

SEMI-CASCADE STYLE BONSAI

Chapter 7

NOTES

I. OBJECTIVES

As a result of studying this section of the *Intermediate Bonsai Syllabus*, viewing audio visual presentations, or participating in other activities provided by an instructor, you will be able to:

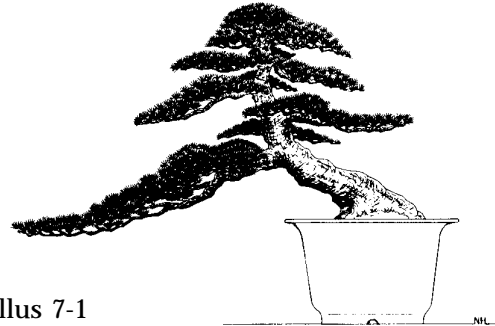
1. Describe the principal identifying features of *semi-cascade* style bonsai which distinguish it from other bonsai styles.
2. Using an appropriate stock plant, create a *semi-cascade* style bonsai in training.

II. GENERAL

- A. A *cascade* style bonsai is one in which a major feature extends below the lower rim of the pot.
- B. A *semi-cascade* style bonsai is one in which the major cascading feature extends below the top rim of the pot but does not extend below the bottom of the pot.
- C. The *semi-cascade* style bonsai may incorporate one or more of the characteristics of an *informal upright*, a *slanting* and a *cascade* style tree.
- D. It depicts a tree in nature growing on a mountain top with all or a part of it hanging over the edge.

III. SEMI-CASCADE STYLE BONSAI DEFINED

A. The *semi-cascade* style bonsai is one in which there is an *informal upright* or *slanting* style trunk whose trunk, or unusually long first branch, cascades below the rim of the pot but not below the base of the pot.



Illus 7-1

B. Trunk

1. May be in the *informal upright* style with a **semi-cascading branch**.
2. May be **extremely slanted**, extending to the right or to the left over the edge of the container and then cascades below the top rim of the container but not below the bottom of the pot.
3. **Tapered** from a wide base to a narrow apex.

C. Branches

1. On the trunk in the *informal upright style semi-cascade* bonsai, the first branch is usually long and cascades below the rim of the pot but not below the base of the pot. The remainder of the branches are as on an *informal upright* style bonsai.
2. On the **extremely slanted** style the first branch is often a rear branch and the remainder of the branches project to the front and to the rear.

D. Container

1. The **container** should be relatively deep and may be round, square, octagonal, hexagonal, or a deep cascade.
2. The container may be glazed or unglazed depending on the species of tree.

IV. STYLING THE TREE

A. Roots

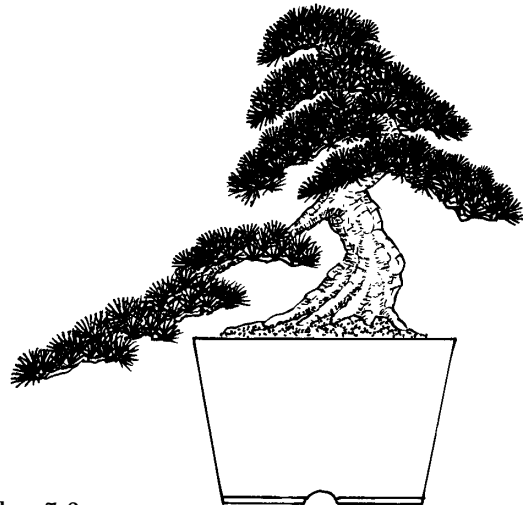
1. Remove **surface soil** down to relatively thick radiating roots.
2. **Surface roots** should radiate in several directions but should be strongest on the side away from the direction of the lean.



Illus 7-2

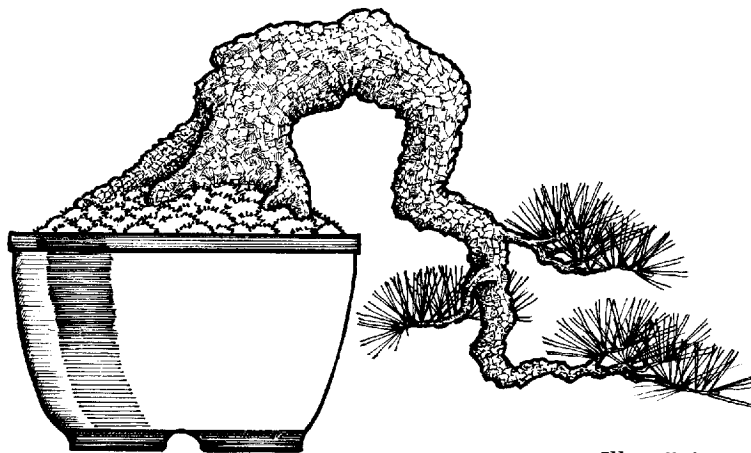
B. Trunk

1. On an *informal upright style* bonsai with a **semi-cascading branch**:
 - a. The curved trunk should emerge from the soil at an angle.
 - b. The **front** of the tree must have either the semi-cascading branch to the right or to the left. Which of the two sides is selected as the front depends on the trunk's other characteristics and branching.
 - c. The radius of the trunk's curves should become less higher up on the trunk.



Illus 7-3

2. On an the **extremely slanted** *semi-cascade* style tree:
 - a. The curved trunk should emerge from the soil at an extreme angle toward the side of the container over which it cascades.
 - b. In the vicinity of the lip of the container, the trunk arcs downward, below the lip of the container, and then turns parallel to the table or bench on which it is placed.



Illus 7-4

C. Branches

1. On an *informal upright* with a **semi-cascading branch**:
 - a. The semi-cascading branch should be the lowest and heaviest branch. It should extend at about a 45 degree angle to approximately midway between the rim and base of the pot. The tip should flare upward.
 - b. The remainder of the branches are positioned and styled as on an *informal upright* style bonsai.
2. On the **extremely slanted** tree:
 - a. The first branch should be a rear branch to give an

immediate sense of depth.

- b. Shorter branches may project toward the front.
- c. An upright apex may be created toward the tip of the cascade using a vertical growing branch. It is then styled as a small *informal upright* tree.

V. POTTING THE TREE

- A. Prepare the correct size and style **container** as described earlier, and assemble the appropriate **soil** mix.
- B. Decide on the tree's **location** in the pot.
 - 1. Position it in the container to the rear of the center line and either left or right of the center.
 - a. In deciding whether to place it to the left or to the right consider the location of the cascading element.
 - b. If the cascading element is on the right, position the tree to the left of center. Vice versa if the cascading element is on the left.
- C. Remove soil and roots from the rear and from the left or right side depending on placement.

Note: Details on potting are discussed in the chapter on formal upright style bonsai and will not be repeated here.

VI. SUMMARY

- A. A *semi-cascade* style bonsai is one in which there is either an *informal upright* or *slanting* style trunk whose trunk, or unusually long first branch, cascades below the rim of the pot but not below the base of the pot.
- B. It has a curved trunk, tapered from base to apex.

Semi-Cascade Style Bonsai, Continued

NOTES

- C. The container is relatively deep and may be circular, square or a deep cascade and may be glazed or unglazed depending on species of tree
- D. The tree is positioned in its container to the rear of the center line and either left or right of the center depending upon the location of the lowest branch or other characteristics which provide weight and mass.