

30 Most Famous Chinese Calligraphy Art Masterpieces You Really Need to Know



**Classics
Appreciation of
Chinese
Visual Arts**



Calligraphy

Editor Wang Xinyu
Translator Wang Rong



e Yellow River Publishing & Media Group Co., Ltd

Ningxia People's Publishing House

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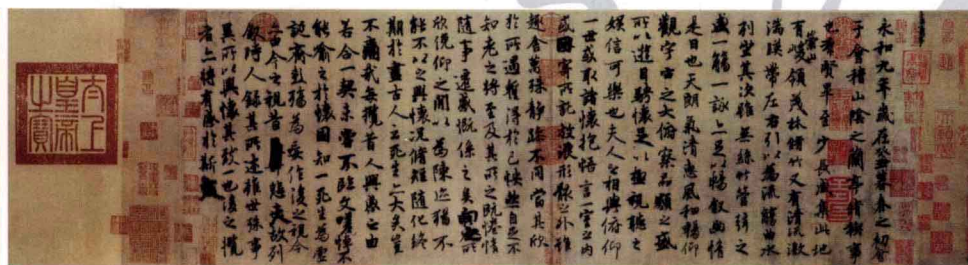
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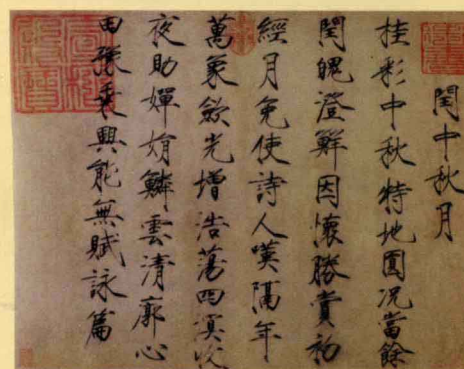
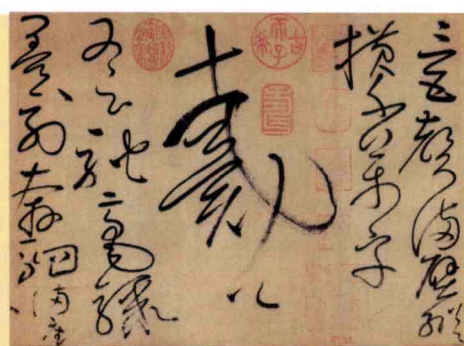
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STELE FOR CAO QUAN

Calligrapher: unknown

Creation year: AD 185

Style of calligraphy: clerical script

Size: stele height of 253 cm, stele width of 123 cm rubbing height of 178 cm, rubbing width of 72 cm



Full name of *Stele for Cao Quan* is *Stele for Cao Quan, Magistrate of Heyang County in the Han Dynasty*. It was carved in the Eastern Han Dynasty, which is

now collected in the Forest of Steles in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province. Cao Quan served as Magistrate of Heyang County (today's Heyang, Shaanxi Province) in the Eastern Han Dynasty. This stele records his lifetime achievements, with 19 rows on obverse side and 45 Chinese characters in every row (except three Chinese characters are missing in two rows of this work).

Clerical script of the Han Dynasty shows various styles. *Stele for Cao Quan* is a representative of "beautiful and shapely" style. The writing movement is dominated by

round stroke, with running central edge and mellow lines with plenty of changes. The characters are mostly in oval square shape. Vertical strokes are compact, while horizontal strokes extends towards both sides by means of long horizontal line, top-down vertical line, left-downward slope line and right-falling line so as to smartly combine "convergence" and "laxity". In this way, the characters look beautiful with many postures like the flying white cranes with ethereal lightness.

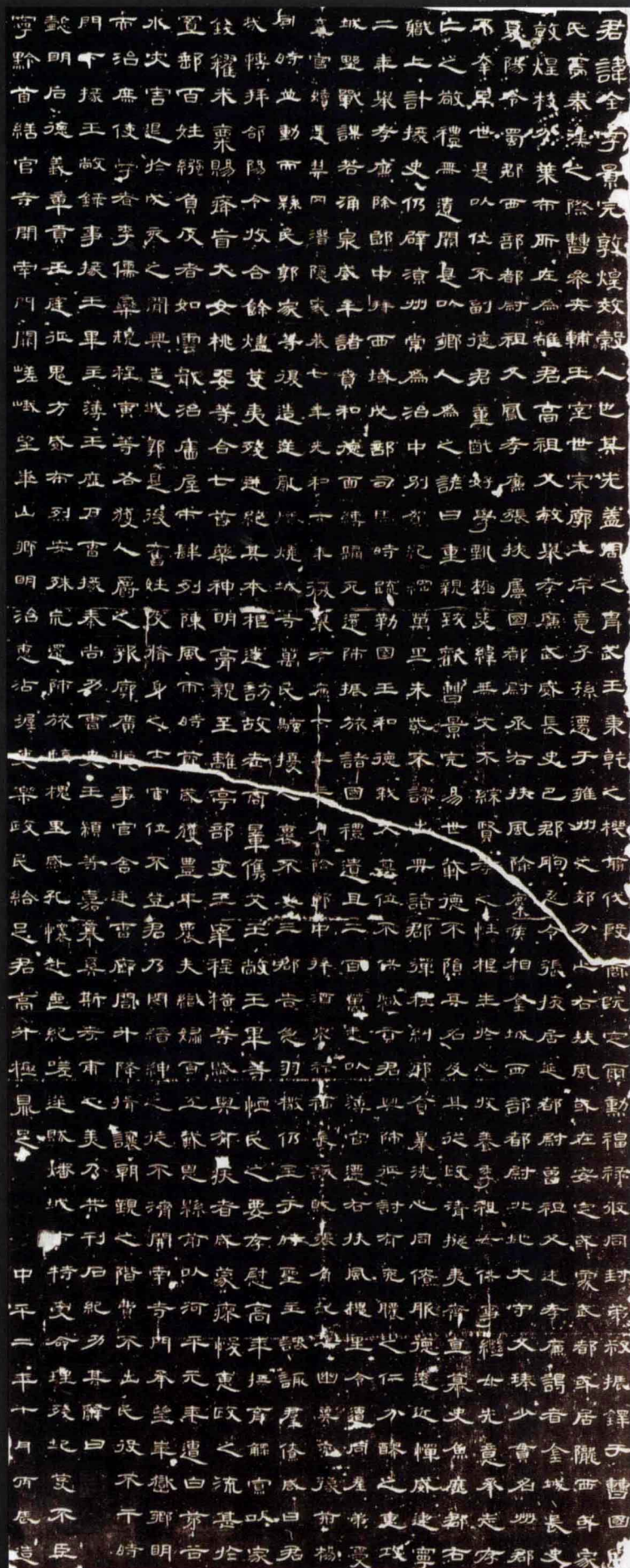


Showcase Window

Clerical Script

Clerical script is a type of the Chinese character fonts, which is also called as "Assisting Script" or "Historical Script". It evolved from seal script. According to the legend, clerical script was created by prisoner Cheng Miao in the Qin Dynasty. In the Qin Dynasty, prisoner was called as "Tu Li". So this new type of font is called as "Li Shu" in the Chinese language.

In the Han Dynasty, clerical script continued development and improvement. It features flat font, well-balanced blankness, square upright stroke and clear-cut writing. It is generally characterized by the shape of "silkworm head and swallow tail".





"Beautiful and shapely" style

"Beautiful and shapely" style is a pretty and vivid calligraphy style. Such a style is often formed when lines are slender and smooth and structure is upright and well-proportioned.

