

Calligrapher

IN SUPPORT OF THE RUSSIAN NATIONAL LETTER

An appeal to the Russians by Yuri Ivanovich Arutsev, founder of the author's school "Russian Calligraphy and Ligature" and the cultural and historical complex "Museum of Russian National Writing" in Yaroslavl.

STREET CALLIGRAPHER FROM YAROSLAVL

Meet Alexander Aleksandrovich Abrosimov, 21, calligrapher artist, designer, student of Yuri Ivanovich Arutsev, and author of more than a dozen calligraphic works, expertly introduced into the city.

MICRO-MINIATURIST ANATOLY KONENKO, "TIME GOES BY - WE ARE CHANGING"

NASSER TAVUSI -
"EVERY CULTURE
AND EVERY NATION
HAS SOME KIND OF ART
THAT IS SIGNIFICANT FOR IT"



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I remember the response Yuriy Ivanovich, founder of our school of Russian Calligraphy and Ligature, gave to my question: "How to unite the works with quotations of famous people, poems of classical poets and literary pangrams in one section?". He replied, "It's decorative handwriting!"
- 30 The "Aleksandr Sergeyevich Pushkin" font**
The "Aleksandr Sergeyevich Pushkin" font acquired its name in 2012, when all the previous experience in teaching Russian calligraphy to children and adults in the author's school of Yuri Arutsev, "Russian Calligraphy and Ligature" required the introduction of not only special professional terminology into the educational process, but also the characteristics of the writing itself.
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What is common between graphics and calligraphy? What is the difference between calligraphy and lettering? What principles of composition creation exist in calligraphy? These and other questions of "The Calligrapher" were answered by graphic artist, calligrapher, and candidate of pedagogical sciences Lyudmila Pankratova.
- 44 The first school of Chinese calligraphy in Saint Petersburg**
"In ancient times, all the men of science had teachers. The teacher is the one who transmits the 'Tao', teaches the cause, clears up misconceptions. There are no people who were born already full of knowledge, who will not be mistaken. Not following the teacher is a true mistake, never resolved. <...> There are no precious or despicable, older or younger ones - there is a true path, there is a teacher."
- 50 Mao Guangsong, "Truth is only sought by loners and they break with everyone who loves it not enough", these famous words of Boris Pasternak always inspired me to continue my creative search."**
«Не изменять своей решимости, не переставать трудиться, не жалеть себя», – принципами «трех не», которые помогают добиться успеха, поделился автор каллиграфического стиля «маоцзюань», китайский каллиграф, член Китайской ассоциации каллиграфов, профессор учебного центра при Китайской ассоциации каллиграфов, член правления Китайской ассоциации международного сотрудничества г-н Мао Гуансун.
- 55 Nasser Tavusi - "Every culture and every nation has some kind of art that is significant for it"**
Nasser Tavusi is a unique master. For a long time, he has been professionally engaged in the revival of ancient fonts and the restoration of works of different eras. This allowed him to master all sorts of handwritings of Islamic calligraphy, including early Kufi, Muhaqqaq, Thuluth, Rayhan, Thauki, Reqa, Naskh, Nasta'lik, and Shekaste Nasta'lik ("broken nastalik"). He restored such forgotten fonts as Reqa and Thauki, updated them, and breathed new life into them, so that later other masters also began to perform works in these styles.
- 60 Bahman Panahi: "Music and calligraphy are my destiny, my life"**
Bahman Panahi is an Iranian artist, calligrapher, and musician living in Paris. In early childhood, he discovered a craving for calligraphy and music and later, while working on his doctoral dissertation at Sorbonne University, combined these two areas together.
- 64 Calligraphy for left-handed people**
Being left-handed and doing calligraphy is not so easy. Let's try to highlight some moments of writing with the left hand.
- 67 Katya Shabanova: "Being left-handed is not a sentence. Be sure to try calligraphy! It is a pleasure!"**
Calligrapher Katya Shabanova is left-handed. She has her own online school, which celebrates its five year anniversary this year.



Dear friends,

I am pleased to present to you the third issue of the Calligrapher magazine. Despite the coronavirus epidemic and the quarantine caused by it, we continued to work. Self-isolation not only did not affect our activity, but became the reason for an interesting study. We decided to ask the calligraphers what they do during quarantine: is creativity really a special world that does not know boredom? And I must say that the survey results fully confirmed our expectations. Calligraphers improved their skills, created new works, taught online, and even wrote articles for our magazine.

We are extremely pleased that the Calligrapher has become a platform for expressing and transferring the experience of the outstanding master Yuri Arutsev, creator of the author's school Russian Calligraphy and Ligature. Today, Yuri Ivanovich is fighting a serious illness, but continues to work hard and fruitfully, and we wish him a speedy recovery.

The editors are grateful to Alexander Zolotarev, student of Yuri Arutsev, for an article about the great Russian ligature. A return to the origins of native culture is always the path to the revival and strengthening of spiritual and moral values.

We thank Oksana Khukhrina for the story of the First School of Chinese Calligraphy in St. Petersburg. Today, the art of Chinese calligraphy unites a variety of people, and we think that it will interest many of our readers.

"Without studying different schools, it is impossible to find your own style; without resorting to the highest achievements of others it is impossible to create that which is your own and unique." This thought of the Chinese prose writer of the Qing era, Liu Kai, runs through the entire issue with a red thread.

Russian, Chinese, Islamic calligraphy; we aim to introduce you to the representatives of various national written traditions. We hope that their interviews, their knowledge, and their experience in mastering the art of beautiful writing, which they willingly share on the pages of our magazine, will give you inspiration and serve as an incentive for the implementation of new creative solutions.

Regards,

*Alexey Shaburov
Editor in Chief*

*Director of the World Calligraphy Museum
Director of the Association of Private Museums of Russia*

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected strokes that form a unique, abstract shape.

Lessons from the pandemic: what difficulties we encountered and what use calligraphers found in self-isolation

Maria Tomilova, author of the article

The quarantine caused by the coronavirus epidemic in Russia has dragged on. Many people are having difficulties navigating in time and cannot always identify today's date and what day of the week it is. Most people are tired of staying at home and pretty much miss work. However, self-isolation should not affect creative people. They do not stop their activities. For them, self-isolation is an occasion to dive even more into work. Is this really so? Calligrapher magazine asked whether calligraphers are experiencing a creative upsurge, whether calligraphy schools are transitioning to non-standard learning formats, what difficulties they encountered, and whether they see the advantages of working online.

Yes, creativity is a special world that does not know boredom, and therefore it is not surprising that the life of most calligraphers has not changed much. Some continue to work on improving their skills and creating new works, some are engaged in the development of teaching materials and, finally, found the time to complete the project started long ago, and some solve new, non-standard tasks for themselves.

Perhaps, of all whom we managed to communicate with, the National School of Beautiful Writing Art was in the most dramatic situation. In May, the World Calligraphy Museum, where it conducts its lessons, was evacuated. The fact is that the Sokolniki Exhibition and Convention Center, on the territory of which the museum is located, was converted into a temporary hospital for patients with coronavirus and it is now clear that the school will be able to resume its work only when the virus is finally defeated.

"This is a serious test for us," says Olga Shaburova, deputy director of the National School of Beautiful Writing Art. "Mostly people study at our school, for whom calligraphy is an outlet and a source of positive emotions. They come to us not to study, but to relax, enjoy live communication, stay in the museum, and enjoy the beauty created by eminent calligraphers from around the world. Some of our students still use regular push-button telephones. Therefore, when we invited them to continue their studies online, only one of the eight groups agreed to do so. Will they come back to us after the pandemic? Only time can answer this question. Despite this, I fully share the position of my spouse, the president of Sokolniki Exhibition and Convention Center, the director of the World Calligraphy Museum and the National School of Beautiful Writing Art, Alexey Shaburov: it is impossible to do otherwise when it comes to the health and lives of thousands of people. This is our contribution to the fight against the pandemic."

Going online has caused difficulties not only at the National School of Beautiful Writing Art. It is apparent that there are quite various areas of difficulty. International class calligrapher and securities designer, artist Yuri Koverdyaev, is struggling to master modern services for conducting online lessons. "I have not grown to such types of communication as Skype," Yuri Ivanovich admits. "They offer me help in organizing online classes, but for this you need to come to my house, which is also quite difficult now. Therefore, I do not practice distance teaching. Yes, and my students are now also lacking the same zeal they had before. Those whose creativity is in full swing and those who are set to work communicate with me and the rest calmly wait for the quarantine to end. In fact, isolation dampens the brain. To be honest, I bring myself into working condition with great difficulty, trying in every way to speed myself up. I now have a period when I don't need to run anywhere, there is no busy schedule to which I am attached, and I can do anything. This, on the one hand, relaxes me, and on the other, relieves me of unnecessary hassle. Therefore, I can't say that it is difficult for me to isolate. I work calmly, doing what was not just conceived, but what was started and not finished, and what I am constantly reminded of. I have something like that of a student in an anecdote: "If you win a million dollars, what will you do



Yuri Koverdyaev. Calligraphic fonts and elements

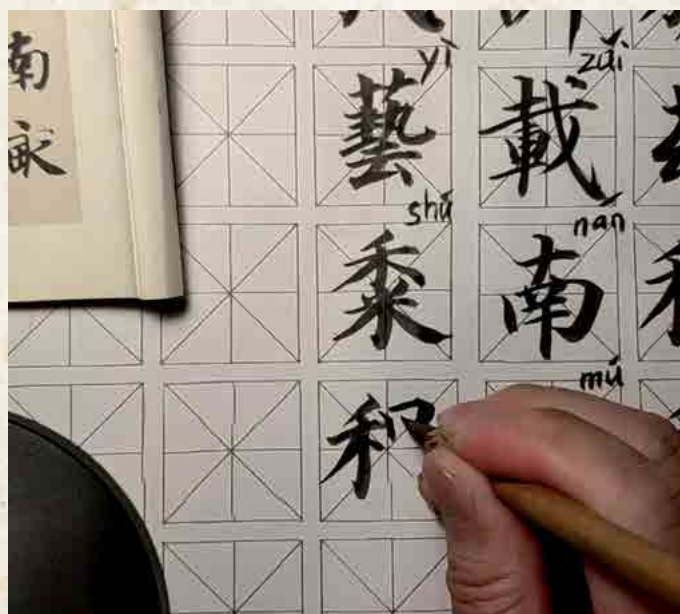
with it? - I will repay debts. - And the rest? - And the rest will wait." There are several types of fonts that I need to bring to mind. Moreover, the sketches for two of them were made by me twenty years ago, when I was engaged in the design of securities and new types of printing protection. I would also very much like to complete the work on two Slavic fonts and two title fonts for the handwritten Constitution of the Russian Federation, which, I hope, despite its long path toward creation, will nevertheless take its rightful place among the exhibits of the World Calligraphy Museum. But for this it is necessary to think over some things that would attract the attention of not only specialists, but also ordinary viewers. However, this is just what I'm only trying to fit into my current schedule. Most of the time I devote to the development of methodological material and the creation of calligraphic elements that can be performed without taking the hand off, and thus hone the technique of using the pen. Now I just "weave" some ornaments out of them, but this is not what will be dead weight. This is a working material, without which it is impossible to create any interesting things and which I plan to use in my more monumental works. For many years, my creative life has been connected with securities. Working on their design, I used a set of ready-made elements. If there were none, I had to create them, and then make something more complex out of them."

The master of calligraphy, a teacher at the National School of Beautiful Writing Art, Artem Lebedev, is also not inactive during the self-isolation, and finally, according to him, completed work on copybooks for learning the basics of English italics with tips and detailed schemes for writing each letter of the Latin alphabet. Speaking about the online format, Artem also admits that, as for many, it is unusual for him. "A lot depends on the technical means and the speed of the Internet. Often the picture quality suffers," says the calligrapher. Nevertheless, Artem is slowly adapting to remote forms of work, although he still holds the opinion that online communication is good, but it is rather an alternative

and salvation. It is better to study such an applied subject as calligraphy if there is a live contact between the student and the teacher. "The online format has only one big plus. It allows you to reach students from other cities and countries. Another thing is that for some reason the financial situation of many has worsened and the targeted use of funds has also changed; spending has become more practical," says Artem Lebedev.

Oksana Khukhrina, art critic, teacher, and one of the founders of the First School of Chinese Calligraphy in St. Petersburg, holds about the same point of view. "We have completely transferred our activities online. The schedule of classes has not changed; it is held once a week. We use the Discord application; it meets our needs the best. Once a week, we upload the notes of classes there so that they can be viewed and consolidated once again. Thanks to the online format, we not only managed to save all our students, those who have already become part of our community, but also attract new ones. The opportunity to study at our school was given to the colleagues from other regions. So, Muscovites joined us. Therefore, in the future we will definitely continue to use such a training format," says Oksana. "However, despite the new conditions and opportunities, the quarantine, of course, adjusted our plans. In September, we planned to hold an exhibition in China. This is currently out of the question. And there are also difficulties in accepting students without any skills, since being in the online space, putting your hand in and explaining the intricacies of Chinese calligraphy is quite difficult. For the formation of the correct skills of hieroglyphic writing, of course, close communication with the teacher is necessary."

If the masters are just starting to get used to working online, then young calligraphers have long put Internet technology at their service. "From the very beginning, we worked remotely, so we didn't have to reconstruct," said Varvara Panteleeva, the young and talented calligrapher, and



Online classes of the First School of Chinese Calligraphy in St. Petersburg (screenshots)

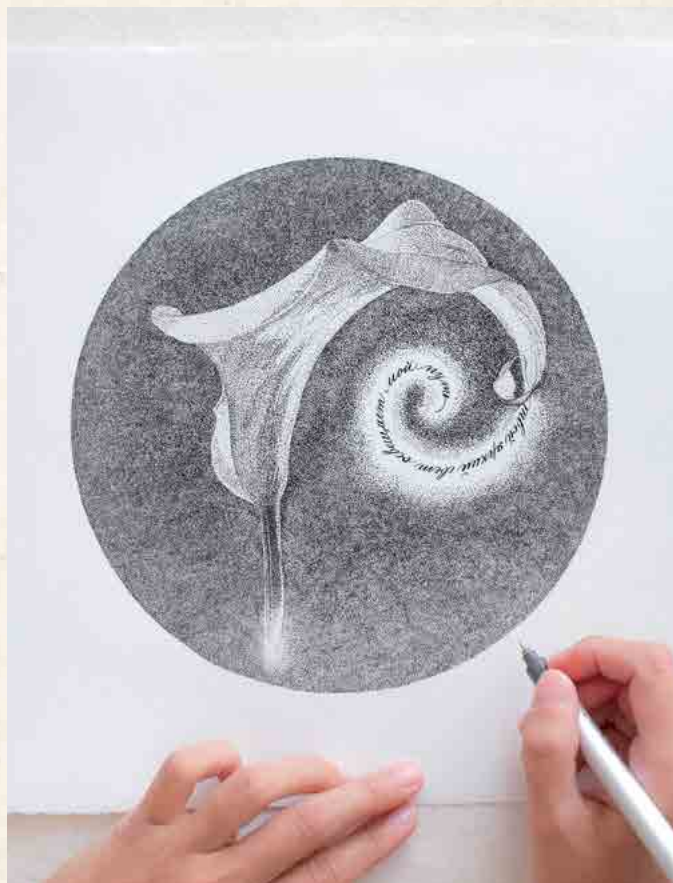




Varvara Panteleeva. Study «Sonata N16 (Facile). W. A. Mozart»
Pointed pen, watercolor

owner of Nikolietta Studio. “The only thing we had problems with was delivering goods from our online store. Until mid-May, its work was suspended. As for our other activities, we paused one of the most popular studio services - signing invitations to weddings, anniversaries, and other special occasions - canceled all face-to-face events, including visiting performances, and rescheduled the calligraphic tour - masterclasses in Rostov-on-Don and Krasnodar. In general, quarantine had almost no effect on my creative activity. I always tried to devote a significant part of my time to creating calligraphy works. Now I can devote myself to my hobby even more. «

“My online school continues to function successfully. Surprisingly, the flow of students decreased slightly; I was preparing for the worst,” says the founder of the Voronezh School of Calligraphy, Katya Shabanova. “I have been teaching online for four years and periodically conduct offline courses and masterclasses. I was in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Samara with my masterclasses. It helps me that the students come back to me, take new courses, and actively recommend my school to their friends; such recommendations are the most valuable. Having tried to study with me, students no longer want to experiment with finding a teacher; they stay with me forever. At the beginning of 2020, I opened a small corner of calligraphy in my hometown of Voronezh. Now, because of the quarantine, the offline school is closed, but this is normal. Health is much more important. The school has not yet reached high profitability, and the landlord did not



Varvara Panteleeva. «Your Bright Light Illuminates My Path.»
Flower portrait performed in Pointillism



Calligrapher Varvara Panteleeva



Calligrapher Katya Shabanova

charge me rent for this period - we agreed that way - so I did not suffer any tangible losses.»

Things are going well with the artist-decorator and calligrapher from Ufa, Lira Suleiman: "I can't say that my creative activity has changed a lot. I did not feel drastic changes. Over the five years of my art workshop, I have developed my own regular customer base. People who know me and have acquired a picture from me once come back to me again and again; it is only a matter of time. Periodically, they need to buy a gift or something else for their own home. I do not only do calligraphy. My workshop has three main areas: genealogy and family heraldry, Arabic calligraphy - the execution of lines from the Koran and registered tugras - and the creation of interior paintings and jewelry watches. I work alone, so I have no difficulties with taking orders. All this happens online. People themselves understand that it is better for them not to come now and not to hold personal meetings. You can make an order and discuss all the technical nuances through messengers. There are no problems with delivery either. Delivery services, taxis, and transport companies are available, if you need to send work to another city. The only change that happened was that my workshop moved out of town. For me today the situation is like this. Things are good».

For the creator of the Russian Calligraphy and Ligature author's school and the Russian National Writing Museum, the calligrapher artist Yuri Arutsev, the pandemic and related self-isolation are also no reason to stop his activity. Over



Katya Shabanova. Greeting card, handmade paper, 2019



Katya Shabanova. A humorous work "Life is Too Short," 2019



Lira Suleiman. Abstraction «Turquoise». Mixed author's technique, fine glaze, glass. The work was completed during quarantine

40 years of creativity, he has created countless calligraphic works, including monograms, bookplates, logos, and ceremonial texts. Even now, despite a serious illness, Yuri Ivanovich continues to work hard and fruitfully. During the quarantine, he resumed work on the series "Necklace of the Russian Cities", which he began in 2013. The name of the series speaks for itself. In each picture, the name of the city is written in his A. S. Pushkin handwriting and decorated with a bright cascade of monograms woven into the graphic image of the main city cathedral. At the moment, the works of Yuri Ivanovich reflect the images of Yaroslavl, St. Petersburg, Veliky Novgorod, Pskov, Arkhangelsk, Veliky Ustyug, Sevastopol, Smolensk, Bryansk, Ryazan, Voronezh, and Staraya Ladoga. In total, he plans to create 160 of these paintings.

"Now I have been working hard and productively," says Yuri Arutsev. "I have finished the illustration-screensavers for the Journey Into the World of Calligraphy dictionary. There are about 60 illustrations left and we will launch it in print. Digitization of all works in order to create a museum catalog is in full swing. I am preparing to publish a small collection of my poems. Teachers of our school also do not lose time; they learn to work with the site and put the school on a stable financial basis. We are starting work on the Elite School of Calligraphy project for children 4-6 years old. I see this project clearly. There is a lot to do and there is no time to get sick."

"The worst torment is the torment of a person doomed to inaction, deprived of the opportunity to creatively realize and express himself," said the outstanding philosopher of the twentieth century, German philosopher, psychologist,



Lira Suleiman with Mufti of Tatarstan Kamil Samigullin at the opening of the exhibition of calligrapher Najip Nakkash, 2020



Lira Suleiman, decorator-artist, exhibitor of the Moscow Cathedral Mosque, Kazan Kremlin, Grozny City, etc., winner of international competitions, the project «Time of the First on OTR Channel», 2018



Yuri Arutsev. Monogram of the family of Grigory Arutsev

and one of the founders of neo-Freudianism, Erich Fromm. Quarantine certainly affects everyone. It entails negative consequences not only for the economy, but also for every person. Violation of the usual way of life and the lack of the ability to make plans can cause a lot of stress. Fortunately, calligraphers react to isolation in a productive way; for them it is an opportunity to finish a project started long ago, to master a new one and devote all their forces to realizing their creative potential, and to make a foundation for the future.

"I look to the future as a falling climber," says Yuri Koverdyaev.

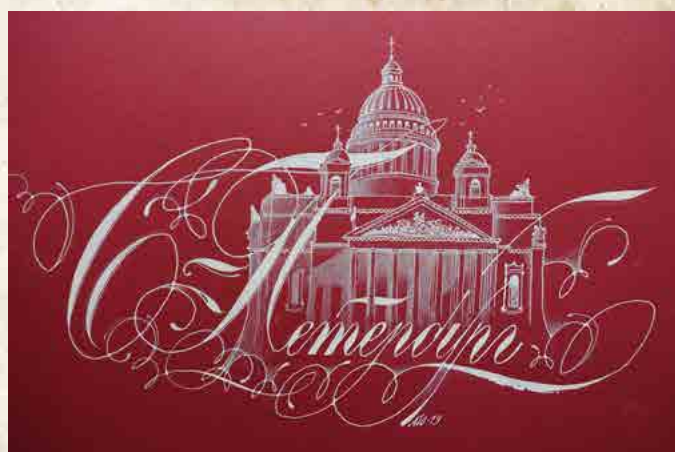
"- Vasya, are you alive?

- Alive! ... intact!

- So, get up!

- I can't. I haven't reached the bottom yet!

While we are falling, we'll see what happens next. One must be prepared for everything. Since we are not living the first day, we will overcome difficulties as they appear."



Yuri Arutsev. Works of the series "Necklace of Russian Cities"

Microminiaturist Anatoly Konenko: "Time is passing and we are changing"

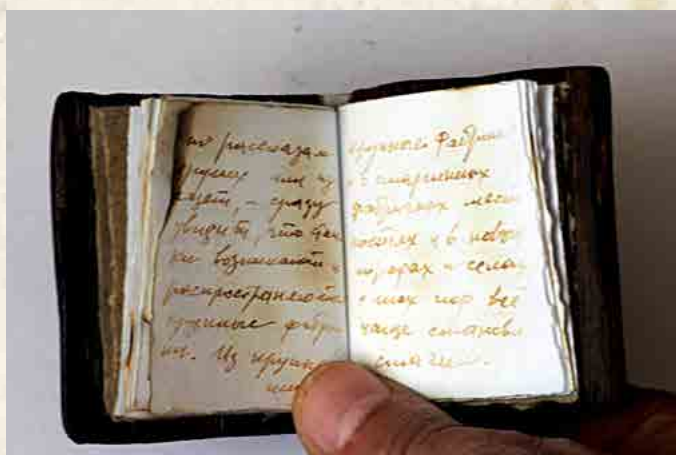
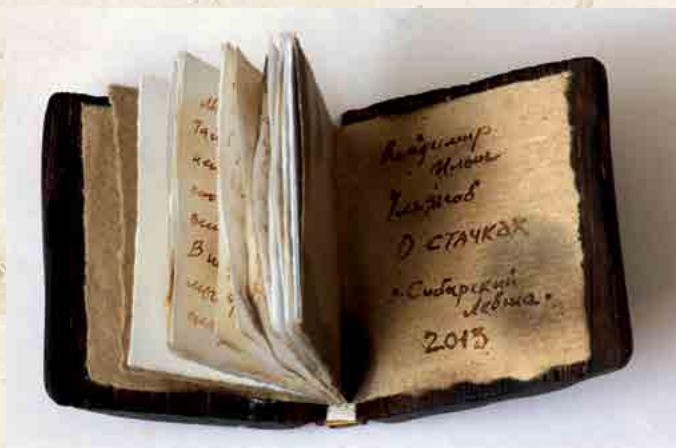


He is called the Siberian Lefty, but shoeing a flea for Anatoly Konenko means only confirming the qualification. The tasks that he sets for himself are much more complicated. They require the invention of new tools and the development of new technologies. To learn how to write on rice, poppy seeds, and then on human hair, it was necessary to make a real technological breakthrough. In 1997, Anatoly Konenko published a circulation micro book measuring 0.9x0.9 mm; It became the smallest book in the world. For this achievement, his name was added to the Guinness Book of Records in 2002. Within six months he managed to do what the best masters of Europe, who created miniature books throughout their creative lives, could not do in eleven years. Today he publishes books measuring 0.1 x 0.1 mm, and most recently his invisible book has appeared; it can only be read with the help of ultraviolet rays.

