Automatic Tendencies in Japanese Avant-Garde Calligraphy:
Motifs Defined by Modernism and Tradition

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Abstract

This paper focuses on automatic tendencies in the works of leading Japanese avant-garde calligrapher Morita Shiryū 森田子龍 (1912-1998), and the connection of said tendencies with abstract art and calligraphic tradition. In the first section of the paper the author examines the term 'automatism' and its meaning in the various movements of surrealist and informalist abstract painting; then, by analyzing a discussion on calligraphy between Morita and fellow calligrapher Hidai Nankoku 比田井南谷 (1912-1999), published in the journal *Bokubi* in June 1959, the author aims to establish the nature of the automatic tendencies in Morita's works, undoubtedly developed to some extent under the influence of abstract art. However, when we compare the automatic tendencies which Morita discusses, with the automatism of abstract art, a significant difference between the two becomes clear: in automatic creation in calligraphy, Morita relies heavily on 'knowledge' and 'experience' derived from extensive replication of calligraphy classics. This is in stark contrast to automatism in Western avant-garde art, which mostly aims to break free from tradition. This peculiarity of avant-garde calligraphy could be explained by the fact that Japanese avant-garde calligraphers are all classically trained, and that traditional calligraphy treaties also deal with the topic of spontaneity and subconscious creation, under the heavy influence of Daoist and Buddhist philosophy. In said treaties there is no conflict between notions of technique and composition, and unthinking creation and spontaneity, as this paper demonstrates with examples from treaties by Zhang Huiguan 張懷瓘 (middle Tang dynasty, years unknown) and Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 (1037-1101). In conclusion, this paper aims to demonstrate that avant-garde calligraphy's connection to and reinterpretation of this type of traditional discourse allows Morita to walk the fine line between relying on past models and breaking free from traditional formats.

Keywords: *Automatism; Automatic Tendencies; Avant-Garde Calligraphy; Morita Shiryu; Hidai Nankoku*

1. Introduction

This paper aims to analyze the automatic tendencies in the creative process of avant-garde calligrapher Morita Shiryū 森田子龍 (1912-1998), as presented in the journal *Bokubi* 墨美 ("The Beauty of Ink") (1), which was published from 1951 to 1981 and was the main outlet for debate regarding avant-garde calligraphy and modern art in the 1950s and the 1960s. The author argues that these tendencies have their roots in calligraphy tradition dating back more than ten centuries, and have been brought forth by avant-garde calligraphers' reinterpretation of tradition. This is in stark contrast to automatism in Western avant-garde art, which can be said to have emerged in opposition to tradition.

Morita was one of the most influential and studied calligraphers of the 20th century. As he was particularly keen on popularizing calligraphy abroad, he is the subject of many studies on avant-garde calligraphy and its cultural and artistic impact, as well as comparative studies of avant-garde calligraphy and Western abstract art.

There exists a fair number of analyses of the influence of abstract art on Morita's calligraphy and vice versa, both conceptually and visually; however, such analyses are focused on the theoretical or practical exchange between Morita, other Japanese calligraphers and Western artists. This means that for the most part, existing research does not focus explicitly on the deep connection that exists between modern and traditional calligraphy in Morita's ideology of unthinking creation, and what that means for the modernization of calligraphy. It is a fact, however, that all of his attempts to modernize calligraphy are deeply rooted in his desire to reinterpret the calligraphic tradition. This is in stark contrast to artists in avant-garde fields in the West.

Regarding the creative process in avant-garde calligraphy, analyses focusing on automatic tendencies are still scarce. This paper aims to show that focusing on automatic tendencies could provide us not only with another point of comparison between avant-garde calligraphy and other avant-garde art, but could also provide more clues as to how avant-garde calligraphers reinterpreted the tradition of their art conceptually and spiritually.

2. Automatism in Western Avant-Garde Art and Avant-Garde Calligraphy

The word 'automatism' first gained widespread recognition with the establishment of André Breton's surrealistic movement in France. In his "Manifesto of Surrealism," he defines the word 'surrealism' as follows:

> Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express – verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner – the actual functioning of thought. Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern (2).

As suggested by this definition, Breton means to say that the control of reason hides the 'actual functioning of thought,' and that automatism is the method to overcome this. Any moral or aesthetic concerns about form and beauty limit the product of our thoughts and, thus, obstruct true automatism. Conversely, automatism helps us tap into our subconscious, which holds true creative power, far more than logically constructed work.

