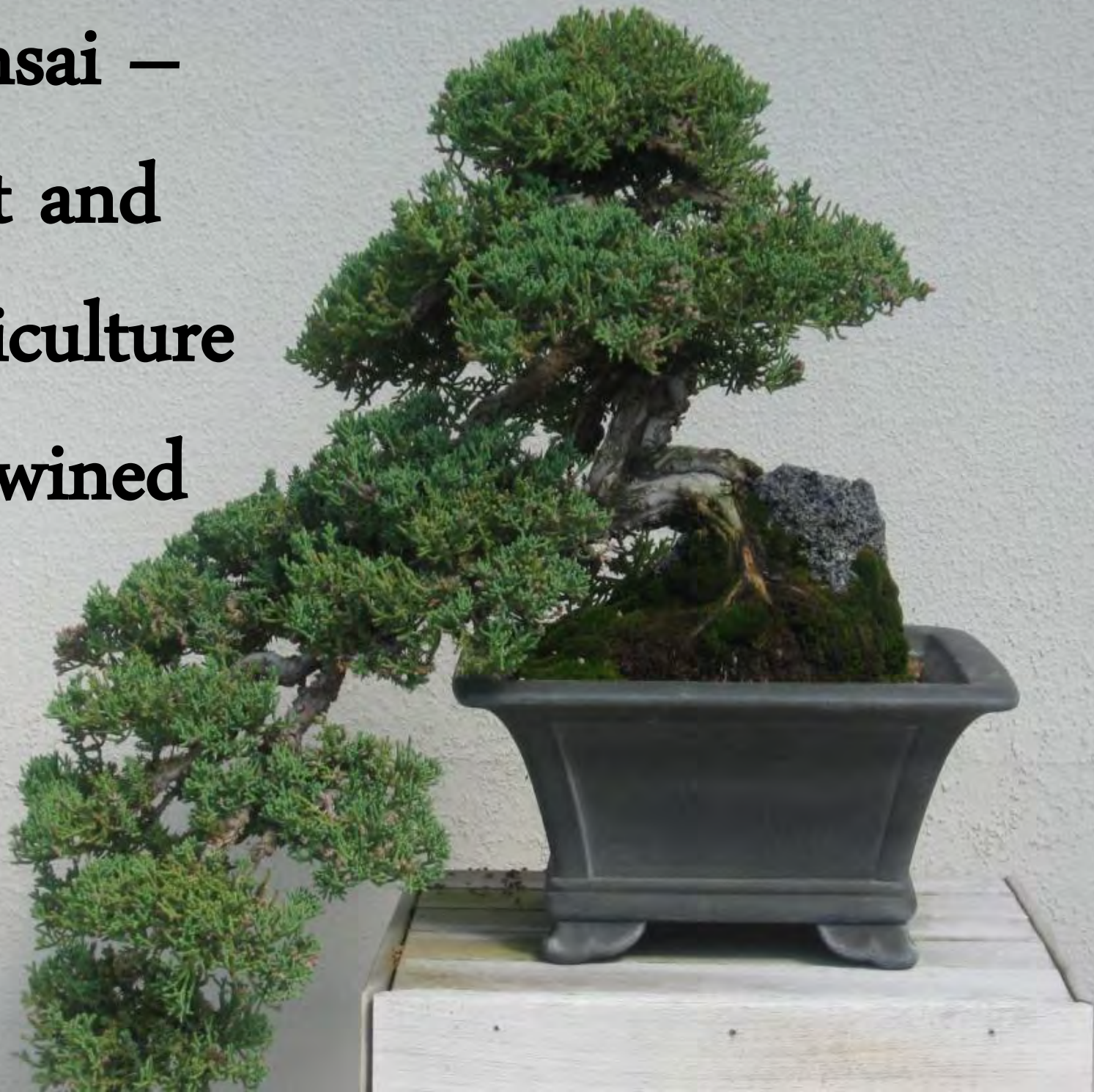


**Bonsai —
Art and
Horticulture
Entwined**



How are Bonsai kept so small?

- They stay small because the small container limits their growth.
- The roots & tops are cut back regularly to keep the plants happily growing in a small container.
- Bonsai are repotted regularly. Generally evergreen plants every 4 – 6 years and deciduous plants every 2 – 4 years. Age and vigor are then taken into account.
- Winter pruning is a good time to correct or refine the structure or shape of an older, more well-established tree.
- Younger trees need shape or structure pruning more often than older trees.

Bonsai can be started from a simple nursery plant. Through selective pruning & years of training a beautiful Bonsai can be created. They can also be started from a large plant or seedlings.



Nursery plant

Initial Pruning

First wiring

Repotting

When repotting the plant must be removed carefully from its container. Here the gardener loosens the plant from its pot. Then it is either gently tugged loose at the base of the plant or pried out of the pot .





Once removed the dense mat of roots is visible.

The roots are carefully combed apart with a metal hook. This may also be done with a knitting needle, chopstick, or a similar tool.





Roots are pruned with very sharp cutters to encourage growth of younger “feeder roots.” No more than 1/3 of the fibrous root system is removed.

The newly pruned plant is placed on a layer of new potting mix. The mix is also packed around the root ball. We use a coarse mix of $\frac{2}{3}$ aggregates and $\frac{1}{3}$ fir bark. This allows for good drainage.





The great variety of Bonsai tools used for pruning roots and branches.



Pruning

When the first flush of growth starts in the spring it is time for gardeners to prune back the new shoots. They may do this several times during active growth.



Just as gardeners prune outdoor woody plants to direct growth, Bonsai gardeners select which leaf to prune back to according to the directions they would like new growth to appear.

Each plant is pruned according to the species needs and the gardener's design plans for size and shape.

Plants may also be more severely pruned and shaped with wire to create a new shape or form.

