



The Bonsai News of Houston

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
Houston Bonsai Society, Inc.

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September 2004

September 1, AUCTION!

The next meeting of the Houston Bonsai Society (HBS) will be held Wednesday, September 1, at 7:30 p.m. at the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, located at 1500 Hermann Drive. Refreshments will be served at 7 p.m. Be sure to come early so you can visit with other members before the meeting begins.

The annual auction for the benefit of the HBS will be held at the September meeting. This is a major fund raiser for the HBS, and so your support is important. Proceeds from the auction support programs and other activities for our members. If you missed last year, you missed some great opportunities. Don't miss this year.

Bring donations of bonsai-related and non-bonsai-related items including styled trees, rough nursery stock, books, stands and pots, tools and aprons, logo pins and convention memorabilia, suiseki, gift certificates for goods or services and drawings or autographs from bonsai masters.

AND BRING YOUR MONEY! Cash or check book.
Bid high and often!

--Pete

Saturday, September 18, Study Group

Our study group will meet Saturday, September 18, 9:00 A.M. at Bayland Center in Bayland Park, 6400 Bissonnet (Bissonnet at Hillcroft--south of I-59 and east of Fondren). Everyone is welcome.

--Donald, Buddy

Texas Tour Speaker 2004

Marco Invernizzi – Here Sat-Sun Sept. 25-26

This year's Lone Star Bonsai Federation (LSBF) visiting artist is Marco Invernizzi from Italy.

For those of you who might not be familiar with this annual event, LSBF sponsors a visiting artist each year who tours the bonsai clubs in Texas and presents educational programs and workshops. LSBF pays for the travel expenses and a portion of other expenses which reduces the cost to our club. In turn we are able to have very reasonably priced workshop and observation fees, especially for a world renowned artist like Marco.

Marco Invernizzi lives in Milan Italy. He has been doing bonsai for over 13 years. He began when he was 16 and studied for 5 years with Salvatore Liporace, then traveled to Japan where he spent 4 years studying under Masahiko Kimura. He now travels the world as a full time bonsai artist.

Marco is a talented young artist. We are privileged to have him as our guest this year. His English is excellent, and his demonstrations are always entertaining. Please try to attend Saturday and/or Sunday.

Saturday Lecture/Demo: Marco will do a lecture/demonstration Saturday night September 25 at 7pm in the Houston Garden Center – Herman Park. He will style a nice medium-sized shimpaku juniper that the club purchased earlier this year. The tree will be raffled off at the end of the demonstration. The observer fee Saturday night will be \$5 per person.

Sunday Workshops: Sunday, September 26, there will be two bring-your-own-tree workshops also at the Houston Garden Center. The cost will be \$25 per tree per participant on a first come basis. You must pay at the time you sign up. We began the sign up sheet at the last regular club meeting and will continue at the regular club meeting in September. Please see Janet Wilson for sign up. The first workshop will be held 9 a.m. to 12 and the second will be from 1:30-4:30. Silent observers are welcome to sit in on the workshops for a \$5 fee. Again, this is a bring-your-own-tree workshop, so let's bring some quality material for Marco to help with.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone Saturday and Sunday. It's not often we have an international artist as our guest so let's try and have good attendance.

--John, LSBF Alternate

Fall Bonsai Show October 9-10

The HBS fall show will be October 9 and 10 in the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, 1500 Hermann Drive. Show times will be 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Sunday.

Cont'd next page.

Bonsai Care

by John Miller

John Miller, who writes a monthly column for the Bonsai Society of Dallas and the Fort Worth Bonsai Society, has agreed to share his column with us. We need to make adjustments for our warmer, damper climate, with its early springs, long summers, late falls and erratic winter. This article is reprinted from The Bonsai News of Houston, September 2003.

Check the trees you still have wire on. When the cooler days get here some trees will expand their branches and get wire cuts rather quickly. You need to check them periodically over the winter also. Winter growth will usually be pretty slow but can occur, especially on the evergreens. Cut the wire off. You can easily break the branches trying to unwrap the wire and it's just not worth trying to save the wire. If you need to reapply some wire, take care. Remember that the branches will be more brittle when the sap is not flowing.

Watering now becomes harder. As trees slow their growth, they do not take as much water. Neither will they transpire as much on the cooler days. So check each one separately and water as often and as much as the individual tree requires.

You should help the plant slow down and get ready for winter by not applying nitrogen fertilizer about 90 days before the first freeze. This would be the first part of September in the Dallas-Ft Worth area. Out here in the boonies, I will stop before Sept 1. The reason is that nitrogen causes new growth to occur and will not have time to mature before a freeze occurs. You may fertilize with one with a formulation like 0-10-10. The other two, phosphorous and potassium, help the general hardiness of the plant and can be applied now. Evergreens, both needled and broadleaf, and tropical species that will be kept growing through the winter will benefit from a low nitrogen fertilizer.

Two things you can do now. You should prepare your winter quarters and you should study your evergreen trees to determine if you need to do any restyling later on this fall.

