



# YAMA KI NEWSLETTER

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

September

2007

## PAULINE MUTH'S SHIMPAKU JUNIPER LECTURE & WORKSHOP SEPTEMBER 15, 2007 10:00 AM LECTURE, 1:00 PM WORKSHOP AT THE MUSCOOT FARM

Our September meeting (to be held at Muscoot Farm in Somers, NY) will feature *Pauline Muth* presenting a morning class on Shimpaku juniper and how the five basic styles of bonsai relate to that species. The meeting will start promptly at 10:00 am - please be on time to allow sufficient time for the workshop ( we must vacate at 4:00 pm). In addition to styling, *Pauline* will discuss in depth the cultural and maintenance requirements of Shimpaku. Though this promises to be an excellent program for our newer members, more advanced members will have the opportunity to learn many of the finer points of styling from a very gifted teacher. In addition to owning and operating her own bonsai studio, *Pauline* is currently serving as President of the American Bonsai Association, and for many years has served as a board member of MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies (MABS). For additional information about *Pauline*, go to [www.pfmbonsai.com](http://www.pfmbonsai.com).

There are still several openings left for the afternoon workshop, for which the fee will be \$25/person. There are also 4 trees remaining of those we reserved for the workshop: (1) 2 gallon tree at \$50, and (3) mame/shohin size trees at \$20 each. Workshop participants may bring their own trees (any type/species) if they prefer, but realize that the entire day will be oriented towards the specific needs of Shimpaku. *Pauline* also has pots and tools available for purchase, so if you need a pot for a tree you're ordering, please specify. If you plan to repot, bring your own soil. Of course, remember to bring your own wire and tools. If necessary, you can purchase needed tools from *Pauline*.

Registrations will be honored on a first come- first served basis, so please book your spot by emailing Gail asap at [galtbon@aol.com](mailto:galtbon@aol.com).

## AUGUST'S WORKSHOP @ MUSCOOT FARM WITH JOHN ROMANO

*John Romano* began the workshop with a short discussion of Shohin (under 10") bonsai styles and provided a two-page handout with a great deal more detail (copies will be available at our next meeting and/or download it from our website). He gave an overview of points to keep in mind when creating a shohin display: the outline of the full display should create a triangular shape, just as is done with an individual bonsai; the movement of the trees should lead the eye naturally from one tree to the next (e.g., a cascade displayed in the upper left area should have the cascade portion flowing down towards the right, leading the eye towards the next item in the display); tree species which would normally be found growing at high altitudes should be situated in the upper areas of the display, low altitude plants situated on lower shelves; all items in the display should have a cohesive nature vis-a-vis season and climate.



Then *John* got very busy critiquing and giving styling suggestions for member's trees. Sometimes, implementing those ideas on the spot. At *Anita Hawkin's* suggestion, *John* was set up in the middle of the room, where everyone could clearly see what was happening, and everyone felt comfortable discussing and asking questions as we went. The attendance was great and everyone had at least one individual session with *John*. Since so many people had brought trees for *John* to look at, time was spent with more experienced members making suggestions to new members on how to improve their trees. Those members who had more trees simply stayed until all trees were discussed. *John* did a great job providing us with lots of helpful ideas and advice regarding our trees.

One was related to watering: Can do anytime of the day, water will not burn the leaves. His trees are watered at least once a day . . . more often on hot/windy days, most important for Shohin. He does not use organics in his soil mix, which he sieves at least three times. *John* uses organic fertilizers from mid May through September - organics need warmth for them to work.



These photos were taken at *John Romano's* workshop. Check out our website for additional pictures.

Comments and photos courtesy of *Norman Geisinger, Joan Thomas and Gail Therrien.*

### **BARTLETT ARBORETUM'S NEW ENTRANCE POLICY**

The Bartlett Arboretum has added a gate and an entrance fee to the arboretum. However, the fee does not apply to Arboretum members or to individuals attending a meeting at the Education Building. Just tell the attendant at the gate that you are attending the YAMA KI BONSAI SOCIETY'S meeting.

Our Society has a group membership to the Arboretum, but it does not entitle YAMA KI members to free visits at the Arboretum on occasions other than our meetings. If you would like to have unlimited free access, become a Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens members. Until Labor Day they are offering a family membership (usually \$50) for \$ 35 the price of an individual membership.

### **MARCO INVERNIZZI'S BYO WORKSHOP**

October 13, 2007 at the Bartlett Arboretum



Italy's *Marco Invernizzi* will be back in the US and is our guest artist for our October meeting and BYO workshop. Many members will remember his last meeting with us in April 2006, which was a lecture/demonstration. This time we will have the opportunity for him to enhance our own trees. Based on the new workshop policy approved by the Board at its last meeting, the workshop is limited to 8 participants. The fee for this workshop is \$25. Please call or email *Irv Kleiman* to place your reservation: (212) 724-7840 or [irkleiman@rcn.com](mailto:irkleiman@rcn.com). Remember to bring your tree(s), soil, wire, and tools!

