For Alessandro, this journey was not only a formal step in his path as a monk. It was a return to the original roots of Zen in Japan, a way to deepen his practice and to understand more clearly the meaning of rituals, ceremonies and temple life.

At the same time, this journey was also a continuation of the living Zen tradition that arrived in Europe through Master Taisen Deshimaru, was transmitted by Master Roland Yuno Rech, and is now followed and embodied through the teaching of our master, Beppe Mokuza Signoritti. In this sense, Alessandro's experience in Japan was not a separation from our European Zen history, but a way to bring it back to its source and renew it from within.

During the Zuise ceremony, a monk who has received Dharma transmission symbolically serves as abbot for one day in each of the two head temples and receives a red kesa to wear. This is a very important moment: it confirms his connection with the lineage and his responsibility to continue transmitting the practice.

Alessandro expresses his deepest gratitude to Master Beppe Mokuza, who has guided him and will continue to accompany him in the continous practice of gyōji. He also wishes to thank the whole Sangha of Gyogenji Temple, who made a great effort to support this path of training. With all his heart, he hopes that more monks of our Sangha may be able to undertake the same journey, with seriousness and dedication to the Three Treasures: Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

FROM THE NETHERLANDS

March: Marjanne is preparing frames

May: Marjolein is cooking and weeding

May: Hester is cleaning the flower garden

FROM FRANCE

Zen master Guy Mokuhô
Abbot of Zen Temple La Gendronnière

"Spending a few days in Gyogenji with the Beppe Mokuza Roshi Sangha was a real moment of relaxation and discovery. A beautiful temple is emerging from emptiness to teach all beings the practice of zazen and also of sumi-e. A benevolence that feels good, a vegetable garden whose vegetables arrive fresh on the table, an incessant activity without being stressful. In short, a temple where it is good to live the teachings of the Buddha.

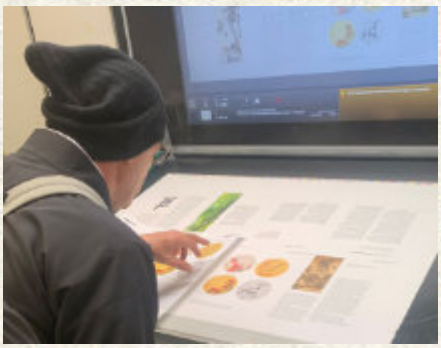
GUY MERCIER

INSPIRATION

We are very proud to present the book Sumi-e: Art, Method and Life Experience, which was published in April 2026. The book is the fruit of six years of patience, dedication, study, reflection and great commitment to the art of sumi-e and is a precious showcase for the teaching and 30 years of practice of Master Beppe Mokuza Signoritti.

The book is published in Italian. Translations into English and French are also planned for the near future. To order the book: write to dojo@bodai.it

In the first months following its publication, the book has already been greatly appreciated for the professionalism of its approach, the richness of its contents, the quality of its photographs and its unique place within the publishing landscape dedicated to Sumi-e. The volume brings together the experience of Master Beppe Mokuza Signoritti, Sumi-e teacher and Zen master, offering a path that combines biographical elements, historical references, philosophical foundations and practical guidance.



The book introduces the reader to the cultural roots of Sumi-e: the Four Treasures of the Study of Sumi-e, the relationship between painting, calligraphy and poetry, the influence of Taoism, Confucianism and Zen, the language of Eastern painting and the symbolism of the Four Nobles.

At the heart of this volume is bamboo, a symbol of flexibility, strength, inner emptiness and wisdom: not only a pictorial subject, but also a model of balance, presence and harmony. The second part introduces the concrete practice: preparation of the materials, posture, breathing, use of the brush, basic exercises and the study of the first compositions.

A manual suitable both for students wishing to deepen their practice and for anyone who wishes to discover Sumi-e as an artistic, cultural and meditative path.

HOW TO SUPPORT GYOGENJI TEMPLE

DONATIONS

The Gyogenji Temple exists thanks to the generous donations of practitioners and supporters. Every contribution, big or small, helps us to:

- Complete the construction work.
- Expand and care for green areas.
- Develop reforestation and regenerative agriculture projects.
- Offer educational programs for children and teenagers.

ADOPT AND PROTECT

By adopting a tree, plant, or animal from the Temple, you actively participate in our mission to protect the environment: €50 per year or €250 for a lifetime adoption.

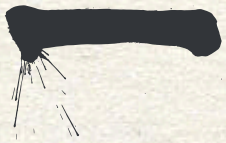
You will receive regular updates on how your support contributes to biodiversity and the regeneration of nature.

VOLUNTEER

Manual work (samu) is an essential practice in the Zen tradition. As a volunteer, you can contribute to:

- Maintaining the Temple grounds.
- Caring for green areas.
- Participating in reforestation projects and event management.

Volunteer opportunities are available for short-term (weekends/one week) or long-term periods (one month or more), offering a unique experience of personal growth within the monastic community.



HOW TO DONATE

Donations are gratefully received through bank transfers:

Zen Bodai Dojo Association
IBAN:
IT21Y0853022505000000045799
BIC: ICRAITRREQ0

ANBI-STATUS IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Bodai Doji Zen Association manages the Temple and is recognized in the Netherlands as a Public Benefit Institution (ANBI). With the ANBI status, donations to the GYOGENJI Zen Temple become tax deductible and no gift tax is levied.

RSIN Number: 823997765

Algemeen Nut Beogende Instelling
ANBI

BEQUESTS

A bequest to Gyogenji Temple is a gesture that leaves a lasting legacy. Including the Temple in your will means supporting spirituality, sustainability, and community for future generations.

For more information, contact us at dojo@bodai.it

沙門默座

蝉蛹以为是末日
众生称之谓蝴蝶

"WHAT THE CATERPILLAR CALLS THE END OF THE WORLD, THE REST OF THE WORLD CALLS A BUTTERFLY

LAO ZU (6TH CENTURY BC)