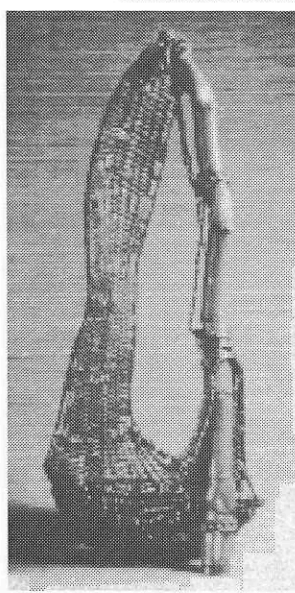
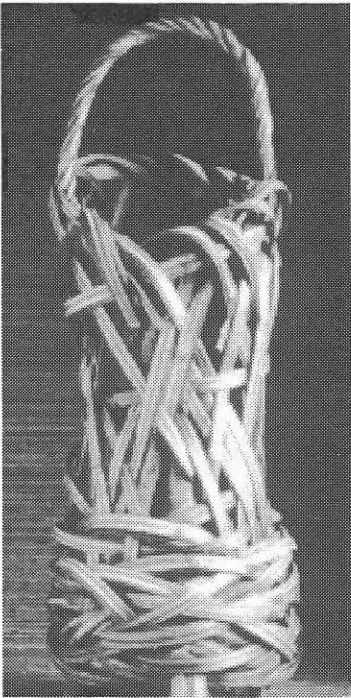
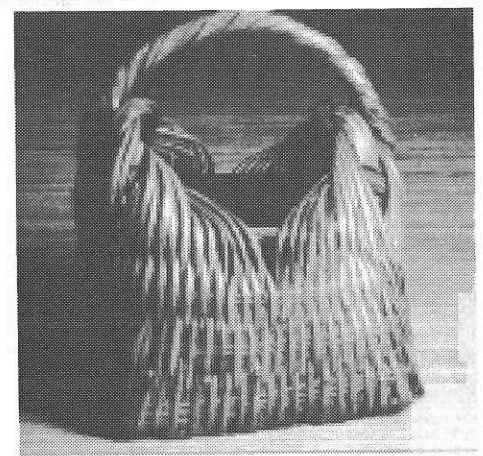
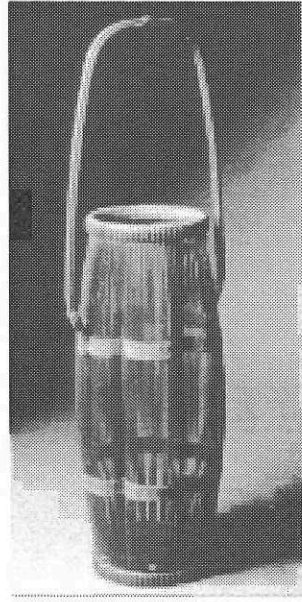
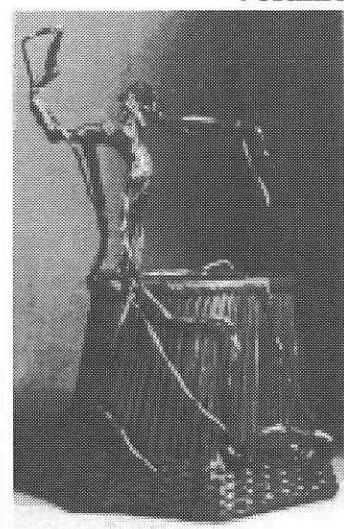
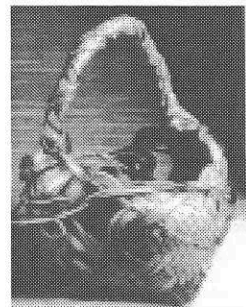
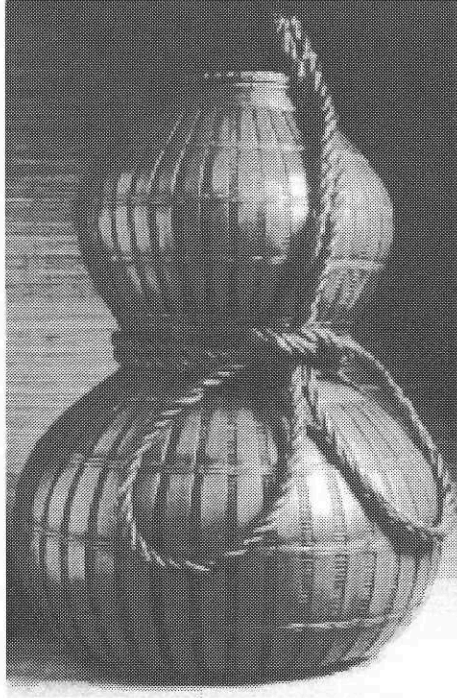


PBA Clippings

NEWSLETTER OF THE POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION

Volume 29, Number 8
October 1999



In This Issue

In This Issue	Page
Editorial	2
BBS Auction	4
Calendar	5
BONsai MOT	5
Poetry Corner	6
How it all Began	7
Back to Basics with Berni	10
Another Friend Passes	11
1st Lady of Bonsai . . .	12
Baskets, Baskets, Baskets	15
Monthly Care Tips	22



PBA
Clippings
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Editorial by Jules Koetsch

The beginning of October, maybe even the latter part of September, is the time of year when one should be working out the strategy for the annual ceremony of winterizing one's bonsai. Toward the beginning of November, a bonsai person's attention is riveted on every TV weather report. There's pruning and repotting to be done for some plants. In the past, there has been an occasion or two where I've procrastinated long enough to find the first freeze is upon us.

Supposedly, we are permitted two freezes with a thaw in between before bedding down our potted plants for the winter. Sub-tropicals should be in well before any freeze, and certainly before any frost. You might consider root-over-rock and root-on-rock plantings in the latter category, and even slab plantings.

October is also the time of the year when you should take stock of your collection because you probably have more plants to put into your winterizing area than in the previous year. It may be time to mark some as give-aways, or for the PBA auction at Behnke's Nursery next spring. Also, there is the somewhat dubious habit some of us have of taking cuttings and trying to root them. My excuse is that the host tree which I just styled may not survive. I remember a while back in John Naka's presence when somebody mentioned that he tries to root the cuttings from his trees. John remarked in what seemed to me to be a slightly deprecating tone of voice, "Don't tell me that you do that!" I think that he was trying to imply that before long you'll have more plants than you can handle. It's at this time of year that I recall his remark because the area I have earmarked for the winter storage of my plants hasn't grown any larger since the previous winter, but my collection has. So every year it's sort of like putting together a jigsaw puzzle to get them into my non-expandable polyhouse. Another problem

is that my polyhouse has a 3-tier arrangement for shelves; and every year I have to do a lot of pruning on the tops of the plants to get them to fit in between shelves.

I decided a number of years ago to forego the winterizing method where the pots are placed on the ground, covered with a mulch or dead leaves and surrounded by a windbreak of burlap fencing after losing some during a winter where the temperature went below zero. Note that the word "ground" was used in the previous sentence since placing the pots on concrete isn't such a good procedure. Once the concrete is chilled to a very low temperature, it does not readily transmit heat from the soil beneath. I put up a polyhouse with 3 levels of shelves. Like the National Arboretum did with the National Collection, I use a space heater to keep the temperature from going below freezing. To keep down the likelihood of mildew forming, I have one small fan just below the ceiling and one at floor level to move the air.

Of late, I've been trying ways to take care of the plants that won't fit in the polyhouse. It's not convenient to move plants out of the aisle of a 12-foot-long polyhouse just to get in to water them, and afterward have to put them back. Hence I've resorted to digging some in. The area that I chose was in my wife's vegetable garden which, because it is our best site for a vegetable garden, gets sun for a good part of the day. Such a location is supposed to be taboo for winter storage, because heat from the sun causes the bark to expand in the daytime and the colder evenings cause the bark to contract and develop cracks. Fortunately that did not occur on the conifers I had put in that area. In fact, I nurture the same feeling that some others do in that the pines really do not hibernate as soundly as other species and welcome the sun in winter.

I had dug a hole so that the surface of the soil in the pot would at the same level as

the ground when placed on a 1/4-inch slate tile. Before putting the tile in the hole, I took the added precaution of making a drainage hole about 1½ inches in diameter and 18 inches deep. Pine bark mulch was used to fill in the sides of the hole and cover the top of the pot and the ground around it. I did not use nylon stockings to wrap my pots, but it is recommended if one is concerned about damaging the surface of a good pot. There was one unfortunate result - a black pine did not survive probably due to me not being more rigorous in checking the moisture levels in the soil. The black pine had been planted only in grits. My diagnosis is that the death was due to lack of water. There was no mulch in the soil mix which could have served as a reservoir for some water. The Japanese may plant their black pines in sand; but ever since that incident, I'm adding some mulch to my black pine soil mixes.

Neophytes sometimes overlook the fact that plants need to be watered during the winter. Watering plants which are not in a polyhouse, greenhouse, or cold-frame during the winter is often somewhat dicey in that when the soil in the pots is frozen, watering is of no avail. My plants in the polyhouse are checked with a moisture meter and need watering about every 3 days. I've seen photos of bonsai in Japanese nurseries still sitting outdoors on their display benches covered with snow. I don't know how successful this approach is for our area - maybe some readers have been successful doing this. I know one trick that some have used is to place the plants under the benches, put mulch or dead leaves over the pots, and maybe even put a plastic sheet over the tops of the benches to hang down the sides to ground level forming some more protection. Light doesn't seem to be necessary for plants during the winter when they are dormant. In a Japanese publication, I've seen a picture of a sunken chamber in the earth for winterizing

bonsai. The roof at ground level is opaque and, ostensibly, the plants remain in total darkness in this chamber through the winter. Anyone willing to try that?

