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Date: Mon, 3 Aug 1992 17:17:52 EDT
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
From: GMCDONOU@MIDAS.SINCLAIR.EDU
Subject: BONSAI ART???????

I belong to a disucssion list called NEW-LIST. It really is not a discussion group but a listing of new discussion groups. About once a week I receive a message listing the new groups on Internet with a paragraph concerning the focus of the group. I don't know how the new groups are placed on this. In any event, the editor of our group, BONSAI, may want to contact them to ensure that we get on the NEW-LIST list. My address for this group is
LISTSERV@VMI.NODAK.EDU

***What is Bonsai Art???????

Since I live about an hour's drive from Columbus, Ohio, I have been to the AMERIFLORIA three times and hope to make several more visits. There are several Bonsai trees on display. One is reputed to be 500 years old. The last time I visited, there was finally a person at the exhibit that could answer questions. I learned that the tree had been found in one of the Carolina's in the early '70's by an expert in this type of tree (a Buttonwood, I think).

I did not realize that "natural bonsai" could be classed as Bonsai. The very old Bonsai I have seen (like the great gift from the Japanese that is at the National Arbrium in Washington, D.C.) have been cultivated by people with the help of nature not by nature alone.

QUESTION????????????????????

Is naturally occurring bonsai-type plants considered Bonsai art?

Is it acceptable practice in Bonsai art to allow the owner to claim all those years in which Mother Nature shaped the plant?

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Date: Mon, 3 Aug 1992 16:52:34 CDT
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >

From: "Mark R. Williamson" <MARK@RICEVM1.RICE.EDU>
Subject: Re: BONSAI ART??????
In-Reply-To: Message of Mon,
3 Aug 1992 17:17:52 EDT from <GMCDONOU@MIDAS.SINCLAIR.EDU>

On Mon, 3 Aug 1992 17:17:52 EDT <GMCDONOU@MIDAS.SINCLAIR.EDU> said:
> Is naturally occurring bonsai-type plants considered Bonsai art?

There is art in recognizing the beautiful in the nature. Consider
suiseki (roughly rock appreciation), where the human contribution is
best limited to placement in a suiban (tray).

Similarly, in bonsai the recognition of good material is an important
first step. That's not to say that that's all you would do, of course.

> Is it acceptable practice in Bonsai art to allow the owner to claim
> all those years in which Mother Nature shaped the plant?

Normally, one would cite both the age and the time in training. Add
the time you have trained it if you didn't start it yourself. Many
would say that all of these are subsidiary to how old it looks.

Mark R. Williamson, Rice U., Houston TX; MARK@RICEVM1.RICE.EDU or @RICEVM1
=====

Date: Tue, 4 Aug 1992 10:46:00 -0600
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: Keith Sedgwick <KEITH@INTAUD.USU.EDU>
Subject: Re: BONSAI ART??????

***What is Bonsai Art??????

Since I live about an hour's drive from Columbus, Ohio, I have been
to the AMERIFLORIA three times and hope to make several more
visits. There are several Bonsai trees on display. One is reputed
to be 500 years old. The last time I visited, there was finally a
person at the exhibit that could answer questions. I learned that
the tree had been found in one of the Carolina's in the early '70's
by an expert in this type of tree (a Buttonwood, I think).

I did not realize that "natural bonsai" could be classed as Bonsai.
The very old Bonsai I have seen (like the great gift from the
Japanese that is at the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.) have
been cultivated by people with the help of nature not by nature
alone.

That is what you are trying to create -- a natural looking tree you can move around and enjoy. You don't have to trek through a Carolina swamp to see a great tree. You can have it sitting on your patio where you can look at it every day and share it with the world through pictures, shows and articles.

QUESTION????????????????????

Is naturally occurring bonsai-type plants considered Bonsai art?

A naturally occurring bonsai-type plant is considered just that. A naturally occurring bonsai-type plant. Usually a small plant (but I have seen a bonsai at the National Arboretum, a pine, that is about 5-6' tall) that has had to struggle to stay alive. A plant found growing in very little soil, in a small depression in some, out of the way, place. I wouldn't classify this plant as bonsai art. It would probably make a great bonsai. But in it's naturally state, I would not call it a bonsai.

I think one reason why bonsai was accepted by Japan and developed by them to such a high state, was due to the limited resources and very little unspoiled and undeveloped wilderness in that small country. Every person needs some quite time where he can relax, lay down on a blanket in the forest, look up at tall trees and watch the clouds roll by.

Due to the limited space available for the Japanese to do this, they did the next best thing. They borrowed bonsai from China and developed it into an art that can be produced relatively fast (by wiring) and enjoyed by many people. Hey! doesn't this sound familiar? Like -- the story of the automobile industry in the last 50 years. It looks like throughout history, the Japanese have been taking a good idea and making it a great idea that can be shared by everyone (and making a great deal of money in the process).

