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# Billboard

Newsletter of Bonsai Society of Upstate York Inc.



## Special extra June meeting

Young Choe is a kusamono artist who studied traditional art, ink painting and calligraphy in her native Korea before she moved to the United States. With her BS horticultural degree she currently works at the US National Arboretum, in Washington, DC. While volunteering at the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum she was able to bring her artistic talent together with her horticultural knowledge to create kusamono. Ms. Choe traveled to Japan to study this unique and little-known art form with Keiko Yamane, the leading kusamono artist in Japan and former student of Saburo Kato. Ms. Choe worked with native plants at the USDA, NRCS, National Plant Materials Center in Beltsville, MD and was also a propagation horticulturist at the US National Arboretum. Together with her artistic background and solid understanding of plant material she has become the leading kusamono artist outside Japan. She now travels around the world sharing her love of kusamono through lecture/demonstrations, workshops and exhibit. Her talent and artistry will be part of the upcoming US National Bonsai Exhibition.



We have a unique opportunity to preview her art at a special meeting on *Sunday, June 13, at 6:30 pm*. She will share her work with kusamono - roughly translated as "grass thing" - and she will show us how beautiful even weeds can be when treated with respect and artistry.



An article in the Washington Post last summer featured Ms. Choe and her work: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/home/kusamono-the-softer-side-of-bonsai/2020/07/28/1ee152b0-cc3a-11ea-bc6a-6841b28d9093\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/home/kusamono-the-softer-side-of-bonsai/2020/07/28/1ee152b0-cc3a-11ea-bc6a-6841b28d9093_story.html)

Ms. Choe's lecture and demonstration will be Sunday evening, June 13 at 6:30 pm, at International Bonsai Arboretum. Space is limited, so reservations are required, and any one who reserves but does not show will be charged a \$10 fee. Please bring your own chair. Make your reservation by email to our treasurer Diane Koretz: [treasurer@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org](mailto:treasurer@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org).

We are so thrilled that Ms. Choe will also conduct a hands-on workshop from 1 - 4 in the afternoon. The cost of that workshop is \$50.00, and to reserve you should first email treasurer Diane Koretz and she will instruct you on whether to mail or bring your check to the workshop.

*Please read "things to bring" on page 4 if you plan to attend the workshop.*

## NEXT MEETING

**Tuesday, June 15 at 6 p.m.  
Summer picnic & Auction  
Brighton Town Lodge  
at Buckland Park**

Please help support the club by bringing your plants and bonsai related materials for sale. We'll start at 5 pm with a "Sell or Swap". Please mark your prices clearly, and set up your own table or area to work with customers. 10% of these sales go to the club. These funds help support our first-class programs, speakers and workshops.

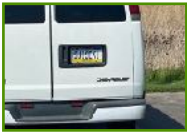
We'll break at 6 for our picnic dinner, with great summer picnic food.

Then at 7 pm, we'll have a short business meeting, and move right into the auction. Please bring bonsai or pre-bonsai plants, pots, tools or other bonsai accessories. Register your items between 6:30 and 7. 10% of your proceeds are the club's commission, although you are welcome to donate more - some folks have donated 50% or more!

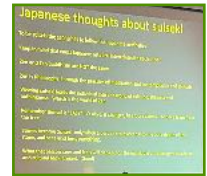
The Brighton Town Lodge is at 1341 Westfall Road, Rochester, NY near the corner of Westfall and Clinton.

Our fearless Refreshment Manager, Rick Marriot, has arranged for superb picnic food, including pulled pork and chicken, and many sides. We are not yet able to bring food to share. Although there is no cost for the picnic, we do want to help Rick plan and order the right amount of food, so please let us know if you plan to come by the end of Thursday, June 9, 2021. To reserve, please send an email to Marti & Tom, Billboard editors, at: [billboard@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org](mailto:billboard@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org).

