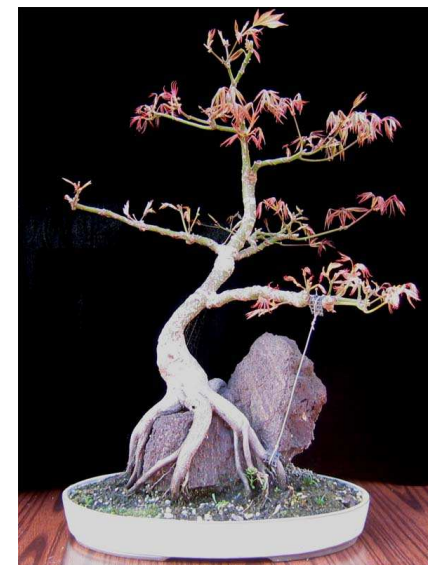


Bonsai

- Bonsai is an art, which expresses in miniature the beauty of natural tree forms. The word 'Bonsai' is comprised of two words '*Bon*' means a tray or shallow container and '*sai*' means to grow; thus bonsai means something growing in a shallow container or tree in a pot.



Origin of bonsai culture

- China in 1133 A.D.
- However, Japanese claims its originators.
- But, reaches height of popularity by Japanese in 17th century.
- Now it is considered as a part of domestic, artistic life of the countrymen.
- There is hardly any house without a bonsai in Japan.
- All over the world with increase in multi-storey buildings the use of bonsai in interior decoration has increased.

How bonsai making is an art ?

- Bonsai culture requires painter's eye.
- Poet's imagination.
- Sculpture's hand.
- Bonsai is essentially the art of choosing a plant which has the potential of becoming a good bonsai.
- Growing it under complete, constant and affectionate care so that it blends with the container in which it is planted to express its natural beauty.
- Thus, every bonsai has its own personality and individuality like human beings.



Bonsai garden



Successful bonsai grower

- Bonsai should be watched with constant attention and affection like children following the theory of 'Love begets love'.
- A person must spare sometime daily to look after the bonsai.

Bonsai v/s pot plant

- A pot plant is usually valued for ornamental flowers, foliage, fruits or bracts.
- In bonsai the beauty of entire plant along with its harmony with the container is the matter of aesthetic appreciation.

Factors affecting the success of a good bonsai

- Selection of right plant species.
- Constant, complete and affectionate care.
- Suitable growing media.
- Adequate sunshine, water, ventilation and fertilizers.
- Careful trimming, training, pruning, wiring and repotting.
- Balance among the roots, trunk, branches and foliage should always be maintained.

Categories of bonsai

Categories of bonsai with respect to size (height in inch):

- Mamie - 2" to 6"
- Small- 6" to 12"
- Medium- 12" to 24"
- Large- 24" to 60"

Bonsai styles

- Formal upright
- Informal upright
- Wind swept
- Slanting
- Semi-cascade
- Full-cascade
- Multiple trunks
- Group planting
- Raft
- Broom
- Rock-grown



