



Founded January 1964

# JOURNAL



**February 2017**

[www.torontobonsai.org](http://www.torontobonsai.org)

# Schedule of events

Meetings are held at the **TBG** ([Toronto Botanical Garden](#)), located at **777 Lawrence Avenue East** (at Leslie St.), Toronto, in the studio rooms upstairs. The first meeting is free for non-members.

## Bonsai 101: 7:00-7:30

Bonsai 101 is held in Studio #2 upstairs at the TBG. Beginners should read '[INTRODUCTION TO BONSAI](#)' (click on link), posted on the [TBS web site](#) prior to attending. This class was created for beginners to bonsai.

**Feb 13: no class this month, due to silent auction**

## General meetings: 7:45-10:00, upstairs studios 1, 2, 3

### Feb 13, 7 p.m: silent auction & social

Since this is our major annual fund raiser, members are asked to bring anything and everything to donate. Please put a minimum bid on the sheet for each item, and remember to take home things that didn't sell.

### Mar 13: bonsai soil mixes; fertilizers; Japanese maple demo

Jim Retsinas will give a talk on bonsai soil mixes, and there will be a talk on bonsai fertilizers, Pumice sale: \$25 per bucket. After the break, there will be a Japanese maple pruning & wiring demo.

### Apr 10: collected trees

Angelo Dumitru will give a slide show presentation on tree collecting.

### May 08: TBA

### June 12: TBA

## Spring show: Saturday, May 27 – Sunday, May 28

**TBG Floral hall 8 am:** bring in your bonsai, bonsai stands, shitakusa, suiseki, and scrolls for display. Volunteers are needed for set up, take down. Open to public 11 am - 5 pm.

**Social/Critique:** Saturday evening.

**Sales area:** also in the Floral hall. Trees, bonsai soil, tools, wire, books, and other materials are available for purchase. If you are selling items, you must volunteer to help, and fill out the [sales forms](#) (click on link).

## Outside our club:

### April 28-30: 8th World Bonsai Convention (WBC)

The convention will be held in Omiya, Saitama City (north of Tokyo), Japan. Visit the [WBFF website](#) for more details.

### Nov 3–11: 14th Asia-Pacific Bonsai & Suiseki Convention and Exhibition

Held in Changhua, Taiwan. See the [BCI website](#) for details.

**On the cover: Angelo Dumitru's boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) bonsai, from the 2016 fall show. See p. 7 inside for more details on its development. Photo by Mike Pochwat.**

# President's message: donate, bid, enjoy

by Carlos Bras

At our last meeting in January, Chris Hendry (The Bonsai Guy) came to visit us, all the way from London, Ontario. He shared some thoughts on how to keep our indoor trees healthy, and he also sold club members some black lava rock. Chris donated 6 trees to the club for the workshop that followed, which were styled and then raffled off to lucky winners. I am hoping to get some feedback on this new format in which we had senior members style trees, with a raffle at the end of the night. If you did enjoy or didn't let me know, send me a message or let me know at our next meeting.

Next meeting is our annual "Silent Auction". Members donate and bid on bonsai-related and other items for fun and to help with our club fund-raising effort. If you are donating items to auction, please fill in the bidding sheet with a description of the item and an opening bid; it can be as low as \$1.

We will start to set up the auction at 7:00 p.m., so please come in early to help set up the tables, bidding sheets, and donated items.

Here are some quick rules on the bidding process:

- start the bidding with the opening bid
- bid in increments of \$1
- write your name clearly beside your bid amount
- bring cash or cheque

During the bidding wars, the club will serve snacks and drinks (wine, beer and soft drinks). Bring along a guest, your partner, family member or friend, if you like, but please drink responsibly.

Please note that there will be no Bonsai 101 class for the next meeting.