This method was first and foremost applied in automatic writing (3), but soon came to be used in different kinds of media, including paintings. Breton's primary interest at the time was the dream world – the world in which we spend more than a third of our lives and where logic and reason take a step back to allow the free reign of the subconscious. In his "Manifesto of Surrealism," he states the following:

> Freud very rightly brought his critical faculties to bear upon the dream. It is inadmissible that this considerable portion of psychic activity […] has still today been so grossly neglected. I have always been amazed at the way an ordinary observer lends so much more credence and attaches so much more importance to waking events than to those occurring in dreams (4).

In Breton's definition of surrealism, we have a very distinct dichotomy between 'reason,' manifested through structure and technique, and the 'actual' functioning of thought, manifested through the use of automatic creation. In his Manifesto, Breton clearly states that matters of logic and reason are inferior to what is hiding in our subconscious, since 'logical methods are applicable only to solving

problems of secondary interest (5)'. This inevitably leads to the fact that Breton's surrealism defies the structure, logic, and imitation of past models in the creative process, instead favoring an automatic expression of the subconscious.

In the postwar period, action painting and informalism (or informal art) were most known for automatic creation with notable representatives, such as Willem de Koonig (1904-1997), Robert Motherwell (1915-1991), Pierre Soulages (1919-), and Georges Mathieu (1921-2012) among others. The focus shifted more from accessing the dream world of the subconscious to expressing dynamism, movement, and lack of inhibitions with a stress on the unsophisticated, unintellectual, instinctive side of art. The fast and dynamic process of action painting turned into a performance that drew a big crowd, and viewing the act of painting was equally as important, if not more, for the artistic experience (6). Because of these large-scale performances in the late 1950s through the 60s, avant-garde calligraphy has often been compared to action painting (7).

Many avant-garde calligraphers, especially Morita, were aware of the parallel drawing between their art and Western action painting and informalism. Morita seems to have been particularly interested in the issue of calligraphy and abstract art and was willing to look at calligraphy from a broader, universal perspective. This is attested by the very existence of the journal *Bokubi*, with its many issues dedicated to modernistic topics like 'space,' 'composition,' and 'the subconscious' in calligraphy, compared to other visual art forms (8). One can see the pervasive influence of Western modernism on avant-garde calligraphy.

The topic of automatism and the subconscious, in particular, as a buzz topic of surrealism, informalism, and action painting, was well known to Morita. He has mentioned it in discussions on several instances, like in *Bokubi* no. 26 (August 1953), in a discussion about calligraphy and abstract painting (he uses the word 'automatism' explicitly) (9) or in *Bokubi* no. 50 (December 1955), in which the topic of the discussion is the subconscious, and in which Morita mentions a 'more primitive, physical thing' (より原始的、肉体的なもの) and a 'higher, intellectual element' (より高級な、だから知的な要素) as two opposing tendencies in art appreciation (鑑賞) (10). This is in line with Breton's and subsequent modernistic interpretations of 'automatism' and spontaneity in art as something 'primal' and 'uninhibited,' opposed to the 'intellectual' or 'logical.'

However, it seems that in Morita's understanding of automatic, spontaneous creation, this opposition is much less stressed upon than in surrealism and other Western avant-garde movements. I examine this in more detail in the next section of this paper.

3. Morita's View on Calligraphic Creation

Avant-garde calligraphy is a complex phenomenon, created by many influences, both modern and traditional; however, the influence of Western abstract art on calligraphy is undeniable. Abstract art pushes calligraphers, such as Morita, to reinterpret the tradition of calligraphy and experiment with new formats. This is evidenced by a multitude of novel analyses of classical works published in *Bokubi*, in which calligraphers use modernistic terms like 'space,' 'composition,' 'depth,' or 'line quality' in an art that never had such clear-cut terms (11). Additional evidence is the establishment of the 'section alpha' (α部) in journals *Sho no Bi* and *Bokubi* – a section for experimental works that either have no recognizable characters, use the Latin alphabet, or are simply an abstraction of lines (12).

