



June Newsletter Triangle Bonsai Society



NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY June 3, 2018 club picnic and auction

Event: Spring Picnic and Auction @ 1:00 PM (food at 1:30 PM)

Come early to preview auction items.

CLUB MEETING location:

Lake Crabtree Park 1400 Aviation Pkwy, Morrisville .

Beech shelter (first shelter you come to on the right side of the road)

The annual TBS Picnic, club auction and member plant sale is just around the corner on Sunday, June 3rd. The club will provide Fried Chicken and BBQ along with drinks, cups, plates, utensils and napkins.

Members are asked to bring a side or dessert to go with the picnic fare and bring bonsai related items to donate to the auction. Sales of these items support the club activities including this picnic and visiting artists.

Bargains will abound for successful bidders: pre-bonsai, bonsai, containers, books, and tools, so bring your checkbook. See you there!



From our VP- Program chair Gabriele Monetti

We had a great turnout for the second session in our Beginner's Series on April 28. Several students brought trees for discussion, as well as plenty of questions. The main topic was an overview of bonsai styles; the focus of the next session, which will take place in late June, will be wire and wiring techniques.

Last weekend TBS hosted Nashville-based and Japan-trained Owen Reich. Owen guided nine students through the styling process of healthy Dwarf Bloodgood Japanese Maples and on Saturday afternoon he helped TBS members with trees from their collection, including an azalea that will be on display at the upcoming US Nationals in early

September. During our Sunday meeting Owen's extensive horticultural experience was in full display as he tackled the advanced topic of large cuts and healing techniques for deciduous trees.

We are now in the season of the lineup of programs when presentations from guest artists tend to slow down and we start to focus on club and shows. The Spring picnic and auction are upon us and I encourage all of you to join us on June 3rd at Lake Crabtree County Park to take advantage of great deals on trees, containers, tools, and supplies. In the first full weekend of July we gather at Duke Gardens for our yearly Club Show. Last year's event was a huge success, with well over 1,000 estimated visitors; we expect this year's event to be even more popular!

Last, but not least, I'd like to report on a couple of changes in our schedule for the rest of the year, as it is not uncommon for the agenda of the second half of the year to be reshaped as we finalize topics and guests' availability. The topic for August will be replaced by a conversation on detection and treatment of common diseases. One very exciting change for September: I'm very happy to report that we have secured the services of a world class artist, Mauro Stemberger, for the weekend of September 22-23. Obviously that means that we will not hold our monthly meeting on September 8-9, as originally anticipated; that date was always tentative, since it coincides with the US National Exhibition in Rochester, NY where, incidentally, Mauro is one of the three show judges. We are very much looking forward to a great presentation from one of the true yamadori masters!



Sketching Your Bonsai. Part 2 . (Part 1 was in April Newsletter)

By Gabriele Monetti

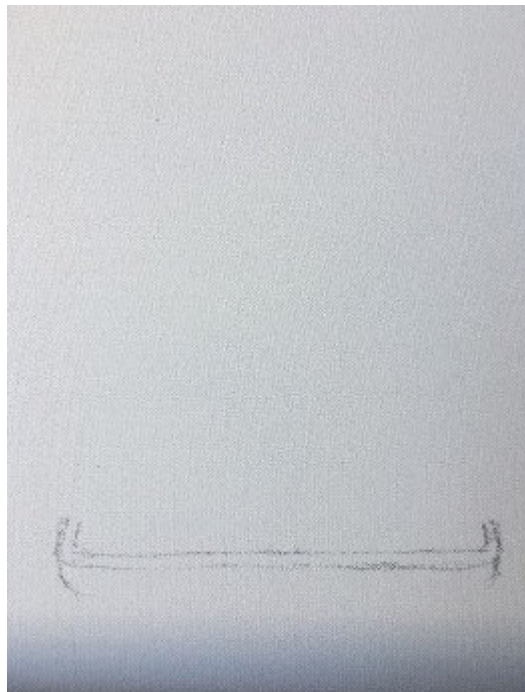
In the first part of this article we discussed the benefits of creating a simple, monochromatic sketch of our tree before making any major styling decision: a very helpful move on the way to a handsome bonsai. But a sketch may be just a start, or insufficient to render the breadth of your vision for the tree. You may need something more detailed or more realistic, or you may simply enjoy the drawing process itself. Whatever the reason,

