

A BONSAI-SHAPED MIND &
POSTURES OF THE HEART

PROSPECTUS



A Limited First Edition from Mixolydian Editions and Nawakum Press

Mixolydian Editions and Nawakum Press announce another new first edition, a celebration of all that is bonsai. *A Bonsai-Shaped Mind & Postures of the Heart* from Marc Peter Keane is their fourth collaborative publication. Their prior edition *LOOM* won the Carl Hertzog Award for Excellence in Book Design. This new endeavor explores the art of bonsai, presented as two books in one.

Bonsai, the ancient art of cultivating miniature trees, embodies a unique and captivating form of natural beauty. At first glance, these diminutive masterpieces appear to be small, delicate specimens, yet they possess a profound and timeless elegance that transcends their size. Every twist of a branch, every carefully trimmed leaf, and every winding root tells a story of time, discipline, and a deep connection between the artist and the tree.

Bonsai trees, with their artful combination of wild nature and human creativity, invite contemplation. They evoke a sense of tranquility, offering viewers a glimpse into a demanding and intuitive process, a harmonious relationship between humanity and a small slice of the natural world. The meticulous care and attention to detail required to shape and maintain a bonsai tree is a testament to the patience and dedication of its caretaker.

Bonsai's relevance today lies in its fusion of nature and artistry. In our fast-paced world, these miniature trees symbolize patience, mindfulness, and the beauty of simplicity. Beyond aesthetics, they serve as a reminder of the importance of nurturing and preserving our environment, making it a timeless and meaningful practice.

The first section of the edition is titled *A Bonsai-Shaped Mind* and consists of a series of five short essays on bonsai from internationally known author and artist Marc Peter Keane, living in Kyoto, Japan. They address bonsai culture, the awe-inspiring yet humble nature of the art form, and the foresight required to work within this realm. For the author bonsai is a living art; it is the art of shepherding; it is the art of inheritance. His translations of short poems from Japan's Heian period share the stage with the writing.

Master wood engraver Richard Wagener has created a number of large, end-grain boxwood engravings for this section, inspired by actual bonsai specimens at the Pacific Bonsai Museum in Washington State. Each specimen engraving comes with a descriptive provenance for that specific tree. All engravings are printed on Japanese gampi paper on Wagener's Pratt Albion hand press.

In the second section of the book the reader will find an intricately crafted short story in nine parts. It follows a sole shimpaku bonsai tree, backwards and forwards in time. The story takes place over a five-hundred year period, incorporating both the distant past and an uncertain future. Three owners of the bonsai, and their circumstances while shepherding the tree, are portrayed. And again Wagener's wood engravings add depth and grace, printed with his hand press on Japanese handmade Yamagampi.

Kokin Wakashū 490

The pale moonlight
spreads gently across the waiting
pines of Okabe,
Evergreen everlasting
no less my heart's desire

ABOUT THE EDITION

A Bonsai-Shaped Mind & Postures of the Heart was designed and co-published by David Pascoe of Nawakum Press and Richard Wagener of Mixolydian Editions. Boxwood engravings were created and printed by Richard Wagener at his studio in Petaluma, California. The short story, essays, and poetry translations are by Marc Peter Keane. Eighty-two copies at 9 3/4" x 10 3/4" inches are published at seventy-two pages.

Joel Benson printed the text at Dependable Letterpress in Vallejo, California. The center spread, with four-color letterpress printing, is by Rebecca Chamlee of Simi Valley, California. The handmade papers used are Twinrocker and Japanese gampi. Suminagashi paste papers are by New York based artist Natalie Stopka. Additional paste papers were made by Marie Kelzer of Marina del Rey, California. Binding assistance by Sandy Tilcock of Ionegoose press in Bisbee, Arizona, and bound by Jace Graf at his Cloverleaf Studio in Austin, Texas. The book is published in three different states.

Engraver's Edition: 22 copies.

The full leather binding, with terra cotta covers and dark green spine, has a suminagashi inset with stamped leather title panel. The traditional shiho chitsu enclosure has a Tamo ash wood inset on red and black Japanese silk book cloth. A paper chemise encloses five large bonsai tree prints and one unique print.

Deluxe Edition: 26 copies.

Hard cover Bradel binding with leather spine, partial suminagashi paper and dark green book cloth, with stamped letterpress kanji label inset. Sand colored clamshell box with light green suede trays and stamped leather inset label. Paper chemise with three prints from the book.

