



The Tree Shrinker

Volume LX, No.12

A MONTHLY BULLETIN

<http://www.eastbaybonsai.org>



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East Bay Bonsai Society
Monthly Meeting: December 8, 2021 7:30 PM
Lakeside Garden Center, Lake Merritt

December Meeting

As the trees start to show their fall color and the days get shorter, we typically find ourselves in a holiday mood. Every year we look forward to sharing a meal with our society members as we take a look back on all of our activities for the year. This year we are still struggling with fallout from the Covid19 virus, so instead of a holiday meal, we've opted to have an all-member workshop!

A workshop will allow us to interact with each other and share knowledge, but at a safer distance. Each member should bring their tools and a tree or two to work on. There will be tables set up around the normal meeting room that can be shared space for working on your tree. There will also be club experts: Bill Castellon, Randall Lee, Janet Nelson, Rick Trumm, Tom Colby and Bob Gould who will be available to help you with Azaleas, Pines, Junipers, Cypress, Deciduous trees and more. You can work with one or feel free to walk around the room to see what others are working on and lending advice or asking questions. We have many artists with expertise within our club, so if you have a question on a particular tree or species, this will be the perfect time and place to ask it.

The meeting will begin at 7:30 with announcements and elections. Then Michael Hylton will present a year in review from slides of our activities this last year. After the review we will start the workshop. There will also be Seasonal Guides for sale and information on upcoming events.

So be ready for a fun and educational evening with your bonsai club members.

Get ready to Sell!

That's right! The long-awaited EBBS sale is on!

The date: Saturday, January 8, 2022

The time: Set up/Drop off 9:00 am

Sale time: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Pickup and cleanup: 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

The place:

Lakeside Garden Center,
666 Bellevue Ave. Oakland

All sale items must be bonsai related, tagged with a two-part sales tag and recorded in the consignment sale sheet. Sales will be subject to a 20% consignment fee that will be calculated based on sales price (i.e.: not including tax).

Tags and sheets will be available at the Dec 8th meeting or you can print them off from the email this newsletter is in.

All sales will be subject to State sales tax in Oakland at 10.75%. This will be collected at time of sale and will not affect the selling price. Purchases made for resale must provide proof of sales permit or resale license and fill out a resale document at purchase time.

If you would like to volunteer to work in the sales area as a seller, cashier or in security, please contact Bev Martinez at Martinez_bev@yahoo.com or call (925) 437-2347.

All cashiers must be able to add the Square.com application to their cell phone as all sales will be recorded in Square.

November Meeting

By: Tom Fedor

In November we were honored to have Janet Roth of the Suiseki Society of Northern California give a presentation on the history and art of suiseki.

Janet began with a brief history of the California Suiseki Society (of which our own EBBS director Alise Lacosse-Offeman is now President. Yay, Alise!) and her experience of transitioning the organization from being bilingual in Japanese and English to English speaking only.



She discussed the introduction of suiseki into Japan sometime unknown between 600 AD and 1200 AD, when they were kept by monks, scholars and samurai for contemplation. When the samurai were rubbed out in the 1800's, suiseki passed to the enjoyment of wealthy merchants and such. And trickled down to us hoi-polloi, eventually, like being rocked along in their riverbeds. On a more personal level, Janet discussed a particular stone given to Mas Imazumi by his teacher as a long-term project in opening a doorway into Zen.



Uniquely Japanese concepts of art pertain to stone selection and display. One looks for a shape evocative of some natural landscape. Harmony in balance and movement is essential, and darker colors are preferred over bling and brightness.

Most of the best are “natural” in the sense of being unworked and unmodified, but sometimes cutting from a larger stone can produce interesting results. Even so, sharp edges are avoided. Different surface textures contribute greatly to the complete stone, and different surface textures even have their own Japanese names.

When you find a stone in a river, Janet says “Clean it.” Water and a brush will take off most of the gunk, but vinegar and, occasionally, stronger acid have their uses. Afterwards, age your stone in the sun to allow atmospheric chemical reactions in the stone's surface to add their contributions to the end product.



There followed an extensive photographic display of the various features that make a stone a suiseki (One key is that the stones evoke emotion and memories), and a recounting of some of Janet's stone-hunting expeditions complete with photos of the catch. And after a year and a half on the couch, your humble correspondent is now making plans for wading in a California river somewhere.

Aesthetic influences of suiseki include:

- Shinto - regarding the stones as sacred.
- Zen Culture and Tea
- Wabi Sabi - appreciation of the transition in life and death.
- Shibui and Yugen - the Awe in joy.

