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NOTES FROM THE SIDELINES:

Almudena Veiga-Lopez – Recording Secretary

April 28, 2010 Meeting - Invited Guest – Marco Invernizzi

Club members started gathering at MBG around 7:00PM to share bonsai experiences and beautiful flowering bonsai trees brought by a few club members. At 7:30PM Alfonso Tercero welcomed the internationally recognized Bonsai Master Marco Invernizzi from Italy (www.marcoinvernizzi.com).

Marco led an incredible interactive evening. He began by commenting on a yew tree from the MBG collection started as a bonsai in 1983 and commenting on its qualities, such as the old-looking bark that makes this specimen a great bonsai tree.

After that, an old Scotch Pine cared for by George Randall was used as great starting material for the evening. Marco spent almost 2 hours working on the pine that was later raffled and awarded to the lucky AABS club member Kyle Kipp.

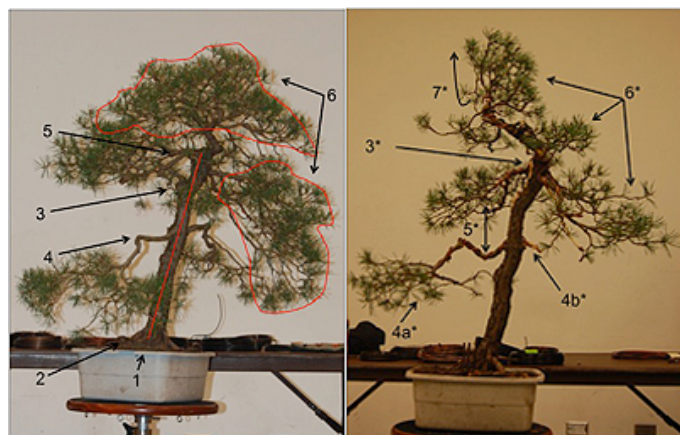
After studying the tree Marco decided on the bonsai tree style. In this case, he chose a Literati because we can see the trunk up to the apex of the tree and it has some taper, but not too marked (#1). He started off by removing selected surfacing roots and a few other dead roots (#2). He said one needs to be careful in the case of removing bigger roots. The option then may be to cut off a little of the root each year and when repotting to check how many roots are connected to it.

Another major problem of the tree is the main bump midway to the top (#3) that Marco solved by making a *shari* (#3*). He managed to create a natural *shari* by pulling from the bark, as nature will do, avoiding an artificial cut. He decided to enlarge the scar until the start of the second left branch. Also, both lower branches form an unpleasant cross (#4). Marco decided to keep the left branch; much healthier and with a much older

look. He lowered the left branch by wiring it (#4a*) and made a short cut into the right branch transforming it into a short *jin* (#4b*).

Working his way up, Marco decided to use the second branch to the left and lowered it but kept enough space to the first branch (#5*). A reduction in the foliage of the second right branch and top was also necessary to keep the foliage pads compact (#6 & 6*). In the future, it will be important to prune in order to obtain an optimal ramification system. Marco wired the top part of the trunk improving the dynamics of the tree trunk line (#7*).

In less than 2 hours, a great result and a wonderful learning experience! Thank you Marco!



Japan's Masahiko Kimura is arguably the world's most renowned bonsai artist. Much of his work involves large conifers with fantastic shapes and lots of dramatic carved deadwood. As impressive as his work is, that style is not a favorite of mine. Nick Lenz is one of America's best bonsai artists. He often puts absolutely magnificent trees in old hubcaps or the like. Sometimes he carves Halloween faces in the knotholes. That jars one's sensibility, which is probably his intent. The work of Michigan bonsai artist Jack Wikle is also nationally known but it is more conventional. I have never seen a tree of Jack's that I did not like and some of his trees are among my favorites of all time.

