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## PREFACE

Gu qin, chess, calligraphy and painting, also known as the “four arts,” are symbols of personal cultural cultivation with which most scholars and literati are connected with in ancient China. Calligraphy of Chinese characters was once a compulsory subject for Chinese scholars. During the process of writing, one quietly learns about life’s morals. As such, calligraphy has developed as an independent school of art. Calligraphy possesses its own aesthetic rules. The level of cultivation of the calligrapher is reflected in the level of art in his calligraphy.

In line with the University’s pursuit of whole person development education, promoting humanities and arts outside the classroom is among the projects CityU Library has strived to develop recently. In this semester, we have proudly received the support of Dr Sze Chi-ching to initiate and promote students’ understanding of and interest in calligraphy. We shall display his fine works of calligraphy in the Library and CityU Gallery, allowing students to grasp basic knowledge about calligraphy and, thus, begin to approach the appreciation of calligraphy. Besides adopting the usual “Resource-Based Learning Approach” design as the strategy for this learning activity, we will also make use of a rich variety of resources. In particular we have arranged over twenty workshops for copying model calligraphy, at which teachers from the Chinese Civilisation Centre can give instructions. Other learning activities include thematic exhibitions, a thematic webpage, an information booklet, a learning assessment, a multi-media display, a thematic lecture, etc, hoping that all of us can understand Chinese calligraphy of various levels from different angles. Once the door of calligraphy appreciation is open, it is hoped that this art subject will become our lifelong learning pursuit. We look forward to seeing stronger interest in calligraphy from our students after this activity.

It is our wish that we can make good use of the Library space and that the rich collection will enhance students’ contact with and understanding of Chinese calligraphy, a gem of Chinese civilization. Recently, a Western scholar visited the calligraphy exhibition on works by the famous calligrapher Dung Yan-zhi. He said that through her calligraphy, he was enlightened about the rich tradition of Chinese literature and philosophy. He believed that there is a need for both the East and the West to pay strong attention to Chinese calligraphy education because Chinese calligraphy learning is a simultaneous training of students’ concentration power. We can gradually discover that calligraphy, this art with a long history, is indeed closely related to our lives and is immersed in our daily life.

Prof. Steve Ching  
University Librarian

# INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY

## ✿ Chinese characters being the Medium for the Art of Calligraphy

Calligraphy is an important component of Chinese art. Its presentation format is an art that hinges on Chinese characters. And Chinese characters are ideographic in nature. Combinations of strokes of characters are open to many possibilities. In comparison with other ethnicities' phonographic writing system, Chinese characters are more figurative. Also, apart from possessing a complete set of rules of brush (dot, horizontal stroke, falling stroke, vertical stroke, hook, etc), the calligraphy of Chinese characters has also established a developed aesthetic system. Following the rules of the combination of Chinese characters and varying the combinations can express versatility in the styles of the art of calligraphy, creating aesthetics of different appearances and tastes.

## ✿ The Three Basic Components of Calligraphic Creation: Use of Brush, Structural Combination and Layout

**Use of Brush:** The use of brush covers the use of ink at the same time. Calligraphy is an art of lines, endowed with the aesthetic of abstraction. Together with the uniqueness of Chinese brushes and methods of use of brushes, various linear patterns can be put down.

**Structural Combination** (also known as combination of character): Refers to the structural and composite relation between the strokes of each character. It is to be noted that setting out the components of each word requires considering aspects of prioritization, concession and coherence among the components. As such, structural symmetry and harmony of the character can be achieved.

**Layout:** Refers to the overall spatial arrangement for the whole piece of calligraphy through the organization of the space between characters, the distance between the lines, the allocation of characters, etc. To be particularly well-arranged there must be a relation between the black and white colors on the whole artwork which is instrumental to producing the effect of void and concretion.

## ✿ Tools for Calligraphy: Paper, Brush, Ink and Ink Slab

**Paper:** Paper is one of the four major Chinese inventions. Paper produced in Xuan county of Anhui province is the most famous, known as “*xuan* paper.” *Xuan* paper can express the elegance of ink. Papers for the use of calligraphy differ in their strength of ink absorption. Thus, the selection of paper is made according to the ideas the calligrapher has to present.

**Brush:** Chinese brushes are made of animal hair, being soft and flexible. One special feature is the point at the tip of the brush. By controlling the pressing or raising of the brush, the calligrapher delivers a feeling of brush thickness or fineness, of feather-weight or of heavy-strength.

**Ink:** Traditional ingredients for the making of ink originate from burned palm twigs or the smoke from tar. For the sake of convenience, modern people gradually turned to ink chemically produced for their writing. But the process of ink grinding requires time and patience, thus, this process is able to make people stay calm and enter a state of mind suitable for calligraphy. Such practice of cultivation is a stage that must be gone through for studying and practicing calligraphy.

**Ink Slab:** An ink slab is an essential for ink grinding and writing. Ink slabs appear in many varieties but ordinary slabs are made from stone-hitting. Ink slabs made from stones of the highest quality can produce ink of the best kind. Furthermore, the longer they are preserved, the higher is their value.

All in all, differences in skills, habits, and the aesthetic tastes of calligraphers bring a difference over in their dealings with strokes, structural combinations and layouts for the same character, even when identical papers, brushes, ink and ink slabs are used. Such a feature is unique to the calligraphy of Chinese characters.

# ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF CATEGORIES OF CALLIGRAPHY AND APPRECIATION AND ANALYSIS OF CALLIGRAPHY

Chinese calligraphy consists of five categories of seal script, clerical script, regular script, running script and cursive script.

## Pre-Qin Dynasty Calligraphy

### *Oracle Bone Inscriptions*

Oracle bone inscriptions are divinatory scripts carved on turtle shells, and animal bones after the shells and bones were used for the practice of divination. They are characters of the Shang dynasty of Yin from before 1300 B.C. The alignment of an oracle bone inscription is casual, unlike that of later calligraphy. But the distribution of strokes is very even, with a balanced structure. The characters are essentially pictographic but are formed by reorganizing their strokes. There are the earliest seal script of China.



Inscriptions on bone. Shang dynasty

## *Bronze Inscription*

In the eight hundred years between the end of Shang dynasty and the period of Spring and Autumn and the Warring States, there appeared words carved or inscribed on bronze wares of bells and dings, known as bronze inscriptions, bell and ding inscriptions or ji bronze inscriptions. Bronze Inscription of the late Shang dynasty is characterized by the pointy head and tail of a stroke which sandwich the portly centre and variation in size among the characters of the whole piece of text. Beginning from the middle and late era of the Western Zhou dynasty, the structure of bronze inscription turned harmonious, with strokes appearing in balance and intentional regulation on the arrangement of space between lines and characters.

The number of words for the inscription on the tray totals 357, recording the land deed of the late Western Zhou. During the days, “San” and “Shi” were two small neighboring states. As the state boundaries were not clearly delineated, wars were frequent between the two states. In view of the turbulence caused to their lives, people found a third party state to execute arbitration. They decided to use bronze to carve a plate on which the state boundaries were clearly delineated. Further dispute over the boundary would call for the plate as proof.



San Shi Pan (a pan vessel). Western Zhou dynasty

Lines of the characters on San Shi tray are lean and strong, carrying liveliness and mobility. The structure of characters shows a horizontal inclination. The arrangement of the characters' alignment appears in fair order, and at the same time, delivers a sense of freedom and animation. Masculinity, power and ruggedness are features of this style.

