

## Two Chinese Hardstone Bonsai Trees.

This September, Michaan's Auctions is offering **Two Chinese Hardstone Bonsai Trees (\$400-\$600)** in our Asian Art department. The larger of the two bonsai sculptures depicts a Chinese peach tree in a rectangular, spinach-colored planter, while the smaller is a flowered bush in a cloisonne enamel flowerpot.

Bonsai is a technique of growing woody, limbed plants and artificially preventing them from reaching their normal size. The name *bonsai* is an amalgamation of two Japanese kanji words, “bon” and “sai,” which together roughly translate to “planted in a container.” Despite being deeply associated with and an intrinsic part of Japanese culture, bonsai finds its origins



in ancient Chinese horticultural practice. It is unknown how and when exactly the practice came to Japan, but it some that Buddhist monks brought the practice to Japan in the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

Chinese bonsai is called penjing, and depicts a more natural and wild vision of nature, especially when compared to Japan's refined and more stylistic technique. While Japanese bonsai tends to focus on a singular

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tree or plant, penjing often consists of multiple plants displayed in landscape form, and can include additions like rocks or figurines to better depict a natural scene. Chinese bonsai is also seen planted in various different materials, such as directly in water or on a rock.

While bonsai is typically associated with the cultivation and sculpture of trees, any kind of plant species with a woody stem or trunk that grows true branches is able to be shaped into a bonsai tree. This is because bonsai as a technique of growing involves



pinching buds, pruning and wiring particular, and carefully restructuring fertilizer use to limit and redirect healthy growth. Above all, bonsai is a way to celebrate, capture, and abstract the beauty in nature and the changing of seasons on a miniature scale.

Michaan's Auctions catalogues can be viewed on our website: [www.michaans.com](http://www.michaans.com), Live Auctioneers, and Michaan's Live. Bid live in our gallery or remotely via online, phone, or absentee bidding.

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