

= Goshin =

Goshin (Japanese : 護身 , " protector of the spirit ") is a bonsai created by John Y. Naka . It is a forest planting of eleven *Foemina junipers* (*Juniperus chinensis* ' *Foemina* ') , the earliest of which Naka began training into bonsai in 1948 . Naka donated it to the National Bonsai Foundation in 1984 , to be displayed at the United States National Arboretum ; it has been there ever since . The individual trees represent Naka 's grandchildren .

= = History = =

Naka began working with the first two of the eleven trees that would ultimately make up Goshin in 1948 ; he created a " two @-@ tree style " composition using two *Foemina junipers* of equal height . In 1953 , Naka created a " formal upright " style *Foemina* , during a demonstration for his bonsai class . He also acquired a taller tree (eventually to become the main , tallest tree of Goshin) , which was replanted in the ground and gradually thinned and shaped ; it was ready for showing by 1960 .

Goshin first took shape as a forest planting around 1964 . Inspired by a forest of *Cryptomeria japonica* near a shrine in Japan , Naka first combined the four trees he had already developed into a single , 4 @-@ foot @-@ tall (1 @.@ 2 m) composition . He soon added three more , to create a seven @-@ tree forest bonsai . Naka also had to modify the pot to ensure adequate drainage ? the lack of which caused one of the trees , and its repeated replacements , to die . At the time , Naka had seven grandchildren , each of which was represented by a tree . At the urging of fellow bonsai artists , he named his composition ; he called the bonsai " Goshin " , meaning " protector of the spirit " , in reference to the forest shrine that inspired it . By 1973 , Naka had eleven grandchildren , and he augmented Goshin concordantly .

In 1984 , Goshin was displayed at the Philadelphia Flower Show in mid @-@ March , where it was viewed by about 250 @,@ 000 people . At the show 's conclusion , Naka donated Goshin to the National Bonsai Federation (which he had helped launch in 1976) , to be displayed in the new North American Pavilion (named in his honor) of the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum at the United States National Arboretum in Washington , D.C. Since 1984 , Goshin has repeatedly graced the covers of prominent bonsai magazines , and it is one of the most widely recognized bonsai .

Naka returned frequently to Washington to check in on and supervise maintenance of Goshin , including extensive work in 1999 . Later that year , he created another forest bonsai that is known as Goshin Two . When Naka died in 2004 , one French site published a cartoon captioned (in translation) : " John Naka has gone . A whisper of astonishment wanders in between the branches of Goshin . "