here are a few simple steps to draw something a bit more sophisticated, polychromatic, and closer to reality. The tree I selected is a beautiful twin trunk juniper shown at the Nationals show in 2016; it used to be part of the collection of one of TBS's members and it graced the cover of one of the recent issues of International Bonsai magazine.

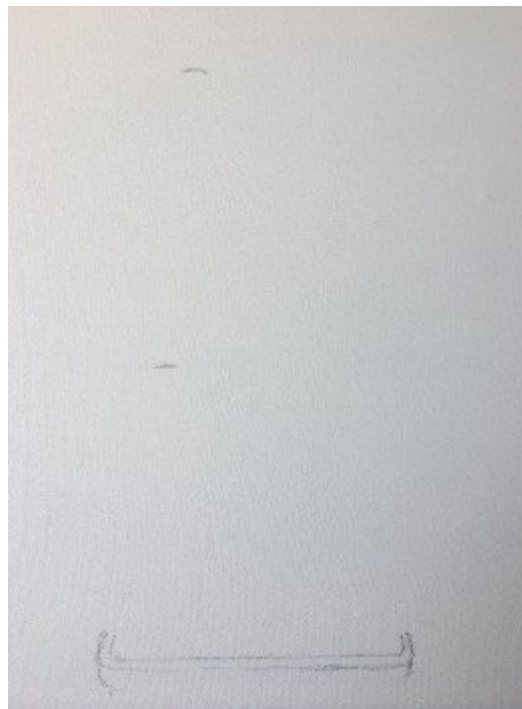
First, the tools. I imagine each of you has his/her own favorite medium; that's what you stick to. I have a few favorites; one I particularly like for sketches is quality pastels. In the picture you see the range of colors I used for this specific sketch. You will also notice a certain degree of coarseness to the sketch; that's because I used canvas, rather than paper. As you know, you can pick the degree of coarseness of your sketch by selecting the appropriate paper/canvas from the multitude of brands and materials currently available.



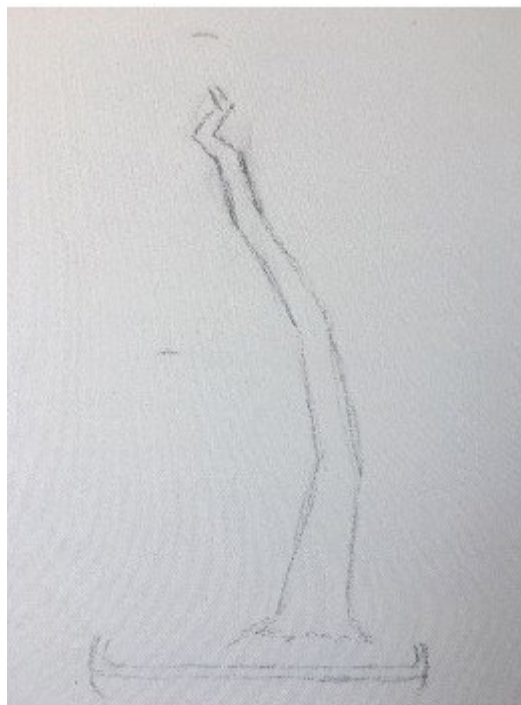
As mentioned in Part 1 of this article, the one aspect of any bonsai that can be used as a fixed point of reference for any other part of the tree is the edge of the container. The lip, with few exceptions such as crescent pots, is about 1/8" above the soil line. Let's draw the lip of our container. In this case I also drew a hint of the two side walls.