The types of suiseki viewing stones include:

- Landscape stones (mountains, rivers, waterfalls...)
- Object stones (Humans, animals, farmers huts...)
- Pattern stones (Moon, sun, plants ...)

Interesting to note that the Diaza (platform the stones are placed on) is to the stones, as a pot is to a bonsai tree.

For more information on suiseki visit the following online sites:

Janet Roth: <https://suisekiart.com>

Sam Edge: <https://samedge.wordpress.com>

Phat Vo: <https://suisekiblog.wordpress.com>

California Aiseki Kai: <https://aiseikikai.com>

Show and Tell



Jeremy Stevermer - Ficus



Tom Colby - Manzanita



Janet Nelson - Pyracantha



Mike Cullen - Suiseki

Bonsai Calendar

- To enjoy fall color, gradually move maples and other shaded trees into the sun.
- Review exposure of trees to the movement of the sun.
- Continue fertilizing all trees.
- Rotate trees twice a month.
- Remove wisteria from the pan of water after foliage has yellowed.
- Insect and disease control –Remove dead plant material. Watch for and treat insect infestations.
- Good time to start grafting a variety of trees
- Last opportunity to sever air-layers having adequate rootage.
- Good time to collect conifers from the High Sierras with permits to do so.

Refer to the EBBS Bonsai Seasonal guide for more information on care

Some thoughts on Stands

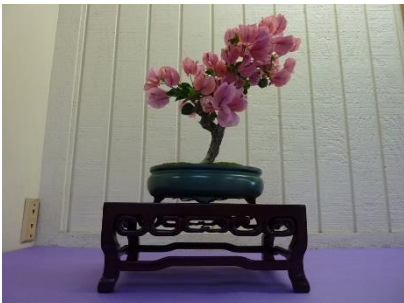
By: Tom Colby

Imagine for the moment that you are a lady and you have been invited to the opening night of the San Francisco opera. You know that the occasion is where the top one percent strut their stuff and you need to dress accordingly. After much searching for just the right gown at a fashion house you select a gown from the famous designer Armani which has many yards of beautiful silk damask. Of course, you will wear the diamond necklace from Tiffany which has been in your family for generations even though it doesn't compliment the gown very well. The big night comes and, on the way out the door you suddenly realize that you need shoes, so you grab an old and dirty pair of tennis shoes. You are good to go, right? Well, not exactly. Your overall composition leaves something to be desired.

So why is this relevant? Surprisingly, it is not unheard of for bonsai enthusiasts to treat the tree entered in a show

the same way. A lot of time is spent fussing with trees to get them just the way they will show their very best. They are in a pot and whatever pot works just fine. On the way to the show, we grab something to put the tree on and we are good to go, right? Just like the hypothetical lady who selected with great care the gown for the evening and lost track of the rest of the outfit for the occasion, we sometimes lose track of the fact that we are not displaying a tree, but we are presenting a composition and all parts of the composition are important.

Putting the point in another way, you frequently hear people talking about the tree that they are going to display in an upcoming show. As a matter of fact, no one has ever shown a tree. Taken in its most literal sense displaying a tree means taking the tree out of the pot and plopping it down roots, dirt and all on the display area. Of course, no one does this. Trees are always presented in a pot. The addition of the pot makes the display a composition. Trees shown in a show are shown on a stand, another addition to the composition. The merit of the composition depends not only on the tree but also the choice of the pot and the stand. Think of the stand as a picture frame. It completes the presentation of the picture by setting the picture apart from the surrounding area and yet, does not compete with the picture for your attention.



Stands come in a wide variety of sizes and shapes and the stand that we select should reflect the features of the tree. A stand with straight legs will show a formal tree such as a pine to best advantage. A stand with curved legs is a good choice for a delicate maple. A low stand works for a tall tree. A taller stand might be used to elevate a short, twiggy Yamadori juniper so the fine details of the tree can be more easily seen and enjoyed. The criteria for a good stand is a clean and simple design that does not compete with the tree. A quality stand can be compared to fine furniture. Quality stands are expensive but don't despair. There are several alternatives to an expensive stand. Bamboo mats are frequently used as an informal summer display stand in Japan. They are available in import stores. Very simple stands can be made from short sections of hardwoods. A bit of sanding and finish is all you need. Three boards which are sanded and finished can be arranged in a staggered formation and this presentation is particularly useful for trees in a large pot. Each of these boards should be about one third the width of the pot.

