

**TIME  
CRITICAL  
INFO**

POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION  
% U.S. NATIONAL ARBORETUM  
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20002

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PBA NEWSLETTER:

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CIRCULATION:

Over 400 internationally on a monthly basis.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

PBA membership includes 12 monthly newsletters covered by part of the annual membership dues. Corresponding membership: \$6.50 for 12 monthly newsletters. Make checks payable to Potomac Bonsai Association and mail to M. Hersh, 102 Devon Ct. Silver Spring, MD 20910.

ADVERTISING RATES:

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ADVERTISEMENTS and/or ARTICLES: send to the editor.

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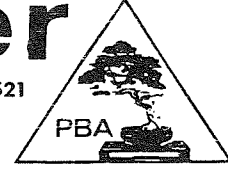
PRESIDENT: Fred Mees; VICE PRESIDENT: Jim Sullivan; Educational Vice President: Bill Spencer;  
Secretary: Julie Walker; Treasurer: Molly Hersh

POTOMAC  
**BONSAI**  
ASSOCIATION

Vol 18 No 5 May 1988

# Newsletter

ISSN 0160-9521



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### DUES ARE DUE !!!

(Members: Pay your local club treasurer)  
(Corresponding members: Please send \$6.50 to  
M. Hersh, 102 Devon Ct., Silver Spring, MD 20910)

(Note: As promised last Fall, those persons who were members of PBA and had paid full registration to attend the 1987 PBA Annual Symposium, will be given free membership in PBA for 1988. Your local club treasurer will be provided a list of those qualifying for that.)

## PBA AUCTION

Saturday 14 May 1988

BEHNKE NURSERIES

Editor's note: For those who missed last month's writeup about the

PBA Auction for this year, here's a repeat of some of the information plus some more. The accompanying photographs were taken by Chris and Betty Yeapanis (Northern Virginia Bonsai Society) when they made a visit to Newport News a few months ago to get a first hand impression of the Henley bonsai collection. The following is Chris's impression of what he saw.

The collection consists of about 80 trees. Many of the trees are 30 plus years of age, - some even have been grown from seed by the Henleys. The majority of the trees are planted in good bonsai containers. One container to be auctioned is old enough to be classified as an antique. There is a wide variety of trees, - some being five needle pine, pitch pine, magnolia, barberry, hornbeam, maple, honey suckle, hinoki cypress and varieties of chamaecyparis.

Here's a chance for you to get a well started tree that may only need repotting and trim.

Chris Yeapanis

\*\*\*

#### AUCTION DETAILS

**NOTE:** This is a combined auction and sales. Persons can offer items for sale at fixed prices. Are you getting crowded out by too many plants, pots that you do not know what to with, too many tools, wire with no further use, etcetera, - here's your opportunity to try and turn them into hard cash.

Auction will be held rain or shine, - it will be in the same old place, - the first floor of the warehouse next to the rose's sale area.

The auction is open to the public since The Behnke Nurseries are donating the space.

#### Times

8:00 a.m. - Nursery opens

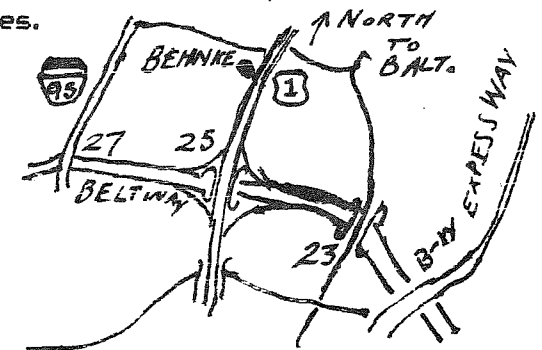
9:00 a.m. - Persons wishing to auction or sell items should be at the Behnke Nurseries by this time to have items listed. It is also requested that a brief, written description accompany each item for auction to include the following:

1. Where and when obtained.
2. For plant material:  
The common name,  
The scientific name (if known),  
The age if known
3. Minimum starting bids for auction items if so desired.

10:00 am. - AUCTION and SALES BEGIN.

END TIME - This is contingent on the amount of material to be auctioned coupled with the audience participation. The event will terminate when there is no more interest shown in bidding but no later than 7:00 p.m., - the time when Behnke Nursery closes.

Directions: The Behnke Nursery where the PBA Auction is to take place is in Beltsville, Maryland (not the Largo, Maryland location). The address is 11300 Baltimore Avenue which is U.S. 1. Take the Capital Beltway to Exit 25A which is between the I95 and

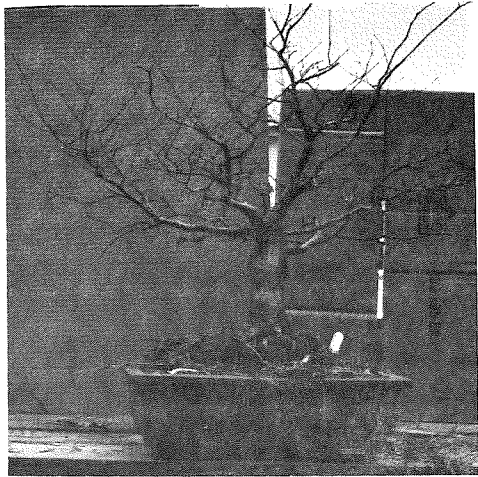


the Gladys Spellman (Baltimore-Washington Parkway) exits North to Baltimore. The nursery is 2 miles north of Exit 25A. At the nursery look for the first floor of the warehouse next to the rosebeds.

