

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

艺术自述



什么是书法？

What Exactly Is Calligraphy?

“什么是书法？”这个问题一直是历代书法理论探讨的主题，并因之有了不同的答案：书法是书写工具，书法是艺术，书法是生存之道，等等。关于书法之美，历史上也有不同的看法，或曰精熟，或曰神采，或曰冲和，或曰达情，或曰尚意，或曰尚韵，或曰自然，或曰法度，或曰妍媚，或曰古拙，等等。虽然见解不尽相同，但总体来说，传统书法有自己的理性和法度，即便是抒情性极强的草书，也有着严整的系统结构与章法，并非脱离规范随意涂鸦。

中国现代书法家接受过西方的非理性思潮、精神分析学等哲学思想的洗礼，他们对书法尺度之内的自由开始了怀疑，进行了颠覆。书法家们针对传统书法的法度提出了“现代书法”的非理性特征、形式化需求、纯艺术化的精英态度。“现代书法”的出现一定程度上反映了书法家对书法艺术创新的“现代性”思考。

此外，书法作为中华民族特有的一种艺术形式，在国际上具有与西方艺术对话的独立地位，其独特的抽象性、哲学性、时空性等艺术特性亦与其他艺术和生活有着融通的基础。中国“现代书法”虽然也受西方当代哲学和艺术思潮的影响，出现颠覆、解构传统，割裂汉字的表意与书

写的建构特征，但是其根源依然是传统书法，其孕育创新所依托的土壤是中华民族特有的书法文化。从这个角度来看，中国“现代书法”始终是中国本土化艺术，在世界艺术中有其独立的话语权。这种独立性正是其与世界艺术对话的根基。

从形式特质上而言，中国“现代书法”对形式本体的强调使之与西方抽象绘画有对话的可能性。书法的线条和笔墨意象本身具有丰富的表现力，远远超过了表情达意本身。抽象的书法形式以“意在笔先”为胜，又以形式中蕴含的“意”为美。中国“现代书法”的形式主义化创作并未脱离传统书法的本质特征，甚至可以说更是强化了这种特征。书家借助笔意、线条营造意象，使之成为有意味的形式，其创作的结果与西方抽象绘画异曲同工，甚至存在一种不谋而合的对话性。

具备现代性意义的艺术，关乎作品的精神内涵，更关乎艺术家性情中独立自主的精神内核。艺术创作的精髓不是某种材料或某种形式，而是寄寓在作品中独特的观念。书法从古典走向现代的道路上，难免有徘徊、停滞，或者模仿吸取其他艺术形式的过程，而在最终的艺术呈现上，不

同书家分别提供了不同的探索样式。

沈语冰在论及国内20世纪90年代的现代书法思潮时曾提出：“现代书法必须以书写性为主，以区别于西方绘画，以空间构成为主，以区别于传统书法。”在书写性和空间构成上，无论是日本书法家井上有一偏向于具象的单字书法，还是中国书法家王冬龄的“乱书”，作为现代书法作品，它们都保留了书法艺术最基本的要素：汉字或类汉字结构、笔墨、线条、书写性等。他们的实践经验也为后来者的现代书法转型提供了一些思路：若仅仅是利用了汉字资源而淡化了书写性，取消了笔墨的基本规定，那就称不上是现代书法，而仅仅是利用书法材料进行的其他艺术行为。

一个时代的新书体、新书风，必然意味着对前代风格的颠覆，但是颠覆不等同于完全的割裂，而是有根基、有逻辑的螺旋上升与蜕变。当代的书法创作，如果全然抛弃了传统性，就无异于无本之木、无源之水，割断了与母体的联系，其生命力便难以持久。反之，若书家内心缺乏对现代性的反思与观照，对传统亦步亦趋，不敢越雷池一步，就无法承担当下时代的历史使命。

古典书法审美理念与重视品行修养的哲学立场，与当代艺术语境如何有机相融，需要书家既有传统的笔墨积累，又有高度的艺术视野和超前的艺术敏感性，更要有积年累月的实践探索，一如《天工开物》言珍珠产于蚌腹，必“经月成胎，经年最久，乃为至宝”。深研传统书法与文化，把握东西方的当代艺术潮流，在“现代性”这个前提下，寻求多元艺术语言深层次的融合，现代书家只有定位在这样的学术坐标之上，才可能寻到正确的途径。

The question “What exactly is calligraphy?” has always been a central theme in calligraphic theory throughout history, yielding diverse answers: calligraphy as a writing tool, as an art form, or even as a way of life. Historically, perceptions of calligraphic beauty have also varied—some emphasizing technical mastery, others spiritual resonance, harmony, emotional expression, poetic sentiment, naturalness, rules, elegance, or antiquity. While interpretations differ, traditional calligraphy adheres to its own rational principles and conventions. Even the highly expressive *cursive script* (*caoshu*) maintains a rigorous structural and compositional system, never descending into undisciplined scribbling.

Modern Chinese calligraphers, influenced by Western irrationalist philosophies and psychoanalysis, began questioning and subverting the freedoms within traditional calligraphic boundaries. Their “modern calligraphy” challenged classical norms with irrationality, protocols of abstract composition, and an elite attitude toward pure art. This movement embodied modernist ideals of artistic innovation.

As a uniquely Chinese art form, calligraphy holds an independent position in dialogue with Western art, thanks to its abstract, philosophical, and spatiotemporal qualities that bridge other arts and life. Despite Western influences—such as deconstructing tradition and divorcing Chinese characters’ semantic from their written form—modern Chinese calligraphy remains rooted in the native calligraphic culture, preserving its autonomy in global art.

Formally, modern calligraphy’s emphasis on its essence aligns it with Western abstract painting. Its strokes and ink imagery possess expressive power surpassing mere communication. Abstract calligraphic forms thrive on “intention preceding brushstroke” and beauty in form-embedded meaning. Its formalist creations amplify, rather than abandon, traditional calligraphy’s essence. By crafting meaningful forms through brushstrokes and lines, calligraphers engage in direct conversation with the tradition of abstract painting.

Modern art’s significance lies in its spiritual depth and the

artist’s autonomous spirit. The essence of creation is not medium or form but unique ideas embedded in works. The transition from classical to modern calligraphy involves experimentation, stagnation, or borrowing from other arts, with individual calligraphers offering distinct explorations.

Shen Yubing noted on 1990s modern calligraphy: “It must prioritize scriptuality to distinguish itself from Western painting and spatial composition to distinguish itself from traditional calligraphy.” Whether Japanese calligrapher Inoue Yūichi’s *figurative single-character works* or Chinese calligrapher Wang Dongling’s *Luan Shu* (*chaotic script*), modern calligraphy retains core elements: Chinese or quasi-Chinese structures, ink, lines, and its scriptual basis. Practices suggest that when artists discard scriptuality and the orthodox principles of ink, they demote calligraphy to the status of a simple artistic material in other art forms.

New calligraphic styles inevitably subvert predecessors, but subversion implies rooted evolution, not outright rupture. Contemporary works severed from tradition are like trees without roots or streams without sources, lacking vitality. Conversely, calligraphers lacking modernist reflection, bound by tradition, fail their era’s mission.

Integrating classical calligraphic aesthetics—linked to moral cultivation—with contemporary art requires calligraphers’ traditional ink mastery, artistic vision, sensitivity, and years of practice. As *Tiangong Kaiwu* (天工开物) states, pearls take months to form and years to perfect. Only by deeply studying tradition, grasping global art trends, and seeking fusion under “modernity” can calligraphers determine their appropriate trajectory through the academic continuum.

菩提与书法

Bodhi and Calligraphy



图1 任天进，《心经小方·三》，2019年，纸本水墨

Fig. 1 Ren Tianjin, *Heart Sutra, Small Square III*, 2019. Ink on paper

记得第一次去苏州的灵岩山，是1986年的深秋，我随洪丕谟先生在山寺中小住。彼时洪先生为中国佛学院灵岩山分院客座教授，在那里讲授书法课程。方丈明学法师、知客贯彻法师负责接待我们。晚餐后，洪先生在香光厅挥毫泼墨，我在旁铺纸盖印。秋后山寺外的树林在风中发出阵阵松涛声，小沙弥们围观、提问、求字，一直到深夜。第二天的早课当然是不能错过的了。曦光古寺间，悠沉鼓钟下，佛弟子诵经声随着晨风飘向远处，犹如一幅画，一副难以形容的画。那一年，我二十四岁。

2013年初秋，我应印觉方丈之邀去广州花都华严寺小住，当年佛学院的学生现在已经是方丈住持了。广州花都华严寺的朗朗早课声，把我带回1986年苏州灵岩山寺的那个深秋，回荡的沙弥诵经声，便是我创作《心经小方·三》（图1）的缘由，让我不由自主地将所感以浓淡、明暗、层叠的自由形态体现出来，带领我重回那个凉意明爽的秋日课堂，我仿佛又置身于寺院的早课声中。

对于这件作品，艺术家、湖北美术学院的杨鹏评论道：“第一眼，是书法阅读中从未有过的视觉和心理体验，让人不觉得是书法，觉得像冬天。大雪无痕，风过无痕，春梦了无痕，落笔却有痕。墨痕间，《心经》似消隐，又似已然融刻于心。自然超然，从容无法，了无痕迹地显现出创作者对书写意义的深度思考和极高的审美判断力和创造力。”

著名策展人王萌也评论道：“任天进以全球性的艺术视野沉于东方书

学的本旨内涵，他探索性地触及并完成了对于‘现代性书写’的溯源及其在理论上的可行性研究。在理性和逻辑的学者气度之外，他还拥有天马行空般的创作气质，他以‘在地性’的书写资源将传统文脉释放于‘现代性’的感性体验，在富有未来气质的融汇和豪迈的激情中穿越，为当代艺术注入了新的生机。”

2019年春，在毛里求斯的一次旅行中，我参拜了古老的印度教马赫斯瓦纳特神庙，庙内有一棵千年古菩提。我立于树下，透过参差斑驳的树影，仿佛看到沙弥虔诚地在抄写经文；微风触动树叶，呢喃出智慧的、神圣的风声，依稀间我似乎听到释迦牟尼静坐菩提下感悟时的轻声诵经。置身其中，我感知阳光、空气、风吹树叶，豁然开悟，一花一世界，一叶一如来。彼时情景，我久久不能忘怀，从而创作了这幅将书法《心经》融入千年古菩提的书画作品《智慧之影 I》（图2）。

邵亦杨说：“天进写心经，常写常念，如小沙弥念经，又如自然更迭之常态。风过耳，心留痕。层次分明，阴阳相对，虚实相生，如春光乍现。这看似偶得，实际上是他长期书写实践中的一次革新，从此一发不可收。图像如树影婆娑，呈现时光更迭的痕迹；又如柏拉图所谓‘影子世界’与真理世界的叠印、弗洛伊德心理分析学中无意识与潜意识的交织，呈现了他全新的艺术语言和审美取向。”

此后，我相继创作了作品《智慧之影 II》（图3）、《莲 I》《莲 II》（图4）、《菩提 I》（图5）以及《慧光》《五蕴》等水墨作品来表达这种无意识与潜意识交织的独特艺术形式。

1985年夏，洪丕谟先生应邀在浙江湖州铁佛寺举办个人书法作品展，当时作为洪丕谟先生学生的我，有幸参与了展览的筹备工作（图6）。这次展览中，有洪丕谟先生为展览特别创作的作品，还有一些是已被郑逸梅、钱君匋、江曾培等名家所收藏的佳作，但其中大部分作品是那几年洪先生为我作示范所写的，也是我最早的收藏品。此次展览，由我负责与诸位藏家沟通，借还藏品。在与这些名人、学者的来往中，我拓宽了艺术眼界，丰富了艺术素养，可以说获益良多。

临近展览，我邀请好友桂未谷先生的父亲杜宣先生为洪先生的展览题写展名。为表谢意，洪丕谟先生与我一同拜访了杜宣先生，洪先生以他最新出版的著作作为礼，感谢杜宣先生对展览的支持。而杜宣则礼尚往来地回赠了他的著作。文人间以文相谈的君子之交使我这个旁观者深深地感受到了艺术家之间的惺惺相惜。

为了把展品送到湖州展览，洪丕谟、姜玉珍夫妇和我，亲自携带着

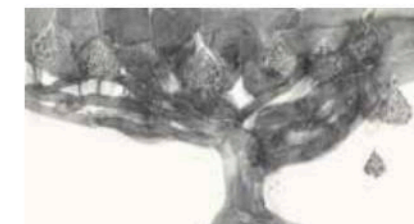


图2 任天进，《智慧之影 I》，2019年，立轴，纸本水墨。芝加哥艺术博物馆藏
Fig. 2 Ren Tianjin, *The Shadow of Wisdom I*, 2019. Hanging scroll, ink on paper. The Art Institute of Chicago

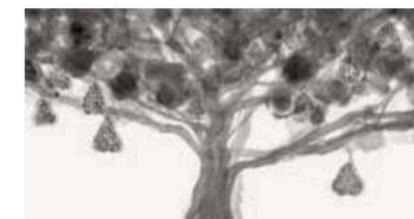


图3 任天进，《智慧之影 II》，2019年，纸本水墨
Fig. 3 Ren Tianjin, *The Shadow of Wisdom II*, 2019. Ink on Xuan paper



图4 任天进，《莲 I》《莲 II》，2020年，纸本水墨，芝加哥艺术博物馆藏
Fig. 4 Ren Tianjin, *Lotus I and Lotus II*, 2020. Ink on Xuan paper. The Art Institute of Chicago



图5 任天进，《菩提 I》，2023年，纸本水墨
Fig. 5 Ren Tianjin, *Bodhi I*, 2023. Ink on Xuan paper



图6 任天进与洪丕谟(右)合影, 1985年
Fig.6 Ren Tianjin and Hong Pimo (right), 1985



图7 任天进与王冬龄(右)合影, 2015年
Fig.7 Ren Tianjin and Wang Dongling (right), 2015

好几大捆卷轴, 坐着上海至湖州的长途汽车, 到展场布置展览。时隔多年, 我仍能清晰地回忆起展览现场的古朴而文雅。当年湖州那边负责接待的高宝平先生, 也是洪丕谟先生的学生。

2020年6月, 我从杭州回沪途中, 忽起念再访铁佛寺。缘分使然, 这次仍是高宝平先生接待, 而他现在已是湖州著名书法家了。在他的陪伴下, 我们重游铁佛寺, 弹指一瞬间, 往事历历在目, 与佛, 与书法, 我终有说不清道不明的机缘。从黄昏的钟声到深夜初夏的凉风, 我与铁佛寺住持智根法师谈艺至深夜。

寓上海的好处是可以结识海上各界精英, 上海龙华寺也是佛缘之地。20世纪90年代, 明旻法师给我写过条幅“福寿康宁”。而多年后, 在龙华寺方丈室同照诚法师谈艺说法也是一种佛缘。

在中国美术学院攻读博士学位的5年中, 我和导师王冬龄先生交流甚多。(图7)王冬龄先生除了书法教学, 在书法创新创作上也孜孜不倦。他在运用书法及书法的笔触创作作品的同时, 书写《心经》也是他书法实践的一种常态。他独创的“乱书”取得了非凡的艺术成就。同时, 他也尝试以“乱书”方式书写《心经》, 外界有赞同的, 也有批评的声音。对艺术一直保持敬畏和严肃之心的王冬龄先生会认真对待批评的声音, 并对自己的艺术作品进行更多的审视和研究。

王冬龄对艺术抱着一颗真诚的心, 用心去投入。不管是褒扬或是批评, 他都泰然处之。他曾说:“批评也并不见得都是坏事, 有时候还能成为前进的动力。”

2017年初秋, 中国佛教协会在杭州灵隐寺举办“2017年中国佛教讲经研习班”, 王冬龄先生受邀在研习班举行一场关于书法的讲座。那天下午, 我陪同先生驱车前往灵隐寺。光泉法师引领我们来到会场。会场里坐满了来自全国各地寺院的方丈, 王冬龄分享了一个多小时关于书法及书法创作的体会。会后, 他向众僧提出了一个自身的困惑: 在书法创作时, 尤其是在书写《心经》时, 是否可以用草书、“乱书”的形式进行书写? 参与本次研习班的静波法师起身郑重地说:“用什么样的字体或书写风格书写《心经》并不重要, 只要是发自本心地书写《心经》, 用任何字体、任何风格都可以书写。佛法的宗旨是予读经人、抄经人以内心的宁静与淡然, 而不拘泥于形式。”

其后, 光泉法师将灵隐寺珍藏的董其昌《金刚般若波罗蜜经》精仿手卷赠送给王冬龄先生, 王冬龄则在现场以行草书写《心经》回赠寺庙, 书法与佛法的互动与交流, 一时成为美谈。

