



Bonsai & Stone Appreciation

2022
Q1

Shohin display exhibited at AKI-TEN 2021 in Bressanone, Italy by Roland Schatzer. Top shelf: *Larix decidua* from a plant nursery; Middle left shelf: *Juniperus comunis*, yamadori; Middle right shelf: *Pyracantha angustifolia* from a cutting; Bottom left shelf: *Carpinus betulus* from a plant nursery; Bottom right shelf: *Pseudocydonia sinensis* from air-layering
Tempei: A howling wolf
Table: *Pinus thunbergii* 'Corticosa' from a pre-bonsai

Aki-Ten 2021 Exhibition

Midwest Bonsai Society Exhibit 2021

**The Annual Tainan Bonsai Association
Bonsai Exhibition**

**The Best Czech Bonsai
in the Prague Botanical Garden**

Exploring Bonsai Farming in Korea

**The Buddha: The Evolution
of a Remarkable Scots Pine**

**A marvelous penjing garden,
and an outstanding
penjing pot collection in Suzhou**

**Wonderworlds; Creating scenery in ceramic,
urn-shaped pots**

**Eastern White Cedar:
Letting Time Do the Work**

Remembering Norman Haddrick



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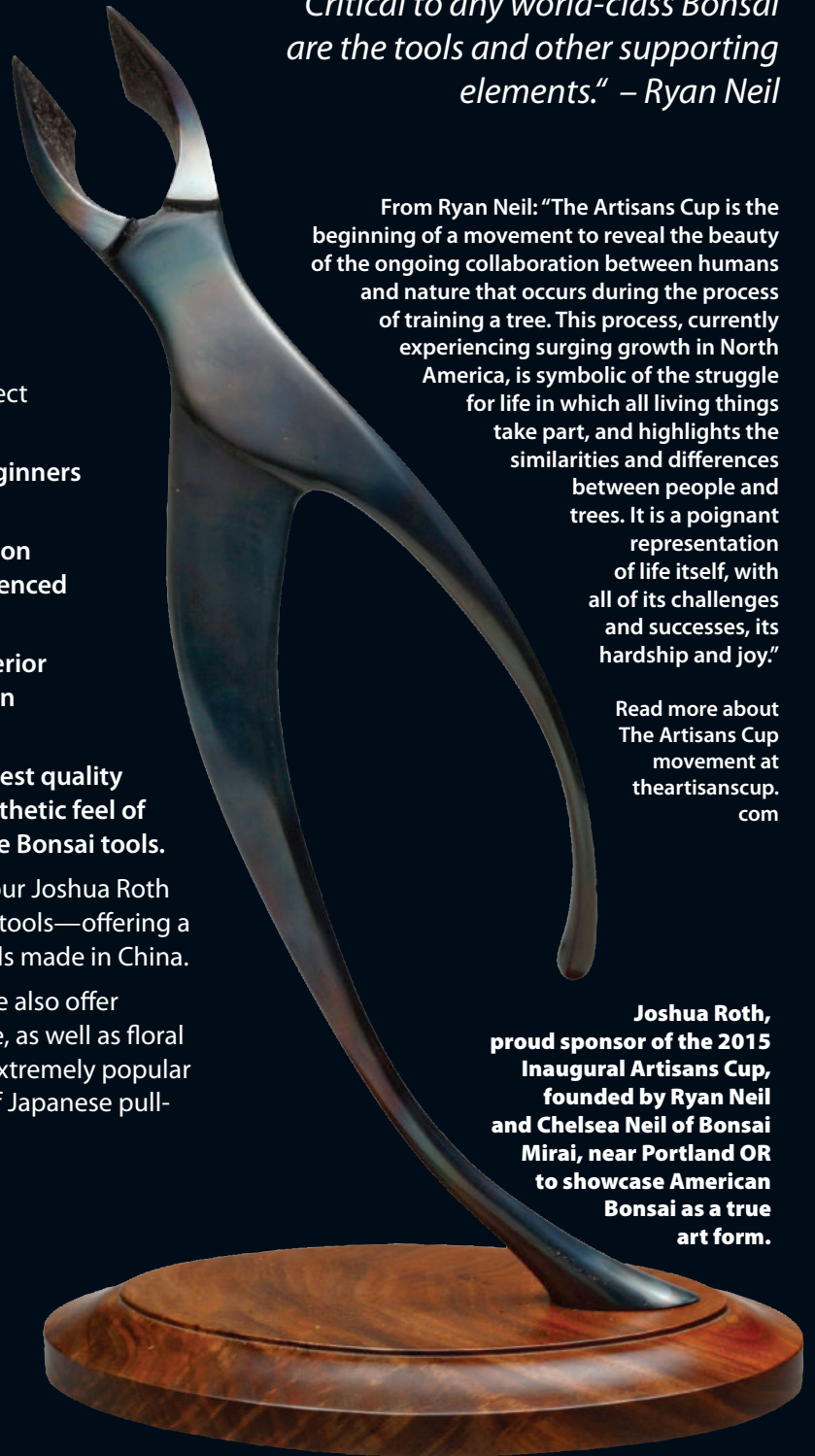
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“Critical to any world-class Bonsai are the tools and other supporting elements.” – Ryan Neil

From Ryan Neil: “The Artisans Cup is the beginning of a movement to reveal the beauty of the ongoing collaboration between humans and nature that occurs during the process of training a tree. This process, currently experiencing surging growth in North America, is symbolic of the struggle for life in which all living things take part, and highlights the similarities and differences between people and trees. It is a poignant representation of life itself, with all of its challenges and successes, its hardship and joy.”

Read more about
The Artisans Cup
movement at
theartisanscup.com

**Joshua Roth,
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to showcase American
Bonsai as a true
art form.**



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President's Message

Welcome to Q1, 2022 of the BCI Magazine. Well, no good news has transpired on the COVID front, with a new variant raising its ugly head since the last issue.

As a result of the COVID virus, the convention scheduled for 2022 is in a holding pattern.

We still believe the 60th Anniversary BCI convention in Taiwan will be a go. We are excited to see our Taiwan bonsai friends in person again!

Budi Sulistyono says there is a good chance the regional show in Indonesia will still be a go in August 2023.

Sae Won Kim is working hard to secure a date for a South Korean regional convention in the upcoming year, 2022.

Let's hope we can get back to normal bonsai life soon!

We are looking for more upcoming BCI convention possibilities for 2023, 2024, and 2025. If you are interested in the possibility of hosting the BCI annual convention or a regional convention, please contact Helen Su, chair of the convention committee at hweiyng.cheng@gmail.com.

We had a BCI fund raiser auction on Facebook in November that was a great success! The auction raised over \$13,000.00.

This income is a tremendous help since we could not hold a BCI convention in 2021.

I want to thank all of our dear friends of BCI who donated! Especially Glenis Bebb, Lindsay Bebb, Naemi Iwasaki, Susan Lee, I.C. Su, Sae Won Kim, Václav Novák, Pauline Muth, Cheng Chen, BCI China Group, Larry Stephen, Joe Grande, Budi Sulistyono, Peter Macasieb, Enda Coyne, Teresa Wooden, Sue Aziz, Kok Hwa Chua, Kang Hee Jung, Min Hsuan Lo, Mr. Hartono Lingga Wijaya, and Frank's Custom Sculptures and Jewelry.

Also, a big thank you to everyone who bid on the auction! Our auction can only succeed if we have people bidding on our items! So the bidders are just as important as the donors. Thank you both!

Don't forget the 60th anniversary BCI logo coffee cups and other merchandise that is for sale!

In this past year, 2021, I was personally invited to these bonsai shows held in the USA.

- Wellfield botanical gardens, Elkhart, Indiana.
- The Flower Market, Monroe, Michigan
- The Mid-West bonsai show, Chicago, Illinois.
- Golden State Bonsai Federation, Santa Nella, California.

All of these bonsai shows were pretty well attended. It was great to finally see our bonsai friends again. It was almost 1.5 to 2 years of no bonsai shows, but it felt more like 5 years!

So with a bit of luck, the USA is slowly but surely returning to a normal bonsai environment. We can only hope that the whole bonsai world will follow soon!

The first test for me will be The Trophy by Bonsai Association Belgium, a premier bonsai show coming up on February 19–20, 2022. This will be the first international bonsai show that I plan to attend that is still scheduled. It will be a true test of our recovery and a possible return to a normal bonsai existence in 2022.

2022 will also debut the NEW BCI award to be given out only at BCI conventions. The process of making this award will be featured in the Q2 2022 BCI magazine.

So everyone, please be safe in 2022 and get vaccinated! So we can end this horrible virus already!

Bonsai people spread love, not hate... 🌳

Frank Mihalic



BCI Excellence Award by Frank Mihalic



60th Anniversary BCI Cup

\$20.00 (plus
shipping)

See page 68.

You are invited to be a part of the BCI Vision.

**We are raising funds for the future of BCI!
Any donation you can make, will help.**

Remember BCI in your will, your trust, your future!

For more information contact:

Frank Mihalic, president@bonsai-bci.com

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Do you speak bonsai? Translating an article from German to English, I read that Germans refer to bonsai pots as “bowls,” Italians call bonsai containers “vases.” I often encounter problems translating articles because a single word can have many possible meanings. The verb “get” is a good example, and it can mean “procure,” “become,” or “understand.” Sometimes a single word form is associated with two or several unrelated meanings, like a tree’s bark and a dog’s bark. Electronic translators are getting better at understanding the context and providing accurate translations. Still, a good solution is to speak the international language of bonsai—Japanese. Prepare for multi-language workshops, demonstrations, critiques, and lectures by knowing and using terms like; *nebari, jin, ten-jin, saba miki, shari*, etc. These universal terms can help overcome language barriers. .

