



Appreciation

What would our meetings be without a program? Thanks to the generosity of the following members, we do not need to wonder: **Jack Dennis, Tom Elias, Jim Greaves, Ann Horton, Wanda Matjas, and Larry Ragle** put in the effort to make sure we keep learning.

Thank you newsletter contributors, **Peter Aradi, Ralph Bischof, Tom and Hiromi Elias, Wanda Matjas, Rick and Mimi Stiles, Wil from Japan, Peter Warren and Ray Yeager**. We all owe a huge debt of gratitude to the best newsletter staff ever, **Linda Gill, Jim Greaves, Flash Partch and Larry Ragle**. We would be rowing in circles without you. And... a special thank you, **Ralph Johnson**, for your continued support, encouragement and for always making all things possible.

~ Nina 

Excellence

After 20 years of being the official label maker for our Huntington Show, **Bill Hutchinson** is passing the torch to **Richard Aguirre**. Thank you, **Bill**, for all your support and hard work. If you are an attending member you recognize that **Bill and Lois** also organize our refreshments every month. They have been indispensable. Thank you **Bill and Lois**.

And thanks to the **Blasingame's** and their crew for the show's setup and teardown. Thanks to **Jim Greaves** and **Don Kruger** for their curatorial skill. And thanks to **Joe James** for organizing our field trips. Thanks for **your** participation. Every member participates by attending our meetings and/or reading the newsletter. We would not be a club without **you** and your support.

I also want to thank the person and bring it to your attention (if she doesn't edit this out) who seldom gets mentioned in the newsletter because she edits it and doesn't give herself accolades. Because of her diligence and her drive for perfection she is attracting international acclaim, from readers and authors.

Since her award winning work is available online, our website was visited more than 30,000 times in 2010. Granted, that could be one lonely guy with a bad memory but it's more likely 2,000+ viewers every month. That's not bad for a website that doesn't have *suiseki* in its name. We have 100+ e~subscribers. That leaves 1,900 who don't get a hard copy but check out the website every month. **Nina**, thank you. I think it's safe to say, we all thank you.

[ED Note: I didn't edit it out so I could say, "Thanks."]

It's show time. Didn't we just take down the backdrops? I'm happy to say that last years show was a step forward for most displays. By now you should have some stones and type of display in mind. As a reminder, we have two types of displays, first is a single item, a stone in a *daiza* or *suiban* shown on a table (or club box) or board (*jiita*). These displays are on the six long inside tables. The second types of display are on the tables with backdrops, for example, a two part display in the *sekikazari* style (a stone on a table and a complementary piece). **Jim** also arranges groups of stones based on a theme or emotion. Help **Jim** by bringing in the best you have.

Larry Ragle

The Huntington Show

Huntington Show Schedule of Events

Dec 22 - set up day. Tables and backdrops will be set up beginning at 9AM.

 **Dec 23** - Bring your displays between 9-12. Bring bonsai and complimentary plants for set up. Take plants home, return them on 12/26 by 9:30

Dec 26 - 31 show opens at 10:30 and closes at 4:30.

Jan 1 - closed for New Years Day.

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

 Please do not forget to sign up for security / docent duty! See page 3 for the schedule. Check your calendar, select times you will be available to help and call **Linda Gill** with the dates and times. **Exhibitors:** participation is a must. **Richard Aguirre** needs to know what you plan to display so he can make the labels. Please refer to page 3 for labeling instructions. **Richard** also needs to know if you are planning a multiple piece table display for the perimeter. The deadline for labels is **Dec 10th**. 310.386.2559 or email him: usapounders@yahoo.com

Limit 5 displays per person (thematic displays count as one) ~space available, curator's choice.

October Meeting Notes *by Linda Gill*

Barry and Sandy Josephson returned. **Ralph Bischof** joined us from New Jersey. **Phil Chang**'s friend, **Jesse**, and the **Hagbury**'s were in attendance.

- ➔ We discussed labels. **Richard Aguirre** volunteered to be our new label man. **Important:** please see page 3 for labeling instructions.
- ➔ It's the Year of Rabbit; **Jim** may have one but if you do, please send him a picture of it. We will select the best.
- ➔ Call **Jim** if you need help with your formal display using a whole or half table. He will loan tables, stands, etc. if you contact him early, so as to be label ready by Dec 10th. **Jim** can help with label choices as well.
- ➔ **Marge** asked for a crew to set up on the 22nd. If you volunteered please be at the Huntington by 9AM. If you are not sure or wish to help, please call **Marge** first: 626.579.0420



