



The Tree Shrinker

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A MONTHLY BULLETIN

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East Bay Bonsai Society

Show: October 13 - 14, 2018

Meeting: ~~October 10, 2017~~ **CANCELED**

Show



Excitement about our annual show has been building for a long time and show time is here! Our show will be held on Saturday, October 13 and Sunday, October 14 at the Lakeside Garden Center. Show hours are 10:00 am to 5:00 pm on Saturday and 11:00 am to 4:00 pm on Sunday. Setup for the show is from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm on Friday, October 12.

The headliner for the show is Jonas Dupuich who has been a longtime member of the local bonsai scene. Last year Jonas made a presentation at a regular EBBS meeting that was very well received. He maintains a web site which features articles on all aspects of bonsai which many of us have used to further our knowledge. The web site is www.bonsaitonight.com. In addition, Jonas has made several trips to Japan to study bonsai. He is imminently qualified to be our headliner and we look forward to his participation in our show.

Demonstrations at our show have been very popular. So popular, in fact, that this year we are scheduling demonstrations for both Saturday and Sunday. Saturday a large juniper will be used and the finished tree will be auctioned rather than raffled. Sunday a Korean Hornbeam will be the subject of the demonstration and this tree will be raffled when

completed. Both trees have a clear future ahead of them as superb bonsai.

The best way to enjoy the show is to participate. There are a lot of opportunities for each of us to participate. A successful and smoothly running show requires the help of a lot of people doing a wide variety of activities. Help is particularly needed for security, although all of the various committees could use a hand. If you have not already signed up for show duty and a committee chairperson calls, be prepared to give generously of your time.

All types of trees are welcome in the show. Since this is a fall show, deciduous trees in fall color and trees with fruits or berries are especially welcome. Everyone should exhibit at least one tree in the show.

Many of us have trees that are in the early stages of becoming finished bonsai, and rest assured that these trees are most welcome in the show. As usual, there will probably be some bonsai masterpieces on display. But while these trees are wonderful additions to the show, they are not where the action is for EBBS. Our show is for all the members to participate and enjoy, and the result is that everyone is encouraged to show regardless of the quality of their trees.

Trees in our show are accompanied by small name tags which identify the species of the tree for the public. When you have selected the trees that you would like to show, contact Don Meeker (dmeeker@astound.net) who will prepare the tree labels.

If you have not displayed a tree before, you'll be surprised at how nice it looks when dolled up for the show. Preparing a tree for the show is not hard. Be sure that your tree is bug free, the weeds are removed, dead leaves and unwanted small branches are trimmed, and the pot is cleaned. A very light coat of mineral oil on an unglazed pot will show it at its best. If you do not have a stand for your tree, there usually are a few stands available for loan at the show set up.

Also, if you are interested in doing a Tokonoma, a more formal display of your tree, please contact Janice Dilbeck at janicedilbeck@comcast.net. A tokonoma requires that you set up your own display with at least a mature bonsai on a stand and one other complementary object. As of this printing, there are still 6 tokonomas available.



If you have any accent plants, please bring them. Accents really do add the finishing touch to our bonsai show.

The show is the high point of the year for the club. The fun comes in knowing that you actively participated in the show by displaying a tree, and volunteering to help on one of the many committees needed to make the show run smoothly.

Schedule of events

The schedule of the weekend activities are as follows:

Friday Night

6:00 pm Show setup starts
10:00 pm Set up finished, doors locked

Saturday

9-10 am VOLUNTEERS ONLY Plant Sale
10:00 am Show and sale are open to the public
11:30 am Hospitality room opens for lunch
1:00 pm Demonstration begins in the Ebell room
2:00 pm Hospitality room closes
4:00 pm Demonstration ends
5:00 pm Show and sale close to the public

Sunday

9:30 am Critique of the show by Jonas
11:00 am Show and sale are open to the public
11:30 am Hospitality room opens for lunch
1:00 pm Demonstration begins in the Ebell room
2:00 pm Hospitality room closes
3:30 pm Benefit drawing begins
4:00 pm Plant sales and vendor sales close
4:00 pm Show closes and teardown commences
5:00 pm Doors are locked

Show Set-up Friday Evening

Volunteers are needed to arrive early and to help with installing the tables and backdrops. Doors of the Lakeside Garden center will be open for work to start at 6:00 pm. You don't have to go home for dinner before helping with set up because the club will provide pizza and beverages for all workers.

