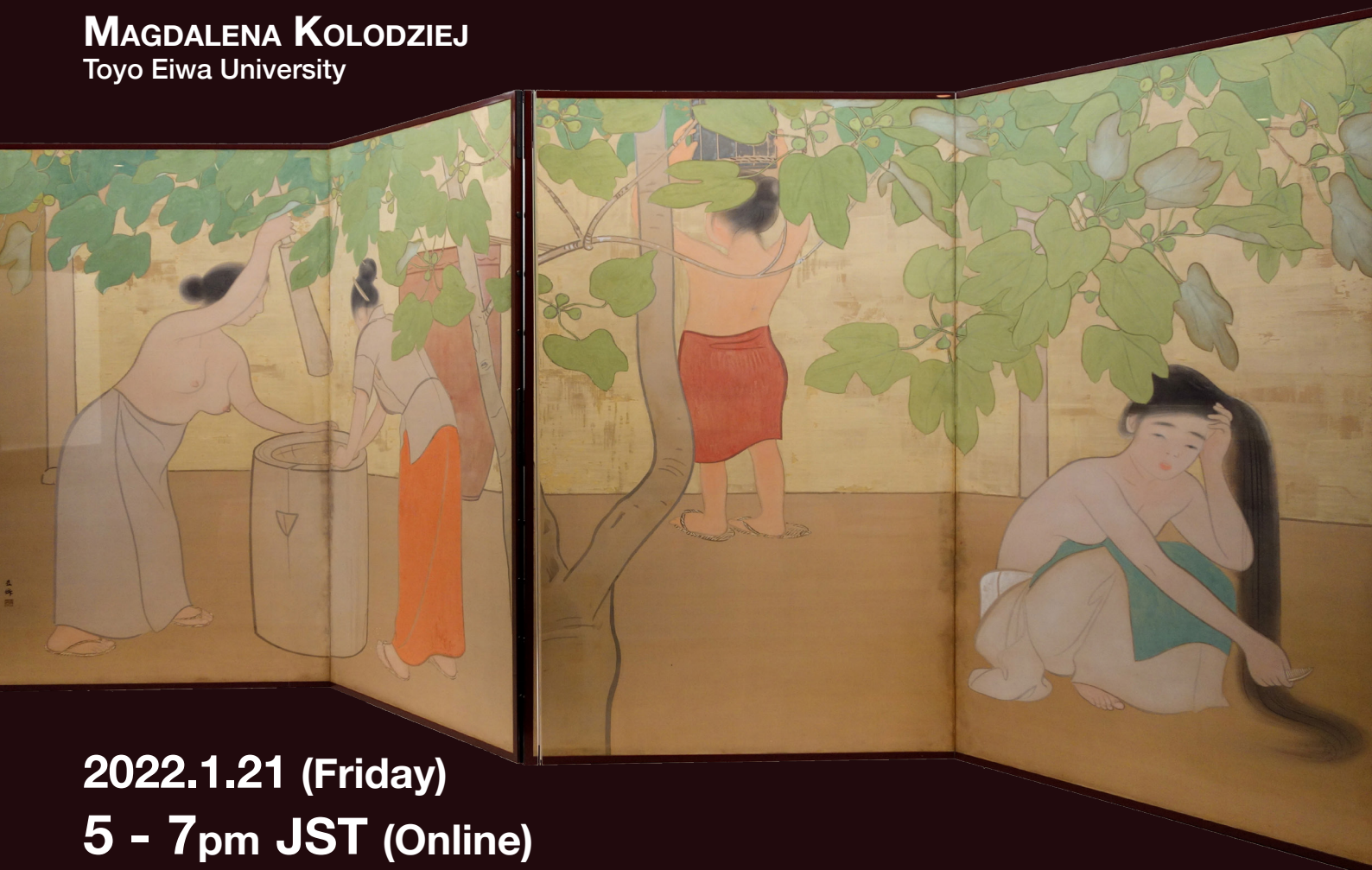


CONSTRUCTING THE MODERN

Japanese Salon Art on Display in Colonial Seoul and Taipei (1922-1945)

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This presentation invites you to rethink the Japanese art world in the 1920s and 1930s. It is a little-known fact that Japanese paintings, nihonga and seiyōga, were displayed at Korea Fine Arts Exhibition and Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition as so-called model works (sankōhin). Moreover, in 1933, the first government-sponsored art museum dedicated to Japanese modern art was established at the Tōksugung Palace in Seoul, serving a similar role as a display of model works. Through these case studies, this presentation demonstrates how by the 1930s artists in Japan saw themselves as part of an imperial art world. Japanese settler-artists and bureaucrats promoted Japanese art in the colonies under the banner of the civilizing mission. Moreover, they relied on the colonial other to construct Japanese art's advanced position in East Asia and vis-à-vis the West. The discourse of artistic progress and social Darwinism helped them elevate nihonga and seiyōga to the status of modern art. Yet, the putative superiority of Japanese art was not self-evident or stable. It needed to be constantly emphasized and promoted through print media and displays. I define this process as the "labor of colonialism." Examining the rarely acknowledged exhibition history of Japanese art in colonial Korea and Taiwan provides us with crucial insights into Japan's imperial art world and its tensions.

ZOOM PRE-REGISTRATION LINK:
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