However, despite all the similarities in form, and some in ideology, there seems to be a big difference in the perception of the role of 'knowledge' and 'experience' in automatic creation between Western avant-garde art and Morita's idea of calligraphic creation. To touch on this in more detail, I would like to look at several statements in a key discussion between Morita and fellow avant-garde calligrapher Hidai Nankoku 比田井南谷 (1912-1999) about the nature of calligraphy

and spontaneous, unthinking creation. The discussion occurred in 1959 and was published in *Bokubi* no. 87 (June 1959) (13). This is one of the rare instances in which Morita provides a full and comprehensive summary of his views on calligraphic creation in an article published in his journal.

In this discussion, Morita first states that 'it is not so much that the hand moves to create the shape, as it is that the shape is the result of the movement of the hand.' He further elaborates, 'I think it best if the work is not something where you consider all sorts of effects and move your hand to create such and such shape (14)'.

In response to this, Hidai states that he has thought of calligraphy as 'shapes,' and that in the process of writing his 'experience and knowledge all work together to help' him while writing characters. He gives an example with the character for 'eye' (目) and how in the process of writing it, his experience helps him 'decide' where to place the horizontal lines. To this, Morita replies with the following: 'I never said that knowledge or experience play no part. Rather, [I wanted to say that] you do not shine a light on your experience and knowledge that reflects off it, but it is the inner life itself, nurtured by your experience so far, that comes to the front in calligraphic creation. It is not knowledge and experience that dictate form, the artist as an individual is at the bottom of it (15)'.

Morita states that knowledge and experience work together with spontaneity in creating calligraphy. He stresses that the existence of knowledge and experience does not negate the automatic nature of calligraphy creation, and that at the bottom of that creation lies the individual, who is obviously shaped by external influences from their environment – in this case the acquisition of calligraphy techniques and background knowledge on calligraphy history and theory. However, these influences should be internalized in such a way that they work organically with the individual in a spontaneous, unthinking process of creation. Ultimately, Morita says that the form of the work is not a decision based on experience and knowledge, but it is a natural consequence of the artist's 'inner life.'

To this Hidai wholeheartedly agrees with the words 'Of course, I agree, it is not something that you do consciously. I want to state clearly that calligraphy comes spontaneously. […] It comes out by itself without interference from the conscious mind. Even if you try to write a line consciously, you cannot write it how you pictured it (16)'.

While this discussion between Morita and Hidai shows strong automatic tendencies in the sense of surrealist or informalist automatism, both Morita and Hidai stress the fact that one still needs a considerable amount of experience in calligraphy technique, acquired through long repetition and copying of classical works (as they both have done), and that this technique works organically with and is inseparable from the artist's self (or 'inner life,' as Morita puts it). The way in which this organic fusion between technique and 'inner life' occurs, Morita does not elaborate. The lack of reasoning can be perceived as a serious flaw in Morita's statement, but nonetheless, it shows a distinct position on automatic creation in avant-garde calligraphy, as this organic incorporation of 'knowledge' and 'experience' with unthinking creation is in stark contrast to automatism in most Western avant-garde art movements.

The question arises as to the reason for this stark difference. As a modern artist, Morita has always strived to spark debate on the essence of calligraphy with Western artists and to gain international recognition for Japanese avant-garde calligraphy (17). In this, he often takes an interest not only in modern art, but also in traditional calligraphy, if mostly in the so-called *bokuseki* (works by Zen Buddhist monks). He has additionally taken interest in other aspects of traditional Eastern thought, as evidenced by his ample correspondence with Buddhism scholar Hisamatsu Shin'ichi (久松真一 1889-1980). It is therefore not only in modern influences, but also in the tradition of calligraphy and Eastern thought, that one must seek justifications for Morita's complex view of automatic creation.

4. Automatic Tendencies in Avant-Garde Calligraphy and Calligraphic Tradition

Connecting modern calligraphy with Eastern philosophical thought is a trend clearly visible in Morita's path as an artist. As stated above, his correspondence with Hisamatsu is his best testament. Morita accepted him as one of the 'leaders' of the avant-garde calligraphy movement, who, in Morita's own words, 'lead the calligraphy revolution movement out from the bottomless depths (18)'.