There are in bonsai, as in other forms of art, different approaches which produce different results in the end product. In other forms of art these different approaches are called "schools," "genres," or "currents." Often they result from explicit attempts by an artist to get people to experience the work in a new and atypical way. Picasso's work is a famous and successful example of this process. But even the kind of success Picasso had does not mean the new ways are inherently any better than the previous ways of doing things. After a while even the most successful new way will become the "previous way." People bring a wide range of perspectives and expectations to the appreciation of any art, so they respond differently to a given piece of work. Beauty is truly in the eye of the beholder. Like most people, I have certain preferences in schools of painting. There is no reason for me to change them even if I could. But there is also no reason for me to fault anyone else's preferences either. That is true for bonsai as well.

Germany's Walter Pall is a leading proponent of the "naturalistic" school of bonsai design. Walter describes his goal as the creation of trees that look like they have never been touched by a human hand. His work is outstanding but it was not immediately recognized as such because it is unusual. In my books and magazines and on the web I have come across a number of terms like "naturalistic" that describe various currents in bonsai. "Modern bonsai," "sumo bonsai," "commercial bonsai," "text book bonsai," "classical bonsai," and even "neo-classical bonsai" are just a few. I can only guess what some of these mean and I am not certain about any of them. I would not be at all surprised if Kimura's style has a name but I don't know. I would call Jack Wikle's trees "classical bonsai" but I am not sure that is correct either.

A few years ago I was traveling through the heartland of this great country when I happened to drive past a nursery on the outskirts of a small town. Hanging below the main sign like rungs of a ladder were placards that said "evergreens," "fruit trees," "flowering shrubs," and "bonsai." By the time I saw that magic word on the bottom I was too close to the entrance to stop so I went on by until I came to a place where I could turn around and go back. I have no doubt every one of you would have done the same thing. I pulled in, parked, and

began to search for the bonsai. I had not yet found them when a gentleman came up and asked if he could help me. I told him what I was looking for and a perplexed expression came over his face. With a silent wave of his hand he indicated the plants arrayed on the benches in front of me. I had not paid much attention to them because they were not what I was expecting to see. Some might have been classified as topiary but most just defied description. One juniper had a straight, skinny, bare trunk with straight, skinny bare branches, each of which had a neat little tuft of foliage at the end. One broadleaf I didn't recognize had been grown in a coil of several loops, which were all fanned out. It reminded me of a leafy Olympic symbol as much as anything. It did not seem that there was any attempt to echo nature in miniature but rather it seemed the goal was to make each tree as bizarre as possible. When I realized that there would be nothing there that interested me, a strange thing happened. I became interested in what was there. They were fascinating in their own way and I enjoyed looking at them. I did not consider them to be bonsai though. In retrospect, perhaps I was being small-minded about it. In any case, have no standing to make such a judgment. Some may consider them "avant-garde" bonsai. They were in fact small trees in pots. Dean's Forest Fire bonsai has been turned down for some shows because "it is not a bonsai." It is one of my favorites of Dean's creations and I always thought of it as a bonsai. What is the difference?

There is nothing wrong with classifying bonsai in various genres. It can simplify discussions and make references more meaningful. But it can also lead to elitism. At first I found all those arcane references to various styles of bonsai to be intimidating. Whenever I ran across a term I hadn't seen before, I felt that my ignorance diminished my qualifications as a bonsai practitioner. But the satisfaction one gets from the process of creating a bonsai is not diminished one iota by a lack of knowledge of these different genera. In fact, it may be liberating not to know about them. Most of us had concave cutters in our hands before we had much of an idea what to do with them, but we had no less fun doing it. It does not bother me anymore that I don't know what "neo-classical bonsai" are. I will probably find out someday but it is just not central to the joy I derive from doing bonsai. I can think of no other activity that offers the gratification that doing bonsai does, and that is due, in no small part, to the fact that it is internally motivated and internally rewarded. These rewards are mostly in the "doing," not in the "talking about." So, do not hesitate to grab your bonsai tools and do your own thing. Maybe you will start a new school of bonsai and not even know it.

(Note: This article was originally published on the March 2010 Issue of the Gnarly News – Newsletter of the Sakura Bonsai Society of Northern Michigan and it was permitted by the author to be published here. Thank you, Jack!)