Kathleen Fugle –Cave



Don Kruger –Mountain with a cave

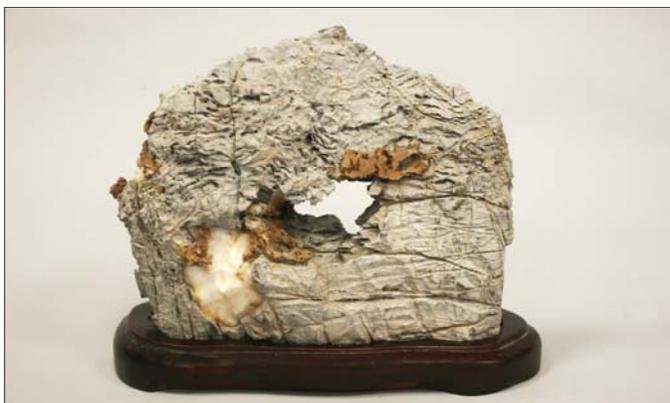
October Program Notes *by Linda Gill*

Stones with Holes, continued... **Jim Greaves** carried on where we left off last July (see the August newsletter Program Notes). **Jim** discussed stones from Antarctica, Murphy, Lake Hill, Italy, and China among others. All emphasized different aspects of stones with holes, giving each its own focus: cave, tunnel, grotto, etc.

Using stones brought in by the members, **Jim** reminded us that a cave stone should have a floor, depth, and is best with a bend in direction. **Jim** said of **Tom**'s Ligurian stone not to cut out the *daiza* beneath the arch as that breaks the idea of the *daiza* as the ocean.

Remember that if a stone has a hole (tunnel, cave, etc.), to be classified by the hole (i.e. cave stone) the hole must be the prominent feature, otherwise, the stone should be designated by its dominant form and, if desired, appended with a description of the type of hole present [see **Don**'s stone, lower left]. **Don**'s cave feature is minor in the context of the 2 mountain peaks.

Stone of the month- (stones with holes, part 2); The stone of the month was an extension of the **Jim**'s program. We had a lot of participation during **Jim**'s program and afterwards as well. See some of what our members brought in:



Phil Chang –Tunnel, Lingbi from China



Ralph Bischof –Tunnel from Oregon

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



Security/Docent Schedule

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

Date	Hours	Hours
Dec 26	10:30-1:30	1:30-4:30
Dec 27	10:30-1:30	1:30-4:30
Dec 28	10:30-1:30	1:30-4:30
Dec 29	10:30-1:30	1:30-4:30
Dec 30	10:30-1:30	1:30-4:30
Dec 31	10:30-1:30	1:30-4:30
Jan 2	10:30-1:30	1:30-4:30

Linda can be reached at **818.833.9883** or email her at **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. Please arrive 5-10 minutes before your time slot. **Remember your purpose:** you are there to educate and to secure our displays. **Linda** said, "It's a great chance to get better acquainted with your fellow 'stoners' and we encourage all members to come and serve even if you aren't showing. You'll learn a lot and it's fun!!!"

Japanese Festival at Descanso Gardens

Jim Greaves, Don Kruger and **Hanne Povlsen** staged an excellent exhibit on Nov 6-7. There were many thoughtful displays, some non traditional and all engaging and label-less. It was a perfect venue.

Below: Jim greets Flash and Nina At right: Taka guards the Minka



2010 Show Labels

- Designation** (choose one only)
 - Poetic Name ('Sitting with Fan Kuan')
 - Descriptive identification (e.g. Distant Mountain)
 - Japanese classification (e.g. *Toyama-ishi*) *
- Source** (choose one only)
 - Specific Site (e.g. Eel River, California)
 - Generic source (e.g. River, Desert or Coast) and/or State, Province or Region (e.g. Great Basin, Rocky Mountains, Northwest Coast)
- Name of Exhibitor**

* Hopefully, retaining some usage of Japanese names will impart a sense of the international and historical aspect of stone appreciation. Since this year we will not be using both Japanese and English names on individual stone labels it is suggested that the Japanese names be reserved primarily for stones that can be understood by the public without explanation in either language, such as a *yamagata-ishi* that can obviously be seen as a mountain. Note: If uncertain, the general categories below that are listed in **Matsuura's** new book may help.

Mountain shaped stones	<i>Yamagata-ishi</i>
Island stones	<i>Shimagata-ishi</i>
Shore or coastal stones	<i>Iwagata-ishi</i>
Waterpool stones	<i>Mizutamari-ishi</i>
Waterfall stones	<i>Taki-ishi</i>
Plateau stones	<i>Doha</i>
Stepped or terraced stones	<i>Danseki</i>
Stones with an opening [caves, arches, tunnels]	<i>Domon</i>
Figure stones & hut stones	<i>Sugata-ishi & kuzuya-ishi</i>
Pattern stones	<i>Monyo-ishi</i>

Labels will be consistent, made by **Richard Aguirre** and will be 3 lines total. Remember, you are limited to 5 stones or displays per person, space available. This year we will have 1-2 tables for international stones. The best from each country will be displayed, curator's choice.

