



Some of the Bonsai in the Clark Collection are beloved of staff and visitors alike, due to their unique visual attributes. Our Bald Cypress is often referred to as the “Swamp Monster” in reference to its large size and origin. The Coastal Live Oak, with its grotesque features, long ago acquired the nick name “Del Monte Ogre”. The three Junipers you see before you are often called “the dancers”. The narrow trunk width relative to the vertical height of the trees (a proportion ratio of 12:1) creates an elegant, graceful image. The rhythmic repetition of gentle curves in the trunks creates a sense of harmonious movement, as if the trees were dancing to some silent melody. Close your eyes and listen, can you hear nature's music? The trees do.

## CBCS 118

Artist/ Maker: Unknown

Common Name: Chinese Juniper—Shimpaku. Originally native to Japan, they were first collected in the 1850s. They are primarily grown and used as decoration, and at one point were a symbol of status in Japan. Shimpaku juniper are one of the most popular species in the bonsai community. Its attractive foliage and beautiful bark make this one of the top candidates for bonsai.

Botanical Name: *Juniperus chinensis*

Date Acquired July, 2016

Age:

Evergreen

Style: Triple Trunk **Sankan** **Three-trunk** Three trunks rise from separate sets of roots. Trunk sizes are varied, with one dominant trunk being the thickest and generally the tallest. The three trunks are placed so that a straight line cannot intersect all three, to minimize symmetry and make the design look as natural as possible.

Donor: Richard Brustlin



2021



2024

Humenori and Kioko Hatanaka were extremely talented Japanese American pioneers of the early practice of bonsai in the US. We don't know which one or if both created this bonsai by grafting Shimpaku foliage onto a prostrata juniper twin-trunk. Grafting is used for a variety of purposes: to add a branch in a specific place for compositional reasons, to replace foliage with a preferred variety, to enhance the roots or to create a new tree combining desired characteristics of both plants, as is the case with this bonsai. Shimpaku has finer, more attractive foliage than prostrata, which can have strong trunks and well distributed branches. Stripping the bark to create deadwood *sharis* and thinning branches to create *jins* add to the look of age. Artists use these techniques to replicate what nature does over a long period of time.

### **CBCS 098**

Artist/ Maker: Original Artist: Hatanakas. Restyling Bob Hilvers & Julian Tsai

Common Name: Prostrata Juniper Trunk & grafted Shimpaku Juniper foliage

Botanical Name: Juniperus Prostrata & Juniperus Chinensis

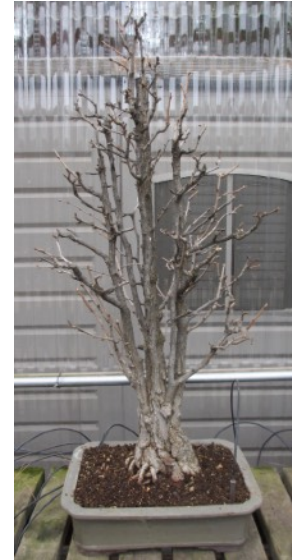
Date Acquired: June 2021

Age: Given provenance, estimated age 50+ years

Evergreen:

Style: Twin Trunk / Sokan. Two trunks rise from a single set of roots. The base of the trunks generally touch and may be joined to each other up to a short distance above the soil. One trunk is usually taller and thicker than the other, both are clearly visible from the bonsai's front.

Donor: Bob Hilvers



This bonsai is a dwarf variety of ginkgo known as 'Chi-Chi Icho'. Ginkgo biloba reproduces with separate male and female sexes. The 'Chi-Chi' is a clone propagated from a cutting from a male tree. Ginkgo biloba is the sole survivor of an ancient group of trees that date back to before dinosaurs roamed the Earth – creatures that lived between 245 and 66 million years ago. It's so ancient, the species is known as a 'living fossil.' Fossils of Ginkgo leaves have been discovered that date back more than 200 million years. Although they once were widespread throughout the world, its range shrank and by two million years ago, it was restricted to a small area of China.

The distinctive fan shaped leaf of the ginkgo is featured in many Japanese artistic designs and has long been a symbol of Tokyo, Japan's capital city. It is much admired for the beauty of its golden yellow fall color. Though its medicinal value is a matter for debate in modern times, Ginkgo has been used in traditional Chinese medicine since at least the 11th century. Ginkgo seeds, leaves, and nuts have

### CBCS 013

Original Artist: Ray Thieme

Bob Hilvers acquired this bonsai from Ray Thieme who made it in 1972 from a cutting he got from Kahn Kumai, a well known, long time bonsai artist from southern California.

Common Name: Ginkgo

Botanical Name: Ginkgo Biloba 'Chi-Chi' (also known as 'Tshi-Tshi') is a dwarf, dense, mounded, slow-growing, multi-stemmed shrub form of the popular ginkgo tree. It typically grows to only 4-5' tall with a fan-shaped habit and over 10 years. 'Chi-Chi' is a male clone.

Deciduous.

Acquired; 3/10/21

Estimated age: 40 years

Style: Kabudachi/ Clump In the clump style, three or more (should be an odd number) trunks grow from a single point. The natural equivalent might be a group of trees that have sprouted from a single cone, or a collection of mature suckers springing from the base of a single tree.

