

Florida Bonsai

W I N T E R 2 0 1 0

Displaying Bonsai



BONSAI SOCIETIES OF FLORIDA, INC.

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WINTER

Florida Bonsai

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Florida Bonsai is the official publication of the **Bonsai Societies of Florida**. It is published quarterly, in February, May, August and November, and is provided to every current member. If you are not a Florida resident and would like to subscribe to *Florida Bonsai* please see the subscription form on page 48.

Submission of articles should be made directly to the editor. The utmost care will be given to respect our authors' intended meanings. Author supplied photos will be used as space permits.

Be sure to visit our website at:
www.bonsai-bsf.com

Please submit your notices and articles in advance of your events. Follow the advertising schedule below to plan your promotional materials and send them to the *Florida Bonsai* Editor.

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Contributed articles express the opinion of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the BSF Board or the Editor.

Advertising

For advertising schedules and rates please contact **Louise Leister** at advertising@bonsai-bsf.com.

DEADLINES FOR ADVERTISING

Spring Issue – 12/31/10;

Summer Issue – 5/31/10;

Autumn Issue – 7/30/10;

Winter Issue – 9/30/10

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ON THE COVER: Display guideline submitted by Louise Leister showing the proper elements and flow of a formal display.

A Message from the President



With the 2011 ahead of us, I look back at 2010 to reflect upon our accomplishments in BSF and to take this opportunity to thank all of you for making this an incredible year.

What a year it has been. We celebrated our convention with Robert Stevens in Orlando, were proud participants in a wonderful Bonsai display at Epcot, welcomed new members to our board and thanked those who have served with our state activities. Our BSF magazine remained the signature publication of BSF and in the forefront of publications throughout the country. Less visible, but just as impressive, are the technological improvements we have incorporated into the BSF management's operations. We are moving forward with positive momentum!

The year was certainly eventful and at times challenging. Thankfully, we have continued

thriving and collectively our Bonsai clubs are stronger. I look forward to the challenges of 2011 and the upcoming BSF Convention in Orlando.



The planning is complete for our 2011 BSF Convention. The *Tropical World of Bonsai* promises to be one of our best

events ever with internationally-recognized bonsai artist, Ryan Neil as our headliner for the event. Ryan was an apprentice to Masahiko Kimura for over six years in Japan. BSF members, who have recently seen Ryan in California, are ecstatic about him being with us in Florida. In addition to workshops and demonstrations, Ryan will critique our exhibit and present a separate slide

presentation at a luncheon for our benefit.

Along with our talented Florida artists, this conference will have something for everyone to appreciate.

We are trying something new at this year's BSF convention. Several workshops have different sizes of material which will allow small, medium and large workshop material to be worked on simultaneously with our speakers. These workshops are a unique approach and will be more interesting for participants and observers. I'm excited about the quality of material for the convention (please check out the website) and I hope all of you will make plans to attend and spend time with your Bonsai friends throughout the state. The convention will be held the weekend of June 10-12, 2011, (not Memorial Day Weekend). Of course, a full room of vendors will provide you with the pots, plants and all the bonsai supplies we value.

Our new membership procedures have been moving along smoothly and I thank you for your patience and participation. I believe you will see the results with a better flow of information and receipt of your magazines. Most of you have been receiving speaker information and convention ads through our new e-commerce site. Over time this site will allow the BSF board to communicate with you directly, elicit your feedback from time to time on questions of governance, and keep you informed of upcoming BSF activities and club events throughout the state. I believe our ability to see what is occurring in clubs around Florida makes us stronger as an organization, helping us to participate in and build upon each others experiences.

Thank you again for your participation in Bonsai Societies of Florida and I look forward to seeing all of you in Orlando in June.

A Message from the Editor

For our final issue of 2010 we have included the supplemental readings from our Autumn Issue article submitted by Mac Caruthers of the Fort Walton Beach Club. This informative article, rich in botanical information was extensively researched and very well presented for which we are very grateful to Mac.

Also in this issue are two articles on displaying bonsai. This important aspect of the art of bonsai is often overlooked, but in reality needs much study in order to properly enhance our trees and their visual impact. I hope everyone enjoys this fascinating subject and delves deeper into the art of display.

