



Open, Yet Unbroken

Kazuaki Tanahashi's work at White Lotus enchants, inspires

Can an artist simultaneously honor hundreds of years of tradition and create something that breaks tradition?

Calligrapher Kazuaki Tanahashi would likely say yes. Tanahashi, whose "Brush Mind" exhibit opened at White Lotus on Valentine's Day, mixes traditional methods and Zen Buddhist iconography to create work at once calming and intense.

At the gallery, it's easy to see three distinctly different tracks emerge even though Tanahashi paints each piece on manageably sized canvas with a single acrylic figure. One track, the least interesting, involves massive single

brushstrokes across the bottom half or third of the parchment canvases. The strokes incorporate a variety of colors — orange and red, or blue and green with some yellow mixed in, for instance — and run off both sides of the paper. Tanahashi gives many of his similar paintings the same name, in this case, *Happiness*. The red *Happiness* at the gallery contains more playful brushwork, a more complex terrain for thought, than the orange painting with the same title.

Another path Tanahashi follows is that of calligraphic ideograms. In countries that use ideograms to communicate, calligraphy artists work hard. They study for many

years in order to master the movements, the balance and the insight necessary to create stunning, perfectly centered ideograms on bare backgrounds. Tanahashi was born in Japan and spent many years laboring and loving his art before moving to the U.S. in 1977, and his work slyly mixes the old country and the new. *Compassion*, for instance, combines a wide, airy base with

a more compressed peak, where a streak of gold enters the dark paint, and *Enjoyment's* bright red tangles teeter atop a playful combination of more solid strokes.

But there are also figures like *One*, a one-stroke work, which leap out with their powerful play of white movement on black backgrounds. At the rear of the gallery, *One* is paired with an explosion of white

Part of the reason these pieces jump out is the very Zen acceptance of splatters.

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TEETH
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CHARLIE BARTLETT R 11:30, 2:10, 5:15, 8:05, 10:40
BE KIND REWIND PG13 11:00, 1:40, 4:35, 7:25, 10:10
WITLESS PROTECTION PG13 11:05, 1:35, 4:25, 7:00, 9:35
THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES PG 11:10, 11:45, 1:50, 2:25, 4:30, 5:05, 7:05, 7:55, 9:40, 10:35
DEFINITELY, MAYBE PG13 11:20, 2:05, 4:55, 7:45, 10:35
STEP UP 2 THE STREETS PG13 11:25, 1:55, 5:00, 7:30, 10:05

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BEE MOVIE PG [12:10] 2:40, 4:55
ENCHANTED PG [12:25] 3:45, 7:10, 9:45
THE GOLDEN COMPASS PG13 [12:45] 4:10, 7:40, 10:15
INTO THE WILD R [12:00] 3:40, 7:00, 10:10
MICHAEL CLAYTON R [12:15] 4:20, 7:25, 10:05

THE MIST R [12:30] 4:00, 7:30, 10:20
ONE MISSED CALL PG13 [12:05] 2:25, 4:50, 7:45, 10:00
OVER HER DEAD BODY PG13 7:20, 9:35
SWEENEY TODD R [12:20] 3:50, 7:15, 9:55
THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP PG [12:50] 4:15, 7:05, 9:40
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