

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

.....

Bonsai Introduced to Virginia's Orland E. White Arboretum

Goyou Matsu – White Pine

by Jules Koetsch

Ed: Following is the text of a letter submitted by Pete Jones of NVBS. Pete did a bonsai demonstration during the Orland E. White Arboretum of Virginia's 1993 Octoberfest and made a major contribution in introducing an appreciation for the art of bonsai in the Winchester area of Virginia.

I enjoyed doing a bonsai demonstration at the Orland E. White Arboretum on October 17, 1993. The demonstration bonsai tree was donated to the Arboretum for their silent auction and sold for \$30.00. I was told that the bonsai demonstration drew the largest attendance (over 70 people).

Old copies of *PBA Clippings* were provided as a hand out. After the bonsai demonstration, most of the *PBA Clippings* were taken. Since I only had one hour to do the demo, I did not have time to answer the many questions that people had about bonsai. I did stress that if they were interested in bonsai or a bonsai club at the Arboretum, to leave their name and address with the Arboretum.

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At last November's meeting of the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society, Mr. Steve Pilacik of the Greater Philadelphia Bonsai Society, which is a member of PBA, gave a talk and demonstration on growing and styling Japanese white pine as bonsai. He brought some varietals of Goyou matsu and attendees could practise needle plucking. Goyu is the Japanese word for "five needles" to distinguish the pine from other pines of two or three needles in a fascicle or bundle. One of the main attributes of Goyou matsu is the small needle size not found in too many other species of white pine. Having witnessed Steve's presentation, I thought it would be a good idea to see how an old article which appeared in the May 1982 *PBA Newsletter* stacked up against other printed material amassed since then.

Of course, one can appreciate that black pine (kuro matsu) and aka matsu (red pine) with their bigger needles, are not suitable for shohin or small bonsai. Moreover, all the pines and conifers when trimmed undergo a

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Goyou matsu, Japanese White Pine, Informal Upright.

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Advertising Rates (until December 31, 1993): Monthly rates: 1/6 page, \$12.50; 1/3 page, \$25.00; 1/2 page, \$37.50; full-page, \$75.00. 10% discount for 6 months prepaid, 20% discount for 12 months prepaid. Direct inquiries/payment (make checks payable to Potomac Bonsai Association) to: Jerry Antel, Jr. 6409 Middleburg Lane, Bethesda, MD 20817, (301) 320-5251. Send ad copy to editor at address listed below for articles.

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From the Editor . . .

Much has been written about Goyou matsu or Japanese white pine as bonsai. As Vaughn Banting once mentioned - the reason that so many species used for bonsai are Japanese in origin is because the Islands of Japan have been blessed with plant material that has characteristics that make the material ideal for bonsai - small leaves and close internodal spacings of leaves. That statement alone may not sound impressive but when you find out that of some 159 species of white pine or *Pinus parviflora* existing in the Japanese islands 96 are classified as yatsubusa cultivars - the types used by the Japanese for bonsai. Hence when you're out getting your white pine for bonsai, make certain that the vendor classifies it as one of the yatsubusa variety. For the most part your asking that may be superfluous because you should be able to see that the specimen in question has the all the traits of a yatsubusa and is not one of those common nursery lengths in disguise with the needles sheared to 3/4 inch lengths. Reference (1) provides the following definition for yatsubusa which clearly covers all that is desirable in a bonsai, "The term YATSUBUSA meaning "eight buds," or "cluster of eight buds," is used to describe the variants of plants with the following characteristics: multiple bud breaks, short internodal distance, hard wood, small foliage and buds produced from old wood. Most of the yatsubusa forms remain dwarf, are easy to propagate from cuttings (including some pines), and give the impression of a witches' broom or *krummholz*. Many species of plants have a yatsubusa form." One which most of the readers are familiar with is Kingsville boxwood, which is a witches' broom or sport from a common boxwood.

