



NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Church
182 Victoria Street
(Cnr Collins Street) Beaconsfield


7pm Tuesday 8 June 2010

Guest presenter Chris Di Nola –
producing bonsai from root
cuttings

7pm Tuesday 13 July 2010


Team Styling

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MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership \$30.00

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Welcome to the June Newsletter

June Meeting:

Guest speaker this month: the very knowledgeable and entertaining Chris Di Nola. Chris will be talking about producing bonsai from root cuttings.

We will also be finalizing the plans for this months nursery crawl.



Salvatore Liporace at the 2010 Bonsai Convention

In this months newsletter:

- Trees on display at the 2010 Bonsai Convention, see pages 2 & 3
- Salvatore Liporace's Mugo Pine redesign demonstration pages 4 & 5
- For an article on the potter Janet Selby see pages 5 & 6
- Events Calendar on page 6

Look for more articles on the 2010 Bonsai Convention in next months newsletter

TREES ON DISPLAY AT THE 2010 BONSAI CONVENTION



Picea pungens 'Glauca' – Blue Spruce



Myrciaria cauliflora – Jaboticaba



Banksia integrifolia – Coast Banksia



Pinus densiflorus – Japanese Red Pine



Landscape Suiseki

TREES ON DISPLAY AT THE 2010 BONSAI CONVENTION



Banksia integrifolia

Coast Banksia →

Banksia serrata

Old Man Banksia



Pinus densiflora – Japanese Red Pine



Pinus thunbergii – Japanese Black Pine



Ficus rubiginosa – Port Jackson Fig



Indian Head and the award winning Mother & Child Suiseki

SALVATORE LIPORACE DEMONSTRATION ONE – MUGO PINE

At the 23rd Annual AABC Convention held in Sydney over the weekend of 14-16 May, the overseas demonstrator was the renowned Italian Master, Salvatore Liporace. His presentation was somewhat hampered by the necessity for a translator but he passed on many tips.

Salvatore made the following points during his demonstration:

✳ To make good bonsai you need mind, heart and hands. These are the three most important things. Australia has good material but Australian enthusiasts have to move forward. You need to travel all over the world [or use the internet] to see and analyse advanced work. It is so important to study advanced work.

✳ The first thing I notice about Australian bonsai is proportion. John Naka, the American-Japanese bonsai master, was a great teacher and he was generous with his knowledge. His two books, *Bonsai Techniques #1* and *Bonsai Techniques #2* are bibles of bonsai information.

✳ John Naka's guideline for proportion was 1:6. The tree should be no higher than 6 times the trunk width. If the diameter of the trunk is 10cm the tree height should be no higher than 60 cm. But bonsai is an art and art changes.

✳ Now the proportion is changing, big bonsai are not popular and the styling trend is towards smaller trees; trees to 15cm, 15-20cm, 20-30cm 30-45 cm. This takes the ratio to 1:3 and 1:4. If the trunk is 10 cm the tree should be 30 or 40cm high, not 60 cm.

✳ My comment on Australian trees is the trees should be smaller. Of course this is my opinion. In a couple of days I go back to Italy and you can do what you want. Years ago Italian bonsai stylists felt they could never do as well as the Japanese Masters but this has proved to be false. The philosophy of 30 years ago has changed.

Salvatore proceeded to demonstrate styling a Mugo Pine.

He doesn't like classical styling but prefers to do something original and unusual.



Salvatore discussing the possibilities of the tree with his interpreter

'To make good bonsai you need mind, heart and hands'

Salvatore Liporace

His demo subject was reasonably tall and he immediately removed the entire top section and jinned it.



Salvatore reducing the height of the tree

"When you start a bonsai you have to know in your heart that you can improve it, otherwise don't start. The first step is to remove the unnecessary branches. Wiring is a very important technique. Putting wire on properly is like owning your tree".



Chris Di Nola acted as Salvatore's assistant, here Chris is peeling off the bark to make a jin from the original trunk of the tree

Salvatore scorned aluminium wire and stated that Europe uses copper as aluminium is too soft. With conifers the branches are flexible and when wired with aluminium they will stay in position until the branch starts strengthening and then the aluminium wire won't be able to control the growth.

Copper is softer but as it weathers it hardens and holds the tree better. A professional bonsaiist will use 15 -18 different gauges of wire from 0.05 upwards. 5 gauge is not used because it is too thick and if you need thicker than #4 you should use branch benders.

SALVATORE LIPORACE DEMONSTRATION ONE – MUGO PINE

The angle of wiring is said to be 45 degrees but that is not true. It should be wider than 45 degrees with all wiring the same distance apart. You should lower the branch and wire the branch when it is in position so the wire doesn't get loose. The more wire there is on the tree the less the person knows. Less wire and the tree will be happier.



Chris wires and wraps the branch that will be reshaped

Wiring properly has three advantages: It looks nicer on the tree, anyone seeing the well wired tree will know whether the bonsai artist is capable or not, and most importantly, for the well being of the tree. The majority of people put at least 3 wires when 1 wire should be used to do two branches. Before you start wiring you need to know the future shaping of the branch. Every time you wire you can improve the tree. If a job has to be done it is better to do it well than poorly.



Salvatore wires the secondary and finer branches

To start your wire at the front of a tree is a mistake. Start at the back and this means you have one less wire crossing the trunk and the tree looks better. The more wire you use the more danger of wire marks.

Europe is very dedicated to bonsai – their trees have to be good enough that you want to eat them. There is less competition in Australia and competition increases the incentive to do better.

