

pfm bonsai studio ramblings



October 2013 Volume I

A warm rainy fall has firmly arrived. Check all your trees for wire damage. Do not let the warm winds dry out your bonsai.



October

moving into dormancy

ABS 2013 is now a fond memory. The seminars were highly successful. The teachers imparted a great deal of bonsai knowledge. The exhibition was outstanding. If you would like a Disk of the event, you can order one from ABS on their web site. The Disk will include all the trees in the exhibition as photographed by Adriano Manocchia and candid photos of the classes and events photographed by Steven Miller.

In the yard leaves are falling rapidly and everything is in its normal messy autumn state. I do love it. The air is cool and fresh. The junipers are bright and dark green.

This is the time to start working on styling pines. We will have a number of pine workshops at the studio from October thru February giving you a number of chances to work on your pines or start one or two new ones.

It is also a good time to begin your evaluation of all root masses. Label your trees so that you will know which ones need repotting in spring.





Species of the Month: Dwarf Pomegranate

Punica granatum 'nana'

by Pauline F Muth

The pomegranate originated in the Mediterranean region, in the Himalayas and in Southern China and has been cultivated long before we have written records. Today it is

widely grown in subtropical climates and as an indoor plant in the cold climates.

Its name Punica comes from malum punicum, apple of Carthage. Pomegranate derives from pomum, the apple and granatum having many seeds. This refers to the apple-like fruit that is full of seeds.

In reality, it is a shrub that grows to small trees proportions of about 5 feet in mild climates in the nana

form. Branches may have small spines on them. The leaves are thin, glossy and bright green and have reddish veins giving the petioles a reddish hue. Some strains have leaves of a lime green color.

This variety does not show the twisting growth habit of some varieties of Punica. It is also known for its smaller flowers and tiny fruit.



Climate

For bonsai purposes it is considered to be subtropical and will survive down to a 35 degree F temperature. It is semi- deciduous depending on the temperatures at which it is cultivated. The idea climate will have hot summers with cool nights. In cooler climates, it is brought out for frost-free weather and returned to the greenhouse or light garden culture in the fall after leaf loss. In temperatures up to 70 degrees F, growth will be tight will short internodal spaces, in higher temperatures, new growth will be leggy and thin. This also holds true if the light is weak.

If brought into the greenhouse, keep damp and the bonsai will bud out in mid winter. If brought into a light garden, it will bud out about one month after leaf drop. A southern or eastern window is required for indoor culture.

Soil

Punica adapts to a wide range from slightly alkaline to acid soils, but prefers acid soil and will develop excellent color and growth if used. The soil must show excellent drainage. The plant must receive plenty of water during the growing period, but it just kept damp in the cool of winter. If given a dormant period, water sparingly until growth starts.

Using a mixture of a good potting soil and a bonsai medium works well for this species. IF you are in an area with heavy rainfall or if you are a heavy waterer, use only bonsai medium.

It needs high phosphorus fertilizer for bloom and applications of iron twice during the growing season to prevent chlorosis. Begin fertilizing when buds swell and stop during the flowering period. Continue fertilization after flowering is complete.

Repotting

Repotting is best done in late winter or early spring before the buds leaf out. In fast growing young plants, yearly repotting with root pruning is needed. Be extremely careful when pruning the roots as this tree exhibits direct relationships between the main roots and its branches. Working with stock that has been especially developed for bonsai helps as it should have a well developed fibrous roots system which will eliminate the need for removing larger roots that could effect the tree health. In any case the removal of root mass must be done gradually to prevent the loss of branches.

In established plants, repotting should be done every two years.

Sun Exposure

Although full sun is preferred, take care not to burn the leaves during hot dry periods. It will tolerate some shade. Well developed specimens thrive in an eastern exposure. If the plant has leaved out indoors or in a greenhouse, expect sun burn on the developed leaves when you put it outdoors. The leaves that sprouted indoors will have too thin a cuticle layer for exposure to the sun. The leaves that sun burn will eventually fall off as new leaves sprout a develop the proper cuticle layer of protection.

Flowers

Punica flowers range in color from white to yellow to peach to orange-red. They are hermaphroditic (capable of self-pollination). Although they often will have a high bloom period in mid summer, blooming will continue into fall. Take care to remove pollinated blossoms as too many fruit can overtax the strength of this plant in a bonsai pot. This dwarf variety tends to have peach or orangish flowers.

Training and Pruning

The tree is best worked in late winter or early spring for hard pruning. Wire only the trunk and woody branches and raffia protection before wiring in young plants is suggested. It can be wired at any time except while flowering. Larger branches can be very brittle. The use of raffia on woody branches is suggested to help prevent cracking after wiring and bending.