A quick glance at “Inside Q1, 2022” on the facing page suggests we are back to pre-COVID-19-normal. We report on four exhibitions. Whether this is due to lulls between pandemic waves or back-to-normal will soon become apparent. As I write this column, our local health authorities are imposing restrictions on gatherings and venues as strict as those at the beginning of the pandemic. One common theme that comes up often is that bonsai exhibits are showing better trees at every level. Is this because our isolation has given us more time to work on our trees? What are you noticing in your local area? Are your shows getting better?

The organizers of Aki-Ten in Bressanone, Italy, certainly think so. And so does Larry Stephan, president of the Midwest Bonsai Society in Illinois, USA. Taiwan has a reputation for excellence in bonsai design, and the report *Return to Mazu* is proof. BCI director Václav Novák submitted the article featuring the best Czech bonsai, beautifully photographed by Amálie Balaštková.

Gudrun Benz was surprised by the quality of a private penjing garden and pot collection that she discovered by chance on a pre-COVID trip.

Jyoti and Nikunj Parekh always amaze with new ways of creating miniature scenery with plants and accessories well within reach of even novice bonsai enthusiasts.

BCI director Massimo Bandera presents an article by bonsai master Mauro Stemberger. It is the back story of an exceptional Scots pine that won a BCI Excellence Award at Arcobonsai 2021 in Italy.

A vast bonsai farm in Korea is the subject of an article sourced by BCI director Sae Won Kim. It will make you wish you were within driving range of this precious source of first-class bonsai material.

A newcomer to this magazine, Steve Ulrich from Canada, discovered bonsai in his late teens. See how resourceful he was in developing a beautiful *Thuja occidentalis* in ten short years.

Ex-director Joan Greenway enjoys her local bonsai club and promotes Canadian Penjing and Bonsai on Facebook with fellow Canadian Vianney Leduc. In this issue she has the sad and joyous task of marking the passing of Norman Haddrick, a bonsai pioneer and a BCI director in the '90s. He touched the lives of many bonsai enthusiasts. 🌱

—Joe Grande, Canada

MISSION STATEMENT

BONSAI CLUBS INTERNATIONAL

Bonsai Clubs International, a not-for-profit educational organization, advances the ancient and living art of bonsai and related arts through the global sharing of knowledge. We educate while promoting international friendship and solidify world relationships through cooperation with individuals and organizations whose purpose is consistent with ours.

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Authors are requested not to submit articles simultaneously to another publication.

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Q3	J/A/S	June 1
Q4	O/N/D	September 1



Bonsai & Stone Appreciation

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FEATURED ON THE COVER: Shohin display exhibited at AKI-TEN 2021 in Bressanone, Italy by shohin expert Roland Schatzer, Italy.

AKI-TEN 2021

A fantastic exhibition makes history again.

By Helmut Bachmann, Italy

Translation Joe Grande

Photos by Jörg Derlin, Germany, and Peter Ebensberger, Italy

With 50 presentations of beautiful bonsai, suiseki, and kusamono, the forum in Bressanone, Italy was the ideal setting for AKI-TEN 2021. Thanks to the many friends from near and far, it was possible to present so many high-quality bonsai.

In the six Tokonoma, Helmut Bachmann presented a *Picea abies*, Frener Georg a *Larix decidua*, Alfredo Salaccione a *Pinus sylvestris*, Udo Fischer a *Pyracantha*, Jean Poul Polmanns a *Pinus nigra austriaca* and Eduardo Rossi a *Quercus*.

With Jean Poul Polmans from Belgium, we had a very well-known bonsai designer who designed a *Pinus sylvestris* and gave a fascinating lecture on the development of some of his bonsai, a successful lesson for many participants. Alfredo Salaccione from Milan, Italy knew how to put a beautiful *Pinus mugo* in the limelight. Hartmut Münchenbach from Bavaria, Germany, a designer, with his designs on a *Pinus nigra austriaca*, convinced us that top results can be achieved with a bit of patience and without a lot of wire. Nicola Crivelli from Switzerland concluded the design with a *Larix decidua*. He, too, transformed the inconspicuous raw material into a spectacular mountain larch. All four knew how to put the audience under their spell in a very professional manner with their very different approaches.





In the special exhibition by the ceramic artist Christian Falk, tea ceramics were presented in combination with art objects that were produced by a unique black-fire process. Black is achieved by smothering the fire at the end with ashes so that no air reaches the hot pottery and the carbon from remaining fuel blackens the pottery.

The Ceramic Contest took place for the third time this year as part of the AKI-TEN in Brixen. Twenty-two ceramists faced the competition. Three bonsai containers were awarded and may be exhibited with planted bonsai by all exhibitors drawn up for the AKI-TEN 2021 until the next exhibition.

The three winners' cups from 2019 were filled this year by the three exhibitors from 2019.

Roberto Pegoraro presented a *Populus tremula* in the winner's container from Christian Falk from Brixen.

Bruno Benin introduced a *Pinus mugo* in the container of the runner-up Suzuki Ryo from Japan.

Zilli Oberartsbacher exhibited a beautiful *Ampelopsis brevipedunculata* (porcelain berry) in the container of third-placed Igor Carino from Italy.

The jury was composed of: Filip Piccolruaz, sculptor in Val Gardena, the Bolzano ceramist Veronika Thurin and the Salzburg ceramist Gerold Tusch.

The competition is intended to support the further development of the cultivation vessel and increase awareness of the designability of the containers, which is conceivable far beyond traditional ideas. After all, the plant and the container combine to create the perfect ensemble. That was precisely the topic of Fritz

Bayer's lecture on bonsai ceramics with the title "Out of stock again."

Criteria for selecting the winning containers were, for example, good suitability for planting and handling, their shape and form, craftsmanship, and ceramic qualities.

The three winners can look forward to cash prizes. The matt black, round winner's container by Christian Falk from Bressanone was impressive with the subtle further development of a classically reduced design language. On the contrary, the container was awarded second place by Kai Sperling from Germany for its courage to experiment and its surprising, grotesque, sculptural shape. Third place went to Tatyana Maiolo from Tuscany, Italy for the restrained presence and the harmony of the delicate decor and shape of the container.

The jury's decision reflects the wide range of options for choosing the right container and once again draws attention to this important design aspect for bonsai.

Of course, there was also a small but well-chosen bonsai shop in Brixen, which was very popular.

At the very popular bonsai party in the Hotel Elefant, not everyone could participate and enjoy the delicacies from star chef Mathias Bachmann. Unfortunately, the 125 seats were sold out soon after reservations opened.

With a lot of enthusiasm and great experience of the OK team and its more than 90 members, it was possible to set up a top-class exhibition.

AKI-TEN 2021 was a complete success for the Bonsai Club Brixen, Italy. 🌳

Bruna Parma, Kusamono



Bonsai Container, First Place: Christian Falk



Bonsai Container, Second Place: Kai Sperling



Bonsai Container, Third Place: Tatyana Maiolo



Helmut Bachmann, *Picea abies*



Georg Frener, *Larix decidua*

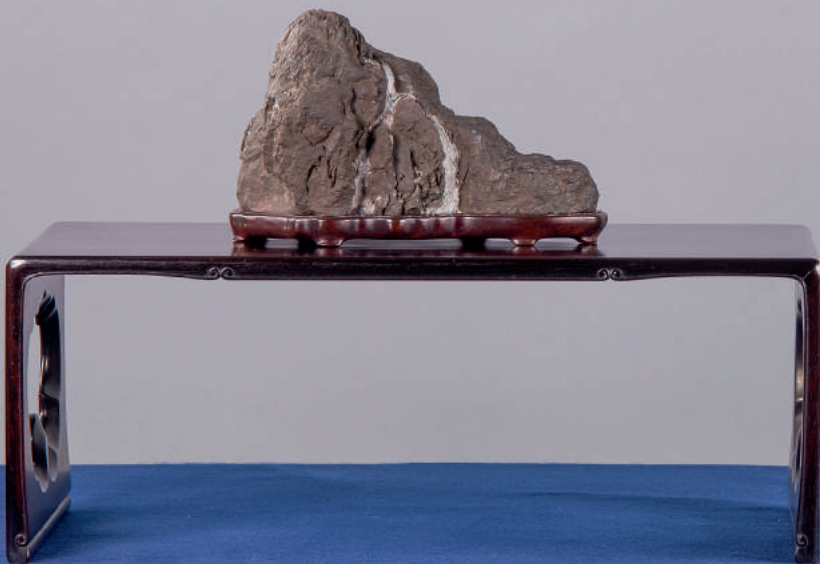


Udo Fischer, *Pyracantha* sp.



Eduardo Rossi, *Quercus* sp.





Zilli Oberartsbacher exhibited a beautiful *Ampelopsis brevipedunculata* (porcelain berry) in the container of third-placed Igor Carino from Italy.



Lorenzo Angnoletti, *Ulmus* sp.



Reinhold Altstätter, *Euonymus europaeus*



Helmut Bachmann, *Pinus sylvestris*



Markus Innerbichler / Igor Carino, *Azalea sp.* / *Diospyros kaki*



Nik Rozman, *Fagus sp.*



Gianni Cara, *Juniperus rigida*



Marco Giannini, *Juniperus chinensis*





Petra Kriegel, Shohin



BONSAI EXHIBITS RETURN TO

By Larry Stephan, President, Midwest Bonsai Society and BCI Business Manager

Photos by Jenifer Fonseca



Top and inset: Views of the Midwest Bonsai Society Exhibit.

