

gregg baker
asian art



7108 A paper kakemono (hanging scroll) painted in ink with a hossu (fly whisk) and calligraphy

Singed: Tōrei sho (Written by Tōrei) with his kao (a clam shaped insignia)

Seals:

Right: Uzuike sakamizu (Pond with an anti-clock-wise eddy)

Left:

Upper: Yūhei

Lower: Tōrei

Inscription:

Hyakuoku mōtō

hyakuoku shishi arawaru

A million ignorant fools

A million Lions appear

Japan 18th century Edo period

Dimensions:

Scroll: H. 198.5cm x W. 30.5cm (78¼" x 12¼")

Painting: H. 132cm x W. 27.5cm (52" x 11")

Tomobako (original box) inscribed:

Lid: Tōrei zenji hossu no zu (Painting of a hossu by Zen priest Tōrei)

Lid interior: Taishō kanoe saru baigetsu, zen-jūji Koku Koshu daikan (Written and authenticated by priest Koku Koshu 1920)

Tōrei Enji (1721-1792). Born in Omi Province he began his monastic life at the age of 9 and began his studies under Ryōzan Erin (unknown dates) at Daitoku-ji, Kyoto. At 17 he went to Daikō-ji, Miyazaki prefecture, Kyushu where he trained under the important Zen master Kogetsu Zensai (1667-1751) and his successor Suigan Jūshin (1683-1773).

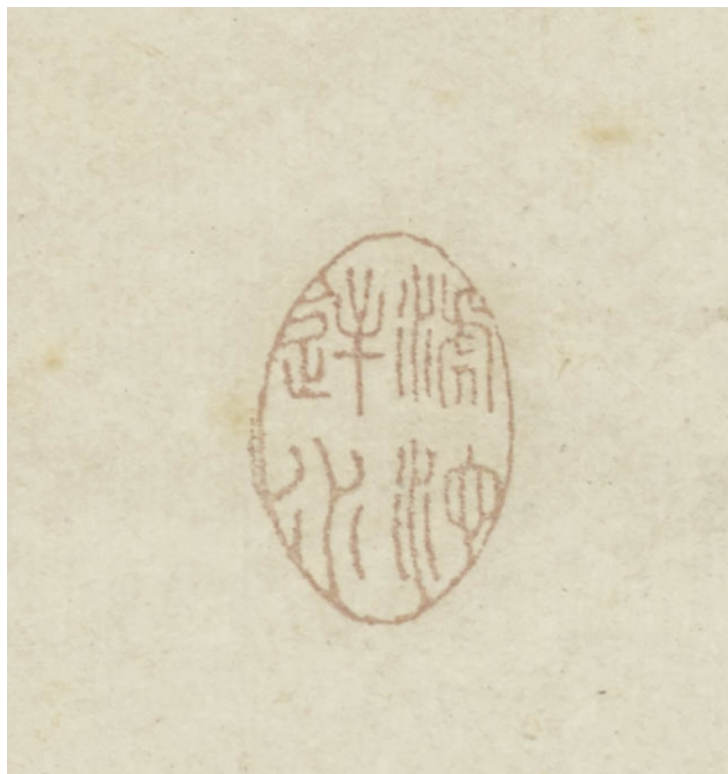
At 23 he visited Hakuin (1686-1768) at Shōin-ji, Hara, Suruga Province. This meeting proved pivotal and