Donor: Bob Hilvers



This Japanese Maple Forest was created by the late Ray Thieme, considered a local bonsai legend, practicing bonsai for over 53 years. In 1989 he collected the seeds from a single “Mother” maple tree and when they reached the desired size, created this all-sibling forest bonsai. This unique forest style was additionally challenging because it incorporates so many similarly sized trees. It appears to be an utterly random arrangement, but it requires careful artistry to insure that no tree obstructs the view of any other, and the viewer feels drawn into the scene. Forest bonsai are more complex due to the number of visual elements that define the style. They are therefore much more difficult to render into a harmonious image, convincing our “mind’s eye” that we are beholding a miniature vignette of the natural world. The visual entry point in forest bonsai is reminiscent of what one finds in traditional Chinese and Japanese monochromatic ink landscape paintings which invite the viewers to enter and traverse the scene in their imaginations.

### **CBCS 003.**

Artist/ Maker: Ray Thieme. (See Bio)

Common Name: Japanese Maple

Botanical Name: *Acer palmatum*,

Date Acquired: 5/13

Age: 34 years

Deciduous

Style: Yose-ue/Forest Group This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number unless too many to count easily, in a bonsai pot. The pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. The goal is to portray a view into a forest, This forest is unique in that the trees are more numerous than usual and of similar size. Their placement appears totally random, but if you look closely, you will see that no tree is entirely obscured by any other. This composition includes an entry point that seems to invite the viewer to take a walk in the forest.

Donor: Purchased by CCJAC



This Trident Maple bonsai group was created by Mike Nishitani, a Kibei (a term used to describe Japanese Americans born in the United States who returned to America after receiving their education in Japan). While going to school in Japan, the Japanese government sent him to pilot school. Towards the end of the war, they were running out of airplanes, so luckily he was never called to serve in the air force. He met his lovely wife in Japan, married, and came back to the US after the war. This bonsai is part of the Legacy Collection, which are works created by Japanese immigrants and/or Japanese Americans and maintained in the style of the original artist, in so far as that is possible, to provide an historical spectrum in keeping with the mission of a bonsai museum. The Forest or Yose-ue Style is a planting of many trees, typically an odd number, in a low sided bonsai pot to emphasize the height of the trees. The trees are usually the same species, but with a variety of sizes to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. The goal is to portray a view into a forest, and perspective effects, such as placing the smallest trees toward the rear, creates a sense of depth.

**CBCS 144 LEGACY COLLECTION** Bonsai within the Collection created by Japanese immigrants and/or Japanese Americans and maintained in the style of the original artist in so far as that is possible to provide an historical spectrum in keeping with the mission of a bonsai museum.

History reported by Chuck Nelson: "Mike Nishitani is a Kibei (a term used to describe Japanese Americans born in the United States who returned to America after receiving their education in Japan). He met his lovely wife in Japan, married, and came back to this country after the war. Mike told me that while going to school in Japan, the government sent him to pilot school. Towards the end of the war, they were (literally) or they might have made him a Kamikazi pilot!"

Original Artist/ Maker: Mike Nishitani

Common Name: Trident Maple

Botanical Name: *Acer buergerianum*

Date Acquired: May, 2017

Age: ?

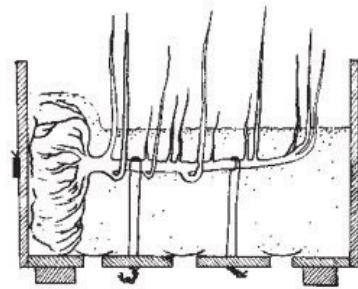
Deciduous

Style: Forest or Yose-ue: This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number. The pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. The goal is to portray a view into a forest, and perspective effects, such as placing the smallest trees toward the rear, are important in developing a specimen in this style.

Donor: Chuck Nelson



Raft (Ikadabuki) bonsai styles mimic a natural phenomenon that occurs when a tree topples onto its side, for example, from soil eroding beneath the tree. Branches along the top side of the trunk continue to grow as a group of new trunks. Roots will develop from buried portions of the trunk. Raft-style trees give the illusion that they are a group of separate trees, while actually being the branches of a tree planted on its side. This Raft bonsai was created from a tree removed from Ray Thieme's Trident Maple Forest when it was restyled and transplanted by Ryan Neil in 2018. Peter Schaeffer of the Fresno Bonsai Society built the box. The raft was created by Bob Hilvers and the Clark Bonsai team. The team removed it from the box and the raft bonsai was potted in February, 2020.



## CBCS 056

Artist/ Maker: Bob Hilvers and CBCS Staff

Common Name: Trident Maple

Botanical Name: *Acer buergerianum* (*A. trifidum*)

Date Acquired: Forest 5/10/15 Tree boxed for raft 1/28/18 Potted 2/20

Deciduous

Style: Ikadabuki/Raft, straight-line These styles mimic a natural phenomenon that occurs when a tree topples onto its side, for example, from soil eroding beneath the tree. Branches along the top side of the trunk continue to grow as a group of new trunks. Sometimes, roots will develop from buried portions of the trunk. Raft-style bonsai can have sinuous or straight-line trunks, all giving the illusion that they are a group of separate trees, while actually being the branches of a tree planted on its side. The straight-line style has all the trees in a single line.

Donor: Bill Clark (Original Ray Thieme Forest)

History of Work: The Trident Maple tree was removed from Ray Thieme's forest during its restyling by Ryan Neil in 2018. It was planted in a box by Peter Schaeffert of Fresno Bonsai Society built the box. The raft was created by Bob Hilvers and the CBCS team. The team removed it from the box and placed it into a pot on 2/5/20



The group style bonsai is one that often elicits an emotional response in the viewer because groves and forests represent our most profound relationship to trees. A seemingly mature forest growing out of an especially shallow pot emphasizes the height of the trees and enhances the magic that is bonsai. This encourages the viewer to use their imagination to shrink down and take a walk into the forest.

