

8. Typography

Synopsis

This module introduces calligraphy, the basic principles of typography, and applications of typography.

Lectures

- 8.1 Calligraphy
- 8.2 Basic Principles of Typography
- 8.3 Typography Applications

8.1 Calligraphy

The art of writing beautifully is called calligraphy. Before the invention of the printing press, scribes were called upon to write manuscripts and religious texts. In spite of the proliferation of computers, people give a lot of importance to writing and a good handwriting is considered to be a reflection of a person's nature. It is not surprising therefore, to know that calligraphy has been considered a highly evolved practice by many civilizations.

Calligraphy is an art that just about anyone can do. All you need is a pen and paper, and you're ready to do calligraphy! Indeed, it requires very few materials - you don't need very much space - and, since you can probably write anyway, you already know the basics!

Calligraphy is art form in which patience and attention to detail are more important than artistic talent. That means you don't have to be an "artist" to be good at calligraphy!



Fig. 8.1.01

Calligraphy is the infusion of the handwritten letter with life and breath. Different tools such as flat-tipped nibs cut at different angles, brushes of varying thicknesses and shapes, and even mops used for cleaning floors have been used by calligraphers to create letterforms having zest and elegance.



Fig. 8.1.02

The practice of calligraphy requires a good understanding of the qualities of the tool and the surface used and its strength comes from respecting the natural interaction of tools and surfaces, enabled by the movement of the calligrapher's hand.



Fig. 8.1.03a



Fig. 8.1.03b

A playful example where Islamic letterforms are used to create a goat and a lion.

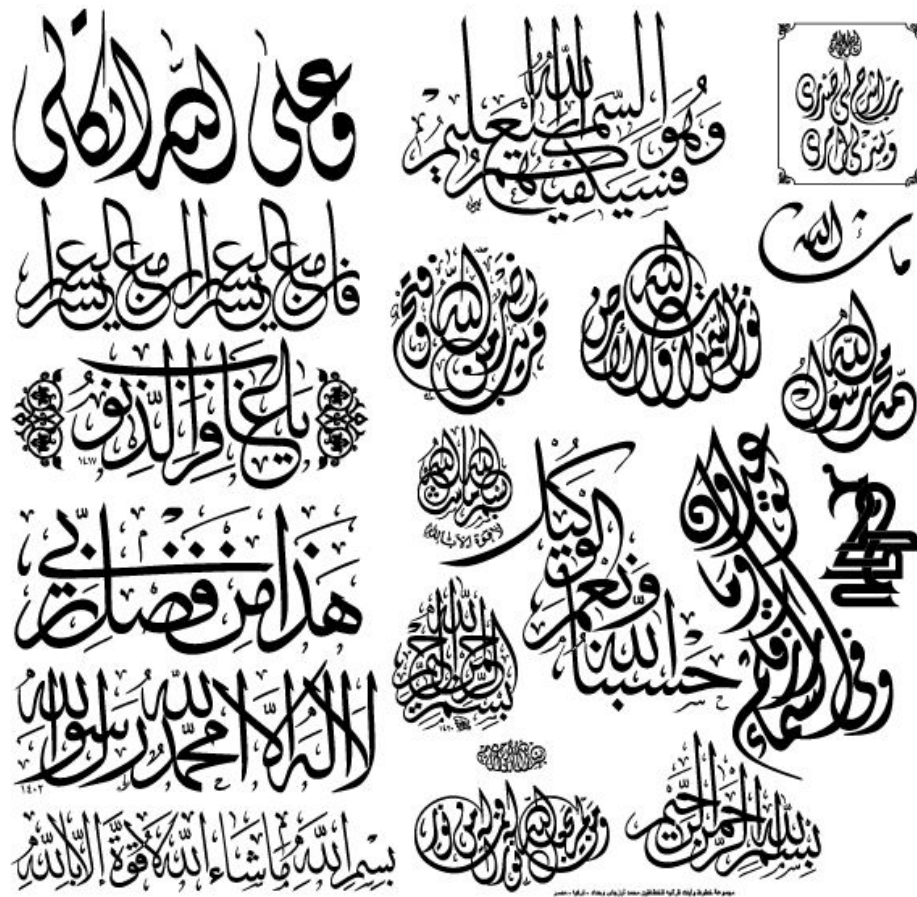


Fig. 8.1.04

Examples of Islamic calligraphy.

