

Special event preceding EAJRS Conference, Leiden, September 16-19, 2015

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

**“IMAGES OF WOMEN IN THE AGE OF MECHANICAL REPRODUCTION:
PRINT CULTURE IN EARLY MODERN AND MODERN JAPAN”**

Tuesday, September 15, 2015, Leiden University

Abstracts and Speakers' Biographical Notes (in the order of appearance)

Masato Naitō (Keio University)

Harbingers of Modernity: Objective Portrayal of Women in ukiyo-e

Many beauties were depicted in *ukiyo-e*, mainly in prints or on commercial objects that needed to appeal to potential buyers. As *ukiyo-e* was driven by consumer demand it is necessary to be cautious when analyzing it as a historical document of the Edo period. This presentation aims at a comparative study of two different ways of representing women in *ukiyo-e*: one that is considered typical and one that is atypical and as such heralds the coming modernity.

Masato NAITŌ is Professor of Art History at Keio University and Director at Keio University Art Center (Tokyo). Formerly, he served as head curator at the Idemitsu Museum of Art (Tokyo). His research interests focus on Edo period art and include *ukiyo-e* as well as painting of the Rimpa and the Kanō school. His major publications include *Ukiyo-e to patron* (Ukiyo-e and Its Patrons, Keio University Press, 2014), *Katsukawa Shunshō to Tenmeiki no ukiyo-e bijinga* (Katsukawa Shunshō and Images of Beautiful Women of the Tenmei Era, Tokyo University Press, 2012) and *Rimpa Art* (co-authored, British Museum, 1998) etc. Prof. Naito received the Kajima Foundation for the Arts Award in 1994 and the International Ukiyo-e Society Award in 2015.

Ewa Machotka (Leiden University)

Women in Print: The Figure of the Woman Writer in Japanese Early Modern Print Culture

The imagery of the woman writer that abounds in Japan's early modern printed culture has commonly been interpreted as a Woolf-esque emblem of women's social power and prestige. The representations of Heian literary celebrities such as Murasaki

Shikibu (c.978-c. 1014 or 1025) or Ono no Komachi (c. 825-c.900) are usually used as evidence of the emancipating value of writing.

Paradoxically, the same figures are featured in two printed genres commonly associated with gender oppression: 1) *jokunsho* or moral guides for women promoting ideals of domestic femininity and 2) eroticized images of *bijin* (beauties). How to explain these virtual contradictions? When and why do these figures enter Japan's printed culture? How are they represented? What is the role of such representations in early modern Japan? In order to elucidate these issues this paper explores two early printed books, 1) *Honchō jōkan* (Mirror for Women of Our Land, 1661), attributed to Asai Ryōi (ca. 1612-91), and 2) Hishikawa Moronobu's (1618–1694) *Shipan bijin e-zukushi* ("The New Collection of Images of Beauties, 1683).

Through a critical investigation of the imagery of women perpetuated via early modern printed material, this paper explores the operations of mechanical reproduction in visual culture. It reveals that the role of medium extends beyond a common technological aspect of the printed culture but also influences the semiotics of representation.

Ewa MACHOTKA is Lecturer in the Art and Visual Culture of Japan at Leiden University. Formerly she served as Curator of Japanese Art at the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in Stockholm, Sweden and the National Museum in Krakow, Poland. She is interested in interdisciplinary approaches that intersect visual arts and social and intellectual history, focusing especially on the multifaceted relationships between text and image. Her current research projects pertain to socially engaged artistic practices and the relationships between visual representation of nature and environmental consciousness in contemporary Japan. In 2009 she published a monograph *Hokusai's Hyakunin Isshu: Visual Genesis of Japanese National Identity* (Peter Lang P.I.E., 2009). Currently she is co-editing *Consuming Post-Bubble Japan: Commodity, Garbage, Art* (forthcoming from Amsterdam University Press).

Matthi Forrer (National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden)

Women with Utamaro and with Kuniyoshi. From Idol to Personality

In my paper *Women with Utamaro and with Kuniyoshi. From Idol to Personality*, I intend to explore how Kitagawa Utamaro (act. 1779-1804) evolved from the court portraitist of Yoshiwara courtesans in early Kansei (1789-1801), to an artist pretending to portray women as human beings living in their own thoughts and mind by the mid-Kansei period, focusing on the daily life of women and their concerns of everyday life towards late Kansei. Quite remarkably, Utagawa Kuniyoshi (act. 1815-61) bears witness of a

somewhat similar career: focusing on fashionably clad towns-women in the Tenpō period (1830-1844), and then portraying them as examples of virtuous behaviour or as women engaged in various crafts later on in his career. This, it must be said, defines the difference between ukiyoe and Japanese prints as a product catering to a very different audience. But then, a product requires a market. But then, what is that market?

