



**Finding
the
Flow:
A
Calligraphic
Journey**

by Gina Jonas

Calligraphy

is the art of line

in relation to

letterform, word image, and page design.

ARNOLD BANK

Calligraphy is an independent genre of art

that combines certain general and specific characteristics.

General characteristics include the manifestation of lines—
continuous and broken, fast and slow, heavy and light—
similar to the rhythm of music, the movement of dancing,
and structure of architecture.

The particular characteristics involve characters,
which introduce a textual dimension of meaning and thought,
making calligraphy
different from other visual arts.

Although the aesthetic effect of a work of calligraphy
is not determined by the meaning of the characters,
excellent work always unites the forms of the characters
with their meanings.

The main distinguishing factor of calligraphy is its origin in text.

YIGUO ZHANG

Brushed Voices, Calligraphy in Contemporary China



Joy

At left is a reproduction of a framed work titled *Joy*.

It 'reads' horizontally: joy liberating the mind

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by Gina Jonas

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Typefaces: Bookman Old Style & Univers



Cover

I chose this image from one of the full-page explorations that I occasionally make just after a calligraphic practice session. Having warmed up with pen exercises I feel a bold confidence which seeks to freely express itself. While there are usually some letterforms, as here, they are experimental rather than formal. Here we see the stroke finding its flow!

Introduction, page vi

The full text, which I wrote, 'reads': liberating the mind/through meditation/techniques a path to/compassion wisdom joy

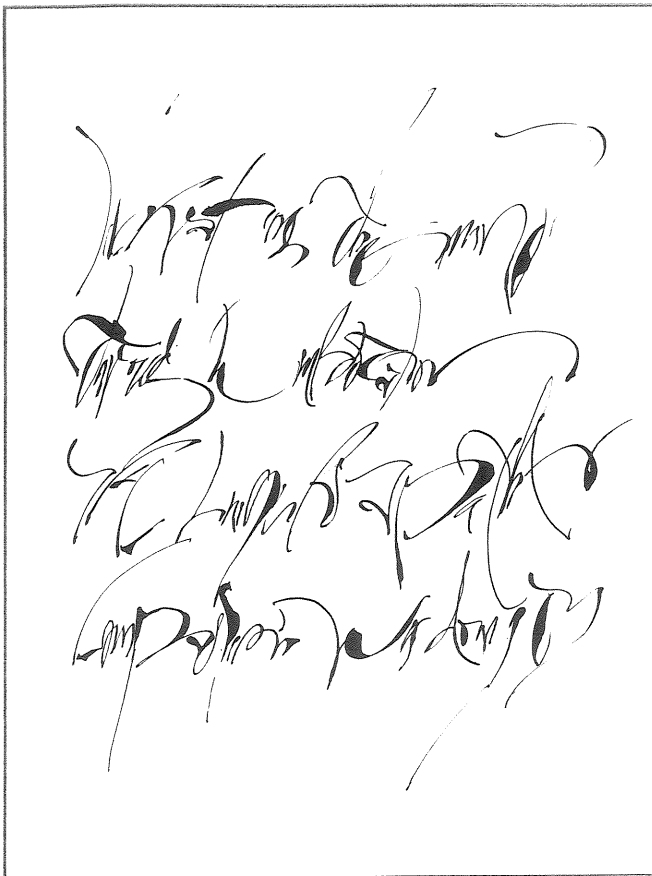
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Introduction

First, I strongly believe that one's definition of a field or activity has a crucial influence upon the way in which it is pursued and taught. Naturally, a definition can change over time for an individual or an entire field: Picasso did not remain in the Blue Period, and Modernism has become Post Modernism. So, too, calligraphy cannot be restricted to Webster's 'beautiful handwriting'. I would like to begin by offering my definition of calligraphy to help the reader appreciate the context in which this book was written.

My Definition of Calligraphy: The conscious use of letterform—its form and flow—to express meaning, whether purely verbal or purely visual (non-legible), or somewhere along this continuum. For me, a letter's form carries verbal meaning by the direction, joining and spacing of its strokes in words and text. However, it is through a letter's 'flow' that these strokes are embodied with vital rhythm, movement, gesture and sensitive touch—with life!



Liberating the Mind

Since we live at a time which distinguishes visual artistic production as either fine art or craft, I also think it valuable to offer a definition of calligraphy as fine art.

Fine Art: Calligraphy that is based on text but intended as artistic self-expression, or as a rendering of the spirit of the text. The calligrapher does not serve the text as scribe; rather, s/he interprets the text, creatively, working within the constraints of design and meaning. Here, the calligrapher intends the work to 'speak' first and foremost to the eye, visually. It may be easy or difficult to read, or it may be 'readable' if accompanied by a printed text (as are such pieces of mine). Since such work is generally framed and meant to hang on a wall, the calligrapher's primary concern is its visual impact, rather than its decipherability. Just as other visual artists, such as painters and sculptors, employ the elements of line, shape, space, color and texture, and the principles of design—so do calligraphers. The calligrapher's work, however, brings an additional element to the composition: the word. Although the calligrapher generally derives her/his motivation to create a work from a text, for the sake of visual self-expression s/he may choose to render the text illegible. I am part of a trend in Western calligraphy which wishes to explore this unique and fascinating situation.

Because the calligrapher's 'landscape, portrait, or abstraction,' are letterforms, the symbols of writing, they may also be regarded as metaphor for meaning; and, just as the writer uses words descriptively, ironically or satirically, so, too, the calligrapher grapples with giving meaning to the symbols of meaning.

A Little Background. New books on calligraphy continue to ignore the depth and breadth of calligraphy's potential. A brief historical note may be useful to individuals entering our centuries' old, yet surprisingly unexplored, field. Just a century ago in England Edward Johnston pioneered an influential approach to lettering through his teaching and book *Writing & Illuminating & Lettering*. He investigated the role of the quill pen in traditional manuscript production while exhorting, "Our aim should be to give letters life that we

ourselves may have more life.” (His own work was certainly exemplary in this respect.)

In the United States, one of my most influential teachers, Lloyd Reynolds, also stressed the importance of creating living letters and wrote a seminal essay, “Notes on Movement Involving Touch.”¹ His teaching did include warm-up exercises for italic handwriting, but no preliminary work for formal study. What Johnston’s and Reynolds’ work expressed, what gave it life, was energy and flow; however, they did not teach these qualities because they largely limited calligraphic study to work with form. To teach these essentials, I strongly believe we must focus on flow apart from form. I would now like to invite you to participate in a process for discovering and developing flow.

My Audience. You may be individuals wishing for an artistic practice which integrates mind and body; beginners wishing to develop beautiful handwriting, forms that flow, and are open to where this might lead; artists with a love of words and texts who wish to explore a mode of self-expression for engaging them. The exercises in this book will serve many interests: as a foundation for learning formal alphabets; as an opening to creative alphabet design; as part of a process toward visual self-expression; and, potentially for all, as a time to cultivate awareness of the mind and body joined together to give life to line through one’s own sensitive touch and rhythmical movement.

The Central Role of the Stroke. In taking up the tools—pencil and edged pen—we enter a relationship with calligraphy’s four essentials: tool, paper, ink and writing desk. These four are keys to the life enhancement derived from embodying stroke and form, and to the unlocking of your potential for unique personal expression. Moreover, it soon became clear to me that the stroke, the basic element of letterform construction, would be the focus of my work. The words (chosen for the title page) of a noted twentieth-century calligrapher and teacher, Arnold Bank, supported me in this choice: “Calligraphy is the art of line in the service of letterform, word image and page design.” For me, the art of line

would begin with the physical act of stroke making. In the exercises we will find the pulse of the stroke, its rhythm, in the dynamic interplay of touch and movement.



The Practice of Calligraphy.

Calligraphy as presented here requires regular practice. Like the pursuit of any other art, it requires the devotion of the disciple: a discipleship, not set by authority, but one dedicated to self-knowledge. In such an undertaking, you may encounter the discomfort of doubt or fear which attends any new challenge, any new investigation of the unknown. Hence your practice becomes a ‘Way’ as it may lead you to confront such life-thwarting obstacles. They are often a part of the process and may be faced in a variety of ways, but they should not be allowed to strangle your impulse to create. In the practice of these exercises, which may lead to and encompass formal calligraphy, it is important to also develop a role for the inevitable critical impulse. I would like to suggest that you make an effort to transform an unconstructive critic into a gentle teacher, one who wishes you happiness and fulfillment, one who trusts learning as process involving faith and patience.

Using this Book. In the process of writing this book, the rather haphazard actual progress of my journey transformed itself, for publication, into one that has surprised and delighted me by its orderly development! However, having made a quilt from patches, I invite those with experience to select and combine as you desire. For beginners, though, I suggest a more or less one-page-follows-another approach. Whichever method you choose, and this may also change, I hope you will



Warm-up Progression:

- 1 Exercises
- 2 Alphabet
- 3 Text
- 4 Text Variation

remember that the exercises are intended to stimulate and guide you toward your own discoveries. They will, hopefully, help you develop confidence, and the flow that accompanies it.

The Learning Process. It has been my experience in teaching calligraphy that learning this art, as with all others, is a process of self-encounter. Some take up formal calligraphy out of a desire to create, thinking that calligraphy will offer a paint-by-the-numbers or a how-to formula which, if followed with unswerving exactitude, will lead to 'success'. Some teachers do in fact offer such a happy delusion. Eventually, however, the student becomes stymied by the limits of this type of instruction, falling into the hope that maybe the next workshop will provide the missing secret.

This book charts an unexplored territory preliminary to formal alphabet study. I believe what we learn from its most prominent feature, stroke exercises, provides a valuable template for alphabet study. Through it we learn alphabet forms by viewing them as a visual pattern of strokes. For letterform, as for stroke exercises, we may wish to begin by tracing the pattern with a pen its same width. The first tracing may be made with a dry pen, followed by a wet one. After establishing the pattern, we then turn our attention to its dynamics of pressure and release as a guide to finding its rhythmical movement. Although I have provided very detailed description for the exercises, I know that words cannot replace active

demonstration. I have made an effort to articulate as carefully as possible because the exercises are intended to provide you with experience I have found helpful in developing flow. Of course, these instructions are not intended as a final authority, but as a guide toward your own equally valid educational experience.

The letterforms and alphabet work that you find in this book are not formal, but have arisen spontaneously from my work with strokes and movement. It arises from within as the warm-ups and exercises cultivate a state of mind conducive to creative exploration. The letterforms are not presented as the models of traditional, formal alphabet study, which employs the numbered arrows of ductus. Rather, my letterforms are offered more as illustrations of what may result from following a process. Engage with them by all means, but in a spirit of play, with an open attitude rather than a perfectionistic one.

My examples are the product of years of work and experience and you should not expect to reproduce them at an early stage. In approaching my forms you might consider them as you would other objects, animate and inanimate, as objects embodying posture with which you can try to develop empathy. As you develop your skill and confidence through the exercises, return to that which eluded you and you will probably find yourself closer to its form and flow. In fact, these exercises arose in large part from my own inability to imitate the work of calligraphy's modern masters.

After regular practice with the exercises I had developed, I returned to the work I was striving to emulate with far better results: I was beginning to truly understand what lay before my eyes. Thus, non-formal work prepares the calligrapher to participate in the flow of historical and contemporary letterform, and more experimental letter design.

We have now come naturally to an important pedagogic issue: whether or not it is efficacious to imitate, or copy, as a way to learn. I believe that when imitating is defined as a serious effort to study and understand calligraphic form, whether historical or contemporary alphabet models, then it is a very useful learning strategy. The only real issue to me is which models: I believe we should study the work of the most highly regarded masters, living and dead. Just as noted above, we may not be sufficiently skilled to reproduce their work immediately, nevertheless, the student cannot reproduce the poor model either! A student must realize that the work of a highly developed calligrapher is not easily imitated. Therefore, one does well to accept one's current level, albeit returning over and over to the same inspiring models. The exercises and theoretical material in this book will help you develop the skill to create dynamic, sensitive strokes, the qualities that elude you in copying a model at an early stage. As you develop, you enter more deeply into form, find its heartbeat through flow, and bring it to life—you 'follow' the path of life followed by its creator. This is a wonderful journey!

Plan of the Book. Since there is not another book like this one, I would like to introduce its plan to you and make suggestions for its use.

Pencil Exercises:

Preliminaries to the Edged Pen.

I regard this section first as an introduction to the basic activity of working consciously with a tool: of holding it while sitting at a desk and relating to a paper surface. Next it is an introduction to calligraphy as a physical act, to the engagement of bodily movement and sensitive touch. Although the activity of writing with the hand appears common, its conscious practice

nothing would be no more if we did not
make somebody pay for mercy

elicits an uncommon mental awareness, one in which you are exploring and investigating, not moving in a habitual manner at all. I encourage you to come to all the material in this book as a beginner, not knowing, but open to discovery. From this standpoint, you may engage everything as your own direct experience.

[no more could be/If]

I recommend working through the exercises slowly. First you will want to understand them as blueprints for action, with various directions and heights. Grasping them in this way, you will have a pattern for the experience of their dynamics, rhythm and gestural expression. I generally find it beneficial to include a range of sizes and speeds in any practice session. A very important dimension is that of loose to precise; usually the looser work will be larger, and sometimes quicker, while the more precise work will be smaller and slower, engaging the sensitivity of the fingers rather than the sweeping directional motion of arm and shoulder. This experience with the pencil may serve as a preliminary to the edged pen, or as a springboard to drawing, or even as a meditation practice.

4

no more could be/If

From William Blake's *The Human Abstract*

The Edged Pen:

Introduction & Exploratory Exercises.

This section introduces you to the edged pen, directly, through exercises exploring its unique capabilities. No longer working with a self-sufficient mark-making tool, we now learn how to carry and apply the ink necessary for transmitting a trace of its movement. Through ink and paper we engage the pen's edge, thick and thin, and its corners, employing the shoulder-arm movement and thumb-index finger sensitivity we activated with the pencil.

Since most individuals taking up this book will be calligraphers, the edged pen studies almost immediately lead to alphabet explorations. As stated, these are not intended as formal models, but as examples of a process. In the exercises we work with a variety of types of line; the quality or character of this line may suggest an idea or motif. This stroke/line motif then merges with what I call my 'alphabet archetype' to produce an alphabet style. I define 'alphabet archetype' as the conceptual notions we all possess, without further education, about letter shape. More explicitly, this means that anyone who can write can also conceive and render an 'A', 'a' and 'a', and their related forms. Although people today are aware that the alphabet provides seemingly inexhaustible material for design (witness the array of fonts available) they may not have realized they too could participate in the design process by virtue of a personal 'archetype'.

The more experience one has with alphabets—historic and contemporary, manuscript and typographic—the more extensive the dimensions of their archetype, the more potential stimulation for imaginative activity. Future work with all kinds of alphabets will expand the domain of your alphabet archetype, in addition to your palette of historical and cultural allusions.

In your work with archetypes you may wish to test the boundaries of legibility for the sake of visual expression, to communicate graphically rather than verbally. When calligraphers step outside their province as scribes into that of visual artists, their desire to make a visually compelling statement may render the word or text so carefully chosen, so dearly meaningful, barely legible or completely illegible. (See example this page.)

Thus the remarkable calligraphic spectrum: scribal legibility through interpretative alphabet design to visual art. In this latter realm we learn to appreciate, as any other visual artist, the range of dimensions an object, in our case letterform, may represent beyond its objective, literal one: symbolic, historic, social, economic, ironic, satirical, expressionistic, etc.

Pen Stroke Exercises.

In this section we engage the stroke as a multifaceted element, one which carries a vast range of potential expression, including direction and shape, rhythm and mood. In order to understand the nature of flow, we will investigate the forces at work in stroke movement. I refer to these forces, such as pressure and friction, as pen stroke dynamics.

Pen Principles & Techniques.

In these pages we delve into a deeper, more analytic understanding of the work we have done and where it may lead. The principles will equip you with the concepts necessary for a fruitful study of edged pen alphabets. Please trust your ability to understand; seek out teachers but not as authorities—they may or may not be able to expand your understanding. Since Western calligraphy is not an integral part of our culture, as say, Chinese calligraphy is in China, we are, I believe, in a pioneering period and you may become a part of it. Thus we doubly encounter the challenges of the



unknown and the joys of our new discoveries. This book is a report of my journey to date, one which I envision with a life-long trajectory.

I have chosen to distinguish 'pen dynamics' from 'pen technique', although the former may also be considered more basic technique. The section titled Pen Technique focuses specifically on more advanced calligraphic techniques. If you are a beginner, please realize that this work is challenging for even advanced students. When you start to feel comfortable with the pen and its dynamics, I would try the exercises of this section.

The Objectives of this Book.

First and foremost this book is an instruction guide. The instructor's voice is meant as one of inspiration and encouragement to the student; it assumes a student who wishes to engage the topic boldly and sensitively.

The second objective of this book is to change the way in which calligraphy is currently taught, to broaden the learning spectrum to include the vital element of flow. The richness of this experience might awaken greater public interest in our field, even attracting persons who are not drawn by calligraphy as it is currently taught and practiced. Ananda Coomaraswamy has written, "An artist is not a special kind of person, but every person is a special kind of artist." In my own view, the artist is one dedicated to a life which both makes an effort to develop something authentic to say and a means by which to say it. Not everyone can devote themselves to such an endeavor. Nonetheless, I do think everyone who wishes to can, through their own special effort, discover their own unique creative flow!

Working with the Exercises.

With edged pen as with the pencil, I suggest working through the exercises slowly. After getting an idea about what each offers, you may wish to choose a few that help you prepare for formal work (if you are working at this stage), or choose on the basis of the day's energy and mood. The core of the preparation for formal study is the stroke sequence in Stroke Direction on page 48.



Since many of the exercises have no precedent, and hence no established terminology, I have enjoyed the process of naming them. Here, the pioneering role was met as an invitation and I hope my terms will serve you in the learning process.

As a work for reproduction, there is some touching up of forms but not much; most images are actual size and may be traced.

Work-in-Progress.

I have presented some of the material in this book to students and friends and from their very helpful comments made adjustments to it. This book is still, in a sense, a work-in-progress; I would very much appreciate feedback about what does and does not communicate.

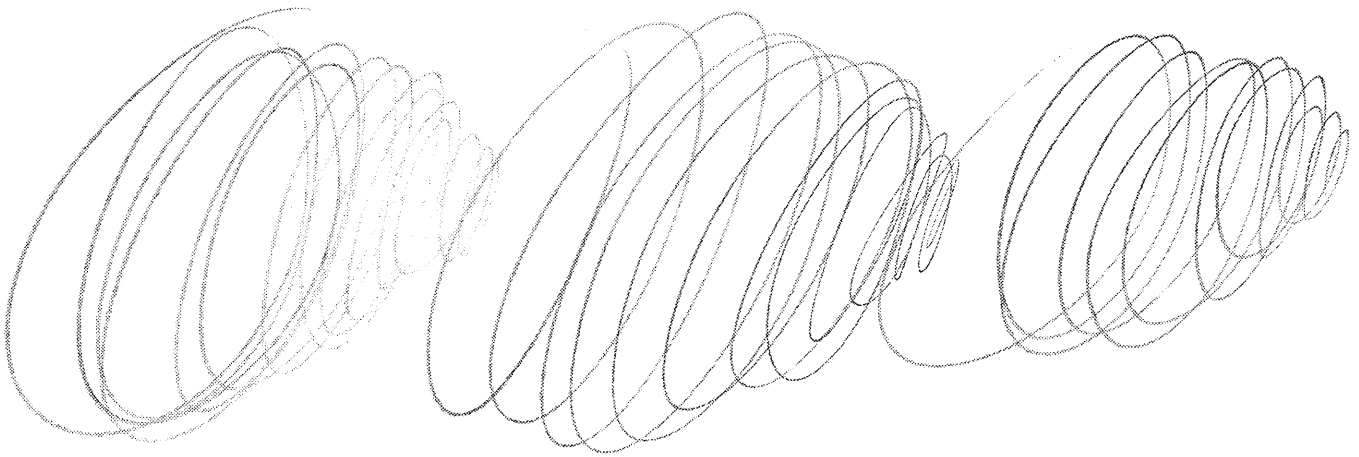
Finding the Flow.

While the warm up exercises are intended as guides, not as finished work, when they express the quality of flow they inevitably have an intrinsic attraction for the viewer! Just as the qualities of rhythm and flow embody the life process, we may naturally respond to them as a 'by-product'. I wish you joy in the process of finding the flow; if this leads you to cultivate alphabet form as flow I welcome you to the fascinating, vitalizing world of calligraphy!

1. *Calligraphy and Palaeography: Essays Presented to Alfred Fairbank on his 70th Birthday*, edited by A. S. Osley; October House, 1966 (U.S. edition)

Pencil Exercises

Preliminary to the Edged Pen



Introduction

Recently, in my pursuit of the calligraphic art form, I have discovered an approach to calligraphy that is as deeply concerned with its inner workings, its flow, as with its external image, its form. Decidedly, this is an approach in which a letter's appearance is as much a product of a conscious interaction between body, tool, materials, and life's vital forces, as a consequence of directed strokes. The journey along this approach becomes a process which I would like to call 'finding the flow'. My journey as a calligrapher and consequent delight in 'finding the flow' have inspired me to share my experience with you.

The exercises in this book arose when I began to approach calligraphy as an investigation: when I picked up a tool and made contact with a writing surface with the intention of investigating my personal relationship to this ever-so-familiar situation. Hence it was necessary to become a beginner again, to approach even such basics as pen hold and paper contact, as new territory. And, to my delight, the exercises which arose in this process were not dry or mechanical! To the contrary, because I approached them with awareness, always open to discover more through them, they invigorated me! They brought me into contact with the creative force and energy of calligraphy. Through exploring line—throwing, pulling, stretching and drawing it—its relationship to the natural forces of tension, pressure and friction were slowly revealed to me.

These forces now infuse my strokes and letters with a quality of power which has brought grace to my motions. Surprisingly, these motions also engender emotion: entered into with care and awareness the exercises transform ordinary physical movement into felt gestural movement. Merging this sensitivity with the pulse of rhythmical movement brings a surge of life and flow to the calligraphic line.

As the mastery of such line slowly develops, so does a confidence and joy in its formation; this result further

encourages the hand to dance with the imagination in playful exploration. The source of such delight, recognized by the poet William Blake, is energy: "Energy is eternal delight." We may generate this energy in our movements by consciously incorporating within them the above-mentioned forces of tension, pressure and friction. Through understanding the operation of these powerful forces, in relation to the drawing of lines and line figures, we may develop the principle of vital energy in line: *tensile elasticity*. Interacting with these seemingly impersonal forces, our own energy is released, as is the very personal quality of our unique creativity.

Hence, I invite you to enter into and experience the very forces that give letters life. To develop an understanding of the way in which these forces operate, we will engage in exercises that are both active and playful in character. These exercises will incorporate movements that are present in many different activities, and so can be described in common terms. From the world of music we have 'bowing' and 'conducting', which cultivate gesture and feeling in relation to movement. From the sphere of sport we have the slalom of skiing, which develops rhythmical movement. From the realm of play we have 'throwing', 'flinging', and 'skipping', in addition to 'springing' and 'jumping'—all of which nurture elastic, rhythmical movement. And, perhaps the most fundamental one is that of 'drawing'—in the sense of pulling a bowstring in archery, or pulling under tension—by which we encourage the growth of tensile elasticity.

The Pencil & the Edged Pen

We begin the adventure of calligraphy when we pick up a tool with the intent of forming a relationship between ourselves, a writing surface and, ultimately, form. For centuries the pencil has been the tool for training artists in the art of drawing: the tool teaching them to see and coordinate the visual image with the hand. But drawing has also taught, even if indirectly, freedom of movement, sensitivity to pressure, and an understanding of the nuances and expressive potential of line. Regrettably, when the pencil is used by

the calligraphy instructor, generally for drawing Roman Capitals, it is with the all-to-limited purpose of studying them as objects—their proportion and form—than as a way to explore the potential of line, or understand the *dynamics* of form.

I took up the pencil as a calligrapher when I decided to offer a short italic handwriting class called “Calligraphy with Ballpoint Pen & Pencil.” Completely unforeseen to me, this course would introduce me to the pencil’s pedagogic potential for calligraphers. It became my passion to discover a way in which the energy of handwriting could be translated into formal, edged pen calligraphy.¹ However, it was not until I focused my investigation upon the complex workings of the edged pen itself, through exploratory exercise sequences, that I began to glimpse connections between my pencil discoveries and edged-pen calligraphy. Through a daily practice of exercises of what I called my ‘warm-ups’ and my husband humorously called ‘doodling’, I gradually built a relationship to this tool which continues to offer discoveries and, most gratifyingly, to produce strokes and forms of calligraphy that exhibit expressive energy.

Let us begin with the pencil. This simple tool, unlike the edged pen, allows the student an immediate experience of rhythmical and gestural movement. (I believe that exercises which involve the student with these seminal qualities also provide a fertile grounding for work with the edged pen.) We choose a mechanical rather than a regular pencil because it ‘advances’ the lead quickly, with only a momentary click; we need not interrupt the flow of our movement by continual re-sharpening. Aside from this feature, the mechanical pencil is still ‘just a pencil’. As such, it is a familiar tool, which invites the student to take it up with confidence, free of inhibition. (Just don’t advance too much lead to cause breaking!)

The Exercises

The approach to calligraphy offered here does not begin with letterforms, the ‘performance’ if you will, but rather with preparation for performance; and, like the arts of dance and music, it starts with bodywork. Students of dance

‘exercise’ at the bar and on the floor, by stretching and strengthening, to awaken their consciousness of bodily movement. Students of music ‘warm up’ with scales and exercises, and to reenter the special relationship with their instrument. These exercises are taken seriously, for if practiced mechanically, this lack of feeling is perceived in the performance. To help the calligrapher develop sensitivity to bodily movement, I offer exercises such as ‘bowing’ and ‘conducting’.

Even though these exercises focus on the essential ingredients of our art, its strokes and dynamics, they are not intended as *objets d’art*, for viewing. They concern our art’s inner workings; and the way to its discovery comes through a very personal process of investigation. Hence calligraphers will benefit from a letter-free time, a time preliminary to writing words and texts. During this time, one free from the tyranny of the eye, the calligrapher turns her/his attention to bodily movement to discover the play of forces and feeling within, and to consciously cultivate their coordination. Calligraphy, I believe, embraces a paradox: to have form one must let go of it with one’s eye and feel within, out of focus, the forces responsible for its visible expression.

1 Rhythmical movement through shoulder-arm awareness

The calligrapher ‘discovers’ movement by turning conscious attention to her/his own bodily movement. However, beginning instruction for calligraphy focuses not upon such movement, but upon letterform. The student, who is intent upon reproducing the form, works very slowly, moving only the fingers. Such limited motion is quite unlikely to awaken the sense of movement, the very sense that leads naturally to a vital engagement with rhythm! (See ‘The Pen Stroke’.) Therefore, if we are to bring movement to consciousness, we need to exert it over a larger area than is possible for the fingers alone. From the very beginning, a student should engage the shoulder and arm. To better encourage their freedom of movement, I strongly recommend working at a drawing board held in your lap and propped up against a table or, at a

drawing table. We begin the exercises, then, with a sequence for activating shoulder and arm, focusing our attention as much as possible on the shoulder. In so doing, we may discover that this part of our body has become 'frozen', and requires a little time to 'defrost'. Gently turning our attention to it will serve this purpose.

Before making contact with the pencil, let's make arm gestures in the air. Place your left hand (if right-handed) on your right shoulder and flex the shoulder a few times. Keeping your hand on the shoulder, extend the right arm slowly, gently, and make a few large circles, clockwise and counterclockwise. Focus attention on the shoulder as the impetus for this movement. A little more quickly, move from large circles to small and back, in each direction. Observe how the shoulder connects to the upper arm. Try shifting attention to the arm.

Now, hold the pencil comfortably, gently; again, extend the arm and move the arm as though you were in a pool of water performing water ballet. You will likely feel tension in your arm from the water's resistance, and a fuller sense of movement. Breathe. Keep a comfortable grip on the pencil; this is shoulder-arm work, not hand-finger work.

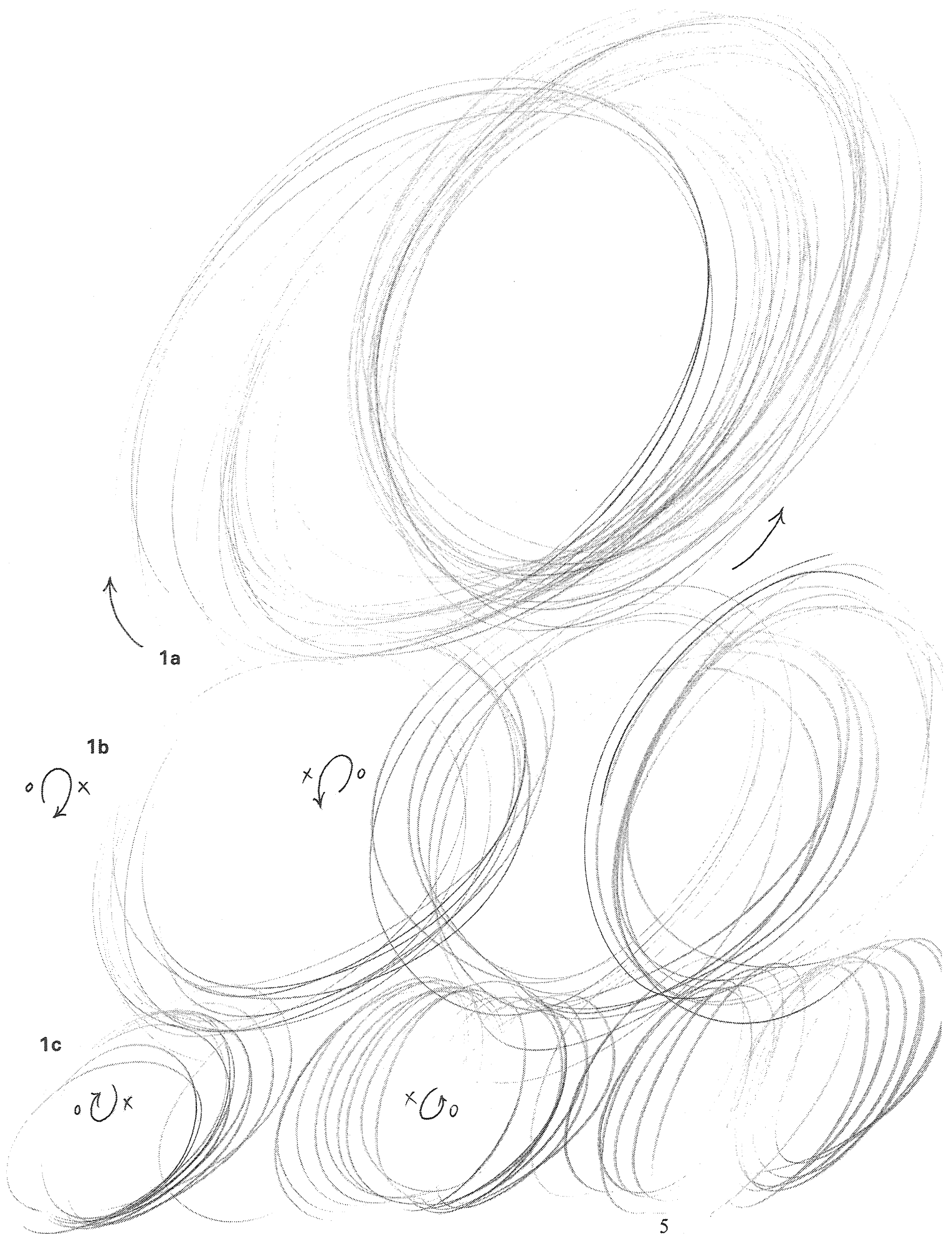
Holding the pencil, place your hand on a sheet of paper, but not the pencil tip itself. Move the hand on its side/heel in a large oval, at least 8" across, with the weight of the hand sitting upon the desk. Allow your shoulder to be the source of contact and movement. Readjust your focus: relax and try to imagine that the circular pattern is itself moving your shoulder. Move rather lightly and quickly. Here we experience how the body moves in accordance with form.

