

Issue **36** October 2011

Magazine of the International Saikei Association

SAIKEI

International

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GENERAL NEWS

SHOWS

We look back with a certain pride at the shows we attended during this year and I think it can be said that we have been able to educate and raise awareness of the art of Saikei. Our president has asked me to pass on his personal thanks to all those individuals who helped out and attended the shows this year.

NEWSLETTER

We are thinking of changing the focus of the newsletter from purely Saikei to a mix of Saikei, other Landscape art forms i.e. Penjing and Bonsai. This decision is being made to further reflect the fact that many Saikei enthusiasts also practice these other forms. We would like to hear from members regarding this shift in focus.

WEBSITE

NEWS ITEMS

We are still seeking news items for the newsletter and website. So if you know of an event let us know and we will advertise it for you.

ARTICLES

We are considering publishing articles on our website, if you have any article you would like to submit please send it to

BACK TO BASICS SHOWING

INTRODUCTION

It is important to recognise that showing Saikei is open to people of all levels and not (as some people think) to those experienced members that have been doing Saikei for “Cough” years. I remember when I first doing bonsai in the late 70’s and early 80’s I use to visit shows which displayed some really excellent bonsai, and to be honest I used to come away from these exhibitions disillusioned thinking I will never manage that. What the public want to see is a variety of trees and plantings some at the top end and some that are in development so therefore if you have a tree that you like, chances are that others will like it too.

An idea that I saw at another exhibition recently was an education table that included 5 trees of the same species at different stages in development. Each tree had a description of each stage to educate the viewer. Also on this table was a tree that had been styled on only 1 side so that the difference was made clear.

PREPARING HARDWARE

You should be checking your hardware against the following list:

Is the pot right for the planting (believe it or not it is possible to change the pots on Saikei with care, don’t be frightened to ask for some advice).

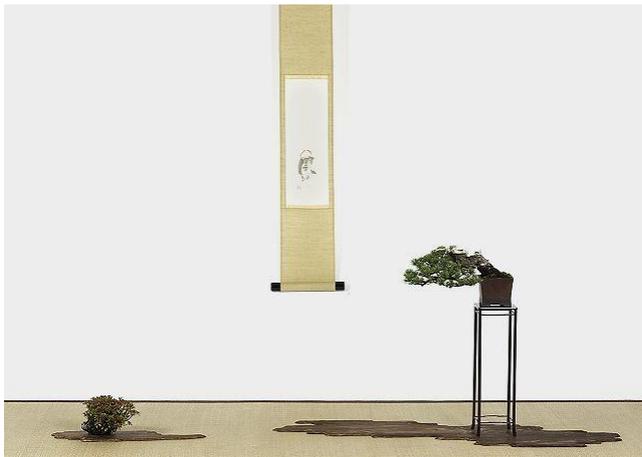
If the pot is right does it have any damage or unsightly marks?

Do I need to do a thorough clean and oil of the pot now so that it will be easier before the show.

Do I have a stand that compliments the pot and composition (remember never use a stand that crowds the tree, space is important) again ask if you are in any doubt.

Choose an accent that will compliment the composition and portray the season (I will often choose 2 or 3 and then pick one that is in the best condition).

Decide on a scroll which will compliment the composition and accent and complete the seasonal image.



An excellent display of Shohin tree, accent and scroll (a Saikei display can often be composed in a very similar way)

PREPARING TREES

When preparing trees for show it is important to make an evaluation of the tree as a whole, look at the:

1. Soil surface – is it clear of weeds and does it help to enhance the natural look of the Saikei, (liverwort does not serve as a soil surface and is not a good thing to have on a Saikei at any time of the year let alone during a show).
2. Are the surface roots nicely spread and clean of old fibrous roots .
3. Is the bottom of the trunks (Tachiagari) clean and well shaped.
4. Is the rest of the trunk clear of old branch stubs and free of moss.
5. Are the branches well shaped and in the right position (now is the time to take corrective measures if not).
6. On conifers you can start to correct foliage problems. Closer to the exhibition there should be a general review of the foliage on broad leaf trees (remember to shelter the tree from the harshest of elements, especially on the more delicate species).

Once you have reviewed the composition then you can plan the remedial action needed to get the Saikei to a showable condition.

SHOWING

Make sure that you have prepared everything in advance that way it will be far less stressful.

Before you go to exhibition use this check list.

1. Have you cleaned the pots?
2. Have you cleaned the soil surface and dressed it for exhibition?
3. Have you removed dead or unsightly foliage?
4. Have you got the tree, stands and accent?
5. If you are displaying in a Tokonoma do you have the tree, stands, accent and scroll?
6. Have you got the oil rag and scissors for last minute touches?
7. Are you relaxed and ready to enjoy yourself?

Showing should be enjoyable so go and have fun!

