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international friendship
through bonsai



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Bonsai & Stone Appreciation

2015
Q3

Suseok on Center Stage; 20th Annual Korean/American Viewing Stone Exhibition

An Exhibit of Art: Bonsai at the Lynden Sculpture Garden

Tree in Mind Clay in Hand; Gong Linmin, Master Ceramic Artist

Nibelungo; How a semi-cascade Mugo pine became an informal upright

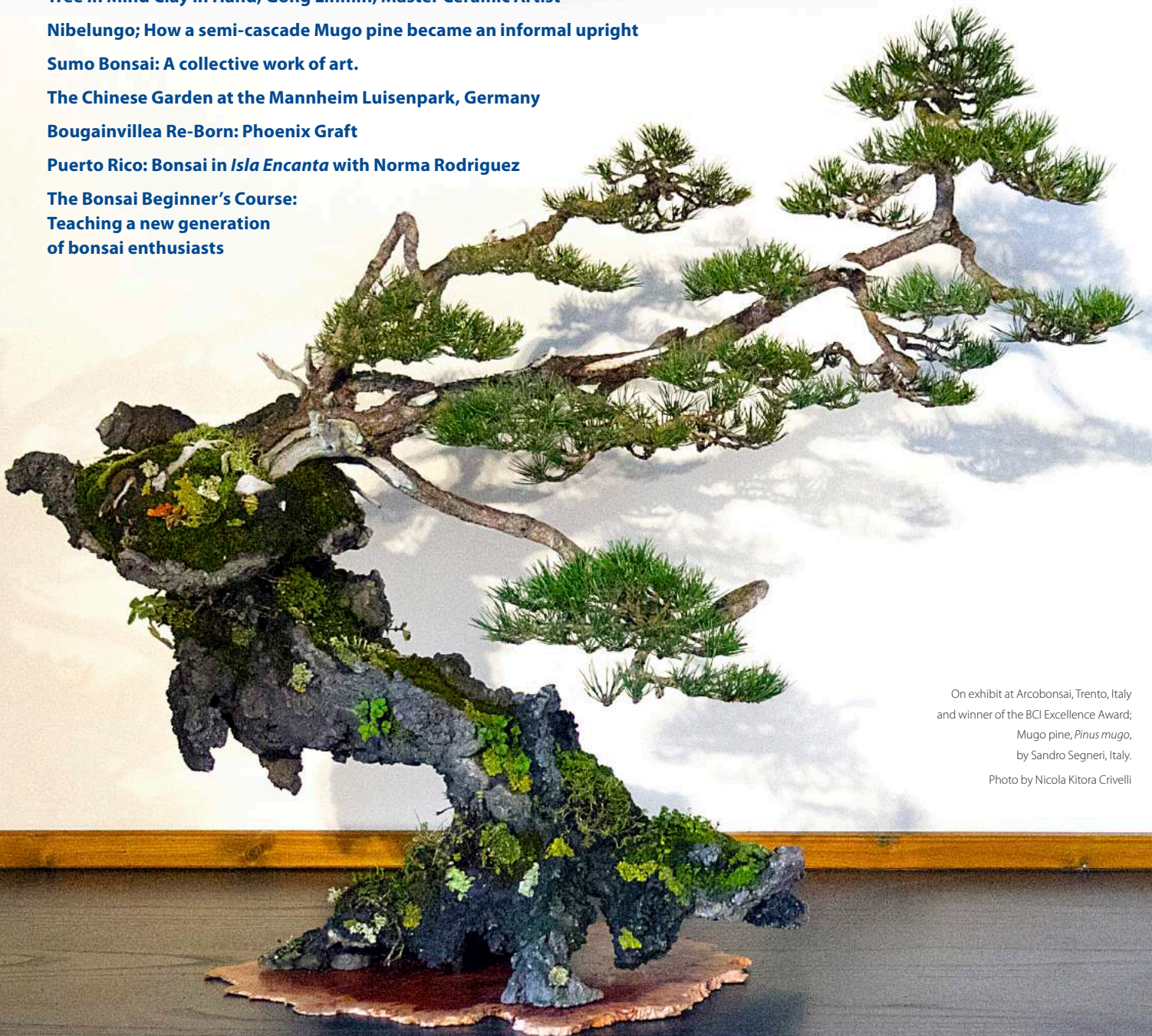
Sumo Bonsai: A collective work of art.

The Chinese Garden at the Mannheim Luisenpark, Germany

Bougainvillea Re-Born: Phoenix Graft

Puerto Rico: Bonsai in *Isla Encanta* with Norma Rodriguez

**The Bonsai Beginner's Course:
Teaching a new generation
of bonsai enthusiasts**



On exhibit at Arcobonsai, Trento, Italy
and winner of the BCI Excellence Award;

Mugo pine, *Pinus mugo*,
by Sandro Segneri, Italy.

Photo by Nicola Kitora Crivelli

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President's Message

I recently returned from the Asia-Pacific Bonsai Friendship Federation Grand Vietnamese Bonsai Exhibition held in Ho Chi Minh City in early June. It was a grand event with over 800 trees on display and several internationally-known bonsai artists conducting demonstrations. Nearly 200 foreign guests from 16 countries, and over 15,000 Vietnamese visitors attended the four day event. I was pleasantly surprised to see the great interest in bonsai in Vietnam and the very high quality of their bonsai specimens. Three BCI Medals of Excellence were awarded at the closing banquet to Vietnamese bonsai artists for their outstanding trees. Over twenty new members from Vietnam joined BCI during this event; thus, helping BCI develop a stronger presence in this country.

There are many advantages to attending regional and national bonsai meetings in addition to the exhibitions and demonstrations. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet old friends and develop new ones. The exchange of ideas and information can inspire us to do more and to improve our bonsai techniques. Walking through the vendor areas during these meetings is exciting and gives us an opportunity to acquire new materials. I was able, for example, to purchase five nice, natural, native stones while attending the Vietnam meeting. Some of the small trees were tempting, but sadly I was not able to bring them back due to plant quarantine restrictions in my home country.

The next opportunity for BCI members is our annual 2015 convention that will be held in Guangzhou, China September 17-21. This meeting, *The Infinity of Bonsai & Viewing Stone: A Cultural Voyage from Canton to the World*, will bring some of the finest bonsai artists from China, Taiwan, Europe, and North America for demonstrations. Bonsai artist François Jeker from France, Matsuda Mitsuo from Japan, John Wang from the U.S., and Chen Jian Liang from Taiwan will join some of China's leading bonsai artists as demonstrators at this event. In addition, a slate of five internationally-known viewing stone experts will present lectures about stones from Europe, Japan, North America, and China. This will be a great opportunity to see, learn, and exchange information with others. Guangzhou (formerly Canton) is a major international trade center in southern China that is very friendly to foreign visitors. It is easy to get to and there is still time to register and attend. I hope to see you there. Go to www.gzbci2015.com now and plan to attend.

Then, in March, 2016, BCI will hold its first regional bonsai convention in conjunction with the Philippine Bonsai Association. This will be an opportunity to highlight the outstanding bonsai and viewing stones found in this island nation. I am convinced that you will be as surprised as I was when I saw several private collections of bonsai in the Philippines. Bonsai artists from several countries will be featured demonstrators, including William N. Valavanis from the US. English is commonly spoken throughout the Philippines, so come and join us and see the sights of this country.

I am pleased that the number of people joining BCI is growing as we welcome many individual memberships and



The next opportunity for BCI members to attend regional and national bonsai meetings is our annual 2015 convention that will be held in Guangzhou, China September 17-21. This meeting, *The Infinity of Bonsai & Viewing Stone: A Cultural Voyage from Canton to the World*, will bring some of the finest bonsai artists from China, Taiwan, Europe, and North America for demonstrations.

new bonsai club memberships to BCI. In the last two years, we have seen considerable growth in members in several countries including the Philippines, Malaysia, India, Vietnam, and the People's Republic of China. People are responding to our *Bonsai and Stone Appreciation Magazine* as it has increased in the number of pages for some issues and improved in the quality and scope of the articles. I always take a supply of our BCI magazine with me when traveling to major meetings to give to prospective new members. I enjoy seeing people's reactions when they see the quality of our *Bonsai and Stone Appreciation Magazine* and, more often than not, they ask how they can join BCI.

BCI is truly an international, non-profit, educational organization committed to sharing information about the art of bonsai, penjing, and stone appreciation. We have members in approximately 35 countries. We have many members in North America, Australia, India, Taiwan, and a growing presence in Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam. We will be attempting to expand our presence in Europe, Africa, and Latin America in the years ahead. Each BCI member can be an ambassador for us and help to inform others about our wonderful organization.

Finally, I plan to take time to enjoy my small bonsai collection and viewing stone collection in the next two months. I have been so busy travelling that I haven't had the time to just sit and view my collection and consider what each of them mean to me. The spirit of bonsai and viewing stones can be an important factor in the quality of our lives. Take time to enjoy your trees and stones now. Eventually, there will be a time when we are no longer able to do so. 🌳

Tom Elias, President
Bonsai Clubs International

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:

Thomas S. Elias; tselias@msn.com



MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

The new BCI website has been launched and I hope by now you have visited www.bonsai-bci.com to see it for yourself. See page 63 for more information and a description of some of the new features we have implemented.

If your club is a members of BCI and you are the official contact who looks after membership with BCI, we need your help. Please take a few minutes to log in to your account and update your information. The profile page for clubs now includes a text field at the top for the official name of your club. Below it are text fields for the person to contact. In order to notify member clubs, it is important that we have accurate information in the appropriate text fields, so that we can easily and accurately sort the database for BCI Member Clubs. Clubs have voting rights on BCI governance, such as voting for the annual slate of BCI Directors and other official matters. Be sure to check the e-mail address associated with your club and update it or correct it if necessary. If you wish to manage your individual membership and your club membership with the same e-mail address, send an e-mail to info@bonsai-bci.com and we will make a manual adjustment to allow this.

BCI has also published a list of member clubs on the new website to help individuals in locating a club near them. Please check this list, featured at the bottom of the home page, and let us know if your listing is included and accurate. We can link your club's website address if you have one.

The BCI Artist section has been retired and replaced with a BCI Instructor and Teacher Directory. BCI is focusing on instructors and teachers to better promote bonsai and viewing stone education and to help our member clubs locate qualified instructors for their workshops and events. If you have been a member of BCI for two or more years, or, if you join for a two-year term, and you meet the criteria outlined on the website and the request form, you are eligible to be listed as a teacher or instructor.

Another great feature of the website is the Events Calendar, a dynamic calendar that can be viewed by year, month and by week. Here we will list all bonsai and viewing stone events, categorized as local, regional, national and international. To add an event, log in and go to the Events Calendar, bottom of home page, and click on Add Event below the calendar and fill in the form. We will review it and then publish it. Non-members are asked to send their events listing to events@bonsai-bci.com.

I look forward to working with BCI members to add more content to the website in my role as website editor, aided by Bonnie Moore, webmaster and Carole Roske, business manager. Bonnie handles all technical issues and Carole manages the membership database. Please contact me if you have articles to contribute to the BCI website or the magazine. 🌳

—Joe Grande, Canada (bcieditor@grandesign.net)

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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Digital images must be provided at 300 dpi resolution for an 8 x 5 inch size minimum.

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

PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

| Issue | Month | Closing Date |
|-------|-------|--------------|
| Q1 | J/F/M | November 1 |
| Q2 | A/M/J | February 1 |
| Q3 | J/A/S | May 1 |
| Q4 | O/N/D | August 1 |



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ON OUR COVER: On exhibit at Arcobonsai, Trento, Italy and winner of the BCI Excellence Award; Mugo pine, *Pinus mugo*, by Sandro Segneri, Italy. Photo by Nicola Kitora Crivelli.



Gong Linmin, Master Ceramic Artist

By Tom Elias, USA

Photographs by Gong Linmin

Above and inset; Selection of some of artist
Xiaoling (Gong Linmin) handmade pots.

There are many artists in every major type of art form in the world. Invariably, a few artists stand out among their peers for their skills, ability, and creativity. The cream will rise to the top is an old but true adage. While there are many people making hand crafted bonsai and flower pots in China today, one person has been widely recognized in the penjing and bonsai communities for his outstanding pots. Mr. Gong Linmin, a Shanghai native born in 1962, is now recognized as a master ceramic artist whose pots are in great demand. It is the custom in Asia for an artist to adopt a second name, one that they are known for in the art world. Gong Linmin is widely known throughout China as “Xiaoling.”

Xiao ling is a gentle man with short graying hair and a warm smile. He graduated from the Art Institute of Shanghai University as an accomplished artist. Not satisfied with this, he wanted to further develop his skills in the carving arts which lead him to

Tree in Mind Clay in Hand



apprentice with Master ceramic artist Xu Hantan. This was a wise choice as he was able to refine his artistic skills under the tutelage of Master Xu. For the past ten years, Xiaoling has been studying traditional cultural art, particularly red porcelain. During this period, his own style began to emerge. One that was inspired by a combination of western art and traditional Chinese art. Since his apprentice days, he has made hundreds of pots, many of them unique, one-of-a-kind pieces. In 2001, he had his first national solo exhibition of his works in Shanghai where over 500 pieces of his ceramic art were exhibited. A year later, several of his ceramic pieces were selected for publication in the book *Variations of China's Zisha Flower Pots*. The latter two events firmly established his reputation as a talented artist in China.





The Shanghai Bonsai Association enlisted Gong to make a limited edition of 200 pots to celebrate 2000, the new millennium. At that time, he carefully selected some of the finest sand in Yixing, the famous center for the production of fine pots in China. This clay, after firing, develops a shiny surface on the pot. Over a period of six months of testing and experimenting, he developed a marvelous piece “Millennium Dragon-Phoenix Flower Pot” measuring 22 cm in diameter. The pot is decorated with two abstract phoenix patterns that imply happiness.

His commissions have included tea pots as well as bonsai and flower pots. In 2001, he worked with ceramics master Shen Juechu from Shanghai to make two red porcelain tea pots. Gong designed the pots while Shen painted and carved them. These tea pots were presented to a visiting Japanese tea master who performed a tea ceremony in Shanghai.

Gong’s skills and abilities have been recognized repeatedly over the last decade that has resulted in many awards for his excellent pots. In 2008, his piece titled “Nest” won the award Best of the Best in China’s Arts and Crafts in the Tenth Exhibition for China’s Arts and Crafts. The following year, 2009, his ceramic art named “Ping Gai Po” was also awarded the Best of the Best during the Eleventh Exhibition for China’s Arts and Crafts Festival. Three years later, Mr. Gong once again was award the Best of the Best award for his piece “Catnap” in the fourteenth arts and crafts exhibition.