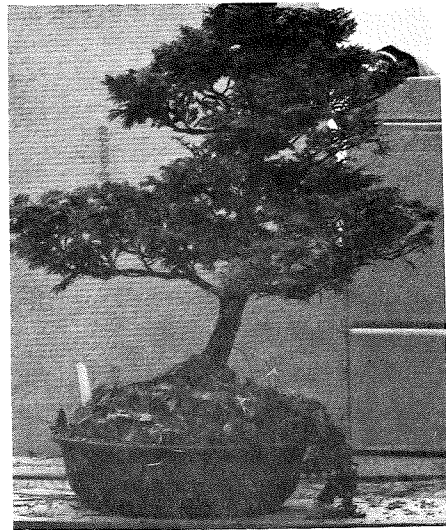
The PBA commission is 15% of all sales which goes into the PBA treasury.

The accompanying advertisement is indicative of only a small portion of the large selection of plant material available at The Behnke Nurseries. It is also an opportunity for you to browse through the nursery stock for bonsai material. The advertisements usually appear weekly in the "WASHINGTON HOME" section of The Washington Post which is a Thursday supplement to the paper.

Once again PBA is deeply grateful to The Behnke Nurseries for once again allowing the PBA Auction to be held on their premises in Beltsville, Maryland, and thereby to have become an annual PBA event.



*Carpinus caroliniana*, -  
American hornbeam, 24" high



*Chamaecyparis obtusa*-  
Hinoki False Cypress, 24" high.



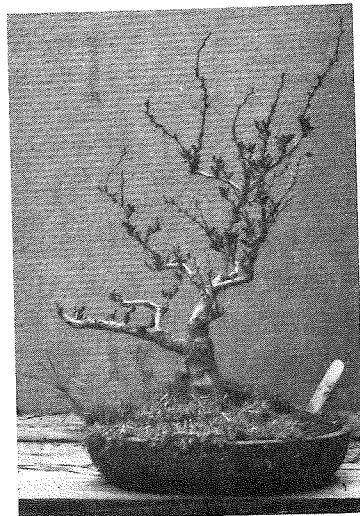
*Magnolia stellata*, - Star  
magnolia, done in Bill  
Valavanis workshop,  
20" high.



*Pinus virginiana*, 24" high,  
2"+ trunk diameter at  
base.



*Pinus parviflora*, -  
Five needle pine 18" high.  
Grown from seed.



*Berberis*, - Barberry, 15" high.



*Berberis*, - barberry,  
15" high.



*Pinus rigida*, - Pitch pine.

Photos of plants in the Henley Collection by Chris Yeapanis

Photos of plants in the Henley Collection by Chris Yeapanis

**FREE !!!**  
**JOHN YOSHIO NAKA**  
**LECTURE/DEMONSTRATION**

**TREE ASSESSMENT**

LOCATION: U.S. National Arboretum Main Auditorium.

DATES: May 20th, Friday

Lecture/Demonstration

7:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m.

May 21st, Saturday

Tree Assessment

10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

NOTICE: It is requested that all persons whose trees are to be in the Tree Assessment on Saturday, bring the trees to be assessed to the Arboretum on Friday night, i.e. to the Lecture/Demonstration. This will enable Naka-sensei to have more time to look them over and give a more profound critique of each tree.

As reported in the last issue of the Newsletter, JOHN YOSHIO NAKA, on Friday, May 20th, will be conducting a lecture demonstration using a large juniper. The finished demonstration material will be raffled at the end of the meeting. Don't miss this opportunity to see John work and possibly become the proud owner of a John Y. Naka original.

On Saturday, May 21st, John will be holding a tree assessment program. This will provide a rare chance to find out how John looks at a bonsai and his thoughts on possible improvements. You can learn by listening and observing even if you do not have a tree being assessed. (At bonsai symposia, - the cost for being an observer in the now popular tree critiques given by bonsai experts on the symposia exhibit trees runs around \$20.00,- but PBA's is free!)

In accordance with John's request, the trees to be assessed are well along towards being finished bonsai. Each bonsai will be in bonsai display pots and have a minimal of wiring,- preferably none.

For those attending on Saturday and not desirous of bringing a lunch, a food vendor will be present to accomodate them.

Potomac Bonsai Association's 14th Annual Symposium

The Art of Penjing

\* US National Arboretum  
 Washington, DC

September 30 - October 2, 1988

Lecture/Demos

Workshops

Vendors

Literati

Chinese Rockery

Micro Environments

Clip & Grow Method

Dan Barton, England

Marian Borchers, Florida

Gee Yeen Chan, Hong Kong

Amy Chang, Taiwan

Don Dobbins, Virginia

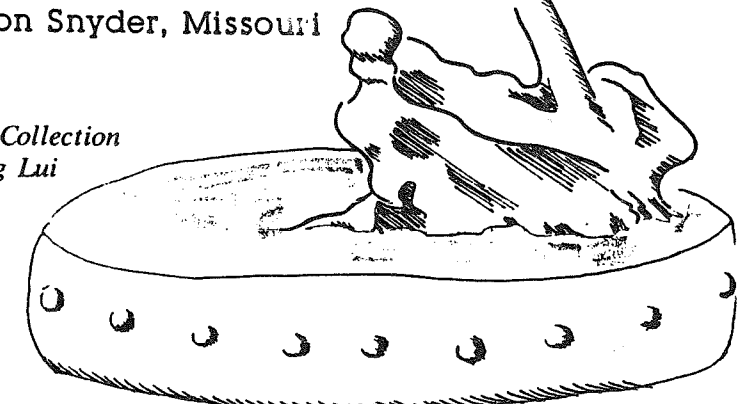
Cliff Pottberg, Florida

Dr Leon Snyder, Missouri

*Dedication of the Penjing Collection  
 donated by Mr Shu-ying Lui  
 and Mr Yee Sun Wu*

Registration limited to 150

For more information, write  
 Chris Yeapanis  
 4228 Berritt St  
 Fairfax, VA 22030



\* In cooperation with Friends of the National Arboretum

OTHER ACTIVITIES

1 and/or 4 May Sunday and Wednesday

U.S. NATIONAL ARBORETUM 1:30 p.m. LIVING LEGENDS - IN PRAISE OF TREES. Join Dr. Frank Santamour, Jr., Arboretum Research Geneticist, for a program on the best trees for gardens, streets, parks and landscaping. Program will be held in the Administration Auditorium.