Bill Daly (NVBS) recently told me that last winter he winterized his bonsai by taking them out of their pots and planting them in the ground using the same soil mixes that were in their pots. He said that they looked so much healthier the next spring compared to when they were wintered in their pots. He noted that the only "pain in the neck" was that he had to re-pot them in the spring. A number of years ago, I had the privilege of visiting Dr. Bruenner to see his bonsai collection in the suburbs of Seattle, WA. I always remember him saying that he plants his bonsai in the ground every 3 years, and leaves them in the ground for a year before repotting them.

There is one precautionary note I must mention about planting your bonsai in the ground. I had placed, among other species, a black pine and a pin oak in a growing bed. One year, some chipmunks appeared on the

property and set up housekeeping in their burrows. Then one spring day, I checked the growing bed and the above two plants were at a very rakish angle. Just trying to set them upright proved their roots had been pruned almost to non-existence by experts. I suspect the roots provided the chipmunks with their winter fare. I put the pine and oak in pots and they are doing fine now with re-established rootage.

Just as Bill Daly had noticed, Dr. Bruenner said his bonsai showed a renewal of energy - a life force from the earth. After all, if you want a plant to grow thicker in the trunk and branches, you are usually advised to let it grow in the ground for a number of years. By following Dr. Bruenner's advice, one circumvents Bill Daly's "pain in the neck" by not having to re-pot in the spring. You can forestall one year.

Makes one wonder if the plants are as happy as we think they are in pots and with all our loving TLC--maybe not supremely happy, but at the next lower level of happiness.



BBS Auction to Honor Yuji Yoshimura

7:30 p.m., Thursday, 21 October

December 24th will be the second anniversary of the death of Yuji Yoshimura, one of the most influential bonsai masters in the US. In honor of this man who did so much to introduce the Japanese art of classical bonsai to America, Brookside Bonsai Society is having an auction. Members of other clubs within PBA are encouraged to attend. A minimum of 25% of the selling price of each auction item will be given to The Yuji Yoshimura Fund established by The National Bonsai Foundation, Inc. Everyone is encouraged to designate a larger percentage, up to 100%, if possible. The objective of the fund is to create a permanent endowment. The annual income of the fund will support various activities at the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum.

'Finished trees,' bonsai stock material, pots and other bonsai-related materials are welcomed as auction items. PBA members who are not members of BBS are limited to selling 3 items. There are no limits to buying items other than your checkbook. If your collection has gotten larger than your winter storage area, this is a good opportunity to sell a few items. Please bring sale items between 6:30 and 7:00. Please check your material to make sure it is healthy and disease free. The auction will begin at 7:30.

Auction Location: The location for the sale may not be the usual gathering place for BBS meetings due to a problem at the North Chevy Chase Rec Center. BBS members will be notified of the location for the auction via their October newsletter. Other PBA members interested in attending the event should call Jim Hughes any time after the 5th of October for location information **(301) 779-2891**.

Last year at the BBS auction, 35 bidders competed for several hours buying trees, pots, tools, etc brought by 24 members. The club received \$555 from the auction, and \$1725 was dispersed to individual members. Some members donated their entire share to the club.

It will be fun, and definitely a good cause, so please join us. -- Jim Hughes. BBS

Calendar of Events compiled by Doug French, NVBS

October

Rappahannock Bonsai Society

2 11 am Demo/lecture: Wiring Techniques

Northern VA Bonsai Society

9 9am Viewing Stones- Chris Cochran *No ?*

Lancaster Bonsai Society

9-17 Special Exhibit at the Arboretum and demo on Sunday, 17th, 1 pm

Baltimore Bonsai Club

17 1 pm Judging of Chrysanthemum bonsai. Tree of the month: Pine Display: Marc Garnier

Brookside Bonsai Society

21 BBS Auction

Kiyomizu Bonsai Club

24 11am Picnic and Home visitation- Frank Dombrowski's Farm.

November

Rappahannock Bonsai Society

6 Demo/lecture: Bonsai Winter

Northern VA Bonsai Society

13 9 am Tropical Bonsai- Mary Miller
PBA

17 1 pm Board Meeting OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS - Y'all come.

Brookside Bonsai Society

18 Monthly Meeting - Arthur Joura, Curator of the bonsai museum at the North Carolina Universty Arboretum.

Baltimore Bonsai Club

21 1 pm Three Ring Circus/Auction

Other Happenings

September

Suiseki Club

25 10:30 am Collecting trip north of Charlottesville, Info? Call C. Yeapanis *done*
after 11am (703) 591-0864) or e- ibonsai@erols.com

October

2-5 Taipei Taiwan, 5th Asia- Pacific Bonsai, Suiseki, Chinese Old Pottery Convention and Exhibition '99. Further details in this issue.

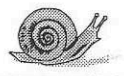
National Arboretum

14 7pm-9pm Successful Fall Color in Bonsai, Yoshimura Center, "Tricks" to ensure good fall color in bonsai, Warren Hill, Registration required. Fee \$7.

21-24 Atlanta, GA. Kimura... Conact Tony Smith (404) 872-2217, or hermita@mindspring.com.

30-7 Nov Arboretum Fall Foliage Show

A notice to all clubs: Steve Pilacik will be in our area the second week in November and is putting out feelers to book engagements with our clubs. You can reach him at Matsu Momiji Nursery, Rt. 2 Box 147-D, Hurricane, WV 25526 or phone (304)562-9666; or e- him at matsumomijinursery@worldnet.att.com.



BONsai MOT

Bill Orsinger (NVBS) responded to the request for bonsai bon mots with a whopping 13 bon mots which he had jotted down at one symposium near Philadelphia 24 April 1988. Here's one by John Y Naka:

You can't have two bosses in one house or the roof will come off! (You can have only one apex on a bonsai.)



PBA Fall Symposium

• What a wonderful classroom situation. What a splendid group of which to be a part. See that empty chair. I'll bet you could have used it.

Poetry Corner - Calm yourself and appreciate our local talent . . .

Happy Birthday to David Garvin!

He's witty, he's stubborn, he's kind--
 Yes, David's one hell of a fellow.
 He's bossy, he's thorough,
 He's generous, loyal, and mellow.
 He's proud, has a scientist's mind.
 Oh how he hates to waste time!
 He's an artistical fellow
 Who shares what he knows--
 Yes, his sensitivity shows.
 When we both work on a tree,
 It seems clearly to me
 That I prune it just right--
 Dave gives me a fright
 He attacks with such might!
 What's left---oh dear me -----!
 Clips wee* just might help a tree.
 - Janet Lanman

**This poem was accompanied by the gift of a tiny 1" pair of working clippers.*

candles, never burn	arakawa grow!
pluck, no feathers, no eyebrows	twig, finger thick, soon bonsai
japanese black pine	wrinkle skinned ya-ya

- Contributed by John Hoffman, NVBS

**Time to get back to a haiku by Basho and one by Thoreau from "MORNING MIST - Thoreau and Basho through the Seasons," by Mary Kullberg; Weatherhil, Inc., NY.; 1993.*

On a withered branch
 A crow has settled -
 Autumn nightfall.
 - Basho

I hear faintly the cawing of a crow...
 It is not merely a crow calling to crow for it
 speaks to me too. I am part of one great
 creature with him...
 - Thoreau

Answers to Septembers quiz: Question 1 involving 3 diagrams - Question 2 on branch pruning -

How it all Began by Janet Lanman (now of BBS)

Editor's Note: The history of how the U.S. National Bonsai and Penjing Museum came into being can be found in individual articles in the National Bonsai Foundation's dedication catalogues for the museum's components. It seemed like a good idea to recount them in a chronological sequence so that we could follow the history up to where it now stands. The following is the first in a monthly series of articles.

Who had the glorious inspiration to display a collection of superlative bonsai in the capital of the United States?

In 1972, Dr John L Creech, newly appointed Director of the US National Arboretum, learned that the Department of Agriculture was considering staging a bicentennial exhibition. At about the same time the fledgling Potomac Bonsai Association, spearheaded by James Newton, John Hinds and Clifton Pottberg, staged the first bonsai show at the Arboretum. Dr Creech was impressed by the show and by the appropriateness of bonsai at an arboretum. Soon after, Yuji Yoshimura, renowned bonsai master, gave a demonstration lecture. Dr Creech attended that event; and afterward he and Mr. Yoshimura had an interesting conversation. Mr Yoshimura spoke of the dream of "a place to which American bonsaiists could give or will give their treasures knowing that the trees would be cared for and viewed by visitors for years to come."

When the time came for someone to arrange the Japanese gift to America of 53 priceless bonsai trees, Dr Creech was so logically prepared for the assignment it appeared he had been chosen by design.

Wild and ornamental trees and shrubs of the Far East — azaleas, camellias, and hollies in particular— already were his speciality. A sharpened focus on bonsai plants—miniature trees grown in containers and shaped with horticultural finesse—was just an extension of Creech's interest in living artistic creations.

Oriental, especially those friendly with plants, hold Creech's world-renowned reputation as a plant explorer in high esteem. His quest for decorative plants has taken him to Japan three times, to the Soviet Union twice, and once each to Nepal, Taiwan, and Yugoslavia. He is widely known by plant seekers everywhere.

