



Ling, Manny (2012) 'Calligraphy Across Boundaries'. In: International Calligraphy Conference, 15 - 22 Jun 2012, University of Kankannpaa in Finland.

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EAST MEETS WEST

WEST MEETS EAST?

WHERE DO I FIT IN?

EAST

IN THE MIDDLE?

WEST



EAST

WEST

WHAT DID I LEARN FROM THE EAST?

THE STATUS OF CALLIGRAPHY IS DIFFERENT



*IN 2010, A PIECE OF CALLIGRAPHY
BY HUANG YING JIAN (1045 -1105)
SOLD FOR £20,000,000*

I THEN ASK MYSELF, WHAT IS CALLIGRAPHY?

WEST - BEAUTIFUL WRITING

CHINESE - SHU FA

JAPANESE - SHO DO

EAST - AN ART FORM

WEST - CRAFT? ART? DESIGN?

I STARTED TO EXPLORE EAST ASIAN PHILOSOPHY AND TRADITIONS

THE CONCEPT OF 'CHI'



'CHI' - BREATH, SPIRIT
(CALLIGRAPHY BY EDMOND TO, UK)

“Chi’ is an elusive term, one whose meaning can be sensed without difficulty but which no simple definition can cover. The fundamental fact that it has to be grasped through intuition indicates that an intellectual definition would fall far short.”

- SZE (1959)

“The idea that Chi, (the breath of heaven), the spirit stirs all of nature to life and sustains the eternal processes of movement and change; and that if a work has ‘chi’ it inevitably reflects a vitality of spirit that is the essence of life itself.”

- SZE, (1956)

“ Chi has little to do with intellectual analysis or the intentional making of effort. It also has little to do with struggling or forcing. It is a gentle and natural flow of energy that is open to spontaneity; and lies largely in the realm of non-thinking – a relaxed but highly focused and concentrated force that manifests in a non hesitating, decisive, and unbroken stream, which can only be cultivated with sustained training”

- TANAHASHI, (1998)

SO, WHAT IS CHI IN THE CONTEXT OF CALLIGRAPHY?

氣韻
生動

*'CHI YUN SHENG TUNG' - THE FIRST CANON OF PAINTING
BY CHINESE PAINTER HIESH HO (AD 479-502)
(CALLIGRAPHY WRITTEN BY EDMOND TO, UK)*

生氣
動韻

— 'CHI'
BREATH
AIR

SPIRIT
ENERGY

'CHI YUN SHENG TUNG'

生氣
動韻

‘CHI’
BREATH
AIR
SPIRIT
ENERGY

‘YUN’
VIBRATION
RESONANCE
RHYTHM
RHYTHMIC

‘CHI YUN SHENG TUNG’

‘SHENG’
GROWTH
ALIVE
LIFE
VITALITY

生氣
動韻

‘CHI’
BREATH
AIR
SPIRIT
ENERGY

‘YUN’
VIBRATION
RESONANCE
RHYTHM
RHYTHMIC

‘CHI YUN SHENG TUNG’

‘SHENG’
GROWTH
ALIVE
LIFE
VITALITY

生氣
動韻

‘CHI’
BREATH
AIR
SPIRIT
ENERGY

‘TUNG’
TO MOVE
GESTURE
MOVEMENT

‘YUN’
VIBRATION
RESONANCE
RHYTHM
RHYTHMIC

‘CHI YUN SHENG TUNG’

RHYTHMIC VITALITY

MAI MAI SZE, 1956

LLOYD REYNOLDS, 1965

RHYTHMIC VITALITY

PHEW!