2, 4, 9, 11 May Mondays and Wednesdays

BONSAI for BEGINNERS at the U.S. National Arboretum, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. This is one of the U.S.D.A Graduate School's evening program series. Material will be provided. Course is limited to 14 students. This course is a repeat of the one given in April. Contact (202) 447-5885 during working hours to sign up or for more information.

7 May Saturday

BALTIMORE (301) 235-5336: Cylburn Market Day and our Annual Spring Show. Setup starts at 8:00 a.m. We need your help and trees. To benefit the club, bring items you want to sell to the Bonsai Assc Boothe. All proceeds, less 10% to Cylburn, will benefit BBC.

10 May Tuesday

NATIONAL ARBORETUM 1:00 p.m. BONSAI REFINEMENT WORKSHOP. Robert Dreschler, Curator of the National Collection, will conduct a Bonsai Refinement Workshop in which he will assist individuals in repotting or refinement of their own bonsai plants, according to seasonal requirements. Participants must bring their own bonsai plants, bonsai tools, wire, container and soil if repotting is planned. The Arboretum will provide no supplies or equipment. Advance registration is required, and enrollment will be limited to five (5) persons. To register, please phone the Education Department at 475-4857. A fee of \$12.00 sent in advance to the Education Department, will be charged. A reduced fee of \$10.00 will be charged to FONA members. All checks should be made out to Friends of the National Arboretum and sent to the Arboretum Education Department, 3501 New York Avenue, N.E. Washington, DC 20002. Bonsai Refinement Workshops will be held on the second Tuesday of each month. PREREQUISITE: A BEGINNING BONSAI CLASS.

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P B A      A N N U A L      A U C T I O N

Saturday May 14th Starting at 10:00 a.m.

BEHNKE NURSERIES

See the article in this issue.

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15 May Sunday

BALTIMORE (301) 235-5336: Loch Raven Branch, Baltimore County Public Library, 1046 Taylor Avenue, 1:00 to 1:30 p.m. - BEGINNER WORKSHOP - bring trees for review and further work; 1:30 to 1:45 p.m. - coffee; 1:45 to 3:15 p.m. - Richard Meszler with topic to be announced; 3:15 to 3:30 p.m. - coffee; 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. - problem tree forums.

19 May Thursday

U.S. NATIONAL ARBORETUM 1:30 p.m. TOUR of the NATIONAL BONSAI COLLECTION and BONSAI FILM. Robert Dreschler, Curator of the National Bonsai Collection will introduce an educational film on bonsai produced by the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Following the film, Mr. Dreschler will conduct a tour through the National Bonsai Collection and Japanese Garden. The program will begin in the Administration Building Classroom.

20 and 21 May Friday and Saturday

JOHN Y. NAKA will be at the U.S. National Arboretum!!!

20 May at 7:30 p.m.- Lecture/demonstration.

21 May at 10:00 a.m.- Critique of 15 selected PBA bonsai, (Events will be open to the public since the U.S. National Arboretum is permitting PBA to use the Arboretum Auditorium.)

See the article in this issue for details.

21 May Saturday

WASHINGTON (202) 583-2676: National Arboretum at 2:00 pm. WORKSHOP: preparing, refining trees for Summer display. Bring pictures of your past displays.

26 May Thursday

BROOKSIDE (301) 381-6549: Argyle Community Center.

7:00 p.m - BEGINNERS' CORNER.

7:30 p.m.- REGULAR MEETING. This is the Annual Three Ring Circus Critique. I hesitate to call this a critique because that word has harsh connotations. My idea is that it is a more informal affair where one can get advice on his or her problem tree, - i.e. to hear what other people visualize in your tree and conversely what they have in mind about their own trees.

28 May Saturday

WOLFTRAP NURSERY and GREENHOUSE (703) 759-4244. 11:00 a.m. to noon - lecture/demonstration followed by 1-1/2 hours of general questions and answers. Topic:- SIZE: HOW to ATTAIN and CONTROL IT. Due to limited space, phone reservations are advised.

Topic and date are subject to change.

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P B A      B E G I N N E R ' S      W O R K S H O P

6 June Saturday

FREE...FREE...FREE...FREE...FREE...FREE...FREE...FREE

INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOP FOR NEW PBA MEMBERS

PBA Member Clubs, Educational Vice Presidents Pleas Read !!!!

1:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Auditorium in the Administration Building, U.S. National Arboretum, 3501 New York Avenue, N.E. Washington, DC.

PBA Is continuing the annual program for new members. A free, one day only workshop is again being offered to welcome new members of PBA who have joined for the first time. \*\*\* A modest starter tree and the Sunset book "BONSAI CULTURE and CARE of MINIATURE TREES to initiate beginners into the "mysteries" of creating their own bonsai.