Questions by Maria Tomilova

Anatoly Ivanovich, a miniature book is one of your favorite areas of creativity. Since 1994, you have released more than 250 publications - the number speaks for itself. Which path had you travelled before you started creating the first book, and why did you decide to focus yourself on this field of applied art? What size was your first book? Was it really more interesting to shoe a flea, make a violin for a grasshopper, or something like that that can only be viewed under a microscope?

I started doing miniatures quite a while ago, back in 1981. I performed work in micro-living areas, graphics, sculpture, carving on the bones and fruit trees seeds, and in other genres. There were no miniature books among them, until one day I tried to make a model of a book in order to supplement the portrait of Pushkin at one of the exhibitions. There was no text or binding in that book. Some time passed, and I decided to eliminate this defect and write poems in it. Otherwise what book is this?! But, to be honest, at that time I still did not really know what a miniature book



Anatoly Konenko. A miniature book written in milk, 48x55 mm



Microminiaturist Anatoly Konenko

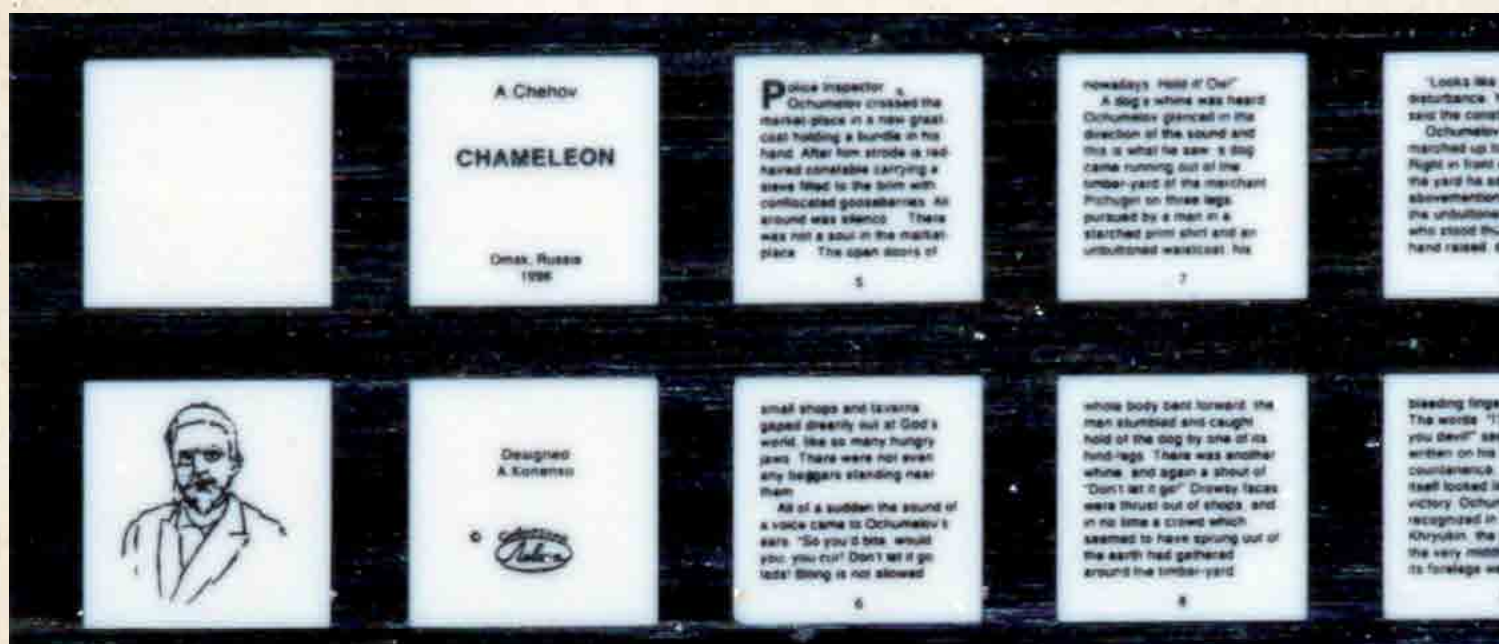
was, so in order to get to know this field of art better, I had to meet with collectors of miniature publications; this was in 1994. It was communication with the bibliophiles that aroused in me the desire to make a book similar to those in their collections. But since I was not a publisher and was not at all familiar with the technology of making books, I began to think about how to execute text, how to make illustrations, how to bind a book, i.e. how to create it. First, I made a test copy of the book block, and after I managed to complete the binding, I decided to publish the book. I chose the standard of «high poetry» for it - the sonnets of William Shakespeare - and created twenty-three illustrations for them. The book's size is 22x30 mm, its volume is 310 pages, and circulation is 100 copies. Collectors liked the book. One hundred copies scattered instantly, and I thought that it would be possible to publish both the second and third books. So, after Shakespeare, Pushkin's novel Eugene Onegin came out, followed by several collected works of Lermontov, and poems by Alexei Koltsov, Kozma Prutkov, and Sergey Yesenin.

How do you choose works for your books?

Often the choice of a work is influenced by the collectors. There are many works of Pushkin among my books because both in our country and abroad he is loved

very much. There are a large number of collectors who collect only Pushkin's books. And it doesn't matter what it is, The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish or the Eugene Onegin novel, which, by the way, was published by me twice. Any book by Alexander Sergeyevich is perceived by them with a bang. They compare it with those publications that are already in their collections or that they once met, find out if it was previously released, and what size it is. There are, of course, fans of Lermontov and fans of Prutkov among the collectors. Once I received an order for Lermontov's collected works, because collectors wanted to have the smallest book of the writer. Therefore, choosing a work for publication, you can focus on collectors and release, for example, only Pushkin's works. It is clear that they will be in demand. But to deal with only one writer or poet is not always interesting. Therefore, many of my books were born under the impression of an event. For example, Yesenin's collection of poems, "I Am Not Sorry, I Don't Call, I Don't Cry..." was born after a trip to the poet's homeland. In about the same way - under the influence of personal interest - the Word about Igor's Regiment was born. Now I try to publish books of those authors, which were rarely published, and I know that next year they will have a jubilee date.

But if we talk about wooden books, then everything is a little different. It is important here that when looking at it you



Anatoly Konenko. A. P. Chekhov, «Chameleon»: mass-market microbook, 0.9x0.9 mm, 30 pages, color illustrations

can immediately understand what is hidden under its cover. It is always good when the appearance reflects the content. Therefore, as a rule, for my wooden creations, I select Slavic folklore: prayers, epics, tales, and legends that in a wooden binding will look organic. There is also a Slavic alphabet in my collection; it is also written in wood.

I do a lot of my work in one copy; these are completely unique editions. Books of ice, rose petals, and beads. The content of each of them was inspired by the material from which it is made.

What other materials do you use when creating books? The texts in them are written by hand?

My first miniature books were made from traditional materials. These include paper, cardboard, and leather or paper vinyl for the hardcover. Over time, I began to use wood, stone, metal, and bone.

A book is considered miniature if its size does not exceed 10 cm. Large miniature books can be published even in print shops. The circulation of such books is not limited. Handwritten books are published in one copy. Collectors do not really like them, because only one person can possess a handwritten book. Often I don't give them to anyone at all and exhibit them in my museum. The most valuable books for collectors are those that are released in a small print run of 5–10 copies. In their manufacture for applying text, I use the method of engraving or etching. Simply put, I write the text on a metal plate, then etch it and transfer it to paper. Almost all miniature books and micro books are done that way.

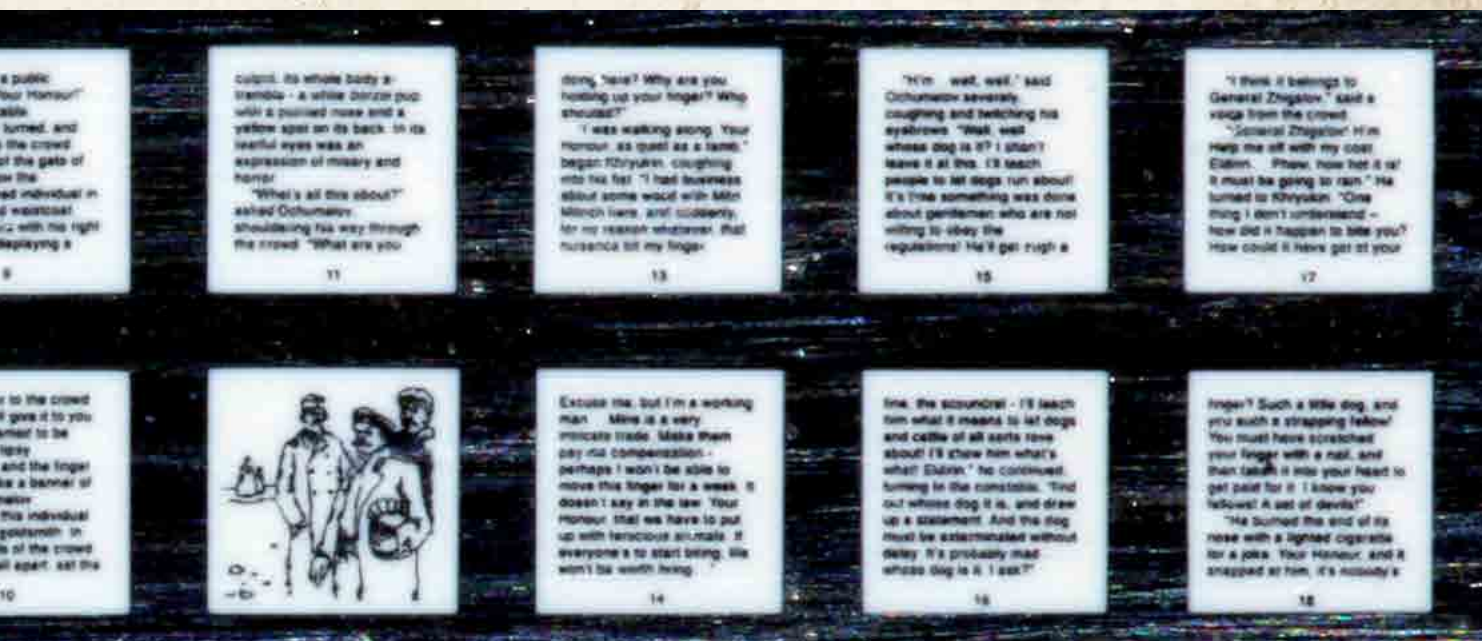
After visiting the museum-apartment of V. I. Lenin in Ulyanovsk, you published a miniature handwritten book measuring 48x55 mm. An article by the leader of the world revolution is written in it in the best traditions of

the underground, with milk. It can only be read through a magnifying glass. How difficult was it to work on it? How many mistakes have you made?

It is difficult to work with milk, since the text is not visible during the writing. It appears only above the candle flame, or when ironing with a very hot iron. This experience was new to me; I had never seen how it was done. However, after working for several days, I found a technology that allowed me to write the text properly. I noticed that while the text is raw, at a certain angle it can be seen. How many mistakes have I made? I developed the text after I wrote it. There were no errors. There would be mistakes, I would rewrite it, make a second, third copy, and that is, I worked on it until it became error-free. After the release of the book, I held several workshops for schoolchildren. I showed them how Lenin wrote with milk. We made an inkwell from bread crumb; it is known that in case of danger he ate it, wrote the text with a thin pen, and then showed it over the candle. Everyone was very pleased.

In one of the interviews you said that before you do small things, you need to learn how to do big things. How long did you have to master the art of beautiful writing?

It really is true. All beginnings must be learned by making it big. From this begins work on any miniature, whether it is a miniature painting, graphic, sculpture, or carving. This also applies to the letter. How well it works for me to write, beautifully or unsightly, professionally or not, is difficult for me to give an assessment of, especially since I do not consider myself a professional calligrapher. Working with a microscope, I set a slightly different task for myself - to make a text of a small scale, and it is performed by incisors, which also need to be used. Therefore, the handwriting with which



I write under the microscope is noticeably different from the way I write under normal conditions. In other words, micro-scale engraving dictates its own rules. Typically, I try to use block letters. A text can be so difficult to write that it's not even a question of calligraphy. I had to learn micro letters for quite some time, but I am still in search of new technologies. Time goes by and we are changing.

Each of your books is a work of art. Each is bound and framed by you manually. And the size of the smallest of them is 0.1x0.1 mm. Tell us, what is this book? Are there many lines and letters in it? How did you work on its text? What tools did you use? Do such tools really exist in nature? After all, these "crumbs" are impossible to even pick up with one's hands.

This is the book "Signs of the Zodiac". It consists of twelve sheets and a gold cover. On each sheet is a zodiac sign. There is no text in it. In general, all microtexts are applied to paper by engraving on metal using the etching method. I already talked about it. You can write on paper if the height

of the letters is at least 0.5 mm. In this case, the pen should be sharpened correctly. For example, The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish was written by hand. The size of the book, being 16x20 mm, allowed me to successfully cope with this.

In nature, tools for creating micro books, of course, do not exist; they need to be invented and done by oneself. But the most difficult thing is not even that. To pick up material for micro books and figure out how to connect the pages so that you can turn them over later - this puzzle is the most difficult.

How long does it take to create a micro book?

It depends. I made the book with Chekhov's story "Chameleon", thanks to which my name fell into the Guinness Book of Records, in six months. The book has 29 pages, there are color illustrations, as well as a portrait of Anton Pavlovich. Before I did it, I had to work out all the technologies. Before this, I had yet to release a book with a size of 0.9x0.9 mm. But still, such a deadline is fast enough. For example, in order to shoe a flea, I searched for technology for seven years; micro



Anatoly Konenko. A. S. Pushkin, "The Song About the Prince Oleg": pine, 45x40 mm, 10 pages



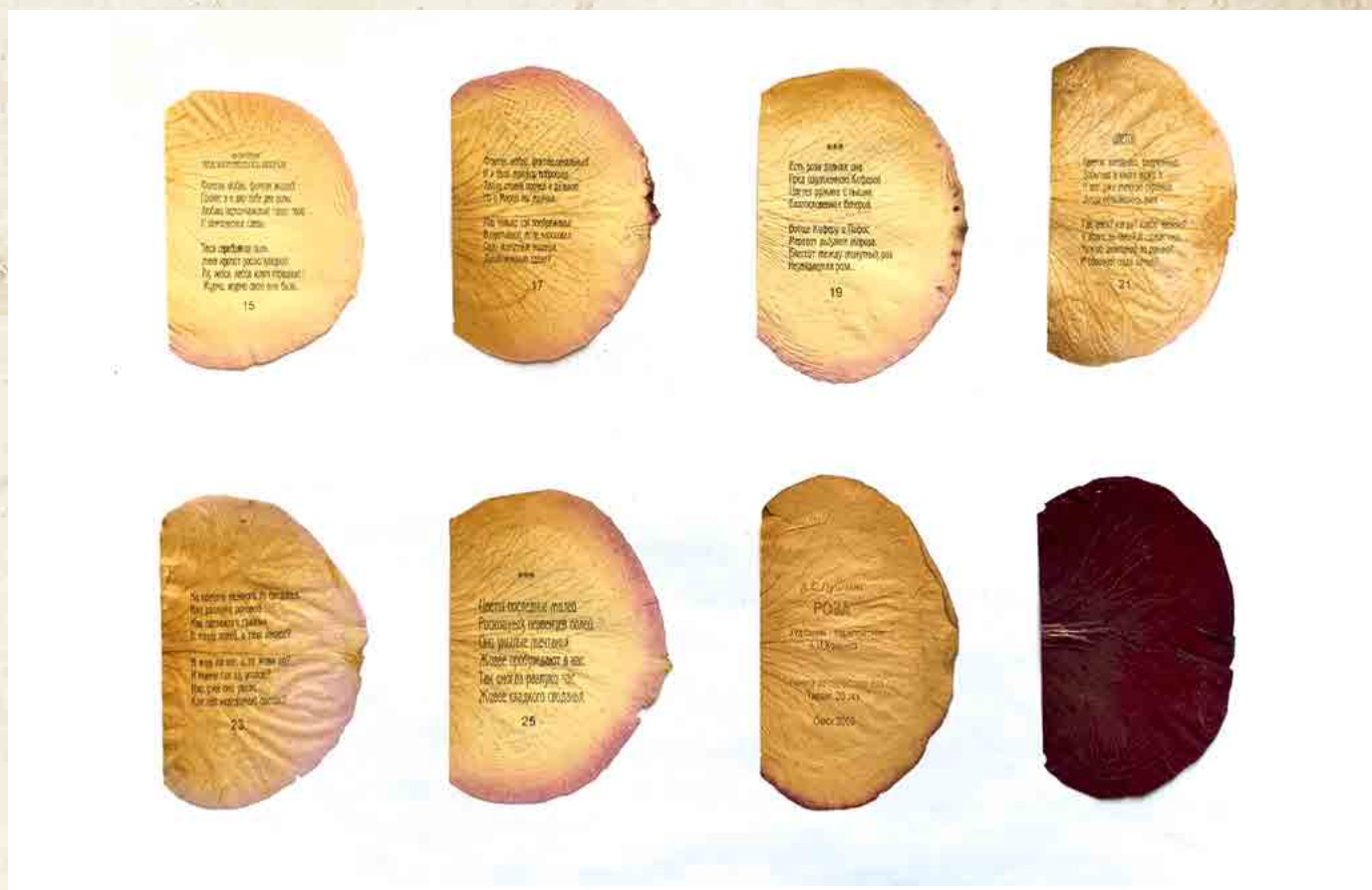
Anatoly Konenko. S. Yesenin, "You Are My Fallen Maple": maple, 45x40 mm., 10 pages



Anatoly Konenko. A. S. Pushkin, "Rose": a collection of poems about roses, 65x45 mm, 26 pages



Anatoly Konenko. A. S. Pushkin, "Rose": A collection of poems about roses, 27x34 mm, 28 pages



Anatoly Konenko. Pages from the collection of poems by A. S. Pushkin «Rose», 65x45 mm



Anatoly Konenko. A. S. Pushkin, "Rose": A collection of poems about roses, 65x45 mm, 26 pages



Anatoly Konenko. A. S. Pushkin, "Rose": A collection of poems about roses, 27x34 mm and 65x45 mm



Anatoly Konenko. Microminiaturist Tools



Anatoly Konenko. «Italian Noon.» Micro-miniature on a mammoth tusk plate from a picture by Karl Bryullov, against a background of grape seeds, 4.0x4.5 mm, watercolor

painting was mastered in twelve years. It also happens that the books "lie" for several years, because the illustrations are not turning out as needed. Others, on the contrary, are born very quickly, since there are few prints in them.

Chekhov's story "Chameleon" is a circulation micro book. It is interesting that for its first owners you specially made registered bookplates. The dimensions of the bookplates are 0.7x0.8 mm and 0.7x0.7 mm, i.e. less than a fly's gait. Today they are the smallest bookplates in the world. Tell us more about them. What kind of species do they belong to (stamp, monogram, line, or story)?

In total, ten bookplates were made, nine of them are registered, and they are approximately the same size: 0.7x0.7 mm. Another bookplate, the smallest, measuring 0.5x0.5 mm, is listed in the Russian Book of Records and belongs to the International Union. The size of all bookplates was chosen so that they could easily fit on the page of the smallest book, 0.9x0.9 mm. However, in terms of decoration, they are all different. For example, ex-libris of collector Maria Nesterova storyline. She is a scientist and oceanologist who wanted to reflect this. The bookplate of Dmitry Sakharov has a coat of arms. But one way or another, all personal bookplates contain the word ex-libris and the initial letters of the name and surname, that is, the initials of the owner of the book, and the bookplate of the International Union of Book Lovers - the first three letters of the words in the title (IUB) and the phrase «from books».

You invented writing technologies on rice, poppy seeds, and even human hair, and for the 300th anniversary of Omsk you wrote "Omsk! We are proud of you!». How did you do it? Share the secrets of micro art.

Indeed, there is such work. It is stored in the Omsk Regional Museum of Fine Arts named after M. A. Vrubel. I wrote repeatedly on a human hair, even the anthem of Russia, completely with the entire refrain. In order to do this, I had enough hair less than 2.5 cm long. In its structure, the density of the hair is not similar to any other material. It is one thing to write on white polished plastic, and quite another on hair, a grain, or a wing of a dragonfly or mosquito. All materials are different, and each needs its own tools. Writing on plastic is very convenient; everything is clearly visible and it is easy to make incisions on it, which can then be wiped with paint, etc. Putting text on hair, as it turned out, is also possible, but to do this, I had to invent new micro tools and learn new technology.

What paint did you use to apply text to your hair?

I usually use ink. It is very finely ground, and grains are not visible under the enlargement, which cannot be said about oil art paints. The only requirement is that it must have a very high viscosity.

You said that among your works there are books of rose petals. It's hard to believe. Rose petals tend to fade quickly.

It's really hard to believe, but there is such work. As you rightly noted, rose petals tend to fade quickly, so they had to be saved. How could this be done? The first thing that occurred to me was to straighten and dry them, and only then try to write the text on them. In this book are the poems of Pushkin and all that I found written by him about roses. The most interesting thing is that the great poet had a lot of such verses, so I got a full-fledged book with a volume of 26 pages; these consist of thirteen uncircumcised petals. The text was printed using the swab method: preparing the matrix and then using rubber, then transferring the text from it to the flat petals while they were still strong and would allow this to be done. I have released several of these publications; their sizes are 65x45 mm and 27x34 mm, and there are already 28 pages in the smaller book. The petals in it are cut off, so it has a rectangular shape. These unusual «flower buds» are stored in personal collections and in many museums and libraries.

A few years ago you presented books in a new format. When closed, they look like wooden chocks. When did you create your first wooden book? How did it occur to you to use sawn stumps as material for books?

The idea to make a wooden book came to me in 2012. Somehow, while chopping firewood in my country house, I came across a little chock. And when I took it, for some reason I wanted to split it into thin little things. Having done this, I saw a miniature book in it. Then I took another little chock



Anatoly Konenko. «Japanese Motive», engraving and painting on a rice grain 6 mm long

about 5-6 cm high and chopped it in the same way. After that, I began to think about how to sew or connect the boards so that the book could be opened. As a result, I decided to use a Coptic stitch for binding. This is the method of the ancient Egyptians – the Copts. It is used to staple paper notebooks into a book block.

Well, after that, before starting to make the first book, I prepared a whole batch of wooden chunks and prepared them for writing: dried, sanded, and polished the boards and began to try to write on them.

How do you choose wood species for books?

In principle, I am trying to make books from different species of trees. As soon as I find an interesting lump, I immediately try to split it. If I see that the split is interesting – beautifully curved and there is a picture inside – then I definitely try to make a book out of it. I have books from birch, aspen, spruce, and cedar, and the book with Yesenin's poem "You Are My Fallen Maple" is from maple. In general, I use all species of trees that grow in Siberia. If an interesting little chock comes across my path while I'm abroad, I'm taking it home. From stumps with knots, I also do not turn away; they can be turned into whistles. The tone depends on the thickness of the knot. Therefore, some of my books have several musical keys. There are no analogues of such books in the world.

Book-bird, stylized like the work of the Arkhangelsk

masters, is made of spruce?

Yes, from the spruce. Why from spruce rather than birch or another tree? Because the spruce can be split into very thin, even planks. Here, however, there are secrets, too. Slices must be done at a special angle; only then it splits as it should. Interestingly, the Arkhangelsk spruce splits easier than ours. From these, you can make boards with a thickness of a millimeter or even thinner, so book-birds are made only from spruce; at least from other species of trees I couldn't do anything like that.

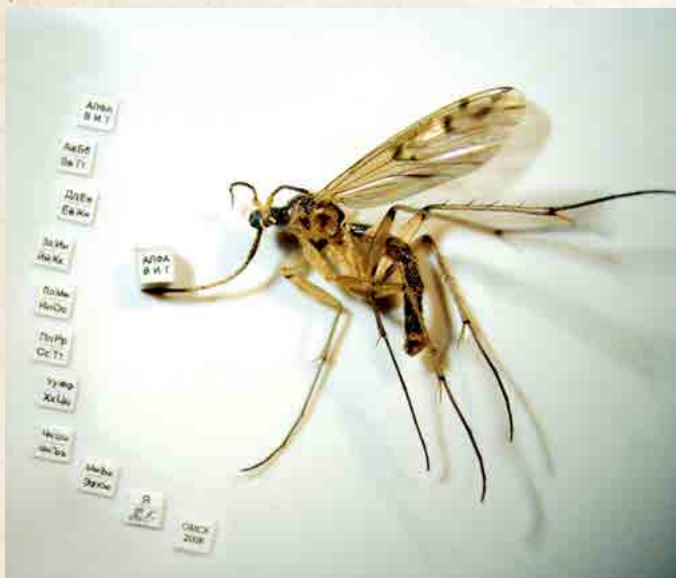
How do you apply text to a tree?

