

Printmaking Archive for Reference, Research and Regional Links

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Introduction

The project proposal is to establish an archive for research and networking purposes for artists, the general public, and academics interested in printmaking. This archive is online, i.e., web-based. The site named “Printmaking Digital Archive” will be a source of reference for those interested in the printmaking discipline, either in detail or for just an overview. With this, it will add to the chain of interconnections and form a linkage.

Visiting the different set-ups, facilities, institutions, and related spaces within the region, I carried out my research by looking, collecting information, taking visual data photographically, recording short videos, sketching, observing, and talking to persons involved.

The interest in print as collectibles—an affordable piece of artwork—is growing. There are guidelines and variations in answers to such questions as “What is a print?” or “Who is a printmaker?”. There are many websites about print, but the information is not cohesive or organized enough for artists and the general public alike to access.

The web archive will provide descriptions of printmaking techniques—intaglio, lithography, mezzotint, woodcut, screen print—as each has its own set of procedures, rules, and terminologies. A directory of suppliers for tools and equipment will be helpful and a glossary of terminologies can ease the language barrier and facilitate communication. Paper conservation—an important factor—is discussed as most of print artworks are done on paper.

The archive will also mention facilities that are available for printmaking, museums and institutions

with permanent exhibition and hold major print collections. Artists’ links, calls for print competitions, residencies or exhibitions will be listed under “news” as announcements.

Research in Japan

Akiruno Artist-in-Resident Program

(see Appendix 1: Photo 1, 2, 3 and 4)

There are plenty of artist-in-resident programs regionally, but those adapted for artists doing printmaking are few and far between. Open to international participation, the Akiruno Artist-In-Resident program is sponsored by the Akiruno City Education Board (ACEB) and operated by the Art Studio Itsukaichi Operation Committee (ASIOC).ⁱ The purpose of this program is “to discover young artists / printmakers who are active throughout the world and offer them a growing experience and an opportunity to create artwork in a communal atmosphere with other artists from different backgrounds. The program aims to further the friendship and understanding of art and different cultures between the artists and local communities through artworks and exchanges.”ⁱⁱ Also known as Art Studio Itsukaichi Residence Program, the Akiruno residency invites one foreign and two Japanese artists annually. The application criteria, deadline, terms and conditions are available online. Selection of artists is done by the ASIOC. Successful applicants are given a monthly stipend during the three-month sojourn.

Musashino Art University

(Appendix 2: Photo 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12)

Accredited as an educational institution in 1957, Musashino Art University (MAU)ⁱⁱⁱ was founded

in Kichijoji, Musashino City in 1929. Named Teikoku Art School in the beginning, currently, the main campus in Kodaira covers twelve main blocks that include the College of Art and Design and the Graduate School of Art and Design. With exchange programs, the university has a list of affiliated organizations and overseas universities. It is active in organizing collaborations, workshops, and projects together with its international partner institutes.

The art education curriculum of MAU "...aims to offer the best possible grounding in the formative arts." It is guided by the belief that "when it comes to specializing in the realms of arts and design at the undergraduate level, a true education can only be obtained through a well-balanced combination of liberal arts subjects, in which students study a wide range of disciplines that will help them to cultivate the all-round judgemental and critical faculties needed to major in their intended field of art or design"^{iv}

Printmaking is a Fine Arts course study under the Department of Painting at MAU. The studios for woodblock, copperplate, lithograph and silkscreen printmaking are equipped with facilities for the production of large prints. Students in the master's degree program study print production by "exploring the possibilities of printmaking as a form of expression, based on the fundamental principles of these different types of prints." The objective of the school is "to provide practical training for the next generation of printmakers and researchers."^v

Musashino Art University's museum and library are housed together in a complex with a large foyer that could be used as an exhibition space, a hall and atrium for events, symposia, lectures and concerts. The folk art gallery has a large collection of Japanese artefacts, while its image library holds about 17,000 film works, ranging from classics to documentaries, spanning a wide range of genres.

