



YAMA KI NEWSLETTER

“Learning from each other Sharing with the community”

February

2006

MARTY SCHMALENBERG PRESENTATION “WINTER SILHOUETTES” FEBRUARY 4, 2006 - 12:00 PM AT BARTLETT ARBORETUM



Marty is the Director of Asian Studies at Blair Academy in New Jersey where he teaches Japanese, Chinese, and Korean history, culture and religion. He has been involved with bonsai and stone appreciation for over 20 years, and has traveled extensively through Asia. Many Yama Ki members have taken workshops with *Marty* and know he is an excellent instructor and speaker.

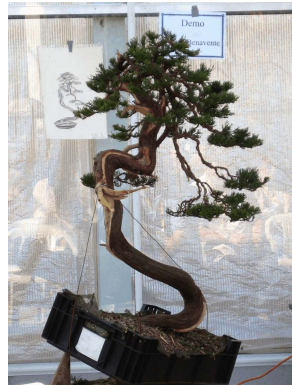
Marty will be doing a slide presentation and will be teaching how to prune deciduous bonsai to achieve ramification. He will bring six of his masterpiece deciduous bonsai as examples. Members are encouraged to take full advantage of this teaching program by bringing a deciduous bonsai for a critique and suggestions for future styling direction by *Marty*.

This will be the first in a new series of teaching meetings YAMA KI will present to members. Its function is quite obvious, i.e., to teach, stimulate and advance members to create and maintain their bonsai. Also to increase members' self-confidence to create future bonsai. Step up a notch on your climb to bonsai expertise by attending this and the rest of our meetings this year!

JANUARY'S VIRTUAL TOUR OF THE 5TH INTERNATIONAL GINKO EXHIBIT



Daizo Iwasaki Judge



David Benevente demo



Salvatore Liporace demo



Kevin Willson demo

Mike Pollock, with *John Cotaggio* assisting, presented a running commentary while projecting on a large screen a DVD movie of the International Ginko Exhibit prepared by professional photographers engaged exclusively by the sponsors. The video was divided into close-up videography of the almost 200 exhibit trees representing some of the best bonsai in Europe today. Each was selected in its respective country to be submitted to the Ginko committee



Rupen Kiskanyan with Kevin Willson

The video also showed scenes of the still photography before the show and the meticulous setup before the opening. Other sections showed the demonstration trees being styled over the course of the two-day event.

Mike also had a slide-show running before the video of his "vacation" pictures taken during his sightseeing in Belgium with his wife and daughter and *John Cotaggio* and *Rupen Kiskanyan*. The Ginko Cup is presented every two years. *Colin Lewis*, who organized this trip, should be running one again in 2007.

We were all impressed by the size of the exhibit, as well as the presentation and quality of the bonsai. Both *Mike* and *John* were awestruck by the large number of masterpieces submitted - mainly by amateur bonsai enthusiasts. It was a great afternoon for us to actually see the photographic evidence and come to the same conclusions.

JANUARY'S TOKONOMA

January meeting's tokonoma was provided by *Mike Pollock*.



January 2006



May 2004



The plant is a *Ficus neriifolia* *Mike* purchased in May, 2004. It was reduced in late summer eliminating all branches. New branches have all been developed since then. In October 2005 half of the roots were removed when the tree was repotted. The accent stone is a Kamogawa-ishi (a stone from the Kamo River in Kyoto) purchased in Japan. The scroll is Chinese purchased from Osiga.com

BACK TO BASICS WITH BERNI

Berni Gastrich

MORE ON SOILS

The particle size of your soil will have a direct effect on the rate of growth of both the roots and the top of your tree. Larger particles allow roots to penetrate the soil space more easily, and therefore grow more rapidly. If you have a young tree, and wish to encourage both trunk thickness and total size, such soil, along with sufficient water and high nitrogen fertilizer will produce explosive growth. The internodal spaces will be long, and you will have to periodically prune back, or your tree will become leggy. This is most easily done with deciduous material.

You will also have to repot and root prune more frequently. Adding a little extra granite grit is a good idea, because it helps to cause the roots, to have more numerous divisions, rather than be entirely leggy.

When your tree reaches the size where further growth is not really desired, a much finer soil is appropriate. This finer soil, including the granite grit, will cause very fine root ramification, and short internodes in the top of the tree. This of course produces the beautiful twigyness so much desired in a mature tree. This finer soil does hold water better so do not overwater. The Berni test is: the scratch down into the soil near the perimeter of the pot. If you find moist soil before you are down 25% of the vertical soil depth, do not water. If it is still dry at this point, go ahead and water. As your tree reaches maturity, fertilize less frequently, and with a lower nitrogen fertilizer.

