

# ***The Sound of One Hand: Paintings and Calligraphy by Zen Master Hakuin***

## **Glossary & Vocabulary List**

### **Arhat**

Direct disciples of the historical Buddha, varying in number but most typically 500 in Japan, where they are known as *rakan*.

### **Bodhisattvas**

Buddhist deities who have attained Enlightenment but choose to remain on earth to guide others in their path to Nirvana and relieve the sufferings of humankind.

### **Calligraphy**

The art of fine handwriting; in East Asia calligraphy it is done using a brush.

### **Colophon**

A statement at the end of a book or scroll giving information about its authorship and execution.

### **Dharma**

1. The teachings of the Buddha which lead to Enlightenment; the essential nature of existence realized by the Buddha.
2. The constituent factors of the experienced world (phenomena).

### **Diptych**

A pair of pictures on two panels or scrolls.

### **Enlightenment**

Attainment and understanding of the *dharma*. Enlightenment is often referred to within Zen as the "mind-to-mind" transmission of the *dharma*. The concept of "dharma transmission" is integral to Zen Buddhism because it asserts the importance

of lineage (i.e., under what circumstances one achieved Enlightenment; from whom the dharma was transmitted) rather than scripture. Followers of Zen Buddhism seek to attain Enlightenment through an intensive process of sitting in meditation, training with Masters, contemplating *koan*, and following the Eightfold Path.

### **Eightfold Path**

A Buddhist doctrine expounded by the Buddha in his first sermon near Benares, India. Regarded as the way for individuals to deal with the problems named in the Four Noble Truths, the path consists of right understanding (faith in the Buddhist view of existence), right thought (the resolve to practice the faith), right speech (avoidance of falsehoods, slander and abuse), right action (abstention from taking life, stealing and improper sexual behavior), right livelihood (rejection of occupations not in keeping with Buddhist principles), right effort (development of good mental states), right mindfulness (awareness of body, feelings and thought) and right concentration (meditation). It is also called the Middle Path, because it steers a course between sensuality and asceticism. Following the Path leads to escape from suffering and attainment of *nirvana*.

### **Four Noble Truths**

These Truths, followed by all adherents of Buddhism, are among the realizations that Buddha discovered when he attained Enlightenment:

Life is suffering; the cause of suffering is desire and attachment to the world; suffering may end when we disassociate ourselves from desires; freedom from suffering is possible by following the Eightfold Path.

### **Hotei (Budai)**

A Chinese Zen Buddhist monk who lived during the Liang Dynasty (907-923) and was thought to be an incarnation of Maitreya Buddha (the Future Buddha). He is depicted as a good-natured beggar figure carrying a large staff and a sack.

### **Katsu**

A type of shout used in Zen Buddhism to give expression to one's own enlightened state (*satori*) and/or to induce another person to move beyond rationality and logic and, potentially, achieve an initial Enlightenment experience.

### **Kenshō**

First perception of the Buddha-Nature or True-Nature, sometimes referred to as "awakening." Not a permanent realization but a clear glimpse of the true nature of existence.

### **Koan**

Enigmatic anecdotes, dialogues, questions or statements meant to reflect the enlightened mind and prompt the attainment of Enlightenment within one's own mind. Zen monks are often assigned a specific *koan* by their Master to consider and meditate on. The Master will check the pupil's awareness by checking

his or her response to his *koan*.

Hakuin's favorite *koan* was "What is the sound of one hand?"

### **Negative space**

The area surrounding, between, or inside a form or object.

### **Nirvana**

A spiritual state of complete peace and understanding of the dharma attained through Enlightenment. It is the final freedom from the cycle of birth and rebirth.

### **Patriarchs**

Within Zen Buddhism, individuals who represent the line of successors to the transmission of the *dharma*. There are reputed to be 27 Patriarchs in the Indian tradition, stemming directly from the historical Buddha. Bodhidharma (in Japanese, Daruma) is identified as the 28th Patriarch, and is critical in that he is credited with moving the Zen tradition from India to China. Bodhidharma was succeeded by six subsequent patriarchs in China, and these 34 individuals are considered the core patriarchs of the Zen tradition.

### **Reincarnation**

The belief that the soul, upon death of the body, comes back to earth in another body or form.

### **Rinzai Zen**

A sect in Mahayana Buddhism, Rinzai is the Japanese line of the Chinese Linji school, which was founded during the Tang Dynasty by Linji Yixuan (Japanese: Rinzai Gigen).

### **Samsara**

The transmigration or rebirth of a person.

### **Satori**

Individual Enlightenment, or a flash of sudden awareness.

### **Sumi-e**

An East Asian style of brush painting executed in ink. The tools of *sumi-e* are the same as the tools used for calligraphy. These include ink sticks used to grind one's own ink on a grinding stone, and animal-hair brushes. *Sumi-e* was introduced to Japan by Zen Buddhist monks in the 14th century.

### **Sutras**

Buddhist scriptures; the teachings of Buddha.

### **Tonality**

The lightness or darkness of a color. In gray-scale compositions, tonality defines the tints and shades between white and black.

### **Zazen**

Sitting in meditation; its purpose is to calm one's mind and make it receptive to enlightened thinking. *Zazen* is central to Zen Buddhism, as the emphasis on spending many hours in meditation in pursuit of Enlightenment is one of the major factors that makes Zen fundamentally different from other schools of Buddhism.

### **Zendō**

Meditation hall where *zazen* is practiced.

### **Zen Buddhism**

School of Buddhism that claims to transmit the experience of Enlightenment achieved by the historical Buddha. Arising as Chan in China in the 6th century, Zen developed fully in Japan during the 13th century and had a significant following in the West by the later 20th century. Zen teaches that the potential to achieve Enlightenment is inherent in everyone but lies dormant because of ignorance. It is best awakened not by the study of scripture, the practice of good deeds, rites and ceremonies, or worship of images, but by breaking through the boundaries of mundane logical thought.