THE YEAR OF COLOR

2018
When you read the word *tree* does an image of a brown trunk with green leaves come to mind? When you see the color green, do you think of growth? What magic happens when a tree with green leaves is paired with another color, like blue, brown, or plum?

‘Colorful’ is apt descriptor of 2018 at Pacific Bonsai Museum, literally and figuratively. Our Elements of Design exhibit brought bold paint colors to our outdoor gallery alcove walls for the first time in 29 years. Exhibit-goers explored six major design elements of bonsai art—line, shape, form, space, color, and texture—each element marked by a corresponding change in wall color. As Autumn approached, the wall colors took on an even more dramatic tone set against blazing orange, red, and yellow foliage.

2018 also brought dramatic programmatic growths with these firsts:

- The Launch of the LAB: our four-part, multi-year-long experiment investigating and advancing innovation and artistic expression in bonsai;
- Our First Annual Bonsai Fest!: a two-day, program-packed celebration of bonsai held on World Bonsai Day- / Mother’s Day-weekend;
- Our expanded Youth Field Trip program, that welcomed 177 students in 2018; and
- Our first Bonsai Basics Class offering: an introductory bonsai class for aspiring bonsai artists that continues to be a big hit in the community.

Thanks to you, appreciation for bonsai art is flourishing. Not only are more people visiting Pacific Bonsai Museum than ever before, more people are experiencing the powerful, collaborative combination of [nature+art] through our engaging programs.

Pacific Bonsai Museum is a giant gift to our community, to the Pacific Northwest and beyond. It is a place to connect with nature, a place to learn, a place with living art for all.

Thank you for helping us offer this gift.

Kit Severson
Board Chair

Kathy McCabe
Executive Director
Connecting people to nature through the living art of bonsai.

Photo by Chris Hornbecker.
Bonsai is distinct from any other visual art in that its creative medium, a tree, is alive. Unlike a painting or sculpture, which rarely changes after the artist applies the last brushstroke or chisels the last facet, a bonsai continues to grow and develop over its lifetime. It is a work of art that is never finished. A bonsai that is properly cared for will even outlive the original artist, requiring the horticultural and artistic contributions of others.

As living art, bonsai incorporates the elements and principles of design found within painting, sculpture, and other art forms. These design elements and principles are the tools artists use to communicate with their viewers. Learning about how each tool works enhances one’s appreciation for an artist’s work.

**2018 Special Exhibition**  
**Living Art of Bonsai: Elements of Design**

To foster understanding and appreciation of the art of bonsai, Living Art of Bonsai was presented as a multiyear exhibit focusing on the elements and principles of bonsai design. In 2018, Elements of Design explored line, shape, form, texture, color, and space, that established a foundation for bonsai appreciation and interpretation. As visitors explored each element, they could see how that design element appeared in bonsai, in trees, and in other works of art, and then “Now it’s your turn” signs prompted them to try out bonsai interpretation for themselves.
Collections

In 2018, we accessioned the following bonsai into the collection:

- 191 Scotch Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*); Donated by Chase and Solita Rosade.
- 192 Red Spruce (*Picea rubens*); Exchanged with Chicago Botanical Garden.
- 240 Hinoki Cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*); Donated by Lynn Paietta.
- 265 Winged Elm (*Ulnus alata*); Donated by Rodney and Charlie Clemons.

That these bonsai donations came from a diverse set of donors helps further diversify our collection. The donors included two, nationally-renowned bonsai artists, a major institution (with which we made an exchange), and a dedicated Pacific Bonsai Museum Volunteer/ bonsai enthusiast.

*Opposite page:* This tree was originally styled by Vaughn Banting before Rodney Clemens (Curator at the Smith-Gilbert Garden and at the garden of the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Georgia) acquired it. We were especially excited to welcome this tree into the collection as a representation of Southern U.S. bonsai. The addition of this tree to our collection makes ours a more complete representation of American bonsai.

*Near left:* This very special Scotch Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) was donated by Chase Rosade, a prevalent artist who has been working and teaching bonsai for 40 years. He runs the Rosade Bonsai Studio in New Hope, PA.
"How can Pacific Bonsai Museum advance the art of bonsai?" This was the question Executive Director Kathy McCabe and Curator Aarin Packard asked in 2016 that spurred the LAB (Living Art of Bonsai). With input from LAB patron Millie Russell, what started as an idea to resequence the standard tree->pot->stand approach morphed into a series of concurrent experiments with three artists each taking a turn ‘starting’ a bonsai in order to produce three artworks, each produced with a different sequence of inputs and handoffs.

The first LAB experiments were run on August 4, 2018 at the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Chauncey L. and Johanna Griggs House in Lakewood, WA. At the LAB Session 1, Spaces of Liminality: Enter the LAB, we witnessed the live styling of a limber pine by Ryan Neil, the unveiling of Ron Lang’s Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired bonsai container, and the unveiling of Austin Heitzman’s tall, walnut, Wright-inspired stand. Dr. Kevin Nute, a subject expert in the influence of Japanese culture on Wright’s designs, gave a presentation on Wright’s life and design sensibilities.

The audience and artists participated in a thought-provoking, moderated discussion around design innovation, collaboration, and the techtonics of bonsai. The whole Session was documented as part of an upcoming full-length, film festival-ready documentary, so that we can introduce many others to bonsai, Pacific Bonsai Museum, and the LAB. It was just the type of kick-off Session we had hoped for: provocative, lively, and creatively inspiring.
Programs & Partnerships

Bonsai Fest!
Historically, Mother’s Day weekend has always been a reliably busy visitor-day. That weekend happens to be when the World Bonsai Friendship Federation celebrates its annual World Bonsai Day, and also the time of year when the Puget Sound Bonsai Association traditionally held their annual spring show at the Museum. Knowing that crowds would come, we wanted to recognize World Bonsai Day and give PSBA an opportunity to show their work to a wider audience in a lively, weekend festival of all things bonsai. Bonsai Fest! became a two-day, free festival to allow more of the community to experience bonsai in a fun atmosphere. The results astounded us. A record-setting 3,000 people visited over the weekend. It became a new annual tradition.

Field Trips
One of our primary goals is to educate youth to deepen their understanding of and personal connection with nature and art. As students explore the bonsai, they can make tangible connections to universal principles of pattern, order, rhythm, and proportion found in all growing things. They hone their skills in observation, close-looking, analysis and interpretation. In 2018, we expanded our field trip program to serve more students from more schools, providing logistical support, supplies, infrastructure, marketing, and staff management time. With the support of donors who generously gave to the Buses4Bonsai fund, we were able to provide bus transportation to schools who needed that support.

Bonsai Basics
In 2018, we ‘piloted’ a new beginner’s bonsai class, just to see how it would go. It sold out almost immediately and has continued to reach capacity with every offering. It seems you all have been clamoring to learn! With Instructor Patrick Buckholz’s approachable style, students learned about the art of bonsai while creating their very own juniper bonsai to take home, along with the knowledge of how to care for it.
Thank you!

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Corydon & Kayla Weyerhaeuser
Bruce Williams
Jamie Wright
Aki Yamakawa

Thank you!

Photo by Francesca Scarpola.
By The Numbers

38,211 VISITORS

From 48 states and 27 countries*  
* As reported by visitors who signed our guestbook.
By The Numbers

150
Bonsai in collection

41
Tours given

872
Volunteer hours
NOTE: The Museum also recorded other income of $111,144 primarily from donated land as well as $304,270 in other expense from land lease, depreciation, and asset disposal. The release from reserves is part of the Museum’s plan to allow fundraising to ramp up over time.