



Nifty Trees

Whitepaper - A Platform for Creating and Selling Bonsai NFTs

The Digital Tokenization of Ancient Japanese Art

Abstract

In this paper we present Nifty Trees, a digital tokenization solution for bonsai trees built on multiple block chains: Ethereum & Tezos which enable anyone to interact with non-fungible tokens (NFT) using standard smart contracts like FA2, TZIP-12 & ERC-1155. Each Nifty Tree has one or many series of tokens that are the moment-in-time embodiment of specific points in the progression of a growing bonsai. Along with the visible virtual representation, the NFT contains metadata about the tree species, location, transaction history, and ownership of the token. Nifty Trees is our first approach to increasing the market liquidity for the regal art of bonsai. We provide a public platform enabling digital trading at a worldwide level. Beyond economics; we aim to establish the universal virtual location for recording and sharing the journey of bonsai compositions as they evolve to be legacy art. We believe the increased interest in the commodity of Nifty Trees will help transmute the art of bonsai into a consumable format for the information era. This innovation is possible due to the emerging technology at the intersection of cryptographic technology and growing appreciation for bonsai art. The Nifty Trees platform allows approved 'Pagodas' to mint their bonsai artwork, instantiate tokenization representation for the asset, and provide the investment opportunity to enthusiasts across various industry markets. Nifty Trees MVP goes live at the end of Q3 2021 with an unveiling of the first collection and series of purchasable tokens at the 7th annual 2021 U.S. National Bonsai Exhibition in Rochester, New York, USA.



NIFTY TREES

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Bonsai in Brief

Japanese Origins: Passing Tests of Time

The art of bonsai originated in Japan after the Chinese art of Penjing, the representative growing of trees in containers with respect to natural forms, migrated from China in the 12th century. Bonsai became a core artistic outlet for the expression of creativity in Japanese culture partially because of the societal practice of Shinto, the perspective of supernatural entities inhabiting all things. There is a degree of respect taken when displaying bonsai during the year.

The living art form of bonsai tangibly explores the harmonious pairing of a tree and its respective container often formally displayed with other compositional natural elements. Trees as living creatures have the capability to exist for thousands of years and currently, there are documented bonsai which have seen more than 7 generations of hands train them.

Japanese culture goes hand in hand with the art form and there is a deep appreciation for the practice among the general population. It is typical for a corporation or private investor to own a masterpiece bonsai and trust the supporting nursery to maintain or enhance the piece of art. The financial sponsor can be recognized for the awards and related prestige commanded by the bonsai from society. These beautiful and valuable living pieces of art appreciate in both aspects, compellingness/value, over time with the guidance of trained bonai professionals.

Over the vast centuries of bonsai practice in Japan, many talented artists mark the evolution of the Japanese aesthetic of design for a wide variety of tree species. With the financial support of the Japanese economy, these artists were able to dedicate their lives to fulfilling their ikigai or purpose in life: the intersection of vocation, mission, professional, and passion. These locations, upon which the iconic Japanese bonsai artists gained reputation, are handed to the future nursery stewards to continue to explore their passion in bonsai. Imagine that option for others.

Global Adoption: Europe & United States Today

The deep dedication of Japan's practice of bonsai art impressed many different types of people from around the world. Bonsai attracted foreigners to visit Japan to learn the techniques which were brought back to the visitors' home country. These seeds of knowledge eventually grew into mature bonsai cultures distributed across various countries in Europe. Each country is eager to explore the potential of unique tree species available in their country and thrives on competition.

The passion for bonsai is fervent and established across generations in European countries like Italy, France, Spain, England, Germany, Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, and more. Thanks to dedicated artists like David Benavente, Walter Pall, Mauro Stemberger, Nicola Crivelli, Marija Hajdic, Peter Warren, Harry Harrington, Jan Culek, Horst Heinzreiter, Will Baddeley and dozens of others; bonsai is a facet of European culture. There are centers for learning, practicing, and cultivating techniques necessary to transform enthusiasts into seasoned practitioners under the guidance of experienced artists.

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Beyond the people, Europe is ripe with a large variety of native species unique to the Northern Hemisphere. Pines, Junipers, Flowering Deciduous, and Native Olea species are prolific across the continent. With the prevalence of bonsai enthusiasm, there are many refined yamadori bonsai specimens in the hands of experts across the continent. An established network of practitioners allows for the enthusiasts to be educated further exploring the possibilities of tree art specific to the home country, dipping into pure expression of the natural surroundings.