2019年秋, “书·非书: 2019杭州国际现代书法艺术节”在杭州举

办, 我的参展作品是一幅用水墨在宣纸上创作的《智慧之影 I》, 引起了策展人汪涛(图8)的关注。这件作品是我2019年春结束毛里求斯之旅回到上海后创作的。我先在从毛里求斯带回的菩提树叶上书写, 然后在宣纸上勾勒叶形再创作, 把平时书写《心经》的日课(图9), 结合形与非形的绘画, 最终创作出这幅以菩提树为基本元素、书法与绘画相结合的水墨作品。

印度、斯里兰卡、缅甸以及中国各地的丛林寺庙中, 普遍栽植有菩提树, 它在《梵书》中被称为“觉树”, 被虔诚的佛教徒视为圣树, 万分敬仰。传说佛祖释迦牟尼是在菩提树下修成正果的。“菩提”一词为古印度语(即梵文) Bodhi 的音译, 意思是觉悟、智慧。后佛教传入中国, 唐朝初年, 僧人神秀与其师兄慧能对话, 写下诗句:“身是菩提树, 心如明镜台, 时时勤拂拭, 莫使惹尘埃。”慧能看后回写了一首:“菩提本无树, 明镜亦非台, 本来无一物, 何处惹尘埃。”以物表意, 借物论道, 2000多年过去了, 菩提树在佛教界被公认为“大彻大悟”的象征。

从旅行中见到巨型菩提树到以此元素作为创作基础, 从书写在树叶上, 书写在水墨叶上, 到书法和绘画的有机结合, 再回到更加抽象的“去”绘画、“去”书法的抽象创作, 这一切无不与佛缘有关。

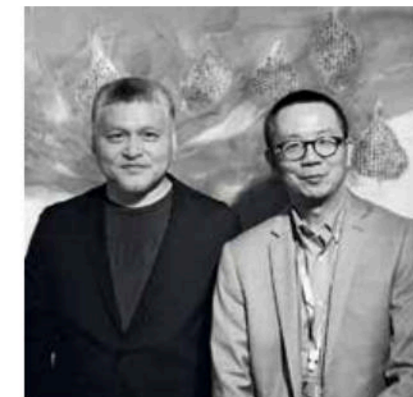


图8 任天进与汪涛(右)合影, 2019年
Fig.8 Ren Tianjin and Tao Wang (right), 2019



图9 部分书法日课作品
Fig.9 Partial Works of Calligraphic Practice

I still remember my first trip to Lingyan Mountain in Suzhou. It was late autumn 1986. I stayed at the temple there with Professor Hong Pimo, who was teaching calligraphy at the China Buddhist College Branch on the mountain. We were hosted by Abbot Mingxue and Master Guanche. One evening, Professor Hong practiced calligraphy in Xiangguang Hall while I assisted to prepare the paper and his stamp seals. Outside, the autumn wind whispered through the pine forest. Young novices gathered around, asking questions and requesting calligraphy from him late into the night. The next morning, I attended the chanting service—an experience I'll never forget. At dawn, the solemn bells and the monks' sutra recitations drifted on the wind like a living tapestry of sound painting the air. I was twenty-four that year.

In early autumn 2013, I was invited by Abbot Yinjue to stay at Huayan Temple in Huadu, Guangzhou. The students from the Buddhist College had now become abbots themselves. During the morning chanting at Huayan Temple, the sounds transported me back to that deep autumn of 1986 at Lingyan Mountain. The voices of the novices inspired me to create *Heart Sutra, small Square III* (Fig. 1). Without really planning to, I expressed those memories through layered, flowing brushstrokes—as if I had returned to that crisp autumn day and the sound of chanting.

Artist Yang Peng of Hubei Academy of Fine Arts once said about my *Heart Sutra* works:

The first glance offers a visual and psychological experience unprecedented in calligraphic reading—it feels less like calligraphy, more like winter. Snow leaves no trace, wind passes without mark, spring dreams vanish without residue, yet the brushstroke bears its imprint. Within the ink traces, the Heart Sutra appears to dissolve, yet simultaneously seems etched into the soul. Natural yet transcendent, effortless yet beyond method. What appears utterly traceless in fact conceals the creator's profound contemplation on the meaning of writing, alongside exceptional aesthetic discernment and creative power.

Writer Wang Meng also observed:

“Ren Tianjin brings a global vision to the ancient art of calligraphy. He has explored—and realized—what ‘modern writing’ can be, both in practice and theory. He is both a scholar and a free-spirited creator. Using traditional techniques, he brings cultural heritage into contemporary expression, blending future-looking creativity with emotional depth—breathing new life into today's art.”

On a spring 2019 trip to Mauritius, I visited the ancient Hindu Maheswarnath Temple, which has a thousand-year-old Bodhi tree in the center of the temple grounds. Standing under the tree and looking through the dappled shadows of the leaves, I seemed to see novice monks devoutly copying the Heart Sutra. The breeze touched the leaves, rustling up a soft wind — as if you could hear Shakyamuni sitting quietly, gently chanting under the Bodhi. Wandering in the temple, I could feel the sunlight, air, and breeze blowing through the leaves. I suddenly shook off all my stress: to see a world in a moment and a Bodhi in a leaf. This inspired my piece *The Shadow of Wisdom I* (Fig. 2), which combines calligraphy of the Heart Sutra with the image of that ancient tree.

As Shao Yiyang noted:

“Tianjin's practice of writing the *Heart Sutra* is both constant and contemplative, reminiscent of a young novice's daily chanting—a rhythm as natural as the changing seasons. The wind may pass by the ear, but its trace remains in the heart. His brushwork reveals distinct layers, a dynamic balance of *yin* and *yang*, and an interplay of void and substance—like the first glimpse of spring light. What appears spontaneously captured is, in truth, the fruit of sustained practice—a breakthrough that ignited an unstoppable creative momentum. The resulting imagery sways like shifting tree shadows, tracing the passage of time; it resonates with what Plato termed the overlapping of the ‘world of shadows’ and the world of truth, while also echoing the interweaving of the unconscious and the subconscious in Freudian psychoanalysis. Through this synthesis, Tianjin has forged a wholly new artistic language and aesthetic vision.”

After that experience, I created a series of ink works exploring the space between conscious and subconscious expression, including:

The Shadow of Wisdom II (Fig. 3), *Lotus I*, *Lotus II* (Fig.4), *Bodhi I* (Fig. 5), *The Light of Wisdom*, and *The Five Aggregates I–V*.

In the summer of 1985, Professor Hong was invited to hold a calligraphy exhibition at Tiefosi Temple in Huzhou. As his student, I helped with the preparations (Fig. 6). Many of the works shown were ones he had written during our lessons—some of my earliest treasures—along with pieces on loan from collectors like Zheng Yimei, Qian Juntao, and Jiang Zengpei. I was tasked with contacting these well-known figures to borrow and return the works. Through them, I learned a lot and broadened my artistic horizons.

As the exhibition drew near, I asked Mr. Du Xuan—father of my friend Gui Weigu—to write the exhibition title. To thank him, Professor Hong and I visited him in person. Hong gave him a collection of his newly published works, and in return, Mr. Du presented us with his own calligraphy. It was a beautiful moment of mutual respect between artists—a kind of conversation through art.

To bring the works to Huzhou, Professor Hong, his wife Jiang Yuzhen, and I carried several large bundles of scrolls ourselves. We took a long-distance bus from Shanghai and personally set up the exhibition. Even after all these years, I clearly remember the simple and elegant atmosphere of the show. Our host in Huzhou, Gao Baoping, was also a student of Professor Hong.

Many years later, in June 2020, on my way back to Shanghai from Hangzhou, I decided to revisit Tiefosi Temple. By chance, Gao Baoping—now a well-known calligrapher in Huzhou—was there when I arrived! We walked through the temple together, and memories came flooding back. There has always been a deep connection for me between Buddhism and calligraphy. That night, I talked late into the evening about art with Abbot Zhigen.

Living in Shanghai has given me the chance to meet

many remarkable people. Longhua Temple is also an important part of my journey with Buddhism. In the 1990s, Venerable Mingyang wrote me a scroll with the characters “福寿康宁” (Blessing, Longevity, Health, Peace). Years later, I also had a meaningful conversation about art and Buddhism with Venerable Zhaocheng in the Abbot's Room.

While working on my doctoral degree at the China Academy of Art, I had many conversations around Buddhism with my supervisor, Professor Wang Dongling (Fig. 7). In addition to being a calligraphy teacher, he is also an innovator—always exploring new forms. He often practices by writing sutras in his singular “*Luan Shu*” (Chaotic Script), which is especially striking. He has even written the *Heart Sutra* in this style—which has received both praise and criticism.

Professor Wang has always maintained a humble and earnest attitude toward art. He takes feedback seriously and keeps reflecting on his work. He once told me: “Criticism isn't always a bad thing—sometimes it pushes you forward.”

In early autumn 2017, the Buddhist Association of China held a workshop at Lingyin Temple in Hangzhou. Professor Wang was invited to speak about calligraphy. I went with him. Venerable Guangquan welcomed us, and the audience included abbots from all over the country.

During his talk, Wang shared his thoughts on calligraphy for over an hour. Afterward, he asked the monks a personal question:

“When writing the *Heart Sutra*, is it acceptable to use cursive script or even ‘*Luan Shu*’?”

Venerable Jingbo stood up and replied kindly:

“The script doesn't matter. What matters is the heart. If you write with sincerity, any style can carry the truth. The purpose of Buddhist scripture is to bring peace—not to enforce form.”

Then Venerable Guangquan gave Professor Wang a replica of Dong Qichang's Diamond Sutra from the

temple's collection. In return, Wang wrote the *Heart Sutra* in free-running cursive script on the spot and gifted it to the temple. This interaction and the exchange between calligraphy and Dharma became a beautiful story widely spoken about for a time.

In autumn 2019, I took part in the "Writing Non-Writing: Hangzhou International Modern Calligraphy Festival." I exhibited *The Shadow of Wisdom I*—an ink work on rice paper. It caught the attention of the curator Wang Tao (Fig. 8), who is the Pritzker Chair of Arts of Asia at the Art Institute of Chicago. I created this work in Shanghai in spring 2019, after returning from my trip to Mauritius. I first wrote on real Bodhi leaves I'd brought back. Later, I painted leaf outlines on paper and combined them with my daily *Heart Sutra* writing—merging calligraphy with abstract and figurative elements (Fig. 9). That is how this piece, centered on the Bodhi tree, came to be.

The Bodhi tree is deeply tied to Buddhism. It is often planted in temples in India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and China. In the ancient Brahmana texts, it is called the "Tree of Enlightenment." Buddhists revere it—it's said the Buddha attained enlightenment under a Bodhi tree.

The word "Bodhi" comes from Sanskrit and means "awakening" or "wisdom." There's a famous poem from the Tang Dynasty by the monks Shenxiu and Huineng:

Shenxiu wrote:

"The body is the Bodhi tree,

The mind a bright mirror.

Always wipe it with diligence,

Let no dust cling."

Huineng replied:

"Originally there is no Bodhi tree,

Nor any bright mirror.

Since everything is empty from the start,

Where can dust settle?"

For over two thousand years, the Bodhi tree has been a symbol of great enlightenment.

From encountering that giant tree, to writing on leaves, to painting them in ink, to merging calligraphy and painting—all these steps are connected to my ongoing relationship with Buddhism.

现代书法创作的创新性之比较研究

——以井上有一、王冬龄为例

Comparative Research on the Innovation of Art Creation in Modern Calligraphy

— Research on Inoue Yūichi and Wang Dongling

一、研究背景

传统书法艺术经数千年的发展在形式、技法、审美上已臻于完备，随着时代的发展，书法由实用技能蜕变为纯粹的艺术，已经形成了强烈的内在变革需求。近代以来，中西方文明的交流互鉴，也加速了书法向纯粹的、更具现代性的艺术形式的转变。现代性转型是传统书法无可回避的问题，日本书法家井上有一（图1）、中国书法家王冬龄（图2），两位书者出于传统而转向现代，开创了具有各自文化独特性，又会通于书写艺术的现代书法艺术风格。本文结合两位书家的艺术历程与不可复制的时代背景，分析个体书家在书法现代性道路上的探索，探究书法作为纯粹艺术形式在现代性创新上的可能性及意义。

要厘清的一点是，本文所探讨的“现代书法”，是基于观念上的“现代性”而言的，而非基于时间上的“现代”。对于“现代”，笔者更赞同福柯对于现代性的界定，即所谓现代性意味着一种“批判的气质与态度”，基于此，很多生活在当下但完全在传统的规范中书写的书家不在本文讨论的范畴内。

二、个案比较

(1) 日本现代书家井上有一及其“一字书”

1942年，井上有一拜入上田桑鸠（Ueda Sō-kyū, 1899—1968）门下学习书法。上田桑鸠是日本前卫书法中具有引导意义的代表人物，对井上有一来说，拜师上田桑鸠，使他无形中与“现代书法”建立了联系。

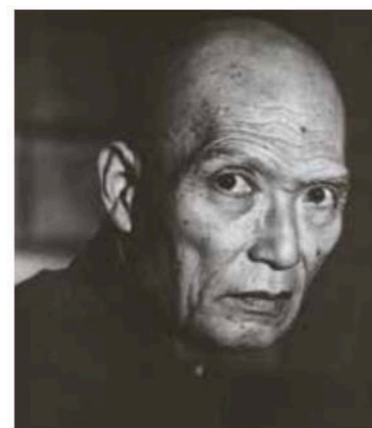


图1 井上有一
Fig. 1 Portrait of Inoue Yūichi

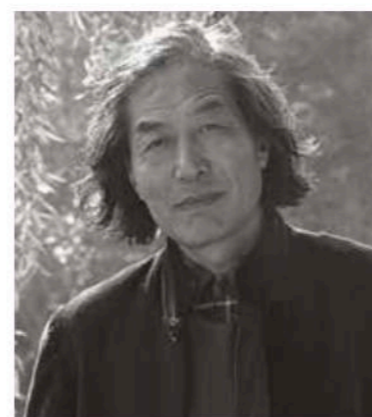


图2 王冬龄
Fig. 2 Portrait of Wang Dongling



图3 创作瓷漆作品的井上有一
Fig.3 Inoue Yūichi at work on an enamel writing



图4 井上有一,《愚彻》,1956年,纸本水墨
Fig.4 Inoue Yūichi, *Yu Che*, 1956. Ink on paper

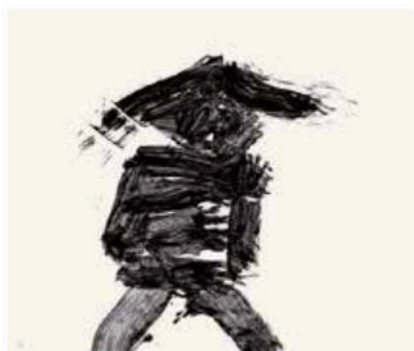


图5 井上有一,《贫》,1972年,纸本水墨
Fig.5 Inoue Yūichi, *Poverty*, 1972. Ink on paper

1952年1月,井上有一与森田子龙 (Morita Shi-ryū, 1912—1998)、关谷义道 (Sekitani Gi-dō, 1907—1982)、江口草玄 (Eguchi Sō-gen, 1913—2008) 共同创建了“墨人会”团体,他们创办的《墨人》杂志成为介绍西方现代艺术与日本新书风的重要阵地。东方书法与西方绘画相互启发激荡,西方抽象主义画家对书法元素的粗浅借用,激发了革新派书家迫切变革的内心渴望,此时传统书法的“文字性”或“文学性”便成了一种阻碍,成了最先要抛弃的部分。于是井上有一所说的“向绘画摇摆的时期”出现了。

1955年,井上有一以草把、肯特纸和瓷漆为工具,把最大的力气付诸“写”这一行为。《朝日周刊》所刊登的那张照片(图3),让人联想到杰克逊·波洛克 (Jackson Pollock, 1912—1956) 的行动绘画,却更加极端化,更加夸张。然而无节制的自由表达很容易让人迷失创作的本心,很快井上有一就发现这条路是走不通的。但这一段否定文字的探索并非毫无意义,井上有一说:“丢掉文字,我才明白了书写的精彩。”瓷漆时期那种搏命般的书写方式,对书法时间性与空间性的全新感受,使其形成了“黑、重、茂密”的书法面貌。当井上有一回归文字本体,传统的积淀与创新的表现力便很快找到了融合点,于是1956年参加第四届圣保罗国际美术展时受到西方艺术界瞩目的作品《愚彻》(图4)诞生了。

“愚彻”两个字紧密地叠在一起,像一个漆黑的团块结构,又像是一个黑色的雕塑装置,沉甸甸地矗立在那里。这件作品所具有的东方气质和独特形式征服了西方艺术界,也奠定了他此后作品的基本取向。以此为起点,井上有一开启了自我风格的构筑。

