



BONSAI SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

OCTOBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

For our October 19th meeting, Rick Owens will be doing a [Kintsugi](#) demonstration. If you have broken pottery and would like to learn how to repair it, bring them with you to the October meeting. Click [here](#) for a Word document with materials information. Also, bring any trees for advice to get ready for the show.

Get ready for our show on November 16th and 17th. Be ready to step up and volunteer for numerous jobs that will need to be done.

Get exhibit forms filled in and turned in, get trees ready, and practice your display.

We will be electing new officers at our November meeting. Those running for office are towards the end of this newsletter. Step up and get involved.

Pay your dues for 2025 by December 1st. We must pay the state (BSF) for our membership before the end of December so they can update their membership before the new year.

Sign up for next year's study groups. We will still have our Adam and Mike Lane study groups next year with some new guidelines. The sign-up sheets will be out by our October meeting so we can complete scheduling for 2025.

Sign up for next year's monthly displays, hospitality, and clean-up crew. These sign-ups will also be available at the October meeting.



THE BONSAI SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

2024 ANNUAL BONSAI SHOW & SALE

**Exhibit of Bonsai Trees, Sales,
Demonstrations and Workshops.**

November 16-17, 2024

Saturday 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

Sunday 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

**FREE ADMISSION
FREE PARKING**

**Ft. Myers-Lee County Garden
Council ---- Berne Davis Gardens**

Just North of

Edison-Ford Estates

2166 Virginia Ave. Ft. Myers, FL

www.bonsaiswfl.org

239-935-6850

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday, Nov 16, 2024

9:00 - 5:00

EXHIBITS, VENDORS AND RAFFLES OPEN

9:00 - 12:00

MULTI-CLUB STYLING COMPETITION

9:30 - 12:00

WORKSHOP WITH Javier Cortes
Blue Bell Desmodium, 10 Spots, \$50 ea.

12:00

RAFFLE of Plants and Bonsai Items

1:00

Demonstration by Javier Cortes

Vago's Bonsai

Jaboticaba

(Will be on Sunday's Raffle Table)

5:00

RAFFLE of Plants and Bonsai Items

Sunday, Nov 17, 2024

9:00 - 3:00

EXHIBITS, VENDORS AND RAFFLES OPEN

10:00 - 12:00

Free Workshop

This is for those with no Bonsai experience.
10 Slots available. The workshop is free, but if
you wish to purchase the tree, the cost is \$25,
otherwise it will go on the Raffle table.

12:00

RAFFLE of Trees and Bonsai items

1:00 - 3:00

Bonsai Related Activities

Joe Mayhew, Potter

Pot-Throwing Demonstration

Bill Smith, Bonsai Help Table

Martha Goff

Art of Kusamono Demonstration

3:00

Final Raffle of Trees, Bonsai Items,
and Styling Competition Trees.

Display Layout.....Getting prepared for our show.

Submitted by Rick Owens

Bonsai are meant to be seen. Cultivating your Bonsai is only part of the beauty of working with these plants. A Bonsai that isn't well-displayed can never be fully appreciated.

The practice of displaying Bonsai doesn't have to be complex. There are a number of issues to consider, but three critical points should always be your guide:

1. The Bonsai is the critical element of the display. Its selection should drive every other display decision, which should be intended to highlight the display's primary focus: the Bonsai.
2. The Bonsai display should invoke a sense of harmony in nature.
3. Every aspect of the display should be intentional. Nothing in the display should be an afterthought.

With these guiding principles, below is more detailed advice regarding how to create the most compelling display with your Bonsai.

The Basics

Your goal should be to create an overall panorama that highlights the unique beauty of your Bonsai. At a minimum, your display will include a pot for the Bonsai, the space in which the Bonsai will be placed, and the furniture piece on which the Bonsai will stand.

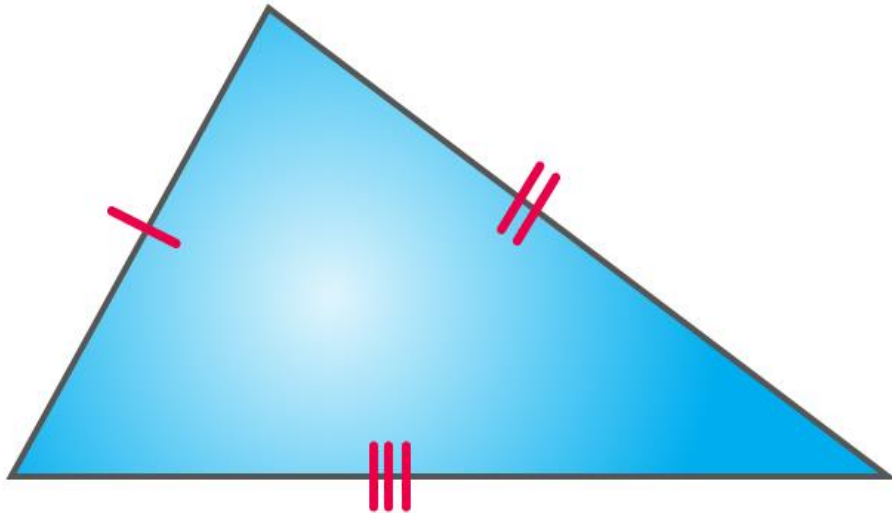
However, most Bonsai displays will also include other elements, often called companion objects. Common companion objects to use are:

- Scrolls
- Mountain stones, or Viewing Stones: "[Suiseki](#)"
- Smaller floral plant "[Kusamono](#)"
- A small statue, which is often an animal or other natural element.