Top booth: Sara Rayner, Minnesota

Middle booth: Andy Smith, South Dakota

Bottom Booth: Quattlebaum Bonsai Booth – Dana Quattlebaum, Arkansas

In mid-August, the Midwest Bonsai Society held its 43rd Annual August Bonsai Exhibit at the Chicago Botanic Gardens in Glencoe, IL. Due to COVID, the 2020 Exhibition was postponed. This year's Exhibit is the largest to be held in the US between the East Coast and West Coast in 2021. The Exhibit featured 22 vendors from 12 states. Vendors flocked in from New York, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Kentucky, Ohio, and many other states. The tree competition featured 104 entries. The Best Tree (non-professional) in the show was entered by Tim Cox of Michigan. Andy Smith of Golden Arrow Bonsai in Deadwood, South Dakota, won Best Professional Tree. The Vendors were located in the Garden courtyards, so masks were not required. Masks were still required in the exhibit building. The Chicago Botanic Garden Bonsai Curator, Chris Baker, added

AMERICA



Top two photos: Vendors selling bonsai at the exhibit.

Lower middle right: Cactus and Succulent Society of Chicago display.

Bottom right: Frank Mihalic's Children's Workshop



Left column: Two Suiseki stones – Cat Nelson, Iowa (bottom one is a dragon stone)

Top left: Best in Show, Open Category, Collected Ponderosa Pine, Black Hills, SD, Tim Cox, Michigan. Tree is 300 to 350 years old in a Ron Lang pot.

Top right: Best in Show, Professional – Collected Ponderosa Pine, Black Hills, SD, Andy Smith, South Dakota. Tree is estimated at about 200 years old.

Middle right: Indian Laurel Fig, Judith Doll, Illinois

Bottom: Itoigawa Shimpaku Juniper, Tim Priest, Michigan

Facing Page:

Top left: Ficus Retusa, Cat Nelson, Iowa

Top right: Dwarf Scotts Pine display (with 76 years of history), displayed by Bill Valavanis, New York

Middle right: Korean Hornbeam, Larry Mager, Illinois

Bottom: Nine-piece Kusamono, Stephen Carini, Wisconsin



to the experience by displaying many of the Garden's premier collection of bonsai trees in courtyards and inside on the walkway. We also shared some space with the Cactus & Succulent Society of Greater Chicago. They presented some beautiful displays.

A sad note was a signboard honoring five of our long-time members. This year, they were no longer with us, including former Garden Bonsai Curator Ivan Watters. But on the happier side, we held Children's Workshops where Frank Mihalic of Wildwood Gardens in Ohio, with the help of our volunteers, potted and





styled small trees for 60 children on Saturday and Sunday.

Due to COVID concerns, the Gardens placed some limits on how many people could be admitted at one time. So, attendance was down from our last Exhibit two years ago. However, pent-up demand more than made up for the decreased attendance. Many vendors reported that this year's sales of their trees, pots and other items were their most successful ever. Sara Rayner of Red Wing, Minnesota, sold every pot she brought to the Exhibit.

In general, the event was a great success. Many people felt that the trees entered in the competition were the best we have ever seen. If you want to attend a beautiful Exhibit in one of America's premier venues, think about the 44th Annual August Midwest Bonsai Exhibit in 2022. You can check for more information in early 2022 on the website www.midwestbonsai.org 🌲





Top left: Douglas Fir
 Landscape, Larry Stephan,
 Illinois
Top right: Dawn Redwood
 Forest, Larry Stephan, Illinois
Middle left: Narrow Leaf Ficus,
 Cat Nelson, Iowa
Middle right: White Pine,
 Robert King, Illinois
Bottom: Itoigawa Shimpaku
 Juniper, Tim Priest, Michigan





Top left: Prostrata Juniper, John Daufeldt, Iowa
Top right: Japanese White Pine, Victor Zurczak, Illinois
Upper middle left: Ficus Grove, Dick Ruemmele, Illinois
Upper middle right: Spiraea, Michael Plishka, Illinois
Lower middle left: Redwood, Steven Carini, Wisconsin
Lower middle right: Ponderosa Pine, Ron McAdams, Illinois
Bottom: Suiseki, Mountain Stone, Larry Stephan, Illinois



Photos of the Chicago Botanic Gardens and the bonsai trees from its collection on display at the Midwest Bonsai Society's 43rd Annual August Bonsai Exhibit. The Botanic Gardens' Curator is Chris Baker.

Middle right: Acer buergerianum, Root-over-rock. Donor: Louellen Murray

Bottom: Acer buergerianum, Informal upright. Donor: Jack Thompson





Top left: *Ginkgo biloba* 'Chi-Chi', Formal upright. Donor: Susumu Nakamura
 Top right: *Acer palmatum* 'Arakawa', Informal upright. Donor: Tony Welninski
 Bottom: *Acer palmatum* 'Shishigashira', Rock planting. Donors: Jim and Kay Erlenborn

Return to Mazu (媽祖)

The Annual Tainan Bonsai Association Bonsai Exhibition

By Li Hongqian (李宏虔), Taiwan, and José Luis Rodríguez Macías, Puerto Rico



Juniperus chinensis (真柏)
Jiang Yi Xun (蔣宜勳)
Champion (總冠軍)



Randia spinosa (刺榴)
 Li Man Nan (李滿男)
 Gold Award (金牌獎)



Hibiscus tiliaceus (黃槿)
 Yu Cheng Hsun (游承勳)
 Gold Award (金牌獎)

The last two years have been a difficult time due to the world COVID-19 pandemic. We monitored government restrictions that might affect the celebration of our annual bonsai exhibition. Fortunately, the Tainan Bonsai Association was able to hold our annual bonsai show this year from September 18-23, 2021, coinciding with the Mid Autumn Festival holiday (中秋假期). As always, we honor tradition by having our yearly event in the Tainan Luermen Tianhou Temple (鹿耳門天后宮), which was built in 1604 in honor of our Lady of Mazu (媽祖).

Opening ceremony duties were led by Tainan Bonsai Association President, Mr. Li Hongqian (李宏虔), the Mayor of Tainan County, the Honorable Huang Wei Zhe (黃偉哲) and the Chairman of the Tainan Legislative Assembly, Mr. Guo Xing Liang (郭信良). The support of our local government has always been instrumental in our development as one of the largest and most respected bonsai associations in Taiwan.

As usual, the Tainan Bonsai Association sets forth high competition standards, as evidenced by the numerous-high quality bonsai works. Kudos to the members of the Tainan Bonsai Association for always outdoing themselves during our annual exhibition. Without the continued work of the membership, this exhibition and the life of the Tainan Bonsai Association would not be a success.

Here we present the trees selected by our judges, winners, and representatives of the superb quality represented by this exhibition.

A special thanks to the Chairmen of the numerous Taiwanese Bonsai Association who were present during our event. All of you are part of our continued success! 🌳

Wrightia religiosa (水梅)
Hsu Zu Lu (許自錄)
Gold Award- landscape
(金牌獎)

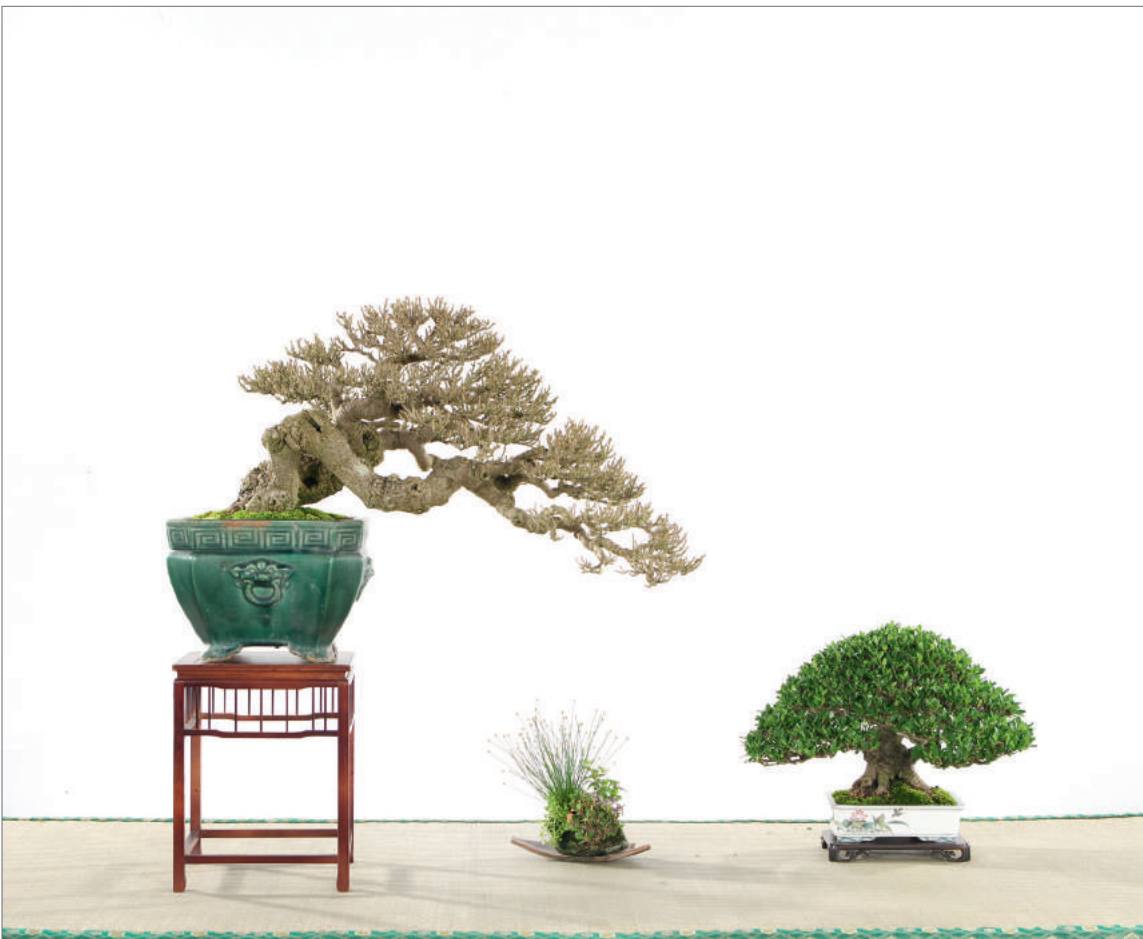


Zelkova serrata (檉樹)
Li Man Nan (李滿男)
Gold Award (金牌獎)
23) *Hibiscus tiliaceus* (黃槿)
Li Man Nan (李滿男)
Gold Award (金牌獎)