Of all the 96 yatsubusa varieties, two have been considered to be at the top of the list - Zuishou and Koko-no-e. On one of my trips to Japan in the '80s, I brought back a Koko-no-e. 5-needle pine were not on the No-No list of the Department of Agriculture. I can still see the inspector in Los Angeles looking at the needles to try and discern if there were 5 needles to a bundle because they were so small. That Koko-no-e died in about 4 years - just in time for another trip to Japan. I now had learned that Koko-no-e had been replaced overwhelmingly by Zuishou. In Japan one could in the 1980's still find a purveyor of bonsai material on a city street. The one I found had 2 Zuishou which I purchased, brought home and watched them decline in 2 to 3 years to the point that one died and the second was not long for this world. In a moment of compassion I realized that there is much less than a full day of sunlight on the area where I keep my bonsai, so I turned over the last surviving member, one Zuishou, to Pete Jones, Northern Virginia's super green thumb. Pete has informed me that the Zuishou is doing fabulously, it now has a cone which he is letting develop for two years, the normal gestation period for the seeds to develop in the cone. Hopefully, in time, there will be more Zuishou and Zuishou hybrids for us to make into bonsai. The magazine BONSAI TODAY is replete with articles on Japanese white pine and the many ways they can be styled. Reference (2) is an article written by the man responsible for developing Zuishou as a bonsai, Mr. Saichi Suzuki. That article gives an interesting account of how Mr. Suzuki discovered and persevered to develop Zuishou as an outstanding bonsai plant material.

Joseph Burke was one of this country's foremost developers of dwarf white pine and did cross-breeding to try and develop new strains from seed. Thanks to Dave Dambowic the article PINE SEED in the last issue of the *PBA Clippings* was given for printing after he had obtained permission from Mr. Burke. Pete Jones also has two of Joe's cultivars which Joe thought came quite close to Zuishou in characteristics. In time there should be interesting dwarf white pine resulting from Pete's efforts.

As for me, my enthusiasm has again been whetted and I'm seriously considering trying white pine once again. I've been eyeing the one area around the homestead where sun and light are provided for the most part of the day. The only problem I have is to negotiate with my wife for tenant space since it's in her vegetable garden plot.

References:

(1) *JAPANESE FIVE-NEEDLE PINE*, Nature, Gardens, Bonsai Taxonomy; Encyclopedia of Classical Bonsai Art, Volume 2; by William N. Valavanis; Symmes Systems, Atlanta, Georgia; 1976.

(2) *ZUSHO the GOOD OMEN*; by Saichi Suzuki; *Bonsai Today*, July-August 90 Vol. 8; Stone Lantern Publishing Co., Sudbury, MA.

Jules Koetsch

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Meeting location and club contact number for additional information is as listed unless otherwise noted in calendar listing. A member of any one club is eligible to participate in any PBA or PBA member club event.

Baltimore Bonsai Club

Cylburn Arboretum, 3rd Sunday, 1 PM
(410) 668-1868

Bowie Bonsai Club

Bowie Community Center
Last Monday, 7 PM
(301) 350-3586
(202) 667-1016

Brookside Bonsai Society

North Chevy Chase Recreational Center
3rd Thursday, 7 PM
(301) 365-7621

Chesapeake Bonsai Club

Paca Garden, Annapolis, MD
2nd Tuesday, 7:30 PM
(301) 261-8131

Greater Philadelphia Bonsai Society

Pennypack Watershed, Willow Grove, PA
4th Thursday, eve.
(609) 753-0311

Kiyomizu Bonsai Club

Clearwater Nature Center, Clinton, MD
3rd Saturday, 2 PM
(301) 645-3519

Lancaster Bonsai Club

Lancaster Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, PA
2nd or 3rd Wednesday, 7 PM
(717) 653-9102

Mei-Hwa Penjing Society

Bowie Community Center
2nd Sunday, 1 PM
(301) 390-6687

Northern Virginia Bonsai Society

Hidden Oaks Nature Center, Annandale, VA
2nd Saturday, 12 Noon
(703) 591-0864

Washington Bonsai Club

U.S. National Arboretum
3rd Saturday, 2 PM
(202) 296-2441

Organizations sponsoring regular events of interest to PBA members:

U.S. Botanical Gardens
(202) 226-4082

U.S. National Arboretum
(202) 475-4857

JANUARY

Saturday 8
Northern Virginia Bonsai Society
Presentation by Russ Kinerson, 12 pm.

