



NEXT CLUB MEETINGS

Green Square Community Hall

3 Joynton Avenue Zetland

7pm Tuesday 12 June 2018

Show and tell evening. Bring any "outstanding" plant – success, potential or failure

7pm Tuesday 10 July 2018

Annual General Meeting and small demonstration on potting for the less experienced.

CONTACT DETAILS



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COMMITTEE

Patron	TBA
President	Bryan
Vice President	TBA
Secretary	David
Treasurer	Chris
Newsletter Editor	Roz
Librarian	Les
Committee	Frank & John

MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership	\$40
Concession	\$25
Family	\$55
Pensioner	\$25

SCBC wishes to thank Sydney City Council for their continued support for our club by providing the hall at a reduced rate.

June Meeting

- Show and tell evening. Bring any "outstanding" plant. It can be an outstanding success, a plant with outstanding potential or a plant that is an outstanding failure. Share what you have learnt from the tree.
- Members to work on their trees



Nature has performed its magic in bonsai presentation with this natural bonsai in a rock.

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Bonsai & Pot Sale at June Meeting

There will be a special sale of pots and trees at the June meeting. Bring some cash along if you are interested. The trees are excellent for intermediate bonsai enthusiasts and some of the pots a large solid plastic ones which are good for training and are very light. There is one large ceramic pot that will be good for someone with a larger tree.

Reminder

Access to the Community Hall is via Portman Street only.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT BONSAI POT

Choosing the Right Pot for your Bonsai

At the May meeting Lee gave a great talk on bonsai pots. Here are some notes from her talk.

“You change your clothes to suit the occasion and so you should choose your bonsai pot to suit the tree. It is the whole unit – tree and pot.”

A tree has to tell a story and the pot must complement this story.



The pot selections have been made to match the more masculine elm (left) compared with the elegant “feminine” elm on the right.

The twin trunk elm (left) is complemented by the handmade two colour rectangular pot. This pot is rectangular but without sharp lines. The chunkiness of the pot reflects the fat strong twin trunk. Contrast this with the elegant curved elm in the yellow pot (right). Both the curves and the lightness of this pot reflects the curves and feminine nature of this tree.

The general rule for selecting pot depth is the width of the tree. However you should not sacrifice the health of the tree to meet this general rule.



“Knock Knee” elm may just be heading for a new pot

While the exaggerated bends in “Knock Knee” are emphasised by the straight lines of this Japanese made pot, the strange pot on the right may work better.



The similarities in colour and form of the pot to complement elm which hugs the rock



What you see here first is the olive and not the pot.

With the olive (above) the pot colour has been chosen to complement the colour of the trunk. However its texture is smooth and dull in order to make your eye see the tree before you notice the pot.

Plant species also lead you to choose certain pots. For example figs should never go in rectangular pots. Everything about a fig is rounded – its leaves and its trunk. Make sure you choose a subtle colour to go with the tree – not the high glazed stark blue or a very busy decorated one as your eye will be drawn to the pot and not the tree. Maples tell a soft story so choose a pot with soft lines and colour. Azaleas should be put in a pot with a dull glaze – when in flower you do not want to compete with the pot.



Accent plants need to complement both the tree and its pot, so you may need to change the accent plant pot to suit which tree you are displaying.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT BONSAI POT CONTINUED

Where to buy pots

You do not have to spend an absolute fortune on bonsai pots. If you are astute you can pick up excellent pots if you go to bonsai events where potter's have sales tables. Get there early and you can often pick up excellent hand made pots. Sometimes you can get great bargains where the potter has a "flaw" in the pot e.g. a small crack or badly glazed area. However, the "front" of the pot has that beautiful glaze that will exactly match your particular tree. Just go for it.

Also often bonsai clubs (sales nights or at annual shows such as the recent Illawarra Bonsai Club Show, have sales tables with second hand pots. You can often pick up fabulous Japanese Tokonama pots or quite rare hand made pots for a fraction of the normal price.