Group display (成組)
 Yu Cheng Hsun (游承勳)
 Gold Award (金牌獎)



Hibiscus tiliaceus (黃槿) & *Gardenia
 jasminoides* (黃梔子)
 Peng Kuan Chin (彭冠今)
 Gold Award (金牌獎)

Group Display (成組)
Lin Jin Hui (林金輝)
Silver Medal (銀牌獎)



Juniperus chinensis (真柏) &
Hibiscus tiliaceus (黃槿)
Li Hui Hsi (李瑞西)
Silver Award (銀牌獎)





Wrightia religiosa (水梅)
Chou Yuan Peng (周元鵬)
Silver Award (銀牌獎)

Ficus microcarpa (金門榕) Fang Mao Ti (方茂地) Silver Award (銀牌獎)



Bougainvillea spectabilis (九重葛) Wu Wen Feng (吳文風) Silver Medal (銀牌獎)



Carmona microphylla (福建茶) Zhang Qin Wen (詹清文) Silver Award (銀牌獎)



Celtis nervosa (石朴) Chu Chang Yuan (朱長淵) Silver Award (銀牌獎)





Hibiscus tiliaceus (黃槿) Yu Cheng Hsun (游承勳)
Silver Award (銀牌獎)



Diospyros vaccinoides (楓港柿) Chen Zheng Hao
(陳崢豪) Silver Medal



Ulmus parvifolia (榆樹) Hong Jin Kun (洪金崑)
Silver Award (銀牌獎)



Hibiscus tiliaceus (黃槿) Wu Chun Liang (吳俊良)

Hibiscus tiliaceus (黃槿) Li Hong Qian (李宏虔)



Flueggea virosa (刺蔥) Wu Yao Pin (吳耀彬)

Juniperus chinensis (真柏) Li Hong Qian (李宏虔)





Juniperus chinensis (真柏) Li Hong Qian (李宏虔)



Podocarpus costalis (羅漢松) Li Hong Qian (李宏虔)



Juniperus chinensis (真柏) Yu Cheng Hsun (游承勳)

Severinia buxifolia (黑刺柑) Wu Yao Pin (吳耀彬)



Celtis nervosa (石朴) Chu Chang Yuang (朱長淵)

Hibiscus tiliaceus (黃槿) Li Hong Qian (李宏虔)





An unexpected trip to Suzhou, a marvelous penjing garden, and an outstanding penjing pot collection

Text and Photos by Gudrun Benz, Germany

I arrived early in Shanghai for the tour to several Chinese cities in 2016. The trip was offered to BCI board members by Mr. Chen Chan for the opening of three BCI cooperation centers in Rugao, Shuyang, and Kunming. Another reason for the trip was the ninth China National Penjing Exhibition and the 1st Penjing Exhibition of BCI China Committee in Panyu, Guangzhou. (See issue 4, 2016 of *BCI Bonsai & Stone Appreciation* magazine). Mr. and Mrs. Su had arrived early as well. Mrs. Helen Su invited me for the afternoon to join their group to visit the private penjing garden of Mr. Yang Gui-Sheng in Suzhou. I was delighted to accept.

My expectations were greatly surpassed when we arrived. I was surprised by the large garden, the central part of which consisted of a large pond. The surrounding area was filled with hundreds of pre-penjing planted in pots but waiting to be shaped. There were nearly exclusively junipers of large size with impressive deadwood in parts of the trunk. They were partly large in size, like garden trees, and the pots were amazingly huge too, but nevertheless beautiful. You can't see such gigantic specimens of ceramic pots in Western countries. Of course, there were also some spectacular mature penjing near the tea house where tea was offered to the guests. Instead of a cup of tea, I preferred to look closer through the garden and later the penjing pot museum nearby. When I entered the hall, I marveled at what I could



Top: A large pond in the middle of Mr. Yang Gui-Sheng's garden
Bottom: Path to the garden pavilion. At the right and left big pre-penjing in large containers are lined up.

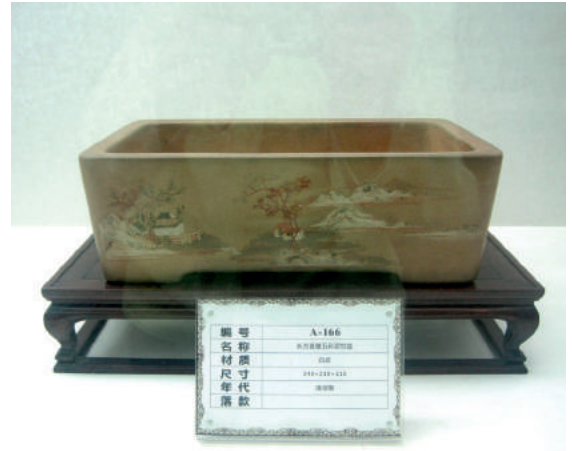


Top left: Such big beautiful pots you can't find in the West.

Top right: Impressive junipers with dead wood trunk.

Middle left: An exceptional pine penjing among hundreds of junipers.

Middle right, bottom left and right: Impressive big garden penjing.



Top left: Overview of the penjing pot museum. All pots are stored in glass showcases.

Top right and middle right: Pots with beautiful landscape painting.

Middle left: Along the museum walls, a continuous line of showcases.

Bottom left: A few smaller pots were placed on shelves.

Lower middle right: Pot imitating tree trunk on beautiful root wood tables.

Bottom right: Beautiful pot at the half-landing to the museum-hall.





Left and right column: Tall pots of different shape and painting: octagonal, round, square, and hexagonal.

Bottom right: Pots on display at the tea house.



see. I couldn't believe it. Unfortunately, all pots were in glass show-cases, making it difficult and sometimes impossible to take good photos. All pots were placed on display tables fitting precisely the size to the pots. Simple but elegant in shape, most pots were made of purple clay and unglazed. A few pots were decorated with beautiful paintings, mostly landscape or plant motifs. It is really a pity that such beautiful items are "hidden" in an inconspicuous private building and not open to the public.

In the evening we were invited to a delicious dinner which closed this perfect day. 🌸

Wonderworlds

Creating scenery in ceramic, urn-shaped pots with windows, rock arrangements, and miniature trees.

A step by step process demo by Jyoti and Nikunj Parekh, India
Photographs by Sujata Bhat

Material needed: urn-shaped ceramic container in various sizes, with front and back window or only a single window, sandstones or limestones in assorted sizes, cement and quick adhesive, slow-growing pre-shaped trees/ plants which can withstand regular pruning, and a few ground covers to be planted in nourishing soil, medium wires for shaping.



On the facing page is a single-window urn with built-in natural-looking ceramic pockets for planting. We planted *Carmona microphylla*, *Juniperus procumbens*, *Aralia sp.* and *Bucida spinosa* with spreading dwarf *Hemigraphis* as ground cover. Bird and fisherman small figurines are added for fun. This flourishing mountain scene was created about 6 years ago. Two tiny urns with plants are displayed on each side.

Step-by-step photographs of the process follow. Urn with two-sided windows without pockets for plants:



Left to right: Beejal Mehta, the owner of the urn, Nikunj and Jyoti Parekh.



Figure 1. Urn with two sides open. Figures 2 & 3. Front side and rear side with sandstones cemented in position. Figure 4. The ceramic bridge is fixed in position.



Figure 5. The front side of the urn showing *Bucida spinosa*, moss, and green dwarf *Hemigraphis*

Figure 6. The rear side of the urn, showing *Juniperus chinensis*, dwarf *Hemigraphis*, and moss.



Urn with two-sided window.

Figure 7. Front side with limestones and dwarf *Ficus long island*

Figure 8. The rear side of the urn, showing dwarf *Ficus long island* and limestone scene with bridge



The urn is designed by a ceramic artist who makes containers for us in India. We asked him to make a ceramic jar, with one window or a window on both sides and indicated the height and diameter of the jar.

He makes the urns with a mold, then cuts out a window either on one side or both sides with a sharp tool and cuts it in a zig-zag shape when the clay is soft. Then he bakes it; first, a bisque firing, afterward applies the color glaze and fully fires the jar at 1200 degrees centigrade.

Windows in the jar give a depth for arranging suitable rocks to get a mountain range effect. This is done by cementing rocks, and we also use quick-setting adhesives. The mountain range has depth, dimension, and range of heights on both sides. In the middle, we place a small ceramic bridge to provide scale to a scene of mountains. The center below at the base can be a river or water stream, which can be simulated with a layer of white marble sand. 🌲



Few small urn arrangements:

Top left: Small urn with *Ficus long island*

Top right: Small urn and stone with *Ulmus parviflora*
"Catlin" elm

Middle left and bottom: Small urns with *Premna microphylla*



The Buddha

The Evolution of a Remarkable Scots Pine

By Mauro Stemberger,
Italy

Photos courtesy Mauro
Stemberger and
Massimo Bandera.