## Seal Script

The seal script includes the large seal script and the small seal script. The so-called small seal is defined in relation to the large seal. Since the first Emperor of the Qin dynasty had unified the states into China, the texts used by the former six states were turned into the small seal script (Qin seal). The seal script of and prior to the Warring States period is one of the large seal scripts. The writing of a seal script is complicated. Such an inconvenience led to the seal script gradually being replaced by other types of scripts. Meanwhile, the seal script lost its practical function although its aesthetic function has been preserved. It has become the script of pure aesthetics up until the present day.

### *Small Seal Script*

After he had merged the six states and established the Qin dynasty, the First Emperor of Qin ordered unification of words into the “small seal script” commonly known to us. The Structure of the combination of the small seal script is relatively symmetrical. The shape of the characters appears rectangular, with a use of a curved brush. Beauty of balance is created.

### ✧ Selected Work

In the 28th year of the reign of the First Emperor of Qin (219BC), the emperor ascended Mount Tai. This work was created by the Prime Minister Li Si in honor of the achievements and virtues of the emperor.



*Copy of Stone Inscription of Mountain Tai.*  
Qin dynasty



## Clerical Script

Legend says that for speeding up writing, Cheng Miao of the Qin dynasty turned the circular and balanced form of strokes of seal script into one of regulated and angular strokes, thus explaining the birth of the clerical script.

The most apparent feature of the clerical script is that the beginning of horizontal lines is akin to the head of a silkworm while the finish is akin to the tail of a wild goose and that its form appears flat and square, as if the character were gliding in the sky. In the Han dynasty, almost all official documents were written in clerical script. In the Eastern Han dynasty, steles were also mainly carved in clerical script. The emergence of the clerical script ended the era of ancient writing that had spanned nearly two thousand years, while opening a new generation for calligraphic art which looked for beautification.

### ✧ Selected Work

Before the invention and later popularization of paper, slip and fabric were the two major writing materials. “Slips” are long and narrow-shaped bamboo chips chipped for the use of writing. The characters of Han slips represent the process of development from seal script to clerical script. They differed from the later mature clerical script in styles in both the combination of structure and the use of the brush. Some characters on this piece of Han slip, for example “*ju*” and “*cong*”, are shaped in flat and square form and, at the same time, give a lift in the pressing stroke, demonstrating the evolution towards maturity of the clerical script.

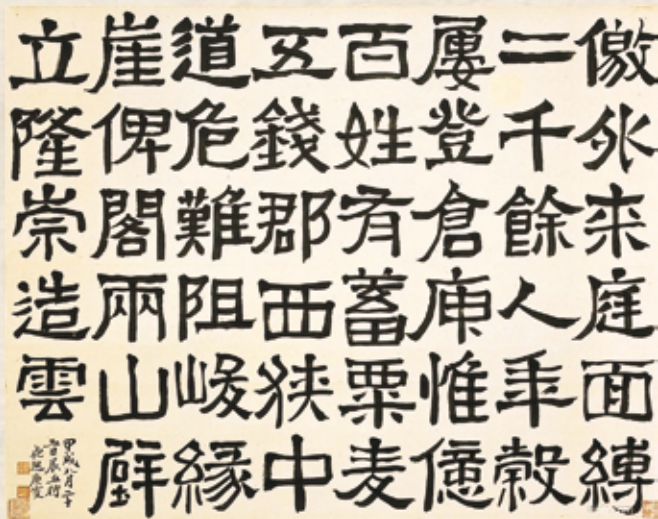


Slips of Han dynasty



*Copy of Cao Quan Stele. Shen Yunchang (1912 - ), Republican Period*

*Cao Quan Stele*, set up by Cao Quan, chief of Heyang in the second year of the reign of Zhongping of Eastern Han dynasty (185). Text of the stele records the family background of Cao Quan and his achievement in suppressing a rural uprising. The calligraphy runs smoothly in light air, styled in classical elegance and structured in formal balance, representative of the orderly style of the clerical script of Han.



*Copy of Xixia Eulogy*. Zheng Jiaoxu (1912 - ), Republican Period

*The Copy of Xixia Eulogy*, written by Chou Jingwen and put into calligraphy by Han De, stands on the cliff of Mount Tian Jin in Cheng county in Gangsu province. The text of the stele glorifies the incident of provincial governor Li Xi controlling the middle way of Xixia. The structure of the characters of the calligraphy appears in a systematic and orderly manner, conveying a grandiose style of stability.

In the learning of the writing of clerical script, one could firstly approach *Cao Quan Stele* in order to fully sense the qualities of flatness, broadness and elegance essential to clerical script. Subsequently, one could copy the steles of *Xixia Eulogy*, etc for sensing the unique flavor of the austerity and sobriety of the Han stele. One may then learn to trace the characters on Han slips for acquiring a natural use of brush. For long, many calligraphers have copied works of ancient clerical script and then made their own creations by adopting styles and technique of ancient works.

## Regular Script

Regular script is also known as “uniform script” and “real script”, referring to a typeface of order. Regular script is a regular typeface directly evolved from clerical script. It turned the “silkworm head and wild goose tail” of clerical script into a flat and straight form. The word turns from being flat to square and regular. Regular script began to bud in the late Han dynasty, gaining momentum in Wei-Jin North and South dynasties and reaching its prime in the Tang dynasty. This script has remained in use until now and is the fundamental skill people must learn well in their study of calligraphy.

### ✧ Selected Work



*Eulogy on the Chronicle of Ni Kuan. Chu Suiliang, Tang dynasty*

Chu Suiliang (595-658) together with Ouyang Xun (557-641), Yu Shinan (558-638) and Xu Ji (649-713) are known as the four major masters in early Tang dynasty. When the development of regular script had reached the stage of the four major masters, the horizontal line appearing flat and the vertical line appearing straight finally was achieved. Also, rules and the format applying to each dot and each line were also set. Therefore, many people believe that authentic regular script did not mature until the Tang dynasty. Chu’s work uses slender and vigorous brushes. Rooms are available in the composition of characters. The strokes are versatile in thickness. Refinements in the movements of pause and tick add to the attraction of Chu’s calligraphy.

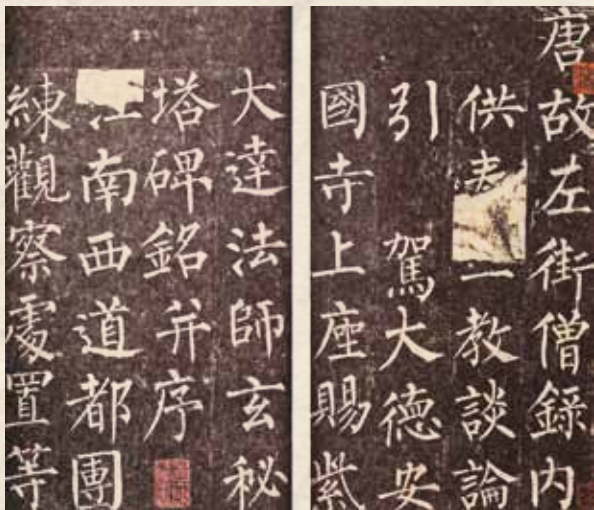
The strokes of this piece of calligraphy appear slender and airy. Diversity in the pose of words and changes in the thickness of only one single line convey a sense of self indulgence and the wonder of elegance.



*Duobao Pagoda Stele. Yan Zhenqing, Tang dynasty*

Yan Zhenqing (709-785) turned the elongated composition of regular script in the early Tang dynasty into a square-form. But in the square one can see a circle. And each character possesses a centripetal force. In his use of the brush, Yan began his stroke with the head appearing subtle and finished it with twists. His lines are bulging. The layout is of density and lushness, echoing with the golden age of the Tang dynasty. The history of calligraphy claims that Yan's characters could demonstrate his righteousness and upright character.

