



YAMA KI NEWSLETTER

Learning from each other. Sharing with the community”

October

2007

ALL DAY WITH MARCO INVERNIZZI LECTURE-DEMONSTRATION AT 10:00 AM & BYO WORKSHOP AT 12:30 PM OCTOBER 6, 2007 AT THE LASDON PARK & ARBORETUM



Please check the headline and note the changes: the date is **October 6th** and the location is the **Lasdon Arboretum**. Italy’s *Marco Invernizzi* will be our guest artist for the October meeting and BYO workshop. The demonstration material is a Shimpaku juniper. (Members who attended the September meeting with *Pauline Muth* are familiar with the species, its characteristics and maintenance.) There are still a few openings available for the workshop. The opportunity to enhance your collection with *Marco’s* artistry for only \$25 is unbelievable! Call or email *Irv Kleiman* to add your reservation: (212) 724-7840 or irkleiman@rcn.com. Remember to bring your tree(s), soil, wire, and tools!

Workshop participants should enter the house driveway at the black gate on the right after entering the main gate. Because of deer damage, do not leave the gate open. Open and then close it behind you. Take the driveway to the house and drop off your trees, tools, etc. and then go back out the house driveway to park in the public parking area.

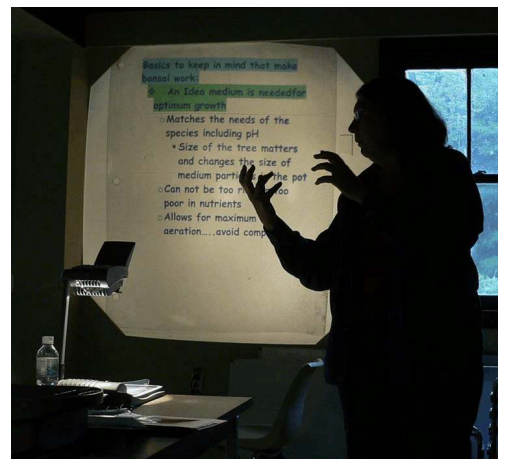
The Lasdon Park and Arboretum “is a magnificent 234-acre property consisting of woodlands, open grass meadows and formal gardens that feature a variety of tree, shrub and flower specimens from all over the world.” Check out their website at <http://www.westchestergov.com/parks/brochures/LasdonParkmain.htm>. Directions to the park:

- ! Take I-684 to exit 6, and head west on Route 35; the park entrance is three miles ahead on left. Or .
- ! Take the Taconic State Parkway to Route 202 exit and head east on Route 202. Follow to Route 35 and turn left; the park is three miles ahead on the right.

PAULINE MUTH’S SEPTEMBER HORTICULTURAL SEMINAR & BYO WORKSHOP

As Muscote Farms opened its barn doors to YAMA KI members on a glorious September day, we found *Pauline Muth* waiting for us. She hails from West Charlton, NY, not too far north of our capital region and operates her own bonsai nursery/studio as well as being president of ABS and Mohawk Hudson Bonsai Society.

Pauline started the day with a careful review of horticulture basics and developing technique in stages with a Shimpaku juniper as the demonstration material . Much to the surprise of long-time members there was quite a bit of “basics” that were useful to all. Knowledge of tree growth regardless of species is vital. Auxins direct hormonal growth. Photosynthesis puts leaves in place to utilize energy and for bonsai helps reduction. Nutrients and light set leaf size. Awareness of a species life cycle will help you determine the time for repotting, wiring, pruning, and



trimming. How many of us do ¼ turns on a regular basis so that our trees have even exposure to sun? (You may even need to lay a tree about 45° on its side in summer (especially cascade) to get even sunlight. Respect seasonal changes which affect each of your species. Ideal growing temperature range is 50-60°.

Soil: For starters, *Pauline* still uses three sizes of soil rather than one-size-fits-all that has come into vogue. The aim is to prevent compacting the roots so as to have a steady release of water. If you want to slow down growth rate, use only small particles. When repotting, change the soil and fertilizer carefully to avoid problems with Ph (alkalinity/acidity). Areas with hard water must pay close attention to Ph. Air must move through the roots even more urgently than through leaves. Oak leaf mulch added to soil slows the need to water. Some clay is needed to help nutrients move to trees; some organics help keep soil temperature low. If you prefer to use 100% inorganic you may find fewer pests, less root rot and good aeration. A monthly inoculation of mycorrhiza kills needlecast.