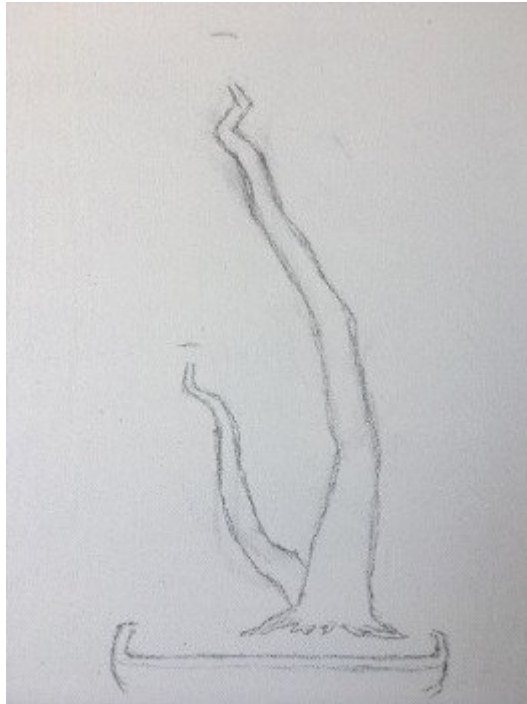
Drawing, much like bonsai, is about the right proportions. Pretty much any point in the tree's structure can be drawn on the canvas as a fraction of the distance between our soil line (or container lip) and the apex of the tree. Our bonsai is a twin trunk, so we draw the two apices. From this point it will be much easier for us to detect if an element is out of place by visually triangulating between container, apex, and element.



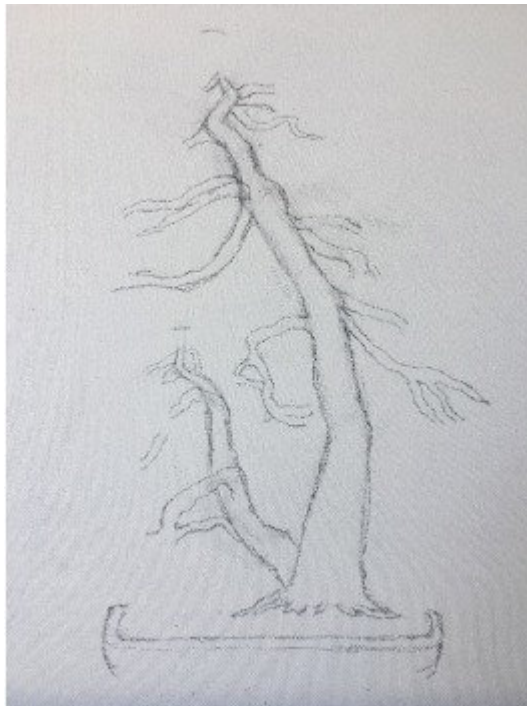
Next we outline our nebari and our trunk(s) using the cone method described in part 1. As you noticed, I selected a very elegant tree, with gentle curves, and minimal taper, so our cones are close to being cylinders. Notice how the outline ends short of the apex; we need to leave room for the canopy. Remember, this is an outline of the main portions of the trunk, the tree's backbone; we are not detailing the entire skeleton.



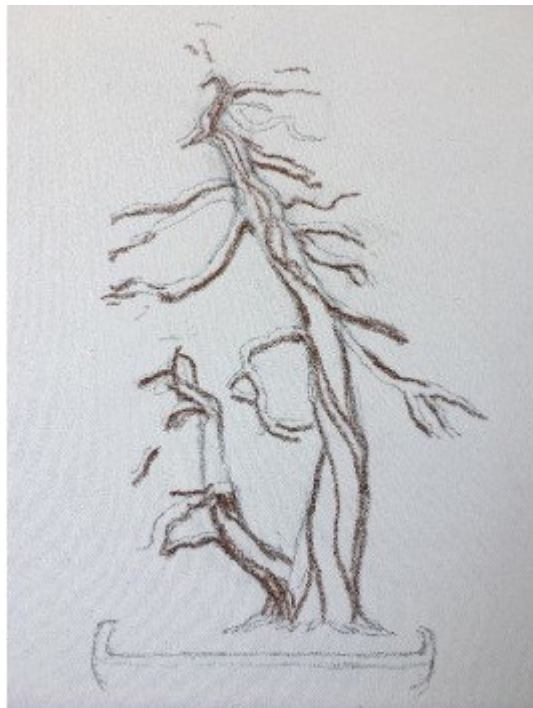
We start making our tree a bit more realistic by smoothing the junctions between cones. At this stage start taking a step back and looking at your drawing. Are there areas where you introduced too much or not enough curve? Don't go overboard with fixes, but remember that there is a wonderful thing called an eraser; as you can see, I wasn't shy about using it when necessary.



