



Book Reviews (Margaret Hodgson)

Bonsai, Its Art, Science, History and Philosophy
by Deborah R. Koreshoff

255 pages, 31 colour photographic plates, 223 black and white figures. Index. Hardbound, Copyright Deborah Koreshoff, 1984 and reprinted in 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1990 and 1992. Timber Press, Oregon, USA.

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Deborah Koreshoff, born in 1957, was immediately immersed in the world of Bonsai, her parents both being involved in bonsai meetings, lectures and demonstrations. Her father was the holder of the largest and oldest collection of exhibition quality bonsai in Australia and this remained his major outlet of his artistic talents. She began her own collection at the age of seven years, and, by the age of fourteen years, was giving lectures and demonstration of bonsai locally and throughout

Australia. After graduation from Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia, her efforts went into writing this book which has had nine reprints, such was its popularity. The book remains as one of the most informative on the subject of bonsai. For many years she was the Education and Programme Officer for the Bonsai Society of Australia, as well as a major contributor to the magazine, "Bonsai Australia". In late January, 2008, Koreshoff gave up the world of bonsai to take on other artistic pursuits.

In the opening pages of ***Bonsai, its Art, Science, History and Philosophy***, the author makes special mention of the outstanding photograph used for the front cover, one of her father's pines which illustrates the beauty in the world of bonsai. The photograph is again repeated as the frontispiece, illustrating both the usual "Containerized form and as we see the tree in our imagination". The photograph was named "Dragon Flying Through the Clouds", and the author gives a vivid description of the significance of this name. As the title suggests, the author has given the reader practical information of the Art of Bonsai, but has added to the pleasure of reading this book by presenting the historical and philosophical aspects for the art as well. Each chapter follows detailed information of the mechanics of successful bonsai methods, material required, how to achieve proper shaping, notes on fertilizing, soil required, and expands into the artistic construction of developing group settings, containers which are appropriate to use and the qualities of achieving success in exhibition and display of bonsai. Koreshoff credits Penny Wright for the beautiful photography in the book. The colour plates are outstanding and almost make the book worthy on its own as an expression of great beauty. The black and white figures assist greatly for any reader who is considering trying his/her at a new art form, that of Bonsai. This book is in our library.