

Symposium "Programme for the Support of Human Resource Development through the Construction of a Comprehensive Archive & Talent-Development Programme Linking Traditional Woodblock Printing and the Arts" "Workshop Report Session"

Date: Friday, 19 December, 13:00–17:30

Venue: Ritsumeikan University Art Research Centre / Online (Zoom)

Z O O M : https://ritsumei-ac-jp.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_V7UBxtVbTO2hYwhNMYVquw

webinar ID : 954 4522 3588

passcord : 890604



Programme

9:20–9:30 Opening remarks

Session 1: Keynote

9:30–9:55 Ryo Akama & Ryoko Matsuba

"The Current State and Future of Woodblock Print Digital Archives:
Connecting Research and Creative Practice" (provisional title)

(5-minute break)

Session 2: Film Screening

10:00–12:00 Screening of Paper by Washi +
Commentary: Ayumi Hamada (Director, Washi +)

(Lunch break – 1 hour)

Session 3: Research Presentations

13:00–13:10 — Introduction

13:10–13:30 Myosai (online)

13:30–13:50 Miki Sawanaga (online)

13:50–14:10 Michika Noda (online)

(10-minute break)

14:20–14:40 Keiko Kobayashi (on-site)

14:40–15:00 Tomomi Furukawa (on-site)

15:00–15:20 Eriko Fujita (online)

(10-minute break)

15:30–16:00 Mia O (online)

16:00–16:20 Nobuto Ogawa (online)

16:20–16:50 Natasha Norman Moodley (online)

16:50–17:20 Lucy May Schofield (online)

17:20–17:30 Closing remarks

Overview

【Session 1: Keynote】

From programme directors Ryo Akama and Ryoko Matsuba (Ritsumeikan University), there will be a report on the current status of the accumulated woodblock-print-related documentary films and the digital database. They will also discuss the impact that broader online access to ukiyo-e images is beginning to have on contemporary artistic expression. In addition, they will outline the challenges and gaps in the existing database and call widely for the provision of film materials and oral histories held in various regions, with a view to exploring possibilities for collaborative archive-building in the future.

【Session2:Film Screening】

In the morning, we will hold a screening of *Paper*, a performance work by Washi+ (directed by Ayumi Hamada), a theatre group based in Ino, Kōchi, whose practice centres on "washi". This presentation will explore how washi is being used as a medium for innovative artistic expression in the performing arts, a field quite distinct from woodblock printmaking.

Screening: *Paper*

Paper is a theatrical work created in Kochi Prefecture by inviting the Singapore-based playwright and director Tze Chien Chong, who is active both in Asia and internationally and has in recent years been developing an energetic practice in Japan. Following research conducted in 2018 with papermakers and kōzo farmers, a showcase performance was presented in 2019. Although the main production had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, its long-awaited world premiere finally took place in August 2024 at the Kochi Prefectural Museum of Art Hall, as one of the featured works of Washi Meets Art Festival 2024 (organised by Washi+ and La forêt).

Playwright / Director	Tze Chien Chong
Cast	Kazuyama Tachimoto Takako Inoue Keita Hara Ayumi Hamada

Washi+

Since 2015, Washi+ has been based in Ino Town, working to rediscover the appeal of washi through the performing arts and to expand the possibilities of theatre within the local community. Rather than maintaining a fixed director, the group adopts a production model in which directors and writers are invited afresh for each performance.

【Session 3: Research Presentations】

This report session will review the outcomes of the workshop held from 13 to 19 October 2025 in Kōchi, Mino, Echizen, and Kyoto, through presentations by the participants themselves. During the workshop, participants visited major washi-producing regions to learn first-hand about raw material characteristics and procurement challenges, as well as papermaking processes such as cooking, beating, and drying. In the printing workshops held in each region, they examined how the differences in paper quality affect colour, texture, and durability in woodblock prints.

The ten presenters were selected from applicants in Japan and abroad who are actively engaged in woodblock printmaking. This session aims not only to introduce their activities but also to share the insights they gained and the ways in which their perspectives have shifted through the programme—particularly regarding the role of "materials" and "place of production" in printmaking, and their deeper understanding of the relationship between traditional washi industries and contemporary creative practice.