Calligraphy of the Han Dynasty

In the Han Dynasty, clerical script was the most widely used font. In the Western Han Dynasty, clerical script was mostly written on bamboo slips and silk. In the Eastern Han Dynasty, clerical script was carved on stone steles in large quantity. Later, people often summarize the calligraphy of the Han Dynasty with the phrase "clerical script of the Han Dynasty".

Do You Know?



Long horizontal line and long left-downward slope line often show arch-shaped upward curve and downward curve, which extend unsophisticatedly like waves, and show strong sense of undulation and rhythm.

"Four top-down vertical lines" are smooth and mellow like pearl and jade, which echo with each other.

Spotted strokes are thin, short, smart and lovely.

Curved arc is flexible and vivid.

Strokes are separated, but intended conception links up to add the flavor of tactful change.

With large row distance, composition is sparse and clear.

■ The Chinese character "Zheng" features dense and unconstrained shape.

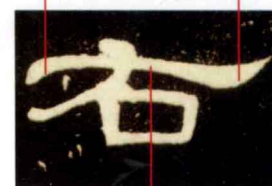
Dense. Unconstrained.



Flat shape looks calm and classical.

■ The Chinese character "You" features unsophisticated, grand and pretty shape.

Silkworm head Swallow tail



Like undulating waves, it looks beautiful with many postures

■ From this part, it can be seen that *Stele for Cao Quan* looks beautiful with many postures like the flying white cranes with ethereal lightness.



Brief Background

"Bu Bai"

"Bu Bai" is a term of calligraphy, which refers to overall layout of stroke structure.

"Silkworm Head and Swallow Tail"

"Silkworm head and swallow tail" is shape feature of clerical script lines. "Silkworm head" refers to the mellow first stroke like round head of silkworm, while "swallow tail" refers to that upward wave shape is formed by means of emphatically pressing and then gently stirring horizontal line and right-falling line.

STELE FOR ZHANG QIAN

Calligrapher: unknown

Creation year: AD 186

Style of calligraphy: clerical script

Size: stele height of 314 cm, stele width of 106 cm rubbing with 36 sides; rubbing paper height of 26.5 cm, rubbing paper width of 14 cm



Stele for Zhang Qian is now collected in the Forest of Steles in Dai Temple, Tai'an, Shandong. Zhang Qian served as Magistrate of Dangyin County (today's Tangyin County, Henan Province) in the Eastern Han Dynasty. After his death, his subordinates erected this stele to praise his merits during his lifetime.

Stele for Zhang Qian represents "primitive and robust" style of clerical script of the Han Dynasty. It features relatively straight strokes which are stubby powerful with full of antique. There is square fold instead of rigidness in the style of writing. At the time of writing, the natural mix of length, thickness and pitch often radiate sophisticated ideas. The characters are almost square, neat and massive like rock and mountain cliff, which seem solid and rigid. Deltoid and rectangular shapes are also interspersed to make a great contrast and set off each other, with full of fun. In terms of font structure, this work breaks through the common layout principle of "balance up and down". The composition often presents big upper part and small lower part so as to radiate the unique and innocent connotations through simple and vigorous appearance.

Upper tip of *Stele for Zhang Qian* is inscribed with 12 Chinese characters which mean "Ode to the Deceased Magistrate of Dangyin County, Gucheng in the Han Dynasty" in seal script, with odd and imposing appearance.



Square fold strokes are dominant. Powerful and straight lines have rich tints of engraving.

Sometimes round curves appear to break the original rhythm and tempo, which adds jump dynamics and presents a new look.

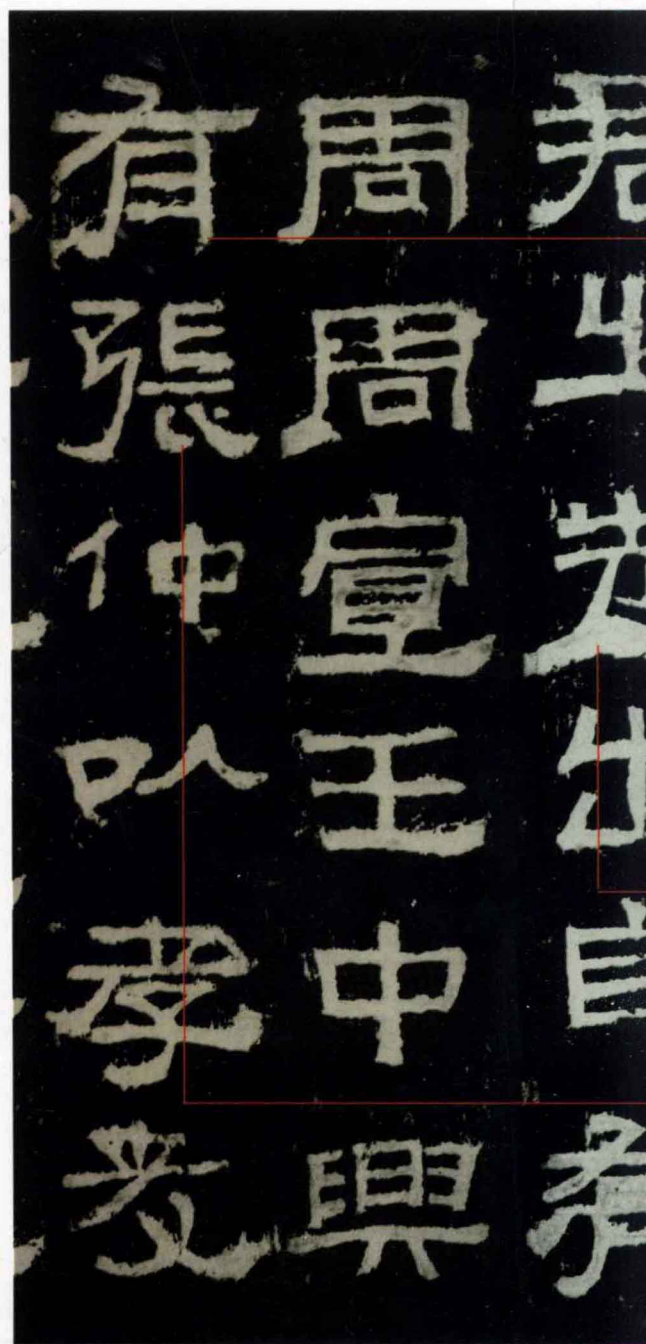
Left and right row spacing is wide, thereby achieving free flow of atmosphere between the lines.

The characters are interspersed and staggered up and down, which look dense and seamless on the whole.

Brief Background

Square Fold and Round Turning

Square Fold refers to that fold strokes are dominant in turning points so as to form square and straight outer contour. Round Turning refers to that turning strokes are dominant in turning points so as to form rounded and curved outer contour.



