Landscape Views

The newsletter of the International Saikei Association 栽景

March 2011 Issue 29

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International Saikei Association

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Quick News and Board Activity

Board News

Editor

We held a Board Meeting on the 20th of March and discussed a number of items including a new display format for the Association at shows. We also looked at member services, finance and promoting the association.

If you would like a copy of the minutes please contact David Penny.

david.penny@saikei.co.uk

Around the World

Editor

This will be the last time you will see this section as we are going to create a dedicated section between members news and the gallery for area specific news so come on and let us know about what you and your fellow countrymen are up to in Saikei and Bonsai.

We need to know about shows and local club events like workshops and demonstrations these might include bonsai demonstrations or bonsai shows.

Send your news and events to brian.dale@saikei.co.uk

Learning Opportunities News

Learning Coordinator

We are in the process of reviewing the learning resources so please advise if you have any subjects you wish to be covered in future releases.

We are also interested if you view this newsletter as part of the learning process as we do.

Events and Shows

Eastleigh Bonsai Show

13th of July 2011

Events Coordinator

The Association has been invited to attend the Eastleigh Bonsai Group show at Humbee's Garden Centre which is almost directly opposite Marwell Zoo near Winchester.

The Association will be putting on a display of Saikei and members will be creating a few Saikei under the watchful eye of the president of ISA. There will also be around 90 bonsai on display.

The show will be open from 10.00—16.00

The address is:

Thompsons Lane
Owslebury

Other Shows

Events Coordinator

If you are involved in a society which has a show and you think there might be interest in hosting a stand from the Association please contact me through the VP membership.

Bonsai World 2011

3rd and 4th of September 2011

Events Coordinator

The Association has been invited to attend the Bonsai World show at K2 Leisure Centre in Crawley, West Sussex.

The Association will be putting on a display of Saikei and other Japanese Cultural Activities will be demonstrated. There will also be some of the best bonsai in the country on display.

We will post more details in the next newsletter.

The address is:

K2 Leisure Centre, Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 9BQ

The website for further information is:

http://www.bonsaiworld2011.co.uk/index.htm

If any member outside the UK wishes to attend this event please contact us and we will arrange to have local information sent to you regarding where to stay, local airports, places to eat and local contacts for the Association.

Profile on Tom Yamamoto

Tom Yamamoto was a Japanese American born in Honolulu, HA, the youngest of six children. He would graduate from McKinley H.S. (Honolulu) and enter the military service two years later in 1944. His first exposure to bonsai would come in 1946 when he was a member of the U.S. Occupation Forces in Japan. He would be fortunate to be stationed in Japan on and off for eleven years. During this time he would become very interested in bonsai and start to learn this fascinating art. One unfortunate thing about being in the service is that whenever you are transferred, you can't take the bonsai with you. Upon retirement in 1965, a veteran of WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, Tom would decide to go back to Japan to learn more about bonsai When he would start his training under Mr. Kawamoto and other experts, he had no idea that one day he too would be teaching this art. .

Tom showed a natural leaning towards Bonsai and Saikei and Toshio Kawamoto made Tom a teacher at the Bonsai Saikei Institute where he his English speaking abilities became invaluable as Bonsai and Saikei became a worldwide interest, and people travelled to Japan to learn these fascinating arts. Some of his students would be Ambassadors from other countries and their wives. There were also many people working at the Embassies and other foreigners living temporarily in Japan. Tom would enjoy sharing his Bonsai-Saikei knowledge with others.

Tom would travel all over the world initially with Toshio Kawamoto and then in his own right as a Saikei master and conduct workshops and demonstrations of this beautiful art.

Tom Yamamoto (Left) with Toshio Kawamoto

Back to Basics

Start with cheap materials

When first starting in Saikei it is best to start with cheap materials such as plastic trays rocks collected from your garden and cheap conifers from a garden centre. If the cost of materials is kept to a minimum this will enable you to create Saikei without the confines set by expensive material, it will allow you to experiment with different ideas and different combinations so that you understand the basics of Saikei. Although we do not actively encourage students to think of any piece of material as unimportant the financial impact of getting it wrong is reduced. In the following sections we will give you various options for getting started in Saikei and practising the technique and art that makes this hobby so enjoyable.