Wednesday 12
Lancaster Bonsai Society
Slab workshop, 7 pm.

Saturday 15
Washington Bonsai Club
Slide lecture by Dan Chiplis on his Japanese experiences, 2 pm.

Sunday 16
Baltimore Bonsai Club
Slide show by Richard Meszler on *Travels to Pacific Rim Collection*, 1 pm.

Thursday 27
Greater Philadelphia Bonsai Society
Dave Spirt will be presenting a slide presentation. Subject TBA, 7-9 pm.

Thursday 20
Brookside Bonsai Society
Paul Wildisan will demonstrate sharpening each type of bonsai tool. 7:40 PM. 7 PM Beginners' corner, 7:30 PM Club business.

Saturday 22
Brookside Bonsai Society
Drop-in Workshop: Tool sharpening with Paul Wildisan, 9-12 Noon at Tony Meyers home.

FEBRUARY

Wednesday ?
Lancaster Bonsai Society
Early Spring workshop, 7 pm.

Thursday 17
Brookside Bonsai Society
7:00 PM - Beginners' Corner
7:30 PM - Club Business
7:40 PM - Fertilizers and Feeding, Bill Spencer, Jim Oliver and possible guest. Tony Meyer will demo making fertilizer balls.

Saturday 19
Washington Bonsai Club
Slides on collecting, 2 pm.

FEBRUARY

Thursday 24
Greater Philadelphia Bonsai Society
General meeting, 7-9 pm.

ETCETERA

March 11-13, 1994
The Bonsai Societies of Louisiana
Bonsai On the Rocks Mini convention, Howard Johnson Hotel & Conference Center, Metairie, Louisiana
Warren Hill, Brussel Martin, Rodney Clemonas, Dan Gill and Robin Tanner. Lectures and workshops on Root over rock, Slab and Mountain (rock) plantings. For more information contact: Bill Curry, 6723 St. Claude Ave., Arabi, LA 70032, (504) 271-2585, FAX (504) 271-2587.

April 15-17, 1994
Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Festival
Randy Clark, Deborah Koreshoff, Roy Nagatoshi, Chase Rosade and Martin Schmalenberg. For more information please contact Kurt Wittig, 17 Old Mill Drive, Denville, NJ 07834, (201) 361-6642.

Bonsai Introduced to Virginia's Orland E. White Arboretum

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Much to my surprise, my brother showed up for the bonsai demonstration and video taped the whole thing. The video turned out quite well. I am still analyzing my performance! I will send the Arboretum a copy for the Arboretum's library. If club members are interested, I am sure my brother would make a video record of their trees.

Dr. Flanagan, of the Arboretum, had placed a sign up sheet with the bonsai trees I had on display. I believe 15 people had signed up for a beginners course. I am working with Dr. Flanagan to arrange dates and times for the course.

In my last conversation with Dr. Flanagan, she stated that her involvement with starting a bonsai club will be limited to helping the club get started and providing a place for the club to meet. Experience in planning a bonsai agenda for each meeting will be an important factor in helping this club get off to a good start. More than likely, most new club members will want trees, pots, tools and answers to many "How to" questions. With proper guidance and instructions, many good bonsai could be grown by club members.

I believe we (PBA) can provide much help to Dr. Flanagan on starting a club at the arboretum. If anyone is interested in helping, I would appreciate it if they would contact me. I believe a committee approach would be much better than several individuals giving their opinion of how a club should be established.

