

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Press Advisory from the Japan Information and Culture Center
Embassy of Japan, D.C.



JAPAN INFORMATION
AND CULTURE CENTER
在米国日本大使館広報文化センター

Media Contact: Megan Ryle, Publicity Coordinator

The Embassy of Japan Celebrates 40th Anniversary of Bonsai Gift to the United States with Exhibition, Event, and Artist Tours

WASHINGTON, D.C., (June 28, 2016) – This summer the [Japan Information and Culture Center \(JICC\), Embassy of Japan, D.C.](#), in partnership with the [U.S. National Arboretum](#) and the [National Bonsai Foundation](#), is delighted to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Japan’s gift of 53 bonsai trees to the people of the United States. These bonsai trees are housed in the [National Bonsai & Penjing Museum](#), which is on the U.S. National Arboretum grounds. In October 2016, a redesigned Pavilion displaying the museum’s historic Japanese collection will reopen to the public.

Bonsai or “tray planting” is the art of a styled tree in a pot. The framing vessel complements the tree in shape, texture, and color. Over time, each branch and twig is carefully shaped and trained into a chosen bonsai style, and then maintained and improved through a constant regimen of pruning and trimming. Although often outliving their original caretakers, each bonsai plant constantly remains “in training”.

To honor this significant occasion, the JICC will hold an eight-week exhibition of the magnificently detailed bonsai photography by Stephen Voss, which features the museum’s famous bonsai collection. An accomplished photographer with work published in *National Geographic*, *New York Magazine*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Politico*, Stephen Voss will be presenting his new show “In Training”, which intimately and respectfully captures the quiet mystique and humble, rugged beauty of the bonsai art form. Along with the release of his new fine-art photography book of the same name, his objective is twofold:

For someone who has never seen a bonsai before, I hope this book will be a meaningful visual introduction to this art form. For those who know bonsai intimately, I hope these photos will present a new way of looking at these trees - a fresh, but respectful interpretation of the artist’s intent.

- Stephen Voss, bonsaibook.net

The JICC will host an opening event to introduce the exhibition on July 14th. Stephen Voss will provide a short presentation introducing his interest in bonsai and how his career led him to this fascinating project. Jack Sustic, Curator of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum, will provide an introduction to the museum, highlight some of the museum’s most important bonsai trees, describe arrangement techniques, and present a hands-on wild tree bonsai demonstration. Stephen Voss will also offer artist tours on Mondays in August from 12-12:30PM, and on several days extended exhibition hours will be offered. All events are free, but registration is required to attend the opening event and encouraged for artist tours. No registration

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Press Advisory from the Japan Information and Culture Center
Embassy of Japan, D.C.

is required to visit the exhibition during regular and extended hours. To register for this event, please visit <http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jicc/>. *For media inquiries, please contact Megan Ryle.*

WHY This year, The United States National Arboretum and the National Bonsai Foundation celebrate the 40th anniversary of Japan's gift of bonsai to the people of the United States, housed at the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum on the U.S National Arboretum grounds. Founded when Japanese bonsai artists in the Nippon Bonsai Association donated 53 bonsai and six viewing stones to commemorate the U.S. Bicentennial, the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum has one of the largest and most comprehensive collection of these timeless trees in North America. The JICC, Embassy of Japan is proud to host a bonsai exhibition, a special event, as well as artist tours to mark this occasion.

WHEN *Opening Event: Thursday, July 14th, 2016, 6:30 – 8:30PM (Registration Required)*
Exhibition: July 14th, 2016 thru September 9th, 2016, Mon – Fri, 9AM – 5PM (Closed on Holidays)
Exhibition Extended Hours: July 20, 28 and August 5, 12, 17, 5PM – 6PM
Artist Tours: Mondays in August (August 1, 8, 15, 22, 29), 12-12:30PM (Registration Encouraged)

WHERE JICC, 18th St NW, Suite 100, Washington, D.C. 20036

PICTURES



Juniper Bonsai Tree, © 2016 Stephen Voss Photography



Red Maple Bonsai Tree, © 2016 Stephen Voss Photography

II. Further Information:

- A. Stephen Voss' Website: <http://www.stephenvoss.com/>
- B. Stephen Voss' Book, "In Training": <http://www.bonsaibook.net/>
- C. The National Bonsai and Penjing Museum at the U.S. National Arboretum: www.bonsai-nbf.org

ABOUT THE JICC

The Japan Information and Culture Center (JICC) is a part of the Public Affairs Section of the Embassy of Japan in Washington D.C. The JICC's goal is to promote better understanding of Japan and Japanese culture by providing a wide range of information and events to the American public. For more information, please visit [our website](#).

###