In winter 2004/2005, my master Enrico Savini and I visited the famous collector, Valerio Gianotti, near Turin. Valerio is among the best Italian and European tree collectors and a skilled bonsaist. He has given some wonderful trees to the Italian bonsai community.



Among these is the Scots pine called “Python,” depicted on a stamp of the Republic of San Marino.

When we went into his garden, the number of collected materials seemed incredible to our eyes. Most trees were Scots pines and Sabina junipers of the highest level.

One Scots pine, grown for some years, that Valerio called “The Buddha,” fascinated me the most.

2006

Valerio told us he found a huge bush five meters wide during a mountain walk along a rocky area where he usually collected yamadori. When he went closer to better scrutinize it, he noticed a remarkable twisting trunk protected by its vast foliage. The pine was growing among some rocky slabs and developed a thick root apparatus between the slabs. Assisted by his son and a friend whom he promised a reward, he successfully collected and brought it home. I am always fascinated by the trees that testify to the grimness of the wild.

I am used to looking for “the survivors” during my hikes, too; trees growing in extreme conditions that kept fighting to survive for their entire life. Scots pines born on the rocks develop a compact trunk. The base enlarges looking like a ball (this happens with other species, too); this is probably their strategy to adapt to extreme environmental conditions.

I told Valerio that I would be interested in buying the tree if he decided to sell it one day. After a long time—I clearly remember the day—I was leaving my university class at the end of a lesson when Enrico called me to confirm Valerio decided to sell me the pine!

The Buddha became part of my collection one week later. When I bought it, the tree was 105 cm high and had a 55 cm wide base, a monster!

The tree was healthy and already in a bonsai pot. We immediately started to think about how to enhance it. Some interventions were necessary; compact it to highlight its evocative character and substantial nature. Some months later, Enrico and I planned two days of work to restyle it completely. We started with the parts that could be lowered to reduce the height.

We wrapped the top area that we compacted, lowering it using a screw-tensor, fastened to a nail at the base.





The first part of the S-shaped trunk got hardly lowered, then we proceeded with the second. Protected wood fibers easily bend and keep their humidity, and we can already see the bend's effect on the foliage.

The other bend concerned the first branch, coming from the back; it simply needed to be placed closer to the trunk with a tie-rod. Some too-long branches were pruned. Then we started wiring the entire tree to shape and compact the foliage highlighting the big trunk.

After many working hours, the final result was satisfying, the final height set at 85 cm.

2006 to 2012

However, making The Buddha more compact was only the first step of a long history together. One year later, because of the slight angle change we set during the former operation, I put the tree in the correct position, assisted by some students. The Scots pine lives in symbiosis with the mycorrhiza (structural and functional combination between the mycelium of a fungus and the roots of a tree that helps the roots system to absorb nutritional elements from the ground).

When I repot, I never totally get rid of the old soil of a tree that is already in the bonsai pot, as I could possibly damage its health. I usually refresh the sides and bottom with a few centimeters of new soil mix to ease the growth of new roots.

When I work with a pine in a training pot, I try to substitute the original soil of the collected plant within two or three pot changes. I use akadama and pumice to promote proper root development.

The Bonsai path comprises long wait times. The Buddha continued its growth through the seasonal interventions to keep and mature the foliage; candle pinches in springtime, old needles cleaning end of August, and buds selection in Fall.

In the following years, the structural wiring was removed, including the tie-rods, the tree matured very well. I felt satisfied with my job, so I decided to exhibit the tree at the national UBI exhibition in Salerno 2012.



2013

The Buddha's shape matured more and more. I exhibited it in my garden (spring 2013) with a companion plant supported by a dolomite stone specifically shaped. (see facing page)

I gave it to my friend Paolo in the springtime 2013, to happily welcome it again in my garden in winter 2016. The tree was really fit, and its maturity improved.

2016

Vigorously grown during the whole vegetative season, the time finally came for the finishing touch.

All old needles were removed to let air and light into the inner areas and allow easy wiring. The team carefully wired the branches. All foliage masses were defined, creating full and empty spaces harmonizing with the trunk movement in all its details, from the main branch up to the top.





2017

The Buddha in its renewed beauty—winter 2017.

2021

The Buddha was exhibited at Arcobonsai Trophy in Garda Trentino, September 2021, an event that has become a must on the international scene. It was the first post-COVID-19 Italian congress. BCI Director Massimo Bandera bestowed the BCI Excellence Award to my *Pinus sylvestris*, The Buddha. 🌲





The Best Czech Bonsai in the Prague Botanical Garden

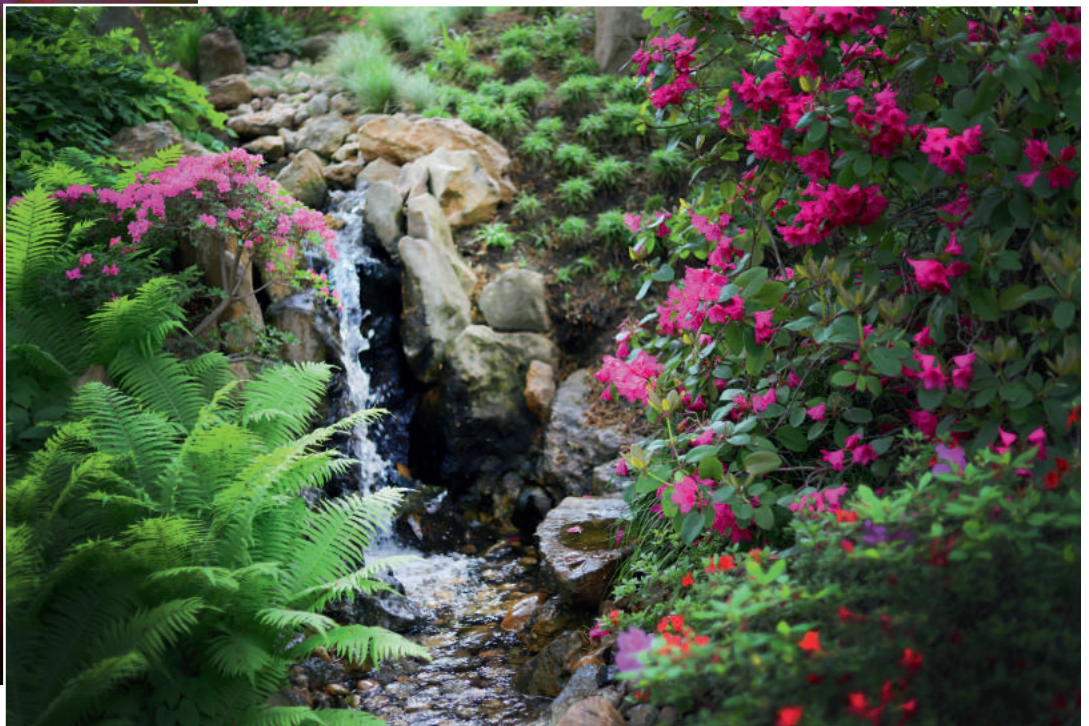


By Michaela Bičíková, Czech Republic

Photos by Amálie Balaščíková

Top: Spring in Japanese Garden in Prague Botanical Garden - gazebo for tea ceremonies with blooming rhododendrons

Left: The opening ceremony of 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden. Left to right: director of Prague Botanical Garden Mr. Bohumil Černý, Czech actresses Ester and Anna Geisler, The Ambassador of Japan, His Excellency SUZUKI Hideo with his wife



The Prague Botanical Garden is the largest and most well-known botanical garden in the Czech Republic. It was founded in 1969 on the right bank of the Vltava River, on the slopes of the Troja Basin. Its south-facing slopes and proximity to the river create the ideal climate for plants from all over the world. The location is a home for many endangered species. This modern botanical garden includes the tropical Fata Morgana Greenhouse opened in 2004—a true European rarity with its layout and 1,800 square meters of expositions.

One of the greatest treasures is the Japanese Garden—an exposition created in Japanese style. Opened in 1997, it is one of the most beautiful parts of the botanical garden. It is also very popular with visitors. The exposition has two parts: the first represents a mountain landscape with a gazebo for tea ceremonies and a *tsukubai* purification washbasin. Close to the gazebo is a pond surrounded by the “Stones of Waiting” used for contemplation. The turtle-shaped island symbolizes wisdom, and the small stream represents the “River of Life” with the “Spring of Knowledge” and the “Stone of Breaking.” In the second part, the garden represents

Top: Spring in Japanese Garden in Prague Botanical Garden—the part that represents a mountain landscape with blooming azaleas and rhododendrons

Middle: Spring in Japanese Garden in Prague Botanical Garden—“River of Life”



plants from China and Japan. The basic elements of the Japanese Garden are water, stone, and plants. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that principles applicable to Japanese-style gardens are achieved with the help of plants growing in the Czech climate. The Japanese Garden has also become a traditional venue for bonsai exhibitions where bonsai trees of the Prague Botanical Garden collection are also presented. Some of them are more than a hundred years old. The exposition and bonsai collection are currently managed by the curator and bonsai expert Miroslav Horský.

In September 2021, the Prague Botanical Garden held the 16th bonsai exhibition, which presented the best that Czech bonsai growers can boast of. This year the exhibition was a competitive exhibit for the first time.

The exhibition was opened on 2 September 2021 by the Ambassador of Japan, His Excellency SUZUKI Hideo, and his wife. The opening ceremony was also attended by the Czech Bonsai Association and the Czech-Japanese Association representatives. The exhibition was accompanied by a rich program that introduced Japanese culture and art, such as the Kyōgen theatre, Japanese drums, martial arts, ikebana, and calligraphy. Experts, headed by the experienced leader of the Czech bonsai community, Václav Novák, demonstrated bonsai shaping using professional techniques and materials.

