



## The Year That Was



This has been a wonderful year starting with our holiday party in January, **Kemin Hu** in February and **Bob Mowry** was here in March. We have had programs by **Jack Dennis, Kathy Coffman, Al Nelson, Larry Ragle** and **Richard Turner**. We went rock hunting in the Yuha and some of us went to China. Thank you all for supporting our club.

### News Flash:

We have just been awarded **best newsletter** of 2007, long form, at the GSBF Convention, for the second consecutive year! Thank you, contributors.

## The Huntington Show

We do not have a meeting in November but there is quite a bit to do since our show is next month. If you haven't done so yet, contact **Linda** for docent/security duty and make sure you get your display information to **Bill** before Dec 15. Preparation is everything.

### Huntington Show Schedule of Events

**Dec 22** - set up day. Tables and backdrops will be set up beginning at 9AM. **Have your displays at the Huntington between 12-3.**

**Dec 27 - 31** show opens at 10 and closes at 4:30.

**Jan 1** - closed for New Years Day.

**Jan 2** - open 10-4:30. Take down at 4:30.

Please do not forget to sign up for security / docent duty! **Linda** is waiting to hear from you. **See page 8 for that schedule.** Check your calendar, select times you will be available to help and call **Linda** with the dates and times.

**Bill** needs to know what you plan to display so he can make the labels. Make sure you tell him the classification and place of origin for each of your stones. **Limit 5 per person.** He also needs to know if you are planning a 2 piece *sekikazari* (table display). **Deadline for Bill is Dec 15th.** 714.964.6973 or [hutch@aisekikai.com](mailto:hutch@aisekikai.com)

## You Can Lead A Horse to Water

The October meeting was exciting and thought provoking in many ways. My suggestion in our last newsletter, to eliminate classifications, such as near mountain, from the name tags was heatedly debated. The central theme of the opposition was, our show is more an educational event for our inexperienced audience than a challenge to their intellect.

Changing the name tags was not urgent and there was no time for a lengthy discussion. A simple show of hands indicated a wide majority present wanted to keep the classifications on the tags. So be it, for now.

If you weren't in attendance, the minority support pointed out that art - any kind of art - should evoke or stimulate emotion, thought or reflection based on one's life experiences and interests. This primary interaction may be as simple as an appreciation of the artist's efforts or on a more personal basis, evoke the mental process of "*reducing material objects to ideas*" - **Hegel** (1770-1831).

The primary purpose of our shows is to celebrate the sheer beauty of natural stones. I believe we are underestimating the intelligence of our audience by telling them what to see. Although some visitors who politely come and go while on a bus tour may not get it, we have members who don't get it. No matter how much information is provided, some people will never understand the deep philosophical meaning of *suiseki* and other viewing stones but they can still appreciate the beauty of this art.

The library, art collection and gardens, attracts people who are curious and have that ability to *reduce material objects to ideas*. The ability to imagine landscapes, patterns or objects in stones, is in all of us if exercised.

We can continue to tell viewers, "I see a tiger in this stone" - verbally or in writing. They might see a tiger, but once that concept is communicated, must we tell them what the owner sees in each stone in the room? I hope not. I maintain that with active docents, slide shows and our new educational pamphlet, next years audience won't need to be told what to see.

# October Meeting Notes

by Linda Gill

ANNOUNCEMENTS- Guests were Dr. & Mrs. **Sohn** and **Jane Nelson**.

- **Marge** needs volunteers on Friday, 12/21, to paint, etc. at 10AM. Wait for her in Friends Hall.
- Set up for the show will be Saturday, 12/22, at 9AM. Please come help! Lunch will be served.

### Stones & plants should come in 12/22, between 12-3.

- Please remember to take your plants home with you that day & return them on 12/27. Be sure **Jim** sees them before you go. You will be given an index card for each plant; please write the name & size of the plant & your name on the card. Leave it where you put your plant. This will remind **Jim** when he moves stones/plants as he surely will.

We will have our **new club pamphlets** for sale at the show and our **25th Anniversary club pins**, too.