In addition to precise selection of the Bonsai and its companion objects, the other basic area of attention is the placement of all these elements relative to each other. Usually, you'll want to create an asymmetrical "scalene" triangle that has dimension and creates a cohesive, natural scene.

What is a Scalene Triangle

A scalene triangle is a triangle in which all three sides are of different lengths, and all three angles are of different measures. However, the sum of all the interior is always equal to 180 degrees. Thus, it meets the [angle sum of the triangle](#).



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Selecting Your Basic Items

Since Bonsai is rooted in a celebration of nature, all your selections of elements and placement should be based in what shows nature at its finest. This means careful selection of the Bonsai plant, which should itself display some particular aspect of its beauty for the current season.

The Pot

Once you've selected your Bonsai, you can start thinking about the pot. The color of the pot must be harmonious with the state of the Bonsai. The ideal width for the pot is the width of the spread of the Bonsai's branches. The pot should look as if it's evolved naturally from the width of the Bonsai.

The ideal depth of the pot depends on whether the Bonsai cascades. For a non-cascading Bonsai, the pot's depth should be roughly the size of the Bonsai's root, just above its flare. For cascading or semi-cascading Bonsai, the pot should be no deeper than half the cascade.

The Stand

Bonsai are best viewed at eye level, which means the average table will be too low.

A Bonsai stand, or "[shoku](#)", can either be a floor stand or a table stand. The stand itself shouldn't be so ornamental that it distracts from the Bonsai. As with the pot, the color

of the stand should be in harmony with the state of the Bonsai. Dark woods are quite attractive with most Bonsai, but a lighter wood might be more attractive for a flowering Bonsai.

The Placement Of The Display

The placement of display is different from the placement of the elements within the display. Remember, nothing in your Bonsai display should be an afterthought. This includes selecting where the entire display will be placed.

Ideally, the area you select should provide some natural frame for the display by having three sides. The entire display should be placed in the center of this area, although the individual elements will often be placed at different distances from the walls.

The background of the space shouldn't compete with the display either. It should have a soft, neutral color. Keep in mind that a clean, white wall will often be too bright and harsh to set off a Bonsai display nicely.

Selecting Companion Objects

You've already chosen the Bonsai for its natural qualities, as well as the other required items, so it's now time to select the companion objects.

Before selecting any specific companion object, create in your mind the idea of the scene you're trying to create. The companion objects should be selected for their ability to contribute and enhance this scene. Again, nature should be your guide.

If you're going to display your Bonsai with a smaller flowering plant or small statue, it should be one that you'd see naturally occurring with your Bonsai.

Scrolls are lovely elements to add and have the additional advantage of bringing an extra layer of depth to your display. However, they also present the risk of competing with your Bonsai, which is always the focal point of your display. A subtle scroll with an ink painting, or "sumi-e", depicting a natural element that is in harmony with the scene you're creating is a good choice.

Finally, don't select too many companion objects. Having two companion objects should be the maximum.

Placing The Elements Within The Display

Now that you've selected your basic and companion elements, it's time to put the entire display together. Remember the scene or sense of nature you're trying to evoke. You want to place your elements in a way that has harmonious dimension and perspective.

The Bonsai

The typical shape of the display is an asymmetrical triangle. The Bonsai should be placed on the side that is opposite to its pull. If its branches lean predominantly to the right, you'll place the Bonsai on the left side of the area.

The Companion Objects

A companion object should be on the opposite side of the area, away from the Bonsai. Typically, it should be as far away from its nearest side wall as the Bonsai is from its nearest side wall. However, it shouldn't be on the same horizontal axis as the Bonsai. By placing the companion object either behind or in front of this axis, you bring dimension to the triangle.

Since stones, "[Suiseki](#)", are usually used to represent mountains, they'll be placed closer to the back wall than the Bonsai to give a sense of distance. In contrast, small flowering plants or statues are usually placed farther away from the back wall than the Bonsai.

The Importance of Display Tables



Bonsai display tables are no less important than the pot, stones, tools and humidity or drip tray. They are essential to protect whatever floor or carpeting is underneath them. And they are important to the whole look of the Bonsai area. Each table adds a sense of formality that sets the Bonsai garden apart from the rest of the room and emphasizes the time and meditative aspect of your careful arrangement. The very best are hand carved by Chinese artisans who understand the origins of Bonsai and the art of cultivating the foliage in the garden. A hand-finish with a stain protects the quality and long life of the materials while giving the table a rich shine against the Bonsai pot. Ideally, they are made of hardwood that cradles your hard-won treasure elegantly. The many shapes, designs and sizes ensure that there is one perfect for both your Bonsai and your décor, which will complement and display your living Zen art but not detract from its beauty.