If you have a multiple stone display, contact **Jim** for labeling instructions. 



Ask Guy Jim

Dear GuyJim,

Enough of the words, already! I need more quality time. Why not just show some stone photos and walk me to the beach before it gets dark?

Taka, Santa Monica

Okay Taka,

The days are getting very short. To make amends for some of this year's wordier discussions, allow me to celebrate the season with a selection of stones from California – some old, some new ... And as we enjoy the coming holidays, please take a moment to thank our service men and women for insuring that we may enjoy collecting stones rather than ducking them!



Indian Summer, Eel River, CA, 7 3/4" W x 1 3/4" H x 3 1/2" D, cut.



Rainy Morning, October, Eel River, CA, Steve Yong, (AVSRC)
8" W x 8" H x 6" D



The Lacquered Hills, Eel R., Alice Greaves, 7 3/8" W x 1 7/8" H x 4" D



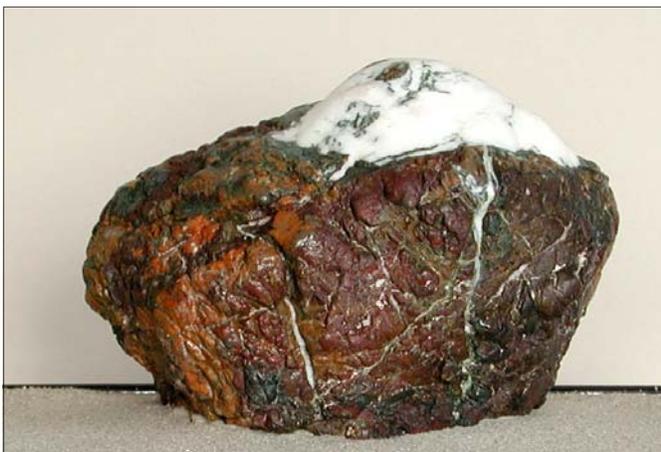
Autumn Kimono, Eel River, CA
Alice Greaves,
9 1/2" W x 14 1/2" H x 7" D



Chrysanthemum, Eel River, CA
Alice Greaves,
6" W x 8" H x 3 1/2" D



Autumn Embers, Stony Creek, Frank English, (AVSRC)
18" W x 7" H x 7" D, cut.



First Snow, Eel River, CA, 8 1/4" W x 7 1/4" H x 5 1/2" D





Autumn Glory, Stony Creek, CA, Ken McLeod, (AVSRC)
4 3/4" W x 1 1/2" H x 2 5/8" D , cut.



Pantry Scene : *Sleeping Cat*, Eel River, 5 1/2" W x 4 1/8" H x 3" D
Mouse, Saddle Peak Hills, CA., 3 1/2" W x 1 1/2" H x 2" D
Grain Sack, AZ., 5 1/2" W x 3 1/4" H x 4 1/2" D



Momiji-yama, Thomes Creek, CA, 19 1/2" W x 11" H x 6" D



Harvest Moon, Mokelumne River, CA, 5 1/4" W x 2 3/4" H x 4 3/8" D



Autumn Display, ETERNAL RHYTHMS: SEASONS & TIME –American Viewing Stones from the Greaves Collection, U.S. Bonsai & Penjing Museum. January 1 – June 17, 2009



The Next Range, Eel River, CA, Steve Yong, (AVSRC)
12 1/2" W x 8 1/2" H x 4 1/2" D



Taka, Shiba Inu,
20" L x 14" H x 7" W

Over Thinking and Under Feeling: A Difference in Approach from East to West

by Peter Warren

After my experiences at both the 2008 and 2010 ISAS symposia and along with reading much of the discussion and debate on the internet, it is obvious that the approach many people take to suiseki differs greatly.

It is not my place to criticise or denigrate opposing points of view but rather explain the why behind mine and hope that it helps others to understand their own. After a few years involvement within the bonsai and suiseki world in the west, both European and American, I have noticed that there is one particular topic which is very rarely discussed. Many enthusiasts and professionals wax lyrical about what is or is not a suiseki and how to understand it in simplified terms and conditions; however I have yet to find many people who talk about why they do suiseki. Although there are many reasons and none is superior to any other, we are all entitled to our opinions and tastes yet we are seemingly afraid to openly discuss our motivation.

My initial experiences of suiseki were entirely in a Japanese environment and I was lucky enough to be exposed to very high quality stones in a traditional environment. At first I found it strange that lumps of rock could be revered in such a way, however as time passed I began to truly enjoy the appreciation of suiseki in a deeper and philosophical way. After coming into contact with bonsai and suiseki I began to reconsider the logic which I had previously studied during a degree course in physics, as stones spoke to me of a world beyond my immediate comprehension. Suiseki is, to quote from the new **Matsuura** book, “anything but scientific” and allowed me to “feel the poetics and beauty of all things in nature.” Stones that have a provenance of over 500 years can tell us many stories but more importantly, if approached with the correct mind they can give us an insight into ourselves and the way in which we see the world around us.

