



International Symposium
Art of the Japanese Copy

University of Zurich
September 12 and 19, 2023



Hag of Adachi Moor. Ikiningyō life-sized sculpture.
Pigments with wood, glass, powered oyster shells, and textiles. Ca. 1880, Japan



SYMPOSIUM ABSTRACT

An International Symposium: Art of the Japanese Copy will take place at the University of Zurich, Switzerland, on the 12th and 19th September, 2023. This symposium will feature leading and emerging scholars from Japan, Austria, and Switzerland.

The symposium is an attempt to widen the discussion of the “copy,” especially in regard to Japan during the nineteenth century. For too long, the popular discussion on the Japanese copy has centered on the trope that Japan copied everything from China or the West. Here, the copy has been seen as a negative act, in terms of a Japan that needed to copy from others in order to create worthwhile work. We aim to expand the discussion and look at the various ingenious ways that Japan used the idea of the copy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, at a time when Japan was coming in terms with ideas from the West. We will not only look at several aspects of the idea of the copy in Japan during this time but also examine the copy as a long-established tradition. The act of copying was, for example, one of the fundamental artistic practices in Japan, and over centuries, copying was not just an important cultural technique for the appropriation and transmission of styles and techniques; it also functioned as an artistic gesture of appreciation.

In this symposium we will look at three specific areas of the copy: 1) the copying of historical relics, and 2) the copying of Japanese architecture, and 3) the copying of the human form in the *ikinigyō* tradition.

For the first example, we will examine how artists such as Kanō Tessai (1845–1925) and Niino Chūnosuke (1869-1954) studied the culturally important artifacts at major temples and storehouses and recreated exact or reduced-sized copies of these objects. Here there were multiple purposes: preserving culturally significant objects, protecting against natural disasters, learning the techniques of previous generations, and promoting Japanese culture, inside and outside of Japan.

As for the second example, small-scale copies were made of major temples and shrines and sent to Western institutions. There they were displayed in ethnological museums and used as models in architectural studies. A number of these models still exist in western museums and have recently become the focus of academic inquiry.

As for the last example, makers of the *ikinigyō* copied the human body and created surprisingly lifelike visions of human beings. Created not just for local fairs and commercial goals, they were also exported to the west. Hence a number of these were used in order to display Japanese life and culture within Western museums. Here, the Historical Museum of Bern holds a significant collection of these works. A number of newly discovered objects from various Swiss museums will also be discussed.



SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

Tuesday, 12th September 2023

University of Zurich, Room: Aula Magna KOL-G-201

Rämistrasse 71, 8006 Zurich

18:30 – 19:45 Keynote address
Her Imperial Highness Princess Akiko of Mikasa
(Kyoto Sangyo University)

*Copying the Buddha or Copying Buddhist Thoughts?
Reproductions of Hōryū-ji Mural Paintings from Meiji to Shōwa*

Please note: The keynote talk will be held in conjunction with the Japan
Lecture series, hosted by the Europa Institut, University of Zurich

Tuesday, 19th September 2023

University of Zurich, Room RAA-G-01

Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zurich

9:00 – 9:30 Registration for speakers

9:30 – 9:50 Welcome from the Organizers
Prof. Dr. Hans Bjarne Thomsen (Institute of Art History, University of
Zurich) with Anna Herren, M.A. (Institute of Art History, University of
Zurich)

**9:50 – 12:10 Panel One. Copies of Human Form: Buddhist Sculpture, Masks, and the
Ikiningyō**
Chair: Anna Herren, M.A. (Institute of Art History, University of Zurich)



9:50 – 10:20 Prof. Dr. Kensuke Nedachi 根立研介 (Director, Foundation Bijutsuin)

Imitation of Buddhist Statues from the Late Meiji to the Early Showa Periods:
Seen through the Activities of Niiro Chūnosuke

明治後期から昭和初期における仏像の模造—新納忠之介の活動を通して考える

10:20 – 10:50 Haruko Tomisawa 富澤治子 (Chief Curator, Contemporary Art Museum Kumamoto)

*What Ideas Did the Ikingyō Capture? And What Were the Differences between
Receptions in the West and in Japan?*

生人形は何を写したか、西欧と日本それぞれで見せたものの違い

10:50 – 11:20 Coffee break

11:20 – 11:50 Prof. Dr. Hans Bjarne Thomsen (Institute of Art History, University of Zurich)

Copying Ancient Masks: The Life and Works of Kanō Tessai

11:50 – 12:10 Discussions

12:10 – 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 – 15:20 Panel Two. Copies of Japanese Architecture in Western Collections
Chair: Isabelle Leemann, M.A. (Institute of Art History, University of Zurich)

14:00 – 14:30 Bettina Zorn (Head of East Asia, Weltmuseum Wien)

*On the Definition and Meaning of Japanese House Models in the Context of the 1873
World's Fair in Vienna*

14:30 – 15:00 Gargely Barna (Project Researcher, KYOTO Design Lab, Kyoto Institute of
Technology, Kyoto, Japan)

Dreamworld to Reality: "Pavillon japonais", a Japanese House-Shaped Model
Interpreted as Authentic Architecture at the 1889 Paris World Exhibition (via
Zoom)



15:00 – 15:20 Discussions

15:20 – 15:50 Coffee break

15:50 – 18:00 Panel Three. Case Studies: Examples of Ikiningyō in Swiss Collections

Chair: Dahi Jung, M.A. (Institute of Art History, University of Zurich)

15:50 – 16:20 Dr. Damien Kunik (Curator, Musée National d'Ethnologie, Genève)

On a Long Forgotten Pair of *ikiningyō* and Other Mysterious Objects in the Collections of the City of Geneva

16:20 – 16:50 Saskia Goldschmid, graduate student (Institute of Art History, University of Zurich)

Gifts of Diplomacy. *Ikiningyō* in the Bernisches Historisches Museum

16:50 – 17:20 Elisabeth Eibner, M.A. (Institute of Art History, University of Zurich)

Ikiningyō in the Collection of Schloss Burgdorf

17:20 – 18:00 Final discussions and end of symposium

18:00 – 20:00 Dinner for symposium participants