*Two years ago (1974), the National Academy of Sciences sent him to the People's Republic of China as a member of the Plant Science Delegation.**

Enthusiasm for bonsai was growing rapidly throughout the United States and the world. What a stunning bicentennial possibility! Encouraged by then Secretary of Agriculture, Earl L. Butz, and Administrator of the Agricultural Research Service, T. W. Edminster, Dr. Creech moved forward on several fronts. He consulted with leaders in the Potomac Bonsai Association and was assured of the support of the local bonsai community. In July 1972 he addressed a joint meeting of the American Bonsai Society and Bonsai Clubs International held in Atlanta. The session was chaired by presidents of the two organizations, Beverly Oliver and Dorothy Young. The reaction of the membership was one of delight, and a resolution was passed giving "full and wholehearted support" to Dr Creech's proposal.

Dr Creech then turned his attention to his longtime friends in the world of horticulture in Japan. Dr Creech was and is a world leader in plant exploration with particular emphasis on azaleas, camellias and

8
hollies. His searching had taken him to the Himalayas, Yugoslavia, Russia, China and most frequently to Japan. On his numerous visits to Japan he became well known and made many good friends in its horticultural community. Kaname Kato, the distinguished satsuki azalea expert, was Dr. Creech's primary contact there. Dr Creech spoke first with him about the dream. Immediately, Mr. Kato was interested, and he contacted members of the Nippon Bonsai Association and the Japan Greenhouse Association. Events on both sides of the globe, led by these great horticulturist friends, quickly moved forward. The Nippon Bonsai Association was successful in enlisting the support of the Japan Foundation in helping to make possible a gift of 53 extraordinary bonsai to the people of the United States. It was called the Green Mission for Peace.

The vital function of choosing which trees would make up this momentous gift was, carried out with great care by the board members of the Nippon Bonsai Association. First, they studied photographs of hundreds of bonsai from throughout Japan, making a preliminary selection of potentially appropriate trees. Next, they traveled about the country to view specific bonsai. Only then did they make the choice. Owners were approached one-by-one to ask them to let their trees become a part of the Green Mission for Peace.

In addition to the 53 bonsai, the gift included six treasured viewing stones selected with equal care. Emperor Hirohito, in an unprecedented gesture by the Imperial Household, gave a 180-year old Japanese red pine in a 300-year old container. Princess Chichibu gave a 100-year-old hemlock, Prince Takamatsu gave an 80-year-old trident Maple. Most of the trees were gifts, a few were purchased by the, Japan Foundation. Member's of the Nippon Bonsai Association spent many weeks repotting and perfecting each tree before formal presentation of the collection

on March 20, 1975. This historic event took place in Tokyo at the elegant New Otani Hotel. Nobusuke Kichi, Prime Minister of Japan, and Nobukichi Koide, Director of the Nippon Bonsai Association formally presented the trees to U.S. Ambassador James D. Hodgson. At the reception following the ceremony Dr Creech and Mr. Kato agreed, "surely the Gods are smiling."

The trees were then placed on display at the Nippon Bonsai Association headquarters to give the Japanese public an opportunity to say farewell to treasured plants and viewing stones.

The complicated logistics of arranging for the shipment of the treasures from Tokyo to Washington were jointly attacked by Dr Creech and Sylvester G. March, Chief Horticulturist at the National Arboretum. Each time a tree was added to the gift, the cost of transportation rose; and it became clear that an entire Pan Am 707 freighter would be required to handle the shipment. Frequent, frantic telephone calls were made to Washington for authorization of the mounting costs. Documents of agreement with the Imperial Household Agency had to be signed; authorization from the Japanese Foreign Office was necessary. And then there were tax and customs exemptions, and quarantine procedures to be sure that the plants would be admitted to the United States.

Meanwhile packing of the trees was minutely supervised by the Nippon Bonsai Association Directors. An individual wooden crate was designed for each plant so that not a single branch stuck out. Every crate had a special base so that the plants could be securely tied down. Each tree was carefully misted; then the soil was covered with sphagnum moss, then linen, and finally plastic. As told by Dr Creech, "Quarantine officials scurried around inspecting each plant, minutely as carpenters sawed, fitted, and nailed each crate. Each one had to be carefully

measured to be sure it could squeeze into the cargo door of the 707 aircraft. Finally, all was accomplished and late in the evening, seven trucks filed out of the NBA display area and headed through Tokyo to the tarmac at Haneda Airport, where Creech and March anxiously waited. The huge crates were loaded, and at last the cargo door slammed shut; and we stood looking down the long belly of the freighter, now filled from one end to the other with crates of miniature trees -- probably the largest and most expensive air shipment of plants ever made. The only place for the two couriers to sit or lie was on the first palette with its crated wisteria. Thirteen hours later found us gently setting down at San Francisco Airport!

The only worrisome occurrence was the stop in San Francisco because the plants had to be transferred to two smaller planes. The wind was blowing strongly; the switch was made as quickly as possible. Upon arrival at the Baltimore-Washington Airport, the crated treasures were rushed to the United States Department of Agriculture Plant Introduction Station in Glenn Dale, Maryland. The trees were gently unpacked and placed in a specialty prepared enclosure where they were kept in quarantine as required by law.

While his friends in Japan were assembling the collection, Dr Creech had serious responsibilities on, this side of the globe. First he had to, appoint the all important curator of the bonsai collection. Robert F. Drechsler was his fortunate choice. Mr. Drechsler had worked for seventeen years at the Arboretum with Donald Egolf doing research on crabapples, crape myrtle, pyracantha, and other woody plants. In his youth, he had worked with a florist, where he developed flower arranging skills. He brought to his new responsibility both horticultural expertise and an eye for design.

Mr Drechsler took over the care of the trees at Glenn Dale. Ruth Lamanna and Dorothy Warren worked with him as volunteers. In 1977 the Nippon Bonsai Association made it possible for Mr. Drechsler to spend some time in Japan working under Fusazo Takeyama and Saburo Kato in Omiya Village. The Nippon Bonsai Association arranged for him to visit outstanding bonsai nurseries, private collections and several of the great natural beauty spots. The continuing beauty and health of the trees at the Arboretum today is tribute to "Bonsai Bob's" curatorship. On several occasions some of the donors of the trees have visited their "children." When Masaru Yamaki came to see his venerable Japanese white pine, he stood before it and after some minutes said in Japanese, "When I was on my way here to visit my daughter, I was filled with anxiety, but now I find her looking so beautiful, I am at peace."

Such a unique and priceless gift had to be housed appropriately. Dr Creech persuaded the Department of Agriculture to provide funding for the design and construction of a fitting place for this, superb bicentennial gift. The architect, Masao Kinoshita, then of Sasaki Associates, working closely with Dr Creech, designed a bonsai complex with oriental overtones which is functional and elegantly simple. In addition to the Japanese Bonsai Pavilion and the Japanese approach garden, the long-range plan projected an American Pavilion, a Chinese Pavilion, a teahouse, a koi pond, and a formal display area.

In early July 1976, all was in readiness. The garden and pavilion were complete, the venerable trees had been brought from Glenn Dale to their permanent showplace. On July 9, 1976, the dedication ceremony took place. Numerous American and Japanese dignitaries were present, among them Ambassador Fumihiko Togo; the

Honorable Kono Kenzo, House of Councilors of the Japanese Diet; Nobukichi Koide from the Bonsai Association; and Henry A. Kissinger, United States Secretary of State, who spoke eloquently of the Green Mission for Peace.

Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz profoundly thanked the representatives of the Japanese people -- "this extraordinary gift will join the flowering cherry trees as a living tribute to Japan's friendship -- this Bonsai Collection is a major showpiece of the United States bicentennial celebration." It was a perfect evening, and the enchanted guests strolled through the bonsai garden lit only with candles in paper lanterns and moonlight. Bonsai lovers from near and far, many of them assembled in Washington for the International Bonsai Congress, were

enthralled by the majesty of the trees. Koto music was performed by the National Capital Koto Society, and refreshments were served by the National Capital Area Federation of Garden Clubs. But, of course, the trees were the major cause of awe and delight. As reported in the Potomac Bonsai Association Newsletter, "the 350-year-old *Pinus Pentaphylla* sported a bird's nest -- its presence was indeed a propitious omen."

- Janet Lanman (Janet's article was included in the Dedication Catalogue produced by the National Bonsai Foundation, Inc, for the John Y. Naka Pavilion, 1 October 1990

*Italicized portion is from "9-Ton Flight - The eyes of Creech on Bonsai," by Clay Napier, 1/20/76 handout at the US National Bonsai and Penjing Museum.

BACK TO BASICS WITH BERNI* *by Berni Gastrich*

Autumn, like spring, provides a period when moderate soil temperatures produce and increase plant activity. The leaves continue to produce sugars; but now instead of using the sugar to spur new growth, the plant sends it down into the roots for storage. The roots expand in size considerably to become an energy storage device. These sugars flow upward in the spring to initiate new growth of foliage.

The use of fertilizers high in nitrogen interferes with the above process. It encourages spring-like activity, i.e., upward flow of nutrients and new growth, rather than downward flow and 'hardening off.' Instead, use 'Root and Bloom' type fertilizers (e.g., 5/30/15). Sept. 15 is about the right time to switch fertilizers. Even though evergreen plants do not behave quite the same way (they store sugar in the leaves), it is still important to reduce nitrogen in the fertilizers.