Al Keppler donated this Chinese Elm forest style bonsai to the Clark Collection when it was first being developed at the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture in Hanford. Over the past 40 years, Al has been dedicated to the art of bonsai as an avid student of some of the best known bonsai masters and as a member and sometime officer of three local bonsai clubs: Akatsuki, Hanford and Fresno Bonsai Societies. Al has explored a full range of species and styles, and he has generously shared his experience and expertise with his fellow practitioners becoming a mentor and teacher himself.

## **CBCS 005**

Artist/ Maker: Al Keppler. (See Bio)

Common Name: Chinese Elm

Botanical Name: *Ulmus chinensis*,

Date Acquired: 5/10/08

Age: Estimated age of largest tree – 25 yrs.

Deciduous

Style: Yose-ue/Forest Group This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number unless too many to count easily, in a bonsai pot. The pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. The goal is to portray a view into a forest,

Donor: Al Keppler



Loropetalum is being seen increasingly as a bonsai species in recent years. It is a relatively new species of shrub coming to the United States in 1989 when some were sent to The U.S. National Arboretum from the Nihonkaki Nursery in Japan. Soon after, many varieties were being imported. Around 2000 or so they started to become widely used for landscaping. It is unusual to find loropetalum bonsai featuring trunks of this size and age. A relative of the Witch Hazel, it flowers in a similar manner with 1-2 inch bright pink fringe flowers. The dark purple foliage stays the same color all year, though it can get a little greener in summer. This bonsai is on loan from the Fresno Bonsai Society in memory of Gene Nelson, an admired member of the Clark Bonsai curatorial team.



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**CBCS 068**

**SPONSOR: RON WOODSON**

**2/26/20-2/26/25**

Artist/ Maker: Gene Nelson

Common Name: Fringe Flower (Fuchsia)

Botanical Name: Loropetalum chinense f. rubrum 'Zhuzhou Fuchsia'

Date Acquired: 12/4/19

Age: ?

Broadleaf evergreen

Style: Sharimiki/Driftwood This style portrays a tree with a significant part of its trunk bare of bark. In nature, trees in the sharimiki style are created by disease, physical damage to the trunk, weathering, and age. At least one strip of live bark must connect the leaves and living branches to the root system to transport water and nutrients. The bared trunk areas give a strong impression of age regardless of the tree's conformation, so driftwood bonsai often fall outside of the conventional styles in shape and foliage.



Ray Thieme, a bonsai local legend, created this Trident maple forest which was acquired by Bill Clark for the Clark Collection at the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture in 2013. Internationally known Bonsai Master Ryan Neil transplanted and re-styled the group in 2018, in collaboration with Ray. The estimated age of the largest tree is over 50 years. In forest style bonsai, a variety of heights and trunk sizes are employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. In nature, when a “mother” maple drops its seed pods, the seedlings compete for sunlight, the fastest growing shading the others resulting in a variety of sizes. The placement of an odd number of trees should look natural and random, but in fact the precise placement of each tree requires great artistry. The goal is to portray a view into a forest, using balanced asymmetry and perspective effects, such as placing the smallest trees toward the rear to visually expand the depth. The most appealing bonsai forests seem to invite the viewer to enter.

## CBCS 015

Artist/ Maker: Ray Thieme (See Bio)

Common Name: Trident maple. Botanical Name: *Acer buergerianum* ( *A. trifidum*)

Date Acquired: 5/10/13

Age: Estimated age of largest tree 50 years + (second largest tree is reputed to be of native Japanese origin)

Deciduous

Style: **Yose-ue/Forest** This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number unless too many to count easily. Usually the pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees, and may be replaced by a flat slab of rock. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. (For mixed-species plantings, see the Japanese art of saikei.) The goal is to portray a view into a forest, and perspective effects, such as placing the smallest trees toward the rear, are important in developing a specimen in this style.

Donor: Purchased by Bill Clark

**SPONSOR: JUDITH SWICK IN MEMORY OF BEVERLY FITZPATRICK**



Believed to be a Phister Juniper, this is not a tree collected from the wild. It started life as part of a hedge row in Sacramento. Years of artistic skill have turned this backyard juniper into a bonsai that looks as if it came from the wild. Given a wind influenced shape coupled with the judicious use of intentionally created “deadwood” and one could be forgiven for thinking that they are looking at a coastal Juniper collected from the sand dunes of some windswept shore. It is an example of how art imitates nature and offers a comparison to those bonsai created from trees collected in the wild, where nature becomes art.

This juniper is a good example of how a bonsai can be an artistic work created over a long period of time. In 1991 this large juniper was collected from a garden in Sacramento by Vincent Owyong, who has been growing, designing and styling bonsai for over 50 years. It was planted in a wooden container and just allowed to grow for the next few years. In 2007, Vince reduced the foliage and started to lower some of the lower branches and put some movement in them, slowly changing the profile over the next couple of years. The juniper was finally transplanted into a bonsai pot in 2009 and maneuvering of the branches continued. In 2015, Vincent donated the bonsai to the Clark Bonsai Collection in Shinzen, and Sam Adina, a highly regarded member of a number of bonsai clubs and sensei (teacher) for the Modesto Bonsai Club, made additional adjustments in preparation for the big juniper’s trip to Fresno. In 2017, Ryan Neil, internationally known, Nippon Certified bonsai master and CBCS’s Visiting Bonsai Master, began his additional styling of the juniper to refine its two-wave windswept style. Fukinagashi is the Japanese term for a Wind-swept bonsai style which describes a tree that appears to be affected by strong winds blowing continuously from one

## **CBCS 106      SPONSOR. Linda Jacobsen**

Original Artist/ Maker: Vincent Owyong et al      Major Re-styling by Ryan Neil 3/1/17

Common Name: Juniper (variety ?)      Botanical Name: Juniperus?