Many of the Japanese aesthetic ideals are concerned with the passage of time and an implicit understanding that death is inevitable yet not to be feared. We are impermanent and the universe continues with or without us and suiseki is a reminder of this. A stone which was created before humanity and will outlast us, yet in this infinitesimal period of time has been appreciated by many, creates a chain of linked experience and shared history which varies according to the individual who gazes upon it. Therein lies the rub, the problem of the individual, and in the case of the appreciation of an Eastern practice through Western eyes, a significantly different mindset.

The logical mindset of the West at times has difficulty embracing the Eastern approach where less emphasis is placed on the quantification of reality and is more interested in the understanding of it through experience, observation and empathy. Rather than seek to define what is observed and conclude an eternal and universal truth, it accepts that “while I see this as x , tomorrow it may be y and for another viewer it may be z .” While a Japanese viewer may see a red mountain stone which reminds him of Mt. Wakakusa, an Italian may see Mt. Sassolungo in the autumn and another viewer may see himself walking through the hills surrounding his Pennsylvanian childhood home. It is true that all viewers see a mountain but in different contexts. This can be taken even further with more abstract stones, particularly object stones. In one figure stone different viewers can see dragons, dogs, people or whatever takes their fancy. An individual and particular appreciation of stones without the limitation of explicit names, either poetic or categorical, is a large part of the enjoyment of suiseki.

For me the beauty of suiseki is the lack of Aristotelian logic and the limitless possibilities a stone can offer the viewer. Without mystery and ambiguity, the beauty of a stone is lost and it becomes a rock, a geological formation with value only as a curio. The Japanese are well renowned to favour black and smooth stones with a quiet and simplistic appearance. Such a stone creates a blank canvas in which the viewer can see a rich tapestry of internal feelings which are destroyed by external considerations such as the geological composition or the positioning of the signature on a scroll.

Approaching suiseki through an either/or logic limits the ability of an enthusiast to appreciate suiseki. There is a greater depth to the practice of suiseki and whilst classification of stones is an important entry point into the deep and mysterious world, it is just that, an entry point. Others of a more spiritual or artistic bent will look to take further steps along the path provided by suiseki to a deeper and more personal, particular understanding. As I stated at the beginning, I firmly believe that no one reason for doing suiseki is superior to any other; for many the joy of collecting is the sole motivation and for others the classification and naming of stones brings pleasure. As you have seen in **Wil's** excellent series of notes from Japan, the umbrella of suiseki is wide and varied, however the motivation of each group and school of thought is



clear, distinct and evolves over time. Each can exist peacefully next to each other as they are all different viewpoints of the same thing. It is unfair to expect everybody to sit meditating in front of stones to get a deeper understanding of the nature of the universe (this is something which very rarely happens in my life); equally I feel that it is unfair to force everybody into the same way of thinking and interpretation which is something that taxonomy and the literal naming of stones does.

When approaching the discussion of suiseki, the motivation of others as well as one's own motivation for doing suiseki must be considered.

While I find the debates created by adherence to rigid systems on both sides of the argument both counterproductive and circular, it is not in keeping with the spirit of suiseki to add fuel to the fire or ridicule anybody else. Self improvement is not achieved by pushing others down, but rather by examining one's own position. I do not look to speak for the Japanese and my personal approach to suiseki is something which is rooted in both West and Eastern thinking and feeling. I have found in suiseki aesthetic ideas which resonate within and allow me to see through different eyes. Over time and without a conscious thought process, philosophical questions posed in quantum mechanics lectures began to explain themselves in ways which I am yet to fully understand. Only through further study and dedication will it become clearer.

* * *

Ed Note: **Peter** apprenticed with **Kunio Kobayashi** at *Shunka-en* in Tokyo for 5 years. **Peter** translated some of the display captions in **Katayama's** Keido books in previous newsletters and we are so fortunate to have him as a contributor. Thank you, **Peter**.

Some of the major players at the Stone Symposium in Pennsylvania, left to right, back row; **Wil** from Japan, **Peter Warren**. Front row; **Jim Doyle**, Mrs. **Morimae**, **Toy Sato**, Mr. **Morimae** and **Sean Smith**.



The Beauty & Spirit of Suiseki

Mr. Seiji Morimae's letter to the International Stone Appreciation Symposium Attendees

"I would like to teach everybody the deeper meaning of suiseki. The stones in the mountains and rivers become objects of beauty and respect depending on the heart and mind of the collector.

