



# YAMA KI NEWSLETTER

Learning from each other. . . . . Sharing with the community”

February

2008

## ART OF DISPLAYING TREES WITH MICHAEL HAGEDORN 12:30 PM ON FEBRUARY 9, 2008 AT THE BARTLETT ARBORETUM

It isn't often that YAMA KI members have the opportunity to have a learning session with a “local boy makes good” star. On February 9<sup>th</sup> we are pleased to have *Mr. Michael Hagedorn* share his knowledge of bonsai display with us.

*Michael* comes with a long history of designing and creating his own bonsai pots at Crataegus Studio after earning a Masters Degree in Ceramic Arts at State University in Alfred, NY. During the years of creating bonsai pots, *Michael* took time to do intensive bonsai studying with *Mr. Boon Manakitivipart*. Then to his surprise, he was accepted as an apprentice by *Mr. Shinji Suzuki* in Nagano, Japan. At a recent MidAtlantic Symposium *Mr. Suzuki* spoke very highly of *Michael's* talents, artistic eye, and some skills not bonsai-related.



*Michael* was honored by having seven trees which he wired as an apprentice shown at Kokufu Ten in Tokyo, two trees in the Taiken Ten, and one in the Sakafu Ten. He also wired two of *Mr. Suzuki's* trees which won awards: one a Kokufu Prize and one a Prime Minister's Award. He now lives in Portland, Oregon where he creates and teaches bonsai and writes for major bonsai journals. Check out his website at [www.crataegus.com](http://www.crataegus.com).

## STUDYING OUR OWN TREES WITH MARTY SCHMALENBERG

*Marty Schmalenberg* wasted no time at the January meeting sharing his approach to styling a tree. His own specialty is native North American trees. Although the United States was ahead of Europe in adopting bonsai, we now trail them in contemporary design and display. *Marty* stated that it appears that both Japanese and European bonsai artists regard much of American bonsai as a lagging step child. .

The meeting was well attended with many trees put forth for *Marty's* guidance. The only tree not needing adjustments was *Mike Pollock's* tokonoma with a Japanese five needle white Pine. *Marty* imported the tree in 1983 and sold it to *Mike* several years ago. *Mike* has continued to develop the tree and plans to repot it at a new angle this spring. Now *Marty* would gladly purchase it back from *Mike*. This tree is really a stylistic model in the classic mode.



*Marty* indicated that the very first item to look for in a potential or to-be-improved bonsai is to find its overall line. Trees read from right to left or left to right and you must find this direction as part of the preliminary search. The trunk line must not be convoluted. A sinuous line should look as though the tree had been stressed by nature and not look as though someone's hands had wired it to have some curves. “Guard against contrivance or disconnect”

was his dictum. Start by removing all crotch material and any twiggy dead branchlets. Too many branches tend to give a tree a “salad look” so eliminate branches that will not serve your design goal. This will open the tree for your further study. Then begin to wire. Wire precisely not just functionally. You can even display a tree which is correctly wired. As you determine your first branch also decide WHERE you want to place it. Do so, but do not continue to tweak it.

Some specifics to consider:

- deciduous, Larch, and Pines you can begin to wire and trim in February then you can re-pot them from March 15<sup>th</sup> to May. Air-layer starting about the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in March;
- remove lichen which is becoming too wide-spread by spraying with vinegar; algae killers are also available if you only have gourmet vinegar; also remove moss which can harm the tree while lichen does not;
- Miracle Grow<sup>®</sup> and Miracid<sup>®</sup>, with fish emulsion added occasionally are his preferred fertilizers with mycorrhiza sprinkled monthly on ALL trees (stop October 1st); fertilize every 10-12 days at half strength. He finds that Miracle Grow<sup>®</sup> with changed proportions and frequency eliminates the need for Miracid<sup>®</sup>;
- watering more frequently for most trees is very effective;
- a very useful cutting tool is a Masakuni<sup>®</sup> bonsai sword; it is not serrated and is exceptionally sharp.

Before the afternoon concluded *Mike Pollock* opened a raffle for a mame *Ficus salicifolia* which he donated. The charming little bonsai brought \$70 to our coffers.

### A SAMPLING OF WORKSHOP PHOTOS



Many species were submitted for critiquing and some members encouraged *Marty* to proceed and implement his suggested styling changes.

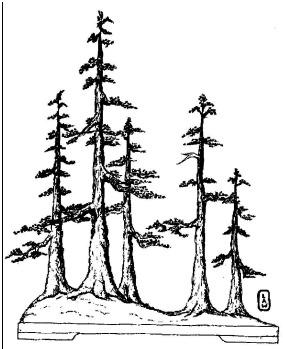


### YAMA KI'S 2008 BONSAI EXHIBIT AT THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

The NY Botanical Garden show will again be for two weeks, from October 17<sup>th</sup> through November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Thus there will be no conflict with the National Bonsai Exhibit in Rochester, NY on October 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. With so much activity for our involvement, YAMA KI will forgo an October meeting.

