



YAMA KI NEWSLETTER

Learning from each other. Sharing with the community”

October

2010

MARCO INVERNIZZI PRESENTATION OCTOBER 23, 2010 @ 10 AM THE GREENWICH GARDEN EDUCATION CENTER

MARCO INVERNIZZI
Mike Pollock

October 23rd brings *Marco Invernizzi* back to us. I've had the honor to study with a lot of the world's best bonsai artists and *Marco* still blows me away every time. His breadth of experience is really the best in the world. No other teacher I know has the full Japanese training, exposure to and involvement in the explosion of European bonsai, and worldwide experience in EVERY bonsai culture. He travels all year-round and brings many viewpoints to his teaching. *Marco* is one of the few visiting lecturers who also knows our microclimate and can speak specifically to our conditions.

We've changed gears and *Marco* will spend an entire day with us. It will begin with a demonstration; *Marco* will transform a tree that will be available to buy in our Holiday Auction in December. He is able to teach and work at the same time, an enviable skill. So he'll be answering questions and teaching while he works on the tree. The remainder of his time will evolve naturally. Members should always bring trees they want input on. In this case, *Marco* may discuss and teach from a members' tree. Or a topic may present itself earlier that *Marco* will expound upon.



So come early, ask questions, bring trees and be ready to be educated and entertained!

RODNEY CLEMONS' GLEANINGS FROM SEPTEMBER'S MEETING *by Lavanya Muller & Norm Geisinger*

“Having a healthy tree is 95% of the work in bonsai. Art is the rest.”

Health tips

- Planting chives in your pots will help prevent fungus.
- Wear protection when working with fungicides and/or perlite; they are dangerous to breathe. Wash hands after using, also when repotting.
- Fungicides have about a one year shelf-life
- Your soil mix should depend more on how often you water your trees than on the specific types of tree.
- Except for pines, where the soil mix is very important
- Inoculate your soil with mycorrhiza. Keep mycorrhiza in the fridge once the container has been opened to extend shelf life.
- Bare-root elms the first time you repot. Wash off all old soil.

- Crushed lava rocks should be washed after sieving before use in soil mixes, to remove fine powder which will otherwise affect the drainage.
- Perlite (for rooting cuttings) should also be sieved before use.
- To combat scale insects, use a foliar oil spray, except on ficus. On ficus use Bayer 2 in 1 or a systemic insect killer. Systemics should be used in spring, when trees are actively growing, to draw the chemical up into the entire tree.
- When fertilizing, don't forget to supply generous amounts of minerals and trace elements as well as the big 3 basics (N-P-K).
- The bark of Shimpaku junipers should be brushed with a soft brush to remove moss and loose bark, which are insect habitats, and lightly painted with camellia oil, which also improves the appearance of the trunk.
- Foliar oils can be used on Shimpakus
- Spray foliage with full strength water-soluble fertilizer very early in the morning to stimulate growth and encourage dormant buds to develop. [Not sure if this applies mainly to shimpakus?]
- Treat needle cast in pines immediately with Daconil or copper. Any infected needles that you remove should be carefully thrown away, not left anywhere in the garden, as it is extremely contagious.
- If pine needles are yellow in spring, use nitrate of soda. [if he gave any details about this, I missed them]
- Oxalis can be killed by very carefully painting the leaves with Roundup. Then sprinkle Snapshot pre-emergent on the soil surface.