## May meeting report



Sean Smith was our featured presenter in May, and everyone will agree that his presentation was entertaining and instructive. After an introduction by Ron Maggio, who described Sean as “the best Diaza maker outside of Japan,” Sean went to work to broaden our understanding of Suiseki.



He describes himself as a carpenter who turned to Bonsai and then to Suiseki. His description of Bill’s critique of some of the first tables he made was vivid and very funny.

Sean explained that Suiseki means water stone, and that most of the stones are found in and around water. Suiseki is a very personal art form, and that something about the stone intrigues the artist who collects the stone. Most stones represent something in nature. Stones



are displayed in a dish with water and sand in the summer, and on a diaza in the winter. One interesting point made is that originally the Japanese did not display Bonsai inside a tea house or room, because they were thought of as a dirty garden plant.

Suiseki collecting develops over time, and everyone who does it becomes pickier as the eye becomes better with practice. Clearly, Sean’s eyes have had a lot of practice. Generally the stones are dark, and Suiseki are often displayed with tenpei and tenkei to give context. “Tenpei” and “Tenkei” are little objects such as a fisherman, a temple, or an animal, which help to explain the scene set by the Suiseki. “In Japan, everything has a story” according to Sean.



Sean went into great detail on the Kiri Baku, or storage container, for the Suiseki. We learned about the wood, and the convention for labeling the stone and the owner.



Everyone learned something from Sean’s presentation, and the raffle tickets sold well. Theresa, our newest member, won the raffle. She’ll be able to display her Suiseki along with the Spruce tree from Boon, which she won last month.

During the day, Sean offered a two part workshop where students learned to create their own diaza, for the stone they received as part of the workshop. This was not just a “how to” session, as Sean interspersed history, art and culture into the workshop. He also provided valuable insight into tools, stain, and finishing the diazas. In the afternoon the workshop focused on creating a Kiri Baku (storage box) for their Suiseki. And again, lots of background information went along with the “how to” portion.



## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Greeting Friends,

Here we are with early summer staring right at us! Strange spring, let’s see what summer brings.

So far it has been a bumper year for pests & fungus. Please check your trees carefully & identify any signs of distress. Remember the time for action is while the patient is still viable.

This month is busy but please find the time to visit our friends in Buffalo this weekend, it sounds like another great show is planned and it’s an easy ride up the thruway. Suiseki lovers note Les Allen will be vending on Saturday along with a number of other vendors both days as well.

We are fortunate to have a special Young Choe workshop & program followed by our picnic & Club sale & auction 2 days later. Things are starting to open up and hopefully it will make it easier to schedule our Project Involved functions. Speaking of Project Involved it would be great to have a few people step up to help with our website, we all would appreciate it!

Mark

## SHOHIN BONSAI FEATURE OF THE MONTH



### Shohin Bonsai, Shimpaku Juniper

This tree needs a visual aid to make sense of my comments, so I altered the original photo with my suggested changes. The original has the Gray background. I feel it is out of balance in two main ways. One, the deadwood is massive, it's very sculptural and I feel it's the main reason this tree was created, to showcase the beautiful movement, shape and depth of the deadwood, but it over powers the foliage. Two, it leans to the right a little too much lowering the foliage and making it look and feel out of balance, like it's going to fall over. My changes with the Black background are subtle changes, but I feel they make a big difference. I centered the tree in the pot, I made the tree a little more upright, which raises the foliage up, and added a little more foliage. I feel the changes puts the tree in better balance, and makes the foliage a more important part of the tree's design. The Red pot is a Direct Complimentary color combination with the Green foliage creating color contrast. The dramatic shape of the pot compliments the dramatic deadwood.

Harvey Carapella

## SUISEKI BONSAI FEATURE OF THE MONTH

This is a stone Les Allen collected on a summer collecting trip with the Bonsai Society of Upstate New York. It was at one of their favorite collecting sites in the Finger Lakes area. It was unique in that it can be positioned two ways. One as an arch stone, and the other as a boat stone. It is in one of his Japanese suibans with Japanese sand.