**MIDATLANTIC BONSAI'S 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
**APRIL 11<sup>TH</sup> - APRIL 13<sup>TH</sup>**

Kick the winter doldrums! Review which of your plants are going to need repotting in about two months. Check your bonsai supplies and make a list of the tools you've always wanted to add to your box; the pesticides and fertilizers which need replenishing; the wire rolls that are low; AKADAMA® or KARUMA®, peat, or soil to refill; the sizes, shapes, and colors of new pots needed; as well as the pre-bonsai and bonsai plants for your collection. All these and more may be purchased at the vendor booths at the MidAtlantic Spring Festival 2008.



In last month's NEWSLETTER you read a bio of Friday night's (April 11) Spring Festival's opening bonsai presenter, *George LeBolt*. Page 1 of this issue introduced you to an exciting new American bonsai star, *Michael Hagedorn*. *Michael* will be another presenter and will also conduct a Critique session reviewing the club members' prized trees. Be sure to send your MABS registration in ASAP to take advantage of the early registration rates. If you need another copy of the brochure, call Rhoda Kleiman (212.724.7840). Extra registration forms will be available at the February 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**YAMA KI BEGINNERS' BONSAI COURSE**  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 1 & 15, 2008**  
**BARTLETT ARBORETUM**  
**9 AM - 12 NOON**

New members should take advantage of the bonsai beginner's course on the two Saturday morning classes at the Bartlett Arboretum. Intermediate bonsai enthusiasts will also find the classes useful for reinforcing their bonsai styling and maintenance techniques. The class fee is \$75 which includes: classroom instruction, a pre-bonsai tree, container, a Basic Bonsai Book, and wire. Tools will be available to borrow for the two sessions. The class is limited to a minimum of six and a maximum of ten members. The instructor will be *Berni Gastrich* with assistance from some of our experienced members. Call *Berni* now if you wish to register for the course (914-764-5022) or email at [gastrihba@juno.com](mailto:gastrihba@juno.com).

**REVISED 2008 MEETING SCHEDULE**

Feb	9	12:00 pm	<i>Mike Hagedorn</i> : Art of displaying trees
Mar	8	10:00 am	<i>Colin Lewis</i> : BYOT workshop (part I)
Apr	9	6:00 pm	<i>Min Hsuan Lo</i> : Dinner and lecture/demonstration
Apr	11-13		Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Societies Spring Festival in Kerhonkson NY
May	17	10:00 am	<i>Pedro Morales</i> : Tropicals demonstration and workshop
Jun	14	10:00 am	<i>Colin Lewis</i> : BYOT workshop (part 2)
Jul	12	12:00 pm	Annual meeting and auction
Aug	9	TBD	?
Sep	13	10:00 am	<i>Colin Lewis</i> : BYOT workshop (part 3)*
Oct	11-12		2008 National Bonsai Exhibit in Rochester NY
Oct	15-Nov 2		New York Botanical Garden/YAMA KI Bonsai Exhibit
Nov	8	TBD	?
Dec	13	12:30 pm	Holiday buffet party and auction

\* at Muscoot Farm

OFFICERS

Norm Geisinger. . . . . President  
Mike Pollock. . . . . Vice-President  
Irv Kleiman. . . . . Treasurer  
. . . . . Corresponding Secretary  
Steve Peach. . . . . Recording Secretary  
Gail Therrien. . . . . Immediate Past President

DIRECTORS

David Castro, John Cotaggio, David Cruz,  
Kevin Goveia, Rupen Kiskanyan, and Lavanya Muller

Co-Editors: Rhoda & Irv Kleiman

© YAMA KI BONSAI SOCIETY, INC.  
<http://www.yamakibonsai.org>

COMING EVENTS

Feb. 9 12:30 pm *Mike Hagedorn* displaying bonsai  
Mar. 8 10:00 am *Colin Lewis* repotting & wiring workshop  
Apr. 9 6:00 pm Dinner and lecture demonstration by *Min Hsuan Lo*  
Apr 11-13 Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Societies' 2008 Spring Festival at the Hudson Valley Resort & Spa in Kerhonkson NY

Remember to check our website ([www.yamakibonsai.org](http://www.yamakibonsai.org)) for updates and latest information

WEATHER HOTLINES

*Norman Geisinger*..... 203-746-3200  
*Irv & Rhoda Kleiman*..... 212-724-7840  
*Mike Pollock*..... 914-764-5557

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