Hisamatsu's main ideas on art and Eastern spirituality are laid out in an anthology of his works, *Zen and Art* (禅と芸術, *Zen to Geijutsu*) (19). He states that traditional Eastern thought does not deal with 'denial' and dualisms. Art, which exhibits the spirit of Zen, deals with the depiction of the 'formless self' (無相なる自己); it is not a depiction of an object with a form (有相なる対象) by a self with a form (有相なる自己). Western modern art, conversely, deals with the denial of form, but that is simple nihilism. In true nihilism, absolute denial is inseparably bound by absolute affirmation. In this sense, all types of duality are impossible. Calligraphy is strongly associated with this idea, since Hisamatsu deems it a purest tool to express the active formless self. In his view, calligraphy is strongly associated with Eastern spirituality, and while there are superficial similarities between it and Western abstract art, the simplistic denial of form in Western avant-garde is a dead end (20).

This seems to connect with Morita's view of the co-existence of the spontaneous, uninhibited nature of 'inner life' and the restrictive 'knowledge and experience' that is classical calligraphy training on the other. Furthermore, this stance on connecting unthinking creation to the Daoist and Buddhist spirituality of non-dualism is attested in many traditional calligraphy treaties that deal with spontaneous creation nurtured by organically achieved knowledge and experience. This is especially valid for cursive and semi-cursive scripts (*caoshu* 草書, or *sōsho* in Japanese, and *xingshu* 行書 or *gyōsho*), since they require a fast pace and definitive rhythm of the brush. Most famous among the treaties are *Shu Yi* 書議 by Zhang Huiguan 張懷瓘 (years unknown) from the apogee of the Tang dynasty (618-907), various commentaries on calligraphy by Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 (1037-1101) from the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127), and treaties by Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555-1636) from the late Ming dynasty (1368-1644). All of them state that works of calligraphy are best when they are created spontaneously, without interference from the thinking mind.

One quote that best summarizes this view of spontaneous creation is from Zhang Huiguan's *Shu Yi*. He says the following: 'The type of unconscious creation in this [*caoshu*, cursive script (21)] is the same as the workings of nature. One can manifest natural phenomena in their writing, acquire the very principle of shapes, and yet no one knows how this principle works (22)'. The true principles of artistic creation do not come from the conscious mind, as they are elusive and impossible to explain in words, just like the principles of creation in nature.

These classical treaties do not deny the importance of acquiring knowledge and techniques from exemplary past models. The natural process of spontaneous and automatic creation relies on a vast amount of practice and knowledge of classical scripts; however, it is the organic fusion of knowledge and technique with one's self, its internalization, and automatization, that helps one create truly great works. In a commentary on Huai Su's (懷素, 737-799) calligraphy, Su Dongpo uses a Daoist parable of a boatman on the river, attested in the Daoist classic *Zhuangzi* (23). If the boatman thinks of his technique, he will surely hit the rocks and drown. However, if he does not think of his technique or of his goal to sail to the other side, he will succeed. Dongpo concludes, 'It is because one does not chase mastery that one is masterful (24),' meaning that the skill is an organic part of the individual, since it should not be consciously sought.

There are many parallels between the Morita and Hidai discussion quoted above and classical treaties on calligraphy. The lack of opposition between technique and spontaneity in Morita's view

of automatic creation relates to Su Dongpo's view of the organic nature of skill. This, in turn, is directly comparable to Hisamatsu's theory of Zen art and his lack of dualism.

In particular, Morita's statement that 'it is not so much that the hand moves to create the shape, as it is that the shape is the result of the movement of the hand' seems to allude to both automatism, as we know it from abstract art, and to the unknown principles of creation mentioned by Zhang Huiguan. Another allusion to the unknown principles of Zhang and Su Dongpo's statement 'It is because one does not chase mastery that one is masterful,' can be seen in Hidai's words 'even if you try to write a line consciously, you cannot write it how you pictured it.' Morita seemingly tries to put Su Dongpo's statement into more abstract and philosophical terms when he says that 'you do not shine a light on your experience and knowledge that reflects off it, but it is the inner life itself, nurtured by your experience so far, that comes to the front in calligraphic creation' – meaning you do not consciously bring your technique to the front; it is organic and inseparable from you; thus, it is always manifested subconsciously.

In conclusion one can say that Morita tried to move past the opposition that Breton saw between acquiring finer techniques and knowledge by imitating past models and spontaneity and subconscious creation. He does this by arguing that technique is not an inhibition; it can become an organic part of oneself and help nurture our natural selves. Thus, the acquisition of technique does not negate spontaneous, unthinking acts since there is no opposition between 'technique' and 'automatic creation.' This paper demonstrated that this overcoming of the inherent to Western automatism dichotomy 'reason – nature' is possible due to Morita's reliance on the long-standing spiritual tradition of Eastern calligraphy and its interpretation in modernistic terms.