All trees and accent plants are to be delivered to the central hallway before 6:30 pm. Trees can be placed on the tables along the wall in the hallway. It is helpful if trees intended for tokonomas are so identified.

Come and join the camaraderie of the show set up. In addition to a lot of work it is also a lot of fun. The pizza is good, too.

Lunch at the show

EBBS lunches are available on both days to members and honored guests. The style is potluck with augmentation and beverages furnished by the club. Assignments for both days are as follows:



Appetizer, last name M-R
Entrée, Last name S-Z
Side dish, Last name A-G
Dessert, Last name H-L

In each case make the dish for 8-10 people and be sure to provide serving utensils if required. Remember to pick up your dish and utensils on Sunday by 3:00 pm.

Show Plant Sale

The sale is very important to the club in many ways. It is easy to overlook the fact that the sale of plants and bonsai and related items such as pots, scrolls and stands is a real money maker for the club and goes a long way toward funding the cost of the show. Look at your collection and see if there is something that you would like to send to a new and more loving home. Our recent auction featured trees that were well along in development as opposed to small cuttings. For many of the folks who drop by the show this is their first look at what bonsai is all about. They are thrilled to take home a small cutting in a pot and as a result, these little plants sell like hot cakes. Above all it is important to remember that something you no longer have interest in may be a treasure to someone else.



As with the auction, items may be donated to the club where 100% of the selling price goes to the club, or may be sold on consignment where 20% of the selling price goes to the club, leaving 80% to the seller. The more attractive you make your tree the more likely that it will sell. Simple things you can do to improve the appearance

of the tree help a lot. Remove any weeds and dead leaves, and trim that awkward branch. Here is a place to practice your merchandising skills by turning your tree into a bit of eye candy.

The fine print for the details of the sale is exactly the same as for our recent auction. Forms and tags will be available and each seller must complete an inventory form listing and describing each item, and showing the selling price, or clearly designating that the item is a donation. A completed tag must be placed on each item. You may wish to reduce the price of an item, but be sure that you changed the inventory sheet to reflect the new price. Donated items must be clearly identified on the inventory sheet.

Items can be brought for sale anytime we are open, during set-up on Friday, after 8:00 am on Saturday, or after 9:00 am on Sunday.

Early Bird Sale

This year we are opening the plant sale to EBBS club member show volunteers only on Saturday morning at 9:00 am. This will give our volunteers the first opportunity to buy items in the sale before we are open to the public at 10:00 am.



Silent Auction

EBBS is featuring a silent auction as part of the many events at our show. These auctions have proved to be very popular and have been a significant source of income for the club. All the items in the auction are donated to the club. You can be part of the fun if you have any item that you would like to offer in the silent auction. Most of the items have been bonsai related, but anything in good taste such as a bottle of wine is most welcome.

Sunday Morning Critique

A critique of the trees in the show will be conducted by Jonas on Sunday morning starting at 9:30 am. This is a wonderful experience and is by far the most valuable part of the show. No matter where your tree is in its development, he can point out how to improve the way the tree is displayed, i.e. the choice of pot, stand and scroll if used. Seeing the show through the eyes of an experienced bonsai artist is always a privilege and always expands our knowledge of bonsai.

Demonstration

The demonstrations on both days will commence at 1:00 pm. Most of the artists that we see locally are heavily influenced by Japan. Each demonstration will be a splendid opportunity to see a local artist who has studied in Japan working on a tree. Further, the results of his effort will be available at the conclusion of each demonstration, one by auction and one by raffle.

A Plea

Do plan to spend at least a little time at the conclusion of the show at 4:00 pm on Sunday to help with the clean up before you depart the scene. At the end of the show, all of us are tired and we are all anxious to grab our trees and go home. This is perfectly understandable, but it leaves tear down of the tables and general cleanup all too frequently to a few hardy souls. These folks would greatly appreciate your help.