The philosophy of the program is that a senior teacher will present the artistic background and advise the participants on the styling of trees. It is expected that a representative from each member club of PBA, hopefully the Educational Vice president, will be present to assist the lecturer. Students will not work on plants at this session. Rather, each club is expected to schedule their own follow-up workshop, whereat new members will be assisted in the initial styling of the tree (so-called "plastic surgery" which sets the basic shape of the tree) as well as when and how to prune, wire, pot and fertilize.

\*\*\* This workshop will be offered on a one-time only basis to new members. The program is specifically designed as an introduction to bonsai and is not meant to be a substitute for a full- fledged beginner's course.

4 June Saturday

BALTIMORE (301) 235-5336: Loch Raven Branch, Baltimore County Public Library, 1046 Taylor Ave. from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. New member workshop for all who joined PBA between June '86 and May '88. They should make plans to attend this FREE workshop sponsored by the Potomac Bonsai Association: (lecture, book, and starter tree to each attendee.) See details in this issue.

June Outdoor workshops at members homes, bring trees for advice, and to work on. Information on those will be passed along.

11 June Saturday

NORTHERN VIRGINIA (703) 591-0864: 10:00 a.m. General Workshop Day at the home of John Simpson, 3617 Ridgeway Terrace, Lake Barcroft. You can plan to stay until 2:00 p.m. so bring a lunch if you wish,- liquid refreshments will be provided. This will be outdoors so - bring trees to work on,- especially the beginners who attended the 4 June Beginner's Workshop at the Arboretum bring their starter trees; a card-table and chair if you can; and all the items you may need such as tools, wire, soil, pot, etc. In case the weather is threatening, telephone (703) 256-4615.

11 June Saturday

NATIONAL ARBORETUM at 10:30 a.m. Lawrence Lee, Curator of the Asian Collections, will lead a walk through the Garden Club of America planting featuring many superb shade loving plants and the Arboretum's newly landscaped Asian Valley where he will point out and discuss some of the interesting trees and shrubs as well as herbaceous plants from China, Japan, and Korea found in this picturesque landscaped planting. Mr. Lee will also discuss the ongoing developments of China Road which will feature plants collected on recent plant collecting expeditions to The Peoples Republic of China. The walk will last approximately one hour and will begin promptly from the parking area adjacent to the GCA Planting (by number 41 on map).

14 June Tuesday

NATIONAL ARBORETUM 1:00 p.m. BONSAI REFINEMENT WORKSHOP. See 10 May entry for details.

18 June Saturday

KIYOMIZU (301) 423-8230 Again in June the club will make their second annual trip to the McColloughs. This will take place on this date. The club will take pot luck in a picnic. There

will be boating, swimming and perhaps another demo by Chuck. This was a great day for those who attended last year and it is expected to be repeated this year. Arrive by noon. At this meeting, the activities for the next 6 months will be planned.

18 June Saturday

WASHINGTON (202)583-2676: National Arboretum at 2:00 p.m. For new members,- bring trees from the 4 June Beginner's Workshop. This will also be a meeting to plan the program for the coming year.

25 June Saturday

WOLF TRAP NURSERY and GREENHOUSE (703) 759-4244: 11:00 a.m. to noon - lecture demonstration followed by 1-1/2 hours of general questions and answers. Topic: HANDLING SUMMER PROBLEMS. Due to limited space, phone reservations are advised. Topic and date are subject to change.

NOTE: ANY CLUB MEMBER CAN ATTEND ANY PBA MEMBER CLUB'S MEETING.

NOTE: During the month of May both the Bowie club and the Northern Virginia club will not be holding a club meeting and consider the PBA Auction as the place where members should go ,- a good substitute collecting trip.

1988 P B A ANNUAL MEETING

The 1988 PBA Annual Meeting was held at the U.S. National Arboretum on 23 April as planned. The PBA President, Fred Mies, conducted the business part of the meeting and covered the past year's PBA efforts and the plans for the forthcoming PBA Symposium in the Fall. The latter event will be emphasizing Chinese bonsai and coincide with the dedication of the Chinese Bonsai Collection at the Arboretum. See the advertisement in this issue.

The slate of candidates for PBA offices proposed by the nominating committee for the 1988-1989 timeframe was unanimously elected:

President - Fred Mies  
Vice President - Jim Sullivan  
Educational Vice President - Bill Spencer  
Secretary - Julie Walker  
Treasurer: Molly Hersh

During the discussions on various aspects of PBA's activities, the following may be of interest to the readers.

Cy Mill (Northern Virginia - telephone (703) 938-0683) has undertaken the task of writing a history of PBA. He is desirous of having anyone with any historical stories, anecdotes, or the like associated with PBA to please get in touch with him. In going through past PBA Newsletters, Cy noted that a few years back there was a shift in the items in the Newsletter away from newsy items about goings-on within PBA. The editor concurs in that it would be super if the PBA member clubs would send him info on a regular basis covering the highlights of the member clubs' activities,- both future and past. Such info would be of interest and benefit the member clubs such as sharing bonsai tips or giving clubs ideas for programs at their own meetings.

The 1988 PBA Symposium slated for next Fall is shaping up very nicely, especially with the number of distinguished speakers from overseas.

A number of items raised were tabled for discussion at the PBA Board Meeting on 2 April, 1988.

