



RMBS

April 2016

Volume 48 Issue 4

April President's Message

by Tom Anglewicz

The Month of the Viewing Stone

Very recently Florentina and I were in California and, in addition to visiting the Huntington Gardens, we had occasion to visit the historic and very beautiful Pasadena Central Library. They have lots of used books for sale, and I purchased a copy of Sunset Magazine totally devoted to bonsai, originally published in 1965, for fifty cents.

As I read through the introductory paragraphs of this yellowed magazine, I came across the following statement, which resonated with me:

"In traditional Eastern thought, humans are one part of the natural world, no different from—or superior to—a rock, a tree or a bird. Western culture, on the other hand, has traditionally seen Homo Sapiens as the

highest achievement of evolution on the planet, with the ability, if not the mandate, to control nature. This fundamental philosophical difference in Eastern and Western thought can be summed up as coexistence versus dominance.

"Thus, a Westerner may regard that small potted plant as simply a personal possession. But in Asian cultures it may instead be seen as a manifestation of the natural world's life force and accorded the respect due to an equal."

These thoughts were directed to the art of bonsai; and, for me, it is easy to appreciate and experience this sense of respect when we work with and nurture our trees. As he worked on a large demo tree during the ABS/BCI Convention here in Denver back in 2012, I remember Ryan Neil stating, "Each

time you touch a tree, do so with respect." I have tried to embody that attitude in my own practice.

I wonder whether this Eastern philosophy of interconnected nature is also at the root of the art of viewing stones, originally in China, then Japan and now throughout Asia and beyond. When we Westerners collect and display viewing stones I often sense that our motivation is primarily to find stones of interesting shape, color, texture, etc. But aren't the best viewing stones truly evocative of nature? When we contemplate them, don't they somehow remind us of our connection with larger natural forces, or the beauty and serenity of a natural setting?

In *The Japanese Art of Stone Appreciation* the authors cite the following:

"While it has been influenced deeply by the Chinese tradition, (Japanese stone appreciation) also has its own independent root in the native religion of Shinto. Animistic beliefs in Shinto led to the veneration of natural stones in situ as dwelling places of spirits. Perhaps this explains, to some degree, why the taste in stone in Japan from the beginning has tended to a preference for the restrained and simple, a predilection subsumed under the wabi, sabi, and shibui and yugen aesthetics."

I do not claim much expertise on the subject of viewing stones, but other members of our bonsai society have collected and displayed phenomenal viewing stones; and I have come to really appreciate this art form and its aesthetic and philosophical relationship to the art of bonsai.

For RMBS, April is the month of the viewing stone! We begin with the current small exhibit in Denver Botanic Gardens' El Pomar Room. This will be followed by a much more extensive show, featuring stones from a number of our members and assembled by Darrell Whitley and Allan Hills, that will take place on April 16th and 17th in Gates Hall.

And, for our regular meeting on April 5th, we will be joined by Paul Gilbert, a former RMBS president who has become a serious collector of viewing stones from around the world. In February, Paul attended the Kokufu Exhibition in Tokyo, one of the most important annual bonsai and suiseki exhibits in the world. For our April meeting he will be presenting photos of viewing stones, and bonsai, from that trip, along with a sampling of stones from his own collection. This promises to be a terrific presentation that should not be missed! *Please note that this meeting will take place in Gates Hall at DBG, not the Plant Society Building.*

Finally, on Saturday, April 9th, at the invitation of the Ikebana International Society of Denver, RMBS member Darrell Whitley will be making a presentation on viewing stones in Gates Hall, from 10:00 AM to Noon. Darrell will speak about Japanese *Suiseki*, as well as Chinese Scholars Stones and viewing stones collected in Colorado. Should be a great opportunity to expand everyone's appreciation for this special art form!