I write on wood with a pen in gouache or acrylic paints. They are good for writing; they do not spread on the tree, like ink and drafting ink, and they quickly dry. Immediately after drying, the pages of the book can be varnished or waxed.

Anatoly Ivanovich, speaking of creating books, you call yourself an artist, designer, engraver, and bookbinder. Don't you think that another specialist is missing from this list – a calligrapher?

I never considered myself a calligrapher. Even when I work on a manuscript book, I remain only an artist and designer. For me, a calligrapher is an artist.

Microminiaturist Anatoly Konenko: "Time is passing and we are changing"



Anatoly Konenko. Super microbook 0.8x0.8 mm. From the series «Alphabets of the Peoples of the World»



Anatoly Konenko. A real flea, shoed with golden horseshoes of 0.25x0.2 mm. Three holes were drilled with a drill diameter of 0.03 mm. The development of technology and the manufacture of this miniature lasted for 7.5 years.



Anatoly Konenko. Wooden whistle-book



Anatoly Konenko. Bird-book, styled after works by Arkhangelsk masters

Great Russian ligature! Shall we give it a fresh start?

Alexander Evgenievich Zolotarev, author of the article,
curator of the Museum of Russian National Writing (Yaroslavl)



"Hello?... Rus", ligature in the snow on the trees

Background. Vyaz' [ligature] (vyazit') is a type of writing where the letters are connected, intertwined, or stuck in one another.

Source: The Dahl dictionary

**If we are not saints
Russia will stop glowing!
Take a pen and a brush in your hands
Write in red and gold...**

Az

ligature exist on Mars of modern calligraphy?

...I leaf through the catalog pages of the International Exhibition of Calligraphy in Sokolniki looking for work with Russian ligature and cannot find any... Hello?!

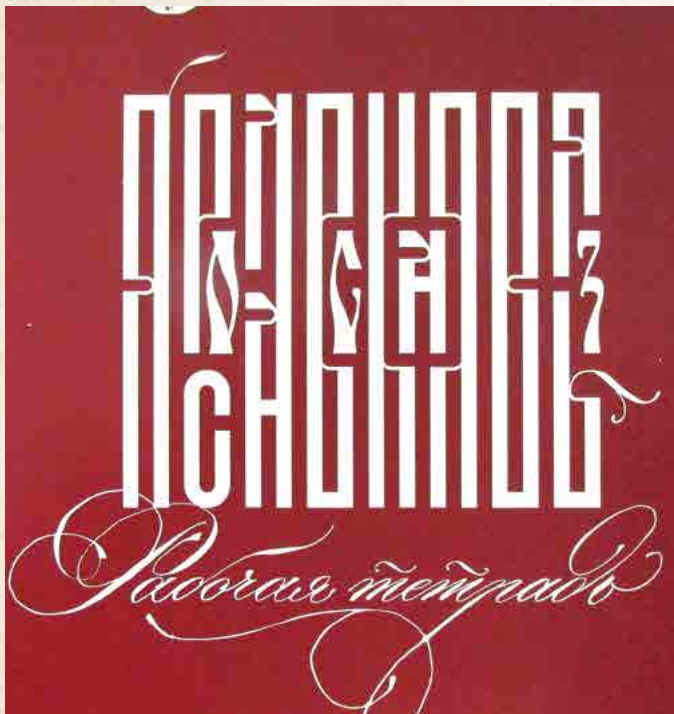
Out of 70 of our calligraphers, the following are passionate about the 'Russian theme': Svetlana Gennadyevna Dityatovskaya, Yuri Sergeyevich Shachnev, Victoria Gennadyevna Osmiyorkina, Elena Aleksandrovna Bobkova, Olga Valerievna Gagulina and several other authors. Only 10 works – very little! (Picture № 2. "With a cat" by Elena Aleksandrovna Bobkova, from the 2017 catalog).

I recall the Calligrafest-2019 festival in St. Petersburg: about 200 works, of which about 20 works were Russian ligature. Now about 40 works are presented on the Calligrafest virtual museum website, including 20 works by two authors - Pavel Drakunov and Aleksandr Abrosimov.

Most of the 'pictures' with ligature are on a black somber background and the words are almost illegible. However, the



E. A. Bobkova. Poem by A. S. Pushkin "On a Faraway Seashore a Green Oak Towers"



Yaroslavl ligature copy-books

ligature has historically been joyful! Its composed of Red skillful letters, graceful masts, and decorations. Starting a new paragraph is the triumph of Russian writing. Ligature has always carried spiritual meaning, and now I see such works as, for example, the 'Goat Skull' poem, where the caligram of a skull with horns is made in ligature.

I am looking through the funds of our Museum of Russian National Writing in Yaroslavl: out of 300 exhibited works, the 'Yaroslavl ligature' is presented by 30 works as a separate exposition.

A modern Russian calligrapher can write in any style: Gothic, Chinese hieroglyphs, lettering, Spencerian and copperplate - anything but his own historical national writing. The skoropis' [cursive writing] is still popular because it looks like modern calligraphy, but I can't find ligature ... Hello?!

Less than 10% of Russian calligraphers write in Russian ligature. The remaining 90% are not interested in it.

When the USSR collapsed in the 90s, there was a certain interest of designers in Russian writing in the West. I have often seen a parody of our ligature in advertising. But it is Russian ligature that is the 'icing on the cake' of Russian calligraphy. There is no English, no Italian, no American ligature either... There are only two concepts: 'Russian calligraphy and ligature' and 'Arabic calligraphy and ligature'! And they are closely intertwined historically, as well as the letters of their wonderful font compositions. So why are we doing parodies of Latin, Japanese, American ligature, and not valuing our own?



S. V. Rudenko. Bible Quotes. "Judge not, and you will not be judged". Triptych

Russian ligature is the "icing on the cake" of Russian calligraphy.

Why can any Russian citizen write congratulatory cards in Russian ligature?

Handwritten writing is dying all over the world (except China); typing on a keyboard is replacing handwriting. The printer prints clearly and legibly, and you no longer need to be able to write. Digital whiteboards and tablets are rapidly entering our school. People stopped writing postcards and do not send them by mail...



R. N. Goncharenko. Grandfather's 85th birthday greetings

But there are still those who write postcards in Russian ligature and give them to their loved ones! And these are not artists of St. Petersburg, but ordinary people of different ages, professions, and social status: lawyers, doctors, teachers, cooks, students...

They have fought off the "three-headed dragon Gorynych":

1. The complexity of the Church Slavonic language
2. Inability to write with a broad pen
3. Inability to intertwine letters among themselves

How did they do it? Thanks to Yuri Ivanovich Arutsev, the founder of the author's school of Russian Calligraphy and Ligature, the only licensed school in Russia.



R. N. Goncharenko. Tanechka



R. N. Goncharenko. Natasha



First grader Taisiya Sedova. First grader Taisiya Sedova. The first lesson on ligature; in 1 hour she completed a neat and beautiful work titled "Mama-Ros" with a pointed pen.

From 2000–2010, he created a new writing system based on the traditional writing and called it the 'Yaroslavl ligature'. Its main features are:

- Easy to learn
- Geometric ornamentality
- Minimalism in decorations

- Complete filling of letter spaces
- Only letters of modern Russian language in a font set

Yu. I. Arutsev: "...two lessons of two hours. This is enough to master the ligature and create individual works."

Yu. I. Arutsev, the 'father' of Yaroslavl ligature

Yuri Ivanovich, how much time does it take to learn to write the 'Yaroslavl ligature'?

Yu. I.: Two lessons of two hours for an adult. This is enough to master ligature and make individual works.

Does it take more time for children to master such complex writing?

Yu. I.: Children learn ligature quickly - in one hourlong lesson, or sometimes in two. They do not have any graphic stereotypes as opposed to adult students.

When was the idea of creating a new ligature system born and why?

Yu. I.: I started working on it in the early 2000s. In 2010, there already was a ready-made writing system for the 1000th anniversary of Yaroslavl. And from that time the name 'Yaroslavl ligature' came into life. For many years I studied the history of Russian writing. At a certain stage, I wanted to create a universal ligature system that was easy to read and easy to write so that everyone could quickly master it.



Yu. I. Arutsev. The President is the guarantor of the constitution



A.E. Zolotarev. We are Russians or You Forgot. Pine bark



M. Osipova. Earth laughs in colors

In 2009, Yu.I. Arutsev opened an author's school, in which over 100 adults and children have been taught 'intricate' Russian writing in Yaroslavl ligature over 11 years. Some works are presented at international calligraphy exhibitions in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Adult students from both capitals often come to this acknowledged master of Russian calligraphy to study.

A distinctive feature of the Yaroslavl ligature is the ratio of the proportions of the masts of a letter to its width - 9:1. Most often, lively colors are used: brown, cherry, vermillion, black on white or artificially aged paper.

Golden ink is sometimes used to highlight the initial letters in a word. Yaroslavl ligature is a self-sufficient writing style: it can be used as a heading, as a main text, and even as decor.

In Russian ligature there are no punctuation marks, and – sadly – in some churches, when restoring paintings and texts, dots and commas are added.

In 2019, 'Yaroslavl ligature' workbooks were issued. You can now easily master this writing yourself in one evening. Go for it!

I crawl through masts of old letters
I am as passionate as a shipboy.
Why do you care about that ligature!
The sea grows rough...

An order is upon the point of the pen:
"Aim! Attention!"
I'm sitting fourteen hours
Over the 'spell'.

I will perpetuate an honest
Poem by Rubtsov!
In our language
Disappearing from the world of speech.

Despising your digital
Tongue-tied slang,
I'm looking for old senses
In another guise...



T. M. Katyreva. Sacred Virgin, Be Pleased!

I believe you can get
Through the labyrinths,
And find loyalty to the family
In hearts, not in fonts!

Az

Is ligature live or dead?

What is Russian ligature capable of in land art, graffiti, street art, design, and fashion?

Centuries ago, ligature was applied on dressed leather, on birch bark, wood, stone using oak ink, cinnabar and gold.

And what will we try to write on?

Why not on the walls? Let's be children! And it's better not at home, but in a parking lot or in a mall, for example. And why not paint the arch on the main street with a poem by Joseph Brodsky - let him enjoy! Why not paint up a dull gray street box?

What Aleksandr Abrosimov does is a genuine delight and surprise! A lot of art objects in Yaroslavl represent modern culture and possibly the future. Aleksandr gave a second life to Russian ligature, although in some works the influence of Gothic is also felt.

A. Zolotaryov: "True ligature does not require paints and brushes!"

Cut Yaroslavl ligature with an axe!

I'm sure that true ligature has to be big...as big as the Volga river. And a true Russian ligature does not require neither paints nor brushes! I cut Yaroslavl ligature with an axe on the river ice and create huge letters with five-meter masts.

'Ice' calligrapher writes hundred-meter 'postcards' to his teacher Yu.I. Arutsev: 'Merry Christmas!', 'Congratulations on Baptism!', 'Happy Maslenitsa' without a pen or a brush – it is possible to use a shovel!

Write Yaroslavl ligature with sunflower seeds

Pigeons were happy! They pecked a Maslenitsa pancake, a bear, and a Russian ligature!

March 1, 2020. Maslenitsa, the central square of the city of Yaroslavl, with many people walking and a flock of pigeons. That's who we will make the calligraphic dish with seeds for. Yaroslavl ligature made with seeds looks particularly realistic and wonderfully amusing - especially for children, for whom I conducted a workshop on writing with seeds.

And the pigeons were so happy! They pecked a Maslenitsa pancake, a bear, and a Russian ligature!



A. E. Zolotarev. Maslenitsa. Performance with pigeons

Russian ligature can look great on any clothing of a modern person: on a shirt, on a jacket, on a coat, on a cloak. Who is the first among fashion designers that dares to claim the rights for Russian ligature style?

Bored monotonous drawings on cars can easily 'explode' with a bright inscription in Russian ligature. Have you ever seen anything like that?!

The possibilities of Russian ligature seem limitless to me... Maybe in 3D? What about sculpture? Or felt? What if you knit or cross-stitch it? Decorate pastries, portraits, business folders...

Eight boldfaced WHYs

Why in the description of the calligraphic work do we only write 'ligature', omitting the word 'Russian'?

Why about Chinese calligraphy do we say "Great Chinese calligraphy" and not proudly tell our children, "Here it is - our great Russian ligature!"

Why does the festival dedicated to Cyrillic writing devote the majority of its time to foreign guests and not to domestic calligraphers? Not a single performance on ligature!

Why was our unique Russian ligature exhibited on the fringes of the Union of Artists in St. Petersburg, but not in the central hall?

Why didn't I see my native Russian letters on the 25-meter board roll at the Calligrafest, signed by all participants of the 'Cyrillic festival'? And no ligature, no cursive writing!

Why is the name of the festival of our Cyrillic writing written in Latin letters (lettering)?

Why do many Russian calligrapher masters only use Latin script as an example of inscriptions for training at the workshops of the Cyrillic writing festival?

Why do modern Russian designers put Latin letters into Russian words? By what right is the Latin 'L' found in the Russian word "XLEB"?

And the number of such examples is limitless...

Description of the great Russian work by Svetlana Gennadyevna Dityatovskaya: "The Lord's look". Baikal taiga birchbark (Russia), Red Sable brushes (The Netherlands), Winsor & Newton ink (France), Speedball pens (USA), Ferrariozo acryl (Italy)...

Birchbark is all we have left?!

Seven questions on Russian ligature

The survey involved:

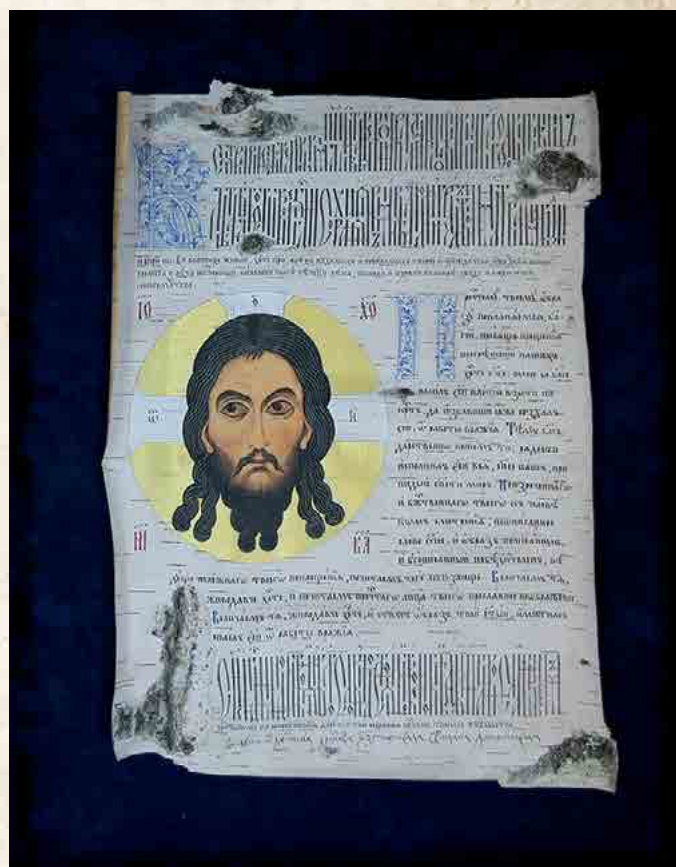
Svetlana Vitalievna Rudenko, teacher. Graduated from the author's school of calligraphy. Yu.I. Arutseva in Yaroslavl, 'Russian Calligraphy and Ligature' on June 6, 2019.

Raisa Nikolaevna Goncharenko, lawyer.

Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Abrosimov, calligrapher.

1. Who taught you ligature? How many years have you been in it?

Svetlana Rudenko: I mastered the technique of the



S. G. Dityatovskaya. The Sight of the Lord. Baikal taiga birch bark

Yaroslavl ligature a year ago and began to write it from the first lesson. The methodology of Yu.I. Arutsev is universal and harmonious, with a ratio of height and width of 9:1, 27 cells. Even children learn it from the first lesson.

Raisa Goncharenko: Yuri Ivanovich Arutsev was my teacher of calligraphy. I've been doing it since 2015.

Aleksandr Abrosimov: Yuri Ivanovich Arutsev showed me the basics of making the ligature around 2016. We dug into the alphabet and the main principles of making the Yaroslavl ligature in one lesson. This type of painting the text did not seem very attractive to me and I lost my interest, for a while.

I took ligature more seriously in 2017, during preparation for the 'Triumph of Russian Calligraphy' exhibition, and during participation in the project of the Textile cultural center "Man Graces the Place". At that time, in 2017, I first tried to make ligature in urban areas, and I was satisfied with the result. "If you want to change the world become this change." I wrote this phrase in ligature.

2. Why did you develop a liking for ligature?

Svetlana Rudenko: Writing in ligature makes your brain find the best solution: a beautiful placement of all letters, while there is a choice of options. You may compare it to a construction kit or a puzzle, and the result gives you great pleasure and joy!

Raisa Goncharenko: I got to like it for its beauty and elegance, of course! You always need to think and decipher... Ligature draws people's attention, while arousing interest and desire to decipher what is written there. This applies to both Russians and foreigners, and especially to children!

Aleksandr Abrosimov: I liked it for its complexity. Complexity in reading. Complexity in drawing straight masts. Complexity in forming a composition. All this forms a unique ornament of letters, words, and texts in its own way.

3. . What kind of ligature did you make (postcard, calligraphy, graffiti...)?

Svetlana Rudenko: I only want to write in ligature about something important and useful, to create a reminder, give a message.

I wrote commandments, quotes and postcards for birthdays, the New Year, Easter...

Raisa Goncharenko: Postcards, calligraphic works.

Aleksandr Abrosimov: I've done a lot in four years. At the very beginning, when I tried to make first 'interwined' texts, I only did it by drawing letters, not by writing. Writing in ligature seemed completely unrealistic to me since ligature rests on strict and straight 'masts', and drawing a straight line is not an easy task for a hand.

But when I did ligature a couple of times in the city, I realized all the fatality and continuity of a long, detailed layout in this particular environment. Then I had to learn new approaches and techniques.

In general, I do not limit myself to formats, materials, or tools. It is very convenient to have, to some extent, a wide range of possibilities; the range of creativity is expanding.

4. Is there any 'discrimination' of ligature for Russian calligraphers in favor of Gothic, Latin, lettering, Chinese and Japanese writing?

Svetlana Rudenko: Sure, fashion dictates its own ways...

Ligature cannot compete with lettering as this technique is used in a way that everyone can read, and even main words are highlighted.

There is no need to use ligature everywhere. In my opinion, it is more suitable for thematic, ritual, festive events. Exhibition, wedding, anniversary ... logos, labels, etc. are also fine.

Raisa Goncharenko: I think there is enough room for everything, including ligature.

Aleksandr Abrosimov: As such, I do not see any discrimination or, let's say, aggression towards ligature. Of course, this style is not so popular and not so developed, hopefully only for the time being. Day by day more and more attention is paid to ligature; new calligraphers appear, even foreign ones.

5. Is there future for ligature in a technocratic society?

Svetlana Rudenko: Of course, because this is somewhat an exotic that throws us back in time, creates an atmosphere, and beckons with its mystery and beauty.

Raisa Goncharenko: It has future until we write it ourselves, with our own hands!

Aleksandr Abrosimov: Ligature does have the future, but how long will it be? It's hard to say - as in a fog! Our decision is important and affects what we will see after this fog clears.

6. Can ligature develop like writing or is it a vestige of an outdated written culture?

Svetlana Rudenko: I do not see it as a regular writing; it's more of an art form.

Raisa Goncharenko: Probably, no longer as a type of writing. But there are a lot of opportunities for it as a decorative art in designing the surrounding environment. This is a native Russian writing and it must be used in promoting our values.

Aleksandr Abrosimov: In general, ligature never took over the task of writing; it has always been decorative. As for the development, ligature, of course, does not stand still; new forms and solutions are found every day, but only in author's work, not in general segment of culture.

7. Would you like to engage in the development of Russian ligature art? Do we need an exhibition of Russian ligature, or are other exhibitions, where it is presented among other styles, enough?

Svetlana Rudenko: It would be great to collect different techniques and methods of Russian ligature in one place. The delight of visitors and masters will be ensured.

Raisa Goncharenko: I think Russian ligature deserves to have its own exhibition.

Aleksandr Abrosimov: In my view, everyone who touches on this topic, to some extent, develops it.

As for exhibitions, of course, I would like to see more works on calligraphy and ligature. Now I don't even remember - were there any exhibitions dedicated to ligature only?!

To serve the mother tongue
Is your high calling!
In writing to leisurely reflect
The nature of the Rus, their mystery...

That is hidden deep down
And everyone will open it again.
Behind golden ligature
Build the road to the future!

Az



In support of the Russian national letter

Yuri Arutsev, author of the article

«It is impossible to justify the name of such stores, like «RUSSIAN BREAD», or «BOOKLOVER», or «RUSSIAN TOY», from any moral or other point of view» - the «Calligrapher» magazine presents an appeal of Yuri Ivanovich Arutsev, founder of the «Russian Calligraphy and Ligature» author's school and the «Museum of Russian National Letters» cultural and historical complex in Yaroslavl.

Russian national letter – the graphic representation of letters and signs, characteristic only of the Russian people, has undergone an evolution from pictographic (drawing) and ideographic (symbolic) to literal.

In order to transmit sounds that reflect the peculiarities of the Russian language, we used special characters, but not the combinations of two or three characters, like it was practiced in Latin and other Western European alphabets. This feature allows you to separate the Russian world from the Slavonic one.

The fact, that the writing system of the Russian people existed long before Cyril and Methodius and has almost five thousand-year history, convincingly proved by G. S. Grinevich, Professor R. N. Maroevich, academician V.M. Rusanovsky, and many other Russian and Western historians.

Approximately the same figure can be obtained by entering the coefficient of the evolutionary development of writing (KERP) - the number, by which you must multiply by 100 (century) to determine the time of the alphabet's creation.

This coefficient is calculated by comparing two or more Drop capitals or texts from the same school, such as Novgorod school, created at the beginning and at end of the century. The smaller difference in font and design, the higher the numerical value of the coefficient is, and the more remote history of writing we have.

Comparing, for example, the letters of the Archangel Gospel of the 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries, we see the highest art of book graphic art images and significant preservation of size, ornament and letter configurations over five centuries. Therefore, you can

conclude, that the evolution of this letter may have more than two thousand years of history, and then the numerical value of the coefficient will range from 4-5. This is a special topic of the lecture course, conducted in our school.

The Russian alphabet had 49 characters, while the Greek alphabet had only 23. Despite far-reaching reforms of the Russian alphabet, conducted by the Russian emperor Peter the Great and the government of the USSR on the initiative of V. I. Ulyanov

(Lenin), which reduced the number of letters of the Russian alphabet from 49 to 33, Russian people have preserved the uniqueness and originality of its national letter, which, by expressive possibilities, has no equal among the writings of all peoples of the world.

While comparing the Russian alphabet with the Latin alphabet, please pay attention to the fundamental difference in their graphical images. When you first take a look at the Russian alphabet, you will see that the Russian alphabet has 59 more graphic characters than the Latin alphabet: about 21 lowercase letters – б, в, г, ё, ж, з, й, л, м, н, ф, ц, ч, ш, щ, ь, ы, э, ю, я; 16 capital letters – Б, Ё, Ж, З, Й, Л, П, Т, Ф, Ц, Ч, Ш, Щ, Э, Ю, Я; 22 letters of printed mark - Б, Г, Д, Ё, Ж, З, Й, Л, П, У, Ф, Ц, Ч, Ш, Щ, Ъ, Ь, Ы, Э, Ю, Я.

We couldn't fail to mention the words of J. Fletcher, who said: «Slavonic, it is believed, is more likely to be derived from the language of Russian, than from Slavonic», and N. V. Gogol, who said: «Our extraordinary language itself is still a mystery. In it exists every tone and shade, all transitions of sounds from the hardest to the most delicate and soft; it is unlimited and can, as a «living» language, enrich itself every minute, drawing on the one hand high words from the language of the church - biblical language, and on the other hand, from the innumerable dialects scattered throughout our provinces, thus having the ability in the same speech to ascend to a height inaccessible to any other language, and descend to a simplicity that the most incomprehensible person can understand.»

Any Russian language learner is struck by the wealth

of synonyms, adverbs, dialects and so on. So, for example, the word «beautiful» has more than forty synonyms, while the word «fall» has more than eighty synonyms and meaning shades.

For centuries, it was believed that in the scientific world, Greek writing developed thanks to Phoenician, and Russian thanks to Greek. This dogma that transfers from one academic publication to another is like a pyramid, placed not on its base, but on its top.