*Duobao Pagoda Stele* is the early work of Yan. This work is composed in order and solemnity with cursive and powerful strokes. Those following Yan should firstly learn *Duobao Pagoda Stele* before learning Yan's other works. In this way, it would be easier to master the characters of Yan's calligraphy.



*The Mysterious Pagoda Stele. Liu Gongquan, Tang dynasty*

The reputation of Liu Gongquan's (778-865) regular script is on par with Yan Zhenqing's. But Liu's strokes are less portly than Yan's as they are slender and rigid and with sharp angles, being orderly configured. Liu said that "a heart of righteousness" is a prerequisite for good calligraphy and Yan is an example. Such an idea shows that the morality of the calligraphers is an influential element in Chinese calligraphic criticism.

Liu's use of brush and the characters' composition embody the credentials of the masters of Ouyang Xun, Yu Shinan, Chu Suiliang and Yan Zhenqing, as if offering one conclusion to the order of regular script of Tang dynasty while establishing its own unique style and school.

The Mysterious Pagoda Stele demonstrates the peculiarity of Liu's works and the power of control exercised over his characters. The strokes are sharp, beginning with a pressing force, finished in a square-shaped ending. Turning points mostly appear angular. Intensity runs through the whole text without being pressing. The Mysterious Pagoda Stele possesses the features of strength and elegance of Liu, being the model for Liu's works.

## Running Script

Running script had already been formed in the late Eastern Han dynasty, reaching its prime in the Eastern Jin dynasty. Its style moderates between regular script and cursive script: it is more free-flowing than the orderly regular script while more easily recognized than the spontaneous cursive script. It was thus widely used. Although running script runs in unrestrained manner, excelling in the writing of this script was not easy. Good practice of regular script is a pre-requisite for fine writing in running script. Wang Xizhi is the most representative personae of the prime age of running script. His *Preface to the Orchid Pavilion* has been commonly recognized as the prime running script among all. Running script was also common in the Tang dynasty. Yan's *Lament for a Nephew* has been commented as the piece of running second to the *Preface to the Orchid Pavilion*. For the calligraphy of the Song dynasty, running script made a great achievement. The four major masters of the Song dynasty: Su Shi (1037-1101), Huang Tingjian, Mi Fu and Cai Xiang (1012-1067) were experts at running script. Among calligraphers of the Yuan dynasty, Zhao Mengfu was expert at running script. Some people say that he embodies the essence of calligraphy of earlier generations, particularly benefiting from the father-and-son of Wang Xizhi, influencing the calligraphy circle of the time. Most calligraphers of Ming dynasty were good at running script, including Wen Zhengming and Dong Qichang. Running script of the Qing dynasty was strongly influenced by Zhao Mengfu and Dong Qichang, producing "pavilion form." In post-Emperor Qianlong's time, many steles were unearthed. Since then, calligraphy changed its course, for example, Zheng Xie (1693-1766) built in the component of a seal script in running script and modeled a new style. Liu Yong (1720-1804) modeled after Zhao Mengfu and Dong Qichang in an early stage and immersed himself in stele carving in a later stage.

## ※ Selected Works



*Clear Day after Brief Snow Model Calligraphy.*  
Wang Xizhi, Jin dynasty

*Clear Day after Brief Snow Model Calligraphy* is one of the representative pieces of running script by Wang Xizhi. It is a short piece written in running-regular script. In terms of use of the brush, round and circular brush strokes dominate. Sharpness was not evident in the dots, strokes, ticks and hooks. The combination of structures stands firm and balanced. An introverted sense and simplicity is aired in delicate postures. A classical and noble air runs through the entire structure.

Emperor Qianlong of the Qing dynasty embraced this piece of art into his heart, and he stored it as a precious treasure together with *Mid-Autumn Model Calligraphy* by Wang Xianzhi (344-386) and *Bo Yuan Tie* by Wang Xun (350-401) at the western hall of the *Hall of Mental Cultivation* in the Forbidden City, namely the *Hall of Three Rarities*. By the 12 year reign of Qianlong (1747), these outstanding works of the three Wang's, including the works from Zhong Yao (151-230) in the Three Kingdom Period, to Dong Qichang (1555-1636) in the Ming dynasty and those of another 135 calligraphers, were compiled into a large collection of model calligraphy, which was called the *Model Calligraphies of the Three Rarities*.





Lament for a Nephew. Yan Zhengqing, Tang dynasty

Yan Zhengqing realized that his brother and nephew were killed in the Anshi Riot. He thus wrote this obituary in opulent emotions for his nephew. Power runs through the whole piece and each word relates to one another for continuity. Dryness of the brush occurs at times, releasing pathetic emotion. At the same time, Yan's running script runs in power and the structure remains solid. His art builds his unique style.



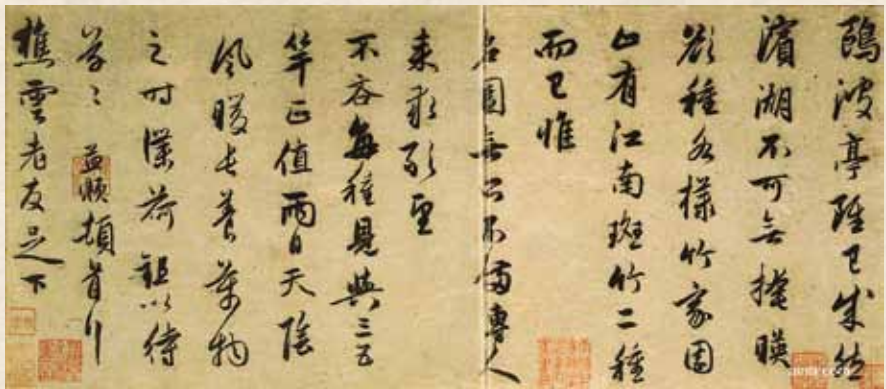
*Cold Food Model Calligraphy.* Su Shi, Northern Song dynasty

Su Shi's calligraphy inherits traditional art and strikes to revolutionize from the basic. *Cold Food Model Calligraphy* includes the two poems Su Shi wrote during the cold food festival in the third year of him being reduced to Huang County. His strokes are strong and properly arranged, changing according to his poetic feelings. The layout changes show unrestrained ups-and-downs. It achieves the seamless merging of artistic form and content.



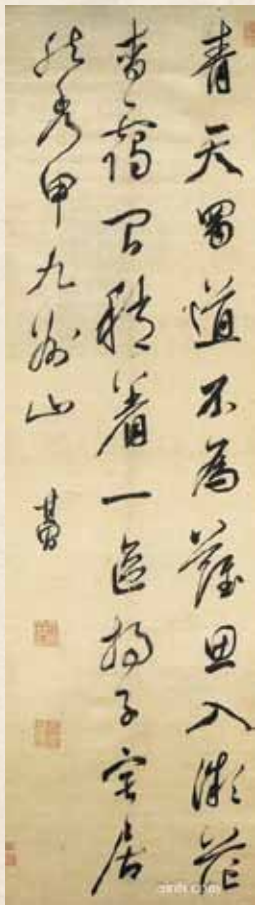
*Chi Du* (letter of correspondence). Cai Xiang, Northern Song dynasty

Cai Xiang drew reference from the calligraphy of the father-and-son of Wang Xizhi in his first approach to calligraphy; he later turned to studying Yan Zhenqing's calligraphy. His running script is the most amazing. The structural composition is elegant and graceful. Grace is interestingly entwined in the power and freedom. His calligraphy took a significant position in the calligraphy circle in the middle of the northern Song dynasty. Power of the brushes is solid for this piece of *Chi Du* while the brushes are steeped in fluidity. Formality of the structure is observed. It is a representative piece of his running script.



