

Lotus story blossoms into new book



Rebecca McEntee photos/American-Statesman

Austin author Jane Scoggins Bauld turned her friendship with Isamu Taniguchi into a new children's book about the lotus flower that blooms in his pond at Zilker Botanical Garden.

By GRETCHEN HEBER
American-Statesman Staff

Nested within Zilker Park, gently smuggled into a corner of the Zilker Botanical Garden and crisscrossing the paths and walkways of Isamu Taniguchi Oriental Garden, is a pond. In that pond is a lotus plant.

A seemingly ordinary plant, this lovely, water-loving blooming beauty holds the secrets of two nations and a thousand years.

The story of how this plant came to grow in an Austin pond is told with delicate, reverent beauty by Austin author Jane Scoggins Bauld and her illustrator daughter Cynthia G. Darr in "Journey of the Third Seed," a children's book released this spring.

Bauld, a former teacher, met Taniguchi



Isamu Taniguchi's lotus is now blooming at Zilker Botanical Garden.

See Taniguchi, E2

Taniguchi's legacy blooms in book

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years ago when she asked him to come to the garden he created and talk to the children in her class. Year by year, she and the man who handcrafted his three-acre gift to Austin formed a bond, and he shared his stories with her.

"He was hard to understand; he spoke broken English. But I hung onto every word he said. Every year he would tell me a little more," Bauld says.



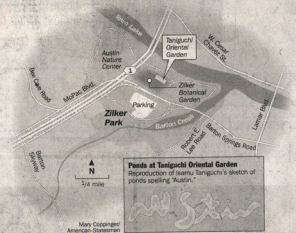
Isamu Taniguchi

Eventually, he shared with her the story of three ancient lotus seeds found by a peat farmer in a Japanese bog. Though they appeared to be rocks, the farmer suspected more. He scraped away the mineralized coating and soaked one of the seeds in water. The seed swelled to life, and the farmer took his discovery to the emperor, whose wise men determined the seeds to be 1,000 years old.

The emperor sprouted the second seed, and the third seed he gave to Taniguchi, who was going to America to be with his son in Austin.

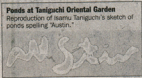
Taniguchi — always in a straw hat and always carrying a pruning tool — carefully planted the seed in the pond of the garden that bears his name, Bauld says, and the beautiful flowers are enjoyed by visitors today. They are in

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A
1/4 mile

Mary Coppinger/
American-Statesman



Ponds at Taniguchi Oriental Garden
Reproduction of Isamu Taniguchi's sketch of ponds spelling "Austin."



Journey of the Third Seed

By Jane Scoggins Bauld, with illustrations by Cynthia G. Darr
Eakin Press, \$17

bloom now and will bloom throughout summer and fall, until we get a freeze, according to the staff at Zilker.

Bauld loves the story of the third seed. "It is a story that will help people feel better about themselves and the world," she says. And she

is honored to have known Taniguchi. "He seemed like the most profound man I'd ever met."

"Journey of the Third Seed" is an enchanting experience for both children and their parents — the story, the language, the illustrations, the typography and the design combine to form a book sure to be well-worn in many households.

Bauld is the author of several children's books, including another about the Oriental Garden, "The Mother Tree." One of Bauld's proudest moments was getting to read "The Mother Tree" to Taniguchi before he died in 1992.

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