It is sufficient to know what the Phoenicians were like at that historical time - they were a semi-nomadic people, whose culture can be defined by the words of the Russian encyclopedist V. I. Dal: «Rabble of peoples, speaking approximately the same language.»

A semi-nomadic people couldn't create a written language! The Phoenicians had no great evolutionary process background for this aim.

There is another important thing: there are only two concepts in the world that define the highest rise of national literature, – «Russian Calligraphy and Script» and «Arabic Calligraphy and Ligature».

Only highly developed civilizations are able to create a script, having traveled a long path of consciousness evolution, implemented in writing.

There can be no doubt that our millennial national writing cultivates patriotism – a special human feeling, partly developed in childhood, partly formed in youth, then remaining in life under the influence of the society and the world in general.

The feeling of patriotism is based on many other feelings, such as the joy of being on your native land, pride of the success of your fellow countrymen, and the sadness of their defeat or failure. The Depth and the productivity of this feeling is directly related to the cultural level of a person, his knowledge of the history of his family, Fatherland, skills of thinking and acting independently, and the ability to feel the Homeland. The lower the cultural level of a person is, the more primitive the feeling of patriotism is; this can take extreme forms: from false patriotism to radical patriotism, or fascism.

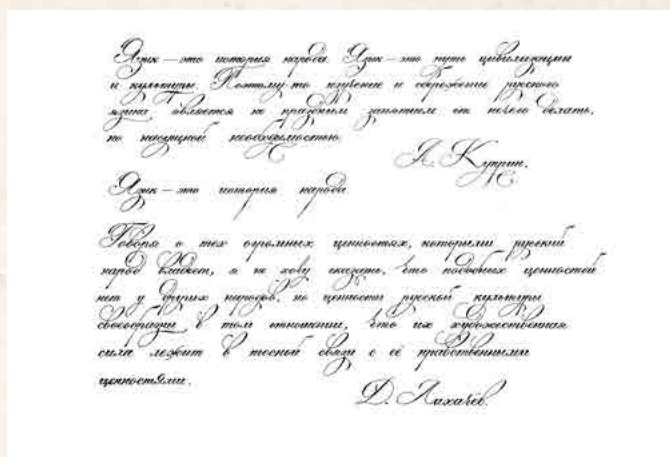
A true patriot is a creator, not a destroyer. In creating one's own home, family, land, and Homeland, this person creates a Fatherland, or, as the famous Russian writer F. M. Dostoevsky said, «...the person creates generations».

Patriotism is a sincere willingness to protect your country from everything that can hurt it, and the ability to protect it by all available means, sparing no efforts for the sake of future generations of compatriots.

The aggression that our homeland was subjected to in the late 12th and early 21st centuries is unprecedented in its information scale. And this is an information war. The information war against calligraphy is a kind of aggression against the Russian national letter and its history, evolution, and uniqueness. It even goes as far as attempting to change the graphic images of letters and signs.

All this is accompanied by a simultaneous intrusion of foreign words and synonyms into the speech system and culture of Russian people.

As a rule, internal resources are used for information



D. S. Likhachev's quote about Russian language

aggression. The forces that do not have a sense of patriotism are temporary, so the actions of such people should be qualified as state crime with all its legal consequences.

One of the most effective methods of information warfare is the Romanization of the Russian alphabet. For many decades I have observed the attempts of some Western and especially domestic designers to change the traditional Russian spelling of some letters to the Latin style. The native Russian letters are subjected to special aggression: б, д, ё, ж, з, й, п, т, ф, ц, ч, ш, щ, ь, ы, э, ю, я. It is impossible to justify the names of such stores, like «RUSSIAN BREAD», or «BOOK-LOVER», or «RUSSIAN TOY» from a moral standpoint or any other point of view.

Frankly speaking, I found a statement on the Internet from one of the Russian designers, who said, «... almost all Russian fonts suffer from the ugly forms of the letters like Ф, Д, Л... Other signs are also crooked...».

Only a person with a «bad» consciousness can't see the beauty of Russian letters and not hear their melody. Not a Russian man! A treacherous person!

Hence, the attempts of some Russian designers to Romanize the Russian alphabet is considered to be an act of betrayal of the Russian people, with all the moral and legal consequences that will follow, and it should be considered exclusively within the framework of criminal law.

Nowadays, the Russian alphabet is the only key to understanding the greatness of our national history, and we should resist and give a worthy rebuff to any encroachments on it!

Taking this opportunity, I and the teachers of our school urge you to be extremely careful in choosing the graphics of letters in order to solve these or other art and design tasks, while promoting our amazing Russian alphabet for its beauty and how it is tied to the Russian land deeply and historically.

Remember, that our children will follow our example. Whether they become the children of Russia depends only on us.

Yuri Arutsev
Yaroslavl, April 21, 2020

Russian Decorative Handwriting is a New Pinnacle of Calligraphy

Alexander Evgenievich Zolotarev, author of the article,
curator of the Museum of Russian National Writing (Yaroslavl)



T. A. Nikitina. Poem by N. Rubtsov, "The Russian North, Native Villages..."

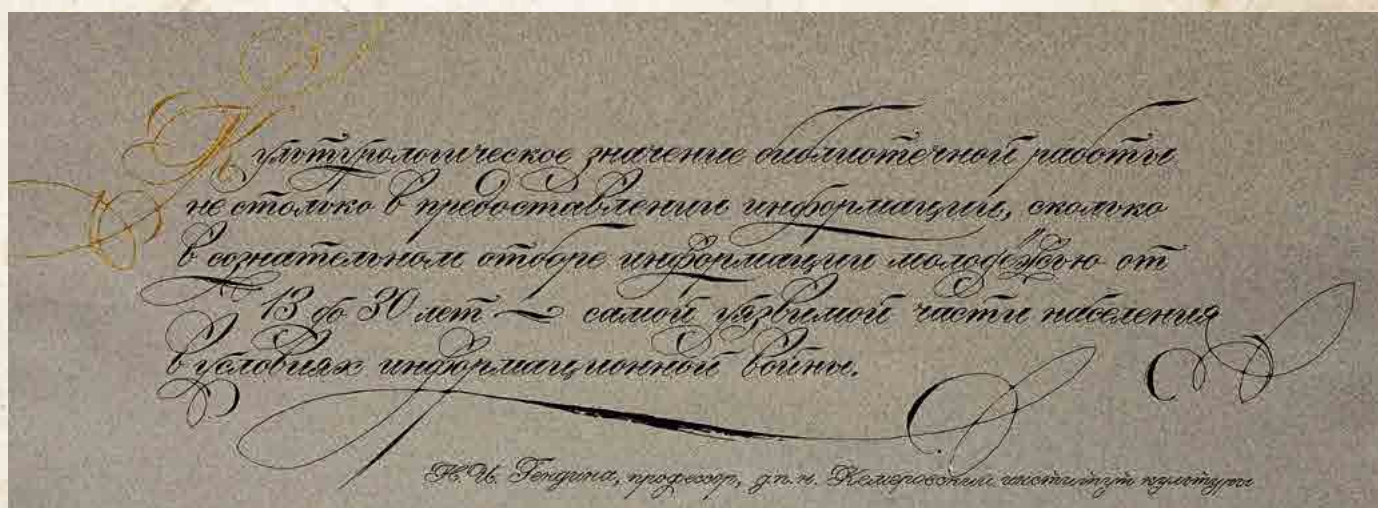
... I remember the first time I heard about decorative handwriting. In February 2017, we were organizing the large exhibition "The Triumph of Russian Calligraphy" in the city Exhibition hall named after N.A. Nuzhin. The Exhibition consisted of five fundamental sections, one of which was Russian Decorative Handwriting.

I remember the response Yuriy Ivanovich, founder of our school of Russian Calligraphy and Ligature, gave to my question: "How to unite the works with quotations of famous people, poems of classical poets and literary pangrams in one section?". He replied, "It's decorative handwriting!"

Thus, four years ago decorative handwriting was introduced to a mainstream audience.

History

According to his memories, Yuriy Ivanovich, started learning calligraphy for the first time in the autumn of 1971, when he was a second year student at Smolensk State Medical Institute. His fine handwriting was praised by his teachers and fellow students. From that point onward he made it his regular practice to write various texts. However, he was not officially recognized as a master calligrapher until May 1975. Smolensk



Yu. I. Arutsev. Quote from N. I. Gendin. «The cultural significance of library work ...»

saw the visit of Meliton Varlamovich Kantaria, Hero of the Soviet Union, who together with Mikhail Alekseevich Egorov mounted a Victory Banner over defeated Reichstag in April of 1945. By the decision of the Regional Party Committee he was given the title of Honorary Citizen of the city of Smolensk. The address was written on a handmade, specially stuffed calfskin piece by Yuri, under the instruction of Ivan Efimovich Klemenko, First Secretary of the Regional Party Committee. On the following day after the ceremonial award Yuri's father, a war veteran, said to him, "Do you know what Ivan Efimovich said about your work?" – "Written as if for a parade!"

The primary school academic educational program served undoubtedly as the basis of the development of Russian decorative handwriting. The techniques of writing letters, decorative elements and compositional patterns have been developing all these years. Finally, after forty years an extraordinary subtle style -Russian decorative handwriting – was developed together with a font named after Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin.

SEVEN Unique Characteristics

The handwritten font named after Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin stands out for its exquisiteness and liveliness, compared to traditional English cursive and the handwriting taught at school during the Soviet epoch.

1. Technique of pressure

Our school uses two modes of pressing down on a pointed pen:

- continuous;
- quick.

The quick mode is subdivided into three main types:

- a) pressure at the base;
- b) pressure at the end;
- b) pressure in the middle (balanced or classical).

If we want to create a light floating feeling, for example, for a poem by Tsvetaeva, we may want to apply a quick balanced pressure on the pen.

If we need to write a romantic text, we can apply pressure at the base or at the end. However, in this case an artistic form prevails over legibility. The technique of continuous pressure will be good for writing dramatic poems by Mandelstam.

2. Neck-like writing

Frequently the spines of letters have "necks" which create an impression of a floating line and make letters rounder. Compared to English cursive, there is no space between lowercase letters.

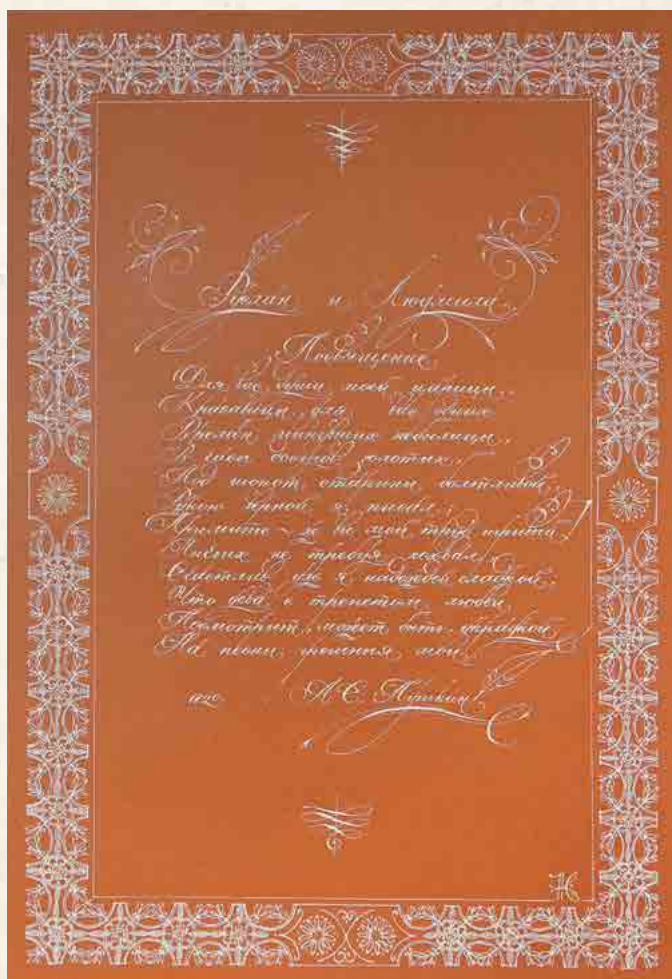
The term "neck-like writing" was made up in classes for children, as this anthropomorphic approach to explanation is easier for them to understand: I have a neck and letters have little necks!

3. Different modes of writing of ascenders and descenders

These terms mean the extending portions of letters b,d,f,h,k,l,g,j,p,q and y; each of them has up to five or more modes of writing.

4. Graphic aspect of capital letters

Capital letters have a special font pattern – A.S. Pushkin.



N. Sh. Voronina. Lines from the poem by A. S. Pushkin «Ruslan and Lyudmila.»



I. V. Molchanova. The clouds can be admired endlessly...

5. Frills

They are decorative elements of some lowercase letters and a graphic portion of a letter itself.

They are used to fill in the spaces between the lines and make the dynamic pattern of writing balanced, as if blossoming cornflowers decorating the white spaces above the lines.

6. Small tail

It's a short trailing flourish, as in "j" and "y", used instead of a horizontal serif.



Lowercase Elements

7. Simple flourish

It's a decorative element of a text attached to the tail of letter "a" at the end of a line.

A repetitive series of two or more simple flourishes is called a cascade of flourishes.

A simple flourish consists of five main elements formed by semi-ovals: big wing, middle wing, small wing 1, and small wing 2. One of the features of a simple flourish is that various turns of small wing 2 make it possible to turn a cascade of flourishes in any direction.

Flourishes can spread in circles around a text and even go beyond the margin of a sheet of paper, going over the passe-partout, make a turn there and go back. This gives a

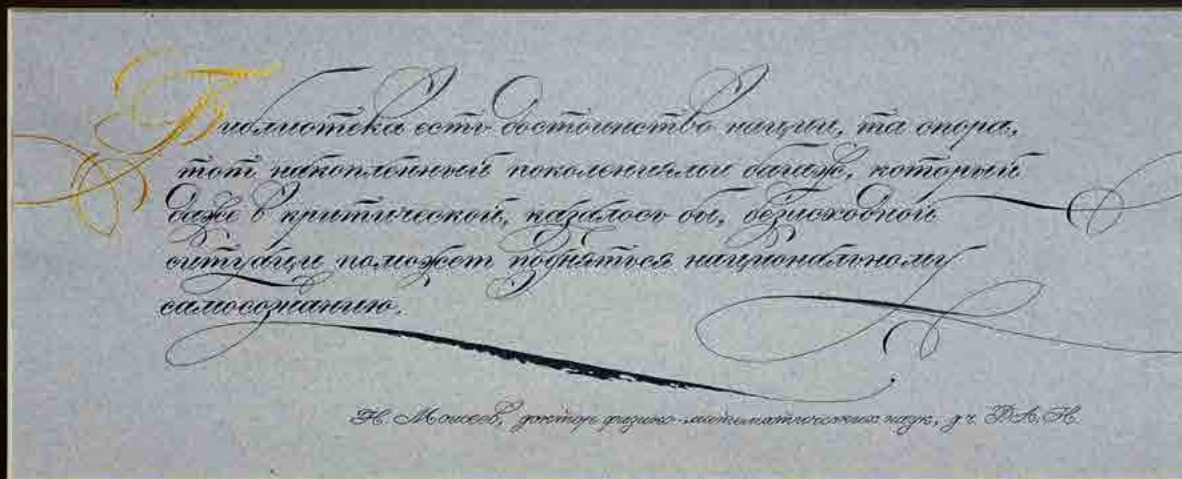
particular freedom to writing and excludes any limits. Going beyond the margin is an exceptionally important technique for children. As a rule, flourishes align with a composition decision and don't contradict the general graphic aspect of the text.

The best example of our decorative handwriting is the name of the Pushkin State Russian Language Institute in Moscow engraved on a metal plate. It's a complete triumph of Russian national writing, our achievement which any educated person in Russia can master. It should be learned from childhood onward!



The standard of writing basic monograms

The “Aleksandr Sergeyevich Pushkin” font



Yu. I. Arutsev. Quote from N. M. Moiseyeva, «The library is the dignity of the nation»

The article is based on the publication by Yuri Arutsev.

The “Aleksandr Sergeyevich Pushkin” font acquired its name in 2012, when all the previous experience in teaching Russian calligraphy to children and adults in the author’s school of Yuri Arutsev, “Russian Calligraphy and Ligature” required the introduction of not only special professional terminology into the educational process, but also the characteristics of the writing itself.

It is interesting that, until this moment, Yuri Arutsev did not take such a close look at his writing. The students of the school noticed the originality of his handwriting, and according to the author of the font, it was great!

Well, with the appearance a new type of handwriting, came the need to give it a name. Getting acquainted with the numerous fonts and font compositions created by the people of the world, Yuri Arutsev discovered that many of them bear the names of the creators.

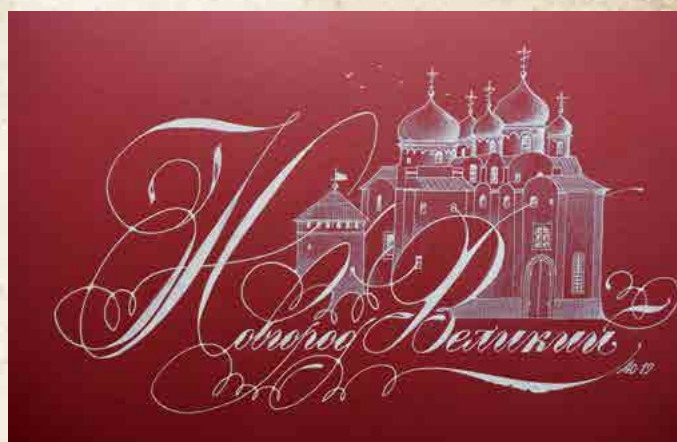
However, if we consider the processes of the evolution of the written language of the people, to which a special lecture course at this school is devoted, we can see that the fundamental, basic image graphics of letters were created in a very limited time, covering approximately the 16th – 19th centuries. For the twentieth century, nothing new was created.

To a large extent, standardization of writing was influenced by typography, which required the simplification of the visual characteristics of letters. But the desire to preserve the beauty of letters made it possible to create a

very special graphic – the drop cap. This primarily refers to the unique part of the written heritage of mankind – Russian calligraphy and ligature. Ligature has become the pinnacle of Russian writing, with unique visual qualities and semantic content.

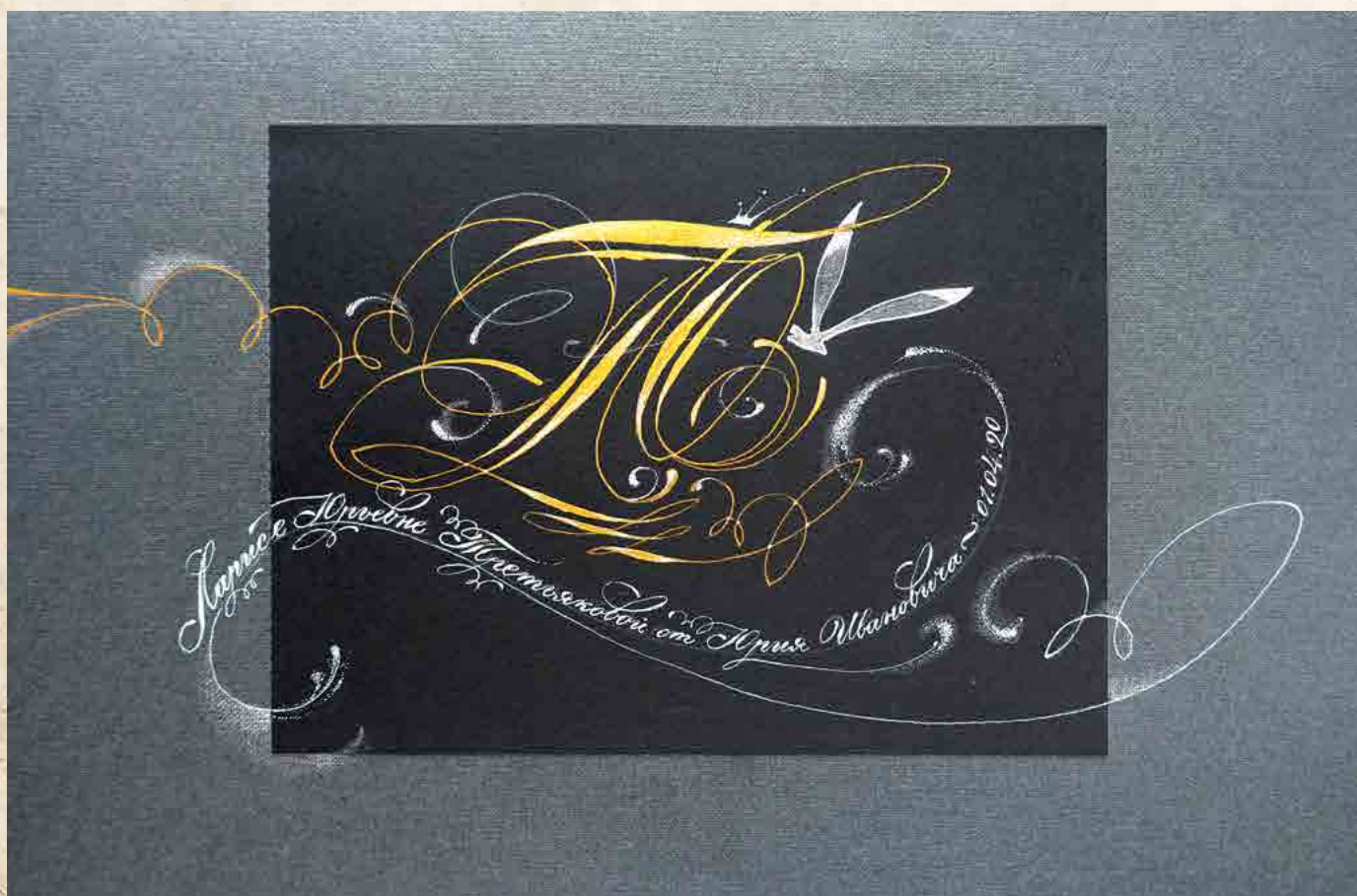
What is the specialty of the “Aleksandr Pushkin” font? The answer lies in the technique of writing ovals and lower hooks with a fine pen. For example, while writing the “cheeks” of the letter “a”, both tails of the pen make a smooth move along the left half-oval of the letter. At the very beginning of the pressure, to create a “cheek”, the left tail continues to move along the half-oval, and the right one starts to go somewhat to the right, and upon completion of the pressure, returns to the left tail of the pen again, and then, moving up, completes the full oval. When performing the “back” of the letter from the top line of the row, the pen is pressed. Both tails of the pen work simultaneously, giving even pressure. As the middle line of the row approaches, the left tail of the pen continues its movement, and the right one begins to return to the left in order to finish writing the lower hook and the entire letter with a thin line.

This sophisticated technique of writing Russian letters is achieved by experience, which is acquired quickly enough and depends entirely on the individual characteristics of the student, whether it be a child or an adult. Texts written in the «Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin» font acquire a special and unique sophistication and splendor. It is no coincidence that in the Museum of Russian National Writing in Yaroslavl, one of the main expositions is ‘Splendid Writing’.



Yu. I. Arutsev. Series of works "Necklace of Russian Cities"

The “Aleksandr Sergeyevich Pushkin” font



Yu. I. Arutsev. Monograms to friends and teachers of the Russian Calligraphy and Ligature School



Federal State-Financed Institution of Higher Education, State Institute of the Russian Language named after A. S. Pushkin

That is why, following the moral national traditions of the Russian people, Yuri Arutsev named the font he created after the greatest Russian poet, Aleksandr Sergeyevich Pushkin, preserving the full name, which specifically distinguishes Russian national culture.

The triumph of the Russian national letter writing is the nameplate of the State Institute of the Russian Language named after A. S. Pushkin in Moscow. It is made of metal according to sketches by Yuri Arutsev.

Thanks to the initiative of the president of the institute, Margarita Nikolaevna Rusetskaya, and the talent of the architect Yuri Vladimirovich Khvoshchetskii, the name of the institute decorating the facade of the main building is now recognized as the world's largest calligraphic inscription in Russian!

About the creator of the "Aleksandr Sergeyevich Pushkin" font.

Yuri Ivanovich Arutsev is a medical expert, calligraphic artist, monogram painter, public figure, writer and poet, and founder of the Yaroslavl historical and pedigree society.

Throughout his artistic career, Yuri Arutsev made about 3,500 calligraphic works, including more than 1,200 monograms, and developed several types of handwritten fonts. One of the most famous of his fonts is "Aleksandr Pushkin", elegant and refined. The largest calligraphic inscription in Russian in the world - the name on the facade of the State Institute of the Russian Language named after A.S. Pushkin in Moscow - is made in this type of font.