Dr Matthi FORRER is senior researcher of the Japan collections of the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, and has published on Edo-period Japanese prints and publishing, as well as on Dutch-Japanese relations.

Sawako Takemura-Chang (Leiden University)

Pictures of Beautiful Women of the Nineteenth Century: Decadent yet Ideal

Pictures of beautiful women, generally categorized as *bijin-ga*, of the nineteenth century have often been labeled as "decadent (*taihaiteki*)" by a number of modern ukiyo-e scholars through years. This paper will first investigate the change of general perception especially toward lower-ordinary class sex workers who are depicted in *ukiyo-e* more frequently at the time. The society seemingly began to consider them to be morally corrupted and disturbing, which might be reflected in those late Edo period *bijin-ga*. Paradoxically, those lower ranked prostitutes including geisha were romanticized and reshaped to be a paragon of ideal women through various media including *bijin-ga* and popular fictions such as *ninjōbon* (books of romance), that were largely targeted for women audience.

As a case study, I would like to mainly analyze a print series, *Ukiyo fūzoku mime kurabe* (Cutoms of the Floating World), dated 1823-24 (Bunsei 6-7) by Keisai Eisen (1790-1848) in order to exemplify the fact. Although the nineteenth century *bijin-ga* had been disregarded and judged as "decadent" until recently, those commoditized but financially independent women like geisha with fashionable style in unlicensed quarters such as Fukagawa seemed sought after both by men and women in the lower-middle social stratum. Through the printing technology and the publishing market, those *bijin-ga* perhaps partly functioned educating women in how they look and behave in order to be favored by the male dominant society.

Sawako TAKEMURA-CHANG is a doctoral candidate in Japan's art history at the Leiden University, The Netherlands. She holds a bachelor degree from the State University of New York and a master's degree in Asian art history from the University of Hawai'i. She used to work at the Japan Society in New York and since 1998 she has served as an

assistant curator of Japanese art at Honolulu Academy of Arts. She enrolled at the Leiden University's doctoral programme in 2012 and since then she has been working on her dissertation on the representation of women in the late Edo period. She is particularly interested in the interactions between *ukiyo-e* and early-modern commercial culture.

Yukihiro Hirayoshi (Museum & Archives, Kyoto Institute of Technology)

Whitening: The Skin Color of Women in Japanese Posters

The Museum & Archives at the Kyoto Institute of Technology houses an extensive collection of modern and contemporary posters, including thousands of Japanese posters dating from the late 19th century to the present. In our presentation, we would like to focus on several notable advertisements for cosmetics, fashion, and beverages as a means of analyzing the skin color of Japanese women.

The Japanese word *bihaku* means “skin whitening,” but can literally be translated as “beautiful white” (美白). Though long used in the cosmetics industry, the term achieved a new level of popularity in the 1990s after cosmetic companies launched a *bihaku* ad campaign. As the word suggests, white skin is synonymous with beautiful skin in Japan. Since face powder was imported from China in the sixth century, a white face came to be seen as a symbol of feminine beauty, particularly in the Heian (794-1185) and Edo Period (1603-1868). (The white face and nape favored by apprentice geisha in the Edo era are one notable example of this trend.)

The Meiji Restoration brought many changes in attitude, including a new outlook on women's skin color. Modernization exerted a palpable effect on cosmetic practice. For example, shaving one's eyebrows and blackening one's teeth were banned, and healthy-looking color was valued. It became more important for women to whiten their own skin than to apply powder and other artificial whitening agents. Following the advent of the modern age, women's skin wavered between the fantasy of beautiful whiteness and a “healthy” tan. (Tanning is no longer seen as a mark of good health, but rather the cause of spots and blemishes.)

As these trends suggest, Japanese women's skin is a mirror of the times. In some cases, it reflects social conditions more than fashions or trends. At the same time, visualizing the subtle differences in skin color presents the printing industry with continuing challenges. Thus, the representation of skin color is closely linked to modernization in Japan, both in technical and social terms.

Yukihiro HIRAYOSHI. Associate Professor, Museum and Archives, Kyoto Institute of Technology. Born in Osaka, Japan, in 1967. Ph D. from Kyoto University in 2004. Curator of the National Museum of Art, Osaka (2000-2008). Current position since 2008. Specializes in modern and contemporary art. Curated exhibitions, while at the NMAO include “Mirrorical Returns: Marcel Duchamp and the 20th Century Art” (touring exhibition, 2004) and “Skin of/in Contemporary Art” (2007). Curated exhibition at KIT include “Art and Technology” (2009) and “Affiches de la Belle Epoque” (2014). Published articles include “Figure and Gaze: Image after Pop Art” (Contemporary Art, Musashino Art University Publishing, 2003), “Desire and Ideology: Posters as a mirror of Art” (Bijutsu forum 21, Daigo Shobo, 2013)

Sabine Schenk (LMU Munich)

Images of Women in the Age of New Reproduction Techniques – Takehisa Yumeji (1884 – 1934) and Commercial Imagery in early 20th century Japan

Within his eclectic oeuvre Takehisa Yumeji’s depictions of women are seen as emblematic for his work and the archetype of melancholic female figures became a trademark, vigorously employed in the field of commercial imagery in the late Meiji to early Shōwa periods.