Trimming of new shoots (those with 4-6 pairs of leaves) to one or two pairs of leaves throughout spring and summer is needed. Watch out for shorter rounded shoots. These are flowering shoots. After flowering, prune hard to regain the style.

This tree works best in formal and informal upright styles as well as group plantings. They can also be developed into group and forests.

New buds will form on old wood. You can buy imported trunks with little or no branches. Once the buds appear soon the work you can select where you wish the branches to develop.

Propagation

It can be propagated by mid summer soft wood cuttings, leaf-less hardwood cuttings in winter, air layering or seeds. Bottom heat and rooting hormone is required for cuttings.

Problems

The tree is prone to attacks from white flies, aphids and red spider mite as well as mildew. Indoors fast new spring growth often is attacked by aphids. Using off the tips of the growth spurts will eliminate most of the aphids. Follow this up with a spraying of a horticultural soap once a week for 3 weeks.

Treating the plant to a soap spray and wash periodically will reduce insect problems and good air circulation will prevent mildew attacks.

To prevent disease and insect problems it needs excellent air circulation

Bonsai Technique: SAIKEI

Saikei literally means living landscape. In this form of bonsai, the artist depicts not just a tree or a forest but a full 3 dimensional landscape. In Japan the school of saikei was founded by Toshio Kawamoto after World War II. He based this bonsai art form on the principles of group plantings and rock plantings of bonsai. Seeing the need for a form of bonsai that would be easily accessible to the average person, he created saikei. Young seedlings can be used and grown into older trees while they create a beautiful scene for us to enjoy. Kawamoto wanted a bonsai form that could look lovely even when freshly planted unlike the many years true bonsai takes to develop. His 1967 book, *Saikei: Living Landscapes in Miniature* has been the bible of Saikei since its introduction.

When Kawamoto introduced this style, he did not use any well-developed trees in his saikei. As time passed, other artists took this style to higher levels by training each of the trees in the saikei. Today Saikei can be designed with young seedlings or rooted cuttings or well developed bonsai. The choice is yours and is only limited by the materials you have available and your skill and imagination.

By studying landscapes in nature, we can envision saikei we would like to construct. As you travel throughout the country, take pictures of various landscapes for inspiration. When constructed the saikei will include rocks, trees, grasses, mosses and perhaps an accessory or two to complete the picture all staged on a beautiful tray or rock.



Ulmus Land and Water Penjing

Larix Saikei On Natural Rock



What is Happening in the Bonsai World?



http://www.internationalbonsai.com/store/1708315/uploaded/national_exhibition/index.html

The **4th US National Bonsai Exhibition** will continue with the presentation of some of the finest bonsai masterpieces in the United States.



Are you ready for something different in a bonsai learning experience? GSBF Convention XXXVI – “Bonsai Artist Studio: OUTSIDE THE BOX” will deliver on October 31 through November 3, 2013, at the Burbank Airport Marriott Hotel & Convention Center. See you there!!

<http://www.gsbfbonsai.org>



See next page for October events at the studio.

October EVENTS

AT PFM BONSAI STUDIO. Also Available MOST weekdays...call to check before coming out

CALL OR EMAIL TO REGISTER FOR ANY OF THESE 518 882 1039



Monday Bonsai Study Group 6 PM or so

Come and play and learn with our Monday study group. There is no charge for this group. We come together and work on a project. Or we simply bring some of our trees to work on. Some join in a shared meal before beginning .we chip in for the food. Bring materials to work on and join in the fun.

We will not meet October 21

October 5 Studio Open from 9 AM to 5

October 6 Free open workshop 9 to 5

October 12 Intermediate Class on Broom Style 2 PM

October 13 Pine Workshop 10 AM ..learn the secrets of pine bonsai, then create a pine bonsai...this is start of the time of year to work on pines \$40 plus tree. Bring wire, tools and lunch.

October 19 Martin Schmalenberg Advance Design Workshop all day.
\$60 Two openings left. Bring trees, tools and lunch.

October 20-22 Studio Closed. Pauline on tour on Long Island.

October 26 Studio Closed. Pauline giving beginner's workshop at Faddegon's Nursery.Call 518-785-6726 to sign up.

October 27 Mame/Shohin Conifer workshop. \$75 materials included. 10 AM Bring wire, tools and lunch.

October 30 to Nov 3 Studio Closed. Pauline at Golden State Bonsai Federation in California

pfm bonsai studio supports

Mohawk Hudson Bonsai Society <http://mohawkhudsonbonsai.org>

MidAtlantic Bonsai Societies - www.midatlanticbonsai.freesevers.com

American Bonsai Society - www.absbonsai.org

Bonsai Clubs International - www.bonsai-bci.com

National Bonsai Foundation - www.bonsai-nbf.org

please visit www.pfmbonsai.com for current happenings at the studio

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