

藝巧貴乎自然，書法藝巧也，初為生民日用之器，及其至也。遂為藝事之大雅，故古之雅士，莫不因日用而工書，三代而下以百數為書之道，始則規行槩步，點畫結體惟恐少失而踰藩柅，終而得心應手，若庖丁之解牛，技進于道，卒遺其規槩藩籬，各率其性而為之，一一歸於自然。此鍾、王、歐、褚、顏、柳、蘇、黃、趙、董、諸公以十數，而面目各殊之故也。陶淵明詩曰，久困樊籠裏，復得返自然，移以論書，其理亦同，規槩藩柅，樊籠也。不為久困而後得返自然，既返自然矣，而後有我之面目。昔江賓谷自敘，其詩謂雖不如城北徐公之美，可無面目乎。書法苟不能有我之面目，雖極天下之工，徒為古名家之奴僕匠而已矣。焯槐夙工書旁及篆刻，推其所好而及于人，舉規槩藩柅課諸生者有年矣。歲庚午梓張焯槐師生書法篆刻集以問世，余曾為之序，旋戲贈鷓鴣天小詞云，四體書城早退身，雕蟲篆刻最怡神，於今已到陳驚坐，何日更希王右軍，當自立，莫因循，六文八體任紛紜，直須筆陣開生面，不逐前賢作後塵。今又六禩，焯槐之書已返自然，篆、隸、楷、草、靡不有其面目，粲然可見。因憶焯槐未冠時，曾從余游于庠序，忽忽四十一年矣。既喜其大成，抑又不勝歲月之感也。

乙亥春羅忼烈序

右文余八年前舊作也，其時不及景棻。明年春初，焯槐將又偕門人為書法篆刻展覽，徵言於余，遂以塞責，蓋亦有感於日月忽其不淹也。

癸未冬慊烈識

Foreword II

Art and craft is cherished for its spontaneity and being natural. Calligraphy is an art. Initially, calligraphy is a daily tool in human life. It is later fully developed and becomes an important branch of art. On account of the fact that they have to use it every day, ancient scholars are good at calligraphy. After the dynasties of Xia, Shang and Zhou, hundreds of scholars practise the art of calligraphy. At the beginning, they are cautious in following rules and regulations. In writing out strokes and dots, they are afraid to go beyond the existing boundaries. Eventually, they acquire the way to master calligraphy like the way the chef succeeds in carving away every part of an ox. Their technique is improved by the way and consequently reaching the stage of not being restricted by rules and regulations. Demonstrating their personalities to the full, their writing styles return to a natural state and they become masters of calligraphy. As their approach to nature differs, it accounts for the completely different styles among the 10 masters – Zhong, Wang, Ou, Chu, Yan, Liu, Su, Huang, Zhao and Dong. Tao Yuan Ming, the poet, writes in one of his poems:

Having lived long in cages and behind fences,
Now I succeed in returning to nature.

The same philosophy would apply to calligraphy too. Rules and regulations are the cages and fences. Having been free from cages and fences, calligraphers could gain the way to return to nature. Upon following their dispositions, they have attained their individual unique style. Once, Jiang Bin Gu, on commenting his own poems, states that despite his work is less attractive than the work by Xu, the master at the northern part of the city, there is still his own style. Should he fail to attain his own style, even the work is reaching the skill of the famous masters, he is at the most a slave and servant of those old masters. Mr. Cheung Cheuk Wai has long been a famous master in calligraphy and is also good at the art of seal-engraving. He is sharing his valuable expertise in calligraphy and seal-engraving with others. Beginning with the basic rules and regulations, he has been teaching his students over the years. In 1990, Cheuk Wai and his students published a book of collection of their work on calligraphy and seal-engraving. To mark the occasion, I wrote a foreword for it. Subsequently, I also playfully composed the following poem for him:

With the completion of the four writing styles, it is opportune to retire earlier.
Seal-engraving is best for cheering the heart and enjoying a harmonious life.
At this juncture, a stage of perfection, same attained by master Chen Zun, has been reached and has delightfully amazed the public.
It would not be long for you to be as good as master Wang Xi Zhi.
Remember to be unique in style and avoid being perfunctory.
Paying not much attention to the difference of various styles,
You will presently open up a new phase in the use of the brush.
Never blindly follow the former masters.

Six years have passed. Mr. Cheung has now reached the stage that his work has returned to nature, whether in the form of seal script, clerical script, regular script and running script. His style which shines brightly is unique. I recall that Cheuk Wai, at his youth, has been one of my students. As time passes by, months after months and years after years, I realize that since then four decades have slid away. On one hand, I am glad to find that he has attained a remarkable achievement while on the other hand, I loathe to find a trace of sadness over the passing of time.

Professor LO Hong Lit
Spring 1995

The above was written eight years ago. Regrettably, it was then not in the right time for publishing. In spring next year, Mr. Cheung will again hold another exhibition on Chinese calligraphy and seal-engraving by him together with his students. In this connection, he has asked for my advice and hence I have given him this foreword as requested. Indeed, I sigh to find that time hastens away so soon.

Professor LO Hong Lit
Winter 2003

藝巧貴乎自然去法藝巧也
習為生民日用之器及其至也益
為藝之至大雅故古之雅士莫不
因日用而工書三代而下臣百如為
本之道始則規引筆步點画結
體惟恐少失而踰藩柵終而得心
在手若若危丁之解牛技進于道
卒遺以規矩藩籬之率其性
而為之一悔於自然止鍾王歐
褚顏柳蘇黃趙董諸品十數
而面目各殊之妙也陶淵明詩白久
固樊籠裏復得返自然遠臣

論書其理立同規矩藩地樊
籠也不為久困而後句返自然
既返自然之矣而後有奇之面
目昔江實谷自較其詩謂雖
不名城北蘇之之美少其面目
乎去法苟不能有我之面目
雖極下之心工徒為古名家之
收僕匠而已矣焯魏風工出
字及篆刻推之其所好而及于
人舉規矩藩地課講生者

青年吳歲庚午梓張焯
槐師生畫法篆刻藥以問
書余為之序擬戲贈
鶴下小司言云四種書成早
遺身彫蟲篆刻最怡
神於今日到陳鶴坐何日
夏希王右軍高自立莫
因循亦文小體任鈔銘直
須筆陣屏生面不遜青

修化後蒼今又六禮焯槐
之出已返身步篆隸楷
麻亦有其面目雖繁可見
因憶焯槐未冠時曾游予
游予序序勿了四十年矣既
其大成抑又不勝歲月之感也

乙亥暮羅抗五敘



右文余八年前舊作也其時不及某琴朋幸幸齊
焯槐將又借門人為書法篆刻歷覽概言於
余遂以塞責蓋亦有感於日月忽其不滄也

乙亥末冬懷烈後

