

PROGRAM

Young Scholars' Symposium in Asian Art 2023

New perspectives on
Asian art and material culture

Royal Asian Art Society in the Netherlands

KONINKLIJKE VERENIGING VAN VRIENDEN DER AZIATISCHE KUNST



17 JUNE 2023

AUDITORIUM RIJKSMUSEUM AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

*May Trung Thu (1906-1980), Le rideau (The curtain), 1944,
ink and gouache on silk, 34,0 x 25,5 cm.*



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WELCOME

The Royal Society of Asian Art in the Netherlands (Koninklijke Vereniging van Vrienden der Aziatische Kunst, KVVAK) is delighted to welcome you to this one-day symposium on 17 June 2023, the fourth in the series of KVVAK Young Scholars' Symposia.

We have entitled the symposium 'New perspectives on Asian art and material culture', because all of today's presenters (BA and MA students, PhD candidates and early career researchers) will present their work that offers new perspectives and approaches to the art and material culture of Asia and the exchange between Asia and Europe.

The symposium is held at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, the home of the KVVAK's collection.

THANKS

This event has been made possible thanks to the help of numerous individuals and organisations. They include the KVVAK, Ikigai (KVVAK's young professionals' network), the Rijksmuseum, and the National Museum of World Cultures. The symposium is supported by the Chair of Asian Art at Leiden University, in turn sponsored by the KVVAK, the Hulsewé-Wazniewski Foundation, the Isaac Ailion Foundation, the Jan Menze van Diepen Foundation, J.M. Boll (1942-2020) and P. Boll-Kruseman and the heirs of E. Veder-Smit.

We are especially grateful for the generous support of Pauline Kruseman and the Van Gulik Estate. Thanks to their financial contribution, we can make this symposium such a memorable event at the Rijksmuseum.



PROGRAM

- 10.00 Welcome by Anne Gerritsen, Denise Campbell (Ikigai) and Thomas van Gulik
- 10.15 - 11.45 **SESSION 1 PORCELAIN**
 Moderator: Willemijn van Noord
 Joanna Ciemińska* – Lecong Zhou** –
 Meghan Parker* – Senna van Dam**
- 11.45 - 12.00 Coffee/tea/water break
- 12.00 - 13.30 **SESSION 2 PERCEPTIONS**
 Moderator: Doreen Müller
 Erika Riccobon & Qinxin He* – Cherelle Karsseboom** –
 Ashleigh Chow* – Kimihiko Nakamura**
- 13.30 - 14.15 Lunch break
- 14.15 - 15.45 **SESSION 3 EXHIBITIONS**
 Moderator: Lin Fan
 Yun Xie* – Ha Thu Oanh Le** –
 Celine Rusman* – Mingliu Lu**
- 15.45 - 16.00 Water break
- 16.00 - 17.30 **SESSION 4 SYMBOLIC MESSENGERS**
 Moderator: Karwin Chi-on Cheung
 Lidia Corna** – Nur'Ain Taha* –
 Xinwu Luo** – Talisha Schilder*
- 17.30 - 17.45 Closing remarks

* research paper, 20 minutes ** focus paper, 8 minutes

10.15 - 11.45 **SESSION 1 PORCELAIN****1. JOANNA CIEMIŃSKA****BEFORE AMALIA: CHINESE PORCELAIN CONSUMPTION
IN THE LOW COUNTRIES BEFORE 1620**

There is a consensus present in the literature dedicated to the reception of Chinese porcelain in Europe that Amalia van Solms (1602-1675), Princess consort of Orange should be credited for the establishment of the porcelain cabinet, understood as a display room in its own right, with specific modalities of display and functionality. However, she was not the first Princess of Orange who owned large quantities of porcelain or other Asian objects and who paid special attention to their display in her private cabinet. In turn, Amalia's predecessors Eleonora of Bourbon and



Louise de Coligny also drew from contemporary porcelain collecting practices, largely brought to the Low Countries by the newcomers from Spain and Portugal, where similar rooms had

already existed in the previous century. This paper provides therefore a broad perspective on and an analysis of the consumption of Chinese porcelain in the Southern and Northern Netherlands during the first two decades of the 17th century, that is before Amalia moved into The Hague as the wife of stadtholder Frederick Henry in 1625. Through revisiting the inventories of goods of her predecessors, this paper places her in a longer line of female collectors married into the House of Orange and explains her motivation for continuing the already established tradition of

porcelain collecting. Moreover, it traces a panorama of contemporaneous porcelain collectors and ‘porcelain rooms’, such as those of Isabella Clara Eugenia in Brussels (documented in 1610) and of the Portuguese merchants in Antwerp (two documented in 1615 and 1617).