In 2009, Yuri Arutsev created the Yaroslavl author's school "Russian Calligraphy and Ligature", which has deep moral and patriotic foundations. "The love of national culture begins with writing. Without writing, there is no interest in reading and development ... There is no love for the Motherland!", Yuri Ivanovich assures.

Teaching at the school is conducted according to a unique methodology, which allows you to teach a student and adult to write at the level of a calligrapher artist in just 72 hours. The school's repertoire has a number of copyright programs: 'Penmanship', 'Russian Calligraphy', 'Left-hander', 'Handwriting Correction', 'Preschooler', 'Yaroslavl Ligature', 'Monogram Art', 'Development of a Personal Signature', etc. For eleven years, the school has trained over 1000 people; more than twenty of them have become international calligraphers.

In 2016, the innovative calligrapher created the only Museum of Russian national writing in Russia. The museum has about 500 exhibits, including calligraphic works by forty masters from Yuri Arutsev's school, and more than two hundred writing instruments from the 15th – 20th centuries.

Street Calligraphy artist from Yaroslavl

Meet Alexander Aleksandrovich Abrosimov, 21, a calligraphy artist, designer, student of Yuri Ivanovich Arutsev, and author of more than a dozen calligraphic works expertly introduced into the city. Alexander prefers large formats and does not «draw» letters but writes in freehand, like the ancient scribes. The area of his largest work, performed on Svobody Street in Yaroslavl, is about 70 square meters. However, street art is not the only direction in which he successfully realizes his creative potential. Alexander is fluent in the calligram genre and Russian calligraphy writing and designs clothes and souvenirs with calligraphy. He can be called one of the most prolific calligraphers of Russia. Returning home after military service in the 4th Panzer Guards Kantemirovskaya Division, he created sixty-seven amazing works in just six months!

Interviewed by A.E. Zolotaryov, curator of the Museum of Russian National Letters

How did you get into calligraphy?

At the age of 16 I attended a trial lesson at the design school of Yuri Ivanovich Arutsev. I only saw broad-pointed calligraphy there and was surprised that you can create subtle beautiful miniature works. I liked everything and then "it took off"... I studied for a year, and later went to additional classes.

What was your first landmark work?

I was asked to make 15 postcards by March 8 for art school teachers. I sat at the Institute for the Development of Education at a desk in the back and wrote in red ink on white sheets. After class, I was surrounded by a group of Yuri Ivanovich's adult students and they watched me write. I was very shy. They liked the postcards and I was pleased that people who knew art appreciated them.

What is the «core» of your writing?

My uniqueness is still being formed. I combine



Abrosimov and Mayakovsky



Speech by Alexander Abrosimov at the State Autonomous Institution «Center for Patriotic Education»



Arch on Svobody Street in Yaroslavl, painted by Alexander Abrosimov together with Evgeny Fakhrutdinov. Words from the poem by Joseph Brodsky, "Do not leave the room, do not make a mistake...", 2019

different techniques and work with various tools. Few people write with a pointed pen in a 3 mm line and a flat 200 mm brush in a meter line on the street. I love large surfaces and textures. At the same time, I also work on sheets with small format.

Why did you, calligrapher Alexander Abrosimov, start to paint and write on the street?

I used to be addicted to graffiti. When I learned calligraphy, I immediately began to apply my skills - the attraction of the street remained! My biggest work is the words from Joseph Brodsky's poem written on an arch on Svobody Street at the store, Rodina, "Do not leave the room, do not make a mistake...". In our situation with coronavirus and self-isolation, it became prophetic. The area of the work is about 70 m2. It took two and a half days and about 20 liters of facade paint to work. My friend Yevgeny Fakhrutdinov and I worked in tandem. I wrote in script, and he decorated the line-spacing with Gothic ornaments.

What is the appeal of a large format for you?

Noticeability, there is the opportunity to «go wild», to feel the swing of your hand, although I often do small work on the street as well.

One of my favorite creations is my favorite dog, Jack. The area of the calligraphic inscription with the dog is 30 m2. It was performed in the underground parking of the Aura Shopping and Entertainment Center as part of the Unick

Street Art festival, where twelve artists received the right to demonstrate their skills. At the end of the festival, nine of them became participants in the competition for the three best works, and in an open vote, my work took third place.

I also made Jack in small format, on paper. This work was demonstrated in the central hall of the House of Artists at the Calligrafest-2019 festival in St. Petersburg.

Last year, you left the army and immediately went to Calligrafest. What are your impressions of this festival? What kind of work did you present?

It was nice to see many famous calligraphers in person.

I presented four works. Two of them - "Jack" and "Spiral" - were part of the exhibition, and the others were presented on the festival's website.

I am constantly looking for new solutions in graphics and I study the work of various authors. I am interested in discovering something unusual and beautiful. I try to bring something of my own into calligraphy but perhaps subconsciously I end up copying someone.

Did calligraphy come in handy during the service?

As relaxation when switching from service, I had wide-pointed pens and nibs and I wrote and did the ligature. Fellow servicemen sometimes asked me to write something, but not very often. These were mostly "handwriting" but I brought home a couple of works that I still really like.



A. Abrosimov. Competitive work performed as part of the Unick Street Art Festival. The dog rarely succeeded in instilling in man its prudence, but it doesn't cost a person anything to let a dog get out of hand (John Terber), 2019

One sample of your Russian calligraphy is a letter from a frontline soldier, Konstantin Simonov. How was this creation born?

I wanted to create a monumental and informative work. The process of choosing the material was long. I envisioned something voluminous... I started with five paragraphs, but then put it off for a long time; I thought that I would not finish it. I started it in 2017 and finished in 2018. Now this work opens an exhibition at the Museum of Russian National Writing.

You made a calligraphic portrait of Rokossovsky. Why is the theme of the Great Patriotic War close to you?

In anticipation of Victory Day, I decided to make a series of works. Now I have two calligraphic portraits of the heroes of the Great Patriotic War, two poems from war veterans, and the inscription "75th anniversary of the Great Victory".

Do you write in Yaroslavl ligature? What is your attitude to Russian ligature?

Yaroslavl ligature is very difficult to write; it is more customized for drawing. But when I do sketches, I remember my "origins". I like Russian ligature, I am actively engaged in it in a modern interpretation. I am looking for new elements and am experimenting. Sometimes I am mistaken and I stumble - without this development does not work.

In 80% of my works, I write letters and do not draw. But there is a type of drawing in complex elements.

I set myself strict deadlines for the execution of my work. Otherwise it would go into a corner! I have no unfinished works, but of course I have drafts.

In some works you try to "make friends" with Gothic style and ligature. What comes of this?



A fragment of the work made as part of the Unick Street Art Festival, 2019

I would not call these elements Gothic. I didn't study Gothic style... In the work on the arch (Brodsky's poem) I like it where there are strict masts and a Gothic ornament, but that was performed by my friend, Yevgeny. We also wrote a lot of collaborations on the canvas, and it looks beautiful.

You paint portraits of the great people of Russia using ligature. How was this theme born? How is it interesting to you?

The theme was born from pop art, and I worked in it for quite some time. I moved this technique to calligraphy and replaced the graphic portrait with ligature. The portraits from letters were made earlier, but I did not see such works from Russian ligature. I'm probably the first here, and it's nice to know that I opened up something new for people! I hope others will try this technique too.

How is a portrait made from letters? How long does it take?



A. Abrosimov. Quote from the annals of the foundation of Yaroslavl. The work was completed on the Day of the City

First, I sketch and silhouette. Shadows loom. Then lines are drawn and written...

The most difficult work was on Rokossovsky. The portrait was more than a meter high and could not fit on the table. I covered part of the canvas with a rag so as not to spoil it and I did all the work lying down. In total, it took 3 days, and the writing itself was about 7 hours.

Is the viewer important to you? Do you receive any feedback on your work?

Sure! Even if there is some criticism, it's still nice to be seen and noticed. They gave an answer and expressed their emotions.

How long can the works "survive" on the streets?

They can be quickly painted over during a season or they can remain for three years, such as the work "If you want to change the world, become this change" at the gates in the Krasnoperekopsky district near the TEXTIL cultural and social center.



Photo with a train: Quote from A. I. Herzen. «Empty answers kill fair questions and divert the mind from action.»



A. Abrosimov. Proverb «The clever does not say everything that he knows, and the stupid does not know everything that he says.»

What writing styles will "survive" in the future?

All styles will be preserved, to one degree or another. There are caring people and they will continue the traditions. Perhaps the letter will go into digital format more - writing with a stylus on the tablet, for example - but manual writing will definitely remain.

Is there a demand for calligraphy? How can you make a living as an artist?

Demand exists, albeit very small. We must actively seek out our clients and constantly participate in festivals and exhibitions so that people will see our work.

What do you recommend to beginner calligraphers in terms of self-development?

Look at different styles and at the writing of different people. "Familiarity" is probably the most important thing at the beginning of your path, in order to subsequently determine which direction is right for you and how to put it into practice.

Do you have any big dreams connected to calligraphy?

My dream is to enter the world stage and exhibit in a good place, a famous gallery, so that my work will be of interest to others.

Lyudmila Pankratova: “I love calligraphy and engineering graphics for the same “graph” root, which yields such different and useful fruits.”

What is common between graphics and calligraphy? What is the difference between calligraphy and lettering? What principles of composition creation exist in calligraphy? These and other questions of “The Calligrapher” were answered by graphic artist, calligrapher, and candidate of pedagogical sciences Lyudmila Pankratova.

Questions by Maria Tomilova

Lyudmila Ivanovna, you graduated from the art and graphic department of the Moscow State Pedagogical Institute. Now you are teaching students descriptive geometry, architectural graphics, graphic design at Ryazan State Pedagogical Institute (now RSU named after S.A. Yesenin). What is common between graphics and calligraphy? What explains your love for them?

There comes a time, when a happy, holistic perception of life sets in, where there are no insurmountable boundaries between “physics” and “lyrics”. True, this border didn't exist for me in childhood. I remember my father, an engineer by profession, studying a paleography book, “The History of Kiev” (I was born in Kiev, I remember walks around the historical places, the mosaics and frescoes of three cathedrals) in his free time with a pencil in his hands.

At the institute, the correlation of technical and artistic disciplines was such that the student himself could hardly decide what he preferred. Natural disciplines, as you know, contribute to the acquisition of the skill of structuring information and, importantly, the desire to find the best solution to the problem, be it technical or artistic. The calligrapher's work is akin to the engineer's calculations: he calculated well, drew, and the plane flew.

The drawing is the result of culture, a high degree of conventions. The first drawings are presented today as works of art; they are so detailed and “verbose”. For example, the image system of Ancient Egypt contains many drawing techniques. Physicist B.V. Rauschenbusch told the artists about this. The architectural drawings of the Renaissance and the technical drawings of the era of the Industrial Revolution are beautiful in themselves; they have independent artistic value.

A font is a phenomenon of the same order. The primary drawing underwent many stylizations until it acquired the form of a modern hieroglyph or letter of a phonetic writing. The process of simplifying the sign is an inevitable and necessary means of increasing abstraction, including a huge number of new concepts and meanings. The drawing and the font evolve in approximately the same direction. There is nothing to do; it is unification, standardization, digitalization ...

But what about calligraphy? In my opinion, calligraphy is a means of retaining cultural meanings in the natural environment of human thoughts, ideas, deeds, and dreams, that is, at the level of living circulation. You can see how today, in calligraphic works of artists from different countries, imagery (personal, historical, cultural, and national) is enhanced. It is a natural reaction to an attempt to level cultural differences.

I love calligraphy and engineering graphics for the same root “graph”, which yields such different and useful fruits.

You defended your Ph.D. thesis on a topic related to the history, theory, and methodology of teaching composition. What can you say about creating a composition in calligraphic works? Are there any rules or principles for creating a composition in calligraphy?

I admire the work of professionals. The dizzying beauty of graphic sheets delights you and makes you look deeper to read the message. Purely visual pleasure transforms into the pleasure of understanding and experiencing the image. Sometimes there is a feeling that the work was done contrary to any rules, according to some of its internal laws. This is common for the great masters.

The question of composition is the most important and difficult question. The laws and rules of composition are



Lyudmila Pankratova. Calligraphic composition based on cursive writing. 2005, 13x20 cm. Coated and tinted paper, broad nib, acrylic, ink

disclosed simply and accessibly in the book of my scientific adviser, doctor of pedagogical sciences, professor of painting, dean of the art and graphic faculty of Moscow State Pedagogical University, Evgeny Vasilievich Shorokhov.

Without exception, all the achievements and problems of any images, including calligraphic ones, lie in the field of composition. For example, suppose you have acquired the skill of cleverly and flawlessly mastering a tool. The next question is why? What is this skill for?

Many art theorists agree on the definition of composition - it is a construction for understanding the meaning of an image. That is, at first the idea and the content, stands out, and then the design. It turns out that the content guides the design, so that then it in turn guides the perception of the viewer. But how does the design do this?

In a graphic composition, easel or printed, the question of the ratio of space and plane on a sheet is very interesting.

This complex aspect of the composition was discussed by V.A. Favorsky, father P. of Florence, A.A. Kibrick and many other artists and theorists. Even physicists, mathematicians, and priests joined in the study.

Vladimir Andreevich Favorsky examined the options for visual sensation; the sense of touch of space in a graphic in detail and with examples. Using the example of writing letters of different lightness and pressure, he showed that letters can easily "float" above the surface of the paper, lie flat, or be "recessed" in a sheet. All this is in the book, and everything "works" for its meanings. He did not approve the illusion of the deep space of linear perspective in a book or engraving, rightly pointing to its destruction of the compositional integrity of the sheet. Favorsky's engravings remain the standard of graphic thinking in the book, which is a manual not only for book artists, but also for calligraphers. Interestingly, Favorsky closely linked space with time. I believe that the same spatial-temporal patterns are also true for handwritten forms.

If we ignore the known laws of composition, and focus only on the perception of conditional space and its artistic effect, it turns out that every time a graphic artist solves the problem of constructing his own space. And somehow, it is closely linked to emotion.

A few examples of how space is a factor in compositional perception:

The space of the medieval icon, like the iconostasis, is read from top to bottom by the enlightened viewer, with "ranks", from the heavenly world to the earthly world, and then to the sinful world. Looking at the icons, a person understands what meanings and experiences are associated with the transition to each level. Other constructions of the icon, distinctly geometric, direct attention to the prayer image. Without going into a particularly retrospective perspective, we say that everything sacred and significant in the icon is transmitted through simple, clear constructions. One of the priests said that the icon is similar to the internal plan and drawing of events.

Renaissance artists, captured by the illusion of a linear perspective, rebuilt the layman's worldview in such a way that the worldview "I" ascended to unprecedented heights and eventually turned into its own destroyer.

The Renaissance perspective was designed for easel and monumental painting. However, many artists corrected it in an effort to bring it closer to visual perception (which, by the way, is impossible to achieve, since geometry prohibits the adequate transfer of a three-dimensional object on a two-dimensional plane). But it did not touch the book. The composition of the book's spread is initially planar, designed to cover the entire field with vision, as the book proportions indicate. The design of the book was adjusted to vision. The book was never read in a hurry. It was almost a sacred action, and this is why there are so many "air" fields, rhythmic ornamental repeats, and ambiguous voids, despite the high cost of materials.

Modern calligraphy is free to handle all the historical achievements in composition. It contains everything. For example, a tape or frieze construction of the text-story, when

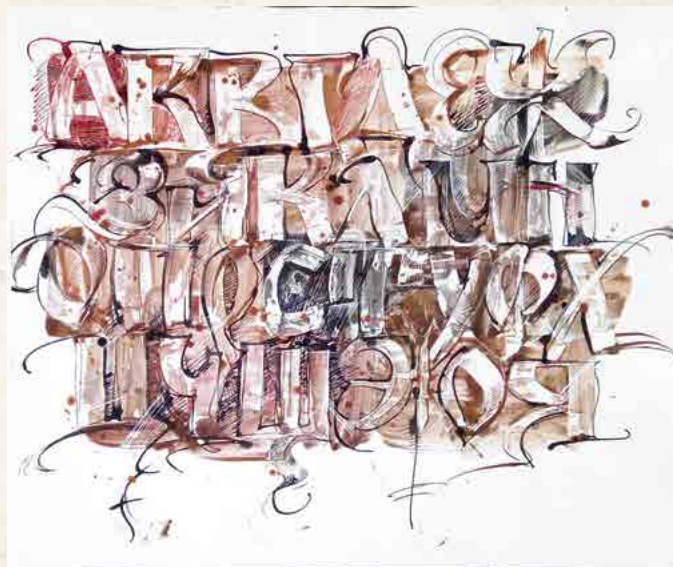


Lyudmila Pankratova. Calligraphic composition based on the seal script. 2009, 40x50 mm. Coated paper, acrylic, gouache, metal ruler

the eye moves along the horizontal or a decorative-plane free filling of the sheet - an abstract rhythm. Sometimes you can even notice the elements of displacement or rupture of space - cubism. The theater technique of side-scenes gradation of depth includes everything from traditional oriental schemes to experimental, dynamic designs. Please note: experiments take place not only with the letters or the configuration of the text, but also with the ways of their spatial interpretation. And only the line still remains a «conductor» for the eye.

A separate issue that is solved intuitively by masters based on their figurative task is the perception of time in the composition of a handwritten text. Powerful, informative, monumental and long-term is transmitted through simple isolated forms, while a fleeting glance, the dynamics of development, the ambiguity, and understatement of the image are transmitted through a cinematic device of fragmentary composition.

Another point that I had to “discover”, while it was perfectly understood by professionals, is the motor sensation, which lies at the very beginning of the perception of a particular manuscript composition. You are involved in the author’s gesture. Often they write, as they draw, with the whole body. Emotion arises from the awareness of a difficult or, conversely, easy movement. This is surprising, but in the



Lyudmila Pankratova. Alphabet. The motives of the seal script and half-running hand. 2018, coated paper, acrylic, ink, metal ruler



Lyudmila Pankratova. ABC abbreviation

same way the viewer perceives the sculpture. First, he gets used to the volume of the sculpture, placing himself in the place of the statue. And only after that comes emotion.

Color. Color is hard; I don’t know what to do with it. Color for me is not at all important in calligraphy, moreover, it is often harmful. The tone is more important because it can build a composition, causing picturesque notes. It is also able to transmit color indirectly.

Paradoxes are interesting and have all kinds of contrasts. Here lies the endless variety and richness of calligraphy. Of course, semantic paradoxes are interesting, as well as how they are solved by each author ...

You devote a lot of time to creating logos and bookplates (book signs identifying the owner of the book), and you can design fonts yourself. What is the difference between calligraphy and lettering?

We develop corporate identity with students, including logos and bookplates. The future designer of the environment certainly needs to know the history of writing and the basics of font writing as a cultural landmark. Taste is an important measure. This can only be given by cultural tradition and the study of nature. There is almost nothing to take from a human oneself.

The availability of printing and the computer played a trick on the so-called designers. The ease of image acquisition creates the illusion of owning a profession. To begin with, I introduce students to the oldest book sign of the priest Dosifei of the 15th century, with examples of woodcut, etching, and linocut classics of graphics. After all, the computer produces an imitation of a cutter, traces of soft materials, and even calligraphy. However, in order to learn, it is necessary for it to be difficult, for the material to resist, and for you to overcome its resistance.

The so-called lettering is widely used in graphic design and advertising, and has an applied momentary orientation. Its relation to calligraphy is the same as design is to art. Design parasitizes on art; the role of the commercial component is great in it.

I will probably express a controversial opinion here, but design is now engaged in what creates an excess of comfort, "kunshtyuk" - entertaining and joyful fine garbage. This is in contrast to the principles laid down in the Bauhaus and Higher Art and Technical Studios. Many people think that true creativity is design and salon painting. While «the distance is enormous» between the works of Maurice Escher and Leonardo Erlich, they both «play» with the illusion in space.

Together with students we do not only study, we discuss various interesting topics. When in judgments we reach an impasse, I propose: if some concept is unclear, translate it into Russian. And then its true meaning will be revealed. Sometimes it turns out funny: lettering is

«alphabetting», «alphabetage», or «alphabet-creating». But this phenomenon of design should also exist in life, if it is appropriate, with humor or irony, and with taste.

In general, I think that a designer cannot do without a share of self-irony. You can't think that you are working on the eternal while writing a card. At one time there was a mocking name for sketches for sale - «imperishable.»

Among your calligraphic works, citations from medieval Russian literature occupy a significant place. What is decisive for you in your work: the content of the text or commitment to some writing style? In other words, do you write quotes from medieval literature because you like the uncial script?

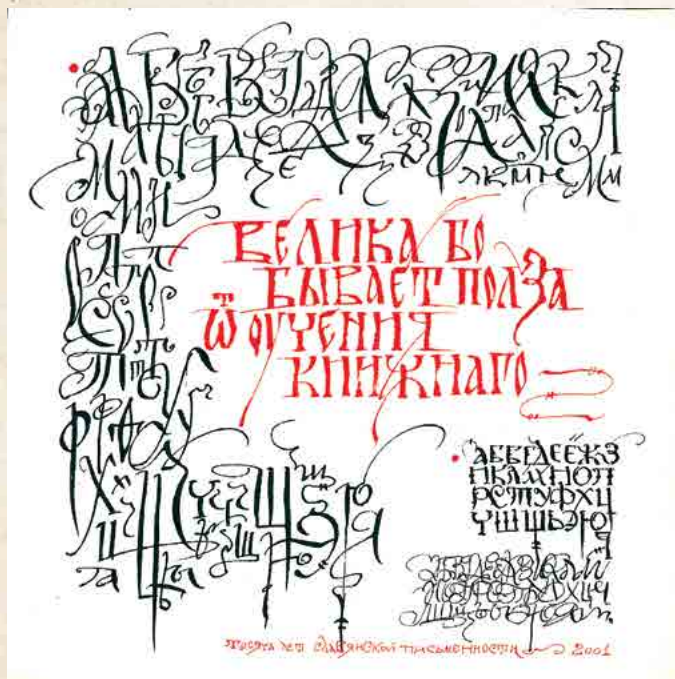
The most exciting thing is the content, the style is drawn to it, and then the structure and rhythm of the letter becomes exciting. And it goes like a sinusoid. I can't divide it.

Where does the choice of style come from ... First, it is paleography - studying dating of the sources and copying styles. As you copy, you comprehend the motor expression of each style and see what can be expressed with this. The very first sketches were quotes from well-known sources: "Praise to Yaroslav the Wise" from "The Tale of Bygone Years" (end of the 11th – beginning of the 12th century), and "Edification" of Prince Vladimir Monomakh (12th century).

There are well-known lines about book teaching. But little is known that the Tale gives an interpretation of good and evil on a cosmic, global scale.



Lyudmila Pankratova donates her works to the Director of the Museum of World Calligraphy Alexei Shaburov



Lyudmila Pankratova. The composition «Great is the Use Of Book Teaching». 2017, 17x17 cm. Paper, ink, gouache, pointed and broad nib

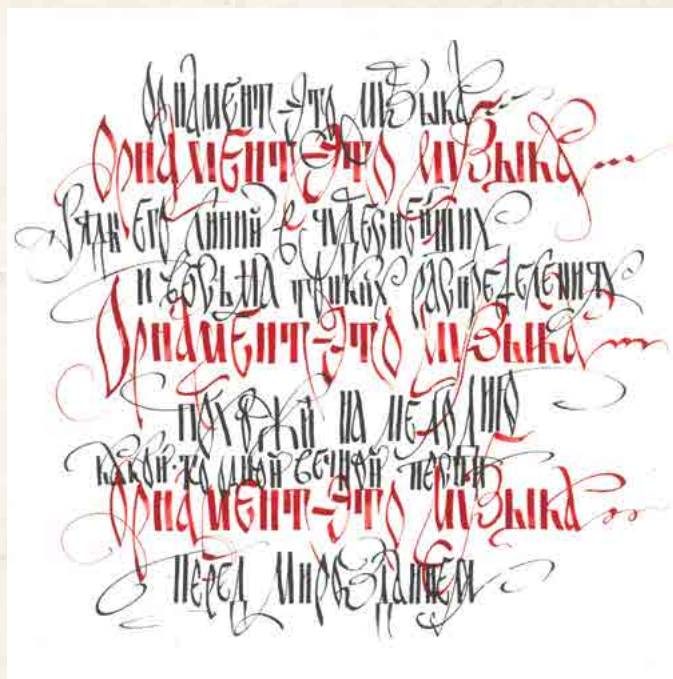
And how interesting it is to read aphorisms from collections for reading: "Bee", "Wisdom of Menander", "Izmaragd". All these are translations from Greek, combined with Russian instructions. It is interesting to read even the medieval legal contracts; it is noteworthy that some strict requirements are written with intricate curls in them.