《愚彻》似乎为井上有一打开了一个创作的方向,此后他在少字数的书法中反复琢磨,并最终在“一字书”中达到了极致,其中最具代表性的便是“贫”字。从1954年井上有一在破烂的隔扇门上猛击般地书写了第一个“贫”字开始,井上有一进入了“一字书”的世界。据统计,井上有一一生所书“贫”字有64幅——当然这是排除了大量的习作之后他自认为可以保留下来的作品数量。

“贫”字是井上有一对自己的警醒,也给自己制造了一个需要不断锤炼的课题。1968年的“贫”字尚略显拘束,而1972年的“贫”字(图5)已前所未有地展示出一个人的姿态——时而奔跑,时而停顿、张望。“贫”字建立了井上有一独特的书写面貌。为了呈现不同的动态与方向感,井上有一往往会颠倒书写的顺序和笔势,甚至采用左手书写的方式,从下往上进行书写,充满朴拙生涩质感的“贫”字慢慢建立起来。在“贫”字中,井上有一不断强化对单字空间结构的研究,使其形态走向更加简明、纯粹,生命的意志更加鲜明,真正捕捉到汉字的意蕴与形态之朴拙、苍雄的

魅力。

井上有一现代书法的经典作品都是汉字而非日文假名,这使得人们重新关注起汉字本身具有的美学价值及其在现代书法中的各种可能性。宗白华先生说汉字是“表现生命的单位”,这句话恰可以用来形容井上有一的一字书法。

以井上有一的《鸟》字为例(图6)，“鸟”本是一个象形字,在甲骨文和金文篆书中可以很明显看到鸟的头部、喙、躯干、翅膀和脚。井上有一笔下的“鸟”字仍然遵循着书法的点画,虽然这些点画已经离开了古典的范式——他所书的不是篆、隶、草、行的任何一种。井上有一书写“鸟”字的灵感源于松尾芭蕉的俳句“今秋岁已衰,云随风,鸟北归”。生命行将衰败之时,孤独地行在天地间的孤鸟,正是井上有一暮年的自况。

井上有一从单个的汉字中发掘出生命的能量,用书法建立起独特的生命意象,打破了东西方文化的隔膜,也建立起初民造字的智慧与现代语境下个人生命感受的通路。对此,井上有一曾自言:“我写出来的字在日本社会中沿用至今,历史久远,加之它们浸透着我手上的汗渍,所以我投入全部生命就能实现这个书法空间。”

单个的汉字,也为井上有一对书法空间的探索提供了无尽的素材。以“塔”字为例(图7),他像建塔一样书写了“塔”字,先从口字写起,一点点叠加上去成为一个“塔”,它看起来就仿佛是耸立于原野上的塔。井上有一把单个的汉字当作视觉空间的试验场。在这里,汉字间架结构的古典法则开始失效,他说:“我终将走上建塔的艰难险途。”又说:“实现书之空间,唯之务须倾尽我生命的火花。”这种空间感的构筑,与他走入式的书写方式息息相关。当他走到纸上,拖着巨大的毛笔用力去构筑一个汉字的空间,身体语言也成为书法语言的一部分,在与纸的决斗中,一气呵成,完成了书写由“传统”向“现代”的历史转变。

除了生命意识的呈现与空间的构筑,井上有一对书写材料与书写痕迹也十分重视。井上有一刻意在墨中加入动物皮熬制的骨胶,从而增加墨的黏性与光泽,在书写时留下清晰的笔痕。井上有一用特制的墨与巨大的毛笔,将传统书法中“飞白”的效果变成了一种绵绵不绝的气脉,如筋脉一般,无尽的生机在其间往复循环。文字的肌理显示着运笔的力度与方向,这也成为欣赏井上书法的重要部分。

井上有一将自我的生命力注入文字之中,面对井上有一的字,就如直面他的灵魂。在现代书法这条路上,井上有一真正做到了愚彻到底,直入化境。



图6 井上有一,《鸟》,1976年,纸本水墨
Fig.6 Inoue Yūichi, *Bird*, 1976. Ink on paper



图7 井上有一,《塔》,1971年,纸本水墨
Fig.7 Inoue Yūichi, *Tower*, 1971. Ink on paper

(2) 中国现代书家王冬龄及其“乱书”

在王冬龄的学书历程中，两个关键的节点对他的现代书法探索产生了至为深远的影响。

其一是20世纪60年代末，跟随当代草圣林散之学习书法。林散之的书法，受益于黄宾虹“平、留、圆、重、变”的用笔诀窍，同时还发展了黄宾虹的宿墨法，将绘画的枯湿浓淡诸法用于书法。林散之毫无保留地把自己的所学所悟都传授给王冬龄，在林散之带领下，王冬龄得以一窥书法艺术的堂奥。吸取林散之的墨法、笔法，又从孙过庭《书谱》中提炼出右提轻收、欹侧左倾的结体面貌，最终形成一种松秀挺拔的气质，这一贯穿在王冬龄的传统行草书中。

其二是1979年考入浙江美术学院（今中国美术学院），成为当时书法专业首批5名研究生之一。受教于沙孟海、陆维钊、诸乐三等书风面貌各不相同的书家，尤其是沙孟海所强调的“穷源竟流”的学习方式以及他擘窠大字的雄强风格，都对王冬龄成为一个具有坚定的反思能力和大胆的开拓精神的书家影响深远。（图8）

1981年，王冬龄研究生毕业留校。在为留学生教授书法的过程中，面对缺乏汉字基础的留学生，如何传授东方的书法精髓，如何让他们领会到书法之美，王冬龄逐渐开始站在西方视角重新审视书法。1989年，王冬龄应美国明尼苏达大学的邀请赴美国教授书法。4年中他在美国各高校讲学、展览，同时流连于美术馆，观摩西方艺术展览。这段经历，使他能够真正站在东西方文化的视域，思索传统书法在全球艺术潮流中的位置以及未来可能发展的方向。不断打开的视野使他比始终浸淫在传统中的书家能够更果决地打破传统书法的藩篱，不断探索书法的边界。

1992年冬，王冬龄归国，此时恰是国内现代书法最热闹的时期，各种现代书法展览、研讨不断，王冬龄也顺理成章地投入其中，正式步入了现代书法创变的道路。他这一阶段的作品，在传统与现代之间游走，显示出强烈的探索精神，其中不乏类似于日本“墨像派”风格的作品。像《玄黄》（图9）、《笔阵图》系列作品，灵感源自传统书法或文学经典，在表现上舍弃文字的限制，纯粹追求墨的表现力，在墨线中呈现出生命力的爆发。这类作品介于书与画之间，有着耐人寻味的表现力，遗憾的是在这个方向上，日本现代书法已经基本发展完备，留给中国现代书家开拓的空间并不多，因此也没有成为王冬龄现代书法探索的主要方向。

2007年12月3日，王冬龄在中国美术馆举办了第三次个展，其中最令人瞩目的两件作品，一是2万余字、50m长的《易经》长卷和37.5m

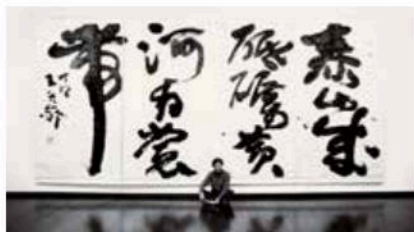


图8 1987年，王冬龄的巨幅草书作品在中国美术馆展出
Fig. 8 In 1987, Wang Dongling's large-scale large-character cursive script works were exhibited at the National Art Museum of China



图9 王冬龄，《玄黄》，2006年，纸本水墨。美国大都会艺术博物馆藏
Fig. 9 Wang Dongling, *Xuan Huang*, 2006, Ink on paper. The Metropolitan Museum of Art

长的《老子》五千言，作品布满了中国美术馆圆厅的整个墙面，产生了令人震撼的视觉冲击力。第二件《乾坤木》（图10），以对半剖开的2块7m多长的巨木为底，书写着《易经》乾卦、坤卦之句。这几乎是一件草书的装置艺术作品。从这个展览就可看出，王冬龄在这一时期更加注重对形式美感的探索，尤其是其巨幅作品，将时代精神与笔墨力量发挥到极致，以一种空间扩大、狂风骤雨式的书写节奏，将传统书法审美力转化为当代思想情感的宣泄与流露。

2008年以后，王冬龄的现代书法创新逐渐进入了成熟期。他在书法创作的材质上不断探索，从画报、摄影、银盐到竹木……从纸张到非纸张的材料，书法载体的边界一次次拓展，也将广义的“他者身体”的空间拓展为书写空间。王冬龄在材质探索的路上越来越放开，离传统书法的标配越来越远。特殊的材质，不仅营造出宣纸上不能呈现的新奇美感，而且通过材质的颠覆，去追问究竟何为书法的本质。

以银盐书法为例（图11），在摄影的成像机制中，王冬龄捕捉到了某种对书法的反向启发：毛笔、宣纸、黑色的墨、红色的印章，组成了传统书法作品“白纸黑字”的基本视觉特征，但书法是否只能是如此的形态呢？如摄影底片一般“颠倒黑白”，以黑底为纸、白色为墨进行书写，难道便创作不出书法吗？“书法”的本质，究竟是对特定媒材的限定，还是汉字文化圈语境下的特定书写行为？以摄影底片代替宣纸进行书写，将书写的场地由书斋变为冲洗照片的暗室，书写之中存在着大量的偶发性，比传统毛笔与宣纸的书写更加难以把握，呈现出比水墨更神奇的晕化效果……但这都不是银盐书法最重要的意义。观念上的突破，对“书法”这一概念边界的不断挑战与更新，让书法艺术更接近了现代的方向，这才是银盐书法的意义所在。

在不断的材料探索与理念转变之中，王冬龄终于在书写方式上进行了大胆的突破，以一种冒天下之大不韪的精神，打破传统书法对章法布局的规训，把日常书写时因不慎产生的偶尔的笔画交错变成刻意的交叠，压制文字的可辨识度，专注于“狂草精神、视觉张力”的凸显，每个字的书写都在法度之内，整体却反其道而行。这种试验性的书写方式逐渐成熟，最终发展成了一种具有独创性的全新书风——“乱书”。（图12）

有人认为“乱书”是类似于波洛克行动绘画的衍生，或者是一种毫无章法的涂鸦，但对“乱书”的生成过程进行分析就可以发现，“乱书”仍保留了书法的基本特质。第一，汉字并未消失，只是产生了互相重叠缠绕。如果以倒叙的方式去拆解，“乱书”仍然是由众多可识别或部分可识别的汉字组成的。第二，“乱书”的书写仍然保留了对笔法的要求，轻



图10 王冬龄，《乾坤木》，2006年，水墨木头
Fig. 10 Wang Dongling, *Qian Kun Wood*, 2006. Ink on wood



图11 王冬龄，《花非花》，2013年，银盐相纸
Fig. 11 Wang Dongling, *Hua Fei Hua*, 2013. Silver gelatin paper



图12 王冬龄，《孟浩然《春晓》》，2016年，纸本水墨
Fig. 12 Wang Dongling, *Meng Haoran's Chun Xiao*, 2016. Ink on paper

重疾徐、提按顿挫，书法的书写性之美被完好地保留在笔迹之中。第三，文字的缠绕虽然降低了可读性，但章法布局仍刻意经营，知白守黑，气韵流动。从这个意义上来说，王冬龄的“乱书”仍是书法。

“乱书”，打散字形布局而保留了笔墨的基本元素，抛开了汉字作为表意符号的功能，提炼出积淀在笔墨之间的人文精神，让更多陌生文化环境中的人能迅速领悟到书法之精髓。在这个意义上，王冬龄的“乱书”使得书法更加接近了纯粹艺术的概念。蔡邕《笔论》中说：“欲书先散怀抱。”王冬龄师从林散之先生，行草已深得“散”之三昧，而独创的“乱书”更是由“散”及“乱”，生发出一种全新的书道，契合了当代人的性情与精神状态，从而引发了众多书家乃至非书法界人士的共鸣。文字的互相挤压、穿插与叠加，形成碰撞、扭结、挣脱的视觉效果，恰好构成了“乱书”的现代性美感：一种内在的不休的矛盾力。字形缠绕，不可辨认，但仍能看出笔意的飞动，这恰与张怀瓘《文字论》所说“深识书者，唯观神采，不见字形”殊途同归。

(3) 井上有一与王冬龄现代书法创新性之比较

就创作主体的身份意识而言，井上有一和王冬龄都自觉地完成了创作主体身份的现代性转化——他们都是现代艺术家而非传统意义上的书法家，这从根本上保证了他们的作品是“现代”的。对井上有一来说，当他高喊着“泼出去，把它泼到那些书法家先生的脸上去”，他便把自己与传统意义上的书法家这个身份进行了分离。而王冬龄则更明确，在面对“您的自我认同是书法家还是艺术家”的提问时，他毫不犹豫地选择了“艺术家”这个身份。只有创作主体完成了从传统意义上的书法家到具有现代意识的艺术家的身份转变，才能超越文化的相对性，创作出具有现代精神的普遍性艺术语言。

“书为心画”这一传统书法的归箴，却也是成就井上有一与王冬龄书法现代性的重要一点，生命意识的灌注，使他们的书法与时代精神会通。对井上有一和王冬龄来说，书写不仅是创作，而且是生命意志的表达。井上有一的孤绝愚痴与王冬龄的洒脱旷达将他们带向了完全不同的两条路。井上有一反复写他感触最深的一个字，在单字的书写中，找到了书法与书写者灵魂层面隐秘的对应关系。而王冬龄则通过现场书写巨幅《逍遥游》，与往昔历史中著名哲人智者的心灵相碰撞，营造出鲲鹏振翅、上下翻飞的壮阔之姿。

书法现代性的一个重要标志是与古代文人书斋自赏式的创作方式的分离。井上有一或王冬龄，公开的现场性书写，步入式的创作状态，固然会让人联想到西方行动绘画那种即兴的、动感的、无特定形式的创作方

式，但是在内在的精神渊源上，其更多的仍是与张旭、怀素“颠张醉素”的狂草精神一脉相承的。

汉字书法结构内在的张力外化于书者的动态之中，与书者的情绪、精神状态相关联，构成了一个充满矛盾、冲突、对抗、妥协的戏剧化现场。创作过程成为一种文化气场的建构，这对于艺术家而言是体力与心力的巨大激发，对公众则是一种不可复制的审美期待。在这个由笔触激发的场域内，创作者与观者共同完成了一次现代性情感与能量的交换。

“消解”是现代书法必然的特质，即通过对汉字或书法的字形、笔画、语义等进行消解，以此建构起新的表现形式，从而区别于“传统书法”，生成新的“书法艺术”。井上有一的“一字书”中消解了传统书写对汉字既有形体的规范，从而强化了与汉字语义相关的生命形态的意象，塑造了直击人心的生命质感。同样不脱离汉字书写的基底，王冬龄的“乱书”则从章法上走出了对传统的突破。通过点画、墨线的合并、重叠，消解了草书的书写规范，生成了新的样式。

现代书法道路上不乏挑战传统书写规则与空间秩序的尝试，但由于创作者缺乏对书法的深层思考与现代性观念的支撑，没有建立起新的美学目标，而流于杂乱无章的笔墨游戏。从旧营垒中冲杀出来的才是出手最致命、最具反叛力的人，在这一点上，井上有一与王冬龄都在深悟到传统书法的微妙与精深之后走上了对传统的反叛，在反复的搏杀之后开辟出了各自的新路。

无论是井上有一临终前对颜真卿的反复临写，还是王冬龄几十年如一日临写《龙藏寺碑》，都使他们在投身现代性书法创作时仍保持了与传统书法的关联，从而防止用力过度，演变成某种失去了笔墨意蕴的行为表演或抽象画作。即使走向消解文字的地步，他们的艺术仍有回归书法本质的通道。现代消解着传统，又从传统之中生成。

三、从个案的比较看当代书法创作的可行性

“现代书法”虽然勃兴于20世纪“二战”后的日本，但从历史的脉络看，书法现代性变革的萌芽或许从明中期个体意识的觉醒中即已产生，从徐渭式乱头粗服的书法到傅山对“丑拙”书风的推崇，从“扬州八怪”的怪异书风再到现代书法打破章法的探索，其内在精神是一脉相承的。

书法的现代性特征虽然早已从传统的内部萌芽，其真正爆发却是在东西方艺术互鉴的潮流之下展开的。东西方艺术家站在各自的文化语境下，热切地吸取对方的艺术特点，形成了东方主义与现代主义互相交织的世界性的艺术运动。无论这些西方艺术家对书法这种神秘东方艺术的接