Tokonoma

Stands are also used when displaying your Bonsai in a 'Tokonoma' arrangement.

A Tokonoma arrangement is one adhering to traditional Japanese aesthetics. It uses a presentation Zen to make a focal point in a more Eastern style (where Western rooms often focus on a mantle). The Tokonoma, or Toko, is a recessed or elevated alcove that contains very little, usually a scroll with an image or calligraphy, and flowers or a very well-kept Bonsai. The Bonsai originally were thought too dirty to go in, but as the art evolved, Bonsai were deemed even more elegant and worthy of the space than traditional flowers. No one steps into the Toko unless absolutely necessary.

Important guests are seated with their backs to the Tokonoma, so the homeowner is not seen as trying to show off the display. The Bonsai stand enters the presentation as one of the few items in the Toko. It serves to melt into the background while keeping the cleanliness intact and any dirt or water off of the pristine floor.

Whether creating a Tokonoma or not, there are so many options for one in selecting a display table or stand, one is sure to appeal to every Bonsai gardener. Here are stands or tables in every color and type of wood or plastic, beautiful bamboo bases, elaborately sculpted stands in the form of roots, scroll-legged bases, turntables for a full view and even elegant stands with marble tops for a regal look. The length and height vary to fit every size of tree or pot and there are neutral shades to fit any room's color scheme.

******* There are two Exhibit Forms here: *******

1. The [2024 Exhibit Tree Submission Form](#).

This form asks for minor personal info and discusses guidelines for submission. Included is a section to briefly describe your tree choice(s).

2. The [2024 Judging Evaluation Form](#).

This form is meant to give you an idea of what the Show Judge (Judy Gore) will use to judge your tree.

Please download them, fill them in and send them to us. There are several ways to do this.

1. Scan them and email them to info@bonsaiswfl.org,
2. Take a photo of them and email them to info@bonsaiswfl.org
3. Bring them to our October 19 meeting.
4. Mail them to BSSWFL, PO Box 61945, Fort Myers, FL 33906-1945

THIS FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY October 19th club meeting.

From Martha Goff:

TO ALL CLUB MEMBERS: I WILL NO LONGER BE SELLING BONSAI SOIL. Due to constant shipping problems, our supplier is no longer carrying elements I use. I will not be at the October meeting because my Grandson is graduating from 'Vet Tech' school, and we are celebrating. So sorry. If you need me, call or email.

Club Members, at the show this year, we will be voting on the officers for next year. I will send out details of how this will work later. Any club member may add their name to the ballot before November. To add your name, just email or call me.

COMING UP:

- 1. Annual show: Get your name on as many help-out lists as possible. You can sign those lists at the October meeting or call or email your name. We have donated foodie lists, set-up lists, tear-down lists, and on-site workers. Let us know. We need all of you.**
- 2. Get your tree display forms in. You can email them or bring them to the October meeting.**
- 3. Elections: I will have ballots available at the Greeter's table for all members. Please vote and put in the appropriate container.**
- 4. Dues for 2025 are due in December.**
- 5. December meeting will be a holiday party with gift exchange. Watch for more.**

FOR ALL YOUR BONSAI NEEDS CONTACT OUR LOCAL VENDORS

Bonsai Tool Sharpening and Repair

Check me out on Facebook @

[Bruce's Bonsai Tool sharpening, repair and cleaning](#)

Bruce Riggins 239-297-7361 grybrd77@gmail.com

TROPICAL GREEN SHEETS

The 'How to Book' on growing bonsai in South Florida!

Tropical Green Sheets I

Regular \$45 Show Special \$40

Tropical Green Sheets II

Regular \$50 Show Special \$45

SHOW SPECIAL: BUY BOTH \$75

POTTERY

Joe Mayhew

Email: jmpotteryllc@gmail.com 941-650-7635

STANDS

Bill Smith

Email: smittysmit23@aol.com 410 869-6650

WIGERT'S

For all your Bonsai Needs: Trees, Tools, Pots

Go to Wigert's Bonsai Nursery, 2930 South Road, N. Ft. Myers, FL 33917

239-543-2234 www.wigertsbonsai.com

The Bonsai Society of Southwest Florida, Inc.

www.bonsaiswfl.org 239 935-5860

ABOUT THE BONSAI SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

We meet the third Saturday of each month at the Berne Davis Botanical Garden building located just north of the Edison Estates at 2166 Virginia Avenue. Parking is located on Larchmont Street, one block south of Virginia off McGregor Boulevard.

Doors open at 9 AM. A friendly member will make you feel welcome. Coffee will be fresh.

We welcome everyone interested in this Ancient Art form to take advantage of our many experienced artists and teachers. Enjoy the camaraderie of those who work to keep this art alive. Join us.

Juniper bonsai trees have always been considered a prized possession for bonsai collectors all around the world as they are some of the rarest. These trees are also among the oldest, with the oldest juniper bonsai ever being a beautiful 1000-year-old tree owned by the Kato Family.