Across the oceans, in North America, bonsai took root in two primary regions to serve as centers of cultural exploration and teaching: New York and California. Let it be known that many other locations in the country also fostered communities of bonsai practice. From the primary hotspots, there is a generation of legends like Yuji Yoshimura, John Naka, Mary Madison, Nick Lenz, Kathy Shaner, Dan Robinson, and many more who emerged and deeply inspired the country. Many dedicated individuals have completed Japanese apprenticeships and returned home to teach, establish nurseries, schools, and public collections. With the flame of American bonsai established, local clubs are continuing to foster new interest where a second generation of bonsai legends are currently exploring and evolving the definition of American bonsai.

The American continent has sensational native tree species, Junipers, Pines, Spruces, Oaks, Elms, and countless unique unexplored varieties, allowing for new frontiers of bonsai to be reached. An undeniable pillar supporting the current growth and surge in American bonsai is Ryan Neil of Bonsai Mirai. By providing a consistent platform for obtaining knowledge and honing techniques for bonsai, a wave of enthusiasts are able to implement their skills with confidence and guidance from their own homes. “High tide raises all ships” and the US is in an era of rapid growth and adoption of bonsai practice at all levels of the art. Here we go!

Barriers to Trade

International trade is limited at a global level for the distribution of bonsai, especially in the United States. By implementation of the Plant Protection Act in 2000, there are strong regulations and permitting required to enable the import of trees from other countries. If and when there is a facility capable of importing bonsai, they are then required to quarantine the imported trees for a lengthy period of time increasing the risk of failure.

Regionality is another factor which limits the trade of bonsai art across different parts of countries or the world. Tree species adapt to the climate from their native environment. When placed into a bonsai container, the species still needs the same environmental stimuli required to survive. Basic examples include tropical bonsai not being able to endure the cold winters and Alpine species struggling to find dormancy in tropical climate zones. The zone envy in bonsai prevents enthusiasts from being able to fully enjoy all types and species of bonsai without undergoing drastic, unrealistic, or unsustainable measures.

Traditionally, buying high caliber bonsai is limited to local or regional outlets and requires a vast degree of knowledge & commitment to cultivate. Nifty Trees unlocks owning a virtual representation of your favorite bonsai from anywhere on the globe.

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Product Design

The era of information, data, and digital culture is prevalently integrating into humanity. Nifty Trees serves the global community of bonsai enthusiasts and practitioners through providing accessible content documenting the bonsai journey in a novel way. With the advent of non-fungible tokens (NFT), Nifty Trees creates the capability to personally own bonsai art as an addition to your investment portfolio while directly supporting the artist.

Nifty Trees - Virtual Trees

Using blockchain technology, Nifty Trees provides a publicly available global record & registry for indicating ownership of a NFT. The information is published onto the network and is uncontested thanks to network consensus validating the transactions. This allows people to see the interactions and trading from wallets to validate the state of the NFT related to the bonsai.

Registered entities called Pagodas, are empowered to mint Nifty Trees through the platform to effectively create a series of tokens representing the bonsai tree virtually. This includes the visual representation and associated meta-data. The content is available for the public based on the integration with the blockchain and IPFS. In future versions, we aim to provide consumption returns to the owner of the tokens being consumed through cultural usage of the asset.

A token indicates ownership of the data profile for the tree: historical information, pictures, video, 3d scans, botanical data, and awards/honors. These assets have utility and inherent value, which will increase as our society moves deeper into the information age. The virtual tokens persist after the tree dies and can continue to be traded. The bonsai may have many series of tokens minted. As the bonsai matures over time, each series of tokens represents a single moment in the journey of the material. Imagine a meeting room where the Nifty Tree on the table gradually matures from seed to an established bonsai over 1-hour, from your portfolio.

Bonsai on Chain

A future service offering which will allow for fractal ownership of a physical bonsai through NFT representation. The globally available ownership record provides uncontested asset security by allowing anyone to see the transactions and ownership of the tokens. The physical asset, or bonsai display (tree, container, stand and any pairings) resides with the sponsoring "Nifty Trees Pagoda", where the bonsai lives. The bonsai is represented by a series of tokens, which when minted, are available to be purchased and can be owned by one or many individuals or groups who are interested in the tokenized bonsai art. Pagodas can effectively mint tokens and trade virtual bonsai assets representing the physical art as a commodity.

Investors have free will to trade, sell, or buy shares of a Bonsai on Chain on the Nifty Tree Market/open market. As time progresses, each Bonsai on Chain will continue its artistic journey and the shareholders of the token benefit from the future advancements and interactions related to the bonsai specimen. This token offering will be available in the Beta phase of release.