图13 任天进与日本著名艺术评论家、收藏家海上雅臣(右)合影，后者是井上有一艺术的关键发掘者与推广者
Fig. 13 Ren Tianjin and the renowned Japanese art critic and collector Unakami Masaomi (right), the key discoverer and promoter of the artist Inoue Yūichi



图14 王冬龄“乱书”创作现场
Fig. 14 At a Luanshu Session with Wang Dongling

受是多么浅薄，甚至可能完全无法领会到传统书法的秩序与法则，但不可否认的是，书法的某些特性契合了现代艺术发展的需求，蕴藏在中国书法中的东方哲理，也或多或少改变了西方艺术家观看世界的方式。反过来，西方艺术家对书法的借鉴应用，也刺激了东方书家思路的转变，使他们可以更加大胆地打破传统的藩篱，创造出新的书风。

从井上有一和王冬龄的现代书法实践可以看出，以汉字为母体的书法天然地携带着“现代性”基因。无论是井上有一偏向于具象的一字书法，还是王冬龄的“乱书”，作为现代书法作品，它们都保留了书法艺术最基本的要素：汉字或类汉字结构、笔墨韵味、线条、书写性……若仅仅是利用了汉字资源而淡化了书写性，取消了笔墨的基本规定，那就称不上是现代书法，而仅仅是利用书法材料进行的其他艺术行为。

书法“现代性”表达的路径，不应生硬借用西方艺术的手法与元素，而该回归书法本体，从汉字的构型特征、书法线条的形式美感等角度深度挖掘，保持其作为中国本土艺术的基本特性。同时，现代书法对形式本体的强调又使之与西方抽象绘画有对话的可能性。这种独立性与对话性是现代书法与当代西方艺术平等交流对话的基础。

对中国现代书法家来说，现代书法这条路起步晚于日本，许多可行的道路已有成功的先例，另辟蹊径就显得更加困难重重。一个时代的新书体、新书风，必然意味着对前代风格的颠覆，但是颠覆不等同于完全的割裂，而是有根基、有逻辑的螺旋上升与蜕变。古典书法审美理念与重视品行修养的哲学立场，与当代艺术语境如何有机相融，需要书家既有传统的笔墨积累，又有高度的艺术视野和超前的艺术敏感性。王冬龄的“乱书”的尝试，既保存了中国书法的书写特性，又打破了识文辨字的阅读性局限，指向了一种王岳川在《发现东方》一书中所提出的超越东方与西方文化的“人类文化精神的合奏”。对现代书法的发展来说，这或许是值得探索的一条路径。深研传统书法与文化，把握东西方的当代艺术潮流，在“现代性”这个前提下，寻求多元艺术语言深层次的融合，现代书法家只有定位在这样的学术坐标之上，才可能寻到正确的途径。

I. Research Background

After thousands of years of development, traditional calligraphy art has reached a state of perfection in forms, techniques and aesthetics. Calligraphy has changed from its practical function of letter writing to a pure art form. These transformations have also motivated waves of artists to seek reform. The exchanges and cultural interactions between Eastern and Western cultures have stimulated the modernization of calligraphy—modernization is an inevitable path for traditional calligraphy.

The works of Japanese calligrapher Inoue Yūichi (1916-1985) (Fig. 1) and Chinese calligrapher Wang Dongling (1945-) (Fig. 2) are outstanding examples of modern calligraphy. Both artists draw on their unique cultural heritages to create distinctive artistic styles. This paper elaborates on their respective historical backgrounds, examines their artistic paths toward modernity, and explores the possibility and significance of modern innovation in calligraphy.

It should be clarified that “modern calligraphy” discussed in this paper is based on the concept of *modernity* (not the time frame of modern art). Regarding “modernity,” the author agrees with Foucault’s definition of “critical temperament and attitude.” Based on this concept, many contemporary calligraphers who work entirely within traditional norms are excluded from the research scope of this paper.

II. Case Comparison

(1) Japanese Modern Calligrapher Inoue Yūichi and His One-character Calligraphy

Inoue Yūichi studied calligraphy under Ueda Sō-kyū (1884-1953) in 1942. Ueda Sō-kyū was one of the most influential artists in Japanese avant-garde calligraphy, and he guided Inoue into the field of “modern calligraphy.”

In January 1952, Inoue Yūichi co-founded the “Mo-Ren” group with Morita Shi-ryū, Sekitani Gi-dō, and

Eguchi Sō-gen. The group’s magazine *Mo-Ren* became a key platform for introducing Western modern art to Japanese audiences. Eastern calligraphy and Western painting began to interact: Western abstract painters’ use of calligraphic elements inspired innovative calligraphers to explore new forms. At that time, the “character” or “literariness” of traditional calligraphy was seen as a limitation by some artists, who chose to abandon character shapes. Inoue referred to this transition as “the swing towards painting.”

In 1955, Inoue focused intensely on the act of “writing”, using straw handles, kent paper, and enamel as tools. A photo published in *Asahi Weekly* drew comparisons to Pollock’s action painting, but Inoue’s work was more extreme and exaggerated in expression. (Fig. 3) However, he soon realized that abandoning character shapes in an unrestrained way stripped his work of its original creativity, making true free expression impossible. In retrospect, this period of abandoning characters was pivotal to his artistic career: “Without letters, I realized how wonderful writing is,” Inoue later said. The feverish, life-pledging mode of writing from his enamel period, coupled with a radically new perception of calligraphy’s temporality and spatiality, gave rise to its distinctive visual character—one that can be described as “black, heavy, and densely textured.” When Inoue returned to working with character shapes, tradition and innovation fused to create something new.

His work *Yu Che* (Fig. 4), created during this period, attracted widespread attention from Western audiences at the 1956 Fourth São Paulo International Art Exhibition. The two characters “Yu” (愚) and “Che” (彻) were placed side by side, folded tightly together. From a distance, they resembled a massive black sculptural installation rather than a two-dimensional work on paper. *Yu Che* showcased a unique Eastern aesthetic that captivated the Western art world and set the direction for his subsequent creations. It was after this initial success that Inoue began to develop his signature style.

Yu Che seemed to open a new creative path for Inoue. He subsequently focused on calligraphy with a minimal number of characters, eventually mastering *One-character calligraphy*. His most representative work in this style centered on the Chinese character “Poverty” (贫). In 1954, when he first wrote “Poverty” on a broken partition door, he initiated this new style. Statistics show that Inoue created 64 refined works featuring “Poverty” in his lifetime, along with numerous drafts.

Through repeated practice and re-creation of this character, the “Poverty” series gained profound personal meaning for Inoue. In 1968, his rendering of “Poverty” was still somewhat restrained; by 1972, it had evolved to convey dynamic human postures, suggesting movement and pause (Fig. 5). Inoue developed his unique approach to writing “Poverty” by reversing the traditional stroke order or even writing left-handed from bottom to top, creating a simple yet awkward texture. Through constant refinement, he streamlined the character’s spatial structure and form, ultimately capturing the essence of the character and its understated nobility.

Notably, all of Inoue’s classic modern calligraphy works use Chinese characters rather than Japanese kana. This choice drew attention to the aesthetic value of Chinese characters and their potential for modernization. Zong Baihua described Chinese characters as “units of life”—a phrase that perfectly encapsulates Inoue’s *One-character calligraphy*.

Take his work *Bird* (鸟) (Fig. 6) as an example. “Bird” is originally a pictograph; in ancient Chinese oracle bone inscriptions and bronze inscriptions, its structure clearly depicts a bird’s head, beak, body, wings, and feet. Inoue’s *Bird* retains calligraphic lines and dots but breaks free from classical paradigms (he did not imitate oracle bone styles). He drew inspiration for this work from a haiku by Matsuo Basho: “In autumn, the clouds have faded, and the birds return to the north.” The poem resonated with Inoue, as it evokes the transience of life and the loneliness of a bird flying between heaven and earth.

Through a single Chinese character, Inoue explored the energy of life and created a unique life image in calligraphy. He bridged Eastern and Western cultures, expressing the wisdom of Chinese characters and his personal interpretation of life within a modern context. As Inoue once said: “The characters I have written are still used in Japanese society. They have a long history, and they are soaked in the sweat of my hands. I devote my whole life to realizing this calligraphy space.”

Individual Chinese characters also provided Inoue with endless material for exploring visual space. For example, in his work *Tower* (塔) (Fig. 7), he wrote the character as if constructing a tower: he first wrote the “Mouth” (口) radical at the bottom, then added the upper parts, creating the illusion of a tower standing in a rural landscape. Inoue used single Chinese characters as a testing ground for visual space, stating that he abandoned classical rules to restructure the characters. “I will eventually take the difficult and dangerous path of building a tower to realize the space of calligraphy; I will use up all the sparkles of my life,” he noted.

This spatial construction was closely tied to his physical approach to writing. Using large brushes, he created a unique balance between solid form and empty space within each character. His body language became an integral part of his calligraphic language, enabling him to achieve the historical transformation of calligraphy from “traditional” to “modern.”

In addition to exploring life’s meaning and spatial construction, Inoue emphasized the importance of materials and techniques. He added bone glue (made from animal skin) to ink to enhance its viscosity and luster, leaving clear traces of his brushstrokes on paper. He also developed custom ink and used large brushes to transform *Feibai* (飞白)—a traditional technique that leaves gaps in strokes—into a dynamic, vital element that seems to circulate on the paper. The texture of his brushwork, which reveals the direction and force of each stroke, is central to understanding his calligraphy. Inoue infused his calligraphy with the vitality of his

own life; viewing his work feels like engaging with his soul. In his pursuit of calligraphic modernization, he delved deeply into his personal inner world.

(2) Chinese Modern Calligrapher Wang Dongling and His Luan Shu (Chaotic Script)

Two key periods in Wang Dongling’s academic background profoundly shaped his exploration of modern calligraphy.

The first period was the late 1960s, when he studied calligraphy under Lin Sanzhi. Lin’s calligraphy drew on Huang Binhong’s “flat, stable, round, heavy, and flexible” brush techniques, and he also applied painting methods to calligraphy—skills he passed on to Wang without reservation. Under Lin’s guidance, Wang studied the works of earlier masters, absorbed Lin’s ink and brush style, and drew inspiration from Sun Guoting’s *Shu Pu* (《书谱》), particularly extracting its “right-side receiving and left-side leaning” techniques to develop his own style. This style would later permeate his traditional and *Luan Shu* works.

The second period began in 1979, when Wang was admitted to the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts (now China Academy of Art) as one of the first five graduate students in calligraphy. There, he studied under masters including Sha Menghai, Lu Weizhao, and Zhu Lesan—each with distinctly different styles. Sha Menghai, in particular, emphasized a “trace back to the source” learning method and favored writing enlarged characters. These influences shaped Wang into a calligrapher deeply rooted in tradition yet bold in innovation (Fig. 8).

After graduating in 1981, Wang stayed on to teach at the academy. While instructing international students in calligraphy, he encountered the challenge of conveying the beauty of this art form to those unfamiliar with Chinese characters. This experience compelled him to re-examine calligraphy from a Western perspective. From 1989, he spent four years as a visiting calligraphy instructor at the University of Minnesota. During this

time, he lectured widely and visited exhibitions across the U.S., gaining a unique East-West perspective on calligraphy’s place within global art trends. This expanded outlook empowered him to break through the constraints of tradition more decisively than artists working solely within a native context, leading him to continually explore and push the boundaries of calligraphy.

In the winter of 1992, Wang Dongling returned to China—during a vibrant era for modern calligraphy, marked by countless exhibitions and discussions. Wang officially entered the field of modern calligraphy, and his works at the time blended tradition and modernity with a strong spirit of exploration. Many pieces, such as *Xuan Huang* (Fig. 9) and *Bi Zhen Tu*, showed traces of Japanese calligraphic influence. Inspired by traditional calligraphy and literary classics, these works abandoned the limitations of character legibility and expressed vitality through ink lines. Straddling calligraphy and painting, they held a unique expressive power. Unfortunately, modern Japanese calligraphy had already advanced far in this direction, leaving little room for Chinese modern calligraphers to innovate—so this path did not become the focus of Wang’s modern calligraphy exploration.

On December 3, 2007, Wang Dongling held his third solo exhibition at the National Art Museum of China. Two works stood out: the first was a 50-meter-long scroll of *Yi Jing* (《易经》) containing over 20,000 characters, and the second a 37.6-meter scroll of *Lao Tzu* (《老子》) with 5,000 characters. Mounted along the entire circumference of the museum’s circular hall, these works created a stunning visual impact. The second standout piece, *Qiankun Wood* (Fig. 10), featured two halves of a giant log (over seven meters long) on which Wang inscribed passages from the “Qian Gua” (乾卦) and “Kun Gua” (坤卦) of *Yi Jing*. This work functioned almost as a *cursive script* installation.

The exhibition revealed Wang’s growing focus on formal beauty—especially in large-scale works, where he pushed the “spirit of the times” and the dynamism

of brush and ink to extremes. This transformed the aesthetic power of traditional calligraphy, allowing it to convey contemporary thoughts and emotions.

After 2008, Wang Dongling's innovations in modern calligraphy gradually entered a mature phase. He continuously experimented with new materials—including magazines, photographs, silver gelatin paper, bamboo, and wood—expanding calligraphy from paper to non-paper mediums and repeatedly redefining its boundaries. Wang grew increasingly open to material exploration, moving further from traditional formats. These unconventional materials not only allowed him to achieve aesthetic effects impossible on flat paper but also helped him grasp the essence of calligraphy through varied material interactions.

For instance, in his *Silver Gelatin Calligraphy* series (Fig. 11), Wang drew inspiration from the imaging process of photography. He reversed the conventional visual elements of traditional calligraphy—white paper, black ink, and red seals—by writing in white ink on black photographic film. This provoked fundamental questions: Can calligraphy take forms other than the conventional? Is the essence of calligraphy bound by material, or is it defined by the act of writing within Chinese cultural practice? Using photographic film transformed calligraphic writing into a process resembling darkroom development, introducing elements of chance and unpredictability. Although more difficult to control than traditional brush writing, this method produced strikingly ethereal effects. The greatest significance of *Silver Gelatin Calligraphy* lay in its conceptual breakthrough: it challenged and expanded the boundaries of “calligraphy”, bringing the art form one step closer to modernization.

Through constant material experimentation and conceptual evolution, Wang Dongling finally made a bold breakthrough in his writing style. He broke traditional calligraphic rules, transforming the accidental strokes that emerge in daily writing into deliberate overlaps. He sought to reduce text legibility and focus instead on “crazy spirit and visual tension.”

Each character adhered to basic writing rules, but the overall work subverted expectations. This experimental approach gradually matured, eventually evolving into his most original style: *Luan Shu* (Fig. 12).

Some critics have dismissed *Luan Shu* as a derivative of Pollock's paintings or unruly graffiti, but an analysis of its creation reveals that it retains core calligraphic elements: First, Chinese characters have not disappeared—they are merely overlapped and intertwined. If the characters are “dismantled” in reverse order, *Luan Shu* is still composed of recognizable (or partially recognizable) Chinese characters. Second, the writing process still relies on traditional brushstrokes, preserving the inherent beauty of calligraphy. Third, although text intertwining reduces legibility, the layout is still deliberately designed. This analysis confirms that Wang Dongling's *Luan Shu* remains a form of calligraphy.

Luan Shu breaks the traditional layout of characters but preserves their basic elements. It abandons the ideographic function of Chinese characters yet retains the humanistic spirit conveyed through ink. By transcending language barriers, *Luan Shu* allows viewers from diverse cultural backgrounds to intuitively grasp the essence of calligraphy, bringing calligraphy closer to the concept of “pure art.” As Cai Yong noted in *Bi Lun* (《笔论》): “The study of calligraphy requires an open mind.”

Trained by Lin Sanzhi, Wang Dongling deeply understood the artistic concept of “dispersion” (散). *Luan Shu* grows from this idea of “disorder,” offering a new vision of calligraphy that resonates with the temperament and psychological state of contemporary people—both calligraphers and non-specialists alike. The overlapping, compression, and interweaving of characters produce visual effects of collision, twisting, superposition, and separation, forming a modern beauty brimming with tension and contradiction. Though the characters may be entangled and illegible, the movement and spirit of the brush remain perceptible. As Zhang Huiguan expressed in his *On*

the Theory of Writing (《书断》): “Those who understand deeply do not need to see the characters clearly—they perceive the spirit directly.”

(3) Innovative Comparison of Modern Calligraphy between Inoue Yūichi and Wang Dongling

First, in terms of the creator's identity: both Inoue Yūichi and Wang Dongling consciously pursued the modern transformation of calligraphy. They identified as “modern artists” rather than “traditional calligraphers”—a positioning that fundamentally situated their work within a modern context. For Inoue, this separation was explicit when he declared: “Splash it out and throw it on the faces of those calligraphers”—rejecting his association with traditional calligraphic circles. Wang Dongling was equally clear: when asked whether he identified as a “calligrapher” or “artist”, he unhesitatingly chose “artist.” This conscious shift from traditional to modern creator enabled them to transcend cultural specificities and develop a universal artistic language infused with modern spirit.