A great bonsai can jump start your imagination. I find it very easy to look at a bonsai and feel like I'm sitting on a ledge, I'm wandering through a forest, or on top of a hill, with a constant wind blowing in my face, and having a quite moment by myself. This is where the art of bonsai reaches out and lets you escape for a while. Sometimes when I look at a well designed bonsai, I feel like I would like to wander through that grove, lay down on a blanket under a tree, or look for a bird in the branches of a tree. This might sound silly but I feel part of the design. My mind can wander and I can escape from reality for a minute and dream up landscape that is much better than I could ever find in nature.

(Boy! is that heavy enough? It sounds like having sex -- its always much better in your mind then what it actually is. OOPS, forgive me I don't

want to turn this into a XXX article on bonsai. That would probably be a first. I don't want Dan C. to have to censor my ramblings. I'll have to find out what my wife did to our breakfast this morning. What ever I had, I can't have it every morning. One thing I do know -- when I find out I won't tell the Japanese! Ha Ha. They would take my cereal, add something else to it and make millions. Oh well back to the question at hand.)

Is it acceptable practice in Bonsai art to allow the owner to claim all those years in which Mother Nature shaped the plant?

I have never seen a bonsaist claim the design styled by nature as his own. Most trees on display or in magazines will indicate when it was collected, its estimated age, and how long it has been in training. A person who really knows bonsai can look at a tree and usually tell if it has been collected or if it was started from nursery stock. Most collected trees have design flaws. The real art in styling collected trees is to use those flaws to your advantage and "cheat" a little bit. Some of the very old, well known trees have a written history of who owned it, what that person did to it, and when it was passed on to someone else.

There are two aspects to bonsai. The art side and the horticultural side. It is very difficult for me to separate the two. You can design a great tree but what enjoyment can you get out of the design if you let it die from lack of proper care. Or you can grow a "post in a pot", but what good is that if it doesn't invoke your imagination?

I read an article recently about the Japanese who are separating the art from the horticultural side of bonsai. They are making it somewhat like an assembly line. One person a horticulturalist, will start the trees from seed. After they are so old they are sent to a bonsai artist who makes the initial design decisions. They are then sent to another grower to develop the trunk. They are then sent back to another totally different artist who specializes in determining the front on bonsai trees. They are then sent back to another grower who specializes in growing branches. This continues through several levels and over a number of years. It kind'a takes the mystic out of bonsai doesn't it. Oh well, if they are well designed and you can use your imagination for a little escape I guess they are not all that bad.

Well enough of my ramblings. I had better get back to work. I won't be around for a few days. My son is playing in a basketball tournament in Las Vegas and "good old dad" is going along. See you next week.

Keith

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Keith Sedgwick ### Bonsai is not a race because
KEITH@INTAUD.USU.EDU ##.#### there is no finish line.

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Happy Growing.

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Date: Wed, 5 Aug 1992 11:32:59 EDT
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
From: "Matthew Simpson" <054340@UOTTAWA.BITNET >
Subject: Re: BONSAI ART??????
In-Reply-To: Message of Mon,
 3 Aug 1992 17:17:52 EDT from <GMCDONOU@MIDAS.SINCLAIR.EDU >

On Mon, 3 Aug 1992 17:17:52 EDT <GMCDONOU@MIDAS.SINCLAIR.EDU > said:
> I did not realize that "natural bonsai" could be classed as Bonsai.
> The very old Bonsai I have seen (like the great gift from the
> Japanese that is at the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.) have
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> alone.
> QUESTION????????????????????
> Is naturally occurring bonsai-type plants considered Bonsai art?

As I understand it, bonsai do occur naturally on rock, in crevices,
and, in general, places that are a bit tough on the plant. The idea
to replicate this phenomenon in house plants, or to take these trees
from their environment and put them in similar root surroundings (pots)
came from the appreciation of these trees in nature.

>
> Is it acceptable practice in Bonsai art to allow the owner to claim
> all those years in which Mother Nature shaped the plant?

>
Exactly what claim is this owner making? Is the owner actually
claiming to have nurtured and shaped this tree from the time
it was only one year old? Is the owner claiming that the tree
was in the family for centuries? Or, because s/he states that
the tree was found in the Carolinas, is your question, "Does the
owner have the right to claim this tree from nature and take it
from its natural environment?"

