

Planning for a Flash slideshow

Slideshow: "Cutting Back the Hornbeam"

<http://www.macloo.com/syllabi/advancedonline/assignments/bonsai/slideshow.htm>

Steps

1. Decide on your story and shoot your photos.
2. View all your photos at full size on a computer and decide which ones are good.
3. Figure out what the user needs to know in order to understand this story (make notes).
4. Match your good photos with the story you intend to tell.
5. Go shoot new photos (if necessary).
6. Plan photo sizes and Flash movie size together.
7. Edit photos, save as BMPs.
8. Import photos to Flash.
9. Position and animate photos (leaving space for text!).
10. Write text *as needed* to tell the story well.

Preliminary list of photos I intend to include in this slideshow:

This list comes *after* you have your photos. You have already picked out the best photos you've got. You are also thinking about a sequence in time. This makes a "how to" story pretty easy to tell, because it is appropriate to tell it in chronological order.

1. Whole tree before any cutting
2. Close-up to show how many twigs and branches it has before cutting
3. Macro close-up of little bud
4. Cutting the twigs
5. Chopping off half of the fork
6. Doug pointing to the fork
7. Cutting off the dead part of the root (this didn't get in)
8. Wiring the little branch (6 photos to choose from)
9. Wire around the roots to hold it in the pot (3 photos)
10. The big chomp
 - a. What it looked like before
 - b. Doug hacking at it with tools (5 photos)
 - c. Raw wood after cutting
11. Putting "cut paste" on the raw place
12. Tools
13. Box of wire
14. Empty pots on the deck

What do I need to tell the viewers (users)?

Make sure your users can understand what's going on in the photos.

1. This tree is a bonsai. What kind of tree? What is a hornbeam?
2. What is a bonsai?
3. The first thing is cutting off every little bit beyond the first bud on a twig. You must keep the bud.
4. After it's all trimmed down, Doug figures out how to shape it. But he didn't really tell me how he figures that out (it's kind of an instinct).
5. He cut off half of the fork near the top to get a single line going up.
6. He cut off a big dead stump of a root at the base. (It just looked ugly.)
7. He uses wire to make a branch start to grow a certain way. It's "training" the branch how to grow. The branch was pointing up. Now it will grow out horizontally.
8. Wire is also used to tie the tree to its pot. Before there's dirt in the pot, the wire is threaded through the holes in the bottom of the pot and wrapped around the tree's roots to hold it in. The pots are shallow, so the big tree might fall out when you are moving the pot around.
9. Doug spent a long time hacking off wood at this spot at the top of the thick part of the trunk. This is to improve the line of the tree or make the line smoother. It's hard work because the wood of the hornbeam is quite hard.
10. He has this jar of brown goop called "cut paste." All the writing on the jar is in Japanese. Bonsai vendors sell this stuff and the tools, pots, etc. Doug puts the cut paste on that large raw space at the top of the trunk to protect the tree from disease.
11. In the end, the tree is ready to grow out into a shape (shape of the foliage) that Doug can see in his mind.

At this point, I realize I don't have a good photo for the end of the slideshow. Doh! I needed to go back and *take a new photo* of the tree as it looks after the cutting is finished. I had originally taken some photos of the finished tree, but they were all too poor in quality to use in the slideshow.

“Screenplay” for the final movie

Photo	Text	Motion
Whole tree before any cutting	1) The hornbeam is native to the eastern United States and is found throughout most of North Florida. Its name—“horn”- (for toughness), “beam” (old English for tree)—refers to its very hard, tough wood.	Zoom in and slide to emphasize tree, not Doug
Close-up to show how many twigs and branches it has before cutting	2) Bonsai can be developed from seeds or cuttings, from young trees or from naturally occurring stunted trees transplanted into containers. Bonsai range from about 2 inches to 3 feet in height.	No motion on photo— Text slides in
a) Cutting the twigs b) Macro close-up of little bud	3) First, Doug gives the hornbeam a “haircut”—he cuts each slender twig back to the bud closest to the trunk. Doug has been working on bonsai for about 20 years.	Cutting tool slides right to left and reveals the little bud remaining
Doug pointing to the fork	4) Doug says half of this fork must go ...	Mask centers your eye on the fork (to compensate for bad blurry photo)— Mask opens up
Chopping off half of the fork	5) ... so that fork is gone!	Mask closes down on the intact fork— Then mask opens up to show missing fork, now cut off

Tools	6) Bonsai tools Most of these tools come from Japan	No motion— This shot adds visual variety so it's not all the tree and Doug
Wiring the little branch (3 photos)	7) Wire is used to “train” a branch to grow in a desired direction.. This branch had been growing upward. The heavy wire will help it to grow horizontally instead.	Cross fades show sequence in time
a) Box of wire b) Wire around the roots to hold it in the pot c) Empty pots on the deck	8) Copper or aluminum wire is also used to anchor the tree in its shallow pot. Bonsai pots always have holes in the bottom for drainage.	Cross fades again— This time to imply relationship among the box of wire, the wired roots, and the empty pots
a) Gesture shows the part at top of trunk that must be re-aligned b) Doug hacking at it with tool c) The big chomp	9) This part of the tree must be cut to improve the line of the trunk.	Mask opens outward (left & right) to focus on the same part of the tree, where Doug's attention is focused— Then a wipe (with mask) to show big brutal cutting tool
Putting “cut paste” on the raw place (2 photos)	10) When the cutting is finished a large raw patch needs to be “bandaged” with a compound called cut paste, which protects it from disease.	Cross fade shows a time sequence
Final tree (two weeks later)	11) The hornbeam (two weeks later) was showing its new leaves and doing very well.	Pan up from pot to top of hornbeam tree, showing its new look— Zoom out to show whole tree and pot