

April Program

Richard Turner on *Context and Meaning*

We've all seen stones that have multiple bases and have experienced the surprise that comes with seeing the same stone in different orientations. The context in which we experience a stone influences our understanding of it. What we know about its provenance, how it is displayed and where we are when we see it all effect our perception of the stone. At the April 25th meeting **Richard** will explore the meaning(s) of stones in context – from the streambed to the museum.

This sounds like a great program! Don't miss it.

Stone of the Month

Doha ishi are lovely landscape stones with a flat open space that suggests a field or a plateau. If you have **Matsuura's** *Introduction to Suiseki*, turn to page 36. He notes that "Some have what resembles a distant mountain located on one side, while others may have more gently sloping hills off in the background." On page 40 he states that although there is some overlap with *danseki*, a *doha* typically has just one flat surface.

25 years ago we asked **John Naka** to define "*doha*" and he said if you ask 40 "experts" you will get 40 different answers. His advice; don't get bogged down with the classification, just go for which aspect of the stone evokes the message of a sloping plain or a flat wide-open plateau for you. You would be hard pressed not to see that message in this wonderful *doha* (below).

(Also, please see GuyJim, May 2006, pgs 3-5, for more on *doha-ishi*.)



Lisa and Phat Vo Kern River, CA 7 x 5 x 3.5

The Good Book

You still have an opportunity to purchase **Matsuura's** *Introduction to Suiseki!* Did you miss out on the first go round? That shipment sold out in a nanosecond. We placed another order which should arrive any day now and although most of that order has already been sold, there are still a few unclaimed copies for sale. Don't miss out a second time!

We are selling this book for a drastically reduced price of just \$40 which is less than half of what it sold for originally. Aiseki Kai is paying for the postage from Japan but you will need to pay \$7 to have it shipped to you. Although this is a bit of a fund raiser for Aiseki Kai it is only available to members. For more information about this book, please see: <http://www.djsampson.com/matsbk.htm> To reserve your copy, please contact **Nina** (phone and email are on page 11.)

I was rereading some of the text in the Nippon Suiseki Association's *Japanese Suiseki Exhibition* catalogs and knowing how much we all like to "look at the pictures", I thought I would share this bit of text, just in case you missed it. This text appeared in the first 3 catalogs:

"What is Suiseki? Suiseki is a general term referring to a stone that captures the poetic beauty of natural landscape scenery. In a single stone one can sense the whole of the universe, making suiseki among the most spiritual and culturally rich pursuits celebrating the art of nature..."

"...its spiritual aspect deepened through its connection with Zen Buddhism and the tea ceremony. The pastime of suiseki as it has been passed down to us today became...A unique literati sensibility toward natural stone and landscape beauty... and ultimately became suiseki as we know it today – an ideal expression of Japanese aesthetics.

It is said that the pleasure of suiseki lies in the heart of the viewer. To allow one's mind to idle in nature, to perceive the whole of creation and Mother Nature's elegance, to reach the point where one can hear the profound voice of the infinite world itself in a single stone, suiseki lures us into the subtle realm of *yugen*; the refined heart of the *wabi* and *sabi* aesthetics."

~Larry Ragle

March Meeting Notes *by Linda Gill*

ANNOUNCEMENTS: **Phil Chang** is giving two talks about suiseiki; one to the Downey Geology Club and one to a plant group. He has already made three presentations. Thanks for spreading the word.

The LA County Art Museum currently has a show that deals with rocks. There are paintings and two of the 'rocks' are carved wood, a steel 'rock' and a 'foam' one also. *Wu Bin: Ten Views of a Lingbi Stone* runs through June 24th. Thank you **Richard Turner** for letting us know.

→ See pg. 9 for **possible** changes in the future of our Stone of the Month newsletter format.

STONE of the MONTH: Good front, lousy back
Measurements are in inches, w x h x d
(Thank you **Phil Chang**, for recording the stats.)



