

First meeting of 2020!
February 26th, 2020

**Beginning at 6:30 in the auditorium at
Matthaei Botanical Gardens**

Carmen Leskoviansky Presents Seasonals Part 2
and Bonsai Display



Carmen will share insights from her second year attending Michael Hagedorn's Seasonal Workshops. She traveled to Portland, Oregon 4 times to experience each of the seasons and learn about bonsai care. She will also discuss the aesthetics of bonsai display.

Carmen earned her Bachelor of Science in Horticulture from Michigan State University. She began working at Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum in 2009. She is a Collections and Natural Areas Specialist, and oversees the care of the bonsai collection.

Note – the positions of Web Page Director and 50th Anniversary chairperson have been filled by Laura Andre and Mark Hanner, respectively. Thank you Laura and Mark for taking on these roles.

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE:
Ron Milostan

Are you a beginner? Did you just recently purchase a Bonsai tree? Are you wondering what to do now to keep this tree alive and looking like a Bonsai and not just a tree in a pot?

You are in the right place, the Ann Arbor Bonsai Society's web page, to ask questions and get advice.

As a beginning Bonsai Artist you'll need lots of basic information to get started and then comes the fun stuff. The AABS can help you with a lot of information, but there is also lots of help and advice on the internet in the form of videos and tutorials and let's not forget books on general topics and specific genre when you are ready.

The real art and fun of Bonsai is trying new things and experimenting, reading about a new technique and then giving it a try. Take as many workshops as you can. Don't just take beginner workshops. If you take an advanced workshop you may be challenged, but you will learn also to spread your wings, or limbs.

Go to Bonsai shows and see what others are doing, ask them questions and then try your hand at the new techniques or work with a new cultivar. Don't stay static, try it all. Hang around with experts in the field and listen and learn. Soon you'll be the one giving advice.

Start as a beginner, but don't stay a beginner. Don't just hang out with beginners, grow in knowledge and experience by finding what you love and become an expert.

50 Years of the AABS

Don Wenzel

2020 marks the Ann Arbor Bonsai Society's 50th year. We are planning a few special things for this year, and if you've been paying attention, you've probably already seen evidence of that.

There's the new weekly missive, Roots and Branches, that features selected snippets from our club's history.

There are the 50th anniversary T-shirts that are available to order.

We have a 50th Anniversary chairperson – Mark Hanner, who, I'm sure we'll be hearing more from in the coming months.

Currently, we are planning to start our public celebration of this event during the upcoming Azalea weekend. You'll be hearing more details about this and other events as they solidify.

All in all, it looks to be a pretty exciting year.

October Meeting Review

Chris Kehrig

Club business:

The By-laws passed with a majority vote

2 New positions to fill:

Director of the web page which requires a couple of hours per month

50th Anniversary chair person

An Evening with Jennifer Price

10/23/19

Jennifer reviewed her 2017 & 2019 visits to China for the Zhongguo Feng Penjing Exhibition

Walter Pall was not available to attend and had Jennifer go in his place. It was her first time to China and she had concerns about how to get around, but she was greeted warmly. The show takes place over 4 days at a cost of 1.5 million.

The show takes place in Shanghai which is smoggy, there was a permanent fog over the city with many people wearing face masks. Many people live in tall apartment buildings and have little to no greenspace like we have here.

Jennifer expressed how important the term Penjing is to the Chinese and not to use the term Bonsai as this is viewed as a Japanese term. They love everything American and study what we are doing in Bonsai.

Many of the trees that she saw look similar with flat top and cloud styles. All scales are represented from very small to landscape large. They were amazed when she brought copper wire as they use twine and rope. Majority of trees are Junipers and Boxwood which have a 10-11 month growing season.

At the show, Jennifer was provided 2 hours to demo on a mystery tree. Her tree wound up being a Podocarpus which she styled into a half deadwood and other half wired downward. The trees in the show were surprising in that the pots were not always clean and shiny plus occasional weeds. Jennifer was pleased to see so many women artists. A big difference from here is that when she was doing her demo, people would crowd around and discuss, even want to help.

The younger artists are not interested in the older styles such as the flat top. They feel the Penjing should tell a story such as walking through and having a tree to take a nap under. Interpretation is taken quite literal and phrases such as negative space are not understood.

The Chinese do not repot often and their soil is not of nice quality. It is more like a dirt/clay mixture, but they have lots of moisture along with the long growing season so the trees seem very healthy.

There is not a lot of deciduous trees with mainly evergreens. They are very much into nature as they lack the greenspace that we have. They also want to send their artist here to America with one of the female artists being set up to visit under Jennifer.

Exploring Penjing

Peggy Kubitz

China's fine garden art, including penjing, has an ancient history. In fact, it goes back over 1200 years. In 1972, the tomb of the Tang Dynasty prince Zhang Huai was unearthed, revealing a mural in one of the passages that shows a lady in waiting holding a penjing in both hands. Prince Zhang Huai was buried in 706 A.D. As a result, there is evidence that penjing was present at the imperial court 1200 years ago. It seems the beauty and appeal of penjing is ancient. Perhaps you've been confused by the term. What is known in China as "penjing" is known as *bonsai* throughout the rest of the world. The art form originated in China, transitioned to Japan, Europe, North America, the Australian continent and other countries, as it grew in popularity. This just goes to show how winsome the aesthetic appeal of penjing is across many cultures.

The progression of penjing involves a connection to landscape painting and classical garden art in early China. All three were inspired by nature. During the Tang Dynasty (618-907A.D.), Chinese culture and art flourished and many robust cities evolved. Influential members of these thriving cities often longed for the idyllic rural life, and sought calm and peace in their hectic, noisy cities. They focused on developing gardens near their residences and began to create penjing. This is when the potted plant or tree known as "penzai" developed into an artistic expression known as "penjing." Penjing is depicted in many art forms during this time period including paintings, poetry, needlework, and scrolls. It is the artist's influence and intent that distinguishes "penjing" from "penzai".