Formal upright



Informal upright with *Lagerstroemia indica*



Japanese Maple structural style



Structural bonsai style



Azalea with structural style



Half cascade style with Gardenia



Cascade style with variegated star jasmine



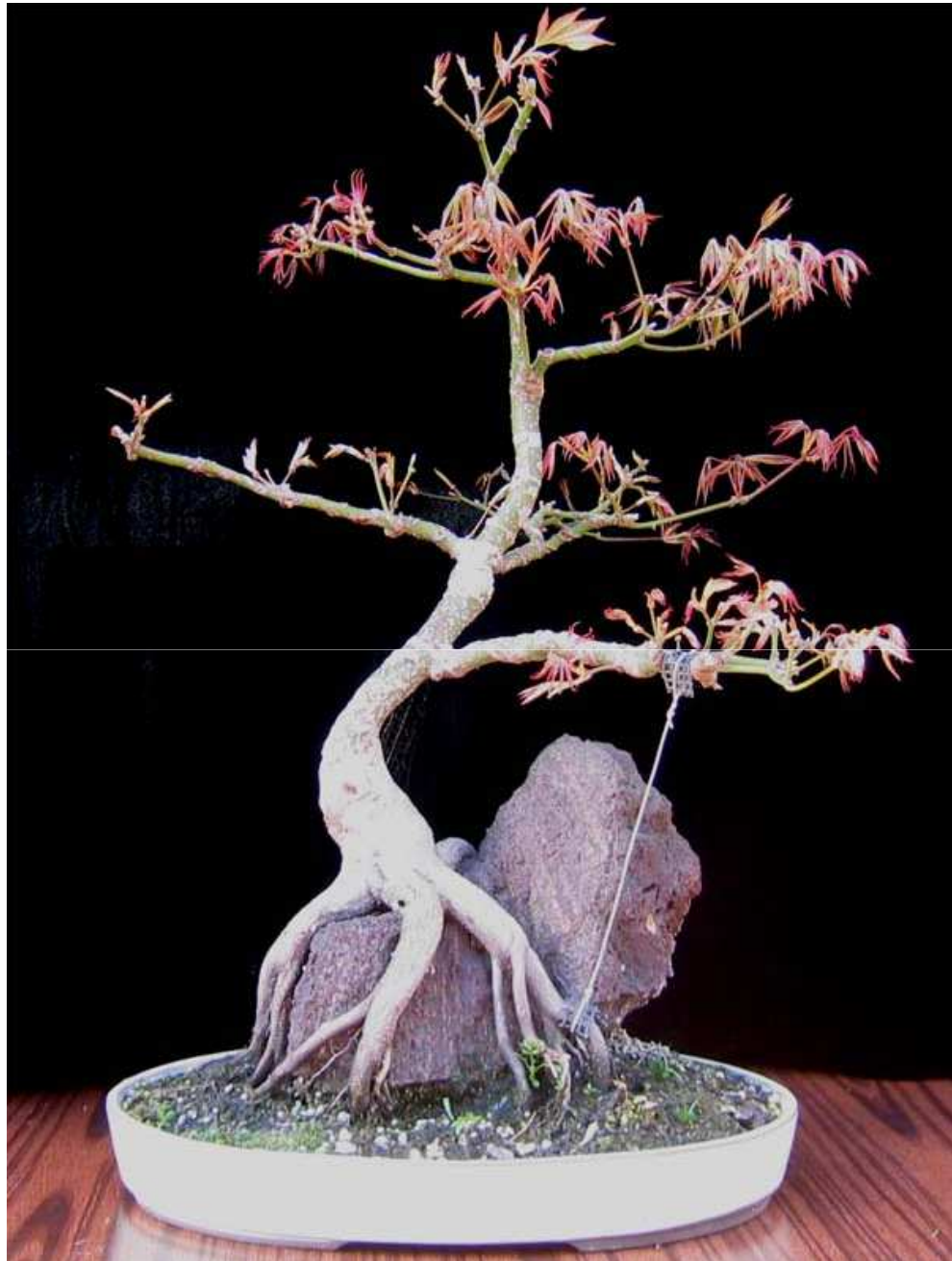
Wind swept

Rock grown bonsai



Rock grown bonsai





Rock grown bonsai



Multistem vertical



Growing media for bonsai

- Coarse, well drained medium which provide basic needs like water, oxygen and nutrition.
- Equal portion of soil, leaf mould and crushed bricks or sand is ideal medium.
- Top layer must have sufficient humus.
- Conifer plants require more dry soil and fruit trees require soil with more humus.

Ideal nutrition for bonsai

- Sludge or well rotten cow dung slurry.
- Groundnut and cotton or *neem* cake one kg each is mixed in five litres of water.
- This is allowed to rotten or ferment for about a month before diluting another five times.
- A mug of this is given twice in a month.
- A pinch of bone meal and single super phosphate mixed is also very beneficial.