## Bjorn Bjorholm visit!!!

Bjorn L. Bjorholm is a bonsai artist and instructor who spent six years as an apprentice under Master Keiichi Fujikawa at Kouka-en bonsai nursery in Osaka, Japan, before receiving certification as a bonsai professional by the Nippon Bonsai Association. His tenure as an apprentice at Kouka-en was followed by three years as artist-in-residence at the same location, making him the first and only foreign-born, working bonsai professional in Japan. During his time in Japan, Bjorn's works were featured in the [Kokufu-ten](#), [Sakufu-ten](#), and [Taikan-ten](#) exhibitions, among many others.

Although he is currently based in Japan, Bjorn will permanently relocate to the United States this year to establish his bonsai school and nursery with his Chinese-born wife, Nanxi Chen.

In addition to his work in Japan, Bjorn travels the world, from Europe to Asia to Latin America, teaching bonsai art and providing services to private clients and international organizations. He operates intensive bonsai schools with affiliate nurseries in Spain and the United States, while also working with international organizations such as BCI (Bonsai Clubs International), Black Scissors Association, and the World Bonsai Friendship Federation.

We are happy to announce that Bjorn will be visiting our club on the weekend of May 27 & 28, which coincides with our spring show. During his stay with us he will be very busy. We have arranged for two workshops and a critique of our Spring Show during the Saturday night social. The workshops are priced at \$80, which is a very reasonable price for the opportunity to work with, and get expert advice from, an accredited bonsai professional like Bjorn. Each workshop group will have 10 participants and we will be taking the names of those interested at the March meeting along with a \$40 deposit. There will be no silent observers during these workshops, nor can members sign up for more than one workshop, so it's important that you jump on this bus soon.

See you all on February 13!

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## The annual silent auction

by Dierk Neugebauer (reprinted from *The Journal*, February, 2005)

I fondly remember my first **TBS** (Toronto Bonsai Society) silent auction.

Two major issues come to mind. Being a relative newcomer to bonsai and to the club, I didn't exactly have a large supply of bonsai items cluttering up my house, just begging to be donated to the auction.

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What to do? I hunted around for other things that could be donated, even though they had, perhaps, nothing to do with bonsai: there were some ceramic planters that had been gathering dust for some time - they went; then there were a couple of old gardening books, that I hadn't really perused in quite some time - another donation; then there were some trivets that could be used under planters to protect good furniture - a good find; similarly, a vase, a wooden box, some measuring spoons, plant fertilizer, and several other goodies that could be spared - all made their way to the auction. After all, if you're going to buy some things for yourself, it's only right that you should also donate some things for others.

Secondly, of course, there was the auction itself! The club's executive made sure we were all in the mood to buy, buy and buy, by providing us with refreshments and nibblings. These helped to lubricate our purse strings. And then, of course, there were the items offered for auction by other club members! And what a selection there was! There were planters, and tools, and wire; there were nick-nacks and gadgets for gardens and kitchen; there were books and magazines. And what magazines they were: older issues of international bonsai magazines were lumped together and offered to the highest bidder. I found these particularly rewarding!

The only thing missing were the trees - no one, it seemed, wanted to donate trees. Hmm...

Well, it's that time of year again...

The holidays are over; you've survived new year's eve; and if you were lucky, you've received another bonsai book, or tree, or pot, or tool, or... the list goes on. And even if you weren't that lucky, and didn't receive some of the above as gifts of the season, you're probably getting quite antsy by now about the long winter, still ahead, and the fact that all of your trees are buried somewhere in the ground, and can't be touched. Naturally, tropicals are not your thing; you're a Canadian, after all: you go to the tropics, you don't grow the tropics! Or you could happily amuse yourself with pruning, preening, and styling them.

So it makes sense to occupy yourself by getting ready for the upcoming season: do some reading, study articles on the internet, write an article for **The Journal**, form a study group, call your bonsai buddies and see how they're handling the winter blues, clean and polish your tools, polish your pots, set aside those items you haven't really used in the last year and bring them to the February auction!

And remember too, it's almost a foregone conclusion, that you put a "high" minimum bid on your donations to the auction. In that way, the club makes a little more money and will be able to offer all of us a better program next year! Yes, the February silent auction!

Look at the advantages of donating: less clutter at home, a sense of well being, an opportunity to buy new "things", support for your club.

