June 2009

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SAIKEI - LIVING

Landscape Views

The e.magazine of the International Saikei Association

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INTERNATIONAL SAIKEI ASSOCIATION

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Show Success for ISA

Brian Dale

The executive and members who attended the Green Lawns show are still recovering from a great weekend. During the weekend we had a great deal of interest from bonsai enthusiasts and the general public alike.

The demonstration of Saikei due to take place on the Sunday was moved to the Saturday and was watched by around 40 people. The style David chose for the day was an alpine gorge and you can see the results opposite all created in just over 2 hours including the preamble talk.

We have included some pictures of the show for your enjoyment. We hope to see some of you at the Sussex Bonsai Group show in Hove town hall on the 7th and 8th of August.

Protect Your Moss

David Penny

With another major show on the horizon I decided that this year the birds would not take advantage of my dedication to growing copious amounts of beautiful moss on my Saikei. This year I have employed some vegetable netting from a garden center and used it on my shade frame to totally protect the Saikei from attack.

In order to prevent the birds from flying into it I have hung bright coloured string all the way along the net so that it is obvious that it is there.

So far so good the moss has remained intact ready for show.

"FAMOUS LAST WORDS"

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In The Workshop

Alpine Saikei

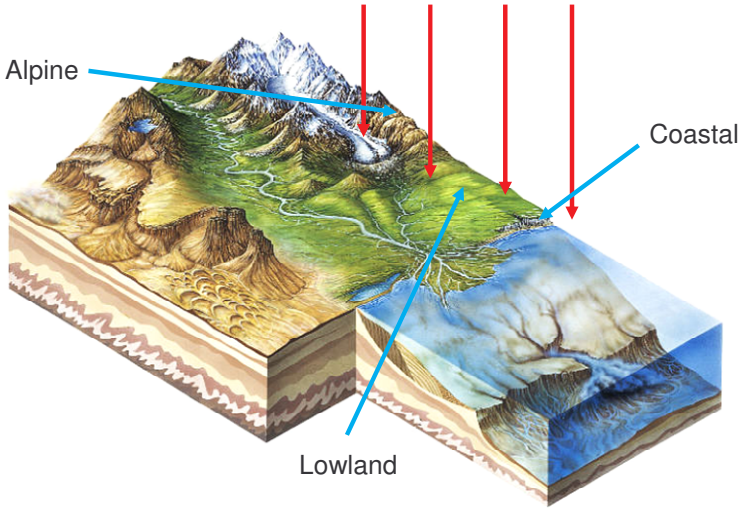
In this handout we will be looking at the most dramatic style in Saikei that of Alpine (mountains to you and me). This is my favourite style in Saikei as it gives the most scope for interpretation, to illustrate this I have included 2 pictures of very famous Saikei by Toshio Kawamoto.

Alpine Ravine

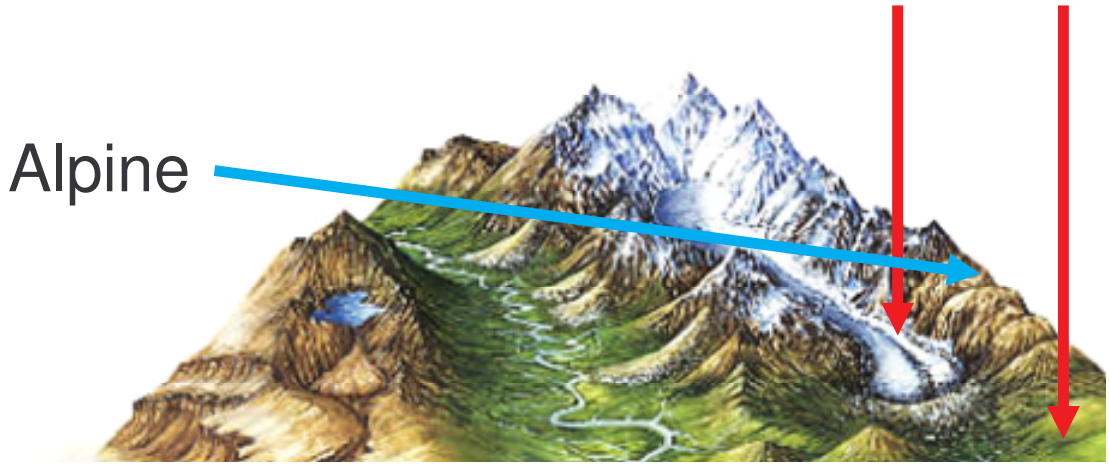
Alpine Meadow

I am sure you can see the similar shape of the trees as apposed to the total difference in their use, in the ravine composition you can see the dramatic affect of the sheer cliffs falling into the rapids below, I can almost hear the water smashing against the rocks. The meadow planting however has a much less dramatic feel and although when I look at this I think of the highlands of Scotland and the cold wind that chills you, I believe it is a more relaxing composition.

As you can see the variation in this style is almost limitless but I recently used a picture in a demonstration which I think helps to define the 3 styles and their place in Saikei.



You can see the points in the landscape that relate to each style. I have taken alpine in a bit closer so you can see the variations involved



You can see that the Saikei design can be taken from the mountain top or side right down to the foot hills of the mountain.

The secret to good alpine compositions is the position and aspect of the rocks, to truly explain rock placement and aspect would probably use up this handout, but a tip would be to think of the rock as a mountain side or as a part of a mountain and to study how mountains look.

To make an alpine Saikei you will need a tray, rock and trees suitable for the variation of alpine style you have chosen. The trees will need to be thin in width to give the impression of an alpine tree (I saw a lot of alpine larch and spruce in the Alps and they all had the same shape, tall and thin).

- Prepare the pot by covering the drainage holes with large grade net.
- Put in clay or sand where you need to place the rocks (remember if you are going to do a ravine or mountain side they must be secure)
- If you are creating a ravine or mountainside and you have more than 1 rock forming a cliff you may wish to place clay between the rocks to stabilise and prevent soil from falling out of the gaps.
- Now place a layer of soil so that when you place the trees they are level with the top of the cliff and put the trees in place. You may like to place trees in the side of the cliff and at the bottom particularly for a mountain side.
- Now mound the soil around the trees and place moss on the surface of the soil.
- Often a small amount of grit placed at the base of cliffs can be affective to represent rock falls.

I hope you have fun and look forward to seeing the results soon.

Suppliers

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Affiliated Bonsai Groups

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Eastbourne and Wealden Bonsai Club (Sussex)
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