promoting
international friendship
through bonsai

bci

Bonsai & Stone Appreciation

2020 Q4

Resurrection 96
Juniperus chinensis var. Kishu
Height: 80 cm. Pot: Yakimono by Haru Matsu of Seto. Artists: Massimo Bandera and Alessandro Bonardo. Photo by Pangrazi. In the collection of Massimo Bandera, Italy

www.joshuaroth.com

Bonsai Tools to Shape the Dream

As your experience with Bonsai grows, so does your need for higher quality tools. Joshua Roth offers a wide range of superior Japanese Bonsai Tools at competitive prices—for every level of interest—worldwide.

Our products are available through our extensive network of retail dealers—including several mail-order and Internet dealers.

We offer four grades of Joshua Roth brand of tools. Select the tools appropriate to your interest and needs:

- **Student/Novice:** Good Quality, basic tools for beginners at a fair price.
- **Intermediate:** A wider range of quality high carbon steel tools for the increased needs of more experienced enthusiasts.
- **Professional:** This very wide range presents superior quality and life for the serious Bonsaiist without an astronomical price.
- **Master:** Our Stainless Steel grade is of the very best quality available at any price. Easy clean-up, with the aesthetic feel of fine surgical instruments—the ultimate in lifetime Bonsai tools.

For those looking for tools at a lower price point than our Joshua Roth Japanese tools, we now also have the RYUGA brand of tools—offering a wide range of both stainless steel and carbon steel tools made in China.

Although we specialize in Bonsai Tools and supplies, we also offer qualitiy tools for landscaping and nursery maintenance, as well as floral and gardening tasks. These product lines include our extremely popular GardenCut™ general purpose shears, and a selection of Japanese pull-technology saws.

For more information

visit www.joshuaroth.com or
e-mail bonsai@joshuaroth.com

Call 1-800-624-4635 today for a free catalog and the name of a dealer near you.
Outside the US, phone 1-541-791-5312.
Fax: 1-541-791-5337

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

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

Read more about The Artisans Cup movement at theartisanscup.com

Joshua Roth, proud sponsor of the 2015 Inaugural Artisans Cup, founded by Ryan Neil and Chelsea Neil of Bonsai Mirai, near Portland OR to showcase American Bonsai as a true art form.

2015 Artisans Cup Trophy by Sculptor Rick Gregg, www.rickgreggstudio.com

JOSHUA ROTH LIMITED

Joshua Roth — where artistic vision gains precision

Providing Superior Service and Quality Tools to the Bonsai Community Since 1980.

President's Message

Welcome to another great issue of BCI *Bonsai & Stone Appreciation* magazine. This is the last magazine for 2020 and drawing to the end of a tragic year globally. I am approaching my 70th year on 18th January 2021. (If you want to add a reminder to your diary and share a virtual drink with me!) I've witnessed many disasters here, in my home country. Even more internationally, fire, flood, cyclones, tornados, earthquakes, and recessions but never have I experienced a world disaster that affects everyone worldwide. Enjoying our hobbies of Bonsai, Suiseki, and related art forms greatly helps us lose ourselves in our art during these difficult times. I hope this issue will give you inspiration, motivation, and enjoyment. Let's hope 2021 brings an end to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we can all move forward to recover and rebuild a "new normal" lifestyle.

Magazine Postage

Due to the reduction of international flights, it is still taking much longer for BCI *Bonsai & Stone Appreciation* magazine to reach most countries outside the USA. Restrictions have been lifted, and most countries are now accepting international mail. We thank you for your patience and a reminder you can view the online version and back copies at any time via the members' area on the BCI website.

BCI Conventions

While BCI hasn't been able to host any International Conventions this year, we have several countries wanting to host BCI events as soon as international travel restrictions permit, and it is safe to travel.

BCI Virtual Bonsai and Stone Exhibition

We are looking into hosting a BCI Virtual Bonsai and Stone Exhibit. We will let you know the full details when it is confirmed. I'm sure with all the extra time on your hands, your bonsai are all looking great. In the meantime, if your bonsai are looking good, take some photos to have ready. If you need some tips on photographing your bonsai, there is an article on the BCI website. BCI Knowledge Base/Lew's Lessons/Bonsai Techniques Blog/Taking Photos of Bonsai.

BCI Everything Bonsai Online Auction

We have just wrapped up the first BCI Everything Bonsai Online Auction. We had some very nice items donated. I thank all of those who donated items and also all of the bidders. Congratulations to the successful winners. We netted around $ 3,400. We plan to run another auction. If you have any suggestions on improving things, your feedback is welcome and appreciated.

BCI Annual General Meeting

We couldn't hold our Annual General Meeting this year in person. If your club has anything they want to discuss or any suggestions or feedback, please let me know.

Zoom Presentations

Also, if your club can't hold meetings, you may be interested in a Zoom presentation. BCI Instructor Tony Tickle is hosting Zoom Presentations for clubs that can't have regular meetings. Please contact him directly for his programs and costs. tonytickle@gmail.com

Thanks to all of the authors who have contributed to the magazine this year. To Joe Grande, BCI Editor, for another year of a great publication. Bonnie Moore, BCI tech wiz, Larry Stephen, BCI Business Manager, all of the BCI board members who have contributed and to you, the BCI member for your continued support.

This has been a very challenging year for everyone. I hope you can all take some time out to spend with family and friends over the holiday season, and I pray that 2021 sees an end to the pandemic, and the new year brings health and happiness to all.

Stay safe.

Cheers from Down Under,
Glenis Bebb

P.S. A full list of BCI contact e-mails is on page 2.

We have just wrapped up the first BCI Everything Bonsai Online Auction. We had some very nice items donated. I thank all of those who donated items and also all of the bidders.

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:
Glenis Bebb, president@bonsai-bci.com

Message from the Editor

The articles on bonsai in this magazine are a reminder that time can be our greatest ally in the practice of bonsai. It takes a lot of talent and technique to bring out the best features of a plant destined to be bonsai. After each intervention, whether it is styling, pruning, branch bending, or potting, it takes time for the tree to reward us with a transformation. If you have been practicing bonsai for more than 10 years, you'll know what I mean. If you are new to bonsai, learn, and practice all the techniques you can. Apply them to a tree, putting the health of the plant first, and then wait. Be patient. Be observant. As the tree responds to your work and care, look for opportunities to improve its design.

This is how Massimo Bandera approached a remarkable Kishu juniper over his forty-year love affair with bonsai. See the extraordinary transformations this tree has undergone and the insights and work by Massimo, Masahiko Kimura, and Alessandro Bonardo that have merged to create an exceptional bonsai. Our spotlight on BCI members features another great tree by Nelson Hernández from Puerto Rico. His Neea buxifolia has been like a member of his family. Over the last 25 years, he has perfected its design and watched his young daughter turn into a young woman. BCI Instructors Danilo Scursatone and Marco Tarozzo each present their work on spectacular yamadori. With skill and purpose, they create magnificent bonsai that will only get better with time.

Roland Schatzer from Trentino-Alto Adige, in northern Italy, has developed a passion for shohin-sized bonsai. His excellent must-have book is the featured book review. Roland's article on reproduction by air layering, excerpted from his book, is one of the best presentations on this technique that I have seen. I am sure you'll agree.

Speaking of shohin, BCI Director David DeGroot provides an innovative alternative to traditional display stands.

Gudrun Benz discusses traditional Chinese Gardens and what makes them so beautifully spiritual. She also takes us to an outstanding garden in Suzhou and shows us its wonders.

Two articles on bonsai-related arts round out this edition. Florentine Grunwald reports on ceramic artist Martin Englert and his captivating creations. You'll also learn a thing or two about ceramics, a fascinating craft that can be elevated to real art. Brought to my attention by Jyoti Parekh, Anita Bajpai from Bhopal, India, combines her love of Chinese land-water penjing with the contemporary use of pigmented resin. She creates a very realistic and atmospheric ocean scape.

This issue also marks the 40th edition that I have edited and designed.

How are you enjoying the magazine? Drop us a line and let us know what you like the most. I also welcome constructive criticism!

—Joe Grande, Canada

MISSION STATEMENT

BONSAI CLUBS INTERNATIONAL

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

EDITOR
Joe Grande: editor@bonsai-bci.com
41110 Mun 53 N
Ste. Genevieve, MB Canada R5J 0B3

MAGAZINE ADVERTISING
Please visit www.bonsai-bci.com/advertise or contact the editor or the BCI Business Office.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Massimo Bandera, Italy & Spain
Gudrun Benz, Germany
Min Hsuan Lo, Taiwan
Danilo Scursatone, Italy
Budi Sulistyo, Indonesia
José L. Rodriguez Macias, Puerto Rico

Bonsai & Stone Appreciation Magazine (ISSN 1068-6193 USPS 901-680) is published quarterly by Bonsai Clubs International, Inc., at PO Box 639,

Prospect Heights, IL 60070-0639, USA, and is sent to its members. Annual membership dues include a 1-year subscription to the Magazine. Back issues are available from our business office. Periodical postage is paid at Prospect Heights, IL, the USA, and additional mailing offices. This issue is printed in U.S.A.. Postmaster: send address changes to *Bonsai & Stone Appreciation Magazine*, PO Box 639, Prospect Heights, IL 60070-0639, USA.

Advertising, Editorial Policy and Deadlines:

For advertising space or rates, please visit www.bonsai-bci.com and under the Magazine menu, choose Advertise.

The Magazine reserves the right to edit all materials accepted for publication. Articles requiring extensive editing will be returned to the author with suggestions from the editorial staff. Manuscripts, drawings & photographs, with clear identification for captions, should be provided in digital format, on disk, or by e-mail or internet. Digital images must be provided at 300 dpi resolution for an 8 x 10 inch size minimum.

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

PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

Issue	Month	Closing Date
Q1	J/F/M	December 1
Q2	A/M/J	March 1
Q3	J/A/S	June 1
Q4	O/N/D	September 1

promoting international friendship through bonsai

bci

bonsai-bci.com

Bonsai & Stone Appreciation

VOLUME 59 NUMBER 4
OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

inside Q4 2020

PHOTO ESSAY

ARTICLES

BCI INSTRUCTORS

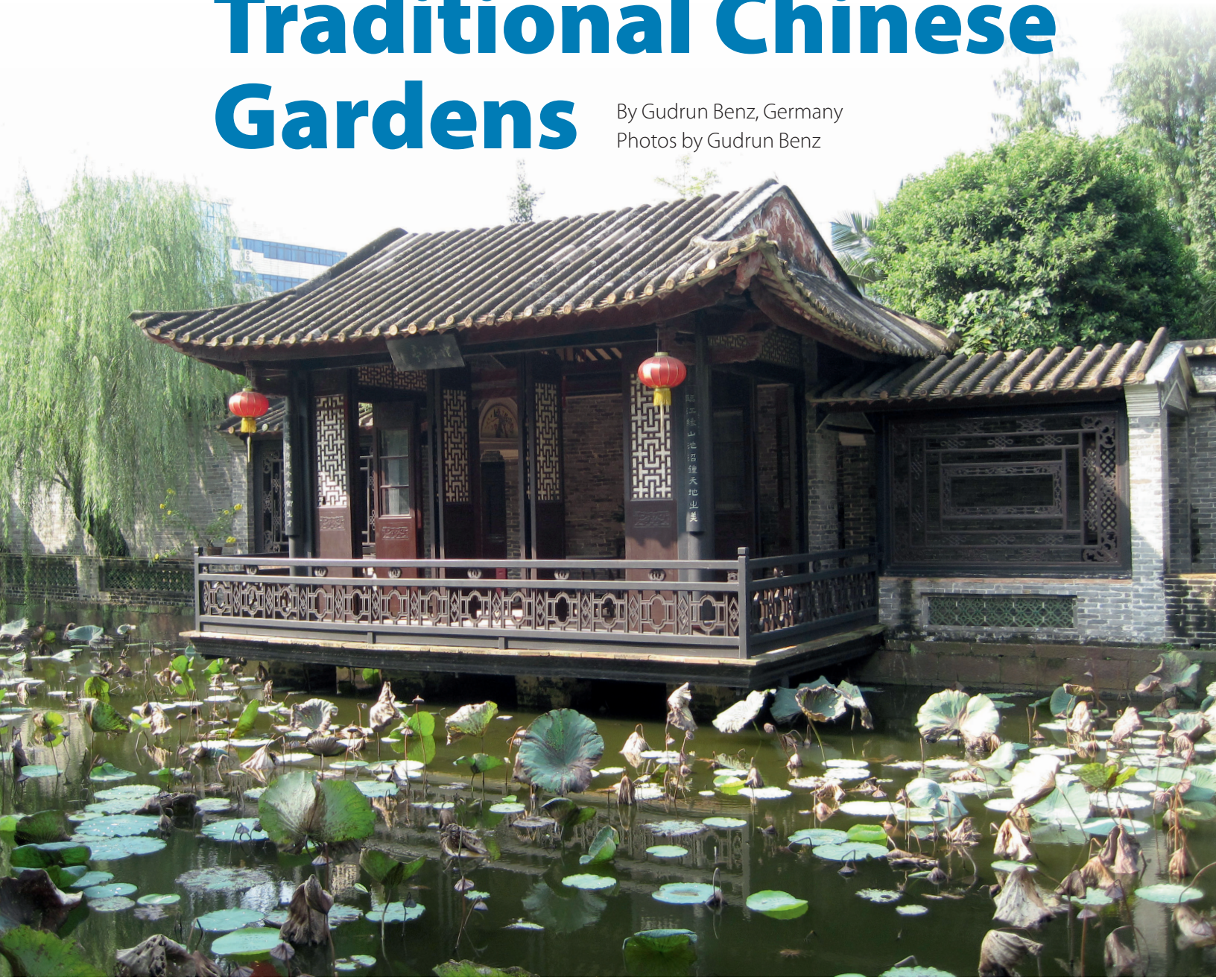
PEOPLE

BOOK REVIEW

FEATURED ON THE COVER: The subject of this issue's Photo Essay: Resurrection 96, *Juniperus chinensis var. Kishu*. Height: 80 cm. Pot: Yakimono by Haru Matsu of Seto. Artists: Massimo Bandera and Alessandro Bonardo. Photo by Pangrazi. In the collection of Massimo Bandera, Italy

Appreciating Traditional Chinese Gardens

By Gudrun Benz, Germany
Photos by Gudrun Benz



Top: Pond with lotus flowers and a special pavilion over the water for viewing the flowers.