IN THE WORKSHOP – CYPRESS TREES

GENUS TRAINING TECHNIQUE - CYPRESS

INTRODUCTION

Cypress is a very popular tree for bonsai and Saikei. Generally all the plants in the family Cupressaceae are known by the common name of Cypress.

You can often source cypress trees from garden centres or nurseries or by cuttings or even seed, it is best to avoid those that use the hedging as these will often be fast-growing and large trees.



LOCATION

I personally grow Cypress Saikei in semi-shade I find that the trees will generally stay in a much better condition if not exposed to full sunlight during the winter I removed shading and tilt the pot to avoid the tree becoming waterlogged.

WATERING

Cypress trees require more water than most conifers and this should be reflected in the soil choice for your Saikei a soil which retains more moisture will oversee make the care much easier in the coming years.

FERTILISING

I will generally feed approximately every two weeks or in-line with the manufacturer's recommended dose with a high acid fertiliser this is due to the fact that cypress dislikes a high alkaline level in the soil.

PRUNING

With many of the species the given the common name of Cypress will only be grown within Green wood which can cause a major problem if trees are allowed to grow unchecked for any period of time. Due to this habit the primary way of pruning cypress is to soft pinch the new growth.

PINCHING BACK-METSUMI

If we pinch back new growth during the growing season it is possible to create a reasonable looking tree in a very short time. As the new growth forms you should allow a short period of growth to strengthen the tree from the winter and then by taking the old foliage in your left hand pinch a proportion of the new growth with your right generally I will gather a clump of the foliage on a branch together and then pinch to create an even and compact foliage pad.



PINCHING BACK SHAPED SHOOTS-MEKIRI

If you have cause to shorten a branch you must be in mind that the cypress is not likely to back bud on old wood for this reason any tool work must be carefully considered scissors should only be used to reduce shoot length in old wood as cutting foliage on the cypress tree with scissors will cause unsightly brown discoloration.

Foliage pad cleaning

As with many other conifers foliage pad cleaning is a necessary maintenance task as old foliage dies away it will often remain inside the foliage pad providing an ideal home for pests and also reducing the light available to the inner branches which will often result in the failure of the small branches that form the ramification of the foliage pad.

WIRING

Most cypresses are easy to wire but branches may take a while to set and may need to be rewired several times to avoid cutting into the tree. The cypress can be wired any time of year but wiring seems to sack the vigour of the plant it is best to wait three months after repotting to wire the tree and ensure that the tree is in full health.

VIEWS FROM A LENS—GALLERY



Eastleigh Show 2011



David Penny Alpine Saikei in 1997



Saikei owned by a member displayed in a bonsai show 2010

SUPPLIERS

Name	Telephone	Address	Email	Website
Bushukan Bonsai	01702 201029	Ricbra, Lower Road, Hockley, Essex SS5 5NL	bushukan-bonsai@ic24.net	www.bushukan-bonsai.com
Southampton Bonsai Trees	02380 495729	6, Farmery Close, Swaythling, Southampton, SO18 2JX	info@bonsai-trees.com	www.bonsaitreessouthampton.co.uk
Downsview Bonsai	01323 485656	126 Wannock Lane, Lower Willingdon, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN20 9SJ	info@downsviewbonsai.co.uk	www.downsviewbonsaitreenursery.co.uk
Green Lawns Bonsai,	08700 347765	Hadleigh Road, Boxford, Nr Sudbury, CO10 5JH	enquiries@greenlawnsbonsai.co.uk	www.greenlawnsbonsai.co.uk

CLUBS

Name	Telephone	Address	Day of Meeting	Website
Dai Ichi Bonsai Group (Essex)	01277 625 298	Shenfield Village Hall	1st Monday of each month call	
Eastbourne and Wealden Bonsai Club (Sussex)	01323 731 369	Hellingly Village Hall	2nd Monday of the Month	www.bonsai-club.co.uk
Eastleigh Bonsai Club (Hampshire)	01489 789 962 or 07795 187 632		2nd Monday of the Month	

CONTACTS

Name	Role	Telephone	email
David Penny FISA (HON)	President	07909 846 885 01892 665 704	david.penny@saikei.co.uk
Paul Eslinger FISA (HON)	Senior Vice President	07795 187 632 01489 789 962	paul@eslinger.com
Brian Dale SISA	Vice President Membership Services	01323 731 369	membership@saikei.co.uk
Bruce Scrivens FISA (HON)	Vice President Finance		finance@saikei.co.uk

www.saikeiassociation.org

Administration Offices

International Saikei Association

70 Forest Rise

Crowborough

East Sussex

United Kingdom

TN6 2ES

t. +44 1892 665 704

President: David Penny

Senior Vice President: Paul Eslinger

Vice President Membership: Brian Dale

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