The digital archive, together with the Research Center for Art and Design of MAU, are in the process of constructing various digital collecting

archives. In 2010 the Museum and Library^{vi} of MAU published a set of five catalogues, *The Exhibition of Digital Archive I, II, III, IV & V, Rare Books of Musashino Museum & Library* to accompany an exhibition of the same title.^{vii} High-resolution images culled from natural history books and the catalogues of hand-colored botanical, flora and fauna studies, illustrations of sea creatures from Ernst Haeckel *Kunstformender Natur*, three volumes of Captain James Cook's voyage (1776-80) to the Pacific Ocean, to name a few, from the library's collection have been made available online. This visual treasure in its original form would otherwise have restricted access or be unavailable for viewing to the general public.

The printmaker's studio of Hideki Kondo

(see Appendix 3: Photo 13, 14, 15 and 16)

Hideki Kondo^{viii} (b. 1977) is a Japanese artist who also teaches at the Musashino Art University, in the printmaking department. Besides doing prints, he is also a sculptor, and his exhibitions are usually a combination of installations which are site specific, with the works on paper. At his studio in Machida City, he has set up his own printmaking studio for his preferred printmaking technique, lithography, which requires a lithographic press. He also runs lithography workshops in museums or art centers, and is actively involved in the management of the Akiruno Artist-in-Resident program.

Artist-run print studio: Kawalabo

(see Appendix 4: Photo 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22)

In Machida City, printmakers Sachie Hirakawa and Masahiro Kawara started Kawalabo,^{ix} also known as the Kawara Printmaking Laboratory, for artists interested in doing print works. The Kawalabo studio is well equipped and offers, on a time rental basis, printmaking facilities and space at good rates, with assistance provided. Having a location near public transportation facilities and amenities in the vicinity of the Machida City Museum of Graphic Art, this studio is also ideal for short-term visiting artists.

The Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts

(see Appendix 5: Photo 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30)

Located in Serigaya Park, the Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts has quite an impressive collection of print artworks from around the world. Established in 1987, besides the archive and collection, throughout the years, the museum has a program that promotes printmaking by giving art talks and workshops, financially sponsoring and hosting student's art competitions, having thematic shows, and holding major exhibitions.^{xi} It is a lively museum, actively engaged with the printmaking community and the city's denizens.

The Japanese Paper Museum in Ino Town

(see Appendix 6: Photo 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38 and 39)

The Paper Museum in Ino Town, Kochi Prefecture is very informative and detailed in its display of Japanese paper history. It has a chronological table of the *washi*, from its past to the present, and in the second room, a comprehensive explanation and exhibit of the complete process, from the raw materials to the product—all the tools involved and the methods. There is also a workshop for handmade paper so visitors can see and also try their hands in making *washi*. At the end of the tour is a museum shop selling objects crafted out of *washi*, papers for arts and craft, brush for calligraphy, printing, painting, mounting, etc., and books on Japanese paper.

The independent handmade Japanese paper makers of Tosa province

(see Appendix 7: Photo 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50 and 51)

Handmade Japanese paper is an important cultural tradition that, in spite of modernized or factory-made productions, still plays an important role in printmaking and paper conservation.

Many of the Japanese printmakers use handmade Japanese paper for its inherent quality, beauty, and durability.

Among paper conservators, Paper Nao^{xiii} is known worldwide^{xiii} as the reliable supplier of top-quality machine made and handmade Japanese paper. Treasured for the low content of lignin^{xiv} and strength, handmade Japanese paper is also used in conservation (repair of tearing, use as backing or hinging) because the fibre of the inner bark, as compared to wood fiber, has a cellulose molecule, which resists acidity longer.

The handmade paper, *washi*, is deeply rooted in the Japanese way of life and has been very important in its cultural development. Tosa province on Shikoku Island, now Kochi Prefecture, is called the “Tosa Kingdom of Paper” and is still one of Japan's main producing centers of raw materials and handmade paper. Paper has been made in Kochi for over a thousand years. Towns such as Tosa and Ino are well known for their traditional local paper industries. There are still over 130 people engaged in making handmade paper in Kochi.^{xv}

There are also quite a number of young and independent handmade Japanese paper makers in Tosa province continuing the tradition in their small set-ups. The papermaking process is a repetition of simple labor, but every stage of work requires experience, skill, and patience.^{xvi}

Raw materials, such as the inner bark of *Kozo*, *Gampi*, *Mitsumata*, are used for Japanese paper. The material is boiled, soaked, and washed under running water for days before it is bleached in the sun. A bleaching agent is also used as an alternative to sunlight. Then the fiber has to be divested of any impurities or specks, a very tedious process, before it is beaten into pulp. The pulp stock is evenly dispersed in a tank, where mucus liquid of *Tororo-ai* is added, and it becomes ready to be screened with a *Sugeta*, one sheet at a time. Each sheet of screened paper pulp is layered upon another and this stack of paper is called *shito*. The *shito* is then pressed slowly to dehydrate before each sheet is laid on a wooden board to dry in the sun or on an iron plate if using a dryer. Using a brush, the sheet is smoothed out and the finished handmade Japanese paper is examined thoroughly, cut into a standard size and ready for use.