After the business end of the meeting was over, there was delicious Chinese food for everyone to partake of. While everyone was enjoying the food, the third tape in the 3-tape series of Kimura the Magician was shown. Member clubs should try to program the showing of that tape at one of their future meetings. Seeing it lead to some interesting points and you might consider them in the light or reading the article herein written by Dan Robinson. First: Kimura apparently uses the chain saw and die grinder to sculpt jin and shari on one species of trees and one alone - junipers and preferably either Shimpaku or Needle juniper (Tosho). This emphasizes the point often made but just as often cast aside by most of us and that is: "One should confine one's efforts to create bonsai to one species to expect to understand how to best work with that material and develop fine bonsai." To do what Kimura does to junipers, one should have much in depth experience and knowledge in how to work the material. On the other hand, Kimura is a fine bonsai master with other species of trees, but like other Japanese bonsai masters, you will notice that the carving of wood and the creation of jin and shari are by and large confined to Junipers with an occasional excursion into the pine species.

## BONSAI NEWSLETTERS

**INTRODUCTION:** One of the perquisites of PBA's courtesy mailing list for the PBA Newsletter is that other bonsai organizations who have newsletters, respond to PBA's freebie Newsletter by mailing their newsletters to PBA. Periodically Julie Walker, the PBA Secretary, mails the recently arrived newsletters to me, as Editor of the PBA Newsletter. There are interesting articles in those mailed-in newsletters, but there is always a quandary as to how many of the articles in those newsletters should be reprinted in the PBA Newsletter short of making the latter just a run-off of articles in other newsletters. However, this one time I am copying articles from three of the newsletters to introduce the readers to them and also list how one might subscribe to them.

Jules Koetsch

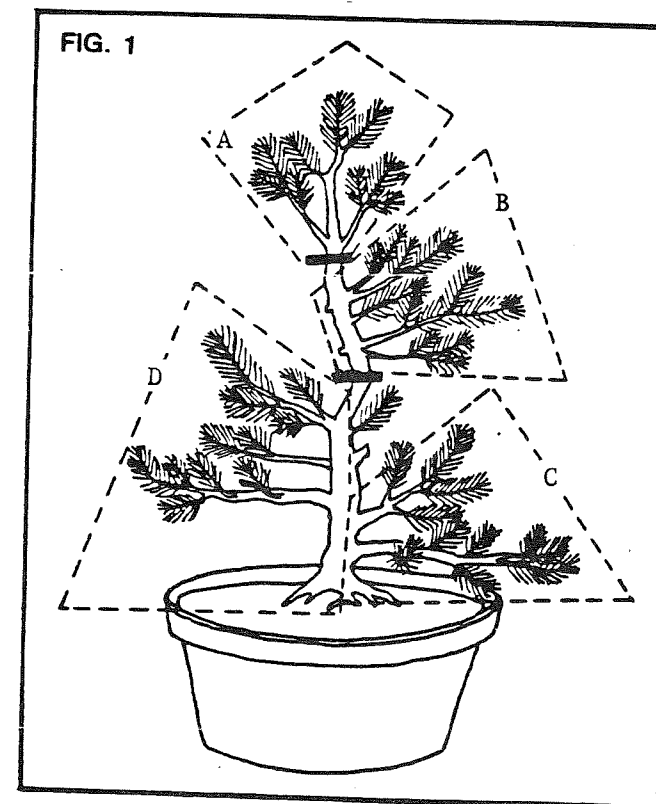
### CREATING FOUR BONSAI FROM A SINGLE TREE

Adapted by Donna Banting from a translation by C. Graves

(This article appeared in "new orleans bonsai" April 1988, Vol XVI No. 4. Address inquiries for subscribing to the publishers: The Greater New Orleans Bonsai Society, P.O. Box 13212, New Orleans, LA 70185-3212.)

Mr. Yasumitsu Tsuji created four small 5-needle pine bonsai from a single tree. His article in "The bonsai World" June 1977 might inspire you to take a good look at that problem tree which lacks good taper or attractive branch placement and structure. Examine each individual part of the tree to find your future bonsai: nearly every tree offers several design features.

First, the tree was carefully examined and its division planned. (Fig. 1) The 5-needle pine was air-layered in April at "A"