A Second Plea

The Christmas season is still a bit away but Michael Hylton is busily planning for it now. EBBS traditionally has a potluck dinner celebrating the holiday season. For the past several years the high points of these dinners have been superb programs of images from EBBS activities over the year put together by Michael. Michael would be delighted if you have images, particularly of the upcoming show, that you would like to share for his program this year. He would appreciate pictures in smaller format since large formats such as 3 megs give his software indigestion. Pictures can be sent to mhylton@rocketmail.com.

November Meeting

The November meeting will feature a presentation by Rick Garcia on azaleas. Azaleas have unfortunately acquired the reputation of being hard to grow. That is fake news. They are easy to grow if you can meet their requirements which are a bit different from, say, junipers or our other usually grown trees. Come to see Rick's presentation and learn how to grow these beautiful plants. They are not that hard and boy, are they rewarding plants.



September Meeting

The September meeting was devoted to a demonstration by the John (Doig) and Chris (Ross) show. John was primarily the worker bee who did the pruning and wiring. Chris was the talking head who tried to explain what in the world John was doing. This was definitely not the usual garden variety demonstration (sorry).

The demonstration was unusual in three regards. The choice of tree for the demo was a juniper directly from a nursery lot (Urban Tree Farm in Santa Rosa).

Usually the demo tree has been grown with an eye toward its eventual fate as a bonsai, and major branches have been removed or moved long before the demo. The demonstrator has studied the tree carefully and so can quickly proceed with what needs to be done to produce a finished bonsai. The focus of these demos is to prepare a finished bonsai from a tree that is already nearly there.

But this demo focused on how to prepare a tree from nursery stock for a tree that is poised to be a bonsai sometime in the future, but isn't there yet. No prior work had been done on the tree so everything was

accomplished in front of us. The demo was a great learning experience for us all on how to create a bonsai from readily available nursery stock, and was particularly valuable for members new to bonsai.

So many times, the demonstrator talks a little and then devotes his or her time to wiring which is necessary to create the finished bonsai. This can take a lot of time and is about as exciting to the audience as watching paint dry. By having two presenters, one could talk while the other wired. The presentation proceeded at a good clip, and interest by the audience never lagged.

Members of the audience were called up to examine the tree at various stages and were asked to comment on what they saw. Chris then commented on their comments. Audience participation in a demonstration is rare and, in this case, provided an additional and welcome dimension to the learning experience.



The demo tree was a mound of foliage at least two feet in diameter and Chris asked at the outset "what do we do with this?" The obvious answer was to markedly reduce the branches to see the structure of the tree. Some long branches which would not be useful to the design of the tree were cut off. It was noted that totally cutting off a branch could cause the root feeding it to die, ultimately leading to a strip of deadwood on the trunk. A couple of branches were left untouched to allow them to rampantly grow and fatten up. They would be shortened much later in the development of the tree. Other branches were shortened.

Little branches in the interior of the tree were very important because they figure strongly in the future of the tree. Side branches on the shortened branches can develop into pads of foliage in the finished tree. Little branches in the crotch of two larger branches are even more important because they grow much faster than the little side branches and can quickly replace long, leggy branches or overly thick branches. Some of the larger branches were wired away from important little sprouts to allow them to receive the sunlight that they need to grow.

Chris repeatedly made a point that new people to bonsai should get past the botany as quickly as possible and into the art of bonsai. Botany in his comment is the mechanics of bonsai and includes how to wire, pot and choose soil. These are basically simple skills and

mastery will allow concentration on the art part of bonsai, specifically what your tree should look like. The best way to reduce this to practice is to spend a little time with an experienced bonsai artist.



As a matter of fact, Chris advocated always working with another bonsai enthusiast because ideas always merge when two people work together. Your work partner may see something in your tree that you might have missed, and perhaps you can return the favor. Another useful approach for you to improve your tree is to take a picture of it. You see the tree in three dimensions, but the picture is in two dimensions and this allows you to see the tree in a different way. This can point out features that might need to be changed for the best presentation of the tree.

The John and Chris show was a different and enlightening demonstration that was very well received by EBBS members. Thanks, guys. You did good.

Show and Tell



Bob Gould shared with us his beautiful azalea.

Bonsai Stands

All members of EBBS are encouraged to show at least one tree in the upcoming show and all trees are welcome from a humble juniper to a spectacular collected tree. All trees in a show are displayed on a stand. Most of the meetings of the club are focused on how to develop

a tree and little mention is made of how to complete the display of the tree, so a word about stands is timely.



