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international friendship  
through bonsai



# bc*i*

# Bonsai & Stone Appreciation

## 2018 Q3



**Yamadori and Creativity First:  
BCI World Convention in France**

**40th Anniversary of Bonsai Club  
Germany & 25th Anniversary of  
the German Suiseki Society**

**2017 Orchid and Bonsai  
Show, Kuala Lumpur**

**2018 European  
Bonsai & Suiseki  
Convention**

**Jerusalem Botanical Garden  
Annual Bonsai Exhibition**

**Malaysia Wood Art,  
Suiseki & Floral Design**

**The Story of Hiryu,  
The Flying Dragon**

**Theme-Based  
Viewing Stone Exhibitions**

**Little Stones from Indonesia**

**A Daiza For the Three Norms**

**Mountainscapes in Mumbai**

**Bonsai Empire's Advanced Bonsai Course**

The *Juniperus communis* of  
Mirco Tedeschi was awarded  
the BCI Excellence Award at  
the Crespi Bonsai Cup.



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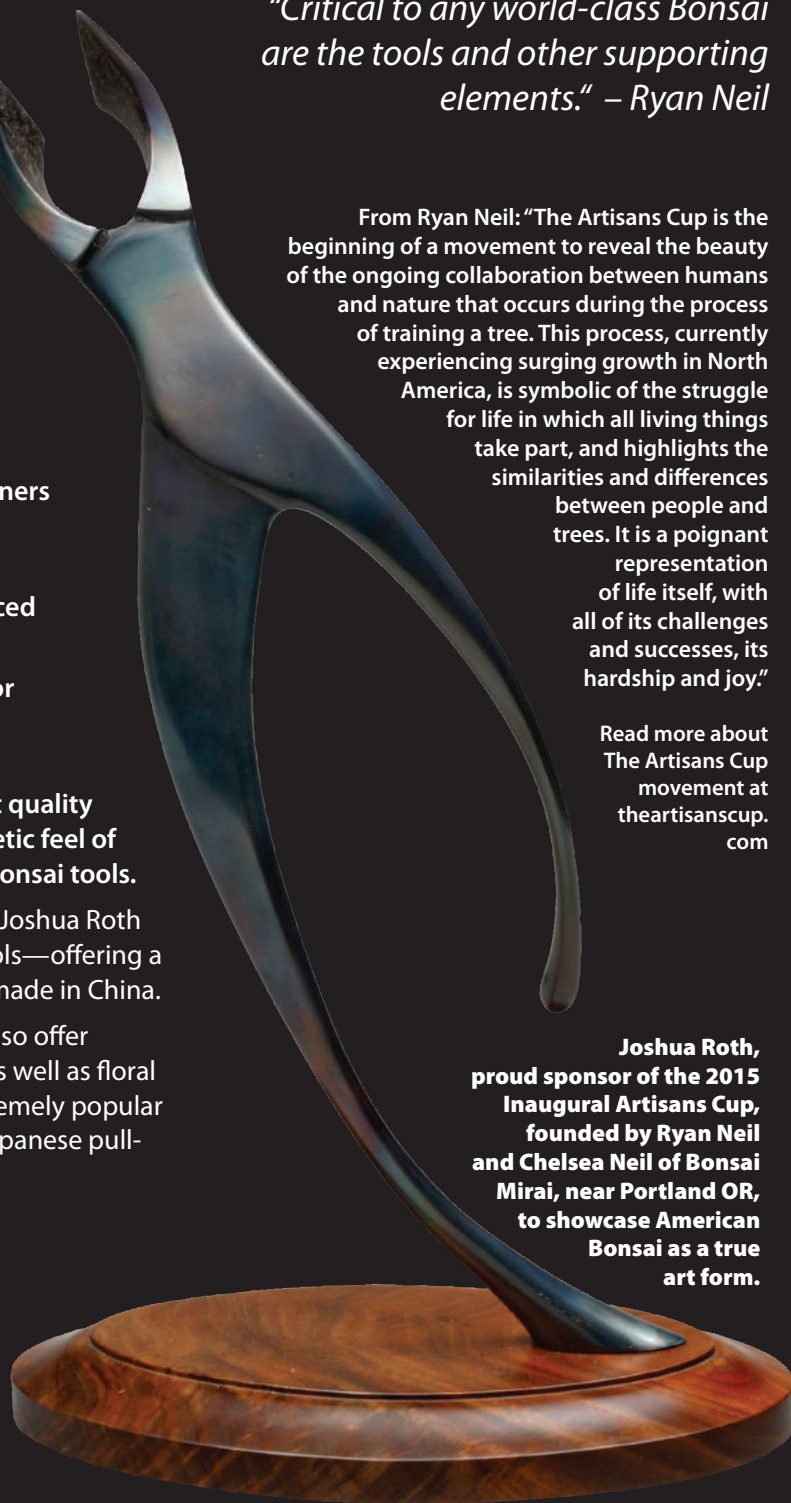
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*“Critical to any world-class Bonsai are the tools and other supporting elements.” – Ryan Neil*

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

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## President's Message

I write this message on my flight home from our Australian National Convention. The Association of Australian Bonsai Clubs hosts an annual convention in a different part of our country. This year it was hosted in Melbourne. Around 250 delegates attended. The theme for this year's event was "Winter Silhouette." Most of the bonsai exhibited were deciduous trees and the ramification they have achieved was very impressive. Each year we bring in an International Demonstrator along with local talent. This year Bjorn Bjorholm was our International guest. Bjorn is a very talented, great communicator and willing to share his vast knowledge. Over the 4-day event, he did a full day Master class, a critique, four demonstrations and two workshops. He stayed on for several days after the event, conducting more workshops for convention delegates.

Included with this issue is a complimentary copy of Museo Tatsugoro's 10th year Anniversary Magazine. Museo Tatsugoro is a bonsai garden and studio in Mexico. The owner, Miguel Ros, is a supporter and Life Member of BCI. He has gifted a copy of the magazine for every BCI Member and Member Club. Miguel has also covered full postage cost for both publications. We hope you enjoy reading about Bonsai in Mexico.

BCI's big event for 2018 in Mulhouse is fast approaching. François and his team are promising to put on a great event. It's not too late to register for an all-inclusive package. You can also visit the Exhibition on a daily basis. Information can be found at: [www.world-bonsai-mulhouse.fr](http://www.world-bonsai-mulhouse.fr), a website hosted by Parc Expo, the venue for the convention.

BCI 2019 will be a two-part event with an add-on tour. Starting in the mountains in Guiyang then flying to Alashan, Inner Mongolia for stones, followed by an add-on optional 5-day tour to Mongolia. This will be a once in lifetime experience which includes

staying in a yurt, five stars of course! We will give you full details in the next issue, and info will be available on BCI website in late October.

We are changing the mailing schedule for BCI Magazine hopefully starting with Q4 2018 Issue. The magazine will go to print three weeks earlier and distribution will be staggered. The results should be that everyone throughout the world will receive the Magazine around the same time. We will need to receive articles and news items earlier than in the past and deadlines will be adjusted accordingly.

Today, 23rd July, I heard of the sad passing of Hatsuji Kato. Hatsuji was the eldest son of Suburo Kato from Mansei-en in Omiya Bonsai Village, Japan. Suburo Kato was the founder of the World Bonsai Friendship Federation. Many of you attended the first World Bonsai Convention in 1989 in Omiya Japan. Suburo's famous mantra was world peace through bonsai. After Suburo's passing, Hatsuji took over the reigns. He was the fourth generation at Mansei-en. Back in the '80s Mansei-en was the largest bonsai garden in Omiya and to visit was, and still is, a must. My relationship with Hatsuji started in 1987 on my first of over thirty trips to Japan. Hatsuji spoke English and was always very helpful with our tour groups when we visited Saitama. We also shared a few drinks at various bonsai events around the world over the years. Hatsuji was the Executive Chairman of the very successful 8th World Bonsai Convention held in April last year for the second time in Omiya Japan. Mansei-en will now be in the hands of the fifth Kato generation with Hatsuji's son Haruhiko. The extended BCI family extend our deepest sympathy to the Kato family. 🌲

Cheers from Down Under,  
Glenis Bebb



**BCI's big event for 2018 in Mulhouse is fast approaching. François and his team are promising to put on a great event. It's not too late to register for an all-inclusive package. You can also visit the Exhibition on a daily basis. Information can be found at: [www.world-bonsai-mulhouse.fr](http://www.world-bonsai-mulhouse.fr).**

*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:

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## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

**A**ppreciating bonsai and viewing stones means that there are many contests around the world where the very best are chosen and regaled with awards, cups, trophies, certificates, ribbons, and more. It is exciting to study a winner to see if you agree with the judges. And it is only human to compare the trees and stones in our collection to these show-stoppers. So we might own some good trees or stones, but will they ever win the top prize? For exhibitors, it is helpful to remember that “good” is not the enemy of “best.” Think about the different people that will see your stone or tree and how unique these people are. Many viewers will connect to a work of art because it relates to a personal experience and has little to do with whether the work is deemed best. We relate to the story that the artist is telling us through his or her work, and it is stories that fill our collective history.

This issue is full of stories. For every winning tree or stone, there are many good ones that deserve our attention too, with stories that are every bit as compelling.

François Jeker, organizer of the 2018 BCI World Convention in Mulhouse, extols the virtues of yamadori and their potential for creative expression. Dr. Sujata Bhat, BCI Director, tells us a short but impressive story about the famous *Flying Dragon*, one of the last of the shimpaku yamadori collected in Japan.

Contributing editor and BCI Director Gudrun Benz reports on major gatherings in Europe, where bonsai and suiseki are celebrated and promoted with equal energy.

Although recently set back by serious health issues, BCI Director Ing Suan Ng is doing much better and continues to promote bonsai and suiseki in Malaysia with vigor. In this issue he introduces us to Wood Art, another fascinating way to enjoy the wonders of nature.

Budi Sulistyono's article, on the theme of “small is beautiful,” showcases some of his evocative stones. Themes are an effective and creative way to enhance an exhibition of trees or stones. Tom Elias and Richard Turner explore the subject of exhibits with themes and suggest alternatives to shows that accept entries at random.

Sandro Tschudin's article is a story about how he discovered the art of Suiseki and how he repays his gratitude to his mentors with a creative gesture. Creativity was also the focus of the Bonsai Study Group of the Indo-Japanese Association in Mumbai where they made mountains for their bonsai with great results. And lastly, BCI welcomes bonsai artist Moshe Emergui, who tells us about bonsai in Israel, their annual show and a stimulating visit by a very special visitor.

Do you have a good story to share with BCI? Often, there is very little that separates a winner from other works on exhibit. 🌳

—Joe Grande, Canada ([editor@bonsai-bci.com](mailto:editor@bonsai-bci.com))

## MISSION STATEMENT

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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.

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Q3	J/A/S	August 1
Q4	O/N/D	August 1



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ON OUR COVER: BCI Director Massimo Bandera gave this *Juniperus communis* of Mirco Tedeschi the BCI Award of Excellence at the 2017 Crespi Cup International Bonsai & Suiseki Conference. Photo courtesy Crespi Bonsai..



# Yamadori and Creativity First

## BCI World Convention in France, a Celebration of Yamadori

By François Jeker, France

Photos courtesy François Jeker

In France and in Europe, bonsai lovers are very lucky, they have enormous possibilities to sample yamadori of very different species: high-mountain trees; lowland trees; and trees of very hot and dry zones in the South. This abundance predisposed these *amateurs* to devote themselves primarily to the creation of bonsai starting from trees taken from nature. These trees require both a lot of creativity in the aesthetic sense, and, a great deal of care and shaping techniques. That is why the vast majority of the trees that will be exhibited at the BCI World Congress in France, in Mulhouse from October 12 to 14, have been selected according to three criteria: To be a yamadori; To demonstrate great creativity; To have a special history.