When Westerners come to China and see traditional Chinese gardens for the first time, they are amazed about their "strange" features, which are very different from what they are used to seeing in their homelands. Traditional Chinese gardens have a long history of more than 2500 years and are unique in the world. They have been handed down from generation to generation. Even in modern times, some gardens in China are built following the rules of classical garden construction. Examples include the penjing garden within the Botanical Garden in Shanghai, which was opened in 1978, the penjing garden of the Tiger Hill in Suzhou in 1982 or the garden of the Penjing Museum in Yangzhou with the building of the Penjing School in 2009 even if the history of garden landscaping in Yangzhou as well as in Suzhou goes back to the Han Dynasty (206 BC – 8 AD). Yangzhou's penjing culture was developed already during the Tang dynasty.

The Golden Age of the classical gardens was in the Tang dynasty (618 – 907 AD) in Chang'an (nowadays Xian) and Luoyang, in the Song dynasty (960 – 1279 AD), mainly with gardens in Hangzhou and Suzhou, in the Ming dynasty (1368 – 1644 AD) and Qing dynasty (1644 – 1912 AD) with the Summer Palace near Beijing and much more.

1

2

3

4

5

6

Entrances and gates

Fig. 1 Entrance of the penjing garden of the Botanical Garden in Shanghai. Moon shaped entrances and gates are most common.

Fig. 2 Entrance in the shape of a Moon gate of the Bao Garden, south of Nanjing, Anhui province .

Fig. 3 Entrance gate to the penjing garden in Kunming, Yunnan province.

Fig. 4 Gate within the penjing garden in Kunming. In general, such gates give a glimpse on the part behind the wall.

Fig. 5 Openings in garden walls are of different shape. Besides moon gates there are gates in the shape of vases, leaves, gourds etc. as well as geometrical designs like a hexagon or octagon.

Fig. 6 Geometrical opening in a wall of the He Garden in Yangzhou.

We distinguish three types of traditional Chinese gardens:

- **Large imperial gardens**, respectively, palace gardens and hunting forests in the northern part of China (Beijing, Chengde) and former capitals of imperial China (Nanjing, Kaifeng, Luoyang, Xian). They were mostly built for pleasure and to impress. Some of them were open to the public temporarily.
- **Gardens of monasteries and temples**
- **Smaller private gardens of mandarins** (high government officials), literati (scholars), poets and artists, as well as rich merchants mainly in the region at the lower Yangtze such as Suzhou, Hangzhou, Yangzhou, Wuxi.

I will focus on the third category, the gardens of literati, artists, and (retired) government officials, mainly in Suzhou and Yangzhou. Not all gardens have survived until today. Many were destroyed by war, neglected, or given up. Nevertheless and fortunately, some of them still exist even in their original state.

Garden designing was and is a comprehensive science as well as an art in China, dictated by profound philosophy that reflects Taoist cosmology, which believes that all components of the universe exist in a balance with one another. "Feng Shui", literally "wind and water" is an essential part of a building or a garden even today in China. They should be favorably oriented

Rocks and mountains symbolized by rock formations are the bones of the earth according to Taoism. Water (pond, lakes, waterfalls) should not lack in a garden as it is regarded as the blood of the earth.

Top: The Five-Pavilion Bridge over the Slender West Lake is the most famous landmark of Yangzhou.

Garden sceneries

Fig. 7 Overview of the penjing museum garden in Yangzhou. It is built in traditional style with irregular walls and windows of different design. The pagoda of the Da Ming Temple at the back ground is used as a so called "Borrowing scenery" which means that an outside element (building, distant mountain, trees of the neighboring garden,…) creates the impression that the garden is much bigger than it is in reality.

Fig. 8 Scene of the Ge Garden with slender vertical rocks, bamboo and ophobogon grass before a wall with several openings (windows) of different design and a moon gate.

Fig. 9 Rock formation at a pond and before a white-washed wall at the He garden in Yangzhou.

Fig. 10 A pavilion on the top of a huge rock formation, Forbidden City in Beijing.

7

8

10

9

and protected from "unlucky directions." The classical gardens are an expression of man living in harmony with nature and reclusion from the mundane world for a man of letters and artists. Garden principals, landscaping painting, and poetry are combined. Gardens were regarded as microcosms of nature. One intended to create an idealized miniature landscape that expresses the harmony that should exist between nature and man. Therefore the planning of a garden demanded careful elaboration of the details. A garden designer must observe natural landscapes, study painting theories, and take nature as his teacher. The garden was not meant to be seen all at once, and the size wasn't important. The designer created a series of different parts or scenes.

11

12

13

14

15

Winding paths and gateways, zigzag galleries and bridges, rock formations, walls, and buildings provided different views with each turn when strolling through the garden.

There are characteristic elements of landscape gardening and garden architecture. The main elements can be divided into

Elements of nature:

Water: A pond or lake is often situated in the center of the garden. Sometimes there is a waterfall over the rockeries.

Rocks and rock formations: These are man-made mountains, caves, grottos, gates, etc. In general, rocks have no regular shape, and they are vertically placed singly or in groupings and often set against a white-washed wall. Rock formations are mostly built of Taihu or Yingde stones, stalagmites, and more rarely, wax and other stone types.

Plants: Old trees but also flowers were essential elements. Age-old trees, for example, pines, willows, ginkgo, etc. are characteristic specimens.

Man-made elements:

These include buildings such as pergolas, (roofed) walkways, corridors, fancy openings in the walls,

16

Fig. 11 Rock formation with elegantly raised-up jagged peaks, Foshan, Guangdong province.

Fig. 12 Waterfall at the Chencun World of Flowers, Foshan, Guangdong province in 2010.

Fig. 13 Landscape scene with waterfall at Kunming.

Fig. 14 Famous "Auspicious Cloud-Capped Peak" at the Lingering Garden in Suzhou. Such single rocks were high regarded by scholars.

Fig. 15 A path takes the visitors through a grotto. He Garden, Yangzhou.

Fig. 16 An impressive huge single rock on a stone pedestal at the Botanical Garden in Beijing.

17

18

19

20

Fig. 17 and **18** Huge single Taihu rocks are vertical directed against the sky. At Xuanwu Lake, Nanjing. Taihu rocks are very appreciated as garden rocks but one can find also smaller ones in studios as scholars' rocks.

Fig. 19 and **Fig. 20** Taihu rocks on a carved stone pedestal at the Summer Palace in Beijing.

Fig. 21 Large Taihu rock formation enclosed by a stone fence at the West garden of the Forbidden City.

Man-made Elements/ Buildings

Fig. 22 – **24** Examples of pavement of different designs like geometrical or floral patterns. The mosaic is made of small natural pebbles of different colors.

21

22

undulating walls, blank, lattice or lattice-framed windows, zigzag bridges, mosaic pavements, bamboo fences, gates with carved ornamentations, pavilions, and halls with curved rooflines and upcurled eaves, and heavy ceramic roof tiles. The roof's unique design, zigzag bridges, winding path, and high thresholds and/ or walls blocking a direct view/way into a property or garden are intended to repulse demons or evil spirits because the later can only go straight.

The symbolism of the different garden elements is an essential point too. Rocks and mountains symbolized by rock formations are the bones of the earth according to Taoism. Water (pond, lakes, waterfalls) should not lack in a garden as it is regarded as the blood of the earth. There are also typical plants one can find in Chinese gardens. Old pine trees are most important and stand for long life and dignity of age. The placement of a plant also depends on its combination with other plants. Pine together with plum (*Prunus mume*) and bamboo are called "the three friends of age." The three, together with chrysanthemum, form the "four plants of virtue." The flowers of plum blossom announce the coming spring. Bamboo, which is, in reality, a grass, is known as a plant of noble character and modesty.

Other trees and flowers one can often find in Chinese gardens are lotus flowers as a symbol of nobility, purity respectively unsulliedness. Peony is called a flower of wealth and rank and is regarded as the king of flowers.

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

One also can find orchids, narcissuses, azalea, willows, ginkgo, and other flowers and trees.

The naming of the garden or the buildings is very important for the literati. It often reflects the philosophical and aesthetic views of the owner.

A wall surrounded the garden. The buildings were mainly arranged around a central pond or lake. For example, they were used for different purposes, a retreat of peaceful ambiance, a quiet place for meditation, drinking tea, playing chess, painting, playing music, meeting and discussing with friends. Pavilions are situated usually near the top of a "mountain," open to three or even four sides so air can freely circulate, and one can view the surrounding scenery. Or the pavilions are hanging over the water so one could observe fish or lotus blossoms. Roofed walkways connect the different

Fig. 25 Pavilion and covered bridge (corridor) over water with beautifully wood framed windows connecting two buildings. A pond without plants is regarded as a mirror reflecting the often changing sky.

Fig. 26 Pavilion and two-story gallery, He Garden, Yangzhou.

Fig. 27 Roof covered corridor with white-washed wall at one side and open to the other side.

Fig. 28 The assembly of buildings, rock formations and plants in a small area may look for Westerners overcrowded.

Fig. 29 Building at the shore of the Slender West Lake in Yangzhou with a terrace to view the lake.

Fig. 30 Pavilion at the top of a "mountain" which provides an overview over a part of the garden, He Garden, Yangzhou.

Pine together with plum *(Prunus mume)* and bamboo are called "the three friends of age."

Fig. 31 Zigzag bridge protects against evil spirits.

Fig. 32 Elaborate stone carvings at the entrance to a property.

Fig. 33 The subdued light creates an atmospheric feeling.

Fig. 34 Wonderfully ornamental window in a wall.

Fig. 35 The lattice framed window provides a glimpse on the bamboo behind.

31

32

33

34

Chinese believe that evil spirits and demons can go only straight. Therefore they are repulsed by winding paths or zigzag bridges, and the inhabitants of the garden are protected against misfortune.

35

buildings and allow enjoyment of the garden independently of the weather. They protect against sun, rain, or snow.

The old city of Suzhou is the most important and famous city for classical gardens. It is situated about 100 km northwest of Shanghai on the lower reaches of the Yangtze River and Lake Tai's shore. Because of its numerous canals and bridges, it is called "Venice of the East." Nine of its gardens have been inscribed on the World Heritage List by UNESCO.

The most important and famous gardens of Suzhou are:

- The Humble Administrator's Garden, built in the Ming dynasty,
- The Master-of-Nets Garden,
- The Lingering Garden of Ming dynasty with the "Auspicious Cloud-Capped Peak",

36

• The Lion Forest Garden, originally a Buddhist temple,

• The Mountain Villa of 10,000 Scenes with the Tiger Hill penjing garden. The later was built in 1982 by borrowing a view of the North Temple Pagoda.

Some of the gardens mentioned in this article were on the program of last year's BCI convention tours. Only the most important of these were discussed, for instance, the imperial gardens of the "Forbidden City" and the Summer Palace in Beijing, Yangzhou with the Ge and He gardens, Suzhou with the penjing garden of the Tiger Hill, Hangzhou with its garden temples and boat tours on the famous West Lake (since 2011 a UNESCO World Heritage Site), the penjing gardens in Kunming and Shanghai, and gardens in and around Guangzhou.

I am most grateful to the BCI organizers, especially to Mrs. Helen Su, to see the beautiful and unique places in China that are unforgettable memories for me once more.

37

38

Fig. 36 Beautifully furnished reception hall. Scholars often collected art, such as porcelain (often vases), jade, paintings, bronze artifacts, calligraphy, rocks… "Dense Pine Tree Hall" at the Tiger Hill, Suzhou.

Fig. 37 Covered zigzag walkway. Corridors, walkway, bridges are rarely straight but build in a zigzag or winding way or arch over pond.

Fig. 38 Many classical Chinese buildings show excellent crafted wood carvings of the doors, windows and furniture.

Fig. 39 Typical furniture of a scholar's studio.

Fig. 40 Windows with painted panes of glass.

39

40

Big Mugo from the Graian Alps

By Danilo Scursatone, Italy

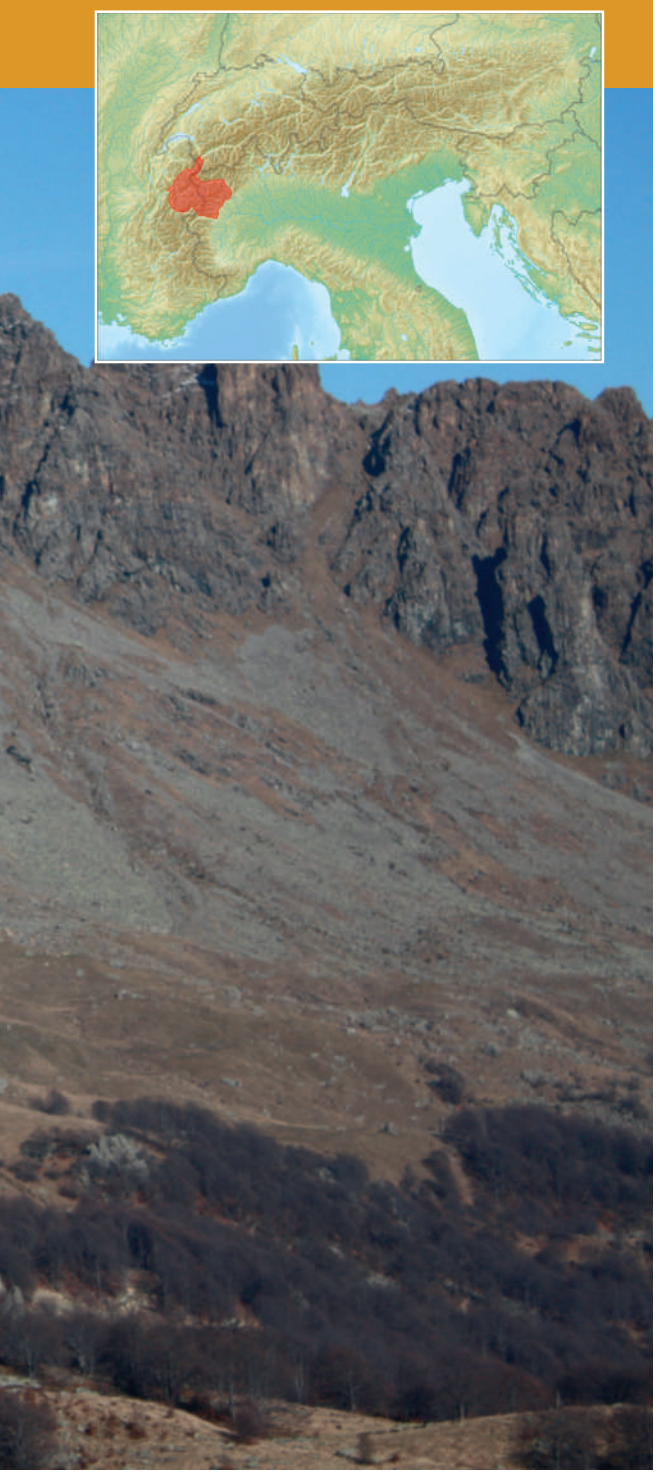
Photos By Nicoleta Baciu

Translated by Danilo Scursatone and Joe Grande

Top: The high pasture lands of the Graian Alps where Big Mugo was found.