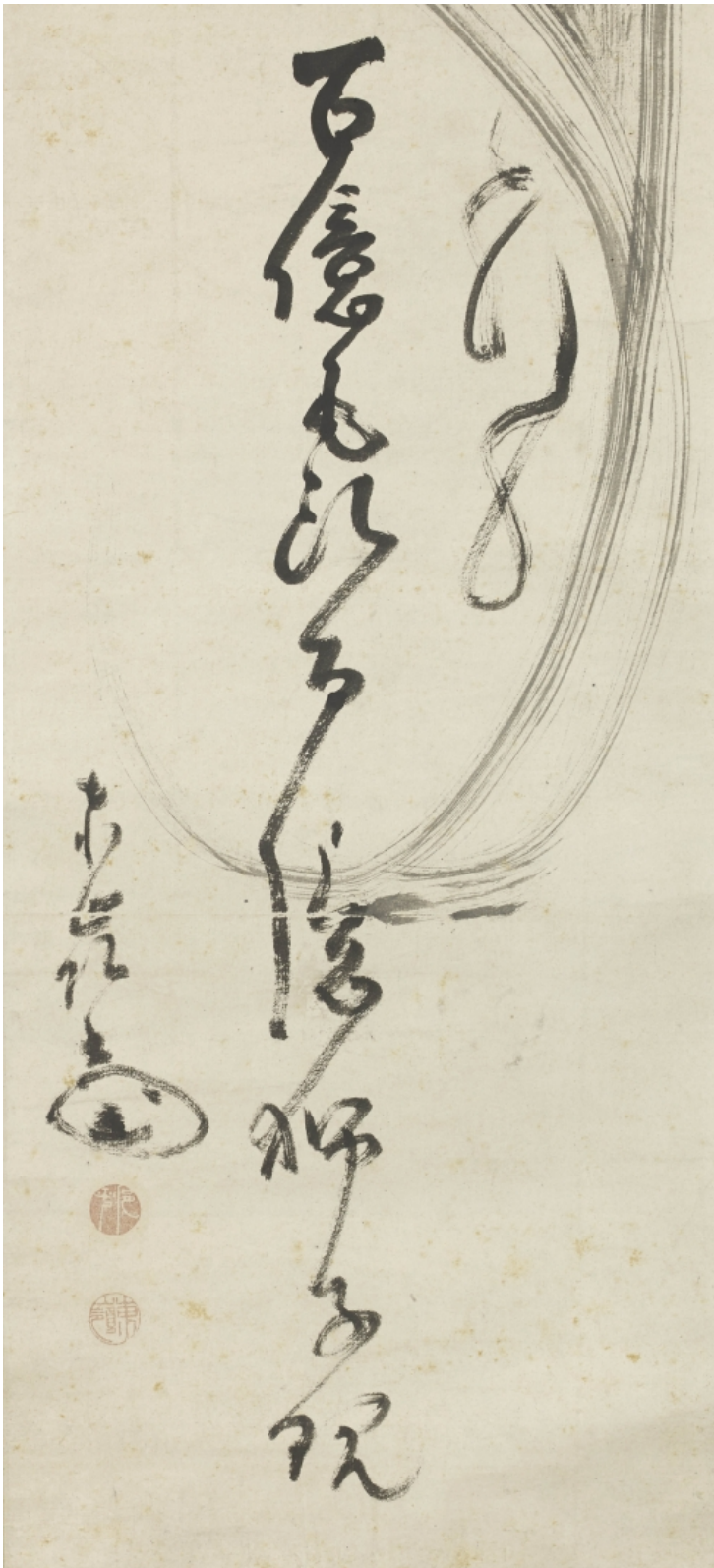
Enji eventually became Hakuin's best pupil. At 35 he became a priest at Myōshin-ji and was first referred to as Tōrei. After serving at various temples across Japan Tōrei finally resided at Zuizen-ji, Nagoya and Reisen-ji, Omi prefecture.

Throughout his life, Tōrei retained a strong interest in Shinto, Confucianism and Buddhism eventually writing a treatise on the theory of all three stating his belief that they are basically identical.

This Zen dictum referred to here is adapted from the death poem of the prominent Zen Priest Mugaku Sogen (1226-1286) which reads: hyakuoku mōtō ni shishi genji, hyakuoku mōtō ni shishi hoyu (A Lion appears in front of a million ignorant fools, and the Lion roars at a million ignorant fools). In essence, this dictum encourages lay believers to dispel delusions with a mind awakened by the sight and sound of a roaring Lion (Buddha).

The hossu is one of the many accessories used by Buddhist monks and is believed to help overcome ill fortune, remove obstacles and dispel delusion. Its practical use is to whisk away flying insects, preventing the devotee from accidentally killing any life form and therefore abiding by Buddhist law.





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