More recently, Gong Linmin conducted demonstrations of his ceramic artistry at major bonsai conventions. He was displaying his pot making skills at the Asian Pacific Bonsai and Suiseki Convention (ASPAC) in Takamatsu, Japan in 2011. In 2013, Gong fashioned beautiful bonsai pots at the Bonsai Clubs international (BCI) convention in Yangzhou, China. This was done in an outdoor setting next to several of the world’s leading bonsai and opening artists. Later that year, Gong conducted another excellent demonstration at the World Bonsai Friendship Federation convention in Jintan, China. His creativity in the ceramic arts was on full display at the later 2014 BCI convention in the Gold Coast, Australia. BCI members will have an opportunity to see Gong in action and meet with him at our 2015

Examples of Gong Linmin’s painting style on pots.





Examples of Gong Linmin's fine unglazed pots.

convention Guangzhou, China September 17-21 of this year. Gong has donated one of his beautiful hand crafted pots that will be auctioned at the close of this convention. It is a shallow oval pot made from black Yixing clay.

As Gong mastered the techniques of his predecessors, he went on to develop his own style. His works are known for having a unique air of artistic charm. This results from his skills in calligraphy, painting as well as selecting the finest clays and best firing techniques for his pots. As a result, his works are highly regarded among serious pot collectors and are sought after by collectors worldwide. His pots are now held in several museums including the Shanghai Botanical Museum, the Italian Bonsai Museum, and in China by the Yixing Ceramic Museum and the Penjing Museum in Yangzhou. During the last ten years, he has become more widely known in the international bonsai community and among collectors of fine pots. Now, his reputation expanded from a national level in China to an internationally recognized artist.

We are fortunate that Gong Linmin's has offered to share with our readers, his step-by-step method of creating a fine bonsai pot. The following six pages illustrate from the conceptual design to the final firing of a completed masterpiece. Gong's believes that "by grasping the key elements between the pot and the tree can we reach such perfection as harboring the tree in mind while holding the clay in hand." 🌳



Gong Linmin's step-by-step method of creating a fine bonsai pot are illustrated in the following six pages, from the conceptual design to the final firing of a masterpiece. Gong's believes that "by grasping the key elements between the pot and the tree can we reach such perfection as harboring the tree in mind while holding the clay in hand."



1. Conceiving and designing a bonsai pot.



2. Selecting the style and type of tree for the pot.



3. Making a full-size drawing of the pot and tree.



4. Cutting the pattern in preparation to making the pot.



5. Making a block pattern using a wood plank or plastic plate.



6. Hammering the clay into appropriate pieces.



7. Smoothing the clay and obtaining the appropriate thickness.



8. Using the pattern to slice the clay.



9. Preparing clay slurry for use in joining the clay pieces.



10. Getting the clay slurry to the right consistency.



11. Applying the slurry to the edges in preparation of joining pieces.



12. Joining the sides of the pot to the clay slab which will become the lip.



13. All four sides of pot joined together.



14. Joining the pot bottom to the lower part of the sides.



15. Trimming the newly attached bottom of the pot.



16. Adding clay to reinforce the rim.



17. Smoothing and polishing the pot.



18. Cutting away the top to make the rim of the pot.



19. Cutting pieces of clay for the legs of the pot.



20. Attaching legs to base of pot.



21. Locating position for drain hole.



22. Cutting drain hole in bottom of pot.



23. Add artist seals to the bottom of pot.



24. Finished bottom of pot with legs, drain hole, and seals.



25. Adding the calligraphy to the rear side of the pot.



26. Painting the landscape design on the front of the pot.



27. Completing the decorative design by incising the clay.



28. The finished design.



29. Rear side of pot after firing.

30. The masterpiece pot after firing (facing page).



il Nibelungo

By Massimo Bandera, Italy

How a semi-cascade Mugo pine became
an informal upright

Interview by Joe Grande, Canada

Photos by Massimo Bandera



Founded in 2006, Museo Fujisato, located in the famous bonsai centre in Turin, is one of five Italian bonsai museums. Open to the public every day of the year, it offers a collection of bonsai imported from Japan and China, and a collection of native Alpine species. The museum features a collection of Mugo pines.

The following interview is about one of these pine trees and the work of BCI Director and bonsai artist Massimo Bandera who is developing this tree into a masterpiece bonsai. The most interesting facet of this story is how the tree, first styled as a semi-cascade, was transformed to an informal upright style, complete with dramatic deadwood features.



Top; Views of the Mugo pine after it was collected in the Alps.

Bottom right; The pine was collected by Piero Masiero, founder of the Museum Fujisato, and commercial collector of bonsai.



BCI: What is the story of how this tree came to Museo Fujisato?

MASSIMO BANDERA: Collected in the Alps in 2007, it was grown in top vigor for three years before starting the first interventions. It was brought immediately to Museo Fujisato and acquired as a piece with great future potential. The pine was collected by Piero Masiero, founder of the Museum Fujisato, and commercial collector of bonsai.

You have named this tree *il Nibelungo*, why?

With the new stylistic choice of informal upright, this bonsai shows considerable strength and dynamism, and for this to be all Western, we decided to give it a name from Northern European tradition that expresses great strength and power and is also a suitable name for a northern species such as *Pinus*



Top four images; Initially the tree was styled as a semi cascade and coarsely wired.

Middle left; the Mugo pine with its inclination changed from semi cascade to informal upright.

Bottom; Antonio Jesús from Spain, is shown below applying the wire and jin solution at the top right of facing page.



mugo. Nibelungen are a mythological people of Germanic legends ruled by Prince “Nibelung.” The composer Richard Wagner composed a cycle of four operas titled *Der Ring des Nibelungen* based on these mythological legends.

How did you cultivate this tree during the first three years while it was recovering from the shock of being transplanted?

To increase its strength and maximize growth, it is necessary to use the method taught to me by my teacher Kimura, consisting of attentive watering, amino acid protein fertilizers and pure Akadama growing medium for an exceptional capacity for cation exchange.

Akadama’s ability to hold and release plant nutrients is renowned. Are there other types of growing media that have similar properties?

No, in my opinion there is nothing like Akadama.

Are there other potting mixes that you use and why?

I personally use pure Akadama during the first ten years after the collection of pine trees, then switch to a mixture of 50% Akadama and 50% Kiryuzuna which is a harder equivalent to Akadama that will retain structure for longer.

How did the cultivation change when the tree regained its vigor?

To balance its growth I reduced fertilization and container size. In a few years it will be transplanted in Akadama mixed with 50% Kiryuzuna. The tree





continues to be cultivated for maximum growth to create branching and to thicken the live veins. In a couple of years, that is, ten years since it was collected, I will start to slow down its vigor to build fine branching and short needles.

We can see from the photos of the front, sides and back that the semi-cascade seemed like an obvious solution at the time. Did you consider other possibilities before committing to a semi-cascade style? The cascade style had a couple of serious flaws: a surface root was in an unfavorable position and too long, and the trunk had a reverse taper which could have been masked with branches, but tilting it in the moyogi style, its sculptural qualities and extraordinary movement is more evident.

How was the tree cultivated while it was a semi-cascade? What work was done to the branches and needles?

As a semi cascade it was fertilized for strong growth and it was coarsely wired.

Was it allowed to grow freely at some point so that it could transition to an informal style or was it a chance discovery? Take us back to the day when you made the decision to dramatically alter the inclination of the trunk.

In fact it was a flash of lightning: one day cleaning the shari that was rotting under the trunk I saw a stunning beauty, I did a test to tilt it and—I wondered—how could I not see it before!



Top left and right; Jin solution is applied to the deadwood, a major feature of this subject tree.
Middle left; This is a photo montage that combines a photo of the styled tree with the selected container to provide a preview of the finished composition.
Middle right and bottom; The styled tree, Massimo Bandera and Antonio Jesús.



How much time passed between the first work, when the style was changed, to the next intervention when the branches were wired and arranged, and the dead-wood was carved and treated with jin solution?

By following year I had redone everything! The shari was reinforced with epoxy resin and then bleached because it was rotting.

Antonio Jesús is shown applying the wire and jin solution. Can you introduce Antonio to our readers and tell us how he became involved in this project?

Antonio, a BCI instructor, is my most advanced Spanish disciple. He was here with me in Italy for his annual internship, so I engaged him with advanced wiring that was very informative. Often one does not realize how much difference there is in wiring a bonsai in the various stages of its formation: from the wires and rods of the first major violent and energetic setting, to the fine wiring in copper for mature bonsai. Antonio is very good because he brings a blend of natural talent and practical experience.



Looking at the finished result, what are the characteristics that make this tree a better informal style than a semi-cascade?

The main point is the wabi-sabi-yuugen aesthetic has improved dramatically: now the bonsai appears as a massive ancient pine and very compact.

You made a photo-montage to preview how this tree will look when it is planted in the correct pot. Why did you choose this container?

A pot from imperial Japanese collections, with an amazing antique patina, has the necessary austerity for il Nibelungo.



You transplanted the tree in a temporary pot but it is higher in the pot than in the photomontage.

Yes, I wanted to put it in the temporary pot as it was in the photomontage, but during the transplant I discovered a more beautiful base.

How much time will pass before this tree has to be reotted?

A couple of years more and it will be ready for the first major aesthetic analysis.

Do you take a formal approach to the aesthetic analysis? Is it a process you can describe?

The aesthetic analysis is a complex process. For cutting-edge analysis is better to separate the physical and metaphysical. This allows a more detailed study to choose the best path for this

tree. The physical analysis involves triangular asymmetry, inclination of the trunk, foliage that supports the intended design, branches in the appropriate locations, detail work on the deadwood, asymmetrical position of the surface roots and proper placement in the Tokoname container. The metaphysical analysis is mostly focused on telling the story of the tree and highlighting how it has responded to its environment over time, emphasizing its unique reaction to climatic forces and its struggle to survive—storytelling that involves the artist's intuition and aesthetic sensibilities. 🌲

Facing page, top to bottom; Three views of the Mugo pine several months after the styling session.

Top right; The Mugo pine called "il Nibelungo" viewed from the formal front several months after the styling session.

Bottom; During the transplanting Massimo discovered a more beautiful base in the tree and has placed the tree in the container to highlight this important feature.



Suseok on Center Stage

20th ANNUAL KOREAN/AMERICAN VIEWING STONE EXHIBITION

Ayers Hall, Los Angeles
County Arboretum, Arcadia,
California USA

Interview by Jack L. Dennis, USA
photos by Jack L. Dennis, except
where otherwise noted



Top; exhibit space, Ayers Hall. Photo by Don Kruger.

Middle; Don Kruger (Curator), Chung Kruger (President), Eden Chung (Historian)

Bottom left; Collector/Exhibitor: Jim Greaves and a collection of (AVSRC) Korean flower Pattern stones.

...one must gather one's courage to engage Kwaesuk.
Even Jade doesn't compare with Kwaesuk.

From a poem, *In Praise of Kwaesuk*, by Syngman Rhee, First President of the Republic of South Korea, 1954-1957

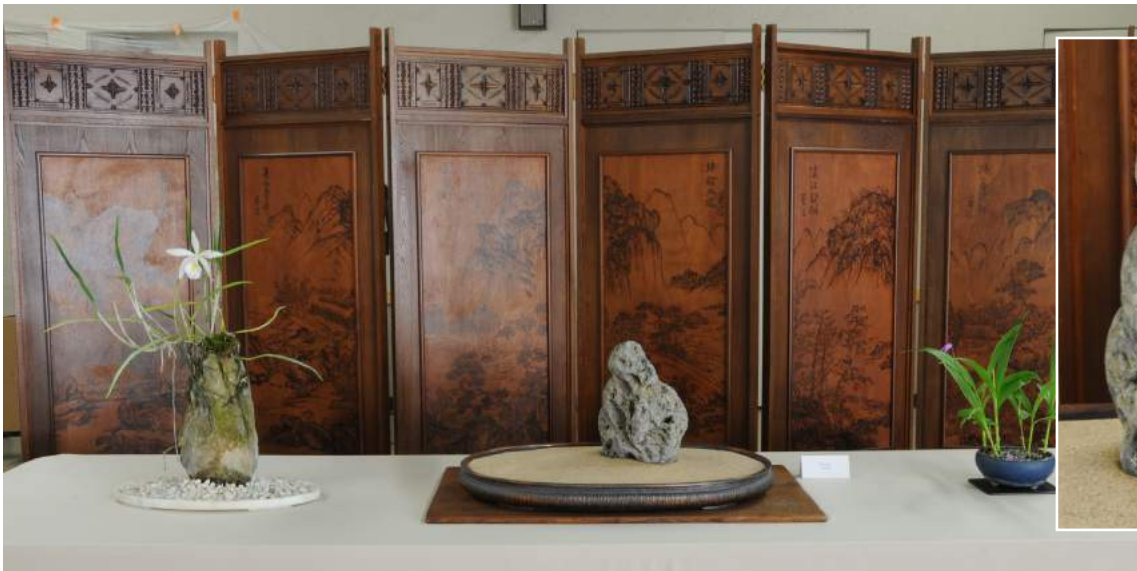
The Korean American Soosuk Club staged an exhibition of Suseok viewing stones in Ayres Hall at the Los Angeles County Arboretum, Arcadia, California on April 4 and 5, 2015. There were 75 splendidly choreographed stones arranged on informal tabletop display throughout the facility. Mr. James Greaves (Guest Exhibitor) arranged a companion display of stones from the American Viewing Stone Resource Center (AVSRC). The AVSRC is resident at the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens San Marino, California.

Within the Korean community in Southern California, Suseok may be compared to the common practice of Suiseki (Japanese art of Stone Appreciation) or Gongshi (Chinese art of Stone Appreciation). Some believe that the advent of the art made its way from China to Japan by way of Korea. The art was refined in each ensuing country to be in line with the culture of each in its turn. Every exhibition rewards us with a learning opportunity and as justification for a lifetime of fascination with stones and this particular exhibition was premier to that end.

GENERAL METHODS OF VIEWING STONE PRACTICE

Gongshi has been imported throughout the world for generations. Gongshi has been defined by Westerners as Scholars Rocks. The relatively recent series of books written by Kemin Hu of Newton Massachusetts and the advent of the urbane scholarly work, *Worlds within Worlds*, published by Harvard University art Museums, has paved the way toward greater understanding of the Chinese method of appreciation in the USA. Gongshi is a common practice of decorative viewing stone art by many but it is still an enigma to most western practitioners and collectors alike beyond the novice approach in decorating their home.

