The History of the Korean Script and Calligraphy

Class Time: Wed. 6:10-8:10pm
Classroom: Murray 112
Prerequisites: none
Instructor Hyobin Kwon
Office Hour: Wed. 5:30-6:00pm & by appointment

Course Description

Hangŭl, the indigenous morphophonemic writing system that was invented by King Sejong and his scholars in the 15th century was adopted as nonofficial writing throughout the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910) until it has emerged as contemporary forms in Modern Korea. The course will provide an overview of the history of hangŭl writing practices as well as an introduction to the principles, techniques, and art of Korean calligraphy that are distinct from Chinese calligraphy. Practice is the most significant part of the course and will involve both brush writing and pen writing in a variety of styles (e.g. old p’anbon style and palace style for brush writing). In addition, students will learn brush stroke techniques, composition, and essential skills that includes "Four Noble ones" painting genre with plum blossoms, orchid, bamboo and chrysanthemum, develop an understanding of the aesthetics of Korean calligraphy and Korean brush painting and its role in traditional Korean culture.

No prior knowledge of the Korean language or calligraphy is required.

Assessment: Students will be evaluated based on the midterm and calligraphy productions. Grading is based on:

- Attendance, practice, concentration 10%
- Midterm (on theoretical part) 20%
- Brush writing production of a sijo 20%
- Korean painting production 20%
- Final artworks in brush 30%

Goals/outcome of the course:

- Learn the Korean script, hangŭl and the historical background of its invention
- Understand and appreciate different brush writing styles and their historical contexts
- Learn the basics of brush writing techniques
- Acquire basics of Korean brush painting (Four Noble ones)
- Appreciate Hangul calligraphy aesthetic sense through the representative art works
**Required Books and Materials:**

Materials:

- Korean writing brush (5 cm long and 0.8 mm brush tip), Asian rice paper, ink and container
- Newspapers, water container, and paper towel

**Course Schedule**

Week 1 (9/4): Introduction: Calligraphy in East Asia (China, Japan and Korea)

- Tseng Yuho (1993) *A history of Chinese calligraphy: summary of five script types*

Week 2 (9/11): Invention of the Korean script


Weeks 3 (9/18) & 4 (9/25): The history of Han’gūl Calligraphy

- P’anbon style and Palace style
- Midterm Exam

Week 5 (10/2): Introduction of writing instruments, brush holding, and techniques

- Practice basic lines and strokes
Week 6 (10/9): Introduction of basic strokes and syllable composition for balanced spaces (P’anbon style)

- Practice and Assessment of basic strokes (words, phrases and simple sentences)
- Choi, Da-Won. (2009) *Han’gül P’anbon style*.

Week 7 (10/16): Introduction of basic strokes and syllable composition for balanced spaces (Palace style)

- Practice and Assessment of basic strokes (words, phrases and simple sentences)

Week 8 (10/23) & 9 (10/30): Practice brush writing with classical work of poetry

- Introduction to traditional Korean poetic form, *Sijo*

Week 10 (11/6): Appreciation of a variety of writing styles


Week 11 (11/13): Assessment of brush writing

Week 12 (11/20): Introduction of Korean brush painting

- Four Gracious Plants - Orchid and Bamboo

Week 13: NO CLASS

Week 14 (12/4): Introduction of Korean brush painting

- Four Gracious Plants - Plum blossom and Chrysanthemum
Week 15 (12/11): In-class production of a Korean painting with calligraphy artworks

- Exhibition & Assessment