

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ Tokyo)

DIJ Study Group

August 21, 2024, 6.30 pm (JST) / 11.30 am (CEST)

Between tradition and pop culture:

The meaning of traditional Japanese materials and techniques in the practice of contemporary artists in Kyoto

Alexandra Faust, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna / DIJ Tokyo



Western perspectives on Japanese art and artistic practices are often divided into traditional Japanese art movements, such as Nihonga painting, and contemporary art characterized by Pop-Art-like Manga and Anime characters. This presentation examines the fusion of these two worlds by exploring how contemporary Japanese artists utilize traditional Japanese materials (e.g. Washi-paper, Sumi-ink) and artistic methods commonly associated with Nihonga-art. Focusing on contemporary artists living and working in Kyoto, I will discuss how these artists integrate traditional Japanese materials and techniques into their artistic practice. Empirical data collected over the last five months not only provides insights into the use of these materials and techniques but also reveals their connection to traditional, often forgotten knowledge about limited natural resources and sustainability.

The aim of this study is to challenge the dichotomy between traditional and contemporary Japanese art by examining the holistic development of artistic practices. I will also offer a broader perspective on the contemporary Japanese art scene, addressing the themes of materials and sustainability. This presentation draws on theories from Anthropology of Art, Cultural Studies, Modern Japanese Art History, and Contemporary Japanese Art.

Alexandra Faust is a PhD candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (Austria). Being interested in Japanese culture since her first long-term stay in Japan, Alexandra has graduated in Japanese studies, cultural studies, and cultural and social anthropology from Humboldt University of Berlin, Kyoto University, and the University of Vienna. Her areas of interest include anthropology of art, cultural studies, modern Japanese art history and contemporary Japanese art. Since February 2024 she has been a PhD student at the DIJ Tokyo.

About:

The DIJ Study Group is a forum for scholars from all disciplines conducting research on contemporary or modern Japan. The event is open to all.

Hybrid Event:

On-site participation: please register via email to neuhaus@dijtokyo.org until August 20, 2024.

Online participation please register via our [webpage](#).

Venue:

Online and DIJ Tokyo ([access](#))