Basic Guidelines on How to Pick a Pot

EXCERPTS FROM *BONSAI EMPIRE* BY THOR HOLVILA

[HTTPS://WWW.BONSAIEMPIRE.COM/BASICS/BONSAI-CARE/ADVANCED/CHOOSING-POTS](https://www.bonsaiempire.com/basics/bonsai-care/advanced/choosing-pots)

"A large part of practising Bonsai is how to be able to spot the right pot. Some go by their gut feeling. But that may be difficult for a beginner... So here are some basic rules and guidance for you to stick on to. "

Masculine or Feminine or Between

"The first thing you must do is to decide if your tree is masculine or feminine. Usually, a tree is a mix of both and question is which sex is the dominant. This is absolutely crucial and perhaps the most important rule in choosing a pot. "



A



B



C

A. The composition is very masculine – thick & scarred bark. Pot straight lines and opens out.
B. Curved lines of the pot give the tree a little feminine charisma
C. Male lip of pot removed but massive feet remain make the tree look like it is on top of a hill.
Which would you choose?

"Some attributes that can help you along the way is that the curves, grace, smooth bark and sparse branches is considered feminine. The corresponding masculine traits are strength, old bark, deadwood, thick trunk and dense branches."

Size

"The general rule is: The pot should be of the same height as the trunk is wide above the nebari. Oval and rectangular pots are usually 2/3 of the trees height. Round or square pots is 1/3 the height of the tree – unless foliage is unusually large, then the pot is also becoming wider, this is compensated by lowering the height of the pot. Trident maples (which has rapidly growing roots) need, just as fruit and flowering trees deeper pots."



Left-The wide canopy of this tree makes it look better in a larger pot. Right- What the tree would like with the 2/3 rule

Design

"The pots design should match the degree of masculinity or femininity of your tree. Should it be concave, convex, angular, round, oval, rectangular. Generally masculine pots are deep, angular, have clean lines and stout feet. A lip on the rim strengthens the masculinity, an inward rhyme reinforces the pot femininity. Feminine pots often have soft lines, delicate feet and are relatively low and sleek. Round pots, drum pots are generally considered to be androgynous.

The most general rule when it comes to choosing the glaze for a pot is that the colour should appear in the tree. Either in the bark, the colour of the leaves, and fruit or flowers. Therefore, the unglazed brown, grey and earth tones are usually safe choices. They also provide warmth and stability to the tree. But we can also work with contrasting colours like blue or cool green. They provide balance and refreshes the composition.

The goal is to create harmony.

BONSAI AS AN ART FORM

Bonsai from Traditional Art Form to Contemporary Practise



Ofer Grunwald is an Israeli-based multidisciplinary artist, working mainly in bonsai, figurative and installation art. He presented at Bonsai Week at the National Arboretum, 2018.

The first part of Ofer's presentation was on the history of bonsai as an artform and technique, The second part was on how to represent the essence of bonsai in a contemporary fashion. The part of the talk that fascinated me the most was viewing bonsai as an ongoing process in 4 dimensions – our normal 3D plus the 4th dimension time. The beautiful beautiful formations and emotive response in us when we reflect on old bonsai are a result of a long-term partnership with nature and the bonsai artist over time.



Above: Tree in nature on mountain provokes and emotive response

Right: Picture of servant carrying miniature fruit tree in pot dated 706 AD



The practice of using trees in pots to replicate nature started in the Chinese Imperial Court in the 5th century although there are Chinese pictures of trees in pots going back as far as 6,000 years ago. The concept of bring nature back to an urban setting then moved to Japan and later in the 17th to 19th centuries it also moved into Europe.

Essence of bonsai

The Eastern view of bonsai centred on the acceptance of the transience of things and their imperfections. Characteristics include asymmetry, roughness, simplicity, economy, austerity, and the appreciation of the ingenuous integrity of natural objects and processes. You could liken this to the “soul of bonsai”.

The developments in Europe have been more along the lines of developing bonsai technique.



The Eastern view of bonsai is more about the “soul of bonsai.” This 50 year old windswept ash features and old tree deprived of all its leaves in the strong autumn wind blowing continuously from one direction.

Ofer believes we are limited in what you can do in designing a bonsai. We can only work with what the tree gives us. With every individual tree you have limited choices- how far you can move a branch, cut branches, reposition a trunk or refine the foliage. No matter what you do the living tree will still keep on changing. You have to let it grow. A young tree permits us to make our own statement – we can shape it with curves, make it powerful and strong or create abstract movement. We have to respect the statement already made in an old bonsai – although we can refine and add a further statement to it (e.g. refine the movement and tension within the tree or create a jin to reflect natural event or process).

“Bonsai, by definition, is an art form focusing on process, and devoid of any product. As such, it tends to exist in two time-frames – the very momentary frozen image of the here and now (and ultimately you can yield an amazingly beautiful momentary image); and the unseen, relentless movement of the growing tree.”