The TBS basically derives its operating funds from three main sources: your annual dues, the annual February auction, and the semi annual shows. Without the income from these sources, there would be no meetings, no shows, no support, no Journal, no web site, no socials; in short, there would be no get-togethers for you and other bonsai enthusiasts. So if you like monthly meetings and workshops, semi annual shows support, help for your bonsai problems, your monthly Journal, your resourceful website, your social get-togethers, your auctions, you really owe it to yourself and your club, to load up that car and bring an abundance of items that others will want to acquire.

Plan on being there!

*(Editor's note: these and other articles are located on our old TBS website. To access these articles, just go to our current website ([torontobonsai.org](http://torontobonsai.org)), and click on the 'Old Website' button on the top right of the screen.)*

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## Chris Hendry and the expert bonsai artist workshop

by Greg Quinn, photos by Greg Quinn, Otmar Sauer

What if, instead of searching for potential indoor bonsai throughout the winter in every nursery and home improvement store in the GTA and beyond, you headed directly to a bonsai nursery? What if you invited the owner/operator/grower to give a presentation on growing these mostly tropical trees indoors during our Southern Ontario winter, with its extreme highs and lows, low levels of light and humidity, and generally dreariness? What if you challenged the club's best bonsai artists to work on trees donated by the grower, where they also took questions and suggestions from all the members?

That is what we had at the last meeting.

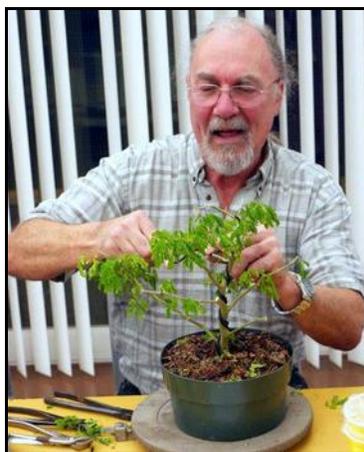
As we have heard before, Chris reminded us that we cannot rely on the sun at this time of year: we must provide extra indoor lighting for plant health, with the use of cool white fluorescent tubes, compact fluorescent bulbs; Chris recommended bulbs marked 'daylight'. Since tap water contains several chemicals a free-running bonsai soil so that the trees don't suffer from root rot from water logging, and plant food in the form of synthetic or organic fertilizer, which is now readily available. These are fairly simple to set up. But the most important thing he brought up was the question of providing humidity in our dry homes.

If possible, install a shower curtain around your growing area, he said. Just as you attempt to keep water from escaping the bath enclosure during a shower, a shower curtain can keep airborne humidity from escaping the growing area. Since a shower curtain is not attractive in one's living rooms, Chris suggested that the growing area should be located in the basement. My wife agreed...

So, once again, it's about the setup, preparation, and culture in advance of growing trees indoors.

The bonsai challenge workshop was a big success, judging by the levels of participation from all levels of membership.







One small glitch was the raffle structure: we hadn't anticipated that a single multiple ticket purchaser (3 tickets for \$5) could potentially win 3 trees... Luckily (for me, at least!) this person had the decency to decline his second prize. Yes – I won a tree; yes - it is still alive and growing!

## Boxwood bonsai development

by Angelo Dumitru



**June, 2013**

This boxwood is a good example of pre-bonsai material that comes from somebody's garden as an old, overgrown shrub that most people just want to get rid of - I like to think that I rescued it from the yard waste. It is definitely older than your average garden centre boxwood, with a thick trunk and nice bark and a whole lot of branches, maybe to many. However, it has quite a few flaws. There are many branches growing out from the same area on the trunk, and that will continue to create some reverse taper.



**May, 2014**

Another flaw became visible after the tree was planted in a box: the bark on the bottom part of the tree, being covered with soil for so many years, doesn't match the much older looking bark higher up on the trunk. That may correct itself in time, now that the nebari is exposed, but the reverse taper may not ... that's why I created the shari that goes up the trunk.