Date Acquired: 9/14/15      Age: Est. 80+ years      Evergreen

Style: WFukinagashi/Wind-swept      This style describes a tree that appears to be affected by strong winds blowing continuously from one direction, as might shape a tree atop a mountain ridge or on an exposed shoreline.

Donor: Vincent Owyong



This clump style bonsai is a good example of what happens with these trees when they are burned, cut or knocked down but still have healthy roots. In time the stump will produce new branches. With careful tending, pruning and wiring, the resulting bonsai is a living example of nature's capacity for renewal. This coastal redwood bonsai was created and donated by Kenji Miyata, the Clark Bonsai Collection's first Visiting Bonsai Master. Kenji is a Japanese Nippon Certified Bonsai Master who played a vital role in the development of the Collection. Nippon Certification requires many years of rigorous apprenticeship to a Certified Master who can be a harsh taskmaster. The Visiting Master program has brought the knowledge, skill, and artistry of a number of well-known Bonsai Masters to contribute to the continuing improvement of the bonsai in the Clark Collection and the development of the skills of its Curatorial Team.

### **CBCS 055 LEGACY COLLECTION**

Artist/ Maker: Kenji Miyata

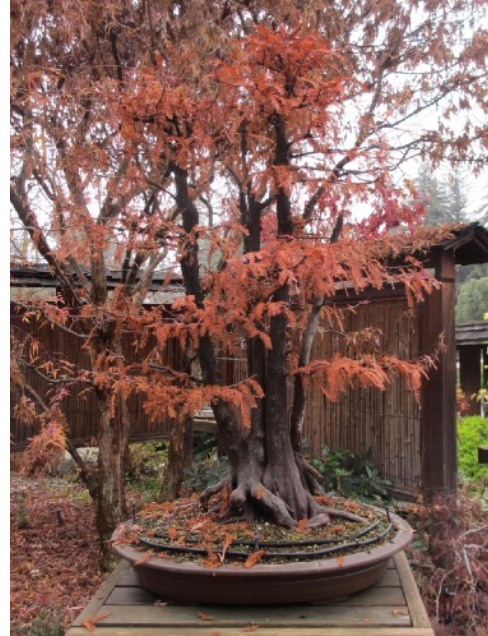
Common Name: Coastal Redwood Botanical Name: Sequoia sempervirens

Date Acquired: 5/2017 Accessioned 9/15/17 Age:

Deciduous / Evergreen: Evergreen

Style: **Kabudachi / Clump** In the clump style, three or more (should be an odd number) trunks grow from a single point. The natural equivalent might be a group of trees that have sprouted from a single cone, or a collection of mature suckers springing from the base of a single tree.

Donor: Kenji Miyata



Montezuma cypress or Ahuehuete (Mexico's National Tree) is primarily native to Mexico and Guatemala, with a few populations in the southwestern US. The tree is sacred to the native peoples of Mexico, and is featured in the Zapotec creation myth. Montezuma cypresses have been used as ornamental trees since Pre-Columbian times. Richard Ramirez acquired several Montezuma Cypress seedlings in 1973 from the Henderson Experimental Gardens with the intention of creating a forest. However, they found their way off into a pot in the corner of Richard's garden and grew into this intermingled clump. *Kabudachi* or clump style bonsai has three or more trunks growing from a single point. In nature this might be a group of trees that have sprouted from

### **CBCS 123**

Original Artist/ Maker : Richard Ramirez

Common Name : Montezuma Cypress  
mucronatum

Botanical Name: Taxodium

Date Acquired: 1/14/17

Age: Estimated 46 years

Deciduous

Style: *Kabudachi*/Clump In the clump style, three or more (should be an odd number) trunks grow from a single point. The natural equivalent might be a group of trees that have sprouted from a single cone, or a collection of mature suckers springing from the base of a single tree.

Donor: Richard Ramirez



Intake 2016



Initial Restoration 2019



Glamor Shot 2023

This Sawara Cypress forest is a prime example of the resilience of nature and the perseverance and the aesthetic vision of the bonsai artist. Pictured left is its near-death condition when it was donated to the Clark Bonsai Collection in 2016. By 2019, it had been brought back to health, but it wasn't until 2023 that it achieved its current refined, harmonious windswept style through the efforts and artistry of Todd Schlafer, a Visiting Bonsai Master from Colorado, and Julian Tsai, our current Professional Bonsai Consultant who prepared it for exhibition in the 2024 Bonsai Exposition. This species is native to central and southern Japan. It is grown for timber, but it is also popular as an ornamental tree in temperate climates in Japan, Europe and North America.

### **CBCS 071 SPONSOR Elizabeth Lowham in Honor of James and Yuko Brumm**

Original Artist Unknown/ Continuing: Restoration by the CBCS Staff

Todd Schlafer performed the transplanting and major wind swept redesign in 2021  
Julian Tsai added refinement for the 2024 Bonsai Expo

Common Name: Sawara Cypress.