AABS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Almudena Veiga-Lopez – Recording Secretary

Date: March 24 2010

Attendees: Alfonso Tercero, Paul Kulesa, Victoria Norfleet, Dustin Mann, Jay Sinclair, Raquel Vega, Ryan Liu, Bill Heston, Almudena Veiga-Lopez, Joan Wheeler

Items discussed by the board:

1. *Raffle of bonsai and a position with Michael Hagedorn.*
Board agreed that tickets will be sold for \$5/ticket or \$10/3 tickets.
2. *Visit of Jerry Meislik*
His visit will be coordinated by AABS and MBG to publicize the Bonsai project at the Gardens. He may stay longer and as a critic.
3. *Jerry Meislik critique show*
Jay Sinclair suggested that a fee of \$50-\$100 be donated to MBG as requested by Jerry Meislik. The board approves a fee of \$100 to be donated to MBG.
4. *Workshop on Monday and/or Tuesday following the show*
Jerry Meislik has committed to one workshop. He requested that his workshop fee be donated to MBG. The board approves that his workshop fee goes towards MBG and that each attendee will be charged \$35. The fee remains to be decided (between \$250-\$350)
The cost of the airfare and hotel will be shared with MBG. The material for the workshop will be coordinated with Kurt Smith and Pria.
5. *AABS pins and anniversary pins*
Limited edition pins will be available for \$5 each (100 units only).
6. *Backdrop for bonsai display at the show*
Paul Kulesa reported that the assembly of the panels has been delivered and is \$300 under the original budget.
7. *Web page modifications and mailing list*
Raquel Vega discussed all new additions to the webpage and mailing list. She has been improving the website including the home page. Now, the home page has more links instead of showing all the information at once, and is therefore more efficient. She will be updating the mailing list for the next few months. If a current annual fee is due, an email will be automatically sent to them that they will be removed from the mailing list. Members will have to act on it by sending the fee to the treasurer. It was discussed whether to add a few more bonsai images to the website. Also it was mentioned that we should update the annual show pictures. A great addition is that Raquel provided each of the board members with a board member email ID that will allow members and non-members of the club to

contact us protecting our personal email address confidentiality by redirecting emails to our personal email address.

8. *Newsletter and monthly notification*
It has been proposed that the newsletter be published at a minimum each quarter. The boards agrees that it is best to have one newsletter each month.
9. *Proposed scheduled executive board meetings*
It is proposed and agreed that a quarterly executive board meeting will take place. Possible dates are November-December, March, June and September.
10. *Library status*
Vicki Norfleet mentioned that they are 22 books missing in the library inventory. All the missing books date from before she took charge as the AABS librarian. Raquel Vega suggested that a list of available books/magazines be uploaded to the AABS website so members can request books before attending the monthly AABS meetings.
11. *The annual treasury report*
Joan Wheeler reports the financial status of the AABS to the board. There are a total of 83 members. Several reminders have been sent to members that still need to pay the 2010 annual fee.
12. *Bonsai material for upcoming workshop*
Paul Kulesa proposed the purchase of bonsai material for an intermediate class next Spring for less than \$500. The board approved the purchase.
13. *Demonstration trees for visiting artists*
It is proposed to buy demonstration trees to be used for visiting artists and to be later auctioned. It is proposed that 3-4 trees will be bought for less than \$400. A home for the trees should be found among the AABS members.
#13 has not been decided yet. A final vote will be conducted online.

ITEMS DISCUSSED OFF THE AGENDA

14. *Microphone device*
Alfonso Tercero proposes that the board chooses between 2 different wireless microphone devices. The board has chosen the PGX 14/85 Lavalier wireless system.
15. *Rates for workshops*
It needs to be decided whether AABS may charge a different workshop fee for members and non-members of the AABS.