Check on the place you expect to winter your bonsai. Make sure that it is clean and that you will be able to check the water needs of the trees. It should be somewhat protected from winds but should have some air movement to help prevent molds from developing. Having it in a location where you can see the trees would allow you to enjoy the winter silhouette, i.e., the branch structure and twiginess, that is a great part of deciduous bonsai.

There is not too much to be done on deciduous trees at this time. Bugs and other problems are usually not a matter of concern since the foliage will be dropping soon. Evergreens and tropicals will still need to be watched for their insect problems, especially the spider mite which will be active into fall. Use the Garrett Juice formula to control them. If we should have a stretch of damp weather, you should be watching for fungal problems, leaf spot, mildew,

etc. Treat fungal problems with Garrett Juice with potassium bicarbonate added (baking soda--sodium bicarbonate--will work about as well). I would be okay with using a 1% hydrogen peroxide solution at this time of the year for fungal control.

Pruning and trimming can be done any time that there is not a lot of sap flowing. Sap flow is indicated by the foliar activity of the plant like in the spring. If your tree went into summer dormancy which occurs during hot weather, then the cooler weather might result in a larger sap flow in late summer or early fall. If your plant gets a flush of new growth, it would be advisable to postpone large pruning cuts for a while. Basically let you tree tell you when it is ok to operate.

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By appointment, please.

Fall Show *(cont'd from page 1)*

HBS members are encouraged to display one, or more, trees. We plan to have a variety of trees on exhibit, ranging from the small shohin to the larger trees that stand three to four feet. On both days, several members will conduct demonstrations and give presentations while they work on trees. We are asking members to volunteer for two or three hours as hosts, to greet and answer questions of visitors. We have some volunteers for the show, but we will need more. I will have the sign-up sheets at our next meeting. Vendor members will be available for visitors (and members) who might want to take home their own tree(s), plant materials, tools, bonsai pots, books, videos, and other bonsai-related materials. The fall and spring shows are indeed our opportunities to share with the Houston community our trees and our love for the bonsai art.

Set-up time for the show will be Friday, October 8th, 6:30-8:00 p.m. Members may bring their trees on Friday night or early Saturday morning, but it is best to bring trees on Friday night to get an early start and be a part of the fun in setting up an exhibit. We would like to ask all members to please leave their trees on exhibit until at least 4:00 p.m. on Sunday.

--Donald



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BONSAI SPOKEN HERE!

By appointment.

September 18, Shohin Society of Texas

The Shohin Society of Texas (SSOT) will meet Saturday, September 18 from 10:30 a.m. until about 2:30 p.m., for its annual business meeting at which the group will select its programs and meeting dates for 2005.

The group will also have a panel critique of any tree—rough material or previously styled trees—which you may wish to bring. A three-member panel composed of **Marty, John** and a yet-to-be-named person will offer their ideas on styling or restyling your tree.

Meetings are at Persimmon Hill Bonsai, 12001 Red Hawk Cove in Austin. Bring a sack lunch or have hot dogs courtesy of the SSOT kitty.

For information, contact Terry or Sheila Ward at 512-280-5575 or texshohin@aol.com.

From the President

A big thanks to **Deborah** and **Phil** for giving the presentation on bonsai containers at the last meeting. It is people like them with a willingness to share who make a great club. When you step forward and give of yourself and your talent, you reinforce what you have learned and show others that it does not take an expert with a doctoral degree. It takes a person willing to put

in extra effort. Again thanks for sharing and putting in that extra effort.

A reminder to all--we will be looking for new board members at the end of this year--a president, 2nd vice president and two members at large. If you feel called to serve on the board, this is your chance. Express your interest to a board member. We will also be taking nominations from the floor at the November meeting.

I need to apologize to the club; I forgot to do the picnic this year. With the activities coming up, it would be hard to schedule one now. I hope this will not cause any heart burn for anybody.

We will be having the Christmas party in December. You will not want to miss it. It's is the last meeting of the year when we have the steal-the-gift party. It is a lot of fun to see who steals whose present!

I have been saving plants for the auction at this month's meeting. I always have fun bidding and seeing what plants come in.

See you at the meeting.

--Virgil, President, HBS

Calendar of Events

Sept. 1	Monthly meeting of HBS 7:30 p.m., Hermann Park. Annual Auction.
Sept. 18	Study Group, Bayland Community Center
Sept. 18	Shohin Society Of Texas (SSOT) in Austin. Business and panel critique. <i>Contact: Terry or Sheila Ward at 512-280-5575 or TexShohin@aol.com.</i>
Sat., Sept. 25	Lecture-Demo by Marco Invernizzi, 7:00 p.m. Hermann Park
Sun., Sept. 26	Two workshops by Marco Invernizzi, 9:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., Hermann Park.
Oct. 9-10	HBS Fall Bonsai Show
Nov. 13	Study Group, Cabrera Farms
May 13-15, 2005	State Convention, Fort Worth Walter Pall (Germany); Mary Madison (Florida)

Win a Trip to the Caribbean!

The Texas State Bonsai Exhibit, Inc., (TSBE) is selling raffle tickets for a Caribbean cruise on the Grand Princess, sailing from Galveston to Cosumel and Cancun for five days on November 8, 2004. This special introductory voyage is sold out. The lucky winner will have a room upgrade. Raffle tickets are \$10.00 a piece.

