




Three essential points of enjoying Bonsai

<p>A Brief history of Bonsai</p> 	<p>Bonsai art started in China in 8th century. It was called “Bon-kei (or landscape in a container)” An old painting which was probably made in 8th century, we see the first Bonsai tree in the arms of a court woman. The picture was found in a tomb of the son of famous Chinese female ruler Sokuten-Buko (623-705).</p> <p>Small trees with flowers in the painting show that people loved to see natural landscape, as they thought, trees, flowers and the container symbolized the nature.</p> <p>Bonsai art was brought to Japan in the era of Heian (794-1185) by Zen Buddhists who studied in China. It was only popular among noble class people. They enjoyed Bonsai as Chinese nobility did.</p>
<p>What Bonsai mean?</p>	<p>The word Bonsai consists of two words, Bon (container) and Sai (plants, particularly the ones planted in vases or containers).</p>

First Point: Eternity is in your mind when you see Bonsai 壺のツボ 盆栽には悠久の時間が宿る

<p>“Seiryu (Blue Dragon)</p> 	<p>This is called “Seiryu (Blue Dragon)” which has approximately a thousand years of history. It seems that the tree take us all to the ancient world in our imagination where, we believe, legendary blue dragons lived.</p>
<p>“Higurashi”</p> 	<p>People say (NHK said!) that this 450 year-old Bonsai called “Higurashi (all day long)” (left) is the best in Japan. But, it looks more older than it is.</p> <p>The reason why it is called “Higurashi” is that the sun is setting down without knowing it when you look at this Bonsai tree.</p>

Second Point: You may see the earth in a tree 貳のツボ 一木(いちぼく)に大地を見よ

Folding screen with Bonsai



The screen (on the left) was made in Edo era (1600-1868). Even if the Bonsai trees are in vases these trees still keep scent (characteristics) of their native lands. So you may recall your homeland when you see or work on the trees.

"Musashi-ga-oka (Musashi Hill)"



The Bonsai (left), 150 year-old Yamamomiji (wild maple) was named "Musashi-ga-oka" after its home town area.

The composition and the shape of the trees remind you the gentle hills with bushy trees.

You might see various landscapes within small container. That is why Bonsai is called "green microcosmic"

Third Point: Good match between trees and vases 参のツボ 最後の仕上げは鉢映り



Third, and the last point is a vase in a decoration. A good chemistry between the tree and the container is the last and important point in Bonsai decoration. Each tree has its own good match, such as a deep vase for Kuromatsu (black pine) and flat container for "Higurashi."