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| 1 * Matthew Simpson * BITNET: |
| \1/ * School of Psychology * 054340@uottawa.bitnet |
| 1 * 145 Jean Jacques Lussier * INTERNET: |
| 1 * Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8P5 * 054340@acadvm1.uottawa.ca |
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Date: Wed, 5 Aug 1992 11:44:00 -0600
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
From: Keith Sedgwick <KEITH@INTAUD.USU.EDU >
Subject: Re: Azaleas

If I receive the typical azalea house plant one finds on the supermarket shelves this time of season, and I would like to break a group of 4 plants away from the dense peat-like soil to make 4 trees, what do I need to concern myself with regarding the roots? I have read here that azalea roots are sensitive. Can they withstand the shredding of the peat?

Hi Matt:

At our last bonsai club meeting a guy brought one of his azaleas to share with the club members. He said the azalea was given to his wife, as a thank you, and was probably purchased at a supermarket. It looked real good. He said he had repotted it a couple of times and was in the process of styling and designing it as an informal upright. He said he had no problems in transplanting it.

If you can, I would wait until spring to break up the tree. I think they would stand a much better chance of surviving if you wait until it has get a growth spurt.

When you make the separation I wouldn't trim the roots unless it is absolute necessary. Try to keep as much root system on each one of the four trees. Rather than breaking them up and cutting them apart have you considered just wiring them down.

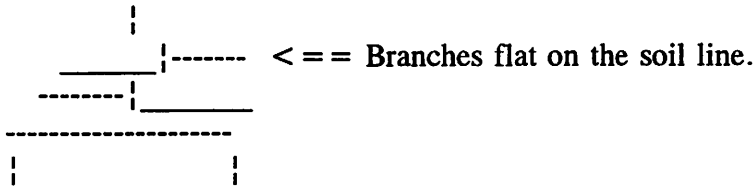
A few months ago we styled some azaleas in club. The guy doing the demonstration used azales that were nothing but a clump of trunks and branches. Just like you would have in one of the supermarket trees. He cut back the mass of trunks until he had an odd number remaining. For example:

\ \ | // <== five upright trunks left

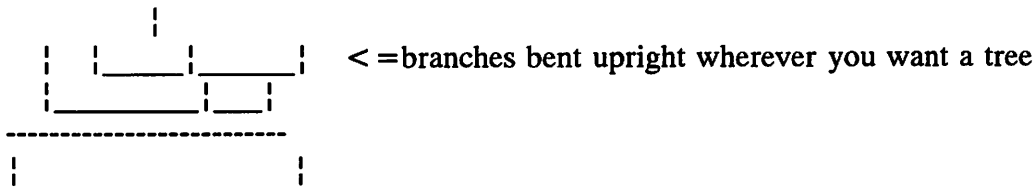
\\ |//

(Hey! don't laugh -- drawing with a keyboard is hard.)

He then wired each trunk and bent some of them down as far as possible. Most of them were parallel with the soil line. Let me try this again. For example:



Then where ever he wanted to make a tree he woul bend the parallel branch upright. This was a real neat way to create an azalea forest. Each azalea would be genetically the same and have the same type of blossoms. Now for my last great drawing --



When he got through bending up the parallel branches into new trees he buried all the parallel branches under the soil. He said azaleas root very easily on branches that are in contact with the soil. I tried one and it seems to be doing very well. He said to let them grow wild for a few years and then repot them. At that time you would have to remove all the wires on the branches you bent down and should now be rooted.

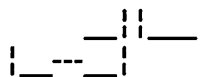
This might be an alternative method of making a four, five, seven, or how many ever, azalea forest. Give it a try. Try it first on a cheapie azalea in case of failures. We all have them.

Keith

.....

Keith Sedgwick ### Bonsai is not a race because
KEITH@INTAUD.USU.EDU ##.#### there is no finish line.
 #.#####.###

Happy Growing.



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Date: Wed, 5 Aug 1992 14:05:31 -0400
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
From: Mark Evans <LIBEVANS@EKU.BITNET >
Subject: Re: BONSAI ART???????

In reading the discussions of the past few days, I have been quite perplexed. I haven't been able to understand what the hubbub has been about. Then it finally dawned on me. Someone(s) out there has failed to realize that bonsai is not a horticultural practice. It is an art; a form of self expression. The horticultural techniques that are used to obtain the end result are merely TOOLS, much like brushes, oil and pigments are to the painter; or, like clay and fire to the potter.

As with any art, the bonsai artist is only half responsible for the piece. The other half of the experience is brought with you, the observer. The artist discovers an element of design (the gnarled tree in its natural setting). After careful preliminary planning, the initial element is combined with other elements (pot, soil, rock, moss, and judicious pruning) to produce a finished work of art. You, the observer, view the piece, and what you see ends up being what you look for.

I hope this has made some sense. Just know that the art is in the eye of the beholder, not in the hands of the artist. There is art in nature, a point on which most of us would agree. Otherwise we wouldn't be on a list called BONSAI.