Penjing is classified into three general categories:

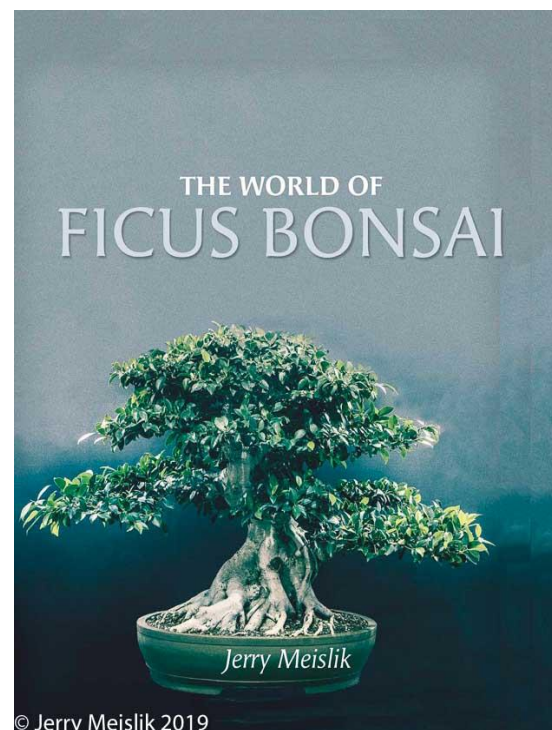
- Shumu penjing : Tree penjing that focuses on one or more trees in a container, with optional plants, and designed through trimming, pruning and wiring. (bonsai)
- Shanshui penjing: A miniature landscape with carefully selected rocks in contact with water or the illusion of water. May include small live plants.

- Shuihan penjing: Land and water penjing style including miniature trees and possibly miniature figures and structures to display a landscape in detail.

In any form, penjing are creations that reflect nature and are sometimes thought of as living sculptures, or three-dimensional poetry. A true artist may capture the very essence of nature in miniature. There is much to be learned in the many schools of thought and techniques associated with the development of penjing. At its best, it can be timeless, and gazed at countless times with pleasure. Whatever you learn or practice related to penjing, enjoy the art, and develop the talent, my friends. Join centuries of those before you who appreciate the beauty, peace, artistic expression and joy of penjing!

Club members may be interested in this new book now available by Jerry Meislik. Here is Jerry's intro.

At long last it is here. **The World of Ficus Bonsai by Jerry Meislik.** I have been learning more and more about Ficus and how incredible they are for bonsai and for growing in your home. I have expanded and added new material to create an enlarged and updated book on using Ficus for bonsai. The book is 324 pages full of great information and full of pictures. It is available as a e-book or as a soft or hard cover book.



You can purchase it on:

Amazon - https://www.amazon.com/World-Ficus-Bonsai-Jerry-Meislik/dp/152553288X/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=The+World+of+Ficus+bonsai&qid=1555519664&s=gateway&sr=8-1

Apple - <https://books.apple.com/us/book/the-world-of-ficus-bonsai/id1460062986>

Friesens - <https://books.friesenpress.com/store/title/119734000056702445/Jerry-Meislik-The-World-of-Ficus-Bonsai>

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Ads in the Newsletter: All members can offer for sale any bonsai and bonsai related materials in the newsletter or at the monthly meeting with no sales fee. AABS Society Members' ads are free to publish in the Newsletter. Deadline for submissions to the Newsletter is the 5th of the month.

Prizes for the Raffle: We are soliciting donations suitable for prizes to be raffled during each general meeting, and, for the Annual Bonsai Show Raffle. If you have a tree, bonsai pot, tool or anything else bonsai related, that you do not use anymore and is still in good condition, consider donating it to the Society. Please see Bill Struhar at any meeting, email Bill at wm.struhar@mail.com or call (586) 468-7169.

Club Logo Now Available: we will embroider the club logo on your garment for \$12 (plus modest additional charge for lined garments).

The logo comes in two forms; light green tree on dark green background, or dark green tree on light green background, with a border on both combinations and AABS lettering and Chinese characters with appropriate contrasting color depending upon the garment color.

Bring your garment in a clear plastic bag to a meeting, select your colors, pre-pay Bill Struhar, and your garment

will be ready one or two meetings later. (The vendor may require a minimum of five garments per order)

2020 EXECUTIVE BOARD

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AABS AD-HOC COMMITTEES

The AABS President is an ex-officio member of all committees with the exception of the Nomination Committee.

Fund Raising: William Struhar

Web Administration: Bob Bauer

Nomination Committee:

Show Committee: Ron Milostan and Paul Kulesa

Annual Auction: Paul Kulesa

Membership dues are \$25. Please pay by check, written to Ann Arbor Bonsai Society or bring your credit card to the meeting and pay! AABS now accepts credit cards for membership fees and other AABS activities. Please talk with the Treasurer at the next meeting.

Tamara Milostan – Treasurer AABS
4228 Highcrest Dr.
Brighton, Michigan 48116

AABonsaiSociety@gmail.com

The Ann Arbor Bonsai Society is affiliated with the American Bonsai Society: <http://absbonsai.org> and the Mid-American Bonsai Alliance: <http://mababonsai.org>



Ann Arbor Bonsai Society
 1800 North Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105-9741


Visit us on the Web:

<http://www.annarborbonsaisociety.org>

Support Local Bonsai Vendors

Hours: Wed., Thurs. & Fri.: 11:00 am to 6:00 pm Sat., 1:30pm to 5:00pm
 CLOSED: Sunday, Monday & Tuesday

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