

Embassy of Japan and Stift Klosterneuburg

Role of Calligraphy in Society

- between Japan and Austria -

Thursday, 8th September 2022, 17.30

Stiftsbibliothek, Stift Klosterneuburg

Stiftsplatz 1, Klosterneuburg

Programme

- 17:30** Admission
- 17:45** Welcome Speeches by H.E. Ambassador Mizutani (Embassy of Japan) and MMag. Dr. Buhlmann (Stift Klosterneuburg)
- 18:00** The Role of Calligraphy in Japanese Society by Dr. Noriko Brandl
- 18:15** Creating a Bond: Collaborative calligraphy writing by H.E Mizutani and Mmag. Dr. Buhlman
- 18:25** Experiencing Western Calligraphy: Life calligraphy writing of Mag.Art Pöll
- Opening of the exhibition on Japanese and Western calligraphy in the library
- 18:45** Sake and wine reception outside of the library

Calligraphy Corner

All guest have the possibility to experience calligraphy firsthand through a Calligraphy corner supported by Dr. Brandl and Mag.Art. Pöll across from the reception.

Dr. Noriko Brandl

President of the Austrian-Japanese Society

Due to her father's work, Noriko Brandl has lived in the official residence of the Tokyo National Museum from her childhood up until she entered university. After graduating from Waseda University (Tokyo) and completing her master's and doctoral studies in the history of Western and Eastern art at the University of Vienna, she worked at the Institute of East Asian Studies at the University of Vienna as Assistant and Lecturer. Her hobbies include Koto (a Japanese stringed instrument), Japanese tea ceremony, Ikebana (Japanese flower arrangement), Japanese dance and calligraphy.

Mag. Art. Eva Pöll

www.kallos.at

Eva Pöll was born in Mödling, Austria and finished her Austrian A-Levels in 1989. By 1997, she has graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien) with a diploma and worked as lecture for type design between 2002 to 2007 at named institution. Since 2008, she is working as independent calligrapher, publishing her work, and offering workshops for groups and individuals.

Stiftsbibliothek Klosterneuburg

The Abbey Library of Klosterneuburg (Stiftsbibliothek Klosterneuburg) is with more than 290,000 tomes the largest private library in Austria. The heart of the collection is the medieval library with its 1250 manuscripts and 860 so-called incunabula (printed books up to 1500). A universal library has been built up already during the Middle Ages and until the Enlightenment, an interdenominational collection of books has been assembled, indicating a largely cosmopolitan convent of the library. Today, the Abbey Library presents itself as a knowledge institution that is partner to various regional and international research institutions.

Calligraphy in Japan

by Dr. Noriko Brandl

Japanese calligraphy is called „Shodō” and literally means “the path of writing”. Calligraphy as a form of art is based on the Chinese characters called Kanji and was imported from China around the 6th -7th century. The number of Kanji-characters is uncountable. There are as many characters as there are words. In the beginning, Chinese calligraphy was mostly practiced by court officials of the Imperial Court and copied by Buddhist monks for their prayers. Japanese Kana-characters (46 syllabaries called Hiragana to write Japanese words and 46 syllabaries called Katakana to write foreign words) first emerged around the year 1000 for writing poems and stories. Japanese characters are written down to top, right to left. This has, over the centuries, evolved into the now well-known art of Japanese “path of writing” (Shodō) with a mix of Kanji and Kana characters.

There are other famous “paths” in Japan: Bushidō (“path of the Samurai/warrior”), Sadō (“path of [making] tea”), Kadō (“path of [arranging] flowers”), Kyūdō (“path of archery/the arrow”) and many more. In a path, the end result or a finished object is not as important as much as the means or the process of creating them. As one creates or takes part in doing these things, the state of mind and focus necessary to them are deemed similar to what one needs in Zen meditation. Therefore, all of these art-forms are deeply connected with the principles of Zen-Buddhism. Some examples of these principles are concentration, discipline, inner peace and harmony.

The tools needed for Shodō are a brush, ink, water, a so-called ink stone and paper as well as various other materials to function as writing pads, such as wood, fabrics, ceramics, glass or similar.

There are certain rules you need to keep in mind and follow while writing. One of the most important things is that your writing should and cannot be corrected at any point. Everything that has been put to paper is in itself unique and forever. The characters also need to be written in the right order of strokes. Only by following this order the characters are guaranteed to ‘flow’ on the paper together with the brush and ink.

The different forms of writing are called “**Kaisho**” (strict strokes), “**Gyōsho**” (cursive writing with a flowing stroke of the brush) and “**Sōsho**” (grass writing, a quick and flowing form of writing).

In Japan learning Japanese characters is compulsory for all children starting from the 1st year of primary school until the end of compulsory schooling – a total of around 9 years. With the knowledge of about 2000 characters you can read most books and newspapers. Children also have to learn Shodō from the 3rd year of primary school for a total of 6 years. Additionally, there are many and different kind of private schools for adults and children teaching Shodō.



Have you seen the painted flowers scattered across the library?

From the herbarium of 1854

Painted by the Augustinian canon Marzellan Stoppel

Sign.: Stiftsbibliothek Klosterneuburg, CCI 1472