BIO

Joanna Ciemińska holds a Bachelor and a Master’s degree in both History of Art and French Philology from the University of Warsaw. She is currently a PhD candidate in History of Art at Universidade Nova in Lisbon and is writing a dissertation on the practices of collecting and displaying Asian porcelain and lacquer in early modern courtly spaces across Europe. Her doctoral track is part of the European Training Network PALAMUSTO, funded by the EU Horizon 2020, which aims to write a new thematic history of the early modern European palace, focusing on the phenomena of cultural exchange. Her interests are centered on collecting, consumption, spaces of display and gift-giving of non-European goods in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries.



10.15 - 11.45 **SESSION 1 PORCELAIN**

2. LECONG ZHOU

DELFT RED EARTHENWARE: THE IMITATIONS OF YIXING WARE IN THE LATE 17TH-CENTURY AND EARLY 18TH-CENTURY NETHERLANDS

Yixing ware is fine, red-colored stoneware made around Yixing city, Jiangsu Province, China. Like blue-and-white porcelain, Yixing ware was widely imitated by European artisans in the Netherlands and Germany. Among them, the Delft potters Ary de Milde (1634-1708) and Jacobus de Caluwe (?-1730), known for imitating 'red stoneware', founded their own brands in the Netherlands. This research will explore how Yixing ware was spread, received and transformed between Asia and Europe. Through the analysis based on the existing works of Ary de Milde and Jacobus de Caluwe, the two generations of potters who represent the beginning and maturity of imitation of the Yixing teapots in Delft, this paper wishes to answer the research questions of what triggered the imitation of Chinese Yixing stoneware in Delft in ca. 1680, and what caused the sudden demise of this once flourishing red stoneware industry in the 1730s in the Netherlands. Although there are multiple hypotheses regarding these questions, it will argue that the rise and decline of the Delft red earthenware were embedded in the transformation and indigenisation of the foreign material culture in the 17th- and 18th-century Netherlands. In this process, 'red earthenware' as a material once tightly related to the newly imported tea-drinking culture and the image of China, gradually transformed into a material that merely served for artistic creation in Europe. By researching Chinese Yixing ware and its Delft imitation, we may better understand how a foreign material culture enters and integrates into a new environment and how a culture strengthens its self-identification through the indigenisation of foreign material.



**BIO**

Zhou Lecong completed his Bachelor in Art History at the University of Groningen. Currently, he is a second-year Research Master student at Utrecht University. His research primarily focuses on the issue of East Asian material culture in the global context, with an emphasis on Chinese ceramics. Lecong has contributed to various research projects, exhibitions and publications in the field. Since September 2022, he started an internship at the Rijksmuseum to research the museum's collection of Yixing ware and its European imitation. Lecong will present his research at the Rijksmuseum in the form of a thematic display of Yixing ware and European red earthenware at Rijksmuseum's Asian Pavilion this October.

10.15 - 11.45 **SESSION 1 PORCELAIN****3. MEGHAN PARKER****TECHNICAL ANALYSIS OF 18TH-CENTURY CHINESE PAINTED ENAMELS
IN THE RIJKSMUSEUM COLLECTION**

In 18th-century Beijing and Guangzhou, a confluence of events led to the development of a new artform: Chinese painted enamels on copper. This development was the product of Chinese workshops combining European painted enamel techniques with the sophisticated porcelain and metalworking technologies already developed in China. While the finest of this ‘foreign porcelain’ was made for the Imperial household, the bulk of it was produced primarily for export. Like many objects historically associated with the export market, limited research has been done on Chinese painted enamels on copper until quite recently.

The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam has a collection of some twenty-four 18th-century Chinese painted enamels on copper, ranging from saucers and trays to a kettle and a cane. Since so little is known about the materials and manufacture of these objects, eight representative examples were selected for an initial technical study. Using a combination of art technological source research, scientific analysis, and imaging techniques,



the materials and manufacture of these eight objects were examined. Comparison with an 18th-century Limoges painted enamel plaque also provided insight into how Chinese painted enameling techniques diverged from

European enameling traditions. While the completed analyses have already increased knowledge about this collection, the research is ongoing, with the hopes that it will further enable the characterisation of and distinction between European and Chinese workshop practices.

BIO

Meghan Parker completed her Master of Science in the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage with a specialisation in metals at the University of Amsterdam in 2022. She is currently in her first year of the two-year Advanced Professional Program that follows the master's degree. She is interested in ethical approaches to the conservation of functional and dynamic objects and historic restoration and repair techniques. This presentation is based on research done for her 2022 master's thesis entitled *Foreign Porcelain: Diagnostic Characterisation of 18th century Chinese Painted Enamels*.



