

Saikei and Art, Miniature Landscapes

Author - Lew Butler
Publisher - Lew Butler
ISBN - 0-9772443-0-X
Library of Congress Catalog Control Number - 2005907221

The development of saikei within the context of an individual's national comprehension is well illustrated in this book. It is a well-presented modern journey of discovery that takes the Asian syntax of our art and translates it into a western US context.

While some of the saikei illustrated are very twee, the development of principles and the horticultural information is first class. The identification of plant material shared adds to the pool of knowledge available to the saikei student.

This is a useful addition, if not a priority, to add to your bookshelf.

Saikei: Living Landscapes in Miniature

Author - Toshio Kawamoto
Publisher - Kodansha International Ltd
ISBN - 0-87011-048-9
Library of Congress Catalog Control Number - 67-26311

This is the definitive English definition of saikei written by Toshio Kawamoto as a framework for the development of what was then an emerging art form. While the presentation may be of the '60s, the artistic and technical content still stands at the forefront of our art.

A huge amount of information, well presented and structured to inform the student of saikei as they develop their understanding. It develops the student's understanding of the elements of composition and the balance necessary to create and maintain saikei of substance.

This book belongs on the bookshelf of every student of saikei.

Creating Bonsai Landscapes, 18 Miniature Garden Projects

Author - Su Chin Ee
Publisher - Storey Publishing
ISBN - 1-58017-484-1
Library of Congress Catalog Control Number -

With a strong Chinese influence, the 18 projects outlined here are very much in the penjing and as such will enrich the student of saikei's portfolio. The projects show a range of animal and spiritual themes derived from the traditions and mythology of China but with just a hint of occidental pragmatism.

The approaches to creating containers, the use of material and the aesthetics will add to the richness of your approach to saikei. The balance of this book is focused on the practical creation of penjing and as such gives practical guidance to the student of saikei as they experiment with technique and develop their own pallet.

This is a useful addition, although not at the top of the list, to add to your bookshelf.

Bonsai Landscapes

Author - Peter Adams
Publisher - Ward Lock
ISBN - 0-7063-7767-2
Library of Congress Catalog Control Number – 94-13707

With an eye to the artistic, this book takes a literal interpretation of landscape as its principal. The designs and ethos outlined are very European in their perspective and only pay peripheral respect to the Asian traditions. The outline of the artistic approach is excellent, while some of the elements are closer to what we would know as kusamono today.

The development and outline of the artistic analysis is of the highest standard but has only a limited value to a student of saikei. The drawings and planned development as well as care analysis are of the highest standard, and very useful to all of us and will translate well into saikei.

This is a useful addition, but would be a little way down the list before you add it to your bookshelf.

Landscape in Miniature

Author - John Constable
Publisher - Lutterworth Press and Sheldon Press
ISBN - 0-7188-2602-7 or 0-85969-412-7 (Paperback)
- 0-7188-2608-6 or 0-85969-435-6 (Hardback)
Library of Congress Catalog Control Number -

A very unusual approach to miniature landscapes, a little Legoland in its approach, and definitely not a serious text on saikei. Having said that the book is not a saikei text, it offers excellent advice on plant varieties and the horticulture of growing them in Saikei-type environments.

If we leave the model making out, the information on plants is very useful. The rest of the book would have little value to the student of saikei.

Borrow a copy from the library, unless you happen across a low-cost copy.

Miniature Living Bonsai Landscapes, The Art of Saikei

Author - Herb L Gusthafson
Publisher - Stirling Publishing Co Inc
ISBN - 0-8069-0734-7
Library of Congress Catalog Control Number -

This book provides a comprehensive analysis of the techniques, tools material and all of the other elements that allow the student of saikei to increase their comprehension of the techniques and approaches required to create saikei of interest. The analysis of the history and the elements that are behind saikei is clearly laid out and easy to follow.

Uncharacteristically for the author the technical content provided here has far greater value than the artistic content. The content lays out in some detail the material the rocks, the soils, the plants etc. Perhaps most importantly for the student of saikei there is a good outline of the care of saikei.

This is a useful addition to your bookshelf but not essential.