

Brandywine Bonsai Society

Promoting the art and horticulture of bonsai since 1967

Longwood Gardens Exhibit Prep Session

Saturday, October 8, 2022

10:00 am meeting at Brandywine Town Center

October Meeting:

As stated in another place in this newsletter, our Longwood Gardens show will be quite different than those in the past. One of the changes is that the show will be held earlier in October than usual. Because of this, it was decided to change the date of this month's meeting to October 8 at the Brandywine Town Center. Our topic is the same; those members who are displaying tree(s) will bring their tree(s) to the meeting so that the members can preview and enjoy the trees.

Longwood Gardens Exhibit (October 12– 17)

Our annual show at the world-famous Longwood Gardens is Wednesday, October 12 through Monday, October 17 in the north corridor of the Conservatory (by the green wall). Fifteen of our finest trees will be on display. If you'd like to volunteer to be a tree sitter, please contact Roberta Carlson (robertacarlson@frontier.com) by October 3. Support your club by visiting the show! Check Longwood's website for hours and ticket reservations. If you can't get to Longwood, our October meeting will have a preview of the show.

2023 Mid-Atlantic Bonsai Societies Convention

Because of the dates for Passover, the planned date for the MABS convention has been changed to March 31 - April 2, 2023. It again will be held at the Hampton Inn/Hilton in Parsippany, NJ. This year MABS will feature Will Baddeley (U.S.), Todd Schlaefel (U.S.) and Hugo Zamora (Mexico). I know this is far in the future but mark your calendar now for this fantastic event. There will be demos, exhibit critiques, and workshops by the artists above, as well as continuous auctions and a large vendor area.

National Bonsai Foundation Apprenticeship Program

National Bonsai Foundation/The National Bonsai and Penjing Museum has developed a new program in which a full-time apprentice studies all aspects of the art of bonsai and penjing at the museum. It is expected that after their studies at the museum, they will go out to educate and train a new generation of budding American bonsai/penjing artists. For more information on this program go to the

following website: <https://www.bonsai-nbf.org/blog-archive/category/Curator%27s+Apprentice+Blog>

At the August meeting, the members of the club voted to donate \$500.00 to this program. In addition, it was also decided that we are only committing to a donation for this year. Future donations to this program are not automatic and will require a discussion and vote by club members. This donation will be in addition to our usual donation of \$250.00 that we make at the end of the year.

Free Classified Ads: We are still carrying your classified ads in the newsletter for free. Are you planning on selling things that will not be included in the silent auction and that you want the club to be aware so they can bring some extra money, are offering some sort of bonsai-related services, or maybe you are heading to Superfly or Nature's Way and are offering to pick things up for our members. You can send this info to Karin Simmat (ksimmat@verizon.net) for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Next Year's Programs

I know it is only September and next year seems far away but certain programs take a long time to arrange – arranging visiting artists, locating plant material, figuring out venues, etc. This being so, start thinking of some ideas for programs for next year and pass them along to the officers.

Brooklyn Botanic Gardens (Rob)

On Sept. 17, twenty-three members and "plus ones" ventured to Brooklyn to spend a day at the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens. After an exciting ride that included crowded highways, closed roads, and detours, Mike Estep helped navigate us through Brooklyn and to the Gardens. The Gardens is unexpectedly located in the middle of Brooklyn nestled amongst busy streets, store fronts, bars, restaurants, and apartment buildings.

The gardens were spectacular. I felt like it was a cross between Longwood Gardens and Chanticleer Gardens up in PA. There were areas that were very natural with the placement of the plants left to nature and other places where the plants were precisely placed. The orchid display was unique in that it was hanging above our heads in the conservatory. If it wasn't for Rebecca Rozazza telling me

to look up, I would probably still be wandering around the conservatory. Other highlights were the rose garden, the garden of native plants of NY, and a corridor of oak trees dedicated to those who were lost on 9/11.

The bonsai were located under glass in the conservatory. There were about 25 trees on display. The trees were about equally divided between tropical versus temperate with ficus being the most common species. The trees ranged greatly in size and in age, which was shown as how many years ago the tree was donated to the Gardens. Interestingly, most of the tags also stated the design style.

A few things that surprised me was that the particle size of the bonsai mix was quite small, being not quite bigger than a pepper corn, most the trees had the surface of the mix covered in moss and that there were no barriers between you and the tree (see the picture of Mark and George). Lastly, being a person who loves the Chinese artform, I was thrilled to see a large island and water penjing on a marble slab.



An outstanding torii gate in the Japanese Garden



The Japanese pond and hill garden was surprisingly larger than expected. You approached the pond by walking through a structure that resembled a tea house. The pond, which was quite green, was filled with koi and turtles and contained a large torii gate. There were numerous paths that circled the pond and transected it at different levels. The pathways were lined with plants from Asia and those North America plants that resemble plants from Asia.

As you walked around the hill, you were treated to several surprises. There were several small huts that you could sit and just enjoy the pond, numerous bridges; as well as a three-level waterfall.

The Elements of Art (Rob)

When I was new to bonsai, I was at an ABS convention and had the pleasure of having breakfast with one of the headliners, Rodney Clemons. I asked him which was more important to being successful in bonsai, horticulture or the art. He replied that keeping a tree alive does not make it a bonsai, but you cannot have a bonsai without using some of the elements of art. These elements are line, shape, color, value, form, space, and texture. This month I will focus on “line” and will discuss the others in future newsletters.

Line is the simplest of the elements and is defined as connecting two points. The line can be straight (formal upright), curvy (informal upright, cascade, semi-cascade, literati), angular (slant style), or free. It can be used to convey movement from one part of the tree to another. We use lines to move the viewer’s eye from the thickest parts of the tree to the thinner areas, usually starting at the base of the trunk (nebari), where a branch and trunk meet, or where one branch ramifies into two. These locations start at the trunk or branches where they are the thickest and then move towards the part of the trunk or branch where it is the thinnest. You can experience this by looking at a statue or trees in nature. Without thinking your eyes will go from the thicker area to the thinner.

Squirrels??? (Rob)

Not too long ago, I was working on a medium size yew wiring every branch and every twig. After working for three hours, I took a break for lunch. When I came out an hour later, I found that while I was gone, a squirrel had placed a walnut underneath my number 1 branch (see picture below). I removed the walnut and spent the afternoon working on the tree. When I came out the next morning, I again found a walnut on this yew except the walnut was placed in the crotch of the number one branch and trunk.