### STONE OF THE MONTH – First ever stone:

**Larry's** stone came from a creek near the Russian River. **Nina** sold her first stone. **Lois's** was a craggy Indian blanket stone from Dumont Dunes. **Bill's** was a mountain from Garnet Hill. **Phil's** was a mountain range from the China trip and he had a dark stone still coated with Chinese oil! **Janet's** pattern stone with hills and moon came from China. **Sharon's** was too embarrassing so she brought a boytroidal jade from Nevada. **Hanne's** was too large so she substituted 2 yellow wax stones from China. **Cliff's** was his latest, found last weekend on the Merced. It was passed up by others who thought it too large to leave uncut. **Linda's** was the first she loved from her first Yuha trip. It is black, lustrous and looks like the surface of the sea in winter. She also brought a Dharuma figure with a moon and surrounding ring from the Merced also found last weekend. **Jon's** was an island from the Yuha. He also had a figure stone - a rat. Just in time for next year! **Sandy's** was a bison from the Eel. **Barry's** was from the Yuha, the head of a seahorse. **Richard Turner's** was a figure stone he bought in Shanghai. **Joe Gaytan** also bought his, a dragon. **Alice's** was a *doha* from the Kern. **Jim** brought a series of firsts: 1st stone - lost; 1st to Aiseki Kai meeting - a Madonna, a gorilla & a calico rabbit; 1st in a show - a step stone from Jade Cove; 1st suiseki - a plateau from the Kern. **Don Kruger's** was a mountain from Lake Hill. **Hal Close** returned with his first stone shown in a California suiseki show from the Eel. **Marybel's** was a 'sushi' stone from the Kern. **Bruce's** was a cut near-view mountain and his first uncut was a 5 color from the Eel. **Lee's** was an abstract stone from as far N & W as you can go in Washington State. She also brought her 1st purchased Chinese stone, a contorted stone mounted atop a slab with a statue of a

scholar bowing. **Jack's** was found on 10/7/93 (at what time, Jack?) a *ten-san-seki* from the Yuha. **Sachiko's** from the same trip was her third - a whale. Her first resembled Mt. St. Helens after the eruption and was shown in Felix Rivera's exhibit. She also showed one given to her by **Dorothy Middleton** whose *daiza* was made by her husband, **Gail**, a lovely stone with good memories attached. **Richard Aquirre's** was a large chunk of mud from near the Eel. A first indeed! **Warren** finished our show & tell with a small elephant that looked like a modern sculpture - a great first!

We had a full house for our last meeting of the year. Thank you all for making it one of our best!



Janet Shimizu's pattern stone and Phil Chang's mountain stone came from China.



Lee Roberts showed Mi Fu bowing to his elder brother and a stone from extreme NW Washington State. [See GuyJim for more on Mi Fu]



Hanne's is a face. Hal Close found his on the Eel River.

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





Jon Reuschel had an island stone from the Yuha Desert.

Barry Josephson showed his seahorse from the Yuha Desert.



Alice Greaves had a doha from the Kern River.

Sandy Josephson had a bison from the Eel River.



Cliff Johnson brought his latest stone, a tiger striped mountain range, from the Merced River. Wonder who made the *daiza*?

Joseph Gaytan showed a dragon.



## October Program Notes

by Linda Gill

**Richard Turner** is the Chairperson of the Art Department at Chapman University. He is the curator of the show that is at the University's Guggenheim Gallery in Orange until November 16.

*Home/Office Landscapes* is the title of the show. **Richard** said that the title for the exhibition was inspired by the Chinese civil servants who worked in a room where they also kept scholar stones that they used to inspire their own paintings or calligraphy. Those rooms were like today's home offices. The show includes work by seven artists and the essay for the show was written by **Michael Duncan**, a Los Angeles art writer.

Each artwork is placed so that it is visually near a stone that resembles it. A chunky stone is placed next to an ungainly sculpture. A sculpture carved from stone is near a scholars' stone that has been hand carved. A *Lingbi* stone with irregular holes is paired with a Styrofoam sculpture that is open and touched with paint. In his power point presentation, **Richard** used an image of a bicycle wheel mounted on a stool - a famous piece by **Marcel Duchamp** and a scholars' rock to illustrate the idea in the essay that both are "found objects".