Dr. Flanagan has scheduled February 19, 1994, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. for the first bonsai club meeting at the Arboretum. In case of bad weather (snow), cancellation will be announced on radio station WINC 98.5 FM. February 26, 1994, is scheduled as an alternate date. This schedule will be printed in the Orland E. White Arboretum's

Tips For January Bonsai Care

Now that winter has us fully in its grip, the bonsai are bedded down undergoing a winter's nap, or are they? There are some who feel that conifers, especially the pines, don't sleep that soundly and don't mind an occasional weak solution of fertilizer. You're on your own with that one. The paramount thing to do is keep an eye on whether or not the bonsai are drying out from lack of watering. Believe it or not, there have been people naive enough to put their plants in winter storage and think that they will survive with no further attention until Spring breaks through. It's hard to get geared up to go out to the poly-house or the outside area where the bonsai are wintering when the weather is cold. It still should be an every day affair.

One caution to observe when storing bonsai in a poly-house, glasshouse, or cold frame - the surface of the soil in the pot may appear damp but the sub-soil may be dry. This is due to the fact that the moisture in the enclosure settles on top of the soil camouflaging what the conditions are inside the pot. Good for moss but not the plant. By the way, have you removed all the moss from the surfaces of the soil? Remember, leaving it in place will invite root rot.

Watering needs:

Conifers and deciduous plants may need water every day

Flowering bonsai such as Crab apple, Crepe myrtle, Forsythia, Quince and fruit bearing such as Holly may only need water every other day.

Needle junipers and Sub-alpine fir - mist every day.

Pruning - no you haven't escaped this task.

This is a good time to refine your deciduous trees since the leaves are not obscuring the branches **PRUNE ALL MAPLES BEFORE MARCH**, otherwise you will have to wait 2 months. If pruned during April and May, when the sap is flowing, a maple may literally "bleed to death."

White pines may have branches removed during this month.

Black pines may have 2 year or older needles removed and needles on the ends of sprouts may be reduced in number to 2 or 3 fascicles or needle pairs for the upper, 5 to 7 for the mid and 9 to 11 for the lower section of the pine.

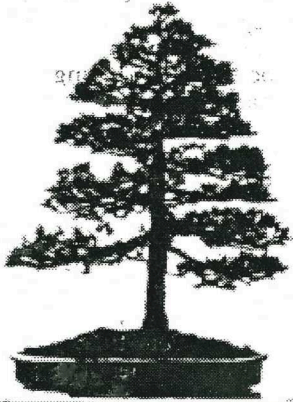
newsletter. Dr. Flanagan would appreciate a good representation of NVBC and PBA's executive committee at this meeting. The representative for PBA can explain what PBA is all about and offer this new club a chance to join PBA.

If you have an idea or wish to help, please send me a note with how you wish to help and how you can be contacted. My address is, Peter C. Jones, 2816 So. 16th street, Arlington VA, 22204-4910. Your ideas and help are greatly appreciated.

Please don't miss this opportunity to share your bonsai knowledge, experience, and know how with this new club.

Goyou Matsu – White Pine

by Jules Koetsch
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Goyou Matsu, White Pine, Formal Upright.

condition of risk but goyou matsu is endowed with the best probability of recovery.

CHARACTERISTICS in DOING BONSAI

Bonsai species sometimes get described as having certain features which are not altogether true. The author of Ref. 1 tends to set those straight for Goyu matsu as follows:

(1) Goyu matsu naturally grow in the high mountainous regions of Japan which leads to the thought that they will not survive on low ground. Goyu matsu will not die outside of the high mountain element. The sweltering heat of the summer and even the freezing of the soil in the pots in winter will not kill the Goyu matsu.

(2) The tree readily sprouts bundles of needles which gives one great flexibility in tailoring the tree to a desired shape.

