



Contemporary Kimono: From Family Ceremonies to High-fashion Communities

Prof. Lucile Druet
(Kansai Gaidai University)



Friday, December 22, 2023, 18:00–19:00
University of Zurich, Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zürich
Room RAA-G-15

*The lecture will be held in English and is open to the public (no registration is necessary).
For questions, please contact the Section for East Asian Art History: kgoa@khist.uzh.ch*

Abstract:

For the past three years the traveling exhibition “Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk” has been highlighting several important perspectives about the design and the sartorial practice of kimono. The show engages the different garments’ material and cultural specificities, how the kimono is connected to ideas of class and identity while inspiring a variety of fashion creators from the Edo period to our contemporary age, inside and outside Japan.

This presentation focuses on the latest segment of the kimono’s complex history, namely from the postwar to the Covid-19 era, examining how such an iconic mode of dress as kimono continues to interpellate concepts of immutability, transmission and family as well as innovation, playfulness and creativity.

By using a variety of visual and textual references (from the exhibition, personal research and observations), it aims at showing how kimono is spectacularly global and local at the same time, and how kimono “traditions” can be innovative while new creations can surprisingly be conservative.

Lucile Druet is Associate Professor of Japanese Arts for the Asian Studies Program at Kansai Gaidai University (Hirakata, Osaka). Her teaching covers literature, painting traditions, theatrical performances, film and Japanese fashion, focusing on kimono. Interested in the intersection of clothing and embodiment, she researches how kimono is currently practiced in Kyoto (Maiko and Geiko communities, rental and second-hand shops) and how it appears in works of fiction (Tanizaki Jun’ichiro, Ariyoshi Sawako, Hayashi Mariko) and poetry (Izumi Shikibu, Yosano Akiko).