### Why yamadori?

When John Naka first visited my garden, he did a long tour of my bonsai in silence, then, after about twenty minutes, he said, “Congratulations, you only have one Japanese tree ! You must work with trees from your country, with your culture, your sensitivity, your authenticity and do not try to copy the Japanese.”

A result of John Naka’s extensive travels in Europe and his many demonstrations, he has greatly influenced the work of amateurs who have often preferred to work with yamadori rather than buying expensive Japanese bonsai that are not adapted to the European climate.

Is the origin and philosophy of bonsai not based on the collection of yamadori? Our goal is to put ourselves humbly at the service of our trees and to try to magnify the work and creativity of nature. We are in a mind-set where we are not the center of the universe, nor the owners of nature, but a small element of the world of the living, fragile elements alive with fine interactions to it. We practice this art because we love trees and respect nature.

In the Mulhouse exhibition, there will of course be some very beautiful Japanese trees, it is a tribute we make to the undisputed masters, but above all will be the yamadori, absolutely unique, with singular history and creativity, including five trees created by John Naka. Here are some examples.



## The Great Cedar of John Naka

John Naka created this tree, a *Thuja occidentalis*, during a demonstration in Heidelberg, Germany, in 1988.

All the spectators were blown away by his work especially when he categorically changed the angle of the branches, initially directed upwards, at the end, directed downwards, all without breaking anything!

The tree then had a complicated course and, in 2011, did not look much like John's original project. See below.



**Is not the origin and philosophy of bonsai based on the collection of yamadori? Our goal is to put ourselves humbly at the service of our trees and to try to magnify the work and creativity of nature.**



*Top;* John Naka bowing to the tree after the demonstration.

*Middle left;* A photo of the tree in 2011 shows little resemblance to John's original concept.

*Middle right;* John did not have time to finish his deadwood work. This was my first task. I then had to make a severe cut and apply wire to everything.

*Bottom;* In my garden with Achim Strecker, after three days of work on the Thuja.





*Top;* Here is the tree after my intervention

*Bottom;* The tree today

It ended up in the hands of Achim Strecker, who decided to entrust me with the tree and this restoration project. Achim brought the tree to my garden where we worked on it for three days.

Since then, the tree has evolved. It was exhibited at the Bonsai Museum in Düsseldorf, Germany, and will come to Mulhouse this October.



**John Naka had said to me, "If you have the choice between following the Japanese rules or those of nature, always choose nature!"**



## The Thuja Moyogi of John Naka

John made this demonstration in Germany in 1984. Udo Fischer brought it to maturity and it has become a very classic bonsai today, in perfect health, while the starting tree was not really interesting.



Top left; John during his demonstration  
Top right; John's design drawing  
Bottom; The tree today







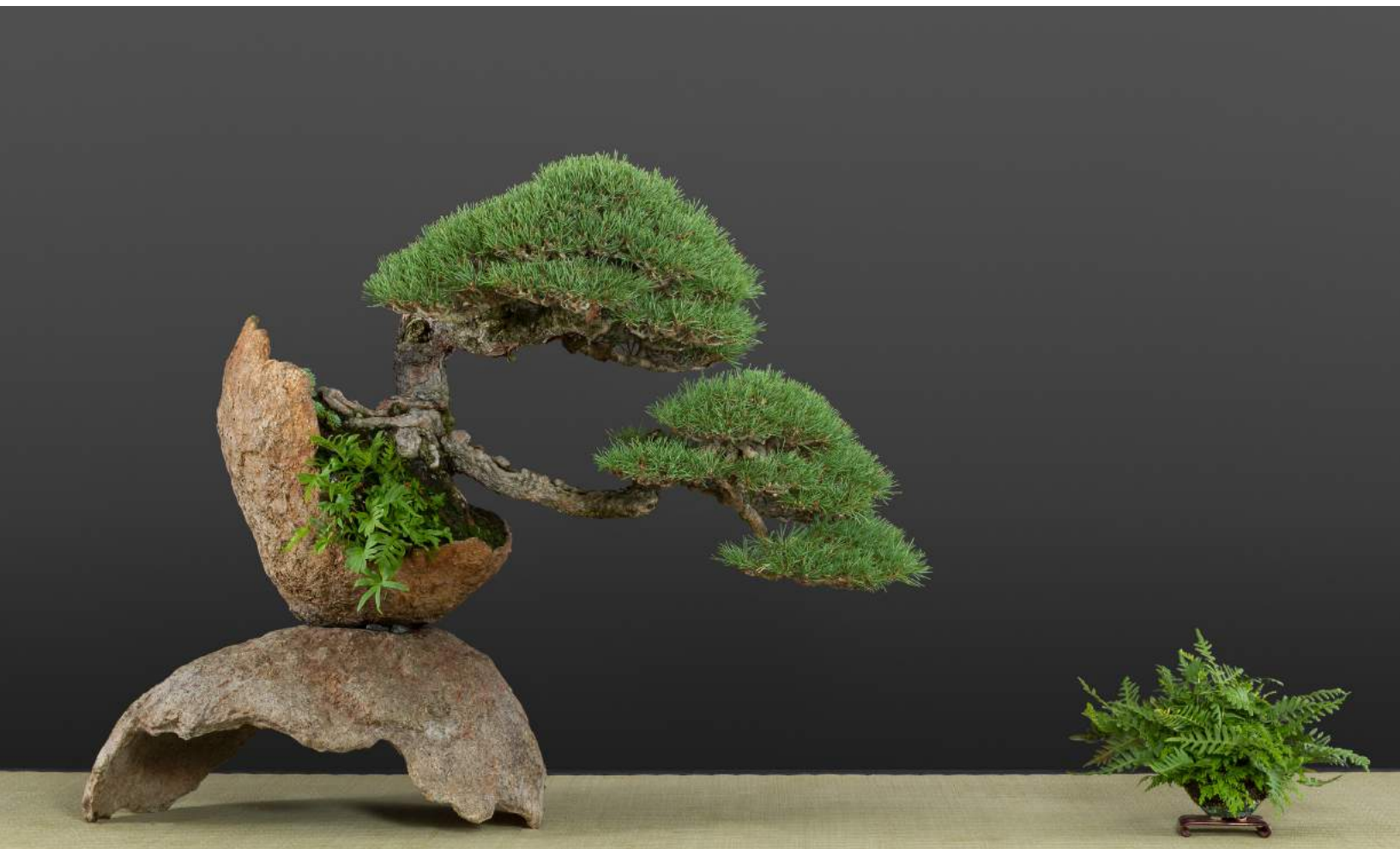
### **The Sumo of Luis Vallejo.**

This huge 80 cm high olive tree is usually exhibited at the Luis Vallejo Bonsai Garden in Alcobendas, a suburb of Madrid, Spain. Created by Luis Vallejo, this tree particularly impressed Kunio Kobayashi who nicknamed it “The Sumo Fighter.” It will be exhibited in Mulhouse with about fifteen very old olive trees, coming mainly from the island of Majorca. These trees have the distinction of having extremely small leaves. In addition, it is very difficult to be able to exhibit them, given the very strict phytosanitary rules that govern this Mediterranean island.

### **“The Little Brother” of Luis Vallejo**

This Scots pine, *Pinus sylvestris*, is very famous in Europe. It was taken in the Spanish mountains by Luis Vallejo in 1987. Masahiko Kimura had chosen to make a demonstration in Madrid in 1991, but finally gave up, its small size not suitable for a public demonstration. So it was Luis himself who put this tree in shape in 1992. This tree is called “Little Brother” because Luis had created another much larger double trunk, “Big Brother,” the two trees having been awarded “Ginkgo Bonsai Award” during the exhibition

At the top of the next page is his big brother!







### The High Mountain Spruce of Christophe Hager

This bonsai is characteristic of our approach in the choice of trees for the world congress. It is a unique bonsai, which required a lot of creativity both in the design of the tree and in the pot, made to measure by Erik Krizovensky.

Christophe Hager, talented French amateur, took this tree himself, did the first shaping of the tree, then brought it to maturity, all within the framework of the workshops that I organize at home, near from Mulhouse.

This bonsai perfectly evokes a tree clinging to a cliff in the mountains, obliged to fight daily against difficult living conditions, but which has overcome these difficulties and created a form of beauty quite extraordinary.







### The Scots pine of Jean-Paul Polmans

This *Pinus sylvestris* has a very tortuous trunk, as only nature can create. Jean-Paul found this tree in the South of France and has been working it for 12 years. Our tendency would have been to cut the falling branch to the left to get closer to the aesthetics of Japanese trees. Jean-Paul made the choice to respect the initial form of this yamadori, which thus, becomes unique, unforgettable and of a great naturalness.

John Naka had said to me, “If you have the choice between following the Japanese rules or those of nature, always choose nature!”

### The Boxwood of Didier Weiss

The Buxus from Corbières, a mountain region in the Languedoc-Roussillon in southeastern France, is probably the most suitable broadleaf bonsai in Europe, especially ones that grow on Mount Tauch. These trees live in a very poor substratum, are subjected daily to violent winds, to very cold winters, and to burning summers. They grow very slowly, form trunks with incredible movements and very detailed natural deadwood. Unfortunately, fires, more severe droughts, the damage of the European corn borer, a butterfly from China with no predators in Europe, have decimated these trees that have become a rarity today. This tree was formed as part of my workshops and Didier brought it to a beautiful maturity. The Buxus has an impressive base, a crooked trunk with very old, natural deadwood. It is several hundred years old. 🌲

Go to [www.world-bonsai-mulhouse.fr](http://www.world-bonsai-mulhouse.fr) for more information and to make reservations. The website is hosted by Parc Expo and has many details to help you plan your trip.





# THE STORY OF HIRYU

## The Flying Dragon

By Sujata Bhat, India

**In the words of Ryan Neil, we were witnessing the end of an era and the beginning of a new one.**





*Previous page;* Hiryu gracing the entrance to the World Bonsai Convention in Saitama, Japan, 2017. Photo by Sujata Bhat.

*Top;* Photo by Wattos Bonsai Blog, Bonsai in Australia, 2006.

*Bottom left;* Naoji Itoh successfully transplanted the impressive juniper in 1983.

*Bottom right;* Eventually Hiryu made its way into the capable hands of Saburo Kato, owner of Mansei-en in Omiya Bonsai village. It was Saburo Kato who skilfully designed and trained Hiryu into its present form for the entire world to see.

I was lucky enough to see this magnificent piece of art at the World Bonsai Convention held in the city of Saitama in Japan in April 2017. After the formal ribbon-cutting ceremony held outside the Saitama Arena, we were escorted into the main exhibition area. The first thing that I encountered on entering the main arena was this massive Itoigawa Shimpaku juniper standing majestically, solitary in its presence, in a simple tokonoma, welcoming the visitors into a truly breathtaking display of bonsai. At first sight, I was mesmerized by this beautiful tree and I wished I could have a better look at it but with crowds milling around me this was just impossible. So I decided to come back later to satisfy my intrigue and curiosity. This was Hiryu, the logo tree of the 8th World Bonsai Convention.

As I was assigned as an official photographer for Bonsai Clubs International, I could come back early the next day before the crowds came in, to have a better look at the tree and photograph it. I stood before the huge

stately tree and was awestruck by its magnificent beauty. I felt I was witnessing a once in a lifetime event, that I may never have a chance to see again. I put aside my sense of wonderment and concentrated on the bonsai itself, its deadwood and foliage, its ceramic container. The deadwood on the juniper was simply magnificent. It was nothing that could be achieved by even the most skillful human hand. This tree had withstood the ravages of the elements of nature for hundreds of years for it to have developed such beautiful jin and shari. A little placard beside the display elucidated the history of the bonsai. It was estimated to be about a thousand years old and that's when I realized that I was in the presence of something which had survived for more than a millennium! I noticed a striking and beautiful interplay between the deadwood and the green foliage, like in a game of hide and seek. The contorted deadwood, imposing as it was, was partially covered by foliage.