Botanical Name: *Chamaecyparis pisifera*

Date Acquired: Summer 2016 Due to its poor condition, it was not accessioned until 2019

Age: Unknown Evergreen

Style: **Forest or Yose-ue:** This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number unless too many to count easily, in a bonsai pot. The pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. The goal is to portray a view into a forest, and perspective effects, such as placing the smallest trees toward the rear, are important in developing a specimen in this style. **Fukinagashi or Wind-swept** This style describes a tree that appears to be affected by strong winds blowing continuously from one direction, as might shape a tree atop a mountain ridge or on an exposed shoreline. The windswept characteristic can be applied to a number of the basic styles. Multi-tree bonsai can also be developed with elements of the windswept style.

Donor: Richard Brustlin

## SPRING TOKONOMA DISPLAY

A tokonoma, typically found in a traditional Japanese home or tea house, is a recess or alcove, often a few inches above floor level, for artful, harmonious displays. They may feature a seasonal arrangement of a hanging scroll, a bonsai, or suiseki (special viewing stone). Three point displays include an accent that may be a complementary small plant, stone or sculpture.



### HANGING SCROLL:

“WATERFALL IN SPRING”

Donor: Chuck Nelson

The waterfall in this painting is associated with early spring because its waters gush out in full melt-off mode, even producing a mist with the force of its waters. But the waterfall has a deeper symbolic meaning dating back to Taoist, Buddhist and Shinto beliefs. In art, the waterfall has frequently been an element which is considered the symbol of impermanence as opposed to the changelessness of rock.

**BONSAI:** Japanese Cherry

**Original Artist & Donor:**

Mike Nishitani

The national flower of Japan, the cherry blossom – or Sakura — represents a time of renewal and optimism. When they bloom, they mark the ending of winter and signify the beginning of spring. Due to their quick blooming season, cherry blossoms also symbolize the transience of life, a major theme in Buddhism.

**SHITAKUSA (Accent Plant)**

Wood Hyacinth



One Sunny Day Initiatives partners with Green Legacy Hiroshima in their mission to spread peace trees throughout the world. These Peace Trees are grown from the seeds of the Hiroshima Legacy Trees “hibakujumoku,” ginkgos, persimmons, camphors, and many more species which survived the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during WWII. Every year volunteers gather seeds for distribution all over the world. They are planted in public parks, city centers, college campuses, and botanical gardens, to serve as living reminders that life and recovery are possible even after the most profound destruction. The Clark Bonsai Collection was honored to be gifted 21 seedlings from a camphor tree that survived the bombing of Hiroshima for the creation of this bonsai forest which was created by Curator Bob

## **CBCS 080 SPONSOR Judith Swick**

### **Hiroshima Peace Tree Forest (See Stories)**

Artist/ Maker: Bob Hilvers

Common Name: Camphor

Botanical Name: Cinnamomum camphora

Date Acquired: 5/21/20

Age: 1 year

Evergreen

Style: Yose-ue/Forest This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number unless too many to count easily. Usually the pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. The goal is to portray a view into a forest.

Donor: Green Legacy Hiroshima Peace Tree Project



Ginkgo trees are ancient and resilient survivors. It is one of the oldest living tree species on earth, dating back over 270 million years, predating the dinosaurs. It has survived multiple mass extinction events as well as being one of the tree species surviving the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945. They are also extremely tolerant of pollution, drought and heat. They can live for a very long time, some specimens being over 1,000 years old. For all these reasons they have become a symbol of endurance, strength and hope. They are also prized for the beauty of their unique fan-shaped leaves that turn a brilliant golden-yellow in the fall. The ginkgo is highly revered in many Asian cultures and is often planted at temples and shrines. For centuries, ginkgo has been used in traditional medicine for a variety of ailments. The individual trees of this bonsai were grown by Haruye Oto, a survivor herself from the internment of Japanese citizens during WWII. She gave them to Chuck Nelson, a fellow member of the Fresno Bonsai Society, to create this ginkgo forest bonsai.

**LEGACY COLLECTION:** Bonsai within the Collection created by Japanese immigrants and/or Japanese Americans and maintained in the style of the original artist in so far as that is possible to provide an historical spectrum in keeping with the mission of a bonsai museum.

### **CBCS 030**

Artist/ Maker: Mrs. Haruye Oto (bio)—Grove by Chuck Nelson (Bio)

Common Name: Ginkgo

Botanical Name: Ginkgo biloba

Date Acquired: 12/11/23

Age:

Deciduous

Style: **Yose-ue / Forest** This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number unless too many to count easily. Usually the pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees, and may be replaced by a flat slab of rock. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests.

Donor: Chuck Nelson



Liquidambar is commonly known as Sweetgum. Its glossy green, star-shaped leaves can turn fiery shades of red, orange, yellow and even purple in the fall. This forest style bonsai was restored and restyled by Kenji Miyata, a Japanese Nippon certified Bonsai Master in 2015. It was originally created in a Golden State Bonsai Federation convention demonstration in the 1980s, but was in terrible condition by 2002 when the Clark Bonsai Collection acquired it. The roots were so compacted, he had to use a chainsaw to separate the trees to create the new forest composition, which has thrived ever since. Kenji served as the visiting bonsai master for the Clark Bonsai Collection from its beginnings. He currently resides in McDonough, Georgia where he has a bonsai nursery and continues to teach and create bonsai. The Visiting Bonsai Master Program at the Clark Bonsai Museum is dedicated to improving the quality of the Collection and the skills of the curatorial team that maintains the bonsai.