Top right inset: The Graian Alps are located in Italy and France.

Left: Big Mugo after the harvest



Characteristics of *Pinus Mugo*

Pinus mugo Turra is a species that grows spontaneously in the Alps, Prealps, the Apennines in Italy, and Europe in the Pyrenees, Carpathians, and Tatras mountains. It covers a vast area ranging from 400 MSL (meters above sea level) at 2700 MSL, finding its ideal location between 1600 MSL and 2300 MSL

It belongs to the *Pinaceae* family, of which it preserves the morphological and reproductive aspects.

Pinus mugo is a pioneer plant very useful in nature. It colonizes sterile, incoherent, and stony soils where, by fragmenting the snowpack, it protects the valley floors from avalanches and landslides.

Pinus mugo is also considered an officinal plant because the essential oil mugolio, a pine cone bud syrup, is extracted from its green, not yet lignified twigs.

Its prostrate or columnar deportment can differ according to the variety of the species (*pumila*, *uncinata*), always with excellent ornamental value.

Pinus Mugo bonsai

From the point of view of the Bonsai form, *Pinus mugo* is a particularly suitable species. It has excellent morphological characteristics, adaptability to the pot, and to miniaturization. Do not neglect its adaptability to the climate of the flat land, considering that in nature it colonizes from 400 MSL

We will be able to distinguish between the *Pinus mugo* of the cultivar and the wild *Pinus mugo*.

The *Pinus mugo* of the cultivar presents itself as an excellent starting material for teaching purposes. It can be shaped in different styles with excellent results in terms of aesthetics, miniaturization of the needle, and shape retention, obtained in relatively short times, about 3 years.

The wild *Pinus mugo* has characteristics and personalities acquired over the years that require the bonsai artist's essential experience. Through careful analysis and knowledge of the species, it can be enhanced, without making serious mistakes that would irreparably ruin its appearance, resulting from experience gained in nature. The bonsai artist must be able to get to the "heart of the tree" and establish a dialogue with it. From this symbiosis, man and nature, the new bonsai tree will take shape, capable of transmitting all its primordial strength to the observer.

History of Big Mugo

When we see the masterpieces of Master M. Kimura, we are certainly captured by the unmistakable style of the Master. Through his bonsai, he lets us imagine the oriental environments to which the species belong. The suggestion of those bonsai has the power to transport us immediately to places and cultures distant from western culture and landscapes.

The history of Big Mugo starts from the clear choice of working the typical species of the places where you live. This choice allows the bonsai artist to express his art, his style, and culture in perfect symbiosis with the surrounding environment.

Through this symbiosis between artist and environment, we will try to transmit to the observer all the emotions of the places where the species is endemic.

So it was that accompanied by the shepherds on their high pasture land, we found Big Mugo in the Graian Alps.

This *Pinus mugo* had grown on a barren slope and was in poor health. Cerambycidae larvae (Longhorn Beetle) had attacked it, causing several branches to dry out. It had several fresh holes in the still live parts, a sign that the larvae were still active. The rooting was poor. The vegetation was rarefied and apical. The pine was very old (estimated over 100 years) and incredibly

Mugo pine bud extract presents as a caramel resin with a strong sweet and aromatic taste. Curious? Look up Mugolio on the Internet.

From the point of view of the Bonsai form, *Pinus mugo* is a particularly suitable species. It has excellent morphological characteristics, adaptability to the pot, and to miniaturization.

From the bottom up: 25% Zeolite, 20% Large Pumice, 30% Akadama, 5% Professional potting soil

Top left: Big Mugo, after 5 years of cultivation.
Top right: Soil preparation
Middle left and right: Root system rich in mycorrhiza
Bottom: Yixing pot

exciting from the bonsai point of view. It had a charm that fully expressed the severity of those places with harsh and extreme living conditions.

In respect of the tree, efforts were made to operate as conservatively as possible in the harvest, freeing it of the major dead parts and safeguarding the active elements. The first thought was to save a living creature of great charm from certain death and, if possible, give it new life to testify to the environment to which it belonged.

Pinus mugo was placed in a cultivation pot with well-draining soil to prevent water stagnation. The Cerambycidae larvae that still internally gnawed the trunk were also eliminated through a dendro-surgery operation. With specific, sterilized cutting tools, parts of the plant invaded by the parasite are removed. The worked parts were subsequently treated with 50% pure propolis in alcoholic solution.

After an initial stabilization phase, the *Pinus mugo* accepted its new location by reacting positively in the

Top: Repotting completed
Front view
Middle: Rear view
Bottom: Tools. We prepared the necessities to carry out the styling that lasted about 5 hours

year following the harvesting. Afterward, a fertilization program was established for 4 years to develop the root system with its mycorrhiza and consequent vegetation. This long cultivation time was essential to ensure a root system that could produce optimal foliage on the old specimen.

In the fifth year, a repotting was carried out, putting the specimen in good health into a bonsai pot.

Repotting Big Mugo, after 5 years of cultivation.

A mix of 25% Zeolite, 20% Large Pumice, 30% Akadama, 5% Professional potting soil was chosen as the potting medium. A large, round Yixing bonsai pot with a leather-colored, pear skin finish was selected to enhance the pine's movement to create an overall appearance that is as natural as possible.

The root system, rich in mycorrhiza and finely distributed, was much improved at the time of repotting than the roots when harvested.

The repotting is completed by placing the *Pinus mugo* inside the pot, gently positioning the entire root system intact.

First Styling

After a further year in this bonsai pot and appropriate fertilization program, we decided to make the first shaping of the old specimen given the excellent state of health and rooting. In the autumn, with my assistants Duilio and Nicoleta, we prepared the necessities to carry out the styling that lasted about 5 hours.

After an initial analysis, we decided to eliminate the secondary branches to balance the branch pads' distribution in the crown's mass. We decided immediately to use only two primary branches to shape the crown.

Top four photos: Elimination of secondary branches

Bottom two photos: Positioning the branches with wire

Once the secondary branches were eliminated, we decided to apply the wire to define the crown and position branches according to the bonsai's new aesthetic shape. We also tried to respect the foliar equilibrium of the pads and their perfect radial form. This choice will allow a prompt reaction of the plant to the first shaping.

After positioning the wire, the coherency of the crown was assessed with the massive trunk. The branch that went down to the left seemed too long, especially considering the evolution of Big Mugo over time. For this reason, we decided to reduce it.

Once the crown was styled, the wood was processed to improve the aesthetics of the old tree and protect it from the entry of pathogens. The first operation was roughing with a grinder equipped with a circular blade

Top three photos: Reduction of the descending branch. The branch that went down to the left seemed too long, especially considering the evolution of Big Mugo over time.

Middle left, right, and bottom: Various power tools with different cutting heads and bits were used to carve the deadwood.

Top: Detail carving was done with concave and triangular wood chisels.

Middle: Flame was applied to the deadwood at 1200°C to burn off the wood filaments left over by the carving process.

Top right: Liquid Jin was then applied to the deadwood to whiten it and protect it.

Bottom left and right: Danilo with assistants Duilio and Nicoleta.

Facing page:

Top three photos: Front view, Rear view and view of crown.

Inset: Big Mugo after the Tambao pruning process.

cutting tool, then a refinement of the sculpture with a high-speed cutter with a special 6-blade circular tool followed by a carbide burr.

The finishing work was completed by carving the remaining cavities with concave and triangular wood chisels and applying a flame at 1200° C on the carved wood to eliminate the remaining residual wood filaments.

The work comes to an end by coating all the processed deadwood parts with liquid Jin (calcium polysulfide) to curb the entry of pathogens, suitably tinted with black oil color to make the gray tone more similar to the naturally aged wood.

Big Mugo thus began the long bonsai path in symbiosis with man.

The stabilization of the structure and the elimination of the wire was obtained in about 2 years. Given the vigorous growth, it was decided to operate a Tambao (pruning of the needles and candles) in July to reduce the crown's mass and facilitate the emission of new buds with needle reduction, thickening the pads.

Big Mugo reacted very well to this operation and, in the following year, sprouted new buds and needles, making the whole result more harmonious.

With time and refinements, Big Mugo will increasingly transmit those emotions that only nature and the places where it was born can give us. My work will be closely linked to the evolution of a living being, respecting its nature and the places to which it belongs. I had a first personal success by snatching it from certain death, and it rewarded me by reacting positively to the path taken. Its deadwood, witness of the harsh environment to which it belongs, will be treated in its evolution without interfering with the natural aging process. The hand of man will disappear, and Big Mugo will be able to tell its observer its story and convey the emotions that only nature can give us.

Big Mugo, *Pinus mugo*
Pot: Yixing. Nebari: 45 cm.
Height: 75 cm.

PHOTO ESSAY|

Resurrection 96

Juniperus chinensis var. Kishu

By Massimo Bandera, Italy
Photos courtesy Massimo Bandera

2019. Exhibited at ArcoBonsai in Trento, Italy

Resurrection 96, a *Juniperus chinensis var. Kishu,* is one of my most important and famous historical bonsai that has accompanied me throughout my career and practically spanned the forty years of bonsai in Italy.

It was a plant presented for the first time in 1990 in Italy at the EBA congress (European Bonsai Association) held in Turin. I still have the catalog of the Volonterio editions that show the tree in those years. The photos came from the 80s. It was an important specimen because it was also the candidate for the 1990 European Kimura demonstration. However, it was not chosen because it was too expensive.

Then I managed to acquire it from a collector who owned it and immediately thought of doing an avant-garde work. I asked my mentor, Masahiko Kimura, for advice for a challenging intervention that succeeded in April 1996. I cultivated this bonsai for three years in large grain akadama to raise its vigor. I sculpted the living wood to create deadwood following the pattern of the veins. I immediately presented it as a distinct work to the master with whom I had been making a cultural exchange for three years now, not as a disciple, but as Ryan Neil says, a very special relationship. Precisely through this tree, I obtained indications that, over time, earned me a Kinbon article, wherein August 1997, Kimura introduced me to the bonsai world. Pages from the article follow, along with the initial images, the first styling, and then the second result after the master's instructions.

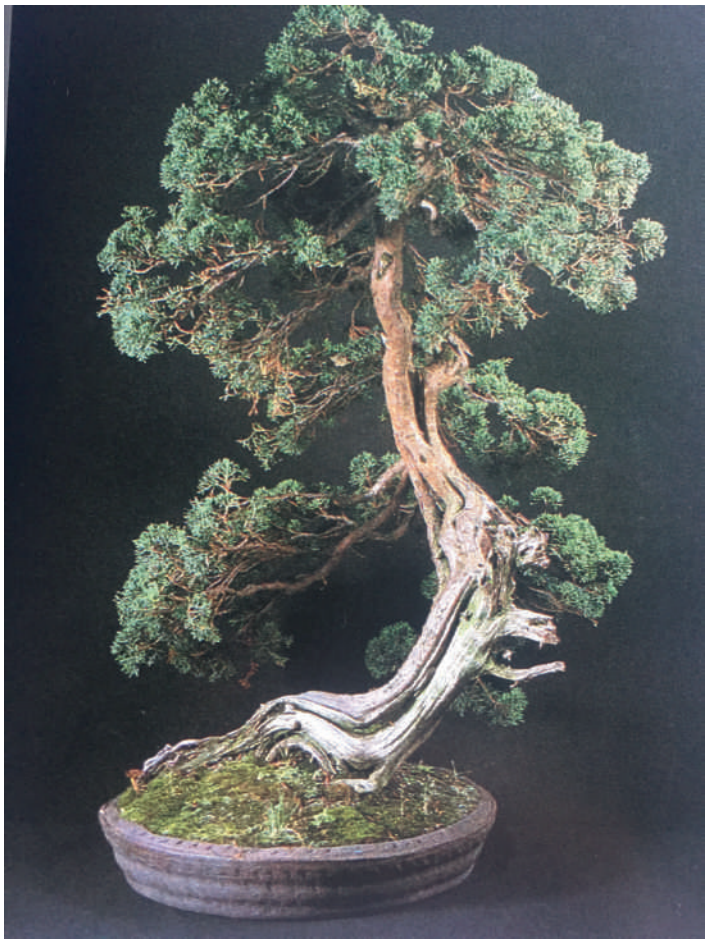
I still keep Kimura's letters and drawing with his advice that you see published where he says that the deadwood sculpture was magnificent. However, it was still necessary to make some variations to the foliage by moving the apex. Kimura made a drawing by his hand for me and published my work.

Resurrection 96 started as a cutting a century ago. Material from the 70s, imported from Fujisato and cultivated in the 80s, reworked in the 90s. Now it looks like a plant that truly reflects a professional history. It is also a tribute to the master: resurrection in homage to the famous juniper with *sharimiki* by Kimura sensei called "resurrection" and 96 because it was done on Easter 1996.

In the photo above, you can see what Resurrection 96 looks like today in its latest styling by Alessandro Bonardo, my first pupil, and who is now a disciple of Masahiko Kimura. Alessandro will finish his apprenticeship in 2022 and will return to Europe as a great promise.

You see this very harmonious crown in the ratio of the golden section, typical of Kimura's disciples' hand, and my deadwood sculpture, which at the time which was avant-garde. I remember that I began to use the term avant-garde for bonsai in Italy twenty years ago with my FKB school, which bears the name avant-garde. At that time, the term "contemporary bonsai" was mostly used. In many circles, the word "avant-garde" is still scary today.