I decided to delve into the history of this bonsai. I collected whatever information I could get from various sources and found that this was one of the last surviving collected shimpaku junipers remaining in the world. It was then that I realized that I had seen something truly historic. In the words of Ryan Neil, we were witnessing the end of an era and the beginning of a new one.

### The Story of Hiryu

The Hiryu was called "God's Tree" among the mountain collectors of Shimpaku junipers and was discovered on the rocky walls of Mount Myouji. Mount Myouji is located in the Nagano prefecture. The tree measured about 2 feet wide at the base of the trunk. The trunk was spectacular in its beauty having been carved out due to the harshness of nature giving it a rugged and contorted look. The Hiryu stood apart from many other outstanding collected Itoigawa Shimpaku Junipers from the Myouji mountains in its majestic and imposing appearance. It was indeed a masterpiece.

It was 1983 when Hiryu was brought down from the mountain. It was the combined effort of two great mountain collectors Shinichi Nakamura and Tetsuya Nakamura, that was responsible for getting this huge tree down the mountain. This effort required some great coordination and teamwork. Getting such a







large specimen down was indeed a difficult task. In spite of having a large team of people and putting in a concentrated effort, they were initially unsuccessful because of the large size and weight of the juniper. They then developed a detailed plan and with some great determination and skill they finally succeeded in their task. With most of the naturally grown Shimpaku disappearing from the mountains by the 1980s it was a miracle that the Hiryu was left untouched in the wild. This may have been due to the fact that the tree was considered too big to be a bonsai.

Hiryu was successfully transplanted by Naoji Itoh of Kotaki. It was handed down to several different owners and eventually made its way into the capable hands of Saburo Kato, owner of Mansei-en in Omiya Bonsai village. It was Saburo Kato who skillfully designed and trained the Hiryu into its present form for the entire world to see.

### Hiryu's Sibling

Apparently a sibling of the original Hiryu was air-layered from the top of the original tree and grown in a wooden box. Hiryu's sibling is shown in photographs. Although the sibling was not as good as Hiryu with respect to its shari, it was still imposingly majestic. The whereabouts of this tree is currently unknown.

### The Significance of its Name

The name Hiryu, or Flying Dragon, seems to come from its rough trunk and winding Shari, and they are strangely vivid. Hiryu in Japanese mythology means "A winged Dragon that is extremely tough, but can be tamed and ridden".

The significance of the Hiryu is that it brings down the curtain on a 100-year history of mountain collecting Shimpaku of Itoigawa, which started during the first decade of the 1900s and we were indeed privileged to see this masterpiece at the World Bonsai Convention in Saitama. 🏞️

**Note:** To read more about the history of Shimpaku Junipers in Japan, visit <http://wbffbonsai.com/Info/ShimpakuJuniper.pdf>.



Top left; Souvenir photo of Hiryu in 2003, in its early stages of development.

Top right; Hiryu in Mansei-en garden in 2016, just one year before its exhibition at the World Bonsai Convention.

Middle; Mountain collectors Shinichi Nakamura (right) and Tetsuya Nakamura (left), were responsible for getting this huge tree down the mountain.

Bottom; A sibling of the original Hiryu was air-layered from the top of the original tree and grown in a wooden box.

Note: The photos shown middle and bottom are from a fascinating article, *The Story of the Shimpaku Juniper, Its Secret History*, by Kazuki Yamanaka published in Japanese in the June 2003 issue of *Kindai Bonsai Magazine*. Due to a generous donation from Daizo Iwasaki, WBFF's Vice-Chairman, WBFF obtained permission from the publisher to translate the article into English and publish it on the WBFF website.



The concept of organizing an exhibition around a broad or narrow theme has been used by the global community of museums since the 19th century.



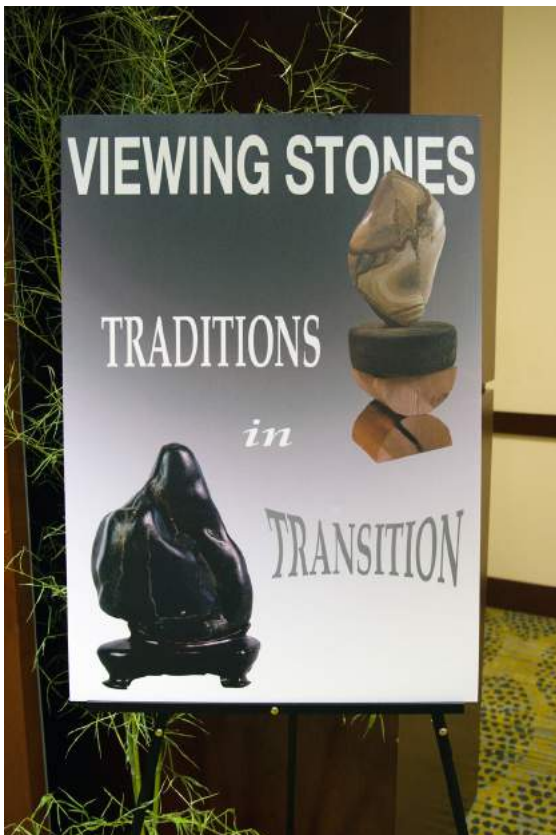
# Theme-Based Viewing Stone Exhibitions

By Richard Turner and Thomas Elias, USA

**E**xhibitions of bonsai and viewing stones are often a prominent feature of international, national and regional conventions. These provide opportunities for people to display their prized stones and trees for others to view and be inspired by. Most often, organizers of these exhibits provide the space and backdrops and then invite individuals, clubs or organizations to bring trees and stones for display. In terms of preparation, exhibitions of this type are the easiest to stage. There is, however, another approach to exhibitions that should be considered for future conventions—one that could generate more interest within the viewing stone and bonsai communities and attract a wider audience.

The concept of organizing an exhibition around a broad or narrow theme has been used by the global community of museums since the 19th century. Curators have organized exhibitions of paintings, sculpture, drawing, photography, and artifacts from the natural world that brought a sense of coherence to an otherwise diverse group of objects. A curator might choose a broad theme such as *Unfinished, Thoughts Left Visible*, a 2016 exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art that included 197 artworks from the Renaissance to the present that were incomplete to one degree or another. Or a curator might opt for a narrowly focused show of selected work by a single artist, such as the 1987 blockbuster exhibition at the National Gallery of Art, *Andrew Wyeth: The Helga Pictures*, an exhibition of drawings and paintings that Wyeth did of a single model between 1970 and 1985. We will look at two recent viewing stone exhibitions along with other examples to illustrate how a themed

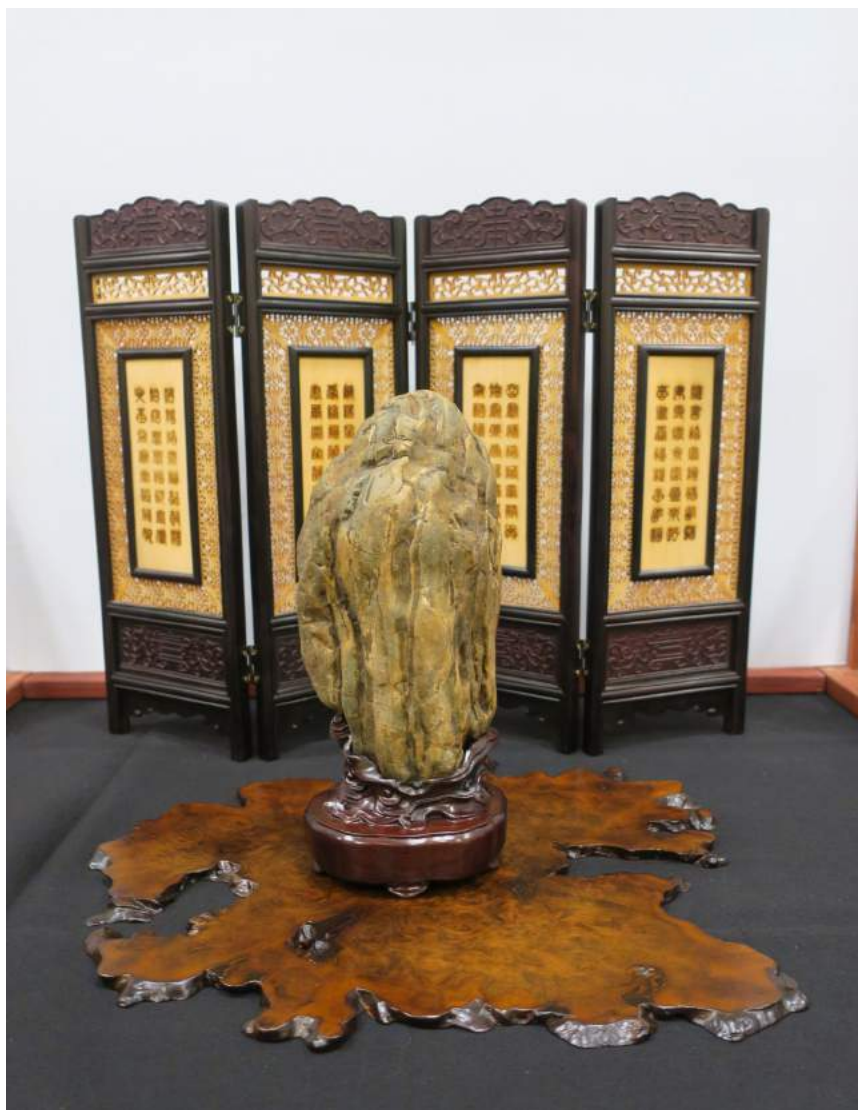




exhibition can benefit the bonsai and viewing stone communities. The exhibition, *Viewing Stones, Traditions in Transition*, was staged for the 2017 Golden State Bonsai Federation annual convention held in Riverside, California October 27-29. A second exhibition, *Wu Bin: Ten Views of a Lingbi Stone*, is on display at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in Los Angeles, California from December 13, 2017 through June 24, 2018. The first exhibit was a low budget effort organized by volunteers for a regional meeting; while the latter was higher budget, professionally staged exhibit of museum-quality objects intended for a broad audience. Despite their differences, both exhibitions employed themes which resulted in the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.

### Most Exhibits Are Not Thematically Organized

“Curate” is a term that has been trending on social media for the past couple of years. People talk of curating everything from their playlists to their wardrobes, the meals they eat to the movies they watch. Not so long ago the term was the exclusive property of the art world. Whether we understand the term “curate” in the trendy or the traditional sense, the thoughtful selection and organization of items is a practice that can guide our thinking about the mounting of viewing stone exhibitions. In North America we typically experience viewing stones in annual exhibitions sponsored by clubs. For such exhibitions club members are usually invited to submit a limited number of stones for display. New club members, uncertain about the quality of their stones, may seek advice from the more knowledgeable



*Facing page;* The exhibit began by displaying a large olive bonsai next to a piece of petrified wood which attracted many bonsai enthusiasts into the stone displays.

*Top left;* A large attractive poster with the theme of the exhibition and plants were placed outside the entrance to attract visitors to the room.

*Top right;* A traditional Japanese mountain stone in a suiban.

*Bottom;* A Chinese Julong-bi stone. The exhibition first featured traditional stone displays from China and Japan.





Top; One of Richard Turner's displays featuring a stone resting on a fragment of a Chinese landscape painting.

Middle; Turner explaining the features of the contemporary stone displays to attendees of the convention.

Bottom; A painted, used cell telephone holder was recycled as a diaza in this display.



members of the group about what to submit, and the persons responsible for arranging the display may exercise some selectivity, but generally all stones that are entered will be shown. This type of exhibition is similar to exhibitions of painting, drawing and photography mounted by amateur art associations. There is an important difference however. Exhibitions sponsored by amateur art associations are commonly judged by an outside juror—a trained specialist, gallery director or an art critic—who selects (and rejects) entries, awards prizes when appropriate, and sometimes participates in the arrangement of the work in the gallery space. Juried exhibitions have the advantage of both encouraging widespread participation and demonstrating to club members what quality work is, at least from the perspective of the chosen professional who juries the show.