The traditional calligraphic concept of “writing to express the mind” (书为心画) is central to understanding the modernity of both artists' work. By infusing their calligraphy with life consciousness, they enabled it to embody the spirit of the times. For Inoue and Wang, writing was not merely artistic creation but an expression of their life philosophy. Inoue's sense of “loneliness” and Wang's pursuit of “freedom” led them down distinct paths: Inoue repeatedly wrote a single character that resonated with his inner self, discovering a hidden connection between calligraphy and his soul; Wang, by contrast, created large-scale works such as his enlarged *A Happy Excursion* (《逍遥游》), engaging with the spirits of ancient philosophers and conveying a majestic, soaring vitality.

A key marker of modern calligraphy is its departure from the ancient scholarly tradition of “self-appreciative creation”. Inoue and Wang's innovative practices—such as on-site open writing and dynamic, process-driven

creation—echo the spontaneity of Western action painting. Yet their spiritual inspiration remains rooted in the “wild spirit” of Tang Dynasty calligraphers like Zhang Xu and Huai Su.

The inherent tension of Chinese character structures is reflected in the dynamism of their writing, which is intertwined with the calligrapher's emotions and mental state. This creates a dramatic scene filled with contradictions, conflicts, compromises, and confrontations. The creative process becomes a fusion of cultural aura (which energizes the artist's body and mind) and irreproducible aesthetic anticipation (for the audience). In this way, creator and viewer jointly complete an exchange of modern emotions and energy.

“Dissolution” is an inevitable characteristic of modern calligraphy. By dissolving the form, strokes, and semantics of Chinese characters, artists construct a new expressive language—one that differs from traditional calligraphy yet remains rooted in its essence. Inoue's *One-character calligraphy* challenges and subverts the standardization of traditional Chinese characters, revealing life images that connect directly with human emotion. Similarly, Wang's *Luan Shu* breaks new ground without abandoning basic calligraphic principles: by merging and overlapping character radicals and lines, he dissolves *cursive script* into a new expressive style.

While many artists have attempted to challenge traditional writing rules and spatial order in the name of “modern calligraphy,” some have failed due to a superficial understanding of calligraphic fundamentals—reducing their work to chaotic lines devoid of meaning. In contrast, Inoue and Wang rebelled against tradition only after deeply mastering its subtleties and depth: Inoue continued to copy Yan Zhenqing's works until his later years; Wang has copied the *Longzang Temple Monument* (《龙藏寺碑》) for decades. Even as they devoted themselves to modern creation, both maintained a connection to traditional calligraphy—avoiding the excesses of abstract painting, which would have stripped their work of the essence of brush and ink. Even in their “dissolution” of characters, they

retained a path back to calligraphy's roots: modernity, for them, emerges from tradition, not in opposition to it.

III. The Feasibility of Contemporary Calligraphy Creation from the Comparison of Individual Cases

While “modern calligraphy” became prominent in Japan after World War II, its historical origins in China can be traced to the Ming Dynasty. The spiritual thread remains consistent: from Xu Wei's “disordered calligraphy” (狂草) to Fu Shan's advocacy of “ugly style” (宁丑毋媚), from the “The Eight Eccentrics of Yangzhou” to modern explorations of compositional innovation—all reflect a drive toward modernity.

Calligraphy's modern characteristics originated in tradition, but its full emergence was sparked by the interaction between Eastern and Western art. Standing in their respective cultural contexts, Eastern and Western artists eagerly absorbed each other's artistic traits, forming a global movement intertwined with Orientalism and modernism. Whether Western artists' understanding of “mysterious Eastern art” was deep or shallow, they struggled to fully grasp the order and principles of traditional Chinese calligraphy. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that certain qualities of calligraphy aligned with the developmental needs of modern art: the Oriental philosophy behind Chinese calligraphy transformed Western artists' perception of the world, while Western artists' use of calligraphic elements inspired Eastern calligraphers to boldly break conventional barriers and create new styles.

From Inoue and Wang's modern calligraphy practices, we see that calligraphy rooted in Chinese characters inherently carries “modernity” in its genes. Both Inoue's figurative *One-character calligraphy* and Wang's *Luan Shu* retain the most basic elements of calligraphy: Chinese character structures, ink charm, line vitality, and the “act of writing” (书写性). If an artist uses Chinese characters but abandons “writability”

and basic calligraphic rules, their work cannot be considered “modern calligraphy”—it is merely another artwork that uses calligraphic materials.

The artistic expression of “modernity” should not rely solely on techniques and elements borrowed from Western art. Instead, it should return to the essence of Chinese characters, exploring their structure and the beauty of lines while preserving the fundamental qualities of traditional Chinese art. At the same time, modern calligraphy's emphasis on form enables it to engage with Western abstract painting. This balance of “independence” and “connection” is the foundation for equal dialogue between modern calligraphy and Western contemporary art.

For modern Chinese calligraphers—who began exploring modern calligraphy later than their Japanese counterparts—many feasible paths already have successful precedents, making the search for new directions more challenging. Innovation in writing styles inevitably involves subverting existing conventions, but this subversion is not a complete revolution; it is a transformation rooted in tradition and logic. Traditional calligraphy emphasizes philosophical depth, and integrating it with contemporary art requires calligraphers to possess both mastery of traditional brush and ink techniques and a broad artistic vision with refined sensibilities.

Wang Dongling's experiment with *Luan Shu* not only preserves the “writing nature” of Chinese calligraphy but also breaks the limitations of legibility. His work validates the idea of “the unity of human cultural spirits” proposed by Wang Yuechan in his book *Discovering the East*—a concept that transcends Eastern and Western cultural divides. For the future development of modern calligraphy, this path is worth exploring. Only by deeply studying traditional calligraphy and culture, grasping the trends of contemporary art in both Eastern and Western contexts, and seeking a profound integration of diverse artistic languages under the premise of “modernity” can modern calligraphers find their rightful positioning.

一画

——从神话溯源到艺术实践的中国传统美学核心

One Stroke

— The Core of Traditional Chinese Aesthetics from Mythic Origins to Artistic Practice

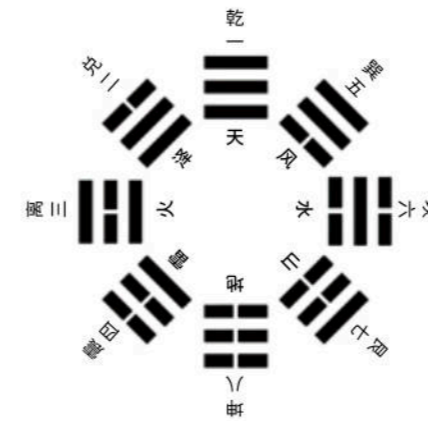


图1 传说伏羲所创的八卦图
Fig.1 The Eight Trigrams Diagram, Which Legend Has It Was Created by Fuxi

“一画”是中国传统文化中兼具宇宙观与艺术观的核心概念——它的内涵并非凭空而来，而是溯源至“一画开天”的创世叙事，既承载着对宇宙起源的思考，又深度融入艺术创作，最终成为连接“宇宙诞生”与“艺术创造”的重要桥梁。厘清“一画”的根源与内涵，不仅能帮我们理解中国传统“一画”艺术理论背后的哲学依据，也能为不同文化背景下的艺术研究，提供重要的文化参考。

一、“一画”的内涵演进：从神话符号到艺术理论

“一画”的概念源头，离不开“盘古开天辟地”与“伏羲画八卦”两大创世传说。（图1）这两个故事经后人的哲学提炼与艺术加工，逐渐赋予“一画”以“宇宙秩序初始载体”的核心内涵。

先看这两大传说的核心关联。三国时期吴国徐整在《三五历纪》中最早记载了盘古的故事：他于混沌中分离天地，又化生为世间万物，其“开辟混沌”的动力，暗合“一画”从“无”到“有”的生成逻辑。而《周易·系辞下》记载的伏羲画八卦，则更直接指向“一画”的雏形——伏羲“仰观天象，俯察地理”，画出的八卦以象征“天”的乾卦为首，乾卦第一笔“阳爻”（一条长横线“一”），被视作打破混沌和建立宇宙秩序的起点，蕴含“以一笔构建宇宙认知体系”的思路，与盘古的创世意义形成呼应。

到了宋代，理学兴起后，“一画”的内涵得到哲学升华。学者们以“理”“气”重构创世叙事，认为伏羲画八卦的“一画”、盘古开天的“初始动力”，本质上都属于“理”——“一画”是“理”的视觉呈现，一个根本道理衍生出万千具体事物的宇宙秩序，正是通过“一画”从混沌中展开。至此，“一画”不再只是神话中的符号，还成为连接“道”（宇宙本源）与“象”（现实世界）的媒介，为后续转化为艺术理论打下哲学基础。

“一画”作为明确的艺术概念，在清代文献中得以完善。清初画家石涛在《画语录·一画章》中提出“一画者，众有之本，万象之根”，明确“一画”是所有存在的根本、一切事物的源头。与石涛同时代的画家吴历，则进一步将“一画”与传统创世叙事绑定。他在《墨井画跋》中写道：“画之道，在乎一气呵成，一笔不苟，所谓‘一画开天’，盖谓此也。”这句话精准点出“一画”的双重属性：既延续了盘古开天辟地的“初始动力”，又承接了伏羲画卦的“认知符号”。至此，“一画”成为承载画面生命力与结构感的双重载体，生动诠释了“艺术即微型宇宙”“艺术即认知符号”的传统美学观念。

二、“一画”的艺术实践：跨文化与跨媒介探索

中国传统“一画”理论，虽源于本土创世观，却不仅影响中国艺术，还与西方艺术展开跨时空对话，在当代跨媒介创作中也得以传承。

清代石涛明确将“一画”定为艺术创造的根本法则——这“一画”不只是技术起点，还是艺术家与宇宙对话的媒介。这种理念，恰与西方艺术家对“一根线”的哲学思考形成呼应：法国雕塑家罗丹（Auguste Rodin, 1840—1917）认为“真正的艺术在于捕捉自然中内在的韵律，而一根线足以表现生命的流动”，其贯通宇宙的“一根线”，与“一画”象征宇宙律动的特质高度契合；德国艺术家保罗·克利（Paul Klee, 1879—1940）在《克利的日记》中写下“线条就是一个点在散步”“一幅画就是一条线出门散步”，他的油画以线条为核心承载内容，与石涛“以一画统摄万象”的理念不谋而合；野兽派大师亨利·马蒂斯（Henri

Matisse, 1869—1954）则吃透“线条即情感，线条即生命”的内核，让线条突破“描摹形体”的束缚，成为独立的艺术语言，让东西方美学在线条流动中完成共鸣。

当代中国艺术家更以实践传承“一画”精神。吴冠中曾说：“我用线条说话，线条里有我的心跳。”他提出的“笔墨等于零”，本质是一场“‘一画’的解放运动”——通过弱化传统笔墨的技法桎梏，让“一画”（以线条为核心）回归艺术“传递情感”的本质。华裔抽象画家赵无极则将西方抽象艺术与东方“一画”哲学融合，不追求具象造型，而是以线条的流动与交织，传递对宇宙、生命的思考，践行“以一管之笔，拟太虚之体”的理想，让“一画”的宇宙观在当代油画中得以极致呈现。

结语

“一画”的概念发源于“一画开天”的创世叙事，历经宋代理学的哲学提炼、清代艺术理论的完善，最终成为连接宇宙观、文明观与艺术观的核心。其内涵涵盖“从无到有”的宇宙生成逻辑、“从混沌到认知”的文明意义、艺术创造的“本源与秩序”以及“天人合一”的精神追求，为中国传统艺术理论奠定了深厚根基。

在当代艺术语境中，“一画”的价值愈发凸显：它不仅是中国传统美学的重要符号，而且成为跨文化、跨媒介对话的桥梁。它提醒我们，艺术的真谛在于用最本质的“一画”，感知宇宙本质，传承文明传统，完成人与宇宙、传统与当代的永恒对话。

“One Stroke” is a core concept in traditional Chinese culture that encompasses both a cosmic worldview and an artistic perspective. Its connotation does not emerge out of nowhere but traces its roots to the creation narrative of “Yihua Kaitian (One Stroke Initiates the Cosmos).” It not only embodies reflections on the origin of the universe but also integrates deeply into artistic creation, eventually becoming a crucial bridge connecting “the birth of the universe” and “artistic creation.” Clarifying the origin and connotation of “One Stroke” not only helps us understand the philosophical foundation behind the traditional Chinese “One Stroke” art theory but also provides important cultural references for art research across different cultural backgrounds.

I. The Evolution of “One Stroke”: From Mythic Symbol to Art Theory

The concept of “One Stroke” is inseparable from two major Chinese creation myths: “Pangu Separating Heaven and Earth” and “Fuxi Creating the Eight Trigrams” (Fig. 1). Through philosophical refinement and artistic adaptation by later generations, these two stories gradually endowed “One Stroke” with its core connotation as “the initial carrier of cosmic order.”

First, let us examine the core connection between these two myths. In the Three Kingdoms period (220–280 CE), Xu Zheng of the Wu state recorded the earliest account of Pangu in his work *Records of the Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors*: Pangu separated heaven and earth from primordial chaos and transformed himself into all things in the world. The “power to break chaos” implied in this story aligns with the generative logic of “One Stroke”—evolving from “nothingness” to “existence.”

Meanwhile, *The Book of Changes: Xici Xia* (Appended Remarks, Part II) records Fuxi’s creation of the Eight Trigrams, which points more directly to the prototype of “One Stroke.” Fuxi “observed celestial phenomena above, examined geographical patterns below, and drew inspiration from his own body and surrounding things” to create the Eight Trigrams. Among these, the Qian Trigram—symbolizing “heaven”—begins with a “yang line” (a single unbroken horizontal line “—”). This line

was regarded as the starting point for breaking chaos and establishing cosmic order, embodying the logic of “constructing a cognitive system of the universe with a single stroke”—a meaning that echoes Pangu’s role in creating the world.

During the Song Dynasty (960–1279), with the rise of Neo-Confucianism, the connotation of “One Stroke” underwent philosophical elevation. Scholars reinterpreted creation narratives using concepts such as “Li (the underlying principle of all things)” and “Qi (vital energy).” They argued that both the “One Stroke” in Fuxi’s creation of the Eight Trigrams and the “initial driving force” behind Pangu’s separation of heaven and earth essentially belonged to “Li.” The “One Stroke” was seen as a visual manifestation of “Li,” and the cosmic order—where “one fundamental principle gives rise to countless specific things”—unfolded from chaos through this “One Stroke.” By this point, “One Stroke” was no longer merely a mythic symbol but also a medium connecting “Dao (the origin of the universe)” and “Xiang (phenomena in the material world),” laying a philosophical foundation for its subsequent transformation into an art theory.

As a clear artistic concept, “One Stroke” was refined in literary works of the Qing Dynasty (1636–1912). Shi Tao, a painter in the early Qing Dynasty, proposed in *The Theory of Painting: Chapter on the One Stroke* that “The One Stroke is the origin of all existence and the root of all phenomena,” clearly defining “One Stroke” as the foundation of all beings and the source of all things.

Wu Li, another painter of the same era as Shi Tao, further linked “One Stroke” to traditional creation narratives. In his *Notes on Ink Well Paintings*, he wrote: “The way of painting lies in completing the work in one continuous flow, with no carelessness in a single stroke—that is what is meant by ‘Yihua Kaitian (One Stroke Initiates the Cosmos).’” This statement accurately highlights the dual attributes of “One Stroke”: it inherits the “initial driving force” of Pangu’s creation of the world and carries the “cognitive symbol” of Fuxi’s Eight Trigrams. By this time, “One Stroke” had become a dual carrier of a painting’s vitality and structural coherence, vividly embodying the traditional aesthetic concepts that “art is

a microcosm” and “art is a cognitive symbol.”

II. Artistic Practice of “One Stroke”: Cross-Cultural and Cross-Medium Exploration

Although the traditional Chinese “One Stroke” theory originated from local creation beliefs, it not only influenced Chinese art but also sparked cross-temporal dialogue with Western art. It has also been inherited in contemporary cross-medium creations.

In the Qing Dynasty, Shi Tao explicitly defined “One Stroke” as the fundamental principle of artistic creation—not merely a technical starting point, but a medium for artists to communicate with the universe. This idea resonates with Western artists’ philosophical reflections on “a single line”:

The French sculptor Auguste Rodin argued that “True art lies in capturing the inherent rhythm of nature, and a single line is sufficient to express the flow of life.” His concept of “a single line that permeates the universe” highly aligns with the attribute of “One Stroke” as a symbol of cosmic rhythm.