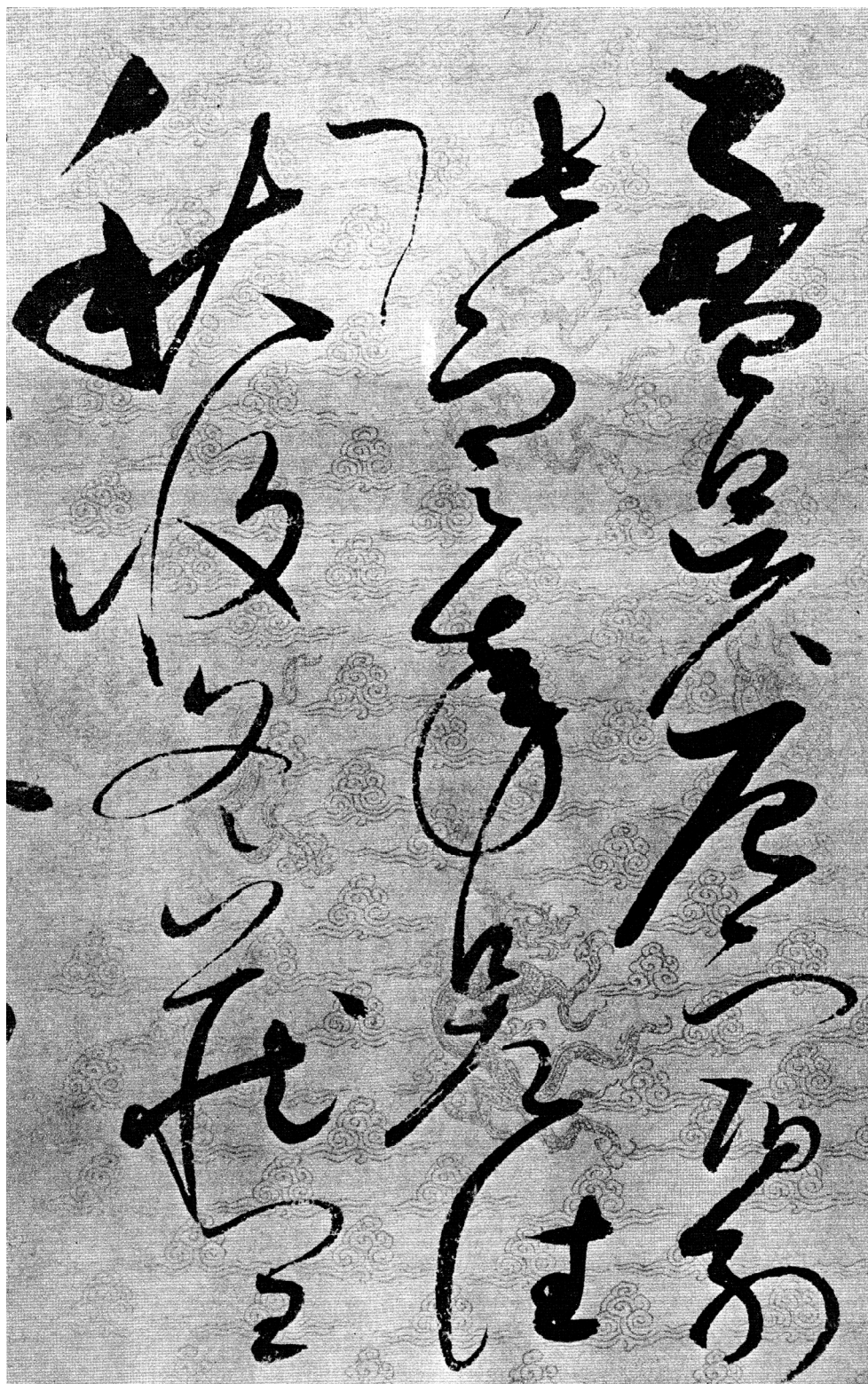
HOW DO WE APPRECIATE EAST ASIAN CALLIGRAPHY?

1. GESTURAL & EXPRESSIVE ART



2. STUDY THE FORMS

(BOTH INTERNAL & EXTERNAL ASPECTS)



Whoever thou
art that interest
this Church, leave
it not without
kneeling down &
Saying a Prayer
to GOD
for thyself, for
those who minister,
and for those who
worship here.
Surely the Lord is in this Place.

水调歌头

游泳

才飲長沙水，又食武昌魚。
波聲千里江橫渡，極目楚天舒。
不管風吹浪打，勝似閒庭信步，今日得寬餘。
子在川上曰：逝者如斯乎！
風檣搖動，水天相接，
立見西南起大雲。橫看成嶺側成峰，
迴崖沓嶂凌蒼蒼。翠點三吳秀，
青凝百越雄。江山壯麗多奇蹟，
高峡出平湖。神女應無恙，
巫山正在畫堂東。

毛澤東
一九五六年
七月五日

天將降大任于斯人也必先苦其
心志勞其筋骨餓其體膚空乏
其身行弗亂其所為所以洞
心隱性增益其所不能

3. IT IS A CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE

(TAKE THE LINE FOR A WALK!)