The club that sells the most tickets will receive a free lecture/demo from one of the TSBE directors, and the individual who sells the most will receive a bonsai.

The drawing will be October 2, 2004. All ticket stubs and money must be returned by Thursday, September 30, 2004.

Purchase tickets for yourself or your family. Sell them at work and to family and friends. The proceeds will benefit the state bonsai exhibit being planned for the Austin area.

For information, contact Elaine.

Exhibiting Your Bonsai

Notes from a presentation given by Shane Cary to the HBS on October 6, 1999. These notes originally appeared in The Bonsai News of Houston, vol. 28, #11, Nov. 1999, p. 4.

Shane Cary put a lot of work into preparing a marvelous show-and-tell for us at the October meeting. To demonstrate the principles for displaying trees, he brought at least three tables (crowded tables!) of trees and accent plants, several boxes of bonsai stands and stones, and a great handout which explains the basic principles of bonsai display and contains pictures of tree displays in color.

The Mystery Tree

The first tree he used was brought into the Garden Center literally shrouded—with a sheet. Upon unveiling, the tree turned out to be a stunning white pine in the classical Japanese pine tree style.

On the issue of an accent plant for the white pine, Shane said, “A tree like this can stand alone; it doesn’t need an accent plant”; however, he went on to explain that you can use a subtle accent plant with it. He demonstrated several possible accent plants including a mixed planting of bamboo and an autumn-colored fern. “At this time of year, the fall colors make a nice touch.” [Later that October, Shane exhibited the white pine at the Kimura conference in Atlanta in the juried exhibit. —ed.]

“We Can’t All Be Perfect.”

Not every tree will be perfect, or will be in the perfect pot, or will be in bloom when we want it to. Shane addressed some these problems. In fact his next tree was a black pine which he had repotted and was allowing to grow for a year. It therefore had long needles.

“Normally you might not want to show a pine with such long needles, but maybe this is the only tree you have to show or maybe there is some other special reason you want to show this tree,” Shane said. “Don’t cut the needles,” he said. “Instead, remove all the down-pointing needles.” After the downward needles were pulled off, the tree’s appearance was much improved.

“Although conifers can be shown singly if they are strong, this black pine is not a strong tree,” said Shane. “It will benefit from a rugged stone (*suiseki*) to represent a mountain in the background.” A small, rugged slab would be an effective stand for an accent plant and would complement the rugged pine.

Answering a question about the black backdrop he was using for the displays, Shane said the background affects the presentation. The display stands out better with a background. Black or burgundy are especially effective for conifers. Deciduous trees benefit from a light background.

In answer to another question, Shane demonstrated that the flow of the main tree dictates where the accent plants and *suiseki* and even a scroll would look good. The elements of a display should themselves make a triangular form and follow the lines of the main tree.

Next Shane moved on to a Chinese hackberry. As an aside, he noted that “some people try to train every tree to look like a pine.” This is not the best way. You should try to make a tree look natural.

The hackberry was in an unsuitable pot. “Don’t try to repot it at this time of year. Make the best of it,” he advised. Your presentation cannot always be ideal. He suggested using accent plants with autumn colors, and demonstrated with the bamboo and autumn-colored fern mixture he had used before.

“In fall I prefer to have the color in the tree, but this tree is not in color.” The accent plant can suggest the season.

The accent plant was large for this particular tree, so Shane placed it to the back of the display.

Of the next tree, another hackberry, Shane said that the pot, a lotus pot, complemented the foliage, lines and bark. Therefore he suggested using a contrasting stand, a black oval with outwardly curving feet which suggested stability and helped offset the tall pot. He added accents and suiseki. "This is not ideal, but the additional elements help an otherwise weak tree," he noted.

"In selecting accent plants and stones, try to consider where the tree grows in the wild. Try to instill a sense of location, especially in a three-piece display," he advised. "For example, the ficus is from the tropics; don't use a cactus as an accent plant."

A Satsuki azalea he placed on a shiny black oval stand and used a flower stone to suggest the flowers that would appear in season.

In answer to a question, Shane said that he felt that we should use classical Japanese principles in designing our displays. After we have mastered those principles, we could experiment.

Everything but the Kitchen Sink

And to demonstrate forms that experimentation might take, Shane opened the "mystery box," the one box he would not let members help him unpack.

The first item out was a simple, natural stained wooden box from a hobby store. It had been marked down to \$1.99 from \$3.99. The box looked great under a cascade—and the lid could be used effectively for an accent plant!

"Sometimes things around the house can be used," Shane said, producing a wood cigar box. It also made an effective stand as did the wooden lid to a saki box.

Shane's most astounding feat of magic, however, was turning a small wooden washboard with a glass panel into

the perfect stand for a water accent plant. The glass of the scrub board suggested a pond! Water accents should be used with water trees such as willows and cypress he noted.

Finally, Shane noted that antique suibans which are used as containers for trees were originally duck bowls. If a duck bowl, why not a dog bowl? He then demonstrated how great a tree can look in one.

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