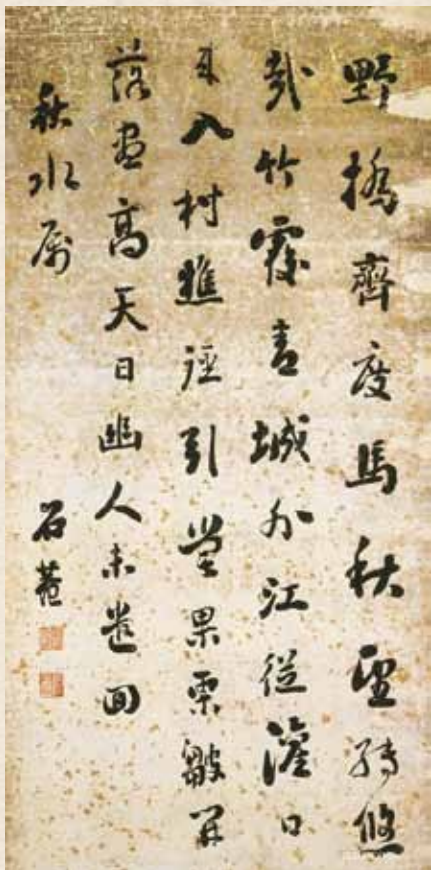
*Album of Chi Du (letter of correspondence). Zhao Mengfu, Yuan dynasty*

Zhao Mengfu's cursive script forms its own powerful and glamorous typicality based on the various works of Wang Xizhi including *Preface to the Orchid Pavilion*.



Running Script. Dong Qichang, Ming dynasty

Dong Qicheng's running script was one of the most influential styles of calligraphy in the circle of calligraphy. His running script is grounded on the calligraphy of the father and son of Wang Xizhi, and is also influenced by Yan Zhengqing and Mi Fu's. Dong's calligraphy is characterized by the acuteness in his use of the brush and the smooth and neat exercise of the brush; the use of ink shows a light and damp tint; in terms of layout, the spacing between the combination of characters and between the lines is a means to interrupt the order so that variations could be made. The combination of characters follows Mi Fu's practice of slightly inclining the character towards the right without upsetting the overall regularity. This piece of running script occasionally incorporates cursive script. The Combination of characters includes irregularity in the formation of the regular form. Spirit circulates in a smooth flow and the power of his brush radiates outward to a certain extent. His method of brush is natural and subtle while the color of the ink is clear and pure. It is a representative work of Dong Qichang's running script in bold typeface.



*Running Script.* Liu Yong, Qing dynasty

The typeface of this piece uses portly brushes and the dots and lines are bulging, comparable to iron wrapped in cotton; the use of ink is strong; the centre of the combination the of structure is closely knit while the upper right angle is relaxing. The characters are spaced properly.

## Cursive script

Xu Shen, philologist of the Eastern Han dynasty (date of birth and death unknown) says, “Han rises and cursive script emerges.” The “cursive script” according to him refers to semi cursive script. Semi cursive script, spurred by the need for speed writing in clerical script, is a form of calligraphy facilitating writing with ease and speed. It preserves the feature of the wild goose’s tails of clerical script while changing the angular turning point into a round one. In terms of layout, each word is independent with no coherence between each other.

There is a belief that Zhang Zhi of the late Han dynasty (during the reigns of Emperor Ling and Emperor Xian of Eastern Han dynasty) took away traces of clerical script from semi cursive script, turning the wild goose tails as a stroke’s finish that echoes with the character’s interior. Between characters in upper and lower positions run the power of the brush. Typefaces’ size and shape grow at their own wish. As such, the so-called “cursive script” came into being. The simple figure of cursive script allows the lines to express their vitality in greater informality. This linear momentum is an important aesthetic aspect in the appreciation of cursive script.

Cursive script has received strong attention from calligraphers since its birth. The configuration of cursive script has been completely developed, particularly following the development of the Jin dynasty’s literati, including the father-and-son of Wang Xizhi (321-379, another saying is 303-361) and Wang Xianzi (344-386), setting the standard for cursive script. After the Jin dynasty, the mode of cursive script basically was bound by the system of Wang’s father-and-son. Apart from Wang’s, there are major cursive script calligraphers in each dynasty, including Zhi Yong of the Sui dynasty (date of birth and death unknown), Sun Guoting (date of birth and death unknown), Zhang Xu (date of birth and death unknown), Huai Su (725-785) of the Tang dynasty, Mi Fu (1051-1107), Huang Tingjian (1045-1105), Zhao Mengfu (1254-1322), Zhang Yu (1283-1350), Zhu Yunming (1460-1526), Wen Zhenming (1470-1559), Fu Shan (1606-1684) and Wang Zhuan (1623-1709).

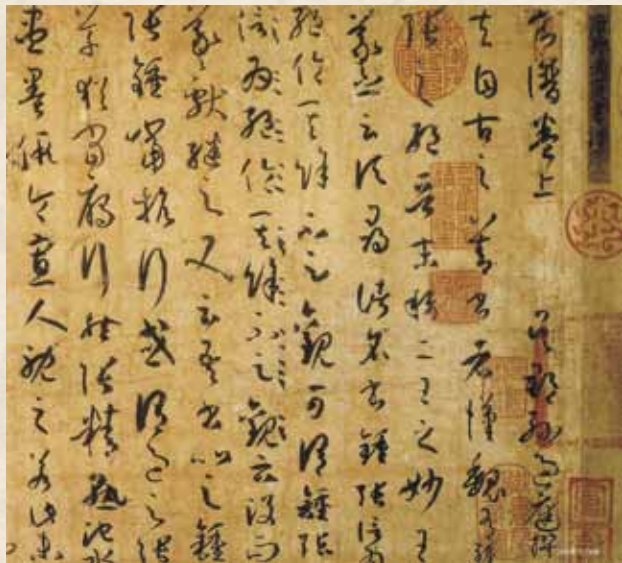
✧ Selected Works



*Yuan Huan Tie*. Wang Xizhi, Jin dynasty

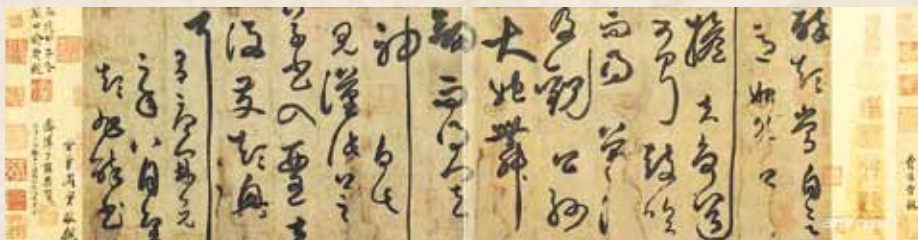
*Yuan Huan Tie* demonstrates a handsome use of brush. Mightiness runs through the whole text while the relaxing mood is able to be maintained. Wits over manipulating the size and weight of characters are observed. The brushes form the structural skeletons which lay out spaces of varying degrees of compactness. This work expresses the fluidity and grace which characterize Wang's calligraphy.





*Books of Calligraphy*: Sun Guoting, Tang dynasty

*Books of Calligraphy* is Sun Guoting's master work, well received in the flow of history, which also crystallizes his theory on calligraphy. Of the over three thousand and five hundred characters in the whole text, not a single one is indolent, which is indeed a reflection on the substantiality of Sun's basic training; the whole text is an orchestra of climaxes and falls which are in turn connected by one force; and, the beginning and the end are tied in a circle. This work appears as a matter of spontaneity, nevertheless, it has not gone astray from the right track.