Neither of the two aforementioned types of exhibitions is curated, which is to say that they are not thematically organized.

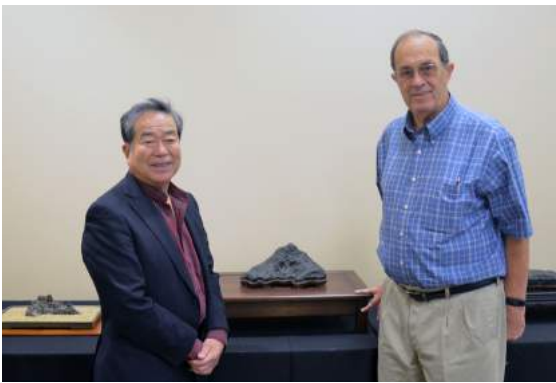
### Two Curated Exhibitions

The curated exhibition presents the opportunity for viewing stones or works for art to be selected and arranged in such a way that they express the curator's viewpoint. *Viewing Stones: Traditions in Transition* is one such exhibition.

**The Viewing Stones: Traditions in Transition exhibition** was based upon the idea that the collection, display and appreciation of stone has been a dynamic process that started in China, spread to Japan and Korea, and eventually to North America, Europe and across the planet. As co-curators we wanted to convey this evolution by first exhibiting Chinese and Japanese stones, then displaying stones from twelve other countries. Stones that were appreciated in Imperial China and Japan were first, followed by more recently discovered types of stones in these two countries. In addition, traditional Asian methods of display were







used for most of the Chinese and Japanese stone. As the exhibit unfolded, newer and different approaches to display were used. The final section of the exhibit was six stones displayed in a contemporary manner. These stones surprised many of the visitors and created considerable interest among the strongly bonsai-oriented participants of the convention.

Since this was a major bonsai convention, the close tie between bonsai and viewing stones was made at the entrance to the exhibit. Visitors were greeted by a large living olive bonsai and a large upright viewing stone—a piece of petrified wood—as a symbolic gesture to the transformation of living trees into stone (under certain environmental conditions) and the tie between the two art forms. This helped to draw bonsai enthusiasts into the exhibit. Considered in its context, *Viewing Stones: Traditions in Transition* was a success. It introduced viewers to contemporary viewing stone display practices against the broad sweep of the history of the tradition. Given more time, resources, scholarship and institutional sponsorship, it could be developed into a substantial museum-quality exhibition.

**Wu Bin: Ten Views of a Lingbi Stone** at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art is just such an exhibit. An extraordinary Ming dynasty hand scroll is the

featured object of the show. Displayed in a 30-foot-long, horizontal vitrine that stood in the center of the room, the scroll alternated Wu Bin's closely observed brush and ink drawings of a renowned stone collected by Mi Wanzhong with inscriptions extolling its beauty and records of its provenance. Each of the ten views (bottom, top, sides, front, back, etc.) was a fully realized drawing independent of the others. The stone that was the subject of the drawing was such a complex form that it was at times hard to believe that all of the drawings, although done in the same style and scale, were of the same stone.

*Top left;* Japanese Ponpira stone from Hokkaido.  
*Top right;* A river cobble pattern stone from the Philippines.  
*Middle left;* Nippon Suiseki Association President, Kobayashi Kunio and Tom Elias discussing the exhibition.  
*Middle right;* A California Murphy's figure stone.





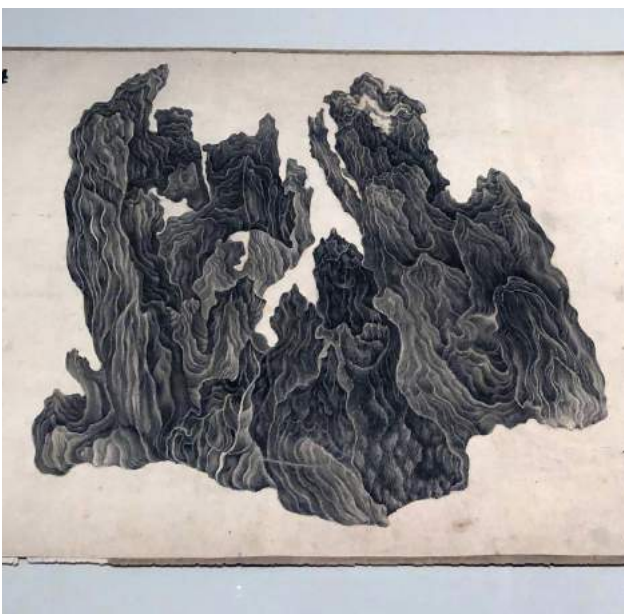
Surrounding the vitrine were stones, sculptures and paintings, each of which introduced the visitor to a different aspect of the world of viewing stones. One ink-on-paper painting by a contemporary artist Zeng Xizojun, shared the intricacy of Wu Bin's drawing while introducing color to the experience. A second painting by Yao Ying-fung suggested the relation between the microcosm of viewing stones and the macrocosm of the landscape. The third painting, also by a living artist, Leung Kai-Ting, mediated between the stone and the landscape, creating a surreal world that was a hybrid of psychedelic fantasy and grotesque rock forms.

There were three stones and four sculptures on display as well. The stones were Lingbi and Tai Hu stones, similar in material and form to the stone in Wu Bin's drawings. The two Qing Dynasty sculptures were carved wood versions of scholar's rocks which served to acquaint the viewer with the larger culture of viewing stone connoisseurship that includes "stones" fabricated from clay, wood and other materials. The other two sculptures were contemporary works by Zhan Wang and Sun Wentao. One was highly polished stainless steel and the other was made from urethane foam. Together they told the visitor that viewing stone appreciation was alive and well in the 21st century and that what inspired Wu Bin in the 16th century still fascinates artists today. *Wu Bin, Ten Views of a Lingbi Stone* was a tightly curated exhibition that introduced the visitor to the wide world of viewing stone appreciation with only ten pieces.

### Other Examples of Curated Exhibitions

These two shows are not the only curated exhibitions of viewing stones. The Potomac Viewing Stone Group in the Washington D. C. area has sponsored several curated shows at the National Arboretum.

Top; An original Ming dynasty long hand scroll by Wu Bin Ten Views of a Lingbi Stone. Details below.





They have mounted shows with witty titles such as *No Holes Barred*, a display of Chinese stones, a show of stones that heralded the coming of spring, and, most recently, an exhibition of stones inspired by the Chinese literati tradition.

On the west coast James Greaves has been curating exhibitions of viewing stones since the early 2000s, mainly at the Huntington Library Art Collections and Botanical Gardens. These have included exhibitions organized around seasonal themes, mineral types such as jade, stones from the seashore, the dialogue between stones and display accessories and the collections of people such as Bob Watson, a seminal figure in the history of west coast viewing stone appreciation. Thomas Elias curated exhibitions of Japanese and Chinese chrysanthemum flower stones at the 2012 BCI convention in Denver, Colorado and then at the 2013 Golden State Bonsai Federation convention in Burbank, California.

The Chambers Gallery in New York city has sponsored two exhibitions of stones and artworks inspired by viewing stones. There was also a 2011 exhibition in London at the White Cube Bermondsey, *Structure and Absence*, in which scholar's rocks were used as a foil for works of contemporary art. In southern California, Richard Turner curated two exhibitions of viewing stones and fine art one at Chapman University's Guggenheim Gallery Home/Office Landscapes in 2007, and a second in Los Angeles for the Fellows of Contemporary Art, *Petrophilia: the Love of Stones* in 2015. The authors are planning an upcoming show featuring common objects such as cutting boards and baking pans used as display furniture for viewing stones.

Viewing stone appreciation has been practiced in North America for at least 70 years. The authors believe that the time is ripe for the acceptance of juried and curated exhibitions as part of the display tradition. For those of us interested in elevating stone appreciation from a hobby to an art form and spreading word of its appeal beyond the viewing stone community, aligning our exhibition practices with those of the art world is a necessary strategy. We recognize that not everyone has the resources or the expertise to stage a curated exhibition. Given the fact that most viewing stone exhibitions are held in venues that are not designed for such displays and that the shows are up for a relatively short time, a curated exhibition is a major commitment of time. However, the very act of thinking and talking about viewing stones in relation to a specific motif or subject can lead to a fresh understanding of your own stones and a new appreciation of your fellow collectors and what their stones say to them. A place to begin might be as modest as designating a portion of the annual show as a curated display themed around seasonal stones, figure stones or abstract stones. The next move is up to you. 🌲



Displays from the exhibit *Petrophilia: the Love of Stones*.

Top; Sculpture, *Travelling with My Heart Above My Head* by Jacci Den Hartog.

Bottom; Viewing stones, fossil, root sculpture, petrified wood from the collections of Thomas Elias, Hiromi Nakaoji and Freeman Wang. Ceramic sculpture by Shoshi Kanokohata



# Suiseki & Bonsai in the Free Imperial City of Augsburg

*Top;* The Golden Hall at the town hall of Augsburg prove the wealth of the "Free Imperial City" at the Middle Ages.

*Bottom;* Town hall and Perlachturn (tower) of Augsburg.





# 40th Anniversary of BCD (Bonsai Club Germany) & 25th Anniversary of the German Suiseki Society

Text and Photos by Gudrun Benz, Germany

Photographs by Jörg Derlien courtesy BCD  
(Bonsai Club Germany)

**T**he annual conventions of both clubs were held in Augsburg on 25th to 27th May 2018. The university city, Augsburg, is located in Bavaria, Germany and is, with about 290,000 inhabitants, the third biggest city of Bavaria. It was founded by the Romans even before Christ and named after the Roman emperor Augustus. It enjoyed economic prosperity because of its favorable geographic location with direct access to most important Alpine passes and as an intersection of many important European connections, it was a major trade route of the Middle Ages. It was one of the “Free Imperial Cities”, a title which was used from the 15<sup>th</sup> century until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to denote a self-ruling city that had a certain amount of autonomy and was represented in the Imperial Diet, the highest representative assembly in an empire. It was subordinate only to the Holy Roman Emperor.



*Top; The social settlement of the “Fuggerei”*

*Middle; A couple dressed in clothes of rich patrician citizens of the Middle Ages.*

*Bottom left; View into the bonsai exhibition: Tokonoma display and a row of big bonsai.*

*Bottom right; View into the exhibition of middle-sized bonsai.*







But Augsburg is mainly known to German people for the “Fuggerei,” the oldest existing Social settlement in the world. It is a donation of the rich patrician family Fugger which founded the Fuggerei in 1521 for citizens of Augsburg in need. The social settlement is a “city within a city” having its own church, town gates, 67 houses with 140 apartments and its own administration, even today. The inhabitants had, and still have, to pay a symbolic low rent of 0.88 Euro per year with the obligation to pray each day for the well-being of the Fugger family.

The “Kongress am Park,” location of the 2018 Bonsai and Suiseki meeting, is a modern building suitable for big congresses, conferences and meetings. It offered enough space for the Bonsai, Suiseki, Kusamono and an antique bonsai pot display, as well as a hall with rooms for demonstrations, lectures, meetings and trader area. Thanks to an intensive promotion of the event, mainly by internet, nearly 1,500 visitors came on Saturday and Sunday to see the show despite the hot temperature of about 30 °C. There were 120 bonsai in exhibit, separately displayed according the size: shohin, bonsai up to 45 cm and big bonsai over 45 cm high. 21 suiseki were displayed in a separate room. A few nice kusamono were arranged on pedestals,

Top left and middle; Tokonoma displays with *Juniperus chinensis*.

Top right; *Crataegus sp.*, a yamadori of about 70 years, in care since 1998.