Suseok is believed to have been introduced to Korea from China but the origin of stone appreciation in Korea is lost in ancient history and the connection remains unclear. Further, it is known that the Koreans most certainly brought stones to Japan no later than the last half of the 7th century, during Empress Suiko's reign. Actually, Korean Baekje aristocracy began migration to Japan, (including importation



Top; Collector/Exhibitor: Don Kruger; Old Man, Wood burned screen: Famous Mountain Scenery; 12" high, 9" wide, 8" deep



Middle and bottom; Collector/Exhibitor: Chung Kruger; Screen: 11th century China Poem (copy): Nine Bend River, Distant Mountain Stone; 8" high, 15" wide, 10" deep

of their refined arts) in the 4th century. Korean oral history records a gift stone called "Mountain of Mystical Inspiration" from Korean King Mu Wang to Japan in 612 AD, and Korean scholar No Ja Kong is thought to have advanced the tradition of stone appreciation in Japan near the end of the 7th century. Korean collectors, in order to better distinguish their style of stone appreciation, often interpret/write the 'su' as 'longevity' (a homonym of the Japanese 'su' meaning water). Korean emphasis is on strength, hard dense stone with deep cavities, protrusions and folds that illustrate a stone's endurance against destruction by the elements.

Suiseki on the other-hand is well known throughout the world as the prevailing bearer of the art. Traditionally the Japanese are closely associated with the almost unbelievable scenic beauty of their country and ultimately find spiritual union with nature. Everything contributes to ceremony, hence to an atmosphere of contemplation, including the appreciation of stones. Gradually during the growing acceptance of Zen Buddhism the Japanese moved towards a more delicate horizontal landscape shape as the prime feature of their stones. However, stones of color, unusual patterns and shapes and abstract



stones (patterns and shapes) routinely advance most collections. In the USA model, conventional wisdom tends to describe Suiseki as dark, dense stones that are smooth to the touch with elegant contours to encourage contemplation that is conducive to meditation and introspection.

In the last few years in the United States, desert stones that have been worn down, eroded, carved, ribbed and polished by wind driven sand (Ventifact action), are being added to collections. Multifaceted in form, complex to the touch, they are highly convoluted, coupled

Top; Collector/Exhibitor: Chung Kruger; Glacier Mountain; 4" high, 13" wide, 8" deep

Middle; Collector/Exhibitor: Eden Chung; Green Mountain, 7" high, 15" wide, 8" deep

Bottom; Collector/Exhibitor: Chung Kruger; Many Layer Mountain, 8" high, 13" wide, 8" deep



with emotive power and energy. Stones with embedded patterns are very popular in the west and grace most, if not all displays, including both Japanese and Korean style collections. Landscape shaped stones are prevalent in most collections of all three methods of practice.

As the Soosuk Club's President, Chung Kruger, was a featured lecturer at the International Stone Appreciation Symposium (ISAS) held at Hershey, Pennsylvania in 2012 where she introduced her perspective of the Korean method of practice of the art. The questions and answers identified below are a selection of a few critical issues derived plausibly from Chung's widely acclaimed formal presentation. The basic goal was to identify and dislodge some misinterpretation

concerning the Korean approach to the art. During this year's exhibition opening, the Soosuk Club's President Chung Kruger and historian Eden Chung were interviewed to make known some of the intricacies of the art of Suseok as practiced by the Korean/American viewing stone club of southern California:

Jack: Compiling such a complex presentation for delivery at the ISAS was surely a lot of work. What did you expect to accomplish? Do you think you were successful?

Chung: Very little has been written about Suseok in English, and many collectors assume that Suseok and Suiseki are one and the same. But there are many differences. In some respects, Suseok is more closely aligned with Gongshi than Suiseki. My presentation was designed to illustrate Korean cultural differences in viewing the stones. My hope was that an understanding of the Suseok method of practice as it differs from Suiseki and Gongshi would be well received by the audience ...and, yes I believe it was. It was inspirational to me in a personal way, also.

Jack: What is the Korean philosophy regarding alteration of stones by cutting, grinding?

Eden: Any modification of stones should not be made!

Jack: No doubt there is mystery attached to the art of stone appreciation. How do you describe this mystery and fascination with the Asian art of stone appreciation as Korean collectors practice it?

Chung: Unfortunately, in the West the very different Asian approaches to the art are being commingled which ends in confusion and misunderstanding. Native cultural appreciation of the beauty, emotive power and the deeper awareness of ordinary stones become obscured, diminished, lost. The suggestive beauty of an ordinary stone is a personal pleasure that comes directly from the heart and soul of the viewer, an individual experience. Therefore the art is very personal and spiritual in its interpretation. We should not forget



that stone appreciation is an *art*, and it may be difficult for some folks to find mystery in an ordinary stone.

Jack: Reportedly the Korean model dictates that the stones are characterized as strong, landscape shaped, dense, hard stones with deep cavities, protrusions and deep folds, but in your show today the stones are mostly imbedded pattern stones. How is this reconciled in your mind?

Eden: Even under very strict Neo-Confucianism, there were many picture stones. Especially of the Four Gentlemen: Bamboo, Plum blossom, Orchid and Chrysanthemum. And of course, the collector is restricted to the material that is resident in local collecting areas. Many of the west coast USA stones are akin to Korean and Japanese models on the one hand, and inclusive of the nearby blowing sand of the desert on the other. We make do with what is available.

Jack: The concept of *chi* seemingly plays a big role in the practice of Suseok. Would you explain your perspective on the concept of *chi*?

Eden: The nature of *chi*—the energy flowing through existence—is a very difficult idea to express and has always been a matter of debate. Basically *chi*, when physically manifested in stones, is evidenced by cavities, holes and folds. Such erosion that reveals structure and reflects a sense of that which endures and that which is transitory. Deeply worn stones epitomize longevity.

Jack: What role did the *Yang-ban* (literati, scholars, noblemen of the ruling class) play in the development of the Suseok philosophy and practice of the art?

Chung: The *Yang-ban* were scholarly officials of the ruling class and as such they oversaw and defined the fundamental Neo-Confucian ideology that strictly constrained every aspect of living, including Suseok: simplicity, conformity and filial duty. The only relief to this official point of view was Chinese-style *Kwaesuk*.

Jack: You use the word *Kwaesuk* in your presentation and in the foregoing response— what does it mean?

Chung: They are strange, compelling stones that are not representative of anything specific, full of feeling but hard to categorize.

Jack: There are some among us who believe that such abstract appreciation is the pinnacle of understanding of the art and as a result they question the ability of Westerners to comprehend with any meaningful degree of understanding of the art. Do you agree with this philosophy?

Chung: Yes and No. Yes, it is possible for a Westerner to see the emotional spontaneity of the Korean culture, but no, it will take years of total immersion in the way of Korean life to understand the nuances of the language, history, and psychology of Koreans and East Asians. But, that doesn't mean that we Westerners cannot appreciate the art form in our own cultural terms.



Jack: In your lecture you say, “Stone Cultivation Settles The Mind.” Surely there is a psychological link between the stone and the minds of practitioners but what exactly does this mean?

Eden: Cultivation means to admire something and reflect on it and through that focus, the viewer's own soul may ascend to knowledge. A mind that cultivates awareness will roam free and knowledge will be the result.

Jack: You say Korea is the “Land of the Morning Calm” attributable to Ming dynasty Emperor 1393. What is it about mornings in Korea that contributes to it being so calm?

Chung: The mountainous Korean peninsula lies due east of the traditionally northerly Chinese Capital and so the sun rises first over Korea. Through most of its 5000-year history, the peaceful little kingdom had posed no threat to Chinese hegemony in the region, and so—poetically speaking—the rise of the morning sun brought only warming rays and calm feeling from

Top; Collector/Exhibitor: Eden Chung, ‘Pal Kong Mountain’ 6” high, 12” wide, 6” deep

Middle; Collector/Exhibitor: Eden Chung, ‘Full Moon sky’; 9” high, 8” wide, 7” deep

Bottom; Collector/Exhibitor: Chung Kruger, Single Peak Snow Mountain, 3” high, 10” wide, 4” deep



This thematic display depicts the story of the Korean Turtle Ship that saved the Korean Nation from the Japanese Fleet in 1598. The Turtle Ship was the first ironclad warship in the world. It was designed and built by Admiral Yi, who used this ship to defeat several larger Japanese fleets in the late 16th century. The final battle occurred in a strait just off the coast of Jindo Island.

Steve notes that Jindo Island, as can be seen in the pattern in the stone, is the place of his childhood home.

Collector/Exhibitor: American Viewing Stone Resource Center

Stone collected/named by Steve Yong, 8" high, 10" wide.

Korean Turtle Ship; 5" high, 6.5" wide. Modern bronze model of the first armored warship in the world.



the east (not hordes of invaders from the north or west, as was often the case through Chinese history.) Japan was not aggressive at that time either. Korea was also known as the 'Land of morning freshness,' for its countless mountain valleys filled with early day waterfall mist and ground fog.

Jack: I am very surprised to learn that the story of Mi Fu figures so highly in Korean stone appreciation and its practice. Why is this so?

Chung: Even though he was often referred to as madman MI, he was a public servant, lauded painter and writer and lover of stones. He was also a major player in the art of calligraphy. His appreciation of stones was so deep that he once addressed a particular monolith as "Elder brother." He penned a catalogue of ink stone types (extant) and a still-practiced classification system for viewing stones. Koreans have respect for Mi Fu and follow his stone rules of *tu* - holes, *joon* - wrinkles, *su* - elegance, graceful, refined, and *soo* - the quality of appearing slim, shapely. Hence, he was an inspiration to the early Korean collectors of stones.

Jack: The Koreans acknowledge a few governing rules. What are they?

Eden: One, natural—no alteration/fabrication/forgery; Two, carry in the hands, 30-50 cm; Three,

one stone per *suban*; Four, they do not cut or alter their stones in any way. The order of the day is, "love stones as they are or leave them where they lie." When a Korean finds a stone, the first thing he should do is to drop it back to the ground to confirm its structural integrity.

Jack: Is there a distinct Korean style or method of practice?

Chung: Yes, but it is not over the top, meaning not acceptable, as some might suggest. Unwilling to alter the essence of his stone, a Korean celebrates its character with personalized presentation, often carving a base that augments the stone's form, such as fitting a legs-and-head base to a turtle shell stone. "Distracting," a Japanese might say, "Unorthodox," a Chinese might say, "Unconcerned," the Korean might reply, "The stone is nature's already perfect work, but the vision and joy are mine."

Jack: What advice do you have for beginners in gaining an insight into the myriad of points of view and personal philosophies?

Chung: Let me quote the famous Korean Poet/stone collector Yoon Sun Do (1587-1671):

*I have five close friends,
Water, Stone, the Pine Tree and Bamboo, and a
rising moon in the east.
Do I need more than this?
Why on Earth do flowers bloom, only to fade
away?
Why does green grass turn brown?
I've mulled these changes over and over,
But all that I see clearly, is what is not changing.
Stone!*

And also poet/collector Cho Myun Ho, who sprayed water on his stones to bring out their full character:

*When I look at you, my 'Crystal Mountain'
I feel I've entered Heaven's precincts*

In other words, Korean style appreciation is more about spontaneous interaction and embrace of spirit, less about following rules.

Jack: Stone aficionados among us are quick to use the word *Traditional* when describing their points of view regarding the practice of collecting and exhibiting stones. It is today's practice that is tomorrow's tradition, which means to me, that the method of practice is in a constant state of flux or change. Whether the preceding statement is true or false, what is your perspective regarding the conventional/traditional practice of the art in Korea?

Eden: The ancient Kwaesuk influence, Mi Fu's four preferred traits, and even the Confucian admiration of pure hardness of material in combination with subdued color (i.e., specific form not withstanding) still live on in Korean stone collecting. These are our *traditions*. But Japanese Suiseki style has flourished since World War II and is today an equal influence.

Jack: With regard to the purists among us, the traditions have not changed in either Japan or Korea but the methods of practice of the art certainly have, especially in the West, which, undoubtedly, will shape tomorrow's traditions. The result of the propensity to change the practice offers an opportunity for experimentation using the material available to collectors. As has been pointed out earlier in this dialog it is well for us to remember that it is art we are discussing and art and its interpretation are seldom predictable. What do you consider to be the most defining aesthetic (artistic/visual) characteristic that separates Suseok from the other notable methods of general practice?

Chung: It's like traditional Korean soup—not too fussy! Humble. Hearty. A mix of flavors and textures. A fragrance. Its warmth invites you in. One sip, deep and satisfying. Pure experience carries you away.

EPILOGUE

There is little doubt that each exhibition of viewing stones, whether they are Gongshi, Suseok or Suiseki, presents an opportunity for a great learning experience for both visitors and for all those who take the time to exhibit stones in shows and participate in the ensuing dialog.

To me there is no greater fun than scanning the desert floor, frolicking at the edge of the surf on a beach, or wading in a cool stream in search of that masterpiece stone which is most difficult to find and even more difficult to define and may not even exist except in the imagination of the collector. It has been said that a spare time enthusiast can scarcely expect to find one. Even if you are providential enough to possess one, it often appears to be deficient for a complete expression of your artistic discernment of what it should be and so the search continues on and on. Therefore too many never seems to be enough.

Chung's presentation at the symposium in Pennsylvania was a masterwork of decorum, scholarship, and distinction. She was a tribute to herself, to the whole of the Korean community, and to all of us who practice the art and are fortunate enough to call her friend.



Top left and right; Sam Suk Memorial. Sam was the founding member of the SOOSUK club. He was always happy and made everyone who knew him feel good as well.

His passion for stones was exceeded only by his good nature and love for the art. Surely his spirit will live on in his stones. Especially within the imagination of viewers of his 'Spirit Dancer' stone. We all look forward to seeing his stones again and again as reminders of his life experience.

Bottom; A viewing stone displayed with a poem, *In Praise of Kwaesuk*, by Syngman Rhee, First President of the Republic of South Korea, 1954-1957.

During every show it is a common sight to see groups of stone enthusiasts discussing the relative merits of a single stone. The ideas and thoughts of these groups of admirers is the impetus for further discussion at meetings and roundtable debates of their respective membership. This particular show was not an exception to that philosophical belief. It was a great show and we hope that it will be but one of many yet to come. Congratulations again to the leadership of the Korean American Soosuk Club for staging a fine show and many thanks to the LA Arboretum for making a wonderful space available for this very worthy exhibit. Well done! 🌸



Puerto Rico

Bonsai in *Isla Encanta* with Norma Rodriguez



Norma in her garden, the view from the balcony and the riot of color that is her garden.

By Kathy Coffman, USA
Photos by Kathy Coffman

Visiting Norma Rodriguez is a marvelous experience due to her wonderful personality, hospitality and conviviality. She knows the place to get huge lobsters, oven grilled pizza in the countryside, or delicious pork cooked whole on the spit in the mountains. *Buen provecho!* If you are interested in a salsa lesson at a rural tavern after a casual dinner, she knows the place to go to dance with beginners or experts, from 2 to 82 years old! She knows where you can find a cooling pool in the jungle, and shoot down a natural stone slide into the water. There are secret stone gardens in the mangrove forest, where lizards will nestle in your hair if you take off your hat on the way!

