

PRESS RELEASE

INTERNATIONAL AQUATIC PLANTS LAYOUT CONTEST 2010 WORLD RANKING TOP27

Aqua Design Amano Co., Ltd. hosted the International Aquatic Plants Layout Contest 2010. It is the 10th anniversary contest, and we have received the record breaking number of entries this year, 1,819 applications from 55 countries. It shows that this contest has been recognized and Nature Aquarium is getting popular globally.

Comment from Takashi Amano

International Aquatic Plants Layout Contest started from the dawn of 21st century, and this year's contest marks the 10th anniversary. In our 10 year contest history, the number of participants and participating country has been increasing steadily, and we have received record breaking participants in this year's contest. This reflects the fact that the number of planted aquarium hobbyists is globally increasing. But I feel very sorry to have seen the decline of layout originality in many applications, while many applicants are now having high layout technique. So some layouts with splendid layout idea were selected on the top prizes this year. It is also regrettable not many applications have a good combination of fish and aquarium layout. It is also very important point to decide the quality of aquarium layout. I wish to see many applications wowing our juries in next year's contest, and I hope this contest will develop further as a stage showing your aquarium layout to the world.

Applicant by countries

For this year's contest, we have received total 1,819 layouts from 55 countries:

Japan	498	Australia	16	Canada	3
China	234	U.K.	15	Croatia	3
Malaysia	116	Israel	12	Czech Republic	3
Taiwan	106	Serbia	12	Latvia	3
India	100	Hungary	11	Netherlands	3
Hong Kong	95	France	10	Azerbaijan	2
Poland	88	Korea	9	Chile	2
Singapore	59	Venezuela	9	Lithuania	2

Brazil	49	Sweden	8	Moldova	2
Thailand	40	Portugal	7	Reunion	2
U.S.A.	39	Turkey	7	Finland	1
Russia	34	Kazakhstan	6	Ireland	1
Indonesia	33	Macau	5	Norway	1
Vietnam	33	Mexico	5	Slovakia	1
Spain	30	Philippines	5	Slovenia	1
Italy	28	Romania	5	South Africa	1
Greece	18	Qatar	4	Switzerland	1
Ukraine	18	Belarus	3		
Germany	17	Bulgaria	3		

Grand Prize (World Ranking No.1)

Title: Forest Scent

Name: Pavel Bautin

Country: RUSSIA

Aquarium Tank: W150 × D50 × H60 (cm)

Aquatic Plants:

Eleocharis acicularis

Fantinalis antipyretica

Glossostigma elatinoides

Hemiantus caritrichoides "Cuba"

Hemianthus micranthemoides

Hydrocotyle leucocephala

Micranthemum umbrosum

Microsorium pteropus

Myriophyllum elatinoides

Myriophyllum matogrossense(Green)

Myriophyllum pinnatum

Rotala nanjean

Rotala rotundifolia(Green)

Fish & Invertebrates:

Boraras maculata

Caridina japonica
Neocaridina denticulate

Evaluation:

This year's grand prize winner is from Russia with an innovative image of forest. 4 juries selected this layout as the best layout. The creator combined many different size straight woods, and expressed a perspective of the forest in a 150cm width aquarium. Myriophyllums planted in the back were closing their leaves due to the nyctinasty movement, as the picture might be taken during the evening, but this worked positive in this case and looked like needle leaf trees. It is regrettable not finding any fish inside, but the nature of forest was skillfully created and the creator's idea was highly evaluated.

Gold Prize (World Ranking No.2)

Title: Loess plateau

Name: Zhang Jian Feng

Country: MACAU

Aquarium Size: W90×D45×H45 (cm)

Aquatic Plants:

Rotala nanjean

Riccardia chamedryfolia

Fish & Invertebrates:

Trigonostigma espei

Caridina japonica

Evaluation:

The gold prize winning layout sent from Macau had a strong color impact. Riccardia chamedryfolia was attached on red table rocks, and it attracted people's attention. Mr. Zhang made use of those unique table rocks, and expressed a plateau. But all the rocks are leveled at the same height, and it is regrettable for lacking the power and natural feeling. The layout is themed on "Loess plateau." It could have been better if the plants were arranged to express a wider landscape of plateau.

Silver Prize (World Ranking No.3)

Title: Colour of life

Name: Xuan Thuy Nguyen Thi

Country: VIETNAM

Aquarium Size: W120 × D45 × H40 (cm)

Aquatic Plants:

Glossostigma elatinoides

Hemianthus micranthemoides

Limnophila sp. Vietnam

Marsilea hirsuta

Rotala rotundifolia sp.

Rotala sp. red

Echinodorus tenellus

Vesicularia sp.

