

BSGNY NEWSLETTER

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MAY 2013

Opening Statements

By Tom Ritter

May's meeting is a workshop on azaleas; last year's azalea workshop trees should be looked at and adjusted. For those that would like to start another tree, I am sure that there will be material available. You can also bring other material to be worked on if you wish.

There will also be a review of the trees critiqued at the April meeting for members wishing to tweak their trees. I am leaving the article on critiquing for your review. <http://www.bonsai4me.com/AdvTech/ATCritique.html> I hope it help you to understand not only the critique but how to look at bonsai trees in general. By studying the critique it might also help in designing your trees.

June is set to be a tropical work shop. Pomegranates, bougainvillea, Ficus and other Tropical's will be available. More information when it becomes available.

The July Program will be the display at the Hume Japanese Stroll Gardens on July 13-14. Setting up the display is a great way of learning more about bonsai. It teaches not only the harmony of the bonsai tree itself but also of how to display the bonsai for your own enjoyment. We will need people to help set up and take down the displays.

Saturday

May 11, 2013

11:00 am

Suburban Water Gardens

There will be an azalea (bring in last year's azalea) workshop **or** "bring your own work shop". There will also be a critique of materials to select the trees that will be displayed at the Cornell Extension of Nassau Exhibit on May 25 (Memorial Day weekend)

Saturday

June 15, 2013

11:00 am

Suburban Water Gardens

The June Program is scheduled to be a tropical workshop. John Capobianco will lead the meeting with a lecture and demonstration. Again if you like bring your own. Pomegranates, bougainvillea, Ficus and other Tropical's will be available.

On July 13 & 14 2013 - We have a commitment to display our trees at the:

The John P. Humes Japanese Stroll Garden
Intersection of Oyster Bay Road and Dogwood
Lane
Mill Neck, NY

e-mail: strollgarden1@verison.net
www.humesjapanesestrollgarden.org

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WELCOME

We would like to welcome our returning and new members.

Richard Danowski
Mike Metzger
Jesse Stoff

The August Program will be a swap meet and bar-b-q at Suburban Gardens, on the second Saturday of the month (August 10, 2013)

East Meadow library wants a bonsai display. More information when it becomes available.

Farmingdale library is looking for a fall display.

April meeting

By Joe Lesnick

John Capobianco did a demonstration of driftwood sharmiki: It does not work well with softwood and deciduous bonsai. The web site Woodcraft is a good site for carving tools. John also demonstrated the use of lime-sulphur as a preservative. It penetrates 1 mm of the surface of the dead wood. It protects the core from further deterioration. It should be applied every 6 months. Pre-soak the wood before applying. If applied straight, it will provide a stark white appearance. Dilute it with India ink to give the wood a more realistic appearance. Apply it outside as lime sulphur really smells bad.

John Capobianco critiqued the trees that members brought for the display at Cornell. The quality of the trees was very good and many trees were selected for the display. There will be several divisions in the display. We need help in setting up the display on Saturday morning. This is also another way of learning the art of bonsai.

This is the latest news on the Cornell display.

**Greetings All, I spoke with Cornell.
Here's the deal. They are only open from 10am - 1pm on Saturdays.
So, they will set up the tables as we decide on Friday night.
We can arrive as early as 8:00am on Saturday to set up.
So security is not going to be that big a deal.
John**

The setup should be easy enough. Cornell will set the tables up and we will hang our blue gray cloth as a back drop. We usually use double sided tape to make things easy. The tables will be covered with our cloth. Trees will then be set "in a picture frame" to show the best possible view of the tables with the trees. This part of the setup takes the most time as trees may be moved several times.

Please arrange to have your trees at Cornell as early as possible.

The directions are in their web address

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Nassau

Horticulture Center & Demonstration Gardens East Meadow Farm

832 Merrick Avenue

East Meadow, New York 11554

<http://www.ccenassau.org/hort/html/directions.html>

2013 BSGNY OFFICERS

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TELEPHONE

516-263-2717

Directions to Farmingdale State University Greenhouse

Take your best route to Route 110, Farmingdale. Enter the campus from the Route 110 Entrance (near Adventure land). The road is divided. At the 3rd break in the median, make a left. Proceed through a parking lot, past a white building, and a glasshouse. We meet in the beige brick building at the end of the road.

