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# 2020 KYOTO LECTURES

Monday, January 22nd, 18:00h

Cecile Laly SPEAKER

## Japanese Traditional Kites From Regional Studies to the World of Arts

The vanishing energy of Japanese traditional kites, crafted from paper and bamboo, echoes their departure from Japanese landscapes since the latter half of the twentieth century. This fading artistry has escaped the discerning gaze of foreign scholars specializing in Japanese studies and has been confined to the status of *kyōdo gangu* (Japanese folk toys) by Japanese researchers in regional studies. Yet, diligent research initiatives and the creation of the collective volume *Cerfs-volants du Japon: à la croisée des arts* (Japanese Kites: At the Crossroads of Arts) in 2021 calls attention to the untapped artistic richness of the study of Japanese kites. This lecture will highlight how the Edo period witnessed the rise of these delicate yet sturdy kites, not merely as celestial entities in the sky but as integral elements within the entertainment culture of the floating world. Indeed, their ethereal dance resonated with literature, poetry, theater, and the nuanced canvas of visual culture. The lecture will then illustrate how these delicate creations descended from the sky to find a new sanctuary upon the walls of galleries and museums as the twentieth century unfolded.

**Cecile Laly** has a PhD in Art History from Sorbonne University and is a Specially Appointed Lecturer at Kyoto Seika University. Specializing in Japanese arts and culture with a global perspective, her extensive research on Japanese kites is evident through her multiple scholarly publications, in particular her edited volume *Cerfs-volants du Japon: à la croisée des arts* (Nouvelles éditions Scala, 2021), a seminal contribution to the discourse on Japanese artistic heritage.

**This hybrid lecture will be held on site (email required in advance) and via Zoom (meeting ID: 826 0859 2665).**



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