**Meng Zhao's** flowing ceramic sculpture suggests the power of water and eroded stone forms. **Jessica Hutchins** relates her sculpture to specific mountains in the Pacific northwest, Japanese poetry and Chinese scholars' rocks. **Andrea Cohen** is influenced by the landscapes of Miami and Chinese paintings. Both have elements of the natural and the artificial. **Jacci Den Hartog**, who had the largest pieces in the show, cited Chinese gardens and landscape paintings as her sources. She uses un-natural materials (resin, plaster) to focus on the natural. **Richard's** work uses the patterns of lattice in windows seen in Chinese garden walls. His forms also convey the destructive force of earthquakes. He showed two drawings of stones in addition to his sculptures. **Rachelle Rojany's** Pet Rock is a carved stone with pencils stuck in it that humorously references the scholarly tradition. Her Base Rock is related to the Taoist belief that mountains were pedestals for the gods.

The photographs of **Skeet McAuley** challenge our concept of scale. His photographs of small stones are enlarged to a scale that takes them back in the direction of the full-scale landscape they were intended to evoke.

[The exhibit included stones on loan from **Jim** and **Alice Greaves** and **Jean** and **Ann Horton**.]

Due to a lack of interest, **Cliff** has cancelled the China Trip for May, 2008... maybe in 2009?



# Ask Guy Jim

Nobody *Asked Guy Jim*, But ...

For the last column of 2007, I would like to take time to recognize that this year marks the 900<sup>th</sup> year of the death of Mi Fu (1051—1107) the nominal patron saint of stone appreciation. Mi Fu, also known as Mi Fei, had the further sobriquet of Madman Ming, seemingly derived from his eccentricities, which included a compulsive cleanliness and dressing in outlandish and outdated clothing, but most particularly, because of his passion for stones.

Most of us are familiar with one of the several versions of the most reported anecdote: Upon being appointed magistrate in the Wuwei district, Anhui province, in 1105, Mi Fu left to pay the obligatory visit to the local perfect and present his credentials. Upon entering the precinct, Mi Fu saw a large, fantastic rock.



*Mi Fu bai shi* by Hu Ruosi (Yu Ying Collection)

because they were a direct manifestation of the Dao.” (Hu, *ibid*, p.22) The subject of Mi Fu bowing to the Elder Brother Stone has been oft repeated in Chinese painting. (Fig. 2,3,4)

As a stone connoisseur, Mi Fu advanced four of the basic criteria still used today in China for judging rocks: *shou* (thinness), *zhou* (wrinkles), *lou* (channels) and *tou* (holes). He was also a great collector and connoisseur of inkstones and his *Yen Shih*, “An Account of Inkstones” has survived. The *Baojin Studio Mountain Inkstone* (*Baojinzhai yanshan*) that at one time belonged to Mi Fu (Fig. 5) is one the most famous inkstones and is the subject of more commentary than Elder Brother, himself.

Although our interest begins with his love of stones, Mi Fu is far better known for other accomplishments. He was one of the four greatest calligraphers of the Song (Sung) Dynasty and one of the most influential art critics in Chinese history. In addition to his work on inkstones, other seminal observations were published as *Hua Shih* (Painting History), *Shu Shih* (Calligraphy History). As a member of the civil service literati, he was also a poet and accomplished painter, principally concerned with landscapes exploring the ‘inexhaustible mystery’ of nature. His style may be best seen in *Pavilion of Rising Clouds* (Fig. 6) which bears the inscription, “(before) Heaven sends a timely rain; clouds issue from mountains and streams.” Mi Fu became renown for



Self-portrait of Mi Fu, Rubbing from Huanzhu Cave, Guilin



Mi Fu Bows to a Rock (*Mi Fu bai shi*) by Yu Ming (Robert H. Ellsworth)



*Mi Fu bai shi* by Wang Zhen (courtesy of Dekkang Art Inc.)