5. Conclusion

This paper examines automatic tendencies in avant-garde calligraphy by first exploring the origins of the concept in Western avant-garde art and comparing them to Morita's views on automatic creation in calligraphy. However, in this kind of automatic creation, the relationship between avant-garde and tradition is far more layered and far less of an opposition than in Western avant-garde art. This could be explained by the fact that calligraphers like Morita, having come in contact with Western avant-garde art, turned to a reinterpretation of the calligraphic tradition.

Breaking from form and looking for new, more dynamic, and bold expressions were stimuli that calligraphers received from automatism in avant-garde art; however, in that process, they never stopped revisiting and redefining their own traditions, and the continued revision led to a specific type of automatic creation that relied much more on internalized technique and the fusion of technique and spontaneity than its Western counterpart. This kind of comparison between abstract art and avant-garde calligraphy from the point of view of automatism provides a very interesting take on how calligraphers viewed their own art and how they assimilated the new and redefined the old. Further research is required in this direction for a fuller understanding of the phenomenon of avant-garde calligraphy in its connections to both modernity and tradition.

Notes

1. *Bokubi* was published by the avant-garde calligraphy group Bokujinkai, consisting of Morita Shiryū, Inoue Yūichi (1916-1985), Eguchi Sōgen (1919-2018), Sekiya Yoshimichi (1920-), and Nakamura Bokushi (1916-1973). Morita himself was the editor.

2. André Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism" in *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, trans. Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1974), 26.

3. In his Manifesto, Breton tells how he came to use automatic writing as a means to access his subconscious. 'Completely occupied as I still was with Freud at that time, and familiar as I was with his methods of examination which I had had some slight occasion to use on some patients during the war, I resolved to obtain from myself what we were trying to obtain from them, namely, a monologue spoken as rapidly as possible without any intervention on the part of the critical faculties, a monologue consequently unencumbered by the slightest inhibition and which was, as closely as possible, akin to spoken thought. It had seemed to me, and still does [...] that the speed of thought is no greater than the speed of speech, and that thought does not necessarily defy language, nor even the fast-moving pen. It was in this frame of mind that Philippe Soupault-to whom I had confided these initial conclusions-and I decided to blacken some paper, with a praiseworthy disdain for what might result from a literary point of view. The ease of execution did the rest. By the end of the first day we were able to read to ourselves some fifty or so pages obtained in this manner, and begin to compare our results.' See: Breton, *Manifestoes*, 22.

4. Breton, *Manifestoes*, 10-11.

5. Breton, *Manifestoes*, 9.

6. For example, Georges Mathieu was a notable artist whose live performances always sparked interest and controversy. He also had connections with Japanese avant-garde circles, as evidenced by his correspondence with the *Gutai* abstract art circle. See note below for more details.

7. Eugenia Bogdanova-Kummer, "Ink Splashes on Camera: Calligraphy, Action Painting, and Mass Media in Postwar Japan," *Modernism/modernity* 27, no. 2 (April 2020): 299-321. In this article Bogdanova-Kummer offers an analysis of the format and meaning of large-scale calligraphy demonstrations in the 1950s and 60s, and makes a comparison between that and the demonstrations of Georges Mathieu in Japan in 1957.

8. For example, *Bokubi* 21 (February 1953), an issue dedicated to 'Space' (空間, kūkan), articles of Hasegawa Saburō 長谷川三郎 (1906-1957) in the first issues of *Bokubi* which analyze modern paintings and raise points on commonalities between all modern visual arts, or *Bokubi* 50 (December 1955) which contains a discussion with the participation of Morita on the topic of the subconscious (無意識の内容, The Contents of the Subconscious).

9. *Bokubi* 26 (August 1953): 1-19.

10. *Bokubi* 50 (December 1955): 40.