REPORT ON JANUARY 14, 2006 BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
Summarized from Board Minutes prepared by Steve Peach

After a review of the financial statements for the 2005 calendar year, the Board made the following decisions:

1. For the fiscal year beginning May 1st, the membership dues will be increased to \$35 for singles, \$50 for families, and \$15 for students. A Ways & Means Committee, chaired by the President of the Board, will approve requests for reduced dues, where appropriate.
2. Meetings will start at 12:00 noon (bring lunch) for most programs. All-day workshops will meet at 10:00 am.
3. Most meetings will emphasize instruction on creating, styling, and maintaining bonsai with illustrations by critiquing and suggestions for members' plants, rather than by the typical lecture/demonstrations.
4. There will be a charge for participating in a workshop, based on an allocation of the cost of the workshop.

The Board approved the artists and programs for the 2006 calendar year as proposed by *John Cotaggio*.

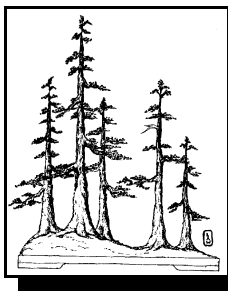
March 11	<i>Sean Smith</i>	August 12	Home Visit with the Pollocks
April 8	<i>Marco Invernizzi</i>	September 9	TBA
May 13	<i>Graham Potter</i>	October ?	<i>Ted Matson</i>
June 10	<i>Suthin Sukosolvisit*</i>	November 4	<i>David Esterbrook*</i>
July 8	Annual Meeting & Auction	December 9	Holiday Buffet Lunch & Auction

* Possible workshops with plants provided.

The committee discussed the possibility of having a members show during the August home visit meeting at the Pollocks. This will allow members to view each other's trees for critique, gives the NYBG Committee a chance to view trees that could be entered into our annual show at the NYBG, and most of all, a time spent together.

During the time the arboretum was being painted all of the kitchen cabinets were emptied and our stored materials were misplaced or discarded. Please bring to the next meeting you attend any extra turntable, tools or miscellaneous supplies you are willing to donate; also any large tins (e.g., popcorn or cookie tins) to help keep critters out of our food and paper supplies.

MIDATLANTIC BONSAI SOCIETIES MEMO



Last month MidAtlantic's article told you about Friday night's (April 21) presenter, *Pauline Muth*, and her lecture/demonstration creating a Sakei using an assortment of collected conifer stock.

Francois Jeker, a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux Arts where he studied illustration, photography, and publicity, will present a lecture/demonstration on Saturday, April 22nd, as well as a critique of the Exhibit material, and a workshop on Sunday using Boxwood microphylla. The Saturday presentation will use a Spruce tree. He is the author of two books and the recipient of the prestigious Ginko Award in Belgium. *Mr. Jeker* has traveled to Japan numerous times and met with many of the renowned bonsai masters. His international bonsai travels include South America, Italy and Canada.

Remember that several YAMA KI people are needed to help at the Registration Desk and staff the Exhibit Rooms. Two people have already signed up. Check the part of the registration brochure that you kept after sending in your registration. Then pick a time frame for helping. Call *Gail Therrien*, 914.244.1320 or *Rhoda Kleiman*, 212.724.7840, to let us know that you will participate.

FRANK OKAMURA, BONSAI EXPERT, IS DEAD AT 94 *

by Stuart Lavietes



Frank Okamura, came to New York City as a gardener after his release from a wartime internment camp in California and ended up contributing to the spread of Japanese cultural influences in America as a bonsai master, restaurant owner and even as a landlord. He died on Monday (January 9, 2006) at his home in Manhattan. He was 94.....

Mr. *Okamura* was on the staff of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden from 1947 until 1981, first as the gardener in charge of its Hill and Pond Japanese Garden, then as a bonsai specialist, responsible for the care of the garden's large and important collection of bonsai.

Mr. *Okamura* also taught the Botanic Garden's bonsai classes and lectured nationwide, instructing thousands of students in the art of creating bonsai. He wrote articles on the subject for the World Book Encyclopedia and the Encyclopedia of Japan, a work in English published by the Japanese company Kodansha.

"He was one of the three major teachers of bonsai in America," said Philip Tackill, a former president of the Bonsai Society of Greater New York. "He taught that the art involves more than just physically arranging a tree; it demands spiritual involvement by the creator. A good bonsai reflects the person who made it."

..... Though never formally trained in the art of bonsai, Mr. Okamura was knowledgeable and skilled. He knew how to control the growth of trees through pruning and selective fertilization, and how to shape them with wire. He also understood the aesthetics of bonsai, which involves arranging the elements of a miniature landscape into a harmonious whole.

Mr. Okamura taught his students that practicing bonsai required patience, sensitivity to nature and five fundamental qualities: humanity, justice, courtesy, wisdom and fidelity.