**CBCS 146 LEGACY COLLECTION** Bonsai within the Collection created by Japanese immigrants and/or Japanese Americans and maintained in the style of the original artist in so far as that is possible to provide an historical spectrum in keeping with the mission of a bonsai museum.

Artist/ Maker: Originally, Japanese guest artist for GSBF convention  
Kenji completely restyled in 2015

Common Name: Sweetgum                      Botanical Name: Liquidambar styraciflua

Date Acquired: Bob Hilvers purchased in 2002 at GSBF auction for \$25. Demo piece for convention in the 80s

Age: ?                      Deciduous

Style: Forest or Yose-ue: This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number unless too many to count easily, in a bonsai pot. The pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. The goal is to portray a view into a forest, and perspective effects, such as placing the smallest trees toward the rear, are important in developing a specimen in this style.

Donor: Clark Center



This Monterey Cypress was collected by Katsumi Kinoshita in 1970 on the Monterey Peninsula not long after immigrating from Japan. It was featured in his first place prize winning composition at the international toko-kazari competition at the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture in 2002. It's style is reminiscent of the iconic "Lone Cypress" which has stood atop a granite headland overlooking Carmel Bay in Pebble Beach California at least since the 18th century. Kinoshita has been a masterful bonsai artist for over 60 years, serving as a sensei (teacher) for the Monterey Bonsai Society and many other bonsai groups. The Clark Bonsai Collection is honored to include several of his bonsai—all on display in the current exhibition—including this signature bonsai donated on World Bonsai Day 2025.



**LEGACY COLLECTION:** Bonsai within the Collection created by Japanese immigrants and/or Japanese Americans and maintained in the style of the original artist in so far as that is possible to provide an historical spectrum in keeping with the mission of a bonsai museum.

**YAMADORI:** literally means "collecting plants in the mountains" but is loosely translated into gathering plants from the wild. The found plant specimen is then carefully and skillfully trained into works of art also known as Bonsai. Yamadori is the most coveted type of Bonsai because of its unique characteristics.

### **CBCS 037**

Artist/ Maker: Katsumi Kinoshita (See Bio)

Common Name: Monterey Cypress Botanical Name: Cupressus macrocarpa

Date Acquired: 5/3/25 Age: Est 75-100 years. In Training since 1970 Evergreen Conifer

Style: **Moyogi / Informal upright** The informal upright style is common in both nature and in the art of Bonsai. The trunk and branches incorporate visible curves, but the apex, or tip, of the tree is located directly above the trunk's entry into the soil line.

Donor: Katsumi Kinoshita



2013

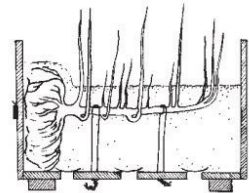


Sam's Raft 1987

Raft (Ikadabuki) bonsai styles mimic a natural phenomenon that occurs when a tree topples onto its side, for example, from soil eroding beneath the tree. Branches along the top side of the trunk



continue to grow as a group of new trunks. Roots will develop from buried portions of the trunk. Raft-style trees give the illusion that they are a group of separate trees, while actually being the branches of a tree planted on its side. Bonsai rafts can be created by planting the tree in a box as pictured right. This prostrata juniper raft bonsai was created by Sam Kawaguchi in the 1980s, (See picture left) and was about 30



years old when it was donated to the Clark Bonsai Collection in 2013.

## CBCS 021 SPONSOR DOROTHY CHEU 1/26-1/28

**LEGACY COLLECTION** Bonsai within the Collection created by Japanese immigrants and/or Japanese Americans and maintained in the style of the original artist in so far as that is possible to provide an historical spectrum in keeping with the mission of a bonsai museum.

Artist/ Maker: Sam Kawaguchi. (SEE BIO)

Common Name: Prostrata juniper

Botanical Name: Juniperus prostrata

Date Acquired: 10/10/13

Age: Estimated age 30 years +

Evergreen:

Style: **Ikadabuki Raft, straight-line** These styles mimic a natural phenomenon that occurs when a tree topples onto its side, for example, from soil eroding beneath the tree. Branches along the top side of the trunk continue to grow as a group of new trunks. Sometimes, roots will develop from buried portions of the trunk. Raft-style bonsai can have sinuous or straight-line trunks, all giving the illusion that they are a group of separate trees, while actually being the branches of a tree planted on its side. The straight-line style has all the trees in a single line. **Netsunagari, netsuranari Raft, sinuous** This style is like the straight-line raft, but the underlying trunk has several bends in it. The trees growing up from it do not appear in a straight line.

Donor: Helen Kawaguchi



**CBCS 020 LEGACY COLLECTION:** Bonsai within the Collection created by Japanese immigrants and/or Japanese Americans and maintained in the style of the original artist in so far as that is possible to provide an historical spectrum in keeping with the mission of a bonsai museum.

Artist/ Maker: Yoshio Fujimoto. (See Bio)

Common Name: Japanese Red Maple      Botanical Name: Acer Palmatum

Date Acquired: 12/11/23      Age:

Deciduous

Style: **Yose-ue / Forest**      This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number unless too many to count easily. Usually the pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees, and may be replaced by a flat slab of rock. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests.