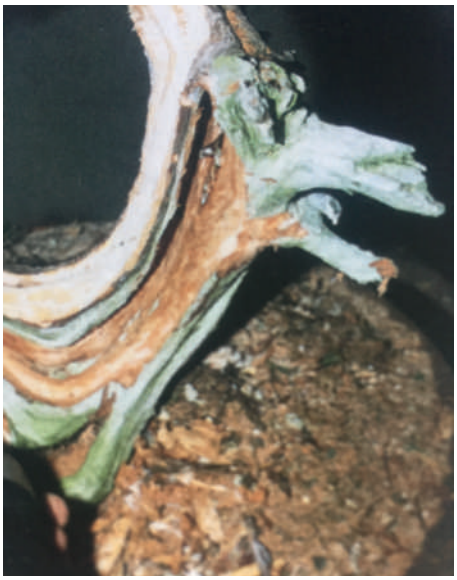
Even if in this bonsai there is truly the avant-garde, it maintains the beauty of the classic Japanese form in a personal sculpture with the contemporaneity of the Italian spirit. This makes bonsai not only a way but welcomes the shadow of a work of art. — Massimo Bandera



1985. The juniper just arrived in Italy from Japan through Holland. The beautiful development of the branches already denotes many decades of cultivation.

1990. After 5 years the bonsai has hardly changed. It was kept mostly in the shade.

1995. As it appears before styling in 1996 after two years of highly vigorous cultivation in akadama with large one-centimeter particle size.



1997. Styling and the new pot. The removal of two low branches to make the figure more elegant and the transition to fine akadama to miniaturize the foliage.

1997. Resurrection 96 is in its new pot, and after the advice of the master that we see in the adjacent drawing, the apex was moved more towards the tenshari.

My relationship with Kimura consists of a cultural exchange with discussions and studies, not an apprenticeship.

1997. The master publishes my article with the styling in Japan in Kinbon magazine and introduces me to the world.

2000. The studio photo with the crown at its maximum development.

2008. The juniper just before the first branch at the bottom lost its vigor.

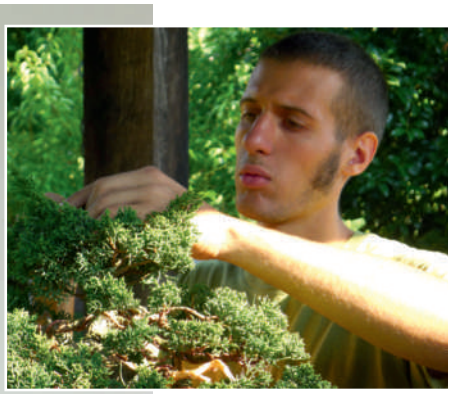
2008. I chose to jin the first branch at the bottom that had lost its vigor. This is where the beginning of the design opened, which was then fully realized by Alessandro in 2018.

2010. After two years it was decided to lighten the shape by removing a branch.

To enhance the modernity of the work, this wonderful round pot by Harumatsu of Seto was chosen. A pot from the 1980s where the master elevates the Zen aesthetic level of yakimono ceramics with a canvas texture that decorates the entire outer surface of the pot. Typical of many tea pottery pieces, this texture is sometimes left as a mark of craftsmanship on the bottom of the vessels. Raising it to the level of engraving the bonsai pot is a brilliant avant-garde act by the famous potter. In doing so, the vase acquires an aesthetic value of emotional surplus.

2018. Alessandro Bonardo restyles Resurrection 96 with an extraordinary interpretation that greatly improves the beauty of the crown.

2018. Top right; after two years of growth on the day of styling, and bottom; the completion of Alessandro's work.



Martin is also an active Bonsai enthusiast and cultivates his trees since 1998, so it was reasonable for him to make pots for his own trees and colleagues in the Bonsai working group of Osnabrück.

Portrait of German Ceramist Martin Englert

By Florentine Grunwald, Germany

Photos courtesy Martin Englert

Top: Portrait photo © Manfred Pollert

Middle: Wood-fired bowl, glazed by fire ash

Bottom: Porcelain bowl, painting inspired by motif on an old Japanese plate at the National Museum in Tokyo

Introduction

I was made aware of Martin Englert when reading our German Bonsai Association magazine in 2019. There was a short report on the Gafu-ten held in Kyoto in January 2019, about the on-site beautiful Shohin presentation and Martin Englert. He was awarded the silver medal for his wonderfully decorated white porcelain Shohin pots.

Unfortunately, the pots were depicted in small formats only, so I couldn't get a detailed impression. But a German potter awarded in Japan? Of course, this was noteworthy!

About eight months later, we visited the Trophy in Genk, Belgium, held in February 2020 (directly before the European Corona lock down). When strolling through the dealer's section, we came across Martin Englert's exhibition booth. In this very first moment, it became apparent to me that Martin's artistic pottery was built around two different main points: the (awarded) porcelain pots with various detailed paintings, and more natural-looking bonsai pots in earthy colors and with interesting surface textures.

At that time, I was looking for a special bonsai pot for a Korean hornbeam. I quickly found a suitable (and decorative) pot at Martin's stand. The conversation with Martin was easy and very friendly. So this very first contact was a real pleasure (as were other conversations later on).

Some months later, we visited Martin and his wife Sabine at their home near Osnabrück (Lower Saxony), a town in northwest Germany. He and his wife created an interesting and diversified garden at their cottage, with sunny and shady areas, lawns, orchards, and roses, well suited for Bonsai.

We found Martin painting a porcelain pot in his living room, using a self-constructed portable toolkit for colors, painter's palette, brushes, quills, and so on. Of course, I was curious about the two so different fields of his creativity, and so comes this story.

So how did Martin start his experiences in pottery?

Martin is also an active Bonsai enthusiast and cultivates his trees since 1998, so it was reasonable for him to make pots for his own trees and colleagues in the Bonsai working group of Osnabrück.

Then, influenced by his friendship with the ceramist Monika Herbst, his interests in pottery increased sharply. As a professional ceramist, she had visited the Japanese town Bizen for advanced education and had lived and worked there together with the highly respected Fujiwara family. After returning to Germany, she started and operated her own studio with a big wood-fired kiln in Osnabrück, teaching in parallel at the municipal school for fine arts. So she was (and is)

Top left: Martin has cultivated Bonsai since 1998, e.g. some of his conifers.

Top right: A view of the Englert garden.

Middle: Four views of a porcelain bowl, decorated with a rich painting, telling a story about a paper-dragon-dance

Top left: Wood-fired kiln at Monika Herbst's studio, Martin's mentor.

Top right: Heating up the kiln

Middle left: Martin's kiln, under construction.

Middle right: Mounting the bowls into the kiln

an invaluable mentor for Martin, especially regarding Japanese ceramics and the fascination of wood-firing.

Martin's first impression of a wood-fired kiln in 2002 was very compelling and influenced him to this day. For Martin, the attraction of this firing technique lies in its natural beauty. He says, "Wood-firing creates various surfaces, sometimes stony and mat, sometimes shiny or velvety opaque, made by the interaction of fire and material. This leads to unique and individual items. Wood-firing is deeply ingrained in Japanese aesthetics. It stands not only for traditional and artistic craftsmanship but also for an idealized image of nature."

Monika Herbst's kiln is a very big one with a volume of more than 2 cubic meters. Therefore it needs 30 to 35 hours and about 8 to 10 cubic meters of wood to reach the final temperature of 1280°C (2336°F). Preparation takes about one week (engobing the stove plates and pillars, arranging the blanks, and providing the wood).

The firing itself is very extensive, needing six persons working in shifts. Afterward, it is necessary to wait for 3 to 4 days before cooling off and opening. Hence Martin designed and built his own smaller kiln, which can be fired alone if needed. This allows him to fire it 6 to 8 times a year and gather different experiences more quickly. To reach the final temperature of 1300°C (2372°F), only 1 cubic meter of wood is needed and about 20 hours. Since the fly ash affects the glaze positively, Martin uses well-seasoned oak wood.

Preparation of bowls for the kiln

Martin constructs his pots using slab and coil techniques as well as wheel thrown. He uses many different types of clay and reduces the atmosphere in the kiln to create various colors and surface textures. The clay interacts with the fly ash to form the glaze, and likewise with the salt, which can be added in the oven before firing. Alternatively, the salt can be added directly into the fire at temperatures of more than

1250°C (2282°F). Therefore the choice of the clay is of key importance for the aesthetic impression of the final result.

Furthermore, Martin uses clay- and porcelain-engobe, as well as black and red iron oxide. Martin employs additional glazes rather rarely. But for example, Shino-glaze tolerates salt and fly ash very well, and produces different colors for the kind of clay and the strength of reducing atmosphere.

All bowls are fired in an electric oven at about 850°C (1562°F) before being wood-fired in the kiln. This prevents possible stress cracking, resulting from uneven temperature distribution and temperature jumps. All bowls and other articles are put on separation pieces made of a mixture of fireclay and sand (Knürpselmasse

Top left: Wood-fired pot with natural glaze, that has a unique texture and color on each side.

Top right: Construction of a bowl for wood-firing, final refinement.

Middle right: Same bowl as above, after wood-firing.

Lower Middle: Melting cones before and after wood-firing.

Bottom left: Examples of some oven spirits, who will "take care" of the firing process.

Bottom right: View into the peep hole during firing.

Top left and right: Painting of porcelain bowls: sketching with graphite and drawing with a steel pen.

Upper Middle, left and right: In process: half-finished painting and toolkit.

Detail of a bowl: mini pig, Martin Englert's second signature.

Lower Middle, left and right: Mokkou-shaped porcelain bowl (a shape modelled on a Japanese quince) with 4 different painted emblems. View of the very functional perforated bottom.

Bottom: 3 different wood-fired pots for roses.

Top left and right: construction of a bowl using a beech wood mold: reinforcing the bottom seam and cutting the feet.

Middle: Preparation of a bowl: dipping into the glaze.

Bottom 3 images: These 3 pots are examples of Martin's latest works: bowls have been painted before being wood-fired. They are showing the natural ash glaze.

in German). Otherwise, the fly ash would fuse the bowls to the oven plate. Due to the silica sand, the Knürpselmasse stays crumbly and can be easily removed after firing.

Firing the kiln

For temperature control, Martin uses special melting cones with defined melting points. Regularly, several cones with melting points below and above the target temperature are put into the kiln near the bowls. Their melting behavior can be observed during firing when the stone which closes the peephole is removed. Additionally, with great experience, it is possible to estimate the oven temperature from the glow color.

Before starting the fire, an oven spirit made of Knürpselmasse is put near the cones, to watch over the final success of firing.

The kiln is then heated at 100°C (212°F) per hour. From 900°C (1652°F) on, the rate becomes slower and more laborious. During the entire firing process, several reduction phases are inserted. The kiln is fed with more wood and less air. During reduction, the flames take the necessary oxygen from the ceramic clay, causing the special colors on the surface.

After the final temperature of 1300°C (2372°F) is reached, the kiln is often tempered for some hours with

Top four images: 5 examples of martin's last porcelain bowls with very rich and detailed painting, needing several firing processes at different temperatures, depending on number of colors and complexity of motifs

Bottom: A wood-fired bowl with shino glaze

Martin Englert
A short résumé

- 1960 born in Berlin (Germany), raised in an artistic family,
- Early study of several musical instruments
- 1977 starting with professional gigs
- 1979 – 1982 professional qualification (handicraft)
- Since 1982: independent musician and sound engineer
- Since 1998: independent potter; Bonsai cultivation in a cottage near Osnabrück
- 2009 construction of his first kiln (wood-fired oven)
- Since 2016: participation at the Trophy (Genk, Belgium)
- Since 2017: participation at the Bonsai San exhibition (Saulieu, France)
- 2019 attendance at Gafu-Ten, awarded with silver medal

reducing flame. Afterward, all openings are closed to prevent oxidation during the cooling phase. After 3 days, the kiln has cooled down to about 70°C (158°F), and it is possible to open it.

Martin says that he likes wood-firing very much because it is a very archaic process depending on random elemental incidents that reflect in the objects in a natural way. One can see where the flames have touched the bowls, and in which position within the kiln they were placed, since the fly ash glaze is shown on the front side and the reduction colors on the back. The diversity displayed on the surfaces reminds Martin of the pebbles in a mountain stream, which appear underwater surprisingly colorful, but are completely natural.

The functional properties of the pots are important. For instance, I was impressed by the perforated bottom of the bowls. Regularly you will find 1 to 3 bigger holes in the bottom, depending on the size (and perhaps some smaller ones for anchor wires). Martin pierces about 75 % of the base plate, making very precise little holes of about 3 to 4 mm (0.12 to 0.16 in) in diameter. This allows fixing the tree at several points as required. More importantly, the many holes allow good drainage over the entire bottom plate, leading to more uniform humidity and better soil ventilation.

Preparation of porcelain pots

Martin uses soft paste China for these pots, which shows a warm white color and fine translucence. Regularly Martin throws or builds these bowls, but he also uses self-made molds of beech wood for square or complicated pots. When the pots have been dried for about one week, they are ready for bisque firing. Afterward, the vessels are dipped into a transparent glaze, and after another drying period, they are fired.

Martin sketches the design for the vessel, painting with a graphite pen directly on the bowl to fix layout and proportions. The sketches are filled-in using a steel pen and on- or in-glaze colors, while the color fields are painted with fine paintbrushes. Depending on the complexity of picture motifs and colors used with different baking temperatures (e.g., gildings), it is necessary to fire the bowls up to 5 times in the range of 760 and 1260°C (1400 and 2300°F).

Martin's picture motifs stem from Japanese woodcuts and ink paintings, but also from Chinese art. Often,

nature itself and the impressions from trips to Japan provide the inspiration. One of his first paintings showed a village setting. On the front face, a Chinese group was grilling a pig on a rotary spit. On the backside, a group of pigs was cooking a Chinese in the same way—representing a myth, since Chinese art often uses animals as symbols. Martin preferred the side with the group of pigs grilling the person. So up to now, on each of his painted porcelain bowls, a little pig is hidden as a second signature.

Martin says that the creation of the painted porcelain bowl represents, in fact, the polar opposite to wood-fired pots—and that is what excites him. For firing porcelain vessels in an electric furnace, computer-like precision is necessary. The clay itself has to be protected meticulously from dirt or contamination with other materials. The building of the bowls is focused on gracefulness and accuracy. The connecting element to wood burning is again the closeness to Japanese culture and aesthetics.