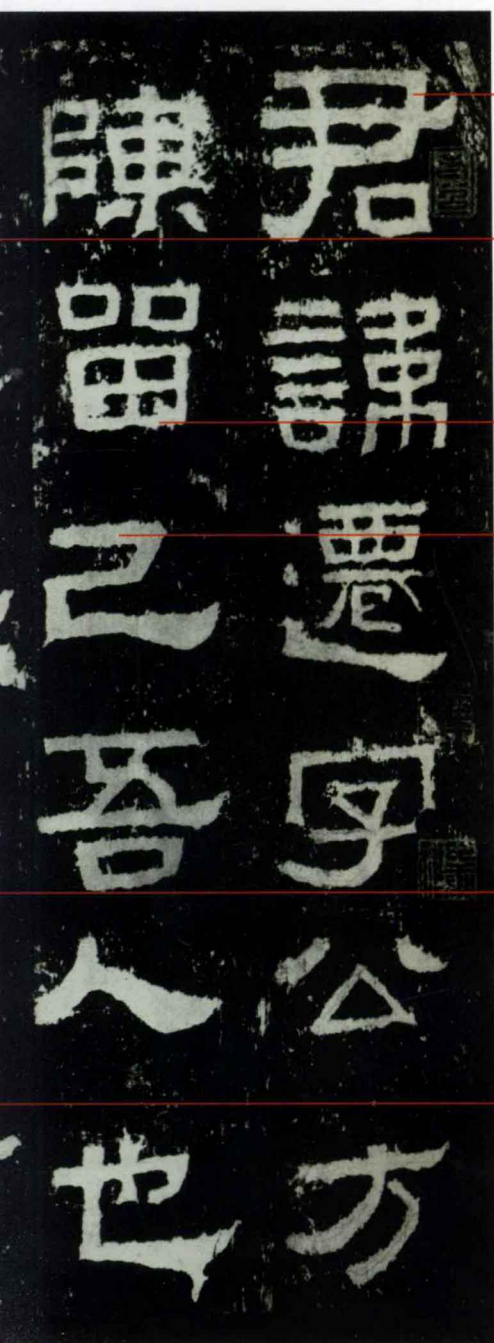


Showcase Window

Seal Script

Seal script is a kind of Chinese character forms, which falls into large seal script and small seal script. Large seal script refers to characters on bronzeware and stone carving of the Shang and Zhou Dynasties. Small seal script refers to simplification and standardization of large seal script, which appeared in the Warring States Period and widely used in the Qin Dynasty. Round strokes still preserve hieroglyphics style.

■ Here show 1st-5th lines, majestic plain characters are bold and reveal primitive and unique charm.



Upright shape shows magnificent and simple momentum.

This includes bending with the idea of novelty.

Big upper part and small lower part are simple, without adding too many modifications.

Thick and straight lines.

Horizontal line shows character misalignment ups and downs, with full of change.

Occasional short subtle curved strokes show innocent fun.



Artistic Style

"Primitive and Robust" style

"Primitive and robust" style is a type of writing, which refers to that robust and solid writing has simple flavors, without spots in ornate style.

■ The Chinese character "Zi" makes clever use of geometry.

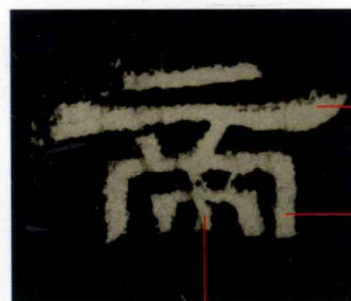


Square fold surrounds contour from top to bottom.

The middle looks like triangle.

Round strokes wrap from bottom to top.

■ The Chinese character "Di" treats exaggerated strokes.



Horizontal stroke stretches to expand from both sides.

Vertical stroke is short and powerful, with vertical compression.

The central vertical stroke is relatively thin and slightly tilted like a beat note.



General Knowledge

Stele

In calligraphy art, "stele" refers to polished smooth stone monument with a certain shape, which is used to chronicle and record merits in the narrow sense. In a broad sense, it is a generic term for stone with engraved characters, including engraved stone, cliff inscriptions, statue records, epitaphs, etc.

Rubbing sheet and rubbing book

Rubbing is also known as "rubbing copy", which refers to copying the shape of steles and copper objects and attached characters and figures. Such copy on paper sheet is called as "rubbing sheet", while such copy on paper book is called as "rubbing book".

MEMORIAL TO THE THRONE FOR RECOMMENDING JI ZHI

Calligrapher: Zhong You Creation year: AD 221

Style of calligraphy: small regular script

Size: vertical length of 33.4 cm, horizontal length of 33.9 cm



Memorial to the Throne for Recommending Ji Zhi is a calligraphic masterpiece in small regular script during the Three Kingdoms period. It was a memorial written by 71-year-

old Zhong You for the purpose of recommending Guannei Marquis Ji Zhi to Emperor Ming of the Wei Kingdom, hoping to reinstate him.

Although this is a regular script artwork, calligraphic connotations of clerical script and running script are also shown, with artistic elegance and simplicity and full of vitality. With softness outside and robustness inside, rounded and concise strokes are full of intensity. Spotting strokes stress echo with each other, and linking strokes appear to add mildness and jump to composition sometimes. With flat square shape, the characters have seemingly loose but wide structure, with tilting changes. Small distance between the upper and lower characters takes smooth flavor between the lines. The large distance between the lines achieves wide sparse composition and fresh and crisp style. In simple and unsophisticated manner, this artwork appears to demonstrate primitive and actually unique delicate taste.



Small Dictionary

Calligraphic Connotation

Calligraphic connotation refers to the modality demonstrated in painting and calligraphy. In calligraphy, seal characters, clerical script, regular script, running script, cursive script and the like have their own unique calligraphic connotations.

Artistic Conception

Artistic conception refers to connotation and charm shown in calligraphy, paintings and articles.

Occasionally calligraphic connotations of clerical script demonstrate artistic elegance and simplicity.

The large distance between the lines achieves wide sparse composition and fresh and crisp style.

Anecdote



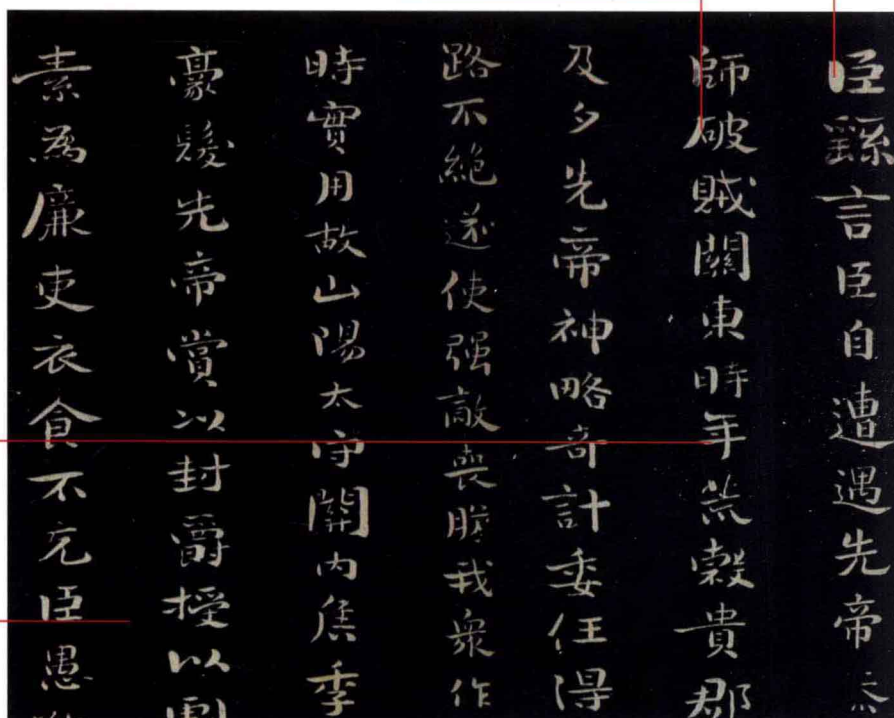
Zhong You painted on quilt

In early years, Zhong You learned calligraphy on Baopu Mountain. He carefully concentrated on study, and did not left for three years. Later, Zhong You obtained *Ways of Strokes* authored by Cai Yong, a great calligrapher of the Han Dynasty. He highly valued this book and concentrated on study, who was so absorbed as to forget food and sleep. Even when others sat, Zhong You chatted and practised calligraphy in the surrounding places. In the sleep, he often used fingers to follow calligraphy strokes. After a long time, quilt surface was worn. Zhong You finally realized the essence of *Ways of Strokes* so that his calligraphy skills made progress. And Zhong You became a great calligrapher.