*Monologue Model Calligraphy*. Zhang Xu, Tang dynasty

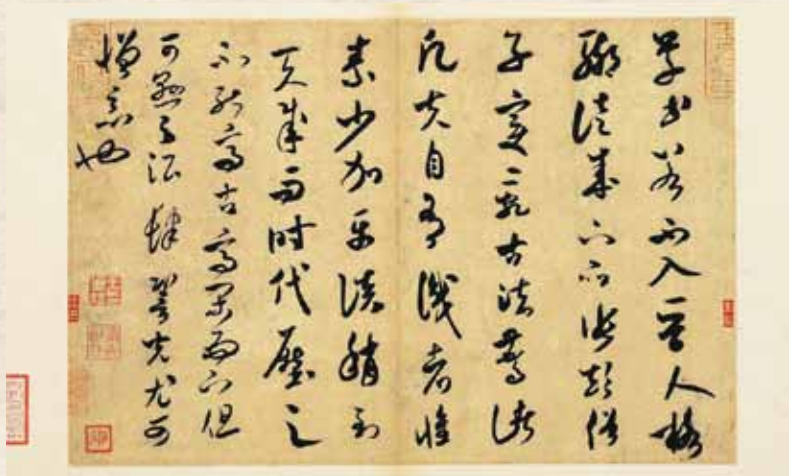
Zhang Xu was born to enjoy wine. There is story about him always writing when drunk, soaking his hair in ink, thus, he is known to the world as “Zhang the lunatic.” Zhang’s cursive script is best known for its “wildness”. The “wildness” is realized in the unrestrained and uncontrolled state of his mind and countless variations in his use of the brush, the combination of words and the handling of layout, as well as his expressive power with a potential for exaggeration and wild wandering. The masculine high power of *Monologue Model Calligraphy* generates an uninhibited running of spirit, allowing Zhang to attach his heart to his work, evoking overwhelming emotions.



*The Autobiography Model Calligraphy.* Huai Su, Tang dynasty

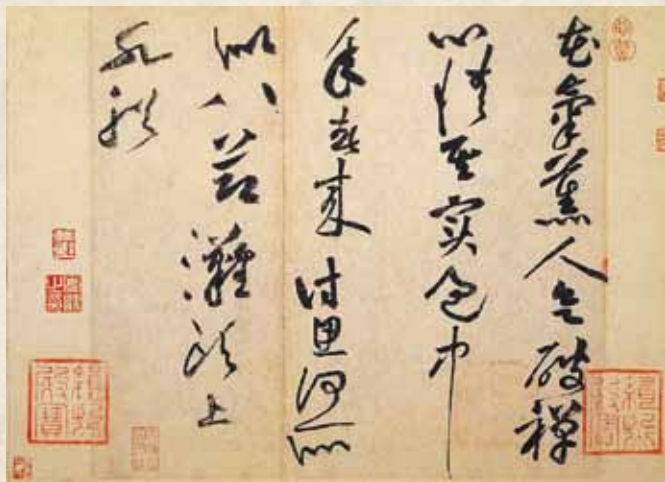
Huai Su was also greatly interested in wine. His inspiration came when he was drunk and then he put down his art quickly. He was known to his contemporaries as “wild monk”. And the names of mad cursive script and Zhang Yu go along hand in hand.

His most highly acclaimed work is *The Autobiography Model Calligraphy*, an essay in which Huai Su narrated his achievement over the learning of calligraphy. Throughout the whole piece runs an air of dignity and passion as well as wildness. He used his brush with ease. It seems that the rise and fall of Huai’s emotion in moving his brush can be felt. This style of ultimate freedom and self-consciousness became the icon for cursive script.



*Calligraphy on Calligraphy.* Mi Fu, Northern Song dynasty

Mi Fu's behavior was driven by his self-centeredness. He is known as "eccentric Mi." Nevertheless, he invested a lot of hard work in studying the calligraphy of ancient times. Brushes of Mi Fu exert great strength. *Calligraphy on Calligraphy* is Mi's commentary on cursive script. He argued that cursive script by people of the Jin dynasty is the best while those of the Tang show inadequacy. The style of this piece inherits that of one of the father-and-son of Wang Xizhi's, fully showing Mi Fu's theory and practice.



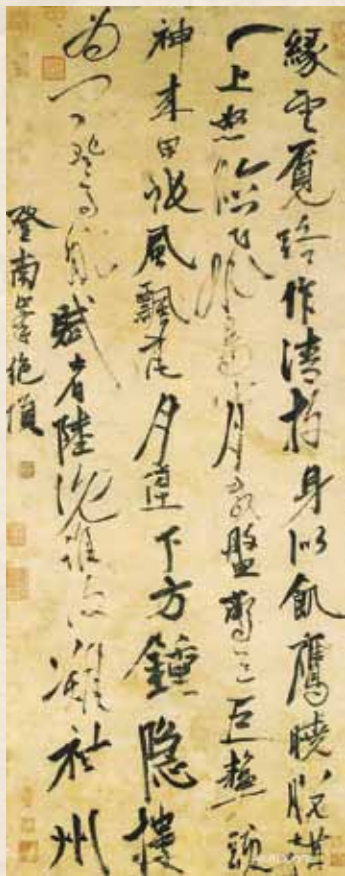
*Scented by Fragrance Model Calligraphy.* Huang Tingjian, Northern Song dynasty

Huang Tingjian's cursive script followed Zhang Xu, Huai Su, etc. His cursive script shows ambition and radiates outward in full scale; the combination of words changes without prediction and strikes in outrageous pose; condensed rigidity glides along his lines which fly. *Scented by Fragrance Model Calligraphy* is Huang's representative piece of wild cursive script. His use of the brush is applied with strength and his ink is applied in a spectrum of effect of richness, moistness and aridness. This is an exceptional piece.



*Copying Seventeen Model Calligraphy*. Zhao Mengfu, Yuan dynasty

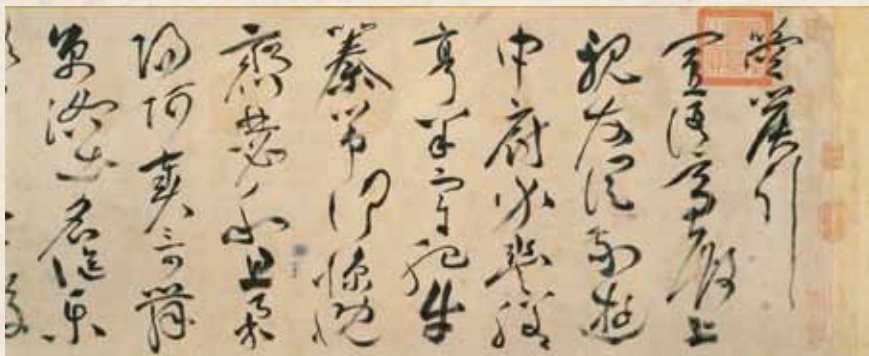
Zhao Mengfu was adept at every style of calligraphy. A great amount of his work circulated with his running script circulating the most. And quite unexpectedly, pure cursive scripts became rare. His cursive script was modeled after Wang Xizhi's *Seventeen Model Calligraphy*. This *Copying Seventeen Model Calligraphy* shows his supreme mastery over the calligraphic style of Wang. At the same time, it carries the elegance of Zhao's calligraphy and aesthetic view about the revival of ancient calligraphy.



Calligraphy on Seven-Character Poem.