Trips to Japan

In 2019 Martin had the opportunity to participate at the yearly Gafu-ten Shohin Bonsai exhibition held in Kyoto for over 40 years. Since there are unique artistic requirements for Shohin pots, with regard to their small size, shape, glaze, painting, and sophisticated details, there is one section of the Gafu-ten reserved for ceramic artists.

Through Ursula Funke, a dear friend of Martin, the contact to an exhibition organizer was established, and the application was prepared. So Martin went on his first trip to Japan and was actually awarded the second

Four examples for wood-fired bowls.

Two bowls upper right: Surface texture is created by fly ash and salt.

Middle: Bowl with Shino-glaze

Bottom: Bowl with square bottom and natural fly ash glaze

Top left and Middle left: Martin Englert's presentation of pots at the Gafu-Ten 2019 (Kyoto, Japan), awarded with silver medal.

Top right and Middle right: Porcelain workshops in Arita, Japan.

Bottom: View on a Noborigama kiln, large multi chamber climbing kiln, Fujiwara family in Bizen, Japan.

prize for painted porcelain bowls in January 2019. He was then invited to the Gafu-ten in 2020, and of course, he took advantage of a second trip to Japan.

Again the trip included a visit to the world-famous town Bizen, well known for wood-firing. At the Fujiwara family's workshop, father and grandfather are honored for their Japanese pottery as living national treasures. Martin had a look at the family's special Noborigama furnace, a Japanese multi-chamber climbing kiln.

Additionally, he visited the towns of Imari and Arita on the Japanese island of Kyushu, known for excellent porcelain made in Kakiemon style. Due to some Japanese potters' friendly help, especially Mr. Tatebayashi, Martin had the opportunity to visit some workshops and buy very special Ferric colors for painting.

In Japan, Martin was also inspired by the elaborate handcrafted wooden cases (kiribako), which are used

to pack precious bowls, and other things, securely. They are made out of Paulownia wood (Japanese: kiri). Martin finally succeeded in tracing a source for this kind of wood in Europe. Now, he is also able to fabricate his own kiribako.

Perspectives

Currently, Martin plans the construction of a second kiln, which possibly is fired with wood and natural gas, to experiment with glazes and avoid the addition of salt. So he expects results coming closer to those of a classical Anagama oven (Japanese single-chamber furnace). This oven will allow firing bowls up to 70 x 50 cm (27.6 x 19.7 in) in size.

Furthermore, Martin experiments with unglazed porcelain for wood burning and painting of stoneware, to fire these pieces afterward in the kiln.

Martin says that the most important thing for him is developing new ideas and themes and experimenting with all given opportunities. There are so many things left to discover!

So from my perspective, it will be very exciting to see the creative and impressive results that will emerge from Martin's pottery studio in the future!

See more of Martin's work on his Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/EnglertKeramik/ or on his website: http://www.englert-keramik.de

Left Row: 3 examples of pots colored with special reddish Ferric colors from Japan

Middle right: Martin also builds the special Japanese kiribako (boxes made of Paulownia wood)

Bottom: Examples of mini bowls. 3 to 6 cm (1.2 to 2.4 inch) in diameter.

A Versatile Display for Shohin Bonsai

By David DeGroot, USA

Photos by David DeGroot

A magnetic shohin display board is not intended to replace traditional shohin or mame display stands because it will not satisfy everyone's aesthetic taste, but as a way to display trees that might not otherwise fit in a traditional display, it can work very well.

As a bonsai aficionado, I have focused my efforts at creating and maintaining medium to large size bonsai, (30–100 cm) as those sizes seem to me to offer greater design flexibility and greater visual presence than smaller trees. Nevertheless, with advancing age I find that smaller trees are gaining appeal, so I have acquired a few shohin bonsai in early stages of development.

Shohin are traditionally displayed in a group to create a collective visual presence. Traditional multi-tree display stands create an environment and lift at least some of the trees to a satisfying viewing height. Whether the stands are round, rectangular or multi-level, they provide shelves that accommodate trees of various heights and widths. **Figure 1**.

Traditional shohin stands have some limitations:

- They can hold a fixed, limited number of trees.
- All shelves need to be occupied for the display to look finished.
- All shelves are the same depth.
- The shelves are in fixed positions, so the trees in some sense need to fit the stand in order to relate properly to each other.
- Shelves that are rather closely spaced can create shadows and make good lighting a challenge. **Figure 2.**

For club shows in particular, it would be nice to have a shohin display system that could accommodate varying numbers of trees in varying sizes, and that could change from show to show, depending on the number, size, and characteristics of the trees submitted.

The author has devised a display system that has all those characteristics, and it is a magnetic bonsai display board. Although it sounds unlikely, a couple prototypes have been built and tested, and found to be practical. Rare earth magnets with remarkable holding power are what make it possible. A magnetic shohin display board is not intended to replace traditional shohin or mame display stands because it will not satisfy everyone's aesthetic taste, but as a way to display trees that might not otherwise fit in a traditional display, it can work very well.

A small display board can be built at a cost that is about the same as a high quality traditional wood display stand, depending on the number and size of shelves. Following is an example of a display board I built for use with a couple organizations in my area. **Figure 3.** The board itself is comprised of a flat frame


1


2

put together with mending plates. **Figures 4 & 5.** A sheet of plywood thick enough to support weight but thin enough to save weight (about 10 mm thick in this case) is nailed or glued to the frame. Holes are drilled where braces will be attached and T-nuts are driven in from the face of the board. **Figures 6 & 7.** A piece of factory pre-primed sheet metal is glued to the plywood with contact cement. Thickness (gauge) is not important functionally, but it must be perfectly flat, so it should be thick enough (22-20 gauge) that it will withstand handling until it is glued in place. Edges of the board should be trimmed for appearance. I used strips of wood lattice. If paint is used, I recommend a matte surface as gloss paints can encourage slippage. Paint colors can be changed between uses, fabric can be stretched over the board, or vinyl mural art can be used for variety.

Set-up is a breeze. I used 40 cm shelf brackets for braces, bolted to the frame and clamped with quick-clamps to the table. **Figures 8 & 9.**

Shelves can be made in many sizes and have various weight-holding capabilities depending on the size and number of magnets installed. The shelves in the

illustrations were intended to be as thin and unobtrusive as possible, to make the trees look almost as if they were floating, so they had an angle front to back of only 12°, and were only 380 mm deep at the back. **Figure 10.** Making the angle wider and the back deeper will increase stability. It is also important to attach magnets along the TOP edge of the shelf for maximum holding power. **Figure 11.**

Figures 12 to 15 show the construction of the shelves used on this board. Many different designs and finishes could be used.

A word about the Neodymium magnets used for this project—they extremely powerful and must be handled with care. If two magnets are handled without the shock absorbing spacers, they can snap together with such force as to take a piece of flesh out of your hand. They can also meet with enough force to shatter. Illustrated in the smaller shelf in **figure 11** are three pre-drilled and countersunk magnets, 50 mm x 25 mm x 5 mm installed with brass screws, and with a pull force of 15 Kg each. In the larger shelf are three magnets 38 mm x 19 mm x 5 mm with a pull force of 26 Kg each.

Despite the power of the magnets, you should ALWAYS weight-test each shelf before setting a bonsai on it. Shelves are easily removed from the board by tilting the front edge of the shelf down.

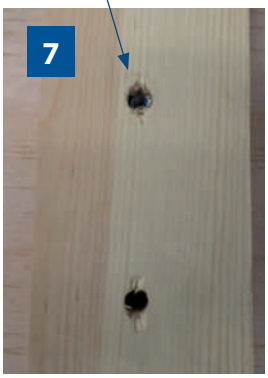
Two of many sources for the magnets are:
CMS Magnetics at <www.magnet4sale.com> or
Applied Magnets <wwww.magnet4less.com>

There are some aesthetic challenges to using a display board instead of traditional stands. One is an apparent lack of depth because the trees are very close to the backdrop. An open display stand gives the illusion of greater depth because you see beyond the trees. A large display board can give the impression of being too bland an environment if it is a single color. Selecting patterns or images that add interest without competing with the trees might be a challenge. One example of how a backdrop using images can be effective is found at the Slender Lake Penjing Museum in Yangzhou. **Figure 12.** Another challenge is that the freedom of arrangement the display board affords can lead to rather freewheeling or unstructured arrangements. Care must be taken to define relationships between the trees as in a stand display.

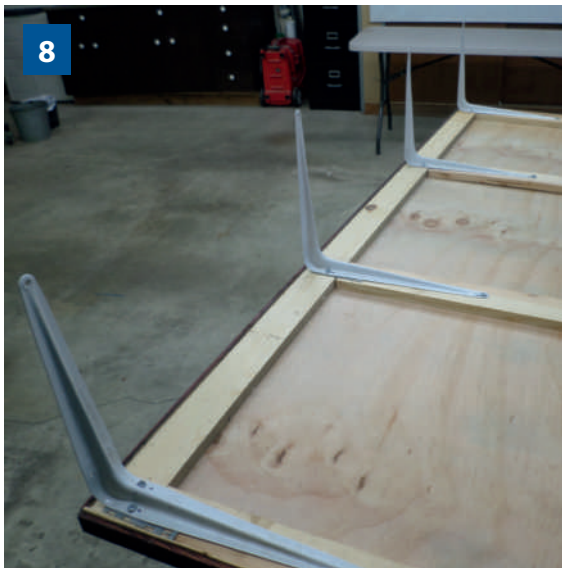
However, advantages to using a magnetic display board compared to other means of display are several and worthwhile, and include:

6

7

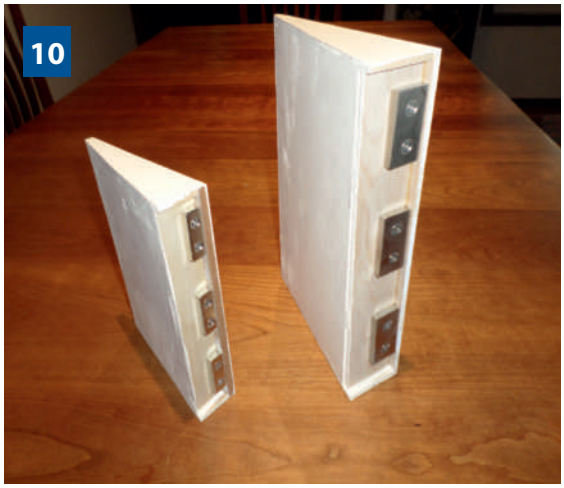


8



9

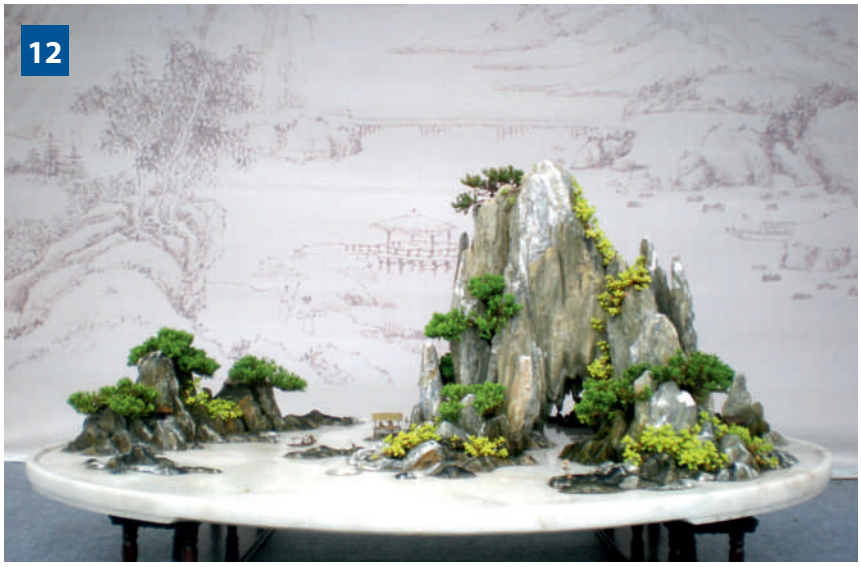
10



11

- Great flexibility in number of trees shown. Shelves can be added or removed at will.
- Great flexibility in shelf sizes. Larger or smaller shelves can be made according to need.
- Infinite placement choices, as shelves do not have to be set in slots or holes
- Clean aesthetics—there are no slots or holes showing where shelves are not.
- Shelves can be positioned for each tree so it is not in the shadow of the tree above it.
- Easy setup and takedown, easy to store.

A magnetic shohin display board is an enormously versatile addition to any shohin or mame display. **Figures 13 & 14** are examples of the board in use.

