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Day1 Period 3
Floral Culture
January 21, 2009

Bonsai's

Bonsai means tree growing or planting trees in the Japanese culture. Bonsai is an art form that is used as a way to grow many different types of trees and plants. The method used to grow these plants is done through growing plants in containers, as opposed to in the ground. The word bonsai is used in the West as an umbrella term for all miniature trees in containers or pots, but properly should be applied only to container-grown trees following the Japanese tradition. In class we bought bonsai trees and replanted them into plastic pots. This demonstrates the art of bonsai because they are being grown in containers, or pots. We gently took the tree out of the small container, and replanted it into a wider, shallower container, which is more suitable for the growth of the tree. This prevents the roots of the tree to grow too deep. Bonsai is a type of growing method used for plants and trees.

The bonsai method is said to date all the way back to the Egyptian culture. Pictorial records from around 4000 BC show trees growing in containers cut into rock. "Pharaoh Ramesses III donated gardens consisting of potted olives, date palms, and other plants to hundreds of temples. Pre-Common-Era India used container-grown trees for medicine and food." In China during the [Jin Dynasty](#), in the period 265AD – 420AD, the method of Penzai was being used which was the planting of trees. The method of Penzai spread various parts of China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam and became even more popular during China's Song Dynasty. Rhyme prose on a Miniature Landscape Garden was released which denoted the use of a deep pot. This is when Bonsai was first created in

China along with the use of Garden Architecture. Many wealthy began to plant trees and plants using the Bonsai method as a pastime. Eventually, this great technique was spread across the world, then to Great Britain and to the United States. The Bonsai method has been cultivated over time by many different people.

There is more to the Bonsai method than just planting in a shallow pot. A few of the techniques used on the plant or tree are leaf trimming, pruning, wiring, clamping, grafting, defoliation, and deadwood. With limited space in a bonsai pot, regular attention is needed to ensure the tree is correctly watered. Sun, heat and wind exposure can dry bonsai trees to the point of drought in a short period of time. While some species can handle periods of relative dryness, others require near-constant moisture. Watering too frequently, or allowing the soil to remain soggy, promotes fungal infections and root rot. Free draining soil is used to prevent water logging. Deciduous trees are more at risk of dehydration and will wilt as the soil dries out. Evergreen trees, which tend to cope with dry conditions better, do not display signs of the problem until after damage has occurred. The repotting of these trees is typically done around the springtime, but can vary depending on the age and health of the plant. Opinions about soil mixes and fertilization vary widely among practitioners. Some promote the use of organic fertilizers to augment an essentially inorganic soil mix, while others will use chemical fertilizers freely. Most use the general rule of little and often due to the flushing effect when watering, taking care to use the correct fertilizer at any given time in each season, depending on the tree's requirements. Bonsai soil is primarily a loose, fast-draining mix of components,[12] often a base mixture of coarse sand or gravel, fired clay pellets or expanded shale combined with an organic component such as peat or bark. In Japan, volcanic soils based on clay

are preferred, such as akadama, or "red ball" soil, and kanuma, a type of yellow pumice used for azaleas and other calcifuges. Most bonsai species are outdoor trees and shrubs by nature, and they require temperature, humidity, and sunlight conditions approximating their native climate year round. Traditional bonsai species (particularly those from the Japanese tradition) are [temperate](#) climate trees, and require moderate temperatures, moderate humidity, and full sun in summer with a dormancy period in winter that may need be near freezing. They do not thrive indoors, where the light is generally too dim, and humidity often too low, for them to grow properly. Only in the dormant period can they safely be brought indoors, and even then the plants require cold temperatures and lighting that approximates the number of hours the sun is visible. Raising the temperature or providing more hours of light than available from natural daylight can cause the bonsai to break dormancy, which often weakens or kills it. Tropical and Mediterranean species typically require consistent temperatures close to room temperature, and with correct lighting and humidity many species can be kept indoors all year. Those from cooler climates may benefit from a winter dormancy period, but temperatures need not be dropped as far as for the temperate climate plants and a north-facing windowsill or open window may provide the right conditions for a few winter months. Having and caring for a Bonsai is a very tedious process and you have to make sure you put aside time to care for your tree or plant.

Care Log

If I were to have a Bonsai these would be the steps I would take to care for my Bonsai.

- Buy a Bonsai and replant it into a shallow pot. Make sure to pack with rich soil.
- Water with a small amount of fertilizer and regular water daily. Do not over water, or let the Bonsai dry out.
- Place by a window, not next to a heat source, but in a semi-cool area.
- About once a month, change the soil so the Bonsai stays healthy.
- As the Bonsai grows, you are going to need to wire the branches so that Bonsai has support while it grows.
- The Bonsai will outgrow the pot, so you will have to Re-pot it into a wider but still shallow pot. Do this by taking the same steps you took when you first planted the Bonsai.
- Every once in a while water the Bonsai with fertilizer.
- Make sure the tree looks healthy and give it love.