Her garden is an inspiration and rejuvenating for spirits weary from the Northern winters: every color of bougainvillea, and orchids blooming in profusion





draw hummingbirds to their nectar; succulents are lashed to the trunks of palm trees, seeking a foothold; the mangoes and coconuts grow ripe in the sunshine.

The view from her balcony is 180 degrees of heaven, blue green water and palm fronds waving in the gentle tropical breeze as you drink your morning coffee. Her garden also has unusual shaped stones for contemplation, and the paths wind down the hill to a bench where you can linger and gaze out to sea like an iguana resting at your ease.

Asking Norma when she got into bonsai, she answered that she had started about 10 years ago.

When asked how she got started, she answered, "I always liked bonsai, but never had the time until I retired." Her number one teacher was Rosa Caraballo, a lawyer. Her number two teacher was Sylvia Avin. She also learned a lot from William Acosta, one of the best bonsai artists in Puerto Rico. She also learned



*Top left, middle and bottom left; Bougainvillea in bloom.
Top right; Poinsettia (Flamboyant, Norma's favorite) 49" tall x 89" wide
Bottom right; Bull Horn Acacia (shaving brush), Mame, 14 inches wide by 9 inches tall.*



Top left; Buttonwood, *Conocarpus erectus*, 28"
 Top right; Chinese elm, *Ulmus parvifolia* – cascade 20"
 Middle left; Texan Ebony, *Ebenopsis ebano*, 17 1/2"
 Middle right; Portulacaria, *Portulacaria afra*, cascade 21"
 Bottom right; Roble Amarillo *Handroanthus chrysotrichus* (Tabebuaya), 28"
 Bottom left; Eugenia 33"



from Marta Bonilla, Victor Cardero, Gustavo Bures, and Pedro Morales. She sought international teachers as well at conventions, such as Min Hsuan Lo from Taiwan, and Budi Sulistyono from Indonesia. She also took a course with a Taiwanese man that specialized in driftwood.

What attracted Norma to bonsai? "A passion for nature."

What is her favorite tree? "I like both the Flamboyant and the Buttonwood trees."

And her bonsai wishes? She wishes all she had to do was trim her trees and put them in good shape rather than all the other day-to-day tasks she must accomplish. Also she wishes for more time to teach others the art. 🌳

南国明珠 艺融四海

PEARL OF SOUTH CHINA
CENTER OF WORLD ART



**2015 BCI Convention and
the 12th Asia-Pacific Bonsai and Viewing Stone
Convention and Exhibition**
Guangzhou, China
September 18–21



2015国际盆景大会暨亚太盆景赏石大会

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Bonsai Clubs International Convention 2015

& ASPAC Bonsai & Viewing Stone Exhibition, Guangzhou, China

The Infinity of Bonsai & Viewing Stones: a Cultural Voyage from Canton to the World

Convention Program 17-21 September 2015

Thursday 17 September

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| 8:30 am - 4:00 pm | BCI Board Meeting: Third Floor, West River Meeting Room, Guangdong Hotel |
| 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm | ASPAC Board Meeting: Third Floor, West River Meeting room, Guangdong Hotel |
| 2:00 pm - 6:30 pm | Convention Registration: First Floor, Guangdong Hotel |
| 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm | Welcome Reception: Second Floor, Guangdong Hotel |

Friday 18 September

Bonsai Demonstration & Viewing Stone Lecture are held at the same time, guests can choose to participate in one.

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| 9:30 am - 10:30 am | Opening Ceremony: Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall |
| 10:30 am - 11:50 am | Visiting Bonsai Show: Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall |
| 10:30 am - 11:50 am | Visiting Viewing Stone Show: Guangdong Science Hall |
| 12:00 noon - 1:30 pm | Lunch: Second Floor, Guangdong Hotel |
| 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm | Bonsai Demonstration by Ng Shing Fat/Zhao Qing quan/Mitsuo Matsuda: Auditorium, First Floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm | Viewing Stone Lecture with Tom Elias on Viewing Stones of North America: Amphitheater at First Floor or Auditorium at Fourth Floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 3:00 pm - 3:30 pm | Afternoon Tea: First Floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm | Bonsai Demonstration by Ng Shing Fat/Zhao Qing quan/Mitsuo Matsuda: Auditorium, First Floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm | Viewing Stone Lecture with Mr. Zhou Guo Xin on Guangdong Ying Stones: Amphitheater at First Floor or Auditorium at Fourth Floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm | Dinner: Second Floor, Guangdong Hotel |

Saturday 19 September

Bonsai Demonstration & Viewing Stone Lecture are held at the same time, guests can choose to participate in one.

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 7:30 am - 8:30 am | BCI Annual General Meeting: Meeting room, Guangdong Hotel |
| 7:30 am - 8:30 am | ASPAC Annual General Meeting: Meeting room, Guangdong Hotel |
| 8:30 am - 10:00 am | Bonsai Demonstration by Chen Jian Liang/John Wang/François Jeker: Auditorium, First Floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 8:30 pm - 10:00 pm | Viewing Stone Lecture with Dr. Michal Sebo on European Viewing Stones: Amphitheater at First Floor or Auditorium at Fourth Floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 10:00 am - 10:30 am | Tea Time: First floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 10:30 am - 11:30 am | Judgment of Viewing Stone Display with Tom Elias - Guangdong Science Hall |
| 10:30 am - 12:00 am | Bonsai Demonstration by Chen Jian Liang/John Wang/François Jeker: Auditorium, First Floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 12:00 noon - 1:30 pm | Lunch: Second Floor, Guangdong Hotel |
| 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm | Bonsai Styling Demonstration by Ladies from Hong Kong, Interaction of Students and Bonsai Amateurs: East Square of Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall or Auditorium at First Floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm | Viewing Stone Lecture with Kunio Kobayashi on Japanese Viewing Stones: Amphitheater at First Floor or Auditorium at Fourth Floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 3:00 pm - 3:30 pm | Afternoon Tea: First Floor, Guangdong Science Hall |
| 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm | Viewing Stone Lecture with Dr. Qiu Zhili on Lingnan Wax Stones: Amphitheater at First Floor or Auditorium at Fourth Floor of Guangdong Science Hall |
| 5:30 pm - 10:00 pm | Award/Banquet/International Night - Second Floor, Guangdong Hotel |



Shenzhen Tracy Garden, with more than 3000 antique pots and hundreds of beautiful bonsai trees, is part of the Bonsai Tour included with the convention registration costs. This garden uses the Lingnan methods to style their trees.



The optional Viewing Stone Tour to Yingde, Guangdong, home of Ying Stones will acquaint participants to many exquisite stones in markets, museums, and parks in this two-day adventure.

Sightseeing Tours of bonsai & viewing stone will be arranged by the convention. The convention will be responsible for food, accommodation and transportation. Two options for your choice:

| Option 1 Bonsai Tour | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Sunday 20 September | |
| 8:00 am - 12:00 noon | Visiting & Interaction of Lingnan Bonsai Garden 1: Shenzhen Tracy Garden: more than 3000 pcs of antique pots and many nice Bonsai trees |
| 12:00 noon - 1:30 pm | Lunch - Shenzhen |
| 1:30 pm - 5:30 pm | Visiting & Interaction of Lingnan Bonsai Garden 2: Panyu Chu Kong Pipe Co. Ltd. Bonsai Garden |
| 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm | Dinner - Panyu |
| 7:00 pm | Back to Guangdong Hotel |
| Monday 21 September | |
| 8:00 am - 12:00 noon | Visiting & Interaction of Lingnan Bonsai Garden 3: Shunde Pinsongqiu Pine Garden |
| 12:00 noon - 1:30 pm | Lunch - Shunde |
| 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm | Back to Guangzhou from Shunde |
| 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm | Visiting & Interaction of Lingnan Bonsai Garden 4: Home of Lingnan Style Bonsai, Liu Hua West Park in Guangzhou |
| 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm | BCI2016 Presentation/Closing Ceremony: Guangdong Hotel |
| 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm | Dinner: Second Floor, Guangdong Hotel |

| Option 2 Viewing Stone Tour | |
|--|--|
| <i>Guests with this option need to stay one night at Hotel in Yingde on Sept. 20. Hotel will be paid by the convention. Room in Guangdong Hotel will be still kept for guests, so bring simple baggage with you for this tour.</i> | |
| Sunday 20 September | |
| 8:00 am - 12:00 noon | Home of Ying Stone: Stone Market in Guangdong Yingde, Viewing Stone Street in Zhenyang Fang Town, Yingde |
| 12:00 noon - 1:30 pm | Lunch: Zhenyang Fang Town, Yingde |
| 1:30 pm - 5:30 pm | Downtown in Yingde, visiting of Viewing Stone Museum |
| 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm | Dinner - Yingde |
| 7:00 pm | Stay in Yingde Hotel |
| Monday 21 September | |
| 8:00 am - 12:00 noon | Visit of Ying Stone Gallery in Wangbu Town in Yingde, Visit of Ying Stone Park (a small forum will be arranged here) |
| 12:00 noon - 1:00 pm | Lunch: Ying Stone Park in Yingde |
| 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm | Back Guangzhou from Yingde, and a visit to a Private Stone Market along the way |
| 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm | BCI2016 Presentation/Closing Ceremony: Guangdong Hotel |
| 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm | Dinner: Second Floor, Guangdong Hotel |

Venue: Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall; Guangdong Science Hall
Organizers: Bonsai Clubs International, The People's Government of Guangzhou Municipality.

Sponsors: Administration of Forestry and Gardening of Guangzhou Municipality, Guangdong Society of Landscape Architecture, Guangdong Provincial Viewing Stone Association, Guangzhou Penjing Association, and China Regional Committee of Bonsai Clubs International

www.gzbci2015.com for more information



Sumo Bonsai

A collective work of art.

By Mauro Stemberger, Italy

Photos courtesy Mauro Stemberger and Walter Pall

Translation by Joe Grande, Canada



Over the past year, thanks to the art of Bonsai, I have had the opportunity to travel around the world and do something I love to do—work on native species characteristic of the places I visit. During one of my recent trips to the US, I was fortunate to be able to work on an incredible Rocky Mountain juniper specimen at Nature’s Way Nursery in Pennsylvania. The rocky mountain juniper, *Juniperus scopulorum*, is an species very similar to the Italian *Juniperus sabina*.



They grow at high altitudes, in rocky terrain poor in nutrients, in mountainous areas characterized by high humidity, lots of sun and forms a creeping bush, unlike its cousin, the California juniper, *Juniperus californica*, from a dry desert climate with a tree-like poise.

The subject of this work is a so-called “sumo bonsai,” a specimen characterized by considerable size and with a mighty trunk full of detail due to the deadwood—very old and worn by the weather. The tree prior to styling measured over 120 cm in height by 160 cm in width with a trunk diameter of about 40 cm.

When I travel I am fascinated to participate in the creation of specimens that have passed through several hands and make my mark for their future as a bonsai. This juniper, collected by the famous American collector Randy Knight in 2006 (photo 1), shows right away the features that make it a valuable *araki*: a trunk with accentuated movement, a lot of deadwood and a compact root system, a sign that in nature the plant probably grew in a crevice in the rocks high up in the Rocky Mountains.

The early years of this century has been a golden period for collecting *yamadori* in the United States. For many American bonsai artists, these plants have

Middle left and right; This juniper, collected by the famous American collector Randy Knight in 2006, shows right away the features that make it a valuable *araki*: a trunk with accentuated movement, a lot of deadwood and a compact root system, a sign that in nature the plant probably grew in a crevice in the rocks high up in the Rocky Mountains.



Top left and bottom left; During his first visit to Portland, Oregon, Walter Pall, renowned German bonsai artist, was able to see and buy the specimen that is the subject of this article. In collaboration with Jim Doyle, owner of Nature's Way Nursery, they brought the tree to the East Coast.

Bottom right; Two years after harvesting, the juniper has thoroughly rooted and has been repotted in a bonsai pot to continue maturing with regard to the branching.





It was evident that the plant had two possible fronts but I immediately discarded the one at the top, which for my taste had a line that was too strong and elusive. A more compact solution that could bring out the strength of the trunk and the cavity.

become a new resource from which to create beautiful bonsai.

During his first visit to Portland, Oregon, Walter Pall, renowned German bonsai artist, was able to see and buy the specimen that is the subject of this article. In collaboration with Jim Doyle, owner of Nature's Way Nursery, they brought the tree to the East Coast (photo 2).

We see how now, only two years after harvesting, the juniper has thoroughly rooted and has been repotted

in a bonsai pot to continue maturing with regard to the branching. The plant needed to develop branching and have sufficient strength to withstand a first styling.

When I saw the plant for the first time in 2013, it was love at first sight and in agreement with Jim; we decided it would be the material for my demo during my next trip. Finally the time came and I found myself face to face with this beast of a tree. Bringing it indoor into the workshop area, I was clear on the final design that I wanted to apply to this tree. It was evident that the plant had two possible fronts but I immediately discarded the one, which for my taste had a line that was too strong and elusive. Opting for a more compact solution that could bring out the strength of the trunk and the cavity at the base surrounded by an interesting live vein that rises to the front branch.

The selection of ramification begins immediately, eliminating all branches from the large branch in the back that is readily transformed into a *jin*. Doing so removes its visual strength, refocusing attention to the more compact branches that will form the primary structure of our bonsai. All the carving work is carried out using mostly hand tools, namely knives, gouges and a splitter to tear the fibers of the wood and to shape the dead matter.

The next step is to wire and bend the main branches. Juniper species are very flexible in this regard and paying the necessary attention, can be bent, even those very thick. Start by removing the dead part of the main branch to make it flexible by using a die grinder. Immediately after, the carved area is filled with wet paper—to maintain humidity during the following months—and then wrapped with raffia ribbon and plastic wrap to prevent dehydration.



Top left; All branches are eliminating from the large branch in the back that is readily transformed into a *jin*.

Middle and bottom; All the carving work is carried out using mostly hand tools, namely knives, gouges and a splitter to tear the fibers of the wood and to shape the dead matter. To make the branch more flexible and easier to bend, deadwood is carved out with a die grinder.



Top left and right; The carved area is filled with wet paper—to maintain humidity during the following months—and then wrapped with wet raffia and plastic wrap to prevent dehydration.

Middle; Winding in the direction that I'm going to bend the branch in order to tighten the coils when bending. This type of wiring does not function to bend but rather to keep the fibers of the wood tightly packed together to avoid breakage and to help distribute the tension at the anchor point.

Bottom; I bend the branch to the desired point and my hands "feel" the flexibility of the wood, helping me understand how much force I dare apply.

