

The Bergen Bonsai Society



An educational
non-profit organization

OCT 2014 Newsletter

Meeting: **Sat 09/11 Sun 09/12**

Time: **9:45 AM—3PM**

Place: **Closter Nature Center
154 Ruckman Rd., Closter, NJ**

11th. & 12th. Guest Artist
DAVID EASTERBROOK
WORKSHOP

The Bergen Bonsai Society
Incorporated
P.O. Box 822
Teaneck, New Jersey 07666
Website: BergenBonsai.com



Year 2014 Programs
Mark Your Calendar

	<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT AND/OR GUEST ARTIST</u>	<u>AM MTG</u>	<u>AFT MTG</u>	<u>EVE MT G</u>	<u>AWAY MTG</u>
	January 19	<u>POT SALE /SWAP MEET</u>	<u>X</u>			
	February 16	<u>GUEST ARTIST — MIKE POLLOCK — NEIGORHOOD ARTIST</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
	March 16	<u>PREP/SELECT TREES FOR MID ATLANTIC—REPOTTING</u>	<u>X</u>			
	April 25,26,27	<u>MID-ATLANTIC SPRING FESTIVAL</u>				<u>X</u>
*	May 3	<u>GUEST ARTIST— OWEN REICH—LECT—OPEN WORKSHOP</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
	May 18	<u>OPEN WORKSHOP—MATERIAL SUPPLIED (SEE PETER)</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
*	June 22	<u>OPEN WORKSHOP</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
*	July 20	<u>PICNIC AND AUCTION</u>		<u>X</u>		
	August 17	<u>ANNUAL SHOW AND CRITIQUE</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
*	September 14	<u>OPEN WORKSHOP</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
*	September 27	<u>BROOKLYN BOTANICAL GARDEN</u>				<u>X</u>
*	October 11	<u>GUEST ARTIST —DAVID EASTERBROOK —OPEN Workshop</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
	October 12	<u>David Easterbrook— L/D PRIVET—Workshop Material Supplied</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
	November 16	<u>OPEN WORKSHOP</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>		
	December 7	<u>HOLIDAY PARTY</u>		<u>X</u>		<u>X</u>

* Indicates a change in date, event or time, since previous Newsletter

NOTES

1. All meetings @ Closter Nature Center are on Sundays
2. All morning meetings @ Closter Nature Center start 9:45 AM to APROX. 12:30 PM
3. All afternoon meetings @ Closter Nature Center start APX. Noon to APROX. 4 PM

LAST MEETINGS —SEP 14th — OPEN WORKSHOP

The group was small but the information was plentiful, interesting, and educational. Our esteemed leader Len, led us through discussions regarding trees that our members brought in for some help and direction.

The focus was mainly on styling and there was no shortage of opinions for helping our members come up with ideas for improving their trees. Some of the trees were large with heavy trunks and there were many possibilities for how to do the best for the trees and make them acceptable for the owners. Many of them had great potential to be lovely bonsai in the future.

The session ended with some hands-on work by the owners, employing some of the ideas that came up during the session

The morning ended with final arrangements for the trip this month to the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens.

At this writing there are still openings for the Saturday all day workshop with David Easterbrook and one opening for the Sunday afternoon workshop. Please let me or Len know if you are interested. - Mitch

SEP 27th — BROOKLYN BOTANICAL GARDEN TRIP

Our trip to the bonsai exhibit at the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens finally took place on Saturday Sept 27. The Weather was beautiful. Eight of us car pooled from Closter and joined six other members and friends at the main gate. We all arrived on time to meet Julian Valasco, the bonsai curator. There are over four hundred trees in the collection and Julian is solely responsible for their maintenance as the only paid bonsai person. Many of the trees are old and venerable with interesting histories and associations.

We started the tour in the main exhibition greenhouse, where only a few good trees were on display because the day time summer temperatures are too hot. After about half an hour Julian took us to the closed back areas where the rest and the best of the trees were located. Since taking over six years ago Julian has concentrated on maintaining and improving the health of the trees while at the same time putting on a good exhibit for the public. As an effective teacher who knows a lot, Julian talked continuously for over an hour and a half about the hows and whys of bonsai care. Black pine differs from white pine in the methods used to encourage dense healthy growth, but the basic mechanics of generating a healthy root structure are the same for all species. It was a very interesting and informative visit and trees looked great.

Lunch at the cafe was good, there was a chilly festival going on, the park was beautiful and after the tour we broke into separate groups, each deciding when and where to go. This was a very fine trip and pretty cheap too! -Len



A Trip to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden bonsai collection by the Bergen Bonsai Society or...