Training and pruning

- To develop in to a good attractive shape.
- Reduced growth by regular trimming and pruning also restrict growth and maintain proper balance between roots and shoots.
- In one trimming not more than 1/3rd portion of roots or shoots are cut.

Watering in bonsai

- Bonsai requires plenty of water and nutrients to express their maximum beauty of flowers and foliage.
- Living in a restricted space these are completely dependent upon their attendant for meeting requirement of water and nutrition.
- Best time for watering is morning or evening.

Selection of plants for bonsai

- Lot of knowledge, perseverance and experience is required to select a right plant.
- Plants with smaller flowers and fruits are selected as foliage automatically gets reduced to about 1/4th.
- Plants bearing flowers on leafless branches are very good.
- Plants selected must be able to grow in stress conditions of small growing medium and low nutrients.

Propagation

- Seeds
- Cuttings
- Layering
- Grafting
- Buying from nursery
- Collection from forests and fields.

Important plants for bonsai

- Amaltas, Araucaria, Babul, Bamboo, Banyan, Ber, Bottle brush, Bougainvillea, Casuarina, Cherry, Chinese orange, Coranda, Cryptomeria, Deodar, Duranta, Excoecaria, Gulmohar, Hibiscus, Ixora, Jacaranda, Java fig tree, Murraya, Malpighia, Oleander, Peach, Pines, Pilkhan, Pipal, Plum, Prosopis, Silver oak, Tamarind, etc.

Important plants for bonsai in hills

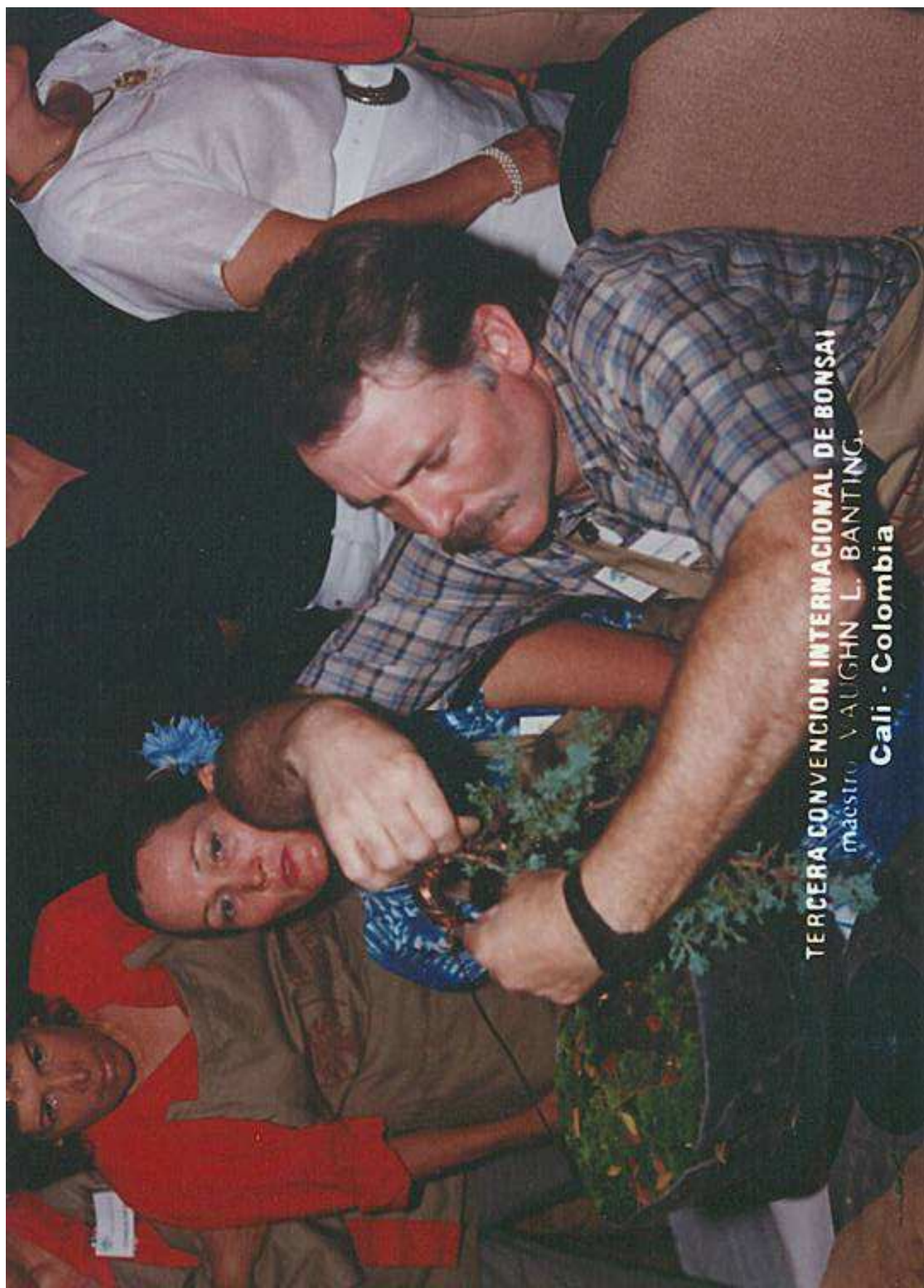
- Araucaria, Aucuba, Azalea, Camellia, Chinese hat, Coral tree, Cryptomeria, Cypress, Flame of the forest, Ginkgo, Juniper, Koelreuteria, Maple, Magnolia, Plane tree (Chinar), Peach, Pines, Podocarpus, Sal, Silver fir, Spruce, Taxus, Thuja, Willows, Zanthoxylum, etc.