Beginners trees

As indicated above it is possible to start Saikei with minimal cost we actively promote the propagation of trees through cuttings and seed as this will allow for the early training of trees ready to be used in Saikei. There are various trees which will provide a good starter material for those new to the art of Saikei, these trees will generally have certain characteristics indicated below:

- Be hardy for the climate you live in.
- Strong rooting.
- Resilient.
- Able to withstand both drought and poor care.
- Small leaves so that they appear in scale.

As you can see from the above this narrows the field considerably. In the northern hemisphere we often start beginners on tree material like junipers, thuja, chamaecyparis and cotoneaster as these fulfil the above criteria. As you progress in your Saikei knowledge you will be able to try less hardy trees that have a more demanding care regime.

Choosing practice materials

When choosing practice materials it is important to ensure that they meet your requirements, you should think about the location in which they must grow, your budget, the amount of care and time you are able to give them. When choosing trees it is important to to make sure that they are healthy, have been well cared for and they meet the above criteria. Although rocks will not suffer any ill effects from being positioned in a composition and then removed I always feel that it is better to start with cheap rocks in case you find you do not like the art of Saikei however unlikely that is.

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Containers

As with rocks and trees the expense of the pot should be kept to a minimum you may wish to try a seed tray, a terracotta drip tray or any other tray type pot. The one thing with using any form of tray is that it must be able to drain excess water away there will need to be drainage holes of a reasonable size. As your skills improve and you start to create Saikei that you wish to keep and develop, then you will be able to select a bonsai pot of suitable size and depth to act as the frame for your landscape.

Soil Preparation

Soil is probably one of the most misunderstood elements of Saikei, different soils should be based on the trees planted within, and also the style of the composition. For instance you would not use the same soil mix for junipers as you would for cotoneaster, these two trees have very different requirements, likewise you would not use the same soil mix for an Alpine landscape with high rock placement as for lowland Saikei.

Getting Experience and Help

Many people find it a more rewarding experience to undertake their first composition under the guidance of more experienced individuals, perhaps as part of a workshop or class, but this is not a 'must' and each person should find their own path. Many people who are new to Saikei will eventually attend a class, workshop, show or conference to find out a bit more and to experience Saikei in a way that no book can ever achieve. The advantage of attending one of these events is the chance to meet other Saikei enthusiasts and more experienced artists who will be able to help with any composition problems. You should of course always remember that it is your Saikei so only change it if it feels right. Membership to an association will often improve the Saikei experience and provides a port of call with any problems, often associations will have publications and fact sheets that you will be able to purchase, request or download and these will provide valuable learning experiences. If you can try to attend a class as this will help to put things straight in your mind if you are having any issues and always take along your compositions for advice. As a teacher of Saikei for 15 years it is very helpful to see what students have been trying so that the learning experience can be catered to the individuals needs.

Composing your first Saikei

Composing your first Saikei is an exciting experience, you may have of course already given Saikei a go and I hope that your first Saikei turned out well. Preparation is the key with creating your first Saikei, make sure you have all the materials prepared in advance so that you can concentrate on creating a pleasing composition.

Some examples of Beginners Saikei composed during ISA Workshops

Saikei Tree Styles— Multiple Trunk Style

Multiple Trunk Style in Saikei

I have to admit that I do not use the multiple trunk style in Saikei as much as I should, this is not a reflection on the ability of this style to appear natural in Saikei, it is purely a personal preference that I prefer to use singular trees thus giving me a better ability to position the trunks exactly as I wish them to be. If you look around when you are travelling you will see any number of multiple trunk trees in a variety of different landscapes therefore it is easy to see why Toshio Kawamoto uses these trees very effectively.

What Constitutes a Multiple Trunk Style
A multiple trunk style is defined simply by the number of trunks emanating from a single root base this will include clump style as well as root connected. Using the standard formula a multiple trunk style tree will have the following:

- Multiple trunks emanating from a single root base.
- A good radial root system.