Leila
and
Nathan Barbour

Fig. 8.1.05a

Calligraphy

Fig. 8.1.05b

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É
Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ à á â ã
d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
& 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 (\$ % ' , ! ?)

Fig. 8.1.05c
Examples of Roman calligraphy..

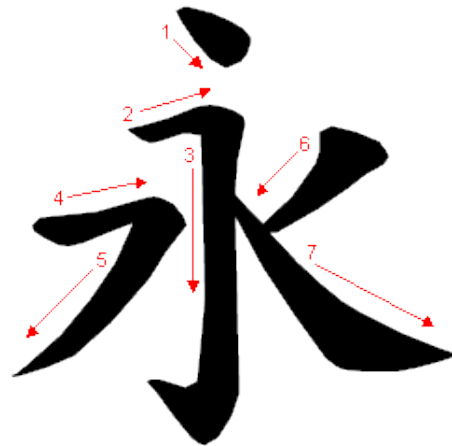


Fig. 8.1.06
Calligraphy is regarded as one of the highest art forms in China and Japan.

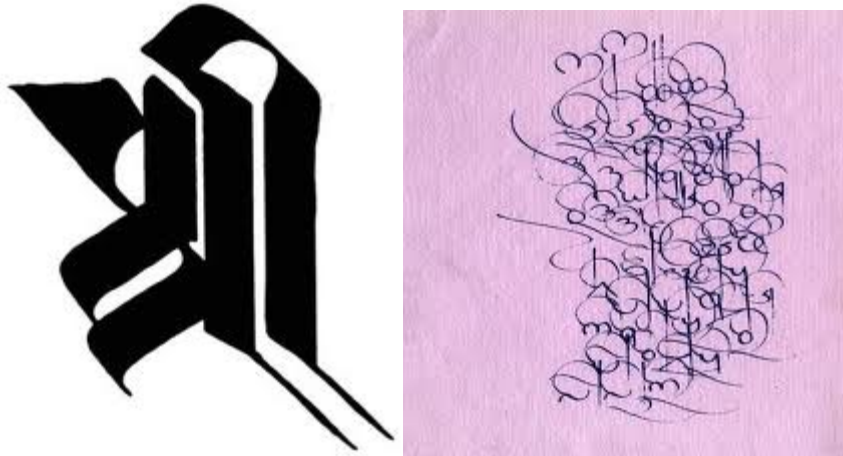


Fig. 8.1.07
Examples of calligraphy in Indian scripts.



Fig. 8.1.08a



Fig. 8.1.08b

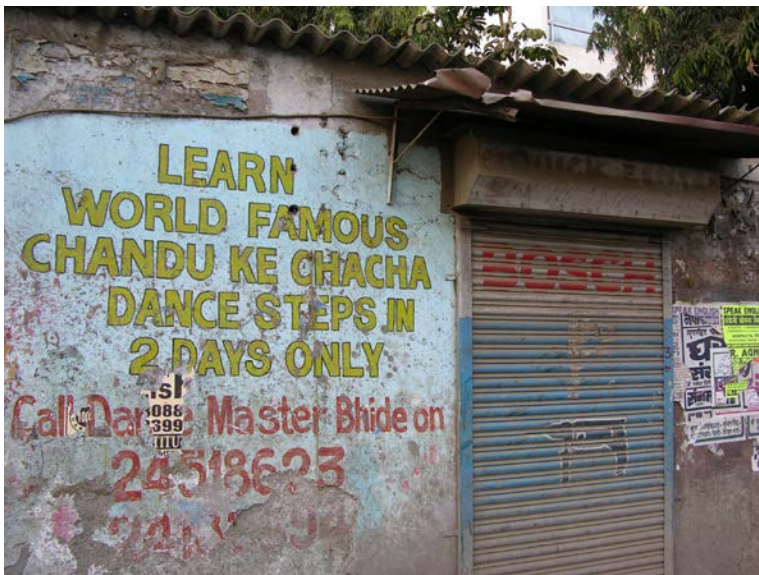


Fig. 8.1.08c



Fig. 8.1.08d

Signboard painters, political slogan writers would perhaps not qualify as calligraphers though they do attempt to create letterforms that are pleasing. What is the quality that you think make the difference between the letter-form artist and the calligrapher?