Since cooler air and weaker sun do not desiccate trees as they do in the summer,

be careful not to over water. When leaves have fallen, reduce watering even more, but do not stop completely.

It is important that your non-tropical bonsai be fully dormant before they go into winter shelter. Two or three nighttime frosts help to assure this.

When bonsai are outdoors, wind, sun and rain help to reduce insect and fungus problems. When brought into shelter, these populations can multiply rapidly, especially if storage temperatures are a little too warm. Spider mites especially can be a problem. As a precaution, spray all your trees with a fungicide and an insecticide once a week for three weeks prior to storage. If you do it only once, you will not get total kill. Insect eggs (the next generation) are usually not affected by sprays.

* I discovered that Berni spells his name without an "e" at the end!

Melba L. Tucker 1917-1999

On August 26, 1999, Melba Tucker passed away peacefully and painlessly a few days after her 82d birthday. She had been hospitalized and in a convalescent home just two short months in her final illness. I have written articles about the First Lady of Bonsai before. She was a friend and mentor to many people all over the world who will miss her so much. Melba cared about people; she cared about bonsai; and she cared about teaching and sharing bonsai with all who were willing to learn. She had the greenest thumb I've ever known. I've always been convinced that she could root a cutting in dust and it would grow for her. She had an innate sense of proportion and styling design which made her bonsai (and saikei, and suiseki) outstanding. It's hard to know what she is most noted for.

Teacher, leader, author, friend, Melba always promoted education and learning, and was never one to shrink from getting her hands dirty by doing. Her many awards and citations attest to that, as does the Melba Tucker Suiseki Pavilion at the US National Bonsai and Penjing Museum, named in her honor in 1996 and funded by donations from her many friends.

She practiced what she preached. She was a founding member of Santa Anita Bonsai Club, a member of California Bonsai Society, Golden State Bonsai Federation, treasurer of BCI for 18 years, and joined and participated in numerous other clubs in and out of California. She traveled all over the world to teach bonsai and give demonstrations and workshops. We are sure to miss Melba very much. Let's think about what we gained from our friendships, though, not what we've lost with her passing. We can celebrate who and what she was and be glad that we played parts in her life. She touched many of us and we're richer for it.



Many people have asked where they might send condolences to Melba's family. Her husband Ned is now living in Washington State near their daughter Mariana Haug. The address is: 3319 W. Metaline, Kennewick, WA 99336.

I'm also happy to tell you that the National Bonsai Foundation has pledged to raise funds to name the proposed Bonsai Outdoor Demonstration Arbor at the Bonsai and Penjing Museum in Melba's honor. It seems a most fitting and appropriate tribute to her life and loves. If you would like to make a contribution in her memory, you may send a check made out to National Bonsai Foundation and annotated for the Melba Tucker Memorial Fund, to: National Bonsai Foundation, Chris Yeapanis, Treasurer, 4228 Berritt Street, Fairfax, VA 22050. Because NBF does not have credit card capability, BCI has arranged to process VISA/MC donations in Melba's name on behalf of the National Bonsai Foundation. If you wish to make a donation via credit card please direct it to: BCI, POB 8445, Metairie, LA 70011-8445; fax: (504) 834-2298; e-mail BCIeditor@aol.com. Please indicate that it is for the Melba Tucker Memorial Fund.

Melba -- America's First Lady of Bonsai, Saikei & Suiseki

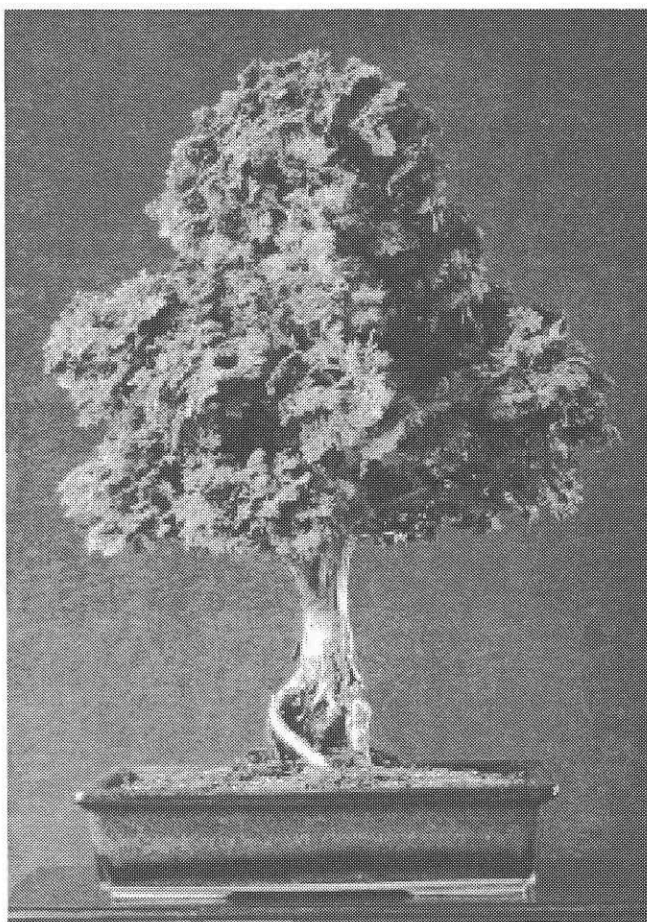
Melba Tucker was born and raised in Colorado and was involved with growing plants all her life. Her father was a produce farmer; and from an early age she helped him in the fields. It may have been from her father that she acquired her "green thumb," but her talent for the cultivation and styling of bonsai was all her own.

After high school, Melba moved to the Los Angeles area to live with a sister. It was there she met and married her husband, Ned. In 1944 they moved to El Monte, California, and began the full-time operation of a dairy business. Despite a rigorous seven-day-a-week schedule and the addition of two children to the family, Melba's passion and fascination with plants still maintained its grip on her.

Whenever time allowed, she would visit the local San Gabriel Nursery. It was there she encountered her first bonsai. Many of the trees on display at the nursery had belonged to Japanese-Americans who had been sent to internment camps after the outbreak of World War II. Melba's budget didn't permit her to buy any of these bonsai, but the memory of their beauty never left her.

It wasn't until 1963 that she received a Christmas gift, a small Italian stone pine in a container. Shortly afterward she saw a newspaper ad for "bonsai refinement" which had been placed by California artist and teacher, Khan Komai. She remembered the bonsai she had admired at the San Gabriel Nursery and decided to answer the ad. That day, a new chapter in her life was opened. According to Melba, "things have never been the same since." Melba became one of Khan's students. With her natural talent and love of growing things, she learned quickly. Within a few years she began conducting bonsai classes on her own. Melba was not

satisfied with simply teaching styling techniques in her classes, but also wanted to impart the horticultural knowledge and understanding necessary to maintain healthy trees. Subsequently, she obtained certified teaching credentials in ornamental horticulture, and thereafter began conducting bonsai classes at the local high school. Twenty-four years later, Melba was still teaching weekly classes at the school and had several of her original students as participants. Melba did not believe in teaching bonsai partway. She was committed to teaching everything she knew and in helping others to reach their full potentials.



Hinoki cypress (27" tall) in training in Melba's collection for 33 years.

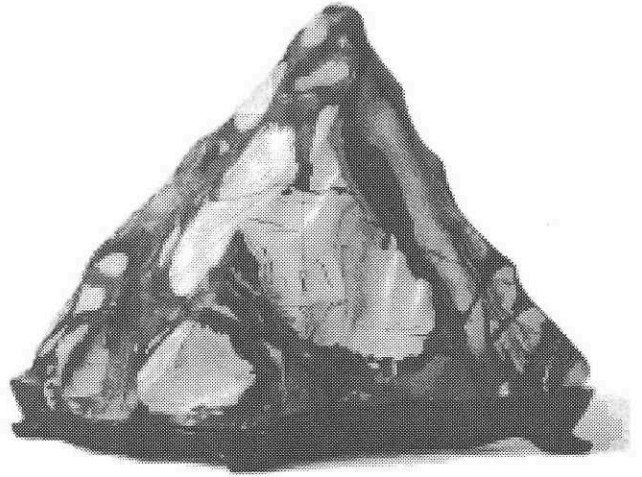
Over the years Melba became known for her work with several different species of trees. Unlike many of us, her collection did not try to include one specimen of everything. Through the years she developed favorites. These included Trident maples, especially those grown as root-over-rock, Catlin elms, olives and recently, ficus. The growing area of her garden revealed tables full of olive, elm and ficus rooted cuttings, which she used in her workshops and classes.

One of her large prize olives was so excellent, it was selected to be included in the North American Collection at the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum.

Her interest in bonsai also lead her to an involvement with the art of creating living landscapes known as saikei. She first became acquainted with saikei through a book written by Toshio Kawamoto, Japanese saikei artist. Several years later, she had the opportunity to see Kawamoto create saikei at the BCI convention in Kansas City. It was during that demonstration that her understanding of the art "came together" for her. Since that time, her reputation as gifted saikei artist gained her worldwide recognition. A number of years ago, several of her devoted students even purchased "4 SAIKEI" license plates for her car as gift.