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

The New York Botanical Garden has retained *Colin Lewis* to coordinate the annual bonsai exhibits which previously has been primarily a YAMA KI bonsai show. *Colin* and the Garden are looking to create, long term, a top notch bonsai show with trees coming from all over the country. This year is a starting point and we have been given space to display our group's top notch trees. There will be trees from other sources also in the exhibit. We will also be allowed to promote YAMA KI and use this opportunity to corral some new members.

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 for nine to twelve member trees. We would like to have about fifteen to eighteen high-quality trees available for the show. Set up is scheduled for Wednesday October 17<sup>th</sup> with take down on Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup> and we will plan a tree rotation on Monday, October 29<sup>th</sup> . . . this will allow for more member trees to be shown.

Selection of YAMA KI'S trees will be done by a panel of members based on photos. Quality will be the key criteria for selection. Submit as many trees as you feel are of high quality.

Photos will need to be:

- ★ Two or more color photos per tree with white or black background,  
One should be a front photo, with the tree next to a soda can or 750ml wine bottle for size perspective.
- ★ One tree per photo, minimum 4X6" photo size.
- ★ The tree should be show ready, on a display stand and taken at eye level.
- ★ Provide a standard description of the tree: species, age (if known), years in training, etc.

Members can submit a hard copy (Norm Geisinger 5 Meadowbrook Road, New Fairfield, CT 06812) or via e-mail to ([normc21@aol.com](mailto:normc21@aol.com)) - **by September 20<sup>th</sup>**.

One of the key reasons for a show like this is to educate the public about the art of Bonsai and it gives YAMA KI a vehicle to meet its goal of "Sharing with the community." In this spirit, we are asking for YAMA KI members to serve as docents during the exhibit. As a docent you would be talking to the public about bonsai and checking/watching over the trees. I would encourage everyone to be a docent even if you do not have a tree in the show. Of course, it also aids us in attracting new members if they can speak to someone who is into the art. It's also lots of fun. We will be planning two shifts per day. A sign up sheet will be provided in the near future.

You should be preparing your trees now if you wish to submit your bonsai for the exhibit. Please read the two articles by *Colin Lewis* and *Bob Bauder* on the following pages.

### PREPARING FOR DISPLAY

Colin Lewis

Nobody has trees that can just be taken straight from the bench and placed in an exhibition. The major exhibitors in Japan and Europe will begin to prepare their trees for display up to a year before the event, sometimes longer, making sure that it is as near to perfection as possible. You may not have trees of that quality, but you can - and should - still make sure that your exhibit is also as near to perfect as possible.

#### Wire or No Wire?

Deciduous trees should not have wire on when in an exhibition. Why? Because aluminum wire is thick, brown and unsightly. If you want to make minor adjustments to small branches with thin wire that is hidden by foliage, then perhaps that would be okay, but it must be very discreet.

On the other hand, conifers almost always need wire to bring the image to completion. Use ONLY copper wire (because it is thinner and its color is less obtrusive) and apply it neatly and discreetly. Don't use any more than necessary and measure to use the thinnest possible to achieve the purpose.

If you use guy wires or ties, use only #20 or #22 wire, and it is less noticeable. Remember that an exhibition should be a display of finished works of art not of the engineering involved in their shaping.

### **Foliage:**

#### **Deciduous:**

- clip off any oversized or diseased leaves
- if you prune shoots, don't allow the cut end to be visible - cut it back so it's hidden by other foliage. In fact, it's best to prune two to three weeks prior to the show so that the leaves readjust their positions.
- clean off any lime or chemical deposits on the leaves.
- make sure there are ABSOLUTELY NO bugs or diseases.

#### **Conifers:**

- remove all dead or yellow needles
- do NOT cut through pine needles to shorten them - pull long needles off or live with them.
- do NOT cut through juniper shoots, pluck them.
- define the undersides of the pads by removing all foliage that dangles below a horizontal base.
- thin out over congested areas in pines, so all the needles are in tufts at the ends of the shoots.

#### **Trunks, Branches and Nebari:**

- clean trunks, nebari and branches with a toothbrush to remove all algae and moss.
- on junipers, remove the flaky outer bark to reveal the red under-bark. Do this a week or two before the show so that the bark has a chance to weather and look more natural.
- cut away any fine straggly roots from the nebari, and clean out 'between the toes'.

#### **Deadwood:**

Clean deadwood and apply lime sulphur at least THREE WEEKS before the show. This will allow time for the harsh white to weather down to a more subtle shade. Also, if it remains slightly yellow, you have time for another application.