QI GONG (1984)

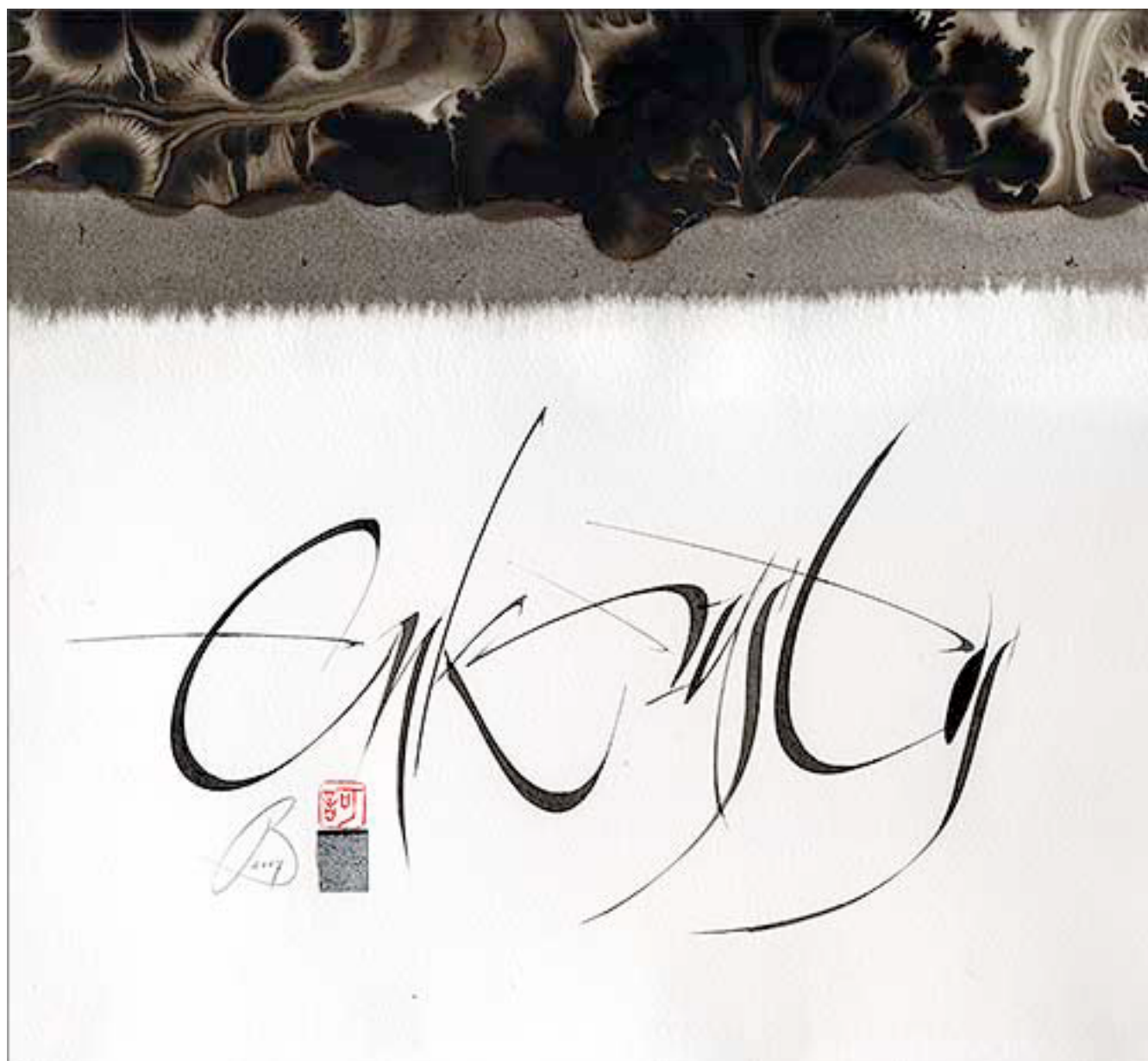
THE SIMILARITIES?

THE SHARPNESS

*“The trueness of the pen strokes shows itself in
three characteristics: the strokes are:
Sharp-edged, Uniformly made and Swift”
- EDWARD JOHNSTON*

Whosoever thou
art that interest
this Church, leave
it not without
kneeling down &
Saying a Prayer
to GOD
for thyself, for
those who minister,
and for those who
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Surely the Lord is in this Place.

Draft: Andean. lat. MS. written with Bamboo Pen. Vermilion MS. with Steel Pen.



