

July 14, 2023

18:00-19:30

**In person only /
No registration necessary
Room 301, 3F,
Building 10,
Sophia University**

To Arrange a Sculpture: Teshigahara Sōfu and Japan's Postwar Internationalization

Alice Ashiwa

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The Sōgetsu School of Ikebana, founded in 1927 by the charismatic Teshigahara Sōfu, became known for teaching a radical ikebana form incorporating elements of Modern Art. After WWII, the school rapidly expanded abroad alongside Sōfu's growing recognition as a modern artist by the Euro-American art world. This talk considers the school's postwar internationalization by exploring its overlaps between the concepts of ikebana and art. Doing so contributes to the broader discussion on the imagination of the postwar national culture of Japan. These overlaps expanded with the construction of the Sōgetsu Kaikan building in the late 1950s to house the Sōgetsu School and Sōfu's newly created Sōgetsu Art Center, which patronized cutting-edge artistic trends. For over a decade, Sōgetsu Kaikan was an important site in Japan for the interaction of international and domestic contemporary artists. The case of the Sōgetsu Kaikan and Sōfu is part of a larger study that examines the creation of such categories as "tradition" and "modern" through transnational interactions in Japan.

Alice Ashiwa is a Ph.D. candidate in the History Department at UCLA and a visiting researcher at the Institute of Comparative Culture at Sophia University. Her dissertation examines the complex entanglement of conventionally distinct or even paradoxical categories of modern, tradition, and avant-garde through a study of the Sōgetsu Institution in relation to the socio-political context of the 1930s to the 1960s. She received her B.A. in anthropology from Oberlin College and her M.A. in art history from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

This talk is organized by Noriko Murai (Professor of Art History, Sophia University).

Sophia University institute of Comparative Culture : <https://www.icc-sophia.com/>



Photo: Sōfu and his works (1952)