Several prizes were awarded during the bonsai competition. The main prize was awarded to the bonsai grower Pavla Vránová from Pardubice for shrubby cinquefoil (*Potentilla fruticosa*). Other prizes in this category went to Petr Herynek from Prague for his common prickly-ash bonsai (*Zanthoxylum americanum*) and Libor Kajš from Nedakonice for his common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). The prize of the Czech Bonsai Association was awarded to Vladimír Došek from Horní Počápel for his bog pine bonsai (*Pinus uncinata*). The Ambassador of Japan, His Excellency SUZUKI Hideo, was most impressed by a bonsai from the collections of the Prague Botanical Garden—the common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). The bonsai is rather large and was acquired on the Slovak-Hungarian border. It is easily recognizable by its attractive custom-made bowl, which Erik Križovský from Slovakia made.

The exposition of the Japanese Garden is continuously improving. These changes also apply to natural elements. In spring, visitors are enchanted by blooming Sakura, rhododendrons, and azaleas. During summer, hydrangeas bloom, and in autumn, the Japanese Garden lights up with autumn colors of Japanese maples and other woody plants. Most bonsai from the botanical garden collections are on display during the season. The bonsai exhibition will be held here again next year. In the future, the Prague Botanical Garden would also like to hold a Bonsai Triennial—an international exhibition in which bonsai growers from the Czech Republic, Poland, and Germany will participate.

See you in the Japanese Garden in Prague.

Mata miemasu! 🌳





Top: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, the main prize winner; Shrubby cinquefoil bonsai (*Potentilla fruticosa*) from grower Pavla Vránová

Bottom: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, awarded common Prickly-ash bonsai (*Zanthoxylum americanum*) from grower Petr Herynek

Facing page, top: Spring in Japanese Garden in Prague Botanical Garden, Blooming Sakura and plum trees

Facing page, bottom: Autumn in Japanese Garden in Prague Botanical Garden, Japanese maples

Top: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, awarded Common beech bonsai (*Fagus sylvatica*) from grower Libor Kajš

Bottom: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, the prize of the Czech Bonsai Association was awarded to Vladimír Došek for his Bog pine bonsai (*Pinus uncinata*).

Facing page, top: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, the Ambassador of Japan, His Excellency SUZUKI Hideo with awarded Common beech bonsai (*Fagus sylvatica*) from the collections of the Prague Botanical Garden

Facing page, bottom left: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, Japanese yew bonsai (*Taxus cuspidata*)

Facing page, bottom right: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical, Hummingbird fuchsia bonsai (*Fuchsia magellanica*)









Top: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, Thorny olive bonsai (*Elaeagnus pungens*)

Bottom left: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, Cherry pie bonsai (*Lantana camara*)

Bottom right: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, Blackthorn bonsai (*Prunus spinosa*)

Facing page, top left: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, Wild olive bonsai (*Olea europea sylvestris*)

Facing page, top right: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, Chinese chaste tree bonsai (*Vitex negundo*)

Facing page, bottom left: 16th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, European larch bonsai (*Larix decidua*)

Facing page, bottom right: 6th bonsai exhibition in Prague Botanical Garden, Blue spruce bonsai (*Picea pungens* 'Argentea')



Exploring Bonsai Farming in Korea

Better than collected specimens?



Top: Black Pine Bonsai Nursery bonsai production farm embraces the vast sea of Muan-gun, Jeollanam-do, and enjoys the sea breeze.

Far right: Director Kim Yong-jin founded the bonsai production farm.

Left inset: It was inherited and is currently operated by his eldest son, president Kim Dae-hyuk.



Photos and Text by Won Hoe Sik, Korea

Looking at the history and origin of Korean bonsai shown in the literature, many people seem to have collected good trees from nature. They brought them to their homes, planted them in the front yard, enjoyed them, and gradually placed them in the pot to appreciate them. Since then, bonsai has been made mainly by relying on wild plants. Some collected young seedlings one to two years old and planted them in a pot. After two to three years, they started putting wires on the plant

to create the shape of the trees. This process became the indirect experience of first material production.

For more than 30 years since the 1970s, Korean society has developed in various aspects, and development has been taking place across the country. In particular, when real estate development was active due to factory construction and housing site development, large amounts of trees were cut down for civil engineering. Materials suitable for bonsai production were available at these development sites.



For the first time in Korea, bonsai with exposed roots on the stone was introduced. Not only bonsai lovers but also the general public responded enthusiastically. As the market response was better than expected, Kim Yong-jin was encouraged to begin production in earnest.

Since then, development has gradually decreased. It became difficult to collect plants from nature due to environmental concerns and civil awareness. Bonsai material had to be produced through sowing or grafting.

This process created production sites nationwide, and several production complexes were created. In the beginning, techniques for producing bonsai materials were insufficient. Production farms selected trees suitable for local climatic conditions or soil and tested them for sowing and growing. However, they failed

repeatedly. Since then, as technology and know-how have been acquired, material production has begun in earnest.

Korean bonsai lovers traditionally tended to prefer pine trees, juniper trees, and yew trees. Most local trees are mainly pine trees and conifers, regarded as symbols of longevity and spirit in traditional culture. Consequently, bonsai artists in Korea have an interest and pay attention to these species. Today's production of Korean bonsai materials focuses on selecting and

Director Kim immediately purchased a field (1,652 square meters or about 16,000 square feet) and started farming black pine trees. They are common on the coast of Muan Beach or on the slopes of hills, growing with exposed roots above the soil.



cultivating tree species based on the cultural and environmental foundation mentioned above.

During the transition to producing materials like natural plants through sowing or grafting, production farmers attempted various meaningful new tasks.

There is a bonsai material production farm that embraces the vast sea of Muan-gun, Jeollanam-do, enjoys the sea breeze, and designs future bonsai. It is the well-known black pine bonsai farm that has pioneered the production of black pine tree materials for the Korean bonsai industry.

If we were to fly for about an hour by plane from Gimpo, Seoul, we would arrive at Muan International Airport. After a 10-minute car ride, we will find a farmhouse on a hill that smells like red clay. This farm was founded by Director Kim Yong-jin. It was inherited and is currently operated by his eldest son, president Kim Dae-hyuk.

Director Kim Yong-jin has not been producing bonsai materials from the beginning. As a young man, he had run a restaurant. However, he wanted a business to operate as he grew older. He thought he could not live his entire life running a small restaurant in a small town in the region. By chance, while visiting a friend's house nearby and looking around the house, he saw trees planted in a flowerpot in the front yard. Although it was not an authentic bonsai, some of the black pine trees, commonly found in the region, were planted in the pots and shaped like bonsai. Using this opportunity, he decided that he would do this job as a hobby for the rest of his life. He studied black pine trees that can be seen in the local nature, looked for people raising bonsai, and acquired the skills to grow trees. Fortunately, a bonsai



artist named Moon Hyung-seok raised bonsai in the same area. Moon Hyung-seok studied how to grow bonsai and knew a lot of advanced bonsai techniques at the time as a bonsai artist who mainly imported and sold proper bonsai from Japan. Kim Yong-jin learned a lot about how to grow bonsai through him. After



learning some basic knowledge and skills about bonsai, he gained confidence. He selected the black pine tree, which is suitable for the local climate, grows well in local soil without problems, and decided to reproduce them. At that time, modern forms/shapes of bonsai, whose roots were exposed, were twice as popular in the market.

Director Kim immediately purchased a field (1,652 square meters or about 16,000 square feet) and started farming black pine trees. They are common on the coast of Muan Beach or on the slopes of hills, growing with exposed roots above the soil. He was confident in the possibility of producing black pine trees with exposed roots.

The exposed root style is achieved using a plastic pipe with a diameter of 10 cm was purchased, cut into appropriate lengths. These pipes replaced the traditional flower pot. Seeds were sown, or seedlings were obtained and planted in the pipes. The pine seeds or seedlings were intensively cultivated to grow their roots long. The plastic pipes were perfect because high cultivation was challenging to obtain, activate and manage.

About ten years later, he shipped the first production of black pines to a bonsai store in Seoul. He received excellent reviews for the seven-year-old exposed roots-on-stone.

Before and after the 88 Seoul Olympics, interest and access to various hobbies actively expanded along with improved household income. For the first time in Korea, bonsai with exposed roots on the stone was introduced. Not only bonsai lovers but also the general public responded enthusiastically. As the market response was better than expected, he was encouraged to begin production in earnest.



Top and middle:
Black pine specimens grown from seed.

Bottom: A field of Bougainvillea bonsai in air pots that help create the exposed root style of bonsai.



Since the production of bonsai materials began, many trials and errors have been experienced in the first decade. First of all, Yong-jin had no experience growing black pine, especially exposed roots cultivation. He tried to learn cultivation techniques by searching foreign bonsai magazines and asking the nearby bonsai artists. The first challenge he encountered was soil (flower pot soil). Black pines did not take root in general sapolite soil (a chemically weathered rock), mainly used for bonsai planting. Even in *Modern Bonsai*, a monthly Japanese bonsai magazine that bonsai people referred to, key technologies were not discussed. So Koreans had to learn by themselves through many trials and errors.

Since it is difficult to revitalize and grow the roots in thick-particle Sapolite soil, it was possible to make holes in the clay field filled covered by a layer of large particle sapolite soil. These holes were filled with finely ground sapolite powder. Young seedlings were placed in the





This bonsai farm ships 6,000 to 7,000 black pines every year from 10 large buildings. In addition, 3,000 three-year-old Pyracantha are currently cultivated and ready for shipment. The farm has the production capacity to ship 1,500 juniper trees, 1,000 mini garden zinnia, 500 shaped garden zinnia, and 500 yellow elm trees every year and is currently studying new cultivation methods.



