University of Zurich[UZH]

museum rietberg
ARTS OF THE WORLD IN ZURICH

East Asian Art History

University of Zurich
Institute of Art History
Chair in East Asian Art History
Rämistrasse 73
CH-8006 Zurich
Switzerland
www.khist.uzh.ch/chairs/ostasien.html

Unknown, Moon Jar, Korea, 18th c., porcelain with white glaze, Museum Rietberg.

Conference "Korean Wave(s)? Global Itineraries of Korean Art and Culture"

Date: Friday, May 16th, 9:00-18:30
Saturday, May 17th, 9:00-17:30
Venue: University of Zurich, Aula RAA-G-01, Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zürich
Museum Rietberg, Park-Villa Rieter, Lecture Hall, Seestrasse 110, 8002 Zürich

The Conference "Korean Wave(s)? Global Itineraries of Korean Art and Culture", organized by the Chair in East Asian Art History, University of Zurich in cooperation with the Museum Rietberg, is held in conjunction with the special exhibition "Hallyu – The Korean Wave". The Conference seeks to engage with the exhibition by examining the global entanglements of Korean art and culture in a broader historical framework. It builds on the notion of "object itinerary" (Joyce 2015) as a tool for analysis of transcultural exchange, which offers a constructive framework for discussing the production, dissemination, and reception of art in a global perspective. This way the Conference conceptualizes the phenomenon of the Korean Wave as part of a continuum of regional and global cultural exchange that has been ongoing throughout Korean history from its earliest days, while critically reflecting on the notion of the 'wave,' as an analytical instrument used in the context of transcultural study of art.

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Before *Hallyu*

The term “Korean Wave” or *Hallyu,* refers to the global surge in popularity of South Korean pop culture, which began in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and rapidly expanded soon after. Key elements driving this movement include pop music (K-pop), TV series (K-drama), and film (K-cinema) that over time grew to encompass other cultural genres like food and fashion, as well as the art scene experiencing a rapid rise in recent years. Due to its astonishing success among diverse audiences worldwide, the Korean Wave is commonly recognized as a global phenomenon reliant on the quality of the Korean productions, their innovative content keeping its offerings fresh and relevant, and favourable governmental policies and infrastructure that bolster the South Korean cultural industry and its exports. These interpretations of the Korean Wave often emphasize contemporaneity and singularity of the phenomenon positioned vis-à-vis the notion of the “Hermit Kingdom”, Orientalist moniker of isolation and insularity, used to characterize Korea and its cultural relationships before the 20th century. They also tend to accentuate South Korea's exclusive agency as the origin of the 'wave,' that may obscure the multidirectional and reciprocal nature of the processes of transcultural exchange that can be observed throughout the history of the Korean Peninsula. For example, as early as the Three Kingdoms period (trad. 57 BCE – 668 CE), historical evidence points to active cultural exchange between the kingdoms on the peninsula and their neighbors. The spread of Buddhist art in East Asia is a significant example of cultural flow during this early period of Korean history. During the Goryeo period (918 – 1392), a range of cultural products, such as highly valued celadon wares and the Buddhist canonical texts known as the Goryeo Tripitaka, fueled multidirectional regional trade and diplomatic exchange. Despite self-imposed restrictions on international exchange, the Joseon dynasty (1392 – 1910) witnessed an intensification of these trends on both regional and global levels, leading to the circulation of various cultural products, including literati paintings linked to Neo-Confucian thought.

Considering these mobilities, the ever-shifting temporal and spatial contexts of Korean transcultural exchange emerge as particularly significant topic, prompting numerous considerations. For instance, should the Korean Wave be viewed as a singular contemporary phenomenon, or is it one in a series of discrete, historically situated 'Korean waves' involving distinct artistic expressions? Moreover, what are the benefits, risks, and limitations of the notion of a 'wave' in this context, considering the diversity of agents, sources, and directions of cultural flows pertinent to these historical exchanges? Lastly, how do diverse spatial and temporal trajectories and contexts shape the reception and adaptation of art objects and related art historiography?

These issues demand critical examination and will form the core focus of the Conference, which will examine mobilities of art objects through different environments over time. This

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exploration will encompass their production, circulation, and transformation as they traverse various cultural and social spaces within East Asia and beyond. Importantly, these concerns are relevant not only to the Korean Wave but also contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the global entanglements of Korean art and culture. This includes their positioning and role within the broader narratives of global art history, as well as the processes of transcultural exchange and globalization at large.

Conference Structure

Workshop for Early Career Researchers

The Conference will commence on Friday, May 16th with the Workshop for Early Career Researchers. The event, thematically aligned with the conference's topic, aims to foster professional development of junior scholars in Korean Art History. The workshop will feature individual presentations, group discussions, and targeted feedback from the panel experts/conference speakers. The workshop is exclusively open to conference speakers.

Session 1: Exhibiting Global Itineraries of Korean Art and Culture

In the afternoon the same day, the Conference will focus on the exhibition "Hallyu! The Korean Wave" at the Museum Rietberg, featuring a curator talk, an exhibition viewing and the first keynote lecture (broadcasted online) thereby offering a point of departure for discussion on the second day.

Session 2: Debating Global Itineraries of Korean Art and Culture

On Saturday, May 17th the Conference will explore the discourse on the global mobilities of Korean art. Focused on the nexus of object itineraries—specifically their topographies and temporalities—the Conference is organized around the intersection of three main themes. Each theme is covered by one of three panels that collectively explore how spatial and temporal trajectories shape the reception, adaptation, and interpretation of Korean art objects in transcultural exchange.