10.15 - 11.45 **SESSION 1 PORCELAIN**

4. SENNA VAN DAM

THE MOON JAR AS A NATIONAL SYMBOL OF KOREA

In recent years Korean culture has attracted a lot of attention worldwide. The attention is not only directed towards popular culture, but also towards Korea's rich past and historical artefacts. Among these artefacts, the moon jar has become exceptionally popular and has acquired the status of a national symbol. A moon jar is a large, round-shaped vase made of porcelain that emerged during the Chosôn dynasty (1392-1910). The South Korean government has made several efforts to promote the moon jar as a symbol of the (South) Korean nation and its culture in the domestic sphere and internationally. Examples of these efforts include former South Korean Minister of Unification Ryu Woo-ik conveying the wish for the unification of the two Korea's by painting the words 'peaceful unification' on a moon jar in 2012, and the use of a moon jar as a cauldron to light the Olympic fire at the 2018 Winter Olympics hosted in PyeongChang. Today, the moon jar holds a prominent display in museums within Korea and abroad, underlining its function of representing Korea and Korean culture. The aim of this research is to analyse how the moon jar has become one of the main objects in exhibitions of Korean art and Korean art galleries, and how interpretations and approaches to the moon jar have developed and evolved from the early twentieth century until today.



**BIO**

As a Korean studies student at Leiden University Senna van Dam focuses on Korean language, culture, and history. She started an internship at the The Prinsessehof National Museum of Ceramics, during which she contributed to the exhibition *KOREA: Gateway to a rich past* by writing object labels and constructing a timeline of Korean history. Right now, she is working on the registration of Chinese ceramics in the collection of The Prinsessehof and manages the Instagram account of The Dutch Collaboration of Asian Ceramics (*Aziatische Keramiek*). Currently, Senna is writing her bachelor's thesis on the role of the moon jar as a national symbol of Korea and plans to enrol in the master's program Asian Studies at Leiden University starting this September.

12.00 - 13.30 **SESSION 2 PERCEPTIONS**

5. ERIKA RICCOBON & QINXIN HE

**A REBUS TO SOLVE, A STORY TO IMAGINE:
THE MULTIPLE LIVES OF JEAN THEODOR ROYER'S
CHINESE TRANSITIONAL WARES (1635-1660)**

This research paper focuses on the transitional wares (1635-1660) from Jean Theodore Royer's (1737-1807) collection of Chinese porcelain. Drawing from theoretical approaches and methods from art history, material culture studies and cultural analysis, this paper investigates Royer's transitional porcelain pieces through three levels of meaning: their original production context (Ming-Qing transitional China); Royer's collection (18th-century Netherlands); and today's viewpoint. By highlighting the multiple perspectives through which these pieces were desired, collected, and understood across time, this paper frames these transitional wares as transcultural objects which contributed to the shaping of ideas of China. The paper contextualises the wares within Chinese scholar-official culture through an in-depth iconographic analysis, which reveals a vocabulary of auspiciousness built through rebuses and homophones. It then offers a reflection on how the new perceptions of shape, decoration, and visual codes embodied by these pieces fitted well with Royer's own research project on Chinese culture. With their meticulous proliferation of visual details (plants, animals, clothes, social rituals), the wares' narrative scenes – although indecipherable for Royer himself – strongly resonated with the increasing encyclopedic interest peculiar to the Age of Enlightenment. Finally, as objects 'in between', Royer's transitional wares show us today the porous boundaries between the Chinese and European art markets at a period of socio-political instability and change in Chinese history. By highlighting the multiple lives



of Royer's transitional wares, this presentation aims to offer a broader reflection on the role of art objects and their visual content in processes of power-shifting and knowledge-making across time and space.

BIOS

Erika Riccobon is a PhD candidate at LIAS, Leiden University. Her research is fully funded by the Hulsewé-Wazniewski Foundation (HWS). Erika is interested in the design, trade, and consumption of Chinese material culture in early modern Europe. Her PhD project *The Interior Space as a Picture* focuses on silks and papers imported from Guangzhou to Europe, where they were used for the furnishing of the interior space. Erika received a research master's degree in Asian Studies and a pre-master's degree in South and Southeast Asian Studies from Leiden University. Before her studies in the Humanities, she worked as a luxury fashion designer in South Korea, France, and Italy. Her background in the creative arts has helped her develop an analytical approach which pays attention to practices of making and historical forms of design thinking.

Qinxin He is a PhD candidate at Leiden University Institute for Area Studies (LIAS). She started to draw traditional Chinese painting (especially *Gonbi* painting) from a young age, so she is interested in both painting theories and art practice. Her PhD project is titled *Constructing the Culture of Sichuan: On the Reception of Sichuan painting during Tang-Song China*, and it focuses on the sociocultural meaning of Chinese local painting within the imperial context. Before starting her PhD trajectory in The Netherlands, Qinxin received a training in Chinese Literature (BA, Wuhan University) and Philosophy (MA, Peking University). Qinxin's diverse background helped her to build a solid foundation on classical Chinese culture and language, while also enabling her to look at museum objects from a transdisciplinary perspective.