Bottom; Example of bonsai together with paintings under the title “Landscapes in Dialog” by Elke Jordan.





and 35 antique, hand painted bonsai pots and hand-crafted bonsai pots by the ceramist Peter Krebs were displayed in glass boxes. Eight posters with photos and text documented the development of the Bonsai Club Germany in the 40 years of its existence. A special small exhibition of bonsai, together with paintings under the title "Landscapes in Dialog" by Mrs Elke Jordan, completed the event which was a great success and will last in the memory of participants. 🌳



*Top and middle; Azaleas in full blossom.  
Bottom; Winner of the Willi Benz Memorial Prize, a big Acer palmatum of Klaus Kimmig.*





European larch  
*Juniperus rigida*



Azalea  
*Taxus cuspidata*, import from Japan, in care by the owner since 2002







*Juniperus Sabina*, yamadori of about 120 years, in care by the owner since 2008



Examples of the Kusamono display







*Middle;* German New Talent Contest: the winner will represent Germany at the European convention in France.

*Top;* Shohin display of Hannelore Bünger, second prize for shohin. Photograph by Jörg Derlien.

*Bottom;* Shohin display of Holger Göbel, prize of the Jury for shohin. Photograph by Jörg Derlien.







*Top left;* Winner of the challenge Cup for Suiseki 2018, a human-shaped stone (40 cm h) of Alois Balmer, Switzerland, origin of the stone: Switzerland.

*Top right;* Japanese mountain stone of 20 cm w x 16 cm d x 5 cm h of Kersten Lochner (Germany).



*Middle right;* Waterfall stone of 20 cm w x 10 cm d x 15 cm h of Gudrun Benz, origin of the stone: Taiwan.

*Lower middle right;* Mountain stone, Ibigawa ishi of René Alber (Germany), origin of the Suiseki: Japan .

*Bottom left;* Chrysanthemum stone of 16 cm w x 8 cm d x 35 cm h of Silvia Kadasch (Germany), origin of the stone: China.



*Bottom right;* Mountain lake stone, origin: Japan, collection Michael Krull (Germany).





# Cheerful, Beautiful and Attractive

## Orchid and Bonsai Show, 2017, Kuala Lumpur at Di Taman Pudu Ulu

By IS Ng, Malaysia



**K**uala Lumpur Orchid and Bonsai Show (KLOBS) is an exhibition and competition of two art forms that share many characteristics. KLOBS was first introduced in 2012 aimed at promoting the premier Botanical Garden which has been upgraded from Lake Garden Park to a botanical garden called Taman Pudu Ulu.

Looking at the response received, KLOBS was organized again in 2014 at the same location, the Perdana Botanical Garden of Kuala Lumpur. Orchids and bonsai were presented as the main theme of the program.

KLOBS continues in 2015 where this program is elevated to an international-quality exposition where entries for orchid competitions and exhibitions came from several foreign countries such as the United

States, Australia, Hong Kong, Switzerland, Thailand and other countries

Visitors who visit KLOBS are diverse, not only are they orchid and bonsai fans but they are also diverse groups of people, locals as well as regular visitors to the Perdana Botanical Garden. There are also foreign tourists who visit the Kuala Lumpur Orchid and Bonsai Show, attracted through massive promotions to enjoy the Kuala Lumpur City Center area and also the hotels around Kuala Lumpur. This is because in addition to the orchid and bonsai exhibition and competitions, the event also provides a variety of interesting and lively field trips, competitions and workshops.

Kuala Lumpur Orchid and Bonsai Show 2017 took place from 2 December to 10 December 2017 at Taman Pudu Ulu, Cheras. In addition to the DBKL (Dewan



Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur, or Kuala Lumpur City Hall) biennial event, KLOBS 2017 was aimed at promoting the re-branding of Taman Pudu Ulu which was officially opened by the Federal Territories Minister on April 10, 2017. This time the Kuala Lumpur Orchid and Bonsai Show was open from 9am to 10pm daily.

Objective of the Kuala Lumpur Orchid and Bonsai Show 2017

- Encourage the active involvement of urban people in improving the quality and culture of healthy living among all walks of life;
- Encourage the creation of on-going quality programs and activities and create a natural environment that is cheerful, beautiful and attractive;
- Encourage the spirit of loving nature-based natural remedies; and
- Encourage the general public to respect and value the environment.

The event was organized by Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (Kuala Lumpur City Hall) and the bonsai was co-organized by Bonsai n Stone Academy. 🌳



Top;  
Opening Ceremony with YB DATO' DR Loga Bala Mohan A/LJaganathan – Deputy Federal Territories Minister on the right and YBhg. Tan Sri Hj. Mhd. Amin Nordin bin Abd. Aziz (Mayor Kuala Lumpur) beside him.



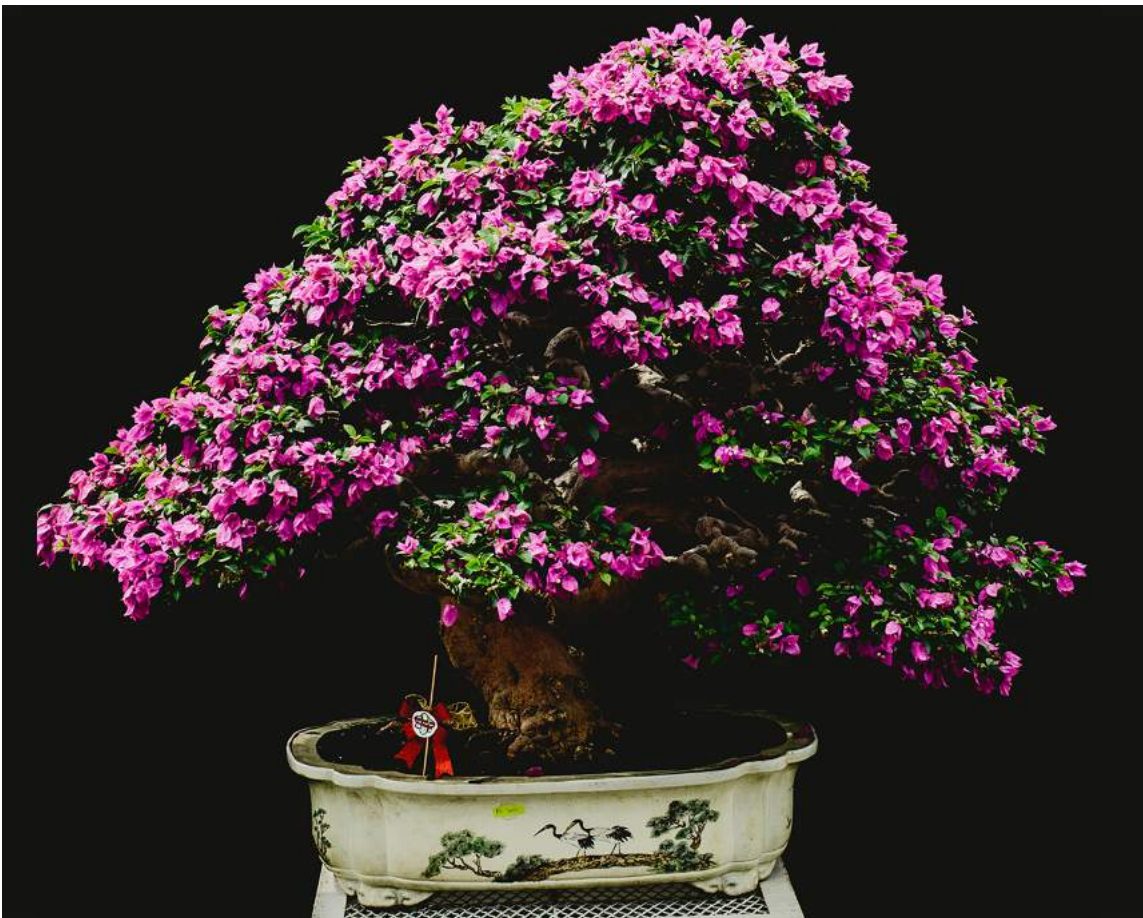
Middle;  
Various department heads from Kuala Lumpur City Hall participating in the Opening Ceremonies.  
Bottom;  
Tin Chok Teng, *Beackea frutescens* - Mayor Award (Imported and Malaysia category)











Facing page;

Top;

Chin Choy Fook, *Celtis sinensis*  
- BCI Excellence Award  
(Imported and Malaysia  
category)

Bottom;

Chin Choy Fook, *Wrightia  
religiosa* - Mayor Award  
(Malaysia)

This page;

Top;

Chong Yong Yap, *Wrightia  
religiosa* - BCI Excellence Award  
(Malaysia)

Bottom;

Chin Choy Fook, *Bougainvillea* -  
Queen of Flowers Award









Facing page;  
Top left;  
Chong Siah Leong, *Beackea frutescens*

Top right;  
Mohd Razlin, *Beackea frutescens*

Bottom;  
Yap Hock Lye, *Premna microphylla*

This page;  
Top left;  
Tang Chak Aue, *Wrightia religiosa*

Top right;  
Wan Zaimi Wan Ibrahim, *Beackea frutescens*

Middle;  
Teoh Boon Liang, *Triphasia trifolia*

Bottom;  
Noor Azidi Mohamad, *Premna microphylla*



# Little Stones with Big Personalities

## Small Size Suiseki from Indonesia

Text and photos by Budi Sulisty, Indonesia

**S**uiseki collecting in Indonesia has spread to many places around the country since the Asia Pacific Convention in Bali in 1991. At that time most stones came from West Java and were sandstone material. Later on, stones from different areas were discovered, like from West Papua, Central Java, other areas of West Java, Sulawesi, North Sumatra, Aceh and mostly from West Sumatra. During the 7th Asia Pacific Bonsai and Suiseki Exhibition and Convention in Bali 2007, Mr. Arishige Matsuura, The Chairman of Nippon Suiseki Association, was invited as one of the judges in the Suiseki exhibition. In the exhibition, as usual, there were exhibited many big suiseki from various new areas. Big suiseki are the most popular in Indonesia. Suiseki with the size between 20 cm to 50 cm are the most loved by Indonesian suiseki lovers. Whereas the suiseki with the size under 20 cm are considered small. In the exhibition at that time, to our surprise, Mr. Matsuura refused to judge the big size suiseki. He would like to judge only up to 20 cm in size. It was a big shock to us when we knew the decision of Mr. Matsuura. It meant that small size suiseki were in favor among Japanese suiseki collectors, although there were some suiseki found in Japanese books quite big in size.

Personally, I like small size suiseki because they are handy and easy to carry, even abroad or used as souvenirs. I already had in my collection many suiseki long before the the judging event at the Asia Pacific Convention in Bali 2007. I just want to show that small size suiseki are also valuable.

Here are some of my small suiseki. 🌿







*Facing page;*

This stone is called *A bowing lady*, with the size W 15 D 7 H 17 cm. This stone will look very good if it is presented together with the "master" that stands on the left or in front of "the lady." This stone comes from Medan, North Sumatra. It has a special character with the line that shows the difference detail of the face and the head cover.

*Top;*

*The Dragon.* This suiseki is from Jonggol, West Java with the size W 20 D 15 H 14 cm.

*Bottom;*

I call this stone *The Lion Head*. It comes from Sijunjung, West Sumatra with the size W 18 D 10 H 18.



Top;

The "Lion head" changes into "The close mountain" when it is shown in a different way. The size is changed, anyhow, into W 22 D 12 H 7 cm.

Middle;

I call this stone *The Blue Mountain* with the size W 17 D 7 H 7 cm. It is from Sei Batanghari, West Sumatra.