BBS@BBG.



Julian Velasco, curator BBG Bonsai collection

Many people have a bonsai story: a first bonsai, a struggling bonsai. And many of these stories do not end happily, at least for the bonsai.

But the very best bonsai stories are about passion and beauty and transformation.

"A dewdrop hanging for a split-second — that is bonsai," said Julian Velasco, the curator of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's bonsai collection and C.V. Starr Bonsai Museum. "It's very Zen-like. It's awesome."

For Velasco, who nurtures over 350 bonsai trees at the botanic garden — one of the largest and oldest bonsai collections on public display outside Japan — it all started with a bonsai he purchased as a young man at a street fair in San Francisco

"Pretty quickly . . . I knew it would be a lifelong path," he said.

Bonsai is horticulture, art, philosophy and even a way of life in the form of a single tree, lovingly pruned and trained to exist in a small pot so that it reflects the majesty of the natural environment, he explained.

*"When you see the Grand Canyon or Yosemite, you are taking in the emotion of the place as much as the visual image," and bonsai is about that emotion, he said. It is the haiku of the tree world.***

*Brooklyn Botanic Garden has one of the largest collection of bonsai in the United States. The first donation of trees came to the garden in 1925, but were not publicly displayed until 1935. After World War II, Velasco explained, returning soldiers brought bonsai back from Japan. They came to the garden for guidance, and the veterans-turned-horticulturalists were soon taking bonsai classes. It wasn't long before esteemed bonsai artist Yuji Yoshimura began lecturing.***

On Sunday some BBS club members met at Brooklyn Botanic Garden for a special tour of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's bonsai collection. It was guided by Julian Velasco who, as mentioned, is the curator. Julian apprenticed for three years with Chase Rosade, and later Robert Mahler, the former curator of Brooklyn Botanic Garden's bonsai collection. Mahler is also a former student of Rosade's.

Julian brought us first to the greenhouse gallery which is the public face of the collection. There a rotating display of bonsai are on view for garden visitors. It is an attractive structure but an unsatisfactory environment for growing bonsai as it not outdoors and can get very hot in the summer. Velasco circumvents this problem by relying heavily on tropical bonsai that can withstand the heat better and of course he always keeps the fans running.



An older picture of the BBG bonsai "warehouse".

Next he took us behind the scenes to the more interesting part of our visit. He first brought us to his workroom where does his styling and maintenance. There he has an extensive selection of pots available along with copper and aluminum wire, work pedestals, shelves of plant tonics and planting mediums. He mentioned that copper wire should be stored flat to avoid bends and kinks which might affect its usefulness. We went next to the fenced garden where most of the approximately 350 bonsai in the BBG bonsai collection are kept. Sadly these trees, many of which are quite old and beautiful, are out of sight to visitors since there is no place to display them. Some of them were purchased by BBG but most are donations from collectors. Julian works on them when he can, raising their level of refinement. Everything generally seems more buttoned down when compared to our last visit several years ago. One of the things he shared with us was that recently he has come up with a proposal to BBG to increase the number of bonsai he is able to display. It includes architectural plans and estimated costs and would mean using part of the current gardens for display. But of course, available space is a premium concern at BBG along with expenditures and he has not yet been able to convince the board to implement his ideas.

Julian spent quite a bit of time patiently answering our many questions having to do with care and maintenance of bonsai. If you could distill his goal when cultivating bonsai it is to trick the bonsai into thinking it is grand old tree in a forest and not a little plant in a pot. The idea is that eventually it will refocus and send nutrients to all leaves equally instead of focusing on one or two branches for instance and neglecting others increasing the chance of branch loss. To do this requires that balancing the growth of the tree from the crown to the lower branches, from leaf cluster to leaf cluster, from the roots to the top of the tree, and from the interior of tree to the exterior. All of these elements need to be calibrated to each other so that energy is spent equally by the tree on all of its parts. This is mostly achieved of course by judicious pruning, bud nipping and leaf cutting. Another thing he talked about was that bonsai containers are designed the way they are (shallow and spreading) to facilitate growth of feeder roots. No energy needs to be wasted on maintaining a tap root! Also, conifers should be planted in a little deeper container than deciduous trees since this solution promotes a drier soil which they like. He recommends fertilizing in the Fall to set up the tree for Spring growth. All in all he was a wellspring of information about a subject he clearly loved and which he shared generously.

We did not discuss the other important aspects of bonsai which are, of course, art and philosophy. Too much information, too little time.