UPCOMING AABS EVENTS

Paul Kulesa – Program Chairperson

On June 12, 2010, from 9 AM to noon, there will be a workshop, drawing bonsai with Jerome Peters. Renowned artist Jerry Peters will show how to use acrylic paint and guide participants to create beautiful renditions of their bonsai. Visit his website for more examples of his work at: www.geraldipeters.com. Limited seating is available; contact Paul Kulesa at programs@annarborbonsaisociety.org to reserve a position in this workshop. The workshop, instruction by Jerry Peters and painting material are \$30.

On June 23, 2010, at our regular monthly meeting, David Kreutz, our invited guest, will lecture on cultivation and maintenance of your bonsai azalea. David will work on a mature Azalea tree and the demo tree will be raffled among attendees. For more information about David Kreutz visit his site at www.satsukibonsai.com.

On Thursday, June 24, 2010, David Kreutz will conduct an azalea workshop. You can bring your own azalea tree or buy one offered at the class. Limited seating is available; contact Paul Kulesa at programs@annarborbonsaisociety.org to reserve your seat. Cost: \$35, plus tree: \$35. Observers: \$10. From 4 to 8 pm.

Jerry Meislik will visit Ann Arbor in late August, just in time for our Annual Show. He will critique individual trees and the Show on Saturday evening, "An event worth planning to attend". On Tuesday, August 31, 2010, Jerry will lead a workshop. Ficus, Jerry Meislik's tree of special interest, have been specially selected for this workshop and are available from Kurt Smith, The Flower Market – Dundee, and Pria at the Bonsai House – Westland. Several ficus will be available for sale at the meetings, thanks to Kurt Smith. Plan to acquire your material early and study the material over the summer.

UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS

- May 15 & 16, 2010 - Michigan AllState Bonsai Show at Frederik Meijer Gardens, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- June 12 & 13, 2010 - 2nd U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition, Rochester, NY.
Go to www.internationalbonsai.com for more information.
- June 19 & 20, 2010 - 38th Annual Four Seasons Bonsai Show @ Telly's Greenhouse, Troy, Mi.
Visit www.fourseasonsbonsai.com for more information.
- June 25-27, 2010 - MABA Convention @ Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids, Mi.
The featured guest is Kathy Shaner. For details go to <http://mababonsai.org>

NEXT CLUB MEETING: DECIDUOUS BONSAI REFINEMENT WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF YOUR TREE?

Paul Kulesa – Program Chairperson

On Wednesday, May 26, 2010, at our monthly membership meeting three of our members have agreed to continue the original program plan, the refinement of deciduous bonsai. However, there has been a small change in the format of this evening's program. Ron Milostan, Robert Bishop and Dustin Mann thought their ideas on deciduous refinement could be better expressed by commenting specifically on members' trees.

This is your opportunity to bring a deciduous bonsai that you think you need advice and concrete information on how to improve the appearance of your bonsai.

A Final Opportunity To Place An Order For The Ichiban

Paul Kulesa – Program Chairperson

You have an opportunity to place an order for the *ichiban*. This is the multi-purpose tool designed by Marco Invernissi and manufactured by Masakuni Tools. You can place your order and pay (\$250/tool) Joan Wheeler at the next General Membership Meeting, Wednesday, May 26, or you may mail your order and payment to our Treasurer. Make the check payable to Ann Arbor Bonsai Society.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- January Club Meeting.....Jan. 27th**
Bonsai Multi-Media Slide Presentation, featuring Don Wild presenting conifer collection.
- February Club Meeting.....Feb. 24th**
Yew Styling Demo with Guest Speaker Will Heath.
- February Class.....Feb 27th**
Beginner and Intermediate Classes, Part I with Connie Crancer.
- March Class.....Mar. 6th**
Beginner and Intermediate Classes, Part II with Cyril Grum.
- March Class.....Mar. 13th**
Beginner and Intermediate Classes, Part III with Jack Wikle.
- March Club Meeting.....Mar. 24th**
Pests and Diseases with Jack Wikle.
- April Special Event.....Apr. 3rd**
Maple Forest Workshop with Jack Wikle.
- April Special Event.....Apr. 11th**
Yew Workshop with road trip to Ken Huth's Greenhouse in Ohio.
- April Club Meeting.....Apr. 28th**
Invited Guest – Marco Invernizzi working on a yew tree.
- April Special Even.....Apr. 29th**

Invited Guest – Marco Invernizzi (BYOT).