Brad Hagbery 16 x 3 x 3



Linda Gill 6 x 7 x 3



Janet Shimizu 4 x 4 x 3



Phil Chang 6 x 4.4 x 2.5



Marty Hagbery 5.5 x 4.5 x 3



John Mortensen 9 x 7 x 2



Jack Levy 18 x 9 x 8

The 1 inch wide inner margins are designed for use with a 3 hole punch.





Richard Turner 12 x 7 x 3.5



Larry Ragle 13 s 4.5 x 6



Jesse Krong 4.5 x 2 x 1.5



Kyra Haussler 12 x 7 x 8



Marty Hagbery 6.5 x 5.5 x 3.5



Linda Gill 5 x 4 x 4



Nina Ragle 10.5 x 5 x 5.5



Naomi Yoshida 13 x 4 x 4

March Program Notes

Are Viewing Stones (Suiseki, Scholars' Rocks) art, or are they just beautiful stones?

by Richard Kahn, PhD

When one looks at a *suiseki* or scholars rock displayed in a home our attention centers on its size, shape, color and perhaps texture. One might think "It's a beautiful stone", perhaps because it resembles a mountain, landscape scene, an animal, a face, or something abstract. It's unlikely that most casual observers would describe it as a work of art. They might exclaim how nature creates beautiful objects, as if 'nature' deliberately plans and executes the construction of rocks for visual enjoyment by humans. Something different happens when one sees paintings on the wall of a home, or a piece of sculpted glass, a statue, or a twisted object made of metal on a table. We'll often comment "That's a beautiful piece of art".

But just why are some things called works of art, whereas others don't readily get that label? Why should we believe everything in an art museum is a work of art, even though we often say "I don't understand it" or "My kid could do that"? Just what is art, anyway? How do we, how should we, know it when we see it? Are *suiseki* or scholars rocks works of art? Can anything be art, or must some criteria be satisfied?

Searching the internet for what defines art, leads one down a confusing maize of ideas and definitions. If one Google's the phrase 'definition of art' approximately 687,000,000 citations pop up. Whew! Perhaps one place to start is with the origin of the word. Art is related to the Latin word '*ars*' which means skill or craft. So it seems to be something made. But made by whom? By nature, an animal, an infant crawling over a wet canvas?

Many well-known thinkers or artists have weighed in. Plato once said that art imitates the objects and events of ordinary life. Thus, according to him, art is anything that copies reality. If this is true, what aspect of reality does a painting with a bunch of colored circles or straight lines represent? Einstein stated that an artist is one who could draw freely upon his imagination. Does that mean if a person picks up a fallen branch of a tree and says it looks like a library---an artist is born?

According to Georgia O'Keeffe, art is filling a space in a beautiful way. Georges Seurat claimed art is harmony. The artist Georges Braque thought art was meant to disturb. Tolstoy said art is that which "one man consciously hands on to others feelings he has

lived through, and that others are infected by these feelings and also experience them". How does that square with a Jackson Pollack drip painting or Rothko's squares of colored paint? What feelings are we supposed to experience? On a fanciful note, Warhol exclaimed that art is "what you can get away with", whereas Marcel Duchamp stated that art is nothing more than "a habit-forming drug".

There is no end to these pithy pronouncements, and most seem as abstract as any work of modern art. There are of course, umpteen essays and books that try to make sense of what we call art, but the many I've looked at (1-11) don't provide a concise and clear definition. What this novice wants is a list of straightforward bullet points that simply define the word. Can that possibly be done?

Take for example the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (3) which provides a wide-ranging discourse on the traditional, historical, institutional and functional definitions of art. The essay ends with a quote by a contemporary professor of art and philosophy ---- "...the sheer variety of proposed definitions should give us pause. One cannot help wondering whether there is any sense in which they are attempts to...clarify the same cultural practices or address the same issue". Now what?

Maybe we should fall back on the approach articulated decades ago by Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart, who claimed his definition of pornography was "I know it when I see it". But defining art that way makes the word entirely subjective. As a definition, ("because I said it is"), it has no grounding or foundation that provides a common reference. If art is anything anyone says it is, what is the response when one is asked "Why did you say that"? Without criteria or standards, without pre-defined principles, we're like a ship sailing to nowhere. A word that has no commonly held meaning is basically gibberish.