Bottom left;

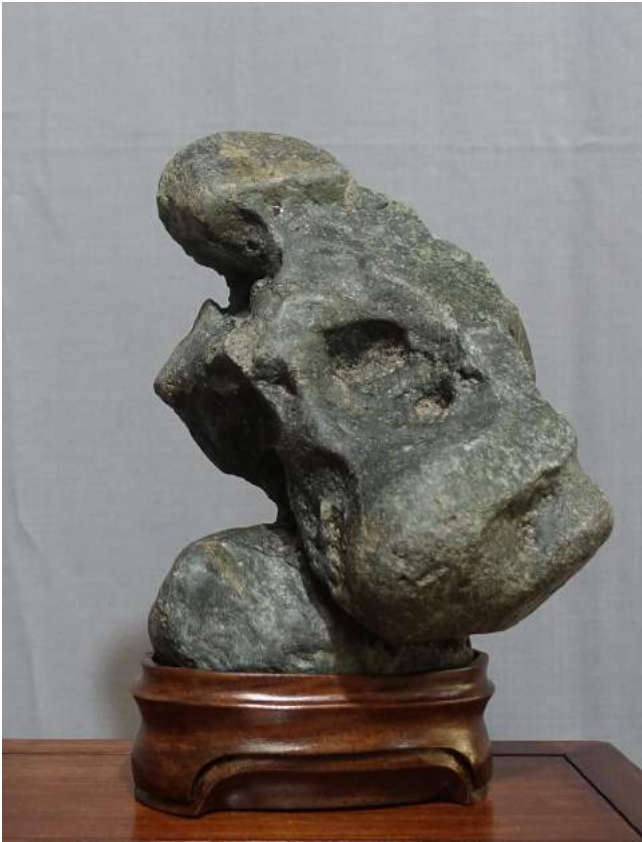
This stone is from Sei Batanghari, West Sumatra with the size W 15 D 10 H 12 cm. I call it *A Hut*.

Bottom right;

*A Tunnel*. This stone is from Sijunjung, West Sumatra, W 7 D 8 H 10 CM







*Top left;*  
*Reading the Scripture.* This suiseki is from Sijunjung, West Sumatra with the size W 15 D 15 H 19 cm. It resembles a person reading a book.

*Top right;*  
The stone is from Aceh, Sumatra, W 19 D 5 H 19. I call it *Chi*, the inner power of a human being.

*Middle;*  
*Mountain.* The suiseki is from Sijunjung, West Sumatra W 11 D 8 H 5 cm

*Bottom;*  
*Multiple Peaks.* The stone is from Jonggol, West Java, W 20 D 17 H 8 cm



*Top;*

The stone is from Medan, North Sumatra, W 11 D 8 H 5 cm – *Mountain and Lakes*

*Middle;*

The *Twin Peaks* is from Sei Batanghari, West Sumatra with the size W 16 D 8 H 7 cm.

*Bottom;* This small stone is from Aceh, Sumatra with the size W 18 D 8 H 10 cm – *The Blue Tunnel*.

*Facing Page:*

*Top;*

This unique stone is from Timika, West Papua, W 12 D 3 H 9 cm. The title is *Omega*.

*Bottom;*

The stone is from Lembah Baliem, Irian Jaya, W 11 D 5 H 7. It is a fossil of a shell. Anyhow, as it has a unique shape I just have it as a *suiseki* with the title, *The Rising Sun*.









# 2018 European Bonsai & Suiseki Convention

By Gudrun Benz, Germany

Photos by Gudrun Benz



**EBA, ESA & UBI Convention 2018, hosted by  
Arcobonsai Club Garda Trentino on May 4–6**





The small city of Arco of only about 18,000 inhabitants is located near Lake Garda and surrounded by an astonishing mountain panorama. It enjoys a mild, sometimes subtropical climate and vegetation with palm trees and olive trees, vineyards, fruit trees, oleander, bougainvillea, etc. No wonder that the city's economy is based on tourism. You can enjoy all kinds of sports and fun: cycling, mountain biking, canoeing, hiking, Nordic walking, trekking, climbing...

The yearly major exhibition of Arco Bonsai Club Garda Trentino takes place at the beginning of May and is well known by bonsai enthusiasts in Europe. The Arcobonsai Club Garda Trentino was founded in 1985 and has about 50 members at the present. Since the first years of its existence the club organized a yearly congress with exhibition and lectures on biological bonsai aspects by some university teachers. So it has a long experience in organizing bonsai events and was therefore competent in hosting the international European Congress 2018. This year's European bonsai and suiseki convention was fixed at the first week-end of May when the regional bonsai event of the organizer, the

Arco Bonsai Club Garda Trentino, usually takes place. Participants of the event enjoyed the warm weather of northern Italy with bright sunshine, mainly on Sunday.

Besides a high levelled bonsai and suiseki exhibition a rich program and large trader area with about 60 professionals completed the event. The program comprised the New Talent Contest with participants of 14 European countries, the European Arcobonsai Contest 2018 with 13 demonstrators and their helpers, the demonstration of the headliner Hotsumi Terakawa from Japan, lectures related to bonsai and Suiseki as well as lectures regarding the connection between nature and arts but also board meetings and the annual general meetings of the participating organizations.

*Facing page:*

*Top;* A medieval castle towers over the small city of Arco.

*Bottom left;* *Myrtus communis* of Sebastiano Villante.

*Bottom right;* Entrance of the Palazzo Marchetti where the Euro Arcobonsai Contest was held.

*This page:*

*Top left;* The German team at the Arcobonsai Contest, Jörg Derlien and his assistant Gil Marriner.

*Top right;* The trader area outside of the Casino Municipale was connected with "Arco Fiori," a colorful flower market.

*Middle;* High mountains surround Arco.

*Bottom;* BCI Award of Excellence, UBI award, and IBS award: Plateau stone; origin, Japan; Daniela Schifano collection, Italy.





View into the bonsai exhibition from the entrance.



BCI Award of Excellence: *Pinus sylvestris* of Bonsai Club Rivalta; by Marco Paschetta.



At the “Euro Arcobonsai Contest” each EBA member country could select one club which should nominate a bonsai artist and one assistant who represented their association at the contest. The participants had to bring their own tree, tools, wire and all they needed for their work. There wasn’t no limit for the variety and the height of the tree: a raw material, a pre-shaped tree or also a bonsai for re-shaping. After having finished

their work each demonstrator had to vote for the tree he liked best, excluding his own tree. The winner was the tree which received the majority of votes. This contest took place during 8 hours the whole Saturday. The winner was Mauro Stemberger, Italy. The second winner Libor Slatinka assisted by Jirka Novák came from Czech Republic and the third winner was Jörg Derlien with his assistant Gil Marriner from Germany.





Michal Mokry from the Netherlands was placed as the first winner of the European New Talent Contest. The second winner Aleš Zavodnik came from Slovenia, and the third Filippo Mazzoni from Italy.

The Japanese bonsai master Hotsumi Terakawa showed his skills during a demonstration with a *Juniperus chinensis* on Sunday.

The bonsai and Suiseki exhibitions were of high standard. Unfortunately, display space for both bonsai and Suiseki was limited. The Suiseki exhibition for example was restricted to 20 specimens so some Suiseki friends couldn't participate with their stones. In addition, the lighting at the ESA exhibition room

*Top left; Juniperus chinensis Itoigawa of Bonsai Gymnasium, by Marco Tarozzo.*

*Top right; Merit Award of EBA: Pinus mugo of Mauro Stemberger, Italy.*

*Bottom left; Juniperus chinensis of Enrico Pavin.*

*Bottom right; Pinus mugo of Enzo Ferrari.*



Top left and right; ESA President's Award: "The Dark Side of the Mountain," mountain stone (85 x 45 x 20 cm); origin, Liguria, Italy; Claudio Villa collection, Italy.

Claudio with his winning stone.

Middle; A.I.A.S. Award: Waterfall stone, origin: Italy, Riccardo Sorbino collection, Italy.

Bottom; UBI Award: Mountain stone; origin, Liguria, Italy; Claudio Villa collection.



was insufficient. Landscape, in particular mountain stones dominated as at most exhibitions in Europe. Most stones were from European origin. They came from Italy, especially from Liguria, Slovakia, Czech Republic but also some came from Japan and China.

High light of the social program was the boat cruise on Garda Lake on Friday evening for the gala dinner. Many awards by ESA, UBI, IBS, AIAS and BCI were presented to bonsai as well as Suiseki during the Evening "B & B & B – Birra e Bonsai e Baraonda" at a tennis hall on Saturday. **A BCI Award of Excellence** was given to an outstanding forest planting of *Pinus sylvestris* of Mario Paschetta from Bonsai Club Rivalta which was also nominated as best Bonsai 2018 of UBI. At this evening all participants had much fun where participating Italian bonsai clubs brought culinary specialties of their region such as cheese, sausages and bacon, bread, wine and beer and shared all this with the other friends and guests.

Next year's European convention will take place at Albi, France on 10 – 12 May 2019. The city of Albi is located about 60 km west of Toulouse and is a World Heritage of UNESCO.







Top left; *Juniperus chinensis* Itoigawa of Diego Fortuna, photo by Herbert Obermayer  
 Top right; *Cupressus sempervirens* of Alfredo Suardi  
 Bottom; ESA Award: Composition with a "Toad" (10 x 16 x 11 cm), animal-shaped Fengli stone (Gobi desert); Holger Göbel collection, Germany; photo by Herbert Obermayer.

Middle left; Nomination of ESA: "Like a robin, a rustle of leaves", mountain stone (29 x 15 x 8.5 cm); origin, Piave River, Italy; Santo Buratti collection.  
 Middle right; Distant mountain stone, Toyama ishi (22.1 x 8 x 9.5 cm); origin, Japan; Yvonne Graubeak collection, Denmark.

The president of Czech Bonsai Association bit for the European Convention 2020. EBA representatives agreed to hold their convention 2020 in Kromeriz (Czech Republic), a beautiful city not too far from the border to Austria and Hungary.

The trader's area was installed outside the Casino Municipale, the location of the exhibition. It was connected with "Arco Fiori", a flower market where also local rural products were offered. The bright colors of the flowers added another attraction to the whole.

I think this year's European convention in Arco was for all participants a nice and unforgettable experience where they could see wonderful bonsai and Suiseki, learn from demonstrations and lectures, meet old friends and make new friends. And all this at a most beautiful location inviting them to come back again.

**Awards presented to outstanding suiseki:**

Awards were presented by ESA, UBI, IBS, AIAS and BCI. The ESA award was given to a "Toad" of Mr. Holger Göbel from Germany. The Gobi desert stone







Top left; UBI Award: Mountain stone; origin, Japan; Igor Carino collection, Italy.

Top right; *Olea Sylvestris*.

Middle left; Detail of the shohin display shown at bottom.

Middle right; *Pinus nigra* – Kuromatsu of Guido Pozzoli.