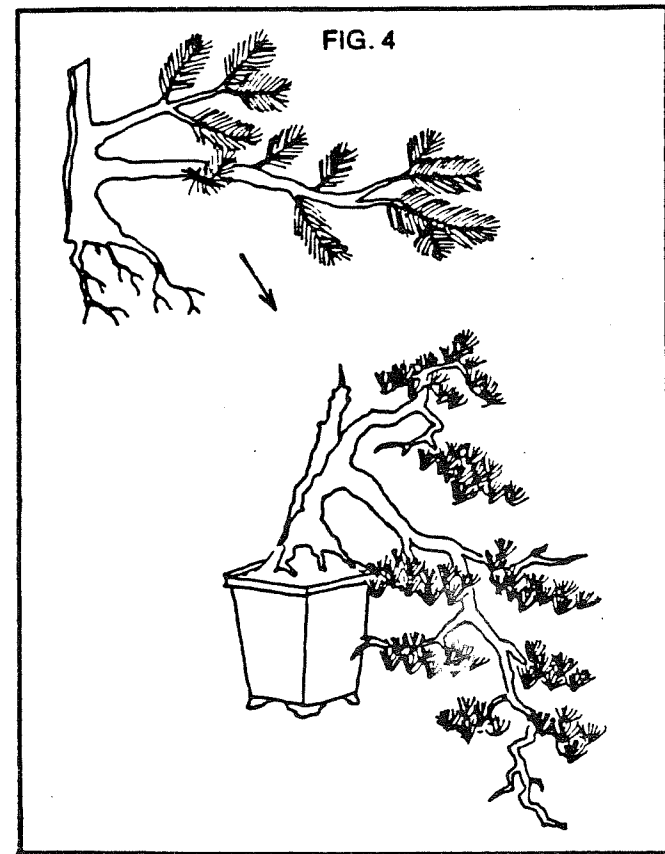
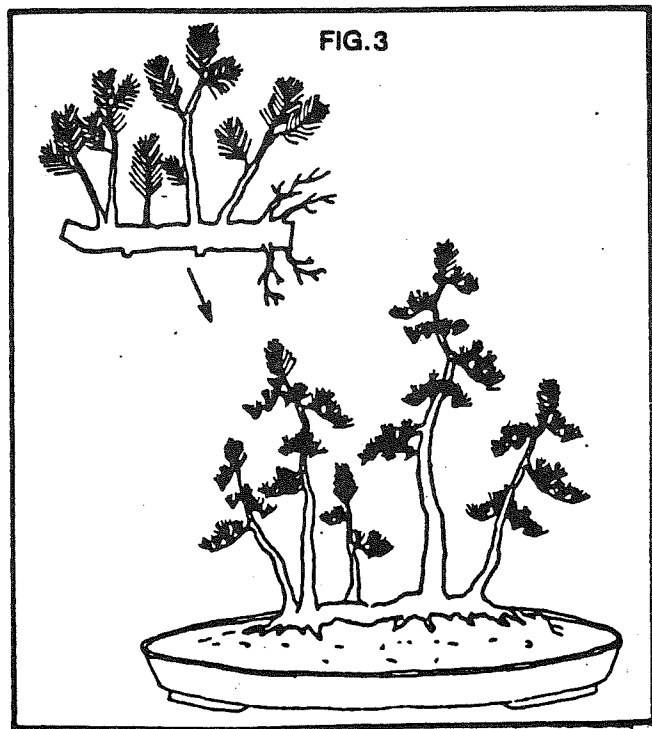
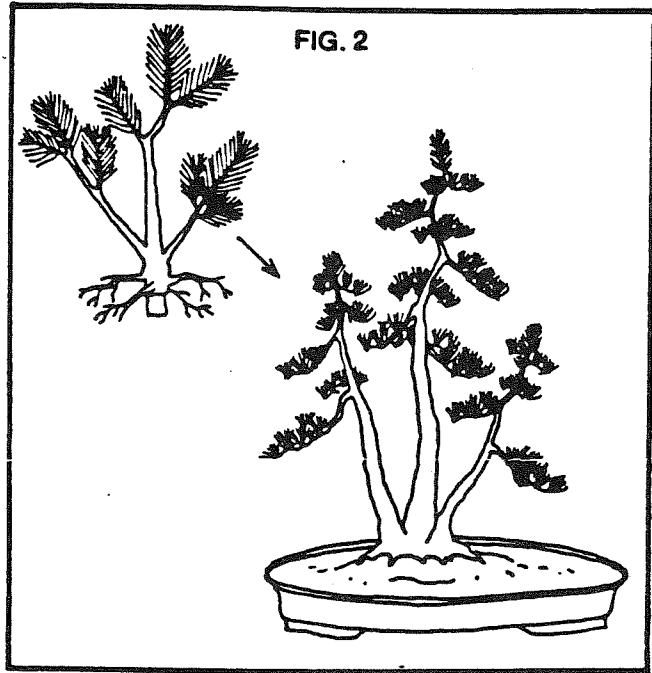


and "B". (See the PBA Newsletter November 1987 issue for details on air-layering.) It is general practice to take a single air-layer at a time, but because the pine he used for this illustration had many healthy branches above and below the air layers, Mr. Tsuji was able to apply the air-layering technique to both areas at one time. He also encouraged root development on the air layers by fertilizing the host tree.

When well developed roots appeared (3 months later for Mr. Tsuji), the air layers were removed and potted. It is alright to pot those rooted trees in regular bonsai soil. After the air layers were removed, the remaining trunk was split down the middle as shown, to create trees at "C" and "D". Of course there must be healthy roots on both sides of the split trunk to create two bonsai. These were also potted immediately in bonsai soil.

Mr. Tsuji's 5-needle pine is now a triple trunk (Fig. 1A is now Fig. 2), a raft style (Fig. 1B is now Fig. 3), a cascade (Fig. 1C is now





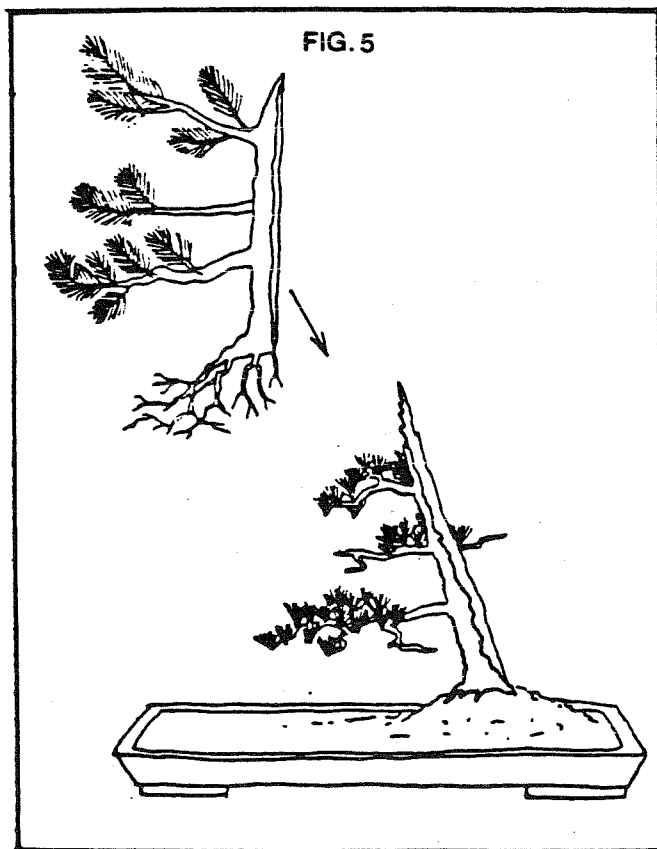


Fig. 4), and a windswept (Fig. 1D and Fig. 5).