It may surprise you to realize that you do not display the tree in a show, but actually present a composition which consists of the tree, the pot and the stand. Think of the stand as a picture frame. The picture frame completes the presentation of the picture. It should complement the picture, and yet not compete with the picture for your attention. When choosing a stand for your tree, take a moment and observe whether the stand complements the features of your tree.

Stands come in a wide variety of sizes and shapes, and the stand selected for your tree should reflect the features of your tree. A stand with square legs will show a formal tree such as a pine tree to best advantage. A stand with curved legs is a good choice for a maple with a gently curved trunk. A very low stand is needed for a tall tree and a very tall stand might be used to elevate a short twiggly yamadori juniper or a small shohin tree so the fine details of the tree can be readily seen and enjoyed.

The size of the stand is important. If the stand is too large the tree looks lost, and if the stand is too small the composition looks cramped. The pot should fit comfortably on the stand. What is the right size? Most stands have a panel in the center and a rim around the panel. The pot should fit inside the central panel.

For the engineers in the crowd there are a couple of formulas that can help. One is to place the pot on the stand and the distance from the pot to the edge of the stand should be one fifth the length of the pot. Another is that the sum of the distance from the pot to the edge of the stand on both sides of the pot should be one third of the diameter of the pot. In both cases the pot can be closer to the front and back of the stand. Although the two formulas give slightly different results, neither should be considered as a rigid requirement, but rather as a useful guideline for finding a stand that fits your pot. Be sure to measure your pot before you purchase a new stand to ensure that the stand is the right size.

Faced with the problem of finding a stand for your tree there are several options. One can order a stand from a stand maker. Jerry Braswell is currently the only active stand maker in the area and can be contacted at www.artofthediaza.com. Jerry usually has a stock of stands on hand for sale, but best to contact him well before the show to be sure that he will have available a stand to meet your specific requirements. It is currently planned that he will be a vender at our show.

From time to time stands are available at sales such as the EBBS auction and the mammoth fund raiser held by the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt in the winter.

The criteria for a good stand are a clean and simple design that does not compete with your tree. When available at a reasonable price, it should be purchased. Even if it does not fit one of your current trees, there are more trees to come to your collection, and it will fit a future tree. Also look carefully at a prospective purchase. The stand should not show wear and tear from a long and abused life. Deep scratches and badly scuffed edges cannot be repaired and will severely limit the attractiveness of your display.



Stands are generally expensive, but take heart because there are several options for displaying your tree which do not involve the purchase of expensive stands. The first is to borrow a stand from another member of the club. Many members are willing to loan stands. The

problem with a borrowed stand is that it may not be the best choice in either size or style for your tree. At the actual set up of the show there are occasionally stands available for trees without stands, but those that are available may not be adequate for your tree either in size or style.

The various oriental furniture stores in the area have inexpensive stands that are meant to display ceramics, and can also serve as a stand for bonsai. Many of these are to the Chinese taste and the designs are frequently too heavy for bonsai. Bulky stands can totally dominate your composition at the expense of the tree.

Bamboo mats are frequently used as an informal summer display in Japan and serve as inexpensive alternatives for stands for your trees. They are available in import stores.

Slabs of wood cut from the trunk of a tree are frequently seen as stands. If you purchase a slab for your tree, select one that is as thin as one half of an inch or less. Thicker slabs tend to dominate the tree.



Three boards can be arranged in a staggered formation, and this presentation is particularly useful for a very large pot. Each board should be about one third the width of the pot.



Finally, very simple stands can be made from short sections of hardwood. A bit of sanding and finish is all you need. McBeath Hardwood in Berkeley (930 Ashby Ave.) has bins of wood cutoffs which are great sources of wood for potential bonsai display. Be sure to measure your pot beforehand to ensure that the new stand and the pot are a good match.



Stands should be thought of as being fine furniture and should be treated accordingly. Before the show spend a moment to prepare your stands. A bit of Old English Scratch Remover, available from Safeway, will remove the dust, hide minor blemishes and will leave your stand at its shiny best. Felt dots, available from Ace Hardware, placed on the bottom of the feet of your pot will go a long way in preventing scratches on your stand from the rough bottoms of pots.