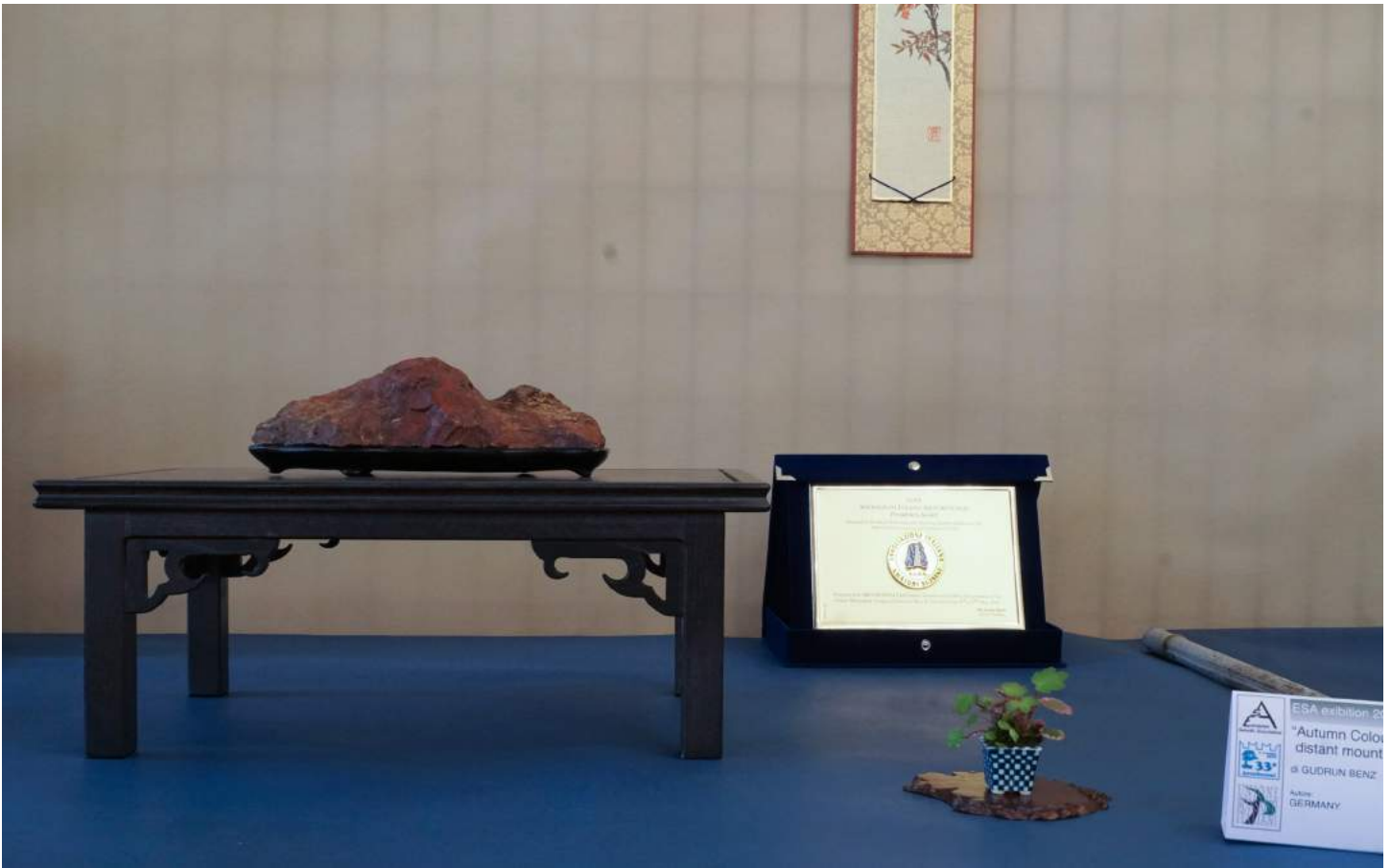
Bottom; Shelf with Shohin composition of Jikan-en Bonsai Laboratory, by Francesco Forno and Fabrizio Zorzi.



was displayed on a shelf together with a scroll and an azalea as accent plant. Two ESA President Awards went to the wonderful mountain stone “The Dark Side of the Mountain” of Mr. Claudio Villa from Italy and an outstanding mountain stone of Mr. Carlo Guardigli from Italy.

A ESA Nomination was presented to Mr. Santo Buratti from Italy for his landscape stone “Like a Robin a Rustle of Leaves” which was found in Italy. The second Nomination went to a plateau stone of Mrs. Martina Vyhldalova from Slovakia. The first UBI prize for suiseki was presented to the magnificent plateau stone of Mrs. Daniela Schiffano from Italy which received also the BCI Award of Excellence. The second UBI prize was given to the beautiful mountain stone in a doban of Mr. Igor Carino from Italy. The third UBI prize went to a impressive mountain stone of Mr. Claudio Villa from Italy. 🏡





Top; A.I.A.S. President's Award: "Autumn Color," distant mountain stone; Sado Akadama ishi (24 x 8 x 11 cm); origin, Japan; Gudrun Benz collection; photo by Herbert Obermayer.  
Bottom; *Quercus pubescens* of Salvatore Di Dio.



The three stones are arranged in an irregular triangle, elevated in lotus flowers out of a pond.



1

By Sandro Tschudin, Switzerland

Translation: Martin Lang

Photos by Sandro Tschudin

Final Picture: Gudrun Benz

**T**he Suiseki fever caught me without me even realizing it. I had a vague idea about the existence of these stones because I had some slight encounters in my search of potential decoration for a bonsai. No wonder the opportunities were very rare, there was until now no active Suiseki scene in Switzerland.

It must have been about 12 years ago when I actually took the time to examine consciously such a stone next to a bonsai. It is very possible that I expressed myself negatively to my colleague, about how artificial the stones looked, being certain that they were processed to have this shape. Suspiciously, we dismissed them as a fraud and considered bonsai the more elevated art. So it wasn't love at first sight.

However, this first conscious encounter must have been indeed the first sign of what has become a profound and satisfying passion. A certain curiosity was awakened. What was this glorified Suiseki all about?

# Flowers of Gratitude

**A DAIZA FOR  
THE THREE NORNS  
(The Three Wise Women)**





**Grenadill wood, of which clarinettes are made, was chosen. Its high density permits most detailed work.**

1. First positioning on the block of Grenadill wood
2. Initial carving with hard-metal cissels
3. Early details of seed vessel and flower
4. Whole group complete impression

I ordered the book *Suiseki – Kunstwerke der Natur, präsentiert von Menschen*, written by Gudrun and Willi Benz. A crucial decision with consequences. What I found, exceeded all my expectations. There, a door was opened to a new universe, revealing a variety and beauty that I have never thought to be possible.

I read the book again and again, soaked up the bundled knowledge and scrutinised yearningly the pictures of the miraculous stones, imaging myself being one of the chosen people to find such a stone and to become the first human being to hold it in his hands.

I will always be grateful to Gudrun and Willi Benz for having ignited this passion. They opened my eyes for this discrete but essential art form. They were my teachers, my pathfinders.

Now, twelve years and many hours of Tanseki later, there is no opportunity any more to give my special thanks to Willi.

I will always regret it.

Fortunately, I met Gudrun Benz personally in Königsberg. Her immense knowledge astonished me once again.

I began to feel a desire to return the favour. To show my appreciation, I intended to carve a Daiza for her. Some months later I had the opportunity: Three figure stones from China gave Gudrun some headache. How to make a suitable Daiza for them? Gladly, I attended to do it myself and first sketches were made rapidly. My imagination was inspired by the richly decorated wooden bases that I saw in the Benz collection and also by my gratitude to them!







The three stones consist of a green colored substance covered with a delicate geometric pattern. The twelve-centimeter-tall figures captivate with their elegant and well-proportioned posture.

I chose Grenadill (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*), of which clarinets are made. Its high density permits most detailed work. The natural color of the wood matches very well to the figures so no staining or varnishing was necessary. Polished Grenadill becomes as smooth as glass, therefore no chemicals were needed, either.

The three stones should be arranged in an irregular triangle, elevated in lotus flowers out of a pond.

Thereby, the different states of the flower should symbolise the course of time as it is seen traditionally in their country of origin. But I also wanted to embed the figures in the mythology of the Occident, to restage them as The Three Norns of German mythology. The three female gods are symbols of the past, the present and the future, influencing the fate of the people. They should be the silent observers of the blossoming and time-passing, wisely and unaffected by the human suffering.





12



13

**My imagination was inspired by the richly decorated wooden bases in the Benz collection and also by my gratitude to them!**



11

As their focus, a fresh lotus bud seemed suitable to me. It should embody the comforting confidence that every ending also contains a beginning. As dirty the pond may be, the lotus will always rise out of it with perfection and glowing beauty.

With Willi and Gudrun in mind I got down to work.

Soon the diligent work was completed and the stones got their right positions. At this point I also decided how the figures were associated to the various stages of the lotus flower. This made it possible to dedicate myself to the creative part of the project. As an aid to carve the fully closed, the half and the full blossom I drew several models. In particular I set value on the details like the filaments of the full blossom or the segments of the seed vessel. Not an easy undertaking given that everything is carved out of one piece. No glue added, just out of pure wood.

I tried to make the petals as lively as possible. The carving of their bending and proportion was a special delight. There I could let my imagination run freely but I always had to take into consideration the overall statement, the relations of the individual components to each other. Like there are movements from one petal to the next and

- 5. Embedded figures details
- 6. Unpretty stem towards observer
- 7. Out of a single piece, no glue, no screw
- 8. View from the left side
- 9. View from behind
- 10. View from the right side
- 11. Correct stem, more upright and towards centre of the flower
- 12. Base that includes composition
- 13. Rippling water





when there is a negative space the young bud is nestled. Furthermore, I really wanted the composition to give an intimacy and concentration towards the middle, where the young bud is emerging.

Very soon it was necessary to think about the stem and the leaves. They should be a frame around the stages of the lotus flower and building a passage to the water surface.

- 14. After sanding
- 15 Polished daiza
- 16 Inscription on the underside of the daiza:  
"For Gudrun and Willi -  
connected in love to stones"



First of all I started by carving the blossom with the stem directing towards the observer. But I had to revise this concept very soon because this way I put too much emphasis on the stem that looked not light enough regarding the whole composition. Only by making the stem more upright and moving it closer towards the middle of the blossom, was the gesture of rising finally given. The biggest and lowest leaf is floating on the water. It should support the whole composition like a bowl. I enjoyed very much to carve out the wavy border of that leaf, because its upwards movements requires an appropriate tension of the bottom side. In this way the work results out of itself. Over and over I tried to work out the parts in a clearer, sharper and more delicate way, so I could soon start with extensive sanding.

I wanted the water to look like light waves, moving concentrically out from the middle. This underlines, together with the chosen round basic form, the focus to the middle. The whole creation appears in harmony and at peace with itself. The bud gets its deserved importance by the posture and the focus of The Three Norns. Letting the composition sink in, one cannot miss its evidence. The Daiza is meant to be an invitation to dwell on the details, the apertures and movements, a homage to the transformation of nature, making aware its infinite creative power in our own life.

The inscription on the underside of the daiza comes from the heart and refers to the absolute underlying truth. 🌸







# Jerusalem Botanical Garden Annual Bonsai Awards and Exhibition

## With Special Guest, Ryan Neil

By Moshe Emergui, Israel

Photos courtesy Moshe Emergui.

Photography: Dor Kedmi (courtesy Jerusalem Botanical Garden)

**T**he Jerusalem Botanical Garden (JBG) is Israel's largest public garden. In addition to its focus on connecting the public with nature as a recreational destination, the Garden is also a local and international pioneer in promoting environmental and horticultural education, as well as urban sustainability and eco-social activism. Finally, the Jerusalem Botanical Garden is also one of Israel's premier institutes for academic botanical research.

The Garden's connection with the Israeli bonsai community began in 2002, when Haim Shir and Refael Shemi, two of the founding fathers of bonsai in Israel, donated their personal collections to the Garden. Since then, the Garden has served as a driving force in promoting the bonsai art-form in Israel, and in 2009 established the Jerusalem Botanical Garden Annual Bonsai Award and Exhibition. This annual event promotes excellence among local artists, offering them a chance to display their trees to the general public, and facilitates ties between the local and international bonsai communities through our visiting



international headliners. To date, the JBG Bonsai Award and Exhibition has already firmly built public awareness of bonsai as an artform, and not as a horticultural curiosity. The event has drawn intense interest from artistic circles and the media alike. Through these developments, the Jerusalem Botanical Garden seeks to build the environment that will foster future generations of Israeli bonsai artists.

In 2012, the JBG decided to update its donated collection, and transform it into a modern, sculptural bonsai collection. To this end, the Garden enlisted the aid of international bonsai artist Ofer Grunwald as curator of the collection. One of the main focuses of recent curatorial activity has been to secure additional bonsai donations to build a collection that is more widely representative of the local bonsai landscape. The addition of trees donated by additional artists not only enables the collection to serve as a public showcase of the broader Israeli bonsai community, but will assure that the engagement with this community will continue in the years to come. Today, the collection is slowly transforming into a true, world-class bonsai collection,





*Top;* The Jerusalem Botanical Garden Annual Bonsai Awards and Exhibition space in the Exhibition Hall at Hansen House



*Bottom;* Visitors' Center and lecture hall in the Jerusalem Botanical Garden





Top left; *Myrtus communis tarentina* by Ofer Maor

Top right; Ryan Neil and Ofer Maor, with Ofer's Jerusalem Botanical Garden Award. First Place, for his *Myrtus communis tarentina*.