Tom Anglewicz

2016 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

| Date and Location | |
|---|--|
| <p><u>Monthly Meeting</u> April <u>Visiting Artist</u> Tue, Apr 5th, 7:00 – 9:00pm Gates Hall in the main building just inside the gardens</p> | <p><u>Visiting Artist</u> – Mr. Paul Gilbert <u>The Art of Suiseki</u> Paul Gilbert (RMBS Past President)</p> |
| <p><u>Saturday Study Group</u> April Sat, Apr 23rd, 9:00am – 4:00pm DBG Bill Hosokawa Bonsai Pavilion</p> | <p><u>REPOTTING OF YAMADORI</u> Workshop Leads: Bob Randall, Tom Anglewicz & Todd Schlafer</p> |
| <p><u>Visiting Artist – Matt Reel</u> <u>Registered Members Workshop</u> Sun, May 1st, 9:00am – 4:00pm DBG Bill Hosokawa Bonsai Pavilion</p> | <p><u>Visiting Artist Workshop</u> 8 Participants @ \$65 Unlimited Silent Observers @ \$10</p> |
| <p><u>Visiting Artist – Matt Reel</u> <u>All-Day Individual lessons for Registered RMBS Members</u> Mon, May 2nd, Time “Open”</p> | <p><u>Individual Artist Lessons</u> Matt is available all day on Monday for individual lessons</p> |
| <p><u>Visiting Artist – Matt Reel</u> <u>Morning Individual lessons for Registered RMBS Members</u> Tue, AM, May 3rd, Time “Open”</p> | <p><u>Individual Artist Lessons</u> Matt is available on Tuesday morning</p> |
| <p><u>Monthly Meeting</u> May <u>Visiting Artist</u> Tue, May 3rd, 7:00 – 9:00pm DBG Plant Society Bldg.</p> | <p><u>Visiting Artist</u> – Mr. Matt Reel <u>The Art of Bonsai</u></p> |
| <p><u>Community Outreach</u> May <u>Saturday Study Group</u> Sat, May 21st, 9:00am – 12:00 Location: 3875 Cherry Creek N Drive</p> | <p><u>TAKAYAMA PARK CLEAN-UP</u> <u>SATURDAY STUDY GROUP</u> Event Lead: Darell Havener</p> |



April Program

RMBS VISITING ARTIST – Mr. Paul Gilbert (RMBS past President and Viewing Stone Aficionado)



Paul Gilbert
RMBS Past President

The Art of Suiseki (Viewing Stones)

Suiseki (Sui = water, Seki = stone) is the study and enjoyment of naturally

formed stones as objects of beauty. The art of Suiseki involves the collection, preparation and appreciation of unaltered naturally formed stones. These stones are found in mountain streams, on windblown deserts, along ocean beaches - anywhere that nature may have deposited or shaped them. Shaped by wind, rain and the passing of time, these beautiful miniatures of our world suggest shapes and designs that remind us of everyday natural objects. When displayed on specially designed wood stands called daizas or trays called suibans or dobans, they become a true work of art.

We are fortunate to have Paul Gilbert as our first Visiting Artist for 2016. Paul was the past president of the Rocky Mountain Bonsai Society and was instrumental with making the 2012 ABS/BCI Bonsai – Stone Convention a great success! Paul definitely fits the description of Viewing Stone Aficionado (a person who is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about an activity, subject, or pastime)

Paul will share many of his pictures and a report of the 90th Kokufu-fen bonsai and stone show from the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum. Focus will be on observations about the trees themselves; but also, how the trees and stones were presented and shown. He will also share how to develop enjoyment of viewing stones through the use of suibans and what to look for when collecting stones, especially shohin style stones. The suiban and doban are oval or rectangular trays used to display

Suiseki. Soft delicate smooth Suiseki are best suited to a suiban or doban, more shallow and oval trays with a narrow lip or no lip and plain legs. Paul will have several of his viewing stones available and will be auctioning two of these stones at the meeting.



Tokyo Metropolitan Art Gallery
Nippon Suiseki Association



NEWS FOR MEMBERS

Membership Renewal:

RMBS has adopted a policy where all membership renewals occur on July 1, and cover the succeeding 12 months, ending on June 30.