It's now time to add secondary and tertiary branches. Draw freely. Don't spend time drawing finer branches that would be completely hidden by the foliage in the final product. This is just a sketch.



Time to add some color! This is a juniper with a healthy amount of deadwood. In a show quality juniper, such as this one, deadwood will be dead white or a very light shade of grey. The living tissue is a color that ranges from an orange brown to a dark brown. We will use several hues of brown to represent not just the natural variations of the trunk's color, but also to differentiate the areas of shade from the areas of light. We start with the darkest brown for the shade areas; in many cases this color also outlines the edges of the deadwood areas.



The next color is lighter, basically the color of a brick. Incidentally, at this stage I also realized that, given the subject, I should have picked a black canvas or paper; it's going to be very difficult to make the white dead branches stand out.



The next step is to create the darkest areas with black pastel and the lightest areas of the live veins with orange. Our tree is starting to look realistic, but we have a long way to go.



The basic rules of color management are no different in drawing bonsai than they are in drawing anything else. Shady areas should be drawn with darker hues of a cooler temperature; high light areas require lighter and warmer hues. A tree ready for a show (at

least in the Japanese tradition) will typically have well-formed foliage pads with a relatively flat bottom. This tree has a lot of pads; we draw the bottom of every pad using a dark, cool shade of green, one that has a hint of blue. We use the same color to draw the areas of the soil surface that are covered in the darkest kind of moss.



Using a green of medium intensity and temperature we draw the body of each pad. We keep adding areas of coverage to the soil surface using the same color. A well prepared tree will have sheets of moss in a wide variety of color, texture, and size.



The next touch of color is some very light, warm, yellowish green toward the top of the pads, as well as some pure yellow at the tip of the pads, in the small areas that are bathed in light. We also add some beige tones and some Siena to the living veins to bring all the other browns together; a touch of Siena is also added to the container.



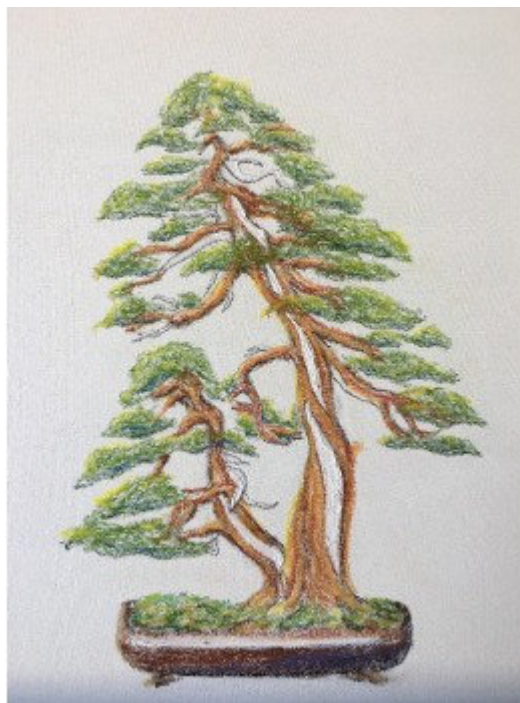
We complete the bottom of our sketch by filling the soil surface with a variety of greens and browns and we roughly sketch the pots. Two things to highlight:

1. the purpose of the sketch is to help you appreciate your tree and to make better styling decisions; don't spend too much time on the pot, unless you have plenty of it.
2. The colors you leave out are as important as the colors you apply; the best way to draw the areas of intense light on the container is to apply no color at all



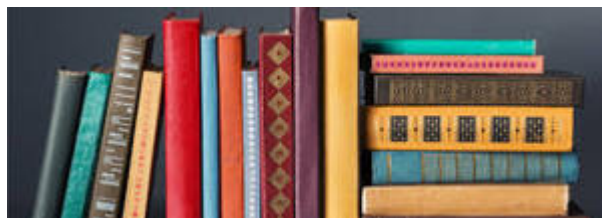
The last decision is how to handle deadwood. Given the white surface, I decided the only way to attempt to make them stand out is to accentuate the dark areas (the bottom of the jins and the shady edges of the shari) with a very dark pastel, and to make the white stand out by applying white pastel.

Et voila'! Not a Louvre-worthy masterpiece, but a solid sketch that works beautifully as a documentation of your bonsai artistry and the current stage of refinement of the tree. You can also use the drawing as the starting point for your next styling decisions; it is much less risky to erase a branch on the sketch than to cut a branch on the actual tree!



TBS Bonsai Library Borrow a book!

**Link to the TBS LIBRARY
(<https://www.trianglebonsai.com/so/eMDk5zdh/click?w=LS0tDQpiMTU1MTkxYS00ZmFILTRiN2EtZjc1OC1iZjUzYTY3Mjc1NDkNCmh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LnRyaWFuZ2xIYm9uc2FpLmNvbS90YnMtbGliYmFueS0yDQotLS0>)**




As I'm writing this column for the newsletter in mid May, I'm busy attending to, and enjoying, my satsuki azalea bonsai. If you didn't know, the Japanese kanji characters "sa" and "tsuki" translate into "five" and "moon" meaning the fifth month of the lunar calendar, indicating the blooming period, and corresponding to late May and early June. So using azaleas as a vehicle, I'd like to ask the membership where they get their species-specific information, and how/if can the library help with that. I know the TBS library has a few books dedicated to azaleas (of the three, I think that the John Naka book has the best information), but there are certainly more available, such as the books by Robert Callaham (my personal favorite) and by Janine Droste. Of course there's a lot of information on the internet, and as true with all internet sources, some is a lot better than others. For example, I would highly recommend Peter Warren's YouTube videos (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDLVsTf4buE> (<https://www.trianglebonsai.com/so/eMDk5zdh/click?w=LS0tDQoxMWZiZjgyYy0yMWZlLTRkZjQtOTg4My04MTM4MWE3ZTJhM2MNCmh0dBzOi8vd3d3LnlvdXR1YmUuY29tL3dhdGNoP3Y9VkRMVnNUZjRidUUNCi0tLQ>) will get to the first of two). So please let me know; I hope to hear back from at least Joe, Merritt, Ed, Harold, and Ken since I know that you all have an interest in azaleas—but hopefully a lot more of you will have some input:

1. Are azalea bonsai of interest to you? If not, that's important information for me (as the librarian) since I don't want to purchase books that won't be used!
2. Where do you get your satsuki information? Personal books, friends, meetings? If the internet, do you have some favorite sites that I can share with other members in future posts?
3. If our library had a better selection of azalea books, would you be interested in checking them out?

Thanks for your help,

Jim Easterbrook, Club Librarian

Check out the new TBS website  ([https://www.trianglebonsai.com/so/eMDk5zdh/click?
w=LS0tDQpmNzE4MmYzYy1mOTcxLTRkNTEtOGY0YS1mZGNhZDM1OTc5ODINCmh0dHBzOi8vd3d3L](https://www.trianglebonsai.com/so/eMDk5zdh/click?w=LS0tDQpmNzE4MmYzYy1mOTcxLTRkNTEtOGY0YS1mZGNhZDM1OTc5ODINCmh0dHBzOi8vd3d3L))