Capturing the horizon: the ceramic sculptures of Fukami Sueharu
Cora Wurmell

Born in 1947 as a son of a ceramic manufacturer close to the Sennuji-district, one of Kyoto’s more recently established ceramic locations, Fukami Sueharu is today considered to be Japan’s leading and most internationally recognized porcelain sculptor. His commitment to technical innovation and his artistic vision translates the essence and beauty of the artist’s Chinese Song-dynasty inspired porcelain oeuvre into contemporary pieces of art. This paper will explore the evolution of Fukami’s wheel thrown and unique pressure cast porcelain sculptures with their characteristic seihakuji (Chinese: qingbai) glazes. This delicate bluish-white glaze was already appreciated during the Kamakura period (1185 -1333) in Japan but has only been rediscovered as a suitable and challenging medium for contemporary ceramicists in the past thirty years or so. Fukami’s relationship with Kyoto as one of Japan’s representative ceramic production centers with its deep-rooted traditions, prestigious schools and research institutions will also be addressed.

The Old Capital in Modern Times and Images of Kyoto
Hiroshi Takagi

Today, more than 55 million tourists visit Kyoto per year, and, in 2016, the American journal *Travel+Leisure* nominated Kyoto as the most popular tourist destination in the world. The tourism discourse consists of “Kyoto characteristics” based on a “national culture” (*kokufū bunka*), to which The Tale of Genji, the Hollyhock Festival (*aoi matsuri*), the Phoenix Hall of Byōdōin Temple are part and parcel just as much as the „Azuchi-Momoyama culture”, characterized by the Rinpa School, the Gion Festival, and the splendor of (golden) panel paintings. These associations were, however, all constructed during the Modern Period. In this lecture I will discuss the history of „Kyoto characteristics”, which were designed in Kyoto from the Meiji Restoration to the Modern Period, and spread from this city to an international community.
Monuments and Mandalas in Medieval Kyoto: Exploring the grand urban vision of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu
Matthew Stavros

Kyoto’s urban landscape was completely reimagined in the late fourteenth century through the ambitious building projects of the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408). This paper examines these projects, focusing particularly on the Muromachi Palace and the Kitayama Villa. The aim is to identify a grand urban vision and, more important, a guiding principle that inspired the warrior-aristocrat’s monumental aspirations. Several interpretations will be explored, including the possibility that Yoshimitsu imagined himself a cosmic ruler or devaraja, creating a capital emblematic of his transcendent status.

The Great Fire of Kyoto: 1788
Timon Screech

The great fire of Kyoto in 1788 is a largely forgotten event. None of the tourist information offered by the city today mentions it, with visitors encouraged to think of Kyoto as unchanging and eternal. However, the fire was monumentally destructive. Only fire or six major buildings survived, with the rest lost in their entirely. Of course, the modern city has expanded meaning buildings of genuine antiquity have been incorporated, but previously these were beyond city confines. This talk will look again at the fire, at its effects and its cultural impact, and also the rebuilding projects that followed.

Poem and Picture in the Miyako meisho zue
Joshua Mostow

One of such clerics, Jikken 賢賢 (alt. Jitsugen, 1176–1249), deserves special attention. Not only was he a prominent figure in the early medieval Shingon temple milieu, but his influence extended far beyond the premises of Daigoji and its sub-temples, Sanbōin 三寶院 and Kongōōin 金剛王院, where he occupied leading posts. For example, Jikken performed esoteric rituals for the safe pregnancy and childbirth of several imperial consorts and noble women residing in the aristocratic households of Kyoto. His disciples included not only ordained monks who went on to forge notable monastic careers, but also less historically visible but nevertheless significant figures who came to be known under the titles of shōnin 上人 (holy men) and played leading roles in the formation of vernacular esoteric and medieval Shinto discourses and practices in medieval Japan. Jikken’s interpretations of esoteric scriptures proved to be an enormously successful “franchise” of illustrated gazetteers from the late Edo period. Meisho and meisho-e, of course, have a long tradition in Japanese literature and visual culture, but 60% of the Miyako’s meisho are temples and shrines, most of which did not have a history as uta-makura, or poetic place-names. On the other hand, the illustrations of meisho include both uta-makura and temples, and especially those of the former include poems. Yet sometimes the poems are inscribed in the picture-plane and sometimes they are not. This paper will attempt to untangle the semantics of these differences.