Surely a dictionary could help us. Ah yes, the Oxford English Dictionary gives us a somewhat practical definition: "*Art is an expression of human creative skill and imagination...produced to be appreciated primarily for its beauty or emotional power*". We have to assume that the folks at Oxford read and discussed many books and articles on the subject. It certainly alludes to many of the concepts I've read about from academics who apply serious, sometimes ponderous, philosophical reasoning to the subject of art.

But even the dictionary definition seems ambiguous because many of its words beg further clarification and specificity. What we need is a set of



explicit criteria that puts a wide range of well-known objects or images, the “I Know It When I See It” art collection, squarely in the domain called art. Our definition has to put a Renoir painting, a Jackson Pollack drip painting, an Ansel Adams photograph, an Andy Warhol Campbell’s soup painting, Robert Motherwell’s thick black lines on canvas and a Calder



Top (left to right). Paintings by Johannes Vermeer and Jackson Pollack, and photograph by Ansel Adams
Bottom (left to right). Paintings by Andy Warhol and Robert Motherwell, and mobile by Alexander Calder



mobile under the same umbrella. Then we’ll test our definition against Marcel Duchamp’s “The Fountain” (at left) a gorgeous bouquet of flowers, a sunset, a piece of turned wood, a ceramic bowl, and the tracing of a four-month-old infant lathered in paint and allowed to move across a canvas. Of course, we’ll also consider a rock placed

on a wooden stand. Do all or most qualify as art? If our definition is so broad and inclusive that every object and image qualifies, we’re back to having a word that fundamentally has no meaning.

I’m not aware of any previous attempt to perform this exercise. If one can list clear criteria, we would hope to find that a wide range of objects and images commonly held to be “art” meet the definition. It should sweep up virtually all the objects in our art museums. Then we could see what else qualifies, and importantly, what doesn’t qualify. When we’re looking at something that prompts the question---“Is THAT art? --- we can apply our rules and feel confident that we know why we know it when we see it.

So let’s start with the Oxford definition. We’ll add clarification from the concepts discussed in some

of the well-known treatises on the subject. The dictionary definition begins with art being an “expression”. That suggests art is not the physical object itself. It’s not pigments, fiber, wood, clay, metal or stone per se. Art is not identified or defined by the material from which it’s made. It can be made of anything. What is critical is that it is not supposed to represent what it actually is. Rather, art is an image or representation of something it is not. That means, for example, that a bunch of nails or pieces of food can be art, but not if we’re only supposed to see nails or food. Art is not the material from which it’s made, but our use of the material to say something. Also, it’s clear that art doesn’t have to be an image of something. It must, however, represent something and the extent to which it accomplishes these criteria is subjective. An exaggeration of a real feature to its most abstract depiction qualifies as becoming art. The visual can even be used to portray the invisible (e.g. an emotion).

Second, the notion that it’s an “expression” resulting from “human” action implies conscious intent (no accidents allowed) by a human, thereby ruling out a sunset, a butterfly or a rock naturally lying in soil or in a river. The necessary or amount of “skill and imagination” to produce a work of art is not specified. It could be the simple swipe of a brush across a canvas or the positioning of a rock in a tray. As long as it’s done by a human with clear intent to express something, it can become art. This rules out, based on all that we know, the thought that a monkey or newborn can create art. It’s very unlikely that such beings can knowingly and deliberately create something. Alternatively, ask a 4 year old to draw a house and her family and her drawing of a square and a bunch of stick figures is art.

The degree to which the work resembles reality is irrelevant. Hence, an abstract painting of colored lines or blotches across a canvas can be art, as are Calder’s mobiles. All are creative; all express something other than what they actually are. All require some level of skill or leap of imagination. Because we humans are limited by our knowledge of reality, or what we think is reality, the expression may be a perspective through which reality may be seen afresh. The reality depicted could be a representation (like a stone that resembles an animal), or an attempt to heighten our awareness of states, emotions, thoughts or ideas. It could be created or made to enhance our understanding or our appreciation of what is or could be the human experience. Convoluted steel on a pedestal or a rock with twists and perforations resting on a stand begins to qualify.