He at once called for his tablet of office and donned his official robes and then bowed to the rock saying “For twenty years, I have been longing to see a brother rock like you” (Hu, **Scholars’ Rocks in Ancient China**, p.22) and, thereafter, addressing it as Shixiong, “Elder Brother Stone.” (Hay, **Kernels of Energy**, Bones of the Earth, p.32). “Bowling to a rock before greeting a local official was the sort of behavior that made some of Mi’s contemporaries dismiss him as crazy, but his veneration of the rock would also be memorialized for showing that nature embodied a higher truth than the ceremonies of public life. In other words, Mi believed that natural forms were superior to human artifice



Baojinzhai yanshan of Mi Fu

his style of painting misty landscapes that consisted of the layering of wet dots of ink applied with a flat brush. [Interestingly, it has been argued that his more amorphous approach was itself influenced by the Chinese marble dream stones that became popular in the Song Period.]



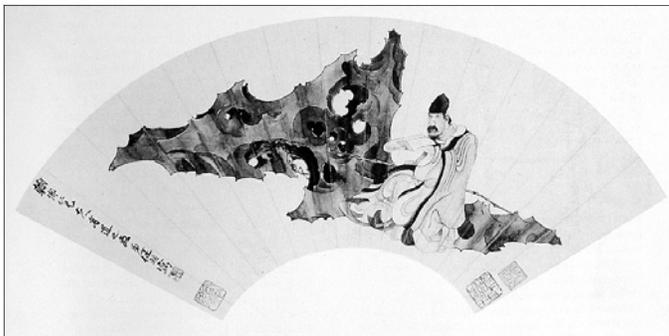
Mi Fu: Pavilion of Rising Clouds (Freer Gallery)

Mi Fu’s natural, unassertive style broke with the more complex, contrived painting of the period and was disliked by the Song Court. Through his association with Su Shi (another famous poet, painter and stone connoisseur) and others, he is responsible for the theory and practice of *wen-jen-hua*, or literati painting, wherein, the artist expressed personal emotions. This approach to painting remains the dominant approach in China and Japan to this day.

**Kemin Hu** (op. cit., p.49) presents the following poem written by Zhou Shaoyin upon seeing Elder Brother Stone:

How pitiful they are who call money most dear!  
 Those who call a stone ‘brother’ are noble.  
 It is ridiculous to bow and worship the secular world  
 Yet it is quite another matter to bow to a stone.

While researching Mi Fu, I came across the following in an article about Chinese stones: “Ironically, at a time when superstitions of *feng shui* no longer hinder mining and blasting the earth, the hobby of stone collecting has, nevertheless, lost its popularity and after another generation may disappear completely”. (*Sermons in Stone, Four Winds*, Magazine of Singapore Airlines, 1973). Interestingly, the article also repeatedly mentioned that Chinese stone collectors considered worked stones to be of little value!



Mi Fu and His Rock Friend by Ren Yi (Robert H. Ellsworth)

May I end another year by expressing grateful thanks to those who have sacrificed their time and lives, allowing us the privilege to simply play with stones,

*GuyJim*

\* \* \*

Finally, your editor’s favorite: *GuyJim’s* Suibanics...

**Keido** - *The Scenic Way* - A formal system of tokonoma display.

**Play-do** - *The Joyous Way* - Playing with stones in *GuyJim’s* large sandbox.

**Dough-do** - *The Commercial Way* - Dealing in stones and stone appreciation for profit.

**Do-re-mi-do** - *The Musical Way* - An obscure Chinese school of stone appreciation in which stones are classified by the musical quality of their ‘chime’ when struck.

**Do-seh-do** [dos-a-dos] - *The Dancing Way* - Creating displays by lots of last minute, back and forth shuffling around the exhibition hall (a California Aiseki Kai Tradition). This term has lately been appropriated to describe the delicate footwork of those asked to critique mixed displays of leaverite, silli-seki, wanabe-ishi, pseudo-seki, etc.