Fish & Invertebrates:

Paracheirodon axelrodi

Otocinclus

Caridina japonica

Evaluation:

The silver prize winner is from Vietnam, and the creator made a good arrangement of rocks and stemmed plants. The rocks are all in same texture, and unique, which make a good ambience in the layout. Stemmed plant trimming technique is also notable. However, we could not see much natural feeling in the layout, as all the elements were meticulously created, and the whiteness of cosmetic sand in the central part seems a bit artificial. The fish also does not match the layout. All these points may have downgraded assessment of this layout.

Silver Prize (World Ranking No.4)

Title: The view

Name: Yutaka Kanno

Country: JAPAN

Aquarium Size: W120 × D45 × H45 (cm)

Aquatic Plants:

Fontinalis antipyretica

Vesicularia sp.

Amblystegiaceae sp.(from São Paulo)

Fish & Invertebrates:

Paracheirodon simulans

Caridina japonica

Neocaridina denticulata

Evaluation:

Another Silver prize winner is from Japan. The layout looks like a piece of modern art, expressing a space in the cave with the dynamic arrangement of driftwood. Some kinds of Willow moss are used, but it gives too much of a monotone impression. The layout could have been completely different if the creator chose to express a different world by using red stemmed plants around the mouth of cave. It could make a visual effect as if we were looking at different outside world by sitting in the cave.

Bronze Prize (World Ranking No.5)

Title: Karst

Name: Zeng Qing Jun

Country: CHINA

Aquarium Size: W150 × D60 × H60 (cm)

Aquatic Plants:

Fontinalis antipyretica

Pogostemon helferi

Glossostigma elatinoides

Fish & Invertebrates:

Paracheirodon axelrodi

Evaluation:

The first Bronze prize winner is from China. The creator used unique shape stones and expressed famous karst landscape of "Guilin." The moss attached on the stones look natural, but the plants in the foreground do not look nice. Many plants with different leaf shapes were planted in small amount, gave an impression of lacking unity. Those plants seem to be just planted and not grown yet. The layout may become disorganized when all those plants are fully grown. The pebble size in foreground seems too big, giving a rough impression to the layout.

Bronze Prize (World Ranking No.6)

Title: A day when walk on a jungle trail

Name: Chen I Sheng

Country: TAIWAN

Aquarium Size: W210 × D60 × H60 (cm)

Aquatic Plants:

Riccardia chamedryfolia

Vesicularia sp.

Taxiphyllum barbieri

Fissidens fontanus

Pellia endiviaefolia

Hemianthus callitrichoides

Echinodorus quadricostatus

Sagittaria subulata

Glossostigma elatinoides

Eleocharis vivipara

Eleocharis sp.

Microsorium pteropus "WINDELOV"

Microsorium pteropus

Microsorium pteropus var.

Anubias barteri var.nana 'Petite'

Anubias barteri var.nana

Bolbitis heudelottii

Vallisneria nana

Cryptocoryne beckettii

Cryptocoryne bullosa

Staurogyne sp.(from Rio Cristalino)
Riccia fluitans

Fish & Invertebrates:

Paracheirodon axelrodi
Carinotetraodon travancoricus
Crossocheilus reticulatus
Crossocheilus siamensis
Ancistrus sp.
Sturisoma panamense

Evaluation:

Mr. Chen from Taiwan created a natural looking layout by using both driftwood and stones. The arrangement of shade plants such as ferns and mosses also contributed to make a good ambience of jungle. However, the base composition is not so clear, especially the right side seems roughly arranged. The open space on the right end is a big disadvantage as the joint part of the back corner appears clearly. The composition would have become clearer if this space were filled by layout materials or aquatic plants.

Bronze Prize (World Ranking No.7)

Title: Forest silent

Name: Grigoriy Polishchuk

Country: UKRAINE

Aquarium Size: W120 × D50 × H50 (cm)

Aquatic Plants:

Cryptocoryne wendtii
Cryptocoryne beckettii
Cryptocoryne lutea
Vesicularia dubyana
Anubias barteri var.
Valisneria nana
Hemianthus micranthemoides
Echinodorus tenellus

Microsorium pteropus

Fish & Invertebrates:

Tanichthys albonubes

Otocinclus affinis

Caridina japonica

Neocaridina denticulata

Evaluation:

A typical concave composition layout from Ukraine is selected for Bronze prize. Composition of the layout materials and balance of the whole layout were highly evaluated. When watched carefully, we can also see some problems in the layout. Anubias on the right side is too big, and looks unnatural. The arrangement of cryptocoryne in the middle-ground and Vallisneria in the back look nice, but they grew too thick. The cosmetic sand in the middle looks dirty. Creator's ability to maintain the layout for a long period was evaluated, but its technique caused degrading.