In *Memorial to the Throne for Recommending Ji Zhi*, calligraphic connotations of clerical script and running script are also shown, which looks artistically quaint and vivid.

The first two lines carry thick strokes in darker ink color.

The first three Chinese characters "Chen Yao Yan" are extremely compelling.



御刻三希堂石渠寶笈法帖 第一冊

魏鍾繇書

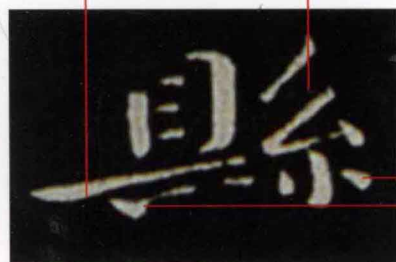


臣繇言臣自遭遇先帝，心腹憂白，建安之初，王
 師破賊，關東時年，無穀貴，郡縣殘毀，三軍餓餒，朝不
 及夕，先帝神略奇計，委任得人，深山窮谷，戶獻米，豆道
 路不絕，遂使強敵喪膽，我衆作氣，旬月之間，廓清蟻聚，當
 時實用故山陽太守關內侯李立之策，勉期成事，不差
 豪釐，先帝賞以封爵，授以劇郡，今立罷任，旅食計下
 素為廉吏，衣食不充，臣愚欲望聖德，錄其舊勲，於
 其老困，復得一州，俾圖報効，直力氣尚壯，必能夙夜
 保養，人民臣受國家異恩，不敢雷同，見事不言，干犯
 宸嚴，臣繇惶恐頓首，謹言。

黃初二年八月，魏武皇帝臣鍾繇表



Long horizontal strokes are straight and powerful so as to elongate horizontal posture on the left, and also increase the upper left blank to make the atmosphere flow freely.



This is traditional Chinese character of "Xian".

Linking strokes are omitted to increase the gap, which looks sparse and clear.

Spotting strokes close upwards and take wave-like posture, giving a sense of dance movement.

Linking short spotting strokes look unique and interesting.

The corners are left empty to echo each other.



This is traditional Chinese character of "Ju".

Although strokes are cut off, calligraphic connotation remains connected.

This short straight-down stroke occupies space in left-half structure, making the left and right halves linked closely.

Straight-down stroke is short and heavy, which compresses the vertical length.

This weakens lower-half structure, and seems naive and cute.



Art Master

Zhong You (151-230)

Zhong You was a famous calligrapher of the Wei Kingdom in the Three Kingdoms, who was a native of Changshe, Yingchuan (today's east part of Changge, Henan). He was the founder of regular script, who is known as "Originator of Regular Script". He was good at clerical script and running script, who is collectively reputed as "Zhong and Wang (Wang Xizhi)" in calligraphy history.

Showcase Window



Regular Script

Regular script is a kind of Chinese character forms, which is also called as "Zheng Shu" and "Zhen Shu" in Chinese language, which evolved from clerical script. It features neat strokes, structural symmetry, upright font and rigorous ways. It started in the late Han Dynasty, which was the official common standard since the Northern and Southern Dynasties. Regular script with diameter of about 1 cm is called as "Small Regular Script", i.e., "Housefly-head Script".

CHU YUE MODEL OF CALLIGRAPHY

Calligrapher: Wang Xizhi **Creation year:** unknown

Style of calligraphy: cursive script

Size: vertical length of 26.3 cm, horizontal length of 253.8 cm



Chu Yue Model of Calligraphy is a letter written by Wang Xizhi (a calligrapher of the Eastern Jin Dynasty) to his friend, which is named after two Chinese characters "Chu

Yue" at the beginning.

This artwork features concise and lively strokes, dynamic, straightforward and strong stroke power, steady and heavy stipple, in particular turning points are never vague, which show syncopated cadence by means of square and round strokes, thereby enhancing a sense of heroism and flying. In terms of character structure, size, obverse and reverse sides and density achieve organic combination, which echo under no constraint. Although it is handy to create the whole artwork, the composition is complete and harmonious in natural form. This artwork is artistically quaint and pure, with unrestrained and vigorous momentum.

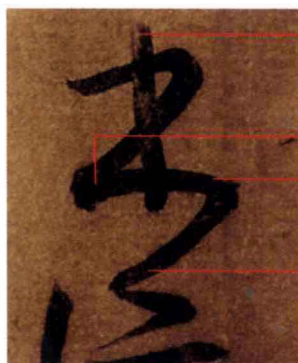
The authentic *Chu Yue Model of Calligraphy* has been lost. This is the copy of the Tang Dynasty, which is collected in Liaoning Museum.



Art Master

Wang Xizhi (303-361)

Wang Xizhi is the most influential calligrapher with the highest achievement in the Chinese calligraphy history. He was good at absorbing the strengths of the others, and bravely get rid of the stale and brought forth the fresh. He not only helped the regular script completely not influenced by clerical script, but also innovated and developed running script and cursive script. He originated calligraphy model of the generations. So he is revered as "Calligraphy Sage" by later generation of people.



The Chinese character "Shu" takes tilting starting stroke, leading to the second stroke.

Turning point is cadenced and powerful.

Bending arc contrasts with the above horizontal straight stroke.

This echoes with tilting posture of the first stroke.

Authentic Work

Authentic work refers to the artwork created by calligrapher or painter, which is differentiated from such work copied or counterfeited by others.

General Knowledge



Strokes are thick, discreet, vigorous and simple.

Strokes are thin, strong, compact and flexible.