Equipments and tools for bonsai

- Plant
- Pots: square, round, oval, rectangular, heart, hexagonal or octagonal shape with one drainage hole at the bottom.
- Potting mixture: soil, sand and leaf mould
- Potting sticks
- Sieves
- Copper wire of 10 to 22 gauze
- Wire cutter
- Pruning knife and secateur
- Watering can and tub
- Turntable



Demonstration on Juniper bonsai in Columbia



TERCERA CONVENCION INTERNACIONAL DE BONSAI
maestro VAUGHN L. BANTING.
Cali - Colombia

Planting time

- February-March
- July-August

Important Do's

- Choose plants hardy suitable for local climatic conditions.
- Choose simple container with adequate drainage.
- Position the plant correctly in the container.
- Do potting and repotting at right time.
- Eliminate air pockets during potting and repotting.
- Trim or prune regularly to produce a fine network of shoots.
- Keep bonsai in open airy place.
- Give balanced nutrition and use mild fertilizers or slow release fertilizers.
- Provide plenty of sunshine to all sides of bonsai.
- Do thorough watering until water comes out of drainage hole.
- Check regularly drainage as water logging is very harmful.
- Inspect often for insect-pests and diseases.
- Develop a design suitable for the species.
- Design must be well balanced and natural looking.
- Give your love and affection by proper and constant care to bonsai.

Important Don'ts

- Avoid choosing plants with large leaves, flowers and fruits.
- Do not choose a style unsuitable for the species.
- Avoid use of blunt cutting implements.
- Avoid unnatural objects for decoration.
- Do not be in hurry for getting flowers or fruits before getting desired shape.
- Do not mix chemicals and fertilizers in the same solution.
- Do not keep bonsai on the ground.
- Do not tie wire very tightly as it remains its dents after removal.
- Do not retain wires for a long duration.
- Avoid hard pruning in conifers.
- Do not give heavy fertilizers.
- Avoid freakish appearance of bonsai.