

或以為書法者，易事也。格度不同，性情或異，書其所書，各有風格，何學為也？余以為書法絕非小道，具非易易。性格不侔，書故有別，而無法，其所書，既無普通之性，復乏共通之點，二者俱無，評何以準？如說話焉，必先有人人共通之文法結構，他人始知其所表現者何事，修辭之好壞，在其次矣。以運動譬之，其花式之基本全無，順性而動，好壞奚分？塗鴉潑墨，自不及格，何風格為？為鞠為棋，盡皆有法，天地之義也。謂書易且不可，書法易則尤其不可也。法者，綱紀也。繩墨之設，方圓之畫，皆有法焉。繩墨者，曲直之準也；規矩者，方圓之至也，無繩墨規矩，曲直方圓，皆不可矣。縱可，非至也。故順性所書而無法，即可，必非至也，猶說話之隨意而全無組織結構者，其可乎？人必不知其所言者何事也！有其法，然後操持駕馭之，日月浸漬之，眾碑觀摩之，羲獻鵠鬻之，深造以道，在法之中，行法之外，無法有法，自得必矣，此張君之有成也。焯槐吾兄浸淫諸碑，磋磨既久，盡得其法。至又澹泊名利，蟄居養晦，研墨自娛，知之者，皆仰其標格而從其學，所謂玉在山而草木潤，荀子早言之矣。從者既得其法，勤而習之，已皆有成，觀其歷屆展覽，自可知之，無庸費辭矣！兆顯與焯槐同門，以視焯槐，其小石之在泰山乎！既俞其序，姑道心腹，大方笑我，其必然矣。

重光單闕孟春之月黃兆顯謹序於杜若書堂

Foreword V

It may be thought that it is easy to learn calligraphy. However, when people differ in their personality and temperament, their style of writing will be diversified but unique. So how can we set about learning it? Personally, I don't believe that there is not much to learn about calligraphy. In fact, means to master it should not be considered as trivial. It is obvious that if there is not an agreed set of common features or characteristics, it would be difficult to gauge the standard achieved by each piece of calligraphy work which is governed primarily by the disposition of the individual. Likewise, the speech one delivers can only be made understandable when it is formulated on requisite grammatical structures commonly known and accepted. The choice of rhetoric is only of a lesser importance. Let's take sport as another example. If there are no fundamental principles governing the learning of different forms of exercise, it would be difficult to judge whether the sport performance is good or bad because what one sees is merely a self-expression of body movement. Scrawling with ink on paper should definitely not be considered as a qualified piece of artwork. As such, how can it be said to be unique in style? Before playing a game of ball or chess, rules required need to be first laid down. They serve as the law to be abided by all the players. If the claim that writing with the brush is easy is not accepted, the belief that the mastery of calligraphy is not at all difficult cannot be established too. Guiding principles are intrinsic in rules. Without which, standards cannot be controlled. The application of basic rules in carpentry or painting is necessary as it safe-guards the achievement of standards in the precise drawing of lines and curves. Thus, I daresay that it is workable to allow writing to be governed by one's mood and not by any rules or methods but this would imply that the road to perfection would be more distant. Similarly in delivering a speech, if the content is randomly chosen without paying any specific consideration to structure or theme, it may become out of focus. The audience will be at a loss as to what the speech is all about. It is only when you have the rules and methods, practise the skills continuously throughout the years and study in details the characteristics of available stone tablets before you could be able to write like great masters. Xi-zhi and Xian-zhi, ancient masters of calligraphy, are followers of the said principles and so is Mr. Cheung. This accounts for Mr. Cheung's success and achievement in the field of calligraphy.

My friend, Mr. Cheung Cheuk Wai, has spent years studying and learning the characteristics of various stone tablets. With continual practice, he has now mastered the skills. He is dispassionate and seeks no fame and wealth. He lives in seclusion and leads a retirement life. He practises calligraphy purely for self-enjoyment. Those who admire his attitude towards life and the art of calligraphy become his followers. As Xun-zi used to say, plants and trees would flourish well on a mountain embedded with jades. Mr. Cheung's students following his teachings and methods and with unfailing practice have been successful in delivering their works. This is verified by the works displayed in all their exhibitions.

Both Cheuk Wai and I study calligraphy with the same master. Cheuk Wai's achievement in calligraphy is immense when compared with that of mine. I am honoured to be asked to write this foreword for the exhibition booklet and may I also take this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation of the achievement he has made together with his fellow-students in the works of calligraphy.

Professor WONG Siu Hin
The first month of spring, 2011