“About four years ago, I came across the amazing work of Geoffrey Mann. I stood before his “moth flight sculpture” and said, “This is it. This is bonsai.”

“I was looking at a frozen manifestation of an unseen movement – the essence of what I was finding so fascinating about bonsai in general, especially in Junipers. This fascination has informed my work ever since.”

In summary in bonsai you are working with a “fluid sculpture” and you commit to a continuous process which over time becomes emotively beautiful through the work of nature and you.

PRESENTING BONSAI -AN ARTFORM IN ITSELF

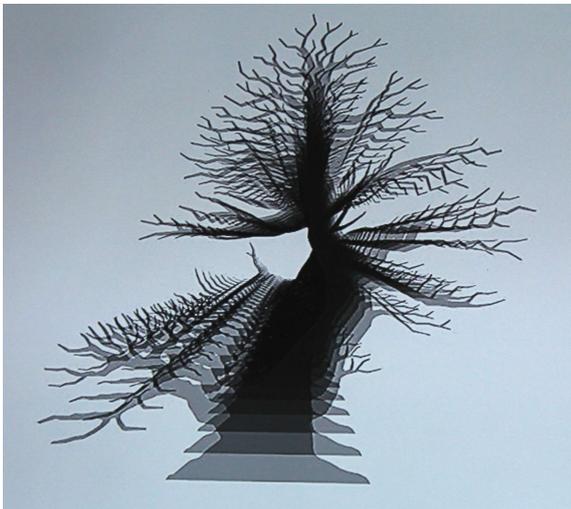
Presenting Bonsai – An Artform in itself

Part 2 of Ofer's talk was on presenting bonsai as an art form in itself. Traditionally in Japan bonsai is presented as an image is based on a landscape painting with the bonsai rendered in 3D and then displayed in a flat (2D) tokonama. This is where the "front" or viewing angle for the bonsai comes from. The tokonama display is "nature refined" - much is symbolic and left to the imagination.



Tokonama display

In bonsai exhibitions, with rows of trees sitting side by side, much of the essence of an individual tree is lost. More recently, formal collections of bonsai have been presented individually on plinths so that the observer can view each tree in 3D. Ofer has gone further than this in his artform presentations of "bonsai" by introducing the notion of time and process in his formal presentations of his bonsai artwork. Here are a few examples of his work.



By placing silhouettes of a bonsai growing over time, he overlapped these on glass slides. As a consequence Ober captured the thickening of the trunk and changes in branch structure over time.



Here is another "time lapse" image of a bonsai. You can see the lighter edges of the trunk represent newer growth. Also see evidence of a previous thick branch that was removed.



As bonsai artists, this image represents the ongoing tension between artist and plant.

Interesting Pots at 2018 Bonsai Week

At the Arboretum, a number of top Australian potter's displayed their pots. You could not purchase on the day but could contact the potter at or after the event.



ILLAWARRA SHOW REPORT & EVENTS CALENDAR

Illawarra Show Report

BY LEE

This year's Illawarra Bonsai Show had a strong African theme with accessories and bonsai beautifully displayed to reflect this. Brenda Parker, the president, is such an inspiration to the bonsai scene with her innovative displays that have a distinctly different feel each year but always compliment the trees the members put in for display, showing each to the best advantage.



Strong African theme for 2018 Illawarra Show



Bonsai displayed to reflect African theme



The balanced placement of these trees and their accents enhance individual bonsai



This stunning Callistamon was displayed at our club meeting in June

The club's Member's Sale Table was wildly successful with some incredible bargains to be had and the chock-a-block sales tables were totally depleted by the end of the show. For all those who attended it was a fantastic chance to get some bargain stock and pots. For those who came Sunday or not at all... note in your diaries to attend Saturday morning next year for the best that's going.

Bonsai Events Calendar

Date	Event	Details
30 Apr-5 May	Bonsai Generations of Growth,	Japan Foundation, Level 4 Central Park Broadway
9-10 June 2018	"Bonsai by the Harbour"	C of E Grammar School Rowing facility Wharf Rd. Gladesville.
20-23 July 2018	31 st Australian National Bonsai Convention – Bonsai Exposed	Mantra Bell City, Melbourne. http://www.abcctd.org/next-convention/
25 Aug 2018	Bonsai Society of Sydney Annual Show	Forrestville Community Arts Centre 5 Darkey St Forrestville
18-20 Sep 2018	Universal Penjing Conference, Canberra Arboretum	For details and registration go to https://www.nationalarboretum.act.gov.au/universalspenjingconference