1a From the shoulder, bring the pencil into contact with the paper, but keep the hand off the table/drawing board. 'Throw' or 'fling' the arm in continuous circular motions. As the shoulder conducts this large, free movement we activate the force of momentum. Experiment with speed and the tightness of your grip—just how much is sufficient?—while the pressure of contact comes from the shoulder.

1b Now, begin a circular arc lower left and throw it clockwise. Start with light pressure and, turning into the arc's bend, upper right, draw/pull towards yourself with greater pressure: as you return to the beginning of the figure, lower left, release the pressure and repeat. This release from pressure provides a natural energy source with which to restart the figure. The alternation of pressure and its release creates *rhythmical movement*. Reverse direction: fling lightly upward, counterclockwise and, after the bend, pull downward with pressure. Note on the diagrams: an 'x' indicates pressure and an 'o' release of pressure.

1c Next, begin the figure at its top. Pull down with pressure, release pressure on the return, upward throw. Work clockwise and counterclockwise. Can you feel the tensions created by this movement? Can you experience this rhythmical movement as a consequence of participating in the physical force of momentum? This force of momentum also seems to transform the circular figure into an oval one. For me, the oval form suggests an orbit: an actual or imaginary path taken by a celestial body during its periodic revolution around another body. Keeping this image in mind may help us become familiar with the idea of form, not as a static pattern, but as a figure expressing movement. With the alternation of pressure applied to our figure, we have quite naturally experienced its inherent dynamic and rhythmical movement. For a more dramatic experience of these dynamics, exaggerate: lift the pencil from the paper when pressure is released.

If we do this with a large, yet buoyant, gesture, we might imagine ourselves participating in the quality of a whale's movements. Taking shorter more rapid strokes, irregularly spaced, we might dart about 'sparrow-like'! Through the imagination we thus awaken our capacity for empathy with movement. Such empathy permits us to experience the posture and gesture, even the life spirit, of creatures such as those above, and of 'inanimate' objects as trees or branches.



2 The tensile elasticity of line (‘Throwing’)

First, make small rapid circular movements in the air just above the paper; then contact the paper with *just* the hand (not the pencil point); and, lastly, draw the ovals with pencil contact. Make the shoulder-arm the source of the pressure for contact with the paper, as well as the source of movement.

2a Moving rapidly, begin with small ovals and, drawing in a spiral fashion, enlarge and overlap them. Work rhythmically, clockwise and counter-clockwise. This again is a ‘throwing’ action.

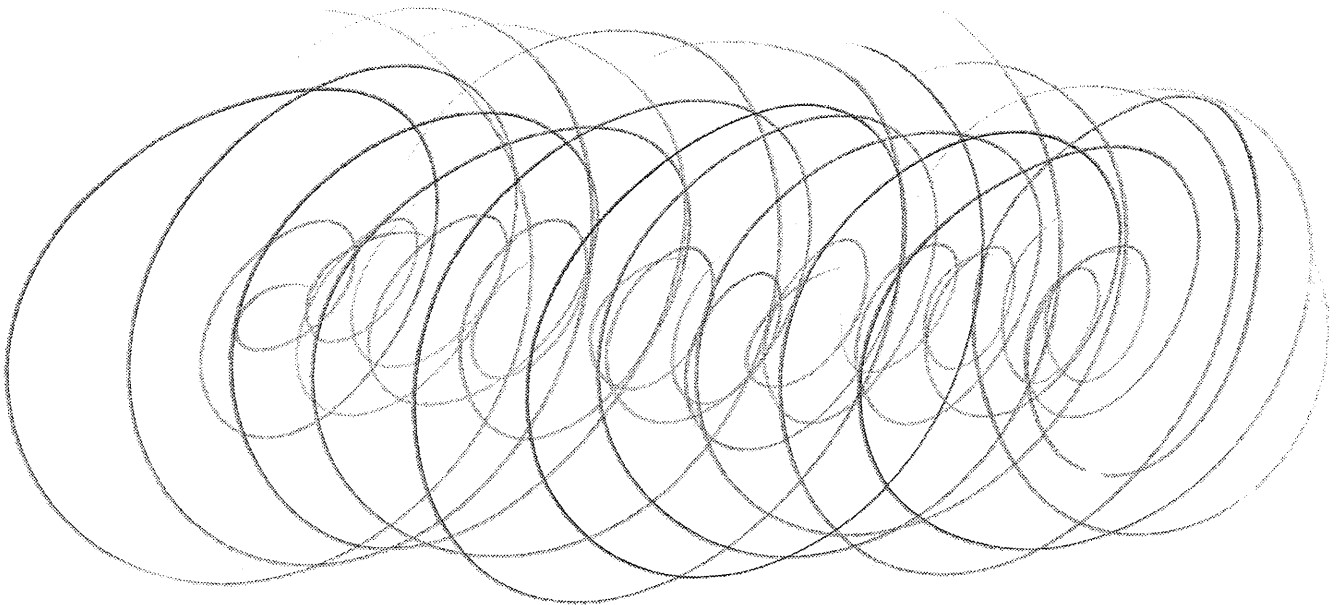
I would now like to describe more carefully what I mean by this term ‘throwing’. For me, it is a very particular type of drawn, or moving line. It includes the idea of ‘aiming’ that is common to throwing a ball; in other words, it is directed and intentional. Unlike a toss, though, it also contains the idea of ‘recoil’—in the sense of returning to a starting point or source. Let’s investigate the nature of recoil a little further. A thing returning has by definition had a beginning. This part of the throw involves a stretching away from a point of origin. We can imagine it

as the elastic part of the throw. The return is activated when the stretch is recalled, when the tension is released by recoil. Whether we throw a line with an actual return, such as a loop or an ellipse, or just draw a straight line, we can invest it with this spring-like, elastic force, this sense of return. Thus a ‘throw’ combines the *intent* of an aim and the *force* of ‘elastic’ recoil. This combination imparts a vital life to strokes which we discover in the act of shoulder-arm movement. We help to activate a throw by our conscious application of pressure. With pressure we also add resistance, and thereby create tension. This tension combines with the elasticity of recoil to imbue strokes with the vital quality of ‘tensile elasticity’.

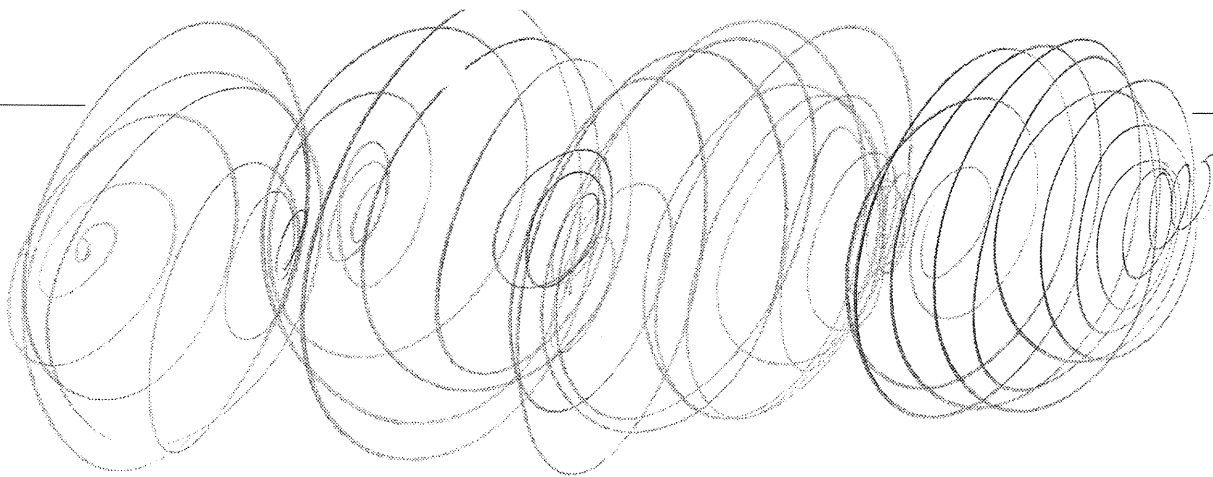
2b ‘Winding up’. Start with a small counter-clockwise throw moving into a small oval: apply pressure to the left downward part of the throw and release it on the upswing; spiral out and repeat about three times before coming off the paper. Stay with the ‘momentum’ and muscle memory of the gesture—looping in the air until landing on the paper to begin again.

2c Rhythmic launchings moving from large spheres to smaller ones, and again to large ones.

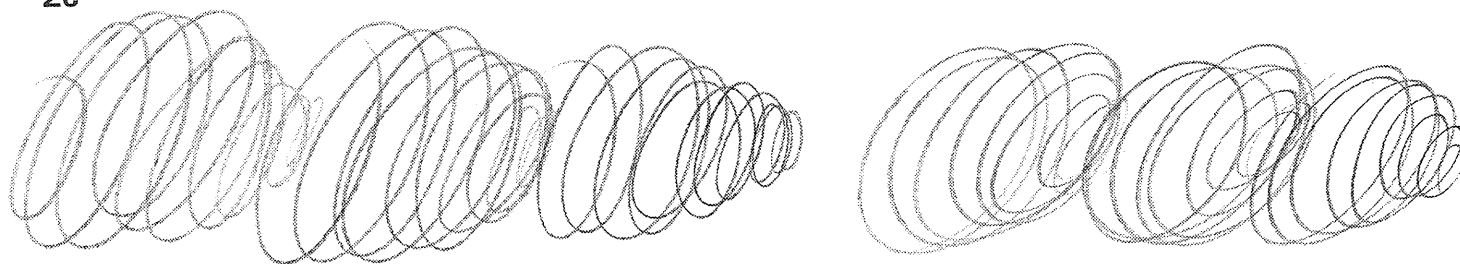
2b



2a



2c



3 The horizontal line: an introduction to gesture ('Bowling')

Referring back to an earlier statement—the eye tutors form but does not engender it—I propose that we now consider gestural movement for this important role. Derived from the Latin word *gestus*, the past participle of *genere*, to bear or carry, the word 'gesture' denotes movement of the body or body part to express thought, emotion, intention, etc. Surely we want our forms to express a quality of life that goes beyond legible lettering. Undoubtedly, the energy produced by rhythmical movement is necessary for this purpose; however, I would like to argue that only the power of feeling can bring it fully to life. (Would the monster Frankenstein have any power to engage us emotionally, as a living creature, if he did not express feelings?)

One day while I was drawing such interlaced loops as those of 3e I became aware that not only was I moving rhythmically, with pressure on the long strokes and its release on the loop ends, but that my experience of the pressured stroke now included 'feeling'. Although I am unable to articulate the exact nature of this feeling, perhaps the world of music can provide a hint for its understanding. Might not this feeling be akin to that produced by a musician's

sensitive 'bowing' of a stringed instrument—a gesture intended to evoke feeling?

Let us now look for the connection between motion and emotion, for the conditions by which a moving line becomes 'moving', a line that is 'felt'. I believe this felt quality arises from actual physical sensation. The pencil is an extension of the fingers; although the tool contacts the paper, it is through the fingers that we perceive this experience. Pen movement inextricably involves touch, because it involves contact. When we consciously experience such contact from a pen through our sense of touch it becomes an emotional experience. Whenever a human being makes physical contact—whether with another person, an animal or a pen moving on paper to produce stroke/letterform—it has the potential to express feeling.

And, considering the arm as our source of contact, we naturally think of the gesture that expresses affection: the embrace. The etymology of this word, too, is grounded in the physical: derived from Latin *im*, meaning in, plus *brachium*, an arm. Also in reverse, from the possession of a feeling to its expression, clasp in an embrace, we see the inseparable relationship between the physical and the felt, between "sense and sensibility."



I offer here a sequence of exercises for cultivating the gestural, or feeling quality of line. Since it is unlikely that you have sought such an experience before, I recommend patience as you open yourself to it. We may begin this seemingly elusive task by creating a 'setting' in which the body becomes comfortable, open to the experience of motion as one in which feeling/emotion may enter. Naturally, the sense of touch plays an important role. Although the fingers and hand may come immediately to mind in this respect, I believe the felt understanding of gesture arises *first* through shoulder-arm work. Hence we engage them at the outset of our exploration into gesture.

My first awareness that feeling had entered the moving line of my pen came when drawing *horizontal* interlaced loops, and I still find this direction especially conducive to evoking it. Thus, my choice of the horizontal direction for these exercises. Generally, historical Roman alphabets, unlike Hebrew and Arabic, seldom send strokes horizontally. Of the Roman alphabets, the formal Roman Caps employ this direction more often than lower case and cursive styles but, all in all, not very often. Nonetheless, the nuances of its flow and sweep are appreciated for flourishing and 'swash' caps. Therefore, as a relatively unexplored 'direction', I propose that we investigate its potential, at this time, in the exercises for cultivating gestural movement.

3a Warming up. Move arm-shoulder in a shallow convex arc back and forth across the width of the paper.

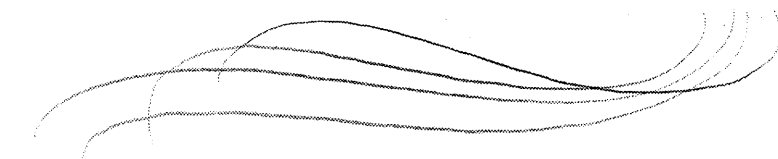
Throw the stroke with some pressure, letting it return on the paper with less pressure, through recoil. Vary the speed.

Lighten the throws back and forth so you feel your arm moving like a pendulum.

3b Make concave, underhanded strokes. Continue to look and listen for the rhythm in your movement.

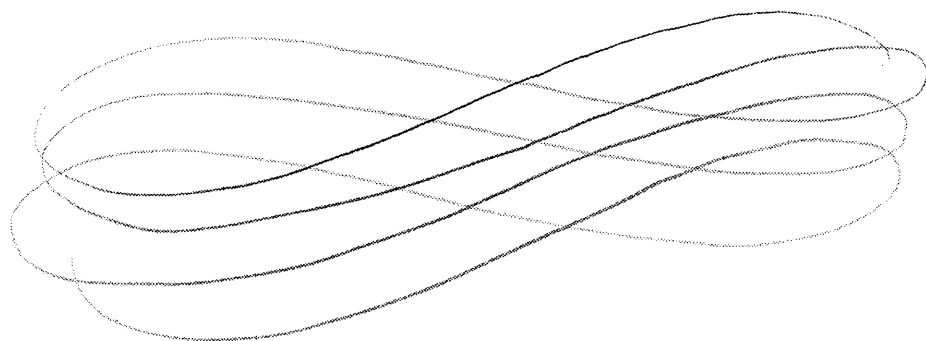
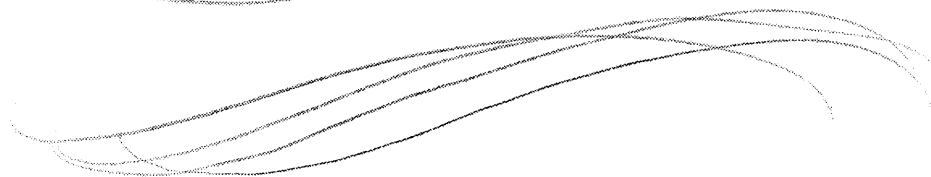
3c Rapidly, throw horizontal strokes. With the line whisking across there is not a strong sense of beginning or ending. To give this definition, begin the stroke with a 'jab', then pause, and from the shoulder move freely across and off the page. In reverse: 'fly' lightly onto the page and across it; at end of stroke increase pressure in a definite stop. These points of pressure intensify our awareness of the body's engagement with the stroke.

'Bowing' is the action of drawing a line with gradual changes in pressure in either a 'reverse curve' or 'looped interlace'. The sensitive application and retraction of pressure nurtures the awakening of feeling through the arm.



3d

3e



3d The 'Reverse Curve'. Consider this stroke in three parts: beginning, mid-section and end. The beginning and end will curve in opposite directions, hence its name.

Start very slowly so you can coordinate the stroke with the breath. Breathing in lightly, come into the convex part of the bend and, exhaling, feel the weight of the arm drawing in a slightly diagonal direction with gradually increasing pressure. As the breath concludes, lightly finish the stroke in a gentle concave bend. Try to find the rhythm: the entrance and exit curves are lighter in pressure and may move more quickly than the middle, pressured part of the stroke.

Focus first on 'the mechanics' of the stroke: its direction, speed and variations in pressure. As these begin to flow, concentrate also on developing an awareness of feeling. To encourage this, imagine yourself a violinist bowing a particularly moving passage.

3e 'Looped Interlace'. Begin the figure from the left with light pressure; increase pressure for the mid-section of the stroke; release pressure in anticipation of the loop. This release produces the energy for sending the stroke into its loop and return.

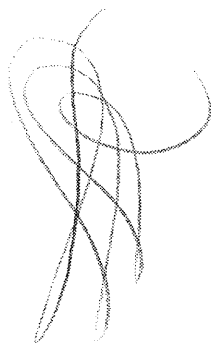
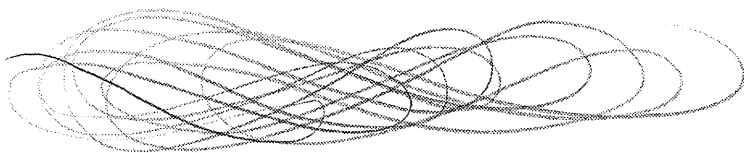
Reverse the direction of the interlace, beginning from the right side of the figure.

Exaggerate: instead of keeping the pencil on the paper for the loop, lift it and make the loop in the air. Use the energy of released pressure referred to above.

3f



3g



3f Imagine changes in pressure corresponding to changes of volume in music: crescendo for greater pressure and diminuendo for release of pressure. Explore pressure in relation to speed.

3g Experiment with the interlace: the measured, evenly-spaced, classical figure, as well as one having potential for freer expression.

4 The vertical line ('Springing')

This page's exercises take up the vertical direction, the dominant direction of Roman alphabets.

4a Begin with an active line, drawing up and down rapidly and lightly: hand and arm moving as one unit with the pencil held lightly.

4b Translate the horizontal sequence of 3a

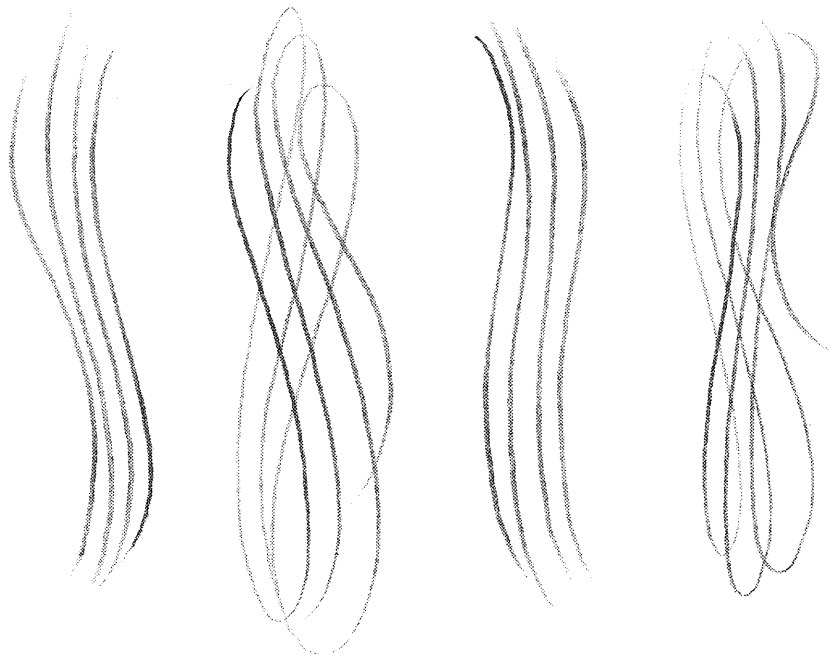
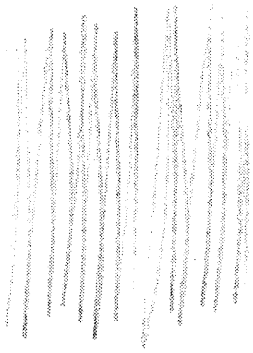
4c 'Springing'. Draw the stroke with increasing pressure, releasing the pressure at the stroke's end. The energy/force of the release acts as a springboard into the light, upward diagonal stroke.

Make the stroke by applying even pressure. At the stroke's completion, use the momentum of the spring to move into a narrow elliptical arch. (Lloyd Reynolds called such a continuous row of arches an 'arcade', a term I would like to adopt.) As the arch bends around into the vertical, move into pressure. Make rhythmical arcades of different heights, always using the momentum from pressure release to launch the arch.

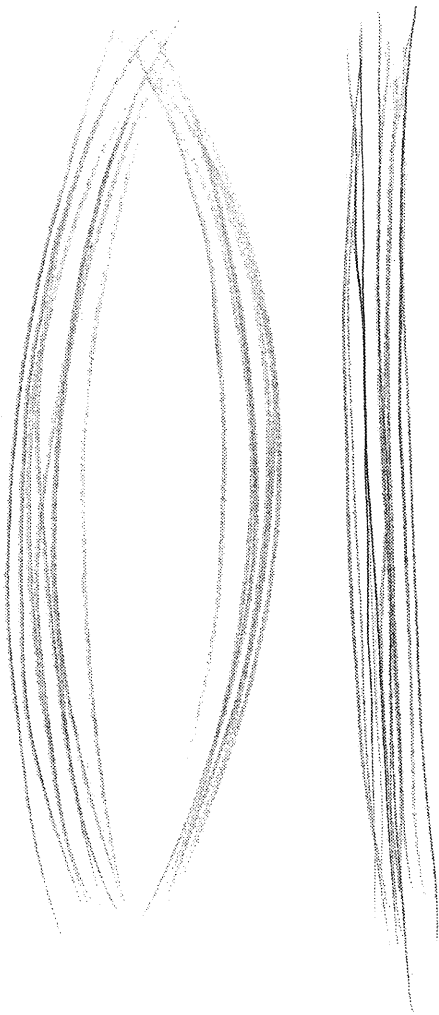
4d Use this same springboard action to launch loops.

4e A sort of 'chorus line'.

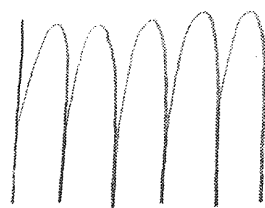
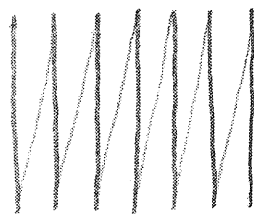
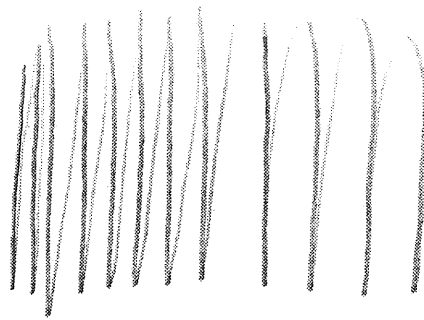
4a



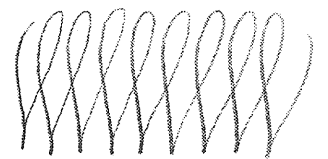
4b



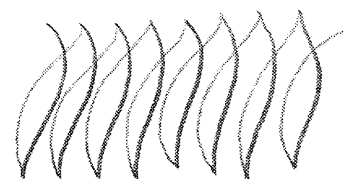
4c



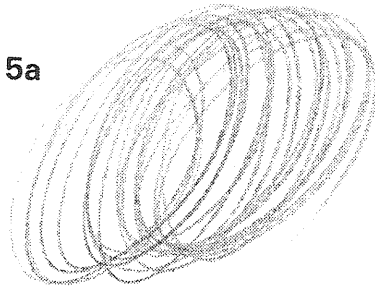
4d



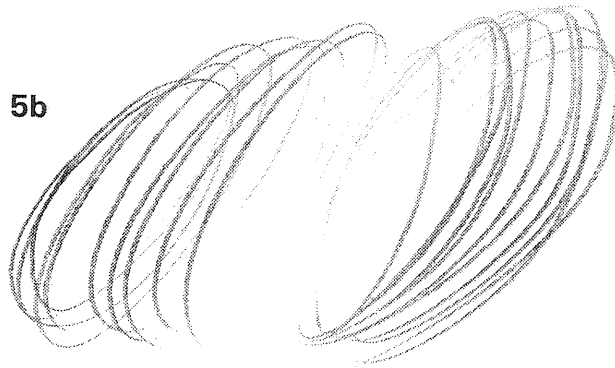
4e



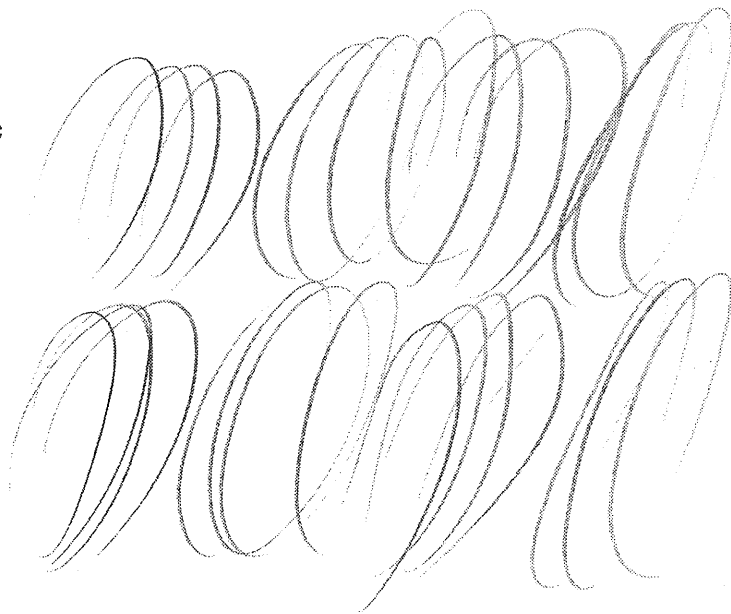
5a



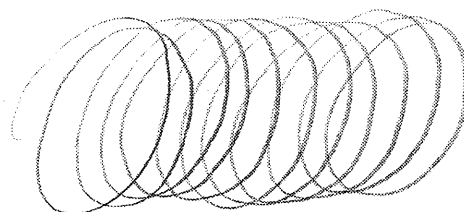
5b



5c



5d



5 Springing from curves

This page of exercises approaches the arcade from the action of the curve.
Warm-up sequence:

5a Quickly-made overlapping ovals.

5b Arced flings: rapidly throw the left side of the oval with pressure and leave the paper on the right side's release. Throw with pressure to the right side of the oval and come off the paper on the left side's release. Start from the top. Feel the arm drawing: hand-pencil as an extension of arm-shoulder, which generates the pressure-pull.

5c Pressured strokes dance quickly back-to-back.

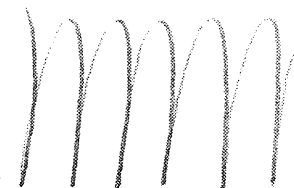
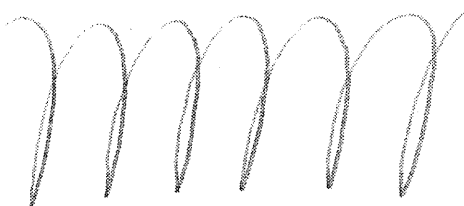
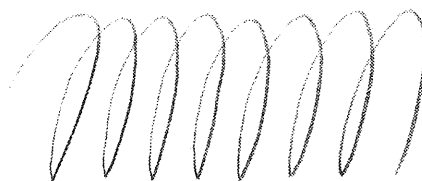
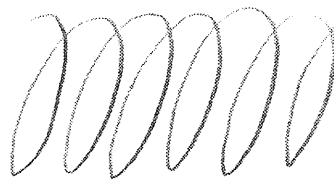
5d Slow down for rhythmical oval overlapping loops: move into pressure on the right side. Use the momentum from the release of pressure at the figure's bottom to launch the left side. Let the space between loops be a result of time—the rhythmical movement of drawing the loops. Listen to the sound of the pencil in motion and try to repeat what you hear with what you feel in your arm.

5e Springboard loops sequence—moving from looped to linear arcades: the loops narrow line by line until the loop itself becomes a line.

5f Pencil leaves paper at top of arcade. Taller and shorter versions.

5g Shorter and wider, and yet again shorter and wider. In these last two, the arc being wider, it has more time and space in which to move from pressure to release and back to pressure.

5e

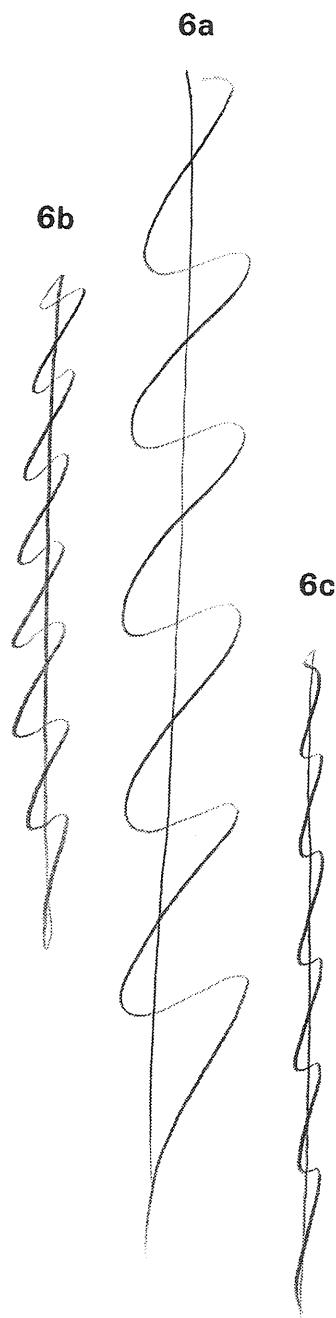


5f



5g





6 Drawing an elastic, rhythmical line (‘The Slalom’ or ‘Skiing’)

(Slalom: a timed downhill ski race over a zigzag course marked by flag-topped poles.)

The ‘slalom’ embodies a pressure-release dynamic similar to the interlace and hence has a similar rhythm. Both figures derive energy for their movement from rhythmical alternations of pressure and release of pressure. Unlike the interlace, though, the slalom only travels a vertical route, like a skier in a ‘downhill’ zigzag. The figure’s downward diagonal is followed by a short reverse horizontal, rather than by a stroke returning to its approximate point of origin. The variations in the length of repeated strokes—long/short rather than long/long—also give it a rhythm, or sound print, slightly different from that of the interlace.

6a Begin with a long vertical stroke.

At its topmost point attach the beginning of a light reverse horizontal stroke. Completing its second bend, move with increasing pressure into the diagonal. Release pressure at the end of the diagonal as you approach the beginning bend of the next reverse horizontal. Make the reverse horizontal with the light pressure of the release. Continue downward, repeating the sequence of graduated pressure increases and releases, feeling the sensations in the arm, listening for the sound of the pencil moving rhythmically. Be alert for sensation in the fingers as pressure is released from the diagonal and they draw the reverse horizontal.