May Club Meeting.....May 26th

Deciduous Bonsai Refinement with Bill Heston.

June Special Event.....Jun. 12th

Workshop with Jerry Peters. Create a Watercolor of Your Favorite Bonsai Tree.

June Club Meeting.....Jun 23rd

Invited Guest – David Kreutz Demonstrating on Azaleas.

June Special Event.....Jun 24th

Invited Guest – David Kreutz Azalea Workshop.

July Workshop.....Jul. 10th

Mugo Pine Workshop with Vance Wood "Mr. Mugo"

July Club Meeting.....Jul.28th

Working Review and Critique – Expert advice from Cyril Grum, Bill Heston & Jack Wikle (BYOT).

August Special Event.....Aug. 14th

Annual Pot Luck – Lary Howard's Home.

August Club Meeting.....Aug. 25th

Tropical bonsai – Repotting techniques with Dustin Mann.

AABS Bonsai Show 2010..... Aug. 28th-29th

September Club Meeting.....Sep. 22nd

2010 AABS Club Auction.

October Special Event.....Oct. 9th

Prospecting Field Trip to Plymouth Nursery and Landscaping led by Jack Wikle.

October Club Meeting.....Oct. 27th

Winterizing your Bonsai – Expert advice from Cyril Grum and Bill Heston.

November Special Event.....Nov. 8th

Annual Banquet and Mini-Exhibit.

2010 AABS EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: Alfonso Tercero (734) 424-9399

Vice-President: Paul Kulesa

Program Chairperson: Paul Kulesa

Corresponding Secretary: Ryan Liu

Recording Secretary: Almudena Veiga-Lopez

Publicity Chair: Lary Howard

Treasurer: Joan Wheeler (734) 485-6306

Librarian: Vicki Norfleet

Past President: Bill Heston (734) 662-8699

Director 2010 & 2011: Dustin Mann

Show Chairperson: Jay Sinclair

AABS AD-HOC COMMITTEES

The AABS President is exofficio member of all committees with

the exception of the Nomination Committee.

Auction Chair: TBD

Membership Chair: TBD

Show Staging: Paul Kulesa

Demonstrations: John Parks

Ways and Means Chair: John Parks

Web Administration: TBD

FOR SALE OR WANTED

10% of all sales go to the Ann Arbor Bonsai Society. AABS Society Members' ads are free to publish in the Newsletter.

Send the information of your items for sale or wanted to aabsnewsletter@yahoo.com include a small digital file if available.

Wanted. If you have a tree, bonsai pot, tool or anything else bonsai related that you don't need anymore and that is still in good condition, consider donating it to the Society. Donations to the Society are always accepted. In most cases many donated trees or other materials have been raffled among the attending members during our monthly meetings.

Please note: All Society members are required to give 10% of the total sales for any items that are sold at AABS monthly meetings to the Society. The 10% fee will apply to all sales at AABS Meetings or through the AABS Newsletter. Deadline for submissions to the Newsletter is the 5th of the month.

Please send your comments or documents to aabsnewsletter@yahoo.com.

The Ann Arbor Bonsai Society is affiliated with the American Bonsai Society (www.absbonsai.org) and the Mid American Bonsai Alliance.

Contact AABS at: aabsnewsletter@yahoo.com.

MEMBERSHIP

Society Membership is for the calendar year. Use the membership form on the Web and bring it to the next AABS meeting or mail it to:

Joan Wheeler
2295 North Harris
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
(734) 485-6306

Email: owheeler5@hotmail.com

Please make your check payable to AABS for \$25.00.



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The Ann Arbor Bonsai Society is affiliated with the American Bonsai Society and the Mid-American Bonsai Alliance.

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Visit us on the Web:

<http://www.annarborbonsaisociety.org>

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Hector DeBrabant
Bonsai Instructor