Donor: Chuck Nelson



**Assembled from nursery stock in 1985.**



**After repotting 2022**

The art of bonsai is a blend of natural beauty and human intention, and there's perhaps no better example of this than a bonsai forest. A well-composed forest not only captivates the eye but also tells a story of community, environment, and the passage of time. A bonsai forest is not just a collection of trees; it is a representation of an environment. This bonsai forest has the largest tree placed off-center to create visual interest and is surrounded with smaller trees of assorted sizes to mimic the dynamics of a natural forest, where younger, smaller trees grow in the shadow of their older, taller counterparts. This placement also extends the sense of space through forced perspective (the optical illusion technique that makes objects appear further away than they actually are). The bonsai pot is very shallow which also emphasizes the height of the trees and adds to the dramatic effect. Although the needle juniper is a common landscape bush, these have been pruned to emulate the growth pattern of old growth mountain trees including some bare lightning strike spires.

### **CBCS 103**

Artist/ Maker: Richard Ramirez

Common Name: Needle Juniper      Botanical Name: Juniperus foemina

Date Acquired: 1/14/17      Age: 40+      Evergreen

Style: **Yose-ue/Forest**      This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number unless too many to count easily, in a bonsai pot. The pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees, and may be replaced by a flat slab of rock. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. The goal is to portray a view into a forest, and perspective effects, such as placing the smallest trees toward the rear, are important in developing a specimen in this style.

Donor: Richard Ramirez



This ginkgo bonsai by Roy Oto is part of the Legacy Collection, which are bonsai with historical importance having been created by Japanese immigrants and Japanese American artists, some at a time when many elements of Japanese culture were suppressed. As a result, they often have a distinct approach to styling. Without a concerted effort to locate and maintain these bonsai, the only visual records of this vanishing art are a few photographs. The Clark Bonsai Collection endeavors to seek out and maintain these trees so that future generations can appreciate their artistry. This bonsai is also special because of the artist's compelling history. He immigrated from Japan with his family in 1935. During WWII they were interned in Jerome, Arizona. After the war he became a leader in the Japanese American community and contributed to the planning and construction of many public works in Fresno, including Shinzen Friendship Garden.

#### **CBCS 104 LEGACY COLLECTION**

Artist/ Maker: Ryutaro "Roy" Oto, (See Bio)

Common Name: Ginkgo

Botanical Name: Ginkgo biloba

Date Acquired: 1/28/17

Age:?

Deciduous

Style: Kabudachi/Clump In the clump style, three or more (should be an odd number) trunks grow from a single point. The natural equivalent might be a group of trees that have sprouted from a single cone, or a collection of mature suckers springing from the base of a single tree.

Donor: Chuck Nelson #31 (Information provided)



All bonsai are, at their core, artistic depictions of the diverse tree forms observed in nature. This Korean Boxwood bonsai combines two styles of trees in and over rock. In nature on rocky terrain, trees are forced to search for nutrient rich soil with their roots, which can often be found in cracks and holes. In *Sekijoju* or Root-over-rock style, the tree's roots are wrapped around a rock. The rock is at the base of the trunk, with the roots exposed to varying degrees as they traverse the rock and descend into the soil below. In *Ishizuki* or Clinging-to-a-rock style, the roots of the tree grow in soil contained within the cracks and holes of the rock. Lava rock is a good choice for root-over-rock bonsai because its rough, porous texture encourages roots to grip securely and allow for good water retention and aeration. Its irregular, jagged and natural appearance also provides a dramatic rustic aesthetic.

## **CBCS 110**

Artist/ Maker: Richard Ramirez

Common Name: Korean Boxwood or Japanese Boxwood (Morris Midget)

Botanical Name: *Buxus microphylla* var. *koreana* or *Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica*

Date Acquired: 1/14/17

Age:?

Evergreen

Style: Sekijoju/Root-over-rock. The tree's roots are wrapped around a rock. The rock is at the base of the trunk, with the roots exposed to varying degrees as they traverse the rock then descend into the soil below. Ishizuke, ishitsuki/Clinging-to-a-rock The roots of the tree grow in soil contained within the cracks and holes of the rock. The rock may serve as a simple container, with the tree escaping the container and forming its own shape, or the tree may show a closer relationship to the rock's shape, growing close to the rock and following its contours.

Donor: Richard Ramirez



Few people now recognize the name Melba Tucker, but during the 60's and 70's she was a prominent teacher of bonsai in Southern California, specializing in simple designs such as "Clump" Style or Root-on-rock, usually using small Maples or Olives. She also taught saikei (Japanese versions of Chinese tray landscapes), and suiseki (naturally occurring "viewing stones" which are appreciated for their aesthetic or decorative value). Melba's book on the American perspective of suiseki (*Suiseki & Viewing Stones: An American Perspective*) was published in 1996 and in that same year the Suiseki Pavilion in the US National Arboretum in Washington D.C. was named in her honor. While the Clark Bonsai Collection has several fine bonsai by women, in general, female bonsai artists have been something of a rarity, though that is now changing.

### **CBCS 043**

Artist/ Maker: Melba Tucker

Common Name: Olive

Botanical Name: Oleo europea

Date Acquired: 12/17/04

Age: Estimated age 40 years

Evergreen

Style: **Kabudachi / Clump** In the clump style, three or more (should be an odd number) trunks grow from a single point. The natural equivalent might be a group of trees that have sprouted from a single cone, or a collection of mature suckers springing from the base of a single tree. **Sekijoku Root-over-rock** The tree's roots are wrapped around a rock. The rock is at the base of the trunk, with the roots exposed to varying degrees as they traverse the rock and then descend into the soil below.

Donor: Joe James



**CBCS 090 LEGACY COLLECTION** Bonsai within the Collection created by Japanese immigrants and/or Japanese Americans and maintained in the style of the original artist in so far as that is possible to provide an historical spectrum in keeping with the mission of a bonsai museum.