I'm happy to announce that December 31 marked my official retirement date from my "day job." While I will continue working on a consulting basis, this event should help put our magazine back on schedule. I look forward to dedicating more time to the publishing of our

quarterly publication and encourage you all to submit your stories and photographs.

The new year is bringing lots of events both in the state and around the country. If you are fortunate enough to attend any of these events, please make sure to bring your cameras and remember to submit your photographs to our publication or to our newly refurbished website.

Our congratulations to Paul Pikel on his hard work in getting our website back in order. Paul is a busy member of the board as coordinator of the annual



Bonsai Exhibit at Epcot. He has volunteered to assume the position of webmaster. This position was been vacant since Henning's resignation this past fall. Our deep thanks to Henning for a monumental job of redesigning our original website and bringing us (technically speaking) into the 21st century.

Your board of directors is hard at work organizing our database for the new year.

The magazine will be mailing in a new format due to postal regulation changes. We will be returning to our wrapped magazine. Unfortunately envelope stuffed magazine, put us over the dimensional limit. There are limits pertaining to the allowable thickness of bulk mailed postings. The post office inspector has advised us to triple seal the issues prior to posting.

Please let us know if there are any difficulties in the arrival of your next magazine.

Our upcoming convention application can be found in the center eight pages of this publication. You can flatten the pages to make copies of the application.

We are looking forward to a great event this year with our headliner, Ryan Neil. Ryan will be performing three demonstrations for us, as well as two workshops (Juniper and Buttonwood).

Our Florida headliners will include Mike Cartrett, Toby Diaz, Mike Rogers, Ed Trout and Erik Wigert. Also appearing will be our 2010 Scholarship Winners. Our first place winner Michael Lane will be part of a 3-ring demonstration that includes second runner-up Michael Feduccia and South Florida's own Ed Trout.

Check out the workshop material online at www.bonsai-bsf.com. This should prove to be a great event, so be sure to sign-up early to get your choice of material. □

Mike

Supplemental Reading A Follow-up to the Autumn Issue

By Mac Caruthers

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his series of supplemental articles will cover *Food, Plant Hormones, Bonsai Containers and Heat, Rules of Bonsai* and finally *Trunk Chop*.

This will conclude the extensive series submitted by Mac Caruthers.



Food

Photosynthesis is the process of converting sun light energy into chemical energy and storing it in the form of sugars and carbohydrates, (food). This process occurs in plants and some algae. Plants need only sun light, carbon dioxide, some nutrients/minerals, (CO₂), and water (H₂O) to make food.⁽¹⁾

The literature, as well as we club members, often speaks of the tree's food as if it were one lump that moves from top to roots or roots to apex. The fact is, that the food processed by the leaves is stored in a multiple number of places. The leaves retain some food. There is a little packet of food stored behind each apical bud that will be used to open that bud when the opportunity occurs.

⁽²⁾ There is certain amount of food stored in the stems and limbs. A significant amount of food is used for respiration that is used in keeping the tree alive. Last, but not least, a quantity of food is use to increase the diameter of the trunk and branches. Any excess food is stored in the roots. A quantity of the food is used up during apical growth and root growth. A large

amount of the food is used up in respiration. Repatriation is the process of keeping the tree alive. Just as in humans, thousands of cells are dying every minute. Those cells need to be replaced; existing cells need to be nourished. New growth needs the energy from the food. Various processes going on within the tree need energy to do their work.

Last, but not lest, any excess food is stored in the roots for future requirements. In other words as the food moves down the tree from the leaves, every component grabs its share. Food allocation is not an arbitrary process. The tree allocates the food according to the most important needs of the tree. Below is a food allocation model.

FOOD – PRIORITY ALLOCATION MODEL⁽³⁾

Photosynthesis converts the sun's energy into carbohydrates and sugar commonly called food.

The tree has a priority order for the allocation of these carbohydrates. (Oliver and Larson (1996):

1. Maintenance of living tissue (respiration)
2. Production of fine roots
3. Flower and seed production
4. Primary growth (elongation of branches and roots)
5. Secondary growth/diameter growth. Growth of the xylem, (the water/nutrients-conducting cells) becomes wood & the phloem (the food conducting cells) become bark.

