

From the intro to NATURE WORD by Schwaller de Lubiez:

A key to understanding the Egyptian sense of the symbol lies in the awareness that, just as the form of a plant is an exact response to the environmental conditions, both material and energetic, which formed it (its trophisms), so any object is the "signature" of the "abstract" functions which entered into its formation. The entire universe is the transitory residue of a certain play of eternal activities. Hence the careful examination of any object reveals the influence of the abstract functions or activities in themselves and thus information about them. We learn to read the forms of nature almost as hieroglyphic pictographs through which to perceive the nature of universal activities. What a stone can tell us of contraction or a tree's branching of expansion has an immediacy and resonance of meaning similar to that experienced in reading a pictorial form of writing. Such cognition by means of the natural symbol is the most concrete way of knowing, a process undisturbed by the intervention of mental constructs.

Excerpt from a letter written by Vincent Van Gogh to his brother Theo ARLES 1888:

If you study Japanese art, you see a man who is undoubtedly wise, philosophic and intelligent, who spends his time how? In studying the distance between the earth and the moon? No. In studying the policy of Bismarck? No. He studies a single blade of grass. But this blade of grass leads him to draw every plant and then the seasons, the wide aspects of the countryside, then animals, then the human figure. So he passes his life, and life is too short to do the whole.

James Lord writes in the Giacometti catalog:

In ancient Egypt a sculptor was called "one who keeps alive." His works were created to represent the idea of eternity, detaching both past and future from the flux of time. They were "true" to life in order to reveal the "falsehood" of death. They made no comment on the how or why of human circumstances but only on the timeless and empirical what. The law of their being was to do nothing but be. Giacometti admired the art of ancient Egypt more than any other, and that was fitting, because his own lives on now in superb obedience to the same law.

Giacometti wrote:

The composition of the seven figures reminded me of a forest corner...where trees...with their naked and slender trunks, limbless almost to the top, had always appeared to me like personages immobilized in the course of their wanderings and talking among themselves.



Egyptian sculpture of Horus.



Drawing by Hokusai.