Slipcase Edition: 30 copies

Limp cover sewn binding with green patterned paste papers over thin boards, dark green Japanese book cloth spine, housed in a two-tone beige and green slipcase with letterpress label.

Two copies retained in loose sheets and two copies hors de commerce.



Unless the reader understands and sympathizes with the solitude and tranquility of the mind, born of the Oriental love and appreciation in daily life of beauty in the simple and the unassuming, he will not be able fully to know the value of truly artistic bonsai.

Shinobu Nozaki, 1940

ABOUT THE ARTIST

RICHARD WAGENER is a printmaker and book artist specializing in fine wood engraving. He has an undergraduate degree from the University of San Diego and a graduate degree from ArtCenter College of Design. At Mixolydian Editions he has published his own prints and books and has exhibited internationally. His work is in the Special Collections of over one hundred fifty public and private institutional libraries around the world.

Wagener was awarded the 2016 Carl Hertzog Award for Excellence in Book Design, and was also awarded the Oscar Lewis Award from The Book Club of California for his contributions to the book arts. He currently lives and works in Petaluma, California. In the Fall of 2021 he spent time in the Pacific Northwest researching bonsai at The Pacific Bonsai Museum.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MARC PETER KEANE is an internationally known landscape architect, artist, and author who received his degree in landscape architecture from Cornell University before relocating to Kyoto, Japan in the mid 1980s. First as a research fellow at the University of Kyoto, and later working from his own design studio, he spent eighteen years there honing his skills.

After many years in Ithaca, NY, Keane returned to Kyoto where he continues to design gardens and write. His work is deeply informed by Japanese aesthetics rooted in simplicity, serendipity, and counterbalancing. Keane is the author of ten books including: *The Art of Setting Stones*, *Japanese Garden Design*, and most recently, *Of Arcs and Circles: Insights from Japan on Gardens, Nature and Art*.

ABOUT THE PRINTER

JOEL BENSON, proprietor of Dependable Letterpress, began putting ink on paper in 1987 at the University of California in Santa Cruz, California, while studying philosophy and ancient Greek. He apprenticed at The Yolla Bolly Press. Joel started his own Press in 2002 in a basement in San Francisco's Mission District, later moving his shop to the base of Potrero Hill, and then to Vallejo, California.

It is a confluence, a coalescence, an amalgamation of every hand that has touched it, every blade that has cut into it, every mind that has pondered its existence.



For inquiries contact:

