

Date / Time: Wednesday, 16 December 2015, 4:00 – 7:30 pm

Place: 918 International Affairs Building, 420 West 118th Street, Columbia University, New York

Event Title: "The Many Worlds of Yamaguchi Yoshiko: An International Workshop"

This multidisciplinary mini-workshop explores the life of Yamaguchi Yoshiko (1920–2014), a Japanese actress, singer, and politician whose remarkably resilient career spanned multiple culture industries, ethnic identifications, and strategic self-reinventions. Audiences in Japan's wartime empire were introduced to Yamaguchi as the "Manchurian" starlet Li Xianglan (李香蘭; Japanese: Ri Kōran; Korean: Yi Sangnan), performer of the hit song "China Nights." In the Fifties, Americans would make her acquaintance as "Shirley Yamaguchi" in such Hollywood B-films as *Japanese War Bride* as well as, in a more highbrow context, the partner and muse of sculptor Isamu Noguchi. And in postwar Japan, Yamaguchi made her reputation anew as a Diet politician, journalist, Vietnam War critic, and advocate of reparations for Korean "comfort women" (military sex-slaves). Yamaguchi's passing last year provides a timely occasion to assess her legacy across the multiple cultural and historical terrains her life traversed.

Program Schedule:

1:30 – 3:30 pm (pre-event)

COLD WAR CULTURE IN JAPAN: RECENT RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

Panelists:

Hideto Tsuboi (Nichibunken / International Research Center for Japanese Studies)

Kōji Toba (Waseda University)

Chair: Tomi Suzuki (Columbia University)

Graduate students are encouraged to attend. Discussion will be in English and Japanese. Sponsored by the Weatherhead East Asian Institute and the Donald Keene Center of Japanese Culture.

4:00 – 7:30 pm

THE MANY WORLDS OF YAMAGUCHI YOSHIKO: AN INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

SESSION ONE (4:00 – 4:30)

Musical Exercise

Miki Kaneda (Boston University)

SESSION TWO (4:30 – 5:30)

Keynote Lecture: "The Colonial Reception of Ri Kōran's Films in Korea and Taiwan"
Naoki Watanabe (Musashi University)

Comments

Dan Shao (University of Illinois)

SESSION THREE (5:45 – 7:30)

Roundtable: "Encounters with Ri Kōran / Shirley Yamaguchi / Li Xianglan /
Yamaguchi Yoshiko"

Kim Brandt (Columbia University)

Hikari Hori (Columbia University)

Greg Pflugfelder (Columbia University)
and others

General Discussion