Panel 1: Transcultural Mobility of Art Objects: Production and Circulation

This panel explores the production and circulation of art objects in the context of Korean transcultural exchange. It discusses how art objects are created, disseminated, and exchanged across different spatial and temporal contexts, considering factors such as artistic materials, techniques, trade routes, and cultural networks.

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Panel 2: Transcultural Reception of Art Objects: Transformation and Adaptation

This panel examines how art objects from Korea are received and adapted in various cultural and social environments over time. It analyzes how cultural contexts shape the interpretation and reinterpretation of art objects, leading to their transformation and adaptation in different cultural settings.

Panel 3: Art Historiography in Motion: Tracing Korean Art Across Time and Space

This panel focuses on the role of art historiography in tracing the spatial and temporal trajectories of Korean art. It discusses methodological approaches and challenges in studying the movement of art objects, as well as the implications for our understanding of Korean art history and its global entanglements.

Conference Program

Workshop for Early Career Researchers*

Friday, 16th of May 2025, 9.00-12.00

Venue: University of Zurich, Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zürich

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Session 1: Exhibiting Global Itineraries of Korean Art and Culture

Friday, 16th of May 2025, 14.00-18.30

Venue: Museum Rietberg, Park-Villa Rieter, Lecture Hall, Seestrasse 110, 8002 Zürich

Attendance is free, but registration with the museum is required. Please register via the following link: www.rietberg.ch/tickets

In the afternoon the same day, the Conference will focus on the exhibition "Hallyu! The Korean Wave" at the Museum Rietberg, featuring a curator talk, an exhibition viewing and the first keynote lecture (broadcasted online) thereby offering a point of departure for discussion on the second day.

14:00 – 14:10 **Opening addresses by Dr. Annette Bhagwati, Director of Museum Rietberg**, and **Prof. Dr. Michael Schaepman, President of the University of Zurich**

14:10 – 14:15 **Welcome address by His Excellency Keum Chang-rok,** Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Swiss Confederation

14:15– 14:20 **Introduction by the Conference organizers, Prof. Dr. Ewa Machotka**, Chair for East Asian Art History, University of Zurich, and **Dr. Khanh Trinh**, Curator for Japanese and Korean Art, Museum Rietberg

14:20 – 15:20 **Keynote Address, Prof. Dr. J.P. Park**, University of Oxford (broadcasted online)
Conflicted Realities: The Politics of Desire and Identity in Korean Art and History

15:20 – 15:50 **Exhibition Introduction, Dr. Rosalie Kim,** Victoria and Albert Museum, London

15:50 – 17:00 **Viewing of the exhibition "Hallyu – The Korean Wave"**

17:00 – 18:30 **Reception** (Apéro)

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Session 2: Debating Global Itineraries of Korean Art and Culture
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Venue: University of Zurich, Aula RAA-G-01, Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zürich

On Saturday, the Conference will explore the discourse on the global mobilities of Korean art. Focused on the nexus of object itineraries—specifically their topographies and temporalities—the Conference is organized around the intersection of three main themes. Each theme is covered by one of three panels that collectively explore how spatial and temporal trajectories shape the reception, adaptation, and interpretation of Korean art objects in transcultural exchange.

09:00 – 09:30 Registration

09:30 – 09:45 Welcome and opening remarks by Prof. Dr. Ewa Machotka (University of Zurich)

09:45 – 10:45 Keynote Address, Prof. Dr. Charlotte Horlyck (SOAS, University of London)
(broadcasted online)
Reflections on Korean Art in Motion: Movement, Reception and Scholarship

10:45 – 12:00 Panel 1: Transcultural Mobility of Art Objects: Production and Circulation
Chair: Dr. Stephanie Santschi (University of Zurich)

10:45 – 11:15 **Dr. Ariane Perrin** (Ca'Foscari University)
New insights on early Buddhist artefacts from the northern region of the Korean peninsula, 5th-6th centuries AD
11:15 – 11:45 **Prof. Dr. Namwon Jang** (Ewha Womans University)
The Journey of Joseon White Porcelain in the 19th Century from Seoul to Hamburg
11:45 – 12:00 Panel Discussion

12:00 – 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 – 15:15 Panel 2: Transcultural Reception of Art Objects: Transformation and Adaptation
Chair: Alva Speth (University of Zurich)

14:00 – 14:30 **Prof. Dr. Jeonghee Lee-Kalisch** (Freie Universität Berlin)
Transcultural Reception of the Tiger Image: The Hanging Scroll by Yi Wonchan in the Berlin Collection, as Example
14:30 – 15:00 **Prof. Dr. Yoonjung Seo** (Myongji University)
The Legacy of An Gyeon: Attributions, Forgeries, and the Northern Song Landscape Tradition in East Asian Visual Culture
15:00 – 15:15 Panel Discussion

15:15 – 16:00 Coffee break

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16:00 – 17:15 Panel 3: Art Historiography in Motion: Tracing Korean Art Across Time and Space
Chair: Isabelle Leemann (University of Zurich)

16:00 – 16:30 **Prof. Dr. Burglind Jungmann** (UCLA/Heidelberg University)
Revisiting Prince Anpyeong's Dream of the 'Peach Blossom Land' in Early Joseon Korea
16:30 – 17:00 **Prof. Dr. Youngsook Pak** (SOAS, University of London)
From Han to Paekche. An Extraordinary Transformation
17:00 – 17:15 Panel Discussion

17:15 – 17:30 Closing Discussion