The views expressed in this column are personal, perhaps irreverent, irrelevant or just plain wrong and do not reflect the consensual view of California Aiseki Kai. Send your viewing stone questions (or comments) for *GuyJim* to [jimgreaves@roadrunner.com](mailto:jimgreaves@roadrunner.com) or 1018 Pacific Street, Unit D, Santa Monica, CA 90405 (310) 452-3680

# Hanne Stages One Woman Show

By Jack Dennis



As part of a tribute to the Japanese Americans who were involved in *Landscaping America: Beyond the Japanese Garden*, **Hanne Povlsen** at center aisle staged a small but wonderful viewing stone exhibit in the main concourse of the Japanese American National Museum located at 369 East First Street, Los

Angeles on October 7, 2007. The quality of the stones was exceeded only by **Hanne's** charismatic love and appreciation of her stones and the art. She expertly classified and displayed 15 stones in two separate groups labeled "River Stones" and "Desert Stones" on two tables that were an enviable main attraction in the heart of other displays of bonsai, landscaping materials and paraphernalia. **Hanne's** display was a credit to herself and to all the members of Aiseki Kai. Bravo Zulu (Well Done) **Hanne** - you made us proud.



## Soosuk Exhibit



Peter Kim



Nam Soo Pak



Sam Suk



Don Kruger



Sam Suk



Rudy Oh



William Chi



David Choi



David Choi



Scott Cho



Chung Kruger



Eden Chung



Chang Ik Ahn



Sam Suk



Sung Bok Kim: Both stones are from South Korea



## Refreshments

Thank you **Warren & Kyra Haussler, Joe & Arlene James, Jim & Alice Greaves, Janet Shimizu & Phil Chang, May McNey and Joseph Gaytan** for all the delicious pies at the October meeting. Pies are always a favorite.



Overview of the Korean American Soosuk Club Exhibition held on October 6-7 at the LA County Arboretum in Arcadia.

CA Aiseki Kai meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Nakaoka Community Center located at 1700 162nd St, Gardena, CA. Second floor. We do not meet in Nov-Dec.

## Contact People

<b>Programs:</b> Larry Ragle	949.497.5626
<b>Treasury/Membership:</b> Nina Ragle	949.497.5626
<b>Annual Exhibit:</b> Jim Greaves	310.452.3680
<b>Exhibit Set Up:</b> Marge Blasingame	626.579.0420
<b>Refreshments:</b> Lois Hutchinson	714.964.6973
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## Newsletter Committee

**November Contributors:** Jack Dennis, Linda Gill, Jim Greaves 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!

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Laguna Beach CA 92652

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



*Leaves no stone unturned*

See us on the web

[aiseikikai.com](http://aiseikikai.com)



## Coming Events

### AMERICAN VIEWING STONE RESOURCE CENTER

Exhibition: *American Viewing Stones – Natural Art in an Asian Tradition* (Selections from the **Jim & Alice Greaves** Collection)  
Sept 15- Jan 2008, Mingei International Museum Balboa Park, San Diego. Tues - Sun, Hours: 10 - 4; Go to: [mingei.org](http://mingei.org).

### BONSAI-A-THON XII

GSBF Collection at the Huntington Fundraiser, Feb 23-24, 2008, Huntington Botanical Center, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino. 7:30-4:30. This is a fundraiser so bring donations! Early bird specials, breakfast, lunch, auctions, raffles, vendors, children and adult novice workshops. Demos both days and demo material will be auctioned. **Jim Folsom's** early morning tour will be a special treat this year because it will include the new and wonderful Chinese Garden, which has its public opening on the 23rd! Please continue to support the Southern California Bonsai and Viewing Stone Collection. Contact **Marge Blasingame** for information: call 626.579.0420 or email her at: [blasmrjr@aol.com](mailto:blasmrjr@aol.com)

**Happy Holidays**

## Security/Docent Schedule

Our show at the Huntington is just around the corner! **Linda** is looking for folks to sign up as docents/ security for our show. Naturally, anyone showing is expected to participate but all members are welcome. Please let her know **all** the times you will be available.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Other Hours</u>
Dec 27	10-1	1-4:30	
Dec 28	10-1	1-4:30	
Dec 29	10-1	1-4:30	
Dec 30	10-1	1-4:30	
Dec 31	10-1	1-4:30	
Jan 2	10-1	1-4:30	

**Linda can be reached at 818.833.9883 or email her at [bigredlinda@earthlink.net](mailto:bigredlinda@earthlink.net)**

**We need you..** Check your calendars and select your days and times. Tell **Linda** when you can work if the listed times are not convenient.

**Linda** said, "Please volunteer. It's a great chance to see wonderful stones, get to know your fellow stone lovers better and maybe even learn something."