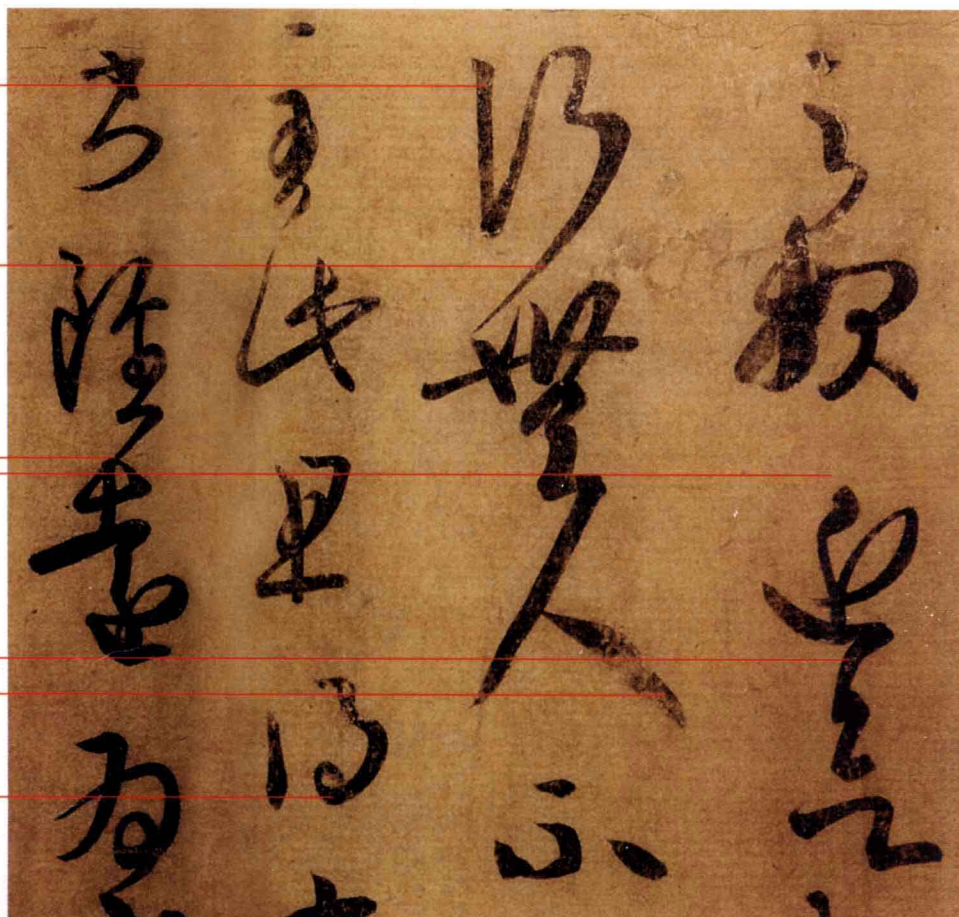
Strokes are completed in one go so that there is coherence in style.

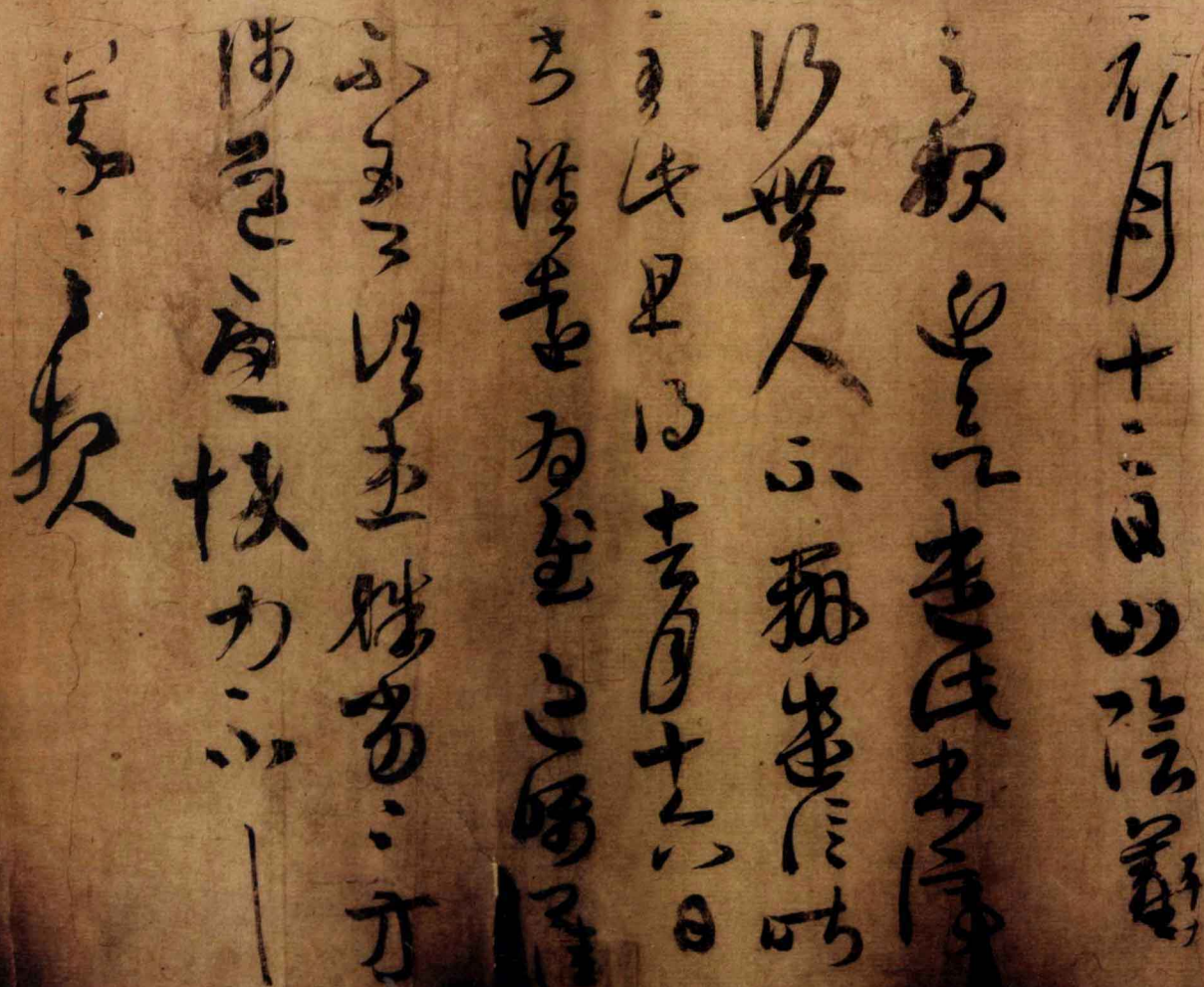
The linkup between the strokes forms wonderful character group combination. Connection and disconnection form an interesting contrast.

Unconstrained style.

Constrained style.

■ Wang Xizhi's cursive script looks like flying dragon, which is vigorous, unrestrained and imposing.





The Chinese character "Xing" starts frankly in straightforward style, which not only drives the following strokes, but also leads to following two Chinese characters "Wu Ren" on the whole.

Mild and stretching strokes seem flying ribbons.

Strokes are disconnected with connected connotations.

Elegant shape and beautiful stretch.

Strokes are mature, forceful, vigorous, powerful and robust.

Side brush movement is sharp, with exposed cutting edge.

Showcase Window



Cursive Script

Cursive script is a kind of Chinese character forms, and its font is simpler than that of running script. The tortuous strokes are implicated each other for quick writing.

Brief Background



Central brush movement and side brush movement

Central brush movement and side brush movement are two brushwork methods. "Central brush movement" refers to that brush holder and paper keep perpendicular. At the time of writing, the brush hair is controlled in middle of lines. "Side brush movement" refers to that brush holder slightly tilts so that one side of brush can be held for writing.



LANTING PREFACE

Calligrapher: Wang Xizhi

Creation year: AD 353

Style of calligraphy: running script

Size: vertical length of 24.5 cm, horizontal length of 69.9 cm



Lanting Preface is representative of Wang Xizhi's running script, which is a manuscript made by him when drinking wine with his friends in high spirits in Lanting, Shaoxing. So there are traces of painting and additions. The first three lines of this work show clear regular script strokes. Brush movement starts to gradually become smooth from the 4th line, the 8th-11th line forms a beautiful rhythm, and the 12th-17th lines completely go into the best status so that brush movement significantly turns faster in more casual style and takes natural and flowing style of writing, thereby leading to infinite reverie. The entire artwork is free and unconstrained with full of flavor, which fully reflects Wang Xizhi's vigorous, robust and flowing running script.

Lanting Preface is known as the "first running hand", but the original has been lost. So it is wonderful copy of Feng Chengsu in the Tang Dynasty.