Artist/ Maker: Irene Tamura

Irene Tamura (1922- 2011) was interned at the Tule Lake camp with her husband, Harold, and their young daughter. After their release, they returned to Madera to farm grapes. She then began spending time creating a Japanese garden at their home and added an interest in creating bonsai, many from seedlings, including the Japanese Maple forest exhibited in the Legacy Collection Exhibition. Delicate bonsai were not really of interest to her husband, so unlike other women bonsai artists who learned techniques helping their husbands, she was self-taught and became a long-time member of Akatsuki, the Madera bonsai club. Harold served as the treasurer, though Irene was the bonsai practitioner in the family.

Common Name: Japanese Maple

Botanical Name: *Acer palmatum*

Date Acquired: January 2017

Age: Deciduous

Style: **Yose-ue Forest** This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number unless too many to count easily. Usually the pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees, and may be replaced by a flat slab of rock. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. (For mixed-species plantings, see the Japanese art of saikei.) The goal is to portray a view into a forest, and perspective effects, such as placing the smallest trees toward the rear, are important in developing a specimen in this style.

Donor: Chuck Nelson



This twisted pomegranate tree was rescued from a deserted orchard over a hundred years ago. Growers discovered that pomegranate bushes were faster growing and easier to harvest than trees. This broken stump was made into a clump style bonsai, called *kabudachi* in Japanese. This style is inspired by what happens in nature when a tree is broken off by a rock slide or burned in a fire, but the roots are still healthy and strong, allowing the tree to grow new branches. This is something you can see happening in the region's mountains and foothills after the wildfires we experience almost every year. The original owner was Al Green, a founding member of the Hanford Bonsai Society, one of the older clubs in the country. The copper wire wrapped around the branches is how bonsai artists train the branches into an aesthetically pleasing composition, much like braces are used to beautify people's smiles. The wire is removed anywhere from weeks to months before it can pinch the bark, forming what's termed "wire burn."

## CBCS 007

The original owner of this bonsai is reported to be Al Green, a founding member of the Hanford Bonsai Society (FOUNDED 1954)

Artist/ Maker: Ralph Green with extensive restoration by museum staff

Common Name: Pomegranate      Botanical Name: *Puncas granatum*,

Date Acquired: 5/20/09

Age: Estimated age 100 years +

Deciduous

Style: Kabudachi/Clump      In the clump style, three or more (should be an odd number) trunks grow from a single point. The natural equivalent might be a group of trees that have sprouted from a single cone, or a collection of mature suckers springing from the base of a single tree. In this case, the top of the tree was broken off, but the healthy roots sent up new branches for the base of the old trunk.

Donor: Richard Ramirez



**CBCS 035 LEGACY COLLECTION:** Bonsai within the Collection created by Japanese immigrants and/or Japanese Americans and maintained in the style of the original artist in so far as that is possible to provide an historical spectrum in keeping with the mission of a bonsai museum.

Artist/ Maker: Harviche Hanemoto (See Bio)

Common Name: California Juniper

Botanical Name: juniperus Californica

Date Acquired: 12/11/23

Age: Collected in the 1970s

Evergreen

Style: **Sokan / Twin-trunk** The double trunk style is common in nature, but is not actually that common in the art of Bonsai. Usually both trunks will grow out of one root system, but it is also possible that the smaller trunk grows out of the larger trunk just above the ground. The two trunks will vary in both thickness and length, the thicker and more developed trunk grows nearly upright, while the smaller trunk will grow out a bit slanted. Both trunks will contribute to a single crown of leaves/canopy.

Donor: Chuck Nelson



**CBCS 001**

**SPONSOR: HELEN KAWAGUCHI**

**LEGACY COLLECTION:** Bonsai within the Collection created by Japanese immigrants and/or Japanese Americans and maintained in the style of the original artist in so far as that is possible to provide an historical spectrum in keeping with the mission of a bonsai museum.

This Needle Juniper forest is one of the original four bonsai that formed the beginning of the Clark Center Bonsai Collection. Created by the late Sam Kawaguchi, a Japanese American bonsai artist, this bonsai was also the first to be included in the Legacy Collection. This forest bonsai was a favorite of Bill Clark, founder of the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture, the original home of the Clark Bonsai Collection dating back to 2004. Due to its favored status and popularity with visitors, this classic bonsai forest was on continuous display in the number one position in the exhibit. This style entails the planting of many trees, typically an odd number. The pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees. A variety of heights is employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. The goal is to portray a view into a forest using perspective effects. This forest bonsai was inspired by the redwood forests of the region's national parks, including the carving the top of the tallest tree to look like the result of a lightning strike. After 14 years on display, the secondary tree died and the forest required re-arranging and restoration, which are only in the early stages at this time. Bonsai is a unique art form because it is alive and therefore can change and even die. While we strive to maintain the artistic integrity of our legacy bonsai, they are living things and therefore ever-changing and never "done."

Artist/ Maker: Sam Kawaguchi (See Artist Biography)

Common Name: Needle Juniper    Botanical Name: Juniperus foemina

Date Acquired: 5/14/04    Age: Age of oldest tree approx. 60 yrs.

Evergreen

Style: Yose-ue/Forest Group This style describes a planting of many trees, typically an odd number unless too many to count easily, in a bonsai pot. The pot has very low sides, to emphasize the height of the trees. The trees are usually the same species, with a variety of heights employed to add visual interest and to reflect the age differences encountered in mature forests. The goal is to portray a view into a forest,

Donor: Helen Kawaguchi