The trunks may move in any direction and there is no set way in which the branches need to be treated.

Creating a Multiple Trunk Style From Nursery Stock

There are effectively two ways in which a multiple trunk style tree can be developed from nursery stock.

- The first of these is to select a tree that has an natural multi-trunking.
- The second is to select a tree that has multiple trunks high up on the plant that can then be a layered to create a multiple trunk style tree.

With the selection of a tree that has a natural multi-trunk habit we are able to start work immediately with most material it will be a matter of clearing out the lower section to reveal the multi-trunks, once this has been completed we can evaluate the material and make a selection of the trunks that we wish to use. After we have made the selection we can then start to work with the branches in order to have a good multi-trunk style.

If we choose to use the second route we will first need to air layer the part of the tree that we intend to

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use. Different types of tree require different techniques to achieve roots during an air layering but it will normally take between six and 12 months to achieve sufficient root to separate the tree from the stock. Once the air layering has been achieved it is best to allow the same period again for the tree to settle before styling as in option one.

Creating a Multiple Trunk Style From Cuttings or Seed

Cuttings and seed can provide a very useful way of achieving this style however allowing for growth this is not a quick way of achieving a multiple trunk style tree. I have personally found that cuttings work very well if you have the time to develop the tree, one way of speeding up this process is to plant in the ground or in an oversized pot, this will rapidly increase the growth of the tree and thus the development time is reduced. When creating a multiple trunk tree from seed you will need to terminate the primary shoot at an early age to encourage multiple branches which will then become trunks. With both cuttings and seed it is very likely that a new root base will need to be formed where the multiple trunks emanate, this can be done very early in the development process as soon as the multiple trunks have started to form.

Roots

Roots in the multiple trunk style should emanate radially from the multiple trunks, this is important to provide a strong visible anchor point for the multiple trunks. If this is not naturally occurring then it is possible to create this root base by layering or by grafting roots to the lower trunk.

Trunk

As previously mentioned the trunks and have any movement that you wish but they must harmonise with the other trunks in order to create a good looking multiple trunk tree. The early treatment of these trunks will ultimately provide a harmonised tree, so it is important to wire and shape as early as possible.

Branches

The branches need to reflect the fact that the tree has multiple trunks therefore it is likely to have less

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branches to avoid becoming a dense shrub. As you select each branch you will need to take into account the other trunks and branches that are in close proximity. I normally start with the largest tree and work down as this is effectively the natural way that a tree would develop because the main tree is stronger it will shade out weaker branches which would then wither and die.

Foliage

There are no particular guidelines for the treatment of foliage in this style as it will depend on the type of setting that you visualise the tree in, for instance a multiple trunk tree in a windswept landscape will of course have foliage and branches that reflect that climate, and of course other landscapes with their natural forces will affect the foliage in a different way. So the key is to think of the location and environmental forces that will shape the tree.

A Berberis in Multi-trunk style being trained in a demonstration ready for Saikei.

Members News

Membership Fees 2011

This will be the last newsletter for those of you that have not renewed or paid your membership fees for 2011, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking you for your previous support and hope that you understand that in order to move the association forward we will need funds to finance the developments.

I would like to ask that you please reconsider renewing your membership and we feel, as i hope you do, that at £5.00 for a year these fees are not over excessive. I would also like to ask that if you feel that there is any way in which we could improve the level of benefit that you get as members please let us know and we will give it very serious consideration.

A number of ideas have been voice of board meetings recently including one of running a workshop for members where you can have a day of hands-on experience under the guidance of a number of the ISA team, learning resources to improve your skill level, demonstrator lists for Saikei and Bonsai and show attendance. Unfortunately as all of us are aware venues for workshops cost money and without the valued support of members these events cannot go ahead.

So we ask you once again please give serious consideration to continuing your membership with us so that we in turn might support you in your Saikei learning. If you decide not to renew your membership i hope that you might be able to give it consideration again in the future.

