

## ***Zen Calligraphy and Painting of Yamaoka Tesshū at the Victoria and Albert Museum*** **3<sup>rd</sup> September - 14<sup>th</sup> December 2008.**

To mark the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Japanese statesman, master swordsman and calligrapher, an exhibition of his Zen calligraphy and painting will be held in the Toshiba Gallery at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Born in Edo (modern Tokyo), Tesshū was a lay Zen master, he received his certificate of enlightenment from Tekisui Giboku of the Tenryū-ji temple and founded Zenshō-an in Yanaka, Tokyo and Tesshū-ji in Suruga, the modern Shizuoka City. Under the tutelage of Iwasa Ittei (d. 1858), the fifty-first head of the Jubokudō school of calligraphy, he mastered the writing styles of Wang Xizhi (303 – 361) and Kōbō Daishi (774 – 835), eventually becoming the fifty-second head of the Jubokudō school. Tesshū aspired to the example of these historical geniuses of calligraphy, his long years of rigorous study enabled him to develop a personal style and to cultivate calligraphy through the *ki-ai* of swordsmanship and the principles of Zen. On March 30<sup>th</sup> 1880, at the age of 45, Tesshū had a realization of the inner truth of Zen and swordsmanship, this was accompanied by a marked change in the quality of his calligraphy. Tesshū declared that swordsmanship, Zen and calligraphy are identical in their aspiration to the state of no-mind. The exhibition will also include scrolls by two other *shū* of the Bakamatsu era, Katsu Kaishū (1823 – 1899), one of Japan's earliest internationalists and Takahashi Deishū (1835 – 1903), who retired from public life soon after the Meiji Restoration of 1868 to devote himself to calligraphy. The exhibition is on loan from Zen master Tanchū Terayama's (1938 – 2007), private collection, master Terayama was an authority on Tesshū and collected these works over a period of 40 years. Most of these calligraphies have never been shown outside Japan before.

### **ZEN BRUSHWORK PROGRAMME.**

There will be an education programme augmenting the exhibition, by senior students of master Terayama, from Japan.

#### **\* Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> September. Headley Lecture Theatre, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. 2 – 5 pm.**

**Lecture programme** – ‘*Ken, Zen, Sho and its Relevance Today*’. ‘*Swordsmanship and Confucian Ideology as One: Yamaoka Tesshū, a Bakamatsu samurai*’. Professor Eiji Takemura (Kokushikan University, Japan). ‘*The Development of Japanese Swordsmanship: from Techniques of Life and Death to Ways of Personal Cultivation*’. Dr Alexander Bennett (Independent scholar, Japan) ‘*The Zen Painting of Yamaoka Tesshū*’. Sarah Moate. (Nihon University, Japan). ‘*Ken, Zen, Sho; Swordsmanship, Zen and Calligraphy and its Relevance Today*’. Presentation of the late Professor Tanchū Terayama's lecture.

#### **\* Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> September. Buddhist Society, London. 2 – 5 pm.**

#### **\* Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> September. Lecture Theatre, V&A, London. 2 – 5 pm.**

No booking necessary. Free.

**Lecture programme:** ‘*Ken, Zen, Sho; Swordsmanship, Zen and Calligraphy and its Relevance Today*’ (shorter version of above) and demonstrations of Jikishinkageryu swordsmanship and Zen calligraphy with a large brush.

#### **\* Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September.**

**Residential workshop**, including periods of sitting practice, Zen brushwork, yokiho (breathing and ki-raising exercises) and basic swordsmanship techniques (optional).  
Charney Manor, Charney Bassett, near Oxford.

#### **Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> September. Sackler Education Centre, V&A, London. 10am – 4pm.**

**Zen Brushwork workshop.** Book through the V&A.

#### **Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> September. Toshiba Gallery, V&A, London. 2 – 5 pm.**

**‘Drop-in’ sessions of Zen brushwork.** No booking necessary. Free.

For more details on these events please contact [hitsuzendo@hotmail.com](mailto:hitsuzendo@hotmail.com)