**Managing
bonsai
materials
using air pots
and other
propagation
techniques to
produce more
advanced
exposed-root
materials**



sapolite powder holes with roots pinned to prevent them from moving. Finally successful cultivation was possible through this process.

Since the first shipment in 1987, four to five thousand exposed roots-on-stone bonsai have been shipped every year. After hearing rumors, Japanese bonsai people who visited began to buy them on a small scale. Chinese and European bonsai artists began to pay attention to this exposed root style, which they took and submitted to local exhibitions. An opportunity to export was now possible.

Since then, Director Kim, who focused on production, moved to a nearby 10,000 m² farm 22 years ago to expand the production farm for new species. As production and sales stabilized to some extent, he left the farm to his eldest son. Director Kim opened a permanent store in Gwangju, a nearby metropolitan city, and began full-scale distribution.

Since then, the eldest son, Kim Dae-hyuk, who inherited the nursery, ships 6,000 to 7,000 black pine materials every year from 10 large buildings on farms. In addition, 3,000 three-year-old *Pyracantha* are currently cultivated and ready for shipment. The farm has the production capacity to ship 1,500 juniper trees, 1,000 mini garden zinnia, 500 shaped garden zinnia, and 500 yellow elm trees every year and is currently studying new cultivation methods.

Since the seventh year, about 1,000 black pine root products can be produced every year. About 400 black pine root materials planted in 2015 are also waiting for customers.

Kim Dae-hyuk, present director of Black Pine Bonsai Nursery, plans to plant and manage materials using air pots propagation techniques to produce more advanced exposed roots materials and is currently trying it out.

In addition, Kim Dae-hyuk, who has received know-how in producing materials of exposed roots, has been preparing to produce 10,000 to 10,000 units every year since the fourth year. In addition, the farm has produced 1,000 to 2,000 Itoigawa junipers, a high-quality tree species, every year since the seventh year. They are ready to be shipped starting this year.

It takes a lot of effort and time to reach a certain level in any field. And courage and determination are also needed when walking on a path that others have never been to. To successfully complete the new path, we must join the journey patiently.

Kim Yong-jin is one of the most active producers and distributors in the market despite his old age. So even now, his dreams and passion are ongoing. And he has been a legend in the industry and will continue to remain a legend for a while. 🌲



Right column: Views of fields and greenhouses at Black Pine Bonsai Nursery.

Bottom left: Entrance to the Black Pine Bonsai Nursery.



Eastern White Cedar

Letting Time Do the Work

Text and Photos
by Steve Ulrich, Canada



2001: Naturally stunted Thuja, unlike many trees that need to be severely pruned during the collection process.

The tree featured in this article is an Eastern White Cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), which is hardy to growing zones 2–7 and native to eastern Canada and the northeastern United States. With its spectacular long-lasting deadwood, bulging live veins, and shaggy grey bark, it is with no surprise that Eastern White Cedar is amongst my favorite species to develop as bonsai. Collected material often displays impressive twisting trunk with live veins that interact with heavily weathered deadwood full of character.



I collected this stunning specimen in late summer 2001 during a trip to the north shore of the St-Lawrence River with my bonsai friend, Patrice Robichaud. It was growing at the bottom of a pink limestone cliff. After a strenuous day of walking through the mountains searching for yamadori without much success, I found it! This one was naturally stunted, unlike trees that need to be severely pruned during the collection process. As such, no foliage or branches were removed whatsoever. Upon closer inspection, I noticed that the base was quite powerful for such a small tree (26 inches or 66 cm). It had a beautiful tapered hollow trunk that is characteristic of older specimens.

I had to cut back substantial roots close to the trunk during collection. I was confident that there would be a lot of fine roots closer to and under the trunk. However, there were just a handful of feeder roots around the large, severed roots. This thuja would need extra care to survive the collection process. So I brought it to my friend Yves Létourneau, a bonsai professional and owner of a nursery in eastern Quebec. The tree was potted in a plastic nursery container with a mix of 40% grit, 30% pine bark, and 30% perlite and placed under a mist system in his greenhouse. Thanks to his dedicated care over that first winter, the tree miraculously survived and started to push new growth in the spring of 2002.

The next decade coincides with my university years living in small apartments in Canada and the United States. This meant that I did not have the room and resources to care for my collection anymore. My mother cared for this tree from 2002 to 2013. It was kept on the ground in a training pot in her backyard all year round and was only watered sparsely. Although eastern

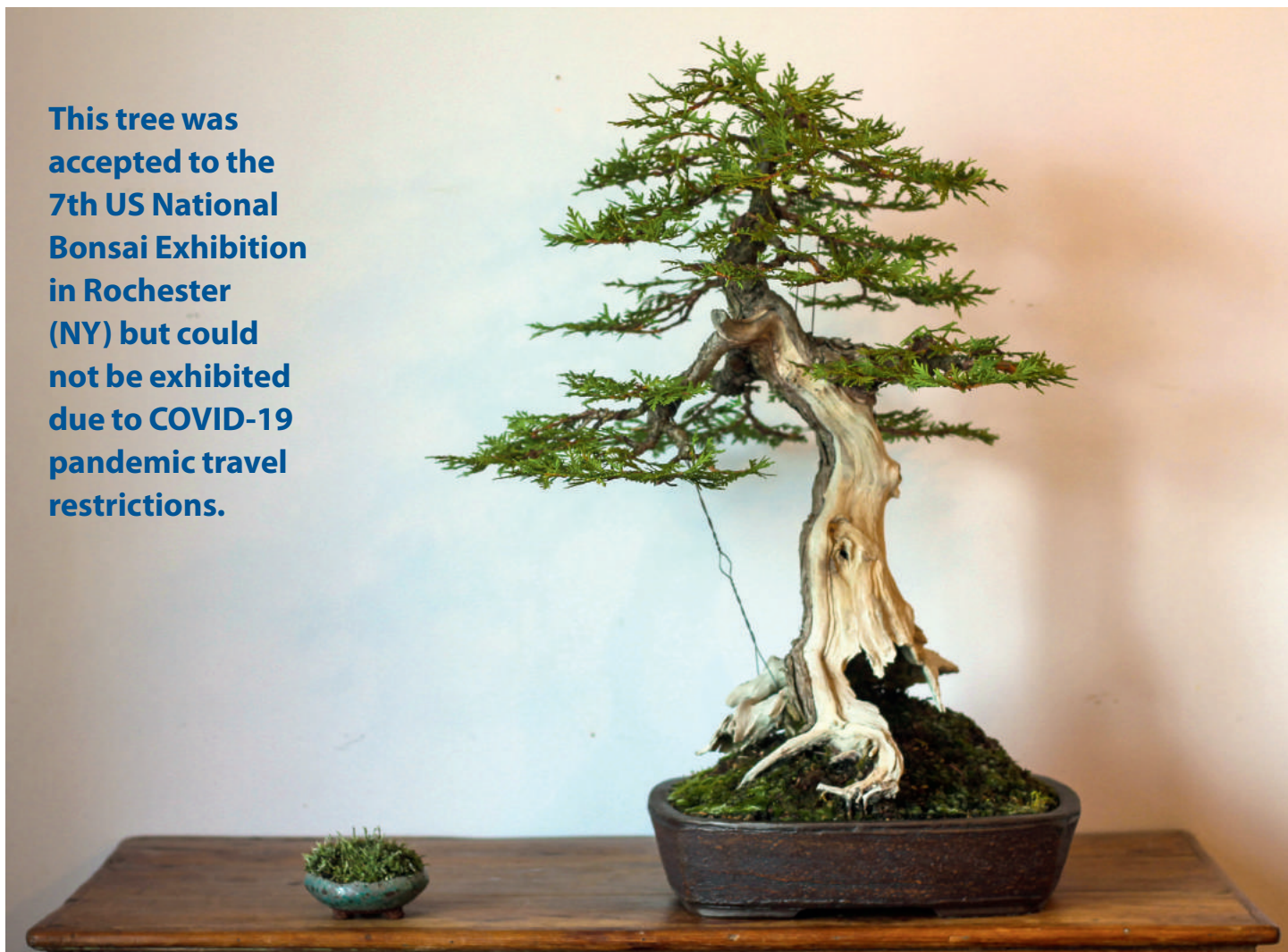


Top left: Thuja in its training container.

Top right: For ten years, the only maintenance done was an annual light pruning to remove water sprouts to encourage back budding

Bottom right: Repotted in a ceramic training container in the spring of 2016.

This tree was accepted to the 7th US National Bonsai Exhibition in Rochester (NY) but could not be exhibited due to COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions.



Ready to be presented in a Sara Rayner container at the 2019 Ottawa Bonsai Society Show.

white cedars are known to be very forgiving, I am still surprised this one survived all these years under very minimal care. During this time, the only maintenance done was an annual light pruning to remove water sprouts to encourage back budding.

After a well-overdue repot in a ceramic training container in the spring of 2016, it finally received its first styling in the fall of the same year. At first, it was shaped with foliage pads equally on both sides. Then, I made it more dynamic by giving it a direction to the left, thereby complementing the trunk movement. This leftward direction was accomplished by moving the highest point of the apex to the left and lowering the first branch on the left side to become the lowest.

It was exhibited at the annual show of the Ottawa Bonsai Society following a 2019 spring repot in a Sara Rayner container in a mix of 40% chabasai (zeolite imported from France), 30% lava, and 30% pumice. At that time, some structural flaws still needed to be fixed, and the positive and negative spaces were not clearly defined. In addition, the apex was still too small and pointy, which gave an impression of a young tree.

