

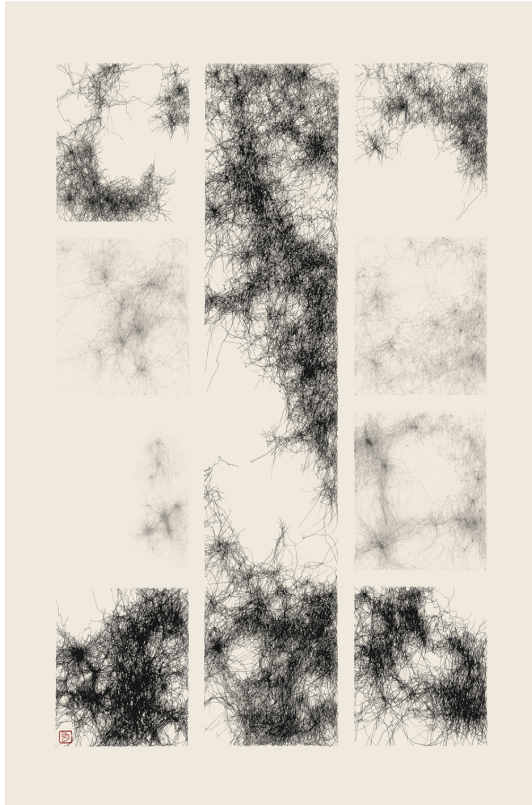
News Release

May 8, 2024

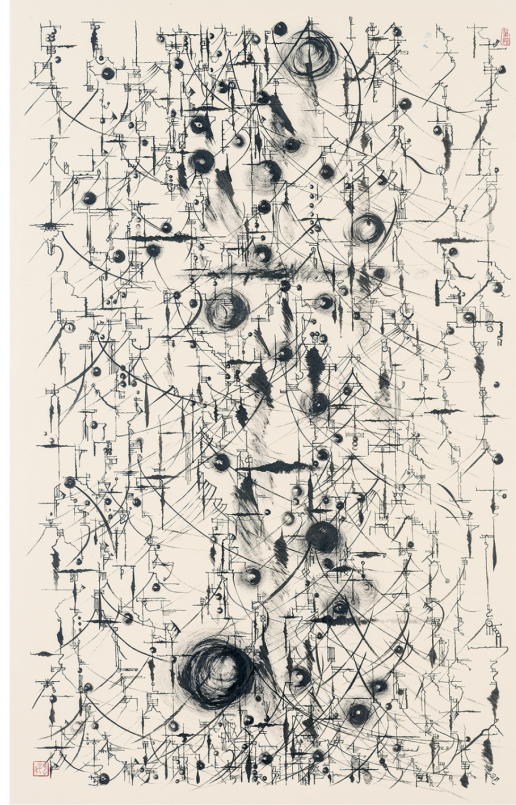
## The Calligraphic Art of Ishikawa Kyuyoh

June 8(Sat.)-July 28(Sun.), 2024 Venue: The Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo

Executive Committee of Complete Works of Ishikawa Kyuyoh



石川九楊 『純然草 No22』(1993年) 95×62cm



石川九楊 『「ヨーロッパの戦争」のさなかに—人類の未熟について』  
(2023年) 95×60cm

“The Complete Works of Ishikawa Kyuyoh” is a two-part exhibition that reveals the full scope of the artist’s creative process, a body of calligraphy that reflects the times he has lived in. This large-scale exhibition questions the act of “writing,” both currently and in the future. In order to present the entire body of his work the exhibition will be divided into two separate parts, one month each. The "Classics" section, held in June, will feature works based on literary classics such as "The Tale of Genji," "Essays in Idleness," as well as “Thousand-Character Sake cups." The "Situational" section, held in July, will feature works which are based on contemporary texts, including his own writings. His works deserve to be appreciated in person for their sheer intensity, such as the overwhelming power of the 85-meter-long paper roll of Japanese translations of Bible verses.

