

# TWO TREE/TWIN TRUNK BONSAI

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## Chapter 9

### NOTES

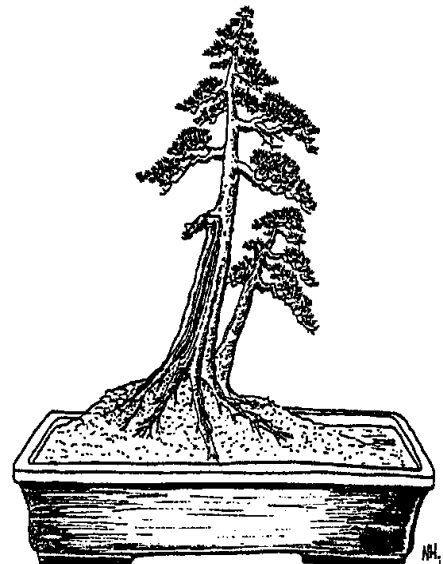
#### I. OBJECTIVES

As a result of studying this section of the *Intermediate Bonsai Syllabus* and 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 the *two-tree* and *twin trunk* style of bonsai.
2. Using an appropriate stock plant, create a *two-tree* or a *twin-trunk* style bonsai in training.
3. Demonstrate the creation of a *two-tree* or a *twin-trunk* style bonsai.

#### II. GENERAL

- A. The *two trunk* and *twin tree* styles of bonsai are examples of a group planting in which **two trunks** of the same species material create a single composition.
- B. They depict a tree in nature which
  1. May have had a lower branch which, seeking sunlight, grew nearly vertical.
  2. May have had its main trunk split vertically, creating two upright trunks.
  3. May have had a seed begin growth at or near its base, which either grew as a separate plant or grafted itself to the larger tree.



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### III. TWO TRUNK AND TWIN TREE STYLES BONSAI DEFINED

- A. A *Two-trunk* style bonsai is one with two trunks on a common root system. A *twin-tree* style bonsai is one in which two trees of the same species are arranged in one composition.
- B. They may be created in most any primary style: formal upright, informal upright, windswept, literati, etc.
- C. The most obvious difference between *two-trunk* or *twin-tree* style bonsai and single trunk bonsai is the number of trunks.
- D. Other differences between the *two-trunk* or *twin-tree* style bonsai, which are not as apparent, involve styling techniques to be described below.

### IV. STYLING A TWO-TRUNK OR TWIN-TREE STYLE BONSAI

- A. Trees which lack all around good branching may be desirable for this style because one can compensate for the shortcomings of the other.
- B. The two trunks of the composition are considered a **single unit** when selecting and placing branches and when forming the overall silhouette.
- C. The two trunks must **complement** each other. If one is straight, both should be straight. If one is curved, the other should be curved, etc. The direction of the curves or slants of the trunks should complement, and to some degree, mirror each other.



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## Two Tree/Twin Trunk Bonsai, Continued

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- D. The two trunks should be of **different height and girth**.
  - a. The shorter trunk should be either one third or two thirds the height of the taller trunk.
  - b. The shorter trunk should have a proportionally smaller girth.
- E. The **shorter trunk** of a *twin-trunk* composition should grown from the base of the larger rather than from a position higher up on the larger tree.
- F. The **first branch** should come from the lesser tree which is younger and still retains its lower branches. It normally is the longest branch.
- G. Select the **front** of the tree(s) as in other styles, but consider both trunks simultaneously when making decisions.

### V. POTTING THE TREE(S)

- A. Prepare the correct style and size **container**. A slab may be used or a shallow glazed or unglazed oval or rectangular shaped container may be appropriate.
- B. Prepare the appropriate soil mix.
- C. Decide on the **location** in the pot for the tree(s).
  - 1. The **base** of the shorter tree of a *two-tree* composition should be as close to the base of the larger tree as possible. This is accomplished by removing a wedge of roots from the larger tree's root ball and fitting the smaller tree's reduced root ball snugly into the opening.
  - 2. The shorter and smaller trunk/tree should be planted **to the rear** of the larger trunk for better perspective of depth. If this is an unsatisfactory arrangement, then the lesser tree should be planted forward of the larger

## Two Tree/Twin Trunk Bonsai, Continued

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tree. Their bases should not be **equal distance** from the viewer as seen from the front.

3. Whether the tree is placed to the left or to the right in the container depends on the overall silhouette created by both trunks. The rule usually applies that the **greater soil space** is located under the greater spread of foliage mass.

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

### VI. SUMMARY

- A. *Two-tree* and *twin-trunk* style bonsai may be in most any primary style.
- B. There are some special design considerations when styling *two-tree* or *twin-trunk* bonsai.