Cover photo: Flowering Plum (Prunus x blireiana ‘Moseri’), in training as a bonsai since 1973; Original artist: Toichi Domoto.
Aesthetic Force

Bonsai is often associated with yin-like qualities—peaceful, awe-inspiring, joyful. We don’t usually focus on its yang characteristics—powerful, transformative, challenging.

In her book, *The Rise*, Harvard University Professor Sarah Lewis articulates the history and essentialness of what she calls aesthetic force: an internal shift that happens because of the power of art to move you. She quotes Frederick Douglass speaking about the power of images that carry a “transportive, emancipating force.”

When art becomes not only an object of beauty but also a way to open hearts and minds, it serves as an aesthetic force. According to Lewis, art is an elevating force of transcendence: “Beauty slips in the back door of our rational thought and gets us to see the world differently.”

Our 2021 special exhibition, *World War Bonsai: Remembrance & resiliences*, did just that. It concluded with Erin Shigaki’s wheatpaste murals (left) that helped us move beyond the beauty of bonsai, inviting us to consider a transformative question, “What kind of ancestors do we want to be?”

We invite you to keep the aesthetic force of bonsai close to your heart; to experience both the yin and yang of bonsai, and to discover bonsai on a deeper level. Consider, “How has the aesthetic force of bonsai transformed you?”

Kathy McCabe
Executive Director
2014 to 2021

Kit Severson
Chair, Board of Directors
2014 to 2021
PACIFIC BONSAI MUSEUM IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT CONNECTS PEOPLE TO NATURE THROUGH THE LIVING ART OF BONSAI.

IN 2021, WE WELCOMED 51,700 VISITORS TO THE MUSEUM
ACCESS FOR ALL

Pacific Bonsai Museum believes that everyone should have the opportunity to experience the power and energy of our collection. We ensure that we welcome every member of our community by donation, turning away no one.

GROUNDBREAKING EXHIBITIONS

We mount at least one major special exhibit annually complete with interpretation, associated educational materials, public programming, and documentation. The commitment we make to high-quality exhibitions sets us apart as a leader among the world's public bonsai collections.

Evolving the Art

We push the boundaries of the art, design, craft and culture of bonsai: an ancient tradition that is evolving as a contemporary art practice as relevant to modern life as ever.

Chinese Hackberry (Celtis sinensis) in training since 1962 originally created by Ben Oki (who survived the bombing of Hiroshima). Exhibited in World War Bonsai: Remembrance & resiliance.
EXHIBITIONS

WORLD WAR BONSAI: Remembrance & Resilience

JULY 2020 TO OCTOBER 2021

FOLSE: A Retrospective

MAY TO SEPTEMBER 2021

Left: Golden Atlas Cedar (Cedrus atlantica ‘GlaucA Aurea’); in training as a bonsai since 1957 originally created by Mas Imazumi. Exhibited with ammo can in World War Bonsai.
WORLD WAR BONSAI: Remembrance & Resilience

We held over our 2020 special exhibition into 2021 so we could share it with more people as the covid-19 pandemic began to ease and they were able to travel. This exhibition traced the cultural practice of bonsai from the pre-war WWII period using bonsai, artifacts, documents, and photographs to share the little-known stories of the people who ingeniously and courageously cared for bonsai, shared their art, and spurred a flourishing, global practice.

In 2021, we placed special significance on honoring the family members of the bonsai artists who practiced in the WWII-era, knowing that their lives are forever linked to their ancestors’ work that live on in our collection. We are honored to steward the living legacies of the families listed to the right.

Western Hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) in training since 1965; Original artists: Jimmy & Marsha Nakahara.
Japanese American Juzaburo Furuzawa grew this Japanese Black Pine tree from seed in a tin can while he was held against his will in a WWII-era incarceration camp. The bonsai became the centerpiece of our exhibition as a symbol of perseverance. In 2021, the Furuzawa family decided to visit the bonsai in person. Here, Juzaburo’s great, grandson, Jordan, stands tall next to the tree.
Engelmann Spruce (*Picea engelmannii*); in training as a bonsai since: 1952; Original artist: Connie Raphael.

Joni Greathouse came to talk with us about her mom, Connie Raphael, who is largely responsible for establishing the Pacific Northwest bonsai scene. Because her determination to make bonsai (at a time when very few women did), the first interracial bonsai club formed in the region. That club, the Bonsai Bums, later became the Puget Sound Bonsai Association.
Stacy Uyedo stands next to a bonsai created by her grandfather, Robert Kataoka: a Subalpine Fir (Abies lasiocarpa) forest, in training as a bonsai since 1960.