Facing page, top; The same operation is also performed in the other two branches to be able to lower them and specifically to create the backside of the design.

Facing page bottom; Main branches are bent and positioned, thinking of the various positions in which I'm going to place the secondary branches, while my assistants continue wiring all the fine branches.



I wrap the protected branch with copper wire of appropriate size, winding in the direction that I'm going to bend the branch in order to tighten the coils when bending. This type of wiring does not function to bend but rather to keep the fibers of the wood tightly packed together to avoid breakage and to help distribute the tension at the anchor point. I bend the branch to the desired point and my hands "feel" the flexibility of the wood, helping me understand how much force I dare apply. The same operation is also performed on the other two branches to be able to lower them and specifically to create the backside of the design.

Then starts the job of six-handed wiring. I personally bend and position all the main branches, thinking of the various positions in which I'm going to place the secondary branches, while my assistants continue wiring all the fine branches.

Starting from the bottom, we begin to define all the foliage masses by opening and creating space and compacting the branches that are still too long and that over time will be shortened.





After about six hours of intense work, the final image emerges and stands as the starting point of the work that will bring this exemplary tree to maturity and to be admired on exhibit in the coming years.

The harmony that is created between the different actors, by their actions in transforming a trunk to become what we call bonsai, is the charm of this wonderful art that surprises and enriches us every day. 🌲

For more on Mauro Stemberger and his bonsai art, visit his website at <www.ItalianBonsaiDream.com>.





An oasis of beauty and tranquility — the Garden of Beautiful Views



Above; First impression and entrance of the Chinese garden: the Arch of Honour
Top left inset; View of the Luisenpark Mannheim with radio tower.

Bottom right; One of the two lions, a female and a male, which guard the entrance.

By Gudrun Benz, Germany

The Luisenpark of Mannheim is a parkland of 42 hectares close to the city centre and offers many attractions to its citizens and visitors: a greenhouse with an aquarium, a terrarium, a cactus hall, a hall of subtropical and tropical plants as well as a butterfly house. But the main attraction is the “Chinese Garden of Beautiful Views” within the compounds of the park. This garden within the garden, built recently in 2001, extends over 5000





square meters and houses the biggest teahouse in Europe. It was designed by the garden and landscape architect Professor Li Zheng from Wuxi and built by Chinese artists and craftsmen from Zhenjiang, sister town of Mannheim in the Jiangsu province, central China. The goal of both cities in this joint venture project, was to create a place of rest and relaxation, but foremost, a meeting point of two cultures and their traditions. It took only two years from the formal agreement in 1999 to its opening in 2001.

Some of the wooden buildings such as an arch of honor, teahouse, pavilions, and corridors were pre-manufactured in China and transported by ship together with more than 200 tonnes of Taihu rocks and “Bamboo sprout tips” (special type of rock) to Germany. Then, all materials were assembled by Chinese experts into one of the most beautiful Chinese gardens outside China.

The appearance of Chinese gardens is very different from the gardens of Europe. All buildings within the garden in Mannheim show characteristic features of Chinese architecture. The roofs have a sweeping curvature that rises at the corners of the roof. The roof of the teahouse is a combination of saddle and hipped roof. The tiles terminate at the eaves with discs decorated with auspicious symbols such as bats, one of the most popular symbols of luck in China. Also



Top; View of the two-storey teahouse, the largest of its kind in Europe.

Middle left; The arched bridge spans over a pond and connects the entrance arch with the teahouse.

Middle right; The tiles terminate at the eaves with discs on which auspicious symbols are featured.

Bottom; The zigzag bridge keeps evil spirits away.

very impressive is the varnished, red latticework of the windows, doors and the handrails alongside the corridors between red wooden columns and the covered walkways. The color red is regarded as life-giving and symbolizes summer, the south and wealth.

A Chinese garden without water and rocks (mountains) is unthinkable. Rocks and water represent Heaven and Earth, they are the negative and positive principles of Yin and Yang. Taihu rocks of bizarre fantastic shape were used for creating an artificial mountain in miniature with waterfall.

A zigzag bridge and zigzag corridors keep evil spirits away and offer varying perspectives—the view changes with every step. Gardens that can be observed from changing angles are a typical feature of Chinese garden design.

Plants often have specific associations with the four seasons. Plum (*Prunus*) blossoms and willows for example are associated with spring, peonies with summer, chrysanthemum for autumn and pine with winter. Plants also are symbols of particular moral



Top; Artificial mountain of Taihu rocks and waterfall. Light green willows besides the waterfall are a symbol of spring.

Middle left; The zigzag corridors interconnect different parts of the whole complex and offer varying perspectives.

Middle; Small stage where music and dance performances are held.

Middle right; At the right side of the stage are placed so called "bamboo sprout tip" rocks .

Bottom; All buildings within the garden show characteristic features of Chinese architecture. Elegant wooden latticework is also an element of traditional garden architecture.





Top left; The interior garden beside the long corridor is a peaceful place, an oasis of silence.

Top right; Another view of the buildings of the garden. In the foreground a pine trees in a container is shaped as a garden bonsai.

Middle; The wall along the corridor offers the opportunity of photo/picture exhibitions.

Bottom; Penjing (bonsai) on display at the spring exhibition.





Photographs of the present exhibition of Chinese art objects and handcrafts.

Top row, left to right;
 Outdoor glass box with Shangshi (Chinese viewing stones) of the Willi and Gudrun Benz Collection.
 Chrysanthemum stones worked by man: a viewing stone, a brush pot and seal stone
 Human-shaped Shangshi



Left column, top to bottom;
 Folding fans and cork carvings.
 Cork carving.

China was well-known for porcelain which was a main export item to the West in the Middle Ages. Shown are porcelain vases with blue underglaze paintings.
 China is also famous for its lacquer ware. Here are carvings of red lacquer.



Right column; Taihu rock.
 Even if big Taihu rocks were mainly used as garden rocks, smaller ones were brought inside in the scholar's studio for contemplation. This Taihu rock is in the style of a traditional Chinese scholars' rock.



qualities; bamboo for gentlemanly integrity; bamboo, pine and prunus together stand as the "three friends in winter," a symbol of endurance. Peony, "empress of flowers," symbolizes wealth and nobility. All these plants are featured in the garden in Mannheim.

The garden also offers exhibitions, lectures, tea ceremonies, musical and dance performances and much more throughout the year. In connection with this, an exhibition of Chinese art objects and handicraft items of the everyday life, as well as bonsai and Chinese traditional and modern scholars' rocks, was opened on April 24, 2015. 🌿

The Bonsai Beginner's Course

Teaching a new generation of bonsai enthusiasts

Photos courtesy Bonsai Empire and Bjorvala Bonsai Studio

Do you remember a time when you knew next to nothing about bonsai? You were aware of bonsai because you appreciated Asian art, perhaps the Japanese aesthetic in particular, and maybe you were exposed to bonsai on a trip to Japan or on a visit to one of the first bonsai museums and arboreta around the world. Maybe it was the subplot in the movie, *The Karate Kid*, the part where Mr. Miyagi performs an emergency repotting on a pine bonsai damaged by the bad guys. Whatever it was, you became extremely curious about bonsai in this chance encounter and with motivation and determination, you resolved to learn all you could about this incomprehensible art form shrouded in tradition and mystery.

Was that twenty years ago or was it just last spring?

Whether you are new to bonsai and wonder what it's all about, or if your knowledge or grasp of certain techniques still needs work, consider purchasing *The Bonsai Beginner's Course* from Bjorvala Bonsai Studio and Bonsai Empire, their first joint effort and their first online bonsai course introduced this past June.

For those new to bonsai, this course provides an understanding of what Bonsai is, and which techniques can be applied to shape and maintain the miniature trees. Although the course is aimed at beginners, it can also reinforce best bonsai practices for those with more experience.

There have been other publications and films that have introduced Westerners to bonsai, such as the fine film, *The Growing Art of Bonsai* by Arthur Skolnik, first released in VHS and then on DVD. The *Introduction to Bonsai Course* designed by Thomas L Zane, promoted by The American Bonsai Society (ABS) and BCI was used by many clubs in the US to teach bonsai to newcomers.

The *Bonsai Beginner's Course* is a new twist on the Japanese bonsai aesthetic covered by many authors in past decades, as they presented a similar program, mostly in book form, with individual flair and their own distinctive bonsai creations. What makes *The Bonsai Beginner's Course* such a compelling offering



Top; The *Bonsai Beginner's Course* if a new offering on the Bonsai Empire website <<http://course.bonsaiempire.com>>

The course is taught by two professional and highly experienced teachers.

Middle; Bjorn Bjorholm is a bonsai professional who studied this living art for over six years while living in Japan, apprenticing under the famous Bonsai master Keiichi Fujikawa. Bjorn is well-known for his technical skills in wiring and styling Bonsai. He travels around the world to teach and demonstrate. <<http://www.bjorvalabonsaistudio.com>>

Bottom; Oscar Jonkers is author of the best-seller "Bonsai, a beginners guide" and owner of Bonsai Empire. While Bjorn handles the techniques and application part, Oscar discusses the backgrounds of what Bonsai is and means.

is the powerful combination of knowledge and experience provided by two young bonsai professionals, Bjorn Bjorholm and Oscar Jonkers and their ability to relate to their young peers. Bjorn's access to top quality bonsai specimens adds much credibility and authority to the offering.

Bjorn's access to top quality bonsai specimens adds much credibility and authority to the offering. Below are two trees featured in the Bonsai Beginner's Course.

Oscar, who lives in Amsterdam, discovered a passion for both bonsai and the internet when he was fourteen. He started a simple website called Bonsai Empire to promote and teach the art of bonsai. Today Bonsai Empire exceed 1 million visits a month, all languages combined. Many followers depend on Oscar to connect them to the wide world of bonsai. He is the author of the online best-seller, "Bonsai, a beginners guide."

Bjorn Bjorholm also discovered bonsai at an early age. He went on to serve a traditional, six-year bonsai apprenticeship in Japan at the Fujikawa Kouka-en Nursery under the master Keiichi Fujikawa and now travels the world teaching and demonstrating bonsai. His films, *Bonsai Art of Japan*, broadcast on Bjorn's channel on You Tube has 15,000 subscribers (total view count almost 3 million in 4 years).

With the use of today's technology and their keen intuitions, they are reaching out to a new generation of bonsai enthusiasts with an online course that is available on demand with a one-time purchase. Students progress at their own pace—most lessons are two to seven minutes long—the longest session is about 18 minutes in duration. The entire course can be watched in about a hundred minutes. The information provided is well-presented and easy to follow. Students can stop the lecture to practice on their tree as they progress through the lectures.

The course is a series of high definition films that employ lively music, professional camera work, well-written scripts and informative graphics and titles. Fast-motion photography is used to keep the students attention during repetitive work such as detail wiring. The website is responsive, meaning the content adjusts in size to accommodate large screens, tablets and smart phones. The first series of lectures are succinct and provide an overview. The subjects are treated in much more detail later in the course. There are bonus



materials too. A time-lapse film showing Bjorn wiring a large pine collapses many hours into five minutes. The effect is mesmerizing.

A self-scoring quiz at the end of the Techniques lectures reinforces the lessons before the main lecture, *Creating Your Own Bonsai Tree*, the longest and most comprehensive component. This lesson can be watched over and over again as you work on your own trees.

The Bonsai Beginner's Course has been well received, exceeding Oscar's and Bjorn's expectations. Students have scored the course 4.9 out of 5 stars. Many are clamoring for intermediate and advanced subjects.

Both instructors attempt to answer all the question posted by students regarding the course.

How are they reacting to this success? Bjorn and Oscar were interviewed by phone and e-mail where they talked about this exciting new learning tool they have brought to the world of bonsai.

BCI: You both started you bonsai journey in your early teens but on different paths. How did you become aware of each other's work and how did you meet?

(Continued next page)



Ramification: excerpts from Pruning and Shaping lecture, The Bonsai Beginner's Course:

First image; Elongating coniferous species such as junipers are pruned using scissors, cutting branch tips back to semi-hardwood as they elongate during the growing season. Avoid pinching junipers as this can damage the tender foliage. Other elongating species such as spruces, hinoki cypress and cryptomeria are pruned using both scissors and pinching.

Second image; Whorled conifers, two- and three-needles pines such as black pine and red pine, can be candle pruned and needle plucked in the early summer months to induce a second flush of annual growth. This expedites the ramification process, creates energy balance and reduces needle length. In early summer, first cut the weakest candles off at the base and pluck needles back to ten or twelve pairs around each removed candle. Ten to fourteen days later, cut the strong candles in the same manner and pluck needles back to six or eight pairs around each removed candle. Within a few weeks multiple buds will appear where the original candles were cut. Cutting the weak candles first gives them a head start and by leaving more needles in weaker areas and less needles in strong areas, growth can be properly balanced.

Third image; In the autumn after the new growth has fully elongated and hardened off, remove all but two buds in each area, choosing those most similar in strength and laterally oriented.

Fourth image; Five needle pines such as Japanese white pine, cannot be de-candled as these will not produce a second flush within the same year. Instead, cut the strongest candle in half during the growing season, leaving some needles on each candle to ensure the survival of the branch. (Continued)



Ramification: excerpts from Pruning and Shaping lecture, The Bonsai Beginner's Course:

First image: On broadleaf evergreen and deciduous trees with alternating leaf patterns along the length of each shoot, allow each shoot to grow five to seven leaves and cut back to two leaves on each.

Second image: On Opposite Leaf Pattern broadleaf evergreen and deciduous trees where leaves grow opposite one another, such as Japanese maple, prune back to one pair of leaves in early spring as new shoots appear. Many broadleaf trees can be defoliated in late spring or early summer to induce a second flush of growth and to expedite the ramification process. Do this only on healthy trees.

OSCAR: Since we're both pretty active on social media, we knew each other's work for a few years. We met a couple of times, in Japan and at the Generation Bonsai event held in Germany.

BCI: What inspired you to write, produce and launch such an ambitious project?

OSCAR: The bonsai community has a certain way of doing things, and it is only slowly adjusting to the huge set of opportunities that the internet has to offer. Ever since I started Bonsai Empire I believed in the opportunities of education through an online community. I started the website, but over the years many people from the community helped to create what has become a platform for Bonsai education. Recently I published an e-book (a beginner's guide to Bonsai) and with the success of this venture, I started thinking of a way to use film to create an online course. Working together with Bjorn on this big project revealed a great synergy; his skills and experience at teaching Bonsai are great and Bonsai Empire's reach is quite big. We needed this scale to make it possible to invest in a quality course.