The final component of a work of art is that it must be “produced to be appreciated primarily for its



beauty or emotional power”. While looking at the object, the artist wants to affect your feelings, create an emotional response, have you see it not for what it is made of, but for what it represents or is meant to convey. Pollack’s drip paintings force one to look at visual chaos, not patterns or familiar shapes. They force us to look beyond everyday experience. The resulting emotion is akin to a spiritual or religious experience.

So, too, the *suiseki* or scholars rock is positioned in a manner that reflects “their power to suggest a scene from nature or an object closely associated with nature” (12) or their abstract qualities. These rocks invite the viewer to appreciate and contemplate the world around them, particularly the natural world. The stone must convey an aesthetic or spiritual feeling (hence the term “spirit stones” used by the Chinese). The stand on which it sits or its placement on a tray orients the viewer to perceive it as something other than an attractive mineral or sedimentary rock. An arrangement of flowers, one could argue, is not art because the work was made to be seen as flowers, despite the skill and imagination involved in the arrangement.

By picking up a rock lying in dirt and positioning it in a specific way, one has produced, by some degree of skill, what now looks like a mountain.

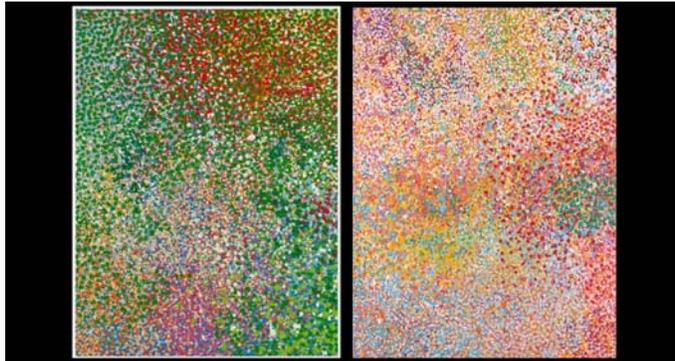


This also allows us to say that geometric circles, or vertical, horizontal or curved lines on canvas may



Top (left to right). Paintings by Frank Stella, Barnett Newman and Morris Louis
 Bottom (left to right). Paintings by Piet Mondrian, Bernard Farmer, and Sam Francis

qualify as art because the intent may be to remind us that there can be order within our world of relative chaos, that the contents of space can be reduced to very simple structures, that blankness amidst color echoes the relative emptiness of the universe, or any other existential or spiritual idea. Conversely, if someone puts paint on a canvas (below) and expresses no intent,



Paintings by Damien Hirst from the series “Veil Paintings”

as Damien Hirst is reported to have done --- “I make it up after the fact” (13), then it would seem that such work is not art.

Some installations, like those of Ai Weiwei, make use of symbolism to heighten or create awareness about politics and culture (below). The art is not in the



Installation by Ai Weiwei in the Tate Gallery, London. Sunflower seeds placed on a gallery floor to be kicked, sat and trampled upon.

material used. Similarly, two clocks side by side on a wall, ticking in unison would invite many interpretations. In contrast, an absolute and perfect copy of something, such as a photocopy, is not art. Each copy is intended to be an exact replica; there is no “expression” of anything not already in the original. On the other hand, a photograph is art because the photographer has presumably chosen what’s in the foreground and background and what is represented at a particular moment in time. It’s not a true copy because we do not see the world in black and white, and because filters, exposure and lighting alter reality. Also, the photographer intends to convey something other than what ink or pigments look like on paper.