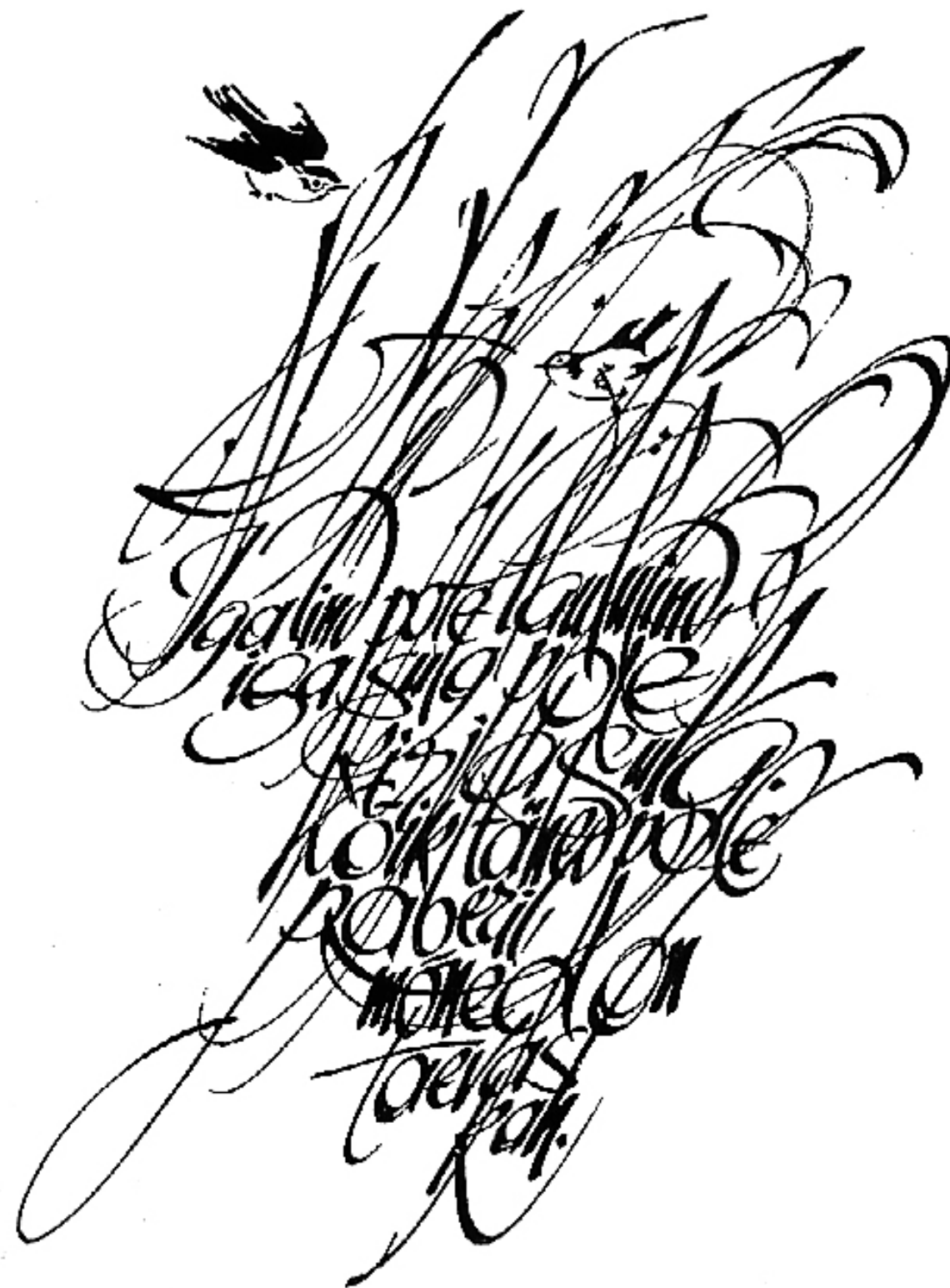
DENIS BROWN | IRELAND

THE DISCIPLINED FREEDOM

EXTRACTS FROM "SONG FOR SAINT CECILIA'S DAY" JOHN DRYDEN 1687

FROM HARMONY FROM HEAVENLY HARMONY
THIS UNIVERSAL FRAME BEGAN,
FROM HARMONY TO HARMONY
THROUGH ALL THE COMPASS OF TEN VOICES IT RAN
THE DIAPASON CLOSING TELL IN MAN
WHAT PASSION CANNOT EXISTICRAISE AND OCELL
AS FROM THE POWER OF SACRED LAWS
THE SPHERES BEGAN TO MOVE
AND SING THE CREATOR'S PRAISE
TO ALL THE BLEST ABOVE
SO WHEN THE LAST AND DREADFUL HOUR
THIS CRUMBLING PAGEANT SHALL DEVOUR
THE CRUMPET SHALL BE HEARD ON HIGH
THE DEAD SHALL LIVE THE LIVING DIE
AND MUSIC SHALL UNTUNE THE SKY

