

RODICA FRENTIU

JAPANESE CALLIGRAPHY: THE PATH TO WRITING AS ART

Il ne s'agit plus de parler de l'espace et de la lumière, mais de faire parler l'espace et la lumière qui sont là.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty,
L'œil et l'esprit

The painting titled *Black Square* exhibited by Kasimir Malevici in 1919 proposed a new aesthetic program in visual arts which its creator called *suprematism* and which would revolutionize the perception of art, thus helping perfect the ways of abstracting painting. The aesthetics of the «supreme» with which Kasimir Malevici entered the world of painting established itself as the aesthetics of becoming, in which abstraction, presupposing the strict economy of form, pointed to the discovery of the essence. In his search for the «supreme», what Kasimir Malevici discovered through essentialized representation was... silence. Preferring neutral colors such as white, black and grey, in a space perceived as infinite in its potentiality, the only possible value of manifestation in the given framework of the painting was movement. Painting becomes for the Russian artist¹ the possibility of creating something

* The illustrations are the author's own

¹ Cf. Marcel Brion, *Arta abstractă/Abstract Art*, București, Editura Meridiane, 1972, p. 173.

Abstract

The study *Japanese calligraphy: the path to writing as art* aims to explore the universe of Japanese calligraphic art starting from the accomplishments of western abstract art: movement (Kasimir Malevici) and the color black (Pierre Soulages). The different manner in which western and eastern cultures received the gift of writing inevitably marked its subsequent evolution. If the Greeks valued the spoken, living word and its craftsmen, skilled handlers of the oral logos were therefore considered the «incarnation of wisdom», the East saw the wisdom of the spirit embodied in the creation of the master calligrapher, the «craftsman of the written word». As a result, calligraphic writing, with the initial moment of the blank white sheet, which the first line makes a participant in the gesture of primordial creation, with the following strokes seen as metamorphoses of the first and with the moment of the final line, the return to the initial void, may be compared to the act of creating a poem. The chained and unchained line dies and is reborn, setting its inner force free. The line creates, recreating a world, the world.

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Rodica Frentiu had Japanese Calligraphy Exhibitions in Japan (2002 - *International Forum. Asian Film and Multi-Cultural Art Exhibition*, Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art, Kobe, Japan. [collective exhibition]; 2003 - Japanese Language Institute, Kansai, Osaka, Japan. [collective exhibition]; 2007 - *Kaze monogatari*, The Japan Foundation, Tokyo, Japan. [personal exhibition]) and in Romania (2004 - *Images-Words in Motion. Japanese Calligraphy*, Museum of Art, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. [personal exhibition]; 2006 - *Japanese Calligraphy. Metamorphoses of the Line*, Museum of Art, Cluj-Napoca, Romania / Museum of Romanian Literature, Bucharest, Romania. [personal exhibition]; 2008 - *A Story of the Wind*, Museum of Art, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. [personal exhibition]). Some of her calligraphy works can be seen on www.fanart.ro.