**June, 2015**

A few months have passed since the tree was planted in the box, and the foliage growth hides the many branch cuts. The old branches were so stiff and brittle that wiring was not an option. Thankfully there is never going to be a winter silhouette visible with this tree, so the somewhat awkward branch structure inside the crown will always be hidden.



**June, 2016**

A year later, after some major root work, the tree was potted into a mica pot. The carving on the trunk starts to blend in and not look so obviously man made. The foliage however, has a long way to go. In spite of an aggressive feeding regimen the tree takes its time and grows slowly, as boxwoods usually do.

**October, 2016**

Another year has passed. The crown is not fully developed yet, and looks a bit triangular, which does not match the image of a mature deciduous tree. The tree was potted into a ceramic pot, and probably will not be re-potted for a few years more. The foliage will hopefully fill in the outline for a more mature look.

**In the near future**

This is where I see the tree in a couple of years: a wider, fuller crown hiding the cuts that are still visible now; a rounder, softer, less triangular outline; some younger branches at the bottom of the crown will be wired down, to avoid a "lollipop" image.

*(Editor: Please feel free to submit your suggestions and helpful criticism on the future development of this tree. We will publish the comments in the February Journal .)*

## Announcements

### Workshops

Workshops are held during our monthly Monday night meetings, on weekends, and in backyards on Saturdays during the summer. To register, contact **Kem Shaw** (see back cover), or check in at the membership desk at any meeting.

### Membership renewal

Your TBS membership comes due in September at the beginning of the club calendar year. If you plan to participate in any club activities, such as our twice-yearly shows, you must renew your membership. Please send an email to **Sylvia Le Roy** (on back cover) and she will confirm your membership. You are welcome to use e-transfer or you can mail a cheque to the address included in the online [membership form](#).

### TBS elections

Our club elections are upcoming in June. In keeping with process, we will be organizing a nomination committee for candidates.

### Journal

Please welcome Zeb Tate to **The Journal!** Please feel free to contact him (on back cover) with any club info., etc.

## Coffee, refreshments & clean up

We are in dire need of volunteers for the coffee preparation at meetings. If we had just a few volunteers we could take turns and share the job, making it lighter work for everyone involved. Some people have been doing it for a long time, which sometimes interferes with their ability to participate in meetings. If several people volunteer now, we can enjoy coffee and refreshments at each meeting: some to prepare, some to clean up, etc. We all enjoy our coffee and tea, so help out! Please leave your name with **Sylvia Le Roy** (see back cover) if you are willing to help a little.

## Atomic bonsai

The 392 year-old [Japanese white pine bonsai](#), in training for approx. 388 years, survived the bombing of Hiroshima.

## Tools?

You need bonsai tools; we sell bonsai tools, among other paraphernalia. Contact **Gim Retsinas** (see back cover) to order.

## Rules

Yes – there are bonsai rules (well, more like “guidelines”...) Here are [Brent Walston's](#).

## Bjorn Bjorholm

Bjorn is arriving in Toronto on Friday, May 26. He will hold workshops on Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.. with 10 participants each, at a cost of \$80 for members, and \$100 for non-members. [Read up on Bjorn - visit his website](#), or [take a bonsai tour with him in the January, 2016 Gafu-ten bonsai exhibit](#).

## TBS fall show on website

Angelo has loaded the pictures from our recent fall show: <http://torontobonsai.org/galleries/tbs-shows/2016-fall/>

## Wanted: club vice-president

We are actively looking for a vice-president, to help Carlos, learn the ropes, and take over the presidency in June, 2017. Please contact Carlos (on back cover).

## Forms

The membership form, introduction to bonsai, bonsai record form, and the sales sheet form are located under 'Documents' (at the top right of the screen) on the **TBS website**: <http://torontobonsai.org/documents/>

## TBS on Facebook

The TBS is on [Facebook](#). (Click on link and like us today.)

## Ficus trees

They are our first choice for tropical bonsai, with a rich [history](#).

## Bonsai Penjing Canada

[Bonsai Penjing Canada](#) promotes our club, and other Canadian clubs.