Yumeji’s notorious *bijin* (beautiful women) are featured in a wide range of graphic media, including directly marketed single sheet woodblock prints, lithographs and mechanically produced printing products. Images of women employed in various commercial implementations illustrate, advertise and reproduce themselves in various styles on book plates, magazine covers or frontispieces and in their re-production as sets of prints, postcards and design items from the prewar period to today.

This contribution examines the relationship between the printing process, the commercial utilization and the modes of reproduction of images of women in Yumeji’s work and its tradition. How do the printing process and commercial objective shape images of women? What modes of image transfer multiply and transfer concepts and styles? How do Yumeji’s women depictions represent a node of the modern and yet are caught in his mannerist romanticism?

Sabine SCHENK is doctoral candidate at LMU Munich and coordinator of the Heidelberg University Office, Kyoto, a liaison office of Heidelberg University in Japan. Following an internship at the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture, California (2009 – 2010), she conducted research for her PhD project with the working title “Art Nouveau in Japan: romanticism, ornamentality und intermediality in early twentieth-century Japanese visual

culture” (LMU, Munich) at the German Institute for Japanese Studies, Tokyo (DIJ). She co-organises international workshops, such as the annual Forum of East Asian Art History, presents and publishes on early twentieth-century art and design, and in particular on Takehisa Yumeji.

Sharalyn Orbaugh (University of British Columbia)

Images of Women in Propaganda kamishibai, 1938-45

From 1938 to 1945 the Japanese government used a variety of media in the mobilization of women behind the war effort, including intensive use of *kamishibai* (paper theatre) plays. An examination of the visual (and textual) elements of propaganda *kamishibai* plays aimed at girls and women reveals the wartime roles envisioned for females, and the ways those roles changed as the war intensified. This presentation will investigate the visual techniques employed to engage and indoctrinate women and how those techniques drew on earlier images of women from modern and early modern Japan.

Sharalyn ORBAUGH is professor of Asian Studies at the University of British Columbia (Vancouver, Canada). She has published widely on representations of gender, sex, and sexuality in modern Japanese popular culture, including *Propaganda Performed: Kamishibai in Japan's Fifteen Year War* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); “Suzuki Noriko and the Properly Feminine Nationalist Body in Kamishibai” (*U.S.-Japan Women's Journal* 45, 2013); “Busty Battlin’ Babes: the Evolution of the Shōjo in 1990s Visual Culture.” In *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field*, ed. Bryson, Graybill, and Mostow (Honolulu: Hawai’i University Press, 2003).

Jaqueline Berndt (Kyoto Seika University)

Odorless Bodies: Edo-era Women in Sugiura Hinako's Manga

For the last few decades, the most prevalent printed images in Japan have been provided by manga, i.e. mostly graphic narratives first serialized in specialized magazines. While not rarely generalized, in particular when driven by a desire for ‘origins’ and the respective penchant for ‘tradition,’ manga images of women are anything but homogenous, neither in terms of historic change nor concurrent genres and styles. Without any intent of being comprehensive, this paper focuses on manga artist Sugiura Hinako (1958-2005), intrigued by the fact that she experimented with ukiyoe-like character design in her early short stories (“Futatsu makura,” *Garō*, 1981), while refraining from it in “Sarusuberi” (*Manga Sunday*, 1983-87), her account of Hokusai as focalized through the character of

Oei, where women tend to be pictured in a style that is reminiscent of the late prints of Hashiguchi Goyō (1880-1921). Given the workshop's concentration on commonalities across eras, this paper shall highlight the prioritization of visuality, or (aesthetic, not necessarily cultural) odorlessness in the representation of female physique, leaning on a notion of media which goes beyond physical medium specificity.

Jaqueline BERNDT is professor in Comics Studies at the Graduate School of Manga, Kyoto Seika University, Japan, and deputy director of the International Manga Research Center at the Kyoto International Manga Museum. Holding a first degree in Japanese Studies and a Ph.D in Aesthetics/Art Theory from Humboldt University Berlin, in her teaching and research she focuses on media aesthetics and visual culture, especially manga and anime, as well as the discourse and institution of Art in modern Japan. Recent publications include the co-edited volume *Manga's Cultural Crossroads* (2013) and the monograph *Manga: Medium, Art and Material* (2015).