6b & c Notice the variations, in width and direction, of the horizontal reverses connecting their diagonals.

6d In this slalom variation the downward 'earlike' arcs end in pressure which releases into a short upward retrace, from which the next arc springs.

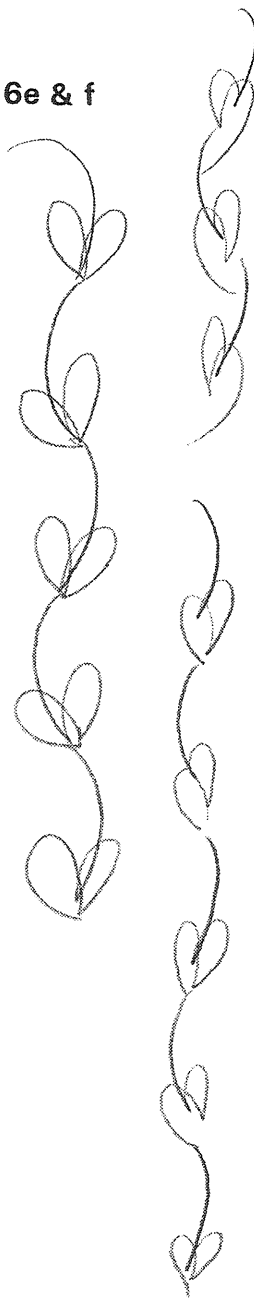
6e & f The release springs further up the downward stroke into two adjacent enclosed loops before continuing downward with alternating left and right arcs. Experiment with the order of making the loops.

6g Variations. Experiments with pressure-release in relation to rhythm and elasticity. The elastic action of line awakens as it is pulled diagonally downward with pressure increasing toward its release. I hope these rhythmical patterns will help you to 'feel' the line stretching, like an elastic band. Is your arm actively participating?

6d

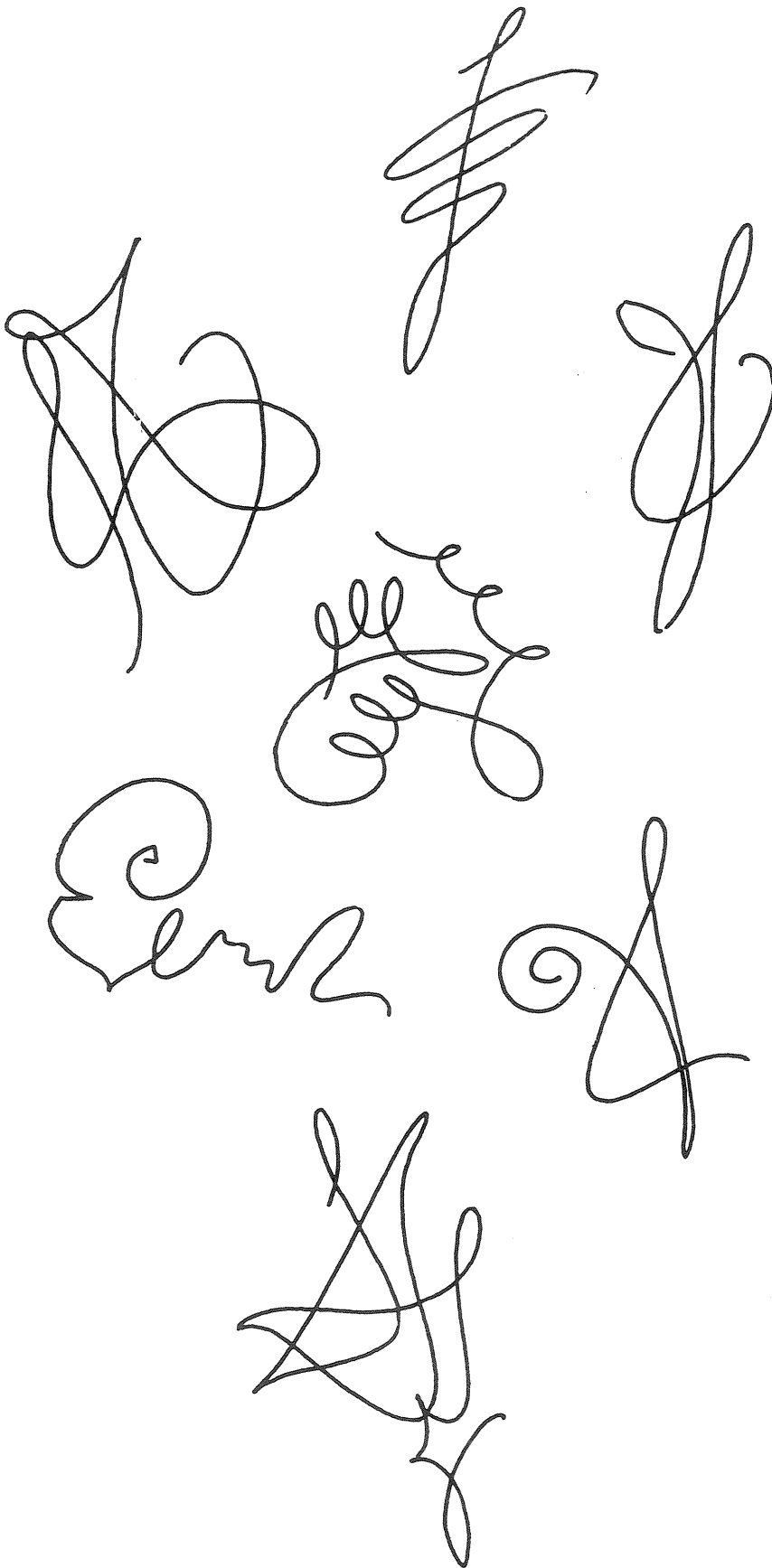


6e & f



6g





7 Experiments with rhythm & gesture ('Conducting')

With 'conducting' we again enter into the realm of music. Through the conductor's gestural movement s/he 'embodies' the *feeling* of a musical composition. Its variations in rhythm, volume and tone are encoded in the bodily movement of gesture. Although interpreting measure by measure, the conductor gives shape to the score with its entirety in mind. I believe the calligrapher, like the conductor, expresses a 'score' with its full scope in mind.

For the calligrapher to 'conduct', I think the graphic 'notation' or image must have some complexity; therefore, these exercises investigate the rhythm of irregular figures, ones composed of unevenly spaced parts.

We here employ our previous experience with the dynamics of movement, experimenting with the application of pressure, remembering that it generally releases with changes of direction. Also, working with such unfamiliar forms may call forth a more sensitive, searching approach. The idea is to explore these figures for rhythm and gesture.

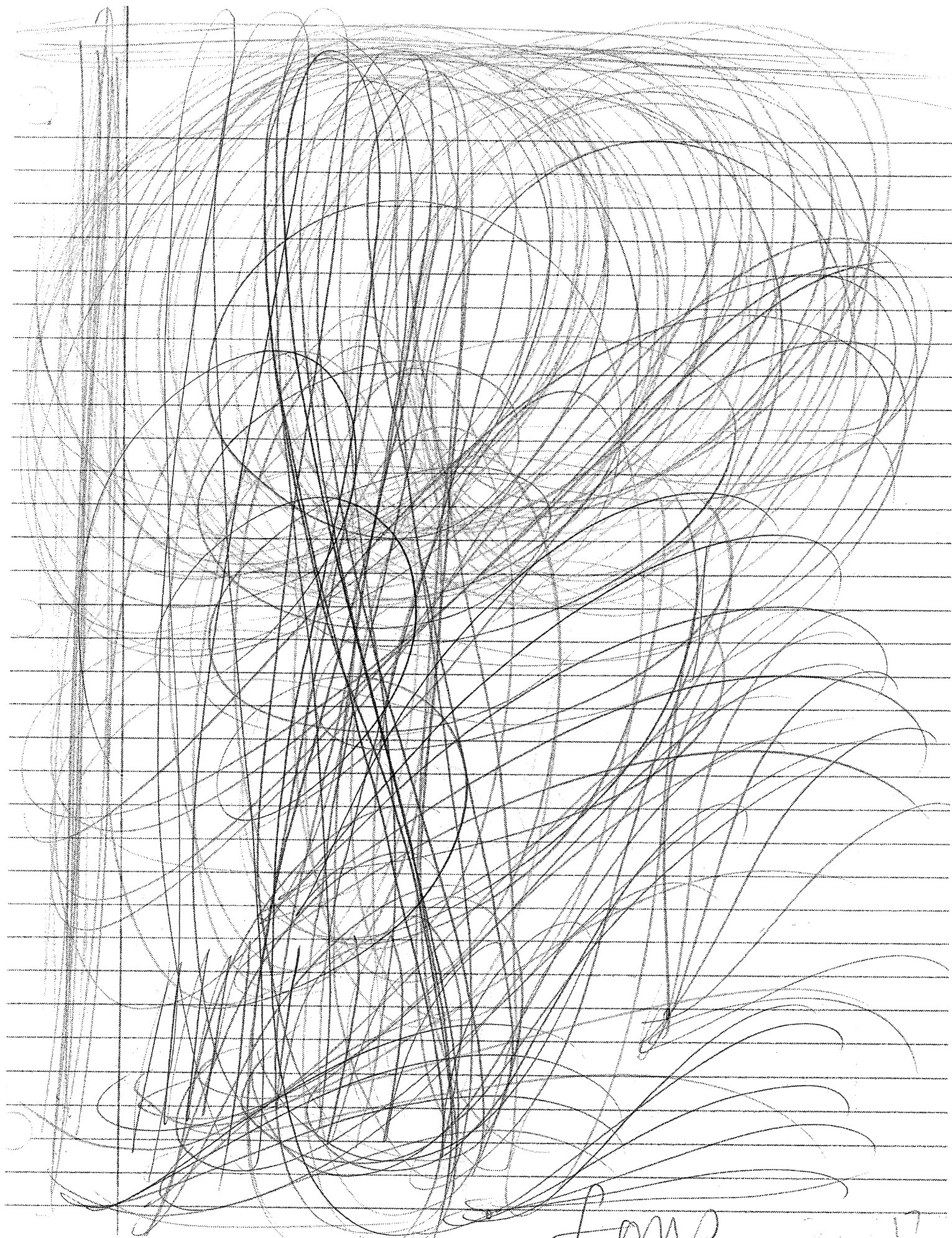
Ultimately, our letterforms are figures, designs that we may investigate in a very similar way. I hope that such work as this will encourage you to investigate letterform as pattern, ever in search of its rhythm and flow.

1 I recommend beginning this work by tracing.

2 Choose a figure. Where does it begin: could it begin at either end? Which flows better?

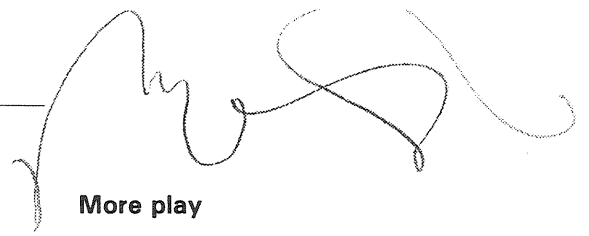
3 Explore its rhythm: look for changes of speed and pressure that will bring it to life, rhythmically. Trace over it until you feel it flows smoothly and you think your muscles are 'remembering' it.

4 Draw it freely, without looking, on a regular piece of paper. It does not have to replicate the original figure. 'Conduct' it until you feel that its rhythm and gesture are your own.



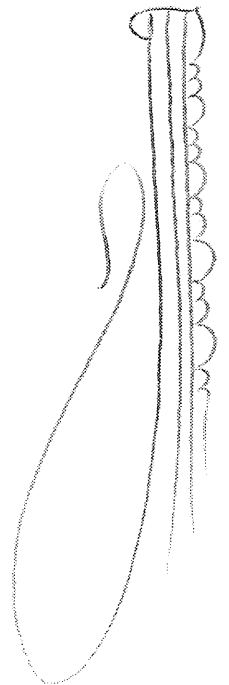
L.M.D.

5/17



More play

It was a joyful awakening when I realized that play was an integral part of calligraphy practice. Such activity usually follows warming up and more disciplined work with line, while it generally precedes work with letterform. It can be large and loose like the five 'lines' on this page; it can even be historically inspired like the filigree. You can even approach a sheet of plain notebook paper as a pencil playground. (See previous page) The process of play involves just being attentive to your arm in motion, to rhythmic patterns you happen upon, to changes in speed, etc. To stimulate this type of 'unstructured' work you could imagine a natural object or objects and 'doodle' them—looking for their energy or growth pattern. Ideas: wild grasses, tree and branches, plants, crazy wild abstract line. Let go and get completely involved. This exercise is an experience of freedom of movement in which the calligrapher has an opportunity to open to the moment. Whatever comes, no judging; this is play, not performance!





Alphabets

Such practice as the preceding exercises may very well stimulate a desire to experiment with alphabet design. This is an opportunity to unite the flow of line with letterform. Keeping in mind the stroke as the basic unit of any form we can begin to make our letterforms of vital, energized line. In the previous exercises, the eye was not of primary concern; in alphabet design the eye regains prominence as the designer of form. With the gradual strengthening of concentration you will be able to expand your awareness to include both form and flow.

The Design Process: Issues

1 Will the alphabet be lower case/minuscule, capital/majuscule, or a mixture of the two?

2 Will it be historically influenced or an 'invention'? For me, an invention usually involves working with a theme or motif. In the process of working with the exercises, motifs may spontaneously arise. With this alphabet example I've chosen to explore 'straight' strokes as curved, to 'shrink' the curved bowls and to experiment with the relative length of letter strokes and connecting strokes. (See Pen Scale). What is the relative formality of your alphabet: will it tend to a more cursive or formal treatment?

3 I suggest you use these questions as springboards to starting the process of creating an alphabet. It is a process, one that asks you to stay open for some time; it always involves adjustment and readjustment of the forms to each other. At the core of the process is an exploration, a searching for compatibility and appraising for harmony, one form with the other.

4 Even so, after 'designing' an alphabet one still regards it as an hypothesis to be tested: writing a word, a few words or lines to see how the forms work together. A new idea may occur for an alternate form. What words/texts does the core feeling 'suggest' for transcription? In the exercises ahead with the edged pen we will encounter many additional issues to consider, and thereby add to the challenge and joy of alphabet design.

Beginning my Studies

Beginning my studies the first step pleas'd me so much,
The mere fact consciousness, these forms, the power of motion,
The least insect or animal, the senses, eyesight, love,
The first step I say awed me and pleas'd me so much.

from *Beginning my Studies* by Walt Whitman

1. Cursive script is to calligraphy what dialect is to literary diction. It has a rank vigor and protean potentiality denied to calligraphy. It was out of the dialects of the Roman soldier and the peasant that the Romance languages evolved. Similarly it was out of the cursive hand that new book scripts sprang up in many districts. New life was needed in calligraphy. It came, as it usually does, from below.

From E.A. Lowe's essay, "Handwriting"

The Edged Pen

Introduction & Exploratory Exercises



Pao-yu found life in the Takuanyuan all that he could wish. He studied a little  did exercises in calligraphy.

from *Dream of the Red Chamber* by Tsao Hsueh-chin



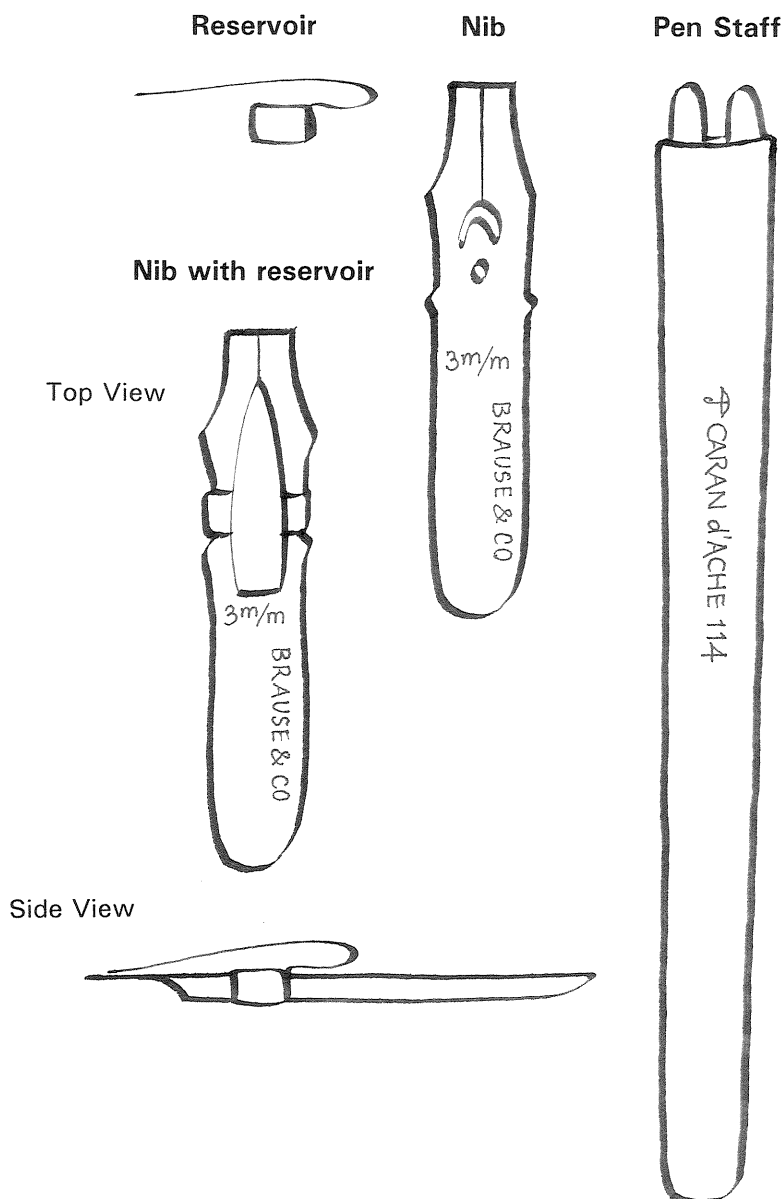
The Edged Pen

Introduction. Roman calligraphy originated with the edged pen. Despite its remarkably simple design—an edge and two corners—it has profoundly influenced the design of all Roman alphabets, from the historical manuscript styles which evolved before the invention of type to their various contemporary interpretations. For the most part, these alphabets fulfilled a specific purpose: the written communication of verbal thought. Having concentrated primarily on this practical purpose, the expressive calligraphic potential of this tool has remained largely untapped. It is my mission in this book to explore the edged pen as a tool capable of powerful graphic expression. To realize this aim, however, the tool must become understood as an instrument through which ink flows like the ‘breath’ of life to ‘embody’ vital letterform.

As the musician brings life to sound by ‘coloring’ it, shading a note by raising or lowering its volume, so the calligrapher brings life to the strokes of letters, ‘sounding’ the shape of a stroke by graduating its thickness, or weight. There are many other analogies between music and calligraphy which we will explore as we take up the pen and learn to play. I invite you to enter openly into the expressive art of calligraphy by taking up ‘exercises and scales’ and, through these, experience the joy of rhythm and movement and begin an adventure in ‘finding the flow’!

The Tool Itself. We start with the physical pen, knowing that this simple instrument is capable of creating a seemingly infinite array of stroke shapes. Throughout the centuries it has been fashioned from reeds, feathers and, most commonly today, metal. For its ease of procurement and use, the metal nib pen appeals to the contemporary calligrapher, especially the beginner.

The Nib. While the design is relatively standard, it does admit to variation. Usually, after experience with the different types, a calligrapher chooses one for a particular purpose or simply from personal preference. The choice of pen



A Writing & Drawing Tool.

The images on these two pages were drawn with an edged pen. Employing the same tool for text and image creates page harmony. Is there a difference between drawing a letter and writing one or does the verb merely distinguish the object produced? Does considering letters as objects to be drawn rather than written affect our approach to them?



design is actually a choice of 'nib', the chisel-shaped pen tip which becomes a 'pen' when inserted into a holder. (For reed or quill, holder and nib are one, since the chisel-edged tip is cut directly from the shaft itself.) In choosing from the different makes, the experienced calligrapher considers the various features and 'feel' of each, and selects one with respect to preference or aim. For the purposes of this book, I have chosen the Brause. This nib is easily loaded with ink and carries a good supply; it's a hearty tool that also allows refinement.

The Nib Reservoir. A nib carries ink in a 'reservoir'. This device may be designed as part of the nib (Speedball), as a separate piece and also purchased separately (Mitchell) or as an adjustable attachment (Brause). The Brause reservoir grips the nib with bent metal clamps. By holding onto the top of the reservoir you can slide the whole device forward and back along the nib to regulate the flow of ink. The further forward, the greater the flow. It is also important to align the pointed portion of the reservoir with the nib's ink slit, midway along the nib's edge. A small ridge toward the back of the nib resists the reservoir moving back beyond a certain distance.

The Pen Staff. The nib becomes functional as pen after being inserted securely into a pen staff, or holder. This instrument, too, is available in a variety of designs. While ease of insertion and removal is helpful, a snug, secure fit is essential. Of the styles available today, Caran d'Ache satisfies this latter requirement very well, I believe. The nib wedges tightly between a metal pronged fitting within the holder and the holder itself. This lightweight, barrel-shaped staff has another desirable feature—the brand name clearly designates the front of the staff—which will be useful in later work with pen angle.

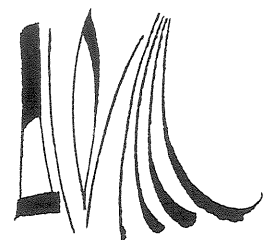
Inserting the Nib. Place the nib between thumb and fingers of the left hand with the thumb on top of the reservoir; place the staff between thumb and fingers of the

right hand above the brand name near the barrel top. Place the rounded end of the metal nib completely over the two prongs of the staff—the curved metal of the nib straddles either side of the prongs—and push the nib, hard, against the prongs. This forces the prongs away from the plastic barrel and allows you to push the nib inside, between prongs and barrel. To move the nib down further, it may be easier to remove the reservoir. To detach it, slide the reservoir up the nib and wriggle the clamps free with your thumb. Then press back and forth on the nib as you wriggle it down into place, with the ridge approximately 1/4" above the gray plastic barrel top. To replace the reservoir, wrap and snap it around the nib, and set it about 1/16" away from the edge.

If the ink flows too freely, it is helpful to flatten the reservoir. I use a tweezers and apply pressure to the metal fold. The mechanism is sensitive, so neither too much nor too little pressure. Give yourself time and practice to get the feel of it.

Dipping the Pen. To load the nib reservoir, dip the pen directly into the ink bottle or, to insure against the barrel immersing too far, pour some ink in a shallow container of narrow diameter. An alternative method for loading involves feeding the reservoir with a brush, a useful technique for working with color. To 'fully-load' the reservoir (see top, next page), which many of the exercises specify, just bring the reservoir below the surface of the ink.

Cleaning the Nib. It is important to clean and, especially, to dry the nib when not in use. It takes very little effort if done immediately after use, and prolongs the life of the nib. I keep a shallow dish of water for the cleaning—just a dip and a wipe will suffice. For drying: 1) absorb water from the front and back of the nib with some sort of lint-free toweling (I use toilet paper) and 2) lift the top of the reservoir with the tip of your index finger and insert the toweling. Wrap drier around the front and back of the nib and wipe it dry.





Paper & Ink

Introduction. The pen leaves the trace of its movement as it releases ink when coming into contact with paper. This interplay between pen, paper and ink activates flow. The roles of the calligraphic essentials, paper and ink, will be explored in this section. Although these materials are considered separately for their unique properties, they are interdependent and operate in response to each other. In the practice of calligraphy we enter into this interrelationship; we set forces in motion with pen dynamics and through them create the compelling experience of calligraphic flow.

Paper. We begin by noting that paper is not merely a passive ground upon which to spread ink; it is a responsive surface, one which we engage actively and attentively. For all levels, I believe the type of paper can enable the student to better understand calligraphy as a physical act. It does this by intensifying the experience of movement through touch. The paper quality which addresses this concern is that of surface texture. Although paper manifests other important qualities, ones such as size, color and weight that we consider carefully in approaching a finished work, they do not have much bearing on our focal interest, the topic of flow.

Paper Surface. A calligraphic paper's minimum requirement is met when it 'holds a hairline', the finest stroke made by the pen's edge: when it takes the ink but does not absorb too much. Such a paper may or may not provide the character needed for the calligraphic experience which this book tries to develop. That character derives from the paper's texture; within the vast spectrum of smooth to rough surfacing we seek papers with a relatively 'rough' texture, those possessing 'tooth'. In other words, it is preferable for the paper to allow a tool to 'bite' into it a little. Tooth encourages the calligrapher to actively engage in the act of writing; it offers resistance to the pen's pressure which, through variation in friction, supports the rhythmical flow of a stroke.

Recommendations. I will now describe the papers which I find promote the desired calligraphic interaction between pen, ink and myself.

1 Boris #37 Bond Layout, produced by Borden & Riley in 100 sheet tablets, 9"x12" and 14"x17".

I find this paper good with respect to both tooth and absorbency. It should work for all the exercises as they are specified.

2 Westwind Pad. Calligraphic graph practice paper, commonly called 'grid'. I began the book's edged-pen exercises with this paper. When I decided to investigate other papers I found that the two papers below, having greater character, provided me a more engaged experience. The ruling of the grid was undoubtedly useful for a foundation with the directional strokes. However, when I was ready for more engagement, I discovered the papers below to be more satisfactory.

3 Hahnemuehle Ingres 95gm/m² White, 18.75"x24.75"

4 Zerkall Frankfurt 120gm/m¹ White 25"x38"

I usually cut the above papers into 4 and 8 sheets, respectively. I recommend either of these for the exercises; however, because of their considerable tooth they may be a challenge for the beginner. (If so, do not hesitate to use the Boris or grid papers.) You will need to experiment with the amount of pressure optimum for accomplishing the aim of any particular exercise. My directions for using a fully-loaded nib, one in which the reservoir is filled with ink, were intended for use with such papers.

All of the above papers may be ordered from the suppliers listed in the Directory.

5 Tracing Paper. Neenah, UV/Ultra II Translucent Printing Paper 8½"x11" Sub 17/64 g/m² Tracing is an excellent way to investigate a form. This is an expensive paper, but it takes ink well. I purchase this paper at a local shop, The Paper Zone.

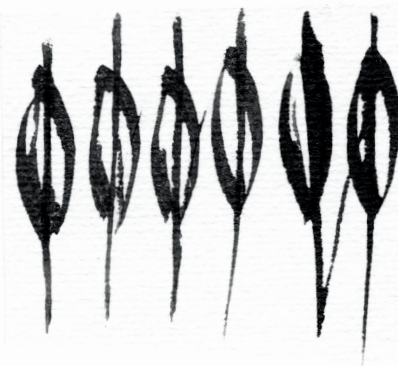
Two-sided. One side of a paper may work better for you than the other. If a paper has a watermark you may wish to try this side first.

Ink. This is the fluid medium by which we record our movement. It is one of the essentials of calligraphy; through it we release the lines, strokes and forms that convey the symbols of written communication along a continuum including traditional style, creative interpretation and artistic expression. We make our mark and our meaning by a synergistic act: the ink helps the calligrapher leave a trace, the calligrapher is responsible for the quality of its flow.

Like the calligrapher's characters, we all exist by the flow of the body's ink, an autonomous flow rhythmically circulated by the life forces within us. However, for the calligrapher to embody a written character with life, s/he must consciously provide the pressure and its release, the pulse-like rhythm by which calligraphic flow is produced.

This is a process that begins by feeding the pen with ink; the amount depends upon the paper with which we are interacting, and upon our intention. The exercises ahead have specific aims and the amount of ink for their practice will be noted, especially for the beginning exercises. As you progress you will become sensitive to the interaction between ink and paper, responding with any adjustments as needed. As you gain experience you will learn to trust your touch.

Recommendations. For the exercises in this book please use a free-flowing ink, a non-waterproof ink. I suggest one such as Higgins Eternal Permanent Black Ink or Parker Quink. These flow well and allow you to clean the nib easily; however, they are not very black. If the cap is left off the bottle they will evaporate over time and grow darker; but they may also get a little slimy and less pleasant to use. Thus, for finished work, a calligrapher generally uses a Sumi ink—stick or liquid—or makes an ink from watercolors or gouaches. If using Sumi be sure to carefully clean the nib; it tends to stick more tenaciously than the other inks. (Note: just because a product has the word *calligraphy* in its name does not guarantee its quality. With time and experience you will discover the materials that serve your purposes best. By taking classes and talking to others you may further explore this important arena.)





Drawing Table position. Less sloped, at a more shallow angle.

At the Writing Desk/Board

Sitting. Since the calligrapher's relationship to her/his writing desk (or board) has direct bearing upon stroke energy and flow, we consider it carefully. All aspects of sitting at the desk should contribute to comfort and encourage a state of relaxed alertness. The calligrapher sits at a desk which is positioned at approximately 25 to 45 degrees. The slope created by this angle allows the calligrapher's arm-shoulder to move freely.

Chair Height. The height of the chair in relation to the height of the desk should be adjusted to provide a distance sufficient for the arm to move comfortably from the shoulder. At this distance the bend of the elbow will form an approximate right angle. This height should also make it possible for the calligrapher to place her/his feet squarely in contact with the floor. For me the 'floor' is a slightly sloped foot rest that helps relieve back strain. Also for the sake of my back, and any influence it may have upon the vitality of the stroke, I try to maintain an upright posture. Becoming aware of the body, its position and movement, takes time. The process of developing this requires an expansion of one's power of concentration—of one's ability to hold many things in attention at once.

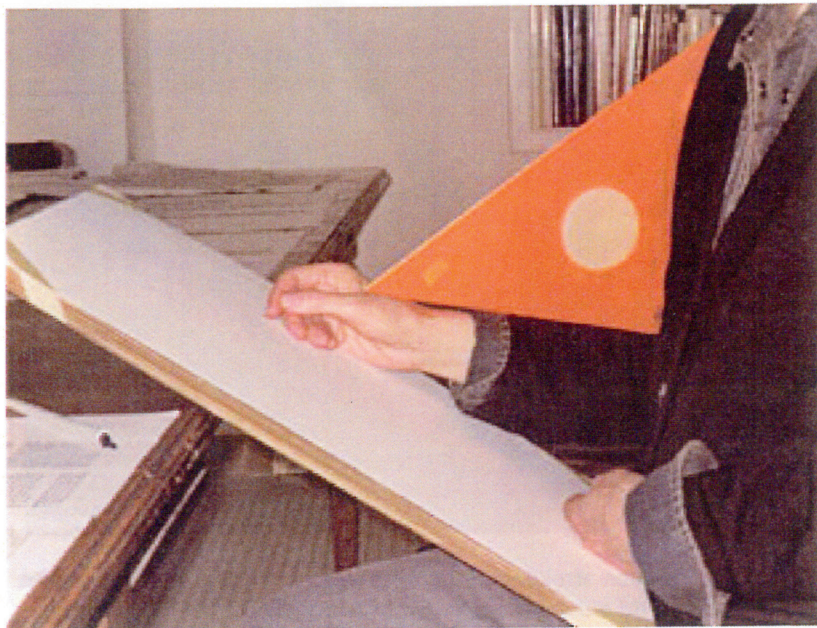
Control. Another fundamental calligraphic skill is the ability to control the appearance of stroke edges: their cleanness or roughness. This is determined by the quality of contact between the broad-edged nib and the writing surface. When the nib's corners are both squarely in contact with the writing surface, the left and right side of a stroke will be clean. To discover the necessary amount of pressure for achieving this contact the calligrapher relies upon feedback from the fingers.