World Ranking 0008

Into the green

Long Tran Hoang

VIETNAM

W155×D81×H50 (cm)

This is a unique layout produced with characteristic shape stones tied with ferns and mosses. The left and right balance is good, and all the composition is organized well. But the white cosmetic sand seems unnaturally white. In order to enhance the natural look of stones, the cosmetic sand close to the natural color should have been used, or the foreground filled with aquatic plants.

World Ranking 0009

Aquarium Size

Infinite Wonder

K.P. Wong

HONG KONG

W120×D45×H45 (cm)

The layout is composed with natural looking complex shape stones. The composition is excellent, and it gives us an impression of seeing a magnificent scenic place. However, using too many colors of aquatic plants was disadvantageous. Especially the bright red color stemmed plants do not match these stones. Mosses and Anubias were planted between the stones. This layout could have been better if planted only with green color plants.

World Ranking 0010

Whitehead Gap

Li Da Wei

CHINA

W120×D50×H50 (cm)

Distinctive texture of stones and nicely trimmed stemmed plants are perfectly matching. The use of cosmetic sand in the foreground also improves the natural look. It is very regrettable thicket of stemmed plants in the background was not filled completely to the right end. The layout could be more natural if they were taller and had more inclination at both sides so that they cover the joint part of the aquarium.

World Ranking 0011

Drizzle

Wang Chao

CHINA

W120×D55×H50 (cm)

The creator expressed a natural feeling well with stones, driftwood, cosmetic sand and mosses. The way stemmed plants in the background grow also looks natural. The

overall impression and natural look is very positive, but the arrangement of driftwood, and their angles did not make a good impression. The layout could be different if driftwood angles were a bit lower as they seem too wide.

World Ranking 0012

Shou Stone Ridge
May Kwan
HONG KONG

W150×D50×H55 (cm)

The layout was composed by meticulously arranging perforated rocks. It gives us an impression the creator took time for planting between the rocks, and composing the whole layout well. It is very regrettable the black joint part of the back corner appeared very clearly, which limits the spatial width. It is interesting layout, but this point became the subject of point loss.

World Ranking 0013

Mountian of Imagine
Chonladar Rattanawichien
THAILAND

W200×D40×H40 (cm)

The creator combined several types of mosses, and made a layout with green contrasting density. But the composition is divided into two parts, and the left and right composition seem unconnected. It is not easy to make a good composition in panoramic size aquarium, but considering the whole composition is necessary for a high-quality layout. It could have been better if the creator limited the number of aquatic plants.

World Ranking 0014

Sado Story
Zheng Ren Chao
CHINA

W168×D60×H60 (cm)

This is interesting design layout, recreating a natural cedar tree of Sado. Branches are impressively expressed, using slender curved driftwood. This central part should be the highlight of layout, but driftwood at both ends have thick trunks, causing the weak impact of the central tree. In order to make layout theme clear, creator could make the driftwood on the both ends slender, and emphasized the central tree.

World Ranking 0015

Memory Area
Quoc Hung Vu
VIETNAM

W120×D45×H40 (cm)

The layout is composed well as iwagumi layout. The selection and arrangement of stones are very good, and the aquatic plants also match with the color of stone. The creator spread cosmetic sand like a flowing river, but it did not create a depth. The perspective could have been more emphasized if a larger stemmed plants thicket on the left side, and smaller thicket on the right.

World Ranking 0016

After a long time
Kazutaka Murase
JAPAN

W180×D60×H60 (cm)

The creator expressed an impressive aquascape by combining the driftwood and stones. Mainly using mosses and ferns, he created a natural feeling well. But the layout is rough around the edges, especially at the open space on both upper parts. The selection of cosmetic sand in the foreground was right, but the color seems too white, and artificial. Soft beige color cosmetic sand could make the layout more natural.

World Ranking 0017

Rio Negro II -the inland of Igarape-
Koji Nakamura
JAPAN

W180×D80×H60 (cm)

The driftwood with many slender branches is the theme of this layout. The selection and angle of driftwood are excellent, but the whole composition looks unbalanced. If the position of left and right driftwood were switched, the whole layout look stabilized. The selection of aquatic plants is good, but the layout could have become more perfect if the surroundings of driftwood were created more meticulously.

World Ranking 0018

Lofty Spirit
Chow Wai Sun
HONG KONG

W200×D66×H66 (cm)

This is a dynamic impression layout, using monstrous shape driftwood. The creator attached mosses meticulously to the driftwood, and it draws attention instantly, but from the view of natural feeling, the curve line of driftwood is too steep. A large open space on the right made the whole layout looks unbalanced. The layout could be more organized if set up in a less wider aquarium tank.

World Ranking 0019

Whisper of Mountain - Rising to the Summit

Lin Ting Quan

TAIWAN

W127×D60×H50 (cm)

The layout presented a natural canyon. The plant was meticulously arranged, but as a whole layout, it has some difficulties, because it is not clear where the gravity center is. The layout is roughly divided by 2:3 ratio, but the heaviest stone is located on the left side. The gravity center would become clear if the stone were placed on the right side.

