LECTURE SERIES ON THE CULTURAL AND ART HISTORY OF KYOTO

INSTITUTE OF EAST ASIAN ART HISTORY
HEIDELBERG UNIVERSITY

INSTITUT FÜR KUNSTGESCHICHTE OSTASIENS

UNIVERSITÄT HEIDELBERG
ZUKUNFT SEIT 1386

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ISLAND OF PLEASURE

ALTERITY AND SPACE IN KYOTO'S EARLY MODERN PLEASURE QUARTER

THURSDAY
9 JUNE, 2016 | 6:15 PM
IKO | Seminar room 311, 3rd floor
Seminarstr. 4 | 69117 Heidelberg

This lecture undertakes an archeology of architectural and conceptual space in Japan's early modern pleasure districts. It focuses on the Sumiya in Kyoto's former Shimabara district. The Sumiya is the only high-end meeting venue (*ageya*) where courtesans interacted with their clients that has survived in its entirety until today. The architectural discussion will be contextualized with pictorial and textual representations of the Sumiya in prints and guide books. It will be argued that *ageya* architecture manifested pervasive otherness through employing excentric typologies, breathtaking material splendor, and multi-layered references to a cultural domain that was *de jure* monopolized by samurai and court elites. *Ageya* architecture thereby provided essential layers of meaning that have to be considered for a full understanding of otherwise well-known courtesan iconographies.

Anton Schweizer is Professor of Practise at Tulane University, New Orleans. He specializes in the art and architecture of Early Modern Japan. At the center of his research is the employment of architecture and artifacts in spatial configurations. This trajectory is complemented by interests in the materiality and temporality of works of art, export art, and transcultural picture migration.

東亞藝術史

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Image:
Utagawa Kunisada (1786-1865):
Courtesan from Shimabara in Kyoto, woodblock print, 1820s.