



Brandywine Bonsai Society

Meeting Date: 10:00, Saturday, May 23, 2009
Subject: Choosing the Right Pot, guest artist Ron Lang
Location: Brandywine Town Center
Cookies: Joyce Smith

Please note that this meeting date is the fourth, not third Saturday

The May Program - Those who have attended the MABS Spring Festivals, or, have met him at one of Jim Doyle's open houses, have seen Ron Lang's work, not only as a ceramicist, but as a bonsai artist. This article from the NBF website explains his work best:

Ron Lang is a ceramic artist who has headed the ceramics program at Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore since 1979. For most of his career he has created sculptural forms with narrative themes. In his more recent work, he returns to the functional form uniting his interest and 25-year experience in the art of bonsai with his ceramic sensibilities. He organized and curated the groundbreaking exhibition *Bonsai inSites* that featured collaborative works between ceramic artists and bonsai artists. The exhibition in 2003 at the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum tested the boundaries of the traditionalists.

Ron may be accompanied on his visit to Brandywine Bonsai by Sharon Edwards-Russell. Sharon Edwards-Russell has a Master of Fine Arts degree from Tulane University and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Maryland Institute College of Fine Arts. She taught ceramics and foundational level courses at Anne Arundel Community College for 20 years, and is currently working for the Art Institute of Pittsburg in the Graphic Design Department. She and her husband Ron Lang have built a wood-firing kiln at their home in Pennsylvania where they produce ceramics for bonsai, kusamono plantings, and viewing stone displays.

If you looked at the kusamono exhibits on the NBF website, you will have seen many

examples of the work of this talented couple. They donated most of those pieces to the National Bonsai Foundation.

Bonsai on Washington, DC television

Thanks go to Greg Kanaskie who sent information about the recent big Festival at the NBF. Go to this site and see the legendary Harry Hirao, guest artist. He is "92 years young" and obviously a role model for all of us.

http://www.bonsai-nbf.org/site/whats_new.html

Private Bonsai Auction - May 30, 2009, 642 Peekskill Hollow Rd., Putnam Valley, NY 10579. In collaboration with Yama Ki Bonsai Society, over 50 trees, hardy & tropical, conifers & deciduous will be up for auction. Most trees are large (20+ years), in bonsai pots, and require further development. In addition, many pots, tools, stands, shohin display stands, some still in their original boxes are available. Go to Yama Ki's website after May 1st for additional information & pictures. www.yamakibonsai.org

Brandywine River Museum Show – Our annual spring show in the courtyard of the Brandywine River Museum in Chadds Ford, will be the weekend of June 6th and 7th. For those bringing trees for the display, setup will start at 7:30am on Saturday and trees may not be removed till 4:30pm on Sunday.

Our primary purpose in this, and in all of our shows, is to promote bonsai. We want to have trees from as many of our members as possible, regardless of their skill level, to show the public that bonsai is available and enjoyable on a wide variety of levels. All exhibitors will be expected to help with the 'tree-sitting' chores, but we also welcome help

from those who may not wish to exhibit a tree at this time. We need a minimum of two people for each of the three sessions on each day of the show.

You can send the filled out exhibitor/helper form to me via email or snail mail, or give it to me at the club meeting on May 23rd. All the forms must get to me by June 2nd to ensure that we have all the correct ID cards for the trees. Thanks in advance for all of your help and support.

Pat Lucke Morris

Tips for preparing your trees for show and showing your trees – *Excerpted from a piece by Howard McNeal*

by Howard McNeal

Preparing your tree for a show - A pot with rough feet can scratch a fine bonsai display stand. Grind the feet of your pot on a piece of slate so that smoothness is achieved to remove rough spots. Use felt tabs placed on the bottom of the pot's feet to prevent the scratching of the stands. Make sure to clean the pot well and remove all traces of lime buildup on the pot. This can be done using vinegar, CLR or lime away. Baby oil can be used to add a final luster to the pot.