(3) As the tree ages - empty, useless lengths of branches do not occur if one does take the time to maintain

the proper pattern for the needles, i.e. plucking the needles.

(4) The tree will fill out over the years with thin, small needles with a specific cast to their color and the bark will also transform from a smooth to a more textured appearance.

(5) With the small needles the tree has a dignified appearance.

There are many desirable features that could be mentioned in support of the Goyu matsu in addition to those above but space will not permit it.

SPECIES, PROPAGATION, TREE SHAPE and SPECIES

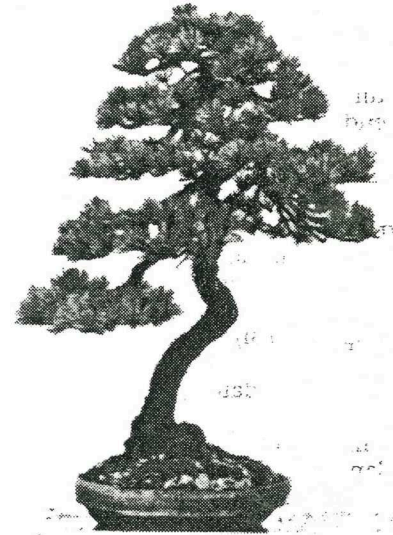
The species are distinguished by the names of the areas in which they are produced and are primarily split between two areas, the Kanto-Tohoku and the Kansai area. The five needle pine species found in the Kanto-Tohoku areas in the vicinity of the Japanese Alps are Asama, Joetsu, Nasu, Fukushima, and Zao. In the Kansai area, the five needle pines are Shikoku, Miyashima, Taiho, and Yamato. Yatsubusa forms can be found in about 20 varieties of goyou matsu.

Propagation: In the bonsai community, about 90% of the goyou matsu are propagated from seed.

Grafting: This is next in frequency as a propagating technique. Black pine is used as the parent stock and good yatsubusa scions can be grafted to the black pine.

In purchasing a tree, select one where the young branches have not started to grow into wheel branch formations.

Select a tree which can be styled without making the remainder awkward in appearance. In selecting a



Goyou Matsu, White Pine, Informal Upright.

zuisho (a yatsubusa variety of white pine) it costs no more to choose one with a system of roots radiating from the trunk.

It is also preferable to purchase a sapling which is three to five years old.

Tree Shape: There is a wide choice of shapes to satisfy one's taste: formal upright, informal upright, slanting, twin trunk, sinuous (similar but not quite raft), multiple trunk (clump), cascade, semi-cascade, rock attached (clinging to rock), and what is also popular now-a-days, bunjin.

PURCHASING TREE AND FIRST YEAR

Pointers for Purchasing Species of Tree:

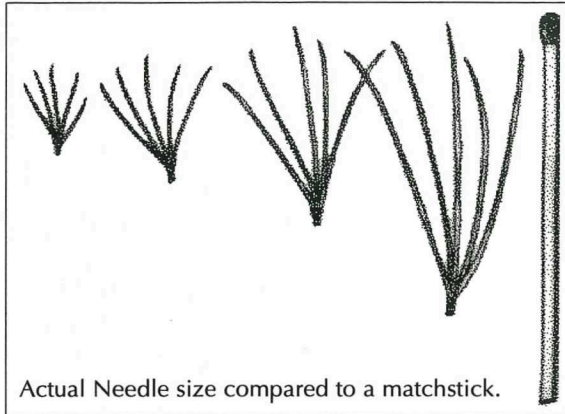
Select the tree between March 20th and 31st. The sapling should be between 3 and 5 years old, have a trunk diameter of between 3-5 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inches), a height of about 7 to 15 cm ($2\frac{7}{8}$ to 6 inches), and with a straight