Bonsai Calendar

- Sun – Continue to move shaded deciduous trees into sun to promote fall color.
- Watering – Adjust watering for fall, but don't under-water.
- Fertilizing – Use low or zero nitrogen fertilizers.
- Repotting – Repot when plants become dormant. Begin repotting flowering and fruiting varieties of prunus.
- Styling/Pruning – Shape both evergreens and deciduous trees.
- Insect and disease control – Remove dead plant material. Watch for and treat insect infestations.
- Propagating/Collecting – Begin root cuttings.

Refer to the EBBS Bonsai Calendar for more details on seasonal care.

Bonsai Instruction at Merritt College

Instruction is in the form of workshops and is a splendid opportunity to learn how to develop your trees into first class bonsai. In these workshops you work on your own tree under the guidance of an experienced bonsai artist. The workshops are open to all experience levels and are usually held at 7:00 pm on the fourth Monday of each month when the college is in session.

The meetings are in the Landscape Horticulture Building at Merritt College which is located in the Oakland hills off Redwood Road. The workshops are free. There is a gate across the road leading to the parking lot that will automatically open when you pull up close to it. Leading the workshops are two members of EBBS, Bill Castellon and Randal Lee. You can contact Bill at 510-569-8003 or Randal at 510-864-0841 if you would like more information.

Events by Others

GSBF's Bonsai and Suiseki Garden: open Tues. - Fri. 11:00 am – 3:00 pm, Sat. 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, Sun. 12:00 noon – 4:00 pm Enter at gate across from Boat House.

October 6th, Cupertino, Midori Bonsai Club: 57th Annual Bonsai Show at the Quinlan Community Center, 10185 N. Stelling Road. Show hours are 10 AM - 5 PM with a bonsai demonstration by Jonas Dupuich at 1:30 PM. The demonstration tree will be raffled off at the end of the demonstration. There will be a Beginners Workshop for those new to bonsai. A tree will be provided along with basic instruction. The workshop will begin at 10 AM, with a nominal fee. We will also be available to take a look, and advise you on any bonsai you'd like to bring in. There will be several bonsai vendors to supply you with plant material, tools, pots, etc, and a club member's plant sale. Admission is free, with plenty of parking available. Come join us for a fun day of bonsai! For further information contact: Jack Christiansen(408) 280-7539, or Jackchristiansen@sbcglobal.net

October 24 - 28, 2018 Sacramento, California Golden State Bonsai Federation: Convention 41 "Creativity taking Flight" held at the McClellan Conference Center. Registration begins July 1st online at <http://www.gsbfcconvention.org/> for Convention, Workshops, Seminars, Excursions, etc. GSBF recommended lodging is Lion's Gate Hotel at McClellan Park. This year's headliners are Yasuo Mitsuya, Suthin Sukosolvisit, and Bjorn Bjorholm. Please join GSBF and Yasuo Mitsuya's esteemed students in honoring Mitsuya-san for his influence on bonsai in the modern era. Hosting Yasuo Mitsuya's visit are: Kathy Shaner, Hideko Metaxas, Boon Manakitivipart, Kenji Miyata, Cheryl Manning, David DeGroot, Gordon Deeg.



Articles or Services for Sale (or give-away)

Wanted to Buy (or for free)

Each membership household, free of charge, may place a five-line ad related to bonsai in two newsletters each year. Send a copy of ads to your editor by the fourth Monday of the month to appear in the next publication. Send your ad to janicedilbeck@comcast.net.

Newsletter Editor: Janice Dilbeck
Newsletter Star Reporter: Tom Colby

East Bay Bonsai Society—Schedule for 2018

Regular Meetings: Second Wednesday, every month (except August and October) @ 7:30 pm

Place: Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland.

Visitors welcome.

Website for Bonsai Garden Lake Merritt: www.gsbfc-lakemerritt.org/

Meeting Program

Oct 28 Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – John Nackley
Nov 14 Satsuki – Rick Garcia
Nov 25 Introduction to Bonsai at BGLM – Janet Nelson
Dec 12 Holiday Dinner

Special Events

Oct 13-14 Show