12.00 - 13.30 **SESSION 2 PERCEPTIONS**

6. CHERELLE KARSSEBOOM**INVISIBLE EXCHANGES: EXPERIENCING AN EDO-PERIOD LACQUER CABINET**

This paper examines an Edo-period (1603-1868) lacquer cabinet produced for European export. Lacquerware was popular in Asia and Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries, with Japan being a primary producer. However, lacquerware signifies material exchange on a larger scale, including in other Asian regions. Moreover, scholars have argued that lacquerware functions as an object of mediation and that the material exchange of lacquerware goes beyond Japan and Europe. Expanding on this notion, instead of creating a static view of tradition surrounding the cabinet, this focus paper delves deeper into constructing a system that assigns meanings to aesthetics and movements. If we were to assign the category ‘cabinet’ to this object and look beyond its functional definition or purpose, how do we experience this object? While assembled in Japan, various exchanges took place to make the assemblage happen. Although the *Toxicodendron vernicifluum* tree is native to Japan, the lacquering technique that flourishes from its sap has been obtained through exchanges with China. The cabinet’s motifs, such as the dense *karakusa* covering, also signify exchange, not only because *karakusa* is a blend of wavy patterns but also because the choice of design is mediated between Japanese aesthetics and the European taste for export lacquerware. Lastly, the mother-of-pearl facet shows that from its harvest as a shell to its application into the lacquerware object, the shell has gone through many hands before, ultimately ending up in the hands of researchers and curators at the Rijksmuseum collection.



**BIO**

Cherelle Jaleesa Karsseboom (MA) is a Leiden University graduate particularly interested in Japanese art history and visual culture. Their research focuses on modes of heritage within that field, including displays of the natural world, such as in painting, and its engagement with building identity. They are currently active at the International Institute for Asian Studies.

12.00 - 13.30 **SESSION 2 PERCEPTIONS****7. ASHLEIGH CHOW****GREEN AND PLEASANT PADDY FIELDS:****VISUALISING CHINESE RICE CULTIVATION IN 18TH-CENTURY BRITAIN**

This paper explores how Chinese visions of rice production were constructed in England in the last quarter of the 18th century, locating them within Britain's larger imperial and commercial ambitions. In the 1690s, the Qing dynasty Emperor Kangxi commissioned a series of colored woodblock prints, known as the *Gengzhi tu* (Pictures of Tilling and Weaving) to acknowledge the toils of labour and to further encourage agricultural production. Less than a hundred years later in London, the renowned printseller John Bowles began selling a series of etchings, known as *The Rice Manufactory* (ca. 1770s). Directly reproducing in mirror-image the *Kangxi Gengzhi tu* Pictures, these scenes of rice cultivation proved popular among British audiences, later reprinted under the title *A New Book of Landscapes* in 1794. Writing the history of the Western landscape. W.J.T. Mitchell noted that not only was landscape painting a



European modern phenomenon, but that it encompassed a new way of seeing. With its noble trees and rivers, how did the compositions of rice cultivation become understood as 'landscapes', absorbed into a discourse that Mitchell deemed to be entirely Western?

Observing the usage of picturesque motifs, this paper argues that by conveying and beautifying local differences, the prints turn the distant and unfamiliar into the approachable in the British imagination, as a land to be beheld and possessed, establishing new views of 'China'.

BIO

Ashleigh Chow is a current MSt History of Art and Visual Culture candidate at the University of Oxford. In 2021 she completed her undergraduate degree at The Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London where her dissertation focused on the intersections of natural history drawings, scientific imperialism and Chinese art history. After spending a year working in the public museum sector, her current research focuses on British attitudes towards Chinese material and visual culture in the late 18th century, as embedded within globalised colonial contexts.



12.00 - 13.30 **SESSION 2 PERCEPTIONS****8. KIMIHIKO NAKAMURA****SITUATING WAR PROPAGANDA MAGAZINES AND BOOKS FOR CHILDREN
AS OBJECTS OF ART HISTORICAL RESEARCH: THE CASE OF TAKAI TEIJI**

From the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War until the end of the Second World War, many Japanese painters, including Fujita Tsuguharu, were commissioned by the military to produce ‘campaign-record paintings’ (*sakusen kirokuga*). Art historians tend to research these official military painters, but in the background, countless painters produced illustrations for war propaganda articles in popular magazines. In particular, illustrations for children’s magazines and books were often done by established painters. However, there have been almost no comprehensive art historical studies of illustrations for children in Japan, except for museum surveys on Japan Association of Illustrators for Children (*Nihon Dōgaka Kyōkai*) or scholarships on Takehisa Yumeji and Akamatsu Toshiko. Although there is a body of scholarship in the field of children’s literature studies, rigorous visual analysis is still lacking. Drawing on insights from Wakakuwa Midori’s study of wartime representations of women in women’s magazines, this paper attempts to situate propaganda illustrations for children as objects of art historical research. In particular, this study focuses on the work of Takai Teiji (1911-1986), examining the ideal image of children in wartime as well as Japan’s imperialist and colonialist ideology. Although the war gave oil painting an occasion to attract public attention in Japan for the first time, the number of visitors to an exhibition of campaign-record paintings would have been limited compared to the number of children’s magazines that circulated in countless households across the country. The paper concludes by highlighting the involvement of these illustrations in the war.