Zhang Yu, Yuan dynasty

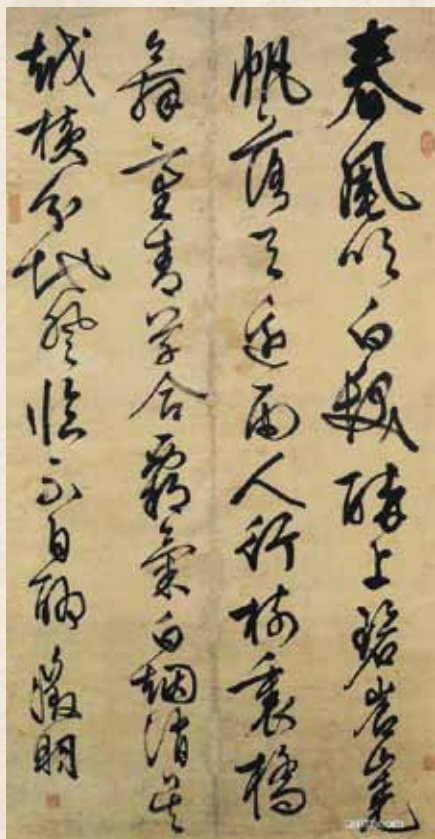
Zhang Yu had followed Zhao Mengfu to study calligraphy, although, he later developed his own distinctive calligraphic style. The characters in his piece expand and shrink suddenly, swaying in an astonishing manner; his use of ink shows changes in moistness and aridness; acute and sharp is his use of the brush which appears to burst out in force; between the second and the fourth line, there are some continuing characters done in a dry brush, greatly resembling *Monologue Model Calligraphy* by Huai Su. Another characteristic of this piece is the cross use of regular, running and cursive scripts, showing Zhang's supreme mastery of exertion and control.



*Miscellaneous Calligraphic Poems Model Calligraphy.* Zhu Yunming, Ming dynasty

Zhu Yunming's wild cursive script draws particularly great attention. His works have artistic charm. The ever restless brushes, rebellious typefaces and layout arranged in complementary use of sparse and dense spacing, come together to form a piece reminding one of a passionate musical score. His work is in line with Zhang Yu, Huai Su and Huang Tingjian.

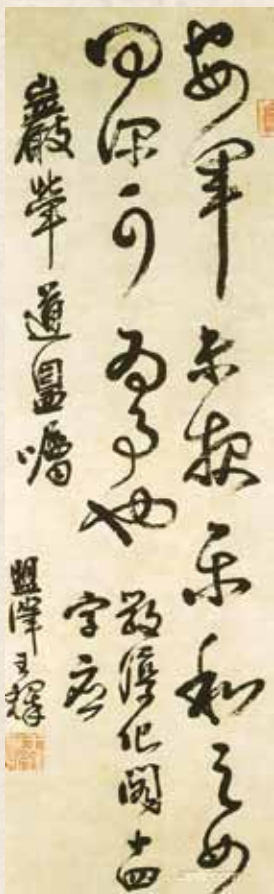




*A Five-Character Poem in Cursive Script of Bold Characters.*

Wen Zhenming, Ming dynasty

Wen Zhenming's cursive script followed Huai Su and Huang Tingjian. Wen Zhen ming was a tight lipped introvert and an uprighteous man who never went astray. His calligraphy reflects his character as there is no exaggeration in his use of the brush. This piece of cursive script in bold characters follows Huang Tingjian. The inside of the characters' composition is closely compacted while the exteriors radiate outward, creating a sense of spaciousness and stability. Risk is tried and prudence is not upset. Central brush and side brush are used side by side. The finish of the brush shows concealment of the acuteness of the stroke, thus, giving a feeling of sobriety and sanity.



*Cursive Script.* Wang Duo, Qing dynasty

Wang Duo was a major calligrapher of the late Ming and early Qing period who reformed the art of ancient calligraphy while innovating the new. Wang's cursive script grasps the roundness of the central brush of Mi Fu, meanwhile, it blends in a twisting brush, strengthening its power and making a greater impact for the pause. The strokes begin with rich ink. The ink gradually turns dry as the stroke stretches. The spatial layout of his characters is artistically arranged. This *Cursive Script* fully demonstrates the capability of cursive script in the expression of emotion.

## WHY SHOULD WE LEARN CALLIGRAPHY?

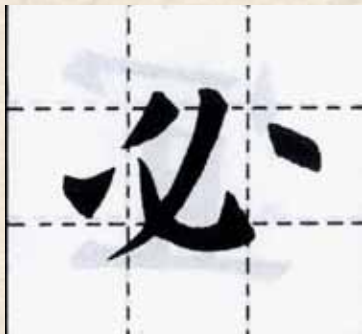
In the past, people learned calligraphy for attaining rank and fame.

Calligraphy was regarded by Confucius as one of the “six arts,” being the skills and techniques ancient gentlemen must possess. As people in ancient times regarded studying, understanding characters and writing as equals, calligraphy was no longer purely a technique but equivalent to scholarly cultivation. As such, Chinese has stressed calligraphy for long, regarding it as a medium of holding the formal doctrine, the outfit for essays and external expression of an individual’s cultivation. Since the introduction of the metropolitan officials system, calligraphy by the scholars was particularly emphasized. In the Tang dynasty, it was even made public that officials were recruited according to candidates’ “body, speech, calligraphy and argument.” This culture of recruiting an official by evaluating candidates’ calligraphy reached its prime in the Ming and Qing dynasties when “*Guangeti*” calligraphy exclusive for use in the Academy appeared. No wonder the famous officials in Chinese history were all well-learned scholars. Their excellence in calligraphy is related to the Chinese tradition of “rank and fame follow excellence in scholarship” and “calligraphy for rank and fame while painting for benefits and wealth.” During the course of the history of China, emperors and well-known officials, for example, Emperor Tai-zhong of the Tang dynasty, Emperor Hui-zhong of the Song dynasty, Emperor Qianlong, and Li Si of the reign of the First Emperor of Qin, Chu Sui-liang of the reign of Tai-zhong of Tang dynasty, Su Si and Huang Tin-jian of the Song dynasty and Liu Yong and Lin Zexu of the Qing dynasty and even the treacherous ministers in Chinese history like Qin Hui, Cai Jin, Yen Song, etc were first-rate calligraphers.



Portrait of Emperor Huizhong of Song dynasty

Do modern people still need to learn calligraphy?



We always say that learning calligraphy can refine one's temperament. But which aspect of one's temperament is refined? Indeed, through copying model calligraphy, we can become a person of strong observance, intricate mind, subtlety and responsibility.

Could you read the direction of the brush of the Chinese characters of “bi 必” and “wu 無” above? The dots and brushes in calligraphy follow the flow of a certain direction. During our process of copying model calligraphy, we should firstly observe the characters in detail, find from each character 1. the key brush 2. the length and thickness of dot and brush, and 3. the relation of coherence and concession between them, followed by further evaluation of 4. the feature of composition of each character. When the above are clearly imprinted in the hearts of the calligrapher, he can put his brush down from copying the model calligraphy. A work appearing simple indeed requires practical and minute work, which can not be handled by a careless and ill-tempered person.

Moreover, if we wish to improve our calligraphy, perseverance in practicing copying cannot be avoided so that copying becomes a daily practice. Through perseverance, we not only improve our calligraphy, we will also become a serious and responsible person.

# VIEWING CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY FROM PSYCHOLOGY OF ART

Calligraphy is an art form unique to China. Other ethnicities may possess characters or characters of fine arts; they do not have “calligraphy.” The “calligrapher” is unheard of in other ethnicities nor is there any person in other ethnicities who has gained a reputation by being competent with calligraphy. “Calligraphy” is the technique and rules for writing. These rules are not established by a certain person but are commonly agreed upon, being a consensus on aesthetic of human. Apart from appreciating the importance of calligraphy through its cultural content, we can explain calligraphy in terms of the psychology of art. According to an analysis of Gestalt psychology, Chinese calligraphy fulfills humans’ psychological appeal for images, therefore, it can become a topic for long-term evaluation.

