

# Mike Rogers

FLORIDA BONSAI ARTIST

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Several years ago I joined a bonsai society and made an effort to make friends in the bonsai community. One of the first people I met was Mike Rogers. Mike was

to work with him. After all these years of knowing and working with Mike I still laugh and enjoy creating bonsai with him.

Mike is a wealth of bonsai knowledge and his

them as a young man and learned the way of plants. He is a horticulturist and can tell you the Latin name of most plants along with their cultural requirements.

Mike started to read about bonsai in the late 1960's. He read as many books as he could find and joined a few bonsai societies to meet people with common interests. He grew in his bonsai knowledge and his ability as an artist. He styled as many trees as he could get his hands on, and before long he had several hundred bonsai in his collection.

He was one of the founding members of the Asagao Study Group and the Palm Beach Bonsai Club, now known as Bonsai Society of the Palm Beaches. He was also a member of several other clubs in South Florida. Mike, along with Helen Souder, Jim Moody, Jim Smith, Joe Samuels and a few of the other greats of Florida bonsai, were the driving force in spreading the word of bonsai in the state.

Mike has had the pleasures of creating bonsai



*Si-Diao BST 2008*



such a nice man and was always willing to answer questions and help everyone who showed an interest in bonsai. He would spend time with newcomers and help them style a tree, and continually offered encouraging words. If you needed something he would order it for you and always remember to bring it to the next meeting. His laugh was contagious and he always makes bonsai fun! It has been a pleasure

work is beautiful. Take a trip to his nursery – you will see the work of a true artist. Mike is truly an artist. He falls in love with his trees and does bonsai for the sheer joy of it. I have always admired that about him – if he loves a tree he will not sellout to the highest bidder. His work is his reward.

Born and raised in Florida, Mike's family roots go back to his farming grandparents from South Florida. He helped



## Mike Rogers

CONTINUED

with many of the greats of Florida Bonsai including: Joe Samuels, Ed Trout, Jim Moody, Mary Madison and Jim Smith – just to name a few. He also took advantage of learning from the visiting artists from the early years like John Naka, Ben Oki, Roy Nagatoshi and many more.

**M**ike wanted to grow Japanese Maples, Azaleas and several other hardwoods that struggled in South Florida, so he moved to Deland and built a home for his nursery in 1991. He started to collect Bald Cypress, Hornbeams, Hackberries and many other native

species. Along with them came several varieties of Japanese Maples. Mike has one of the most extensive Japanese Maple collections in North and Central Florida.

He is also well-versed in tropical species, having spent all those many years in Fort Lauderdale. He has a huge collection of tropicals on which he works as well. His work in bonsai and the cultivation of these trees is amazing. He has propagated many varieties, and many of his early trees have grown and matured into beautiful works of art.

Mike also works extensively with Azaleas and Bald Cypress, and can boast of several masterpieces in his collection.

Once you visit his nursery you have a new appreciation for Azaleas, Maples, Hornbeams and Bald Cypress. You realize he does all this work on his trees, has a family and holds down a demanding job – that's dedication.

**I** can say that after the many years of knowing Mike that he is a true friend, and has taught me so many things and has helped me in so many ways with my bonsai. He will create beautiful Shimpaku junipers in his workshop. His knowledge is overwhelming and his eye for creating and seeing the bonsai in a tree is amazing. Don't miss learning from him and letting him help you to

understand the beauty in the trees. He will help guide you and bring his design knowledge and understanding to each and every tree in the workshop. He is a very patient teacher and knows how the trees will react to the wire and training.

These workshop trees were purchased from Roy Nagatoshi's Fuji Bonsai Nursery in Slymar, California and are very nice old trees with a lot of potential!

This will prove to be fun and a great learning experience. I hope you all enjoy Mike Rogers at the 2008 Convention. Visit Mike Roger's website: [www.mikerogersbonsai.com](http://www.mikerogersbonsai.com) for more information on his nursery.

*Louise Leister*



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