DIRECTIONS TO Suburban Water Gardens:

From The North and West - LIE to exit #50, after passing first light, turn right at Burrs Lane, for one mile - Suburban on the right.

From North and East - LIE to Exit #51 south on Deer Park Ave for 1/2 mile turn right on Ryder Ave to end. Turn left on Burrs Lane for 1/2 mile - Suburban is on the right.

From The South and East - Southern State Parkway to exit 39 North on Deer Park Ave for approx 2 1/2 miles. Turn left at Straight Path (before LIE) for 1 1/4 miles. Turn right on Burrs Lane for one mile, - Suburban is on the left.

Please drop this form at Suburban Bonsai, 211 Burrs Lane, Dix Hills, or mail to:
BSGNY, PO BOX 115, Baldwin, New York 11510.

➤ *Make out your check to "Bonsai Society of Greater NY"* ◀

Name _____

Street _____ Apt. # _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(_____) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Enclosed is my check for an Annual Membership at:

[] \$17 Student [] \$40 Regular [] \$45 Joint (2 people at the same address)

Or sign up at the next meeting. www.bsgny.org

Harmony is a big part of the art of Bonsai. It drives the designs of your trees and how they are displayed. I hope you find it interesting.

This is from the **Intermediate bonsai syllabus** by Thomas Zane.

http://www.bonsai-bsf.com/magazine/intermediate_bonsai.pdf

CHAPTER 2

I. OBJECTIVES

As a result of studying this section of the **Intermediate Bonsai Syllabus**, studying **APPENDIX C - Harmony**, viewing audio visual presentations, or participating in other activities provided by an instructor, you will be able to:

1. Define harmony.
2. Discuss the concept of *harmony* as it applies to bonsai, to include:
 - a. Understatement
 - b. Perspective
 - c. Line
 - d. Balance
 - e. Soul and spirit
 - f. Nature and natural appearance
 - g. Display of bonsai

II. GENERAL

- A. An expanded discussion of Harmony is included in **APPENDIX C** to this Syllabus.
- B. Definitions

1. **Harmony.** Harmony means fitting together, agreement, a combination of parts into an orderly or proportionate whole, congruity, agreement or proportionate arrangement of color, size, shape, etc., that is pleasing to the eye. It is an affirmative emotional response for which bonsai artists strive.

- III. **Bonsai.** Bonsai is the art of creating a miniature replica of a mature tree or group of trees which could be found in nature. The bonsai artist attempts to create an illusion by changing normal plant material into a mature tree.

ELEMENTS OF HARMONY

Various elements, concepts and conditions contribute to the existence of harmony in a given composition. They include: understatement, perspective, line and its continuity and rhythm, balance, and the soul and the spirit of the creation. These will be discussed briefly here. See **APPENDIX C** for more details.

1. **Understatement.** There is a basic aesthetic premise in the Orient which states that the less powerful a thing may be, the more effective it can be. Empty space is as important as filled space.
2. **Perspective** refers to a method of organizing forms in space to create an illusion of depth on a two dimensional surface, or of greater depth in three dimensions. Perspective in bonsai is used to further the illusion that the bonsai has greater mass, greater age and greater maturity and is in a much larger environment than is really the case.
3. **Line** in art refers to a series of points which cause the eye to move along a particular path. It controls the way we view a particular composition. The visual movement along the path created by these points of interest should be smooth and fairly continuous to preclude the eye's becoming confused and lost in the composition.
4. **Balance** fosters harmony. However, unlike much of Western art, Oriental art, on which bonsai is based, relies on **asymmetrical balance** rather than on symmetrical balance.
5. **The soul and the spirit.** Many years ago an early Chinese art critic attempted to establish a criterion by which to judge landscape paintings. In effect he said that a work of art may be technically perfect,

exhibiting perfect technique in execution and workmanship, and it may follow all of the rules, do everything right. But unless it has a soul and a **spirit**, it has not been “divinely inspired”. This soul and spirit separates the great bonsai masterpieces from other specimens.