## 1. Symmetry



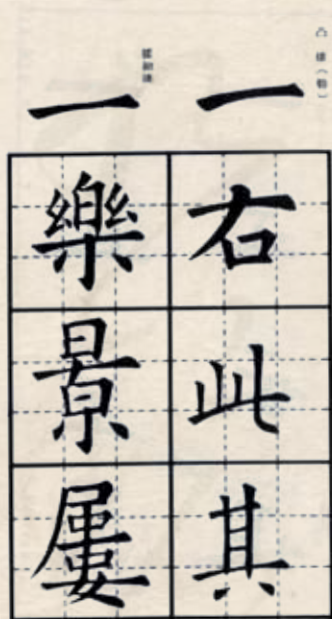
Deng Shiru : *Cursive Script*

Seal characters in Chinese calligraphy require great symmetry in the characters’ formation. According to Gestalt psychology, symmetry can bring a sense of ease to people.

## 2. Balance

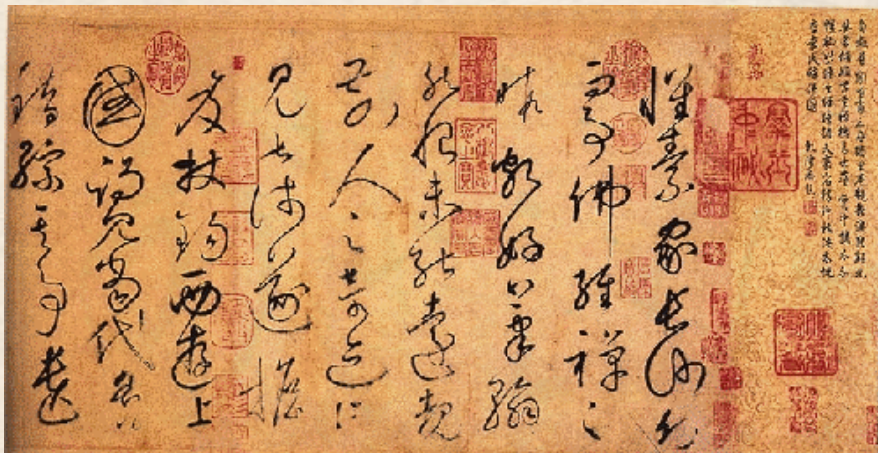


Silkworm Head and Wild Goose Tail



Experiments prove that in physics, a level line appears visually higher on the left and lower on the right or concave in the middle. To make a level line visually, a stroke must appear higher on the left and lower on the right, or the middle be a curved line appearing slightly convex. “Silkworm head and wild goose tail” and the convex horizontal line in clerical script is a curved line appearing slightly lower on the left and slightly higher on the right, which delivers a sense of balance.

### 3. Simplicity and Complexity



Huai Su : Calligraphy on Autobiography

A simple and perfect picture gives people a feeling of comfort and happiness, like the regular script and characters of fine art for Chinese characters as well as most phonographic characters in the world. Simultaneously, the aesthetic progress of these pictures is also simplified. However, pictures of an irregular pattern can easily give people a feeling of tension and suffocation, an example is the cursive script in Chinese calligraphy. Nevertheless, they intensify the tension of aesthetic activities, making its viewing more memorable.

#### 4. Completeness and Incompleteness



Mi Fu : *Poem of the boat on River Wu*



Statue of Venus of broken-arm

When art development reaches an advanced stage, it changes from being a complete form to an incomplete form where an extant piece of void is left, allowing appreciators to use their own imagination to fill the “void”. It is because the most beautiful art work always exists in people’s minds. The incompleteness in form of the extant void in Chinese calligraphy, and even the statute of Venus with a broken-arm, which is one of the “three treasures of Louvre”, indeed allows appreciators to use their own cognition to interpret the work during the aesthetic process. “Lingering threads and foiling shades”, “flying white” and “withering brushes” can achieve a maximum effect by using the least. “Incomplete” calligraphy is unique to Chinese calligraphy.



# LIBRARY LEARNING RESOURCES

## Books

- |    |   |                      |                        |
|----|---|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1  | A history of Chinese calligraphy / Tseng Yuho.  | NK3634.A2 T7725 1993 | Circulation Collection |
| 2  | Li Po and Tu Fu : poems selected and translated with an introduction and notes / Arthur Cooper  | PL2671 .C6           | Circulation Collection |
| 3  | Traces of the brush : studies in Chinese calligraphy / Shen C.Y. Fu   | ND1457.C52 N483 1980 | Circulation Collection |
| 4  | Behind the brushstrokes : appreciating Chinese calligraphy / Khoo Seow Hwa & Nancy L. Penrose.  | NK3634.A2 K56 1993   | Circulation Collection |
| 5  | The embodied image : Chinese calligraphy from the John B. Elliott Collection / Robert E. Harrist, Jr., Wen C. Fong ; with contributions by Qianshen Bai ... [et al.]. | NK3634.A2 H375 1999  | Circulation Collection |
| 6  | Brushing the past : later Chinese calligraphy from the gift of Robert Hatfield Ellsworth / Joseph Chang, Thomas Lawton, Stephen D. Allee.                             | NK3634.A2 C423 2000  | Circulation Collection |
| 7  | Fu Shan's world : the transformation of Chinese calligraphy in the seventeenth century / Qianshen Bai.  | NK3634.F8 B35 2003   | Circulation Collection |
| 8  | Chinese calligraphy / Lucy Driscoll and Kenji Toda.   | PL1171 .D7 1964      | Reserve (Semi-closed)  |
| 9  | Chinese calligraphy : an introduction to its aesthetic and technique / by Chiang Yee ; with a foreword by Sir Herbert Read  | NK3634.A2 C465 1973  | Circulation Collection |
| 10 | Chinese calligraphy : from pictograph to ideogram : the history of 214 essential Chinese/Japanese characters / Edoardo Fazzioli ; calligraphy by Rebecca Hon Ko.      | PL1281 .F3413 1987   | Circulation Collection |
| 11 | Four thousand years of Chinese calligraphy / Leon Long-yien Chang and Peter Miller.   | NK3634.A2 C424 1990  | Circulation Collection |
| 12 | Character & context in Chinese calligraphy / edited by Cary Y. Liu, Dora C.Y. Ching, and Judith G. Smith.   | NK3634.A2 C438 1999  | Circulation Collection |
| 13 | The history and cultural heritage of Chinese calligraphy, printing and library work / edited by Susan M. Allen ... [et al.].  | NK3634.A18 H57 2010  | Circulation Collection |
| 14 | 《紅樓夢》詩詞鋼筆楷書字帖 / 李培隽.  | NK3634.L346 H66 1989 | Circulation Collection |

- |    |   |                          |                        |
|----|---|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 15 | 《紅樓夢》詩詞歌賦對聯：鋼筆書法 / 李洪海, 趙鵬書; 周玉春, 敦禮雲編. | NK3634.L344 A64 1988 v.1 | Circulation Collection |
| 16 | 唐詩三百首硬筆字帖 / 李文采, 姚建杭等書; 責任編輯駱恒光.        | NK3634.A2 T354 1992      | Circulation Collection |
| 17 | 鋼筆行草書千家詩 / 書寫者梁錦英; 注釋者史陸.               | NK3634.L46 L53 1986      | Circulation Collection |
| 18 | 劉放金文孫子兵法 / [刘放].                        | NK3634.L585 A7 2008      | Circulation Collection |
| 19 | 宋苏轼黃州寒食詩帖 / [上海书画出版社編].                 | NK3634.S89 A66 2004      | Circulation Collection |
| 20 | 元赵孟頫前后赤壁賦 / [上海书画出版社編].                 | NK3634.C387 A66 2004     | Circulation Collection |
| 21 | 宋陸游自書詩卷 / [上海書畫出版社編].                   | NK3634.L86 A4 2003       | Circulation Collection |
| 22 | 寶麟書李商隱十六首 / 曹寶麟書.                       | NK3634.C335 A65 2003     | Circulation Collection |
| 23 | 黃山谷書李太白憶舊遊詩.                            | NK3634.A2 J56 2003 v.3   | Circulation Oversize   |
| 24 | 集王羲之書金剛經 / [上海書畫出版社編].                  | NK3634.W3 A64 2001       | Circulation Collection |