Showcase Window

Running Script

Running script is a kind of Chinese character forms, and its structure and gesture range between regular script and cursive script. It is written more quickly and flexibly than the regular script, which is also more legible than cursive script. It is the most common handwriting font.

The origin of *Lanting Preface*

On the 3rd day of lunar 3rd month in the 9th year during Yonghe Period in the Eastern Jin Dynasty (353), Wang Xizhi and his friends jointly went to Lanting in Shanyin (today's Shaoxing, Zhejiang) for gathering. That day, spring breeze blew, the sun shone, and all people were happily immersed in the wonderful landscape. They could not help playing the game of floating wine cup along the winding water. They sat beside a small river, put the glasses on lotus leaves and let glasses drift downstream. When such glass stopped in front of a person, he must drink a glass of wine and make a poem on the spot. Drinking happily, they made many poems. Finally, they decided to compile 37 poems into a collected poem work, and Wang Xizhi was recommended for writing a preface. Wang Xizhi happily raised up the brush. He thought and wielded brush, and soon created masterpiece *Lanting Preface* through the ages. Interestingly, Wang Xizhi subsequently kept mind at peace and re-copied this work several times, but he could not find the feeling with facility.

Font structure of *Lanting Preface* proves high proficiency.



In the Chinese character "Liu", sharp strokes see no void.

Coarse place is not bloated, with dark-ink place is not muddy.

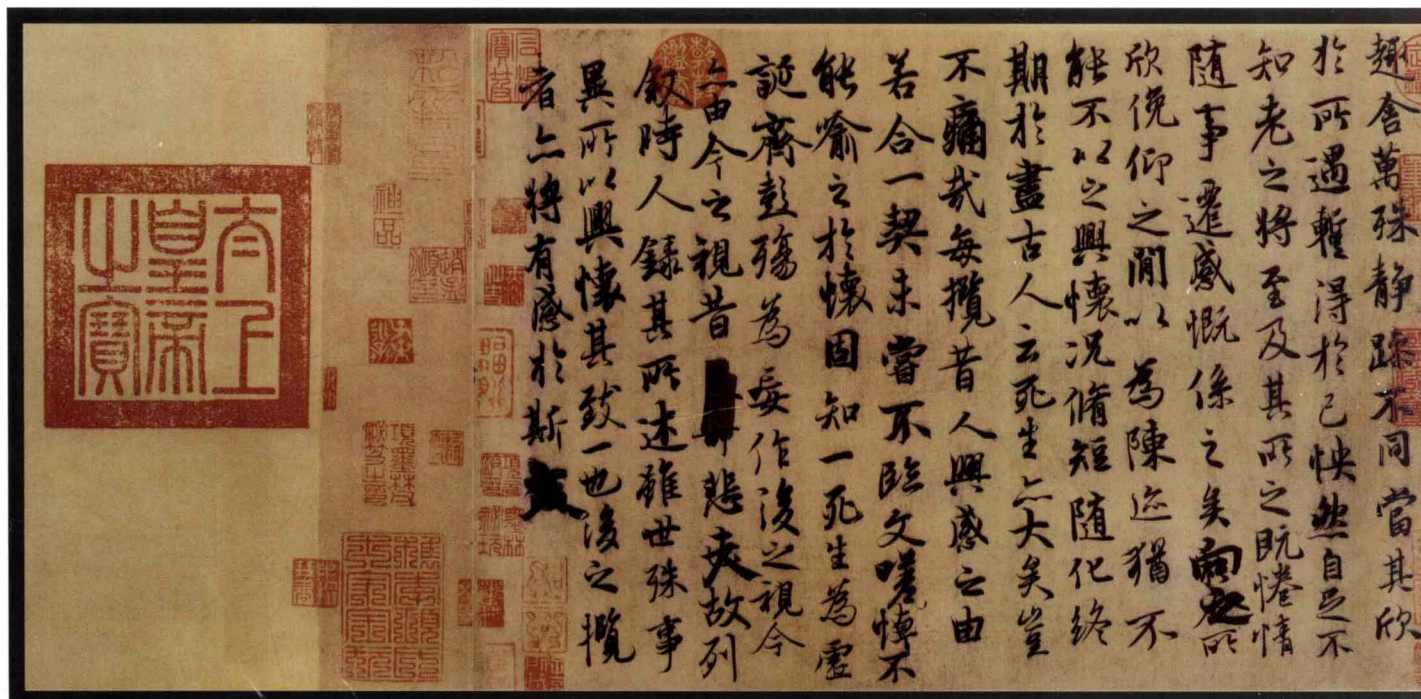
Refined place is not weak.



Turning point of the Chinese character "Chang" combines square and round strokes, with full of change.

Square fold looks strong and robust.

Round turning becomes flexible and moving.





Lin Mo (Copy)

"Lin Mo" means imitation of painting, which specifically refers to the two ways for imitation of painting and calligraphy works. "Lin" means writing according to the originals. "Mo" means covering paper or silk on originals so as to delineate stroke by stroke. Works produced by means of "Lin" is called as "Lin Ben", while works produced by means of "Mo" is called as "Mo Ben". In general, "Mo" enjoys more effective simulation than "Lin".



Anecdote

Why the authentic *Lanting Preface* was lost?

According to the legend, *Lanting Preface* was handed down by the Wang family from generation to generation. Later, before the death, Wang Xizhi's seventh-generation descendant Master Zhiyong delivered it to the disciple Monk Biancai. During Zhenguan Period of the Tang Dynasty, Emperor Li Shimin was fond of Wang Xizhi's calligraphy. He desired to see authentic *Lanting Preface*. So he sent a man named Xiao Yi to pretend to make friends with Monk Biancai. Xiao Yi got *Lanting Preface* by cheating. Emperor Li Shimin treasured this artwork, and repeatedly commanded famous calligraphers Yu Shinan, Ouyang Xun, Chu Suiliang, court imitator Feng Chengsu and other artists to copy and delineate this artwork for handing down for ever. Advocated by the Emperor, people learned calligraphy by copying the works of Wang Xizhi later on. After Emperor Li Shimin's death, *Lanting Preface* is said to be enclosed as funeral object in the tomb of Emperor Li Shimin. The authentic *Lanting Preface* hasn't been seen since then.

In this artwork, the 12th-17th lines is the most exciting part, as brush movement takes natural and flowing style of writing, thereby leading to infinite reverie.

Modified and covered traces show the calligrapher's liberated state of mind at the time of writing.

Although the upper and lower characters do not connect, the atmosphere between the lines is smooth and the rhythm is smooth and beautiful.

Modified and covered traces are left here. Heavy and eye-catching characters change the rhythm of the original writing.

Characters at the end of each line are small, indicating that the author has not exhausted mind to arrange the permissive, but simply allowed natural, homeopathic written.

Patterns of repeated Chinese characters vary, with the size at random.