That's my 2 cents,

Mark
LIBEVANS

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Date: Wed, 5 Aug 1992 13:39:00 -0600
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
From: Keith Sedgwick <KEITH@INTAUD.USU.EDU >
Subject: Re: BONSAI ART?????? and amen.

In reading the discussions of the past few days, I have been quite perplexed. I haven't been able to understand what the hubbub has been

about. Then it finally dawned on me. Someone(s) out there has failed to realize that bonsai is not a horticultural practice. It is an art; a form of self expression. The horticultural techniques that are used to obtain the end result are merely TOOLS, much like brushes, oil and pigments are to the painter; or, like clay and fire to the potter.

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That's my 2 cents,

Mark:

That was worth much more than 2 cents -- more like a million. Very well said! Can I add my amen to the things you so aptly described?

In my recent post concerning bonsai art, the things that took me several sentences to say about being part of the design, you said in a few words. Thanks.

Keith

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Date: Wed, 5 Aug 1992 22:35:48 EDT
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: HALLRL@MOREKYPR.FOGHORN.PASS.WAYNE.EDU
Subject: Black Pines

Japanese Black Pines:

To reduce needle size, pinch back the week candles in spring and thin out some of the needles on the strong candles. A couple of weeks later, the buds in the week areas will begin growing, at this point cut the strong candles back to 1/8th of an inch. A month after that the buds will be elongating, at this point thin out the week buds in the week areas of growth and thin out the

strong buds from the strong areas of growth. Leave 2 buds in the strong areas and three to four buds in the weak areas. In October when old needles are turning red, use tweezers to remove the old needles and thin out some of the younger needles.

To get a more detailed description, see Bonsai Today issue 2. I've just finished reading a great article by Kusida Matsuo on how to enlarge trunks and nebari on young black pines in a matter of several years, see Bonsai Today issue 20. Mr. Matsuo is taking young black pines and planting them in a plastic colander filled with sand and clay (akadama) and then giving them large amounts of slow release fertilizer. Watering is required three to four times a day and the plants should be placed in full sun. In a matter of five years he has a tree that appears to be 20+ years of age, he is getting some amazing results with this process.

Keith, I've tried sending you mail but I keep getting a message from the postmaster at INTAUD.USU.EDU that user KEITH does not exist on that system. Do you have any idea what the problem is? I've tried sending to keith@intaud.usu.edu

Later Rando

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Date: Thu, 6 Aug 1992 19:18:54 EDT
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
From: GMCDONOU@MIDAS.SINCLAIR.EDU
Subject: BONSAI ART???????

Recently I asked the following two questions.

What is Bonsai Art?

Is naturally occurring bonsai-type plants considered
Bonsai Art?

Perhaps the context in which I asked these questions did not reflect why I asked them, so I will elaborate.

I visited the Ameriflora Exhibition in Columbus, Ohio and was surprised to find as the center of the Bonsai Display a 500 year old tree that was labeled as being "found" someplace in the Carolina woods in the mid-70's.

I have thought for some years that Bonsai was dwarf trees and shrubs that grew in small containers while looking very much like their big sisters and brothers out there in Mother Nature's woods.

I have thought that Art was the human effort to imitate,

supplement or alter the work of nature (although I realized that the result many times looked nothing like anything in nature).

Like some of those who commented on my questions, I understand that "the bonsai artist is only half responsible for the piece. The other half of the experience is brought with you, the observer."

HOWEVER-----

It doesn't take much human effort to dig up a tree and put it in a washbowl style pottery container. Is just digging up the tree altering, supplementing or imitating nature? I will admit that it may take skill to make sure that all the roots are dug up and to keep the tree alive for another 15 years BUT the asthetic appreciation that I as a viewer had in this tree had little to do with the owner's efforts. I have assumed that Bonsai Art involved the acts necessary to dwarf the tree or shrub.

Observing the 500 year old tree, I felt that we Americans had perverted an ancient art form. In our zeal to celebrate, we had taken a quick fix.

Garnett McDonough, Chair GMCDONOU@MIDAS.Sinclair.edu
Legal Assisting Program Phone-513-226-2923
Sinclair Community College FAX-513-449-5192
444 W. Third St.
Dayton, Ohio 45402

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Date: Fri, 7 Aug 1992 09:55:21 -0500
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: dan@FOGHORN.PASS.WAYNE.EDU
Subject: Re: BONSAI ART???????

On Friday, Garnett McDonough said:

> HOWEVER-----

>

> It doesn't take much human effort to dig up a tree and put it
> in a washbowl style pottery container. Is just digging up the tree
> altering, supplementing or imitating nature? I will admit that it
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> appreciation that I as a viewer had in this tree had little to do
> with the owner's efforts. I have assumed that Bonsai Art involved
> the acts necessary to dwarf the tree or shrub.