A relatively new form of art, introduced in the early 20th Century by Marcel Duchamp, has been called “readymades” or sometimes “conceptual art”. Here the artist takes something already made and moves it, turns it or converts it to something different. Duchamp’s urinal or shovel, Picasso’s *Bull’s Head* (below), and



Readymade art. Left: Marcel Duchamp “In Advance of Broken Arm”. Right: Pablo Picasso “Bull’s Head”.

suiseki all qualify. In the case of the former two, Duchamp takes common objects, moves them to an unexpected place and changes the way we view them as well as our attitude toward them. Although still a urinal or shovel, it has lost its function by virtue of its placement and what we are to make of it. A name is just a name; purpose is artificial. Picasso takes two common objects and creates the appearance of a third, but the original two remain as they were once made. A viewing stone is not intended to represent a rock, rather it is to be seen as a mountain, landscape, animal or perhaps some abstract representation. The intent of the artist is to have the viewer see an object(s) as something other than its physical structure would denote. Whether the work is liked, appreciated or has pleasing qualities (i.e. colors, form, “beauty”), is also not relevant.

One might argue that a readymade is merely a display. Nothing was truly created, as is necessary to be called art; it was merely placed somewhere. But because it had to be turned, oriented or placed in some way different way from its original position or setting, and was intentionally done so to represent what it is not--- the object is art, not a simple display. When we look at a traditional display--- an object(s) arranged for viewing--- we are looking at what was intended to be seen---pants on a counter in a clothing store, fruit as fruit even though arranged in pleasing colors and shapes on a grocery shelf. The intent, however creative or beautiful, was for the viewer to see the object(s) as they are, as they were meant to be, not as something else.

The requirement that the primary purpose of art is to have it be appreciated for its beauty or emotional

power is what distinguishes art from craft. The latter is also an expression of human skill and imagination but its primary purpose is to be used for some utilitarian end. A work of art can certainly have functional properties, but that is not why it was created. A beautiful vase that was made primarily to hold flowers, an unusually shaped chair purposely created to sit in, a colorful article of fiber woven to be used, or piece of jewelry meant to be, well, a beautiful piece of jewelry, are all crafts. While this distinction between art and craft seems logical and internally consistent, there are many objects whose art/craft classification may be unclear.

Indeed, uncertainty applies to many objects based on my expanded definition of art (below). For

Table 1. A Practical Definition of Art

1. Requires human involvement
2. Requires manipulation of the material
3. Is not identified or defined by the material from which it’s made
4. Represents something or is a symbol
5. Intent is determined by the artist
6. Meant to be appreciated for its beauty or emotional power
7. The work is original; not an exact copy

example, there are many objects whose appearance leaves us baffled as to what the creator intended it to represent or convey. But the absence of that information should not necessarily preclude the work from being art. Also, planting a seed that results in a flower takes some skill and can produce an object of beauty. Is that flower art? There are many works on canvas with glorious color harmonies, but if created only to display colorful pigments, i.e. the work is all and only about the material used, it seems questionable that it’s art. I’m certain that Damien Hirst’s new collection, which he acknowledges has no meaning and that he doesn’t “even know what this kind of work is...they make me happy... they sort of confuse me” (13), will lead more than a few people to wonder if it’s art.

Novel forms of art (cubism, abstract expressionism, and more recently conceptual pieces) were once initially met with great skepticism prior to their acceptance into the art world. No doubt there will be other novel forms. I’m also certain readers of this essay will raise many “so what do you call this...?” questions. My hope, however, is that the question--- are viewing stones works of art? -- has been answered in the affirmative. They certainly have all the characteristics of art (Table 2, see next page), and their beauty or emotional power is obvious.



Table 2. Art and Suiseki---- Common AttributesTo be art

- human involvement
- not to be seen for what it is
- intent determined by the artist
- appreciated for its beauty or emotional power
- ease or difficulty to make is irrelevant

To be a suiseki

- removed from its original location
- manipulated so as not to be seen for what it is
- intent determined by the artist
- appreciated for its beauty or emotional power
- placement takes skill and imagination