Her involvement with saikei has, in turn, lead her to an involvement with the art of stone appreciation known as suiseki. "As I worked with rocks in my plantings, I became more and more interested in the rocks themselves. . . in their shapes and textures," she said. In the early 1970's she purchased a few stones from the late suiseki collector, Ray Sanborn. Shortly thereafter, she was transformed from passive collector to an avid rock hunter. She was soon collecting stones from the California deserts, mountains, and rivers . . . sometimes in dune buggy and sometimes on foot, usually in the company of some of the best early suiseki

collectors in the United States. Today, Melba's collection is one of the best in the US. It is comprised largely, (but not exclusively) of stones she collected in the desert Southwest. Her collection mirrors her fascination with the desert landscapes and weathered rocks which she loved so much.



This is an example of a Biseki (beautiful stone) and is 10" tall and 14" wide. It is an Indian blanket stone from a California desert. Polished by Cliff Johnson who also carved the dai. [It is truly a shame we can't show you this stone in its true colors of red, brown, beige, and white. Go buy the book.]

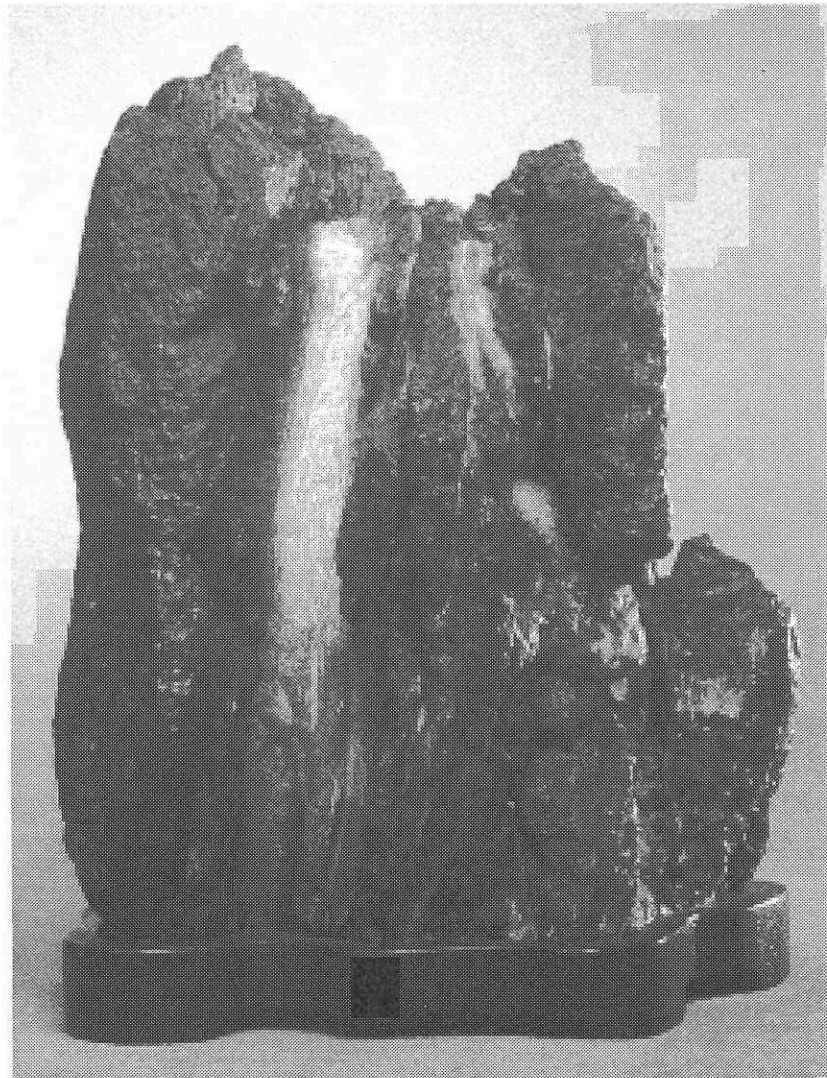
Perhaps her most famous stone, however, does not reflect desert landscape at all, but rather is a pattern stone on whose surface is pictured the image of a geisha. The stone itself is of material called Indian Blanket Stone, and is filled with colorful mix of reds, creams and bluish black. It is the pride of her collection and was featured in the Japanese Art of Stone Appreciation, by Vincent Covello and Yuji Yoshimura. Geisha Girl was also featured on the cover of *Bonsai Magazine's* September/October 1994 issue to highlight an article on suiseki also written by Melba. Melba wrote Suiseki and Viewing Stones: An American Perspective, which made its debut at the PBA/BCI 1996 Convention in Washington, DC. It was here that celebration of the completion of the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum was

held; and here that bonsai and suiseki lovers from around the world will gather for years to come to view the North American, Japanese and Chinese collections of bonsai. It is also here that an important element of the Museum, the Melba L. Tucker Suiseki Display Area, was dedicated in her honor.

The National Bonsai and Penjing Museum had long been one of Melba's abiding passions, because it reflects her philosophy of excellence in bonsai and suiseki, as well as her determination to share its beauty and knowledge with all who wish to learn. She worked tirelessly toward the completion of the Museum, raised funds for it, donated generously herself, and served devotedly as member of the Board of the National Bonsai Foundation.

"I have always wanted to express my love for the art and am fortunate that I have been blessed with the talent and opportunity to do so," she said. Melba's career took her around the world, sharing her knowledge and helping others to develop their skills and deepen their understanding. She was a featured demonstrator and workshop leader at regional and international conventions.

Her efforts have helped promote appreciation and education in bonsai, saikei and suiseki in ways well beyond her teachings. The honors she received and the esteem in which she is held throughout the world is proof that Melba Tucker truly was the First Lady of bonsai, saikei, and suiseki.



Sheet waterfall stone (Nunodaki-ishi) -- A treasured gift from the late Nadine Biel, it is 6" tall and 5" wide. This excellent suiseki shows a type of waterfall often called a "sheet waterfall" because of its broad white water. The dai was carved by Ned Tucker.

This article [with only slight adjustments] was very generously shared with us by its author, Mary Bloomer, now residing in Arizona. It originally appeared in BCI's BONSAI Magazine May/June '96 issue. The obituary was also written and sent by Mary, an "olden days" member of PBA of whom many of you have memories.

All photos which accompany the articles on Melba were taken by Peter Bloomer and were scanned (with permission) from Melba's book, Suiseki & Viewing Stones, An American Perspective.

IN FORM AND TEXTURE - JAPANESE BASKETS FROM THE LLOYD COTSEN COLLECTION

Janet Lanman contributed the article on the exhibit "Splendors of Meiji: Treasures of Imperial Japan" in Wilmington, Del. Since we've digressed from bonsai to including articles on suiseki and the above, the editor thought readers might be interested in another aspect of Japanese craftsmanship--basketweaving for utility and beauty. Many of the baskets in the exhibit had lengths of bamboo as thin as a millimeter woven into intricate designs. It was well worth the trip to New York City last June to see the exhibit at the Asia Society. It has since closed.

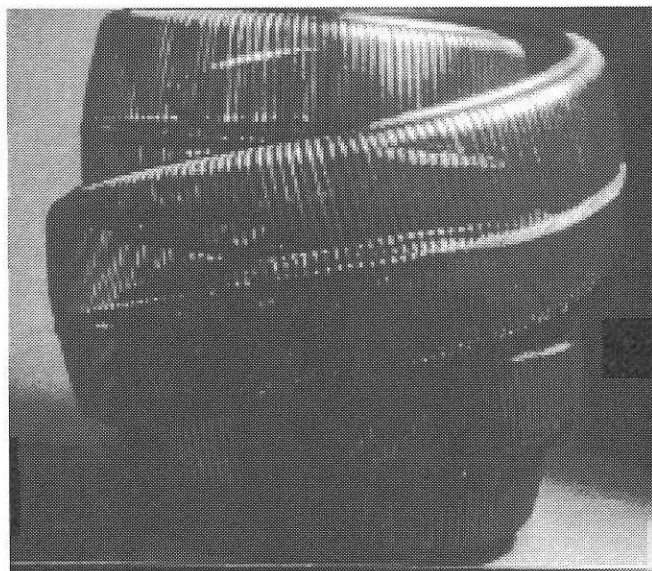
Thanks goes to Ms. Kathryn A. Goering of the Asia Society New York office for very kindly providing the information on the exhibit, along with slides of some of the baskets. The Asia Society is a nonprofit, nonpartisan institution founded in 1956 which provides a forum for building awareness of and dialogue with the diverse countries and peoples of Asia. For more information on upcoming programs and membership, their Washington Center is at 1800 K Street NW, Suite 1102, Washington, DC 20006; (202) 833-2742, Fax (202) 833-0189.

The Lloyd Cotsen collection of Japanese baskets is among the most important in existence. Approximately one hundred of the finest pieces, selected for their sculptural forms and intriguing textures was presented to the public for the first time in this exhibition curated by Mary Hunt Kahlenberg, with exhibition design by Marc Treib.

Introduction

"I feel that the pieces I make must have musical qualities--changes in rhythm, a series of climaxes, and an overall harmony." - Shono Shounsai (1904-1974), bamboo basket maker and Living National Treasure

The history of bamboo baskets in Japan begins with their use as utilitarian objects during the Jomon period (10,000-300 B.C.E.). Along with serving diverse functions in daily life, bamboo baskets have been praised in specialized aesthetic contexts for centuries. As early as the Yayoi period (300 B.C.E.-A.D. 300), excavated earthen wares with impressed patterns of woven bamboo indicate an aesthetic appreciation of woven textures. Today, bamboo baskets are an integral and cherished part of the time-honored



Odo Koyo (1909-1996) Flower Basket entitled Eddyding Water, c. 1970s, 13 x 14 1/2"

flower arrangement and tea ceremony. Referred to as *hanakago* (flower basket) or *hanaire* (flower container), the Japanese bamboo basket exhibits extraordinary beauty and intricate craftsmanship. Modern basket makers explore the infinite possibilities of bamboo not by neglecting tradition, but by grounding their imagination and creative potential in technical mastery. Dating from the late nineteenth century to the present, the baskets in this exhibition reflect the long tradition and transformation of Japanese basketry.