The German artist Paul Klee wrote in *The Diaries of Paul Klee* that “A line is a dot that went for a walk” and “A painting is a line taking a walk.” In his oil paintings, lines serve as the core carrier of content—an idea that coincides perfectly with Shi Tao’s concept of “governing all phenomena with a single stroke.” The Fauvist master Henri Matisse fully grasped the essence of “lines as emotion and life”. The lines in his works broke free from the constraint of “depicting physical forms” and became an independent artistic language, enabling Eastern and Western aesthetics to resonate through the flow of lines.

Contemporary Chinese artists have further inherited the spirit of “One Stroke” through their practice:

Wu Guanzhong once said, “I speak through lines; my heartbeat resides in the lines.” His proposition that “brush and ink amount to nothing” was essentially a “liberation movement for One Stroke”—by weakening the technical constraints of traditional brush and ink,

he returned “One Stroke” (centered on lines) to the essence of art: “conveying emotion.”

The Chinese-French abstract painter Zao Wou-ki deeply integrated Western abstract art with the Eastern philosophy of “One Stroke.” Instead of pursuing realistic forms, he used the flow and interweaving of lines to convey profound reflections on the universe and life. He truly practiced the artistic ideal of “using a single brush to imitate the essence of the cosmos,” allowing the cosmic worldview of “One Stroke” to be presented in its most vivid form in contemporary oil painting.

Conclusion

The concept of “One Stroke” traces its origins to the creation narrative of “Yihua Kaitian (One Stroke Initiates the Cosmos).” After undergoing philosophical refinement in Song Dynasty Neo-Confucianism and refinement in Qing Dynasty art theory, it eventually became a core concept connecting cosmic views, cultural outlooks, and artistic perspectives. Its rich connotation includes the cosmic logic of “emergence from nothingness,” the cultural significance of “moving from chaos to cognition,” the “origin” and “order” in artistic creation, and the spiritual pursuit of “harmony between humans and nature”—laying a profound foundation for traditional Chinese art theory.

In the context of contemporary art, the value of “One Stroke” has become increasingly prominent: it is not only an important symbol of traditional Chinese aesthetics but also a bridge for cross-cultural and cross-medium artistic dialogue. It reminds us that the essence of art lies in using the most fundamental “One Stroke” to perceive the essence of the universe, inherit cultural traditions, and ultimately achieve an eternal dialogue between humans and the universe, as well as between tradition and the present.

身体、精神与公共性

——书法艺术场域的建构与现代化转型

Body, Spirit, and Publicity

— The Construction and Modern Transformation of the Field of Art in Calligraphy

艺术作品的价值从来不止于最终呈现的静态形态，更藏在创作者落笔时的呼吸、心跳与精神共振里。除了师承脉络赋予的技法根基、创造性思维带来的风格突破、时代环境塑造的文化取向，创作者当下的生命状态——情绪的起伏、身体的律动，甚至瞬间的顿悟，往往是决定作品灵魂的关键变量。

书法作为中国最具“身体性”的传统艺术之一，从诞生之初便不是孤立的书斋自娱：商周青铜鼎上的铭文，是工匠在宗庙祭祀的庄重氛围中凿刻的信仰；魏晋文人的尺牍，是友人书信往来间流泻的真情；唐代寺庙的匾额，是书家在众人瞩目下凝聚的心力。这些散落于公共场域的书写，本就带着“过程大于结果”的审美基因，只是受制于竹简、绢帛、纸张等记载媒材的局限，古人挥毫时的姿态、神情与现场张力，大多随时间消散，只留下平面化的字迹供后人揣摩。

所幸，文字记载为我们保留了通往古人创作现场的密钥，其中最富传奇色彩的，莫过于唐代草书大家怀素。这位以“狂草”名世的僧人，不仅将草书的笔法推向极致，而且以“饮酒作书”的创作状态，把书写本身变成了一个

震撼人心的艺术事件。据《宣和书谱》记载，怀素“贫无纸可书，尝于故里种芭蕉万余株，以供挥洒”，这种对笔墨的痴狂，早已融入他的生命节奏；而酒，则成为他释放精神张力的催化剂——酒后的他，目光如炬，手臂似有千钧之力，笔锋落纸时如“骤雨旋风，飞动圆转”，看似狂放不羁，实则每一笔都暗合草书“使转”的法度，结体在开合之间游走，却从不会脱离汉字结构的内在逻辑。当时的文人墨客，早已不满足于欣赏他的作品，更以“围观创作”为快事，而怀素的书写过程，也成为诗人们灵感的源泉。许瑶在《题怀素上人草书》中写下“醉来信手两三行，醒后却书书不得”，精准捕捉到创作状态的不可复制性：酒后的“信手”不是随意，而是精神与笔墨高度合一的即兴，这种状态一旦脱离酒精激发的情绪场，便再难重现。苏涣的《怀素上人草书歌》更是以“忽如裴旻舞双剑，七星错落缠蛟龙”的比喻，将抽象的笔墨动态转化为具象的视觉冲击——裴旻是唐代著名剑客，其剑法刚柔并济、变幻莫测，而怀素的笔锋，恰似双剑起舞，点画如七星错落，线条如蛟龙缠绕，身体的律动与笔墨的轨迹完全同步，此时的“书写”，已超越技法层面，成为身体、精神与汉字美学

的三重狂欢。

这种“创作者—作品—观者”共同构建的互动空间，恰可用法国社会学家皮埃尔·布迪厄（Pierre Bourdieu, 1930—2002）的“艺术场”理论来解读。布迪厄将“场域”定义为“由不同位置之间的客观关系构成的空间”，在艺术领域，它不仅是物理意义上的创作现场，还是创作者的精神取向、作品的文化属性、观者的审美期待相互作用的社会文化场。怀素的创作现场，便形成了一个典型的传统书法“艺术场”：怀素作为场域的核心，以饮酒后的身体动势释放创作能量；围观的文人作为观者，以咏诗、赞叹的方式参与场域建构，他们的反馈不仅是对作品的评价，还是对创作过程的补充；而最终的书法作品，则成为这场“艺术事件”的物质载体，将现场的张力凝固下来，供后世想象。这个场域里，没有绝对的主体与客体，创作者与观者通过笔墨达成了精神共鸣，作品的价值也在这种互动中被不断丰富。

当书法进入现代语境，“艺术场”的建构方式发生了深刻变革，井上有一与王冬龄的创作，便是这种变革的典型代表。他们的书写虽常被与西方行动绘画（如波洛克的滴画）的即兴、动感相联系，但究其精神内核，仍是对“颠张醉素”传统的当代转化——将汉字结构的内在张力，通过身体的外化动势展现，让情绪与精神状态成为场域的核心能量。

井上有一的“艺术场”是内敛的、自我指向的。他一生执着于“打破传统书法的程式化”，主张“书为心画”，认为书法应是自我精神的真实流露。他的创作现场往往只有自己：巨大的宣纸铺在地上，他不坐不站，而是跪在纸前，甚至趴在纸上书写，身体与宣纸的距离被压缩到极致；他使用的毛笔比传统毛笔粗壮数倍，蘸墨时需用双手紧握笔杆，落笔时则需以全身力气推动笔锋。他时而俯身轻提，时而起身重按，纸张上的点画，便成了身体与毛笔“搏斗”的痕迹——这种“搏斗”不是对抗，而是与汉字结构的对话：他写“贫”字时，笔画粗重如铁，结体歪斜却不失重心，仿佛在诉说生命的沉重与坚韧；写“空”字时，线条疏朗空灵，留白处如旷野无垠，传递出超脱的禅意。（图1）

井上有一的“场域”不需要观众，他追求的是“艺术冲动与灵感的纯粹释放”：点画打破“藏头护尾”的传统笔法，起笔露锋，收笔飞白，让笔墨的“生涩感”成为精神状态的直接映射；结体跳出“方正均衡”的桎梏，或左倾右斜，或上紧下松，却始终在汉字的边界内游走，这种“不逾矩的自由”，恰是对传统书法“意在笔先”理念的现代诠释。在他的场域里，被“打开”的不只是字的形态，还是书法作为“自我表达工具”的可能性。

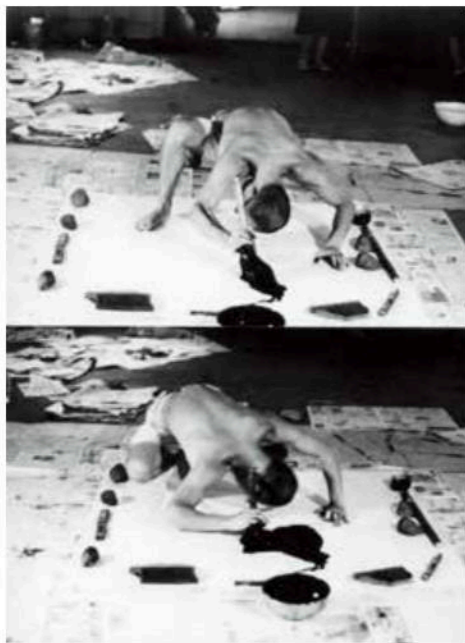


图1 创作中的井上有一
Fig.1 Inoue Yūichi during his creation process

王冬龄的“艺术场”则是外向的、公共指向的，他将书法从书斋的私密空间推向了公共场域的开放舞台，完成了书写机制的现代化转换。他的创作现场往往是美术馆的大厅、城市的广场，甚至是国际艺术展的展台：巨幅宣纸从天花板垂落至地面，他手持特制的长杆毛笔，在空间中自由奔走，时而快步疾书，时而驻足沉思，笔锋在宣纸上留下的线条，如奔雷，如流水，充满强烈的动势。此时的“场域”不再是创作者的独舞，而是将观者全部裹挟其中的能量场：观众围绕在宣纸周围，随着他的笔触移动脚步，时而为他骤雨般的落笔惊呼，时而为他留白处的意境沉思，他们的目光、呼吸甚至议论声，都成为场域的一部分，与王冬龄的身体动势、笔墨轨迹相互作用。（图2）

这种“外化的行动力”，彻底打破了传统书斋书写的静谧感：身体动势不再局限于腕力、指力，而有关全身的协调——奔走、转身、俯身，这些看似“背离传统笔法”的动作，恰恰成为摆脱程式束缚的动力；书写文本不再是固定的经典，而是随机生发的符号，这种“不确定性”，让每一次创作都成为独一无二的“艺术事件”，而国际艺术场馆承载的多元文化属性，更让他的“公共场域书写”成为东西方美学对话的桥梁。

从怀素的酒酣作书，到井上有一的自我搏斗，再到王冬龄的公共狂欢，书法“艺术场”的演变，本质上是书写机制从“私密审美”向“公共体验”的现代化转型。传统书斋书写中，规范的笔法（如“永字八法”）、安静的环境、固定的文本，都服务于“个人精神的内敛表达”；而当代公共场域的书写，以打破的身体动势、开放的环境、随机的文本，构建了一个“能量密集的互动场”。在这个场域里，创作者的体力与心力被极大激发——井上有一书写后常因体力透支而汗流浹背，王冬龄的现场创作往往持续数小时；观者的审美期待也从“欣赏完美作品”转向“体验不可复制的过程”，他们不再是被动的“观看者”，而是主动的“参与者”，通过目光与情绪，与创作者共同完成能量交换。

当代书法的“艺术场”建构，早已超越技法层面的创新，成为一种文化气场的营造。它让书法摆脱了“博物馆里的传统艺术”的标签，重新回到公众的生活视野：当王冬龄在国际艺术展上以狂放的笔触书写汉字时，西方观众或许不认识具体的文字，却能通过身体的动势感受到东方美学的张力；当年轻书家效仿井上有一，以“身体书写”探索自我表达时，传统书法的“笔墨精神”便有了新的传承路径。在这个由笔触激发的场域内，创作者与观者完成的不仅是一次审美体验，而且是一场跨越时空的精神对话——从怀素的唐代酒肆，到井上有一的东京画室，再到王冬龄的现代美术馆，笔墨未变，汉字未变，但“艺术场”的能量，在不断更新中，使书法始终保持着鲜活的生命力。



图2 2016年，加拿大温哥华美术馆中王冬龄《心经》书写现场
Fig.2 Live Calligraphy Performance of *The Heart Sutra* by Wang Dongling at Vancouver Art Gallery

The value of an artistic work has never been confined to its final static form—it also resides in the creator's breath, heartbeat, and spiritual resonance at the moment the brush meets the surface. Beyond the technical foundation inherited from mentors, the stylistic breakthroughs driven by creative thinking, and the cultural orientation shaped by the era, the creator's immediate state of being—emotional fluctuations, physical rhythm, even moments of sudden insight—often serves as the crucial variable that determines the soul of the work.

As one of China's most “embodied” traditional arts, calligraphy has never been an isolated pastime confined to the study since its inception: the inscriptions on bronze vessels of the Shang and Zhou dynasties were expressions of faith carved by artisans in the solemn atmosphere of temple rituals; the letters of Wei and Jin literati overflowed with genuine emotion exchanged between friends; the plaques adorning Tang dynasty temples concentrated the mental focus of calligraphers under public gaze. These writings, scattered across public spaces, carried an aesthetic principle that valued process over outcome. However, constrained by the limitations of recording media such as bamboo slips, silk, and paper, the posture, expression, and live tension of ancient calligraphers at work have largely faded with time, leaving behind only flattened traces of characters for later generations to interpret.

Fortunately, written records have preserved for us the keys to accessing the creative moments of the ancients. Among these, the most legendary is arguably the Tang dynasty master of cursive script, Huaisu. This monk, renowned for his “wild cursive,” not only pushed the techniques of cursive script to their limits but also turned the act of writing itself into a breathtaking artistic event through his practice of “writing while drinking.” According to the *Xuanhe Calligraphy Catalogue*, Huaisu “was too poor to afford paper for practice, so he planted over ten thousand banana trees in his hometown to supply leaves for brush writing.” This obsession with ink and brush was already woven into the rhythm of his life, while alcohol served as a catalyst for releasing his spiritual intensity—after drinking,

his eyes burned intensely, his arm seemed to wield immense force, and his brushstrokes landed on paper like “sudden rain and whirlwinds, swift and circular.” Though seemingly unrestrained, every stroke subtly adhered to the principles of “turn and transition” in cursive script, and the structures of his characters, though expansive and dynamic, never strayed from the inherent logic of Chinese character formation.

Contemporary literati and artists were no longer satisfied with merely appreciating his finished works; they took delight in witnessing the creation process firsthand. Huaisu's performance became a source of poetic inspiration. Xu Yao, in his *Poem on Monk Huaisu's Cursive Script*, wrote:

Drunk, he casually writes two or three lines;
Sober, he tries but cannot write again.

These lines perfectly capture the irreplicable nature of that creative state: the “casualness” of drunkenness was not carelessness but an improvisation born from the complete unity of spirit and brush. Once separated from the emotional field ignited by alcohol, this state became nearly impossible to recreate. Su Huan, in his *Song of Monk Huaisu's Cursive Script*, employed even more vivid metaphors:

Suddenly like Pei Min dancing with twin swords,
Seven Stars scattered, entangling horned dragons.

Pei Min was a renowned swordsman of the Tang dynasty, known for his seamless blend of strength and flexibility and his unpredictable techniques. Huaisu's brush movements were likened to a dual-sword dance—dots like scattered stars, lines like coiling dragons—where physical motion and ink trajectories synchronized completely. At this point, “writing” transcended technique, becoming a triple celebration of body, spirit, and the aesthetics of Chinese characters.

This interactive space, co-constructed by the creator, the work, and the viewers, can be aptly interpreted through French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the *artistic field*. Bourdieu defined a field as “a space of objective relations between positions.” In the context of art, it is not only the physical site of creation but also a socio-cultural field where the creator's spiritual

orientation, the work's cultural attributes, and the audience's aesthetic expectations interact. Huaisu's creative site formed a classic traditional calligraphy artistic field: with Huaisu at the center, unleashing creative energy through his alcohol-enhanced physical movements; the surrounding literati, as audience, participated in the construction of the field through poetry and admiration—their feedback not only evaluated the work but also enriched the creative process; the final calligraphy piece then became the material of this “artistic event,” preserving the tension of the moment for posterity to imagine. Within this field, there was no absolute “subject” or “object”; creator and viewers achieved spiritual resonance through ink, and the value of the work was continually enriched through this interaction.

As calligraphy entered the modern context, the construction of the artistic field underwent profound changes. The works of Inoue Yūichi and Wang Dongling are typical representatives of this transformation. Although their writing is often associated with the improvisation and dynamism of Western *Action Painting* (such as Pollock's drip painting), at its spiritual core, it remains a contemporary evolution of the “*Dian Zhang Drunk Su*” tradition—expressing the inherent tension of Chinese character structures through externalized physical movements, allowing emotion and mental state to become the core energy of the field.