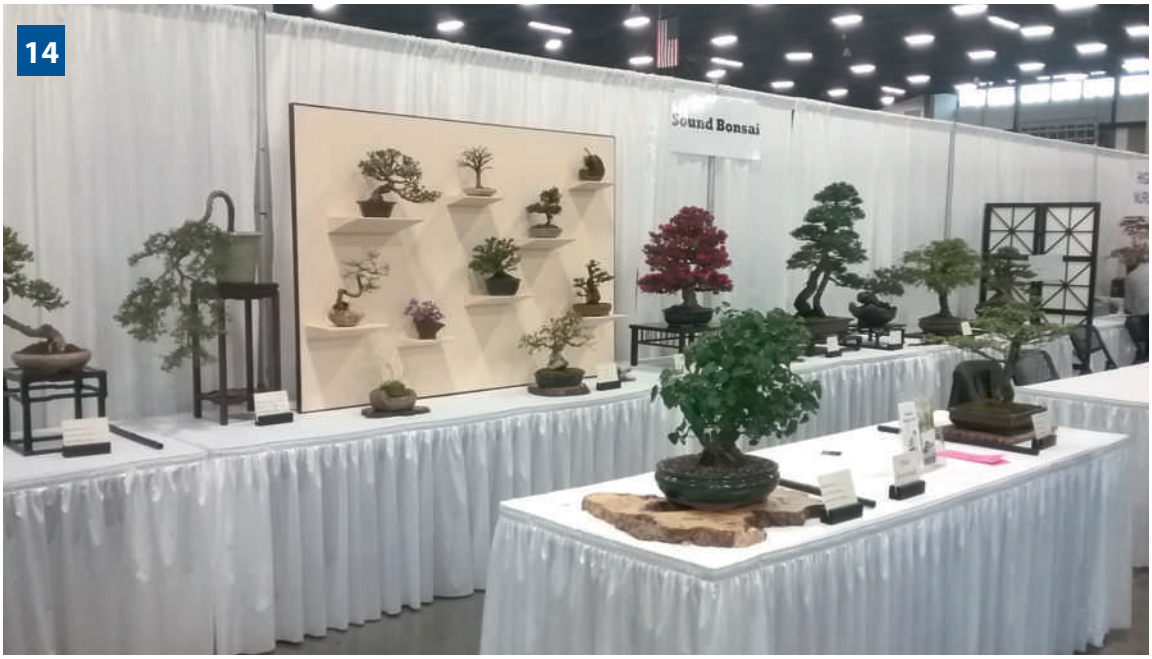

12

Parts lists for board shown are as follows:

Display board materials

- one 1219 mm x 1829 mm x 10 mm plywood
- one 1219 mm x 1829 mm x 20 to 22 gauge factory primed sheet metal (flat)
- two 300 mm x 915 mm x 2438 mm boards
- two 300 mm x 915 mm x 1219 mm board
- eight Mending plates (50 mm x 101 mm or similar)
- four 90° steel brackets
- eight 5 mm #20 x 19 mm T-nuts for wood
- eight 5 mm #20 x 15 mm flat head bolts
- fifty #10 x 19 mm flat head screws
- three 15 mm x 2438 mm lattice
- 1 liter contact cement
- Short nap roller cover
- Paint (matte surface)

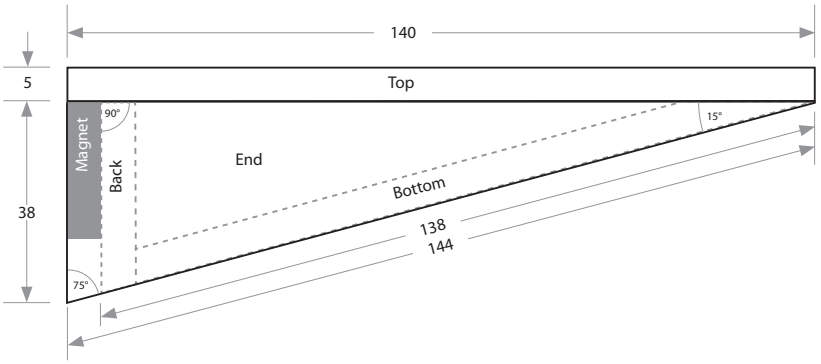

13



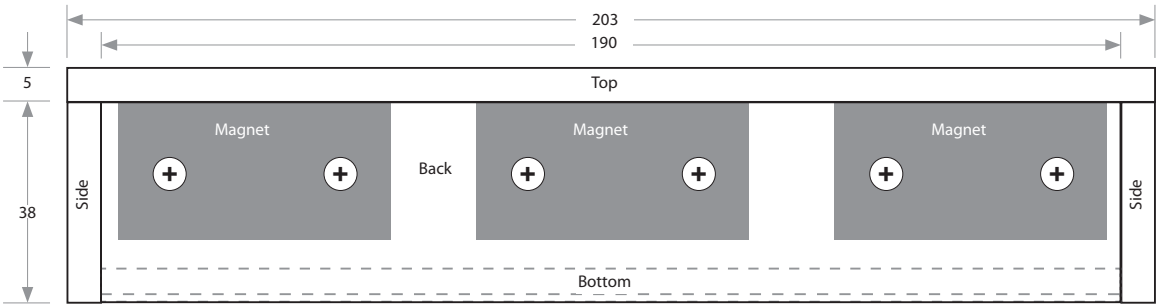
14

Shelf dimensions in millimeters

side view



back view

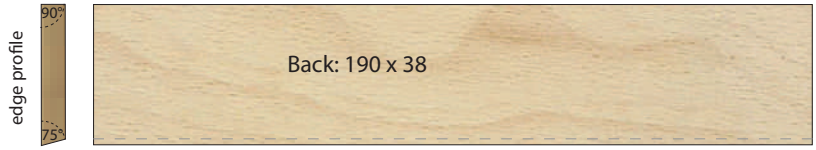


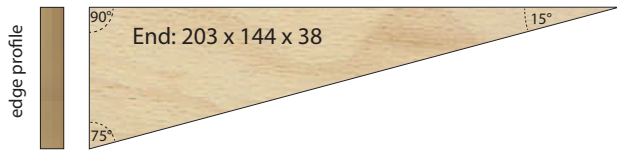
top view

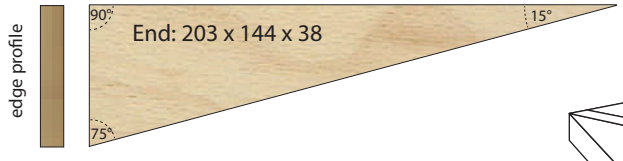
Shelf Materials

- one 5 mm x 152 mm x 1219 mm hobby board
- Wood glue
- four 25 mm x 50 mm x 5 mm Neodymium block magnets w/2 countersunk holes, minimum 15 Kg pull
- eight #8 x 19 mm flat head brass screws

Shelf pieces to cut







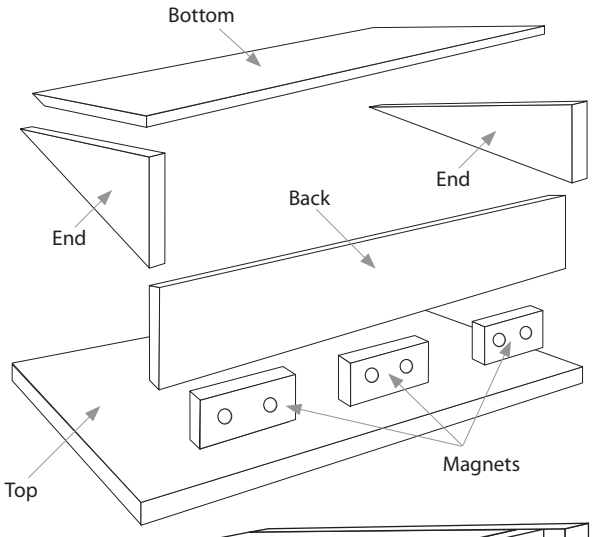
Assembly

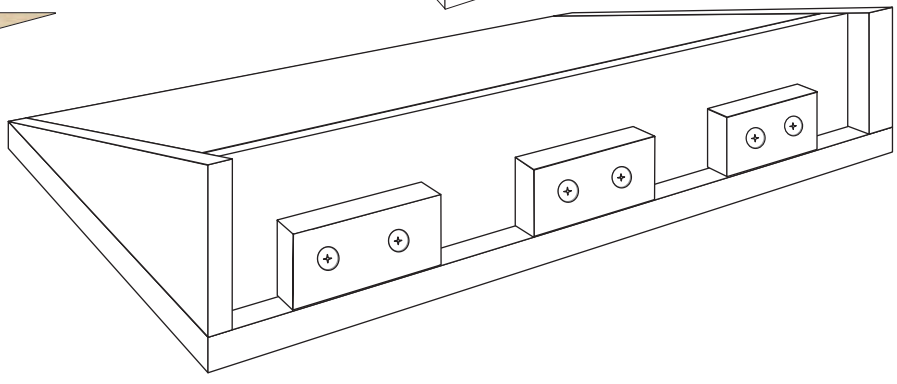
A note about cutting:
The dimensions given here are for the smallest shelf I made, suitable for mame trees or companion plants. Pieces with bevel cut on one edge, the bevel is cut first, then be re-measured before the opposite cut is made. The 15° cut (or any other acute angle cut) at the front edge of the bottom piece might require a simple jig to be made.

Assembly instructions

1. Place the top face down on a flat, level surface
2. Make a pencil line where the rear facing side of the back will align.
3. Apply wood glue to Top edge of two side pieces. Then Top edge and two ends of back piece. Carefully place the back and two sides on the top piece.
4. Allow the glue joints to dry thoroughly.
5. Apply wood glue along the underside of the top, just behind the front edge. Apply glue to the two side edges and back edge of the bottom piece.
6. Stand the partially assembled shelf upright on its back side and carefully insert the bottom into place. The bottom is cut to fit *inside* the back and side pieces.
7. After all glue joints have dried, apply wood putty to any gaps, sand and finish.
8. Place the shelf upside down and position the magnets *one at a time* along the top edge as desired. Mark the position of the screw holes and drill pilot holes.
9. **USING GREAT CARE TO KEEP THE MAGNETS FROM TOUCHING**, attach them with screws to the back.

The shelf is complete.





The Elegant Tiger Hill Penjing Garden in Suzhou

Text and photos by Gudrun Benz, Germany

Yunyan Pagoda or Hu Qiu Tower, built in 961, called the "Leaning Tower of China."

Top: Because of its numerous canals and bridges in the old city center, Suzhou is called "Venice of the East" or "Venice of China." (photo by Jo@net)
Middle: Entrance to the Land-and-Water Penjing Garden.
Bottom: Cascade penjing.

The two cities Suzhou and Hangzhou, are favorably situated at the lower fertile Yangtze delta with a mild climate and are regarded by the Chinese as a paradise on earth. Both cities are close to Lake Tai and lay on the Grand Canal, built at the end of the sixth century. They were important economic, cultural, and commercial centers since the Song dynasty (960 – 1279), which means since about 1000 years ago. Suzhou's history even goes back to about 2500 years and is famous for its beautiful classical gardens in traditional style. Because of its numerous canals and bridges in the old city center, Suzhou is called "Venice of the East" or "Venice of China." Since the 10th century, wealthy officials, rich merchants, and artists settled there and led an "elegant" lifestyle.

Tiger Hill, Hu Qiu in Chinese, is the landmark of the Suzhou garden city and located in the northwest, a little bit outside the city. It comprises an area of 21,3 ha. Its main attraction is the seven-story pagoda Yunyan Temple Tower with a height of 48 m. It was constructed during the Song dynasty of the 10th century. The pagoda is built on an unstable sandy foundation. Therefore, it is slightly inclined to one side, similar to the Tower in Pisa, Italy, hence, the name "Leaning Tower of China." Tiger Hill is designated with a "National Tourist Attraction of Grade AAAAA," the highest national sights level in China. A visit to the garden is a must for each visitor. The name Tiger Hill's origin is a legend: Emperor of Wu State during the Spring and Autumn Period buried his father there. It is said that three days after the burial, a white tiger was seen to be crouching on the tomb, guarding it from then on, hence the name. According to another version, the tomb resembled a crouching tiger.

Suzhou's penjing garden, "Yun Xiu Yuan, "is part of the Tiger Hill area, which means a garden within a garden. At a panel at the entrance, it is called "Potted-Landscape Garden of Suzhou." It is relatively young. It was laid out only in 1982. Nevertheless, one can find there 400-year-old penjing. It is a 5800 square meter garden with Suzhou style buildings for instant pavilions, the main hall "Hall of 10,000 Pines," a roof-covered

Top left and right: *Juniperus chinensis* with shari.

Middle: Protection of the soil against drying up by fragments of ceramic pots.

Bottom: The lower terrace of the penjing display.

Facing Page:

Top left: "Hall of the 10,000 Pines" is the main building of the Penjing Garden.

Top right: View from the lower terrace to the "Dense Pine Trees Hall."

Middle left: A shangshi on a table-like stand at the roof-covered walkway in the garden.

Middle right: High rising slender rocks.

Bottom: Overview of the landscape penjing garden. In the foreground a large landscape penjing in off-center style with two groups of rocks.

corridor, and a collection of about 3000 penjing! In China, the number 10,000 is not exact, but it means "many." Most penjing are donations from all over China. The garden is divided into two parts: an area for tree penjing and an area for landscape penjing or water-and-stone/rock penjing.

The classification into tree and landscape penjing as well as water-and-land penjing is a Chinese "specialty". 'Tree penjing' corresponds to the Japanese bonsai. 'Landscape penjing' reminds us only slightly of Japanese rock and group plantings. Regarding tree penjing, one distinguishes between one-tree penjing and

forest-penjing. There are several kinds of styling tree penjing, also called 'schools,' for example, the Shanghai, Yangzhou, or Cantonese (Lingnan) school. Landscape penjing are arrangements with rocks depicting a natural mountain and water landscape. Water-and-Land penjing are arrangements of one or several trees as main objects together with soil = 'land,' water, and rocks as accessories. Ceramic figurines are often added, such as boats, building like pavilions, pagodas, fisher huts, human and animal figures to create a whole scenery, a theme, a mood. Great care is taken for the right size/proportion of the figurines to convey an impression of a far distance. These kinds of penjing are displayed on a shallow container, called shui in Chinese and suiban in Japanese. The flat containers are made mostly of marble and have an oval or rectangular shape.

Top: By creating a landscape penjing, one also uses plants of different kinds, here podocarpus, grass, and more.

Middle: Yellow, slender rocks with plants (podocarpus and others).

Bottom: Impressive and beautiful landscape penjing with a main peak at the right, a lower rock group at the left and small rock arrangement in the middle-back. The latter creates the impression of depth.

Raijin

God of Lightning and Thunder

Text and photos by
Marco Tarozzo, Italy

BCSA and BCI
Instructor

"The result at the end of the wiring and setting the branches can be seen in this photo. For my taste, I consider that the branches are still too many, and I believe that in the near future, I will have to decide whether what is sashi-eda today will continue to exist or if it can be eliminated and eventually replaced by the one placed above it." — Marco Tarozzo

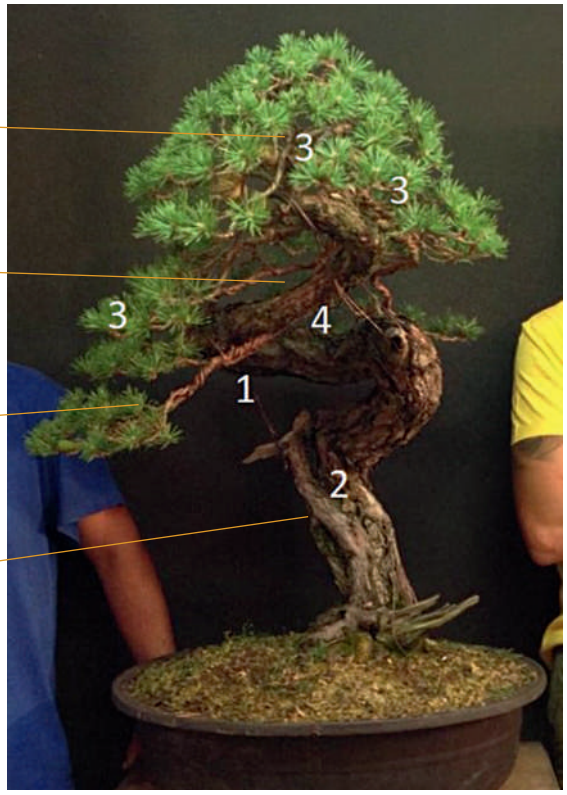
SOME OF THE FEATURES TO REMEDY

3. Redistribution of the foliar mass that, as mentioned before, hides the apical movements of the trunk.

4. Compression of a part of the trunk to accentuate its curvature.

1. The sashi-eda is positioned in an unnatural and not very credible way with respect to the development of the other branches that form the tree

2. Possible improvements with a change of inclination and rotation of the trunk 24 degrees from right to left.



The experience I want to share is compressing a curve, moving a portion of the trunk from the axis and shaping the foliage of a *Pinus sylvestris*, which I call *Raijin, God of Lightning and Thunder*.