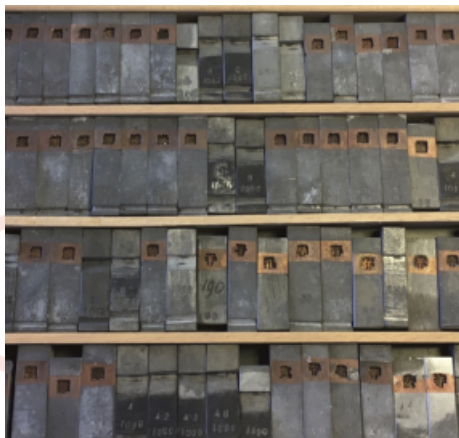
BIO

Kimihiko Nakamura is a doctoral student at the Institute of East Asian Art History, Heidelberg University, Germany. His doctoral dissertation explores the transwar art and careers of four Japanese painters who produced war propaganda paintings in wartime Japan and then established themselves as abstract painters in postwar New York: Inokuma Gen'ichirō (1902-1993), Kawabata Minoru (1911-2001), Okada Kenz (1902-1982), and Takai Teiji (1911-1986). His recent publications include: 'Shinoda Tōkō: Ink, Abstraction, and Radical Individualism', *Woman's Art Journal*, vol. 43, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2022). Kimihiko is working as a research assistant at the Collaborative Research Center 933 'Material Text Cultures', Heidelberg University. Prior to coming to Heidelberg, Kimihiko completed his Bachelor's in Philosophy (Aesthetics) at Keio University in 2019 and Master's in Art History (with Distinction) at the University of St Andrews in 2020.



14.15 - 15.45 **SESSION 3 EXHIBITIONS**
-----**9. YUN XIE****THE REPUBLIC AND CHARACTERS: HONG KONG TYPEFACES AND
GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE-MAKING IN THE 19TH CENTURY**

This paper endeavours to explore the historical significance of the Chinese metal typefaces discovered at the Volkenkunde Museum in Leiden in 2019. These typefaces, known as the Hong Kong Type, were manufactured in Hong Kong and used globally in the 19th century for disseminating knowledge. The paper has three primary objectives: firstly, it aims to bridge a gap in Dutch colonial history by tracing the provenance of the typefaces and examining their connection to Dutch colonial rule in the East Indies, Dutch-Japanese relations, and the establishment of the Department of Sinology at Leiden University. Secondly, this essay analyses a cross-cultural dilemma by discussing the incompatibility between the linguistic features of Chinese and Western printing. For 19th-century typefaces, the enormous number of Chinese characters (at least 5,000) was the most significant difficulty in applying the typesetting technique invented by Johannes Gutenberg. The underlying cause was the infrastructure of Western languages that the Chinese language does not possess: the alphabet. With this premise, designing usable Chinese typefaces became a challenge worldwide. Finally, the paper delves into the historical network of knowledge generation in the 19th century, exploring the collaborative efforts of printers, linguists, missionaries, buyers, and others in creating Chinese typefaces. This network is conceptualised as a 'Republic of Characters'. In conclusion, this paper sheds light on the cultural significance of the Hong Kong Type, exploring its connection to Dutch colonial rule, the challenges faced by 19th-century typefaces, and the collaborative efforts in creating Chinese typefaces globally.

**BIO**

Yun Xie earned a BA in Art History (2015-2019) from the University of Amsterdam and a Research master's degree in the Art History of the Low Countries from Utrecht University (2019-2022). In April 2022, Yun was awarded a Brill Fellowship from the Scaliger Institute to research Brill's non-western metal typefaces which are housed in the Leiden University Library's special collection. In February 2023, Yun was named the winner of the Tiele Thesis Award 2022. This paper is based on her master's thesis and the result of her Brill fellowship research.



14.15 - 15.45 **SESSION 3 EXHIBITIONS****10. HA THU OANH LE****‘WHO WANTS TO GO TO FRANCE?’****VIETNAMESE EXPERIENCE AT THE PARIS COLONIAL EXPOSITION 1931**