BJORN: For the past several years, I have been producing the Youtube series "The Bonsai Art of Japan," which covers many aspects of bonsai culture on a more intermediate/advanced level. When Oscar approached me with the idea of an online beginners' course, I thought it would be a great opportunity to

fill in an informational gap and provide some much needed answers to those just getting their feet wet in the art. The goal of the Beginners' Bonsai Course is not only to provide that information in a concise video format, but it is also to enable folks in more remote areas to become fully connected to the growing global bonsai community.

BCI: You live on different continents separated by time, distance and culture. How did you share the workload to develop The Bonsai Beginner's Course?

BJORN: I did most of the filming in Japan at the Kouka-en nursery, while Oscar shot his clips in the Japanese Garden in the Hague. We met once or twice during the entire project, and spoke to each other almost weekly through Skype.

BCI: Based on sales and reviews, the course is a big success. Do you plan to add more courses in the future?

OSCAR: To be honest with you, when we started work on the Beginner's course we had no idea what to expect. Just before we finished the filming and editing we launched an early bird campaign (providing preregistration for the course at a discounted rate) and that was when we found out the course was something people were actually looking for. We had over a thousand signups in just a couple of days! This first course aims at motivating people to actually get started and we take them step-by-step through the process of creating their very first Bonsai. Several of our students asked for a more advanced (intermediate) course and so we are thinking about creating one; though this will take a few months to complete.

BCI: Will other instructors join your ranks?

OSCAR: The Beginner's course was launched only a few weeks ago, so it is too early to tell where this will take us. But we're open to suggestions!

BCI: Although English is the second largest language spoken, are there plans to offer courses in other languages?

BJORN: We have received several requests to offer the course in other languages, especially Spanish, but we haven't decided just yet. With Bonsai Empire being available in eight languages it would make sense to offer the course in those languages eventually.

BCI: Materials required for the course include plants, tools, wire and a potting medium. What advice do you have for students to help them find reputable suppliers?

OSCAR: In the course we try to motivate students to get started with creating their own Bonsai out of young nursery stock. We explain them what to look for in young plants and also provide a list of shops near them. In most countries they can even order starter kits online, making it easy to get started.

BJORN: Throughout the entire course, we try to keep things simple and we try to take away most of the



barriers people experience even before starting out (they think it is too difficult, expensive, etc).

BCI: How do you anticipate the ideal student will use this course to engage in bonsai?

BJORN: The course is designed for people without any prior knowledge of Bonsai—though we did try to keep it interesting for those that know the basics already. Our ideal student is one that goes through the curriculum and ends with a young Bonsai tree, as well as with a new interest in this fascinating hobby. Once the interest is genuine, the most important step has been taken!

BCI: What are your opinions about beginners joining local bonsai clubs? Is this an important experience for young people who are connected by social media on the Internet?

OSCAR: I feel online and offline experiences are not substitutes but rather complements. Learning through video tutorials probably works better than learning from books, but for those who are serious about progressing their knowledge and skills in Bonsai, joining a club or finding a teacher is crucial.

BCI: You are both bonsai professionals deeply committed to bonsai. What are your hopes and aspirations for this art form in general and for you personally?

OSCAR: I'm mostly familiar with Bonsai in Europe and in the USA and there, things are looking great. General interest in Bonsai is growing quite significantly (judging by the visitor statistics of Bonsai Empire) and the level of trees I see displayed at exhibitions is still rising. I quit my job about a year ago to be able to focus



on my website full-time, so far that has been working out quite well. I hope to keep creating content that my visitors appreciate and set up new projects with people from the community, like I did with Bjorn!

BJORN: Bonsai has undeniably been on the rise globally, both in terms of quality and participation. It is my hope that this trend continues, and I hope to be a part of that in any way possible, through both the art I produce and the educational services I provide around the world and online. 🌲

Shown here is the Before and After photos of the styling session in lecture 13, Creating Your Own Bonsai Tree. In a response to a student who asks if previous work had been done to the demonstration tree, Bjorn explains, "The tree featured in this video, started out as a very small cutting and the initial bends were added to the trunk at that time. It is only about 5 years old, though, so it's possible to create this kind of material in a very short amount of time from cuttings as well."

AN EXHIBIT OF ART

Bonsai at the Lynden Sculpture Garden

By Jack Douthitt, USA

Photographs by Kyle Talbott



Top right; The view as you approach the main building, with Bernhard Heiliger's "Vegetative Sculpture I" (1959) in the foreground.

Bottom right; A shimpaku juniper against the lacy foliage of trees in the landscape.

In 1926 a Milwaukee Industrialist, Harry Bradley, married Peg and they bought a farm several miles outside the city. They brought in a landscape firm to design a park like setting around their dream home and in the 1950s they started buying sculpture for the landscape. Over the years they collected more than fifty pieces of monumental sculpture. Many different artists are represented in the collection including Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Alexander Liberman, and Isamu Noguchi. Five years ago the property opened to the public as The Lynden Sculpture Garden (LSG). Their website can be found at <www.lydensculpturegarden.org>

When LSG was planning their Fifth Anniversary Celebration as a public facility, they asked the local bonsai community to stage a bonsai exhibit as a part of the festivities. Several bonsai exhibitions and workshops have been previously held at LSG, but never in



conjunction with one of their large events. Their offer was readily accepted and a team led by Michelle Zimmer went to work.

The central goal of the bonsai exhibit team was to insert the bonsai into the existing environment in the same manner as the other pieces of sculpture. They wanted to exhibit each bonsai in a manner that was sensitive to its surroundings and in harmony with the art that is already there. A large terrace immediately outside the main building already contained several



pieces of sculpture and the team decided that displaying the bonsai in that location would be ideal.

They also decided that only bonsai that have spring interest would be displayed. Bonsai with blossoms, like an azalea or hawthorn, would be elegant. The exhibit would be filled out with bonsai that have spring foliage that is lush, and distinctive.

The next question was, “What will we use for the display pedestals?”

LSG has what they lovingly call “the dump” which contains salvaged building materials from previous construction projects. Things like granite, brick, bluestone paving, chimney tile and many other items just lying there waiting for someone to see their value. These items sparked the imagination of the exhibit team. One piece was put on top of another and soon the pedestal designs started to evolve. Mentally matching trees to pedestals, they built a pedestal for each bonsai using the salvaged material. The crew at LSG disassembled the pedestals, loaded the material

Left column, top to bottom;

Michelle Zimmer applies the final touch to a mountain hemlock.

Michelle, Steve Carini (in red) and Greg Polak (in yellow) make sure the big Chinese elm is sitting level.

Greg applies the final touch to the shimpaku (see inset, facing page).

Top right; A mountain hemlock, a grove of ginkgo's, and an azalea in the middle of the terrace.

Bottom; Sitting on a pedestal of granite and brick is a Larch. In the background is a Shimpaku juniper on a pedestal of granite and bluestone next to “Orbits” (1967) by Alexander Liberman.



Top; Two Chinese elms on a pedestal made of granite, brick, and bluestone sitting between the main house and a sculpture called "The Source" (1964) by Sorel Etrag.

Middle left; Displayed next to "Queen of Sheba" (1961) by Alexander Archipenko is a Hinoki false cypress and a Miss Kim Lilac

Middle right; A zelkova, a small grove of trident maples, and an Azalea sit on a pedestal of granite, brick and bluestone in front of the main building. A maiden hair fern sits on the terrace.



on their heavy equipment and brought it to the display area, where the exhibit team reassembled them.

The day of the Anniversary Celebration dawned cold and rainy. But as they say, "The show must go on!" so the exhibit team spent several hours in the rain, placing the trees on their pedestals, shimming them, and making their final adjustments.

The resulting bonsai exhibit presented an exciting and beautiful interaction of art and nature. It was wonderfully integrated with the other art at the Garden, and was thoroughly enjoyed by the visitors who came to help LSG celebrate their Fifth Anniversary. 🌳

The Anniversary Bonsai Exhibit team consisted of Michelle Zimmer, Steve Carini, Steve Contney, Greg Polak, Kyle Talbott and Janice Schley. Thanks go to the Lynden Sculpture Garden, especially to Polly Morris the Executive Director, for their interest in having a display of bonsai at their Anniversary Celebration and for all their assistance in making it happen.

UPDATE

BCI 2015 PHOTO COMPETITION & ALBUM



Thank you to all who have sent their entries to the Best of BCI 2015 Photo Competition. All entries have been prepared for final selection where judges from around the world will choose the Competition Finalists to be exhibited at the grand BCI Convention in Guangzhou, China in 2015. The deadline for entries was May 31. We received a total of 205 photographs of trees and 82 images of stones. BCI director Budi Sulistyono is the chair of the committee that is responsible for the contest and publication of the book. Tom Elias and Joe Grande are assisting Budi in the process just as they did with our 2013 Best of BCI book.

A panel of three judges was established to evaluate the trees and a second panel, also of three judges, was established for the stones. There was one judge from Europe, one from North America, and one from Asia on each of the panels. The judges were given the images and sizes, but not the name of the owners of the trees and stones. This will allow us to rank the entries by country. Our goal is to have as broad a representation of trees and stones from as many countries as possible in the book.

While the judging process was underway, we called for bids for the layout and design of the book. We are anticipating having from 150 to 200 trees and stones illustrated in the book. Thus, it will be a larger volume than our 2013 Best of BCI which contained 50 trees and 50 stones. We anticipate that our 2015 volume will contain approximately 125 to 150 trees and perhaps 50 stones. We will not know the actual numbers until we have reviewed the scores from the judges.

The size of the book, 30.5 x 22.8 cm, will be larger than our earlier 2013 Best of BCI (22.5 x 21.5 cm). This will result in a more impressive book. The book will be printed by a leading book publisher. Reserve your copies now at the pre-publication price of \$50.00.

Once the judging is completed, we will send the highest scoring tree and stone photos to Guangzhou, China for printing and display at our September convention. 🌳

The finalists of our new 2015 BCI Bonsai & Stone Photo Competition will be published in a high-quality hardcover book. Photos will be exhibited at the grand BCI Convention in Guangzhou, China on September 17 to 21, 2015.

Reserve your copy now!

Best of BCI 2015:

**Viewing Stones and Bonsai
(Working Title)**

Hard cover, est. 200 pages, full color,
12 x 9 inches/305 x 228 mm
limited edition.

Pre-publication cost: \$50.00

Anticipated Publishing Date: Nov. 2015

- **Single copy:** Full retail price plus shipping
- **Participants in contest who order 2 or 3 copies:** 20% discount plus shipping to same address
- **Drop shipments of 100 copies or more at the time of printing:** 30% discount plus shipping to same address
- **BCI Clubs who orders 6 or more copies at one time:** 20% discount plus shipping to same address
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Bougainvillea RE-BORN

By Lew Buller, USA



This San Diego Red was alive after being transplanted in a hot month and continued to live another 13 years. Look carefully and you can see the rotten spot at the bottom of the trunk and the dead trunk on the left side. Its ultimate death was caused by fertilizer. I fertilized it in the spring of 2014, not expecting a second rainy season. The fertilizer I used was inorganic, in the form of pellets, meant to be released slowly during daily watering. Four days of heavy rain released an enormous amount of fertilizer and that triggered reverse osmosis, literally drawing all of the water out of the plant in spite of the rain.

I looked up *tanuki* or *Phoenix Graft* on the Internet and found a number of articles, some well written with no photos and some with exceptional trees for sale but no text. I wanted a combination of photos and commentary so we, Eitan Hagler and I, decided to create one using a bougainvillea.

There is a rule of thumb with bougainvillea. Quite literally, if the trunk is less than the size of your thumb, there is a risk in transplanting it. The one used here is an Orange King with a somewhat larger trunk of a size that I have transplanted before. It will be paired with the dead trunk of the San Diego Red.

Here are the steps necessary and the photos showing each step.

A. Clean the dead tree and treat it with wood hardener, using two coats of hardener. The brush proved totally inadequate for applying the wood hardener to the dry old porous semi-woody stump. I wound up pouring the hardener directly on the stump for both coats.

Phoenix Graft

"The technique of attaching young live plants to weathered wood is arguably the most controversial of all bonsai techniques. The Japanese call the practice *tanuki*, implying deception or cheat. As you can imagine, this is frowned upon in Japanese bonsai. American bonsai artist Dan Robinson coined the memorable phrase "Phoenix Graft", which views the process from an entirely different perspective. It is based on a legend about a bird that flew into the sun, died and was reborn. The terms *tanuki* and *phoenix graft* clearly illustrate the difference in attitude that can and does exist, not only between east and west, but also between individual artists. If you set out to make a *tanuki*, a deception, you will have no respect for your work. But if you set out to create a phoenix graft, the implication is that you are embarking on a more noble quest. What could possibly be wrong with combining a magnificent piece of driftwood, nature's art, with a healthy young plant, to create an object of great dignity and beauty? If you do it, do it well and above all, don't lie about it. It's only a deception if it is your intention to deceive. In England this technique is called *wraparound*."

— Buffalo Bonsai Society

The stump was turned upside down and wood hardener poured into the cavity.

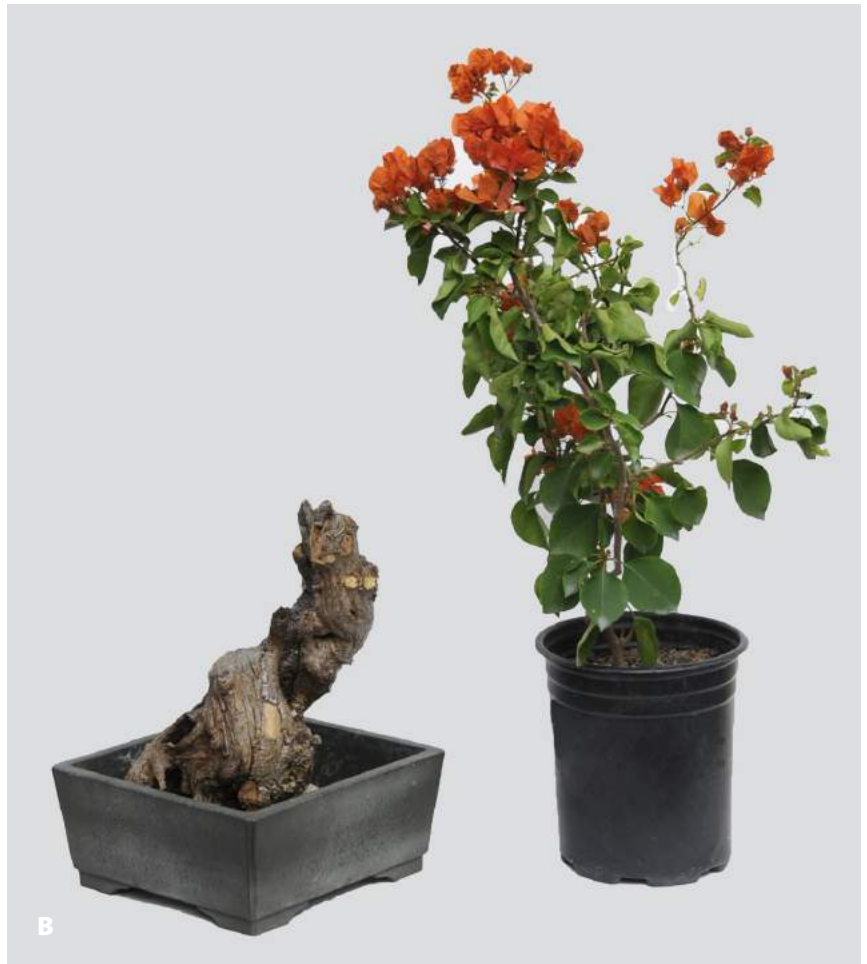
As an alternative, the cavity could be filled with auto body putty. The roots will be adequate for tying the stump in the pot. I could put brass eyehole screws in the harder parts of the stump and attach the wires to the eyeholes.