Horticulture tips

- When potting a tree as bonsai for the first time, be brave about pruning the roots. They have the most energy at that time.
- Remove all soil from nursery stock. Clean and edit the roots and use mycorrhiza inoculants. Rodney does not use rooting hormones.
- If you're not going to remove all soil, use chop stocks working from tree trunk outward, scratch soil to find roots to help determine the front and the tree's story.
- Watering is key to the health of the tree - most hobbyists over-water. Junipers prefer dry soil. Mist them in early morning before the sun hits the tree.
- Elms can be grown from cuttings.
- When you repot in spring, prune out all the roots that go straight down from underneath the trunk, leaving roots that grow out to the sides.
- Large training pots are good for developing a good root system.
- Tie trees into pots with twine to avoid wire scars on the nebari. The twine should decompose by the time the root system fills the pot enough to hold the tree in securely.
- Seal cuts after a few days to encourage smooth healing.
- Making a small mouth-shaped cut at the base of a tree will encourage new roots to grow at that spot.
- The soil mix is central to the system. It is a filter and provides space for air and water. Wash the soil mix and let dry just before using to remove dust and out of soil particulates to enhance their moisture and nutrients retention capacity.
- Avoid touching the trunk of a pine if possible, to protect the bark.
- Pines don't bud back well, so look for trees with needles growing close to the trunk.
- When pruning a pine, leave a long stump and seal the end, to prevent unwanted die-back. Cut off unwanted branches gradually, or the entire tree may die.
- When removing dead needles, be careful not to injure the needle sheath, because new buds form below the old sheath.
- Repot Ficus when nighttime temperatures reach 70 F. Then the entire root system can be sawed off at soil level. New roots will begin to grow right away.
- Ficuses should be defoliated at least once a year. Aerial roots will develop if there is sufficient moisture in the environment.

- Wounds on Ficus trees don't heal well, because the trees have very thin bark. Wrap wounds with sphagnum and keep it moist to encourage healing.
- Thin foliage to encourage growth closer to the trunk.
- Start cuttings in spring, when buds start swelling, but before leaves emerge.
- Kiyohime maples bud back easily and root easily.
- Use a sharp straight razor to make cuttings that you want to root.
- On junipers, jin that isn't from heartwood doesn't last long even if painted with lime sulphur.
- Shimpakus have a tendency to lose branches randomly.
- Shimpaku roots correspond to individual branches.
- On Shimpakus, new roots will grow off exposed roots if you bury them.
- Pinch back Shimpaku foliage rather than cutting it.
- For small leaves, Hornbeams can be defoliated one month before showing.
- Except on rock/ slab plantings, keep moss off your bonsai until it is time to show them. Moss can impede watering and harbor insects.
- Use rubbing alcohol or vinegar to control moss on trees. Keep moss off bark.

Styling tips

- A 45 degree angle between the trunks of a twin trunk tree showcases the difference in dimension, which is an important aspect of a twin trunk style.
- Elms grow in broom style in nature. It is a mistake to try to style them like a pine or juniper. Elms should have a dome-shaped top, not pointy.
- A Ficus bonsai should be twice as wide as it is tall, and have a rounded canopy, banyan style.
- Removing old bark from Junipers and Boxwood allows you to see live veins, gives illusion of distance, and removes hiding places for insects.

Tool tips

- To avoid ugly scars and encourage fast healing, use a knob cutter instead of a concave cutter to prune low branches on the trunk. This makes an indented cut, which heals over more smoothly.
- Use uncoated aluminum wire on trees that are not ready to be shown. It remains easy to see for removal.

The art part

- When looking at a bonsai or potential bonsai, the first thing to do is observe how it goes into the ground. When uncovering a nebari that is buried, remove soil gently from the trunk outward
- The pot and stand should never dominate the tree.
- A shallower container will emphasize the size of the trunk.
- A tree looks larger when it leans toward the viewer.
- Negative space is important.
- If you have to make a large cut on a Ficus, try to make it look nice, because it isn't likely to ever heal completely.
- Large wounds can be reduced by scraping off the top edge of the wound and making a long narrow cut at the bottom edge.
- Bunjin style trees should tell a story with the least amount of branches, the trunk should have excellent movement and almost no taper.
- Paint bark with a very diluted solution of white paint to make the trunk "pop."

The collection of bonsai brought for *Rodney's* review and enhancement was very varied, including: Chinese elm, collected Black birch, collected Larch, many Pines, some Ficus, Kiyohime Maple, Shimpaku Junipers, Hop Hornbeam, Hinoki Cypress, etc.



MIKE POLLOCK'S TOKONOMA



The tree is an Erodium in a mame container from Japan. It is 1" tall by 1.5" wide. The stand is Japanese, from *Phyllis Wishnick's* collection. The tokonoma and scroll were made by *Sean Smith*.



COMING EVENTS

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Nov 13 12:00 pm Sean Smith re: How to repair fine
bonsai containers.

Dec. 12 12:30 pm Annual Holiday Party & Auction

Remember to check our website (www.yamakibonsai.org) for updates and latest information

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