## Publishing deadline

**The publishing deadline for the February Journal is January 30.** Please forward all photos, articles, notifications and materials to [gquinn@hotmail.com](mailto:gquinn@hotmail.com) before then.

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## Links to local bonsai clubs

Bonsai society at the RBG: <http://www.BonsaiSocietyatRBG.com>

Matsuyama bonsai society: <http://www.informdurham.com/record/OSH1103>

Misseto bonsai club: <http://www.missetobonsai.org/>

Kitchener-Waterloo bonsai society: <http://www.kwbonsai.com>

Buffalo bonsai society: <http://www.buffalobonsaisociety.com/>

Ottawa bonsai society: <http://www.ottawabonsai.org>

Societe de bonsai et de penjing de Montreal: <http://bonsaimontreal.com/#&panel1-5>

Bonsai Society of Upstate New York: <http://www.bonsaisocietyofupstateny.org/>

Landscape Ontario: <https://landscapeontario.com/bonsai>

## Regular TBS meetings

Meetings take place on the second Monday of every month, except July and August, at the TBG (Toronto Botanical Gardens), located at 777 Lawrence Avenue East, at Leslie Street, in the studio rooms upstairs at 7:45 pm. The general meetings frequently include demonstrations of bonsai techniques, critiques of bonsai trees, and workshops, in which each participant styles a tree with the help of an experienced member. These meetings are preceded at 7:00 p.m. by the Bonsai 101 beginner sessions.

A small fee is charged for workshops; a tree, wire and an instructor are provided. It is necessary to register in advance of the meetings to participate in workshops, so that materials can be provided.

Members are encouraged to bring in bonsai to show and work on during the meetings. Wire is provided at no charge. Non-members may attend a meeting at no charge to see if the club is of interest to them.

## Library hours and policy

The library is open to members at the beginning of our regular meetings. Members may borrow books free of charge for one month. Late returns cost \$2 per month with a minimum charge of \$2. Please return all materials during the next meeting, and before the summer break.

## Tools & supplies

Tools and supplies are sold by the club at most meetings. It is a good idea to contact the 'Tools & Supplies' executive member (see below) in advance of the meetings for specific tools and supplies.

## TBS executive

### President

Carlos Bras  
[carlos@offthebench.ca](mailto:carlos@offthebench.ca)

### Vice-President

- vacant

### Treasurer

John Hoffman  
[hoffman.john@sympatico.ca](mailto:hoffman.john@sympatico.ca)

### Recording Secretary

Kelvin Lo  
[kelvin.mba@gmail.com](mailto:kelvin.mba@gmail.com)

### Webmaster

Angelo Dumitru  
[adumitru46@yahoo.com](mailto:adumitru46@yahoo.com)

### Journal

Greg Quinn  
[gquinn@hotmail.com](mailto:gquinn@hotmail.com)

Zeb Tate  
[zebtate@gmail.com](mailto:zebtate@gmail.com)

### Membership Secretary

Sylvia Le Roy  
[sylvialeroy@sympatico.ca](mailto:sylvialeroy@sympatico.ca)

### New Member secretary

Kem Shaw  
[kemshaw@rogers.com](mailto:kemshaw@rogers.com)

### Bonsai 101 coordinator

Karen Brankley  
[kayeb29@hotmail.com](mailto:kayeb29@hotmail.com)

### Tools & Supplies

Gim Retsinas  
[gretsinas@sympatico.ca](mailto:gretsinas@sympatico.ca)

### Librarian

Nathalie Vacaresse  
[n.vacaresse@rogers.com](mailto:n.vacaresse@rogers.com)

### Members at large

Sylvia Le Roy  
[sylvialeroy@sympatico.ca](mailto:sylvialeroy@sympatico.ca)

Otmar Sauer  
[otmar.sauer@bell.net](mailto:otmar.sauer@bell.net)



The Journal was founded in January 1964, is published monthly, and exists to further the study, practice, promulgation, and fellowship of bonsai.

Visit the Toronto Bonsai Society's web site, at:

[www.torontobonsai.org](http://www.torontobonsai.org)

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