The 5-needle pine does not grow well in New Orleans, but the same techniques used to create four bonsai from a single plant can be used on any tree species, considering, of course, the plant's horticultural requirements, i.e. best time of year to take air layers, length of time for roots to develop, type of fertilizer used, etc.

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## THE KIMURA EFFECT

by Dan Robinson

(This article appeared in "Puget Sound Bonsai Association Quarterly" Vol 15, No. 1. Address inquiries for subscribing to the Puget Sound Bonsai Association, P.O. Box 15437, Seattle, Washington 98115-0437. Dan Robinson, the author of the following article, introduced many of the bonsai people in this country to the uses of the chainsaw and die grinder as tools for sculpting bonsai even before many of us heard the name Kimura who is nicknamed "The Magician" in Japan. We are indeed indebted to Dan for the following article containing his expert critique of his contemporary, Kimura, who has become a sensation in Japanese bonsai circles.)

### AS I SAW IT

They are the world's oldest living things -- tortured, bleached, dead wood sculptures. Bristlecone pines are the embodiment of the life death cycle. Seeing these living sculptures imprints a permanent image, a guide, if you will, to the best of bonsai design and form. Kimura had to see them.

It happened for me 21 years ago; a trip up from Bishop, California, to visit the "Timberline Ancients", the bristlecone pines I'd been reading of since the early fifties. They were never to be forgotten and much of what I do today regarding bonsai design and sculpture emanates from that "honeymoon visit."

Kimura had to see the bristlecone pines. After a long day of exposure to the White Mountains with their gnarled, ancient denizens, he felt as though he could go home in peace. He had made a visit to the bristlecones a prerequisite for his visit to the Golden State Bonsai Convention in Anaheim in November (of last year). I think his desire to see those magnificent old trees speaks worlds about the man's artistry and value system.

Sculpture of wood is what Kimura is all about and as a student of this art the appreciation of those trees is all-important.

As I heard of his visit to the Bristlecones and that he placed that visit at the top of his priorities, I felt --"how perfect".

Great expectations; this best describes my feelings about Masahiro Kimura's visit to the Golden State Convention. This man certainly has captured the imagination of adventurous bonsai artists everywhere. For me, his style, approach and techniques are those of a kindred spirit. Among all the artists that Japan has loaned us through the years none has really been the raw material converter type artist of Kimura's caliber. Even though he is a young man of only thirty-nine, his countrymen honor his skill, daring and artistry.

As a raw material type guy myself, I saw in this visit a special opportunity to learn from and even bathe in this man's skill, energy and creative resourcefulness.

Setting Kimura's artistry aside for the moment, which is difficult to do, I would like to describe his techniques for getting the creative job done. He was completely organized and thorough to the smallest detail.

A commentary on his approach to the conversion of two specimen California junipers seems of special value here:

1. Carving dead wood: He uses two different rotary power tools-- the chain saw and a home-made rotary belt drive grinder. Comment: His control of the chain saw was fine although his home-made arrangement of handles above and below the motor obviously requires considerable muscle. I think a handle located out on the bar requires considerably less muscle and yields better control--especially for the beginner. This forward handle will give the novice considerable confidence right from his/her first use of the chain saw.

The home-made grinder which Kimura uses is unavailable in the United States. A decided advantage to this tool is that it will accommodate sanders, grinders and even circular saw and dado blades. This versatility makes the tool very handy. The one disadvantage to the tool is that if too much pressure is applied, the belt would, and did slip.

Occasionally the belt also came off the end pulley. Since this tool is

unavailable in the United States, the next best thing is the tool I use and recommend-- the Japanese-made Makita die grinder. It is inexpensive-- about \$60. \$80.--durable and readily available. The Makita's rotary action is similar to Kimura's grinder function.

2. Treating the dead wood with lime sulfur as soon as the carving is done.

Comment: Kimura taught us to wet the dry wood with a light water spray before applying the lime sulfur bleaching agent. The water makes the wood more receptive. He also applied a light water spray after the application of the lime sulfur. The second water spray washes the lime sulfur into the tiny cracks and fissures. He wiped the excess off with paper towels to prevent the lime sulfur from running down the trunk into the root system.

3. Hollowing out or carving away one side of very large branches to facilitate their bending.

Comment: By carving away what seemed to be the majority of the woody structure inside the branch and leaving just the bark, cambium and some sapwood, Kimura made branch bending easy.

4. Wrapping all larger branches he planned on bending with raffia to insure success and preclude breakage.

Comment: Kimura's care and thoroughness in this operation was most impressive. Every size branch received a different wrap depending on the branch's estimated resistance to the bending effort. He demonstrated that on the smaller branches a good, tightly applied, spiral wrap was sufficient. On medium thick branches many strands of raffia were run down and parallel to the branch before being encapsulated in a tightly applied spiral wrap. The use of the linear strands of raffia apparently adds additional support to the branch against breaking.

On the heaviest branches, and also on the hollowed out ones, Kimura added parallel strands of heavy duty wire AND parallel strands of raffia before wrapping the branch in a tightly drawn spiral of raffia. During the bending process Kimura watched the branch closely to see if, during the bending process, the raffia was stretching and

separating so that the bark could be seen. If any bark became visible during the bending, he would apply another wrap of raffia. His margin of safety was enhanced proportionately with the thoroughness of the wrapping job he did.