Practice Space. It will be especially beneficial if you can arrange an area which is dedicated to your calligraphy practice.

A Writing/Drawing Board. This can be constructed from two pieces of triple-wall corrugated cardboard (Daniel Smith ships paper packed in this material), the 'walls' placed preferably in opposing directions for greater strength. Cover with padding such as newsprint and blotter paper, and tape everything together at the corners.

Chair height. One that allows the arm to move comfortably also produces an approximate right angle arm bend.

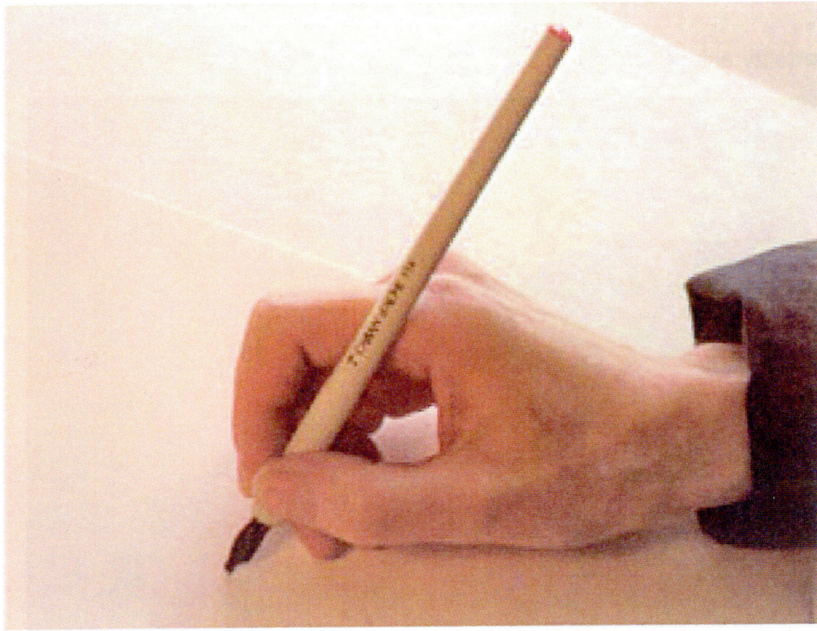


Desk Padding. To enrich sensory feedback from the fingers the calligrapher seeks a responsive surface upon which to work. Hence, the hard surface of the desk is cushioned or padded in some way. Such padding offers the nib's edge and corners a more resilient ground of interaction. This is important since the nib's springiness generates more informative signals for transmission to thumb and index finger. Experiment with the number of pieces of such paper as newsprint or blotter paper needed to produce a suitably responsive writing surface. Some calligraphers prefer to fix this cushioning to the desk, others may choose to fashion a portable cushion of paper held together by tape. (For exercises which focus upon sensitizing the fingers to the nib's corners and surface feedback see 'Pen Corners' on page 40-41.)

Orientation. In setting up your desk, as in most aspects of learning calligraphy, strive to understand the principles behind the various aspects and operations. Calligraphy, you will continue to learn, is an ongoing process of mental and physical engagement and development. As you proceed, I encourage you to experiment freely: to discover methods, forms, materials and tools that are comfortable and satisfying to you at any given moment in developing your practice. I invite you to regard calligraphy as an adventure: a growing process in which you can cultivate a unique, personal relationship to your desk, tools and materials. With practice and experience comes confidence, confidence to make decisions based on personal experience rather than on 'authority'. Gradually, we make our own path, a path along which we may discover our individual taste and self-expression.

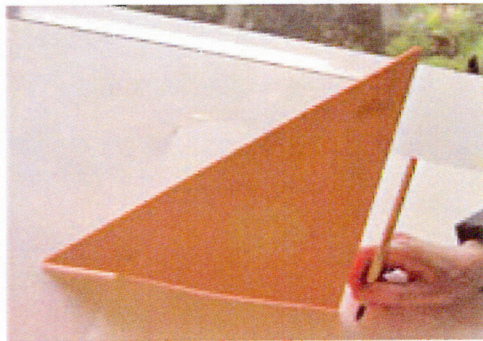
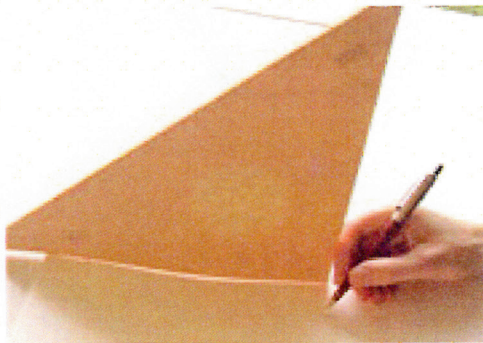


Writing Board position. Greater slope, at a steeper angle.



Staff Angle. The pen stroke is at its narrowest when the staff is furthest from the body, at its steepest angle. (Approximately 90° to the writing desk.) The stroke broadens as the staff moves toward the body and staff angle decreases.

Pen Hold. Note the staff positioned against the index finger's big knuckle. The 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers provide balance; the arm moves free of the table.



Ballpoint & Edged Pen Compared. The edged pen's staff angle is steeper.

Holding the Pen

What is the best way to hold the pen?
How tightly?
At what angle to the writing surface?
Is there a *best* way?

Since these questions directly relate to our aim—to create vital strokes and letterforms—they too must be scrupulously examined. I believe the way in which we hold the pen crucially influences the flow of the stroke. Hence, the dynamics of flow must necessarily be considered as we turn our attention to pen hold. What is the nature of these dynamics? In making contact with the writing surface we push down upon the nib as we pull the stroke. The tension and elastic play resulting from this push and pull combine to create tensile elasticity. (See Pencil Exercises, page 4.) By engaging the force of tensile elasticity we infuse our strokes with greater vitality. The question of pen hold becomes a question of how to actively interact with the forces of a stroke in motion.

The Body. It is my experience that the dynamics of pen movement involve not only the fingers, but also the arm and shoulder. The role played by the fingers in gripping the pen is affected, significantly, when the shoulder, too, provides pressure for contact and movement. Working *together*, with the powerful assistance of the shoulder and arm, the fingers engage and direct the push, pull and friction—the tensile elasticity—of the pen in motion. With their tactile sensitivity and fine motor control the fingers are tailor-made to this purpose. Answers to the question of just how tightly we need grip the pen, to hold onto and guide it in a state of tension, come gradually, with experimentation. In this process we will also discover that the firmness of our pen grip is variable—adjusted in response to the interplay of the above-described forces and the writing surface, its roughness or smoothness.

Finger Positioning & Dynamics. For the relatively free movement of most of the exercises on pages 32-9 place the fingers $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the end of the staff nearest the nib. For the controlled,

careful work of such exercise on pages 40-1 place the thumb and index finger near the bottom of the staff, close to the nib. Given the diameter of most staffs, there will generally be a small gap between the fingers. Position fingers on either side of the nib.

The index finger drives the drawing of a vertical stroke by pushing down upon the staff and, simultaneously, pushes the nib, in alliance with the shoulder-arm, into contact with the paper. (The amount and distribution of pressure are influenced by the width of the nib.) The thumb actively participates by pulling the staff. The tensions resulting from this push and pull are primarily supported and controlled by the thumb pressing the staff against the index finger. Through practice, you will discover an effective contact position someplace between the index finger's second joint and big knuckle. (This position may also be influenced by pen angle.) When the stroke is drawn horizontally thumb pressure may increase. The third, fourth and fifth fingers are not really necessary for gripping the pen and usually just curl under the staff allowing the thumb and index finger to work. The staff may rest lightly upon the third finger but does not clench the pen.

Pen Turning. The above pen hold also enables us to more easily rotate, or 'turn', the pen staff as needed for 'pen turning', or 'pen manipulation'. (See page 71.) This is a design technique which allows the calligrapher to narrow or widen a stroke's thickness; it is one of the most powerful available to the calligrapher. With the control of stroke width the calligrapher may design and refine stroke shape and serif, a crucial skill for calligraphic mastery and self expression. The above described pen hold facilitates turning in part due to the staff angle it produces: the angle between the pen staff and the plane of the writing desk.

Staff Angle. An angle of approximately 75 to 90 degrees allows the fingers to turn the nib with greater ease than a more shallow angle. This extremely steep staff angle, inseparable from pen hold, relates specifically to calligraphy, not to handwriting.

The Moving Pen. With the staff gripped about $\frac{1}{2}$ " above the nib end the fingers and arm can move free of the writing desk/board.



The pen hold for handwriting, one which steadies the staff in an open 'circle', contrasts dramatically with the pen hold for calligraphy, one which stabilizes the staff in a narrow 'ellipse'. This notable difference is a function of their different tools and purposes. Handwriting uses a monoline tool—one producing very little variation in line thickness—unlike calligraphy, which employs a broad-edged tool capable of rendering strokes with tremendous variation in stroke thickness. To exploit the edged pen's capability, we naturally seek the pen hold and staff angle most supportive of our aim. The calligrapher, concerned with the letter as form, employs a pen hold and staff angle, as the one above, to control the dynamics of the movement and stroke shape. Speed is not an objective of calligraphy, in contrast to handwriting; thus, the open hold with its shallow staff angle better facilitates the aim of speed.

Developing Pen Hold. Paying attention to and experimenting with pen hold are ongoing areas of the calligrapher's development. As we explore the flow of the stroke in the following exercises, taking up a variety of calligraphic topics, I encourage you to keep returning your attention to the way in which you are holding your pen.

An Undesirable Grip. Try not to clench the pen staff with the fingers. If the index finger collapses and turns red and white try to relax and allow the shoulder to exert some of the contact pressure.





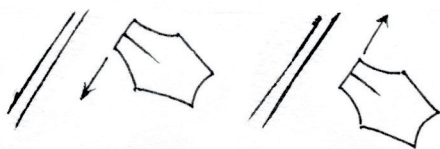
Fully loaded

How much Ink?

I usually adjust the amount of ink in the reservoir to the type of work, and the particular ink and paper. For enhanced freedom of movement, the aim of these exercises, I always use a fully-loaded nib.

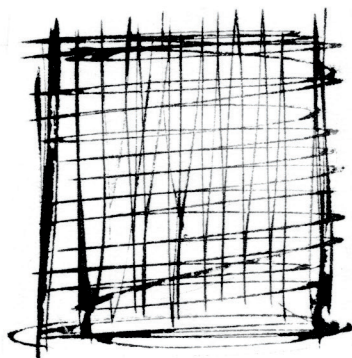
Fig. 1 Releasing the Ink

The easiest method of releasing ink is via the nib's thin edge. Before filling the pen, position the nib parallel to the nib icon and move the pen up and down with your arm in the air, and then lightly on the paper. Next, dip, fully load the nib and shake off excess ink. Set the nib on the paper and push strokes down with your index finger. Then, make strokes by pushing the pen up with the thumb. Alternate pushing directional strokes with the thumb and index finger. Try to keep the arm engaged.



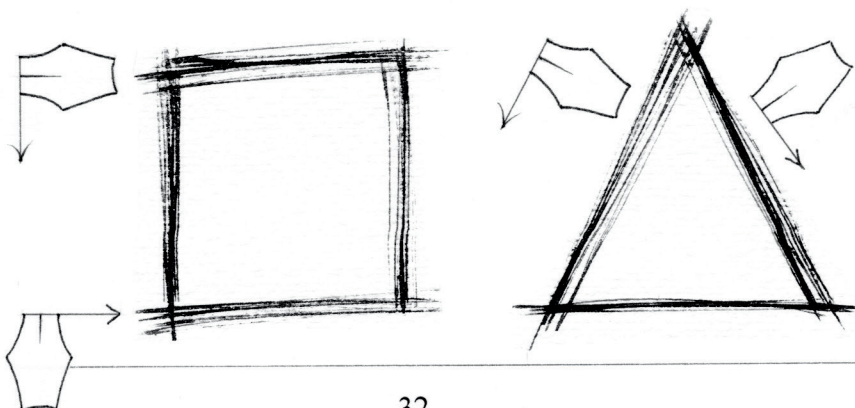
Exercise: Elastic Movement

Throw the strokes vertically up and down, and horizontally back and forth to make a square. Then fill the square with verticals and horizontals. Add a little pressure in moving to the conclusion of the line. At line end, release the pressure and reverse direction; feel a recoil action return the line to its origin. Lift pen to readjust nib position.



Exercise: Figures

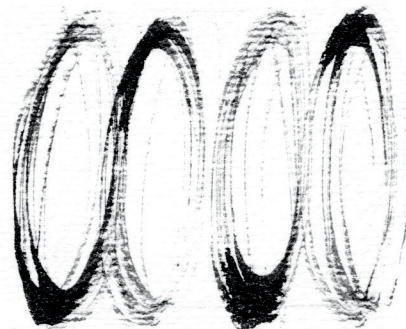
Throw the directional strokes to form a square, triangle and ellipse. Experiment with changes of speed.



Starting the Flow

Releasing the Ink. To initiate the flow, we should first become comfortable and fluent with the release of ink from the nib. For easiest release dip the pen and fully load the nib reservoir. Shake the pen once or twice over the ink container to remove excess ink. I recommend pouring ink from the bottle into a smaller, more shallow container, just enough to fill the reservoir. You then avoid spending time determining if you have filled the nib, or have accidentally lowered the *holder* below the surface of the ink. If the ink does get into the holder casing I would remove and dry the nib; ink that dries inside the staff is corrosive and makes it difficult to later remove the nib.

Ink in Motion. With the successful release of ink we are ready to discover the pen as an instrument of motion, a special motion, one that leaves an ink trace. Like the plume of a jet across a clear blue sky, it reminds the viewer that life is movement—stretching, pulling, skipping, throwing, swinging, drawing! Since it is only by the process of flow that we can give life to form, we are first called upon to develop our sense of movement, the raw material of rhythm. Therefore, these preliminary exercises provide the student with a 'letter free' time, a time for focusing the attention not upon the dominant visual sense of form, but rather upon the less dominant but vital senses of touch and movement. We engage the process of moving the pen with full attention, in the spirit of exploration, that we may engender our product, letterform, with the freedom and vitality of flow. The following exercises ask you to attend to the movement of your body in relation to the pen and its active contact with paper.



Exercise Sequence

Directional Movement & Elasticity. A line moving in space or along a surface is inseparable from its direction. Letterforms may be seen as special patterns of directional movement, embodied in directional strokes. The pen exercises offered here are designed to develop a particular quality in that movement: an 'elasticity' produced by 'throwing.' (See page 6.) Like the pencil-thrown line, so too the pen-thrown contains the sense of 'recoil'—of returning to a starting point or source. This 'sense of return' contains the energy that, encoded in stroke and letterform, 'reads' as vital force, or life movement.

Energy. Viewers of calligraphy, regardless of whether they can decipher the text, respond to this energy. Known as *chi* in Chinese culture, it is considered an essential quality of Chinese calligraphy. The exercises on these pages and ahead are offered to help develop this crucial calligraphic ingredient. Before beginning them, you may wish to stretch or take a few breaths to encourage awareness of your body and its mobility. I recommend starting the exercises by moving your pen arm in the air, getting the feel of the motion before moving on the paper. Breathe, relax and when you are ready, give your movement an ink trace!

Orientation. The edged pen can make a mark as wide as the full width of its nib, or as thin as its narrow edge. With the latter the pen draws its thinnest possible line, a 'hairline'. In these exercises we adopt the hairline because, along it, the pen moves with the greatest ease, and at this time we are interested in the experience of unimpeded movement. We can move the nib on its edge in any direction by bringing it parallel to the line of direction in which we wish to move. Align your nib with one of the 'nib icons' and draw in the direction indicated by the arrows. (We will discuss the orientation of the nib, usually spoken of as 'pen angle', in the following pages.) The major aim of these exercises is to experience your body in motion with pen and ink. Try to discover a rhythm to your body's motion.

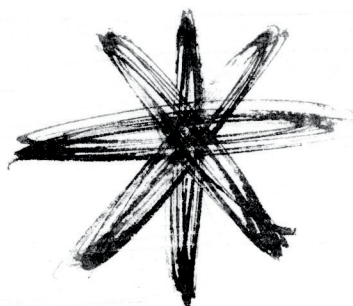
a Xs. Directional lines in motion may become narrow ellipses. Feel free to let the line drag on the paper, or to pick it up.

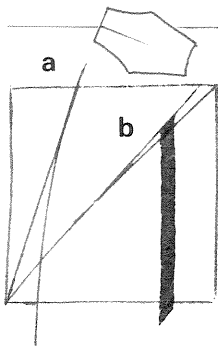


b Whirligigs. Left- and right-slanted ellipses. Pull left side of the left-slanted ellipse toward your body with a little pressure, on the narrow edge of the pen. Release pressure pushing along the hairline into the curved upswing. Throw the left side of the right slanted ellipse away from your body on the hairline. Rounding the curve apply pressure and draw the stroke back to your body.



c Starbursts. Narrow directional ellipticals crossing and overlapping.

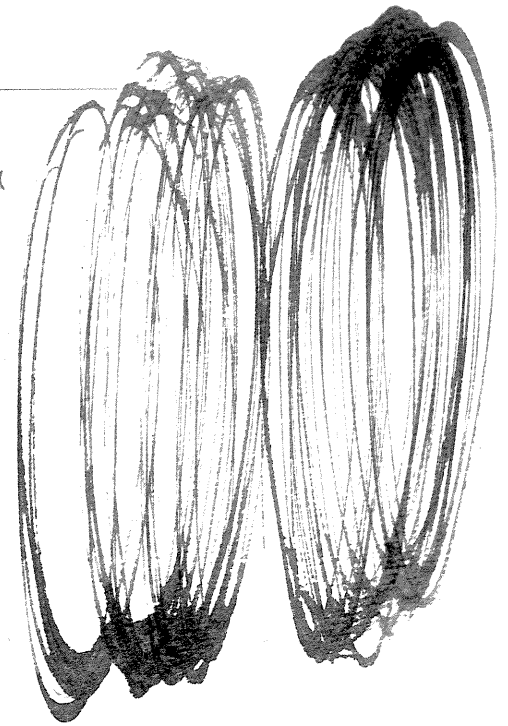




1, 2 From the shoulder throw the ink-loaded nib downward or upward into quickly drawn elliptical loops. Align the nib with the nib icon in the diagram, a, to produce a thin 'aerodynamic' line. Pull the line like an elastic, stretching it. Be alert to developing a rhythmical motion.

3 After the directional loops, rotate the nib clockwise to make thick vertical throws (see diagram, b).

1, 2



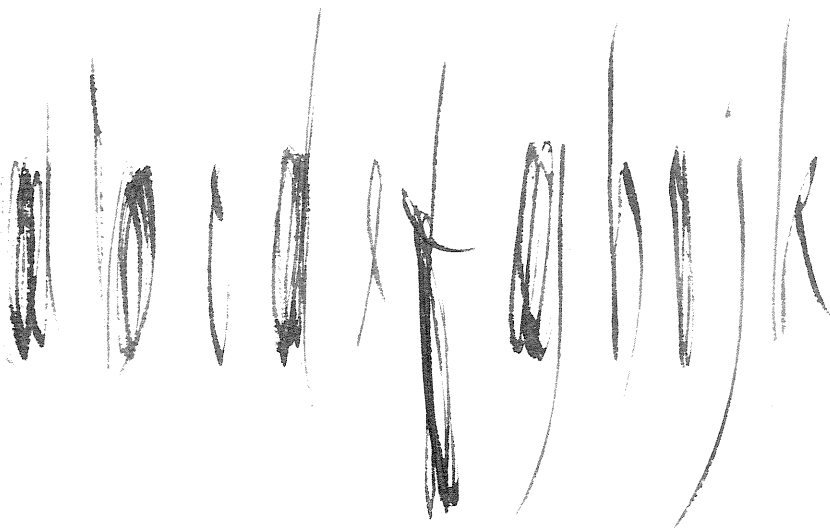
Thin Edge

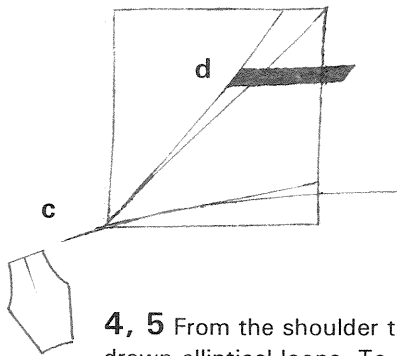
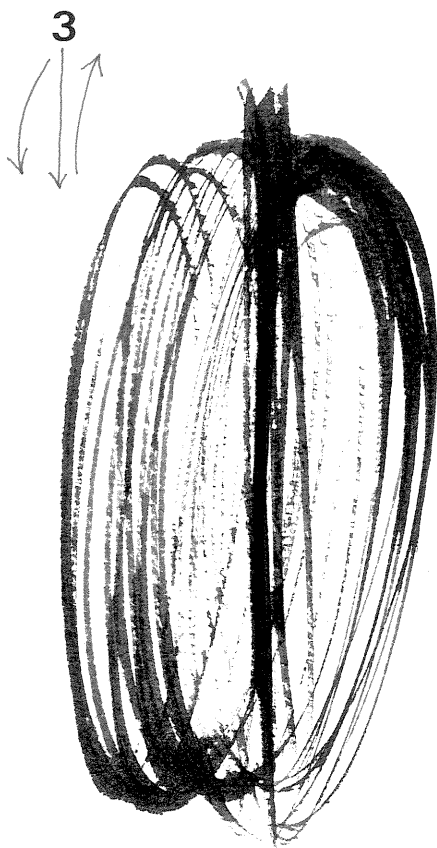
Warming up. Other arts and sports begin with warm-up exercises such as scales, stretching or running: I believe such preliminaries are also essential for calligraphy. Warming up, I find, facilitates a state of relaxed alertness and readiness in body and mind. For the calligrapher, it consists of exercises which focus attention on movement and sensitization: movement arising from the shoulder and arm, and tactile sensitivity required by the fingers. In these initial exercises the focus is on movement: fingers merely hold the pen while shoulder and arm put it in motion.

For me, calligraphy is largely shoulder and arm writing; handwriting is finger writing. For edged-pen calligraphy, the shoulder exerts the pressure needed to make contact with the paper, while the fingers' sensitive touch fine tunes that contact. The respective roles of the shoulder-arm and fingers will be further discussed in sections on 'Pen Hold' and 'The Pen Stroke'.

Through practice with both the pencil and the pen I have gradually activated my shoulder-arm; I am now able to consciously engage it in the act of writing. Shoulder involvement allows my strokes greater freedom of movement and flow, and operates even with smaller writing. I consider it crucial to 'finding the flow'.

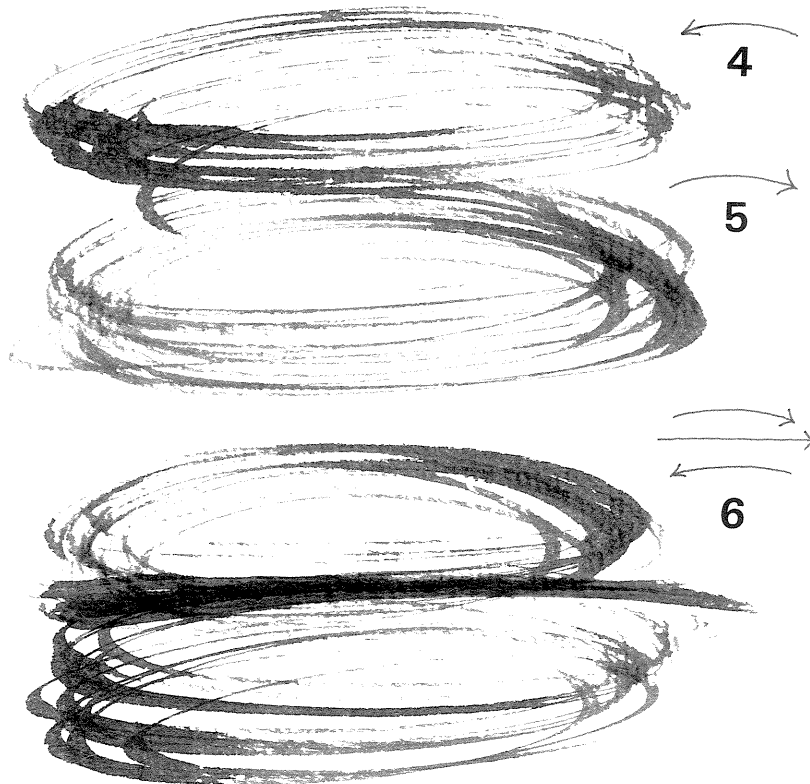
Alphabet ideas/motifs. These may arise spontaneously after warm-up exercises. In the experiment below, for example, in the act of moving quickly the upstroke of the letter 'k' separated from its vertical downstroke. If I were to adopt this separation as a motif I would repeat it in making similar letters as 'h, m, n' and possibly 'b and p'.





4, 5 From the shoulder throw the ink-loaded nib left or right into quickly drawn elliptical loops. To produce a thin 'aerodynamic' line align the nib with the nib icon in the diagram, c, above. Stretch the line like an elastic; be alert to developing a rhythmical motion.

6 After the directional loops, rotate the nib edge counter-clockwise to make thick horizontal throws (see diagram, d).



Awakening the shoulder. Warm ups with the edged pen, like the pencil, begin with exercises that activate and bring awareness to the shoulder. (See pencil section, page 4.) The shoulder is even less in our awareness than the arm. (Practitioners of pointed-pen calligraphy have at least been introduced to the importance of arm movement.) The exercises on these two pages are done quickly; the ink does not need to 'stick'; and larger than normal writing size, two to four inches in height/width is desirable. Try using the pen like a pencil, gripping it one-half inch or slightly more above the bottom of the pen staff. (Nib: 3mm Brause. Paper: one with tooth; check 'Paper' for suggestions.) Load the nib: fill its reservoir fully with a free-flowing ink such as a Higgins Eternal.

The exercises. Let's begin with elliptical loops, rather than straight lines, to help develop a sense of elastic movement, a sense of movement returning to its origin.

The diagrams. These indicate your nib orientation: the angle in which to hold the nib in relation to the horizontal line. This line is the one upon which we position letterforms; it is known as the 'writing line'. Every time we place our chisel-edged pen nib to begin writing, we are creating a relationship between it and the writing line. This relationship is commonly expressed in terms of 'angle', and known as 'pen angle'. In this book I am introducing the student to this fundamental pen principle a step at a time, through the exercises and accompanying diagrams. However, I also treat it specifically, in great detail, in a later section ('Pen Principles'); the student should feel free to consult it at any time along the way.

Broad Edge

Riding the Edge. In 'Starting the Flow' and 'The Thin Edge' we focused on the experience of motion. Ink released from the nib's thin edge was merely a lubricant for this motion; we hardly cared whether the pen left a trace. We concentrated upon the nib's thin edge as a vehicle and found ourselves on a speedway with directional force, enjoying the thrill of the ride consciously participating in our own bodily movement. We further heightened our experience of movement by empowering our hairlines with the tensile strength to elasticity.

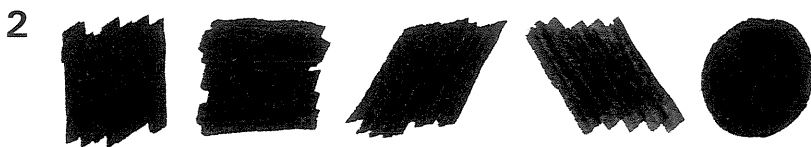
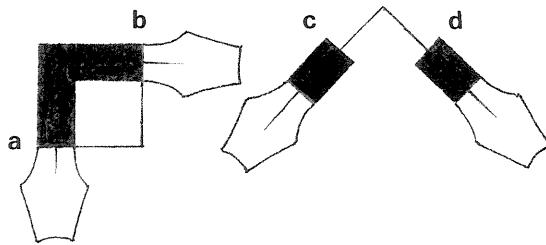
The Broad Edge. We now continue our exploration of the pen in motion, shifting our attention from thin to broad edge. When we move the nib on this edge we release ink across its full breath and, in contrast to the hairline, we make a wide ink band. Increasing the channel of ink movement from a stream to a river bed, we now experience the boldness of ink flow. Unlike the aerodynamic hairline, however, the full edge can create friction when it comes into contact with the paper. To overcome such resistance we again work with the nib fully loaded. To 'paint' strokes with the pen's broad edge we first determine the direction of our stroke (e.g. vertical), and then place the nib at a right angle to this line of direction. (See nib icons at left.)

Positioning. With a dry reservoir, align the nib with the three different nib icons. This allows you to get a feel for changing nib position, as you would with a loaded nib, to make changes in stroke direction. Notice changes to arm position as you shift the pen from broad horizontal to broad vertical or diagonal.

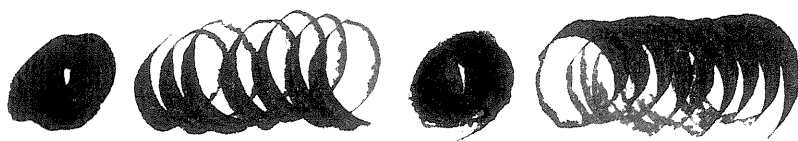
Our Medium. These exercises explore ink as our primary medium: an essential agent of graphic flow and expression. Because of its centrality, we will focus here upon the ink itself, without 'distraction' from the diverse aspects of letter formation. In this way we can become acquainted with it and develop a

Nib & Arm Orientation.

The nib makes its widest stroke when the ink slit parallels the line of direction. With a slightly less extreme position—compare my stroke entries—one yet makes a relatively, and for our purposes, sufficiently wide stroke.



a Loops. Position nib as in 'd' of the diagram; draw a circular swatch. Then, draw counter-clockwise circular loops keeping pen on paper. Use pressure as you curve downward. Release it at the base of the figure, riding the momentum of return, ending just right of loop origin. Repeat.



relaxed, comfortable relationship. The exercises on this page invite you to explore the ink through your sense of directional movement, with the shoulder and arm once again as the source. Now, however, through the pen's broad edge, the ink gives body to line or stroke. Most work will stay on the writing surface, 'in the ink', with the pen moving the ink directionally, laying strokes adjacent to one another to shape the ink. Letterforms start to emerge from the ink, drawn from stroke panels. Later exercises consider stroke beginnings and endings: presently we are not interested in stroke appearance—indeed, here strokes merge and lose themselves altogether in the ink. We now wish to experience the ink and to get the 'feel' of it.

1 Directional 'Sweeps'. Load the nib reservoir fully with ink. For long sweeps I begin by laying down the ink in 2"-3" segments: drawing the stroke across horizontally, letting it 'pull back' or recoil, and repeating, drawing vertically down the page. For shorter sweeps I just make one 2"-3" segment. Since laying the ink is a preparatory first step, it is helpful to apply it in broad bands, using the nib's breadth. (See fig. 1.) After the ink is laid, glide the pen along in it, back and forth or up and down. Move from the shoulder for the full length of the sweep, experiencing the ink in motion. Breathe.

2 Directional 'Swatches'. Again, with fully loaded reservoir. Position the pen to make broad bands, as above. Draw adjacent directional strokes without lifting the pen: ride up and over in the wet ink, engaging energy from the release of stroke pressure. For the circle, move clockwise and counter-clockwise in the ink. (When you lay the ink, the strokes will puddle and glisten.) Then move the pen in the ink, from the shoulder, in the direction of each 'swatch'. Move easily back and forth, 'skating on ink', enjoying the freedom of pen movement. Breathe.

