



## October meeting: Hank Miller Fused Ficus

Our October meeting was interesting and inspiring. Hank Miller, one of our Club members, and a bonsai artist for many years, presented his techniques to make a fused trunk tree.

First, we saw his preparation with several seedlings he had grown together in a pot. (Hank has a real problem throwing away cuttings - does anyone else have this problem?!) Hank separated the seedlings, and arranged them with the thicker ones in the middle. At this point, Hank needed help from Christine or Scott, and sometimes both.



They wrapped the multiple seedlings, and then wrapped branches to separate and give shape. Hank did some basic wiring (it appears that helpers should wear goggles for this part!), and trimmed just a bit. He explained that normally he would not do that at this point, but wanted it to fit in the car of whoever won it at the raffle!



Thank you Hank!

## SUISEKI STUDY GROUP

At 6:00 pm, before our regular Club meeting, Bill Valavanis led the Suiseki Study group. The focus was on Mountain Stones. As always, Bill's presentation was focused, informative and entertaining, and included a very useful handout. Some of the members brought their stones, and Bill used those to illustrate many points. The Club has study groups for both Suiseki and Shohin Bonsai, alternating months. Next Suiseki study group will be in January.



## NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, November 24th  
Design Studio 7:00 pm  
Brighton Town Lodge

This is a unique opportunity to bring a couple of your Bonsai trees for suggestions and ideas from 3 Bonsai artists - Harvey Jim and Mark. You will get input on what the "experts" see in your tree as it is now, and then they will offer thoughts on what they would plan to do with the tree for the foreseeable future, including pointers on care and nutrition, watering, winter storage, suggestions for type, color, and size of pots and more. The trees you bring should be styled already. Don't miss this opportunity for valuable consulting!



*The tree on the left has had good work done but wanted some pointers. On the right you see the same tree after just a few pointers.*



*Shohin Bonsai Study group will meet at 6 pm.*  
Brighton Town Lodge at Buckland Park  
1341 Westfall Road, Rochester, NY  
near corner of West-fall and Clinton

We will have individual cold drinks and some light snacks, packaged individually. Thank you to all who usually bring snacks to share, but we won't do this for the next few months.

## 2020-21 Programs:

*continued on page 4*

- November 24 7 pm Design Studio.  
6 pm Shohin Bonsai study group.
- December 15 6 pm Holiday Party & Auction: details pg 3 no study groups
- January 26 Sean Smith Diaza carving (workshop during day)  
6 pm Suiseki study group.
- February 23 7 pm Harvey Carapella Cascade style bonsai.  
6 pm Shohin Bonsai study group

## From our President:

Greetings Friends,

Well so far 2020 has been one helluva year!

In spite of all the challenges, set backs and emotional trials I hope you were able to find small silver linings like more time with your family and perhaps more time with your trees.

Everyone has been forced to deal with these unprecedented times and my hope is you all have made the best of it. I appreciate friends and family more than ever and for those we have not seen for some time you are all missed.

We have been meeting in small groups, social distancing and taking precautions to keep each other healthy. On Halloween Bill Valavanis & I did a Literati Bonsai Seminar which was a first of its kind and we hope to do another one in the future. The weather has been remarkable but they have started playing Christmas music on the radio so better make plans for your Bonsai today because winter is not far away!

- Mark

### Read All About It in Blogs!

Well into the millennium, everything moves at a fast pace AND online. While we still have books, many of our Bonsai teachers use the Blog format to share their knowledge, tips and pointers. As with books and You Tube videos, one can waste a lot of time reading Blogs, and at the same time miss out on the most important information. These are some of Bill's favorites - check them out!

#### **www.eisei-en.com Bjorn BJORHOLM**

The official channel of professional bonsai artist Bjorn BJORHOLM. Watch his excellent bonsai blogs, demos, podcast and other instructional tutorials. His numerous videos can also be found on YouTube. "Bonsai-U" is a free online bonsai tutorial platform and is issued every other Thursday. Subscribe to his blog. He also has an online shop, podcast and bonsai school. Eisei-En Bonsai Garden is located near Nashville, TN.

#### **www.bonsaitonight.com Jonas DUPUICH**

Bonsai artist and teacher Jonas Dupuich writes the best educational blog twice weekly on many topics. His post archives cover species, techniques, care, exhibits and developments. Subscribe to his blog and podcast. He also offers video consulting, a forum and an online store. Bonsai Tonight nursery is located in Alameda, CA.

#### **www.bonsaimirai.com Ryan NEIL**

Professional bonsai artist Ryan Neil offers "Bonsai Mirai Live" demonstrations/tutorials by paid subscriptions. However, there are often free programs as well as a free 7 day trial offered. An online store, forum, podcast and blog are available as well as instruction. Bonsai Mirai is located near Portland, OR.

## Literati Seminar by project involved

We believe this Seminar, devoted exclusively to Literati Bonsai, is the first not only in this country, but in the world. Our own Bill Valavanis and Mark Arpag let us in a fascinating walk through the history of Literati Bonsai, beginning, of course in China. Bill and Mark showed slides that presented this history through books, paintings and pictures of many trees.



Both Bill and Mark spoke of the many different examples of Literati Bonsai,

and made the point that Literati is not as much a specific set of rules, but much more of a feeling.



Project Involved is a joint effort led by our own club member John Wiessinger to focus on in depth examination of several aspects of the study of and work with Bonsai. Look for announcements about future events over the winter and the spring.