Inoue Yūichi's artistic field was introverted and self-referential. Throughout his life, he was devoted to “breaking the stylization of traditional calligraphy,” advocating that “writing is the reflection of the heart,” and believing that calligraphy should be a genuine expression of one's inner spirit. His creative space was often solitary: large sheets of Xuan paper spread on the floor, he would kneel or even lie on the paper to write, minimizing the distance between his body and the paper. The brush he used was several times thicker than traditional brushes, requiring both hands to grip the handle when dipping ink. As he applied brushstrokes, he would channel his full physical strength—sometimes leaning in lightly, sometimes standing up to press down forcefully. The marks on the paper

thus became traces of a “struggle” between his body and the brush. This “struggle” was not confrontational but rather a dialogue with the structure of Chinese characters: when writing the character for “poverty” (贫), his strokes were heavy as iron, the structure tilted yet balanced, as if conveying the weight and resilience of life; when writing “emptiness” (空), the lines were sparse and ethereal, with blank spaces evoking boundless openness, transmitting a Zen-like transcendence (Fig. 1).

Inoue's field required no audience; he sought “the pure release of artistic impulse and inspiration.” His strokes broke away from traditional techniques like “concealed tips and protected endings,” instead exposing the brush's edge upon entry and leaving flying-white traces upon exit, allowing the “rawness” of ink and brush to directly reflect his mental state. His structures escaped the constraints of “balanced symmetry,” leaning left or right, tight above and loose below, yet always operating within the boundaries of Chinese characters. This “freedom within rules” was a modern interpretation of the traditional concept of “yi zai bi xian” (意在笔先, conception before brushstroke). In his field, what was “opened up” was not only the form of the characters but also the possibility of calligraphy as a tool for self-expression.

In contrast, Wang Dongling's artistic field is extroverted and publicly oriented. He has pushed calligraphy from the intimate space of the study onto the open stage of public venues, accomplishing a modern transformation of the writing mechanism. His creative sites are often grand halls of art museums, urban squares, or even platforms at international art exhibitions: enormous sheets of Xuan paper hang from ceiling to floor, as he wields a specially made long-handled brush, moving freely through the space—sometimes writing swiftly, sometimes pausing to contemplate. The lines left by his brush on the paper resemble rolling thunder or flowing water, full of dynamic momentum. Here, the field is no longer a solo performance by the creator but an energy field that envelops the audience: viewers gather around the paper, moving their steps in tandem with the trajectory of his brush—at times gasping in amazement

at his downpour-like brushstrokes, and at other times falling into contemplation of the artistic conception in the blank spaces. Their gazes, breaths, and even murmurs all became part of the field, interacting with Wang Dongling's physical movements and the trajectory of his brush and ink (Fig. 2).

This “externalized action” completely shatters the tranquility of traditional studio writing: physical movement is no longer limited to “wrist strength” or “finger strength” but involves full-body coordination—running, turning, bending. These actions, which may seem to “deviate from traditional brush techniques,” precisely become the driving force to break free from stylistic constraints. The text is no longer fixed classics but randomly generated symbols. This “uncertainty” makes each creation a unique “artistic event,” and the multicultural nature of international art venues further allows his “public field writing” to become a bridge for East-West aesthetic dialogue.

From Huaisu's drunken writing to Inoue Yūichi's self-struggle and Wang Dongling's public spectacle, the evolution of calligraphy's artistic field is essentially a modern transformation of the writing mechanism from “private aesthetics” to “public experience.” In traditional studio writing, the norms of brush technique (such as the “*Eight Principles of Yong*”), the quiet environment, and the fixed text all served “the introverted expression of personal spirit.” In contrast, contemporary public writing, with its physical dynamism, open environment, and random text, constructs an “energy-intensive interactive field.” In this field, the creator's physical and mental energy are intensely stimulated—Inoue Yūichi often ended up drenched in sweat from exhaustion after writing, while Wang Dongling's live creations often last for hours. The audience's aesthetic expectations also shift from “appreciating a perfect work” to “experiencing an irreplicable process.” They are no longer passive “viewers” but active “participants,” completing energy exchange with the creator through their gazes and emotions.

The construction of the contemporary calligraphic artistic field has long transcended technical innovation,

becoming instead the cultivation of a cultural aura. It has freed calligraphy from the label of “traditional art in museums” and brought it back into the public's living vision: when Wang Dongling writes Chinese characters with wild brushstrokes at international art exhibitions, and while Western audiences may not recognize the specific words, but they can feel the tension of Eastern aesthetics through his physical movements. When young calligraphers emulate Inoue Yūichi's “physical writing” to explore self-expression, the “spirit of ink and brush” in traditional calligraphy finds new paths of inheritance. In this field ignited by brushstrokes, what creators and audiences accomplish is not only an aesthetic experience but also a spiritual dialogue across time and space—from Huaisu's Tang dynasty taverns to Inoue Yūichi's Tokyo studio and Wang Dongling's modern art galleries. The ink and brush remain unchanged, the Chinese characters remain unchanged, but the energy of the artistic field, through constant renewal, keeps calligraphy vibrantly alive.

中国传统书画以笔、墨、纸、绢为基底材料。而我的创作则以普洱茶汁为媒介，在宣纸或画布上运用传统笔法或泼墨技法进行书画创作，这无疑是艺术创作路径的探索。

普洱茶汤因品类或发酵工艺的不同，会呈现深浅不一的棕褐色——这种深邃、沉静且古雅的色调，能产生仿古宣或水墨画般的视觉效果。茶汤富含多酚类化合物，能在纸上形成相对持久的印记。尤其是经过渥堆发酵的熟普，茶汤色泽更浓郁，附着力更强。

普洱茶源自云南大叶种茶树，唐宋时称“银生茶”，明清时期因在普洱府交易集散而得名“普洱茶”，更因成为贡茶而声名远扬。1973年渥堆发酵工艺的发明，确立了现代普洱茶生熟分型的格局。它不仅是茶饮，而且承载着云南的地域历史、风土人情与商贸发展史。

熟普经渥堆发酵后茶汤色深稳定，富含茶红素。浓缩茶汁因茶多酚及色素的本质特性，在纸上形成的茶渍更具耐久性。而生普茶汤色泽清浅，主要含茶黄素及少量茶红素，呈现淡雅色调。这些特性使我得以通过调节茶汤浓度来契合构图需求。

现代宣纸生产常采用碳酸钙等碱性物质进行中和处

当普洱茶遇上宣纸

——从墨分五色到茶有千韵的艺术创新

Pu'er Tea Meets Xuan Paper

— Artistic Innovation from Ink's Five Shades to Tea's Thousand Nuances

理，这种“中性宣纸”或称“碱性宣纸”能提升纸张寿命与色度稳定性。生宣与熟宣在吸水性、茶渍附着及纤维渗透程度方面各具特性，理解如何运用各类宣纸，是创作实践中不可或缺的一环。

简言之，宣纸的主要原料是青檀树皮，普洱茶源自古茶树叶片。这两种自然材料经由传统技艺淬炼，再通过艺术创作被重新诠释，最终以书画形式呈现于观者面前。这一过程本身构成了一种艺术创新——从自然出发又回归自然的循环。生宣、熟宣与半生熟宣，搭配生普、熟普茶汤，使我在创作过程中得以进行多元的艺术实验。

近年来，我在宣纸与画布上创作了大量书画作品，运用不同媒介呈现艺术表达的多种可能。这并非简单的材料置换，而是对传统艺术形态具有深意的拓展与重构。

传统“墨分五色”理念主张通过水墨浓淡变化表现万物神韵。普洱茶汤的引入延续了这一艺术哲学——它虽为单色系，却呈现出从焦褐、赭红到琥珀、淡黄的丰富暖色调。这不仅体现了视觉上的丰富性，而且营造出融合味觉与嗅觉的通感体验。以“茶之五色”替代“墨之五色”，是通过东方文化精髓对古典理念做的当代诠释。作品不仅可

供“观赏”，而且可“品鉴”，增强了其沉思性与内在共鸣。

相较于相对稳的墨色，普洱茶汁会持续缓慢地氧化、陈化。这意味着作品完成后仍处于“生命状态”，色调将日渐深沉，渐显古雅气质。这样的书画艺术，既非纯粹传统水墨，又不归属于西方绘画范畴——它深植于中国茶文化与水墨艺术两大传统，却生长出崭新的当代形态。这是文化自信的笃定宣言：当代中国艺术完全可以从自身伟大传统中汲取养分，开创不同于西方现代主义的创新路径。

普洱茶汤独特的视觉质感带有温厚古拙的材质特性，其天然柔和的扩散边缘形成独具韵味的“茶晕”，与撒盐技法结合时会产生如古墙斑驳、拓片残蚀的肌理，充满历史沉淀感与自然随机性。

茶与宣纸之间更进行着一场深刻的文化对话，这是味觉与视觉、永恒与瞬间、传统精神与当代实验主义的交融。

Traditional Chinese calligraphy and painting primarily use brush, ink, paper, or silk as their foundational materials. Here, however, I focus on using Pu'er tea extract on Xuan paper or canvas, employing either traditional brush techniques or ink-splashing methods to create my calligraphic and painterly works. This is, undoubtedly, an exploratory approach to artistic creation.

Pu'er tea extract exhibits varying shades of brown and sepia—tones that are deep, subdued, and classical, producing effects reminiscent of antique paper or ink wash paintings. The extract contains substantial amounts of polyphenol compounds, which form relatively lasting impressions on paper. Especially in the case of fermented ripe Pu'er, the tea liquid is richer in colour and adheres more effectively.

Pu'er tea originates from the large-leaf tea trees of Yunnan in southwestern China, known as “Yinsheng tea” as early as the Tang and Song dynasties. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, it was formally named “Pu'er” because it was traded and distributed in Pu'er Prefecture; its reputation grew further when it became a tribute tea. The invention of the wet-piling fermentation technique in 1973 established the modern classification of Pu'er tea into raw (*sheng*) and ripe (*shou*). More than just a type of tea, Pu'er carries within it aspects of Yunnan's regional history, geography, ethnic culture, and commercial development.

“Ripe” Pu'er, having undergone wet-piling fermentation, yields a darker and more stable extract rich in thearubigins (TRs). The concentrated tea liquid makes a more time-resistant staining on paper, owing to the inherent colour of tea polyphenols and pigments. In contrast, raw Pu'er produces a lighter concentrate containing primarily theaflavins (TFs) with TRs, resulting in paler tones. These distinct properties allowed me to employ varying concentrations of tea to correspond to the needs of the composition.

In modern production processes, Xuan paper is often treated with alkaline substances such as calcium

carbonate to neutralize acidity from the air. This neutralized paper, or what is also referred to as “alkaline treated Xuan paper,” extends the paper's longevity and colour stability. The absorbency, tea-stain adhesion, and degree of fibre penetration differ between raw papers (*sheng xuan*) and processed papers (*shu xuan*). Experimenting with different paper types is a vital part of the creative process.

In brief, the primary material for Xuan paper production is the bark of the blue sandalwood tree (*Qingtan*), while Pu'er tea is made from the leaves of ancient tea trees. These two natural materials, transformed through traditional craftsmanship, are further reinterpreted through artistic creation, eventually presented to the viewer as calligraphy and painting. The use of raw, ripe, or semi-processed Xuan paper, along with tea extract from both raw and ripe Pu'er, completes a cycle that begins and ends with nature.

In recent years, I have created a large body of calligraphic and painterly works on Xuan paper and canvas, employing diverse media to express variations in the artwork. This approach is not a mere substitution of materials but a profound and significant expansion and reconfiguration of traditional art forms.

The traditional concept of “ink's five shades” refers to the expression of rich layers and the spirit of all things through the modulation of water and a single ink. The introduction of Pu'er tea extract extends this philosophy. Though monochromatic, it offers a rich warm palette—from burnt umber and reddish-brown to amber and pale yellow. The art isn't meant just to be seen—it also engages your senses of taste and smell, creating a deeper kind of experience. By using “tea's colors” instead of “ink's shades,” it connects ancient ideas to the heart of Eastern culture in a fresh way. This isn't just for looking at—it is meant to be felt and appreciated slowly, making it more thoughtful and meaningful.

The unique visual texture of Pu'er tea liquor carries a warm, archaic, and restrained materiality difficult

to imitate with chemical pigments. Its natural, soft edges formed through diffusion on Xuan paper create distinctive “tea halos.” When combined with techniques involving salt, it produces mottled textures reminiscent of ancient walls or stone rubbings, full of historical patina and natural randomness.

While ink colors are relatively stable, Pu'er tea extract continues to oxidize and age slowly over time, much like the tea itself. This implies that even after the work is completed, it remains “alive”; its tones will gradually deepen, acquiring a classical elegance. In this form, calligraphy and painting are no longer purely traditional ink art, nor do they align with any Western painting genre. They are rooted deeply in two profound cultural traditions of China—tea and ink painting—yet give rise to new expressions. This is a highly confident assertion of cultural identity, demonstrating to the world that contemporary Chinese art can draw nourishment from its own great traditions and innovate without following the path of Western modernism.

开放式创新在现代 书法中的应用

Open Innovation in Modern Chinese Calligraphy

书法的现代化

中国现代书法兴起于20世纪80年代，面临两大现代化障碍：其一，模糊的文字逻辑混淆了“现代书法”的界定，多数作品仅模仿日本现代书法、西方抽象表现主义或概念艺术，缺乏创造性，既失“墨象”的情感活力，又缺笔墨的审美魅力；其二，书法传统深厚稳固，学者与艺术家往往对传统范本怀有深刻敬畏，现代转型艰难。现代书法学术研究稀缺，难以支撑实践者，而书法实用功能衰退（手写减少），使公众疏离，审美标准难以确立，致其现代化进程停滞。

如今，更多艺术家与学者认识到书法的困境，不再盲目追求形式变革，而是深入探索。其转型的关键问题在于：创作者如何从“书法家”转向“艺术家”，将古代书法转化为现代书写？如何通过现代书写理解传统书法（及其文论）的局限？如何从西方艺术视角出发，发展新的书法形式与美学？这些答案对探索书法的现代转型至关重要。

开放式创新

“开放式创新”一词由亨利·切萨布鲁夫（Henry Chesbrough，1956—）教授（图1）在其著作《开放式创新：从技术中创造价值并获利的新规则》（*Open Innovation: The New Imperative for Creating and Profiting from Technology*）中提出，相关讨论始于20世纪60年代，于



图1 任天进与亨利·切萨布鲁夫教授（左）合影
Fig.1 Ren Tianjin and Henry Chesbrough (left)

21世纪的企业环境中确立。其核心在于鼓励企业有目的地促进知识、技术等信息的双向流动：一方面，通过引入外部创意与技术（由外向内）来加速和丰富内部创新；另一方面，则将内部暂未充分利用或不符合当前商业模式的创意与技术向外输出（由内向外），使其在更合适的生态中实现价值。依托这一模式，企业得以打破组织边界：既能借助外部视角优化产品，亦可为内部“闲置创新”寻获外部应用出口，从而系统性拓展创新的边界与效率。

理念的流入代表着商业的未来。在更快、更严苛的世界中，开放创新带来了更强的敏捷性与灵活性。

在艺术领域的应用

艺术界与商业界的结构存在相似性，开放式创新方法亦可应用于此。将开放式创新理念融入艺术创作过程，为艺术家提供了跳出框架思考，发现新材料，寻找新灵感的新途径。在竞争激烈的艺术市场中，艺术家常被鼓励创新以触及更广泛的观众。艺术创作从来不是复制前人之作，否则作品只能是仿制品而非原创。每一位伟大的艺术家都通过不断重新开发，将旧主题转化为新内容，展现原创性。创造力不限于形式，因此打破边界成为成功的关键。

尽管多数现代书法仍停留在二维视觉阶段——在材料、书写工具与方法上创新——书法创新始终朝向传统抽象化发展。然而，越来越多艺术家追求超越现代书法的形式，突破传统，融入西方当代艺术的养分。消化西方语境并融合其现有框架并非易事。从传统模式转换，不仅需保留书法的识别度，使东方世界能辨认其书写特征，还需让西方社会接受并理解这种变化。

艺术家应以创新理论为创作过程的指导思想与灵魂，不断提醒自己融汇古今，在保留中国艺术的独特魅力的同时，做出能被西方观众接受的诠释。

雕塑艺术的启示

雕塑自古是西方艺术语境的重要组成部分。事实上，许多伟大画家亦是卓越的雕塑家，将雕塑视为二维绘画生涯之外的新实验。巴勃罗·毕加索（Pablo Picasso，1881—1973）在雕塑语言中探索立体主义与超现实主义，