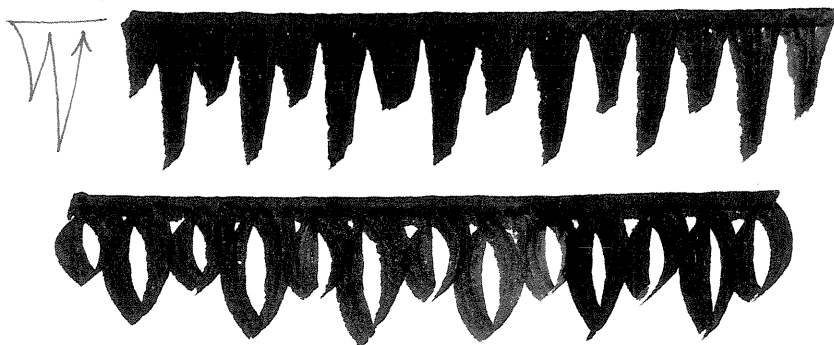
b Pendular Arcs: Vertical. Counterclockwise: throw arc left, retrace up, retrace down, throw stroke diagonally over to begin next pendulum. Clockwise: throw arc right, retrace, throw next arc.



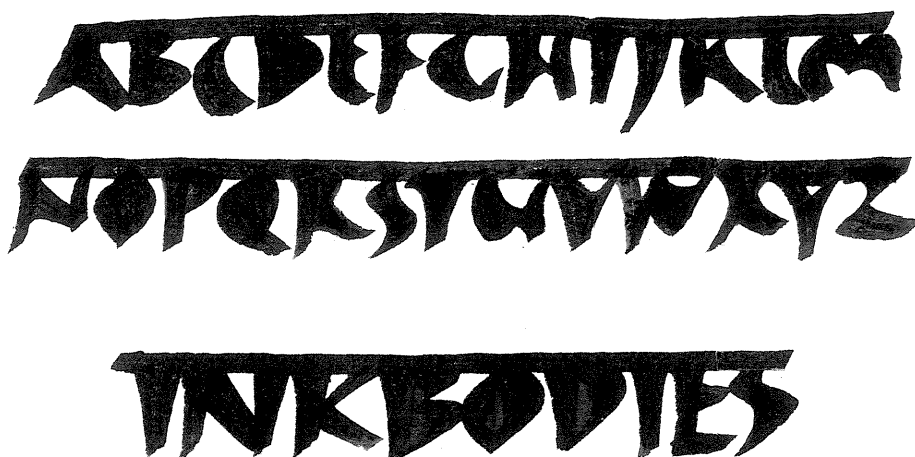
c Pendular Arcs: Horizontal. Throw arcs. The pendulum return leaves the stroke just to the right of its origin, ready to swing again.



3 Stroke Panels. Draw a wide horizontal with fully-loaded nib. From the ink of this stroke, pull down strokes according to the pattern, and retrace in the wet ink.



4 Alphabet Panels. Forming the strokes into letterforms. Feel free to follow my examples and/or to try your own experimental 'ink bodies'.



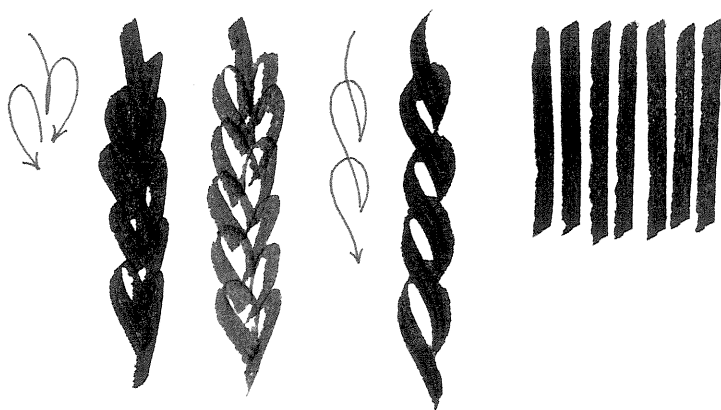


Partially loaded

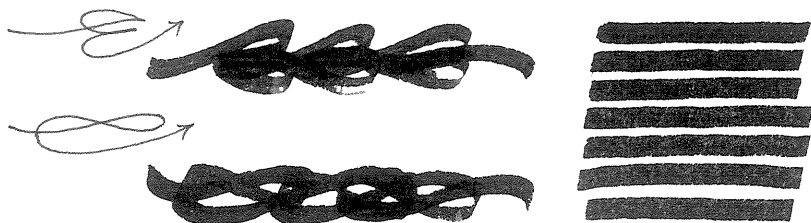
1 Releasing-Adjusting the Ink. To release ink and supply it across the nib's broad edge, first fully load the reservoir. Second, make surface contact by applying pressure from arm-shoulder-fingers to nib. Draw short directional strokes. If the ink flows too freely: absorb with a towel and/or increase the distance of the reservoir from nib's end.



2 a 'Pogo Stick'. Draw down with pressure. Release and spring up, as on a pogo stick, into a loop to the right. Repeat with loop to the left and then alternate. Downstrokes: pressure. Upstrokes: release.



b Sideways-Horizontally



c Diagonally



Rhythm Pattern for Directional Strokes Try this pressure-release rhythm: Make contact with pen pressure, release, apply again, draw stroke; at end release, apply pressure again and lift pen.

Broad Edge, continued

'Joining the Resistance'. In 'The Broad Edge' our aim was to experience the bold flow of the pen's full edge. To overcome resistance to the pen when its broad edge made surface contact, we loaded the nib with ink. In this way we 'resurfaced' the paper with the ink itself; we lubricated the paper so we could get the feel of the ink, and continued to experience the flow of our motion. Now our aim is to find a different kind of flow; not one that carries us along by an elemental and formless surge, but one in which we interact with the forces of flow. Like a swimmer, the calligrapher actively engages resistance through the push-pull of her/his stroke. For the calligrapher this resistance is friction. It results from pressure—the pen pushing against the writing surface as it pulls its strokes. Our challenge is to engage this friction, because within its force stands a powerful ally of flow. The secret to 'joining the resistance', we discover, lies in applying pressure to the pen rhythmically.

Rhythm As the stroke moves, pressure increases and, at stroke end, it is released. This release from pressure acts as a springboard to the next stroke. Integrating this alternation of pressure and release into the stroke we create our broad strokes through rhythmical movement. By incorporating this dynamic into our broad-edged strokes we continue to engage the elasticity that we experienced with hairline strokes. Although friction, the basis for dynamic flow, is produced by pen and paper, the energy driving their interplay originates in the calligrapher's own body.

'Embodying' the Ink. Through conscious participation of the calligrapher's body—shoulder, arm and fingers in particular—the stroke is 'embodied' with life. However, for this to occur the calligrapher must become sensitive to the friction produced by the pen's full or partial edge as it makes contact with the writing surface. To cultivate awareness of this experience we turn our attention first to the shoulder and arm. Together they supply the major part of the pressure needed for contact (not the fingers). The fingers, however, act as sensors; thumb and index finger

become 'feelers' directly sensing friction from the stroke as it moves. We learn through our fingers that friction is relative: the greater the portion of nib edge in surface contact, the greater the friction. This crucial information about relative friction is raw 'data'. In these exercises we first learn to receive it through our sense of touch, and then 'process' it as rhythmical flow.

The exercises. These are intended to help you experience the relationship between your body as the source of pressure and movement, and the pen as an instrument responding to it and sending feedback. Be alert to the 'drag' of the stroke as you pull the nib's full width. A conscious engagement with the friction you are creating aids concentration; this allows you to stay with the stroke, moment by moment, and guide it in any desired direction.

1 Releasing the Ink. (See adjacent page)

2 Stroke Preliminaries. The figures on the adjacent page, a, b and c, are intended as exercises in directional and rhythmical movement. They are loose. Look for the bounce, or spring, when you throw a stroke into pressure and then release it. Work 'in the ink', without space between strokes, and also with space separating them. See how this preliminary work influences your experience of throwing the straight directional strokes which accompany the figures. (See description of rhythm pattern, bottom of adjacent page.)

3 Doubling. Repeating a directional movement, as here, allows you to more fully enter into and experience 1) the rhythmical motion of pressure-release; and 2) the shaping of, or building up, a 'stroke'. Apply latter to shaping letter bodies below.

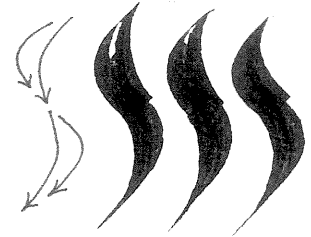
4 Alphabet Exercise. The letters of the previous page are now 'liberated' from their panels and can be fashioned at top as well as bottom. They have also been joined together as words in the age-old custom of illustrating thought. With the alphabet work it is my aim to encourage you from the start to consider the alphabet as a set of 'images' with 'character', expressive of feeling.

3 Doubling. Repeat each stroke using the pressure-release pattern. Practice in alternating arcs which, vertically, become the curves of 'S'.

a 'Leaves'



b S-curves



4 Alphabet & Short Text. Try working with and without ruled lines. Does this effect the expressive feeling of the text as an image?

A B C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W

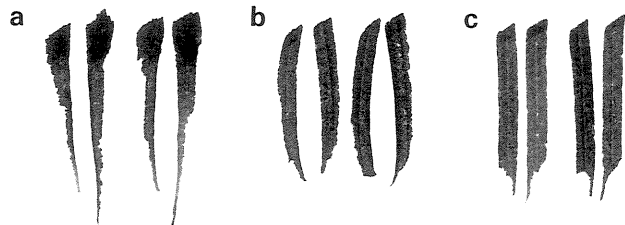
X Y Z

.

THE
ETERNAL DELIGHT
OF PLAY
AND
IMAGINATION

Fig. 1 Pen Corners & Stroke Shape.

- a An ink pool is formed from which a nib's corner draws down.
- b One nib corner lifts slightly as the other remains in surface contact.
- c Both corners remain in contact until just before stroke end. The pen stops and one corner lifts while the other remains in contact and draws.



Pen Corners

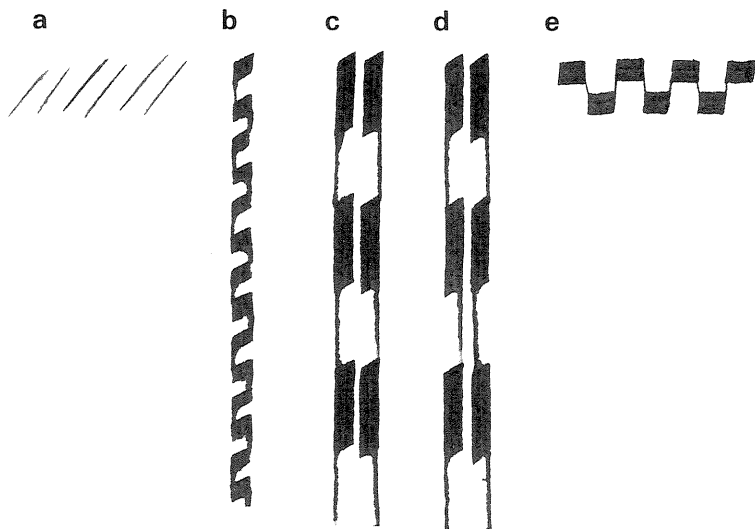
Shaping the Stroke. Although mentioned earlier, it is worth repeating: the pen has a remarkably simple design—an edge and two corners. However the latter, which actually give shape to the nib and consequently the stroke, go unexplored in the instructional books available to calligraphers today. While the pen's edge controls stroke thickness, the corners control its left and right sides, or 'walls'. Whether these walls are sharply defined and 'clean', or are modulated and remain 'rough', depends entirely upon the calligrapher's skill with pen corners. (See fig. 1.) Whether beginning, ending and joining of strokes become opportunities for creative expression or not again depends upon the calligrapher's understanding of and dexterity with pen corners. (See fig. 2, top next page.) Moreover, the sensitive manipulation of pen corners is integral to the process of stroke and serif formation, commonly called pen turning or pen manipulation. Reaching this level of sophistication and refinement tremendously enhances a calligrapher's potential for artistic self-expression. Let's explore!

'Partnering'. To cultivate this highly desirable skill with pen corners it is helpful to imagine that a nib corner corresponds to either thumb/index finger, and is activated/controlled by this finger. Generally, this means that the *thumb* identifies with the *left* pen corner and the *index finger* identifies with the *right*. In the following exercises we begin the adventure of activating these partnerships!

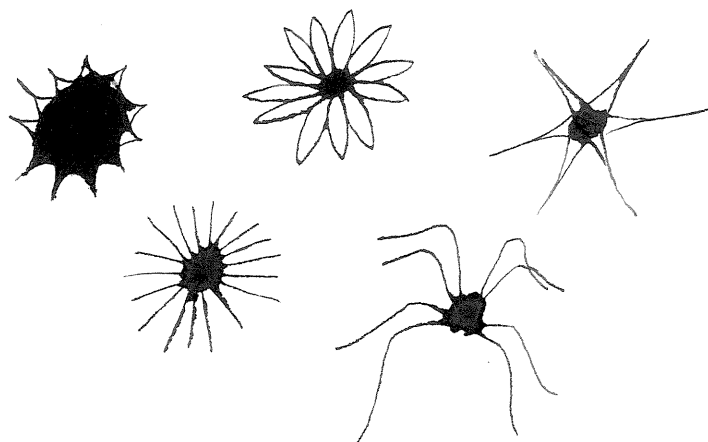
Getting Acquainted. Our aim in these exercises is to focus solely upon pen corners. Since we don't intend to place the pen edge in surface contact, but the pen receives ink from a slit in the middle of its edge, we need an alternative ink source. This is obtained by first using the pen edge to create a pool of ink from which the corner will draw. (After dipping the nib, rotate it clockwise on the paper to release the ink.)

Sensitivity to Touch. Until now, the exercises have primarily concerned movement, which we 'separated' from touch by working quickly. In contrast, these exercises emphasize the sense of

1 Thumb-Index Finger Sensitizing Sequence.



2 The Amoeba Variations. Play and experiment with corners in relation to the direction of drawing. All begin with fully-loaded nib moving the edge around to lay a smaller or larger pool of ink.



touch; particularly, the sensitizing of thumb and index finger. (Our fingers began the process of sensitization with 'The Broad Edge', and we continue their 'education' with pen corners.) To shift our awareness to touch we markedly reduce our speed, and also decrease the distance traveled by stroke or line. We wish to receive the signals from thumb and index finger as they 1) push the edge (ex. 1a); 2) begin to identify with their respective corners and stroke edges (ex. 1b, c & d); and 3) discover how they push and pull and draw in relation to direction (ex. 1e).

The Exercises. As the fingers develop greater sensitivity they participate more 'intelligently' in stroke formation. Furthermore, through these playfully serious exercises we again invite the spirit of our own unique style of expression and, slowing our pace, discover the nuances of another mode, or 'mood', of working.

Dry Pen Preliminary. Before dipping the pen, turn the nib onto its left corner, then place it on paper and draw it lightly over the paper—up and down, left and right. Try this also with the nib's right corner.

1 Sensitizing Sequence

a Alternation. Push a stroke down with the index finger and push one up with the thumb, diagonally on the thin edge.

b Partnering. With fully-loaded nib draw a short vertical stroke under pressure; release pressure and rotate the nib onto its left corner; draw down with the thumb. Rotate pen back to full nib edge; draw down with pressure; release onto right corner and push lightly down with index finger. (Use less pressure with the corner than with the edge.)

c Variation of b: longer strokes. For the broad stroke try to apply greater pressure to the left side of the stroke with the thumb, before releasing onto the left corner; also, greater pressure with the index finger to the right stroke wall, before releasing onto the right corner.

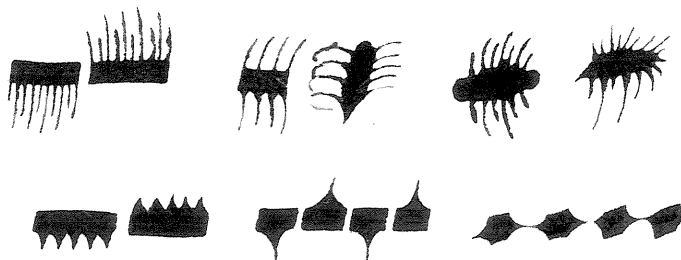
d Alternate fingers.

e Rhythmical pattern. Draw short horizontals under pressure with the full edge; release pressure and rotate onto the nib corner, draw on the corner.

Fig. 2 Pen-cornered Stroke Beginnings, Endings & Joining.



3 Dingbats: more play.



4 Alphabet Exercises.

a Use the right or left nib corner to draw letters from an ink pool(s).



b The open spaces are filled in. Imitate my forms and/or invent your own. Design is an engaged process of trial and response. There is no set 'type' for this alphabet, it is experimental and invites you to play.



c Subtle variations in shape, alignment, size and weight.

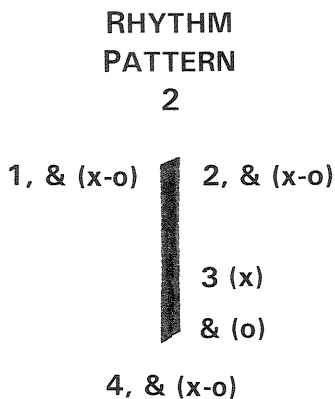
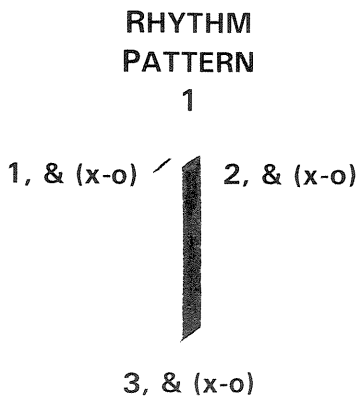


Pen Stroke Exercises



Pen Stroke

Fig. 1 Rhythm Patterns.
Counting patterns correspond
to pressure-release patterns.
(Pressure 'x'; release 'o')



ALTERNATE PATTERN

The Spring Launch.

Spring
from contact pressure
to launch and draw stroke
(‘one’);
reassert pressure & release
(‘two’).

Rhythm & Movement. The stroke itself has seldom been treated as a focus for the Roman calligrapher’s attention, despite recognition that it serves as the fundamental unit of letter construction. In this capacity, as the basic structural element of form, we study its ductus: its direction and its place in the sequence of constructing letters. However, to understand the nature of its flow I have found it necessary to investigate the stroke in its own right. In the preceding exercises with pencil and edged pen we have explored what I consider the essence of stroke flow, its movement. These exercises placed considerable emphasis upon developing our awareness of movement, the ‘raw material’ of rhythm, which is the living pulse of the stroke.

Time and Space. In this section we will probe with particular care into the heartbeat of rhythm, so often mentioned, so little explored. To do so we should understand that the stroke, like any rhythmic expression, is grounded in two concrete elements: time and space. These are not only abstractions for the philosopher to ponder; without these fundamentals the musician plays no music and the dancer dances no dance. Movement, the act common to music, dance and *calligraphy* transpires in time and space. The musician, dancer and calligrapher shape and structure these elements, pregnant with plastic potential, to create vital, moving works from their respective palettes—sound, step, stroke. Each one accomplishes this by giving structure to time. A musical composition is ‘written’ in a particular time ‘signature’ to establish its rhythmic ‘character’. Let’s now consider ways in which the calligrapher can give temporal structure to the calligraphic stroke.

THE TRIPARTITE STROKE

I propose that we regard the basic stroke as a three-step sequence with a beginning, a development and an end. I would like to introduce the student to this structure as a starting point from which to explore stroke rhythm. The suggested

rhythm patterns below can be used for straight or curved strokes. (The exercises with stroke direction on pages 46-7 are well suited to practicing the rhythm patterns described below.)

RHYTHM PATTERN 1

(As if counting beats while playing a musical instrument, count each part of a stroke while making it.)

Beginning ‘Jab’ and wriggle slightly to release ink from nib (count ‘one’); release pressure (count ‘&’).

Development Reapply pressure and draw the stroke down to its end (count two); release pressure (count ‘&’).

End Reapply pressure and spring off the paper in the energy of release (count ‘three’, ‘&’).

RHYTHM PATTERN 2

Beginning Same as above.

Development Begin by drawing stroke with pressure (‘two’); release it as you approach mid-stroke (‘&’); reapply it as you approach the stroke’s end (‘three’); and release pressure at the end (‘&’).

End Pressure (‘four’); release (‘&’).

As already mentioned, the amount of ink needed is related to the type of paper being used and the purpose of the work. (See ‘Paper’.) Most importantly, you want to feel engaged with the paper, to feel the pull of the nib under pressure.

ENGAGING THE BODY

Beginning Lower the pen to the paper from the shoulder. The shoulder is a pivot for motion; it both allows and invites freedom of movement. It also connects the stroke to a larger source of feeling and power, the body itself. When the nib makes contact with paper, awareness in thumb and index finger—the sense of touch—is also activated.

Development The arm draws the stroke from the shoulder. Naturally, one will not immediately have a sense of control, but neither will moving the pen with tightly gripping fingers yield this control.

(When the pressure for making paper contact comes primarily from the shoulder, fingers may more freely maneuver and thereby develop the more sophisticated technique of pen turning.) The fingers guide the pen' they move with alertness to sensation, the fingers are also open to receiving the necessary feedback from friction, and the pen's corners.

End The stroke ends with the act of breaking contact, the pen rising from the writing surface. The movement of raising the pen from the paper involves the shoulder, arm and fingers.

DYNAMICS

Beginning Contact between pen nib and writing surface is made by lowering the nib under *pressure* from the shoulder. Sensation in the thumb and index finger is activated when the nib *pushes* into the paper. These fingers also exert some pressure; however, this pressure comes not from tightly gripping the pen staff but from the push-pull of index finger-thumb. In the 'development' of rhythm pattern 2, this pressure from the fingers is released slightly, in part to make them available for pen turning.

Development Under pressure, the stroke *pulls*, from its point of application along a directional course—vertical, horizontal, diagonal or curved. This pulling, under pressure, activates *friction* between nib and writing surface. This friction then resists the force of the pull, and engages the calligrapher in active interplay, alive with the energy of tensile elasticity!

End The basic ending pattern involves the application of pressure from the shoulder, arm and fingers followed by its release.

Exercise. Draw strokes—vertically, horizontally and diagonally—about an inch long, using the above pattern(s) Count out loud. Exaggerate. Let your body discover a rhythm in its movement.

ELABORATING

Beginning We now further examine a stroke's beginning. In stroke initiation the calligrapher intends to establish

conscious contact with the stroke, to release the ink and give shape to the stroke's entrance. The above jab- and-wriggle method is just one possibility for accomplishing these aims. Additional ways include: a) landing from the air; b) sliding the pen back and forth; or, c) retracing, in the air or on the paper. (See fig. 2, this page.)

Development As an articulation of time, stroke development incorporates three phases: 1) the 'coming from' energy of stroke beginning; 2) the 'along the way' momentum where shaping may occur; and 3) the 'going towards' pull of a stroke's ending. The dynamics of these phases invite and support rhythmic expression. From rhythm, the vital yet elusive quality of flow emerges. Movement in time is also movement in space: as we give shape to the stroke, we also give shape to space right and left.

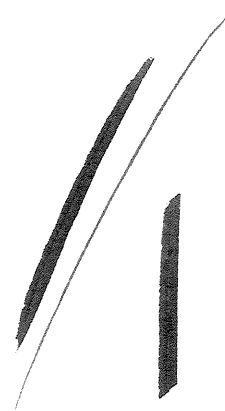
End This last step in the sequence of stroke construction is the one in which the calligrapher shapes the stroke terminal. It is an opportunity to further express the 'character' of a letterform or of an alphabet style. It may involve a serif, the addition of a drawn terminal, or a special release from the paper. (See 'Pen Corners', p. 40-1, fig. 2.) Although it is not within the province of this book to investigate the serif, I would like to encourage you to use the experience you gain from practice with pressure-release to explore incorporating it into the rhythm of the stroke.

Since a stroke's end is also a point of departure—leading to the next stroke's beginning—it plays an important role in establishing a rhythm between strokes: a release from contact which anticipates a return to contact pressure. I hope you will investigate this space-time dimension, the 'between' of writing, as an integral part of calligraphic practice with rhythm. I suggest experimenting with counting patterns such as 'one-and-two' or descriptive ones as 'land-leap-land' to guide your movement from one stroke to another!

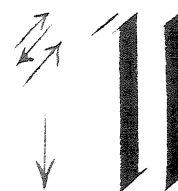
Rhythm & Flow. As you discover and develop strokes with rhythm you will also, I truly hope, experience the joy of making strokes that 'flow'!

Fig. 2 Alternate Stroke Entrances.
(See next page for their descriptions.)

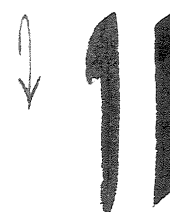
a From the air.



b Slide.



c Retrace.



Pen Stroke

Continued



Practice & Expression. While my practice is grounded in the directional stroke (page 46-7), it also includes such strokes as seen on these two pages. This exploratory work is seeded by warm-up exercises. From them spring a desire to draw strokes directly from my prevailing mood; a pervading state of mind, or spirit, seeks out stroke directions and shapes with which to express itself. Such strokes and stroke progressions as seen here were used as elements to compose the first, third and fourth lines. This brief period of serious play may also invite expressive efforts with a word or short text; the second line on each page, 'calligraphy' left and 'exercises in calligraphy' right, are some examples.

Practice. People generally come to Roman calligraphy because of its look. However, this book's exercises are not primarily concerned with appearance, but with the process of producing letterform and creating the 'look' of calligraphy. The directional strokes on pages 48 and 49 provide the heart of this experience. Practiced with no other purpose than that of exploring your relation to the pen, materials and the stroke, they will yield discoveries and develop skill. It is highly beneficial to engage these exercises regularly; I find much pleasure in doing them early in the day.

An invitation. I approach these exercises somewhat as a disciple or pupil, devoted to learning from them as from a teacher. I come to my calligraphic practice as a beginner, open to the lessons it avails me: feedback from my own senses! Each session is new because, with experience my skill and sensitivity develop, and because my moods reveal different realms of expressive potential. (See *Stroke Mood*, p. 60.) The exercises ahead build upon earlier work with the edged pen, offering opportunities to explore its unique expressive properties. Since it is a letter-making tool it is not too soon to think about personally meaningful words and texts, yours or others, for future calligraphic expression.

דבר אלהים

התקדש

אשר

הוא

Edged Pen Warm-up Sequence

1 Shoulder-arm movement

- a Pull/draw stroke with attention focused exclusively on the shoulder-arm as the source and power for movement.
- b Keep pressure for contact with the paper coming from the shoulder-upper arm, not from the fingers. Experiment with the tightness of your grip.
- c Try coordinating the breath with drawing the stroke as suggested in the description at right.

2 Left corner of nib

- a Mentally identify the left corner of the nib with the thumb.
- b Pull/draw the nib applying greater pressure to its left edge than its right. Both edges of the nib stay in contact with the paper.
- c To achieve this asymmetrical balance on the nib edge, focus attention on the thumb's greater exertion of pressure.

3 Right corner of nib

- a Mentally identify the right corner of the nib with the index finger.
- b Pull/draw the nib applying greater pressure to its right edge than its left. Keep both edges in contact with the paper.
- c Focus attention on the greater pressure exerted by the index finger.

4 Full edge of pen

- a Bring pressure for contact with the paper from the shoulder-arm as in the above.
- b Pay attention to the thumb with respect to the left corner and the index finger with respect to the right corner.
- c Watch both stroke edges: the eye participates with the fingers to create strokes with clean edges.

5 Spider web spinning

- a Load the pen fully with ink. Imagine you are drawing the stroke as though extruding a filament to make a spider web; release/extrude the ink as though by your very finger tips.
- b Decrease pressure from arm-shoulder-fingers and attend to the sensitive touch of the tips of the thumb and index finger. Experience these fingers with tactile imagination, as the very agents from which the ink flows.

6 The stroke as a force of nature

- a As you draw the stroke, imagine a tremendous boulder bearing down upon it or, that it is a waterfall rushing in descent.
- b Imagine the full force/weight of gravity within your arm-elbow.
- c Place a mark where you want the stroke to end and let the power of magnetic attraction draw your stroke to it.

7 The straight stroke

- Draw the stroke with an image of a ruler in your mind.

These exercises and images arose on my journey into stroke investigation. Be open to ideas of your own and explore them fearlessly! And remember, it is useful to begin learning by exaggeration but, as we become more experienced, we should also become more sensitive. Trust yourself to make adjustments as you feel ready.

Stroke Direction A Warm-up Sequence

Directional. Directional strokes are the building blocks of any alphabet. As we join these strokes together we construct our letterforms, or letter structures. The following exercises arose as I explored the stroke as a vital structural element of letterform, one filled with discoveries and rich in unappreciated nuances.

Aim. These are exercises to build confidence in stroke making; therefore the emphasis is upon experiencing the stroke, upon the process of drawing it, not upon the stroke as a visual product. Drawing the stroke along its directional course, we try to participate in an interplay of bodily movement and sensitive touch. These exercises are a time for relaxed alertness, preliminary to the practice of letterform. This work is a foundation for freedom and flow!

Nib Orientation. After the work on the preceding pages with nib icons I think you are now ready to replace the drawn nib with your own actual nib.

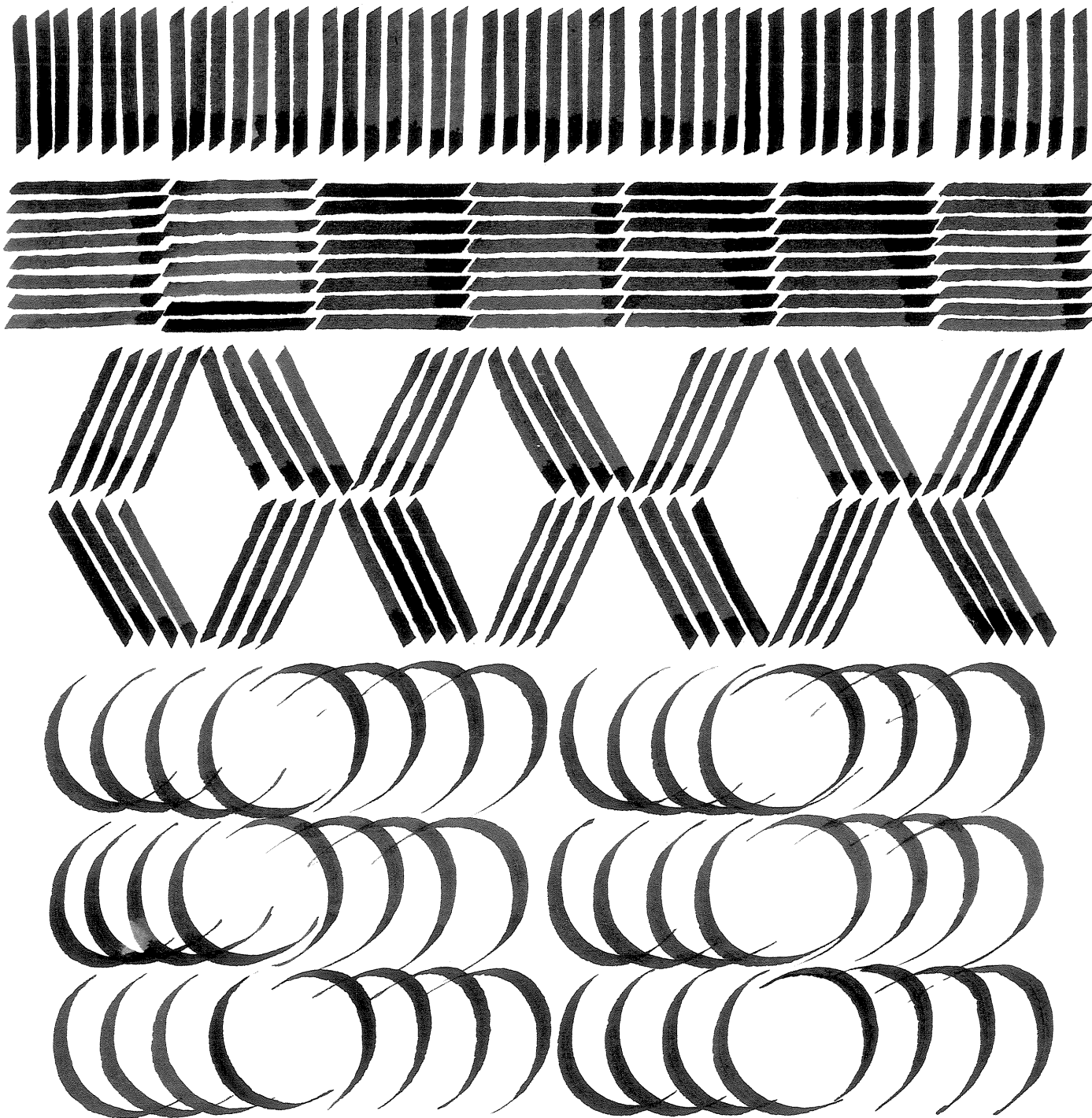
General Stroke Dynamics. Pressure for contact comes primarily from the shoulder. Fingers hold the pen to help direct it, mainly with the help of the thumb and index finger. Pressure from the moving pull of the stroke pushes the pen staff against the index finger near the big knuckle.