MATERIAL: BAMBOO

The very nature of bamboo is ambiguous. A species of grass, it possesses many tree-like qualities: it has a hollow interior yet is amazingly strong; it is used as everything from a food to a building material. Bamboo is also mysterious: it is said to flower only once in a plant's lifetime, and then only once in a hundred years.

Botanical data on bamboo vary from source to source, mainly because there are so many varieties and habitats. Productive bamboo forest covers approximately 34,600,000 acres of the earth's surface, and the warm regions of Southeast and East Asia provide the most hospitable environment. Bamboo flourishes in the temperate climate of Japan, where 600 of the planet's 1,200 varieties of bamboo and bamboo grass have been identified. In addition to its ubiquity, bamboo is notable for being the fastest growing plant on earth. For example, madake (*Phyllostachys bambusoides*, or timber bamboo), the type most prevalent in Japan, has been recorded as growing 47.6 inches in one day. With its phenomenal growth rate, madake reaches its mature height in one month, rising some 30 to 60 feet into the sky. A madake bamboo grove, gracefully rustling in the wind, quietly standing in rain and snow, completes its life cycle with a single flowering in some 120 years.

Astonishing and poetic by nature, this uniquely arborescent grass has profound cultural significance in Japan. The symbolic connotations of bamboo were deepened through Japan's relationship with China. During the Song period in China (960-1279), bamboo's physical characteristics of strength and flexibility were associated with a literati ideal of righteousness. The popular Chinese grouping of bamboo, pine tree, and plum blossom motif (*shochikubai* in Japanese) was introduced to Japan during the Muromachi period (1338-1573). Although

the bamboo motif's association with Chinese literati philosophy seems to have diminished over time, it is still an auspicious sign widely recognized in Japan.

The ready availability of this extraordinary material has significantly influenced the Japanese sense of design in architecture, utensils and tools, musical instruments, writing and painting implements, and baskets. Madake is most commonly used in Japanese basketry, but other types of bamboo such as *suzutake* (*Bambusa brealis*), *nemagaridake* (*Sasa kurilensis*), *medake* (*Arundinaria simonh*), and *hachiku* (*Phyllostachys nigra*, or black bamboo) are also favored, as well as recycled bamboo, in particular the bamboo rafters of traditional farmhouses. Exposed to the soot and smoke generated by cooking and other household activities, bamboo rafters turn a unique reddish brown. Referred to as *susudake* (sooted bamboo), it is admired by basket makers for its deep burgundy tone.

MATERIAL TO OBJECT: BASKETS

Basket makers pay boundless respect to their material. They share the concept that a successful basket integrates the natural beauty of its material with its form, texture, and overall balance. To accomplish this, the basket maker undergoes a long period of training: as the old Japanese saying goes, "ten years for splitting bamboo." This training is devoted to mastering techniques such as the preliminary preparation of bamboo and splitting, stripping, polishing, and weaving. While craftsmanship is often handed down hereditarily, a master basket maker may also accept novices from outside his family. (Traditionally all known basket makers were male; although there are increasing numbers of female basket makers, the majority is male even today.) The vigorous training is a humbling experience for individuals

through which they demonstrate patience and determination. In the most conservative system of apprenticeship, trainees live with their master, sometimes sweeping his garden for months before touching any bamboo. When finally allowed to weave, they will likely be asked to imitate a Chinese model. Learning from Chinese masterworks is still considered an essential way of acquiring refined techniques and developing an aesthetic sensibility. The actual training in bamboo basketry begins by knowing when to harvest the material. This requires a sensitivity to the "best" bamboo, that is, bamboo with the right flexibility and texture for basketry (usually 3 to 4 years old). After harvesting, the bamboo is cleaned and cured, making it insect repellent and bringing out an attractive yellow color. Finally, the stalk is cut into the desired length of approximately 3 feet, and basket makers begin the laborious process of splitting and stripping. Splitting involves repeatedly cutting down the wall of the bamboo stalk vertically, while stripping further thins down each strip parallel to its outer surface. Stripping and splitting are done with a few simple, medium-size knives; the mastery is in the maker's dexterity, not in the quality of the tools. A master basket maker might produce six strips in half an hour, sometimes as thin as a millimeter. Once the preparatory phase is completed, weaving begins. With few exceptions, bamboo baskets are made from the bottom up. The basic structure of a basket consists of a base, body, and rim. The construction of the first and last parts determines the durability and the balance of the whole. The techniques of weaving (*ami*) vary from simple four-mesh plaiting (*yotsume-ami*) to more complex chrysanthemum plaiting (*kiku-ami*). There are also techniques for visual and structural enhancements such as rattan wrapping (*maki*) and inserting separate

pieces or strips of material other than bamboo (*sashi*). All available techniques, together with various types of bamboo, offer basket makers innumerable possibilities in the creation of new forms and textures.

BAMBOO BASKETS AND THE TEA CEREMONY

Buddhism was introduced to Japan in the sixth century, and along with it came the custom of making altar offerings of flowers and related utensils such as bronze vases and bamboo baskets. The imperial repository, Shosoin, built during the Nara period (710-94) and containing the largest number of early artifacts in Japan, preserves varieties of bamboo crafts of which more than 500 are flower baskets. As with other objects in the repository, many of the baskets may be of foreign origin.

Until the sixteenth century, baskets that held aesthetic value for the Japanese were invariably imports from China. Reflecting the ideals and formalism of Confucianism, the dominant philosophy, Chinese baskets display perfection in form and in weave patterns that are bilateral and regular. However, beyond the taste of aristocrats, more casually woven bamboo baskets were used by Japanese farmers and laborers for both religious and secular purposes. The first crucial turning point in the history of Japanese basketry coincides with the codification of the Japanese-style tea ceremony, *chanoyu*, by the sixteenth-century tea master, Sen no Rikyo (1521-1591), who admired the rusticity of everyday utensils. Advocating an aestheticism diametrically opposite to that of China, Rikyo's *chanoyu* cultivated an appreciation of the unpretentious beauty, imperfection, and simplicity of these peasant items, and ordinary baskets were welcomed for the display of flowers in the *tokonoma* (alcove) of a teahouse. Consequently, baskets began to be

categorized into two styles: *wamono* (Japanese things) and *karamono* (Chinese things). *Wamono* baskets are either direct descendants of farming or fishing implements, or are inspired by the informality of their design and weave. For example, Rikyo adapted a creel, used by a fisherman at the Katsura River in Kyoto, as a flower basket, thus stimulating the creation of a new style of baskets, referred to as *Katsura-kago*.

The second turning point in the history of Japanese basketry is also closely related to the diversification of trends in the tea ceremony. While adaptation of native baskets greatly expanded the variety of bamboo baskets from the sixteenth century onward, the *chanoyu* tea ceremony, itself deriving from a Chinese custom of drinking tea, by no means excluded the use of *karamono* baskets. Demand for *karamono* baskets increased tremendously during the eighteenth century, part of a craze for all things Chinese, which swept Japan and included the Chinese-style steeped-tea ceremony called *sencha*. The popularity of this tea tradition led to the proliferation of Japanese basket makers skilled in creating Chinese-style flower baskets (*karamono-utsusht*). Lower-ranking samurai, well-educated townspeople, and sinophile artists and scholars advocated *sencha* partly as a reaction against the conventionalism of *chanoyu* and also as a political protest against Japan's increasingly rigid feudal system.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as the tea ceremony became one among many cultural activities enjoyed by Japanese intellectuals and wealthy entrepreneurs, bamboo baskets continued to be sought-after objects.

ARTISTS AND ARTISANS

Japan's modernization in the late nineteenth century had a far-reaching impact on traditional media such as

bamboo crafts. The newly introduced notion of "art," defined in Western terms, was at first confusing and incompatible with the existing indivisible relationship of art and craft in Japan. Faced with this new artistic paradigm, modern basket makers had to consciously establish an independent niche for their medium.

Until the modern period, baskets were made by anonymous crafts people. Even at the height of the basket's popularity during the Edo period (1615-1868), makers seem never to have attained individual fame. This would change in the late nineteenth century with one small but significant mark made by Hayakawa Shokosai I (1815-1897), in whose footsteps would follow a line of truly "modern" bamboo artists (*takekogeika*).

Hayakawa Shokosai I is the first basket maker to consistently sign his works. He was born to a lower-ranking samurai family who served a small regional lord in the Echizen area (present-day Fukui Prefecture). Soon after losing his father at the age of 19, he moved to Kyoto and began his apprenticeship under a local basket maker. Although it was not uncommon for low-paid samurai of this period to supplement their incomes with side jobs, Shokosai was enthusiastic and proud of his acquired craftsmanship. In 1845 he moved again, this time to Osaka, undoubtedly the mecca of *sencha* culture and the center of bamboo basket production. There he began to carve his name at the bottom of his baskets—a clear statement that his work would no longer conform to the demand for Chinese imitations. Shokosai's daring individualism would place him at the center of the cultural scene during the late Edo and early Meiji periods (1868-1912), and his works enjoyed international fame after they were exhibited at the Paris Exposition of 1878.