We have selfish hearts, we have individual ideas of how a stone must be seen or enjoyed. However, with study and correct manners, suiseki can become much deeper. In the pursuit of knowledge we ask ourselves questions such as 'What is suiseki?' and 'Who am I?' This leads us to understand what is fundamental in life.

There is a relationship between man and nature, our outside mind and our inner heart. A Zen master once said when asked such questions 'Listen to the stone.'

Once you have studied display for a long time, you begin to realize that the most important thing is to not display. This is the true heart of suiseki. It should not be a part of an ornamental display, instead appreciated for what it is, and within the stone there is greater depth.

Understanding this, we need to begin with a respect for the beauty of the natural universe....Together we need to search for the true heart of...suiseki."

October 2, 2010



Mr. Morimae in the tokonoma above, detail of his display, below



Personal Reflections

by Rick and Mimi Stiles

International Stone Appreciation Symposium South Central Pennsylvania September 30 - October 3, 2010

We are big tent people. We respect all forms of stone appreciation including Chinese *gongshi*, Korean *suseok*, Japanese *suiseki*, as well as the youthful American tradition. We adore ancient Druidic stone circles. We admire the enormous balanced stones found in the Northern Marianas. We love the Makapansgat Cobble and the Venus of Willendorf.

Kemin Hu cites a Chinese proverb that expresses this viewpoint, "Why is the sea great? Because it accepts all the rivers."

The International Stone Appreciation Symposium offered a fine venue to meet people from far and wide who love stones. **Seiji Morimae**, the keynote speaker, comes from a family of *bonsai* masters that spans 18 generations in Japan. Clearly this heritage gives **Mr. Morimae gravitas**. He is also a person with exquisite manners and admirable humility. When he spoke, he seemed to be finishing sentences in our own minds that we had been at a loss to complete. His gentle insights, and those of the other speakers, helped us think more clearly about our own practice of stone appreciation.

Mr. Morimae illustrated his refined theories of *suiseki* practice with a step-by-step tutorial in *tokonoma* display. His lectures provided a spellbinding opportunity to watch a master explain his art with ineffable patience. His lessons began with the basics: the core respect for spirit that goes into a display, and the appreciative attitude toward nature.

We learned about the importance of ritual and its roots in practicality. If the writing on a box lid must last for hundreds of years, the box needs to be handled in a specific manner to avoid damage. When one steps into a *tokonoma*, the very position of one's feet is critical. One must step forward in a manner so as to make the drawing of a sword impossible, thus showing that you are not an enemy, and that you approach this special space in the proper spirit. **Mr. Morimae** also demonstrated the careful selection of objects. He showed us how to place them, "carrying heavy things as if they are light, and light things as if they are heavy."

Sand is an entire subject in itself. Washing the sand cleans your mind. Brushing the sand brings you into a relaxed state. **Mr. Morimae** sees the sand as

analogous to the canvas of a painting. You position it carefully to make the stone appear to be deeply buried. You water it, tipping out the excess. Afterwards, you wash your hands and your face before returning to the *tokonoma*.

Mr. Morimae set up many individual examples of *tokonoma* display and then changed them all slightly. Time and again, he would show the profound effect of small changes. Truly he seemed to be a magician. He would change one little element and the whole scene would be different.

Kemin Hu delivered two lectures on Chinese Stone Appreciation. The Chinese tradition is older than the Japanese tradition. It dates to the late Tang Dynasty. It has its own unique characteristics. Certain stone types such as Lingbi, Ying, Taihu, and Kun stones have been particularly desirable throughout history. Some early Japanese stones may actually be Chinese Lingbi and Ying stones. There is tremendous depth and power in the Chinese tradition -- too much to be covered in such a short time.

In her second lecture, she addressed early connections between art and stone. Mainly, she spoke about the appearance of scholar rocks in Chinese painting, stone catalogs and other early sources. The classic theme of **Mi Fu** bowing to his elder brother stone has been painted many times, by many artists over the centuries. Earlier this year, we saw a 19th c. version of this same theme by a Korean artist at the National Museum in Seoul.

Much can be said about the relationship between art and stone. A host of collectable contemporary artists have been influenced by Chinese scholar rocks and other stones. The list is global and it includes the artists **Zeng Xiaojun, Liu Dan, Grace Bakst Wapner, Brice Marden, Zhan Wang, Laura Fay Mah, Giuseppe Attini, Ugo Rondinone, Paul Noble, Fabienne Verdier** and **Jean-Rene Goetz**. **Kemin Hu** alluded to this ongoing connection in passing, when she mentioned the curious fact that work by such artists generally sells for much more than the stones that provide the inspiration. Although this might produce chagrin in some quarters, good explanations for the disparity exist.

Larry Ragle described the long history of primary collecting in California. He presented a number of anecdotes and personal experiences about classic collecting sites in the Golden State. Attendees



scrambled for details, but **Ragle** joked that if you covet California stones, "it would be a lot easier and less expensive to buy them from **Ken McLeod** rather than trying to collect them yourself." Later, **Ragle** presented a fine slide show about "Keido Study in Japan" with good photographs of some of the teaching sessions.