* Excerpted from the January 14, 2006 New York Times obituaries

BONSAI AFICIONADO QUESTIONNAIRE
HOW DEEP IS YOUR BONSAI INVOLVEMENT? HOBBY OR NEUROSIS?
(Reprinted from the December 1995 issue of the Yama Ki Newsletter)

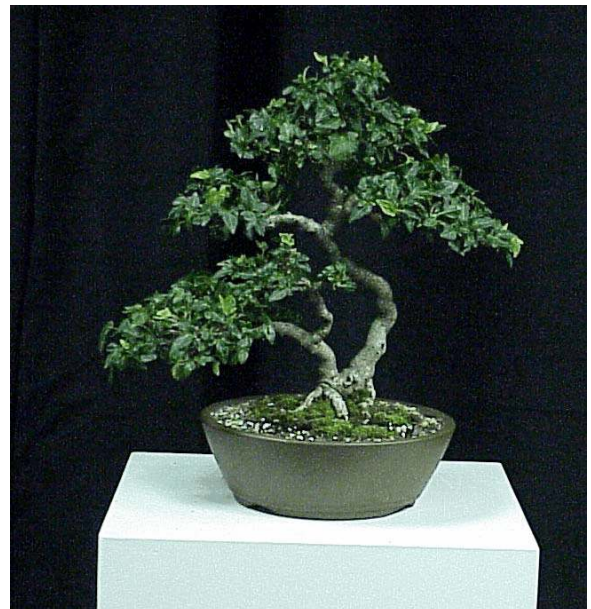
Do you think bonsai is a casual hobby? a passing fancy? a temporary diversion? Tom Dimig, bonsai artist, presenter, potter, and social psychologist recently asked the attendees at the International Bonsai Pine Symposium in Rochester last September to evaluate their perceptions of their involvement with this aspect of horticulture. He tendered a ten point questionnaire for self-evaluation, asking each respondent to be to evaluate their perceptions of their involvement with this aspect of horticulture. He tendered a ten point questionnaire for self-evaluation, asking each respondent to be scrupulously honest. The questionnaire is patterned after Dimig's psychometric test (not trademarked or even recognized by the American Psychological Association). As retirees, please forgive us for not remembering his specific points. We probably forgot some and replaced them with comparable items:

1. Do you know exactly how many styled bonsai you own?
2. Do you have more than one pre-bonsai plant awaiting styling?
3. Do you attend more than one bonsai-related meeting/symposia a year more than 50 miles from your home?
4. Do you subscribe to more than one bonsai periodical?
5. Does your family complain about the odors from organic fertilizer stored in the basement?
6. When company comes which do you show first, your bonsai or your children?
7. When guests come at night, how often do you show your collection by flashlight?
8. Do you plan your vacations during the dormancy season?
9. When acquiring a new vehicle, is cubic-foot-storage a more important consideration than passenger comfort?
10. When on vacation in a new area are you unable to pass by nurseries without stopping?
11. After checking into a hotel/motel do you first check a drawer for the telephone book listings for plants/bonsai/nurseries or for a Bible?
12. How often have you revised your limit on plant collecting?
13. Is your daily calendar controlled by bonsai-care conditions?
14. Do you leave new plants at a friend's house waiting to bring them home when your spouse is away?
15. Do you tell your spouse the actual cost of a new plant or pot?
16. Is the number of pots in your collection more than four time your bonsai collection?
17. If taking a Rorschach test, do you frequently wish to remove branches from the ink blots?

TWO OF YAMA KI PLANTS EXHIBITED AT LAST YEAR'S MIDATLANTIC FESTIVAL



Berni Gastrich's Cork-bark black pine



Maggie Limburg's Shamrock ivy

OFFICERS

Gail Therrien President
Jim Glatthaar Vice-President
Irv Kleiman Treasurer
Mike Pollock Corresponding Secretary
Steve Peach Recording Secretary

DIRECTORS

John Cotaggio, Craig Cowing, Norman Geisinger,
Lavanya Ghose, Kevin Govia, and Rupen Kiskanyan

Co-Editors: Rhoda & Irv Kleiman

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COMING EVENTS

Feb 4 *Marty Schmalenberg* on deciduous plants
Mar. 11 *Sean Smith* on cutting and carving stone
Apr.. 8 *Marco Invernizzi* lecture, demo, critiquing

WEATHER HOTLINES

Connecticut *Melba Greishaber* (203) 840-1942
New York City *Rhoda Kleiman* (212) 724-7840
Westchester *Gail Therien* (914) 244-1320

or check our website online

Yama Ki Bonsai Society, Inc.
165 West End Avenue - 12D
New York, NY 10023