Let's look at the items above. Number 1 is a must; the tree must maintain its internal components or die. Number 2, the tree must grow and or replace its fine roots because they are the primary roots that take in water and nutrients. Number 3, the genetics of the tree dictates that it protects the survival of the species by procreating. Number 4, the tops of the tree must grow to compete for sun light. The roots must grow to gain new territory in order

Trunk Chop⁽ⁱ⁾

Developing Informal Upright Trunks for Deciduous Bonsai

In the article Field Growing it was established that for a thick trunked bonsai, the tree must first be allowed to grow freely in the ground or a pot to help thicken the trunk.

Having thickened the trunk by allowing free growth for a number of years, it is unlikely that the trunk have much taper and will often lack any movement.

There are a number of ways of introducing taper and movement to a field grown trunk; this article describes one method that is known to be widely used in Japanese growing fields to 'build' *myogi* style (informal upright trunks) for bonsai. This process can equally be applied to a collected or nursery tree that is currently too tall for use as a bonsai and needs to be reduced in height.

By studying the following images, it is hoped that the reader will understand and use some of the techniques described to introduce taper and movement in the trunks and new branches for their trees.

This method is intended for deciduous trees only, but some of its principles can be applied to coniferous species.

IMAGE 1 shows the lower portion of the trunk of a tree growing in the ground. Its girth is adequate for use as a bonsai but there is little movement or taper.

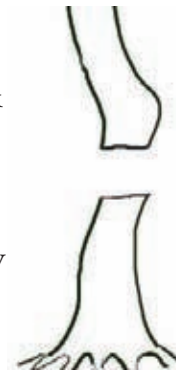
Ideally, the finished bonsai will be approximately six times the height of the trunk diameter. The diameter of this trunk is 3," so the ideal height of the tree when it is finished will be 18." If



a taller bonsai is required, this tree will need growing on for further years before this process begins. Once the trunk has been chopped, it will barely thicken until the new section above it has all but reached the same girth and at which point, taper is all but lost. (Refer to this article for an example.)

So the projected final height of this tree will be 18." The first branch should be at approximately a one-third of the overall height. This means that the first branch should be 6" from the base of the tree.

IMAGE 2. Late Winter/early Spring. The trunk is chopped with a straight cut at a height of around 12," approximately two-thirds the height of the finished tree. If additional movement is required on a very straight lower trunk, the chop can be made at 6"



or one-third of the height of the tree.

A straight cut reduces moisture loss and potential dieback; until a new shoot has appeared and been chosen as the new leader, there is no point in making a diagonal cut as is sometimes advised. As with all cuts, the chop should be sealed with cut paste.

IMAGE 3. Autumn. The tree drops its leaves and reveals the effects of a growing season left to grow freely. The heavy chopping has resulted in strong budding from all over the trunk.

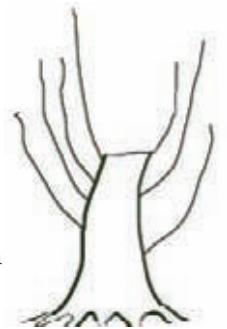
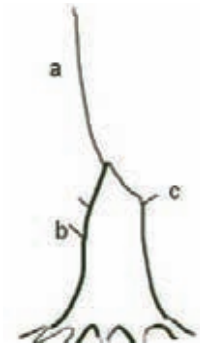


IMAGE 4. Autumn or Spring. (I prefer to carry this work out on deciduous trees immediately after leaf drop





38th
BONSAI
Societies of Florida
2011 Convention

Featuring Ryan Neil

June 10 - June 12

Orlando • Florida

TWO WORKSHOPS AND THREE DEMONSTRATIONS WITH OUR HEADLINER!
PLUS - DEMONSTRATIONS AND WORKSHOPS BY FLORIDA ARTISTS:

Mike Cartrett, Toby Diaz, Mike Rogers, Ed Trout, Erik Wigert
ALSO FEATURING

BSF 2010 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS - Mike Lane AND Michael Feduccia