It was left to grow freely until the fall of 2020 where the structure was fine-tuned. Since then, the work has focused on refinement through active pinching and pruning to obtain more compact foliage pads.

I often get asked about how the deadwood and hollow trunk were created. In this case, it was a simple case of letting nature and time do the work. Twenty years ago, the deadwood on the front extended all the way to the soil level, but over time, it naturally deteriorated to its current state. In the fall of 2021, a wood hardener (clear penetrating epoxy sealer) was applied to preserve the deadwood because it was getting dangerously thin. At the same time, the first branch on the right side was lowered with a guy wire to give it a better downward angle, thereby making it more coherent with the rest of the branches.

This tree was accepted to the 7th US National Bonsai Exhibition in Rochester (NY) but could not be exhibited due to COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions. Looking ahead, I hope to show it at the 8th edition of this world-class exhibition. 🌲

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Steve Ulrich is an avid bonsai practitioner from Gatineau, Quebec who became fascinated by this art form in 1999, at the age of 17. Early on, he developed a passion for collected specimens that reflect the rugged environment they come from. For this reason, he primarily enjoys working with coniferous species native to his area, such as *Thuja occidentalis*, *Pinus banksiana* and *Larix laricina*.

REMEMBERING NORMAN HADDRICK, 1935-2021

“Yes, learning to limp gracefully is just another, but painful, form of art.”

By Joan Greenway, Canada

Norman Haddrick was a unique individual who viewed personal adversity positively and interpreted the world from an artistic viewpoint or inspiration. He added a sense of playful humor whenever he saw the opportunity.

Norman (1935-2021) was among the original founders of Toronto Bonsai Club Canada when it was still associated with the Japanese Garden Club. He was a Director at Bonsai Clubs International and the American Bonsai Society in the '90s. As one of the Toronto Bonsai Society's pivotal members, Norman pursued and pushed the art form in Toronto and abroad. In addition to being an experienced bonsai practitioner, he illustrated *A Bonsai Story*. He also received the Friendship Medal of Japan given to him by the Ambassador of Japan to Canada.

On Oct. 6, 2021, a TBS Zoom meeting was dedicated to his memory. The members talked about Norman's contributions to the world of bonsai. Here are a few of their recollections:

From David Johnson, “After studying with Japanese masters, Norm traveled across Canada teaching bonsai. He developed a Bonsai course, ‘Bonsai Dynamics,’ that was an opportunity for bonsai enthusiasts to advance their skills.”

From Joan Greenway, “Norm was also an honorary member of Matsuyama Bonsai Society (MBS) and often was invited to our meetings. After he attended the MBS show in 2003, he critiqued it beautifully.

He noted that we did not have any forest plantings. In the spring of 2004, he visited us, and within two workshops, we produced quite a few forest bonsai.

I still have the notes—he often quoted John Naka—‘find the bonsai in the tree.’ His advice still holds. ‘Every tree should be wired in. Every tree has a different diameter. Biggest tree behind the centerline. Next tree in front to one side. Third to the back. Do not cut branches until after they are placed. Consider where the forest is growing.’

All our members came to the workshops when he was a presenter, and a few of us still have a forest bonsai that he helped create. The Matsuyama Bonsai Society logo was designed by Norman in 2004.”

He was a presenter at the 1997 BCI Convention in Toronto. Joe Grande remembers: “Five of us from the Bonsai Society of Winnipeg attended the 97 BCI convention in Toronto and saw Norman in action. His demonstration subject, a three-tree larch composition in a 22-inch tray, was raffled at the gala dinner, and I was lucky to win it. Norman's drawing of it was included. What an adventure it was, getting this large bonsai home.

I trained the larches with the clip-and-grow method, re-potted it after 4 years, and replaced one tree after it died. About ten years ago, in late November, a minus 40°C wind-chill and no snow cover proved fatal for three or four of my trees. The three-tree larch group was one of them. Now all I have is the drawing and the tray. Although it is gone, what I learned about bonsai, in caring for it, is priceless.”

Tom Watson, a long-time TBS member, also spoke at the meeting dedicated to Norman on Oct. 11, 2021. “When I first met Norman, it was when I first joined the club in the 1980s. I walked into the hall at the garden center, and I guess I looked lost. He walked up to me and confirmed I was in the right place. He pointed out the membership person and others for me. He was a very calm person who never got involved in any negative politics if they arose. As years passed, he was always willing to help less experienced members with their trees. I asked him how he learned to do such great bonsai art. His answer was, ‘I don't know. I just picked up a pencil one day and gave it a try!’ He will be missed.”

From Mike Roussel: “I really enjoyed celebrating the life of Norman Haddrick in the Toronto Bonsai Society meeting this evening. It was great to hear and share stories of a true Canadian bonsai pioneer.

Here is a photo of the Master with his sensei John Naka. I am so glad I got to know, be inspired by, and learn from him.”



From Vianney Leduc, “I found, in my box of archived newsletters, a long text from Norman on *Introduction to Style* dated August 1994. I also found some articles from David Easterbrook, and I know for a fact that Norman came to the Ottawa club. I think that we are living the continuation of Norman’s dream with Bonsai Penjing Canada!”

Norman was delighted that Vianney Leduc and I had set up Bonsai Penjing Canada.

Norman tried to organize all the Canadian Bonsai Clubs many years ago. Besides stamps and the distance between clubs, he said one of the major stumbling blocks was the French translations. We have your dream Norman!

These were some of the stories that members of TBS and others shared with Norman’s daughters during a special Zoom meeting dedicated to Norman. We end with a story written by Norman. He was treasured for his stories, his illustrations, and his friendship.

Norman Haddrick’s recollection—written after I heard that he was injured in a squash game: “Yes, learning to limp gracefully is just another, but painful, form of art. It happened in a seniors’ squash tournament here, at my Club, Mayfair Parkway. The surgeon who examined me said it would be major corrective surgery needing a long recovery and healing time. Then he said he would not perform such surgery on anyone over 70 years old. So, I limp. What *will* I do when I get old?”

And after asking him what he was doing for fun?

“See the fun you can have living in a condo? Me with my one remaining bonsai, a *Ficus retusa*, grown from a 1/4” thick cutting taken from a demo tree I did in 1978 at a TBS presentation. Now, with a 4-inch-plus thick, well-tapered trunk, it is 18” tall. Nicely branched and planted in a handmade, very expensive, custom glazed bonsai container I bought in Japan on my final trip with John Yoshio Naka to a World Bonsai Congress where John was demonstrating.

John called me up from the audience to assist him with a demo, shaping and potting an amazing Japanese Black Pine. John talked to the audience while I did what he talked about. He joked about the way I was pruning, sawing, and cutting off branches as he instructed, saying I was ‘attacking the tree like a little dragon.’

On the flight home, the pot in a boxed container sat on my lap all the way to California, then home to Toronto. (Not trusting the baggage handlers even then) John was most impressed by the care I took. And he laughed about it for years. That was the most enlightening bonsai trip for me.

Because he’d called me ‘Little Dragon,’ when we got home, John sent me a red ink stamp that says *Ko-Ryu, Little Dragon*, in John’s Japanese handwriting. I’ve used it to this day on every meaningful drawing I do.

Sorry, Joan. You sent my mind back into the past, from ‘see the fun we have.’ Keep up the good work. I enjoy the MBS emails, and I’ll go through the pictures as I can. Thanks.”

And Norman, we will enjoy going through the pictures, the notes, the encouragements, and the memories you have left behind.

Part of you remains here, and your influence on Canadian bonsai inspires our creativity and willingness to learn. 🐉



Norman Haddrick, left, and John Yoshio Naka, right.





BCI Excellence Award

By Luciana Queirola, Italy

The XXIV National AIAS 2021 (Italian Association of Suiseki Lovers) exhibited 79 Suiseki: a sign that Suiseki in Italy is increasingly appreciated. Thanks to the vast typology of materials and origins, we were able to admire specimens from various Italian regions: Liguria, Lombardy, Veneto, Sicily, and Calabria, placed side by side with honor, for example, with Japanese and Indonesian stones.

The judges were: Ezio Piovaneli, IBS instructor and Judge for AIAS; Marco Petruzzelli instructor and judge for IBS; Luciana Queirola, IBS instructor for BCI Excellence Award; Giorgio Rosati awarded the best Exhibit; Daniela Schifano, UBI award.

During the Award Ceremony, I had to express a regret that some stones would have equally deserved the recognition of the BCI award. For this reason, I have taken the responsibility to assign the BCI Excellence Award to two suiseki.

As I explained to Mr. Frank Mihalic, president of BCI, our Association has two distinct groups. Enthusiasts who practice Tanseki-ko, build daiza for the stones they have collected and display them with devotion. Enthusiasts who choose, after careful observation and information, generally Japanese suiseki, exhibit them with suitable accessories.

When it comes to awarding prizes, BCI has an international significance that stands above any trace of parochialism. So I presented two Certificates: one for a Japanese stone, one for an Italian stone. As if to underline that for our Italian Association of Suiseki Lovers, the beauty of Nature in a stone must be recognized, from whatever country it comes from. You can view the 79 stones exhibited at the XXIV AIAS at website: www.aias-suiseki.eu.



Yamagata-ishi. Japan. It belongs to Ettore Gardini and its poetic name is: "Sacred mountain astride the tiger, free your thoughts."



Domon-ishi, stone in the shape of a bridge, Tuscany, Italy. It belongs to Sergio Bassi. Its poetic name is: "the air, the earth, the water."

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