The Hayakawa lineage moved to Kyoto after World War II and is still active there

today, headed by the fifth-generation master Shokosai V (b. 1932). The family's trademarks are the extremely difficult and time-consuming techniques of scraping the top skin from bamboo strips with a sharp knife and staining the strips with a natural dye extracted from the wood of plum trees, which is rarely done today. These methods allow Hayakawa basket makers to produce strips of perfect evenness with a flawless surface and subtle luster. A flower arranging basket by Shokosai V, for example, continues this tradition while ingeniously forming the basket in the shape of an abacus bead by fully exploiting bamboo's flexibility. The bamboo bands, of even width and tapered at top and bottom, are held in place by knots of extremely thin strips of rattan encircling the circumference of the body. The vertical and horizontal orientations are perfectly balanced, and the subtle sheen of the bamboo surface highlights the basket's sculptural quality. The pride of the first Hayakawa artist is carried forward in this contemporary basket through the signed name, "Shokosai."

Hayakawa Shokosai I came from a warrior-class background. Iizuka Rokansai (1890-1958), on the other hand, came from a family of basket makers in Tokyo. The Iizuka family was one of the most successful lineages of the Meiji to Showa (1926-89) eras, and works by Rokansai and other Iizuka were showcased and awarded prizes in the Paris Exposition of Decorative Arts in 1925. From 1912 to the 1950s, Rokansai played a revolutionary role in the establishment of modern Japanese basketry and bamboo craft-art (*takekogeï*), creating new techniques and styles that are freely sculptural and transcend the limits of Chinese models. First, he actively promoted the artistic potential of bamboo baskets by participating in the government-organized Crafts Exhibitions (*Kogeiten*), begun in 1918, and the Japan Art Crafts Association

(*Nihon Kogeibijutsukai*). Second, he expanded his own creative capacity by studying painting, the tea ceremony, flower arranging, and calligraphy. Lastly, Rokansai developed a typology of basket styles, *shin*, *gyo*, and so ("formal," "semi-formal," and "informal," respectively), terms adopted from stylistic distinctions in Chinese calligraphy, thus placing the basket medium within the same aesthetic framework as high art forms such as ink painting. *Shin* style employs highly refined, regular forms and weave patterns, and focuses on achieving formal perfection rather than the organic qualities of bamboo. Chikurybsai's flower container, for example, emulates the form and smooth texture of ceramic vases. *Gyo* style, on the other hand, allows a certain degree of irregularity in both form and texture. So style, as Rokansai noted in 1939, is the most difficult of all, requiring the maximum output of a basket maker's expressive force. In this sense, so style is closest to free-form sculpture or abstract painting, as the basket maker's improvisational arrangement of bamboo strips traces his physical as well as conceptual activity. By introducing this new approach to the bamboo material, Rokansai blurred the boundary between art and craft.

With the appearance of Shono Shounsai (1904-1974), the art of bamboo was acknowledged by the government. Shounsai was designated a Living National Treasure in 1967, the first bamboo craftsman to be so honored. Selected by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Ministry of Education, Living National Treasures are the "holders of Intangible Cultural Properties" as defined in the Cultural Properties Protection Law of 1950. This legal system aims to protect and support the skills and techniques of crafts and the performing arts that have significantly enriched Japanese culture. Today, some 140 individuals and

organizations hold this title, and three-Shounsai, Iizuka Shokansai (b. 1919) and Maeda Chikubosai II (b. 1917) work in bamboo craft-art. All three are well represented in this exhibition (figs. 2, 3, 4).

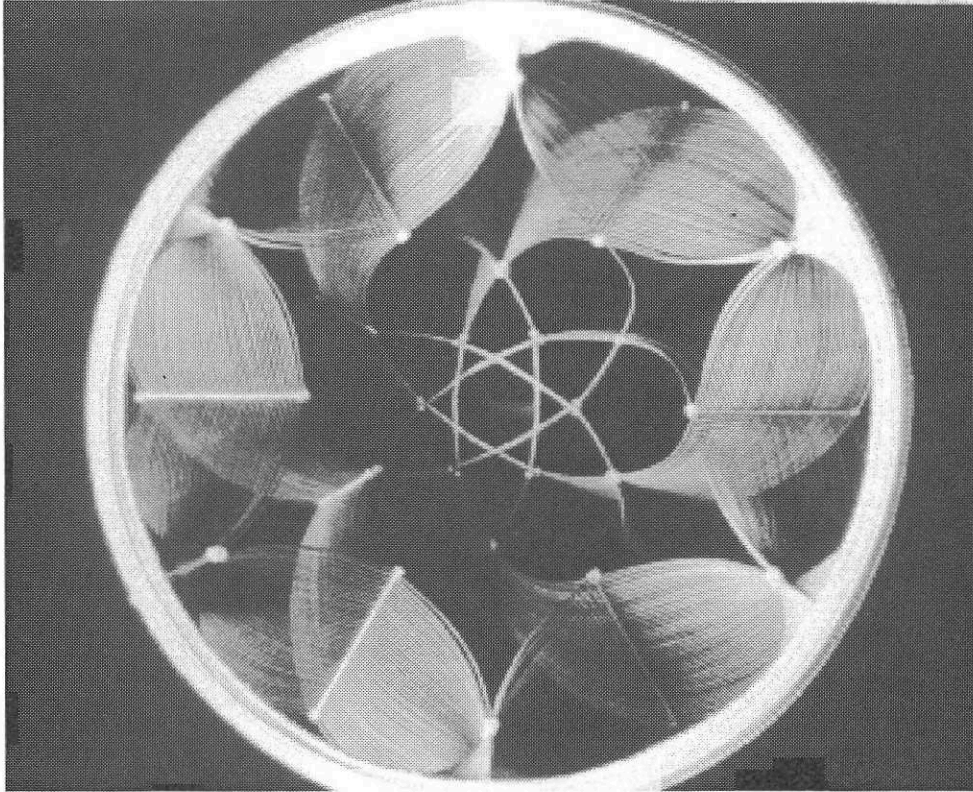
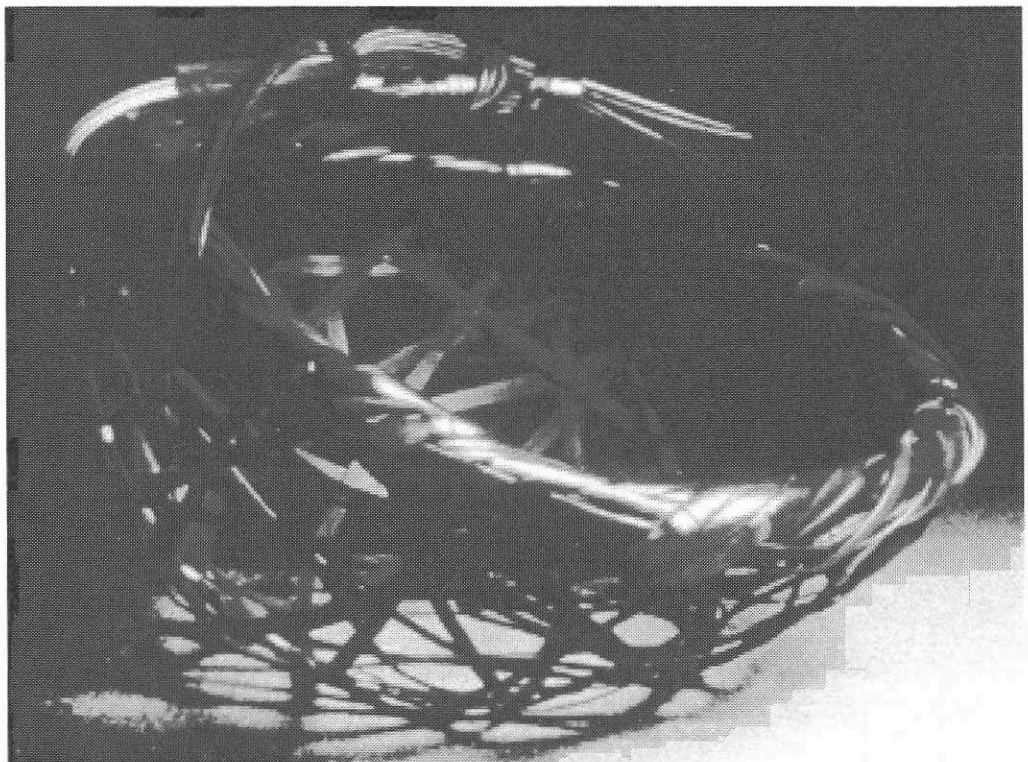


Fig. 2, Shono Shounsai (1904-1974), view from above: Flower Basket entitled *The Shimmering of Heated Air*, c. 1958, 13 3/4 x 12 1/2 x 14 inches

Fig 3 Iizuka Shokamsai (b. 1919), Flower Basket, c. 1990s, 9 1/4 x 6 1/2 x 7 3/4 inches