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For additional information:
BSF 2011 CONVENTION

c/o Louise Leister, 4 Claridge Court South, Pam Coast, FL 32137-8350
phone: 386-579-1639 or email: mysecretbonsai@me.com

BSF 2011 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2011

11:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.	Setup
7:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.	BSF Board Meeting
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Registration Open
FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 2011	
7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration Open
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Bazaar / Raffles Open
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Demonstration I Ryan Neil / Juniper San Jose/Parsonii
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Workshop 1 Ed Trout / Ilex
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Workshop 2 Erik Wigert / Campeche
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Annual Luncheon Meeting
2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Demonstration II Toby Diaz / Erik Wigert / Mike Lane
2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Workshop 3 Ryan Neil / Juniper procumbens nana
2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Workshop 4 Mike Cartrett / Florida Privet
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Dinner on Your Own
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Exhibit Opens
7:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.	Vendor Night / BSF Club Night / Scholarship Competition with Guest Judge Ryan Neil Cash Bar

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2011

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast on Your Own
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration Open
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Bazaar / Raffles / Exhibit Open
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Demonstration III Ed Trout / Mike Lane / Michael Feduccia
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Workshop 5 Ryan Neil / Buttonwood
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Workshop 6 Erik Wigert / Bougainvillea
12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch and Learn with Ryan Neil
2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Demonstration IV Ryan Neil / Buttonwood
2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Workshop 7 Mike Rogers / Podocarpus
2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Workshop 8 Toby Diaz / Neea buxifolia
6:00 p.m. – Midnight	Cash Bar
7:00 p.m. – Midnight	Annual Banquet & Auction
SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 2011	
7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast on Your Own
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Registration Open
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Ryan Neil / Exhibit Critique
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Bazaar / Raffles / Exhibit Open
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Demonstration V Ryan Neil / Juniper shimpaku
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Farewell Luncheon / Raffle / Auction

BSF 2011 CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM (PART I)

CONVENTION REGISTRATION

Full registration includes ALL Lectures, Demonstrations, Bazaar, Raffles, Exhibit, Friday Annual Luncheon, Saturday Night Banquet / Auction and Sunday Auction.

Registration **BEFORE** April 15, 2011

Registration **AFTER** April 15, 2011

Individual	No. _____ @ \$185.00	Individual	No. _____ @ \$210.00 each		\$ _____
Family	No. _____ @ \$340.00	Family	No. _____ @ \$380.00 each		\$ _____
Extra meal package	No. _____ @ \$100.00 each	Banquet only	No. _____ @ \$50.00 each		\$ _____
Ryan Neil - Lunch and Learn (Box Lunch Provided)			No. _____ @ \$45.00		\$ _____
Ryan Neil - Exhibit Critique (Limited to 25 participants)			No. _____ @ \$25.00		\$ _____

DAILY REGISTRATIONS

Friday: \$90.00 each _____; Saturday: \$90.00 each _____; Sunday: \$50.00 each _____ \$ _____

Shirts No. _____ \$35.00 each S M L XL XXL Aprons No. _____ \$25.00 each \$ _____
(All shirts must be ordered by May 1, 2011). **Subtotal** \$ _____

WORKSHOPS

Limited to ten (10) participants. Silent observers limited to available space. (Visit www.bonsaisocietiesofflorida.yolasite.com and select your tree. Note the 5 digit number, this is the identifier of each tree. Be sure to select at least two alternate trees. These are custom workshops are on a first-come, first-served basis. Pay the larger of the choices and a refund will be issued if necessary.)

		SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE	TREE # (5 digits, choices)
Ed Trout	<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 1 Ilex	<input type="checkbox"/> \$115	<input type="checkbox"/> \$145	<input type="checkbox"/> \$185	____ / ____ / ____ \$ _____
Erik Wigert	<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 2 Campeche	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	____ / ____ / ____ \$ _____
Ryan Neil	<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 3 Juniper		<input type="checkbox"/> \$155		____ / ____ / ____ \$ _____
Mike Cartrett	<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 4 Florida Privet	<input type="checkbox"/> \$95	<input type="checkbox"/> \$135	<input type="checkbox"/> \$195	____ / ____ / ____ \$ _____
Ryan Neil	<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 5 Buttonwood	<input type="checkbox"/> \$160	<input type="checkbox"/> \$225	<input type="checkbox"/> \$300	____ / ____ / ____ \$ _____
Erik Wigert	<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 6 Bougainvillea	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$210	<input type="checkbox"/> \$300	____ / ____ / ____ \$ _____
Mike Rogers	<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 7 Podocarpus	<input type="checkbox"/> \$95	<input type="checkbox"/> \$115	<input type="checkbox"/> \$135	____ / ____ / ____ \$ _____
Toby Diaz	<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 8 Neea buxifolia	<input type="checkbox"/> \$130	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	____ / ____ / ____ \$ _____
					Subtotal \$ _____
					Grand Total \$ _____

BSF 2011 CONVENTION WORKSHOP WAIVER FOR PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS

- 1) I _____, acknowledge that I voluntarily observe, or participate in bonsai workshops being held by the Bonsai Societies of Florida at the 36th Annual Convention held in Orlando, Florida from June 10 to 12, 2011.
- 2) I am aware that working with bonsai tools and equipment is a hazardous activity. I am voluntarily observing or participating in these activities with full knowledge of the danger involved. I agree to accept any and all risk of injury, and verify this statement by placing my initials here: _____.
- 3) As consideration for being permitted by the Bonsai Societies of Florida to participate in these bonsai workshops, I hereby agree that I, my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians and legal representative will not make claim againsts, sue, or attach the property of the Bonsai Societies of Florida or the Workshop Instructors or Assistants for injury or damages resulting from my observation of activities in, the Workshop or from the action of the other participants. I hereby release and shall indemnify the Bonsai Societies of Florida and the Workshop instructors and their Assistants from all action, claims or demands that I, or my assignees, heirs, distributees, guardians and legal representative may have for any injury or damages resulting from my observation of, or participation in, these Workshops.
- 4) I have carefully read this agreement and fully understand its content. I am aware that this document/waiver is a release of liability and a contract between myself, and Bonsai Societies of Florida and sign it of my own free will.

(Please Print)

Name _____ Signature _____
 Name _____ Signature _____
 Witnessed by _____ Executed at (City) _____

2011 CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM (PART II)

Mail the completed registration form with a check or money order (no cash please) made payable to: Bonsai Societies of Florida. For credit card payments, complete the form below. Payment will be accepted in U.S. Dollars only. Refunds will not be made after April 30, 2011 except in extreme circumstances as to be determined by the BSF Board of Directors. Mail your payment to: BSF 2011 CONVENTION, c/o 5622 S.E. Lamay Drive, Stuart, FL 34997-6548.

- All workshops are limited - see registration page 2 for availability. Must be registered for the convention to participate.
- Priority for the workshops will be allocated according to postmark. Full registrants will have priority over daily registrants.
- Registrants should rank their preference for all workshops. You may select workshops within the same time frame, just remember to prioritize your selections.
- Successful applicants will be notified as to which workshops they are assigned.
- Refunds of excess deposits will be made in full.
- Once an applicant has received confirmation of workshops assignment, if that applicant wishes to cancel that workshop, refunds will be made only after the replacement applicant has been notified and has paid the required fees, except in extreme circumstances as determined by the Convention Chairman, no refunds of any portion of registration fees shall be made after an individual has participated in a workshop.
- Observers in all workshops are expected to be silent throughout the duration of the workshop. If the instructor addresses the observers and asks for your questions you may feel free to participate, otherwise a strict code of silence will be observed.
- The rights to exhibit and reproduce recordings of "BSF 2011" activities, events and displays including audio, video, both still and motion pictures, in any form or format whatsoever are the exclusive property of BSF for use in furtherance of their organizational goals and objectives. This restriction is not intended to prohibit individuals from taking photographs or from making recordings of "BSF 2011" activities for their own personal use or from sharing their photography and recordings with their local bonsai club providing they do not interfere with or obstruct any other person's view or enjoyment of the events and activities. Registrants must observe and respect individual presenter's wishes regarding recording or photographing of their presentations.