其绘画风格剧变的同时，雕塑亦随之变异。他在雕塑创作中使用传统与非传统材料，初期以木材、金属和石膏组合表达不同流派，后以无拘的想象力与幽默感探索集合艺术，加入车轮、鞋履、篮筐等多元材料。实际上，毕加索的雕塑作品全面展现了他的创新与在三维空间的影响力。除绘画外，雕塑因其实验性而占据独特地位。雕塑实验帮助许多艺术家打破规则，踏出舒适区，跳出框架思考，助其更进一步，探索新实验以丰富艺术生涯。

太湖石：时光锻造的文人石

太湖石灰岩经数百年水蚀形成多孔雕塑形态，多呈灰黑色，偶见白、红变体。其蜿蜒形态体现自然造化，由碳酸波痕雕琢而成。

自唐代起，太湖石便拥有了超越社会阶层的多重文化属性：牧牛人交易它们，僧侣在旁冥想，而其主要拥趸文人誉其为“文人石”。至明代，太湖石成为博学与权力的象征，点缀文人园林的核心。其淡象牙色与轮廓起伏启发了人造叠山曲水，如吴融《太湖石歌》所载：“波中万古生幽石。铁索千寻取得来，奇形怪状谁能识。”

从江南的留园到北京圆明园的遗存，太湖石见证了传统精英审美直至现代才走向普及。如今，它不仅是园林的装饰，还是一种雕塑媒介，尽管传统观念仍在一定程度上制约着其向当代艺术的转型。

“东风”主题的选定

汉字承载着数千年的文化积淀，理解其语境至关重要，“东风”一词便是绝佳例证：在希腊神话中，东风无足轻重；在易洛魁传说里，它则与恶劣天气相关联。然而在中国传统中，它象征着一种决定性的力量，这一含义源出于三国时期的典故“万事俱备，只欠东风”。该典故可追溯至该时期一场著名的战役：蜀汉名相诸葛亮在赤壁之战中，精准预测了东风的到来，使得孙刘联军得以借助火攻大败曹操水军。此后，这句话演变成一个广泛使用的成语，隐喻“等待最关键的条件”。此类叙事揭示了文化精髓如何超越字面含义。

“东风”一词已超越了其作为“从东方吹来的风”的字



图2 作为参考的明(左)、清(右)画家“太湖石”主题国画

Fig.2 Traditional Chinese paintings on the theme of Taihu stones by Ming (left) and Qing (right) dynasty painters for reference



图3 作为太湖石书法创作蓝本的书法《东风》
Fig.3 The calligraphy work *East Wind* that serves as the prototype for the Taihu Stone calligraphy creation

面含义，它承载着一种根植于历史的磅礴气势。若不理解其背后的故事，仅在平面纸张上诠释“东风”将十分困难。东西方之间的这种理解鸿沟，需要一种具备直接视觉冲击力的艺术形式来弥合。

书法：从宣纸到太湖石

我选择以雕塑形式表现“东风”。书法不限于单一形式，亦可在多维形态中表达。为展现气势，我将太湖石雕刻出流动感，仿佛东风拂过，携流转之韵。风本无目的吹拂，但其方向可被工具捕捉。石头的纹路肌理提供多层次视觉体验，宛若将风定格于石上。风可视为自然造物与人类活动的联结。石料的深浅曲线捕捉风的力度，以此解构与重构“东风”二字。从远处视角，我邀请观众参与体验，见证风在石上留下的曲线，同时了解曲线如何构建汉字书法。二字解构与重构带来的双重参与感，拉近了书法与观者的距离。

中国历史上以太湖石为主题的艺术创作早有先例。深入思考分析主题并探究历史上的园林太湖石后，我选取明、清两幅画作（图2）及曾在中国美术学院展出的书法作品《东风》（图3）展开二次创作。

雕塑《太湖石·东风》始于传统制作流程。我按传统步骤创作0.7m高稿，不断调整太湖石雕塑与书法形态以组合成字。汉字融入太湖石雕塑的自然形态，兼具中国书法造型神韵。经持续修改，我将书法造型转化为玻璃钢外壳。根据铸造工艺要求，我将雕塑分块制作，运用失蜡法铸壳、镍银铸造、焊接、喷砂与抛光等技法，赋予金属雕塑生命。因设想其形态为园林式太湖石，我将雕塑泥稿放大至2.58m高，同时以草书风格将汉字“东风”融入太湖石形态。

通过不断参考各类太湖石模型与古画，我发现最难之处在于将中国书法与石纹结合。分析造型的不规则性后，我最终将玻璃钢雕塑切割为44个小块并制作蜡模；依蜡模制作砂壳进行铸造，再将小块焊接成完整石形雕塑。表面处理中，使用大型喷砂机与起重机完成喷砂，这能使铸造焊接后的太湖石雕塑更显自然。接着，我抛光雕塑表面，还原石材质感，赋予其恰当的光泽度与自然泛光。（图4）

这不仅是切割与捕捉的过程，也是拥抱创新方法的行动。我的教育背景，加之数十年沉浸于政治、经济与东西方艺术，使我深汲两种文化精髓。在此丰沃的跨文化环境中，我学会将艺术创作与智识探究相融，超越东西、古今之界。我力求尊重历史传统，亦热情投入当代创新，将二者编织为连贯演进的艺术语言。

太湖石雕塑如一面镜子，引导观众追随我于不同时空文化碰撞中发

现新生的生命历程。融合的材料显露风的痕迹与精神体验。太湖石将书法解构为片段，融入多维艺术形式，展现“风”的力量，为古老坚实的传统雕塑艺术注入生机。

2022年8月31日，《太湖石·东风》作为旧金山亚洲艺术博物馆主入口广场的最新轮换雕塑作品首次亮相。（图5）

观众不再从外部观赏作品，而是穿行其中，亲身参与体验。我们细观《太湖石·东风》雕塑，可见流转痕迹如微风刚过；退后远观，清晰的“东风”二字赫然显现。如此，即便不深谙中国文化者，亦能捕捉石上刻录的风动，感知文字背后的力量与气势。

正如潜意识与下意识在弗洛伊德心理学中的交织，艺术语言与跨界创新亦激荡交融，在创意探索之路上奔涌向前。



图4 《太湖石·东风》系列一组
Fig.4 *Taihu Rock-East Wind Series*



图5 任天进与许杰博士(右)在《太湖石·东风》安装现场
Fig.5 Ren Tianjin and Dr. Jay Xu (right) at the installation site of *Taihu Rock-East Wind*

The modernization of calligraphy

Modern Chinese calligraphy emerged in the 1980s, facing two major modernization obstacles: First, ambiguous character logic confuses “Modern Calligraphy”—most works merely imitate modern Japanese calligraphy, Western abstract expressionism, or conceptual art, lacking creativity, the emotional vitality of “ink imagery,” and the aesthetic charm of brush and ink. Second, calligraphy’s strong, stable tradition makes modern transformation difficult (scholars and artists deeply revere traditional models). Scarce academic studies on modern calligraphy fail to support practitioners, while declining practical use of calligraphy (and reduced handwriting) alienates the public, making it hard to set aesthetic standards—stalling its modernization.

Today, more artists and scholars recognize calligraphy’s dilemma and explore deeply instead of blindly pursuing formal changes. Key questions for its transformation: How can a creator shift from “calligrapher” to “artist” and turn ancient calligraphy into modern writing? How to understand traditional calligraphy’s limitations (and its literary theory) through modern writing? How to develop new calligraphy-style forms and aesthetics from a Western art perspective? These answers are critical for exploring its modern transformation.

Open Innovation

The term “Open Innovation” was coined by Professor Henry Chesbrough (Fig. 1) in his book *Open Innovation: The New Imperative for Creating and Profiting from Technology*. Discussions related to it began in the 1960s and became established in the business environment of the 21st century. At its core, “open innovation” encourages companies to purposely facilitate a two-way flow of knowledge, technology, and information. On one hand, it involves bringing in external ideas and technologies (outside-in) to accelerate and enrich internal innovation. On the other hand, it entails channeling internal ideas and technologies that are underutilized or misaligned with the current business

model outward (inside-out), allowing them to realize value in a more suitable ecosystem. By adopting this model, organizations can break down boundaries: they not only leverage external perspectives to refine products but also find external applications for internal “idle innovation,” thereby systematically expanding the frontiers and efficiency of innovation.

The inflow of ideas represents the future of business. In a faster and more demanding world, Open Innovation leads to greater agility and flexibility.

Application in the Art Domain

There are similarities in the structure of the art world and the business world, and the Open Innovation method can also be applied here. Using the Open Innovation concept in the art creation process provides artists with a new way to think outside the box, discover new materials, and find new inspirations. In the competitive art market, artists are constantly encouraged to innovate to reach a broader audience. Art creation has never been about copying predecessors’ works; otherwise, the works would be replicas or imitations, not originals. Every great artist demonstrates originality through constant redevelopment, transforming old subjects into new ones. Creativity is not limited to form; thus, breaking boundaries becomes key to success.

While most modern calligraphy remains in a two-dimensional visual stage—innovating in materials, writing instruments, and methods—calligraphy innovation still stays within the tradition toward abstraction. However, more artists are pursuing forms beyond modern calligraphy, looking beyond tradition, and incorporating learning from Western contemporary art. Digesting Western context and integrating its current framework is not easy. Switching from the traditional model requires not only retaining the recognition of calligraphy so that the Eastern world can identify its writing characteristics but also enabling Western society to accept and understand the changes.

Artists should use innovation theory as the guiding ideology and soul in the creative process, constantly reminding themselves to incorporate both ancient and modern elements. It is necessary to retain the unique charm of Chinese art while making interpretations that are acceptable to Western audiences.

Inspiration from Sculpture Art

Sculpture has been part of the Western art context for ages. In fact, many great painters were also extraordinary sculptors, seeing sculpture as new experiments in addition to their two-dimensional painting careers. *Pablo Picasso* (1881–1973) explored *Cubism* and *Surrealism* in his sculpture language, and as drastic changes occurred in his painting styles, his sculptures mutated as well. He used both conventional and unconventional materials throughout his sculpture creations, first using wood, metal, and plaster in combination with each other to make compositions that express different genres, then exploring assemblage art with unrestrained imagination and sense of humor, adding more diverse materials including wheels, shoes, and baskets to his assemblages. In fact, the sculpture works of *Pablo Picasso* became a sweeping survey of his innovations and influential works in three dimensions. In addition to painting, sculpture occupied a unique personal status because of its experimental significance. Sculpture experiments help many artists break the rules and step out of comfort zones. Thinking outside the box helps them take one step further and explore new experiments to enrich their artistic careers.

Taihu Stone: The Scholar’s Rock Forged by Time

Formed through centuries of water erosion, Taihu limestone develops porous, sculptural forms—gray or black with rare white/red variants. Its sinuous shapes embody nature’s artistry, carved by carbonated waves.

Historically significant since the *Tang dynasty*, Taihu stones transcended social strata: cattle breeders traded

them, monks meditated beside them, and scholars—their primary patrons—christened them “scholar’s stones.” By the *Ming dynasty* (1368–1644), the stones symbolized erudition and power, gracing scholarly gardens as centerpieces. Their pale ivory hues and contoured silhouettes inspired artificial landscapes of interconnected peaks and winding streams, immortalized in poetry like Wu Rong’s *Taihu Stone Song*: “...the submerged caverns, / ancient stone rippled by waves, / iron-cable strangeness in form.”

From the private gardens in the Jiangnan region to the imperial gardens in Beijing—with examples like *Lingering Garden* and the ruins of *Yuanmingyuan* respectively, these stones defined elite aesthetics before democratizing in modern times. Today, their legacy persists not only as garden ornaments but also as sculptural media—though their transition into contemporary art remains limited by traditional perceptions.

Selection of the “East Wind” Theme

Chinese characters carry millennia of cultural depth, making understanding their context vital. The East Wind exemplifies this: in Greek myth it was marginal, while Iroquois lore links it to harsh weather. But in Chinese tradition, it symbolizes decisive power—originating from the *Three Kingdoms-era* proverb “*All is ready, but the East Wind is missing.*” The proverb traces to a pivotal moment in the era’s military history: *Zhuge Liang*, a revered strategist and statesman of the *Shu Han kingdom*, famously predicted an east wind would arrive at a critical battle. This prediction allowed the allied forces of *Shu* and *Wu* to launch a successful fire attack on their rival *Cao Cao*’s navy. Later, the phrase evolved into a widely used idiom, metaphorizing “awaiting one critical condition.” Such narratives reveal how cultural essence transcends literal words.

The term “*East Wind*” transcends its literal meaning as a breeze from the east; it embodies a grandeur rooted in history. Without understanding the background stories, interpreting “East Wind” on flat paper is challenging. The comprehension gap between the East

and the West requires an art form with direct visual impact to bridge the divide.

Calligraphy: From Xuan Paper to Taihu Stone

I chose to depict East Wind in sculpture form. Calligraphy is not limited to a single form; it can also be expressed on multidimensional shapes. To express the momentum, I carved Taihu rocks to showcase flowing motions, as if the east wind is blowing with a sense of flow. The wind blows without purpose, but its direction can be captured by tools. The lines and streaks of the stones provide a multi-level visual experience, as if capturing the wind on the rocks. Wind could be the connection between nature's creation and human activities. The deep and shallow curves of the rocks capture the strength of the breeze, as they deconstruct and reconstruct the two Chinese words "East Wind." From a distant standpoint, I invite the audience to a participatory experience to witness the curves that the wind left on the stone, while simultaneously learning how curves construct Chinese calligraphy. The deconstruction and reconstruction of the two Chinese characters offer dual-level involvement, bringing calligraphy within reaching distance.

Throughout Chinese history, artworks created with the theme of Taihu stone have many precedents. After in-depth thinking and analysis of the theme and exploring Taihu garden stones in history, I selected two paintings from the *Ming* and *Qing* dynasties (Fig. 2) and chose a calligraphy work "East Wind" (Fig. 3), which had been exhibited at the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, China.

The sculpture *East Wind* began with a traditional production process. I created 70 cm high manuscripts using traditional steps, constantly adjusting the Taihu stone sculptures and calligraphy shapes to assemble them into the words. The characters are integrated into the natural form of the Taihu stone sculpture with the charm of Chinese calligraphy shapes. Through continuous revision, I formed the calligraphic shapes

into a glass fiber reinforced plastic (fiberglass) shell. I divided the sculpture into pieces according to casting process requirements. I employed techniques including making wax mold shells, nickel silver casting, welding, sandblasting, and polishing to bring the metal sculpture to life. Because I envisioned the shape to be of a garden-style Taihu Stone, I enlarged the clay draft of the sculpture to a height of 2.58 meters. Simultaneously, I integrated the Chinese characters "East Wind" into the Taihu stone shape in a cursive script style.

Through constant reference to various types of Taihu stone models and ancient paintings, I found the most difficult part was combining the Chinese calligraphy with the stone's pattern. After analyzing the irregularity of the modeling, the final step was to cut the fiberglass sculpture of the Taihu stone into forty-four small pieces and make wax molds. Following the wax molds to create sand shells for casting, I welded the small pieces into the whole stone-shaped sculpture. In the surface treatment, a large-scale sandblasting machine and a large crane was used to complete the sandblasting process, which made the Taihu stone sculpture look more natural after casting and welding. Polishing the surface of the sculpture, I restored a stone-like feeling, giving it a proper finishing brightness and natural candescence. (Fig. 4)

It is not merely a process of cutting and capturing—it is also an act of embracing innovative approaches. My educational background, combined with decades of immersion in politics, economics, and Eastern and Western arts, has allowed me to deeply absorb the cultural essence of both worlds. Within this rich, cross-cultural environment, I have learned to blend artistic creation with intellectual inquiry, transcending boundaries between East and West, tradition and modernity. I strive to honor historical traditions while engaging passionately with contemporary innovation, weaving both into a coherent and evolving artistic language.

The Taihu stone sculpture is a mirror that guides the viewer to follow my life course of discovering new

vitality in the collision between cultures across different times and spaces. The integrated materials reveal the traces of wind and the spiritual experience. Making calligraphy into pieces incorporates multidimensional art forms, shows the power of "wind," and brings the ancient and solid traditional sculpture art to life.

On August 31, 2022, *Taihu Rock-East Wind* made its debut as the latest rotating sculpture exhibit at the main entrance plaza of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco. (Fig. 5)

The audience no longer views the work from the outside; instead, they engage in the experience by walking through the art themselves. Taking a closer look at the *East Wind* sculpture, viewers can see the flowing marks as if a breeze has just blown. However, taking a step back and looking at the work from a further distance, the two clear Chinese characters "East Wind" appear. By doing so, even those without a deep understanding of Chinese culture will capture the wind in motion as carved on stone, perceiving the strength and momentum behind the characters.

Like the interplay of the unconscious and subconscious in Freudian psychology, artistic language and cross-border innovation converge in a dynamic fusion—galloping along the path of creative exploration.