

Writing and Picturing in Post-1945 Asian Art (Chicago, 21–23 Apr 17)

University of Chicago, Apr 21–23, 2017

Chelsea Foxwell, University of Chicago

Writing and Picturing in Post-1945 Asian Art:
A Three-Day Symposium at the University of Chicago

Writing (?) and picturing (?) are two fundamental human activities. In East Asia, the two have traditionally been entwined, with ink and brush playing central roles. In other areas of the world, their relationship was different. In the West, writing and picturing were considered separate, while in Islamic culture, the Koran gave the art of writing special status.

In modern Asia, calligraphy provided a vital platform for exploration in modernism and its continuing developments in recent years reflect its expansion into ink art and calligraphic abstraction across Asia. In view of this recent development, the symposium Writing and Picturing proposes to survey the state of scholarship and discuss the future directions in both museological and art-historical studies. The symposium organizers aspire to bridge the established studies of modernist art history and newly evolving contemporary art history while casting a wider geographical net beyond East Asia.

The symposium title refers to the East Asian coupling of writing and picturing (calligraphy and painting), while its subtitle indicates our intention to reexamine the cross-medial practices including their materials and tools, which have been thoroughly redefined and expanded from the ancient pair of “ink” and “brush.” Today, ink can be spray paint, digital pixels, video imagery, or even performative gestures, while brush to apply them encompasses spray cans, computer software, the camera, the artist’s body, or any other tools deployed by contemporary artists.

By providing a platform for presentations of new researches on various practices that merge writing and picturing in postwar and contemporary art, the organizers aim to create a watershed moment for culturally dynamic rethinking of those fundamental human acts.

DAY 1

Friday, April 21, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Department of Art History, University of Chicago

Keynote Paper 1

Blackness (hei) and “Ink Images” (mo xiang)

Wu Hung, University of Chicago

Reception to follow

DAY 2

Saturday, April 22, 10:30 am - 5:30 pm

Department of Art History, University of Chicago

Keynote Paper 2

10:30 am – 11:40 am

Muscles, Flesh, Bones, and Spirit: Can Ink Be Free?

Alexandra Munroe, Guggenheim Museum

Panel 1: Media Studies

1:30 pm – 3:30 pm

Department of Art History, University of Chicago

Moderated by Janice Katz, Art Institute of Chicago

Undulating Letters: A Close Look at Later Persian Calligraphy

Maryam Ekhtiar, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The Role of Media and Photography in Connecting Postwar Japanese Calligraphy and Action Painting

Eugenia Bogdanova, Heidelberg University

Painting in Anticipation

Joan Kee, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Remediated Ink: The Debt of Modern and Contemporary Asian Ink Aesthetics to Non- Ink Media

Bert Winther-Tamaki, University of California, Irvine

Panel 2: Probing Political Dimensions

3:30 pm – 5:30 pm

Department of Art History, University of Chicago

Moderated by David Raskin, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Beyond Labels: Decoding Asian Letterings in Postwar Japanese Art

Yasuko Tsuchikane, The Cooper Union

Cold War Ink Painting in Taiwan

Aida Yuen Wong, Brandeis University

Decolonization and Abstraction: Anwar Jalal Shemza

Iftikhar Dadi, Cornell University

Imaging Thought, Abstracting Beauty: Calligraphic Turns after Mao

Jennifer Dorothy Lee, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Artist Presentations

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Logan Center for the Arts, University of Chicago

Painting Demonstration

Enrico Isamu ?yama

Introduced by Miwako Tezuka, PoNJA-GenKon

On Paradise Interrupted

Jennifer Wen Ma

In conversation with Reiko Tomii, PoNJA-GenKon

DAY 3

Sunday, April 23, 10:00 am - 3:30 pm

Graduate Student Workshop

10:00 am – 12:45 pm

Department of Art History, University of Chicago

Moderated by Chelsea Foxwell, University of Chicago

The Carnal Body of Ink Painting: Hasegawa Sabur?'s 1950s Abstract Calligraphy

Mycah Margaret Brazelton-Braxton, Harvard University

Between Emblem and Ornament: Text in the Calligraphy, Book Design, and Architecture of Shirai Seichi

Maki Iisaka, Texas A&M University

Avant-Garde Calligraphy as "Pure-Blood": The Persistent Separation between Calligraphy and Painting in Postwar Japan

Akiko Mukai, Kobe University

Propaganda for a Perfect Stranger: The Image of Writing in Chos?nhwa Portraits of Lim Su-kyung (Pyongyang, 1989–1993)

Douglas Gabriel, Northwestern University

Advance Through Retreat: Yang Jiechang's Hundred Layers of Ink (1989–1999)

Nancy P. Lin, University of Chicago

A Poetic Discourse: Fragments—The Verbal-Visual Intertextuality in Chen Zhe's Toward Evening: Six Chapters

Tingting Xu, University of Chicago

Plenary Discussion

1:45 pm – 3:30 pm

Department of Art History, University of Chicago

Moderated by Reiko Tomii + Miwako Tezuka, PoNJA-GenKon

Discussant at Large

John Clark, University of Sydney

The symposium Writing and Picturing in Post-1945 Asian Art is presented by the Center for the Art of East Asia and Center for East Asian Studies, both at the University of Chicago, and PoNJA-GenKon.

For details, please visit (<https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/writing-and-picturing/>)

Registration: The symposium is free and open to the public, but advance registration is required. Please e-mail your name and affiliation to MailPonja@gmail.com.

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PoNJA-GenKon: Founded in 2003, PoNJA-GenKon, short for Post Ninety Forty-Five Japanese Art Discussion Group / Gendai Bijutsu Kondankai, is a scholarly listserv for those interested in post-war and contemporary Japanese art history.

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