5. Three-stage wiring approach to all branches: first apply heavy wire and bend all heavy branches; second, wire and bend all medium size branches, and third apply fine wire and bend all fine branches.

Comment: This three stage approach is interesting and certainly delivers a finished product relatively unencumbered with wire. He used the heavy wire for only a short distance on each branch. By not running the heavy wire to the tip of the branch and instead, switching to progressively smaller sizes, the wiring was less obtrusive. The convenience of running the single heavy wire from the trunk to branch tip seems inappropriate to him. I agree with him in that heavy wire does overpower small branch tips. It occurred to me during his demonstration of this wiring technique that his finesse in wiring is one of the reasons why his products look so finished. (Editor's comment- The way step 5 reads initially lead me to wonder what's so new about that approach. However, the ensuing comment clarified that statement in that it applies also to a single branch. In this instant,- initially a relatively heavy wire may be needed from the trunk out to a point on the branch where the thickness of the branch now permits it to be bent with a lesser diameter wire, and so on progressively to the tip end of the branch.)

As I drove north toward home, I was elated with having watched this master at work. His demonstrations renewed my energy and I ruminated about what his visit meant to me--to us! It was more than watching him demonstrate his fine technical skill even though that was truly impressive. For me personally his visit was a great reaffirmation of the use and value of power tools.

For the past twelve years I have used and expounded on the use of power tools in bonsai whenever anyone would listen.

Power tools have expanded my creative capacity and they have

done the same for Masahiro Kimura. What has been surprising to me--and from what I have heard it is to Kimura as well-- is how slowly the bonsai public has been to adopt the use of power tools. Perhaps this springs from a timidity to handle power tools. It may also stem from the reluctance of teachers to educate themselves about power tools and then pass this skill on to their students.

There is now the possibility that the many American bonsai practitioners who will try nothing in bonsai that does not have the Japanese cachet on it, will now, after seeing Kimurara in operation and his magnificent finished product, accept power tools as the "new wave" of bonsai.

One can only imagine the consternation Kimura's all-out use of power tools caused in the traditional circles of the Japanese (bonsai) world where a chisel and mallet took weeks to accomplish what a pre-planned chainsaw and grinder operation can do in a few short hours.

My first major appearance in which I used a chain saw was at the International Bonsai Convention in Portland in 1978. The reception of my use of the chain saw ranged from acclamation to indirect sneers. At least there was reaction!

To all the people that watched Kimura's superb creative skill at work, there was a message of hope and promise. He affirmed in person what his two books have done with pictures, "It can be done." There is a way. And that we should all dare to dream for it is the first step .....to creativity.

Kimura's approach is to be daring, to do exciting things with good, really good, raw bonsai material. If a bonsai tree is boring now, it will be boring later unless there is the courage to change it for the better, and he has that kind of courage in spades.

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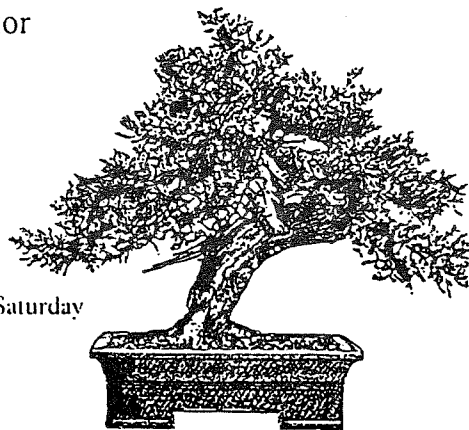
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## ABOUT THE COVER

(This article refers to the cover of the publication it appeared in,— JOURNAL OF THE TORONTO BONSAI SOCIETY, March 1988 and refers to the cover of that publication reproduced herewith. This article was chosen to bring a little levity into this publication, but the above journal also includes articles on bonsai care and the like. If you are interested in possibly subscribing, you can write to the Journal Editor, Mr. Norman Haddrick, 12 Beardmore Crescent, Willowdale, Ontario, Canada M2K 2P5.)

Now I don't know about you, but I myself was always slightly bothered by BONSAI's somewhat effete image. Weighing in at more than 245 Imperial pounds (about 274 U.S. pounds) and standing over 6 feet tall, I'll long remember the shocked surprise of an old Japanese friend on seeing me display some of my proud creations at the Japanese Cultural Centre some years ago, "Oh look, Big George and tiny trees," he shouted in what seemed to me at the time like obvious glee. More than a little hurt by your heartless comments, Sam Yamada, I began my long search for the real roots of bonsai. And that has finally come very gratifyingly to fruition with the recent discovery of an hereto unknown woodcut print by Kuniyoshi\* of Hayano Kampei, circa 1850.

The print shows in great detail the faithful Samurai pruning one of his priceless bonsai with the determination and deep concentration befitting a man of high standing, true to the timeless spirit of Bushi-Do, the way of the warrior. The pruning tool resembling an ancient sword, may seem quite crude to us today, yet the picture clearly shows BONSAI firmly rooted in the fertile soil and traditions of the great Martial arts of Japan.

Thus from now on no red-blooded North American boy needs fear ridicule and accusations of effeminacy when pursuing his manly hobby of BONSAI, or should I say:

"BONSAI-DO" ?

George Reichert, respectfully submitted

\* Utagawa Kuniyoshi 1798–1861

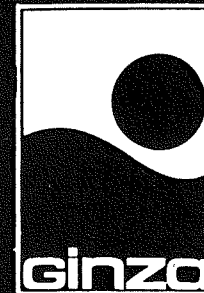
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