Thank you and kind regards,

David Penny—President

The fees for 2011 remain unchanged at £5.00 for individuals and £8.00 for couples.

How to Pay your Membership Fees

Please send your cheque to Brian Dale or contact him to get a standing order form to pay annually directly from your bank.

We have also arranged a online payment scheme with PayPal and details of this can be obtained by contacting the vice president membership on the email below.

brian.dale@saikei.co.uk

Members News cont...

Show Help

If you are able to help but either of the two shows please make contact with the show secretary who will be delighted to take your name ready for production of the rotas. On both shows we will require people to help set up and also to break down at the end of the day as well as people to man and act as promoters for the Association.

These both promise to be very good events with plenty of trees and traders all displayed for your enjoyment, there may be an opportunity to get hold of a pot or tools that you might need. There will also be the opportunity to meet and discuss Saikei with members of the board, if you have a Saikei that you wish to discuss or get ideas on please bring it along and there will be individuals able to discuss and help with any Saikei problems.

Please remember that at each show we hold a best in show Saikei so if you have a Saikei but you wish to display please contact the show coordinator with details of which show you wish to display and the size of your composition.

Feedback Please

1. We are currently seeking some ideas for workshop venues and would be interested to hear from any members.
2. Please can you let us know if you have any ideas for improvements to the services that are currently provided to members.
3. The current learning resources are being reviewed and we would be interested to hear if there are any subjects which members would like to learn more about.

International News

Romania

We are pleased to announce that the Romanian Regional director has advised of the formation of the Romanian Bonsai Association. Please see email received below:

I am pleased to inform you of the recently established RO-Bonsai Association, the first association of bonsai, penjing and Saikei enthusiasts in Romania. The association has a site www.ro-bonsai.ro, a RO-BONSAI MAGAZIN magazine and e-mail has ro.bonsai@yahoo.com

We hope to raise at least at the height of momentum that was established this association.

Best regards,

Radu Lucian Radu

President of RO-BONSAI Association

We wish them all the best and offer our hand in friendship.

Let us know your Countries Saikei and Bonsai news

We are asking all members to keep us informed of events and news in their countries. We want your events to be successful so please let us know and we will also put them on the website.

Please send all submissions to the editor at brian.dale@saikei.co.uk

Views from a Lens

send your photos to brian.dale@saikei.co.uk

Name: Windswept Shore

Created: 1960's

Keeper: Toshio Kawamoto

Name: Un Named (detailed article next issue)

Created: 2011

Keeper: Craig Jurd (Australia)

Name: Wooded Gorge

Created: 1991

Keeper: David Penny (UK)

Name: Inspiration

Created:

Keeper: Mother Nature

Photos can be of Saikei, other tray landscape arts or inspirational landscapes.

Suppliers

Green Lawns Bonsai, Hadleigh Road, Boxford, Nr Sudbury, CO10 5JH

Phone: 08700347765
Email: enquiries@greenlawnsbonsai.co.uk
Website: www.greenlawnsbonsai.co.uk

Downsview Bonsai, 126 Wannock Lane, Lower Willingdon, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN20 9SJ

Phone: 01323 485656

Email: info@downsviewbonsai.co.uk

Website: www.downsviewbonsaitreenursery.co.uk

Southampton Bonsai Trees 6, Farmery Close, Swaythling, Southampton, SO18 2JX

Phone: 023 8049 5729

Email: info@bonsai-trees.com

Website: www.bonsaitreessouthampton.co.uk

Bushukan Bonsai Ricbra, Lower Road, Hockley, Essex SS5 5NL

Phone: 01702 201029

Email: bushukan-bonsai@ic24.net

Website: www.bushukan-bonsai.com

Clubs

Dai Ichi Bonsai Group (Essex)

Meets at Shenfield Village Hall, 1st Monday of each month call 01277 625 298

Eastbourne and Wealden Bonsai Club (Sussex)

Meets Hellingly Village Hall, 2nd Monday of the Month, call 01323 731 369

Eastleigh Bonsai Club (Hampshire)

Meets 2nd Monday of the Month, call 01489 789 962 or 07795 187 632

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