Water: She reminded neophytes to water cyclically (water a little to break the surface, move on, repeat, move on, repeat) rather than all at once till the water comes out of drainage holes. Unlike the majority of species we repot, *Ficus* and *Trident* maples will tolerate a much larger reduction of root area. Use gravel trays with 1" of turkey grit (not Turface®). This is also useful in the summer to keep shohin humidified.

Fertilizer and Minerals: If your mix is overly concentrated it will be toxic to your bonsai. It is best to have it consistently available all growing season. In the fall, spray, in sunlight, the bark of your Junipers with liquid fertilizer. For flowering material use super iron and super phosphate monthly. Recall that the macronutrients which concern us are Ca, C, H, K, N, O, P, S; the micronutrients are B, Co, Cl, Cu, Fe, Mn, Mo, Zn. They tend to have a long shelf life. Mycorrhiza® in jars has a maximum shelf life of two years.

Branch/Trunk Structure: Use sacrifice (unduly long to develop a trunk or branch) and modesty (to cover defects) branches. Wiring must be perfect. Junipers can be pruned and trimmed all summer; some by plucking, as Shimpaku, some with scissors.

Container: Must work for the specific tree, not just be a stunning suiban. It must support the tree and its growing medium and balance the tree weight-wise. Pick one which will maintain a good temperature (e.g., black dries the soil very quickly). Glazed containers help drainage. In Japan, after a tree is exhibited it is taken from its "exhibition" pot and returned to its growing pot to rest.

PAULINE'S GLEANINGS

- ✿ When repotting:
 - wear a mask and gloves;
 - put one layer of soil down, sprinkle with Micromax® and other nutrient enhancers then set in roots;
 - in spring repot when night temperatures remain above 40°.
- ✿ Crediting *Colin Lewis*, *Pauline* noted that it is helpful to use cotton string when tying the root ball to the pot. The cotton disintegrates and that tells you that it is time to repot.
- ✿ Save an old spice jar with a dispersal top for nutrient enhancers. Each spring shake on top soil and work in with chopsticks.
- ✿ Shimpaku: do all work in September, October, and November; include removing all crotch growth.
- ✿ Tridents: defoliate 6 weeks after leaves come out (alternate years).
- ✿ Use Decon® with mothballs against mice, shrews, etc
- ✿ Source for Micromax®: Griffin Greenhouse Supply: <http://www.griffins.com/home>, (610-286-0046).
- ✿ Source for Micromax® mixed with an anti-fungus powder:
 - Biogenics: <http://www.biogenics.com/html/index.html>, (800.240.9304)
- ✿ Excellent book: *Botany for Bonsai Artists* by Enrico Castano; available from AB \$17.95 for members, \$18.95 for non-members plus shipping (<http://www.absbonsai.org/>).

PHOTOS OF THE MOSTLY SHIMPAKU WORKSHOP



Pauline shows Kevin styling possibilities



Joann, Maggie, & Melba watch Pauline reviewing Norman's tree's possibilities



Frank, Joann, & Rhoda listening to Pauline



Maggie & Joann brought their own trees



Pauline critiquing Melba's tree; Herb listens



Rhoda enjoying the reduction

NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN BONSAI EXHIBIT OCTOBER 18, 2007 - NOVEMBER 4, 2007

YAMA KI will have four eight-foot tokonoma; one will be *Berni's* educational display of the development of a cascade Juniper from nursery to styled bonsai in a ceramic container. The other three have been allotted space to display a total of nine to twelve member trees. Set up is scheduled for Wednesday October 17th with take down on Monday, November 5th and we will plan a tree rotation on Monday, October 29th. Please remember to sign-on for one or more of the half-days to serve as docent during the exhibit. As a docent you would be talking to the public about bonsai and checking/watching over the trees. You can check the open hours on our website www.yamakibonsai.org and email Joan with the days you've selected to serve.

MABS for the MOMENT

Twenty-five years ago YAMA KI members were among the founding ancestors of MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies (MABS). Now we learn from *Pauline Muth* that the organizational structure of MABS has been unique among regional bonsai groups.

MABS is truly a society – (a group which shares mutual interests, has a common culture and an organization structure). It exists to bring to this region the best in bonsai demonstrations and display, critiques by renowned artists, exhibits by member clubs to share their design skills and growth, vendors or related goods from beyond our geographic boundaries. Its member clubs share equally in the responsibility for and the presentation of the MABS Annual Festival. If there is an excess of cash in a given year, these clubs also share in the excess on an equal basis (determined by a formula of each Club's attendance).