In Italy there are a lot more species than in other European countries. The huge variety of terrain and soil contributes to this. Australia is such a big country that it is impossible not to have a good selection of trees. In Italy we can import trees from China and Japan but now we realise that Italian trees are just as good and we appreciate our Italian bonsai. We take great pride in the Italian way of making bonsai.



The bonsai after potting & Salvatore has wired & placed every branch

Bonsai is not just an art or a hobby, it is also a philosophy.

AABC Demonstration by JANET SELBY – NSW Potter

Janet Selby is a Sydney based ceramic artist who developed an interest in bonsai over 5 years ago and started making pots for her trees. She has a small retail business and you can see her pots at select shows, at 'Bonsai and Beyond' in Balmain, and her web site (www.janetselby.com.au).

Clay: Rocks from mountains have been washed down millions and millions of years ago and have aged and seasoned, then deposited in lower valleys and worn down. When local clay deposits are discovered they are mined, taken to a factory, pulverised to powder & then mixed with water & chemicals.



The clays vary according to the local environment and the type of rock that is in their makeup. They are then packaged for the consumer.

Clay is not a permanent resource and deposits of clay can be mined to extinction, ending a particular type of clay.

To begin making a pot, the potter picks up the packet of clay and drops the bag on the concrete. This 'wakes up' the clay. The sudden jolt helps the settled particles become more jelly like and plastic.

JANET SELBY - POTTER

If you throw on the pottery wheel, and keep working at it too long, the clay is said to get tired. It is best to then put it aside and leave it to rework later. Fresh clay is easier. All the scraps can be recycled, and re-kneaded.

Types of Clay:

Terracotta: Used in flowerpots, it is usually unglazed and low fired, so it is porous. Moisture is quickly dissipated and the pot is reasonably fragile.

Porcelain: This white, fine particle clay is high fired, and can be fashioned into items that are incredibly thin and delicate. This clay is too delicate for bonsai pots.

Stoneware: Stoneware is a good clay for bonsai pots. It melts at a specific temperature, 1300C, and is what is called 'vitrified' by the firing process which means it is no longer porous and has become 'stone' like. The high temperatures sometimes create distortion due to the clay almost melting.

When a potter decides which clay to use the choice is from white, brown, grey and shades and textures in between. The potter must have an affinity with the chosen clay and understand its limitations and qualities.



The pot is fashioned either by hand or wheel and then has to dry slowly with a drying procedure necessary to keep the pot from cracking. If there is a draft on one side of the pot, it could dry faster than the other with disastrous results.

Types of firing:

1. **Bisque:** Once it has dried completely, known as 'bone dry', it is fired in the kiln. The first firing is called the Bisque Firing and stabilises the pot and readies it for the glaze.

2. **Glaze:** The second firing is to melt the glaze into the pot surface. The type of finish depends on the type of clay used in combination with the glaze. Gas kilns use 'reduction' firing that cannot generally be done in an electric kiln. Gas kilns get hotter faster than electrical kilns and are more energy efficient.

Raku: This is a Japanese word that has become synonymous with a name for a type of clay and firing process. When the pot is removed red hot from the kiln it is plunged into a container of water or a pile of sawdust to get the decorative finish that makes it Raku. These enormous stresses mean Raku ware is not watertight or strong enough to be used for bonsai pots.

Wood Firing: This is sometimes mistaken for Raku firing. It is much hotter and stronger than Raku. Wood firing takes at least 12 hours to reach temperature, by feeding the flames, which produce ash at such a high temperature, melts into glass or glaze. This is deposited onto the pots from the direction it has flowed through the kiln.

Glazes: Glazes can be shiny, satin, matt or unglazed or a combination of those. The glazes are applied by being dipped, brushed, sponged or painted. Some things go wrong. At displays of pottery, you don't see the hard work and many hours of testing, cracking, explosions, dribblings, flakings, and warpings that may have happened. Each glaze and clay needs to be tested first to see if it works, and how it will look. Shiny glazes tend to be more feminine and matt or unglazed more masculine.

Design: The rim is really important in choosing a pot. The eye first sees the bonsai tree then follows it down to the rim of the pot, so it is an important feature that we sometimes overlook.



When you look at a pot, analyse its form to see if the rim, wall shape, feet and glaze blend together.

To make a finished pot, you buy the clay from the shop, condition it, prepare it, form it, drying takes sometimes more than a week, then first firing takes 8-13 hours, then it cools down in a day. Then comes decoration and glazing, then second firing up to higher temperature. This takes a couple of days too. So one piece takes a couple of weeks.

So next time you pick up a piece of hand made pottery, think about the whole cycle it has gone through, from the mountain to the bottom of the river, to the factory then to the first touch of hands of the potter, and finally into your hands.

Date	Event	Details
12 -13 June	Bonsai By the Harbour	Bonsai packed weekend with demonstrators and speakers at Gladesville. Full details when available
9/10/11 September	Bonsai Society of Australia Bonsai Show and Marketplace - Baulkham Hills Council Chambers, Castle Hill.	This is one of the top bonsai shows on the annual calendar with a stunning display of advanced trees and a large Marketplace with a couple of retail nurseries represented.
17-19 September 2010	Illawarra's Eleventh Weekend Workshop at Tops Conference Centre, Stanwell Tops	Friday night - registration & bonsai demonstration with a twist. Saturday - morning & afternoon workshop, happy hour, major demonstration Sunday - morning & afternoon workshop, lecture / demonstration
29 September 2010	Bonsai & Suiseki Tour of China Bonsai Clubs International is conducting a travelling convention of 14 days beginning 29 September 2010.	Glenis Bebb, Executive Director BCI, is handling the Australian section of the tour, and any person interested in participating is invited to contact her at: glen@bonsainursery.com.au