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## Information

### The Complete Works of Ishikawa Kyuyoh

First Part “Classic” June 8(Sat.) - June 30(Sun.), 2024

Second Part “Situational” July 3(Wed.) - July 28(Sun.), 2024

\*Closed July 1(Mon.) - 2(Tue)

Venue: The Ueno Royal Museum  
1-2, Ueno Park, Taito-ku, Tokyo 110-0007

Time: 10:00~17:00 (Last Entry: 16:30)

\*Advance tickets can be purchased online at the official ticketing website ART PASS (<https://art-ap.passes.jp/user/e/ishikawakyuyoh-taizen>).

\*Exhibition site (in Japanese) <https://ishikawakyuyoh-taizen.com/overview/>

This “Complete Works of Ishikawa Kyuyoh” exhibition presents a rare opportunity to experience the breadth and depth of this master calligrapher. Born in Fukui Prefecture, in 1945, he started calligraphy at age 5. As soon as he entered Kyoto University, he became a force to be reckoned with. All of his works in this two-part exhibition are his brush-written interpretations of texts: poetry, novels and essays. The first “Classic” part consists of works in which the source texts are classical literature, such as “The Tale of Genji” and “Essays in Idleness.” In the “Situational” second part, source materials are contemporary writings. These include some of his own essays about current events, such as 9.11 and the Russo-Ukrainian War. He exists in a rarefied sphere, between the highest levels of conventional calligraphy and modern art.

He has famously said that calligraphy is not about writing simple characters, but calligraphy is expressing the meaning of words. As abstract as his work might look, they are all constructed with words. On first impression, the works might feel chaotic, but they are imbued with a masterful sense of precision and razor-sharp intent. He is an artist whose work deserves to be appreciated in person for their sheer intensity. For example, the overwhelming power of “My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?” expanding over 85 meters in length. This exhibition features not only an extensive collection of his well-known works, but some that have never been shown before. As the artworks will be completely different between the two parts of the show, it is worth two trips to appreciate his importance.

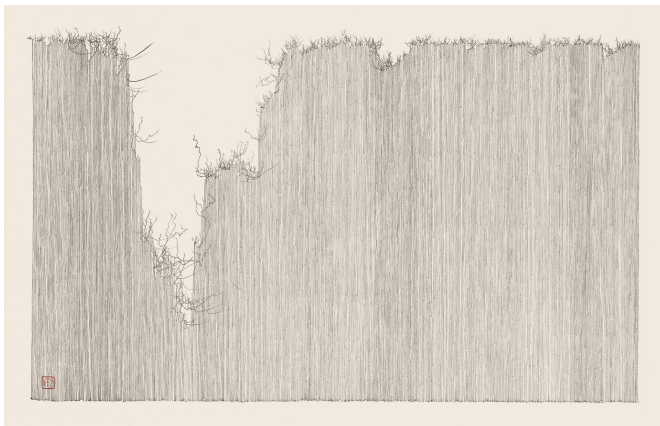
## Explanation of Works

### First Part “Classic”



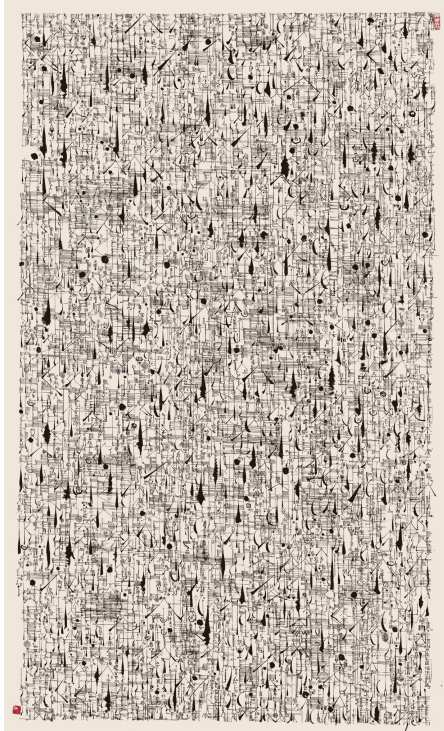
**55 Chapters of The Tale of Genji I, *Wakana Part I*** (2008, 59x94cm)  
\**Wakana Part I* [Young herbs part I]

To the Tale of Genji 54 chapters, one called *Kumogakure*, Vanished into the Clouds, only a title with no text, was added, making it the Tale of Genji 55 chapters. *Wakana Part I* is the one of the 55.