However, this is exactly how this Art got started. It was the search for the tree, as much as the tree itself that was behind it all. The search (I know there is a name for it but I can't think of it right now) was a quest not unlike that which the American Indians also performed to find oneself and become closer to nature/god.

>
> Observing the 500 year old tree, I felt that we Americans had
> perverted an ancient art form. In our zeal to celebrate, we had
> taken a quick fix.

Having not seen the tree, or the arrangement I really cannot comment here.

Dan Cwierniewicz

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Date: Mon, 10 Aug 1992 09:16:46 -0500
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: dan@FOGHORN.PASS.WAYNE.EDU
Subject: The Quest for 'self'

On page 27 of "Introducing Bonsai" by Christian Pessey he states that "In Japanese, the quest for a tree in its natural surroundings is called Yamadori and bonsai obtained in this way are called Yamadori Shitate." Therefore the tree which Garnett McDonough saw at Ameriflora is a Yamadori Shitate.

Dan Cwierniewicz

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Date: Mon, 10 Aug 1992 10:57:02 -0400
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: Bill Walther <bwalther@CCS.CARLETON.CA>
Subject: "Bonsai fakers"
In-Reply-To: <9208101318.AA00962.962@alfred.ccs.carleton.ca>; from
"dan@FOGHORN.PASS.WAYNE.EDU" at Aug 10, 92 9:16 am

I thought this article from the Aug. 8 edition of the Toronto Globe and Mail might be of interest to the list and might end my status as a "lurker" 8-).

BONSAI FAKERS RAVAGE STANDS OF ANCIENT DWARF CEDARS

Owen Sound Times

When visiting a bonsai show in the big city, check for "made in Bruce County" labels.

Some of those potted dwarf trees may actually be centuries old cedars swiped from the cliffs of the Niagara Escarpment.

University of Geulph botanist Doug Larson estimates that on the Bruce Peninsula alone several thousand of these ancient trees have been harvested and taken south by urban bonsai collectors.

The traditional Japanese art involves growing artificially dwarfed bonsai in pots from seed. Tree-nappers cheat by potting escarpment trees and taking credit, he said.

"The truth is they were grown by mother nature...it's fraudulent at the very least," he said. At worst it's illegal.

Larson suspects many of the cedar are taken from private property and the Bruce Peninsula National Park. Long before they harvest, the tree-hunters scout out a cedar, returning each year to prune its branches.

"The first four years it looks like they're sightseeing; the last year they actually remove the whole plant," Larson said.

The stunted cliff-dwellers grow in small pockets of soil in rock, making it easy for bonsai collectors to separate and cultivate the roots.

Living cedars on the escarpment and Georgian Bay islands have been dated at 1,000 years old. As more becomes known about their unique features, Larson fears the trophy-seekers will increase. Survivors of an ancient ecosystem, these trees must be protected, he said.

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bwalther@ccs.carleton.ca (Bill Walther)
Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario

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Date: Mon, 10 Aug 1992 12:27:15 -0500

Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: dan@FOGHORN.PASS.WAYNE.EDU
Subject: Re: "Bonsai fakers"

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> and Mail might be of interest to the list and might end my status as a
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>

> **BONSAI FAKERS RAVAGE STANDS OF ANCIENT DWARF CEDARS**

>

> **Owen Sound Times**

stuff deleted

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>

> Larson suspects many of the cedar are taken from private property and
> the Bruce Peninsula National Park. Long before they harvest, the
> tree-hunters scout out a cedar, returning each year to prune its
> branches.

If they take the trees from private property with the permission of the owners of the property, than no laws have been broken. As far as I know these are not an endangered species and therefore do not have any laws protecting them if they are on private property. Also, note that he says they prune the branches. Therefore human intervention was required to make these plants showable. If they remove the trees from a National Park, then I agree that they should be taken to court.

More stuff deleted

> Living cedars on the escarpment and Georgian Bay islands have been
> dated at 1,000 years old. As more becomes known about their unique
> features, Larson fears the trophy-seekers will increase. Survivors of
> an ancient ecosystem, these trees must be protected, he said.

I agree that they should be protected, but unless the government claims eminent domain and takes the private property on which these trees currently live I don't think anyone can do much, expect guard the park better. Maybe install sensors on each plant that is considered in danger of being snatched (again only in the park, as I firmly believe in a landowners rights)

>

>

>--
>bwalther@ccs.carleton.ca (Bill Walther)
>Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario

Dan Cwierniewicz

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Date: Mon, 10 Aug 1992 16:41:00 -0600
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: Keith Sedgwick <KEITH@INTAUD.USU.EDU>
Subject: Re: BONSAI ART???????