All memberships renew this summer on July 1, 2016. Individual memberships are \$24 per year and family memberships are \$36 per year.

You may pay via cash or check at any monthly meeting, or mail your check to the address below.

If you mail your check please be sure to include your email address and telephone number.

PAYMENT ADDRESS:

Rocky Mountain Bonsai Society
c/o Membership Renewal
PO Box 271043
Louisville, CO 80027

Akadama and Pumice for sale by RMBS

There is still Pumice available for sale from last year's shipment. It is stored at the gardens and you can pick it up at a meeting. Contact Larry Jackel or Adam Johnson. The price escapes me but it is at cost and lower than can be bought locally.

The board approved a purchase of Akadama earlier in the year. Todd Schlafer will be making the purchase and storing the bags. There will be both medium and small size available. All will be in 14 liter bags at a cost of \$47/bag. Todd, and others, have ordered and used Akadama from this supplier. It is very good quality. Contact Todd and he will bring it to the next Tuesday meeting where you can pick up and pay.

2016 Bonsai Classes

The Bonsai Basics classes will be held starting in the 2nd quarter (April or May). Bob Randall and Larry Jackel will be leading the Bonsai Basics class. Stay tuned for more information about the class including scheduling and cost. It promises to be a great class for those seeking a solid base of knowledge in Bonsai. The classes will be held at the Botanic Gardens. Class size is limited, if you are

interested please send an email to

rmbsquestions@gmail.com to add your name to the list. You must be current on your 2016 dues to register and attend.

Bob asks members to consider donating tools (concave cutters). The tools will be kept by the club for future classes. Please bring donations to the Tuesday meetings.

Discounts Available to Members

We have an account established with Way to Grow Gardening Supply in Denver. You can receive discounts on some items up to 15%. You will need to tell them you are a member of RMBS.

Classified Ads:

Resources for Members:

Check out this web site. It is oriented towards planting in the landscape but has a great deal of information based on research. The author, Dr. Linda Chalker-Scott, was one of the presenters at this year's Tree Diversity Conference. Her approach is to take what she calls myths, 'wisdom' that everyone just knows, and see what the research literature says. Topics include fertilizers, mulches, pesticides, and others. Of particular interest to those who use nursery trees is one called 'The Myth of the Collapsing Root Balls.' While it deals with balled and burlapped trees it leads to a discussion about containerized plants as well. The myth being that one should not disturb the root balls when planting. Her evaluation of the research says that they actually should be bare rooted to eliminate the soil interface between the native soil and whatever is in the root ball and to provide the opportunity to address root structure problems.

[Horticultural Myths](#)

[5th U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition 2016](#)

[Brussel's BONSAI Rendezvous 2016](#)

Other internet resources:

[RMBS Web Site](#) – A members only section is being added to the web site. Stay tuned for more information.

- [Colorado Bonsai Ltd.](#)
- [First Branch Bonsai](#)
- [S&S Bonsai](#)
- [RMBS Facebook Page](#)



What We Have For You.....

- Bonsai Trees
- Bonsai Pots
- Bonsai Tools
- Training Wire
- Bonsai Soil
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- Gift Certificates
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Colorado Springs, CO 80909
719-633-9110
(Open by appointment only)
Near Olympic Training Center





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Open by appointment call: 303-232-8700

Specializing in Character and Colorado Native Collected Trees, Finished Bonsai, Starter Plants, Pots, Soil, Books, Tools, Wire, Private Lessons and Online Native Spruce sales. Do you need a gift for a hard-to-shop for bonsai enthusiast? We offer Individual Bonsai Instruction Sessions and we have **Gift Certificates!!** Use them for *anything* (supplies, classes, etc.) and at *any time*.

We're located on the west side of the Denver Metro area, near I-70 and Youngfield.

Email us at: co.bonsai.ltd@gmail.com