It seems that several regional organizations are revising their constitutions/by-laws to emulate our structure. They have had each club responsible for an entire seminar weekend with that club bearing all costs and labor garnering any excess cash accrued. We send our silent thanks to our founders for their foresight.

Mark your calendars for MABS 25th Annual Spring Festival – April 10-12, 2008; Hudson Valley Spa, Kerhonkson, NY. The reservation brochure will come to you in early December.

BONSAI MASTER CLASS

Book Review, Rhoda E. Kleiman

YAMA KI has had bonsai artists from around the world in its 31 years of existence. *Craig Coussins* of Scotland has been among them entertaining us with his humorous approach to life and bonsai as well as teaching us. He continues his mission to make bonsai more accessible to people with an interest in horticulture with the publication of his latest book *Bonsai Master Class*¹. This volume brings us an international outlook on bonsai with artists from 15 countries sharing their expertise.

The book begins with a chapter on basics with a view to moving the bonsai hobbyist from beginner to artist. From cover to cover there are photos of natural sites around the world reminding the reader of one of bonsai's basic goals: to evoke the essence of nature in our bonsai, penjing, shanshi, suiseki, and gongshi.

The strengths of the book lie not only in the range of artists who present their global viewpoints, but their distinctive expertise with a tree species, a styling technique, or a bonsai-related art. Last spring I purchased a "charming" portulacaria from Meehans at the MABS Spring Festival; it has flourished. But what to do with it as it matures? Then Coussins gave me the answer with *Jim Smith's* expansion of Keith Cotes Palgrave's (So. Africa) introduction to "Small-leaf Jade tree (*Portulacaria afra*) and found that it readily provides cuttings for a grove or forest, a slanting tree, or possibly a cascade. Or, leaving no stone unmounted, *Coussins* asked *Sean Smith*, a renowned daiza carver, to describe and illustrate the steps taken in creating a mounting for a viewing stone. (Even this shari-challenged editor is tempted to try making one.)

There are some flaws. *Coussins* included too many photos which are so small or not sharply focused so they do not serve his objectives. Their inclusion also precluded enough space for enlargements of many other photos which convey the drama or line that captured his eye and would have added to our appreciation of the selection. This reviewer notes that the index is inadequate, an oversight which is inexcusable in this digital age. One example

will serve: the word “uro” is in the index but not the commonplace “hole” (its English definition). The illustrative photos are really useful for the topic. Surprisingly the headline on the page includes both jin and shari, but the text only refers to the uro.

Nonetheless, it is a book to which the owner will keep returning because the multitude of photos may provide solutions for problem styling. Useful techniques are found in unexpected places. For example, within “A Utah penjing landscape” is his recipe for muck (used to create walls to hold soil) or in the above mention “uro” item he explains how to care for such trunk holes. *Coussins* includes infrequently discussed details



Making stands for suiseki — daizas —

Sean Smith

Sean Smith is one of the world's leading daiza-carvers. Here, he explains a little about the background of suiseki and then shows us how to create a stand for a beautiful stone. Sean is the proprietor of Custom Oriental Wood Craft in Marysville, Pennsylvania. He has presented demonstrations, lectures, and displays throughout America and Europe, and is one of the principal organizers of the International Stone Appreciation Symposium held each year in America. Sean has made most of the daizas for my own collection.

How to make daizas

Sean Smith



“Daiza” is the word that we use to describe the wooden, hand-carved bases that our beautiful stones are displayed on. This is one way to make your own daiza and has been my preferred way for over six years.



The next step is choosing the wood. I find hardwoods, such as walnut, mahogany and rosewood, excellent, and will use the color of the stone to determine the color of the wood for the daiza.



First place the stone on the wood. Use a sharp, number 2 pencil to trace around the outside of the stone, being very careful of the pencil's angle and width. The angle is very important as you do not want it to be too vertical or too low as that will affect the way that the stone sits in the daiza. You should not have any gaps between the stone and the daiza.

such as putting a cutting from a collected Juniper into pure pumice to encourage good root development. Purchasing the book is easy either from your local bookstore or online.

¹ Coussins, Craig. Bonsai Master Class. D & S Books. Devon, England. 2006.

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COMING EVENTS

Oct. 13	10:00 am	<i>Marco Invernizzi</i> lecture/demo and BYO workshop
Oct. 18) to Nov. 4)	10:00 am 6:00 pm	NY Botanical Garden Bonsai Exhibit
Nov. 10	1:00 pm	<i>Mike Pollock</i> lecture/demo
Dec. 8	12:00 pm	Holiday buffet and Auction

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

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