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ISHIBASHI FOUNDATION VISITING PROFESSOR FOR JAPANESE
ART HISTORY

THE ARTIST ASAI CHŪ AND PARIS IN THE EARLY 1900s

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2017, 6 PM C.T., ROOM 311
INSTITUTE OF EAST ASIAN ART HISTORY, SEMINARSTR. 4, HEIDELBERG**

As a representative oil painter of modern Japan, Asai Chū (1856-1907) was appointed professor of Western Painting in 1898 at the newly established Tokyo Art School (today's Tokyo University of Art and Music). Shortly after his appointment, however, he visited Paris in 1900, a travel that triggered a change of course. Just a year later, in 1902, he accepted a professorship at the Kyoto School of Art Crafts (today's Kyoto Institute of Technology), and thus began his activities as an educator of design in Kyoto. This change of professional direction has hitherto been explained as a result of Asai's awareness of the importance of design, which he had witnessed in Paris during the heyday of the Art Nouveau Movement. Asai did in fact show an interest in crafts while in Paris by painting on ceramic wares, among others. At the same time, however, he questioned his oil paintings and their expressions, which he had believed in up to this point. In addition, this is a result of his doubts regarding what he felt was the symbol of the modern era, "realism."

In this lecture I contemplate on what meaning painting might have had for Asai who lived at the beginning of the "Modern era."

NAMIKI Seishi

Born in Tokyo, Prof. Namiki Seishi was a curator at the Tokugawa Art Museum in Nagoya, and an assistant professor at the Kyoto University before he was appointed professor at the Kyoto Institute of Technology, where he is also the head of the University Art Museum.

Among his brandnew publications are two books published in 2017, which demonstrate the temporal and thematic breadth of his unique interests reflected also in his talk: *The Turning point in Japanese Painting: The Illuminated Scroll of Sake and Rice: From the Age of Handscrolls to the age of Genre Painting* 『日本絵画の転換点 酒飯論絵巻 「絵巻の時代」から「風俗画の時代」へ』 (昭和堂、2017年)、and his co-edited book, *Kyoto: The Modern Art Crafts Network* 『京都近代美術工芸のネットワーク』 (共編著、思文閣出版、2017年) .