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their big sisters and brothers out there in Mother Nature's woods.

I have thought that Art was the human effort to imitate,
supplement or alter the work of nature (although I realized that
the result many times looked nothing like anything in nature).

Like some of those who commented on my questions, I understand
that "the bonsai artist is only half responsible for the piece. The
other half of the experience is brought with you, the observer."

HOWEVER-----

It doesn't take much human effort to dig up a tree and put it
in a washbowl style pottery container. Is just digging up the tree
altering, supplementing or imitating nature? I will admit that it
may take skill to make sure that all the roots are dug up and to
keep the tree alive for another 15 years BUT the asthetic
appreciation that I as a viewer had in this tree had little to do
with the owner's efforts. I have assumed that Bonsai Art involved

the acts necessary to dwarf the tree or shrub.

Hi Garnett:

Have you collected any bonsai trees from nature for your collection? It takes a great deal of strength and skill to dig up a 500 year old tree and carry it back to civilization. The strength comes from packing a rootball (that is to say if you are lucky enough to get a rootball) on your back, down a cliff, over a mountain and through a desert, to where your truck is parked. If you don't have a rootball you've got to pack in wet sphagnum moss to wrap the around the few roots (if your lucky enough to get a few roots) and wrap it in a plastic bag and lug the whole thing out to civilization.

The skill part comes from a great deal of horticultural knowledge to assure its survival. I have come across many trees on my collecting trips that I didn't think I had a chance to keep them alive, so I left them for others to enjoy if they happen to stumble on them. We are not raping mother nature. Most bonsai enthusiasts have a sincere and strong respect for the out of doors. Looking at nature is what inspires most of us into imitation.

It is very difficult to "style" a collected tree. You have to be skilled enough to change a living organism to something that is enjoyable to look at, and all the time be aware that you cannot drastically change what "mother nature" has done to the tree. You have to always be aware of the things that are possible to change, and the things that are not possible to change. You do not want to change it so much that it dies.

One has to be aware of all the things artists are aware of, i.e. scale, perspective, balance, color, depth, and artistic style. It is very easy to look at a naturalized bonsai before it is collected and say it looks very good. Put the same tree in a bonsai pot and it would probably look very unnatural and ugly. It has to be pleasant to look at. The skill comes from communicating to the observer the history of the tree, where did you find it? Was it high on a cliff, on a beach, in a pine forest, etc?

Observing the 500 year old tree, I felt that we Americans had perverted an ancient art form. In our zeal to celebrate, we had taken a quick fix.

Don't blame the Americans. The Japanese have been collecting trees for centuries. Most of the collecting techniques we use today are learned from the Japanese. If you ever grow or train bonsai you know that there is no "quick fix".

Oh, by the way have you priced the "washbowl" style containers lately? If you have some of them, you had better handle them with care. We're

talking hundreds of dollars for a single washbowl.

Keith

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Keith Sedgwick ### Bonsai is not a race because
KEITH@INTAUD.USU.EDU ##.##### there is no finish line.
 #.#####.###

Happy Growing. | |
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Date: Tue, 11 Aug 1992 11:03:00 -0600
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
From: Keith Sedgwick <KEITH@INTAUD.USU.EDU >
Subject: Re: "Bonsai fakers"

Hi Bill:

What is a "lurker?" Can I be one too? Does it hurt? {8-) After I read the article I feel like I should put in my two cents. Of course I disagree with the article. The person who wrote the article must of had a bad experience with bonsai. His choice of words is interesting. I've made a few comments through the article, I hope you don't mind.

I thought this article from the Aug. 8 edition of the Toronto Globe and Mail might be of interest to the list and might end my status as a "lurker" 8-).

BONSAI FAKERS RAVAGE STANDS OF ANCIENT DWARF CEDARS

Owen Sound Times

When visiting a bonsai show in the big city, check for "made in Bruce County" labels.

Some of those potted dwarf trees may actually be centuries old cedars swiped from the cliffs of the Niagara Escarpment.

I like the use of the word "swiped." Kind'a sounds like steal doesn't it? In all the collecting trips I have been on or have heard about, trees are not "swiped." All of the people that I've been associated with on a

collecting trip have had permission from the BLM to collect trees from government land. If it is not federal property then we have received permission from the land owner.

University of Geulph botanist Doug Larson estimates that on the Bruce Penninsula alone several thousand of these ancient trees have been harvested and taken south by urban bonsai collectors.

The traditional Japanese art involves growing artificially dwarfed bonsai in pots from seed. Tree-nappers cheat by potting escarpment trees and taking credit, he said.

