Chapter III: Fan Paintings

Column 3: Folding and Rolling Up

Folding fans can be folded, making them easy to carry. However, it is not only folding fans: many traditional Japanese artworks such as folding screens, hanging scrolls, and picture scrolls can also be folded or rolled to reduce their size. This reflects a widely accepted interpretation of the Japanese aesthetic appreciation for compactness and portability.

Let's focus on the ease of change, which is one of the advantages of folding artworks into small sizes. Japanese people traditionally selected paintings that matched the seasons or specific ceremonies and changed them accordingly. Foldable Japanese paintings are well-suited for everyday use. There is a Japanese-made English term, TPO (Time, Place, and Occasion), which means one should dress and behave appropriately according to the situation. The Japanese sense of beauty, which emphasizes decorating everyday life, may have contributed to the development of these foldable art formats.