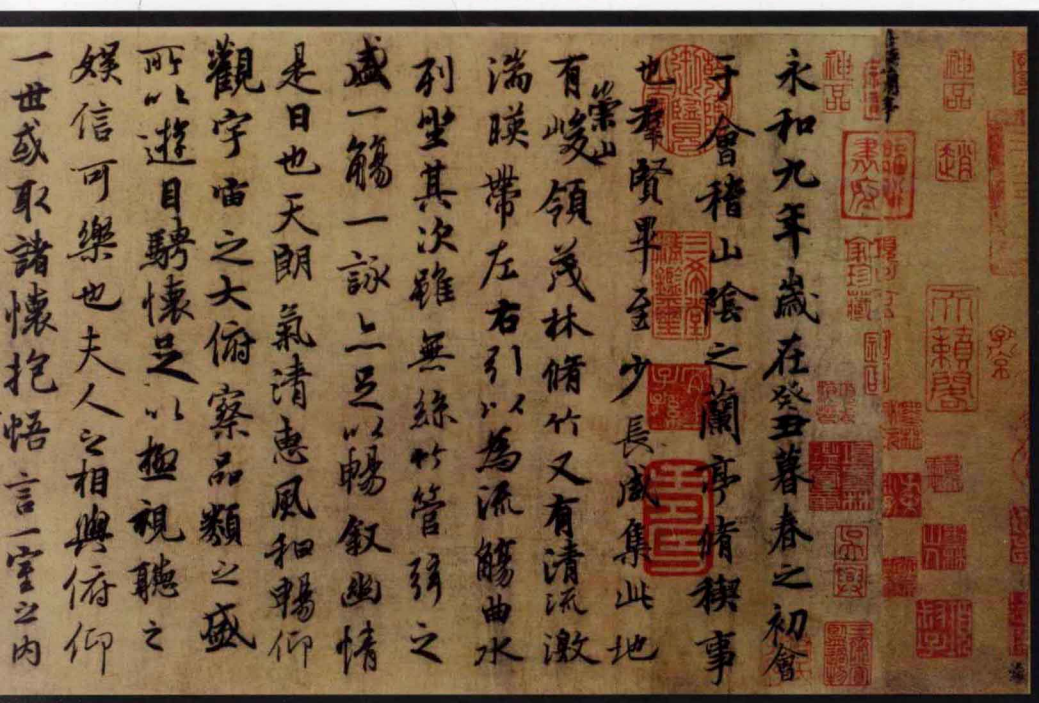
Sound and dignified strokes seem to contain infinite power.



Standing tall and straight, sharp strokes make a showy display.



Brisk and elegant strokes look empty and cute.



E QUN MODEL OF CALLIGRAPHY

Calligrapher: Wang Xianzhi

Creation year: unknown

Style of calligraphy: running and cursive script

Size: unknown



E Qun Model of Calligraphy is a letter written by Wang Xianzhi, with a total of 8 lines and 50 Chinese characters.

Compared with Wang Xizhi, Wang Xianzhi's running and cursive script is more magnificent, flying, gentle and smooth. In this artwork, brush movement is very skilled, spotting strokes are smart and powerful with combination of curve and straightness, i.e., straight strokes are bold and bending strokes are beautiful. The font structure looks dignified and calm in some places, and looks stretched and free with full of change. Throughout the characters run the smooth atmosphere. With connected and disconnected strokes, sparse and dense composition is flexible and natural, with full of bright and cheerful rhythm.

The authentic *E Qun Model of Calligraphy* has been lost. This artwork is copied by Mi Fu, a calligrapher of the Northern Song Dynasty.

Art Master

Wang Xianzhi (344-386)

Wang Xianzhi was the youngest son of Wang Xizhi, who learned calligraphy under instruction of his father since childhood. Later, he set his own school and created a new font "Running Regular Script" and "Running Cursive Script" so that running script system was enriched and improved, with a great impact on future generations. Wang Xizhi and Wang Xianzhi are jointly respected as "Two Wangs".



The Chinese character "E" shows elegant and free style.

Elegant and subtle curves.

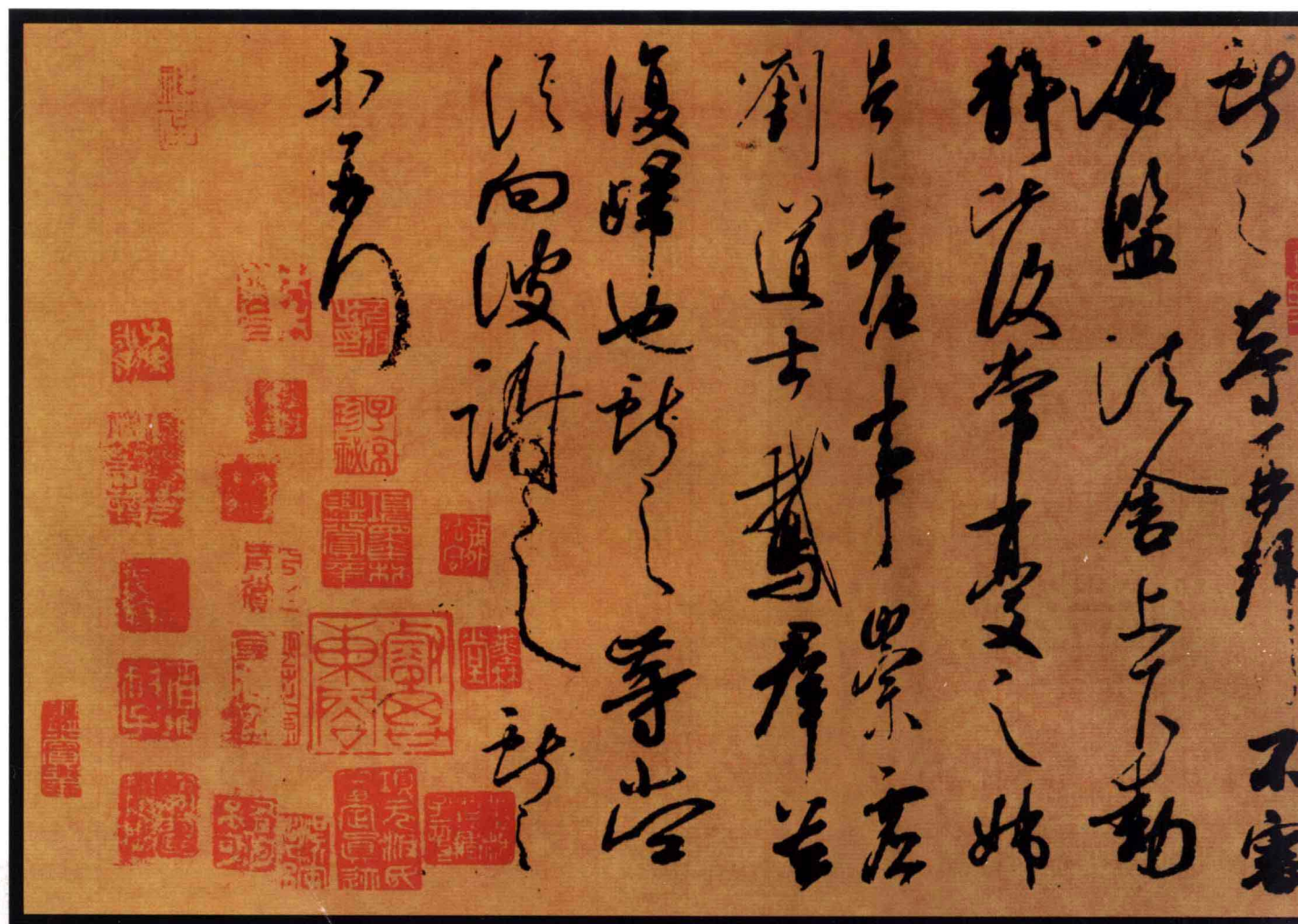
Stretched, straight, thin and powerful slashes.

Heavy strokes join together to form a thick black ink block, strongly contrasting with upper and right blank places.

Strokes echo each other and look brilliant.

Large blank space shows stroke pattern.

Solid and strong stroke.