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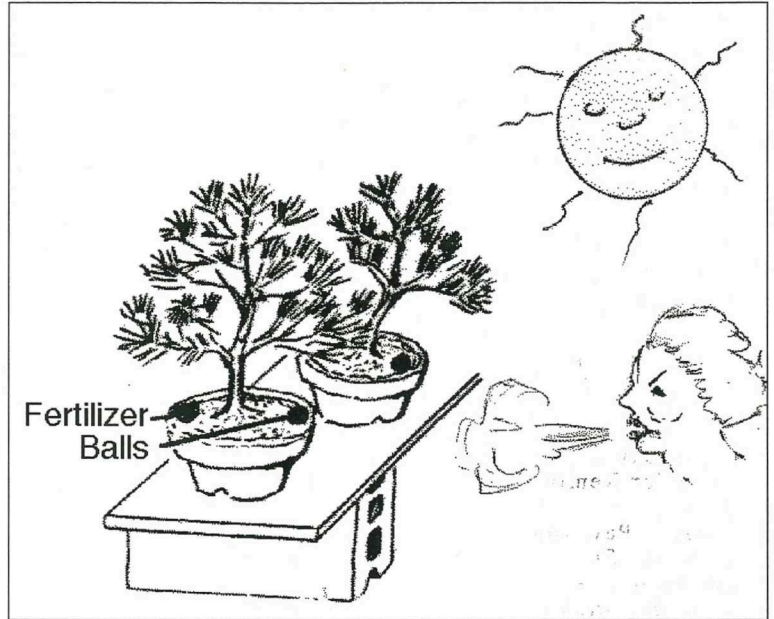
Goyou Matsu – White Pine

by Jules Koetsch

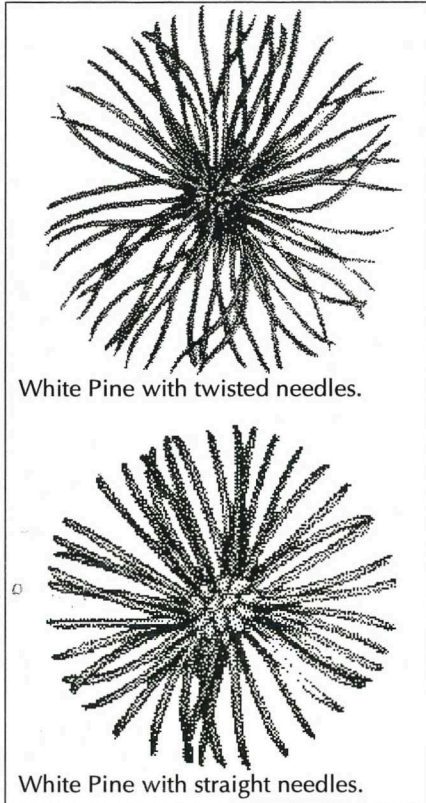
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Actual Needle size compared to a matchstick.



The three main ingredients for growing Goyou matsu are: a full day of sunlight, good air movement and fertilizer.



White Pine with twisted needles.

White Pine with straight needles.

The Japanese consider the twisted needles inferior to the straight in attractiveness.

trunk, since it is the author's viewpoint that perhaps the white pine in this style is most beautiful in its almost regular growth pattern.

Next month we will cover point by point the development of a Goyou matsu.

REFERENGES

DIRECTIONS FOR THE PREPARATION of PINE and CONIFER BONSAI with Illustrated Explanatory Notes: article by Shoryugen Shin, 1975, (in Japanese).

Illustrated: BONSAI - ARRANGING SHAPE and PRUNING: published by You Ki Sho Bou (in Japanese).

