

Root-Over-Rock Bonsai



Inspiration

National Bonsai &
Penjing Museum

Chinese Elm (67 years)



What is Root-Over-Rock?

- Nature inspiration:
 - Soil Eroded
 - Bedrock exposed
 - Roots cling to rock, searching for soil
- Contrast: Tree-in-Rock
 - Tree grown in a pocket
 - More common in penjing



Suitable Material

- Young seedlings/saplings
 - Roots still flexible
 - Vigorous grower
- Rock
 - Think about size of final tree
 - Character of rock vs. character of tree
 - Ridges, cracks, texture for roots to grip



Process

- Bare the roots & create cavity for rock
- Wrap roots around the rock
 - Try to align roots w/ ridges/valleys in the rock
 - Roots “follow the water”
- Fasten roots to the rock
 - Wire, rafia, plastic wrap, aluminum foil, etc.
- Bury most of the rock in soil
- Feed and allow to grow vigorously
- Repot each year
 - Expose roots when possible



Some More Examples