11. As an example of such novel analysis, we can point out *Bokubi* 21 (February 1953). The whole issue is dedicated to the problem of 'space' in calligraphy in comparison to other modern arts, like sculpture and painting. This revolutionary use of modernistic terms has not gone unnoticed in avant-garde calligraphy research as well, although no extensive research with the sole focus on said 'modernistic terms' in calligraphy has been conducted. A research paper that deals with that problem is for instance Eugenia Bogdanova-Kummer, "About the Concept of Blank Space

Yohaku in Japanese Avant-Garde Calligraphy and Euro-American Abstract Painting,〞 in *Tradition and Transformation in Aesthetics of East Asian Calligraphy*, ed. Tsunemichi Kambayashi et al. (Tokyo: Sangensha, 2016): 384-411. It focuses on the problem of the term 'blank space' or *yohaku* 余白 and its codification and usage by avant-garde calligraphers.

12. For an extensive analysis on the 'section alpha' and its role for advancing avant-garde calligraphy expression, see: Nihei Nakamura, "Arufa Bu no Zengo [Before and after Section Alpha]," in *Tōzai Bijutsushi: Kōryū to Sōhan* [History of Art in the East and West: Exchange and Differences] (Tokyo: Iwasaki Bijutsusha, 1994), 406-63.

13. Shiryū Morita, Nankoku Hidai, and Kimehide Tokudaiji, "Nani o dō kangaete iru ka," *Bokubi*, 87 (June 1959): 31-40.

14. Morita, Hidai, and Tokudaiji, "Nani o dō kangaete iru ka," 36. Translation of this and all following quotes from the same discussion were made by the author of this paper.

15. Morita, Hidai, and Tokudaiji, "Nani o dō kangaete iru ka," 37.

16. Morita, Hidai, and Tokudaiji, "Nani o dō kangaete iru ka," 37.

17. Morita has stated on several occasions that he sends issues of Bokubi abroad to several artists, including English painter and printmaker Stanley Hayter (1901-1988), French informalist Pierre Soulages, and Belgian artist Pierre Alechinsky (1927-). Alechinsky later creates a short film about Japanese calligraphy (*Calligraphie japonaise*, 1957), in which Morita appears.

18. Shiryū Morita, "Tsuitō: Hisamatsu Shin'ichi-sensei," *Bokubi*, 294 (September 1979): 1.

19. Shin'ichi Hisamatsu, *Hisamatsu Shin'ichi Chosakushū* [Anthology of Works by Hisamatsu Shin'ichi], *Zen to Geijutsu*, 5 [Zen and Art] (Tokyo: Risōsha, 1970-80).

20. See Hisamatsu, *Zen to Geijutsu* [Zen and Art], 243, 338-42, 562.

21. The cursive script, or *caoshu* (Chinese), *sōsho* (Japanese) 草書 (sometimes translated as 'grass script') is written speedily with a lot of connecting lines between characters, sometimes even leading to whole sections of text being written in one 'stroke' without lifting the brush. In this section Zhang discusses cursive script in particular, since the speed it requires means there is little pre-planning of composition or character shape. From this and previous passages in *Shu Yi*, it seems that Zhang held cursive in the highest regard among all calligraphy scripts because of the pure uninhibited creativity that arises from fast and spontaneous writing. In the previous passage of *Shu Yi*, he compares *caoshu* to natural phenomena, like rivers, mountains, tigers and dragons etc., and concludes with 'It encompasses all phenomena, and expresses all shapes' (囊括萬殊裁成一相). The text of *Shu Yi* is taken from Yūjirō Nakata, *Chūgoku Shoron Taikei Dai 2 kan Tō 1* [Survey of Chinese Treaties on Calligraphy, vol. 2: Tang 1] (Tokyo: Nigensha, 1977), 202.

22. The text of *Shu Yi* was taken from Yūjirō Nakata, *Chūgoku Shoron Taikei*, 203. The English translation was performed by the author of this paper based on the original text and the Japanese translation.

23. Su Dongpo, "Commentary on the writing of Cang Zhen (Huai Su) in the keeping of Wang Gong" (蘇東坡, 跋王鞏所収藏眞書). The text was taken from Mitsuji Fukunaga, *Geijutsu Ronshū* [Anthology of Theories on Art] (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1971), 355. The parable that Dongpo alludes to comes from the Daoist classic *Zhuangzi*, chapter 19: "Understanding Life" (莊子, 達生篇).

24. Su Dongpo, ibid. 本不求工所以能工. The text was taken from Fukunaga, *Geijutsu Ronshū*, 356. The English translation was performed by the author of this paper.

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