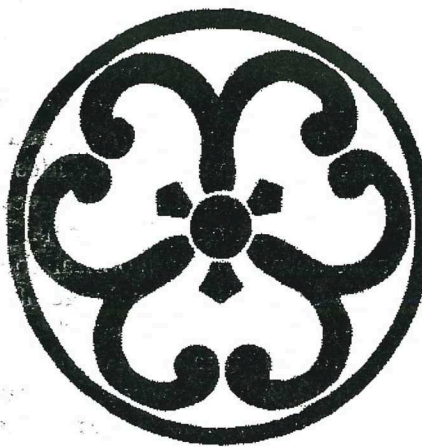
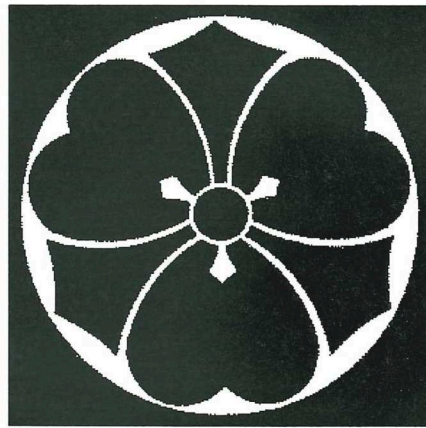
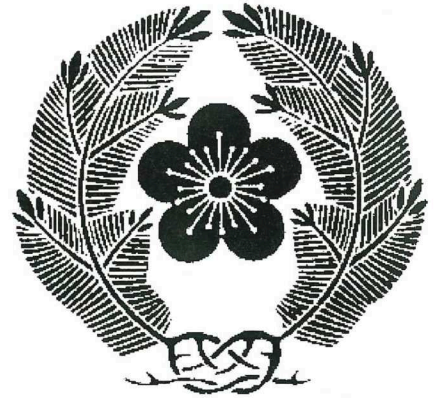
EXTENSIVE OUTLINE of BONSAI TECHNIQUES - Illustrated-2: Goyou Matsu; *Bonsai World*, Special Issue (in Japanese).

JAPANESE FIVE-NEEDLE PINE, Nature, Gardens, Bonsai, Taxonomy; Encyclopedia of Classical Bonsai Art Volume 2; by William N. Valavanis Symmes Systems, Atlanta, Georgia; 1976.

Contains much information on Japanese five-needle pines including an excellent list of references.

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BONSAI

by Kurita Isamu, Writer Critic

Translated by Ogawa Kikuko

Published in *The Sun: 100 Key Words for Understanding Japan*, 1993, No. 386, August, p. 41

Bonsai is considered, even in Japan, as a pastime for the elderly. At times it is criticized by foreigners as an unnatural, artificial, and distasteful hobby involving the distortion of the natural shape of trees. In fact, as a young boy, I, too, avoided it as a Japanese taste for old-fashioned things and the worst example of depauperation and artificiality. However, after a certain period, I realized I was wrong and my appreciation changed entirely. Nowadays, although I cannot collect bonsai due to the difficulty in growing them, whenever I see one, I stop to enjoy it and meditate for a while.

What was the key to this complete turn-about and my sudden appreciation and sympathy for bonsai?

Everything said or written about bonsai so far has a common fault. It has only been discussed from the point of view of an onlooker who has not dabbled with bonsai himself. The same applies to the performing arts and fine art in Japan, too. They are very different from European culture in that there is no clear distinction between the creator and the viewer. Be it *renga*, *haikai*, *yokyoku*, tea ceremony, or *ikebana*, the audience also, as a rule, takes part in the creation. Even in *kabuki*, the *hanamichi* (flower way) and the sense of solidarity with the audience invites them to join the actors. In village plays and festive *kagura*, too, the villagers may be amateur, but they can also perform.

My participation in bonsai was in the form of pruning. Every

spring, at my country house at the foot of Mt. Fuji, an unusual type of cherry shrub called *fuji-zakura* or *kogome-zakura* would come into bloom in vast numbers. I would get lost in creating a magnificent view by sorting out the surrounding plants and cutting some branches. Through that work, I learned a lot about nature.

