

Deconstructing Boundaries: Is 'East Asian Art History' possible?

Saturday 10th – Sunday 11th October 2015

School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Total Number of attendees: 200

UK Scientific Lead: Dr Eriko Tomizawa-Kay, SOAS, University of London

Scientific lead from Japan: Professor Masaaki Itakura, University of Tokyo

Keynote speakers from Japan:

- Dr Yoko Hayashi-Hibino (Agency of Cultural Affairs)
- Prof. Masaaki Itakura (University of Tokyo)
- Prof. Atsushi Miura (University of Tokyo)
- Prof. Doshin Sato (Tokyo University of the Arts)
- Prof. Arata Shimao (Gakushuin University)

Other speakers:

- Dr Gen Adachi (Fellow of the Agency of Cultural Affairs, Japanese Government, Visiting Fellow of the University of the Arts London Research Centre for Transnational Art, Identity and Nation)
- Dr Misato Ido (University of Tokyo)
- Ms Atsuko Ishikawa (Gakushuin University)
- Ms Ji-young Kim (Tokyo University of the Arts)
- Dr Maki Kaneko (University of Kansas)
- Dr Malcolm McNeill (SOAS, University of London)
- Dr Seung Yeon Sang (SISJAC)
- Prof. Timon Screech (SOAS, University of London)
- Ms Minjong Shin (University of Tokyo)
- Dr Eriko Tomizawa-Kay (SISJAC/SOAS, University of London)
- Prof. Toshio Watanabe (University of the Arts London)

The aim of this symposium was to give insight into the changing boundaries and concepts of 'art' in Japan and East Asia. We have especially hoped to illuminate the exchanges and dialogues that took place among the artists of Japan and other East Asian nations.

The birth of East Asian art history could not have occurred without the symbiotic relationships among various groups of artists. Papers have challenged the existing geographic, temporal, and generic paradigms that currently frame the art history of East Asia. What was the relationship between artistic production and political discourse? What role did abiding cultural legacies play in the artistic development of East Asia at large? At this conference, the discussions regarding deconstructing the boundaries of East Asian art was expanded to include scholars from Chinese and Korean art history.

This symposium should be identified as, not only the second phase of the previous June 2013 'International Modern Japanese Art History Symposium – New Boundaries in the Study of Modern Japanese Art: Extending Geographical, Temporal and Generic Paradigms' – generously supported by JSPS London - but also as a further development of study with the key theme, 'Deconstructing Boundaries in East Asian Art and Japanese Art History'. In the previous conference, held in 2013, around 150 people attended over the course of the two-day event, including leading Japanese art historians with a broad area of expertise, and in particular with a fresh approach to art history in terms of modern methodology and historiography.

The symposium offered three key themes: Constructing the idea of East Asian Art in Japan; Japanese Academies as a Centre; and War and Body, presented by a total of sixteen speakers including five keynotes speakers from Japan.

This symposium was expected not only to enhance the awareness of East Asian Art studies from the global point of view, but also strongly to promote study and research for young scholars and students in Japan. Therefore, three representative Ph.D. candidates from Japan presented papers along with prominent scholars. Both senior and junior scholars presented their research in order to stimulate the development of further studies in the area. The participants have had various backgrounds, such as Japanese art history, Korean art history, and Chinese art history.

Through the two-day conference in 2015, questions relating to methodology in (re)constructing a broad history of East Asian art had also been addressed in this symposium. A wide range of backgrounds were represented in the audiences, not only people with East Asian and European Art history backgrounds, but also contemporary artists, art critics, sociologist, and international relations; furthermore people gathered together from East Asia, the United States, and Europe, and exchanged and shared their ideas during the discussion time and built new scholarly networks during the symposium.

This symposium attracted a wide range of scholars who have been not only interested in Japanese art but also the relationship with East Asian art history, and also the new framework of 'East Asian Art' and the definition of 'Art History.' Moreover, the symposium speakers have shown a completely new way in which to see and analyse Japanese Art History to people that are engaged in Japanese studies in Europe, as well as to stimulate audiences with the newest topics in Japanese art history. The presentations and exchange of information about

research topics have given a rare and important opportunity for, in particular, young scholars to create tight relationships in the near-future, and to develop intellectual communications beyond countries and their study areas.

After successfully completing this symposium, the anthology by speakers will be published during FY2017.



Speakers and discussants