**55 Chapters of The Tale of Genji I, *Shii ga Moto*** (2008, 59x94cm)  
\**Shii ga Moto* [At the Foot of the Oak Tree]

This is one of the works in this series, The Tale of Genji, 55 chapters. It pushes the boundaries of calligraphy itself.



**Lamentations on Divergences No. 18** (1988, 92x57cm)

This work contains the full text of Shinran's "*Tannisho*," "**Lamentations on Divergences.**" It took eight months to complete.



**A Li He Poem, from Five Satirical Poems** (1992, 360x192cm)

One of a series of five poems written by the Tang Dynasty genius Li He.

## Second Part “Situational”



**Kawahigashi Hekigoto Haiku, Into a Pomelo Slips a Blade** (2022, 24x34cm)

A poem selected from 109 haiku by Hekigoto Kawahigashi, a forgotten revolutionary of modern haiku.



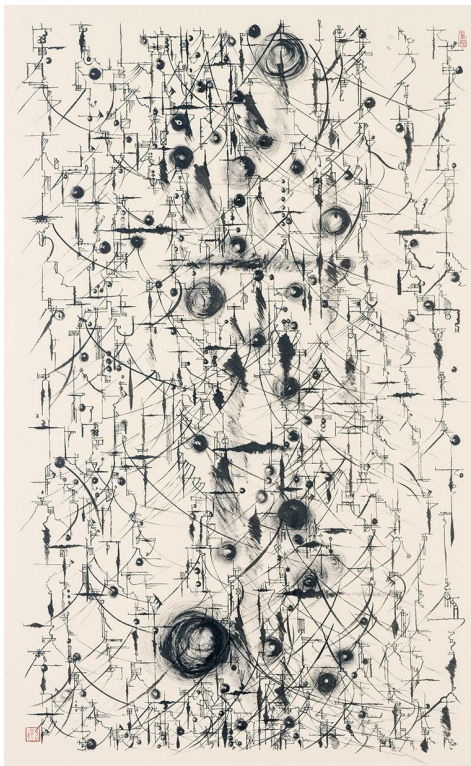
**Kawahigashi Hekigoto Haiku, The Cicada That Plunges into the Light** (2022, 24x34cm)

A poem selected from 109 haiku by Hekigoto Kawahigashi, a forgotten revolutionary of modern haiku.



My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me? (1972, 270x341cm)

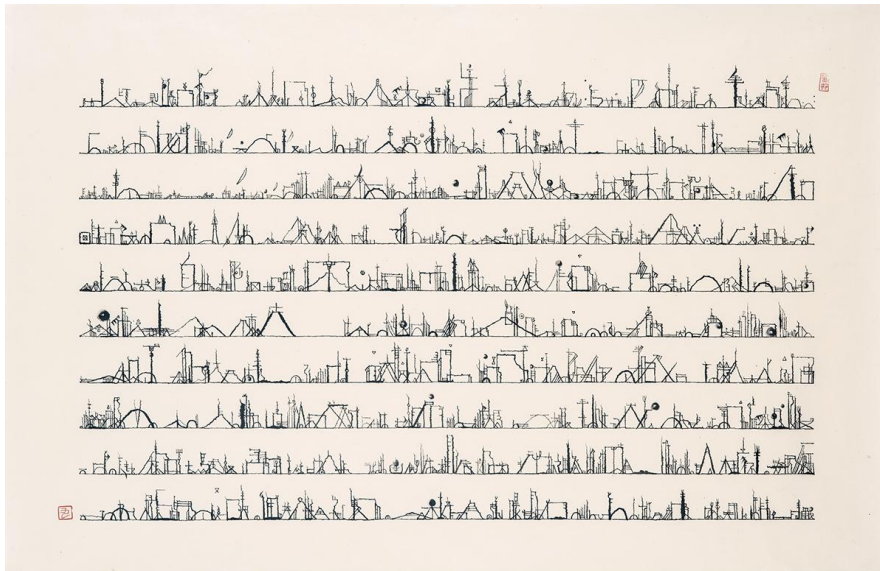
From the Bible, Psalms 22 verses translated into Japanese.