BANQUET MEAL SELECTION

(Please select from the following choices) (All selections served with accompanying vegetables, Coffee or Tea and Dessert)

- Grilled New York Strip Steak Grilled Chicken Grilled Salmon Vegetarian Selection

Name(s) _____ (Please Print Clearly)

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Email address _____

Phone Number (_____) _____ (_____) _____ Area Code Home Area Code Cell

Bonsai Society of Florida Club Affiliation *(if applicable)* _____

I wish to donate Raffle Material _____ Silent Auction _____
(Cancellation of Registration after April 15, 2011 will incur a \$40.00 handling charge.)

Please select credit card type: Visa MasterCard Discover American Express CVC # _____ Expiration Date: _____

Credit Card Number: _____ Signature: _____

Before calling in a credit card, please send an email to: barbarap3@comcast.net with your Name, Address, Phone Number, email address and banquet selection. Barbara Poglitsch, Treasurer, (772) 287-5356.



RAMADA

**Ramada Orlando Celebration
Resort and Convention Center**

6375 West Irlo Bronson Memorial Highway (Highway 192), Kissimmee, Florida 34747
PHONE 407-390-5800 FAX 407 390-1077 www.ramadaorlandocelebration.com

Room Prices: **\$79.00**

Check-in: 3:00 p.m. Check-Out: Noon

After 6:00 p.m. arrivals must guaranteed to a major credit card.

Reservations must be made by May 15, 2011 to receive the special rate. Be sure to mention "BSF 2011 Convention."

The Meaning of Bonsai Display

By Louise Leister

W

hat is meant by a formal display and why do we strive to create the perfect display? What are the rules and where do they come from?

Hopefully this short explanation will help you understand why and where the tradition came from and will help you create a beautiful and respectful display.

First and foremost we need to understand who played such an important roll, and why this art form was created. Mr. Ichiu Katayama, a Japanese teacher,



perfected the study of display. He created and wrote *Keido Katayama Ryu* text books for the first school of instructions on formal display in Japan. The set comprises three books on displaying bonsai, suiseki and ikebana in a formal tokamona display. The books are still used today to teach the art of display in Japan and in other parts of the world. The translation of *keido* means to enjoy or

please the spirit. Mr. Katayama's school was instrumental in creating the first Japanese Display Association. His students were all famous bonsai artists, including Mr. Susumu Sudo who became a

master in the art of display. Later Mr. Sudo became the teacher of the Keido School, where intensive studies on display were taught. Many students enrolled into the school; the lessons were very strict and many of those who enrolled quit before they graduated. Two well-known names who did complete the course and went on to become masters in the art of display were Mr. Kunio

The Meaning of Bonsai Display

Kobayashi and Mr. Masahiko Kumura. Both Kobayashi-san and Kumura-san studied at the Keido School for three years and are today two of the most knowledgeable teachers of formal display in the world.

Mr. Sudo was very strict and demanded total discipline and respect for this art form. His discipline started by teaching the proper way to remove your shoes upon entering a building and how to place the shoes showing respect for the next person leaving or entering the room. Respect was the word repeated over and over again. He taught his students to handle the items used in the display with care and respect. Holding or moving the display tables so as not to scratch them or drop them. Handling each scroll with the utmost care so as not to damage or mark them. Respect in how you unrolled and hung them, respect in

how you removed them from the display. The utmost care in handling them when you rolled them again making sure they were straight, rolled tight and that your hands were clean. And finally that you tied them a very specific way for storage. Making sure the scroll was placed in the box carefully, and that the box was stored properly in a clean, dust-free and dry place. They handled the items used in the display like they were sacred works of art, which many of the items were. They collected scrolls, tables, and other items for the display that were expensive works of art, many of them antiques made by craftsman



Members of the Kunio Kobayashi display seminar following the Second Annual Bonsai Exhibit in Rochester, New York, June 2010.

Displaying Bonsai: Checklist and Tips

By Mike Sullivan

This article is meant as a checklist of helpful hints and techniques to make your bonsai display have the most impact on the viewer and aid in communicating your thoughts and feelings of the story of your composition.

