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SUISEKI NEWSLETTER APRIL 2022

Dear Members,

This month we will discuss Abstract stones. It is a subject that is not heard of often or appreciated, especially to our newer members.

Abstract stones are often compared to sculptures of modern day artists that have form and also sometimes they refer to the cubist style of irregular shapes, colour and textures.

These stones don't have to represent anything in particular but should have something of interest on the surface to create interest for the viewer. For example, there could be criss-crossing lines on the surface formed by fine cracks, mineral veins, furrows, folds and swerves, and indentations that create some interest. These stones can also be very smooth and in some form of a shape and once mounted on a daiza, they could represent a form seen in any modern day art galleries.

The dictionary describes “abstract” as,

*‘existing as a quality or idea rather than a material object,
theoretically using patterns of shapes and colours rather
than realistic likenesses.’*

I think and have seen these types of stones displayed on a daiza and then placed on a nice piece of driftwood, a very plain stand, a flat mat, but I don't think that placing them in a suiban is suitable. A suiban is too formal for this category of stones, reserved mainly for mountain stones, waterpool stones, coastal stones etc.

At the next daiza/club meeting on the **23rd of April** at Ray's Nursery, bring along these type of stones and we can discuss them and how they should be displayed.

Happy Hunting,

Brenda

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

‘A good Suiseki is more suggestive than realistic – thereby leaving the viewer to use imagination for full enjoyment and oneness

with the stone’.

Bob Watson



An example of a very nice abstract stone

Hello 'Rock hounds'

This month for the benefit of newer members and to refresh the memories of older (not aged) members we'll go over the points in selecting a suitable piece of timber for your daizas.

Sorting the Wood from the Trees:

Definitions:

Wood; Something that comes from the 'Wood'shed to the fireplace or something that may be removed from your ailing bonsai i.e. dead 'Wood'.

Timber; Wood that has been milled to dimension, seasoned and can be obtained from a timber yard or other timber suppliers. This is the material that you will need to craft your daizas.

You are going to spend a reasonable amount of time and effort to produce a daiza that's worthy of the stone it's going to hold so spend some time in selecting a good piece of timber to work with. Some of the points to watch for are;

1. Never use timber that is 'green' (unseasoned), your efforts will be wasted when your daiza begins to warp or crack. Some of the imported mass produced daizas have this problem. Also the sap / resin in green wood will quickly gum up your carving bits.
2. Try to avoid using timber that has a lot of knots e.g. some of the pines. This type of timber is difficult to work, can damage your carving bits and will give you poor results. Look for timber that is fairly straight grained.
3. Some of the softer timbers like Western Red Cedar or Pacific Maple are good to start out with, you will get a feel for working the timber and it will be easier to achieve a satisfactory result.
4. As your talents improve, try working on some harder, fine grained timber. This will require more effort but the end result can be satisfying, particularly if you're working on an intricate design.
5. Timber can be sourced from many locations including local timber yards, joinery shops (they sometimes have off-cut bins), building sites (ideal for hardwood flooring & decking off-cuts) and local council clean ups for old

discarded furniture (be sure that the timber you collect is a solid piece and not a veneered piece of ply or particle board).

6. If you can't find a suitable piece of timber you can buy small pieces from specialty timber merchants such as Trend Timbers. Although some of these can be quite expensive, you generally only need a small piece so the cost is not prohibitive if it produces a good finished daiza.

Jelutong

Botanical name: *Dyera costulata*

Jelutong (also called Bukit) is a tall hardwood tree that grows in Malaysia, Borneo and Sumatra. It grows rapidly and has many commercial timber uses, but it is equally well known for its by-product, latex. Trees grow to 60 m. or more with diameters of 1.5–1.8m.



The wood from Jelutong is very light in color, ranging from a creamy white to pale yellow and has a plain, straight grain and fine even texture. These qualities make it an ideal timber for carving work. Jelutong works equally well with hand or machine tools, although gum can pose problems on cutting surfaces. The timber is light in weight and reasonably soft and takes staining and finishing well. Sawdust from Jelutong may cause allergic skin reactions in some people so care should be taken when working the timber.

The list of uses for Jelutong is fairly long. It is an excellent choice for sculpting and carving. It is also used to make architectural models, drawing boards, picture frames, wooden shoes (clogs), furniture parts, doorknobs, dowels and pencils.

Jelutong is rotary cut for corestock for flush doors, plywood and laminated boards. It is used to make toys, dowels, blackboards, brush handles, matchsticks and packing crates.

Jelutong is one of many trees tapped for latex that is used as a base for chewing gum. The latex is also used in paints and for sizing paper.

More on timber in future newsletters.

So long till next time,

G&J

CHRYSANTHEMUM STONES

If you happened to miss the presentation by Tom Elias on Chrysanthemum stones last Saturday, you can view it on youtube at this address:

https://youtu.be/1B4zKQp_2yk

This was a fantastic and very informative presentation by Tom and I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.



A very ornate Chrysanthemum stone