Website for the printmaking digital archive

(see *Appendix 8*)

One of the main goals of the research is to initiate and establish a website. The printmaking digital archive can also be seen as a platform for greater networking within the region. As a source of information, hopefully, it will in future be a conduit for future collaborations, be these academic in nature, a cultural exchange, or for the purpose of establishing connections.

A web design company has been employed to develop the site. The brief given to the designers is straightforward. The layout is user friendly and has been rationalized for easy browsing and navigation.

The web structure is divided into three main categories—pre-production, production, and post-production—with information nestled under these headings accordingly. A glossary of printmaking terminologies runs across. Currently, a listing in Japanese and English languages is available, and, in the near future, the translation in Malay and Thai will be uploaded. Types and techniques of printmaking are discussed under production.

Especially important for artists and collectors alike is how to keep and sustain the works on paper. Advice on conservation, framing, storage, and presentation are given. Artist copyright, edition numbering, and labelling of artwork are post-production sub-categories. A directory with links to art suppliers (for tools and equipment for printmaking), print studios and institutions (museums, galleries, residencies) will help in sourcing and making connections. News in the form of video, web links, or photos about exhibitions, competitions, conferences, or artists will be updated regularly.

A preview of the website was demonstrated at the 12th API Regional Workshop in Bali. The printmaking digital archive has been officially registered and has a valid web address.

Post-Bali Regional Workshop

The fieldwork and networking will continue as plans to expand and share the knowledge for the digital archive is a work-in-progress, i.e. an ongoing project. Establishing contacts between the community of artistic and academic circles, to create an active fount, and maintaining a site that can be used as a source of reference, for research and establishing regional links will be easier. Small steps in the direction of establishing a “...platform that can effectively link public policy, knowledge production, networks and action, creating and contribution towards enabling environment and people’s empowerment for social transformation in Asia that can shape Asian futures for a better world”^{xvii} will continue to proceed.

Meeting the artists and interviewing them were not difficult undertakings, as visual artists tend to network easily, sharing contacts and giving further recommendations. There are a lot of groups, involved in either specific printmaking techniques or in private studios that are quite active in announcing exhibitions or print competitions on social networking sites such as Facebook or tumblr. Be it regional or international, the sites usually have a page in English.

Touching on social activism at a smaller/marginalized communal level, the now disbanded Taring Padi (artist) group from Yogyakarta was famous for using woodcut or linoleum prints to raise awareness about social and human rights’ issues. Artists/activists such as Pangrok Sulap^{xviii} in Ranau, a village at the foot of Mount Kinabalu in Sabah, in a similar mold, utilize woodcut prints to make posters (and t-shirts) with motifs of environmental degradation and deforestation (for palm oil plantations). Working within their own community, the group would put up ad-hoc exhibitions or printing workshops.

The digital archive could be a platform to link these pockets of “smaller” collective of artists/activist regionally. Gleanings from other printmakers’ websites or postings reveal quite a number of

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similar collaborations and if there could be an exchange of knowledge about the projects, activities or modus operandi, that would be beneficial. The archive as an open and accessible repository would hopefully grow into a civic space in a larger digital context, and continue to evolve as a useful collection of artistic, technical, and practical information that could be built upon.