In one case, the beauty of the statement is striking: «Wisdom reigns over all virtues,» or «the Word dresses the soul in an image as a good life". You read and live people arise. Sometimes you hear a sigh: "What is harder for an intelligent person to do? And the hardest thing for a smart person is to teach a stupid and stubborn person". I found a form for such brief statements - small chamber compositions, tinted paper for which had to be prepared separately.

In another case, reasoning is appealing. For example, «On the nobility, dignity and beauty of the human soul.» There are many teachings in family life and parenting.

In the third case, historical truth is clothed in a tragic and luminous image, as, for example, in "The Legend and Perdition of the Russian Land" of the 13th century: "O Light, Bright and Red Decorated Russian Land!"

The uncial is beautiful as a strict clear writing. But there are a lot of methods of writing in Russian books and lists; in addition to the uncial, there is semi-uncial, ligature, cryptography, cursive, diacritical signs, a record of numbers, notes, ornaments; the texts are often dated by observing the specific methods. There are inscriptions of southern Russia, Old Believers, northern, and so on. We understand that documentaries are not expected from calligraphic work; just creating an image is enough. But nevertheless, the knowledge of subtleties brings something valuable, namely historicism and cultural subtext.



Lyudmila Pankratova. Composition based on S. A. Yesenin's quote «Ornament is music...». 2011 Paper, ink, gouache, broad nib. 42x30 cm

In your graphic sheets you can also find lines from the poetry of A.S. Pushkin, M.Y. Lermontov, S.A. Yesenin, and contemporary authors. What style are they written in?

It is more appropriate to speak not about style, but about stylization. In the case of Pushkin's poem «In the Jewish hut a lamp ...» of 1825, the late Jewish manuscript in italics was stylized, and the text is divided into double lines, which is implied by the rhythm of the verse. Tinted paper does not create contrast with the color font. The poem is very disturbing, ambiguous, and ends with the arrival of a wanderer in the hut. The mystery and uncertainty of the ending makes it possible to think of a further action.

How to convey Yesenin's inconsistent restless speech in his early verse, saturated with darkness, murmuring, fears and vernacular? Breath corresponds to a circular elastic font and slanting strokes. There is no beauty in such an outline; there is a general image of vernacular. Here, the styling method is selected based on the reader's breathing.

At the beginning of this year you and Margarita Budylyova held the joint exhibition «Graphics and Calligraphy" in the House-Museum of I.P. Pozhalostin in Solotcha. Tell us about your alliance with her. What works did you present at the exhibition? As far as we know, Margarita made only one calligraphic work, which she is very proud of.

Margarita Budylyova is a well-known artist and graphic artist, who graduated from the Tbilisi Academy of Arts. An artist of books, she developed a font for various print publications of them. The idea of exhibiting easel graphics, dolls and calligraphy belongs to her, and all this came together thanks to her taste, culture, and humor. It turned

out unexpectedly: funny and serious, and touching. I trust Margarita and her always accurate judgments. I'm learning from her.

What can you say about the state of calligraphy in Ryazan, do you have a lot of fans there?

In Ryazan, the public traditionally prefers painting, but this phenomenon is widespread. To judge the state of calligraphy, a certain "critical mass" of enthusiasts is needed, which could be noticed. In reviews, I always get favorable ratings. Some works are in private collections. There is no association or group, even at the Union of Designers.

I am sure that calligraphy cannot but have connoisseurs. It is only necessary to introduce its demonstration into everyday life, or into some system. Popularization is important, especially among young people.

Since we are talking about the youth: are there among your students those who in the near future could be called one of the most prominent representatives of modern calligraphy, such as Pokras Lampas, the founder of a new direction in art, Calligrafuturism?

Arseny Pyzhenkov, with the pseudonym Pokras Lampas, is a Petersburgier who pioneered a successful combination of practicality with artistry. He creates amazing things, combining calligraphy, street art and performance. This is a spontaneous modern language.

I'll say with pride that the students of the design department of the Ryazan branch of the Moscow Institute of Culture, where I conducted a series of special disciplines, were always happy to drudge at fonts. They won prizes in international and domestic poster competitions, developed logos for the city, decorated holidays, and often used fonts as a figurative stimulus in design work.

Olga Korotkova took the font as a basis in the design concept of the children's library and constructed a coherent expressive space. The logo of the House-Museum of I.P. Pozhalostin, made by Anastasia Shapkina, a wonderful draftsman and engraver, on a calligraphic handwritten basis was adopted as a brand name. Alexander Solomennikov, Irina Denisova, and Ekaterina Gorbacheva successfully work in the field of printing, including with handwritten elements of books. Graduates do not lose touch with us teachers. According to the work of our graduates, we see that they support the culture of hand-print, and there is a taste for thoughtful and painstaking work.



Lyudmila Pankratova.

Sketch of the logo of the exhibition of archival materials on the architectural history of Ryazan. 2016



Logo of the house-museum of the engraver I. P. Pozhalostin. Work made by 4-year student Anastasia Shapkina, 2018. The basis of the figurative motive of the logo is the trace of the scribing tool on a copper board.

The first school of Chinese calligraphy in Saint Petersburg

"In ancient times, all the men of science had teachers. The teacher is the one who transmits the 'Tao', teaches the cause, clears up misconceptions. There are no people who were born already full of knowledge, who will not be mistaken. Not following the teacher is a true mistake, never resolved. <...> There are no precious or despicable, older or younger ones - there is a true path, there is a teacher."

Han Yu, «Discourse on teaching» (translation by A.G. Storozhuk)

Oksana Khukhrina, author of the article

Three years ago, in March 2017, the First School of Chinese Calligraphy opened in St. Petersburg. The idea of creating this educational project arose after the Chinese New Year in St. Petersburg, thanks to rapidly developing Russian-Chinese relations. The holiday has been held with the support of the Government of St. Petersburg since 2015. As part of the festive program of events, workshops for Chinese calligraphy and traditional crafts were organized.

In the conditions of a multi-confessional and multicultural city, such events get special significance. Given the growing interest of Russian citizens in the cultural traditions of Asian countries and learning the Chinese language, the celebration of the Chinese New Year in St. Petersburg has become a bright, anticipated and highly visited event. Workshops for Chinese calligraphy by master Luo Lei were one of the most popular and were highly appreciated by the organizers of the Chinese New Year project in St. Petersburg; they also collected a large number of positive reviews from the participants. This was the impetus for the creation of the First School of Chinese Calligraphy in St. Petersburg, the purpose of which is



Master classes



"Preface to the Imperial Instruction" (Shenjiaoxiu) 圣教序 (sheng4jiao4xu4). Composed by the highest order of the emperor of the Tang dynasty, Li Shimin, and rewritten in the style of Xingshu 行书 around year 673, copying the handwriting of the great calligrapher Wang Xizhi (303-361), a monk of the Buddhist monastery of Hongfusi 弘福寺 (in the present city of Xi'an) named Huaizen 怀仁. The text is embossed on a stone stele and consists of 30 lines ranging from 80-83 characters, which equals about 2,400 characters in total! Contents: the journey of the monk Xuanzang to India for the books of the Buddhist canon Tripitaki and their translation into Chinese. Xuanzang (602-664) also, upon returning to the Tang capital, lived in the Hongfusi monastery.

to create conditions for teaching Chinese calligraphy to all those interested, regardless of the level of knowledge of the Chinese language and creative skills.

Luo Lei was born in Gansu Province (China). He began to engage in calligraphy from the age of 13 and studied under one of the most famous calligraphers of our time, Yang Hong. From 1988 to 1995 he taught calligraphy in China, and then moved to Russia. Devoting himself to calligraphy for many years, painstakingly studying and copying the old masters of calligraphy, and absorbing samples of ancient culture, he created a unique author's style. The artist has been engaged in the art of calligraphy for more than 37 years, promoting his ideas and passing on secrets to St. Petersburg students.

The School of Chinese Calligraphy, opened by Luo Lei together with art critic and teacher Oksana Khukhrina, offers an authorial educational methodology using copying techniques, homework programs and individual work plans. The system of classes in the school is built on the principle of «from the simple to the complex.» The set of practical tasks allows students to master the writing technique in the style of kaishu. Luo Lei writes samples for copying and practicing skills; for this, Chinese idioms, benevolent inscriptions, poems by ancient Chinese poets, and texts are used. At classes, there is a discussion of the cultural component of Chinese calligraphy, as well as acquaintance with outstanding calligraphers and artists. Much attention is paid to the organization of the workplace and the choice of materials for calligraphy. Luo Lei himself selects brushes for students to work with, gives recommendations, and also deals with pen-cases with brushes. Sometimes out of fifteen seemingly suitable brushes he leaves two or three. He gives advice on which paper to use, and often he brings his own paper for work so that all students can perform the task in a quality manner. A lesson always starts with a homework check. Luo Lei puts 2-3 hours into calligraphy daily. Students are advised to study at least half an hour, but every day! He is very happy when students make progress. He highlights the most successful hieroglyphs and says, "Think about how you did it. And repeat it." He often praises his students' work, as well.

He is confident that everyone who engages in calligraphy will live a long and happy life. He cites outstanding calligraphers — centenarians — as an example: Liu Gongquan, 87 years old [1], Ouyang Xun, 84 years old [2], Dong Qichang, 81 years old [3]. Luo Lei brings new pieces for each lesson, saying, "Now we will see my homework", and then unfolds scrolls of considerable sizes that sometimes reach 10–20 meters. And it is always a surprise. Expectation and reality always coincide. Smooth columns of hieroglyphs literally fascinate the audience. And that is done without ruling. Each student has his own technique, but no one can do it without a backing sheet. It is very difficult to accurately maintain the size and distance between the hieroglyphs by eye. How much is hidden behind it. Luo Lei knows the laws of calligraphy well and one of the important laws of 知白守黑 sounds like this: "Know white, keep black." A strict teacher will always follow this law. It is amazing that

The first school of Chinese calligraphy in Saint Petersburg

he finds special words for each student – one is advised to write small hieroglyphs, the other is given a big brush and instructed to write large hieroglyphs. “There must be power!” he convinces everyone. He is sincerely admired when he sees that power in written hieroglyphs. There is a number of excellent students who, from the ‘Heart Sutra’ [4] of 260 hieroglyphs, switched to the performance of Zhu Yi Bo’s ‘Singer (Pipa)’ [5] of 616 hieroglyphs, all the way to performance of the ‘Thousand Character Classic’ [6]. Despite the fact that classes are held once a week, students do a lot, taking homework into account.

2019 was particularly successful for the school as it was marked by the organization of two exhibition projects. In February 2019, the ‘Next stop is China-St. Petersburg’ exhibition was held at the Museum of Theater and Music in the Sheremetyevo Palace of St. Petersburg. The project was devoted to traditional forms of Chinese art, among which Chinese calligraphy plays a special part. And this is the result of the work of the whole team. Twenty-two authors presented their works at the exhibition, among them were professional honored masters, members of the Union of Artists, the Designers Association, teachers of art universities of St. Petersburg, and those for whom the art of calligraphy is a hobby. Luo Lei’s calligraphic works, made in different styles from Zhuangshu to Caoshu, were harmoniously complemented by Guo Hua traditional painting, graphics, and paintings, combining the artistic traditions of Russian and Chinese masters. The gem of the exhibition was a collection of Chinese porcelain provided by the Imperial Porcelain Factory, as well as an installation that allows visitors to get acquainted with the four ‘jewels’ of the scientist’s office: brush, ink, paper and ink slab. In order to better feel the atmosphere in which Chinese calligraphy is born, everyone could try their hand at writing hieroglyphs, participating in workshops led by master Luo Lei.

In September 2019, the School of Chinese Calligraphy took part in workshops organized as part of the celebrations for the opening of the ‘Great Chinese Calligraphy and Painting’ exhibition in Moscow. The workshop was held by master Luo Lei and school student Yekaterina Khalturina. Ekaterina, an artist by profession, is a visual arts teacher at a private school in St. Petersburg. As part of her subject, she conducts classes of Chinese calligraphy for very young Petersburgers.

The exhibition of Chinese calligraphy “Ancient Tea Horse Road (Chamadao)” [7] was included in the September events of the “NeobiCHAI nii sad ” festival, organized by the Botanic Garden. The topic of the exhibition predetermined the selection of texts related to the topic of the Tea Road. At the exhibition Chinese poetry was presented, as well as benevolent inscriptions, quotes, and Chinese painting. Classes of Chinese calligraphy and a tea party are traditional for Chinese culture. Master Luo Lay has his own recipe for creating an artistic mood, which is to start a lesson with a cup of good tea, and only a few minutes later, when all the senses achieve harmony, proceed to calligraphy.

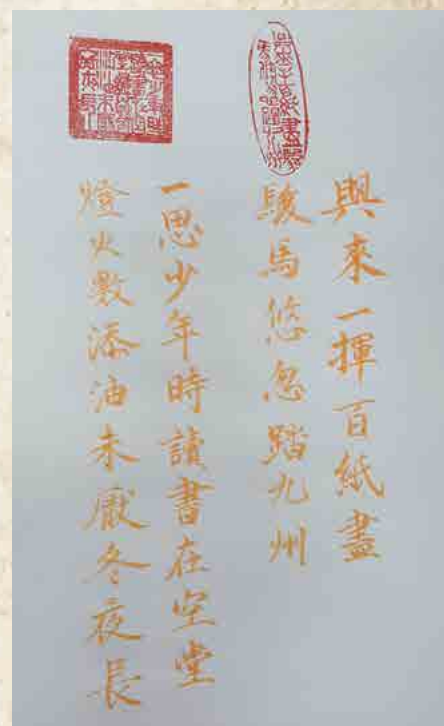
The art of Chinese calligraphy brought together



Sima Qian and his Historical Notes.

The work of Sima Qian received its modern name “Historical Notes” (Shi Ji) after the death of the author; Sima Qian himself called his work “The Book of the Court historiographer” (Taishigun shu). The name is symbolic. It was a kind of tribute of the «father of Chinese historiography» to the ancient, centuries-old traditions created and jealously preserved by court historians and chroniclers.

Calligraphy of Luo Lei.



Tikhon Samartsev's seals, inscription by Lo Lay.

people of different professions. The students of the school were lawyers, doctors, financial analysts, managers, translators and artists. In the classroom, they not only master the Chinese calligraphy, gain knowledge of the culture and history of China, but also gain experience in the traditional design of works in silk passé-partout, which is especially important when preparing works for exhibitions. Master Luo Lei teaches you how to design works and invites everyone to master this skill.

The students of the school are especially proud of their own seals made by the school masters Oleg Rakhmanov and Tikhon Samartsev. The carving of seals is an art, included along with Chinese calligraphy in the List of

Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (UNESCO). Carved seals of Tikhon Samartsev were also included in the «The next stop is China - St. Petersburg» exhibition. Not so long ago, a unique opportunity to study Chinese with Marina Cherevko, a senior lecturer at St. Petersburg University and researcher of literature and historical and ethnographic monuments of China, emerged in the school. Thanks to Marina, Chinese poems, memorized by heart and written in kaishu style under the guidance of Luo Lei, get a special meaning and sound.

Since the school opened, more than 30 workshops have been organized and conducted for children, students, and adults in Moscow and St. Petersburg. More than three



Fragment of the Heart Sutra. Calligraphy of Svetlana Grigorieva.



Fragment of the Heart Sutra. Calligraphy of Svetlana Grigorieva.

The first school of Chinese calligraphy in Saint Petersburg



Work design Exhibition «Next stop China-Petersburg»



Exhibition «Next stop China-Petersburg»,
Theater and Musical Art Museum, St. Petersburg



Oleg Rakhmanov

The inscription 惠風和暢 translates as "Gentle blow of the wind" and indicates a favorable time of the year (early spring) to start collecting tea.

hundred people became students of the school. The project partners are public, private and state organizations: The Chinese community in St. Petersburg, the Center for Oriental Cultures of the Mayakovsky Library, the Confucius Institute in St. Petersburg, the Calligraphy Center «From Az to Izhitsa», the Union of Artists of St. Petersburg, and the St. Petersburg Designers Association.

Luo Lay's enthusiasm and boundless love for his work makes many people follow his example. Apart from his skill, Luo Lei is ready to share his extraordinary love for the world and people. At his workshops, he always says, "How beautiful the world is. Without light, there is no darkness. Day follows the night. A woman is completed by a man and vice versa. Black and white make harmony." This is the high purpose of Chinese calligraphy.



Checking the Homework

Note

Luo Lei is an official consultant of the Museum of World Calligraphy, Moscow. Member of numerous exhibitions, including the Hermitage. His work "Short Song" Cao Cao was included in the non-governmental fund of cultural heritage of the Russian Federation.

1. Liu Gongquan (柳公權, 778–865) lived during the Tang Dynasty. He is considered one of the best masters of calligraphy in the history of China. His calligraphy carries strength, grace,

and accuracy. The next generations of masters of writing held it in high esteem.

2. Ouyang Xun (歐陽詢, 557–641) was a Confucian scholar and calligrapher of the early Tang Dynasty in China, one of the most significant calligraphers of China and the region. The classic of kai shu style.

3. Dong Qichang (董其昌, 1555–1636) was a Chinese artist, theorist, calligrapher, and collector.

4. «Heart sutra» is a statement of Buddhist ideas of perfect wisdom and is among the shortest Buddhist sutras.

5. Zhu Yi Bo (白居易, 772–846). Zhu Yi Bo paid great attention to the social reality and burdens of life of the common people, and his poetic position was as follows: «Literature should be written in accordance with the era; poetry should be composed in accordance with the facts.» Of sentimental poetry, the most famous epic poems are "A Song of Endless Longing" ("Chang Hyung Ge") and "Singer" ("Pipa Sin"). Even in his own time, Zhu Bo enjoyed wide popularity and fame; he had even greater influence on the literature of later generations.

6. Thousand Character Classic (千字文 «Thousand Character Text») is a Chinese text of philosophical content dated to the 5th – 6th centuries, which is used to memorize hieroglyphs. It consists of 1,000 non-repeating hieroglyphs, divided into 125 verses, each of which consists of two rhyming lines of four hieroglyphs.

7. Chamadao appeared during the Tang Dynasty (618–907) and reached its peak during the Song Dynasty (907–1270), when up to seven and a half tons of tea were transported to Lhasa annually. The routes of the ancient tea road caravans ran deep in the mountains, in southwestern China. These are some of the highest mountain roads in the world joining Tibet with the interior of the country. Historical evidence shows coexistence and good neighborly relations between Han, Tibetans and other nations. Transportation was carried out using horse-drawn vehicles and by foot.



Work design

Mao Guangsong:

“Only loners seek the truth and break up with everyone who loves it insufficiently.”

These famous words of Boris Pasternak have always inspired me to continue my creative search.”

“Do not change your resolve, do not stop working, do not spare yourself.” The author of the Maoquan calligraphic style, Chinese calligrapher, member of the Chinese Calligraphers Association, professor at the training center at the Chinese Calligraphers Association, and member of the board of the China Association for International Cooperation, Mr. Mao Guangsong, shared the principles of “three nots” that help one succeed.

Questions by Maria Tomilova

Mr. Mao Guangsong, you began to learn calligraphy quite late, in adulthood. Tell us how it happened. What was the impetus for practicing calligraphy?

Art is an artist's reflection of reality through images, and while it surpasses it, it is characterized by a typical social form; art includes literature, calligraphy, painting, music, dancing, architecture, and more. People of art are subjects of creativity who live at different times, belong to different layers of society, and have different development paths.

Speaking of me, I was born in the 1950s in a remote village within the Lien Shui District of Jiangsu Province in China. Despite the fact that at that time my hometown was very poor, among ordinary people there has long been a tradition of studying Confucianism: everyone hoped that children would study well, write hieroglyphs beautifully and correctly, and become cultural people, because this is usually treated with great regard. Therefore, representatives of the older generations have always said that “people can be judged by hieroglyphs; a hieroglyph is like the “person's face”. This phrase was deeply rooted in my young heart. I really wanted to write hieroglyphs beautifully, but due to the limited conditions in a rural school that lasted until the end of high school, I did not read a single copybook on the calligraphy of ancient masters. I remember when I was in the first grade of high school. I alone rode a bicycle to the Xinhua Bookstore in Qingjiang to buy calligraphic copybooks, covering more than 300 miles there and back, and as a result I returned empty-handed. Later I joined the army, and only at the beginning of the 80s, at the age of 27, was I lucky enough to meet with calligraphy. After pursuing a policy of reform and China's openness, all professions and specialties were given the opportunity to flourish, and cultural construction entered



Mao Guangsong. Russia and China are one family. Together we are invincible. Work done in the style of Mao Quan

a new period of development. In 1981, the Association of Chinese Calligraphers was created, while the War Ministry of the Railway Forces and the large organizations in Beijing in which I worked actively organized calligraphy lessons. In the classes, Li Do, Liu Binsen, Ouyang Zhongshi, Wang Xiaju, and other masters of calligraphy shared their experience with us. The deep and multifaceted art of calligraphy, with a history spanning several thousand years, shocked me very much. From that point on, I firmly decided to make the study of calligraphy my life's goal...a childhood dream that I should strive to realize. I believe that culture is a category that belongs not only to an individual person, but also to the state, nation, and thus to the world. Practice shows that the art of Chinese calligraphy has become the brightest flower in the art garden.

You did not study calligraphy from one calligrapher, but from several outstanding masters. Why? Is this the only way to master the art of calligraphy? Which teacher has influenced you the most?

Confucius said: "When three are on the way, then one of them can undoubtedly be my teacher. I choose what is good and follow it, and the evil should warn and help me to improve." In the study of calligraphy, as in any other occupation, only by following the good and giving up certain

things can one continuously move forward. It is necessary to take care of the small, not paying attention to the superfluous, because if you deal with many at once, it will not lead to anything. The poet of the Tang era, Du Fu said: "It is necessary to distinguish, cut off the excess, and abandon poems of poor shape and poor content; it is necessary to study the Feng and I from Shijin, to learn with an open heart from the sages. The more teachers you have, the more true teachers they will be for you." He says that it is necessary to approach the poems of predecessors selectively: to accept something, and to reject something, it is necessary to make a judgment on the basis of one's assessment; to refuse something, ask the same question to different kinds of mentors, as well as friends who express their opinions directly - this way you can hear different opinions. The main thing, according to Du Fu, is to maintain continuity, that is, to create a new one on the basis of the old. The same applies to the study of calligraphy: you can learn from each other and combine different directions. Obtaining extensive knowledge is necessary, but it is also necessary to highlight key points in order to create something new.

Liu Kai from the Qing era said: «Without studying different schools, it is impossible to find your own style, and without resorting to the highest achievements of others it is impossible to create something of your own that is unique.»



Mao Guangsong. Decorations for the stage of the exhibition «Great Chinese Calligraphy and Painting» in Moscow. Excerpt from Xi Jinping's speech at the meeting dedicated to the 15th anniversary of the signing of the Russian-Chinese Agreement on Good Neighborliness, Friendship, and Cooperation: "Together we will create a better future for Sino-Russian relations. We must actively carry out cultural exchanges; the Sino-Russian Committee for Peace and Development must play a special role, it is necessary to strengthen exchanges between peoples, widely promote the concept of peace established by the Agreement, and stimulate acquaintances and mutual understanding of the society of the two countries. This will facilitate the transmission of Sino-Russian friendship through generations." Mao Guangsong communicates with students at the end of his lecture at the exhibition "Great Chinese Calligraphy and Painting".

Over the years of training and research, I have received detailed instructions and help from many masters and representatives of older generations, such as Li Do, Liu Binsen, Ouyang Zhongshi, Wang Xiaju, Liu Yi, Tong Wei, Kang Yin, Duan Chengui, and others. Their work gave me awareness, inspiration, and brought me many benefits. Lee Do and Kang Yin have had a profound influence on my path of exploring our heritage and finding new ideas. Mr. Li Do contributed to the fact that I switched from writing on paper to writing on stone steles, and Mr. Kang Yin's achievements in the field of paleography, in the art of writing on bronze and stone vessels, and in calligraphy inspired me to boldly move on.

You have created your own calligraphic style called Maotsuan. Tell us about it. What is its uniqueness? Is there something in it that combines it with other styles?