References

1. Janson HW. History of art: A survey of the major visual arts from the dawn of history to the present day. Prentice Hall. 3rd Ed. 1986
2. Graham G. Philosophy of the Arts: In Introduction to Aesthetics. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group. 3rd Ed. 2005
3. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Art. Accessed at : <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/art-definition/>
4. Collingwood RG. The principles of art. Oxford Univ. 1958
5. Gombrich EH. The story of art. Phaidon. 1995
6. Levinson, J. Refining Art Historically. Journal of Aesthetics and Art. Criticism 47: 21-33, 1989
7. Levinson, J. The irreducible historicity of the concept of art," British Journal of Aesthetics 42: 367-79, 2002
8. Barnett S. A short guide to writing about art. Pearson. 10th Ed. 2010
9. Arnason, HH, Mansfield EC. History of Modern Art. Pearson. 7th Ed. 2012
10. Harrison C, Wood PJ. Art in theory: An Anthology of Changing Ideas. Blackwell. 2nd Ed. 2002
11. Heartney E. Art and Today. Phaidon. 2013
12. Covello, V.T., Yoshimura, Y. The Japanese Art of Stone Appreciation. Tuttle. 1984
13. "Damien Hirst, Post-Truth". New York Times. March 14, 2018. Page C1

The Discussion that followed Richard Kahn's talk: *by Linda Gill*

Richard began by saying that most of his career dealt with diabetes, obesity and nutrition. Richard is new to suiseki. He belongs to the Potomac Viewing Stone Group and his home is filled with art with no space left on any wall. It's everywhere! He noted that you must define art before you can answer the question. His program notes are here on Pages 4-8. (Richard Kahn will be identified as "RK" in Linda's notes.)

What about art created by a chimp or another animal? Or by a 2 year old? RK says no because his definition says that art must be created by a human. The 2 year old is human but he/she has no intent to convey any idea/concept. RK says all of his criteria must be present to create art. He showed us a lovely bowl but said its maker said he only did it because he liked the color/ its beauty; again there was no purpose/message for the bowl's creation.

Is Ikebana art? Some folks who made the flower arrangements said they only do it because they find flowers beautiful. Again, no intent by the maker. An example of an Ikebana that is art was a display created to convey the natural disasters that occurred last year: a palm branch twisted to resemble a wave, a bunch of red flowers to symbolize fire and a Manzanita branch and other plant materials to represent the natural biota.

You plant a seed to get a plant but a bonsai may be art if it conveys a message. What about a topiary? Does it meet the criteria?

Quilts entered the discussion. Art or craft? RK said if an article is made for use it is a craft. The vase mentioned above could fit here if the maker designates its purpose. (He didn't) But a quilt with a message intended by the maker could be art. The skill of the maker is not a criteria nor is the material that constitutes the art. Framing a quilt will not make it art if there is no intended message. The intended message separates art from craft; it can't be both.

What about music? RK felt that music does not fulfill all the criteria and performance art does not either. His example of a woman at the Hammer Museum in a bra and panties simply moving around the room did not meet his criteria.

Richard Turner felt that RK's criteria worked for science but not for art. The criteria omitted too many things. RK's response was: 1: He could not give

[Ed Note: Thank you, Richard, for an excellent program as well as this recap of your subject. Your talk generated quite a lively discussion. Read on.....]



any example of an accepted art that did not meet his criteria; and 2: He agreed that definitions change; they are not immutable. But he feels that he needs criteria that are definitive and the best applicable at this time. He stated that this subject as been debated for 100s (maybe 1000s) of years. Richard Turner said that since the 1960s Minimalism has been an artistic trend. The artists wanted to focus on the material itself, not on the meaning. The material is the major point; a brick is only a brick. RK wants it to represent something else if it is art.

What about multiple copies of art? Etchings pulled from the same plate are not exact replicas of the 'original' therefore they can be art. Lithographs and wood block prints fall into the same category. Copies

that are exactly the same - photocopies are not art. They lose the element of skill needed for art.

So, are *suiseki* art? The answer is yes by RK's criteria!

[Linda adds: I am looking forward to seeing the article in the newsletter. It was a very good presentation and I've debated his viewpoint with several of my friends. A while ago I bought a book at the PS Art Museum called "Why Your 5 Year Old Couldn't Do That". It had a selection of different art works, many of them modern, and explained why they were considered art. I found it very enlightening. While not giving a list of criteria as Richard did, it did incorporate many of them and the intended message was a big one for most of the modern art.]