IV. NATURE’S PLACE IN BONSAI HARMONY

- A. **Nature** provides our most basic lessons on harmony. Some of the greatest artists spent their lives studying nature. Mountains, streams, rocks and trees in their natural environment usually exist in simplistic harmony with each other and with their surroundings. The bonsai artist learns by observing nature.
- B. **Natural Style.** Bonsai styling should, within reason, reflect the natural growth habit, shape and form of a species. The bonsai artist combines horticultural and design skills to create a miniature replica of the tree which is in harmony with what might be seen in the wild.
- C. **Illusionary Age.** Bonsai present an illusionary age; they appear to be of a certain age regardless of their actual age. The trunk, branch and foliage mass should be compatible; consistent with the illusionary age which the bonsai represents.
 - a. A **Juvenile** tree, 10 - 25 years old, has a slender trunk, little taper, upward sweeping branch growth, foliage in a ball shape. The ratio of lower trunk to branches is about 50/50.
 - b. **Mature tree**, 25 - 75 years old, has some taper in the trunk, ramification of the roots, greater trunk diameter and maturing bark. There is more foliage mass in proportion to the lower trunk. Lower branches begin to grow outward so the tree begins to get broader.
 - c. **Old** trees, 75 - 250 years, have significantly heavier trunks and branches and the branches are more horizontal or drooping.
 - d. The **Ancient** trees, 250 + years, have very heavy trunks, natural dead wood, open wounds, scars, mature bark and a crown which is broader and more rounded. It is just surviving with short branches, understated foliage close to the trunk. The trunk may be split or it may be squat and robust; almost as wide as it is high.

V. HARMONY in the DISPLAY of BONSAI

1. In the **display** of bonsai, concepts of understatement, space, perspective, visual movement, rhythm, balance, and natural appearance apply in order for there to be harmony.
 1. **Focal point.** Each display and each segment of a display should have a bonsai as a focal point.
 2. **Empty space** on a display table is as important as space which is filled. The empty spaces in front of, between and behind the displayed items establish perimeters or borders to assist the eye in remaining within the viewed grouping.
 3. The **background** should be neutral. A cluttered background is distracting and makes it difficult for the eye to follow the line in the nearer image.
 4. **Triangulation** is not only considered in the vertical dimension but also in the horizontal plane on the surface of the display table.
 5. **Stands** must be in proportion to the bonsai being displayed and should complement the color, shape or texture of the item being displayed.
2. Most of these concepts of harmony involving the display of bonsai apply to the outdoor display also. Plants should be thoughtfully grouped, should have adequate empty space, should not be lined up side by side and should have a relatively non-distracting background.

VI. SUMMARY

- A. A harmonious bonsai is one whose lines, shape, size, container and display environment blend together to present a beautiful coordinated scene.
- B. Various elements, concepts and conditions contribute to the existence of harmony in a given composition. They include: understatement, perspective, line and its continuity and rhythm, balance, the soul and the spirit of the creation, natural appearance, and its display.

Coming Soon
Bonsai Lessons
Beginner and Advanced

Special Classes
Shohin (user 10")
Saikei (Living Landscape)
Kiku (Chrysanthemum)

Contact John Capobianco
516-263-2717

For the teaching schedule
Check the website at
www.suburbanbonsai.com

Robert BonGiorno

www.suburbanponds.com

SUBURBAN
Water Gardens, Inc.

SINCE 1947

211 Burrs Lane
Dix Hills, New York 11746

(631) 643-3500
Fax: (631) 643-3399
e-mail: koi@suburbanponds.com

Bob BonGiorno is offering a 20% discount to any club member of any Bonsai club on all merchandise at Suburban Bonsai. Does not apply to greenhouse space rental.

We still have a few club tee shirts left in the larger sizes. They are still only \$10.00.

Have some trees to sell? Pots, Tools, etc? Why not run an ad in the BSGNY newsletter. Your ad will go to a targeted audience of Bonsai lovers!

For details, call JOHN at 516-263-2717

Bonsai Society of greater New York, Inc.
P. O. Box 115
Baldwin, N. Y. 11510



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