The Paris Colonial Exposition (*l'Exposition coloniale internationale*), which took place from May to November 1931, was a world's fair of enormous scale dedicated to showcasing the exotic treasures and triumphs of the French Empire's colonisation project across the world, especially in Northern Africa and French Indochina (modern day Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia). Critiques of the exposition, most notably Patricia Morton's 2000 monograph *Hybrid modernities: architecture and representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris*, have long focused on the colonisers and organisers' appropriation and replication of architectural sites and sights from the colonies to create an illusion of colonial legitimacy. Others have also addressed actions and narratives by black and militant Indochinese, especially Vietnamese, students who boycotted the exposition as anticolonial praxis. This project, however, seeks a middle pathway that will locate and shed light on the experience of the Vietnamese intellectuals and bourgeoisie participating in and after the Paris Exposition. By surveying the Vietnamese-language newspapers circulated in the year 1931 and archival photographs (where applicable), this paper hopes to discover natives' accounts of the Vietnamese investment in the colonial exposition as well as particular persons, arts and crafts, and performances that were chosen to represent Vietnam on the Paris stage. By collaborating with the French colonisers and actively showcasing Vietnamese tradition as colonial modernity, the bourgeoisie, it will be argued, attempted to use Vietnam's participation at the Paris Exposition as a way to leverage Vietnam's reputation as a colony and to push for more Vietnamese representation and reforms in the Franco-Vietnamese administration.





BIO

Born and raised in Vietnam, LE Ha Thu Oanh, Alicia (she/they) graduated from the University of Hong Kong with a Bachelor of Arts in Comparative Literature and Hong Kong Studies. She is currently working as a Research and Development Assistant at the Department of History, Hong Kong Baptist University while also collaborating with various historians in their research projects of 20th-century East and Southeast Asia.

Trained in literary and visual studies, along the lines of multilingual border crossings, Alicia turned her interest to Vietnamese history upon graduation from university and is now diving into the archives of Vietnamese-language newspapers in modern French Indochina (1900-1930s) to trace the literary, cultural and material connections between Hong Kong, French Indochina and Maritime Southeast Asia. A translator and writer, her public and creative works have appeared on *Zzz Review*, *Mekong Review*, *Canto Cutie* and other venues in Hong Kong and Vietnam.

14.15 - 15.45 **SESSION 3 EXHIBITIONS****11. CELINE RUSMAN****FEMALE DISOBEDIENCE: A LOOK AT THE REPRESENTATION
OF THE MODERN GIRL IN EARLY 20TH-CENTURY JAPANESE PRINTS**

In early 20th-century Japan, a disruptive phenomenon known as the Modern Girl or *modan gâru*, abbreviated to *moga*, took her form in Japanese society as a type of female who exhibited a newly found independence. The aim of this research is to illuminate how the appearance of the *moga* in Japanese prints questioned gender-roles and the social position of young women by the mid-1920s in Japanese society. Analysing a selection of prints depicting the *moga* from collector Elise Wessel's recent gift to the Rijksmuseum, this research examines how the representation of women highly differs from those in previous eras, not only exhibiting resistance to outdated traditions but also showcasing



criticism on feminine values and behaviour deemed appropriate for women by the Japanese government. Considering the aim of the Rijksmuseum to showcase more women in the museum, this paper will conclude on how these new acquisitions from Wessel's collection contribute to the research field of women in Japanese prints and the representation of women in the Asian Pavilion of the Rijksmuseum.

BIO

Celine Rusman is an Art History student at the University of Amsterdam, specializing in 19th- and early 20th-century Japanese prints. She currently works as a research assistant at the Van Gogh Museum, supporting the research practices for an upcoming 2024 exhibition on contemporary artist Matthew Wong. Furthermore, she is writing her thesis on the depiction of women in the early 20th-century prints collection of the Rijksmuseum. Her main research interests are social and gender perspectives within the art of Japanese printmaking and the role of Japanese prints within private and public Dutch collections.



14.15 - 15.45 **SESSION 3 EXHIBITIONS****12. MINGLIU LU****WHY EXHIBITIONS MATTER: EXPLORING THE MAKING OF
EARLY DUTCH EXHIBITIONS OF CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ART**

In sociological discourse, what is defined as ‘art’ is not a singularity created by solitary geniuses, but an image proposed by insiders of the art world that is then recognised by the broader society. In China during the 1980s and 1990s, the absence of authoritative bodies and the vandalisation of conventions after the Cultural Revolution led to a weak degree of professionalisation and regulation in this newly established art field. Meanwhile, cultural censorship and limited exhibition opportunities forced Chinese artists to seek support from international audiences. Overseas exhibitions, in this case, played a key role in the identification, distribution, and legitimisation of contemporary Chinese art in the late 20th century. This paper analyses two influential Dutch exhibitions of contemporary Chinese art in the 1990s: the *China Avantgarde* travelling exhibition in Kunsthal Rotterdam in 1993 and Fang Lijun’s solo exhibition in the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam in 1998. It examines the agents, value regimes, and context involved in their making. Firstly, it explores the establishment of the initial transnational art network between China and the Netherlands in this period, analysing the interaction of individual agents and their relationship with other actors, such as cultural institutions and broader societal contexts. Additionally, this paper examines the value judgments and strategies

of different agents in their interpretation, selection and presentation of contemporary Chinese art, shedding light on how artworks and artists from a foreign art world were positioned within the existing art system and within the ideal art history in the Netherlands.