## SHOHIN BONSAI CORNER

This month we will gather @ 6pm to discuss Shohin Bonsai in our alternating monthly study group. Since this is our Design Studio evening please bring in your Shohin or smaller miniature Bonsai for feed back & advice on care, design improvements, pot selection or any other questions. If you don't have Shohin size Bonsai, bring your questions or listen to the discussion & appreciate the trees. Discussion will revolve around what makes a good Shohin Bonsai and methods to improve them.

As a reminder, we will alternate Shohin Bonsai and Suiseki Study Groups, as listed in the calendar, p. 1&4.



The Ultimate Bonsai Handbook by Yukio Hirose, published by Tuttle Publishing – Rutland, Vermont.

A new book designed for the beginner but containing information that would be of value to everyone. After covering the basics and important maintenance and care for your trees, it covers the development of 70 types of Bonsai in a series of successive photos. The book has over 1000 photos. The section on each individual tree includes month by month development and a very useful calendar for that particular tree. Finally, there is a short section on Kusamono for those who wish to look at companion plants. There is a section on displaying Bonsai indoors but look at that section with caution. The book also includes a very concise list of terms used in Bonsai. The only drawback to the book when you first read it is the author lists the trees by Japanese terms and not English. The scientific nomenclature of trees is insufficient but then how many of us use those terms on a regular basis. He does use common names for each tree.

You'll enjoy looking through this book. — Joe Lentner, librarian

## In Memoriam



Our club, and everyone she has ever spent time with, has lost a valued person with the passing of Alice Chen. She always had a smile and lots of heart and talent. Alice was very eager to participate, to answer any questions, and to help us all. We will all miss Alice.

## Details about Holiday party and auction

As we all know, this year is different in many ways. Our Holiday party will be no exception. Usually, we bring food to share, and our caterer-in-chief, Rick Marriott, puts on a nice spread of shrimp, and other special delights. This year we need to plan more carefully, and arrange our food in advance, so that it can be individually wrapped.

Please make your reservation by Tuesday, Dec. 1, which is when the December Billboard will come out. Please send your reservation to Diane Koretz:  
treasurer@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org

As for the true highlight of the Party, start making your plans now for our Auction. First, use this opportunity to share something special. Please wrap the item(s) and mark if it is bonsai related. PLEASE - no gag gifts. Trees are welcome, unwrapped. Then - bring your cash, checkbook and/or card to bid early and often. This is a wonderful fundraiser for the club, and the funds raised support our club's programs, including speakers.



## Another Way to Change Branch Orientation

By Ross Clark, from the American Bonsai Society Newsletter,  
October 2019 issue

My modest bonsai “operation” includes experimenting with some different species to see if they can be grown in bonsai containers and have the potential of becoming decent bonsai someday. One of those trials involves a few small-leaved Southeastern oaks. Old oaks that have grown in the open usually have main branches which spread widely, giving the overall mature tree an iconically pleasing spreading form. To enhance appearance of age in young oaks, it’s important to spread the branches early, before trees become too large. Also, healthy oaks usually will open two or more buds in spring near the end of their twigs. Artificially spreading the branches of young oaks gives the newest twigs more access to direct sun, adding complexity to the tree faster.

Common ways that we use to change the orientation of branches include wiring (including heavy bends at times), propping stems apart with heavy wires, and guy wires, sometimes with turnbuckles. There is another way to prop branches apart in certain situations that is easier to do and requires less special material. However, it is not appropriate for a tree that will be displayed.

Wooden shims are narrow materials that are often inserted between objects to fill cracks, to level appliances or furniture and similar situations. In certain situations, I like to use notched cut-to-width-and-length wooden shims in place of wire props or heavy wiring. It’s really a low-brow technique, but it avoids wiring and rewiring and the risk of wire scars, so I thought I would mention it to you. When shims occasionally fall out, they can quickly be replaced in the original configuration.



Using props made from wooden shims to spread the main branches of a young (12 yrs from seed) Eastern Live Oak (*Quercus Virginiana*).



Close up to show notched ends and shim placement.

\*\*\*\*Special notice \*\*\*\* At our September 25 Club meeting, a proposal was made and approved to send \$200 to Owen Reich, good Bonsai friend to all, whose studio was destroyed by the Kirkland warehouse fire in Nashville TN. Those wishing to make additional contributions can send them to Owen at:  
1015 W Kirkland Ave, #423, Nashville, TN 37216

## More Events information

This list is continued from page 1, with some additional information where we think it is needed.

- **March 12 - 15 Garden Scape**
- **March 23 - 7 pm Surprise program and Workshop with Bill Valavanis**  
**6 pm Suiseki study group**
- **April 27 Boon Manikitivipart,** lecture and demo for the evening meeting with a limited workshop during the day  
**6 pm Shohin Bonsai study group**
- **May 15 & 16 BSUNY Bonsai Show** - much about this show is still up in the air, but start thinking now about one of your trees to display. The club will have opportunities to help you get *your* tree ready for this show.
- **June 15 - Picnic & Auction**
- **July 27 - Bring your own tree**  
**6 pm Suiseki study group**
- **August 24 -Bring your own tree**  
**6 pm Shohin Bonsai study group**

Billboard is brought to you by:  
President: Mark Arpag  
[president@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org](mailto:president@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org)

Co-editors & photographers:  
Marti & Tom Macinski  
[billboard@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org](mailto:billboard@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org)

Contributors: Mark Arpag, Bill Valavanis, BonsaiTonight, Les Allen, Joe Lentner, Marti & Tom Macinski

Please submit any ideas for the Billboard to Marti & Tom. We took the color background out to save your printer ink! We’re hoping to move to an email format in the near future, probably using Mailchimp. If you have ideas for the Billboard, please email Marti & Tom:  
[billboard@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org](mailto:billboard@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org)