The tree in question arrived in my garden, the bonsai garden at the edge of the lagoon, about 5 years ago. Previously, the tree had some styling interventions that led it to a very pleasant appearance, but that did not satisfy me.

However, I must recognize that the work done up to that moment was of an excellent level, both technical and cultivation.

As a premise, I would like to say that each of us has our own "artistic feeling" influenced by many factors that condition aesthetic taste. Therefore, based on my subjectivity, I found that the tree could be improved in some parts.

- As the current planting angle does not sufficiently emphasize the trunk's movements, repositioning in the pot can make the bonsai more "dynamic."
- The curves are all on the same axis. Looking at the trunk from the side is static. Therefore you need to reposition a curve by making it exit the axis.
- The foliar mass covers the trunk details that can be made evident to improve the "design."

As I mentioned before, the work done previously on the foliar mass was pleasant. The photo sent to me, top right, shows the plant in 2014 after the last styling. The numbers on the photo indicate some of the situations I intend to remedy:

1. The sashi-eda is positioned in an unnatural and not very credible way with respect to the development of the other branches that form the tree.
2. Possible improvements with a change of inclination and rotation of the trunk 24 degrees from right to left.
3. Redistribution of the foliar mass that, as mentioned before, hides the apical movements of the trunk.
4. Compression of a part of the trunk to accentuate its curvature.

As I usually do when a tree arrives in the garden, I left it alone for about a year, intervening only to remove the wire and water it. Unfortunately, it was attacked by a fungal disease, so to bring Raijin back to health and strength, I had to wait another two years before I could work on the tree.

When I considered it fully recovered in the winter of 2018, I moved a part of the trunk and compressed the curve, with my colleague and friend Federico Springolo.

As can be seen in photo 1, I placed an iron bar on one end of the trunk where, in correspondence with the curve, to which I will use a wire tie to keep the bend that serves to move the axis of this portion with respect to the rest of the trunk. In this way, it also accentuates the edge of the upper curve.

I used a trigger clamp to work without jerking, where every pull on the trigger closes a few centimeters until it reaches the desired compression.

As a premise, I would like to say that each of us has our own "artistic feeling" influenced by many factors that condition aesthetic taste.

In photos 2 and 3, you can see the trunk in traction with the temporary clamps and the permanent tie wires that keep it in position.

After this intervention, I placed a wooden block inside the curve, that protects the wood fibers on the curve below it from tearing when we compress the upper curve. **Photos 4 and 5.**

Photos 6 and 7 show the anchor points of the two ends of the clamp positioned to compress the curve.

In photo 8, the distance between the two ends of the trunk to be compressed is 30 cm.

In photo 9, after compression, the distance between the two points is 20 cm.

Now, as can be seen from **photo 10,** the trunk is more dynamic with more decisive curves, and the total height of the plant has decreased by about ten centimeters.

In photo 11, Federico and I are satisfied with what we have done.

Now all that remains is to wait for the growing season without further stressing the tree. Despite the precautions, there was some tearing of the wood fibers.

The tree was not influenced by the work done on the trunk. Given the work to be performed on the foliar mass, it was well fed during the 2019 growing season. The needles are very strong and turgid, the color is typical of Sylvestris, and there are no signs of stress or weakness.

After another year, I removed the wire ties and the iron bar. The trunk remained in position, as can be seen in **photo 12.**

The tree was not influenced by the work done on the trunk. Given the work to be performed on the foliar mass, it was well fed during the 2019 growing season. The needles are very strong and turgid, the color is typical of Sylvestris, and there are no signs of stress or weakness.

So here we are.

I start with cleaning the needles and selecting the branches that I will not eliminate because they are useful for the design I have in mind; subsequently, I dedicate myself to wiring using copper wire with diameters ranging from 4 mm to 1 mm. In the end, there is the positioning of the branches as I imagined in the drawing in **figure 13.**

The result at the end of the wiring and setting the branches can be seen in this article's opening photo. For my taste, I consider that the branches are still too many, and I believe that in the near future, I will have to decide whether what is sashi-eda today will continue to exist or if it can be eliminated and eventually replaced by the one placed above it.

Federico and I are satisfied with what we have done.

It will all depend on the vegetative response that the tree will have in 2020.

Raijin is now as I imagined when it arrived in the garden. I am satisfied with the first path taken together. Except for a few small ailments, everything has gone smoothly so far.

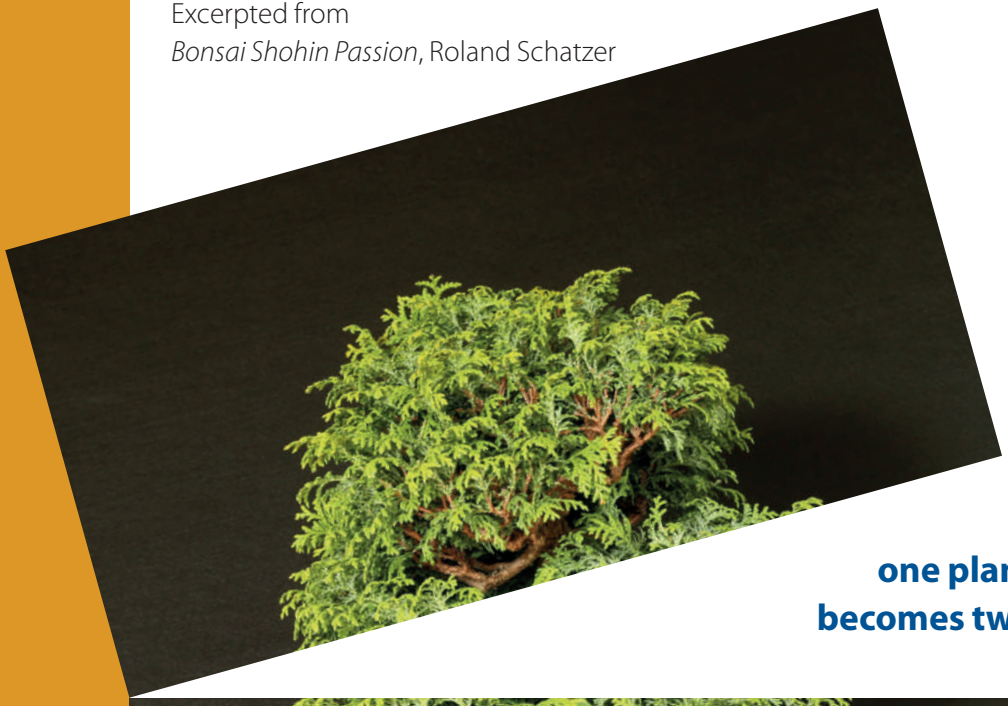
The next intervention will be next year when I will proceed with the repotting, I will place Raijin with the right inclination in a smaller pot suitable for its "stature."

Photo 14 shows the current size of the tree, and me ... before the barber's intervention.

Reproduction by air layering

By Roland Schatzer, Italy
Photos by Roland Schatzer

Excerpted from
Bonsai Shohin Passion, Roland Schatzer



one plant becomes two

Example of a cypress: The parental plant was about 50cm (16.75 in) tall; I only used the upper part of the tree.

May, 2014

Top left: The point of layering was very well chosen.

Top right: The part to be layered was marked with chalk in order to take off a strip.

Upper Middle left and right: Above and below two cuts are made to the cambium.

A perpendicular cut divides the bark strip in order to take it off more easily.

Middle right: The final result.

Bottom: Scrape the cambium by moving the knife from top to bottom.

Another possibility for reproducing parental plants is the air layering technique, which consists of encouraging new roots to grow at a certain point of a branch or trunk. The ideal timing for layering is as soon as the plant is in full growth, i.e., in late spring or early summer. There will still be enough time for the roots to grow, and after the tree is cut, there will be enough time for the new tree to grow before hibernation.

The actual technique works as follows: First, I determine the ideal position of the new roots. Second, with a sharp knife I cut two circles around that specific point into the bark of the trunk or branch. The cut needs to be made deep into the cambium, which can be recognized by its thin, slimy, mostly light green layer below the bark, when you remove it. The bark strip is then taken off and should be the same width as the diameter of the layered branch, which should be one to two centimeters thick. If the diameter is significantly thicker, the strip can be slightly thinner.

Top left: The freshly removed bark strip with scraped cambium .

After taking off the bark, I carefully scrape the cambium layer with a knife. If scraping is not carried out precisely, the tree could grow a callus. This happened to me with the apple tree. Do not eliminate the cambium with branch cutters, as that would mean penetrating deeper into different levels of the tree and reducing the live veins, which transport water with nutrients of vital importance, from bottom to top. It is possible, that the entire part, intended to be layered, dies off.

For the root growth, the use of specific rooting hormones could be useful. They can be applied by means of a toothbrush, and a bigger quantity of rooting hormones will stay on the decorticated part. Then I apply sphagnum moss.

I also tried with different kinds of moss, sometimes it works, however, the biggest success is achieved with sphagnum moss.

It should not be too dry or too humid. Take a handful of it, dip it into water and squeeze it in order to eliminate most of the water, and have a damp cloth.

▲ Moist moss, looking like a pressed flannel, was put on both sides.

▲ The moss bundle, closed on all sides, and lightly pressed.

▼ Hold the moss tight, wrap it with plastic film, then fix the film.

▼ The moss was wrapped tightly with film.

I position the moist moss around the circle. I close the entire package with a transparent film—a normal, cling film used at home. I fix it either with the film itself or by means of a wire. Obviously, you can use any other type of plastic wrap. The important thing is that the moss ball keeps the moisture inside.

Some bonsai experts have had good results with dark film, however I have not noticed any significant difference. Should it stay quite some time on the trunk or branch, I usually sprinkle it with water if necessary, for example with a syringe. I prefer the cling film, as it allows me to observe the condition of the moss and to spot the development of new roots. Therefore, I am able to decide the moment, when enough roots have grown, and time will be right for sawing the layered part. For that passage I do not need to move the film. Usually, this happens after one or two months. That is actually a very intense moment, accompanied by palpitations.

▲ The feeling is that of unwrapping a gift.

▲ Many roots appear gradually, as the film is unwrapped.

July, 2014

Top: Many new roots are visible through the film. The root ball was prepared for cutting off by carefully unwrapping the film.

▼ By means of tweezers I carefully remove the moss.

▼ The exposed root ball's thin roots must not dry out.

Top left: While sawing the tree top it is important to hold the tree firmly.

I cut the new tree just below the new root ball.

Cradling the new tree in my hands reminds me of the emotion I felt when I first held my children in my arms. The feeling was not as strong, of course, but it was similar. The next step is usually to carefully eliminate the external moss. Depending on the quantity of new roots, I cut superfluous branches in order to create a balance between roots and foliage.

The prepared tree is planted together with the remaining moss in a cultivation pot. While fixing the tree, I am not allowed to lay the fixing wires over the roots—as it happens with mature bonsai—but I fix the tree by wiring the trunk or the strong branches. The tree should not wobble or be loose; it is better to apply one more wire if necessary.

The result does not necessarily have to be beautiful, it only has to fulfil its purpose.

I put the tree in a protected, sunny place, and allow it to grow freely.

▲ I used a saw with a narrow saw blade to cut the rooted top.

▲ The "umbilical cord" is cut: A new tree is born.

▼ The upper part of the parental plant seems a bit poor. We will see what the future holds.

▼ The cut part, seen from below: in the middle the cut surface, moss and roots around it.

The first winter it is important to protect it from wind and sub-zero temperatures in a garden shed or in a poly tunnel. Species such as maple, juniper, boxwood, or similar ones are very suitable for the layering technique. Less suitable species are pine and larch, but it should work with them, too—my bonsai friends confirm.

The layered part should have good features and make the entire process worth it, for example good rejuvenation, special species, beautiful structure, or similar features.

Top right: This process brought with it much joy: It can be described as becoming a father who holds his new born baby in his arms for the first time. Maybe I am exaggerating a little.

Middle right inset: I eliminated most of the foliage before potting. The photo below shows the tree and the large quantity of leaves and branches that had been cut.

Middle left inset: Roland sent this photo just before press time. The cypress in 2020. It is well on its way to becoming a beautiful shohin bonsai!

July 2014, the new tree: Hopefully it will grow well in order to become a special shohin. I would like to add it to my collection.

Pandemic Creation "Ocean on a tray"

Text and photos by Anita Bajpai,
Bhopal, India

Two views of the ocean scape on a marble plate

I grew up under a father's tutelage who had a strong creative streak and an immense love for nature despite being an eye surgeon.

I inherited the love for plants and rocks and animals and every creation of Mother Nature.

Now, after twenty years of Bonsai practice, having learned Suiseki and Penjing on the way, enhanced my curiosity about natural rocks.

I have indulged in a land and water Penjing and made a large-format Penjing with fossilized wood.

I have amassed a reasonably good collection of a variety of rocks.

During the last four months locked in at home due to COVID19, I let my creative juices fly.

I had been silently an admirer of resin for the last five years, and I wanted to create a fusion of Penjing and resin work.

I rummaged in my treasure trove and came up with a round marble plate. This was the first step.

Next, I went online and hunted for the Resin (Resin and Hardener) and the colors I wanted.

Amazon came to my rescue and delivered the resin, albeit after a considerable delay.

