

Paintings in Motion **— The possibilities of the Folding Screen —**

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This paper proposes the creation of a new pictorial space through the process of creating folding screens. It describes the development of painting materials and techniques that extend the expressive power of traditional painting.

Over the course of early studies, the author found traditional two-dimensional painting to be restrictive and cramped in terms of presentation. In most cases, when showing two-dimensional painting, the viewer simply appreciates work hanging on a flat plane, due to dependence on the wall, limitations of the exhibition space, visual fixation, and the difficulty of incorporating environmental factors. When exhibiting paintings alongside three-dimensional work, the author grew frustrated by the constraints of a flat surface. Three-dimensional work produced beautiful shadows and became reflective when illuminated. To a limited degree, adjusting the light on two-dimensional work improved the viewing experience, but this was ultimately unsatisfying. However, because it was not the intent to produce three-dimensional objects, research was undertaken to create an expression that could elicit active viewer appreciation, much like three-dimensional work, but using a two-dimensional surface.

While experimenting with ways of presenting two-dimensional paintings, a solution was found in the form of the “byobu,” or folding screen. The hinged function of the folding screen gives spatiality to two-dimensional painting by extending the flat surface into three dimensions. While following a production process that takes full advantage of the folding screen, we will discuss “Paintings in Motion” with mechanisms that allow the viewer to actively participate in the viewing experience. The following outlines the four chapters of this paper.

Chapter 1, “On Paintings in Motion,” explains the concepts of “painting a story without words” and “a picture no matter where you cut it out.” The author discusses limitations of traditional two-dimensional painting and the idea of “paintings in motion,” whereby the byobu transforms a passive experience into active participation in the viewing process. The solution offered by the folding screen draws a viewer’s gaze into the creation of the painting.

Chapter 2, “Hypothesis: Extension of Plane Painting,” describes research into “paintings in motion” through the creation and application of original shell paints, as well as the technique of heaping up “gofun,” or white paint, to achieve new effects. The chapter describes how the author’s work was adapted to the form of the folding screen, and important realizations that it revealed, specifically “the difference between flat and folding screens” and “mobility and freedom.” Based on the possibilities of painting expression emerging from this process, the author developed a plan for the production of “paintings in motion.”

Chapter 3, “Creating Paintings in Motion: A Celebration of Life,” presents a method for connecting to the viewer’s experiential painting space, “paintings in motion,” by following the production process presented in Chapter 2. This mainly incorporates paint innovations and the introduction of multiple viewpoints with a folding screen (H183 x W540 cm). The author created a composition incorporating three perspectives, using the octopus, birds, and the deer as motifs. The resulting discovery introduced a stop-motion animation-like visual experience and a time axis into a still, two-dimensional painting. Based on exhibition and a survey of viewer impressions, it was concluded that paintings in motion have been realized.

The overall plane view is shown in Figure 1. The respective front left and right perspectives are shown in Figure 2, Figure 3, and Figure 4.



Figure 1: Plane view



Figure 2: Viewpoint of the octopus



Figure 3: Bird's perspective



Figure 4: Deer's perspective

Chapter 4, "Conclusion," describes exhibition activity conducted in various spaces and the innovative possibilities realized at each venue. In particular, exhibitions within traditional architectural settings revealed many discoveries about the original form of the folding screen. Specifically, how folding screens are adapted to the low kamo gate (the upper part of the interior wooden frame that is grooved to fit sliding doors and shoji screens) and how they incorporate outside light. Exhibitions in collaboration with live music and an installation of aquariums revealed new developments in the form of the folding screen. Through a series of studies conducted over the course of exhibition activity using 12 long-folding screens, a reconceptualization of the folding screen was achieved. Through thinking, creating, painting and exhibiting, the author concludes that many forms of visual expression in Japan since ancient times were meant to present an experience to the viewer. Folding screens, hanging scrolls, fusuma-e (sliding door paintings), and scrolls are forms of expression that the viewer experiences in sharing the space with others. This research proposes a restoration of a more intimate form of expression, which has been reduced by the arrival of the western "museum" space. The freedom and sense of beauty that Japan once possessed may be lost without a new awareness.

These findings confirm that it is possible to realize "paintings in motion," a pictorial space using folding screens that actually brings the viewer into a deeper experience of the painting. Japanese artistic expression, including folding screens, are a mechanism for "paintings in motion," such that the viewer actively participates in the viewing process. The author also presents new compositional beauty and innovation through the work "Celebration of Life." An original shell paint was developed and applied, a material which creates particles of paint larger and more diverse in size than particles that are usually used. This allows for expression of raised lines by heaping up the paint, producing surface irregularities and textures that are not normally achieved. Metal foil was also applied to the work, producing

fluctuations caused by external factors such as light or reflections. This flickering, illuminating effect further induces the viewer's gaze. In addition, while "Celebration of Life" produces at least three very different viewpoints, they are expressed as a single, unified composition in terms of color and form without any visual disruption. Finally, in reconceptualizing the folding screen, along with a unique method of painting, an additional discovery was made whereby the folding screen is used to intentionally create "invisible places." In this way, the author has realized a novel expression fluidly envisioned with time changes, such as stop-motion animation and slit animation. In conclusion, the author proposes that "paintings in motion" have successfully been produced in an original and innovative way.