Ask Guy Jim

For your consideration: I am advocating that we experiment with the follow changes with regard to our approach to "The Stone of the Month". Our current wide-open approach provides a chance to share and have more than a few laughs, but seldom does much to advance anyone's understanding; similarly, photographing the stones and then uncritically running them en mass within the Newsletter does little to inform the reader. The situation parallels the times when one, not able to read the captions in *suiseki* or *suseok* magazines, puzzles over what quality or imagery could possibly have stirred the collector to go through the trouble to present their stone.

That act of presenting a stone to the club presumes that you have found merit in it. (This holds true even if you have reservations that you hope the opinions of others will help resolve.) If you do believe in the merit of your find, take more time to make your case and present it to best advantage. While any stone may be shared and critically discussed, i.e., as to the appropriateness of a *daiza* versus *suiban* or whether a flaw is acceptable, it should not be automatically included in a photo spread in the Newsletter without being formally displayed. If a *daiza* is determined to be needed, your stone will still likely have a chance to make the Newsletter at a later date when the subject is revisited or in coverage of an annual exhibition. If a *suiban* is required and you do not have an appropriate one, remember that you are welcome to visit the AVSRC *suiban* stash in Santa Monica where I will do my best to help you select one to borrow. While it is true that at this point a concern for formal display may

seem and be premature, the practice will also likely to result in improved presentations in the annual exhibition.

Next, I feel that in addition to taking this step towards formality, we should aim for more informative photo captions. Minimally, these should include your subject and/or title, dimensions and source. You might add comments as to the circumstances of the find, why you have given it a name, admired qualities, strong points and weak, perhaps anecdotes as to how you collected it as was done in the CAK's 25th Anniversary book. It is easy for us to overlook that a special aspect of our club is that we find most of our own stones. These specifics and personalization provide context of potential interest to readers, especially to those who are only able to collect through purchasing.

Finally – as I duck for cover – we should consider instituting a requirement that if you wish your "Stone of the Month" to be published, that you prepare your caption and write it out before hand so it is all ready to insert into the Newsletter. This step will require more thought and preparation on your part and definitely more layout complications for Nina, but adding this requirement not only has the potential to upgrade the Newsletter, the process itself will force us to more carefully observe and better understand our own stones. Some will undoubtedly be seen as falling short, unjustifiable, and never make it to the meeting, but those brought in will provide a more meaningful experience for presenter and audience alike.

Respect both your stones and your audience,

Guy Jim

Yuha Trip ~ March 10-11 Revisited

After losing an hour of sleep, we still had time for a leisurely breakfast before heading out for what turned into a better than we ever imagined rock hunt. It is pretty clear that this was a perfect weekend!



Brad Hagbery, Ann Horton and Linda Gill



Phil Chang



Wanda Matjas



Jon Reuschel, Marty Hagbery and Warren Haussler



Mary Mulcahy Bloomer and Peter Bloomer



Debra Melitz, and Rochelle and Ralph Melitz



The top 2 photos are from Saturday and the lower 2 photos are from Sunday. Thank you **Wanda Matjas** for these 4 pictures! We can see that each day was an adventure worth the effort as it was impossible to leave empty handed. We think Aiseki Kai is definitely about having all the fun...



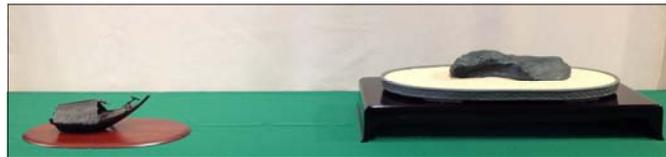
Letter to the Editor

I was just reading a bit of the beginning of Shakespeare's "As You Like It", and from Act I Scene I it is possible to extract the following:

Now, my co-mates and brothers in exile,
 Hath not old custom made this life more
 sweet
 Than that of painted pomp? ...
 And this our life exempt from public
 haunt
 Finds ...
 Sermons in stones and good in every
 thing.
 I would not change it ... Being native
 burghers of this desert city ...