World Ranking 0020

Vine

Gary Wu

HONG KONG

W152×D51×H58 (cm)

The creator made a triangular composition layout by using normal driftwood and twiggy wood. The combination of unique shape driftwood, and natural aquatic plant arrangement made a good ambience in the layout. But the open space on the right seems too big, and the layout could be better if set in a shorter tank.

World Ranking 0021

Knot

Jiang Wei

CHINA

W130×D50×H55 (cm)

The whole layout was meticulously created by arranging stones and mosses. The green moss color is vivid, and it matches well with soft color cosmetic sand. It is regrettable the layout is completely divided into two, and left and right layout seems unconnected. It could have been better if left and right layout were organized well by planting in the central part.

World Ranking 0022

Enchanted Forest
Michael G.W. Wong
HONG KONG

W120×D60×H60 (cm)

The way of driftwood arrangement is new and interesting. The driftwoods on both left and right side look like roots and branches of the tree, but the one in the center seems floating due to the buoyancy. This driftwood in the center makes the whole layout unbalanced. It could have been better if the driftwood were shifted to the right, and laid to the ground.

World Ranking 0023

A sheer morning
Hironori Handa
JAPAN

W120×D45×H45 (cm)

This is a well organized concave composition layout. The left and right balance is good, and the layout has a depth. The idea of combining stones and slender driftwood is excellent, but the use of pebbles in the central part broke the balance of layout. It could be better layout, if this central pebble part were filled with aquatic plants.

World Ranking 0024

Profound
Lee Do Jae
KOREA

W100×D50×H50 (cm)

This layout was also meticulously created by combining stones and driftwood. The plants were carefully planted in details. However, the rock arrangement and the direction of driftwood were all disorganized, and the whole layout lost focus. The layout could be better if all these points were well organized.

World Ranking 0025

Green breeze in May
Junichi Itakura
JAPAN

W120×D45×H45 (cm)

The natural look of stones and bright green color aquatic plants are well harmonized. Twiggy driftwood also became a good accent in the layout. Densely planted green stemmed plants around the stones match well with the rock arrangement, but the red stemmed plants gave impression of only growing halfway. The layout composition would have been clearer without them.

World Ranking 0026

Tree crown
Takehiko Honoki
JAPAN

W120×D60×H45 (cm)

This layout is organized well with a clear concave composition. The selection of driftwood

and fish is excellent, however the left side was relatively heavy as the thick driftwood tip was exposed. Slender driftwood was also used on the right side, lying horizontally. But the layout balance becomes good if slender driftwood was placed more upright position, and the thick driftwood in lying position.

World Ranking 0027

Deep Green

Minako Hara

JAPAN

W180×D45×H45 (cm)

This panoramic layout was composed by dynamically arranged driftwood. The driftwood shape is good, and the plant arrangement looks natural. Composition seems well organized, but the weight of driftwood seems unbalanced between left and right side. Usually the left side should be heavier, so the big driftwood on the right should have been placed on the opposite side.

Contest Grading Guidelines

THE INTERNATIONAL AQUATIC PLANTS LAYOUT CONTEST has counted its 10th anniversary this year. Record breaking numbers of applications, a total of 1,819 works from 55 countries and areas, are highly significant for the worldwide permeation of planted aquarium. As the number of entry works has increased, preliminary screening was conducted to select top 100 works again this year. Jury members had some replacement this year, and those top 100 works were sent to the 18 juries in 12 countries to decide the world ranking. Juries are intentionally selected from various countries and areas in order to eliminate the bias in grading as the preferred taste and style of planted aquarium sometimes differ regionally and/or racially. We made sure that the grading to be conducted under strict grading guidelines by each jury, but please understand that each jury's evaluation may not be absolute. The judging criteria was divided to artistic impression point (maximum 100 points) and technical point (5 categories, maximum 20 points each), total 200 points. This year again, extra 10 points were added to the "Best Aquarium" works which received the highest score by each jury. It is because the technical level of the entry works has remarkably improved in last 10 years, and it has become difficult to grade only by technical

level, thus we have decided to give extra points to the Best Aquarium layouts earned the highest score by each jury. It leaves no doubt that not only the high perfection level, but also the originality and impression that cannot be found in other works are required as essential component to be selected as a Best Aquarium. Maybe because such grading system was considered by many applicants, some juries mention that at this year's contest, there were many works with strong impression capturing their attention. On the other hand, we may add that we found some works that are somewhat similar to last year's winning works or previous submissions during grading process as the contest has been carried out for 10 times. Judgment of the similarity was largely dependent on on each jury, but we have revised the entry regulation based on such trend. New regulations will be applied from next contest.