**BIO**

Mingliu Lu is a PhD student at the Faculty of Art, University of Groningen, where she is working on a research project focused on the collection and exhibition of contemporary Chinese art in the Netherlands since the 1980s. Under the guidance of renowned scholars Oliver Moore and Ann-Sophie Lehmann, Mingliu brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the field of art history. Prior to her current doctoral studies, Mingliu completed a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in Buddhist Art at the Renmin University of China, where she gained a deep understanding of the cultural and historical significance of art and its relationship with religion. Later, she went on to obtain a second master's degree in Museum Studies from the University of Leicester, UK, where she honed her skills in curatorial practice, exhibition analysis and collection management.

16.00 - 17.30 **SESSION 4 SYMBOLIC MESSENGERS****13. LIDIA CORNA****KÎRTIMUKHA ACROSS RELIGIONS AND CENTURIES**

The Kîrtimukha or ‘Face of Glory’ is one of the most recurring motifs in the Indian figurative vocabulary. The beastly face is usually represented with two horns, bulbous eyes and a wide-open mouth, normally depicted without the lower jaw. Over the centuries, the motif became a formal archetype which spread through Hindu, Jain and Buddhist architecture. The apotropaic element, terrible in its expression, is often represented at the entrances of sacred sites where, with its gaping mouth, it engulfs and protects the devotee who crosses the thresholds. From the 12th century, the Muslim invasions gave rise to a new political regime. Desecration of temples was an integral part of the Islamic conquest, since the temple was the site in which the political power of the Hindu kings was legitimised by the deity: destroying it meant destroying the king’s power. Normally, upon completing new territorial conquests, the Muslim Sultan ordered the building of mosques employing spoils of the destroyed temples. However, since Hindu and Jain architecture were widely inhabited by several figurative elements, which are strictly forbidden inside Islamic sacred places, it was necessary to



deface the material before re-using it. Nevertheless, the chisels of Muslim artisans often curiously spare one figurative element: the Kîrtimukha. Thus, the Kîrtimukha also crossed over into the Islamic architecture of the early conquest period. Why is this element the sole survivor of the Indian figurative vocabulary? The paper will propose some hypotheses.

BIO

Lidia Corna is a PhD student at the Italian Institute of Oriental Studies (ISO), University of Rome La Sapienza, where she works on her research project: the desecration of Hindu temples and the reuse of spoils for building 'conquest mosques' during the Islamic expansion in the Indian Subcontinent. In 2021 she received her Master's degree in History and Oriental Studies from Alma Mater Studiorum, Bologna. Thesis title: *The Islamic reuse of Hindu temples and spoils. Case studies in the Deccan of the 13th- and 14th-centuries*. In 2018 she obtained her BA in Cultural Heritage Studies from the University of Milan. Her thesis is entitled *Elements of Islamic aesthetics and Mughal art*, and her publications include 'Architettura indo-islamica e mitologia politica, eredità coloniale e rivendicazioni recenti', in: *Rivista di Studi Indo-Mediterranei*, Vol XII (2022) and 'Rivisitare la presunta iconoclastia islamica: il caso di Warangal', in *Rivista di Studi Indo-Mediterranei*, Vol XI (2021).



16.00 - 17.30 **SESSION 4 SYMBOLIC MESSENGERS**
-----**14. NUR'AIN TAHA****A FOREIGN PUSAKA: THE SYMBOLIC MEANINGS OF THE ROYAL COACH
KANJENG NYAI JIMAT FROM THE DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY (VOC)
IN THE MID-18TH-CENTURY**

In 1755, a coach was given as a diplomatic gift from the Dutch East India Company (VOC) to Sultan Hamengkubuwono I after the Treaty of Giyanti. The royal coach, *Kanjeng Nyai Jimat*, was one amongst many objects gifted that have survived today and is still revered by the Javanese society. Despite its foreign origin and apparent European ornamental features, the royal coach was accorded the status as a royal *pusaka* (sacred heirloom). Today, it is still considered as an important royal symbol for the Sultans of Yogyakarta and as an object possessing mystical and healing powers by the locals in Indonesia. This paper analyses how the royal coach had been appropriated from a diplomatic gift, transforming it into a royal heirloom that represented the authority and supernatural powers of the sultan. By exploring the European imageries and ornamental design of the coach, we can understand how foreign elements have been incorporated into the traditional Javanese cosmology and given new symbolic meanings. Through the acquisition of this royal *pusaka*, Sultan Hamengkubuwono I was able to further legitimise his authority and position as the ruler of a newly formed kingdom. The act of gift-giving between the VOC and the ruler of Mataram also gives us a glimpse of the early political encounters between the Netherlands and the East Indies.

As evident from this encounter, gift-giving can also be seen as a site of encounter that allowed not only the exchange of material objects, but also adaptation of meanings in various cultural contexts.