BREATHING

Rhythm Pattern 1. When beginning the stroke soften the jab so that it is more like a placement. As you inhale, place the nib; as you exhale, draw down.

Retrace. As you inhale, draw/lift the pen in the air up to the top of the stroke and place it on the paper with a little pressure; exhale as you draw down.

From the air. With pen poised above the stroke entrance, inhale. The stroke starts in the air; it moves onto the paper without a distinct beginning. Exhale when you begin to move down, before making actual contact with the paper.



Paper. When I began these exercises I used grid paper; and, after a few months tried Hahnemuhle, which I now prefer. (See 'Paper & Ink', p. 26 for a discussion of papers.)



Shoulder Work

Rhythm & Flow

1 With a full reservoir of ink contact the paper and move the nib lightly from the shoulder, up, down and around without hesitation, in a small space to release ink. Then, 'in the ink', begin Rhythm Pattern 1 or 2, page 44. Experiment with the amount of pressure and coordinate your breathing. On the exhale pull the stroke down. Pull to an endpoint of your choice, slow slightly, press and release the nib (a) or, slow slightly and release pressure as you anticipate the stroke's conclusion. Then, regaining momentum, reapply pressure: pull or 'snap' the nib off the paper (b).

2 For these long verticals I suggest Rhythm Pattern 1, page 44, and for your stroke entrance, the 'retrace' as described on page 45.

3 Shorter vertical strokes are connected to each other by retracing in the wet ink. Lightly push the stroke up to stroke start, press and 'throw' the stroke, under pressure, to its endpoint. Release pressure and let the stroke ride up in the wet ink to a new beginning. Press and repeat. Find the flow of this segmented 'stroke' in its rhythmic alternations of pressure and release.

4 Stroke entrance: From the air, page 45. In this alternating convex/concave arcing pattern the pen stays on the paper and retraces in the wet ink after each arc. The completion of this retrace is also the start of a new stroke. Pause and prepare the mind for the reverse direction. The stroke moves into pressure, gaining in pressure as it travels. At stroke end, the pressure is released and the energy of release fuels the retrace. Listen to the rhythm of the pen moving slalom-like down the page. Or, imagine this is water ballet: feel the resistance of the water slowing the strokes; search out the graceful quality of their flow.

The body is not a fixed object in space; it is dynamic, and each of its parts is dynamic. MUSCULAR INVOLVEMENT ('empathy') is the process of identifying your body with the dynamics of the body you draw. Everyone has a body and is FAMILIAR with it: Ergo—the body is not an alienated apple.

Sergei Eisenstein, How I learned to Draw

5 As in 4 above: the same stroke entrance and figure, only segmented. After making contact and applying pressure, draw the stroke in a shallow vertical arc. As the arc concludes, decrease pressure. Let the stroke's momentum—its force from speed and pressure—carry it off the page. In the follow through above the paper let the energy of stroke release pull the nib back, upward in the air, a little past the stroke's endpoint. Stroke elasticity also influences the action between strokes: the connective tissue of time and space.

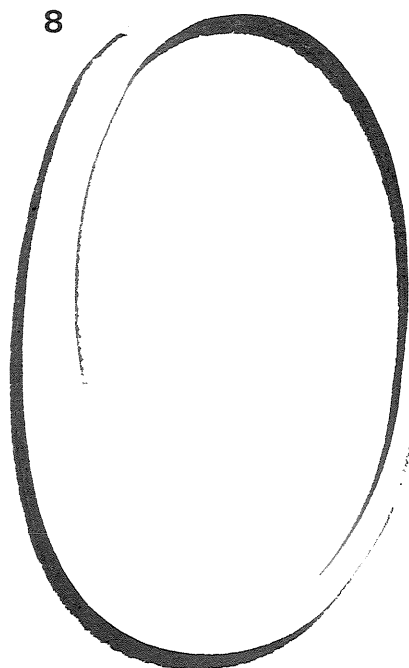
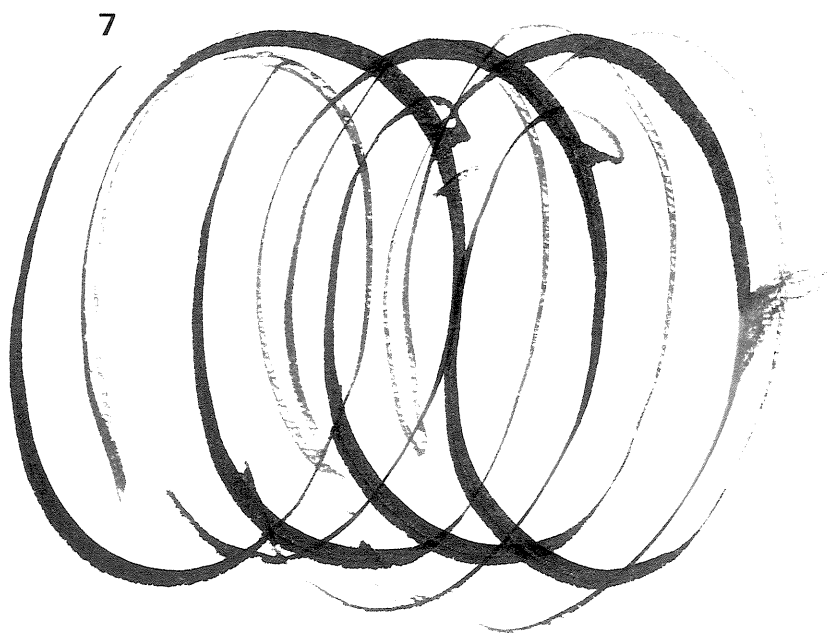
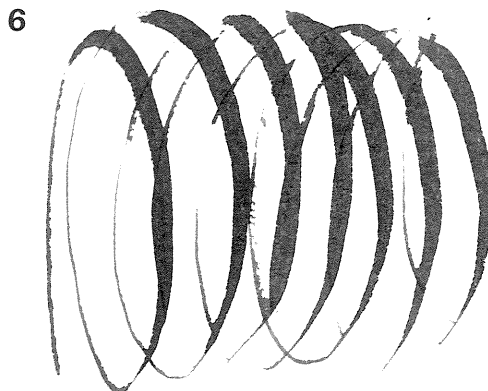
6 General dynamics of pressure-release for these curves: apply pressure from the shoulder-arm on the full edge as you go into the long curve of the arc; release pressure as you draw around and up to finish the loop. You can break paper contact and exaggerate the alternation of pressure-release, and/or remove any friction from the upward return. Move more slowly for the pressured part of the curve and more quickly for the release-return. (The clockwise curves begin on the hairline.) Experiment with speed in relation to changes of pressure.

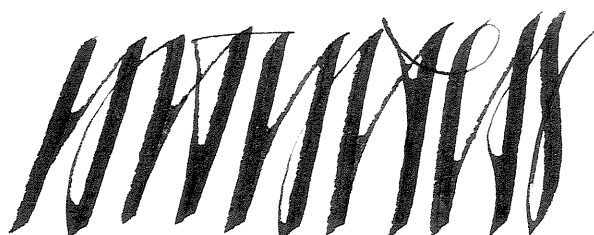
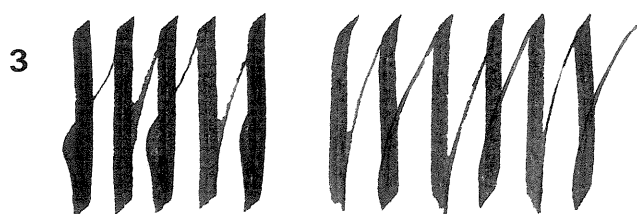
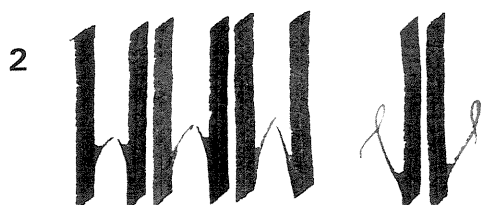
7 This continuous figure alternates counter-clockwise with clockwise throws. I have commenced the change of direction by staying in contact with the paper, but you could also break contact before the start of the new direction. Try to use the figure's thicks and thins to help you establish its rhythm pattern.

8 This figure is more a result than an exercise; it flowed from my pen after the exercises!

(Note: My descriptions may result in your doing what I have done or they may lead you to your own rhythm pattern try to remember that their aim is to cultivate rhythm, getting the feel more than the look of it. Interestingly, the more feel, the more look!)

Suggestion: prepare for the above exercises with Directional Sweeps and Swatches (circular) on pages 36-7.





Letterform experiment, 1. I've employed the 'bow shift' motif for capital letters: the diagonal stroke of 'A' and the vertical of 'B'.



Bowing

Exercise in Gesture. Please begin by reviewing the remarks on gesture that accompany the pencil bowing exercises on pages 7-8. Let us now use the edged pen to continue the body-tuning work we started with the pencil. We should first become fluent in the specific bodily movements of these exercises and their corresponding rhythmic expression. Thus prepared, we can imagine ourselves bowing with the pen as we enlist sensitive touch and movement, thereby resonating with the paper to elicit visual music.

Bowing. The stroke action of pen bowing involves an alternation of direction. As with the pencil's zigzag of interlacing loops, there is a heavily pressured stroke in one direction and a lightly pressured return stroke. With the pen, however, we also shift from one part of the tool to another—from full edge to pen corner. Visually, too, the pen's change of direction differs from the pencil's: rather than accomplishing this with a loop, the pen corner moving out of the broad edge stroke inevitably pulls a little ink along with it. We welcome this trace of our action; it seems to speak of movement and spontaneity.

Now, for drawing both straight and curved strokes, we continue sensitizing the fingers and their 'partnering' with pen corners (see pages 40-1). I suggest you use Rhythm Pattern 1 to learn Bowing's physical and rhythmic basics. When you feel confident with these, you are ready to 'play with feeling'. Also try entering the stroke 'from the air' and/or by retracing.

Body Dynamics. After making contact with the paper, draw the stroke with pressure from the arm. Place the greater portion of that pressure on the side of the stroke wall from which you intend to draw the pen corner. (We practiced such strokes in the exercises with stroke direction, on pages 46-7.) As you get the feel of this, also bring awareness to the finger corresponding to that wall. Attending to the right wall, bring the index finger to awareness and engage it in pushing down the stroke, as though drawing the stroke from the right pen corner. (The left side of the stroke should stay on the paper even with the pressure favoring the stroke's

right side.) For the left wall of the stroke, try to feel the thumb pulling and guiding the left pen corner. At the base of the stroke, stop and apply pressure; allow the power of stroke release to help you rock up onto one of the pen's corners.

1 Basic zigzags. Use the thumb to push and guide either pen corner upward and diagonally, to either the right or the left. From right or left stroke wall, push up to begin another stroke. If the ink doesn't carry from the left side, lay the edge flat to continue the hairline.

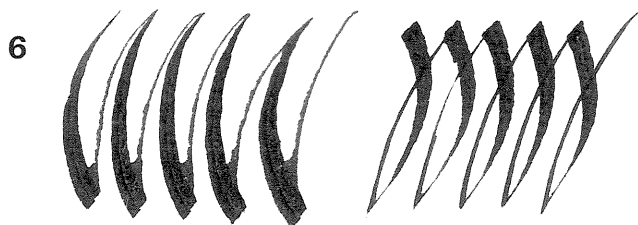
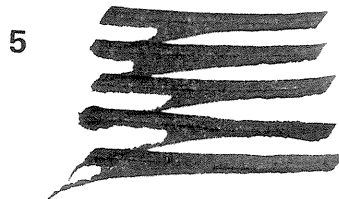
2 The 'bow shift'. When the upward pull of the ink does not continue to another stroke, it becomes a stroke ending.

3 In the variation in which the full edge pushes diagonally up and out from the left wall of the stroke, you can rock onto the right corner to pull a hair stroke up and over to the beginning of the next stroke. Alternate: from left wall, full-edge shift; from right wall, pen-corner shift.

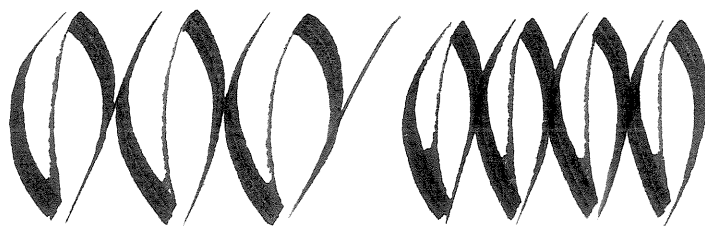
4 Play and more play: variations in stroke direction, stroke spacing and bow shifting.

5 Horizontals. Perhaps because Roman calligraphers are less practiced with the horizontal this directional bowing seems a bit more challenging than the verticals of the previous work. Rock onto the left pen corner to pull a connecting hair stroke diagonally, down to the next horizontal.

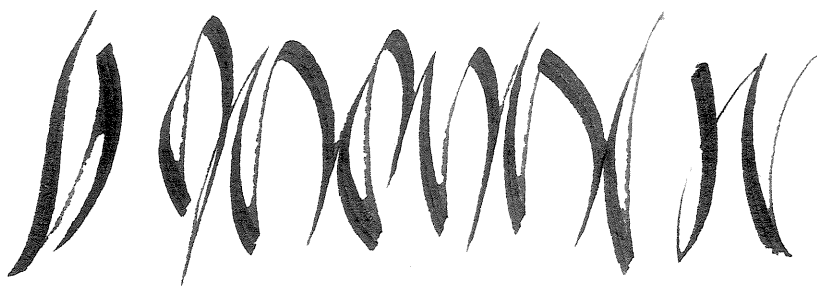
6 The graduated curve: 'holding the line'. Hold the nib steady as you pull the pen in facing arcs, from thin to thick and from thick to thin. These changes in stroke thickness do not require sophisticated pen movement, they occur 'naturally' with change of direction. (See 'Curved Strokes', pages 52-3, for a closer examination of edged-pen curves.) It is challenging though, to make a change of direction without turning the nib edge. (When we made such strokes quickly in previous exercises the thrust of momentum kept the pen position steady.) As you draw an arc the amount of the edge in paper contact changes continuously. To 'hold the line' bring attention, and a little extra pressure, to the finger drawing the arc: the index finger for arcs drawn from the thin edge and the thumb for arcs drawn from the thick edge.



7 Alternating arcs.



8 Play. Experimenting with such variables as stroke height, width, etc.



Letterform experiments, 2 & 3. For lower case letters: motif one, the arc and motif two, the bow shift.



Fig. 1. The Edged-pen Arc:
Constant Pen Angle and
Change of Direction

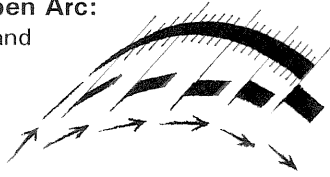
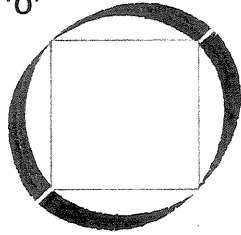


Fig. 2. 'Picking up Edge'



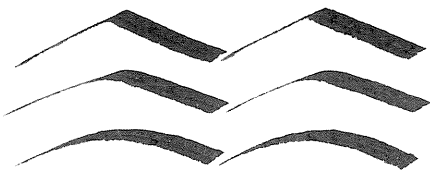
Fig. 3. The Arc & the 'O'



1 a

b

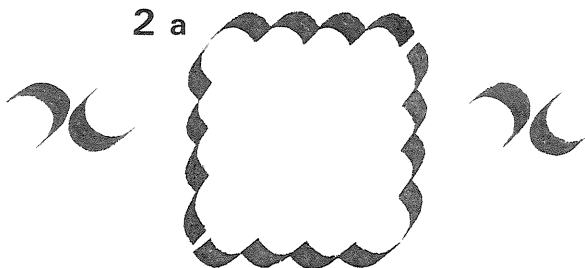
c



2 a

b

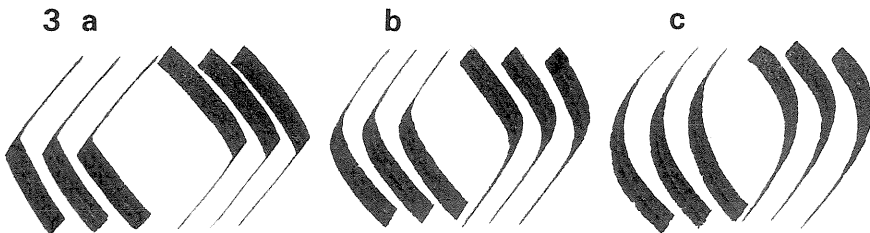
b



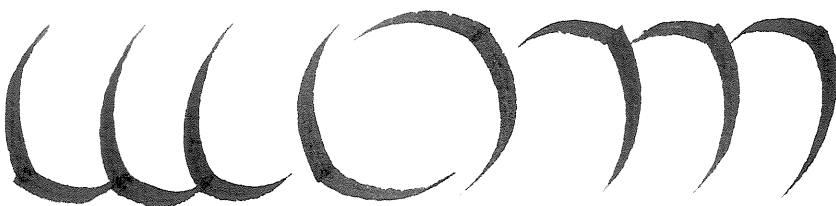
3 a

b

c



4



Curved Strokes

The Arc: Line in Transition

Understanding Curves. The curved stroke, like the straight vertical, horizontal and diagonal, is first of all a directional line. The curve, unlike the straight stroke, changes direction as it moves. When we draw the directional line of the curve with an edged pen, nib held at a constant angle to the writing line, each change of direction produces a change of stroke thickness. See fig. 1. (It only seems like magic!)

Holding the nib edge at a constant angle while changing stroke direction is a challenge because directional change requires an accompanying increase or decrease of nib edge contact. In other words, as a stroke thickens the amount of edge increases: it 'picks up edge' and the paper resists this addition/intrusion. (See fig. 2) In contrast, the special effort needed for a stroke to 'lose edge' involves a very subtle release of pressure, one which removes edge from the paper. To focus on the unique character of the edged-pen curves—a line either in transition from thick to thin or thin to thick—I have found it helpful to employ the arc. While four arcs may not make a 'perfect' letter 'O', they can certainly further our efforts! (See fig. 3)

1 Morphing. Let's consider the arc as an angle morphing into a curve. Stage one (a): two opposing diagonals come together in an angle at their apex. These straight strokes have a consistent amount of edge on the paper—there is no thinning or thickening of either stroke. Stage two (b): bend the angle hinge; as we join the diagonals we 'pick up edge', and the additional edge of this transitional stretch produces a temporary resistance. Stage three (c): the arc, constantly adding edge, meets continuous resistance. To actively engage this resistance, train your attention on the finger which corresponds to the inside of the arc you are drawing; I like to call this mental-physical technique 'holding the line'.

Holding the Line. To hold the line we must stay with it in attention. We do so by focusing our attention on the thumb—and its corresponding left pen corner. By applying a little extra thumb pressure to

this corner and enlisting the support of the wrist, we develop mastery of the curve.

Dynamics of Throwing the Arc. Press with the thumb, on the release spring into the arc guiding with the thumb. A stroke increasing in thickness also increases in pressure—the greater the amount of the edge the greater the stroke pressure. We subtly distribute this pressure for the curve by favoring the thumb and left pen corner as we increase pressure. Many of the following exercises help cultivate such finger sensitivity.

2a ‘Overhand’ and left parenthesis mini arcs each begin with the hairline and add edge. The thumb controls the ascending arc while the index finger guides its descent, each shaping the arc’s ‘bowl’ of space. ‘Underhand’ and right parenthesis each begin with the full edge and decrease edge. The index finger directs the underhand arc; the thumb conducts the right parenthesis. Dynamics: the same pressure-release pattern described above. Remember to increase pressure as the edge contact increases and to decrease pressure as edge contact decreases.

b Arcs combined. As you round an imaginary square, upper-left and lower-right arcs combine as rounded cornices. Even at this small size, such sustained edge contact asks for sustained pressure, and invites shoulder engagement.

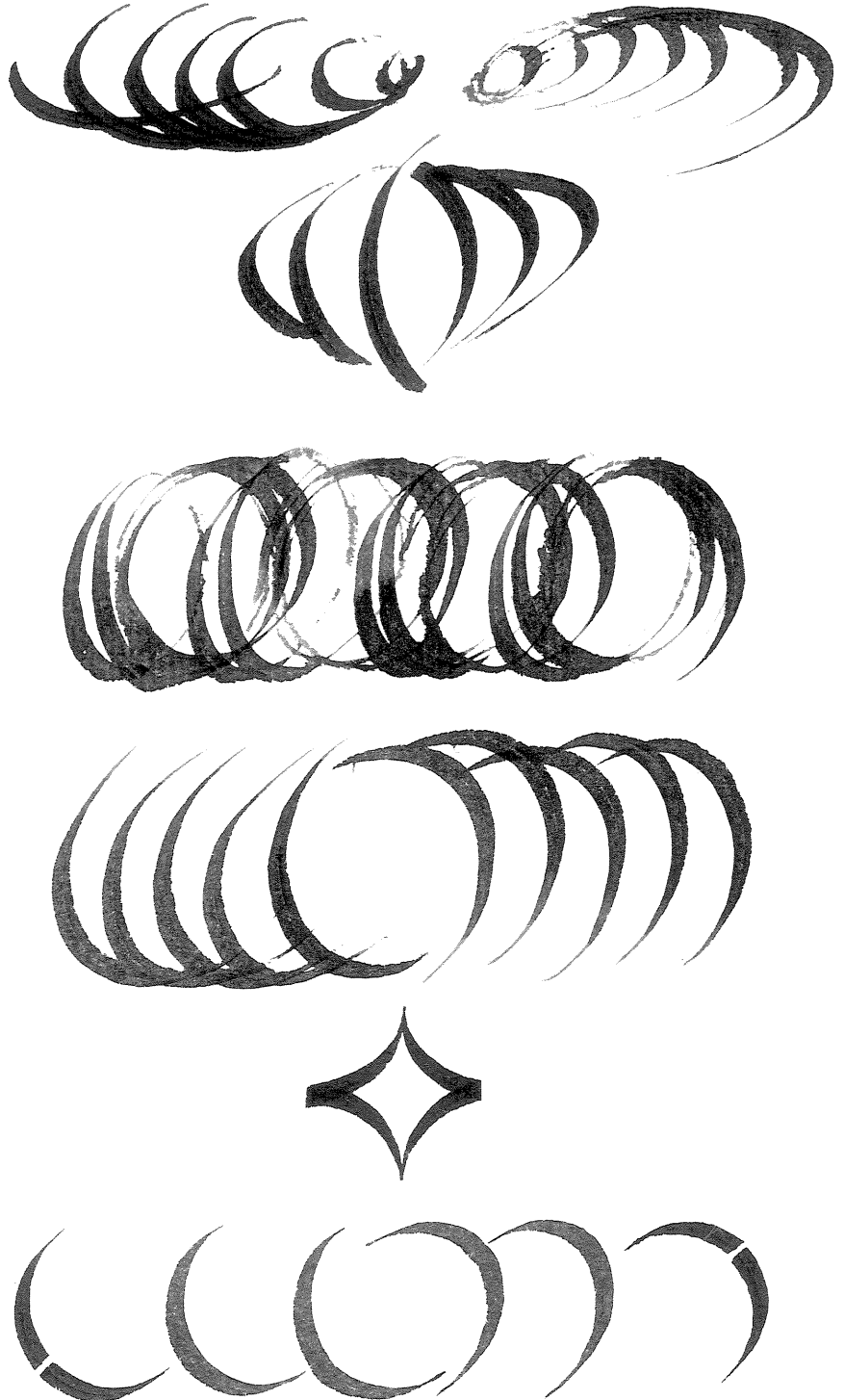
3 a Hinged diagonals. For drawing the thin stroke, push up with the thumb. For the thick downstroke apply a little extra pressure to the left pen corner.

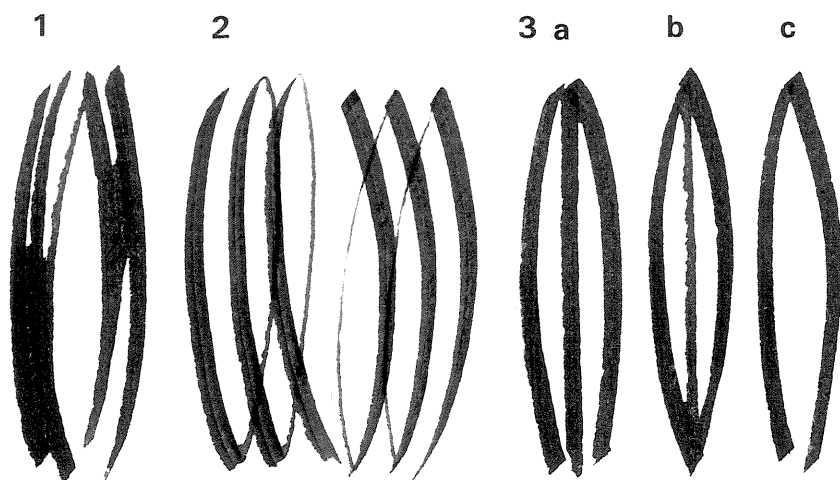
b The bend. As you approach the bend, be ready to apply thumb pressure to the left pen corner; also try to engage the upper arm in the downstroke.

c The arc. The vertical arc sequence below works on the same principles: begin by identifying the operative finger and its pen-corner partner. This is unquestionably a challenging stroke!

4 Broken curves: breaking the smooth curve of ‘double arcs’. Release pressure after the first arc and retrace slightly to prepare to make a right parenthesis or underhand arc. [See this page for ‘interrupted’ double arcs.]

Elasticity of the Curve. We now shift our focus from the careful dissection of the curve as a complex coordination of body- stroke dynamics to its rhythmic-elastic nature. We can experience the elastic character of the curve when we throw it rhythmically with the forces of pressure and release—paying attention to the feel and even the sound of this movement. To experience rhythmical movement we often work more quickly, sacrificing nuances. What the more quickly drawn exercises on this page lose in subtlety they gain in the essential experience of flow.





Large Arcs

Rhythmical Gesture

Upper Arm. In these exercises we continue our work with gesture and the pulled elastic stroke. To explore further our capacity to become aware of a 'felt' quality of movement we proceed on a larger scale and work with a relative looseness. We pay attention to the sensations in our body, to the upper arm as the specific agent for drawing strokes.

Dynamics: basic pattern. Press the nib down quickly; use the spring of release to launch the arc; and then immediately direct awareness to the upper arm. Pull the stroke from the upper arm with increasing pressure. (Alternatively, begin stroke from the air and upon contact consciously engage the upper arm.) Guide the release of pressure for specific aims, as noted in the following exercises.

Rhythm. Try 'counting' the strokes to cultivate a bold confident stroke. For example, draw, 'one' (pressure); return, 'two' (release). To support the rhythm and 'stay with the stroke' try to coordinate the breath with your movement. For example, draw down, exhale; inhale at the base of the stroke; and exhale also for the return upward stroke.

Instructions. Use a fully-loaded nib for the exercises below. Instructions are given for the vertical-directed stroke figures; with what you learn from them, transpose it to the horizontal direction! Depending on the paper and/or your own desire, these exercises may be drawn slowly and deliberately, with time to awaken bodily sensation, or more quickly to emphasize rhythm and flow.

1 Pendulum. Draw down with pressure and retrace in the wet ink. Engage the muscles of the inside of the upper arm. Blur your eyes and count 'one' as you move down and 'two' as you retrace.

2 Loops. From the left side of the loop draw down with pressure; release onto the right pen corner and draw up to the next loop beginning. From the right side of the loop draw down with pressure, release onto the right corner to draw up. If the ink doesn't carry all the way back, you can replace the hair edge to re-supply ink for completion of the loop, and to arrive at the start of the next loop.

3 Stretched 'Almonds'. Draw two or three of each figure to get the feel of it.

a Draw the left stroke, retrace. Draw the right stroke and retrace. Draw down a vertical, retrace.

Alphabet 1



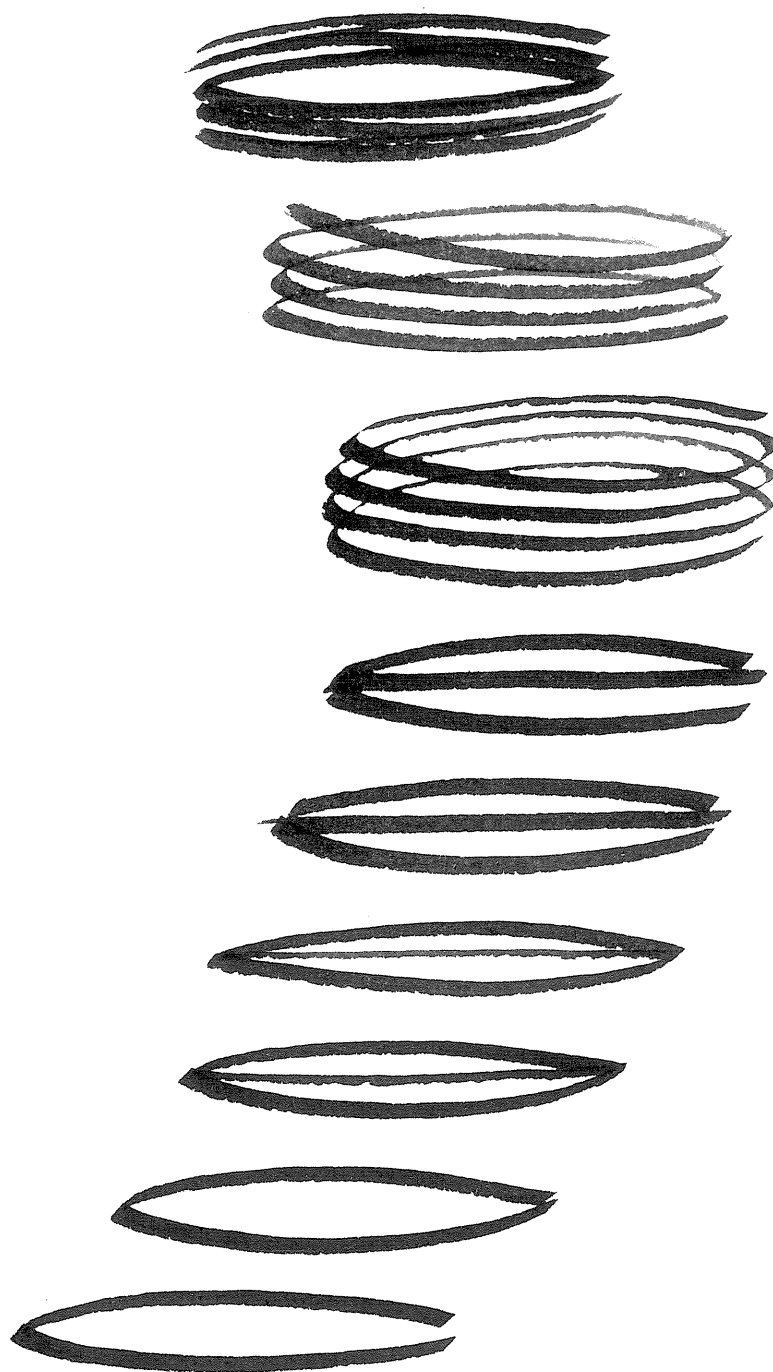
b Draw the left stroke down; rock onto right pen corner and draw up. Draw the right stroke down to meet at the first stroke's base.

c The left-right strokes freely drawn.