*Note: Look for news of this year's collecting trip in the next Billboard.*

## PROJECT INVOLVED EVENT

Project Involved has scheduled the first of hopefully many projects for this year. We will work with a (donated) Trident Maple to take cuttings and start air layers. Participants will go home with cuttings, and will get an extra ticket for the air layers.

This event will be on July 10th, at Bob Blankfield's home, and is Free, but limited to 10 people.

More details will be provided in a separate email.

To RSVP now, send an email to John Wiessinger: [natureetours@gmail.com](mailto:natureetours@gmail.com). You will be given a list of items to bring, and the details of the location.

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## 2021 Programs:

Look for more events as we are able to open up and meet again

- June 5&6 - Buffalo Club show, [see right ->](#)
  - June 13 (Sunday) - Young Choe workshop on kusamano in the afternoon, lecture and demo in the evening. The lecture and demo will be at International Bonsai Arboretum beginning at 6:30 pm. *Please note that space is limited and reservations are required. See page one. Also note that you need to bring a chair.* The workshop will be held from 1 pm - 4 pm, at the International Bonsai Arboretum. You may reserve now for the workshop, fee of \$50.00, by emailing treasurer Diane Koretz: [treasurer@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org](mailto:treasurer@bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org).  
*Things to bring:* a shallow, 5-7" long pot, tools, bonsai soil, Muck-O, and moss. (There will be bonsai soil and Muck-O for sale) Young Choe will have some inexpensive plants for sale.
  - June 15 - Picnic & Auction: we're hoping this Auction will be extra special, and will help make up for not having our Holiday party and Auction. No Shohin Bonsai or Suiseki study groups.  
*Please note reservations are requested, see page one.*
  - June 19 & 20 - International Bonsai Arboretum Open House, 9 - 4 each day
  - July 10 - Project Involved air layering and cutting from Trident Maple
  - July 27 - Bring your own tree - these two meetings are a terrific opportunity to get help from several experts in an informal setting.  
6 pm Shohin Bonsai study group
  - August 24 - Bring your own tree - see info for July  
6 pm Suiseki study group
  - September 11&12 - National Bonsai Exhibition
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### New FREE Bimonthly International BONSAI OnLine Magazine

After publishing International BONSAI for 42 years and producing 164 issues, Bill Valavanis has decided to suspend the printed edition and start producing the magazine in a FREE digital bimonthly format in order to expand his educational offerings. International BONSAI OnLine will continue with the high standards of quality introduced to English language bonsai magazines, and continues to be the first and only professional bonsai magazine published in the United States. In the first month of publication over 16,000 people have viewed the magazine and over and over 1,300 have subscribed. Check it out, and subscribe FREE too! [www.internationalbonsaionline.com](http://www.internationalbonsaionline.com)

## Buffalo Bonsai Society



Saturday & Sunday June 5<sup>th</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
10:00am – 5:00pm

### **BONSAI EXHIBIT & DEMONSTRATIONS**

- Demonstrations daily
- See over 50 members' Bonsai
- Ikebana display and demonstration
- Raffle Tree
- Bonsai and Bonsai related sale area

### Gullo's Garden Center

4767 Southwestern Blvd, Hamburg NY 14075  
(5 Minutes from the I-90)

## Buffalo Bonsai Society Annual Show

Don't forget to support our friends at the Buffalo Bonsai Society by attending their show this weekend.

From our Treasurer:

Thanks to all our members who have submitted their membership dues. We appreciate your ongoing membership. Dues will still be happily accepted for 2021. You can send your check to Treasurer Diane Koretz, PO Box 92215, Rochester, NY 14692

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Please submit any ideas for the Billboard to Marti & Tom. If you have ideas for the BillBoard, please email Marti & Tom:  
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