B. Chose a pot big enough to accommodate both the stump and the live tree. You can take the live tree out of its growing pot, spray the roots, and put them in a plastic bag. Use the bagged tree to test both the fit to the dead wood and the space in the pot.

C. California junipers (*Juniperus californica*) are a much harder, rot resistant variety. They grow very slowly in the dry desert air and various estimates are made of their ages. The piece I cut off to balance a tree had 30 growth rings to the inch, measuring from the center out. An incomplete section measured 2 1/2 inches across.

If I used this dead tree, I would carve a channel for the live plant. When ready for the permanent connection, some of cambium from a juniper scion (this is a Phoenix graft, therefore scion is appropriate) would be removed to stimulate the cambium to further growth. Carefully done, with a close fit, the growing cambium would fill in any gaps and eventually roll over the edges of the groove and give the impression that the scion was growing out of the tree.

The bougainvillea stump is far too soft for that to work and damaging the cambium on a live



Facing page; San Diego Red Bougainvillea that died in 2014 from an overdose of fertilizer.

Top right; The dead trunk and an Orange King Bougainvillea that will be combined in a Phoenix Graft.

Middle left; Treating the stump with wood hardener.

Bottom left; Deadwood from a California Juniper as a comparison to the softer bougainvillea wood.

Bottom right; Orange King prepared for transplanting.

Top right; Anchoring the newly-assembled plant into the pot. The back of the root ball will be covered with soil, using muck and moss if necessary to keep the soil in place.

Middle; Putting lime sulfur on first and then wood hardener leaves a yellow cast from the wood hardener. Putting the lime sulfur on last makes it hard to penetrate the wood and get the color of a weathered dead branch. Photo G shows how it looks applied over the wood hardener.



bougainvillea, would only leave a dead spot. Bougainvillea do not heal well. I will have to follow the natural lines of the dead stump.

D. Removing the Orange King from the growing pot reveals a root ball that is loose and larger than the stump will accommodate. While Eitan the Apprentice held the stump, I trimmed the root ball so it would fit inside the stump and in the spaces between the sides of the pot and the expected placement of the stump.

Keeping it moist with water from a spray bottle, we put it in the cavity, set the stump with bougainvillea down in the pot, and wired it in. With rare exceptions, I anchor all my plants to the pot with wire. In the case of the bougainvillea, it is especially important to keep the tree stable while new roots are being developed.

E. In the wiring photo, looking at the back of the plant, you can see the back of the root ball that will be covered with soil, using muck and moss if necessary to keep the soil in place.

F. The Orange King had several low branches which could be fitted into natural grooves. They were fitted in one at a time, tied in place until the whole plant was tied in, and then excess twine was cut off. The main trunk of the tree continued the slant of the stump. Neither leaves nor bracts on the plant can be trimmed to a perfect outline. It will have to be enjoyed for what it is, an unruly but very pretty flowering plant.

G. In the past, lime sulfur has been used on dead wood to control rot. Either or both lime sulfur and wood hardener can be used on a dead tree. Putting lime sulfur on first and then wood hardener leaves a yellow cast from the wood hardener. Putting the lime sulfur on last makes it hard to penetrate the wood and get the color of a weathered dead branch. I ordered lime sulfur but it did not arrive in time to put it on first. Here's how it looks applied over the wood hardener.

Only part of the tree was covered; it would be a glaring white if it were completely covered. Decide for yourself whether you like it better with or without lime sulfur.

With a rot-resistant juniper, just drill holes in the base and run wires from the bottom of the pot to hold it in the position you want. As an alternative, make a loop of copper wire not quite large enough to slip below the widest part of the dead tree and bring the wires from the bottom of the pot up through the loop. Pull them tight and then bend them down over the outside of the loop to hold the trunk in place. This technique can be used with any tree being wired in a pot. 🌳



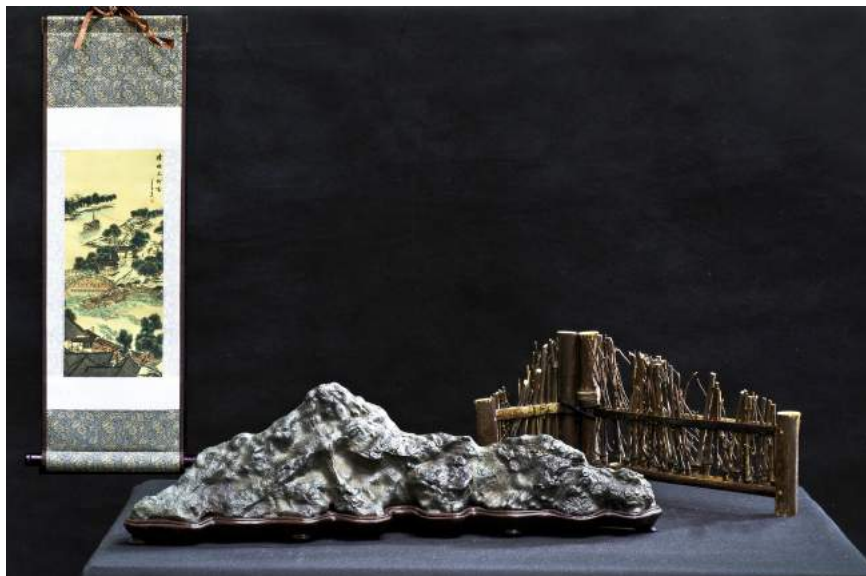
Neither leaves nor bracts on the plant can be trimmed to a perfect outline. It will have to be enjoyed for what it is, an unruly but very pretty flowering plant.



Bottom; the plant photographed July 7, 2015.

A Lover of Mountains

Anthony V Gedang, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines



Top; Uncut Mountain Stone from Japan on a wooden base, dimension: 41cm x 15cm x 10cm. The wooden fence denotes a garden, a garden of stones which he has that is Japanese-inspired.

Middle; Uncut Mountain Stone from China on a wooden base, dimension: 40cm x 15cm x 10cm

Bottom; Uncut Mountain Stone from China on a wooden base, dimension: 41cm x 15cm x 12cm

Anthony V Gedang, known as Tonet to his friends, is a family man, a devoted husband to his dear wife Malou and a loving grandfather to Amber, Alonzo, and Aurora, who bring much joy to their household. Tonet is part of a large family with seven siblings and has many, many friends.

As a businessman, he owns Waterkonsult Equipment and Services, Inc., the leading Non-Revenue Water Reduction equipment and services provider in the Philippines, and Envirokonsult Equipment and Services, Inc., the number one desludging trucks supplier in the country and the first service provider to acquire ISO Certifications in Quality Management and Environmental Management Systems on septage collection, treatment, disposal, and reuse.

His business, devoted to managing precious water resources, has inspired him to adopt and conserve a 10 hectare watershed area at Ipo Dam, Norzagaray, Bulacan and he has participated in the Pasig River (main river/waterway in Metro Manila) clean-up drives.

Tonet's interests and activities are wide ranging; a movie producer, assistant director, story teller, and scriptwriter for multiple award-winning films; a sportsman who enjoys many sports, from tennis to martial arts to mountaineering; and an avid artist involved in landscaping, architecture, interior design as well as installation art, prose, poetry, and book publishing.

He also spends much time on his hobbies; collecting and appreciating bonsai, viewing stones, cacti, and koi. Recently, Tonet joined the Nippon Suiseki Association and participated in the Nippon Suiseki Meihin Ten Exhibition, a premier viewing stone exhibition in Japan.

Anthony discovered viewing stones more than twenty years ago at a suiseki exhibition in the Philippines and was struck by beauty of the images that the stones evoked. Since then, he has collected many beautiful stones by attending auctions, visiting markets and during his travels, sometimes collects stones from nature. His favorite stones are Japanese mountain stones.

He pursues the finer things in life with enthusiasm and is fascinated by philosophy, the humanities, and history, as well as the sciences. 🌿



BCI Board Member Nikunj Parekh receives Japan's Order of the Rising Sun



Top left; The Order of the Rising Sun is a Japanese order, established in 1875 by Emperor Meiji of Japan. The badge features rays of sunlight from the rising sun. The design of the Rising Sun symbolizes energy as powerful as the rising sun in parallel with the "rising sun" concept of Japan, "Land of the Rising Sun."

Top right; BCI 2nd Vice-president Nikunj Parekh, recipient of the Order of the Rising Sun.

Bottom right; a member of the Japanese Consulate, Nikunj and Jyoti Parekh.

One of our board members, BCI 2nd Vice President Nikunj Parekh, was recently awarded the Japanese Order of the Rising Sun by the Consul General of Japan in India. This is the highest award the Japanese government presents to a non-Japanese citizen and only a few people worldwide receive it. The screening and review process conducted by Japanese officials before giving this award is a rigorous process, one that eliminates many candidates. It was presented to Nikunj in recognition for his many contributions to promoting Japanese arts and culture in India, especially bonsai.

In his acceptance speech, Nikunj recalled his first bonsai experience, "This took me back to the year 1970, when during my first visit to Japan, as a member of a delegation of the plastics industry and on a weekend, I could visit the famous Expo 1970 at Tenri Hills near Osaka. Here I saw Bonsai of the highest order for the first time."

When he returned home, his stories of the bonsai trees inspired his wife Jyoti to learn about bonsai. A few years later, in 1979, amongst the stress and uncertainty of the labor strikes in Mumbai that affected Nikunj's industry, he sought refuge in the peaceful hobby of bonsai and Jyoti became his *Adi Guru* or first teacher. He joined the Bonsai Study Group of the Indo-Japanese Association Mumbai where 30 years since, Nikunj has served in positions of General Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-President and currently as President.

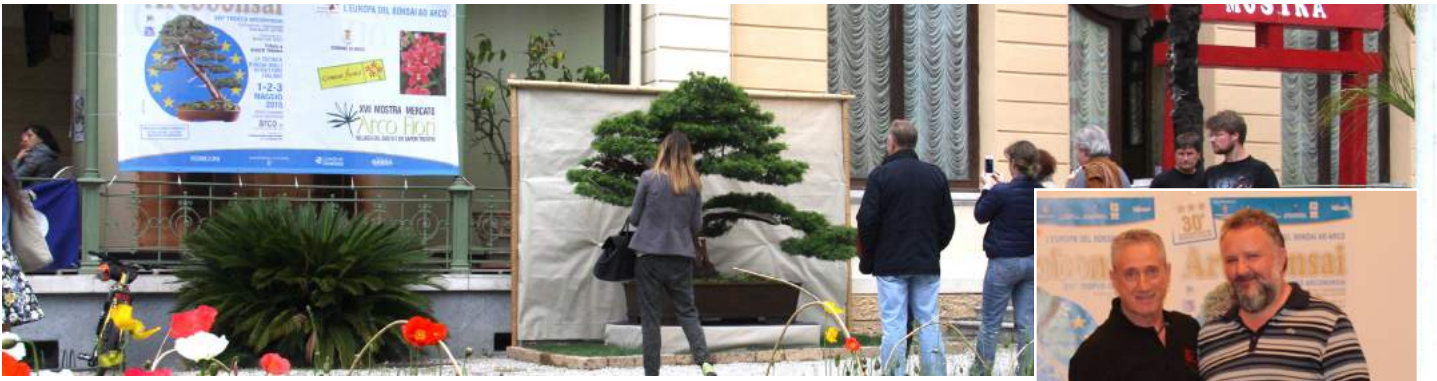
In the early '80s, Nikunj was instrumental in bringing John Naka to India from whom he learned bonsai techniques and bonsai etiquettes. From Saburo Kato, who he calls a father figure, he learned about bonsai techniques, the spirit of bonsai and its philosophy with the life principles of bonsai artists. Then in 1985, he met Toshio Kawamoto, who introduced him to miniature tray landscapes called Saikei.

Since 1982, he has visited Japan twenty three times where he met many Japanese people in the field of Arts,

Crafts, Tourism, Bonsai and Business. Building bridges of friendship with Japan became a reality. "Sister city relationship between Mumbai and Yokohama, Language skills, Technical training, teaching Bonsai, Gardening and editing *Nichin Bonsai* magazine since 1985, widened my horizons. More than anything else I absorbed gradually the unique qualities of patience, courtesy and meticulous planning. As a proponent of Bonsai and other Japanese Arts, my love for nature, greenery, micro and macro environment and events planning got a boost."

Nikunj also acknowledged his Indian colleagues, "I cannot forget my mentors, Mr. Gopal Pohekar, Mr. Lalji Mehrotra, Mr. SP Godrej, Mr. Minoo Shroff, Mr. Suresh Kotak, Mr. Vinaya Mehrotra and all my enlightened colleagues." In conclusion, he added, "I am all the more inspired that the Government of Japan has appreciated my small effort. This is possible only when we walk together in the onward journey with purpose, as *united we bloom & divide we wither.*"

Congratulations to Nikunj for this well deserved honor! 🌳



BCI Excellence Award at the 30th Arcobonsai in Italy

By Massimo Bandera, Italy

In May, the annual event Arcobonsai and Arcofiori in Arco, Trentino, organized by Arcobonsai Club celebrated its 30th year, an event, the organizers have called “The Europe of Bonsai in Arco” and, in collaboration with the Board of the European Bonsai Association, have called on the 19 countries belonging to the association to send two representatives to Arco to compete in yamadori styling for the trophy Euro Arcobonsai.

Italy, represented by Salvatore Liporace, was joined by eight other countries, namely, France, Monaco, Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary and Switzerland. The representatives from Switzerland unfortunately did not show up but the other representatives competed in a contest that was a showcase of talent.

The representatives from Slovenia won the competition with a striking and technically interesting composition. The program also included a contest of twenty Italian clubs and, among these, the fourteenth Arcobonsai Trophy was awarded to Giardino delle Nove Nebbie di Udine.