Toy Sato spoke to the refinement of traditional *suiseki* practice in California during her lifetime, and her longstanding personal connections in Japan, where she is revered as a leader. She shared one cute story. During one visit to Japan, she was seated with her back to a *tokonoma* display. She couldn't see the display so she wondered why her hosts had placed her in such an unfavorable position. Only later did she discover that this was considered to be the place of highest honor.

Peter Warren, an affable Englishman and erstwhile acolyte (five years) at the Shunka-en Bonsai Museum in Tokyo, opened our eyes with his discussion of "Japanese *Suiseki* Esthetics." According to **Warren**, the Western tradition of esthetic appreciation is heavily weighted toward categorization. Our tradition defines capital "A" Art by what it is not. Art is not an every day thing. It is special. It hangs on a wall in a museum. This notion made no sense in traditional Japanese culture, where art was seen more in the context of the way life was lived. Objects such as ceramic bowls were both beautiful and utilitarian. The samurai sword was simultaneously a masterpiece of metallurgy, a superior weapon, and a classic work of art. Capital "A" Art and the everyday experience were of one piece. There was no estrangement.

Nishi Amane (1829-1897) went on a mission to the University of Leyden to understand these differences. He became the first expert in Western esthetics at a time when the Japanese didn't even have words for this area of Western thinking. He established the concept of *Bimyō Gako* (The Science of the Beautiful). He coined words in Japanese to illuminate ideas from the Western canon. Prior to his work, such concepts did not exist. Indeed, the very notion of "Japanese Art" as it came to be known in the West near the end of the 19th century could actually be seen as an export product inspired by what seemed to be desirable in Western eyes.

Warren sees this sharp historical difference as critical to our current understanding of *suiseki*. In the Japanese context, he asserts that "hidden meaning is held in higher esteem than the obvious, or the boldly exposed." In contrast, Western critique has always been more pre-occupied with categorization. Even the seminal text that informed many Americans, **Covello** and **Yoshimura's** *The Japanese Art of Stone*

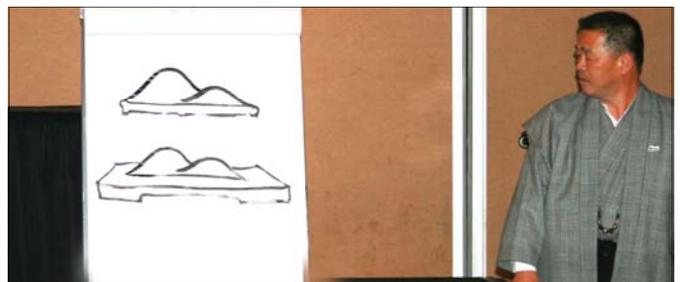
Appreciation, illustrates this bias. Twice as many of its pages speak to classification systems compared with the number given over to the more subtle concepts of stone appreciation organic to the *genre*.

The idea that one can access truth in realms beyond intellectual comprehension may seem difficult to grasp. The mysterious profundity and subtle grace of *yugen* expressed in Noh Theatre or 12th c. Japanese poetry test our capacity for understanding. From empty space beauty is born. Mystery and depth come from inaction. Action can be shown without movement. Ideas from this universe are said to be foundational to the frequently batted about terms *wabi*, *sabi* and *mono no aware*. Such concepts might possibly be thought to originate in the Japanese soul.

Today, neuroscientists have shown that many cognitive activities involve multi-centric origins within the brain. Functional imaging machines reveal these patterns. We may fancy we are operating strictly in the realm of consciousness, or at other times we are "feeling with our heart."

Actually we are activating circuitry in many areas of our brains simultaneously. A lot of this activity isn't strongly connected to conscious thought. We're lighting up the limbic system and other strange places that process emotion, pleasure and feelings even as we "think" consciously.

In physiological terms, the capacity to access truth in realms beyond intellectual comprehension really does exist. It isn't a Zen paradox after all. You might well be able to see *wabi sabi* on scanned images if you looked for it.



Seiji Morimae offered a number of intriguing comments in the question-and-answer sessions on the final day. "To be stuck on rules is not a high level of practice" he said. In the first world, one learns the techniques and the rules. In the second world, one leaves them behind. One approaches stones with humility. One approaches them with an open mind. One approaches them with respect for nature. At the highest level, according to **Mr. Morimae**, one relies on ambiguity or implied presence. Objects are not needed. One sees with the heart, not the eyes. The opportunity to show a stone is an opportunity to



express your own ideas quietly. In some ways the most important thing is not to display.