The pot should be shown with a "good front" – that is the side of the pot that has the most visual interest. A small label can be placed on the back of the pot to indicate to tree-watchers that the tree is shown with the correct front.

Prepare your tree for a show over a period of time. Avoid showing a tree that has been newly repotted - the tree should be repotted at least 3-4 months in advance of the show. Showing a tree with wires on it is not ideal but if it is necessary the wires should not be apparent. He suggests the possibility of hiding or visually minimizing the wires with black marker. Water the tree well prior to showing - you want your tree to have every advantage going into a show.

Displaying your tree in a show. When you display the bonsai, the display needs to complement the tree and the tree should be the main point of interest. A bonsai display should not be "cute". If there is too much going on, you run the risk of the display looking garish. The final image should convey a sense of serenity.

The display should have a theme. The display should be appropriate for the time of year. For example, if you are displaying bonsai in spring, the elements of the display could contain bamboo, water, grass, or flowers, all of which represent the emergence of life. Spring is a time of rebirth and

growth. By telling a story with your display you are feeding the imagination and making a connection with the viewer.

The bonsai should be the focal point of the display and any elements which distract the viewer from the bonsai can unbalance the display. Elements such as a large or brightly colored flower or a mountain stone have the ability to distract and should not be used when displaying your tree. Elements such as these should be displayed by themselves so they are not competing with the bonsai. The elements within a display should complement the tree and not compete with it. For example, a tray with plants which would normally be found growing with the tree in the tree's natural state may work as a good accent.

Tips for caring for the trees during the show. When moving tree onto and off of stands, be careful not to drag the pot across the stand but rather lift pots directly off and onto their stands. Thin black trays can be placed between the feet of the pot under the drain holes to catch any moisture drainage from the tree. This will protect the stand and the thin tray will not be apparent to the viewer. Tilt the pot to enhance drainage prior to placing the tree back on the stand.

The trees should be watered well on the floor prior to the show and misted throughout the day. Be careful not to touch the bark. It is important to watch the trees and not to have your back towards them. Watch the trees not the people.

A Tip from David Easterbrook - David Easterbrook (Curator of the bonsai collection at the Montreal Botanical Garden), who visited BBS several years ago, was a guest artist at the recent MABS Festival. He had a great deal to say about the art of exhibition. One of the attendees asked when a moss should be put on a tree in preparation for a show. The answer: at least six weeks in advance.

Brandywine River Museum Show - June 6 & 7, 2009
EXHIBITOR ENTRY FORM

Name _____
Address _____

Phone # _____ Cell # _____
Email _____ @ _____

Tree #1 Botanical name _____
Common name _____
Space (width) needed _____ 2' _____ 3' _____ 4'
Tree #2 Botanical name _____
Common name _____
Space (width) needed _____ 2' _____ 3' _____ 4'

PLEASE bring your tree(s) to the Museum's back gate by 8:00am Saturday the 6th and pickup not before 4:30pm Sunday the 7th. If you need help with pickup or delivery, let Pat know BEFORE the show weekend.

We need people to keep an eye on the exhibit -- making sure kids of all ages do not touch trees -- as well as answer the public's questions. Previous experience is helpful but not necessary here and the participation of all members is greatly appreciated. Please indicate preferred times when you could help "babysit" the exhibit .

Would you be willing to help "babysit" the trees? Please indicate preferred times .
Saturday _____ 9:30 - Noon _____ 11:30 - 2:30 _____ 2:30 - 4:30
Sunday _____ 9:30 - Noon _____ 11:30 - 2:30 _____ 2:30 - 4:30

PLEASE return this form to Pat Lucke Morris, 151 Paschall Mill Rd., West Grove, PA 19390 or PLMshomei@verizon.net.

We need to have your information by June 2nd, 2008, at the latest so that we can prepare the identification cards for the trees. Thank you in advance for all your help.