



江戸筆

[えどふで]

Handmade Calligraphy Brushes

●主な製造地

台東区、豊島区、練馬区ほか

●指定年月日

平成2年8月9日

●伝統的な技術・技法

1. 筆の種類、穂の毛丈に応じた原毛の選別を行う。長年に亘って培われた職人の勘だけが頼りとなる。
2. 先出造りは、筆の命と言われる穂先を作り出す作業で、金櫛で梳きながら毛先を揃え、毛先の無い毛や逆毛を取り除く(さらい)。
3. 型造りは、命毛・喉毛・腰毛の束をつくり、その束から一本分を取り出し、穂の形を作り出す作業で、毛の間のバランスを図り、穂先の美しさを出すには高度の熟練を要する。
4. 練りませは、毛丈の違う毛を均一にませあわせる工程で、穂の良否を左右する。
5. 芯立ては、こまを使って穂の芯を作り出す作業で、芯の固さ、穂先の弾力など指先の感触

を頼りに毛の量を調整する。

●伝統的に使用されてきた原材料

穂—山羊毛・馬毛・豚毛・たぬき毛・いたち毛・猫毛ほか
軸—竹・木



●沿革と特徴

文房四宝の一つ「筆」は、「日本書紀」の推古天皇の18年(610年)3月の条に、高句麗僧曇徴が「紙、墨の製法を招来した」と記されており、一応これが筆、墨、硯、渡来の嚆矢とされています。

以来、文化の発展と伝承に欠かすことのできない道具として、用途別に各種の筆が製造され、その製造技術も進歩改良されてきました。

江戸時代も中期には、商人の台頭とともに「寺小屋」が急増し、庶民の間にも筆が普及し大量に使われるようになり、江戸の筆職人の技術もさらに進歩し、多くの江戸名筆を生み出しました。江戸主流の製造法「練りませ法」は元禄期に細井広沢により確立された手法で、明治5年の学制発布と共に急速に広まりました。

連絡先

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Edo Fude

Handmade Calligraphy Brushes

■ Traditional Technologies and Techniques

1. Hair for calligraphy brushes is chosen based on the intended brush type and the length of the brush tip. The craftsman relies on instincts developed over many years of brush making.
2. Removing defective strands of hair is part of the tip-formation process. The tip represents the most important part of a calligraphy brush. A metal comb is used to comb through the strands of hair and align them accordingly, and strands without proper tips as well as those that are incorrectly oriented are removed from the clump.
3. The tip is formed by arranging strands into clumps for the very end of the tip (inochige), the middle portion of the tip (nodoge) and the base portion of the tip (koshige). One brush's worth of hairs is then taken from each of these clumps to make a tip. Advanced skills

are required to both ensure balanced spacing between the hairs and to also achieve an elegant brush-tip shape.

4. Nerimaze is a process carried out to achieve an evenly distributed mix of differing strand lengths, and it makes a major contribution to determining the final quality of the brush tip.
5. Shintate is the formation of the final brush-tip shape using a ring-shaped implement. The craftsman feels the tip by hand to check its firmness and resilience, etc. The volume of hair used in the brush tip may be adjusted accordingly in response to how the tip feels.

■ Traditionally Used Raw Materials

Brush Tip - goat hair, horse hair, pig hair, raccoon dog hair, weasel hair, cat hair, and other varieties.

Brush Handle - Bamboo, wood

■ History and Characteristics

Concerning the "calligraphy brush," one of the "Four Treasures of Study" within the Chinese classical canon, in the Nihon Shoki (The Chronicles of Japan) it is recorded that in March of the 18th year of the reign of the Empress Suiko (610); "the methods of making paper and ink were brought about" by the Buddhist priest Damjing. This reference indicates that Damjing was a pioneer figure with respect to the arrival in Japan of writing implements in the form of calligraphy brushes, ink and ink stones.

Since then, there have been numerous advances and improvements made in production technologies as calligraphy brushes (and the written word that accompanied them) became key implements in Japan's cultural and traditional development, with many different types of brush produced for different purposes.

Around the middle of the Edo Period, along with the rise to prominence of the commercial class, Edo witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of "temple schools". In that the general population also began to write, calligraphy brushes came to be widely used among the masses. Furthermore, a number of classic Edo Fude (handmade calligraphy brushes) were born around this time as production technologies employed by craftsmen developed even further. The dominant production method in Edo was called nerimazeho (literally "the mixing method"), and its

processes were established by Hosoi Kotaku (1658-1736) in the Genroku Era (1688-1704). This method of manufacture went on to spread quickly due to the new national education system that was promulgated in the fifth year of the Meiji Era (1872).

Due to the combined calamities of the Great Kanto Earthquake (1923) and the Pacific War (1941-1945) many calligraphy brush craftsmen left Tokyo. However, those who were left focused both on the production of high-end calligraphy brushes, and on working to keep the relevant technologies and techniques alive.



Contact Details

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