My own Quan style was formed after several decades of training, studying and research. This style involves the use of a goat hair brush with a long sharp tip. When studying works performed in this style, you can notice that the point has a triangular shape, and empty and full elements complement each other. The horizontal is like a cornice of a classic building, both ends of which are raised up; the horizontal line is wide, as if hidden behind a ridge of clouds, the flip down and to the left and the flip to the right open to the left and to the right. The completion of the line is very pronounced: when the brush is pulled off, the line increases; the vertical line is strict and strong, with «its strength reaching 1000 ju.» The Maoquan style strongly resembles the beautiful distant, strict rhythm of the steles Quan Bao Tzu and Quan Lun Yang, borrows the simplicity and power of the steles Tian fa Shen Chen, Zhang Qian, Lin Miao, and other steles, their ancient simplicity and energy, as well as the bold style of writing varnish on the bamboo boards of Jin Nong. This is a free writing style that is original, special, natural, honest, and majestic; in its simplicity you can see energy, and there is strength and softness. The

Maotsuan style is suitable for calligraphy on paper and writing on stele: it is both serious and naive, sophisticated and deep, rich and strong, elegant and graceful. This is a style that has excellent outlines. Duan Chengui described my style in this way: "There is a feeling and movement follows it: when calligraphy goes beyond the canons, one can achieve a high level. The style is natural and beautiful, like flowers falling on the surface of a clean reservoir.» Mr. Li Do praised my works this way: "The Tsuan style has a special dignity and strength, it is filled with greatness, like a high mountain or a stone block, it is impregnable, and it contributes to the emergence of spiritual forces among those who see this style."

During the preparation period and during the Great Chinese Calligraphy and Painting exhibition you rendered great support to the World Calligraphy Museum. You wrote a work devoted to the friendship between China and Russia, which has become both a work of art and decoration for the stage. What can you say about the exhibition? In your opinion, how difficult was it to organize an exposition of such a scale? Did you believe in its success? Did the exhibition live up to your expectations?

2019 is the anniversary of the founding of the PRC, as well as the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Russia. This is a great event for two friendly countries. In Moscow, in the second half of September, the Sokolniki hosted the exhibition Great Chinese Calligraphy and Painting. The exhibition was a great success, received a positive assessment from a wide range of people, and was the center of cultural interaction and communication of Muscovites. Deputy Chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, representative of the Russian-Chinese Friendship Society Ivan Melnikov, Chinese Ambassador to the Russian Federation Zhang Hanhui, First Deputy Head of the Russian-Chinese Friendship Society Ms. Kulikova, Director of the World Calligraphy Museum Mr.



Workshop by Nasser Tavusi at the festival and competition of Arabic calligraphy «Silk Lines» in Grozny, 2019

Shaburov, other leaders, and guests of honor took part in this event; it really was of great importance.

The exhibition brought together: Zhang Hai, consultant of the Chinese Calligraphers Association, Su Shishu, chairman of the China Calligraphers Association, Ren Xu Qingping, director of the Xu Beihong Art Institute of the University of China, and Li Gangtian, vice president of the Siliningshe Society. The exhibition featured more than 450 calligraphic works by masters from different provinces and cities. I was lucky to take part in this exhibition at the kind invitation of Mr. Shaburov.

On December 20th, 2018, I first met with Mr. Shaburov during his visit to Beijing; my good friend Yuan Pu introduced us. The main topic of our conversation was the preparation of the exhibition Great Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in Moscow. Mr. Shaburov spoke about the achievements in holding international exhibitions of calligraphy over the past ten years, as well as about the preparatory work for the upcoming exhibition Great Chinese Calligraphy and Painting, dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Russia.

Mr. Yuan Pu shared all his wonderful impressions and experiences traveling to Russia to attend the first International Exhibition of Calligraphy, which took place in St. Petersburg ten years ago. During the communication, I saw that Mr. Shaburov is very enthusiastic in his work, has the highest level of professionalism, and possesses many years of experience in conducting exhibitions. In addition, Sokolniki has an excellent professional team. Therefore, I was sure that the exhibition would be successful, and gladly accepted the invitation, supporting the initiative of Mr. Shaburov, to paint a work for this exhibition. The creation of the work required lengthy preparation. To begin with, it was necessary to determine its content, and then the size of the work. In addition, it was important for me to hear the opinion of my friends.

Mr. Shaburov, along with the team, came to China twice more: in January and April of 2019. During their first visit, they visited the Quan Mao Guangsong Museum of Calligraphic Genre in my hometown of Huai'an in the Lien Shui District of Jiangsu Province. We repeatedly exchanged opinions and basically reached consensus. To create large works, it was required that the height of the exhibition hall be at least 10 meters. For my work, I selected a wonderful passage from Xi Jinping's speech at the meeting dedicated to the 15th anniversary of the signing of the Russian-Chinese agreement on good-neighborliness, friendship, and cooperation: "Together we will create a better future for Sino-Russian relations. We must actively carry out cultural exchanges, in which the Sino-Russian Committee for Peace and Development must play a special role. It is necessary to strengthen exchanges between peoples, widely promote the concept of peace established by the treaty, and stimulate acquaintances and mutual understanding of the society of the two countries. This will facilitate the transmission of Sino-Russian friendship through generations." Mr. Shaburov praised the chosen topic. After listening to the opinions of some of my colleagues, I decided to write this very text in

my Maoquan genre on eight canvases. After the framing, the size of the work was about 8 meters in height and about 6 meters in width. Their creation was completed at the end of June 2019, and the framing was completed in July. In August, Aleksey Kharyutkin, assistant director of the World Calligraphy Museum, came to Beijing once again to transfer works to Moscow.

After careful consideration by the World Calligraphy Museum team, it was decided to use my works as background works and place them in the center of the exhibition hall, with four Russian and Chinese flags displayed on the left and right. Red Chinese lanterns hang at the top of the room, creating a great friendly atmosphere. This unique and unprecedented exhibition effect has impressed every visitor. This form of the exhibition became a Russian innovation, it exceeded my expectations, and I was very pleased. A creation of this kind did not exist at calligraphy and painting exhibitions in China.

The program of the exhibition Great Chinese Calligraphy was quite eventful. It included lectures, calligraphy workshops, tea ceremonies, and musical performances. Zhao Xueli, Zhang Jiancai, Li Zuo, and Yuan Pu demonstrated their skills to the exhibition visitors. Your master class was also in the program and, as far as we could see, it was a great success. People queued to get your autograph or hieroglyph printed on paper. Was this a surprise for you? Is it possible to "fall in love" with calligraphy in just an hour?

At the Great Chinese Calligraphy and Painting exhibition, lectures, calligraphic master classes, a tea ceremony, musical performance and other various cultural events were organized, and all these events were joyfully received by the public. At the master class, I gave thematic readings of "Return to the Wei Jin Period, Meet the Liken Style"; it was dedicated to the style of Mao Guangsong Quan. In the 1960s, the modern Chinese writer and historian Guo Mozhuo believed that 1600 years ago, during the Wei and Jin periods, there was an intermediate Quan style between the lishu and kaishu styles; perhaps this was the style of official writing in society. And it is possible that this style mystically disappeared from the pages of history due to the ban by Cao Tao, and subsequently Sima Yan, on writing on stone steles. And only during successive excavations in the 43rd year of the Qianlong period of the Qing dynasty and in the 7th year of the Daoguan period in Qujing, Yunnan province, were found "two steles of the Quan style", which attracted the attention of scientists, calligraphers, and historical researchers of that time, as well as scientists of subsequent generations.

The Quan style became known as the "living fossil" into which Chinese writing evolved.

Quan hieroglyphs are symbols that combine three categories: pictograms, pointing hieroglyphs, and ideograms, and the meaning of the hieroglyph is to cook food, namely, to cook food over fire. The most interesting thing is that on September 21st, 2019, while visiting the Moscow suburban military park, I was very surprised when I saw the field boilers used by the Russian army; this is our Quan. A metal stick was

buried in the ground at an angle and a cauldron was held at the top, a hole was dug out, firewood was put into the hole, set on fire, and thus cooking was done. During the lecture, I made a drawing that demonstrated that since ancient times Russia and China have a tradition of cooking over fire and, since ancient times, have been sister states. This caused a warm applause from the public. After the lecture, I talked with everyone, gave autographs and gave calligraphic works; many people stood in line with sheets of paper and looked very sincere and friendly. There was order everywhere, which testified to the excellent cultural education of the Russian people, and we should learn from this.

The lecture was scheduled for one hour, but this was not enough. If there was more time and an opportunity to talk in more detail, I'm sure that there would be even more people who would be interested in calligraphy.

If you had to briefly tell about yourself, what would you say?

My successes in calligraphy lie in decades of hard work, in that I was able to implement the principle of "three nots," namely, not to change my resolve, not to stop working, and not to spare myself.

First: do not change your resolve, that is, «take root and hold on tight.» As the saying goes, a person without aspirations will constantly change his goals; a purposeful person will adhere to a certain goal. Such determination and conviction is the basis of all our endeavors, such a mood cannot be shaken, and even if this happens, such a hesitation will not lead to anything. "The heart must be firm, the aspirations must be focused, we must always go forward, and then at the end of the long road we will not be disappointed." It is necessary to be unshakable, purposeful, no matter what you go forward, and then you will reach heaven.

Second: do not stop working. Success in calligraphy is not achieved overnight. How much time is needed for this, how much sweat must be shed, how much energy must be invested, and how much energy must be spent to achieve it? Success is the product of an ideal combination of special mental and physical labor. Stand on real ground and do the right thing; the great truth is extremely simple. For over three decades, regardless of job changes and changing conditions, I always tried to make full use of my free time for calligraphy. For 20 years I did not watch television, did not participate in various recreational activities, eschewed fame and fortune, immersed myself in school, was not afraid of difficulties, worked hard, and finally transitioned to an entirely new world that arose as a result of all efforts.

Third: do not spare yourself. It is necessary to get rid of excess, like trees in the fall, and bloom again, like flowers in the spring. The development of things always happens according to a wave-like movement, an upward spiral, which occurs according to an objective law, which is formulated as "negation of negation". I began to study calligraphy in 1982; in 1998 for the first time I successfully organized a solo exhibition. These 16 years of effort allowed me to master basic skills and create the conditions for new ideas. But it is

easier said than done about new ideas; it is necessary to have a high degree of a certain cultural self-confidence. Self-denial is necessary; one must be bold and not be sorry to give up all the most precious things. After the exhibition, I re-read the history of Chinese calligraphy, searched for my own path, and decided to study little-known writings on two steles. My main reference was the stele «Quan Bao Tzu.» Immersed in a monotonous and difficult work, I alone continued to move forward. And after almost 17 years of hard work, I finally got new fruits; I came up with the Maotsuan style. In June 2015, the Maoquan calligraphic style was officially registered by the Chinese State Copyright Office. The famous Russian writer Boris Pasternak said: "Every herd is a refuge of giftlessness ... Only loners seek the truth and break up with all who love it insufficiently." This famous quote has always inspired me to continue my creative quest. And after a long path of research, I began to better understand Kang Ewei's phrase: "Calligraphy is like Buddhism: it also begins with the most basic rules, is comprehended in the process of contemplation and wisdom, and affirmed in the soul of a man; only through deep immersion in its features can one achieve a high level in this area. In addition, calligraphy is not passed from mouth to mouth."

I don't know how to evaluate myself; I just want to say one phrase: a man of art speaks through works; a work is the best language and the best mark. It is necessary to work; that which is expended is always paid back.



*Nasser Tavusi -
“Every culture and every
nation has some kind of art
that is significant for it”*

“The history of calligraphy began more than a thousand years ago; in Islamic culture, it has been developing and evolving since the time of the Abbasids (750-1258). Previously, there were more than 40 calligraphy styles, but gradually they formed six completed styles, the so-called sextet (a set of six calligraphy styles). Later, Nasta’lik also separated from these and other fonts and styles,” says the famous Iranian calligrapher Nasser Tavusi, who has devoted himself to the theory and practice of calligraphy for over 30 years.

Nasser Tavusi is a unique master. For a long time, he has been professionally engaged in the revival of ancient fonts and the restoration of works of different eras. This allowed him to master all sorts of handwritings of Islamic calligraphy, including early Kufi, Muhaqqaq, Thuluth, Rayhan, Thauki, Reqa, Naskh, Nasta’lik, and Shekaste Nasta’lik (“broken nastalik”). He restored such forgotten fonts as Reqa and Thauki, updated them, and breathed new life into them, so that later other masters also began to perform works in these styles.

Questions by Maria Tomilova

Nasser, Arabic writing seems to Europeans unusual and incredibly complex due to some of its features. The first one that catches your eye is writing from right to left, not vice versa, as is our custom. The question of why different peoples have different directions of writing has been of interest to scientists and researchers since ancient times. Some of them tried to connect this with natural features, believing that the whole thing is in the prevalence of left-handed people among the Arab peoples. What do you think about this?

The reason why the Arabic writing seems so difficult to Europeans is as follows.

Firstly, it is better to talk about Islamic writing, rather than Arabic, since many countries and peoples, such as Iranians, Africans, and Europeans, thanks to numerous ties and interactions between the nations during the early period of Islam, to some extent, influenced appearance and development of its fonts (lines).

Secondly, indeed, in Islamic writing there are many features and characteristics, such as roundness, and strengthening and weakening of the line, which do not exist in European writing.

As for the assumption that there are more left-handers among Arabs, and therefore, or by some other natural characteristics, they prefer to write from right to left, these



Workshop by Nasser Tavusi at the festival and competition of Arabic calligraphy «Silk Lines» in Grozny, 2019



Exhibition of competitive works at the festival-competition of Arabic calligraphy «Silk Lines» in Grozny, 2019



Lectures by the famous Iranian calligrapher Nasser Tavusi organized by the Ibn Sina Foundation and the HSE School of Oriental Studies at various intellectual venues in Moscow, 2019

hypotheses are beyond logic. First of all, many other nations, such as Iranians, Jews, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Turks, or Tatars, also wrote from right to left, but they are not Arabs and are not even related to Arabs. There was even such a writing in ancient Greece, when they began to write from right to left, and when they reached the end of the line, they continued to write from left to right and so on. Thus, this assumption about the Arabs is not true.

It is also unusual for a European that there are no capital letters in Islamic writing. Instead, their form changes depending on the position in the word. There's no hyphenation either. Words are stretched in order to avoid void in lines. Is it difficult to learn to write beautifully in Arabic? And how long did it take you to master the art of calligraphy?

In general, many laws and rules of beautiful Islamic writing and its strict technique of execution were formed more than a thousand years ago, so it is not easy to study calligraphy. It is difficult to calculate how much time it takes to master this skill. You need to spend many years to master

the art of calligraphy, and you should practice constantly. I personally have been studying calligraphy for more than thirty years, improving my skills all the way, and as with any other subject and the sciences, studying never ends. The more you do it, the greater the outcome is.

The ability to write beautifully is appreciated in any culture, but especially in Islamic culture. What is the reason for this?

Every culture and every nation has some kind of art, which is significant for it. The art of beautiful writing and calligraphy has the same meaning for Islamic culture as, for example, painting means for Europe. In Islam, calligraphy is admired and appreciated, perhaps that is why Islamic artists love it and try to practice it, trying to achieve perfection.

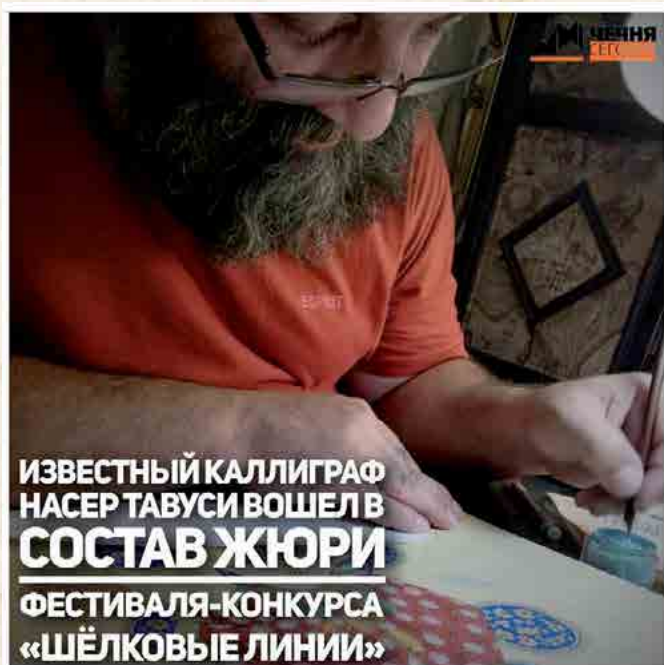
You do restorations of medieval manuscripts and images. How painstaking is it? How long does it take? What does it require from a calligrapher?

The restoration of manuscripts is much broader than just calligraphy. In addition to perfect mastery of modern writing styles, it is necessary to master the writing technique, be able to use a quill (Kalam, a cane quill) and know the fonts of each era. Therefore, in order to master it, you have to spend your whole life; otherwise it will not work, unless of course you find some shorter way. Fortunately, I found it.

In the summer of 2019, you were in Grozny, where as a member of the jury, you participated in the Silk Lines festival and competition of Arabic calligraphy. What can you say about the contest participants, and whose work you remember most?

I remember the works in Grozny by the fact that all the works, regardless of style (and country of origin), were done with soul and great feeling. The level of skill and the size of the work did not matter to me; all the works were created without censorship and restrictions, and it was very interesting to me.

As far as we know, you came to Grozny not only with a judicial mission; at the competition, you presented a number of your works and held a workshop. One of your works has been marked as unique and is now exhibited in Moscow at



ИЗВЕСТНЫЙ КАЛЛИГРАФ
НАСЕР ТАВУСИ ВОШЕЛ В
СОСТАВ ЖЮРИ
ФЕСТИВАЛЯ-КОНКУРСА
«ШЁЛКОВЫЕ ЛИНИИ»



Nasser Tavusi. A line from Iranian verse by Fahrud-din Aroki. Handwriting «Iranian suls», color ink (a combination of gouache, boiled water and Arabic gum), handmade paper, 30x70 cm



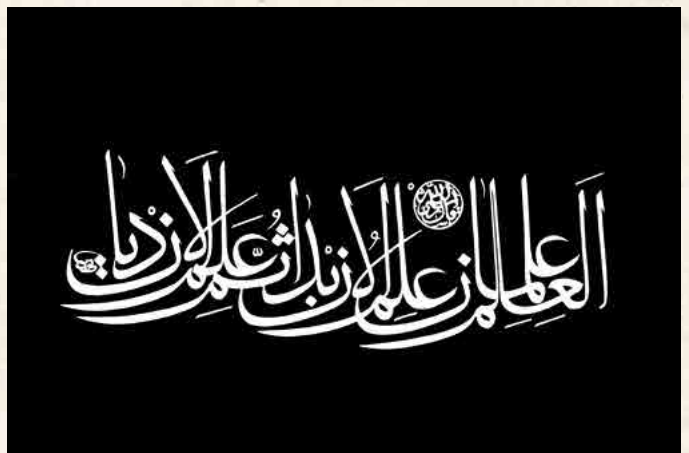
Nasser Tavusi. Arabic expression regarding the purity of the Lord. Reqa handwriting, white ink, handmade paper, 30x70 cm



Nasser Tavusi. A verse from the Shahnameh of Ferdowsi. Iranian Naskh handwriting, Japanese black ink, handmade paper, 10x30 cm



Nasser Tavusi. "In the name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate". Reqa handwriting, Iranian ink, handmade paper, gilded ornament



Nasser Tawushi. "He is the Truth. Oh Caring!" Nasta'liq handwriting, siyakh-mashk (literally "black practice"), white ink, handmade paper, 20x20 cm



Nasser Tavusi. Hadith from the Messenger of Allah Muhammad. Muhaqqaq, white ink, handmade paper, 30x50 cm



Nasser Tavusi. Surah "Tawhid" (112 surahs of the Quran). Reqa handwriting, white ink, handmade paper

the Museum of World Calligraphy, where it was handed over by the President of the Ibn Sina Islamic Culture Research Foundation, Mr. Hamid Hadavimogaddam. It is written in the handwriting of Reqa (Arabic رَقْعَة pl. رَقْعَات - "small sheet"). Reqa handwriting refers to six traditional Arabic scripts. It was considered lost, but you not only restored it, but also developed a font based on it.

In Grozny, Kazan and Moscow, I presented works and performed in the style of Reqa at the workshops for a number of reasons. The first one is that much of the ancient handwriting, such as Reqa, has been lost over time and should be revived, as it has great cultural significance. I see as it my duty and I do it. The second reason is that I noticed that the Reqa font is well applicable in modern graphics, in the current art space, and in printing. It was missing in those, so I restored it and updated it to honor all those who for many centuries have worked to maintain the continuity of art: new cultural and art trends can only flourish on the basis of the achievements of the great artists of the past.

The winner of the competition in Grozny was the artist and decorator from Ufa Lira Suleiman. In December 2019, at the Tehran – Ufa - Kazan Bridge exhibition, you presented twenty collaborations. How was your creative union born?

I met Lira Suleiman in Grozny. I highly appreciated her excellent work. She invited me to hold joint exhibitions in Kazan, Ufa, and other countries, and I agreed.

For many years now, you have been transferring your knowledge and experience to students of the School of Fine Arts in the city of Qom, Iran, as well as to students of the University of London studying Islamic calligraphy. What

can you say about your students? Do they follow traditions? How do you feel about modern Islamic calligraphy?

I believe that modern Islamic calligraphy is great and necessary. Calligraphy should always be relevant; it should not be obsolete, boring, or banal. To achieve this, many requirements have to be met; one of the most important is that calligraphy should be based on the classical and great achievements of antiquity. The artist must first master the traditional classical principles, and only then develop them and introduce something new into them; otherwise there will be no continuity in his works. Fortunately, many artists follow all the necessary principles and achieve great success. But there are those who only care about the financial component. Their works are unbalanced and empty in content, so their works will soon be forgotten.



Nasser Tavusi is among the winners, jury members, and organizers of the Silk Lines festival of Arabic calligraphy in Grozny, 2019.



Bahman Panahi:
*“Music and calligraphy are
my destiny, my life”*

Bahman Panahi is an Iranian artist, calligrapher, and musician living in Paris. In early childhood, he discovered a craving for calligraphy and music and later, while working on his doctoral dissertation at Sorbonne University, combined these two areas together. He invented the term «musicalligraphy», which has gained worldwide recognition. In February 2020, the famous master visited Russia. The reasons for the trip were collaboration with the Rare Book from St. Petersburg publishing house and participation in the International Exhibition of Calligraphy project.

Questions by Maria Tomilova

Bachman, in February of this year, you first visited Russia. Is it true that the reason for the trip was the book of man-made work, Hafiz Shirazi: Forty poems, published by Rare Book from St. Petersburg? Tell us about your participation in this unique project.

Yes, it's true. For more than ten years I have been collaborating with the World Calligraphy Museum in Moscow and its director, Mr. Shaburov. I took part in all the

exhibitions of the International Exhibition of Calligraphy project, organized by Mr. Shaburov. So, starting in 2008, I carefully followed the activities of the museum and was always in touch with it. In addition, for more than two years I have been collaborating with the head of the Rare Book from St. Petersburg publishing house, Mr. Suspitsin, working on the handwritten text of the Forty Poems book by the great philosopher and poet of Persia of the 16th century, Hafiz Shirazi. Therefore, I had two main reasons for coming



Bahman Panahi at the National Design Institute, Moscow, February 2020

to Russia: to visit St. Petersburg to meet Peter Suspitsyn and present a book to the Petersburgers, and to discuss ideas for new joint projects with the World Calligraphy Museum. I was very happy that I was finally able to realize my dream to come to Russia.

What are your impressions of our country? What can you say about the interest of Russians in Persian calligraphy?

In fact, this is very interesting, and I mentioned during my speeches in Russia that the Russian language was one of the first foreign languages that I heard in my life. When I was a young child, I heard it from my mother, who knows a few short and most common words in Russian, such as "zdravstvui" ("hello"), "davai" ("come on"), "khorosho" ("good"), which she learned during World War II. I was always interested in and really liked to say these foreign words. They gave rise to a lot of fantasies and dreams about Russia. Therefore, it is not surprising that when I grew up, in my teenage years I began to read classical novels by such great Russian writers as Dostoevsky and Chekhov. For me, Russia was something that had always existed in my cultural and artistic world and I can even say that I dreamed about this amazing ancient civilization and its artistic culture. I always wanted to visit Russia and this finally happened in February 2020. It was very, very exciting for me and I was very happy. I got the impression that the Russian people are very kind and helpful and I was very pleased to feel their genuine friendliness and willingness to help. They tried to make it so that I could have more creative meetings and get as much benefit as possible from my trip to Russia. I was unusually touched by the enthusiasm with which people working in the field of culture sought to learn more about my work. In general, it was very interesting to communicate with

them and get acquainted with Russian art. Of course, I only managed to get in touch with the Russian culture a little, but what I saw made a strong impression on me. Thanks to the hospitality of Mr. Shaburov, I was able to visit the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow and get acquainted with the masterpieces of Russian painting. I am still delighted with my visit to this museum, it was really great.

What features are inherent in Persian calligraphy? What, in your opinion, attracts Europeans to it?