Our focus is divided into three areas: Preparing for Display, the Basic Principles of Design and finally Complementary Materials.

PREPARING FOR DISPLAY

TO WIRE OR NOT TO WIRE: It is important to have your tree consistent for display purposes. Either wire the entire tree – every branch and twig – or, do not have one wire on the tree. It is up to the individual artist, but please remember – all or nothing.

PREPARING SOIL SURFACE: After weeding your tree, the surface should be covered with moss. Moss application is very important in presenting bonsai. Do not place sheets of moss, but rather small clumps. You can use the moss to hide defects in your

nebari and create interest with a rolling undulating surface.

Originally bonsai were never used in the tokonama in a traditional Japanese home. It was felt that they were unclean and not allowed in this sacred place. Once moss application covered the soil surface it was deemed acceptable, and has since become the standard for displaying bonsai.

If you do not have moss, use a dark consistently-sized soil granule to cover your bonsai soil mixture. It can be removed after exhibition.

CLEANING POTS: Clean pots follow the theory of dirt in a sacred place. Pots should be cleaned prior to exhibition. There are a variety of methods to clean pots. Crushed walnuts wrapped

in a cloth gives a beautiful luster to the pot without adding an artificial shine. You can also use: Camellia oil, Baby oil, Volk oil, Vaseline, Olive oil or any other vegetable oil. But please remember to wipe the pots down and remove as much oil as possible. The idea is to have a clean pot – not a shiny, slick, brand new looking pot. If a little salt deposit remains on your pot it is acceptable as it shows age and adds to the patina.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

VARIETY: Within a display there should always be variety in height, size, color and shape of the trees, companion plants, pots and stands.

DIRECTION: It is understood that a person's eye pauses when it encounters mass and moves directionally in response to line. In bonsai display this knowledge is used to keep the viewer's attention focused on the exhibit. It aids in understanding the ideas we are trying to express through the selection of tree and plant materials.

When we succeed, the observer first examines the primary object, i.e., the bonsai, which should be the center of interest. As interest wanes attention is led by direction by the shape of the bonsai, which leans and/or curves to the next object.

If a bonsai has its mass concentrated on the right and its lines lead to the left, the tree is right dominant. This dominance aids in the placement in the display. A right dominant tree will be placed on the right of the display.

If the mass is concentrated on the left and the bonsai's movement is to the right, then it is left dominant and placed on the left side of the display.

When you follow these rules, the viewer is directed to the center of the display and other elements.

It is not easy to determine a tree's dominance. There is no simple rule and exposure and experience will play a large role in resolving the set up of displays.

Displaying Bonsai: Checklist and Tips

There are two types of scrolls to use when displaying bonsai.

CALLIGRAPHY: The calligraphy should be appropriate to the season or mood of the display. You may need a translator to decipher the writing.

SUMI-E: Your other option is a watercolor or sumi-e painting. The subject matter should be kept simple: a bird, waterfall, sun, moon, clouds or something suggesting a season or feeling.

STANDS: If lucky, you will have a stand or stands to choose from. I know how difficult it is for us to have the proper materials, but stands can make or break a successful display. Simple, elegant, dark woods are the most appropriate. Trees should fit within

the top floating panel of the stand with enough room to not look crowded.

Wooden slabs or jiita are also another effective way to display trees, but primarily used for bunjin trees or companion pieces.

OBJECTS: Viewing stones shaped like Figure or Human-shaped stones (Sugata-ishi), Beautiful stones (Biseki), Animal stones (Dobutsu-seki), Bird-shaped stones (Torigata-ishi), Object stones (Keisho-seki) and Hut stones (Kuzuya-ishi), as well as Figurines or Miniatures can be used effectively in display.

Remember you must use them carefully because they can be a distraction to the overall image. □



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Specimen Shohin Ilex (*Ilex vomitoria shillings*) February 27th, from 10-4 PM. Large 4+ trunks and will be under 10-12 inches tall! Only 4 spaces left. Price includes tree, soil, wire and pot. \$275.00

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