Middle right and bottom right; Views of the show in the Exhibition Hall at Hansen House.

Bottom left; *Olea europaea var. Sylvestris* by Moshe Emergui

fascinating the Garden's hundreds of thousands of annual visitors, and introducing them to contemporary bonsai practice.

This year the JBG decided to hold the annual exhibition at the Hansen House, The Hansen House is a Center for Design, Media and Technology, Designed by German architect Conrad Schick, Hansen House was first established in 1887 as a leper asylum by the Protestant community of Jerusalem. The compound is a wonderful art exhibition space and houses the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design's masters program.

### The "Chief Rabbi of Bonsai" Comes to Israel

The news for the arrival of Ryan Neil was accepted with surprise and great curiosity on the part of bonsai enthusiasts in Israel thirsty for knowledge. Ryan Neil, one of the best bonsai artists in the world, is known first and foremost as the disciple of the magician, Mashiko Kimura. Ryan is also known for his great cleverness and the way he teaches. One of his most important projects is Mirai Live, a very contemporary way of delivering digital media, transferring knowledge by live streaming videos, dedicated to offering subscribers continuous information on how to design and cultivate bonsai.





**“Ryan emphasized that first and foremost is the good health of the tree, and how to achieve this. The secret is balance between water and air.”**



*Left column, top to bottom; Ryan Neil and Amihay Yehizkiyahu, with Amihay's Jerusalem Botanical Garden Award. Second Place, for his Pistacia lentiscus fores.*

*Ryan Neil talks about the composition of an Olea by Moshe Emergui.*

*Portulacaria afra by Yonatan Gal.*

*Views of the show in the Exhibition Hall at Hansen House.*

*Top right; Olea europaea var. Sylvestris by Moshe Emergui*





Left column; Ryan Neil's demonstration and lecture was in the Hansen House Lecture Hall.

Right column; Moshe Emergui hosted a visit by special guest, Ryan Neil and Randy Knight of Oregon Bonsai at his bonsai studio/nursery.

With their first step into Hansen House's unique hall where the bonsai trees were displayed, visitors could feel the magical energy being projected from those small trees. The trees were displayed on a unusually tall stands on which artworks are displayed, giving the audiences a different aspect and new angle to look at the bonsai creations.

Ryan's demo/lecture took place in another beautiful space at the compound, the Lecture Hall in Hansen House. Ryan emphasized that first and foremost is the good health of the tree, and how to achieve this. The secret is balance between water and air.

Ryan's lecture was special, using three trees in various stages. Raw material untouched, middle work done, and a tree that is almost in the final stage of design. On each of the trees Ryan explained how to choose the front and the planting angle, among other illuminating insights.

"Sometimes you have to sacrifice one of the best parts to get the best of the whole tree."

He showed in a simple and clever way how to correctly reposition the tree, removing several branches and achieving a more proportionate appearance among all the different parts of the tree, trunk, foliage, without using wires. And he did not want to push the limit and risk the health of the tree.

Ryan asked questions and the audience was very responsive. The consensus was that Ryan Neil lecture/demo was excellent.

The following day was no less successful, with a workshop of 10 participants, most of them beginners. People brought a number of trees to the workshop and wanted to absorb from the Master every piece of information he had to share.

On Sunday I was lucky and grateful for the opportunity to host Ryan Neil; Randy Knight from Oregon Bonsai, a well-known collector of yamadori, and Ricardo and Ofer Grunwald in my nursery/studio. From my nursery they went to visit Amihay Yehizkiyahu in his home and see his bonsai collection.

The next day they went to the north of the country (Katzrin) and the next day they went up to Mt. Hermon to see the rare and special protected junipers. (*Juniperus drupacea* & *Juniperus excelsa*).

I can easily sum up Ryan's visit as one of the most successful visits in terms of contribution to Israeli bonsai knowledge. And in terms of his pleasant and patient personality, patience so necessary to be in the position of a teacher who communicates information clearly. 🌲



# 2nd Malaysia Wood Art, Suiseki & Floral Design Competition and Exhibition 2017 at Summit USJ Mall Subang Jaya

Joint Organizers, Bonsai N Stone Academy, and Tian Diao Natural Wood Art.

Text and photos by IS Ng, Malaysia

### Grand Champions from each category

Top;  
Water Stone (Large) - James Chai  
Bottom;  
Water Stone (Small) - James Chai







*Top left;*  
Assorted Wood (Large), by  
Chen Yien. Wood Art, Grand  
Champion

*Top right;*  
by Arena Boi Miow Ching

*Bottom;*  
Kayu Raja (Small) – by Lee Fook  
Kong







Top;  
Deep Process (Large, Natural Wood Art) by Tian Diao,  
Bottom;  
Kemuning Hitam (Large Wood Art), by Chen Yien.





**Examples from the exhibit.**

*Top left;*  
Arrangement by Wong Wan Cheng



*Top right;*  
Arrangement by Coco Wong



*Middle left;*  
Arrangement by Desmond Liew



*Middle right;*  
Arrangement by Jenny Lee



*Bottom left;*  
Kayu Hitam (Black Wood)

*Bottom right;*  
Kayu Hitam (Black Wood)







*Top left;*  
 Assorted Wood  
*Top right;*  
 Assorted Wood  
*Middle left;*  
 Kayu Hitam (Black Wood)  
*Middle right;*  
 Kayu Raja (Wood King)  
*Bottom left;*  
 Kayu Raja (Wood King)  
*Bottom right;*  
 Assorted Wood





# Mountainscapes in Mumbai



Top; Finished Mountainscape with *Premna microphylla*

Bottom left; Starting of demonstration.

Bottom right; Building the Mountainscape.



## Event by Bonsai Study Group of The Indo-Japanese Association

28th May – 1st June, 2018

By Jyoti & Nikunj Parekh, India

Photos by Sujata Bhat & Jyoti Parekh

Courtesy: The Bonsai Study Group of The Indo-Japanese Association

**N**early fifty of our members assembled to watch a demonstration on saikei Mountainscapes, followed by three full days of workshop with twenty seven of our members. Mr. Manoj Kumar from New Delhi is a humble, hardworking and popular bonsai artist who has risen in stature these recent years. We recall visiting his nursery some 15 to 17 years back and appreciated his capabilities as a rising star from India.

Mr. Manoj Kumar worked tirelessly, leaving no stones unturned—vertically, horizontally or upside down, and on getting a perfect placement as per his design, he adhered it to the tray with a mixture of cement and fine, crushed stone in the proportion of 1:3 or 1:2, which had to be neither too wet nor very dry. The artist put





Left column, top to bottom:

Another unique stone placement.

Finished Mountainscape with Premna microphylla plants.

Completed Mountainscape with Bucida spinosa plants.

Artist Mr. Manoj Kumar arranging stones initially for Mrs. Bijal Mehta.

Above, left and right; Jyoti Parekh trying her hand and Initial placement of stones by Nikunj Parekh.

Middle right; Another creation of Mrs. Hansa Shah with stones and Premna microphylla plants.

Bottom right; Mountainscape creation by Mrs. Rita Parekh using Wrightia religiosa – (mini variety) plants.



blobs of cement mix at the base of stones or vertically, to make them stand in position. Handling the stones with deft hands, each of the mountainscapes or rock-grown creations were of unique design.

To stabilize and secure the placement of the stones, he asked each participant to wire them together firmly with a twist. He then asked each participant to spray/mist water on the creation. Before it dried and set, he asked us all to clean excessive cement mix with a scraper tool.





Some members were willing to do appropriate planting with small sized plants with compact branching. Few did not opt for immediate planting. It was a demanding time and a test of patience for the artist and all participants.

Bonsai Study group has been organizing and encouraging such events since 1981 for regularly-attending members, rather than private, individual workshops. This is done solely with the aim of sharing knowledge at all times. During this event, we had members watching the demonstrations and workshop participants on first-come, first-registered basis. They came from Aurangabad, Bangalore, Mumbai and Nashik—cities in India. 🌳

*Top left;* A mature *Premna microphylla* tree was arranged on a unique rock arrangement for Mrs. Bharati Gandhi.

*Top right;* A unique rock grown creation with *Wrightia religiosa* for Mrs. Bhavna Shah.

*Middle;* Mountainscape of Mr. Krishna Gupta was created. Planting to be done at a later date.

*Bottom left;* A Mountainscape left unplanted of Dr. Sujata Bhat.

*Bottom right;* Manoj Kumar with one of his completed mountainscapes.





# Advancing Bonsai Education

## Bonsai Empire's Advanced Bonsai Course

By Joe Grande, Canada

**W**hen Winston Churchill said, “The empires of the future are the empires of the mind,” he could not have imagined the Internet and its power to disseminate images and ideas.

Bonsai Empire is one such empire using this power. For 18 years Bonsai Empire has been steadily growing a respected platform, creative and passionate about introducing bonsai to a new generation all over the world. The website's latest course, a year in the making, offers six-hours of tightly scripted tutorials and lectures called the Advanced Bonsai Course. It is presented in a detailed curriculum, divided into sections that are easy to navigate and view at your own pace. Oscar Jonker, founder, worked with Bjorn Bjorholm, bonsai artist and course instructor, to create a rich offering that includes many advanced techniques such as grafting, heavy bending, detail wiring, nebari development and applying moss for display.

The course covers a wide selection of tree species, in different stages of development. The use of subtitles and other graphic presentations effectively reinforce the content.

I particularly enjoyed the background information on philosophy, aesthetics and history. Bjorn makes a compelling argument for bonsai as an art form and eloquently delivers a sound thesis to his dramatic concept that bonsai is an art form on the edge of life and death.

The one-time cost is reasonable when you consider you get unlimited access to all the lectures in the curriculum, without any recurring fees or hidden costs. As with the other courses, students can ask questions about the lectures that Bjorn will answer.



**Image excerpts from Bonsai Empire's Advanced Bonsai Course launched in May highlight some of the topics covered in the 6-hour tutorial: Heavy bending, styling yamadori, thread grafting and detail wiring.**

Bonsai Empire is among a small number of websites that are using contemporary media to help spread the know-how gained by a young generation of bonsai artists who served formal and lengthy apprenticeships in Japan. With this new-found wealth of bonsai knowledge and experience to draw from, your development as a bonsai artist is unlimited. You can practice this art form in your part of the world, with your native species, and know that you are part of larger bonsai community with similar ideals, goals and ambitions, and you will have the confidence to create, recognize and appreciate bonsai art. 🌲





## Tree of the Year Contest

# WIN A Joshua Roth Professional Grade Bonsai Tool Kit

Share photos of your trees with your fellow club members for a chance to win A Joshua Roth Professional Bonsai Tool Kit and the BCI Award of Excellence.

For contest details and how to enter, go to [www.bonsai-bci.com](http://www.bonsai-bci.com) and look for the TREE and STONE of the YEAR CONTEST on the home page.



**bc**i [www.bonsai-bci.com](http://www.bonsai-bci.com)  
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# Bonsai World Events Mulhouse 2018- France

- Bonsai Clubs International world convention
- Bonsai Euro Top 30
- French bonsai federation convention
- European symposium of suiseki

**October 12,13, 14, 2018**

**More than 240 trees  
and 100 suiseki**

A unique event that will not be repeated in the coming decades in Europe.

# Once in our lives !

**bc**

**A large market of  
European traders**



The most beautiful trees in Europe, the most beautiful ishitsuiki in France, the most beautiful olive trees in Spain, the most beautiful trees from the JEKER School, the most beautiful trees from the Albert KAHN Garden, exceptional forests, 5 trees created by John Naka in Europe the best French suiseki, the prestigious suiseki collection from Gudrun and Willy BENZ, the French school of Ikebana Sogetsu, the kusamono of Othmar AUER.

**And 20 demonstrators, a gala dinner in the most famous automobile museum in the world**



**For more information  
and reservations  
[world-bonsai-mulhouse.fr](http://world-bonsai-mulhouse.fr)**

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MULHOUSE**