石川九穂 「ヨーロッパの戦争」のさなかに——人類の未熟について」(2023年)95x60cm

Amidst a European War –on Humankind’s Puerility (2023, 95 x 60 cm)

One of his latest works, it is about the war in Russo-Ukrainian War, and asks the question, "Why don't wars ever stop?"



石川九楊 「『全顔社会』の恢復を願って」(2022年)60x95cm

### **Wishing for the Return of a Full-Faced Society(2022, 60x95cm)**

Original poetry written during the coronavirus epidemic hoping for the restoration of the society of all faces.

## **Coming Events**

### **Catalog Raisonné "Complete Works of Ishikawa Kyuyoh"**

A catalog raisonné (in Japanese, English, and Chinese) of all 2,000 works by Kyuyo Ishikawa is being produced that will be published by SHIBUNKAKU Co., Ltd in summer 2024.

### **Related Project to the "The Complete Works of Kyuyoh Ishikawa" Exhibition**

#### **"Calligraphy is Music" Demonstration Concert**

As a project to demonstrate his theory that "calligraphy is music,"

The program will analyze "Tannisho No. 18," a work that includes the entire text of Shinran's "Tannisho". These scores were written by analyzing three parameters of the "taction" or rush strokes: speed, vector, and depth, used in writing the text. The scores are performed as electronic music and as a string quartet.

Kyuyo Ishikawa will give a lecture about this project.

The venue is the Sogakudo of the Former Tokyo Music School, a retrospective concert hall in Taito Ward. For more details, <https://ishikawakyuyoh-taizen.com/tannisho-no18/> (Japanese)

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**Official Website:** <https://ishikawakyuyoh-taizen.com/>  
**SNS Instagram:** [https://www.instagram.com/ishikawakyuyoh\\_taizen/](https://www.instagram.com/ishikawakyuyoh_taizen/)  
**X:** [https://twitter.com/kyuyoh\\_taizen](https://twitter.com/kyuyoh_taizen)

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### **Organizers**

Executive Committee of ISHIKAWA KYUYOH TAIZEN, Nikkei, Inc., The Ueno Royal Museum

### **Supported by**

SHIBUNKAKU Co., Ltd., Suntory Holdings Limited, HAKKAISAN BREWERY CO., LTD., Sanyo Chemical Industries, Ltd., Kenji Kasahara (Founder, MIXI Inc.), Graphic Corporation, SCREEN Graphic Solutions, Morisawa Inc., Kinki Danboru, Koichiro Yoshida (Cloudworks, Inc.), Sun-M Color Co., Ltd., Otsuka Ohmi Ceramics Co., Ltd., Kyoto Seika University

### **Cooperation**

Hobonichi Co., Ltd., TAKEO Co., Ltd., Minerva Shobo, Sayusha Ichinokura Sakazuki Art Museum, Institute for the Study of Character Civilization

### **ISHIKAWA KYUYOH Profile**

Calligrapher. Born in Fukui Prefecture in 1945. Graduated from Kyoto University, Faculty of Law. After serving as a professor at Kyoto Seika University and director of the Institute for the Study of the Literary Civilization, he is currently a professor emeritus at the same university. He has analyzed the structure and history of calligraphy. He is also active as a critic, and his theories on the Japanese language and culture have had a great influence on various fields. He continues to be at the forefront of expression and discussion in both producing his artwork and publishing his writings. He has produced more than 2,000 works and published more than 100 books. He has received numerous awards.