Robert Kataoka (1909-1986) was an early member of the Senior Denver Bonsai Club, which was founded by Japanese Americans after their release from incarceration at Camp Amache in Colorado.
FOLSE: A Retrospective

In September 2020, bonsai artist Roland Folse generously donated 20 bonsai from his personal collection to Pacific Bonsai Museum: some to add to the Museum’s collection and others to sell in support of the collection.

To recognize Roland’s generosity and his lifetime of achievement in American bonsai, we mounted the exhibition ‘FOLSE: A Retrospective’ to share his bonsai and life story.

Many bonsaists who are also parents to children find that their time-consuming, mind-occupying hobby also becomes part of their children’s lives, whether consciously instilled or not.

Artist Roland Folse’s four children grew up surrounded by bonsai, and the trees were like siblings to them. In tribute to them, Curator Aarin Packard arranged this Scot’s Pine with toys to represent his family’s connection.

Children’s toys with Scot’s Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*); In training since 1972; Original Artist: Roland Folse.
Cedar elm (*Ulmus crassifolia*)
In training since 1976;
Original Artist: Roland Folse.

Waxy-fruited Hawthorn (*Crataegus pruinosa*)
In training since 1980;
Original Artist: Roland Folse.
COLLECTIONS

2021 BY THE NUMBERS

148 bonsai in the permanent collection
11 deaccessions
2 accessions
Accessions


Korean Red Pine (*Pinus densiflora*), in training as a bonsai since 1952, originally created by Dan Robinson.
EXPANDED DIGITAL OFFERINGS

The covid-19 pandemic revealed many truths, one of which is the deep need that people have for both art and nature experiences, even when confined to home. We pivoted quickly to supply virtual experiences to meet immediate needs.

VIRTUAL, DOCENT-LED TOURS
offered to groups of visitors anywhere

VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS
offered to school children studying at home

VIRTUAL Q&A SESSIONS
such as a virtual repotting with our Curatorial team (right) which was live-streamed to Pacific Bonsai Museum members.
2021 PROGRAMS

SOCIALLY-DISTANCED BONSAI BASICS

Our popular Bonsai Basics classes continued in 2021 with masked participants.
VOLUNTEERS

2021 DOCENTS
Docents interacted with visitors on 127 days in 2021.

Dick Benbow
Sarah Ciambrone
John Delapena
Elsa Durham
Ken Martin
J. Overton
Asher Ramras
Victrinia Ridgeway
Joel Schwarz
Iris Tiomatos
Vern Van Houten
Maria Walton
Catherine Warren
Randy Willett
Bruce Williams

2021 BONSAI CAREGIVERS
14 high-skilled bonsai caregivers committed their time to the Museum throughout 2021.

Wayne Burns
Marie Hartford
Ann Hobson
Gary Kiyonaga
John Mork
Patricia Negron
Lynn Pajetta
Millie Russell
Francesca Sarpola
John Schmied
Ladd Smith
Tim Taylor
Ken Wassum
Gary Wharton
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PACIFIC BONSAI MUSEUM THANKS EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED LIVING ART IN 2021.

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- Greater Tacoma Community Foundation

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- Dan Fulton
- Mary and Bill Gates
- Millie and Craig Russell
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- Puyallup Watershed Initiative
- Royal Little Family Foundation

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Ms. Autum by Kyle Ostler
Claudio Bedoya by Adrian Bedoya
Tess D. by Anna Godornes
Hong and Huy by Hong Vu
Inesita, Naña, Seis by Maria Delgado Gomez
Japanese Americans by Karl Holmes and Catherine Pettinari
Juzaburo Furuzawa by Richard Furuzawa and Joyce Mitsuko Tamaru
Virginia Kingston by Neel Parikh
Samuel Low by Richard Woo
Ray Marshall by Christine and David Marshall
Connie Raphael by Joni Raphael Greathouse
Mary A. Selak by Mary Marasco
Keiko Shiba by Jana Baker
Joseph Seto by Steve Seto
John Philip Weyerhaeuser III by Lisa Weyerhaeuser
George and Kazzie Yamada by Eileen Lamphere
Greg Yusi by Nils Cowan

Green Island Fig (Ficus microcarpa); In training as a bonsai since 1965; originally created by Amy Liang.
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE
$959,185

- Individual gifts: 28%
- Foundation grants: 35%
- Gifts in-kind, earned income & other: 6%
- Donated assets: 30%
- Endowment payout: 1%

TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES
$760,761

- Exhibits & Public Programs: 24%
- Collections, grounds & facilities: 34%
- Development & Marketing: 24%
- Administration: 19%

Pacific Bonsai Museum is located on land leased from Industrial Realty Group, LLC at a cost of $1/year. The land lease is valued at $296,563.
Japanese Maple (Acer palmatum), in training as a bonsai since 1956; Original artist: Kai Kawahara.