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Solution Objectives

Increasing the Global Liquidity of Bonsai Art

The public ledger of blockchain enables transparent ownership & trading of NFTs and thus an opportunity to represent the physical bonsai art with digital tokens. Digital tokenization of a single bonsai tree enables fractal ownership at a global scale. This concept is interesting to us as it unlocks the investment into a Bonsai on Chain tree for as many individuals as configured. A single specimen can be owned by 1 to 1,000 different people and still reside with the Pagoda.

Individuals and large investment entities alike are able to diversify their portfolio by investing in a Bonsai on Chain specimen. Nifty Trees is forging a new type of investment which is similar in nature to a 'digital security' by definition. Owners of the Bonsai on Chain tokens experience the inherent benefit of the value increase of the physical bonsai art as it matures over time.

By trading virtual bonsai assets representing the analog version of the art as a digital commodity, we will see an increased interest in bonsai as an art in general. We anticipate the platform for the creating and trading bonsai NFTs will increase interest and awareness of the bonsai art across the world. Ultimately, Nifty Trees will help the world recognize the value of time invested in the design of a bonsai tree along with the skill of the artist. One benefit of this approach to trading bonsai art is the removal of any need to physically move the tree. A Pagoda can tend to the specimen and effectively share equity of the asset to the public without any logistical challenges. Token owners are able to realize the increase of equity as the art evolves.

Evolving Bonsai

As a company, Nifty Trees contributes 10% of profit towards investment in the advancement of bonsai and similar arts. This is not limited to and includes educational scholarships, support and development of public collections, bonsai communities, bonsai societies, and related programs.

Nifty Trees will establish the first virtual bonsai museum which will allow internet users the ability to see bonsai content from anywhere on the globe. As technology advances, similar to the Podcast 2.0 approach, we aim to directly connect the consumers of NFTs with the bonsai artist financially. Bonsai artists who are able to create a reliable and consistent income through the practice of their craft become self-sufficient. Individuals can innovate and explore their unique expression of bonsai in deeper and new ways. Funding to support the bonsai artist allows each individual or group to forgo the need to travel or sell their art to continue their practice.

With an increased penetration of bonsai art into mainstream culture and media, Nifty Trees will create a recursive cycle of interest in the art and simultaneously give the evolving technology a new channel for growth and expansion. To centralize the virtual content, Nifty Trees will document the progression of bonsai art in a globally available manner which provides accountability, revenue generation, and a deeper appreciation of nature in the world.

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Roadmap

Nifty Tree Alpha

In the Alpha version we simply accomplished the first minting of a Nifty Tree in the form of a NFT on the Tezos blockchain. The asset was published to Tezos and IPFS on 5/2021. We then established a minting process and proof of concept for what capabilities are available regarding token interaction. Hawk Eye Bonsai of Austin, Texas was the initial Pagoda with an Olea bonsai as a specimen for creating the first Nifty Tree. The specimen will have a series of 100 tokens.

Nifty Tree MVP

In the MVP version targeted for release in Q3, September at the US National Exhibition in Rochester, New York; the opportunity for being a pagoda is by private invite only. An application form is available on www.niftytrees.com for any parties interested in becoming a Pagoda.

This version offers the capability to create and access an account, bind your Beacon compatible wallet, and view the Nifty Tree virtual museum (alpha). With an account, users can buy Nifty Trees from the marketplace. After buying a Nifty Tree, the token will transfer to your wallet, from there you can view the asset with its meta-data and sell, or transfer the token(s).

For the US National Exhibition event, we are doing the first NFT drop on both Tezos and Ethereum blockchains. The Tezos NFTs will be limited to 100 per Nifty Tree. These will be the first ever series of Nifty Trees available which consists of 300-700 tokens representing 3-7 Nifty Trees from 3 select Pagodas: Hawk Eye Bonsai, Eisei-en Bonsai, and Joey Bonsai. In parallel, each Nifty Tree will have a limited one of one Ethereum NFT available from Opensea.io This first set of tokens will be initially available for participants of the event and then opened up to the rest of the public after the weekend, September 10-12th.

Nifty Tree Beta

In the Beta version, we plan to have a more refined experience with additional services related to NFT creation across new blockchains, enhanced trading, and new museum interactions. To become a Pagoda, we will enable a limited slot referral program to slowly expand the trusted network. Additional viewing and trading capabilities like auction will be tested and become available for implementation. In this release, we plan to prototype the Bonsai on Chain offering exploring the virtual representation of the physical bonsai art as well as the token value.

Nifty Trees Beyond

Nifty Trees will offer multi-language open enrollment to be a Pagoda. We aim to provide immersive quality content with the support of more asset types like 3d modeling files. There are plans to explore additional storage options. The establishment of oracle programs for Bonsai on Chain asset validation and more. Let's continue to grow and thrive together in celebration of life.

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