david@nawakumpress.com

richard@richardwagener.com



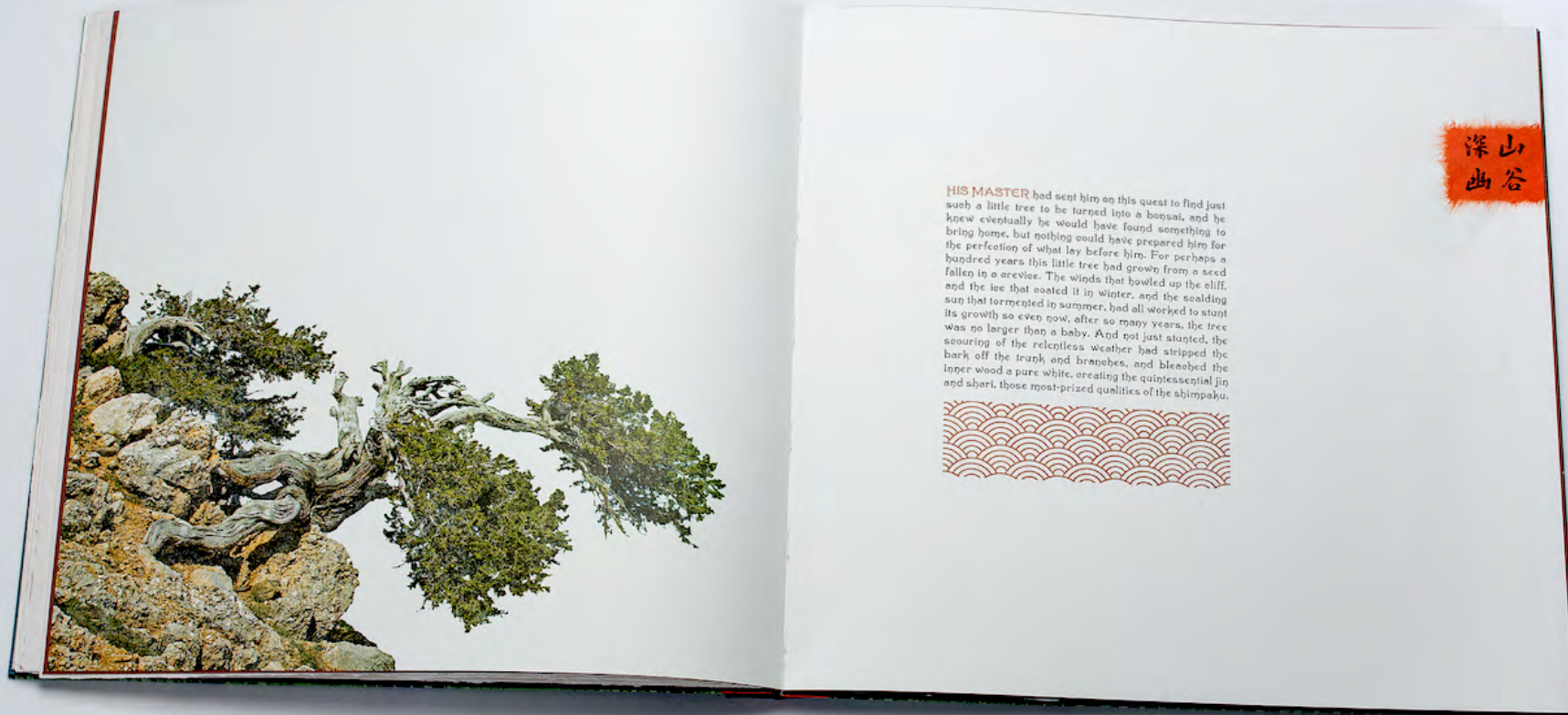
A Bonsai-Shaped Mind & Postures of the Heart • Slipcase Edition • \$1,950



A Bonsai-Shaped Mind & Postures of the Heart • Deluxe Edition • \$2,800



A Bonsai-Shaped Mind & Postures of the Heart • Engraver's Edition • \$4,400



HIS MASTER had sent him on this quest to find just such a little tree to be turned into a bonsai, and he knew eventually he would have found something to bring home, but nothing could have prepared him for the perfection of what lay before him. For perhaps a hundred years this little tree had grown from a seed fallen in a crevice. The winds that howled up the cliff, and the ice that coated it in winter, and the scalding sun that tormented it in summer, had all worked to stunt its growth so even now, after so many years, the tree was no larger than a baby. And not just stunted, the scouring of the relentless weather had stripped the bark off the trunk and branches, and bleached the inner wood a pure white, creating the quintessential jin and shari, those most-prized qualities of the shimpaku.



深山谷

A Bonsai-Shaped Mind & Postures of the Heart • Interior Sample 1



Senzai Wakashū 397
Could it be this first frost
settling gently over the land
In dawn's clear light
I hear ever so faintly
the sound of a temple bell

A Bonsai-Shaped Mind & Postures of the Heart • Interior Sample 2

Cork Bark Japanese Black Pine

This pine was donated by Toshio T. Saburomaru, a bonsai artist who began teaching bonsai to small groups in the 1950s and helped make the art of miniature trees a popular garden hobby throughout the world. The tree has been in training since 1960. The rugged nature of black pines in general is valued in bonsai culture, but the cork bark has the next level of barking that makes this tree special.

Mr. Saburomaru, or "Tosh" as he was called, was born in Hollister and raised in California and Japan. After serving in the army in World War II, he moved to Palo Alto. In the late 1950s, he opened the Tosh Bonsai Nursery in Palo Alto. After studying with bonsai master Yuji Yoshimura, he organized the Kusamura Bonsai Club of Palo Alto, which generated several other clubs on the Peninsula. Mr. Saburomaru maintained bonsai nurseries in the mid-Peninsula area for forty years, and went on to help found bonsai clubs around the world.

As a teacher, Mr. Saburomaru lead teaching tours to South America and Japan, where he exposed students to the latest in bonsai art. He also was known for the many beautiful Japanese gardens he designed and installed at private homes around the Bay Area.

Pinus thunbergii var. "Tsukasa"



