

The Mystery of Bonsai Explained: Could this Ancient Art Enrich Your Life?

**An evening of bonsai presented at the Woodward Library
Wednesday, February 6 7:00 PM Free admittance**

Have you ever wondered about the art of bonsai? Many are intrigued by the mysterious and often misunderstood aspects of bonsai: How is it done? What are its origins? How old are they? Is it truly an art or some form of archaic gardening? Why can't I keep my bonsai alive? Is there some sort of *Zen* magic associated with the practice of bonsai? Why do the folks that practice bonsai seem to have perpetual smiles on their faces? Learn the answers to these questions and much more.

Presenters:

Dr. George Michael Saul is a retired physician who graduated from the University of Michigan Medical School and completed his Residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Texas. He completed his Fellowship in Critical Care Medicine at Stanford. He is a Fellow of the American College of Chest Physicians. He practiced medicine in Fresno for 35 years. He has been an active member of the Fresno Bonsai Society for 14 years. He has been a member of the Clark Bonsai Collection curatorial team since its inception and has his own substantial bonsai collection at home.

Bob Hilvers first took up the art of bonsai more than thirty-five years ago as a hobby. After retiring from a 40 year career in Public Safety, his love of bonsai morphed from a hobby to an avocation and finally to a professional endeavor. In 2001 he, along with Bill Clark, co-founded the bonsai collection at the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture. He oversaw the relocation of that collection to the Shinzen Friendship Gardens in 2014. He is a past president of the Golden State Bonsai Federation and continues to serve on that organization's Board of Trustees. He is a charter member of the National Consortium of Bonsai Curators and is currently serving on the Board of Directors for the Shinzen Friendship Garden Inc.. Bob is beginning his 18th year as Curator of what is considered to be one of the finest public bonsai Collections in the US.

Linda Jacobsen, a retired English and Art History teacher, first became interested in bonsai while a docent for the art collection at the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture. When the Center closed, she volunteered at the Clark Bonsai Collection at Shinzen to continue her interest in Japanese art and culture. She currently serves as the CBCS Volunteer and Educational Program Coordinator, but her favorite time is spent learning about Japanese culture and the history and aesthetics of bonsai and sharing those insights as a docent for visitors to the bonsai garden.

Bob Hilvers, Mike Saul and Linda Jacobsen will discuss the history and aesthetics of bonsai in relation to its potential benefits to the practitioner. A common perception is that immersion in both creative arts and nature are healthful and can be remedies for the stress and anxiety of modern life. Can time spent with a small tree be a healthy alternative?

Presentations will be accompanied by a panel discussion to answer questions from the audience.

A reception and refreshments will follow.