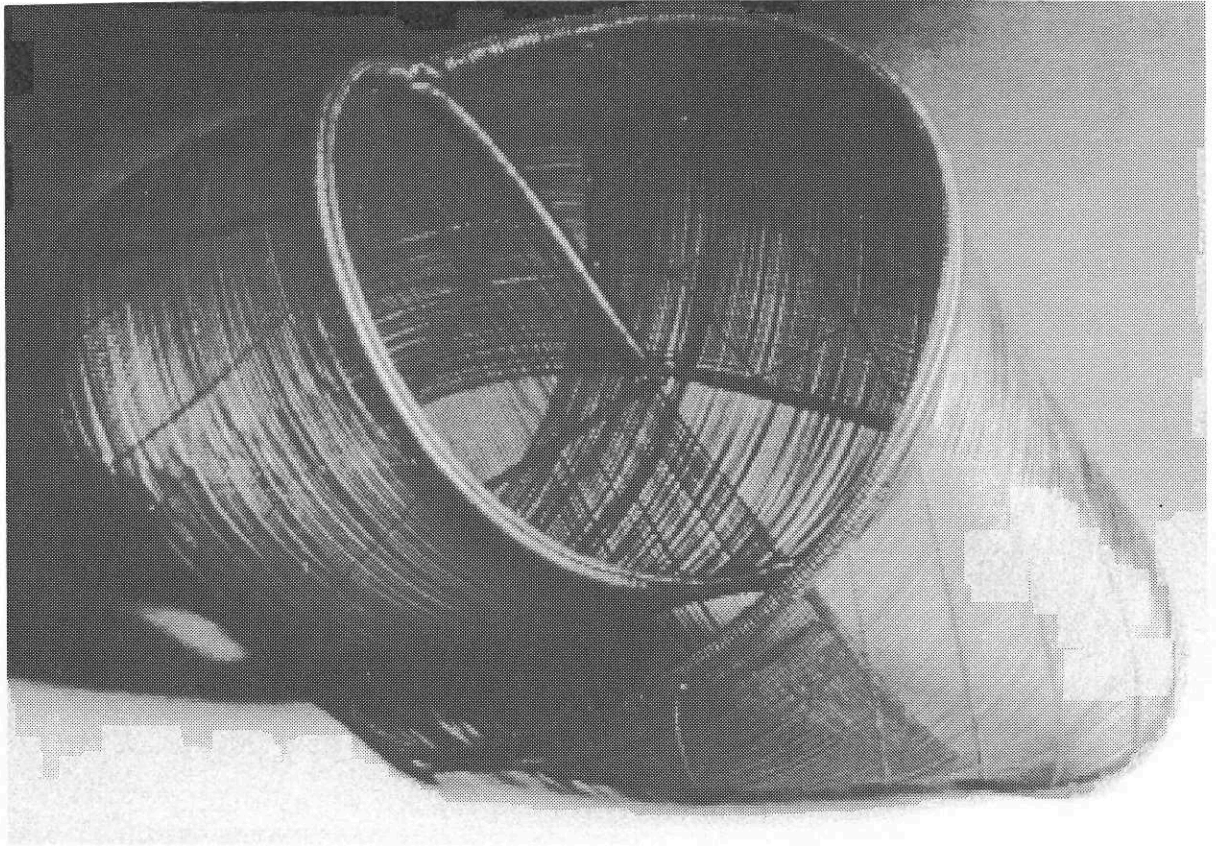


Fig 4, Maeda Chikubosai II, (b. 1917) Flower Basket, 1956, 8 1/4 x 21 x 14 inches

Shounsai was a sickly youth and unable to manage anything but a sedentary vocation like bamboo craft. He first apprenticed in Sato Chikuyosai's workshop in Oita Prefecture, located in the southern island of Kyushu, where high-quality flower baskets are famous as a regional product. After mastering basket-making techniques at the early age of 22, Shounsai established his own workshop and began exploring various styles that conveyed his artistic temperament. The beauty of bamboo, its simplicity, flexibility, and strength are unified into one ethereal yet undeniably architectonic structure under his assured hands. His work entitled *Kagero* (The Shimmering of Heated Air, c.1958, fig. 2) represents the culmination of self-expression, transforming the nature of bamboo into something that no boundary can contain.

CONCLUSION

In recent years, the term *kumi* (to construct) is often used to describe basket making, evoking an association with sculpture or architecture. This, in turn, suggests a general change in consciousness about baskets among the public--a willingness to view baskets as art objects even as they continue to serve utilitarian functions. Contemporary makers are well aware of this conceptual shift and are eager to experiment with formal transformations in their creations. Perhaps, what allows basket making to escape conventional classifications of art is that the makers consider themselves to be artists and artisans, not one or the other. Ultimately, the expressive vocabulary of individual makers harmoniously coexists with the long tradition of Japanese basketry, with the organic warmth and flexibility of the material, and with our basic desire for the enrichment of our surroundings.

MONTHLY CARE TIPS for OCTOBER

The following tips have been compiled from 4 Japanese bonsai magazines and Yuji Yoshimura's book. Wherever fertilizing is to be done, it is noted as "apply fertilizer balls" since that is how the Japanese do it. If you do not use fertilizer balls, you can consider applying the fertilizer of your choice during that time. One application of fertilizer balls is expected to be good for about 30 days. Hence you will have to make up your own schedule for applying your fertilizer during those 30 days. For example, if you are using a certain strength liquid fertilizer and apply it once per week, you can apply it once every week for a month starting from when the words "apply fertilizer balls" appear. If a gap of more than a month appears between "apply fertilizer balls" in the schedule, you should hold back on applying any fertilizer during that time period.

CONIFERS

Black pine: Watering should be done 3 or more times per day. Repot any time during the month if needed. Repotting is normally done every 3 or 4 years. Remove unnecessary branches. Wire any time during month. Give plant full day of sunlight.

Cryptomeria: Water once per day. Pluck or trim back and thin out new growth before the 10th of the month.

Hemlock: Water as needed. It is possible to wire until December.

Hinoki: Water as needed. Apply fertilizer balls during first 10 days of the month. Wire anytime during the month. Repot anytime. Repotting is normally needed every 3 years.

Larch: Water as needed. During the last 10 days of the month remove the wiring. The larch can be pruned. Remove the wire. Rewiring can be done in next March.

Needle juniper: Water 2 times per day. Until 10th of the month, pluck sprouts to retain desired shape. Fertilize during the middle of the month. Keep in full sun for the full day.

Sawara cypress: Water as needed. Wiring can be done during the first 10 days of the month. Repot every 3 years. Wire anytime during the month. Remove old wire digging into bark and rewire if desired.

Shimpaku (Sargent juniper): Water soil and foliage 2 times per day. The first 10 days of the month is the optimum time period in which to repot. You can repot any time during the month; but repotting need only be done every 3 years. Wiring can be done any time during the month. During the last 10 days of the month brush the shari or jin and paint on new coats of lime-sulfur. Keep in full sun.

Spruce: Continue watering 2 to 3 times per day if necessary. Prune, remove any unnecessary branches. Wire/rewire and/or repot any time during the month. Repot after the first 5 years in training, and thereafter once every 3 years. Apply fertilizer balls during the last 10 days of the month. Keep in full sun.

White pine: Water 2 times per day. Any time during the month, wire, prune, remove unnecessary branches, and remove dead needles. During the last 10 days of the month, fertilizer balls can be applied. Keep in full sun and where there is wind or good air movement.

Yew: Water as needed. Repot during the first 10 days of the month. Only repot every 3 years. Rewire any time during the month. Apply fertilizer balls during the middle of the month.

WARNING: From the USDA Integrated Pest Management Tips for May: Avoid using shredded hardwood bark mulch on yews. As it decays, it often releases toxic quantities of copper and manganese. Yews are very sensitive to these metals. Affected plants are stunted, may turn yellow, and in severe cases, small

branches may die. Use pine bark, chopped leaves, or another mulch; and limit its depth to 2 inches.

DECIDUOUS

Non-fruiting / Non-flowering:

Beech: Water 2 times per day. Leaves turn yellow during the last 10 days of the month.

Chinese elm: Water as needed. Prune unwanted lengths of branches during the first 10 days of the month. Leaves turn yellow during last 10 days of the month - appreciate the fall coloring. Keep the plant in full sun all day.

Ginkgo: Water as needed. Prune unnecessary branches. Keep the plant in full sun all day.

Hornbeam: Water 2 times per day.

Japanese maple: Water 2 times per day if necessary.

Trident maple: Water 3 times per day if necessary.

Weeping willow: Water as needed.

Winged Euonymous: Water as needed. Appreciate the fall color of the red leaves and the fruit. Give plant a full day of sunlight.

Flowering/Fruiting Plants:

Cherry: Water once per day. Repot during the first 10 days of the month. Repot every 2 years. Should be in full sun.

Crab apple: Water up to 3 times per day if needed. Remove wire during the first 10 days of the month. Repot during the first 20 days of the month. Repot every 3 to 4 years. Leaves turn yellow color during the end of the month. Keep in full sun.

Gardenia: Water as needed. Keep in full sun. Watch the temperature and


ORIENTAL ORIENTATION

GROWING:
BONSAI, PRE-BONSAI,
JAPANESE MAPLES,
RARE & UNUSUAL DWARF
CONIFERS


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winterize plant where temperature remains above 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

Holly: Water once per day.

Pyracantha: Water once per day. Keep in full sun all day.

Quince: Water 1 or 2 times per day. During the first 10 days of the month remove any wire and repot. Repot once every 2 years. Prune during the first 20 days of the month. Keep plant in full sun.

Satsuki (azalea): Reduce watering from 3 times per day to 1 or 2 times per day during the latter part of the month. During the last 10 days of the month remove any wire.

Ume (Japanese flowering plum or apricot): Water 1 or 2 times per day. Apply fertilizer balls during the first 10 days of the month. Repot any time during the first 20 days of the month. Repot every 2 years. Keep plant in sun all day.

Wisteria: Keep plant in sun all day.