ALPHABET EXPLORATION

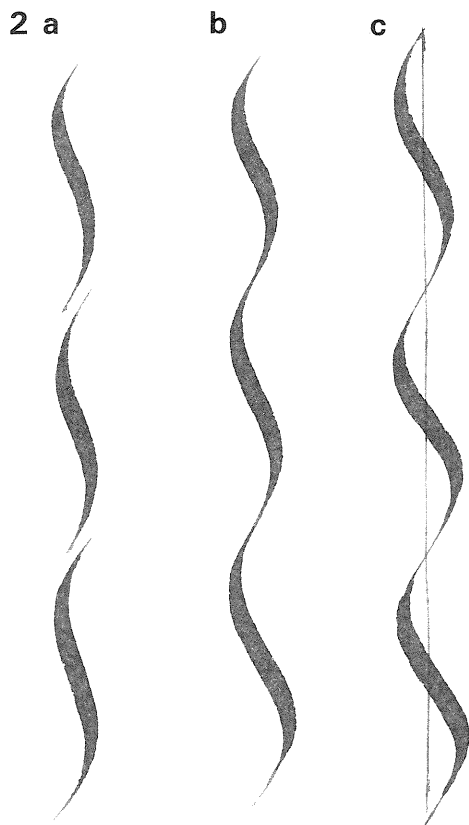
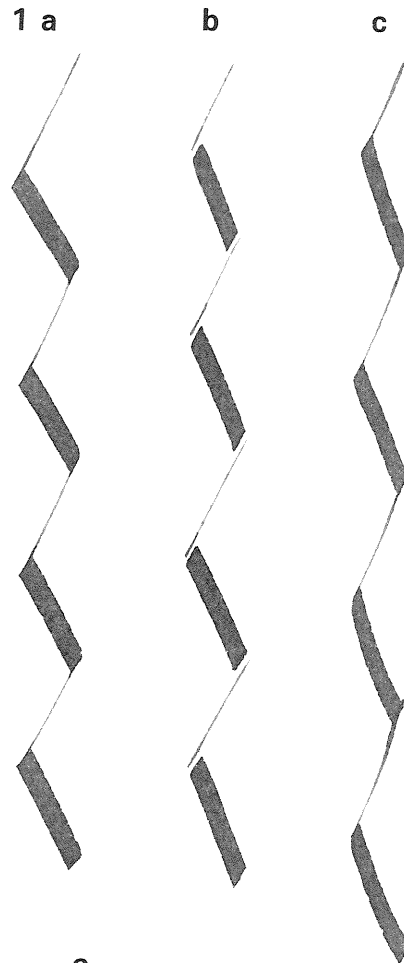
The Alphabet at Play. After an exercise sequence with a particular motif, such as the large arc, I sometimes enjoy exploring its potential for alphabet design. (See 'The Alphabet'.) This stroke proved suitable for most directional strokes; however, for the small bowls of 'B', 'P' and 'R' it needed shrinking and, for the horizontals, given the slim proportion of large arcs, it needed shortening. After drawing the verticals of 'B' and 'D' in parallel arcs, I imagined alternating concave with convex might be worth a try. The result, as seen in Alphabet 1 on the adjacent page, was a freely drawn excursion without ruling or touch up—or the letter 'K'! I liked its happy nonchalant mood but, wondering what might happen if it were drawn between ruled lines, produced Alphabet 2. It was interesting to compare the two versions. These experiments become part of my repertoire of archetypes, and like sketches or entries in a journal, may later enter into public expression.

Ruling. Although Alphabet 2 was written between ruled lines the strokes are not ruled by them! Please note that, treated as 'guides', these lines provide a structural framework but also allow the letters to quietly dance about. We should appreciate the role of rules since their presence influences the character or 'mood' of alphabet letterform. A rule-free time, like a letter-free time, opens up possibilities for exploration and expression.



Alphabet 2

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P R



Rhythm Bands

Learning to Flow. These bands provide further exercises in becoming sensitive to touch and movement; they help you to coordinate this with rhythm and stroke dynamics. First try to get the pattern from your mind into your body. It can be very mechanical to start, like a metronome. As you become confident, look for the flow in the rhythmical pattern, like a dance step. Get the idea, the feel, the beat, and then, the flow!

1 Alternating thin-thick strokes.

a Thin diagonal: press nib onto paper; in the release guide the hairline stroke with the index finger; apply pressure at end of stroke and release.

Thick diagonal: press and draw stroke with pressure from shoulder-arm; release at stroke end. Press to repeat pattern.

b 'Skipping'. Try to discover the carefree spirit of this childhood rhythm.

Thin: jab paper lightly with nib and draw. At the end of the stroke, lift the whole arm and quickly jab back at the end of the stroke from which you just lifted.

Thick: a short distance away, using the whole arm, jab paper and draw stroke to its end. Lift whole arm and jab stroke ending. Find the rhythm of skipping; as you practice this it becomes more precise. Try to stay loose; looseness is more important than precision. This loosening prepares you for the next band.

c Remain on the paper and, as you descend, look for the action of rhythmic swaying. Use the above rhythm of skipping, only moving without the lifts.

2 S-Curves. Try applying the above 'skipping in place' pattern to the S-curve.

a Separate Ss

b Continuous Ss

c Ss weaving to the left and right of a vertical line.

3 Ornamental bands. This pattern interrupts curved arcs with square dots. It is a pattern inviting rhythmical swing and, perhaps, helpful as a warm up to an arc alphabet (See Bowing's 'apple-mango' for inspiration.)

a The arcs all open to the left.

b The arcs alternate left, right, left.

4 Horizontal arc sequence.

a Spring from pressure, guided by the thumb, into a series of overhand-underhand arcs. Apply an increase in pressure as the arc increases in thickness.

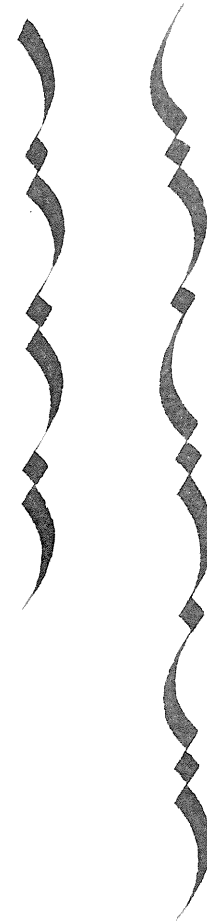
b Step one. Draw a line of continuous overhand arcs.
Step two. Beneath these, the underhand arcs are separately drawn. Each underhand arc begins with the thick part of the stroke and therefore begins its pull with pressure. As the stroke thins, pressure decreases; each arc finishes just before, and in alignment with, the end of each overhand arc.

c A series of broken S-curves, composed of an overhead and underhand arc. Try your own version of a skipping pattern.

d A series of unbroken S-curves.

e A decorative, rhythmic band of S-curves and small parenthetical arcs.

3 a b



4 a



b



c



d



e



Stroke Moods

From Stroke to Text. The strokes at left emerged during my warm-up time the morning after viewing a PBS program featuring the Jet Stream. This atmospheric phenomenon engaged my imagination and the idea of somehow expressing it calligraphically was suited to my energetic mood. First came the strokes drawn out of wet ink as in 'Ink Bodies' on page 37; then, the little bursting caps that I call 'Jet Caps', and lastly, the Blake text, "Energy is eternal delight." The narrow forms below it also developed from exercises, probably after working with hairlines to develop my sense of touch. Although greatly different from Jet Caps in weight and proportion, their common ingredient, energy, suggested another try with Blake's words. (See bottom, adjacent page.) Since I no longer have the warm-up material from which this alphabet sprung, and my alphabets generally do spring from such work, I invite you to consider likely precedents, and experiment with your own stroke ideas and warm ups.

The Calligrapher & Text. Texts are what distinguish calligraphy from the other visual arts.¹ In developing as a calligrapher, one discovers a vast graphic palette by which to interpret and express a text. In the preceding exercises we focused on the fundamental component of letterform, the stroke. On this page we see strokes exhibiting a variety of directions and thicknesses, each chosen in conjunction with other expressive elements, such as scale and proportion, as a means to interpret a text. These calligraphic texts are all legible; however, if the purpose of the work had been to evoke the spirit of the words as artistic self-expression, they may have been less legibly or even illegibly drawn.



Experimental Alphabet.



It's not completely improbable for a calligrapher, finding inspiration from a stroke, to create a text in which to express it! Finding the flow is an essential ingredient in the process of giving visual expression to texts—an ongoing journey of personal exploration.

Stroke Mood. Strokes can have mood, just like the calligrapher, when the calligrapher seeks to express her/his mood through a particular stroke or letterform. In developing calligraphy as an art of self-expression, we discover the need to cultivate awareness of our inner and outer worlds. We find inspiration to create from personal experience and from texts, seeking a congruent flow between these and the world of tools, materials and external forms.

Jet Caps. These capitals are made of very quickly and forcefully drawn strokes. They clearly show, I believe, the dramatic influence of stroke mood upon letterform character. These 'stroke panels' initially arose in the context of cultivating sensitivity in the thumb and index finger.

a Long strokes. With fully loaded nib, draw directional strokes from which to pull short strokes. The directional sweeps, p. 37, served as warm up to these strokes.

b Short strokes. From the shoulder, place nib in the wet ink of the long stroke. In the pressure of contact, pause and mentally activate awareness of thumb and index finger. Pull stroke out and off the paper—energetically and quickly—combining both fingers and shoulder in the effort. Try pulling strokes with attention to only the thumb or the index finger, perhaps alternating these digits. Is one finger easier than the other to sense? Does stroke direction influence which finger activates more easily?

c Curves. Make a mental image of the direction in which you intend to pull the stroke. Try to smoothly increase pressure as the stroke widens, and decrease pressure as it narrows.

These strokes are intended to embody energy: do you feel energy in them—in their making and after, in their viewing? Try writing words or phrases which express this quality, for example: *joie de vivre*, enthusiasm, life!

1
DIRTY BRITISH COASTER

2
IT DON'T MEAN
A THING
IF IT AIN'T GOT
THAT SWING

3
STATELY SPANISH
CAUSE

4
ENERGY'S ETERNAL DELIGHT

The above phrases. One & three, from John Masefield's poem 'Cargoes'; two, from Lloyd Reynold's 'Perennial Pedagogy'; and four, from William Blake's poem 'The Marriage of Heaven and Hell'.

1. With the exception of the recent development in painting known as Text Art.



Pen Principles & Techniques



Fig. 1 Pen Angle.

A nib forms an angle with the writing line when that nib's left corner is placed in contact with it. When the nib is drawn upward at an angle along its edge, the pen makes its finest line, a 'hairline'; when drawn perpendicular to the hairline, the pen makes its thickest stroke.

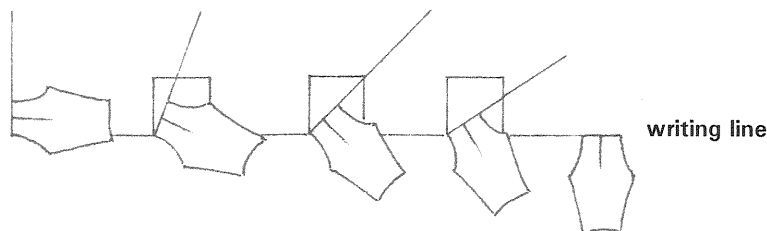


Fig. 2 Constant Angle: The 'Mechanism' in Action.

By holding the pen nib at a constant angle in relation to the writing line strokes drawn in the same directions will be of the same thickness and, these strokes will bear an unchanging relationship to each other. This mechanism creates the patterns familiar as manuscript text: because letterforms are repeated over and over in unvarying widths and relationships there is a sameness that, however readable, is not considered 'fine art' by the larger culture. (A straight directional stroke may change in thickness when the calligrapher uses more sophisticated techniques such as pen turning and partial edge, discussed in the following pages.)

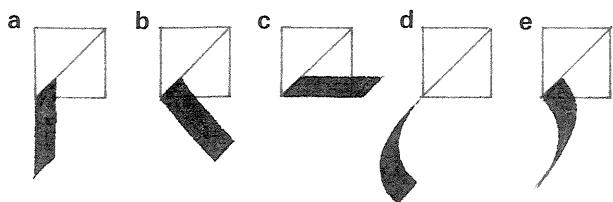
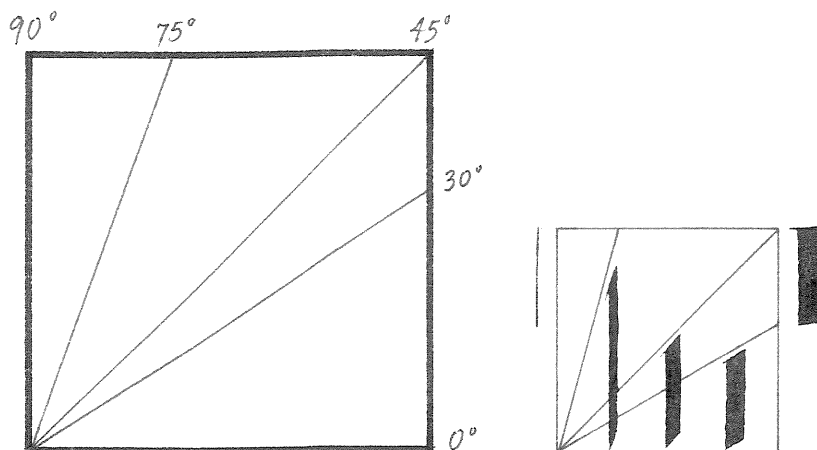


Fig. 3 The Pen Angle 'Square' Icon.

A line drawn at a 45° bisects the square. Given any 3 angle positions—as 30°, 45° and 75° of the figure—the angles assume a relative position with respect to one another: the 75° line is 'steeper' than the 'middle' 45°, the 30° line is 'flatter' than the 45°. This relationship between angles is applied in the second pen principle: Characteristic Angle.



Pen Principles

Principles of Operation. By undertaking the preceding exercises with the edged pen we have gained *direct* experience of its operation. In the following section we consult the pen's 'operating manual' to both deepen and broaden our knowledge of its principles of operation: we now carefully investigate the formal principles of pen angle; characteristic angle; scale and proportion; and pen angle as a full spectrum, or 'full horizon'. For the beginner, these principles are tools by which to analyze and understand the pen's influence upon stroke thickness and shape. For the advanced student fluent in their usage, they are the basic ingredients of creative calligraphic expression.

1st: Pen Angle. The Roman alphabet is written from left to right along a horizontal, or writing line. By taking up the pen, we have discovered that the nib forms an angle when placed in relation to this line. (See fig. 1.) This basic action activates the most fundamental of the pen's principles: that of pen angle. Any stroke the calligrapher makes, in whatever direction, involves the relationship of nib angle to writing line. Moreover, this relationship controls stroke width, or thickness; a stroke drawn with the same angle, in the same direction, is always the same thickness. (See fig. 2.) The shape of any stroke, its uniform or varied thickness, is a direct result of the relationship between pen angle and stroke direction. Let us now formulate what we have learned first hand and add to it!

Calligraphers depict the relationship of nib to writing line elegantly, via a square. (See fig. 3.) In this icon an angle appears as a

wedge, or wedge-like shape. Exceptions: the 0° and 90° angles which parallel the sides of the square's lower left right angle.

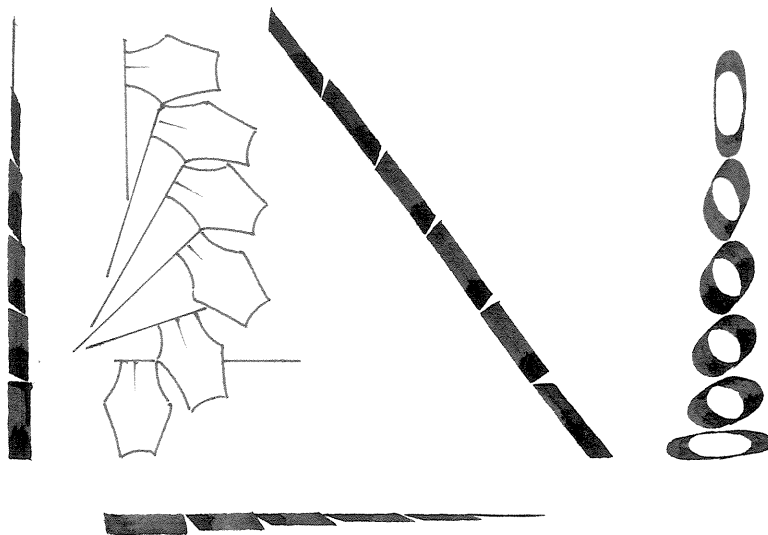
The graded lines of these wedges provide reference points or guides: the calligrapher aligns her/his nib with these graded lines, intermittently, to learn the 'characteristic angle' of a hand, in addition to its adjustments. (See second principle, below) In learning a new alphabet style a calligrapher works concertedly to hold the required angle(s) while drawing strokes in the various directions required to form letters. While this is, decidedly, a major calligraphic challenge, once mastered, the system, or 'mechanism' of pen angle produces, almost automatically, strokes of constant stroke thickness in a constant relationship to each other. (See fig. 2.) Therefore, as stated, any stroke drawn in the same direction at the same pen angle will be the same width; moreover, when the pen angle is set at 45°, a diagonal drawn from upper left to lower right will be consistently thicker than any vertical stroke of the same angle. (See fig. 2a & b.) Curved strokes, such as 2 d & e of fig. 2, change thickness simply because they change direction *within* the stroke. (See 'Curved Strokes', page 54-5.)

Although the ease and predictability derived from constant pen angle may be desirable for a manuscript scribe and text reader, for a calligrapher who seeks to create a work that speaks first to a viewer rather than a reader, the regularity of constant pen angle must be traded for the creativity of consciously chosen pen angle. (See fig. 4.) In this manner a stroke width reflecting artistic intent can be produced. Thus the calligrapher chooses pen angle, perhaps stroke by stroke, to endow any given portion of a work with what in the field of 'Art' is termed 'color' or 'value'. Such 'shading' results from gathering together strokes of differing thickness, length and shape. On the next page I explore the realm of 'value' with respect to calligraphy.

The pen 'scales' at right, like musical scales, are intended to develop dexterity and fluency. The calligrapher's gradations of tone are performed through changes of pen angle. To easily and surely hit the desired note we can practice matching pen angle to stroke thickness as suggested in the adjacent exercise.

Fig. 4 Nib Descending (a Square).

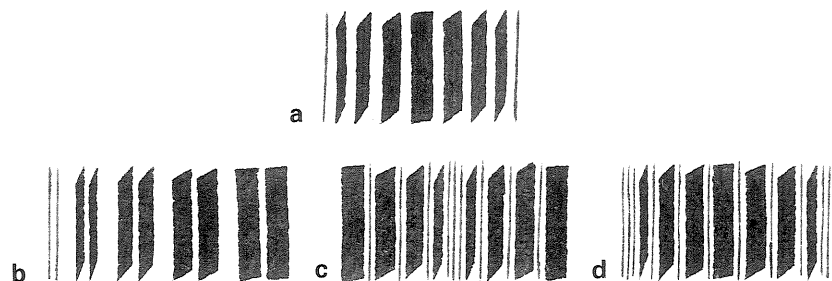
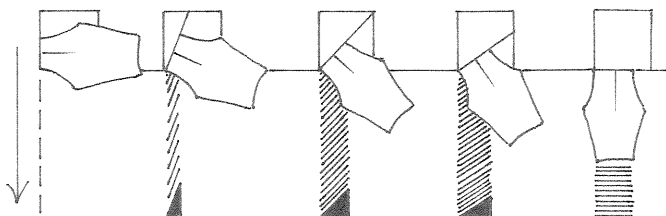
A stroke of any single direction can be drawn the full spectrum of a nib's width: from its thin edge to its entire breadth. To give 'color', or 'value', to a sequence of strokes we may wish a contrast of stroke width, as in 'Stately Spanish Galleon' on the previous page. (See exercise below.)



Exercise: Pen Angle 'Scales'.

Align the nib edge for each of the five stroke widths with angle icons below; then draw the five vertical strokes. If you are a beginner I recommend doing this exercise first with a dry, unloaded nib to start. A 3mm nib will be fine even though it is narrower than the example.

- Make strokes that change pen angle from 90° to 0° and back to 90°.
- Make two strokes at each of the five angles from 90° to 0°.
- Alternate a thin, 90° stroke with the other four pen angles.
- Reverse c.

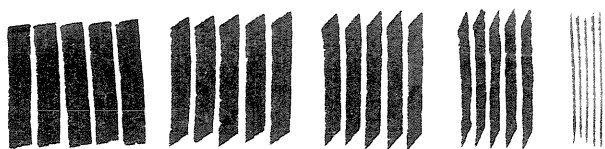


An Exploration of Value, or Weight.

The word 'value' has a specific definition when it is applied to the realm of visual art: it refers to the relative lightness or darkness of a color. This 'color', in the context of calligraphy, is the cumulative effect created by stroke thickness or thinness as written in texts using a characteristic angle. (See figs. 1 & 3, page 67.) Scripts, when intended as legible vehicles like those on the next page, generally exhibit a relative sameness of value. Calligraphy for self-expression opens itself to dramatic variation. For this purpose the calligrapher consciously draws strokes to produce tonal effects of light and shade.

A progression from pure line to letter line:

a Pen angle variations create changes in stroke thickness: heavy to light.



b Mingling strokes of different thickness with variations in the distance between strokes, stroke length and stroke ending.



c The below more freely drawn, with some stroke connections.



d The below renders the words of the incomplete song title *The Big Rock Candy Mountains*. (The verse on the next page is from this song.)



2nd: Characteristic Angle.

This principle considers pen angle in relation to an alphabet's style. A particular hand, such as Italic or Uncial, has a 'characteristic' angle: a nib position that the calligrapher strives to maintain for the majority of the hand's strokes. This term is purposely chosen because it implies the relationship between an alphabet's 'character' and its pen angle. For the beginner, pen angle may seem a technical abstraction and quite foreign; however, an understanding of it is crucial to making letters that live, to imbuing them with *character*. And, just as an individual is recognized by distinctive qualities, for example the sound of a laugh or the gait of a walk, so too an alphabet style. Each style is known by the way in which it expresses itself through various 'traits', or design choices. One of the most immediately engaging and identifiable of these is that of 'weight', or value. (See top left column of this page.) This trait, with respect to manuscript alphabets, is significantly influenced by characteristic pen angle.

In alphabet design, 'weight' is a visual quality. While it cannot be placed on a scale, it is nonetheless 'measurable' in a graphic sense. It tells us whether an alphabet's forms are 'heavy' or 'light': of a relationship between inked letterform and the space it inhabits. It is controlled largely by characteristic angle and the principle of 'pen scale': nib width in relation to letterform height. (See page 68.)

The alphabet of fig. 1 page 67 presents an alphabet drawn at a characteristic angle of 45°. It appears 'heavier' than the alphabet of fig. 3. The alphabet of fig. 3 seems 'lighter' because the thickness of certain vertical, horizontal and diagonal strokes have been narrowed in width, or 'thinned'. These strokes have been adjusted to achieve an important calligraphic aim: that of creating letterforms with pleasing, or expressive, relationships between the thicknesses of their strokes. This often involves one or more adjustments to the characteristic (dominant) angle.

These stroke adjustments to an alphabet are made in relation to its characteristic angle, by 'steepening' or 'flattening' the angle of the nib. In fig. 2, the vertical and horizontal strokes of segment 'a' represent the characteristic angle of the alphabet in

figure 1. In segment 'b' the nib has been turned counter-clockwise, or steepened to a 75° angle. This represents the change needed to make selected verticals thinner. In segment 'c' the nib has been rotated clockwise, or flattened, to a 30° angle. This depicts the change needed to draw thinner horizontals.

Through practice, the scribe learns to maintain a style's characteristic pen angle. Theoretically, every stroke drawn in the same direction would have exactly the same thickness. However, the human hand is not a machine, and one should not expect absolute precision, but similarity. Near precision is sufficient for a visually harmonious text pattern. To maintain characteristic angle, and be prepared to make the angle adjustments needed for thinner strokes, the calligrapher also cultivates a state of ready alertness! The exercise sequence on page 65, Pen Angle 'Scales', is offered to help develop this kind of mental readiness. For these exercises the beginner may start with a dry nib. When using ink, both beginner and more experienced student should experiment with the amount of ink in the reservoir, because ink flow partly depends on the type of paper.

While the characteristic angle of a script produces stroke thicknesses that relate to one another in a visually harmonious way, one may also see it as a constraint when wishing to express the spirit of a text. For expressive purposes, but short of abandoning characteristic angle, we can choose to make thin strokes just a little thinner, with only a slightly steeper or flatter angle, or we can thin them more dramatically. In the alphabet of fig. 3, I chose the latter because, within the constraint of characteristic angle, I felt it better expressed the feeling of the song, *The Big Rock Candy Mountains*. Choice of pen angle strongly influences the visually expressive quality of a calligraphic text.

When these adjustments to stroke width are also regular and repeated, the text pattern of the manuscript page displays harmony and readability of form. However, when expressive aims range outside these values, when a text pattern's harmony becomes sameness and restrains artistic expression, we explore pen angle as a principle independent of alphabet style. (See 'Full Horizon', page 70.)

Fig. 1 Unadjusted Alphabet & Text

This partial alphabet was written with a 'constant' angle of 45°. Constant rather than characteristic because the angle of this alphabet does not change. When the angle remains at 45°, as here, it creates a heaviness that I find incompatible with the happy spirit of the song, *The Big Rock Candy Mountains*. Its lyrics, arising from hardship, portray a playfully imagined fantasy of a better life.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
IN THE BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAINS
THERE'S A LAND THAT'S
FAIR AND BRIGHT, WHERE THE
HANDOUTS GROW ON BUSHES
AND YOU SLEEP OUT EVERY NIGHT

Fig. 2 A Characteristic Angle of 45° with Angle Adjustments.

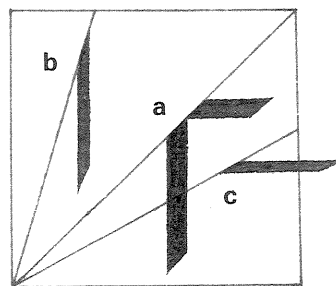


Fig. 3 Adjusted Alphabet & Text

This partial alphabet was written at a 'characteristic' rather than a 'constant' angle of 45°, since pen angle adjustments were made to particular verticals, horizontals and diagonals. I feel the thinned strokes produced by these angle changes better harmonize with the spirit of the song, *The Big Rock Candy Mountains*. The song is not a dirge about hard times, requiring weight, but a cheerful fantasy of hope.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
IN THE BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAINS
THERE'S A LAND THAT'S
FAIR AND BRIGHT, WHERE THE
HANDOUTS GROW ON BUSHES
AND YOU SLEEP OUT EVERY NIGHT

Fig. 1. Relationship of Nib Width & Letter Height to Weight.

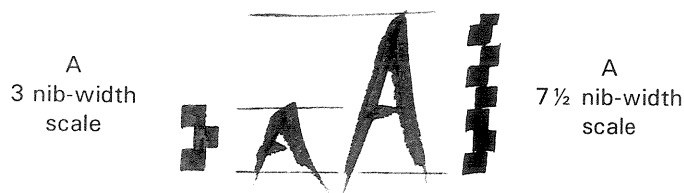


Fig. 2. 'mind forged manacles'. This 3-word phrase is from the last line of a stanza from William Blake's poem, *London*, and reads: "In every cry of every Man,/In every infant's cry of fear,/in every voice, in every ban,/The mind-forged manacles I hear."



Fig. 3. Proportion. A change in width, holding height constant, influences weight and legibility.

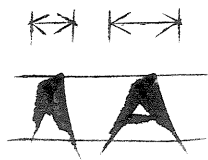


Fig. 4. Pen Scale & Pen size. If height and width remain the same, a change in nib width, or pen size, will determine letter weight.



3rd: Pen Scale. Just as our exploration of stroke flow involved an investigation of the edged pen via principles of operation, we again follow its lead and discover ourselves facing letterform! It is not really surprising that each of the principles is more fully understood by going beyond stroke to letterform. It was, I think, logical to translate the abstract stroke exercise 'Pen Scales' into alphabetic and text examples (figs. 1 & 3, previous page), since, through them, we can clearly see the crucial bearing of the principles upon letterform, their intended product.

Relating Pen Scale to letterform we see that it, too, like the principles of Pen and Characteristic Angle, is intimately concerned with the attribute of weight. Although one cannot easily separate height from width, pen scale usually focuses upon the relationship between nib width and letter height. (See fig. 1.) Nevertheless, weight must ultimately be the measure of a letter in relation to the full space it occupies, and so includes a letter width, in addition to letter height.

A discussion of scale usually occurs in the context of alphabet study: the study of a particular alphabet style which has a specific height-width relationship. I mention this because we here approach scale outside its common context and, because the alphabet 'Jet Caps' is an invented one, without historically determined proportions. This approach, I believe, allows us to look more closely at the interaction between letter height and letter width. In fig. 2, line 'a', the 3 nib-width scale 'forces' the width of the letter and makes it relatively wide; otherwise, it would not have sufficient internal open space to be easily recognized. In 'b' I kept the relatively wide width-height relationship of 'a', but increased the scale for a completely different expressive impact. In 'c' I retained the scale of 'b' but narrowed the letter to retrieve the greater weight of 'a', once again changing the graphic mood. I wanted to demonstrate that, for expressive purposes, both height (pen scale) and height-width ratio (proportion) are subject only to the calligrapher's artistic intent.

Fig. 5. Traditional Western Scripts & Pen Scale.

As noted, the calligrapher measures pen scale by nib width. The width of a nib is turned vertically to 90° and then drawn in short horizontal strokes, or square dots, just adjacent to and atop each other (see fig. 1); or you may measure the nib's width and multiply it by the number of widths you require. If drawing, try to be careful not to apply pressure when making these marks. (Since I have always had difficulty making these with any absolute degree of accurateness, I have now given way to using them more symbolically, as my rather offhand drawing suggests! However, in any formal alphabet study, you will find them carefully rendered.) These are important frameworks for training the eye to see in terms of weight. Ultimately, with increased experience, they become like the training wheels of a bicycle, unnecessary.