#### **Soil surface:**

Bonsai soil is downright ugly! The surface of the soil should be absolutely weed-free and, where not covered by moss, dressed with a thin layer of fine (eighth-inch or less) single ingredient so the soil doesn't look much like a kaleidoscope.

Moss should be applied at least two weeks before the show, so it has time to become established and look natural. Make a natural-looking patchwork of different mosses, placing each piece close against its neighbor and pressing the edges down into the soil to prevent dehydration. Some people prefer to moss the entire pot surface, others leave an irregular margin - either is okay.

#### **Pots:**

Pots must be scrupulously cleaned. Unglazed pots can be smartened up by burnishing, but don't make them look highly polished. A tiny amount of oil (olive, vegetable) on a lint-free cloth will enrich the color without causing a sheen. You can also use a small shoe brush with a little amount of oil or polish - but again, emphasis is on 'little amount'.

#### **Stands:**

No pot should stand directly on the table. If you don't have proper display stands you can use bamboo place mats, cutting boards, or anything that is serviceable and subtle and suits the tree.

#### **Accessories:**

Accent plants, suiseki etc should not be so large or visually powerful that they compete with the tree. If you don't have a suitable accent, best not to have one at all than to have one that is wrong. Ideally the accent should harmonize with the tree: a mountain tree should have a mountain suiseki or mountain accent plant; a forest should have a forest plant as an accent, etc. Also, bear in mind the seasonal aspects of the display when choosing accents.

#### **Labels:**

Name tags and labels should be placed near the pot but not in it nor directly in front of it.

## PREPARING ENTRIES FOR A SHOW\*

*Bob Bauder*

### STARTING 35 DAYS BEFORE SHOW TIME\*\*

#### Timing:

35 days	Prepare for pre-show fertilizing
28 days	Fertilize. Repeat fine-wiring and detailed grooming.
21 days	Fertilize. Pot accent pieces.
14 days	Fertilize
7 days	Fertilize
7-2 days	Final detailed grooming
1 day	Water thoroughly. Clean pots and stands. Deliver exhibit to show.

Pre-show Fertilization: For your entries needing improvement in color, plan to fertilize them on a weekly basis for 4 weeks prior to the show using the following method:

Thirty five days before the show, put 2 tablespoons of blood meal in a quart-size mason jar and add a pint of water. If you have liquid "Water-in", add a few drops. Put the lid on tight and shake the mixture daily for a week.

Twenty-eight days before the show, strain the liquid through an old piece of discarded pantyhose. Add water to the strained liquid to make a gallon of mix and fertilize your show trees. Repeat the preparatory and fertilizing process weekly until show time. You will find that the fertilizer will make your trees very lush and green and will not harm the moss.

To further enhance the appearance of your moss, use 1 tablespoon of fish emulsion to a gallon of water and spray the moss thoroughly 28 days before the show, and again 21 days before the show.

Fine-Wiring and Detailed Grooming: You can avoid the new copper wire shine prior to a show by using this trick: put a small amount of Orthorix (lime sulphur) on a cloth and pull the wire through it before using the wire on your bonsai. Fresh tree cuts can also be camouflaged by rubbing a little damp soil into them.

Twenty-one days: Pot Accent Pieces before the show so they will be well-established.

Final Preparation: The day before the show clean all of your stands, and wax them if necessary. Thoroughly water your trees, then clean the pots. Dust them with a brush and wipe them off with a wet cloth followed by a dry cloth. A small amount of Johnson's® baby oil on a cloth rubbed on the edges and sides of the pot, followed by a dry cloth will return the original luster to the pots. Also a bit of olive oil colored with brown "scratch cover" furniture polish is very effective . . . and always, at this point, stand back and admire your treasure! . . . then deliver it to the set-up committee at the show.

\* Descanso Newsletter. February 1982.

\*\* Editor's note: Here in the northeast, with our show in October, we would fertilize only tropicals/sub-tropicals

### **Shanti Bithi Nursery's End-Of-Summer Clearance**

Saturday, September 29, 2007 Noon - 5:00 PM

Check out Shanti Bithi's End-of-Summer bonsai and pre-bonsai clearance of selected stock with discounts from 20% to 50%. Remember to tell *Lavanya* or *Susan* that you are a YAMA KI member for special consideration! For travel directions, call (203) 329-0768

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COMING EVENTS

Sept.	15	10:00 am	<i>Pauline Muth</i> lecture & Shimpaku workshop
Oct.	13	10:00 am	<i>Marco Invernizzi</i> lecture/demo and BYO workshop
Oct.	18 - Nov 4		NY Botanical Garden Bonsai Exhibit
Nov.	10		TBA

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

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