In fact, I believe that not only Persian calligraphy but also the art of calligraphy as a whole will be more and more appreciated by people around the world. One of the reasons is the quality and nobleness of the art of writing, the history of which goes back to the origins of the human civilization. Calligraphy is filled with deep meanings: spiritual, religious, and philosophical. Today, when contemporary art is often banal and does not carry an idea or a message, calligraphy is gaining more and more value. I think that calligraphy today is like a diamond among many things that have no artistic value. That is why the popularity of calligraphy is growing, and I can say that this is happening all over the world. That is why I believe that we should be more attentive to this direction of art in order to preserve it, to save it. Today it must not be allowed to be spoiled by primitive marketing and lose its true value.

How early did you discover your craving for calligraphy and how did music enter your life?

I began to be engaged in calligraphy in early childhood. It always occupied my imagination, even when I did not know the letters and could not read. I don't know why, but I really was in some way ecstatic with the forms and beauty of the calligraphy that was born in my head. I



Bahman Panahi and his performance "Musicaligraphy" as part of the event at the National Design Institute, Moscow, February 2020



Bahman Panahi and his work, "Musicaligraphy", 130x180 cm, Moscow, 2020

believe calligraphy is a gift sent to me by God. Every time I think about it, I remember how happy I was, dreaming of calligraphy, and I begin to appreciate it more and more. I was lucky my older brothers were engaged in calligraphy. Therefore, I began to seriously study classical calligraphy at a very young age. My teachers were great masters. I am very grateful to them for helping me to enjoy calligraphy from an early age. In the same way, following my brothers but already in my teens, I started studying music. Later, the great masters of Persian music became my teachers. Music and calligraphy are my destiny, my life. I firmly believe that. When I started to study at the Faculty of Fine Arts at Tehran University, I became aware of the relationship between them and began to try to study musicality in calligraphy. This was very natural for me. From a young age, calligraphy and music were with me at every moment in time so it was very natural for me to see the relationship between them. Later, when I continued my studies at Sorbonne University in France, I conducted a very serious academic study on the relationship between calligraphy and music and introduced the new term "musical calligraphy", reflecting the musicality of calligraphy. This term is well known in the world of calligraphy. Today, many people are interested in getting acquainted with the artistic concept of musical calligraphy and putting it into practice. This concept is my life, the history of the relationship of calligraphy and music in my life and my work.

You said you graduated from the faculty of painting at Tehran University. May it be assumed that calligraphy fascinated you a little more than music?

Yes, I have already mentioned that I graduated from the faculty of painting at Tehran University. But I really can't explain which of them, music or calligraphy, captures me more. Today, calligraphy and music are one unique art for me; I can't separate them. This means that when I do calligraphy, for me it is like playing a musical instrument or composing music. These are two components of the same concept. They penetrate each other, they are inseparable. That is why today I do calligraphy in an atmosphere of absolute silence. I can't even hear sounds or music when I am doing calligraphy because for me, calligraphy is the visual music that I play. This is how I see it, and this is my point of view regarding music and calligraphy.

What did your university studies give you? Why did you decide to continue your education in France?

Yes, I had an academic education at the Faculty of Fine Arts at Tehran University and then, after several years of teaching and working on calligraphy and music in Iran and some other countries, I decided to move to Europe and continue my studies in order to get more opportunities for my creative activities. Having traveled around the Old World, I finally settled in France, and again it was akin to fate. I believe that the place where you live is important, of course, but the person is more important than the place. This means that everyone can create their own environment in accordance with their views, beliefs, and actions. Living in France gave

me many more opportunities for communication with Western European countries and enriched my knowledge in the fields of contemporary art, western art, and classical art. I travel a lot, including to the United States, to teach, write, and exhibit my work. All this was the result of living in France. I continued my studies at the Sorbonne to obtain a master's degree and then a doctorate in fine arts and musicology. I defended my doctoral dissertation on the relationship of music and calligraphy. The environment that I was put into helped me look at my experience from different angles. I am not sure that if I had remained in my homeland, in Iran, I would have had such an opportunity.

Tell us more about your Musical calligraphy project.

In short, I am trying to develop the idea of the musical side of calligraphy to show how you can look at calligraphy in terms of musicality. Musical calligraphy is an artistic term; it reflects my view on the art of calligraphy. Since ancient times, in various civilizations and cultures, the art of calligraphy has been called «visual music.» But it was a poetic, sensual interpretation of calligraphy, without any scientific basis. At the Sorbonne, I had the opportunity to develop this idea and make a serious anatomical and analytical comparison between calligraphy and music in the sense of statics, artistic grammatical structure, architectural and constructive elements in calligraphy, music, in philosophical, spiritual, and many other aspects of these arts. That is why, at some point, I came to the concept of "musical calligraphy", where music and calligraphy merge together and become a unique artistic concept.

You have been to many countries where you have lectured and held master classes. Your works have been exhibited in Iran, France, the USA, Great Britain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Morocco, Turkey, India, the United Arab Emirates, and the Maldives. What can you say about the World Calligraphy Museum in Moscow? How do you rate its collection?

Yes, being engaged in creative and scientific activities, I have visited many countries and different continents. I am very lucky to have had the opportunity to talk and present my experience and research to people of different cultures. Thanks to this, I have an idea of the global and general view of my art because the assessment of my work is not limited to only one point of view, and for this, I am very happy.

My acquaintance and communication with the World Calligraphy Museum was positive from the very beginning. I remember very well how many years ago, when the International Exhibition of Calligraphy project was just being created, they contacted me and asked me to become a consultant and participant in the exhibition. This showed me that the organizers were very demanding in the selection of project participants. They needed and wanted to get the opinions of experts from around the world. That is why from the very beginning I had a very positive attitude towards this project. I saw that the level of skill of the exhibitors and the work they represented was quite high. I have already said that we must be very attentive to the quality

of calligraphy in order to preserve the historical, cultural, and spiritual value of this art which dates back thousands of years. During my trip to Russia in February 2020, I visited the World Calligraphy Museum where I had a very interesting conversation with Mr. Shaburov. It confirmed my ideas about his personality and his point of view on the art of calligraphy. Of course, like all art and cultural projects, the museum, despite the high level of the presented works, is still developing and continues to work on the quality and presentation of its museum exhibits. Mr. Shaburov asked me to give my opinion on the museum exhibits. I think that such an attitude should be appreciated. This approach is a sign that the World Calligraphy Museum in Moscow is on its way to becoming an international showcase of the art of calligraphy. He told me about future projects that should reveal the quality and essence of calligraphy. I find them very interesting and deep. Using new technologies to present exhibits, direct interaction with museum visitors is a good way to find a balance between traditional and classical values and modernity.

Recently the director of the World Calligraphy Museum, Alexey Shaburov, along with cultural expert Dmitry Paramonov, opened another temple of art, the Museum of Russian Gusli and Chinese Guqin, where in addition to the exposition of musical instruments, there is a studio where, according to the founders of the museum, great calligraphy will be created to the sounds of guqin and gusli. As far as we know, you were able to visit the new museum. What can you say about it? Was it pleasant to know that this idea has found its embodiment?

Yes, for me it was a big surprise. I knew how important calligraphy was to Mr. Shaburov but I did not know anything about his interest in music. I was pleased to learn from him that he planned to create a museum where calligraphers will create masterpieces to music in front of visitors. This resonates with my idea of the relationship between music and calligraphy. However, I did not expect to receive an invitation from Mr. Shaburov to visit this museum. There is a very good atmosphere there. It was extremely interesting for me to join the great cultural heritage of ancient Russia. It is well felt in the museum that it was created by people for whom the knowledge of the roots of their people and the revival and popularization of the traditions of their ancestors is one of the most important meanings of life. For me, this museum is really special because it allows you to trace the connection between the two arts. During the visit, we had a lot of mutual ideas that combine music and calligraphy. We discussed future cooperation and talked about how you can exhibit music and calligraphy using modern means, and I look forward to the implementation of this project with great enthusiasm and excitement.

Alexey Shaburov presented you with a gusli, a copy of a 12th-century instrument found during archaeological excavations in Veliky Novgorod. What impression did this make on you?



Bahman Panahi at a meeting in the Russian State Library, organized with the support of the Ibn Sina Foundation, Moscow, February 2020

Yes, my trip to Russia ended with another big surprise. Mr. Shaburov gave me one of the instruments that is now hanging in my atelier next to my work, and I look at it every day. My journey began with the man-made book of Hafiz Shirazi in St. Petersburg and ended with a very ancient traditional Russian musical instrument. This is very symbolic. Both sides of my work were present on this journey. I don't know if my life will end with calligraphy or music, but it left a very good feeling from the trip. I am very grateful to Mr. Shaburov. I was amazed when I learned that he had made this instrument himself. Every day I appreciate it more and more. I received one of the best gifts of my life. Thank you very much. The sound of the gusli reflects the soul of the Russian people and the color and beauty of Russian traditions, the image of which I have kept in my imagination since childhood.

Calligraphy for left-handed people



Katya Shabanova. Lyrics, 2016

Maria Tomilova, author of the article

Being left-handed and doing calligraphy is not so easy. The difficulty lies in the fact that the left hand follows the pen and can smear the written text; the right-handed writer does not have this problem. This forces the left hand to be placed in an extremely uncomfortable position even for ordinary writing. Nevertheless, all these difficulties are surmountable. Let's try to highlight some moments of writing with the left hand.

Desktop

Let's start with the organization of the workspace. The location of the items on the table of a left-handed person should be as follows:

- the light source is on the right; in this case the shadow of the hand does not obscure the letter;
- the sheet of paper is tilted to the right, so that the lower right corner is opposite the middle of the chest; you can tilt the paper more if it is more convenient, although most often it is recommended to place the paper straight;
- during writing, the paper moves up-and-down and left-right to keep the hand in a comfortable position.

It is easier for a right-handed calligrapher to write without touching or smearing wet ink. Therefore, in addition to white blotting paper, it is also desirable to use a safety sheet as a cover-sheet for left-handed writing to prevent blots.

Proper seating

Seating of a left-handed person at his desk is no different from the generally accepted position.

With proper seating, the back is held straight, the chest does not touch the table (the distance between the body and the edge of the table is 3-5 cm), and both shoulders are at the same height. Legs are bent at the knees at right angles with the both feet firmly planted on the floor or a footrest. Hands

while writing lie so that the elbows protrude slightly beyond the edge of the table and are located at a distance of about 10 cm from the body.

Fountain pen grip

When writing, the pen must be held at an angle of 50-60° (the opposite end of the pen is directed at the shoulder) with three fingers: thumb, index and middle, the thumb and the middle ones hold the pen, and the index keeps it steady from above. The pen must be held freely without bending the index finger very much. The index finger should not be too close or far from the pen.

Hand position

Left-handed calligraphers can resort to one of three ways of hand positioning:

- Below: the most common position when the hand is located under the line of writing.
- Hook: the pen is held on top, while the hand forms a characteristic hook.
- At a right angle: in this case, the paper is placed at an angle of 90° to the horizontal line and the pen moves from bottom to top, and not from left to right.

World-famous calligrapher and author of *Calligraphy Made Easy*, Gaynor Goffe, is left-handed. She recommends a position from below (number 1), because when the hand is located under the line of writing, the movements of the pen of the left-handed and right-handed people are similar

(unlike position 2, in which movements from oneself turn into movements toward oneself, and vice versa). Other advantages of this method are the same paper arrangement that right-handed people use and the direction of the writing (in contrast to position 3, ref. diagrams).

At first, this method may seem complicated, especially if you are used to writing with your hand in a hook. But there are ways to reduce these difficulties to a minimum. Gaynor Goffe advises doing the following:

- Use special pens for the left-handed people. The bevel of such pens is opposite the bevel of the pen for the right hand; with them it is easier to master the sharper tilt angles necessary, for example, for italics. You can use the usual straight pens for right-handers and simply turn the pen to achieve the desired angle, but in this position the hand may be tense and stiff.
- Use a tablet (desk) with a width of at least 75 centimeters. It will allow you to keep your hand to the left with the desired angle of the pen and avoid tensing.
- At first, shift the sheet to the left 1-2 times for each line; this will help maintain a sharp pen angle. When the hand gets used to this situation, you do not have to move the paper at all.
- Hold the paper horizontally (it is easier to estimate the slope of the letters), but at first you can try lowering the lower right corner of the sheet (see diagram above) to write at a sharper angle.
- Turn your left hand back and left; the sharper the angle of inclination the stronger the turn. Train flexibility in the hand area!
- Try to move your left hand as independently as possible from the shoulder itself; do not tense up the elbow. You can practice large letters with a sharp-pointed marker.

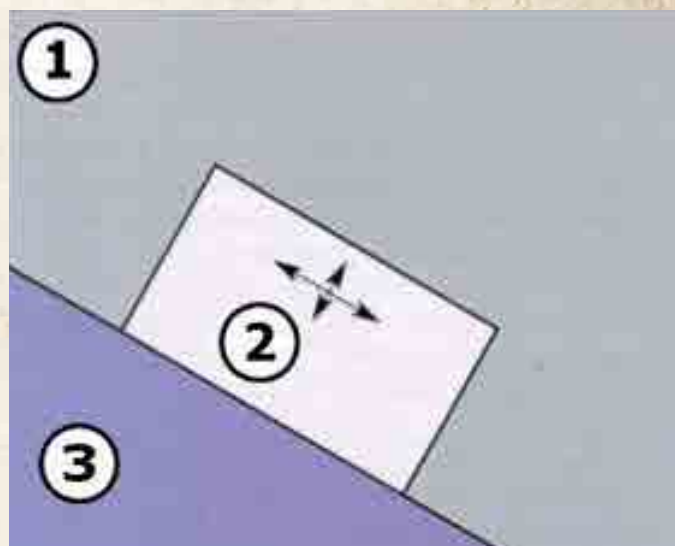
The hook position (number 2) can be simpler if you are already writing in this way; it is easier to relax your hand and write at any desired angle (despite the fact that the pen looks downwards). However, in this position, all movements from oneself become movements towards oneself and vice versa, which significantly limits the smoothness of the lines.

Writing at an angle of 90° to the horizontal line (number 3) also simplifies the movements of the hand and any angles of the pen, but in this position it is more difficult to follow the inclination of the letters, and writing from top to bottom instead of writing from left to right requires some habit.

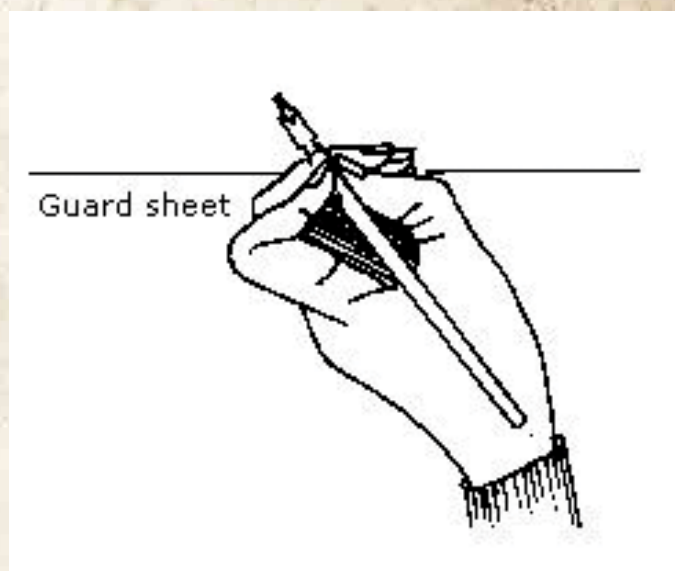
Slanting holders

To make a good inscription with a sharp pen, you need to hold the pen parallel to the desired angle of inclination; almost all calligraphic inscriptions are usually made with an inclination of about 55 degrees. This is much easier to achieve with a slanting holder. Thanks to the flange included in its design, the slanting holder can be adjusted to fit any hand and style of writing.

There are special slanting holders for left-handed people. They have a flange on the right side. When writing



Workspace organization. Illustration from Patricia Lovett's book "The British Library Companion to Calligraphy, Illumination, and Heraldry"



The "bottom hand" position. Illustration from Gaynor Goffe's "Calligraphy Made Easy"



Calligrapher Gaynor Goffe at work

Calligraphy for left-handed people



Capture of the pen holder. A shot from the video tutorial by Katya Shabanova



Capture of a fountain pen. A shot from the video tutorial by Katya Shabanova



Desk for writing. A shot from the video tutorial by Katya Shabanova

with such holders, the paper is turned in the same direction as for the right-handed people, that is, to the left. However, many left-handed people choose slanting right-handed holders and arrange the paper as if they were writing using a fountain pen or a straight holder.

The hand position, the pen grip, the paper location and the choice of a holder depends on the characteristics of each individual person. What is great for one can cause great difficulties for the other. The main rule for anyone who wants to learn calligraphy is to do what works for you. Practice more, improve your skills, and free movements, coupled with skillful handling of a pen, will not keep you waiting.

Katya Shabanova: "Being left-handed is not a sentence. Be sure to try calligraphy! It is a pleasure!"



Calligrapher Katya Shabanova

Calligrapher Katya Shabanova is left-handed. Seven years ago, having found calligraphic forms on the Internet and taking them as a sample, she first tried herself in the art of beautiful writing and when she realized that she was in love with it, she decided to change pens and pencils for a pointed pen: she ordered tools from the USA and began to seriously search for suitable literature and English-language blogs on the subject. Katya is a translator by training, so she had no difficulties understanding the texts. For several years she was engaged in self-training and then took courses with prominent masters: two online courses with Connie Chen, an in-person, four-day intensive course with Michael Sall, and an online course by John de Collibus. Today Katya herself teaches the art of beautiful writing. She has her own online school, which celebrates its five year anniversary this year.

Вопросы Марии Томиловой



Katya Shabanova. Ode to the Spencerian handwriting, 2019

Katya, who finds it harder to master the art of beautiful writing, left-handed or right-handed people?

I think that at the beginning of the journey it is equally difficult for both left-handed and right-handed people. We all learn to hold the tools, to control the force of the pressure, and to sit and breathe correctly.

You practice with a pointed pen: copperplate, spencerian and modern calligraphy. Which writing style was easier for you?

I am a person who loves analysis and a system so I carefully study each handwriting, draw parallels, and look for patterns. All this requires a lot of time and effort, regardless of the style of writing. Each of them is unique and each has its own character, which means that each has its difficulties. It was difficult to "tame" precisely the instrument at the very beginning: the pointed pen is capricious, it does not endure doubt, but then it's a matter of technique and time.

Are there many left-handed people among your students and how well do they successfully cope with the learning process?

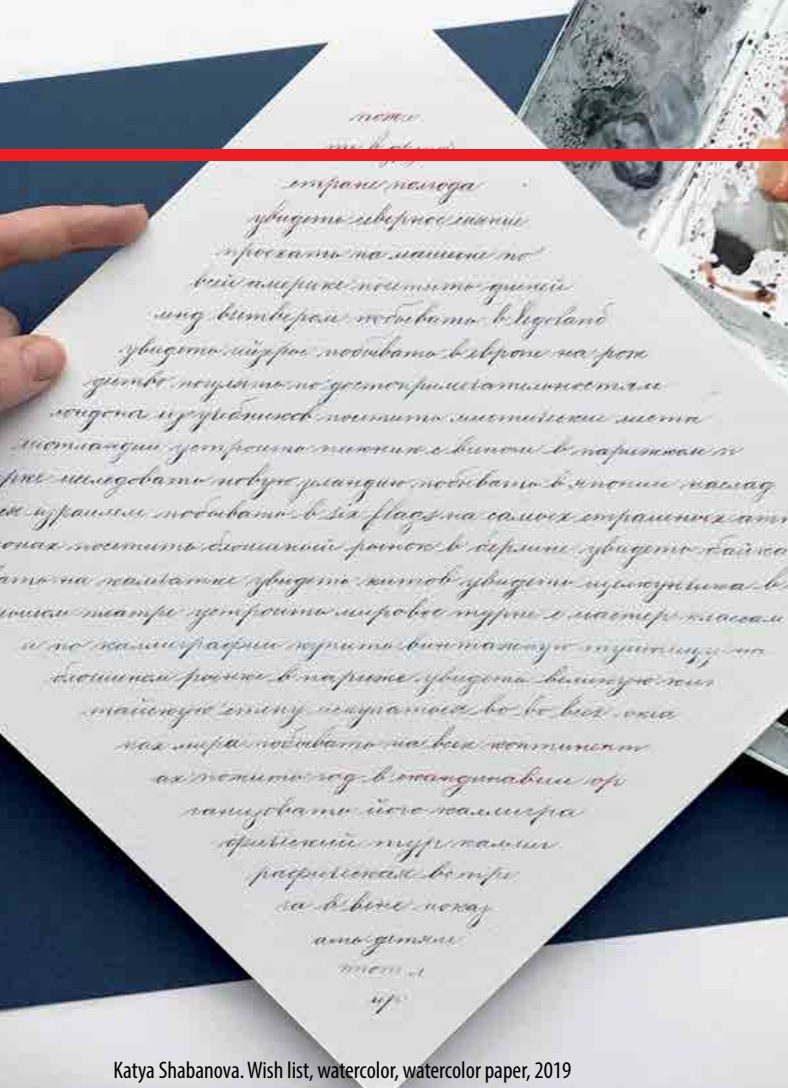
No, I don't have many left-handed students, but there are some. Some cope successfully and some do not. Everything is just like with right-handed people: the harder they work, the better the result. Being left-handed is not a sentence. Be sure to try calligraphy! It is a pleasure!

Which left-handed calligrapher is an example for you?

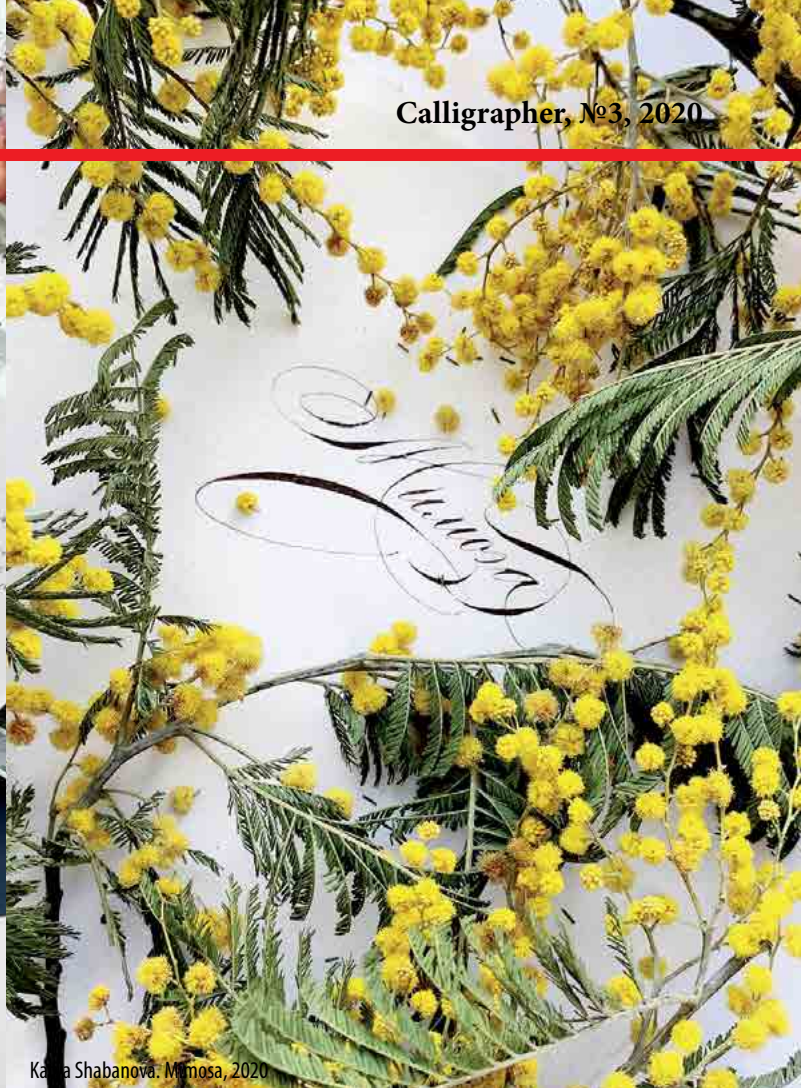
My favorite calligrapher is V.E. Dennis (W.E. Dennis), but he is right-handed. Of the famous left-handed people, I can now distinguish John de Collibus - he is a wonderful master. Nevertheless, I see no reason to focus on the writing hand of a person; it is much more important to follow the tip of the pen and to monitor how it opens, no matter which hand it is in.



Katya Shabanova. A quick sketch done by various types of writing with a pointed pen, 2020



Katya Shabanova. Wish list, watercolor, watercolor paper, 2019



Katya Shabanova. Mimosa, 2020



Katya Shabanova. Greeting card, handmade paper, 2019.



Katya Shabanova. Flowering, hand-cast paper, 2020

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