### Electronic Resources (can be accessed through “Library Learning Resources” on website)

- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 1  | 故宮線上 (NPM Online).  | online access from NPM Online                |
| 2  | 王羲之行書集字楹联. 兰亭序 [electronic resource] / 聂文豪編著.   | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |
| 3  | 欧体集字楹联. 九成宫 [electronic resource] / 聂文豪編著.  | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |
| 4  | 宋词诗书法 [electronic resource] / 鲁牧編.  | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |
| 5  | 赵孟俯胆巴碑集字对联 [electronic resource] / 陆有珠主編.   | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |
| 6  | 标准书法集字 春联 [electronic resource] / 李胜春, 邹琴編著.  | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |
| 7  | 标准书法集字 门联 [electronic resource] / 龙开胜, 盛青編著.  | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |
| 8  | 贺知章草书孝经 [electronic resource] / (唐)贺知章书.  | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |
| 9  | 杜詩書法集 [electronic resource] / 贾兰編著.   | online access from Apabi                     |
| 10 | Calligraphy and power in contemporary Chinese society [electronic resource] / Yuehping Yen.                         | online access from NetLibrary                |
| 11 | Brushes with power [electronic resource] : modern politics and the Chinese art of calligraphy / Richard Curt Kraus. | online access from NetLibrary                |
| 12 | The upright brush [electronic resource] : Yan Zhenqing's calligraphy and Song literati politics / Amy McNair.       | online access from ebrary                    |

## REFERENCES

### ※ Books

Chinese Civilisation Centre, City University of Hong Kong. Chinese Civilisation: a source book – Book 2, second edition. Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press, 2001.

南兆旭主編 / 全景博物館叢書編委會編纂。中國書法博物館。  
鄭州：海燕出版社。2003。

### ※ Online Resource

National Palace Museum Chinese Calligraphy Books and Documents Digital Learning Course.  
[http://elearning.npm.gov.tw/calligraphy/index\\_ch.htm](http://elearning.npm.gov.tw/calligraphy/index_ch.htm)

Interactive Encyclopedia. <http://www.hudong.com/>

## LEARNING ASSESSMENT

To enhance students' understanding of Chinese calligraphy, students are encouraged to take the quiz to win a prize. Please go to the page below for details:

[http://www.cityu.edu.hk/lib/about/event/ch\\_calligraphy/](http://www.cityu.edu.hk/lib/about/event/ch_calligraphy/)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Ms Portia Ip

Chinese Civilisation Centre

Development Office

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## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS OF CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY CUM EXHIBITION OF CALLIGRAPHY WORKS OF DR SZE CHI CHING

Date	Time	Events	Venue
14.2.2011 – 18.3.2011	Please visit website for details	Chinese Calligraphy Model Copying Workshop	Library User Education Room
22.2.2011 – 22.3.2011	8:30 – 11:00	Exhibition of Calligraphy Works of Dr Sze Chi Ching	Library Multi-purpose Lobby
22.2.2011 – 22.4.2011	8:30 – 11:00	Exhibition of Chinese Calligraphy	Library Multi-purpose Lobby
22.2.2011 – 22.4.2011		Learning Assessment (online quiz) <a href="http://libweb.cityu.edu.hk/cgi-bin/quiz/calligraphy/quiz.cgi">http://libweb.cityu.edu.hk/cgi-bin/quiz/ calligraphy/quiz.cgi</a>	
*22.2.2011 – 10.3.2011	12:30 – 16:00	Multimedia: 1. The Passage 2. Cursive	Library Mini Theatre
22.3.2011	16:00 – 17:30	Talk on “Chinese Calligraphy and Literature” presented by Dr Kuo-ching YU (Associate Curator of National Palace Museum)	Library User Education Room

### \*Screening Schedule

Cursive: 22/2, 24/2, 28/2, 2/3, 4/3, 8/3, 10/3 (63 mins)

The Passage: 23/2, 25/2, 1/3, 3/3, 7/3, 9/3, 11/3 (105 mins)

For any updates, please refer to the event website for information.

ENCHANTING STYLES OF THE SCHOLAR'S SCRIPT  
CALLIGRAPHY WORKS BY DR SZE CHING



施子清  
博士書法展

展覽日期  
二〇一一年  
二月二十三日至三月二十三日

開放時間  
每日上午十時至下午七時

展覽地點  
香港城市大學康樂樓六樓城大藝廊

Exhibition Period  
23/2/2011 - 23/3/2011

Opening Hours  
10am - 7pm Daily

Exhibition Venue  
CityU Gallery, 6/F, Amenities Building  
City University of Hong Kong

ENCHANTING STYLES OF THE  
SCHOLAR'S SCRIPT  
CALLIGRAPHY WORKS BY DR SZE CHI CHING



香港城市大學  
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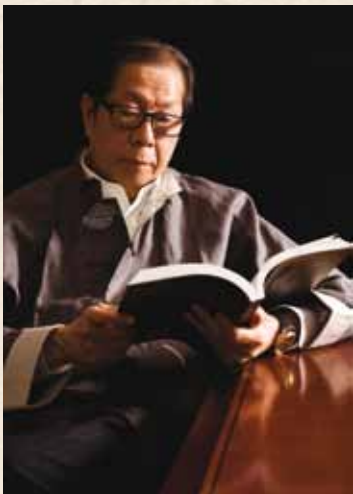
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## BIOGRAPHY OF DR SZE CHI-CHING



Dr Sze Chi-ching, JP. Dr Sze is an entrepreneur, social activist, literati and calligrapher, being a famous scholar-businessman.

He has been passionate about the art of calligraphy since childhood. Following his mother's instruction, he used water as ink, and bricks as paper, to practice calligraphy working hard. He finally turned the practice into his interest. He has studied stele and model calligraphy of every dynasty and calligraphy by modern masters. He has embraced calligraphy of different styles and established his own style. His works of calligraphy have been displayed numerous times in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Fuzhou, Xiamen, etc.

Publications by Sze are many. His large scale special publications on calligraphy includes Calligraphy's Gridlines (《書法經緯》), Chi-ching's Refinement in Ink (《子清墨韻》), Chi-ching's Brush and Ink (《施子清翰墨》), Chi-ching's Delight in Ink (《子清墨趣》); running script in long scroll includes Poem on Late Chibi (《後赤壁賦》), Chi-ching's Calligraphy on Poem on Early Chibi (《施子清書前赤壁

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Dr Sze Chi-ching served as the Vice-Chairman of the All-China Federation of Industry & Commerce (ACFIC), and the Committee Member of the 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). He is currently the Deputy Director of the Committee for Learning and Cultural and Historical Data of the National Committee of CPPCC, the Vice-President of ACFIC, the General Committee Member of China Calligraphers' Association, the President of the Calligraphy and Painting Study Association of Hong Kong Fukienese, the Chairman of Hang Tung Resources Holdings Limited, and with the important role as the president, honorary president, permanent honorary president of numerous associations overseas.