Running Cursive Script

Running cursive script is a kind of Chinese character forms, which ranges between running script and cursive script, with reference of cursive gesture. But it is not implicated as cursive script so that it is more legible than cursive script. Its font structure is simpler than that of running script and more complete than that of cursive script.



■ The Chinese character "Dao" has a strong stipple dynamics, but the overall structure of this character is calm and dignified.

Strokes are heavy and slightly tilt on one side, which seemingly connected and disconnected with following characters.

Thin lines are powerful, compact and smart, with beautiful and lovely shape.

The distance between characters is compact and dense, and rhythm is rapid and coherent.

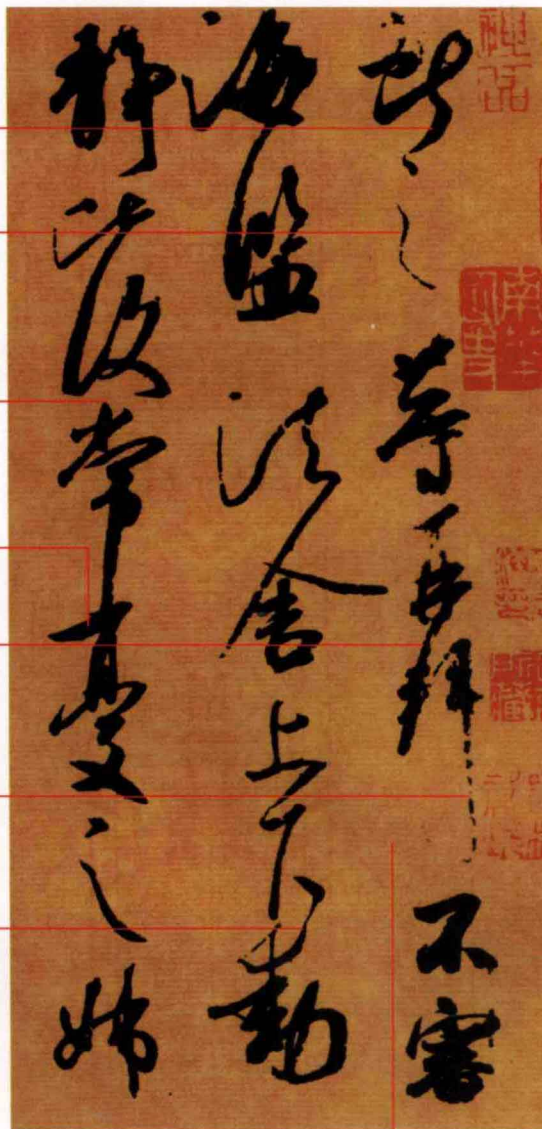
This links with the last stroke of the above character.

Downward stretch demonstrates flowing momentum.

By means of inserted brushwork, this cleverly links with the last stroke of the above character.

This forms a large area of blank so that the atmosphere can flow on left and right sides.

■ In the first three lines, stretching strokes are linked under disconnection. The whole artwork has full of bright and cheerful rhythm.



Jin Shang Yun

"Jin" means "the Jin Dynasty", "Shang" means "advocates", and "Yun" means "charm". This is the summarization for calligraphy features of the Jin Dynasty. Before the Jin Dynasty, scholars often paid attention to the nice and neat appearance of characters. Until the Jin Dynasty, scholars were often in the pursuit of inherent artistic charm of calligraphy, and liked to make work express unique flavor and artistic connotation. This "charm" is embodiment and expression of a calligrapher's spiritual quality and emotion.

ODE TO GODDESS OF LUO RIVER

Calligrapher: Wang Xianzhi

Creation year: unknown

Style of calligraphy: small regular script

Size: vertical length of 29 cm, horizontal length of 26 cm



Ode to Goddess of Luo River is a literary masterpiece created by Cao Zhi in the Three Kingdoms Period. Wang Xianzhi adopted small regular script to transcribe it as a masterpiece of calligraphy.

Wang Xianzhi's small regular script is strong, vigorous, beautiful and rigorous to show natural and leisurely grace. It features straight lines and extended structure, while long stretched strokes are not frivolous and weak. Stroke power is delivered to the end of strokes in high spirits. The composition of this work shows sparse and dense layout, with upright and oblique body and varying-size fonts, which looks lively and natural, with full of change. Throughout this artwork, it radiates artistically mild charms, which is consistent with ethereal realm of the original work.

The authentic *Ode to Goddess of Luo River* has been lost. This is engraving rubbing of the original work (part), which is also known as *13 Lines on Jade Plate*, which was carved by Jia Sidao (prime minister of the Southern Song Dynasty) according to the original incomplete work.

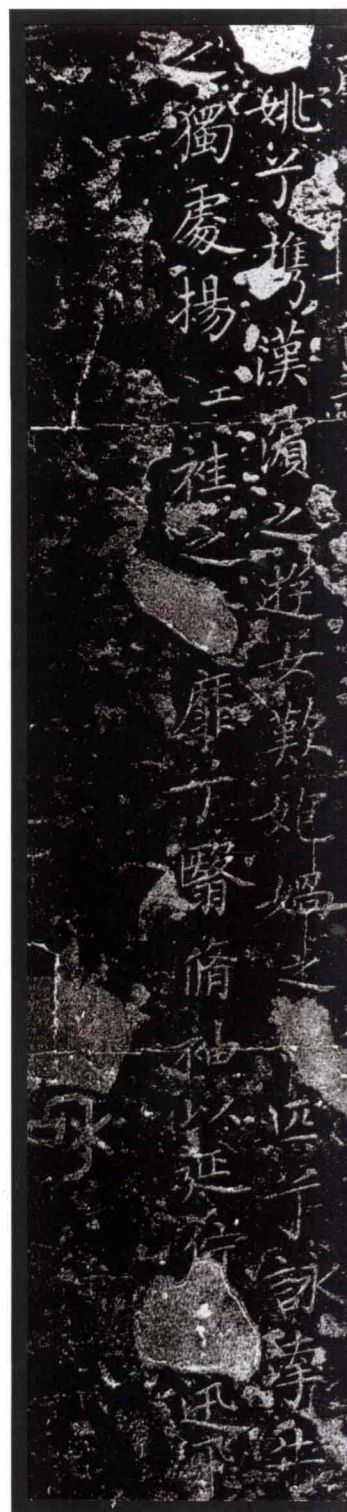


Do You Know?

Calligraphy of the Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties

The Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties were brilliant eras for the ancient Chinese calligraphy, in which many calligraphers sprang up, and created a lot of classics for future generations.

In the Three Kingdoms, the Wei Kingdom made the highest calligraphy achievements, and Zhong You was an outstanding representative. In the Eastern Jin Dynasty, "Two Wangs" originated small regular script, running script, cursive script, running and cursive script which had a profound influence on later generation. In the Southern Dynasty, the tradition of the Eastern Jin Dynasty was inherited to show beautiful style. In the Northern Dynasty, calligraphy was dominated by inscriptions of unknown craftsmen, which was in simple unadorned style.



■ With gently melodious charm, the strokes show natural grace in beautiful and straight appearance.

Stippling jumps, with connotation at running hand.

Lines are strong and straight.

The size is small, but the stroke is not stiff.

Long stretched strokes are often flowing in high spirits.

Occasionally characters tilt on one side in natural and colorful way.

Scattered composition has full of fun.

Quick Link

Nymph of the Luo River

See Page 4 of *Classics Appreciation of Chinese Visual Arts: Painting in this series.*