Morimae reminded us gently that "America is a young country -- less than 250 years old." He cautioned us to "think about our stones 100 years from now." Perhaps we should even think about our stones 500 years from now. This admonition is timely.

We are still in the early days of American stone appreciation. The stones we collect today could be precious objects of artistic and cultural importance 500 years from now. Some of the attendees at this symposium may become the "Old Masters" of the American school. Yet the establishment of provenance is critical for posterity. We need to document everything about our stones and objects. The stone you find in a river today or the **Sean Smith daiza** you commission may be priceless art 500 years from now, but the odds of this happening are negligible if the history gets lost.

During our visit to Pennsylvania, we had the opportunity to examine an exquisite antique *doban* made by **Masabumi** about 200 years ago using a unique type of bronze admixed with silver, called *shibuichi*. This piece was owned by **Katayama Ichiu** whose writing appears on the storage box. **Katayama** founded the *Ichiu-Kai*, a study group for *Keido* masters. **Masabumi** came from the **Goto** lineage, a family that produced sword furniture throughout the Edo Period. This piece is the only *doban* by **Masabumi** known to exist in the *suiseki* world. It's a wonderful object but without provenance it wouldn't convey the same irreplaceable links to *suiseki* history.



Distant Mountain Stone (*Toyama-ishi*) 38cm x 11cm x 12cm
Collected by Hirao Tao, Northern California circa 1955
Masabumi doban, Japan circa 1810

One of the hallmarks of mature thinking is the capacity to hold two contradictory thoughts at the same time. If, on the one hand we may need to place less emphasis on categorization, on the other hand we may also need to be more careful about recording these very same details for posterity. Ask any museum director. A **Rembrandt** without provenance is not a **Rembrandt**.

Thoughts on Mr. Matsuura's New Book

Wil from Japan

Last month at the Stone Symposium in Pennsylvania I had the opportunity to meet some old friends and a number of new people as well, all of whom had come together for a single purpose. It occurred to me at the time that the reason we had come together must have seemed incredibly strange to the other guests at the hotel where the event was hosted, and yet it remains even stranger to me still for its ability to arrest and so utterly distract those of us who go to such great lengths to pursue it.

No more than 12 hours before the flight to Harrisburg a box was delivered to my little Tokyo apartment containing the first few copies of Mr. **Matsuura**'s new book, *An Introduction to Suiseki*, which I had the pleasure to translate and help develop the content of. Literally sent directly as they rolled off the press, the timing could not have been better in terms of being able to introduce the book to people in the US.

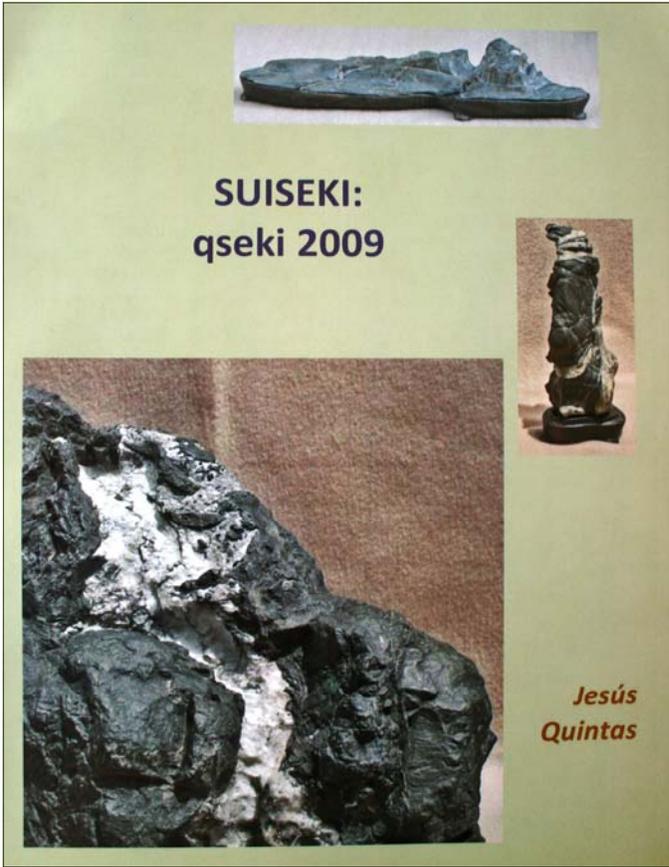
Upon arrival I was pleased to meet quite a few people who had read my short articles in last year's newsletters, and I was very happy to hear that many of them appreciated what I had written. I think it was particularly these individuals who enjoyed learning that Mr. **Matsuura** has released a new book, and while the few copies that I brought were all given away, a handful of people have since ordered them and I hope that everyone who has bought it is enjoying the read. To them, and everyone else who is thinking of getting it, Mr. **Matsuura** and I are both deeply grateful.