In the meantime, I started to place and set the stones on the marble tray (this came easy since I was a trained Penjing artist). I created in my mind a picture of a seascape, an ocean full of colors. I created a lighthouse and a small boat with a mast made from clay for realism that I picked up in New York. I painted these artifacts.

The colors I ordered, too, arrived thanks to Amazon.

Next comes the tricky part.

Take Resin and Hardener in equal amount and mix thoroughly in a transparent plastic glass. Why transparent? So that you can see properly the colors that you add. Divide the mixed resin into five portions, each in a separate transparent container. Mix a different color in each of the five glasses. The pigments used were Nile blue, white, aquamarine, ultramarine blue, and one glass left transparent. Pour the resin with ultramarine blue onto the tray first to make the deep sea.

Tiny sailboats made of painted clay add realism to the ocean scape.

Next, pour aquamarine to show the different shades of the ocean. Then pour the Nile blue for the top layers and white to depict the seashore.

Next comes a critical stage that will remove any air bubbles and spread the colors as per the artist's imagination. Use an electric hot air gun on the total surface. Let the entire piece dry for 24 hours. Now place the boat and lighthouse in the appropriate position.

Anita goes through the steps of creating two examples of ocean scapes using plates, rocks and colored resin. She uses a hot air gun to blend the different pigments. Note the protective masking tape on the edges of the plates during the process.

Top: A large-format Penjing with fossilized wood.

Middle: A vertical rock arrangement on a plate and displayed on a plate stand.

Bottom: A Land and Water Penjing on an oval marble tray.

Next, make a second layer repeating the same as the first time to bring out the depth. Dry for another day.

Voila, the ocean on a tray, is ready. Happy resin working!

Anita Bajpai is a member of Lake City Bonsai Association of Bhopal City, Madhya Pradesh, India. It is affiliated chapter of Bonsai Study Group of The Indo-Japanese Association, who aims to encourage new talented artists in allied arts of Bonsai.

Shohin, Bonsai's archetype

By Joe Grande, Canada

If your experience is the same as mine, you'll know that people who are unfamiliar with the broad scope of bonsai think that a shohin-size juniper in a cascade pot *is bonsai*. Period. They are quite surprised when they learn that bonsai come in many sizes and styles. I would venture to say that most newcomers to bonsai start with training shohin bonsai. Many go on to acquire larger specimens that require more physical energy to shape them, repot them, bend branches, carve deadwood and move them around, from sun to shade, from benches to workshops, from home to exhibits.

Recently, my aging bonsai friends are rediscovering shohin bonsai. They are lighter, occupy less space, are easier to manage. However, they still exude the charm and allure that bonsai gives us—at any size.

Bonsai Shohin Passion

Roland Schatzer,

370 pages, hard cover, full color.

ISBN 979-12-200-0309-4

Available in German, French, Italian and English languages.

Hence this book.

Bonsai Shohin Passion, written by the South Tyrolean bonsai expert Roland Schatzer, fills the gap of shohin books published in languages other than Japanese and offers a wide range of tips and advice on 370 pages, for beginners as well as for experts. With more than 1,200 pictures, this book shows how shohin trees can be cultivated and refined. Lots of useful knowledge enables the reader to carry out his/her own experiments to obtain and successfully style a shohin of their own.

The keyword in the title is *passion*. Roland is passionate about shohin bonsai, curating over 500 plants in his collection. He is also passionate about photography. The book is a delight to the eyes.

The scope of the book also demonstrates his passion. He covers climate, botany, horticulture, design, and all the bonsai techniques necessary to develop show-worthy bonsai—all aimed at shohin-size bonsai. The book feels more like an encyclopedia about shohin than a book one might casually pick up to read.

Bonsai Shohin Passion is strongly recommended to anyone seeking guidance on the shohin bonsai category. Roland offers almost 30 years of experience and insights in growing and shaping shohin. He includes case studies on over 50 species.

For a taste of what's in store for those considering this book, read Roland Schatzer's article on reproduction by air layering on page 54.

To order this book, visit:

<http://bonsai-shohin-passion.com/shohin-europe.php?DOC_INST=4>

Watch the trailer on Youtube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ghzuqvQU9uw&feature=emb_logo>

A case study example

Cinquefoil, *Potentilla fruticosa*, 17 cm (6.75 inches)

"A shohin is a bonsai tree of specific dimensions: the maximum height from the pot edge up to the tree's tallest point is 20 cm (7.75 in.) In the case of cascades, the height is calculated from the lowest point up to the highest point of the plant."

Acer palmatum

"It is a big challenge to maintain the trees' health and growth while making sure not to let them exceed 20 cm (7.75 in.). A strict balance and a soft hand are necessary, the right balance between encouraging and stopping growth, by cutting for example, has to be found."

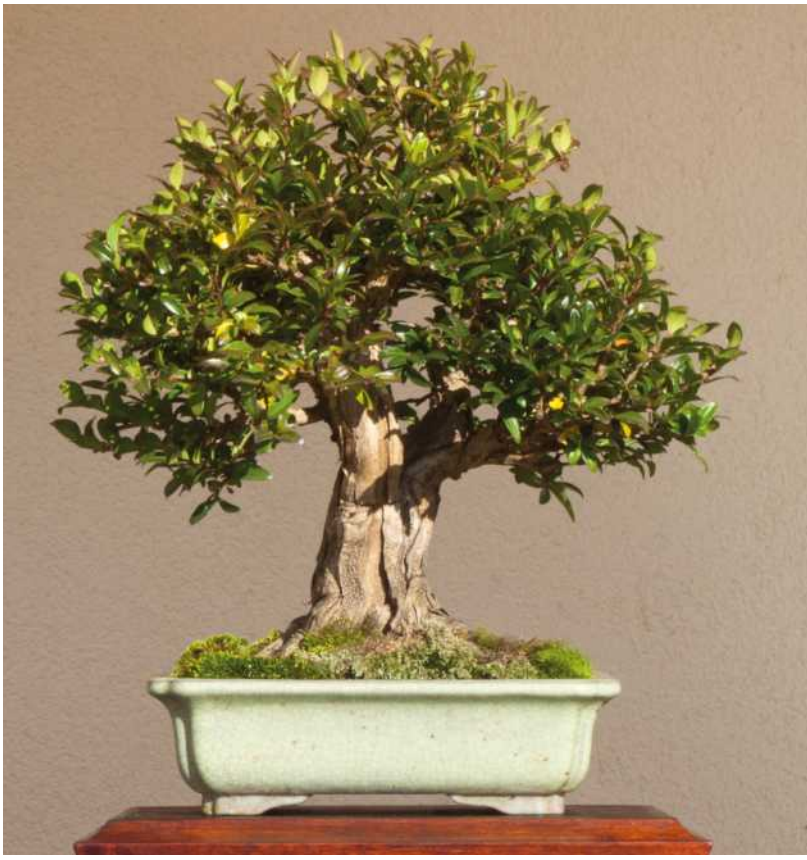
Norway spruce, *Picea abies*

—Roland Schatzer, *Bonsai Shohin Passion*

Japanese white pine, *Pinus parviflora*

Cinquefoil, *Potentilla fruticosa*

Privet honeysuckle, *Lonicera pileata*



Nelson Hernández, Puerto Rico

The Bonsai Dream

Top: Nelson Hernández and his *Neea buxifolia*, a member of his family. Nelson is celebrating 31 years of bonsai passion, and has been a long-time contributor to this magazine.

Bottom left to right:

The Neea, 6 months after collected in 1995.

Eleven years later, with my daughter Victoria at 5 years old.

My daughter Victoria with the same Neea again, now she's 19.

My Neea today. After hurricane Maria (2017) many of my trees (the big ones) were damaged. Hurricane salty water combined with strong winds, around 80 to 100 mph, burned leaves, broke branches or killed the trees! Fortunately many ones are still alive and I keep restyling them.

The art and hobby of bonsai offer us entertainment and a new lifestyle. Once we become bonsai collectors, we add to our routine the general attention that our bonsai trees need. They are part of our life, like another member of our family who cohabits with us.

An exciting dynamic also arises as we tend and train our bonsai. We connect and intimately intertwine with mother nature, in addition to discovering and developing the artist in us. In itself, nature gives us peace. As bonsai practitioners, nature provides us with the inspiration to project ideas into our creations.

Through the way we work on our bonsai over the years, an emotional relationship develops with each tree, making the design ideas flow with greater ease, enthusiasm, and excitement. We continue improving its development until reaching the preconceived and planned design. Also, we develop a great appreciation for our trees. This means much more when they have accompanied us in our life journey for many years, as in my particular case, I still own trees that I started working with since 1989.

Bonsai goes through different stages over time. This time is crucial for the maturity and aging character that the bonsai acquires. Time also develops in us the capacity and patience that all bonsai will demand of us. Another added value of a bonsai's age is when it has been designed to captivate the observer's senses and emotions, as occurs with the appreciation of any art object. The more bonsai emulates nature, the more suggestive power it will transmit because it belongs to nature itself.

Something that has inspired me as an artist, in addition to studying the formations of trees in nature and the techniques of classical and contemporary schools, are the works of other artists. In our beginnings as bonsai artists, we work with the basic concepts learned and try to imitate those works that have inspired us. However, after learning from our own perception of nature and design methods in a broad way, it is time to be more independent and begin to transmit our personal idea in our creations.

Finally, I presume that a bonsai artist's dream is to enjoy the result of a job well done after many years of continuous work. When our bonsai attract attention, it is another reward that gives us satisfaction as an artist, motivates us, drives us, and confirms our design ideas. On the other hand, those who have shared our works publicly in magazines such as BCI, on social networks, books, photography contests, and local exhibitions, get continuous great personal satisfaction in promoting this art and motivating others to start and continue forward. BCI has managed to keep us united with enthusiasm, and to shrink distances worldwide encouraging others to enter the healthy lifestyle of bonsai cultivation.

—Nelson Hernández

Photo sent to the 2013 World Bonsai Friendship Federation (WBFF) photo contest, achieving third place. Artist: Nelson Hernández.

Are you missing out on BCI Member Benefits because you are unregistered?

You are receiving this magazine because you have paid a subscription, but if you have not created a profile on the BCI website using a valid e-mail address, you are missing out on the full benefits of membership to BCI.

Advantages to registered members/subscribers

- E-mail notifications of contests, special offers and events.
- Access to all BCI Magazines in Flip Book format since 2011
- Downloadable PDFs of BCI Magazines for viewing off-line.
- Participation in Members Only programs, contests and offers.
- Posting your club events on the BCI Calendar of Events.

Registering is easy

Send us an e-mail asking to be registered. BCI will create a profile or update your profile and assign you a temporary password that you can change once you log in. **We are here to answer any question and provide technical assistance. E-mail: office@bonsai-bci.com**

BCI Policy About Membership Data

BCI will not share your profile data with any other organization.
We will send you e-mails only when we have beneficial information.
You will not be nagged by unnecessary e-mails.
The BCI website is secure. Our SSL Certificate secures all of your data as it is passed from your browser to the website's server.

www.bonsai-bci.com
email: office@bonsai-bci.com

BCI Logo Tree Pins and Pendants

Each Pin and Pendant is Handcrafted by 2nd Generation Bonsai Master Frank Mihalic, using the Lost Wax and Cameo Carving process. The Pendant is cast in Sterling Silver and has a loop to which a chain or cord can be attached. The Pin, cast in Pewter, comes with a conventional clasp.

Sterling Silver Pendant: (postage included) $95

Pewter Pin: (postage included) $15

Pendants are also available in Gold: Made to order and delivered 2 to 3 weeks after payment.

10k Gold:	$800
14k Gold:	$1,200
18k Gold:	$1,600

To Order

For credit card orders by phone, call: 00-1-847-612-5133.
Online link: <https://bonsai-bci.com/bci-pendant>

Joining or Renewing? BCI offers you 3 ways.

1. Manage your membership online, including editing username and password. Pay securely through Paypal. Go to www.bonsai-bci.com/join.

2. If you prefer to use the post, use the form on the address sheet that came with this magazine and mail it, together with your check or credit card info, to:
Larry Stephan, BCI Business Manager
PO Box 639, Prospect Heights, IL 60070-0639, USA

3. Join or Renew by telephone.
For credit card orders by phone, please call:
00-1-847-612-5133.

Still need help with your membership?
Please send us an email: office@bonsai-bci.com

promoting international friendship through bonsai

www.bonsai-bci.com/join

Ryuga Carving Tools

As your experience with Bonsai grows, so does your need for higher quality tools. Joshua Roth offers a wide range of tools for every level of interest, all made of superior materials and offered at competitive prices.

Our newest brand, ***Ryuga,*** features quality Bonsai tools manufactured in China to quality-controlled Japanese standards, both in Carbon Steel and Stainless Steel. Joshua Roth Ltd is the distributor of ***Ryuga*** in the USA, Australia, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Brazil, Argentina, and Switzerland. ***Ryuga*** tools carry a two-year quality guarantee.

Our original master brand, ***Joshua Roth***, manufactured in Japan, features four grades of tools, from novice to master. For more than 38 years, Bonsai enthusiasts have trusted ***Joshua Roth*** tools to bring life to their Bonsai vision.

Contact your Joshua Roth dealer to order ***Ryuga*** Quality Bonsai Tools now.

For more information

Visit www.joshuaroth.com or email bonsai@joshuaroth.com
Call 1-800-624-4635 today for the name of a dealer near you.
Outside the USA, phone 1-541-791-5312 or Fax: 1-541-791-5337

JOSHUA ROTH LIMITED

Joshua Roth — where artistic vision gains precision

Providing Superior Service and Quality Tools to the Bonsai Community Since 1980.

9th WORLD BONSAI CONVENTION 2021

Perth, Western Australia

POSTPONED UNTIL 2022 DUE TO COVID-19

3 full da... ...strations by
Internat...nal & National Artists
from all 9 regions of WBFF

Bonsai & Suiseki Exhibition
including unique WA species

(NOW SCHEDULED FOR 2022)

www.world-bonsai-convention-2021.com @WBC2021 @WBC_2021

Proudly hosted by:
AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND BONSAI FEDERATION
In partnership with:
WORLD BONSAI FRIENDSHIP FEDERATION
In association with:
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIAN BONSAI CLUBS LTD
BONSAI SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA INC
and BONSAI WORKSHOP OF WA INC