At the end some of us stayed, had lunch, and enjoyed rest of the Gardens before leaving for home.

*From the BBG website.

**From WNYC, Caroline Cooper, 2011.



THIS MEETING —OCT 11TH AND 12TH — DAVID EASTERBROOD

On Saturday October 11 and Sunday October 12, David Easterbrook will be our very special lecturer/ workshop leader for the third or fourth year running. The fact that David, a world class artist and teacher will be spending two days with us this year will allow nearly everyone to experience his informative style and vast bonsai knowledge.

On Saturday we will have an open workshop with David as leader. Bring in your trees ,tools and wire and get expert advice and help on improving your bonsai, the more questions the better. You are encouraged to bring in trees from previous workshops with David, however, any trees that you want help with are fair game. The workshop is open to any member, at a cost of \$50 for the whole day. Please send your check to Mitch for the Saturday open workshop.

On Sunday October 12. we will have a traditional lecture demo in the morning with the demonstration tree raffled at the end (one of us will win a very good bonsai very cheaply). David will be bringing with him his own specially developed pre- bonsai **privets** to use in the afternoon workshop. He will be working with each participant to develop that tree's potential. The cost of the workshop is \$50 plus the price of the tree, can be up to \$150 each.

With less than two weeks to go there are still spaces for both the Saturday and Sunday workshops. Our Bergen Bonsai members will have first shot at these spaces only until next Sunday, Oct 5 . After that date members of Yamaki, our sister bonsai club will be offered any remaining workshop spaces. Contact Mitch Becker ASAP to sign up. Mitch tel: 973-767-2977

NEXT MEETING — NOV. 16th. — OPEN WORKSHOP

Our November 16 meeting is scheduled for two things. We will have our usual discussion about how to over winter our trees. We will follow this with an open workshop , so bring trees , tools, and wire and lets work together.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Bergen Bonsai News, anyone have anything that they like to share, please feel free to drop us an email. We will publish it if it is appropriate.

BONSAI CARE FROM YAMA KI BONSAI SOCIETY — MONTH —OCT

	HARDY	/	TROPICAL
ACTIVITY			
Fertilizing	NO, evergreen	/	YES. tropical
Locations	Prepare winter location	/	Indoors
Pests & Diseases	Dormant spray	/	Spray as required
Potting	NO, evergreen; NO deciduous	/	Yes, tropical
Propagation	NO, evergreen	/	Yes, cuttings
Pruning, drastic	NO, Hardy	/	As required
Trimming Maintenance	NO	/	As required
Watering	YES as required	/	As required
Weeding	NO	/	As required
Wiring	Yes, NEEDLE / NO, Evergreen; NO, Deciduous	/	Yes, Tropical

BBS WEBSITE

Go to www.bergenbonsai.com & you can view our newsletters, pictures from our latest meetings, the Mid-Atlantic Convention, our extensive library & much more. Continued thanks to Bob Pruski.

LIBRARY

As usual, the complete library inventory is posted on our website (BergenBonsai.com). Find what you want, contact our librarians (for videos — David; hard cover books — Rose; Bonsai Today/ Focus —Diann, and Int'l Bonsai, BCL Misc — John), and they will bring it to the next meeting. This is a tremendous asset and one of the best ways to learn more about bonsai in general. The library is a treasure trove of information just waiting to answer all of your questions and some that you haven't even thought about yet. Use these winter months to get answers to the questions that you have about your trees in time for the growing season.

OFFICERS & STAFF

<u>OFFICES</u>	
President	Len Schwartz
Vice President	Ralf Schumann
Treasurer	Mitch Becker
Secretary	Marlene Cuniberti
<u>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</u>	
Mitch Becker	Diann Pinkowski
Rose Chan	Ralf Schumann
Marlene Cuniberti	Len Schwartz
Hank Gross	Peter Sobel
Bryce Hugelmeyer	

<u>COMMITTEES</u>	
Library (Videos)	David Feitelson
Library (Hard Cover Books)	Rose Chan
Library (Bonsai Today/Focus)	Diann Pinkowski
Library (Int'l Bonsai, BCL misc.)	Diann Pinkowski
Hospitality	Teresa Plummer
Refreshments	Elsbeth Christern Ralf Schumann
Tokonoma	Michael Humphrey
Good & Welfare	Virginia Shen
Executive Board Meetings	Jim Killian
MidAtlantic Representatives	Len Schwartz Ralf Schumann
Programs	Peter Sobel
Newsletter Production	Rose Chan
Photographer	Ralf Schumann
Newsletter Reporter	Mitch Becker
Website	