THE GESTURAL MOVEMENT



THE UNITY

*The Unity of
‘the making,’ ‘the maker’ and ‘outcome’*

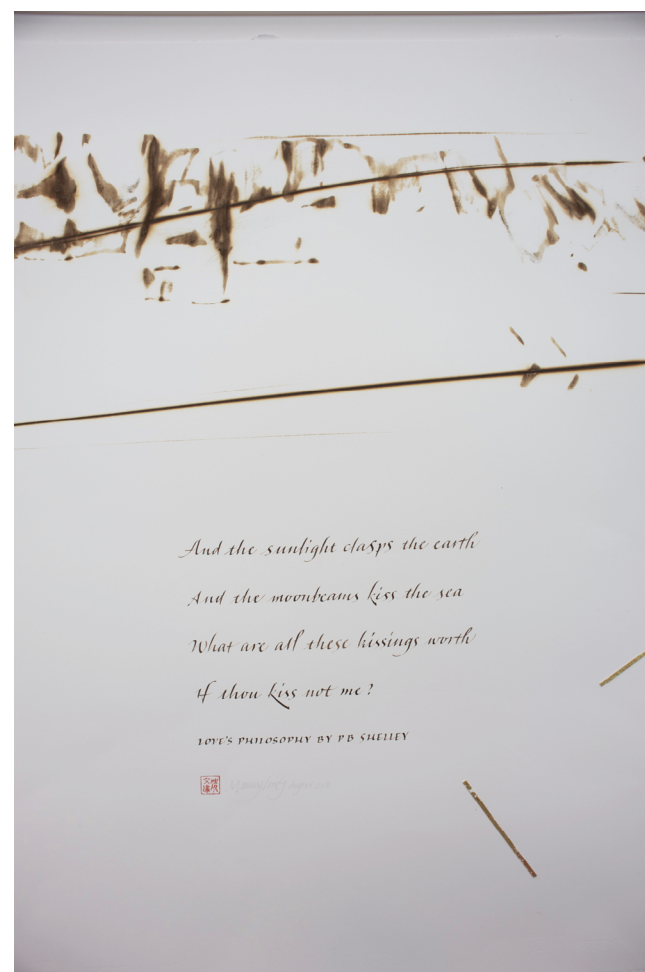
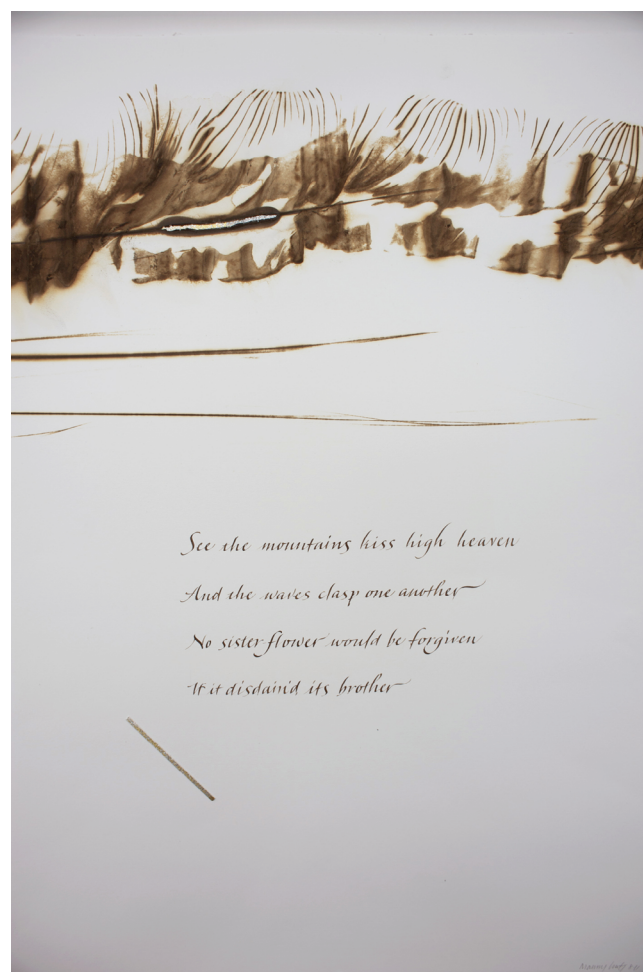
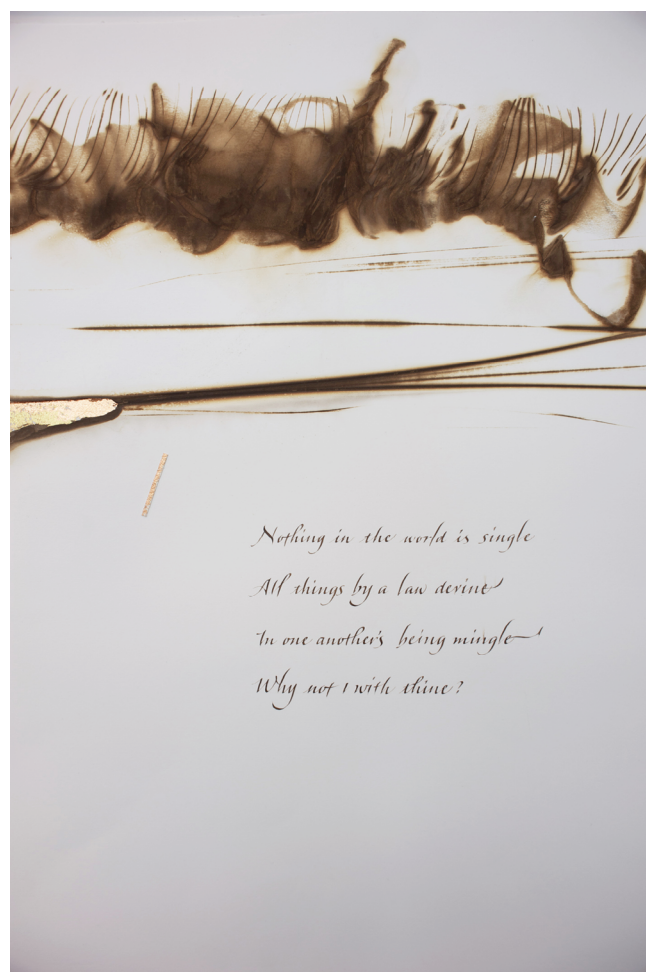
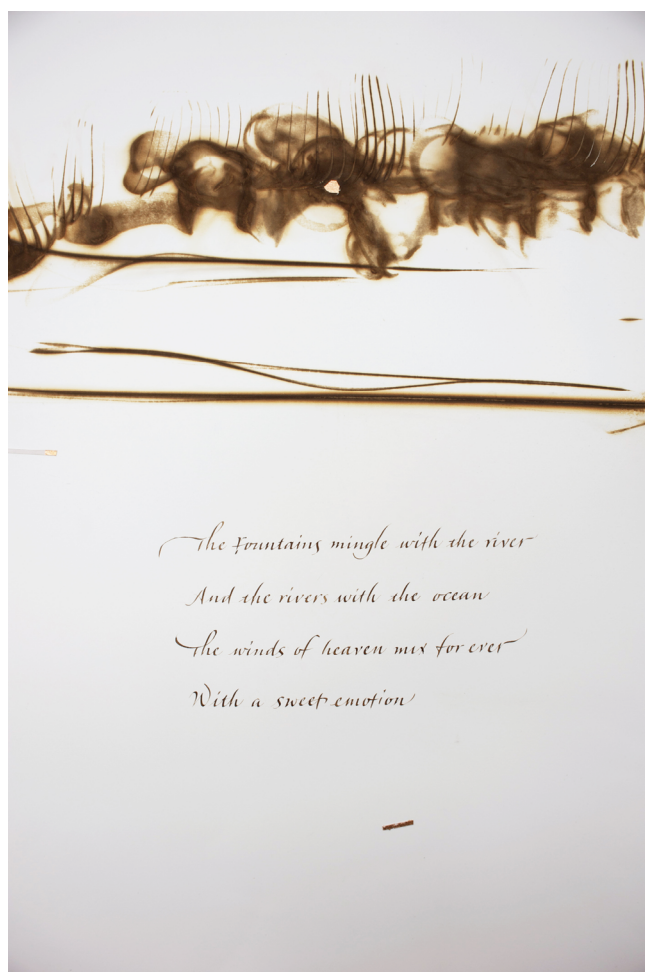
The embodiment of the ‘self’



PROF. EWAN CLAYTON, UK

*“Our aim should be, I think is to make
letters live... that men themselves may
have more life”*

EDWARD JOHNSTON



'LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY' BY P B SHELLEY | MANNY LING, UK



MANNY LING | UK