On Saturday and Sunday, the instructors, previous winners of the trophy and the founders of five of the Italian Bonsai Schools, demonstrated their high professionalism in styling trees, during which they provided to the audience all technical and artistic elements related to the material being processed. Also for the technical and artistic component, instructors Carlo Cipollini and Adriani Bonini, designed plants proposed by convention participants.

The cultural component was guaranteed by the reports from professor Augusto Marchesini, Luca Bragazzi, Massimo Bandera, Silvia Orsi and Andrea Schenone. The latter has also presented a solo exhibition of his suiseki collection, surely one of the leading and most interesting in Italy. Another solo exhibition was staged by Tanaka Shozo which Arcobonsai wanted to pay tribute as he had set up, with Carlo Oddone, the first exhibition of bonsai in Arco in 1985.

The conference began with the commemoration of Charles Oddone, who died early this year. He was Honorary President of Arcobonsai, founder and inspirer of the Club and the Congress. To remember



Top inset and above; Sandro Segneri receives the BCI Excellence Award for his *Pinus mugo* from BCI Director Massimo Bandera



Inset; Massimo receives the Carlo Oddone Certificate.



Bottom; Massimo Bandera's Tokonoma Display in the Arcobonsai exhibit.

Carlo Oddone and his untiring desire to teach and promote bonsai in Italy, the conference instructors and masters received certificates in his name and in recognition of their work to promote bonsai.

During the three days, the turnout of the public was remarkable thanks to the vendors' market with 53 exhibitors selling bonsai and accessories, plus the local nurserymen in the Arcofiori event. The numbers attest to the success of the event if you think that over 360 participant registered for the convention and 3600 visitors attended the exhibitions.

At the closing ceremony the President of the Unione Bonsaisti Italiani (UBI) announced the nominations for 2016 Arcobonsai to organize the next UBI National Congress.

Award UBI for the best tree in the exhibit was presented to Salvatore Liporace's Mountain Pine by President Luciano Granato, UBI.

The Targa IBS (Instructors Bonsai and Suiseki) was presented to Club Drymenetum for their Cork oak, *Quercus suber*, by IBS President Sandro Segneri.

The BCI Excellence Award (Bonsai Clubs International) was presented to Sandro Segneri for the mountain pine, *Pinus mugo*, by BCI Director Massimo Bandera.

The City of Arco Emilio Parolari Memorial trophy, based on votes cast by the public, went to the Hungarian Bonsai Association for their Japanese maple, *Acer palmatum*.

The Euro Arcobonsai Contest Trophy was awarded to the representative from Slovakia.

Finally The 14th Trofeo Arcobonsai for Italian Clubs is awarded to Giardino delle Nove Nebbie di Udine. 🌲

Making Bonsai History in Vietnam

By Tom Elias, USA



History was made in the world bonsai community on June 5 to 8th, 2015 in Rin Rin Park, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Members of the Vietnam bonsai community joined efforts to stage the first major international convention and exhibition held in Vietnam since it became the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 1976. Officially, this was the Asia Pacific Bonsai Friendship Federation Convention and Exhibition 2015 that was hosted and organized by Ho Chi Minh City and the Vietnam Natural and Traditional Beauty Association. BCI member Ms. Hoang (Honey) Ny played a major role in the planning and staging of this grand event. It was held in Rin Rin Park, a large park with a beautiful Japanese garden. This was a perfect setting for this bonsai event.

Bonsai hobbyists throughout Vietnam came to this exhibition along with nearly 200 foreign guests from seventeen different countries. The organizers estimated that in excess of 15,000 visitors attend the four day event and viewed over 800 trees on exhibit. Trees varied from large landscape scenes with multiple trees and stones arranged in a beautiful landscape setting to numerous large single tree bonsai, to numerous small (shohin) to tiny (mame) trees. It was evident from the quality of the bonsai on display that this art form has advanced rapidly in a relatively short time. Traditional-style bonsai were exhibited along with many others that have been influenced by Japanese-style trees and even some that showed a Chinese influence. Regardless of the influences, Vietnamese bonsai artists can now rightfully assume a position on the main stage along with the great artists from other countries.

It was an enormous task to make this event happen and everyone who contributed to this should be congratulated for their foresight and vision. Many of the city officials were present for the opening ceremonies that began with music and colorful dancing. The flags



of each of the participating countries was carried onto the stage during the opening event. I believe this will be the first of several more international bonsai events that will be held in Vietnam in the future.

Several well-known bonsai artists performed demonstrations for the huge crowd of people on the second day of the big event. Kunio Kobayashi from Japan, Amy Liang and Chen Chien Liang from Taiwan, Sujay and Ruppa Shah from India, and Kim Seok Ju from Korea displayed their talents as they styled individual trees and made landscape arrangements for the admiring crowds. BCI President presented an illustrated lecture 'The Ancient Art of Stone Appreciation tracing viewing stones from the ancient days in China to Japan to present day western countries to approximately 300 people.



Facing page; Innovative composition greets visitors to the exhibition.

Top left and right; A land/water penjing in the process of being assembled.

Middle; Bonsai hobbyists throughout Vietnam came to this exhibition along with nearly 200 foreign guests from seventeen different countries.

Bottom; One of three recipients of BCI Medals of Excellence.

Top left and right; Two more recipients of BCI Medals of Excellence.

Middle; BCI board of director I. S. Ng assisted BCI president Tom Elias with the selection of the medal winners and in the presentation of the medals. The three recipients were Võ Văn Tuấn, Đỗ Xuân Phong, and Hoàng Văn Hải.



Two large vendor areas were present adjacent to the entrance to Rin Rin Park. Most were selling nice pre-bonsai along finished bonsai of all sizes. Several of the foreign guests were taking newly purchased trees back to their home countries. The trees featured in the exhibit and in the sales areas were tropical and subtropical trees. The most frequently seen species was the Vietnamese water jasmine, *Wrightia religiosa*. The water jasmine is readily adaptable to different styles of bonsai and has the added attraction of producing small but very fragrant white flowers. Many other tropical plants were represented including species of Ficus, a shrubby Desmodium and species of Podocarpus. One vendor's booth featured very nice Vietnamese stones.

BCI Medals of Excellence were handed to three recipients during the closing banquet. BCI board of director I. S. Ng assisted with the selection of the medal winners and in the presentation of the medals. The three recipients were Võ Văn Tuấn, Đỗ Xuân Phong, and Hoàng Văn Hải. Congratulations to all three men for their excellent bonsai. 🌳



Golden
Arrow
Bonsai

Andrew Smith, 22473 Alpine
Acres Dr, Deadwood, SD

57732

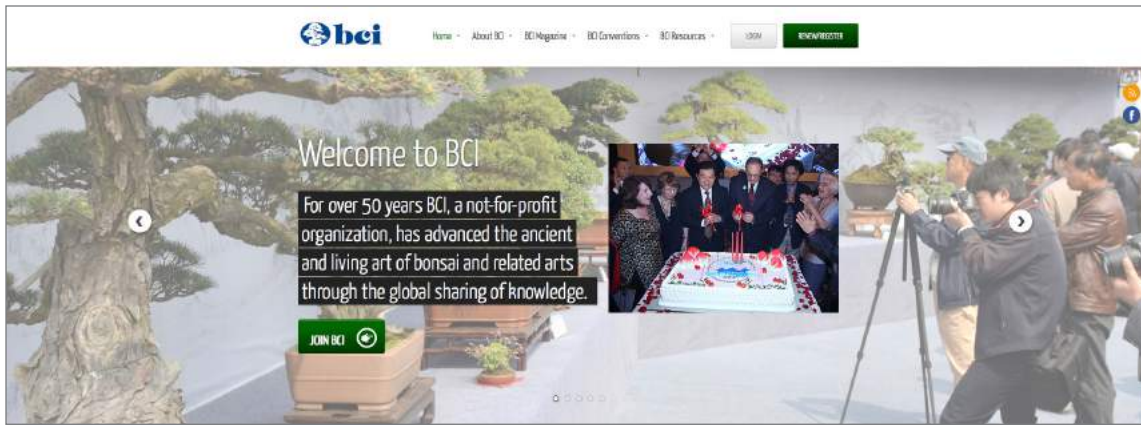
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BCI website:
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New BCI Website

The new website with improved membership login and renewal process has been launched. A big thank you to the directors and members who have contributed to this website. Although there is much more content in this site than in the current site, all the content at our disposal has not been added yet. This process will be ongoing and you will be able to comment on, and suggest, what we add.

Think of this first version of the new website as the first styling on a bonsai tree. Now that the structure is set, refining it is a matter of time, process, and collaboration. We chose website software that allows members and administrators to collaborate on creating content. As we fine tune the website and see how it is being used, we are prepared to add other features such as forums and blogs.

You are invited to visit the new site, to explore it at your leisure and test your login credentials. We will be standing by to help with any questions and fix any glitches that are discovered. Members who signed up or renewed their membership in the last few months will have to click on Forgot Password when they log in for the first time. Your data was transferred over but for security reasons, your password was not.

Allow time for the website to download the first time you visit it. Bonsai and Stones are visual subjects so good quality images are important.

We have listed all BCI Member Clubs, see module at bottom of home page, second from the left, to help potential members in their area find a club to join. If you represent a club, let us know if you wish to add or delete any details in your contact information in this list, especially if your club is not on the list. E-mail are linked but to avoid spambots, they are not displayed.

Visitors and members can access most of the website without logging in. Paid services require a login. Members are served a landing page populated with short cuts to popular areas such as viewing the digital magazine or managing your profile and membership status. BCI will place timely notifications to members on this landing page to update members on BCI programs and activities.

Some of the new features include:

- Up-to-date software with improved security to help keep our database safe.
- Membership login process has been streamlined to



Bonsai and Stone Events Around the World

Find an event near you, or list your organization's event. Use our interactive form to list your bonsai or viewing stone event.



Join a Viewing Stone or Bonsai Club near you

Find a BCI Member Club and enjoy the social and educational benefits of bonsai and stone appreciation with like-minded people




Species Guide

Our members have created fact sheets that provide insights into many aspects of these species to help you in your research.

List of Species by Botanical Name
List of Species by Common Name

FACT SHEETS

| Conifers | | Flowering | | Other |
|---|--|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Deciduous Conifers | Evergreen Conifers | Deciduous Flowering | Evergreen Flowering | Ginkgo biloba |

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| JOIN | JOIN | JOIN | JOIN | JOIN |

be a one-step process. For members who wish to pay by check, the software generates a Payment Slip with membership particulars that you can print and mail to the Business Office with payment.

- Club are now in a distinct category. BCI can now communicate better with clubs when they are asked to vote on BCI governance.
- The different membership plans from Free to Lifetime, list the membership benefits included with each and displayed together so you can compare plans.

- Events Calendar that can be viewed by year, month, week, etc., and by sorted by Local, Regional, National and International. Currently new entries can be added by any paid member. The entries are reviewed by an administrator and then published.
- Landing pages that correspond to BCI's main areas of activity. This will make it easier to promote conventions and subscriptions to the magazine. The Resources section will grow as we add more content.
- The Species Guide section is now all HTML and part of a categorized database. We can now ask members

to contribute to this database that is dynamic and not static like the PDF documents from the current site.

- The site is responsive to your screen size and will reflow as necessary to maximize the images and text.
- Over the next while, we will look for ways to improve your experience when on the website as we review your comments and suggestions, and fix any glitches brought to our attention. Let us know what you think. Contact information for board members, the editor, business manager and tech support are on the website. 🌳

Tree of the Month



Canocarpus erectus
Enrico Castano Collection, Mexico

MEMBERS SUBMIT ENTRY

[View All Trees of the Month](#)



Stone of the Month



Mary River Figure Stone, Australia
Lindsay Bebb Collection, Australia

MEMBERS SUBMIT ENTRY

[View All Stones of the Month](#)



New Feature on New BCI Website: Tree and Stone of the Month

You can start submitting your trees and stone right away by e-mail. Send your photos and story, or questions, to info@bonsai-bci.com.

We are also adding a submittal form on the website.

Members of BCI are creating and curating exceptional works of art in bonsai and viewing stones. Fifteen BCI members, for example, are finalists in the much anticipated Artisans Cup exhibit and competition this September in Portland, Oregon, hoping their entry is worthy of the Ten Thousand Dollar Grand Prize. Competing at this level is a pursuit of many bonsai professional and accomplished hobbyists. Although these talented people help elevate the quality of the art, others appreciate bonsai and viewing stones as a casual hobby and relish the relaxing activities associated with bonsai and bonsai friends. Regardless of your level of experience, a new feature on our new website will offer a showcase for your trees and stones.

Every month, we will publish a Tree of the Month and Stone of the Month. Send us your photos and stories that teach, inform, entertain and inspire! The photo will be accompanied by short story describing some aspect of the subject; how the tree or stone was collected or acquired; who styled the tree or carved the base; a story about the pot and trays or the artist

that created them; a short monograph on the species or geological material.

You can make the story as personal as you like, but try to make it interesting and informative. You can also add a link to your website, blog or Facebook page if you like. Featured photos must be in color, in focus on a neutral background, about 1000 pixels wide. If appropriate or necessary, additional photos showing a process or a “before and after” can also be submitted.

Both the story and photo will be considered when selecting the finalists. Every member and club is eligible to participate. All levels of expertise are welcome whether you are a novice, an experienced hobbyist or a professional. Trees and stones to be featured each month will be selected by the BCI Editorial Committee.

You can start submitting your trees and stones right away by e-mail. Send your photos and story or questions to info@bonsai-bci.com. We are also adding a submittal form on the website.

This is a great opportunity to share your trees, stones and stories with your fellow club members around the world and inspire everyone who visits the website. 🌳



MARCH 17-20, 2016

2016 Philippines-BCI Regional Convention And Exhibition

Ayala Triangle Gardens, Ayala Avenue cor Paseo de Roxas Makati City, Philippines

INTERNATIONAL BONSAI & STONE HEADLINERS:

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Dr. Tom Elias | (USA) |
| Peter Huang | (China) |
| Min Hsuan Lo | (Taiwan) |
| Shinichi Nakajima | (Japan) |
| Xu Wen Ren | (Taiwan) |
| William Valavanis | (USA) |
| Ricky Wu | (Hong Kong & China) |



Organizer: Philippine Bonsai Society, Inc.
The Natural Stone Society of the Philippines
Secretariat: FMSG Building 9 Balete Drive corner
3rd street, New Manila, Quezon City, Philippines 1112
Telephone: (63) 2 571-7818
Email: bonsaipbsi@gmail.com
Website: www.philippinebonsaisociety.org



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- Interactive Bonsai Workshop (Simultaneous Hands-on workshop of Philippine trees guided by International bonsai masters.)
- Philippine Fiesta Bazaar
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