Thus, our study of each of the preceding pen principles has lead us to the discovery of a common visual concern, that of weight. We have also discovered that this attribute is the product of an inseparable relationship between a letter's strokes and its surrounding space. The pen principles reveal the various ways in which we relate to this primary element: adding or subtracting ink with changes in pen angle; flattening or steepening within the parameters of characteristic angle; increasing/decreasing pen scale; and widening/narrowing proportion. Our letterforms engage space as an expression of identity, or character; space is not simply background—far more critically it is a 'ground of being'. Pen scale—like all the principles, with their charts and diagrams of angles—is far more than an abstract schema, it too is a key to unlocking the life of calligraphic form.

Western Scripts & Scale Tradition. Scale may also include the relationship between one letter body and another, as in fig. 4, or the relationship between a letter part and its entire body, as in fig. 5. In the traditional Roman and Italic scripts of fig. 4 we see a relatively fixed scale of about 1:2; in the experimental forms of fig. 5 we find greater variation in scale. The words below these figures are experiments, or explorations, in stretching pen scale for the sake of expression: 1) arabesque, 2) lake and 3) tempest.

AaBbCc AbCd

Fig. 6. Invented Script & Pen Scale Experiments.

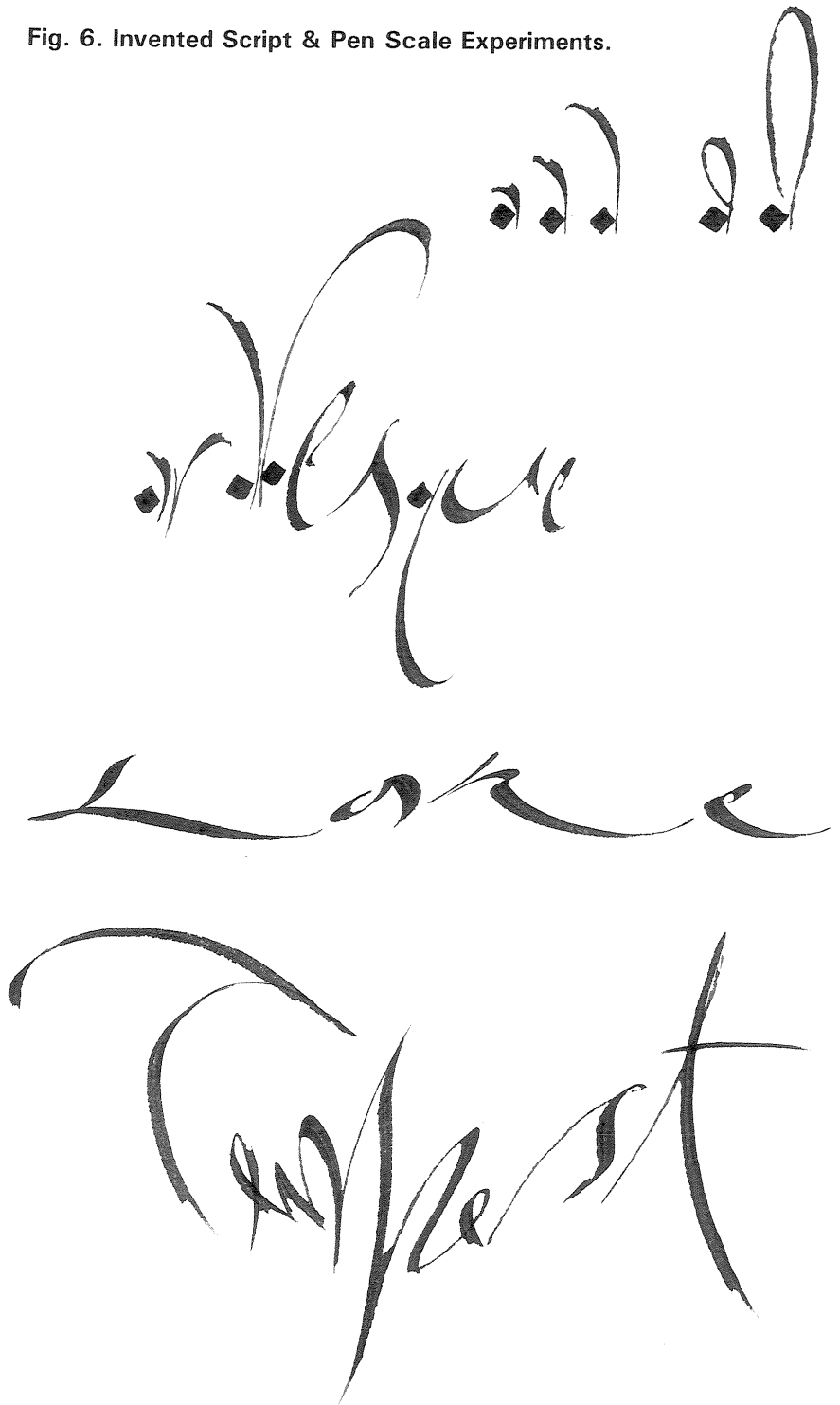


Fig. 1 'The Full Horizon'.

Strokes radiate to the right at 45° and to the left at 135°.

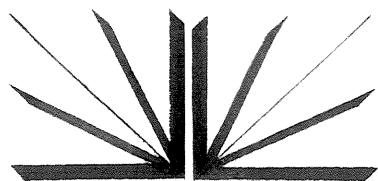


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

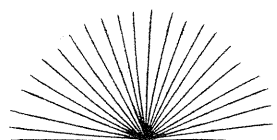


Fig. 4



Experimental Alphabet. This alphabet draws upon previous work with the hairline stroke and pen corners, in addition to the full horizon. It anticipates the technique of pen turning, a discussion of which begins on page 68.

morning has broken
like the first morning



4th: The Full Horizon.

Of the many happy discoveries on my calligraphic journey, The Full Horizon has perhaps been the most dramatic: the angle lines radiating from a square's lower left corner to the right of 90°, could also radiate to the left! (See fig. 1.) This realm of the full horizon is offered to more advanced students; hence I will refer to strokes drawn from it, those between 90° and 180°, as 90+ since describing angles of 135° or 117° would be cumbersome, and because for those ready to work in it, 90+ should suffice.

Upon reflection, it was not surprising that this territory had not been a part of my education: training in traditional Roman alphabet styles does not require it. The range of pen angles in which these historic scripts operate is quite adequately represented by the icon for the pen angle principle, a square. In fact, most of these scripts occupy only a portion of it, since this part admirably suffices to serve the purposes of written communication: ease of writing and reading. The scribe's hand may easily manipulate the pen within this province, and the alphabets within it, governed by the pen angle mechanism, produce regularity and harmony of form. (See *Characteristic Angle*, p. 66.)

However, those calligraphers who wish full liberties of expression and full control of stroke width, may also wish to expand the pen range of scribal tradition to include the full horizon. I will describe what I have found there and offer it for your further exploration.

With respect to contemporary Roman letterforms the 90+ allows us to thin the diagonals of 'R', 'K' and 'k'. The diagram next to these letters illustrates 90+ angles with their corresponding stroke thicknesses. (See fig. 2.)

Fig. 3 illustrates two contemporary letterforms employing a 90+ angle: a Roman form using a mixture of angles, and a Hebrew form using a single 90+ angle.

The stroke shapes of the arcs and bends of fig. 4 are drawn by turning the pen; these graduated strokes incorporate 90+ angles. (See 'Pen Turning', page 71.)



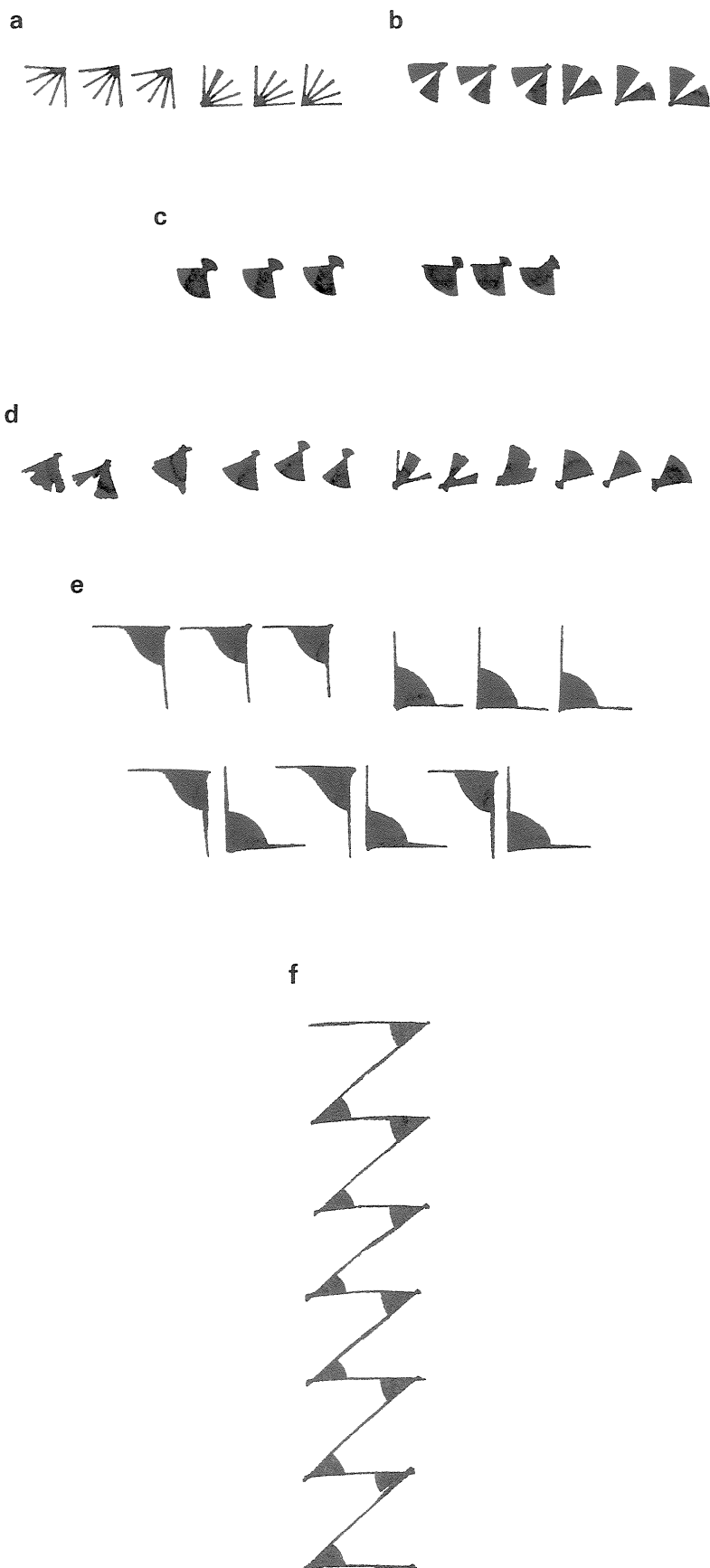
Pen Technique

Pen Angle & Edge. Calligraphy operates, inseparably, from both its techniques and its principles. Since any stroke we make is influenced by the principle of pen angle, we study it carefully to better understand that influence. Moreover, any stroke we draw is a physical act, and involves a special technique. In the previous exercises, I presented pen angle through nib icons, and technique as stroke dynamics: the interaction between the pen, the body, the senses and directional line. Through it we trained ourselves in a basic level of pen angle skill: holding the pen in a fixed position while moving it in straight or curved lines, keeping its edge in contact with the paper. I consider it basic because fixed angle position does not permit the calligrapher to govern the width, and hence the shape, of a stroke. For this level of control the calligrapher must cultivate advanced skills which include 'pen turning' or 'pen manipulation' and 'partial edge'. (Figure 1 at the top of this column contains examples of both techniques in the words 'ink sculpture'.) For pen turning, the angle of the pen is not fixed but flexible, thus the calligrapher, while moving the pen, is able to shape a stroke by widening or narrowing its thickness. For 'partial edge', the pen is moved from full contact to partial contact—contact with one corner and part of the nib's edge—and the calligrapher finds another level of expressive range. Through both of these advanced pen stroke techniques the calligrapher further cultivates calligraphy's potential for refinement, interpretation, and self-expression.

1st: Pen Turning. This technique involves changing pen angle within a stroke: turning the pen staff-nib edge in a fluid fashion while drawing a directional stroke. This is a complex motor skill requiring tactile sensitivity, dexterity and coordination. It is helpful to be experienced with the basic skill of pen angle—moving the pen at a fixed angle—and to know the basic stroke directions and their corresponding angles: horizontal at 0°, vertical at 90° and bisecting diagonal at 45°. Previous exercises such as 'partnering' and 'holding the line' began the training needed for developing this skill. Although it is difficult to break this complex action into parts, we will begin with the twist of turning, the new ingredient, and add extension; the longer the stroke being turned, the more skill required. Hence we begin with short strokes, to further sensitize the fingers and get the feel of rotating the staff.

Holding the Pen. Pen hold is very important for success with pen turning. To facilitate the turning we hold the pen as described in 'Holding the Pen' between thumb and index finger, against the index finger near the big knuckle. The staff is held at a steep angle, changing slightly as the pen moves, steepening as the angle increases, flattening as the angle decreases.

Large Pen. It will be helpful to begin these exercises with a large-nib fountain pen, such as the 6mm Parallel Pen, with which many of the exercises were drawn. (See Directory of Calligraphy Suppliers.) These exercises are designed to develop the thumb and index finger as turning agents.



PIVOT EXERCISE SEQUENCE

a Lifts

0-90° Holding the pen staff at a steep angle to the writing line, place the nib at approximately 0° with complete awareness in thumb and index finger. Press the full edge of the nib onto the paper and release the pressure; rock onto the right nib corner, leaving the left corner and the edge off the paper. Relax the fingers: the pen staff rests against the index finger and, with the thumb, pulls the pen staff down, which turns the pen staff counter-clockwise (c.c.). Replace full nib edge. Repeat. Press, release onto corner, etc. in pivot segments a few times until the nib edge is vertical, at approximately 90°.

90-0° Holding the pen staff at a steep angle, place nib at a 90° angle, parallel to the vertical with full thumb-index finger awareness. Press and release, rock onto left pen corner removing right corner and edge from the paper. Relax the fingers: the staff rests on the thumb while the index finger pushes down on the staff, rolling it over the thumb, rotating the staff clockwise (c.). Replace full nib edge and repeat a few times until edge angle is about 0°.

b Folded Fans

0-90° Place nib at 0°. Use the right pen corner, partnered with the index finger, as a pivot point. Pull the edge with the thumb in a short c.c. swivel. Lift edge, replace and swivel again to 90°.

90-0° Place nib at 90°. Use the left pen corner, partnered with the thumb, as a pivot point. Push-pull the edge with the index finger in a short c. swivel. Lift edge, replace and swivel again to 0°.

c Fans

0-90° Keeping the full edge on the paper, rotate the nib with awareness of the thumb—pulling the staff, making a large c.c. swivel—while index finger simultaneously releases and guides the right corner into an echoing swivel. Experiment with getting the feel of this maneuver.

90-0° A large c. swivel with index finger controlling, the thumb releases pressure to facilitate the sweep.

d Exercises 'a' & 'c' done more quickly.

e Cornices: Adding Rhythm

0-90° Press and release as you place the nib at 0°. In the release push horizontally with the thumb (count one); press, pivot in the release pulling with the thumb (count two); press and release. In the release, pull down with the thumb (count three).

90-0° Same as above with index finger performing the two directional strokes and swivel.

Alternating 0-90° and 90-0°.

f Zigzags

Continuous rhythmic pattern: 0-45-0°.

g Hourglasses

Press and pivot in the release turning from 0 to 45° (one). Press and release: in the release push a hairline diagonally the distance of one nib width beyond the fan shape (two). Press, and in the release, pivot to 0° (three). Press, and in the release push the hairline horizontally one nib width past the fan to begin the next figure (four). Left descending hourglasses push left on the count of four.

TURNING IN MOTION

a Birds

0-45° A continuous moving curve: the thumb is partnered with the left nib corner and holds the line of the arc. You simultaneously sculpt the stroke and its space.

45-0° The perpetual curve is initiated by the index finger. As the nib flattens, the wrist releases to move to the right. Try to make the turn in the release from pressure, as you launch the pen from its initial pressure.

b Zigzag Slalom

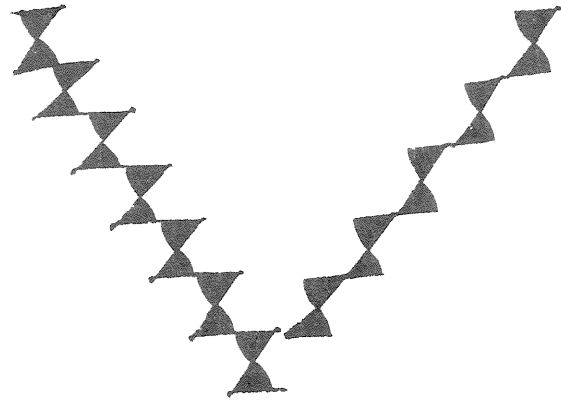
Left and right 'fliers' connected by diagonal. (See hourglass pattern above.)

c Horizontal zigzags as in hourglass pattern.

d Straight Pivots

0-45° Press, and awaken the index finger as the pivot point, but a moving one. Draw the pen staff-nib edge down, pushing it against/near the big knuckle. (A very challenging operation.) Lift the nib and replace it at the exit angle. Pivot from this position to a flat one, reversing the above instructions.

g



a



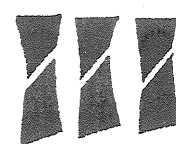
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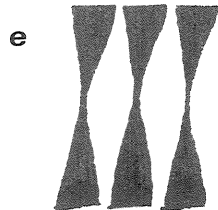


c



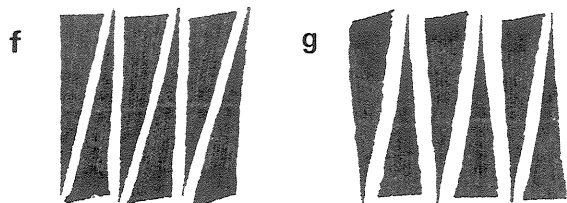
d





e Long Hourglasses

0-90° A full moving pivot from the pen's right corner, the index finger moves diagonally with the thumb, but more slowly, as above in straight pivots. The nib moves continuously and evenly, it loses edge on both sides to shape the stroke. This is a push-pull action: the index finger pushes the right wall down while the thumb pulls the left wall down.



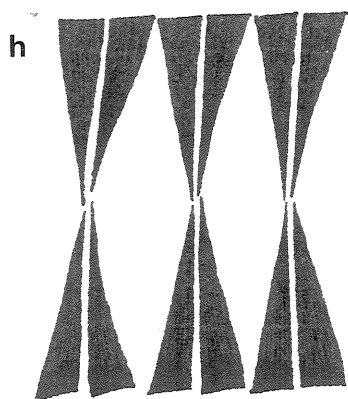
90-0° Gaining edge with the same push-pull dynamics described for 0-90°. During practice, strive to engage the arm-shoulder in drawing the pen-turned stroke.

f 'Right-angle' Wedges

Left and right walls are vertical. While the index finger or thumb pivots to pick up or lose edge, the other finger holds the upright.

g 'True' Wedges

Separating the hourglass top and bottom sections of the hourglass. (See above.)



h Right-angle Wedges, back-to-back.

i Rhythm Patterns. Lozenge: 90-0-90°

First pattern: a continuous descending line of lozenge segments. Press and release into turn; pull the hand-fingers down with the arm-shoulder as you pivot. Press at finish of wedge (0°), release; press, and in the release, launch your turn from 0-90°.

Second pattern: one wall remains upright while the other shapes the stroke.



j Birds in Graceful Flight

An extension of the turn of 'Birds', above, with more travel time picking up and losing edge.

k Mountains & Valleys

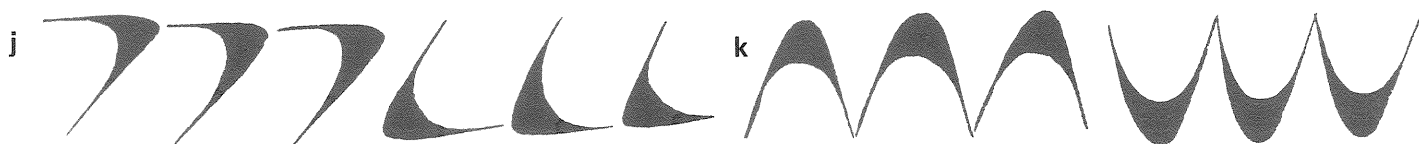
The same ideas as above, only traveling diagonally into and out of the stroke. One finger pivots while the other shapes the stroke's internal space.

l Turned Cornices

Try to be as conscious of the white space as the ink stroke, for as you turn, you are shaping both.

m The Quartet

This is a set of four rectangular figures which express four possible turning combinations, each in a vertical and horizontal pair.



- 1 Left Vertical: steep to flat
Right Vertical: flat to steep
- 2 Top Horizontal: flat to steep
Bottom Horizontal: steep to flat
- 3 Left Vertical: flat to steep
Right Vertical: steep to flat
- 4 Top Horizontal: steep to flat
Bottom Horizontal: flat to steep



n Duets

Members from the Quartet joining together as uprights, maintaining their thickness further down the stroke. The Right Vertical of 1 joins the Left Vertical of 3.



o The Quartet with Guests

Bowties and Fans have been invited, along with a little partial edge. (See next technique.)

SHAPING THE STROKE

a Basic

An unserifed stroke with beginning and ending turns. Try to develop a rhythm counting pattern for this stroke.

Beginning: press and release.

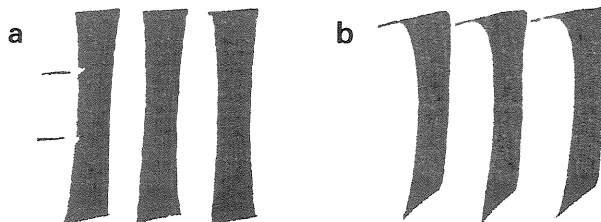
Development: press, and in the spring of the release begin a slightly graded c.c. turning of the pen; draw about one-third of the way down the stroke. Continue stroke at this angle about another third of the stroke. At this point turn the pen c. to finish the stroke at a flat angle.

End: Press and release.
(You may wish to review the second Rhythm Patterns on page 44.)



b Sophisticated

Refined stroke entrance and tapered ending. From a flat angle press to begin the stroke; in the release launch a hairline which very soon begins a pivot turn. The pivot continues in a straight stroke: the left wall turns perpetually c.c. to midway and then shifts to a perpetual c. turn. Finish the stroke by pulling it off with the thumb.





c Playful stroke

Draw left from hairline, turning while bending the top of the stroke.

d Falling Leaves

1 Finish the turned stroke by pulling off with the thumb on the left pen corner.

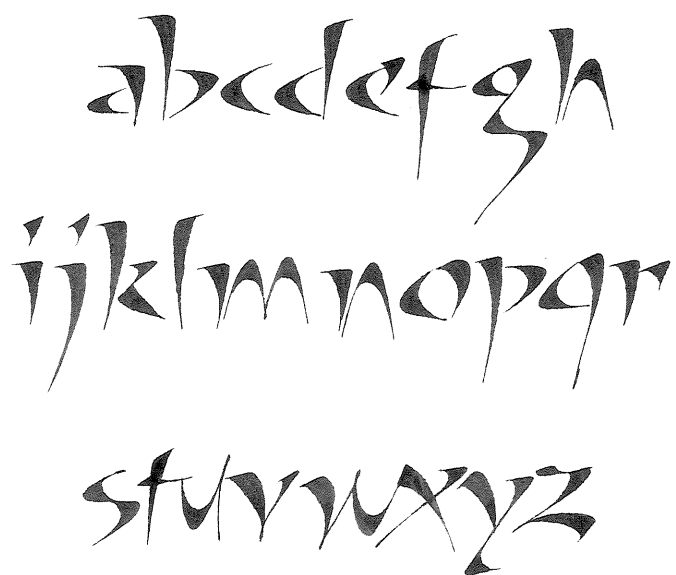
2 Alternate the pulling off with thumb and index finger, with their corresponding pen corners.



2nd: Partial Edge. This technique provides another method for shaping the stroke; the strokes which result from it add to the calligrapher's palette for artistic expression. Partial edge strokes range from light feathering and delicate refinement of line, especially in combination with the use of a pen corner, to bold, assertive and rugged mark making. Since some of the effect depends upon the pen's interaction with paper, it is important to experiment with the surface texture/tooth of a variety of papers. Partial edge stroke dynamics place particular emphasis on the controlled use of pressure as you move from contact with the full edge, thin or broad, to partial edge. In concluding the stroke, the nib usually follows through onto its corner; the corner may then, if it is desired, clean up a feathered/rough ending while it still has a supply of ink. For me, this technique is especially one which invites a spirit of exploration.

A stroke can move either from the nib's full edge and lose part of this edge or, it can draw from the nib's thin edge and add edge incrementally. A nib corner partners with what I will call the controlling wall of the stroke: the side of the stroke with which the nib remains in contact while it removes/adds edge. (See 'partnering' under 'Pen Corners', page 40.) The dynamics of a partial edge stroke require a sensitive application of pressure and release.

e Alphabet Experiment



The papers used for these exercises are given in parentheses: Zerkall (Z), Hahnemuehle (H) and Borden & Riley (B&R). See Paper and Ink for further information.

a Partial Edge: from full edge (Z)

Decide which side of the stroke will have a clean edge; this is the controlling wall of the stroke. Place your attention upon its corresponding nib corner, e.g. the right side of the stroke partners with the right nib corner. This corner also partners with a corresponding finger, the index. Draw strokes in the basic directions, releasing pressure to release edge. While partial edge may be combined with pen turning, here the stroke tapering results from loss of edge.

b Partial Edge: from thin edge (Z)

Again, decide upon the controlling wall. For these strokes the index finger pushes/drives the stroke down and controls the left wall, not the right one, which you might have expected. It pushes the edge onto the paper as the stroke curves, slightly to the right. The left stroke begins the process sooner than the right one; it has a short release on the corner while the right one has a long release. The pen staff is held at a very steep angle and even moves a little 'backwards' as the stroke gains edge.

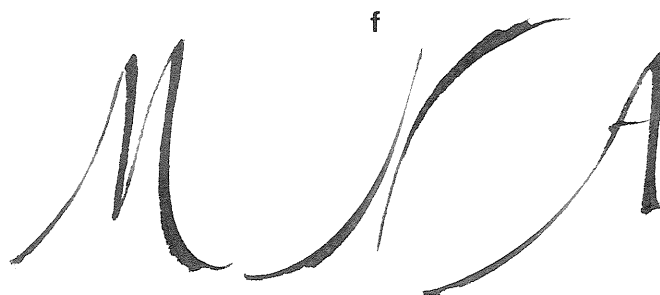
c Short strokes (B&R)

Practice releasing onto index finger with the first group of strokes; release onto the thumb for the second. To encourage stroke involvement a helpful rhythm pattern to use would be 1) beginning: press and release and 2) development: press with a quick release. Launch the stroke in a partial release of pressure; however, it is necessary to maintain pressure for this stroke. Partial edge is a sophisticated technique; with practice comes finger sensitivity and the control of stroke dynamics.

d Pulling & pushing (B&R)

Normally, strokes move from top to bottom and from left to right; the most sophisticated techniques open this fixed directional movement as the full horizon opens the range of possible pen angles.

Strokes from full edge: pull down; strokes from thin edge: push up. For me, the thumb controls the push onto edge in either direction for upward strokes, just as the index finger controls the push onto edge for downward strokes moving to left or right.



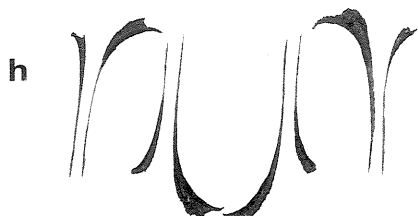


e Short strokes (B&R)

A shorter stroke can create a distinctive shape.

f Finger shift (H)

The index finger guides the downstroke and the thumb the upstroke.



g Partial Edge Quartet Practice (verticals: Z; horizontals: B&R)

All strokes move from the thin edge to partial edge.

Downward verticals are pushed by the thumb and, moving either to left or right, are guided by it.

Upward verticals are pushed by the thumb and, moving either to left or right, are guided by it.

Unlike verticals, the horizontals generally change guiding finger when moving in the same direction.



Top horizontal moving left: with the thumb you make a smooth lower line; however, with the index finger you can smooth the top of the stroke.

Bottom horizontal moving left: generally controlled by the index finger; however, for the bottom of an 'S' you might try the index finger or thumb for different effects.



Top horizontal moving right: I generally use the thumb here. Since this stroke also forms the top arm for capital letters such as 'C', 'E', 'F' and 'G', it can be used to lighten this stroke &/or, with corner participation, refine it.

Bottom horizontal moving right: since the controlling finger influences the stroke shape, its choice really depends upon the stroke you would like to create. I suggest experimenting with thumb and index finger.

h Duets (Z)

Practice with vertical and horizontal pairs.

i Partial Alphabet Experiment: Capitals (H)

j Partial Alphabet Experiment: Lower case (Z)



3rd: Pressure. Throughout the previous exercises we have employed one of the metal nib's characteristic properties, its flexibility. By the nib's flexibility we were able to apply pressure, and with attendant release, to discover the integral role of pressure in stroke dynamics. In alternating pressure with release we explored the rhythm of the stroke, its flow.

The pressure applied for creating the tripartite stroke is relatively slight, and is exerted according to a regular sequence. When we apply pressure beyond that used in stroke dynamics, and exert it whenever we choose, for the sake of design, we are using pressure as a pen technique. By employing pressure in this manner, we in effect broaden the nib to thicken the stroke, thereby using nib flexibility to the greatest extent.

Such usage of pressure shapes the stroke for expressive or stylistic purpose. This technique may be employed on its own or combined with pen turning or partial edge. If the force required for such extra pressure is not congenial to your hand, you might consider other techniques we explored in Broad Edge, such as double strokes, to achieve thickening.

Working with this technique should further sensitize you to the nib's range with respect to pressure. Pressure for stroke dynamics need not be forceful for it to activate/operate as an aid to rhythm and flow. As you become increasingly more skilled with handling the pen, you will become more subtle in the application of pressure.

Of the edged pen metal nibs available today, the Brause is not the most flexible. If you wish to further investigate this technique you could try the Mitchell and Speedball nib.

Continuing to Learn

Directory of Calligraphy Suppliers

John Neal, Bookseller: 1-800-369-9598
Paper & Ink Arts, Ltd.: 1-800-736-7772
Daniel Smith (Seattle): 206-223-9599 or 1-800-426-6740,
www.danielsmith.com

Journal:

Letter Arts Review, contact John Neal, Bookseller (see above)

Local Calligraphy Societies

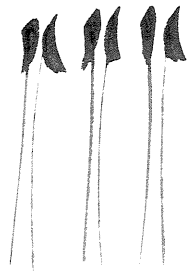
There are calligraphy societies located in cities large and small throughout the United States which sponsor workshops and meetings for furthering one's calligraphic education. Annually, one of these societies sponsors an international conference with workshops and exhibits, vendors and many opportunities to meet others who share one's passion for calligraphy!

Association for the Calligraphic Arts/ACA

An international organization of calligraphers dedicated to furthering of our art. For information visit www.calligraphicarts.org

Workshops

I am happy to offer workshops on 'Finding the Flow' which are tailored to suit an interested group. Please contact me by e-mail at gina.jonas@gmail.com



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Acknowledgements

With deep and ongoing gratitude
to my parents,
teachers and students,
friends
&
Michael