EBBS is slowly recovering from all the covid restrictions and is returning to normal programs including planning for our yearly show in October. If you want to show a composition in the show you need to be considering a stand for your tree if you don't already have one. There will be several major sales soon which may have stands for sale including a sale by EBBS and the Mammoth sale in February sponsored by the bonsai garden. These sales provide great shopping opportunities for upgrading your stand collection.



What should you look for when purchasing a stand? Beware of stands with deep scratches. Minor blemishes can be subdued by Old English scratch Remover (available from Safeway) but deep scratches into the raw wood can never be satisfactorily fixed. Slabs of wood cut from a tree are often seen at local shows. If you purchase a slab, select one that is one half an inch or less. Thicker slabs tend to visually dominate the tree. Vendors of stands will sell at many of the bonsai sales and are a source of fine stands. When shopping for a stand for a particular tree, be sure to measure the pot. To ensure the new stand is a good match for the pot, the pot should fit comfortably on the stand. If the stand has a panel in the center, the pot should fit within the panel. For a fifteen-inch-wide pot the stand should extend two or three inches beyond the pot and about an inch in front of the pot. This ratio of pot size to stand size holds for different pot sizes.

As a parting thought, when show time comes, remember that you are presenting a composition consisting of tree, pot and stand. Whatever you choose for a stand, give it a coat of wax to buff it up and show it at its very best. Pledge (available from Safeway) works but there are many other wax products that work just as well. A dirty and dusty stand not only seriously downgrades your composition but also sends the message that you just don't care.

Special Recognition

Above and Beyond

By: Tom Colby

Early arrivals for the November meeting were confronted by a closed gate at the entrance as a parked car precluded opening the gate. Mohammad, the parks and rec guy who opens the garden center was stationed at the kiosk and directed members to the service entrance. This was above and beyond what Mohammad was expected to do. Fortunately, the car was soon moved, the gate was opened and most of the members could enter and park as usual. This was not the first time that Mohammad has gone out of his way for EBBS members. The club owes Mohammad a big thank you for his concern for EBBS.

A Tough Job

By: Tom Colby

Each month your newsletter features an article summarizing the presentation of the previous month. This serves as a reminder to those of us who attended the meeting of all the great information that was presented as well as a summary of the meeting for those who could not attend of the great meeting they missed. The task of writing this feature has fallen on the broad shoulders of Tom Fedor. Each month for the last couple of years Tom has provided a summary of the previous meeting that is both coherent and readable. The task is more difficult than you might imagine because some of our presenters tend to ramble, yet each month Tom pulls it off with style. Thanks, Tom for all your hard work and valuable contribution to the newsletter.

Events by Others

February 4 through 6, 2022 Santa Nella, California

The California Shohin Seminar will be held at Hotel Mission De Oro, 13070 S. Highway 33, Santa Nella on Friday, February 4th through Sunday February 6th. Bonsai masters, teachers and enthusiasts from all over the country donate their time to this unique biennial event. Registration and more information can be found at: <https://www.calshohin.org>. Registration is now live-sign up by Dec. 15 for Workshops.

February 19 and 20, 2022 Oakland, California

Annual Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt Mammoth Auction & Sale will be held on Saturday, February 19 and Sunday, February 20, 2022 at 666 Bellevue Ave., Lakeside Park Garden Center in Oakland. You are invited to the biggest auction and sale of bonsai, pre-bonsai, pots, books, stands, and related material. A Mammoth fundraiser with all proceeds going to support the Bonsai Garden at Lake Merritt. Saturday auction preview starts at 12:00 p.m. with auction starting at 1:00 p.m. Sunday sale from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., large showing of vendors, plant sales, and much more. Purchase your bonsai needs. For further information, contact George Haas at gwhaas@comcast.net or stay tuned to [BGLM Website](#).

Newsletter Editor: Beverly Martinez

Contributors: Tom Fedor and Tom Colby

East Bay Bonsai Society—Schedule for 2021/2022

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

Place: Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland. Visitor's welcome.

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Program</u>
Dec 8	Monthly Meeting – Member's workshop
Dec 11	Annual Pre-Mammoth Tree and Pot cleanup (10:00-1:00) BGLM
Jan 3	EBBS Board Meeting
Jan 8	EBBS Sale
Jan 12	Monthly Meeting – Jonas Dupuich - grafting the club's juniper
Jan 23	Bonsai for Beginners – Tom Colby
Feb 7	EBBS Board Meeting
Feb 9	Monthly Meeting – Jay McDonald – crabapple demo
Feb19/20	Mammoth Sale