Doug Larson is probably a good botanist, however he hasn't done much research on the art of bonsai! Many well known bonsai in Japan have been collected from the wild by the Japanese. They have been collecting trees for hundreds of years. Collecting trees is not considered cheating! When a collected tree is displayed it usually indicates it when it was collected and how long it has been in training. I would not call this as taking credit for mother nature. I don't know where he got his information on "traditional" Japanese art, but most of the collecting techniques used have been developed by the Japanese.

Doug makes it sound like the only way to grow a traditional bonsai is from seed. This is not correct. I have been growing bonsai for 20 years and almost all of my trees have come from nursery stock. Another acceptable method of acquiring bonsai is layering.

"The truth is they were grown by mother nature...it's fraudulent at the very least," he said. At worst it's illegal.

It is not fraudulent! Fraud is defined as "intentional perversion of truth in order to induce another to part with something of value or surrender a legal right." If a collected bonsai is properly described and displayed then there is no fraud. Even if it is not properly described, I wouldn't classify it as fraud. What legal right has been given up or what thing has been parted with. It is only illegal if a law was broken.

Larson suspects many of the cedar are taken from private property and the Bruce Penninsula National Park. Long before they harvest, the tree-hunters scout out a cedar, returning each year to prune its branches.

I do not know where Bruce Penninsula National Park is, but if it is like a USA national park you cannot remove any tree from the park. If trees are being taken from inside the park boundries and it is against the law, then the collectors should be arrested and punished. If they are being taken from

private property, and the owner of the property has given his permission, there is not much that can be done.

"The first four years it looks like they're sightseeing; the last year they actually remove the whole plant," Larson said.

The stunted cliff-dwellers grow in small pockets of soil in rock, making it easy for bonsai collectors to separate and cultivate the roots.

Living cedars on the escarpment and Georgian Bay islands have been dated at 1,000 years old. As more becomes known about their unique features, Larson fears the trophy-seekers will increase. Survivors of an ancient ecosystem, these trees must be protected, he said.

I would assume that if the cedars referred to by Doug are a protected species then they should not be taken from either private property or a national park. I would also assume that there are laws to protect this classification of trees, if the cedars are so classified.

Oh well, I don't think we can change Doug's opinion of collectors, but there is certainly another side to the story.

Keith

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Keith Sedgwick ### Bonsai is not a race because
KEITH@INTAUD.USU.EDU ##.#### there is no finish line.
 #.#####.###

Happy Growing.
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Date: Tue, 11 Aug 1992 17:59:49 -0400
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
From: Bill Walther <bwalther@CCS.CARLETON.CA >
Subject: Re: "Bonsai fakers"
In-Reply-To: <9208112123.AA24595.24595@alfred.ccs.carleton.ca > ; from "Keith Sedgwick" at Aug 11, 92 11:03 am

Keith Sedgwick writes:

>
> Hi Bill:

>
> What is a "lurker?" Can I be one too? Does it hurt? {8-}

A "lurker" is one who reads a list or newsgroup but doesn't post anything. I have been lurking in this group since it started. I lurk in many lists! It doesn't hurt a bit, until someone posts something and the lurker says to him/herself "Hey, that's just what I was thinking! Why didn't I say that?"

Now that I've confessed to having been a lurker, I will also confess that two of my favourite bonsai are a native juniper and a hemlock which I took from the woods that surround our home. They were both about four or five years old when I potted them--just seedlings, really. I had watched them for a couple of years in the forest, digging around the roots each year to facilitate the transplant and doing minimal shaping. They have been in pots now for three years. The hemlock has never had anything more than tip pruning and makes a beautiful display-- very small (about 10 inches), and even though it has two trunks, in my mind it is a prize. The juniper has been wired and is turning into a cascade. This year I moved it to a tall pot. The surprising thing, to me, is that it has now produced fruit!

Neither of these trees will be missed in the woods, where they abound. And I feel no remorse about finding them in nature and bringing them into closer focus. It has added greatly to my appreciation.

Cheers!

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bwalther@ccs.carleton.ca (Bill Walther)
Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario

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Date: Tue, 11 Aug 1992 20:28:48 EDT
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET >
From: GMCDONOU@MIDAS.SINCLAIR.EDU
Subject: re: Re: "Bonsai fakers"

Bill, You say that you feel no remorse about finding the small seedlings and assisting in forming them and eventually potting them. Would you have felt different if they had naturally dwarfed (bonsaied?) and then you had put them in those (as one commentor has told us) oh so deliciously expensive and obviously exclusive washbowls????