Of course, like all works of man, this book is not without its imperfections. One astute reader caught an error just in time for a correction slip to be included in the front of the book before shipping, and other criticisms are sure to follow. I take full responsibility for any mistakes or ambiguity, and ask only that you cast your stones lightly (and preferably *shohin*-sized). What Mr. **Matsuura** and I would most hope for is rather that readers find the book of interest, and perhaps find somewhere within the text something new, confirmation of something supposed, or clarification of something in doubt. It may leave readers wishing for more- whether it be more pictures of unknown stones or more detailed analysis and explanation, but in an introductory text there is only so much material that can be reasonably covered, and it was thought that sticking to the basics made the most sense. At least this time around....

Again, to everyone who has bought a copy, thank you! I hope more will follow suit and that the book will serve as a useful reference for years to come.

Book for Sale

Jesús Quintas has recorded his collection of suiseki in a wonderful book which chronicles his 20 years of interest in viewing stones. There are 33 stones each of which is photographed from different views along with his personal description and in some cases, a haiku also written by the author. Occasionally the translation is a bit awkward but not so much as to interfere with our understanding. Mr. **Quintas** discusses *daiza* display but not classifications because he said, "If I need to state the shape category to which the stone is to be ascribed, then I have failed." 88 pp, 8.5 x 11.5, soft cover, \$35 post paid. To order, email jqb@ analisisasesores.com



**SUISEKI:
qseki 2009**

*Jesús
Quintas*

Tom Elias Honored

Tom Elias was one of fifty-eight foreign recipients worldwide (10 in the U.S.) to be conferred with the Order of the Rising Sun. This was in recognition of significant career contributions in the enhancement of goodwill between Japan and the United States. The Order of the Rising Sun is the second most prestigious decoration after the Order of the Chrysanthemum which is awarded only to politicians, military leaders, or royalty. The medal will be awarded at a ceremony at the Japanese Embassy.



This is an extraordinary and well deserved honor. Congratulations, **Tom**.

Get Well Tom Elias

Tom will undergo spinal surgery November 11 at San Antonio Hospital in Upland. We all send **Tom** wishes for a speedy recovery. Get well cards may be sent to him at: 2447 San Mateo Court, Claremont, CA 91711

~ Stone Sales ~

Ken McLeod

209-605-9386 or 209 586-2881

suisekiken@sbcglobal.net

An Introduction to Suiseki

Aiseki Kai copies are all sold out. Please contact Mr. **Matsuura** directly to order ¥8,000 plus shipping (discounts available on orders of 10 or more) Email: matsuura@suiseki-assn.gr.jp.

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
Treasury/Membership: Nina Ragle 949.497.5626
Annual Exhibit: Jim Greaves 310.452.3680
Exhibit Set Up: Marge Blasingame 626.579.0420
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Historian: Ray Yeager 760.365.7897
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Newsletter Committee

November Contributors: Linda Gill, Jim Greaves Rick & Mimi Stiles, Peter Warren 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!

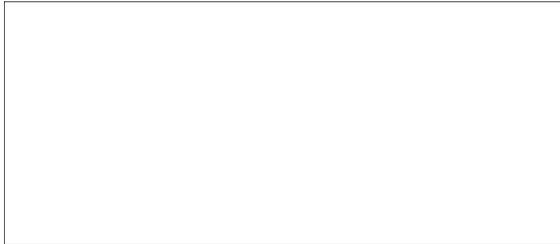
Ragle
P.O. Box 4975
Laguna Beach CA 92652

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Leaves no stone unturned

See our website:
aisekikai.com



Coming Events

Happy Holidays

Dues are Due. Become an e~subscriber and save a tree: Send \$10 to CA Aiseki Kai c/o Nina Ragle, P.O. Box 4975, Laguna Beach, CA 92652-4975.

BONSAI-A-THON XV

GSBF Collection at the Huntington Fundraiser, Feb 26-27, 2011, Huntington Botanical Center, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino, 7:30-4:30. This is a fundraiser so bring donations! 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: margeblasingame@att.net

Always check Golden Statements Magazine Calendar section for additional coming events

21st Anniversary Exhibition at the Huntington

Dec 26 - Jan 2, 10:30-4:30,
closed on Jan 1st. Set up: Dec 22-23
Stones and plants on Dec 23
Plants go home that day and return
Dec 26 by 9:30



Refreshments

Thank you **Barry & Sandy Josephson, Bruce McGinnis, Joe & Arlene James, Hanne Povlsen, Kathleen Fugle, Kit Blaemire** and **Don Mullally**, for the October snacks. There is no meeting in November so save up those recipes for our holiday party in January.



★ Has anyone noticed that we have the most awesome “break for snacks”? Thank you all for your amazing creativity and generosity this year. It’s been great for the spirit if not the waistline. Thank you **Bill & Lois!!!**