Jacks reminds us that we ate pizza, not 'burghers'.
 ~Jack Levy

Display at The Huntington 3/24-25



As a member of California Bonsai Society, **Nina** was privileged to participate in their exhibit March 24-25. This Eel River stone is 12.5”w x 6.5”d x 2.5”h

Miscellany: Does the grit size and/or color of the sand make a difference? Do you have a preference?



Nina found these 2 stones on our recent trip in November and was pleased to show them at The Huntington in December. The display sand on the left (10w x 4h x 7d) was purchased at White Cap and the sand on the right (6.25w x 3h x 5d) was purchased in Japan. Do you have a preference? Why?

California Aiseki Kai meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Nakaoka Community Center located at 1670 W. 162nd St, Gardena, CA. Second floor. We do not meet in Nov-Dec.

Contact People

Programs: Larry Ragle	949.497.5626	crimescene@cox.net
Treasury/Membership: Nina Ragle	949.497.5626	ragle@cox.net
Annual Exhibit: Jim Greaves	310.452.3680	jimgreaves@avsrc.org
Exhibit Set Up: Marge Blasingame	626.579.0420	margerblasingame@gmail.com
Refreshments: Janet Shimizu	310.822.6012	janet.shimizu46@gmail.com
Beverages: Jack Levy	626.794.4572	jnlevy@earthlink.net
Historian: Ray Yeager	760.365.7897	ryeager890@aol.com
Webmail: Chris Cochrane	804.918.4636	sashaichris@gmail.com



Newsletter Committee

April Contributors: Linda Gill, Jim Greaves, Richard Kahn, and Larry Ragle.
Mailing: Flash Partch
Editor: Nina Ragle

We hope you will participate. Please send any submissions to ragle@cox.net no more than 10 days following our monthly meeting. Thank you!

Ragle
P.O. Box 4975
Laguna Beach CA 92652

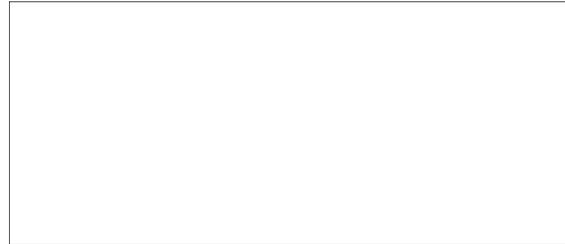
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Leaves no stone unturned

See our website:

aisekikai.com



Coming Events

SAN DIEGO BONSAI CLUB
53rd Annual Spring Show, April 21-22,
Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, Room 101,
San Diego, 10-5. Sales. Demos at 11 and 1.
Free. For more info: email
bunjin54@yahoo.com



DAI ICHI BONSAI KAI
33rd Annual Bonsai Exhibit, "Serenity
through Bonsai", May 5-6, Nakaoka
Community Center, Gardena,
Sat 10-4, Sun 10-3. Demo by **Frank Goya**,
Sun at 1:00. Sales area. For more info
contact **Doyle Saito**: 310.539.9265



Freeman Wang 626-524-5021
Suiseki-Viewing Stone Sale
stores.ebay.com/thestoneking

U.S. NATIONAL BONSAI EXHIBITION
6th Exhibition, September 8-9, Total Sports Experience,
435 West Commercial Street, Rochester, NY. Admission
\$20, weekend pass \$30 (before August 1st). Invitational
suiseki exhibit and critiques, demonstrations, vendors. For
more information see usnationalbonsai.com

Stone Sales Ken McLeod
209-605-9386 or 209 586-2881
suisekistones.com

Refreshments

Thank you to **Linda Gill, Kyra Haussler,**
Janet Shimizu, Naomi Yoshida and
Mika Breyfogle for the March munchies.



Our April appetite appeasers will be provided by
Harley Newman, Phil Chang, Jesse Krong and the
Ragles.

Always check Golden Statements Magazine
Calendar section for additional coming events