**BIO**

Nur'Ain Taha is a PhD candidate at Utrecht University, Department of History and Art History. With a background in Asian studies and the arts, she has also worked in the arts, heritage, and museum industry. Her current research interest lies in the world of 17th-century Dutch trade and material culture, with a focus in the diplomatic gifts exchanged between the Dutch and local Southeast Asian rulers and the unmistakable role of these exchanges in reiterating a multinarrative global history.

16.00 - 17.30 **SESSION 4 SYMBOLIC MESSENGERS**
-----**15. XINWU LUO****FROM PERU TO CHINA AND BACK: A CASE-STUDY ON THE CIRCULATION OF CHINESE PITH PAPER PAINTINGS IN THE 19TH CENTURY**

Pith paper painting is one of the most important forms of Chinese export art in the 19th century. These watercolour paintings on so-called pith paper (made of the pith of a particular shrub) were mostly produced in Guangzhou (Canton), usually depicting Chinese seaports, customs, folklore, flora and fauna. They were often bought by European traders to show other Westerners what China looked like. This paper focuses on a very unusual series of pith paintings depicting not Chinese, but Peruvian subjects. There are nine in total, in the collection of the National Museum of World Cultures. Most of them fit the *costumbrismo* genre, picturing the



Hispanic everyday life. How can this be explained? When the paintings entered the museum, they were initially registered as made in Peru, but later research confirmed that they must have been produced in China. By analysing the origin and the circulation of the imagery in these paintings, as well as their similarity to Peruvian art and collections outside the Netherlands, this paper sheds new light on the research on pith paper paintings.

BIO

Luo Xinwu (MA) was born and raised in China. She has degrees in both Chinese Language and Literature as well as Museum Studies and is currently majoring in Archaeology at Leiden University and working as an intern at the Dutch National Museum of World Cultures. She is interested in the connections between wider regions along the ancient Silk Road as well the history and reception of Chinese collections (and Asian collections in general) in the Netherlands. She is finishing her thesis *Spatiality and In-Betweenness: Dissemination of Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Nestorianism in Xinjiang*.



16.00 - 17.30 **SESSION 4 SYMBOLIC MESSENGERS**

16. TALISHA SCHILDER**TRACING THE TATTOO TRADITION OF THE IBAN DAYAKS IN BORNEO**

While tattoo art has historically been an integral part of the social fabric and spirituality of indigenous communities across Southeast Asia, many tattoo traditions have changed or disappeared. In the case of the Iban Dayaks in Borneo, contemporary tattoo artists in Indonesia and Malaysia stress that Iban tattoo designs and techniques need to be saved from extinction, which drives a contemporary revival of this art form. To render a better understanding of the Iban tattoo revival today, it is necessary to trace the socio-historical development of the Iban tattoo tradition in the past. The existing literature comprises ethnographic records on the Iban Dayaks from different periods, but a comprehensive historical analysis of Iban tattoos remains absent. This research paper therefore asks why Iban tattoo art changed in West Kalimantan and Sarawak, Borneo, from premodernity to the 20th century. It pertains to several interpretations, namely the state of Iban tattoos at different periods, the reasons for its change if not decline over time and space, and the ways foreign powers effect indigenous art. I adapt a multilingual methodology based on a historical analysis of Indonesian, Malaysian, and Anglo sources for reasons of data triangulation and decolonial research ethics. This research speaks to (Art) History scholarship on tribal tattoos as it shifts the conceptualisation of tribal tattoos from ‘indigenous tradition’ to ‘fluid bodily art form’, thereby offering a constructivist understanding of indigenous Southeast Asian art.



**BIO**

Talisha Schilder is a student researcher of the Research Master Asian Studies and the MA International Studies (Culture & Politics) programs at Leiden University. Her research interests comprise the arts, the embodied archive, activism, cultural exchange, spirituality, indigeneity, gender, sexuality, and (de)colonisation in Southeast Asia, especially the Indonesian Archipelago. Talisha's academic work is rooted in Southeast Asian politics of culture and crosses the fields of art history, cultural studies, body studies, anthropology, international relations, and epistemology. She is currently working on papers addressing Southeast Asian tribal tattoo revivals in the 21st century – a form of resistance against the legacies of colonialism. Prior to this event, Talisha has presented at various academic workshops and ECPR conferences. One of her values during such intellectual exchanges is keeping an open mind and heart through decolonial and intersectional feminist research ethics.

THE ROYAL ASIAN ART SOCIETY IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Royal Asian Art Society in the Netherlands (KVVAK) was founded in 1918. The Society's main goal is to disclose high-quality Asian art to a wider audience, to create interest in it and to stimulate academic research in this field. The KVVAK collection (about 2000 objects) is internationally regarded as a world-class collection and is exhibited in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

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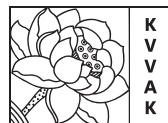
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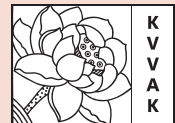
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