GMCDONOU@MIDAS.SINCLAIR.EDU

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Date: Wed, 12 Aug 1992 07:10:41 -0400
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: Bill Walther <bwalther@CCS.CARLETON.CA>
Subject: re: Re: "Bonsai fakers"
In-Reply-To: <9208120026.AA27717.27717@alfred.ccs.carleton.ca>; from
"GMCDONOU@MIDAS.SINCLAIR.EDU" at Aug 11, 92 8:28 pm

GMCDONOU@MIDAS.SINCLAIR.EDU writes:

>
> Bill, You say that you feel no remorse about finding the small seedlings and
> assisting in forming them and eventually potting them. Would you have felt
> different if they had naturally dwarfed (bonsaied?) and then you had put them
> in those (as one commentor has told us) oh so deliciously expensive and
> obviously exclusive washbowls????
> GMCDONOU@MIDAS.SINCLAIR.EDU
> #
>

Whether I "captured" them or not would, I think, depend on where they were growing and my estimate of their chances of survival. If they were growing where they could be readily seen by others, I would not have taken them. Also, these are common species in our area.

I certainly don't share the feeling that trees bonsaied (is that a word) by nature are in any way fakes or that transplanting them in pots is cheating. It takes great skill to transplant an old tree successfully, and often requires years of planning and work.

By the way, planting into a washbowl might not be a bad idea for an old tree with a large root structure if one plans to gradually reduce the root structure over several years. It may take some time before the tree is ready for a "proper" pot.

--
bwalther@ccs.carleton.ca (Bill Walther)
Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario

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Date: Wed, 12 Aug 1992 15:55:14 -0500
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: dan@FOGHORN.PASS.WAYNE.EDU
Subject: Mugo Pine

A couple of days ago I took a trip out to the Bonsai Center near my house. I bought a Mugo Pine cutting. Cost me \$5.50. Yesterday I stopped in at Frank's Nursery (a national? chain) and found a 3 to 4 year old Mugo for the same price. The tree I bought at Frank's may be a different variety (I meant to bring the tag but forgot). Anyway, anyone have particular suggestions as to the care and feeding of these beasts? Best time of year to shape, etc, etc.

Thanks

Dan Cwierniewicz

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Date: Wed, 12 Aug 1992 16:29:30 EDT
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: "Matthew Simpson" <054340@ACADVM1.UOTTAWA.CA>
Subject: anything in my neck of the woods?

Does anyone out there know of any Bonsai Shops or fantastic nurseries in the Ottawa, Ontario area? I tried looking up Bonsai in the yellow pages, but it just don't cut it.

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|_ 1_ * Matthew Simpson * BITNET: |  
| \_1_/ * School of Psychology * 054340@uottawa.bitnet |  
| 1 * 145 Jean Jacques Lussier * INTERNET: |  
| 1 * Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8P5 * 054340@acadvm1.uottawa.ca |
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Date: Wed, 12 Aug 1992 17:29:11 -0400
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: Bill Walther <bwalther@CCS.CARLETON.CA>
Subject: Re: anything in my neck of the woods?
In-Reply-To: <92Aug12.163450edt.8719@ugw.utcs.utoronto.ca>; from "Matthew Simpson" at Aug 12, 92 4:29 pm

Matthew Simpson writes:

- >
- > Does anyone out there know of any Bonsai Shops or fantastic
- > nurseries in the Ottawa, Ontario area? I tried looking up
- > Bonsai in the yellow pages, but it just don't cut it.

Matthew- There was a shop called "Bonsai North" on Bank Street about three blocks south of Sunnyside, but I think they went out of business and sold their stock to Fine's. The Fine's Florist on Riverside out toward the airport often have bonsai in stock, but not much in the way of tools, pots, etc.

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bwalther@ccs.carleton.ca (Bill Walther)
Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario

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Date: Wed, 12 Aug 1992 15:20:00 MDT
Reply-To: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
Sender: Bonsai Discussion List <BONSAI@WAYNEST1.BITNET>
From: The Shadow <THESHADO@CORRAL.UWYO.EDU>
Subject: informative updates

Just some odds and ends I've noticed about the growth and care of some of my experimental bonsai:

1) English Lavender really thrive as indoor plants. They do need a fair amount of light, or they get leggy, but they are very very durable. The wood is a bit on the brittle side, so some care must be taken when wiring to insure that the branches aren't bent a whole lot at any one time. This isn't a significant limitation, however, as it only takes a few months for the branches to hold a bend. Most of the leaves grow from younger wood, and most of the new growth comes from areas of young wood. Occasionally, something will try to come out of an area of old wood, but this is not frequent. It also seems to have an evergreen sort of growth patter, in that the life of a leaf is a rather constant thing that bows not to the seasonal changes, but to the rigors of aging.

2) Russian Olive trees don't do well as indoor bonsai. They survive, but they don't flourish.

3) Ezo Spruce do remarkably well indoors. It has retained good color and vigorous, healthy growth.

Kirk Haines
theshado@outlaw.uwyo.edu

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