First of all, you cannot start pruning garden plants without utilizing your own figurative image or an unconsciously formed prototype as to what a natural landscape should look like. That is to say, pruning is the modelling of the cultural tradition, personal experiences, and knowledge that you have experienced so far. Furthermore, by pruning, man has to communicate with and challenge nature. You are confronted with the great decision as to whether or not to cut a certain branch.

Local garden plants, not to mention my garden in the country, change their shapes rapidly over the year. The growth of the plants and the seasonal laws of nature prevail subtly, yet strictly. It does not require a year. In spring, day by day the trees and plants undergo remarkable changes. If the transformation is contrary to your mental image, you realize the dominance of the laws of nature. This was because you had not taken seasonal changes into consideration quite apart from the manipulation of space. The time axis covers not only the four seasons, but

time-spans ranging from a year, a few years, to several decades. These must also be taken into account when forecasting the harmony between nature and plants. Moreover, a single tree also has to harmonize with the natural environment surrounding it. Consequently, pruning may appear to impose man's own ideas, but in reality, it is continuous forecast and expectation of natural laws and an endless process of approaching and adjustment towards true creation.

In appreciating any Japanese garden, the pruning with participation from the creator's side is actually a very significant element. Let us extend this theory to bonsai. Needless to say, the scale of bonsai is much smaller than actual nature. However, the time required to grow them can be several decades or even a century or two.

Miniaturization is not the purpose of bonsai. On the contrary, the purpose is the expression of a total aesthetic harmony between natural and artificial laws. Beyond the form of the bonsai presented in front of our eyes, lies the idea of figuration formed over the years through pruning by human hands. Particularly in ancient bonsai, there is more than the knowledge of an individual person reflected in it. The true and total form of creation which lies in the Japanese soul lives on in the bonsai. It can be regarded as a monument of our confession of faith in God the Creator.

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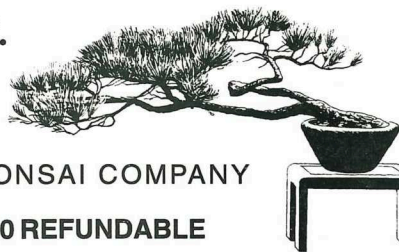
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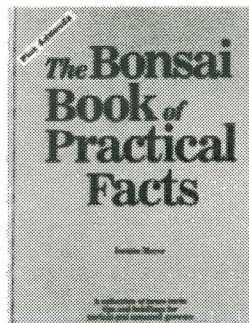
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To become a member, call the contact person of the nearest club for current rates and where to send your dues.

Individuals beyond commuting distance of a club are invited to subscribe to the PBA newsletter, *PBA Clippings*. For subscription to *PBA Clippings* only, mail a check payable to PBA for \$15.00 (U.S. \$35.00 for international subscription/postage) to Beth Potratz, 1101 Pekay St., SW, Vienna, VA 22180. For additional information, call Beth Potratz: (703) 255-9386.

Regular meeting times and places are listed. Meeting times and locations are subject to change, call first! Events are listed monthly in PBA Clippings.

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Bowie Community Center, Bowie, MD
Last Monday, 7 PM

Terry Adkins, (301) 350-3586

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North Chevy Chase Recreation Center, Chevy Chase, MD.
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Stephen Choi, (301) 261-8131

GREATER PHILADELPHIA BONSAI SOCIETY
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4th Thursday, eve.

Larry Chiger, (609) 753-0311

KIYOMIZU BONSAI CLUB
Clearwater Nature Center, Clinton, MD
3rd Saturday, 2 PM

Joan Stephens, (301) 423-8230

LANCASTER BONSAI SOCIETY
Lancaster Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, PA
2nd or 3rd Wednesday, 7 PM

Thomas Gillin, (717) 653-9102

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(Chinese language spoken)
Bowie Community Center, Bowie, MD
2nd Sunday, 1 PM

Akey Hung, (301) 390-6687

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Hidden Oaks Nature Center, Annandale, VA
2nd Saturday, 12 NOON

Chris Yeapanis, (703) 591-0864

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