To quote Dr. Farish A. Noor “Culture tends to become fixed and unchanging when defined by national or geographical borders. Yet the imaginative and transformative power of cultural production can force us to think beyond closed frontiers.”^{xix}

APPENDICES

Appendix 1:

Akiruno Artist-in-Residence Program



Photo 1: Shared studio space with individual worktables, storage facilities and paper drying rack at Akiruno artist residency for printmakers



Photo 2: Etching and lithographic presses at the Akiruno artist residency studio



Photo 3: Motorized etching press at Akiruno artist residency studio

Photo 4: Shared living room, dining and kitchen area at Akiruno artist residency studio



Appendix 2:

Musashino Art University



Photo 5 & 6: Printmaking students at the Musashino Art University; (left) carving plywood panels for woodcut printing technique and (right) etching the image onto the hard liquid ground covered copper plate for the intaglio technique



Photo 7: Student showing her work-in-progress of woodcut print on paper; in the background the large format print works on paper are suspended from a hanging line to dry



Photo 8: Student using the lithography print technique is seen here coating a large lithograph stone (limestone) on a litho press, in the foreground a leather litho roller for inking the slab



Photo 9 & 10: (left) An aquatint box and (right) a vented acid solution bath at the printmaking studio. The set up of studios and workshops at Musashino Art University adhere to a high level of safety and health standard guidelines



Photo 11: Individual tutorial sessions for the students in one of the printmaking studios at Musashino Art University



Photo 12: Artist Toshiya Takabama (API Fellow Year 5) and also professor at the Printmaking Division, Department of Painting, Musashino Art University standing beside a very large mechanised printing press at the university's printmaking studio

Appendix 3:

A printmaker studio; Hideki Kondo



Photo 13: Lithographic press at the studio of artist and printmaker Hideki Kondo; the floor of his studio is structurally reinforced from beneath to support weight of the press



Photo 14: Cleaning solutions, sponges, and materials for the lithographic printmaking process at Hideki Kondo's studio

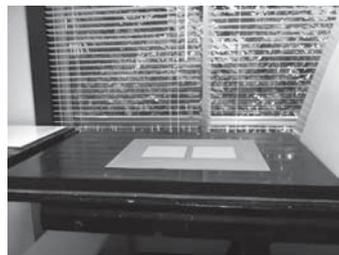


Photo 15: Edition printing of lithographic works at Hideki Kondo's studio in Machida City



Photo 16: Editions of Hideki Kondo's lithographic print works (on Japanese paper) left to dry

Appendix 4:

Artist-run print studio; Kawalabo

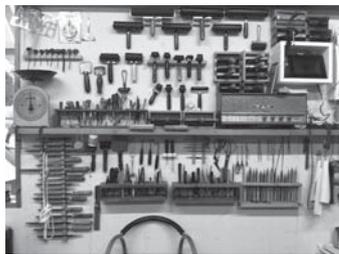


Photo 17: Printmaking tools and equipment at Kawalabo; gouges, chisels, ink rollers, scrapers, metal files, etc.



Photo 18: Intaglio printmaking tools at Kawalabo; engraving needles, scrapers, burnishers, mezzotint rockers, roulette wheels etc.



Photo 19: Large mechanised printing press at Kawalabo, an artist-run studio in Machida City.



Photo 20: Printing area at Kawalabo; which is well equipped for the different printmaking techniques



Photo 21: Worktable set-up and paper storage area at Kawalabo



Photo 22: Information about the operating hours of Kawalabo at the entrance

Appendix 5:

Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts



Photo 23 to 29: 'The 37th Annual Exhibition of the Association of Japanese Art Colleges' at Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts in December 2012



Photo 24: Visitors viewing the exhibition at Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts of print artworks by students



Photo 25: The print artworks by students displayed at the exhibition are submissions for an annual competition held at Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts



Photo 26: The variety of techniques and styles of printmaking by students from 57 Japanese art colleges on display at Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts



Photo 27: There were over 500 print works on display at the exhibition of the student competition hosted by Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts



Photo 28: The winners will be given prize money and their artwork will go into the collection of Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts



Photo 29: The annual exhibition is in its 37th year and since 2005, CWAJ (Canadian Woman Association of Japan) added another major prize to the student print competition



Photo 30: Announcement of a selection of thirty winners of the annual print competition at Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts

Appendix 6:
Japanese Paper Museum, Ino Town

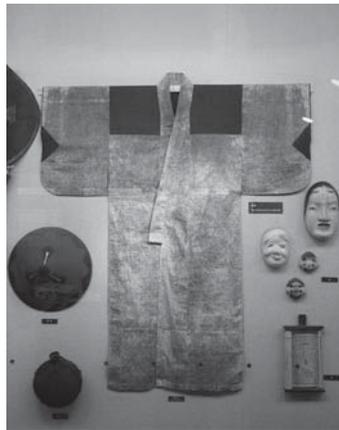


Photo 31 & 32: Display at Japanese Paper Museum in Ino Town; (left) kimono, masks, and beadwear made out of Japanese paper and (right) the step-by-step documentation of making a screen for the papermaking procedure



Photo 33: Japanese paper making tools on display at the Japanese Paper Museum in Ino Town



Photo 34: Large vat to boil the tree barks in the Japanese papermaking process



Photo 35 & 36: Display at Japanese Paper Museum in Ino Town; (left) bunches of dried inner tree barks for papermaking and (right) the different format and texture of Japanese papers

Photo 37 & 38: Demonstration of papermaking is given at the museum workshop (left) and (right) layers of Japanese paper after it is taken off from the screen. Each piece will be left to dry in the sun on large wooden board

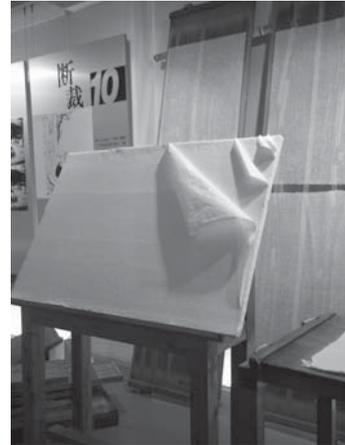


Photo 39: Head of the Japanese Paper Museum in Ino Town proudly showing the transparency of the thinnest handmade Japanese paper

Appendix 7:

Independent handmade Japanese paper makers of Tosa province



Photo 40 & 41: Ryoji Tamura makes Japanese paper out of Gampi fibres



Photo 42: A dried bunch of Gampi fibres before soaking and speck removal in Ryoji Tamura's papermaking studio



Photo 43: Soaking Gampi fibres before the tedious speck removal process



Photo 44: Kozo, a low growth deciduous tree of the mulberry family, cultivated by Hiroshi Tamura for his handmade Japanese papermaking production



Photo 45: The neighbour, a charcoal maker, waiting outside a kiln just beside Hiroshi Tamura's Kozo papermaking studio in Tosa valley



Photo 47: Boiling the raw material of Kozo fibres in a cauldron

Photo 46: Hiroshi Tamura besides the vat to steam Kozo fibre outside of his papermaking studio



Photo 48: A large sink with the Kozo pulp stock ready to be scooped onto a screen to form the sheet of Japanese paper



Photo 49: Neri, found in the root of Tororo-ai for example, is added to the Kozo pulp stock to help in dispersing the fibre better

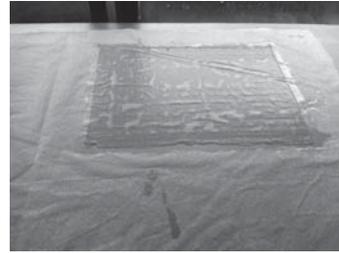


Photo 50: Another drying method is to lay out the freshly made wet sheet of Japanese paper onto an absorbent material on the steel surface of a triangular steam dryer

Appendix 8:

Web site scheme for the printmaking digital archive

Pre Production	Production	Post Production
Equipment Tools	Types or techniques	Artist Copyright Edition numbering Labelling
Paper		Conservation Framing Storage Passé-partout Exhibit
Glossary of printmaking terminologies: Japanese, English; to be expanded into other languages	Glossary of printmaking terminologies: Japanese, English; to be expanded into other languages	Glossary of printmaking terminologies: Japanese, English; to be expanded into other languages

Directory

Suppliers	Institutions Museums Residencies Groups Art schools & universities Galleries Collections
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News

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Exhibitions Competitions Printmaker groups Artists links	Image Video Link
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Table 1

Brief for the Web designer & developer:

- Can be updated from anywhere
- Compatibility for smart phones, tablets & computer screens
- Simple & user-friendly in layout & navigation
- Suitable font
- Registration of name & address of website
- Colour-coded
- E-mail; for feedbacks or inquiries
- A search button
- Regular update in the area of news with images, videos, links to keep 'interest' of target audience

Appendix 9:

Printmaking Digital Archive (PDA) Web site template

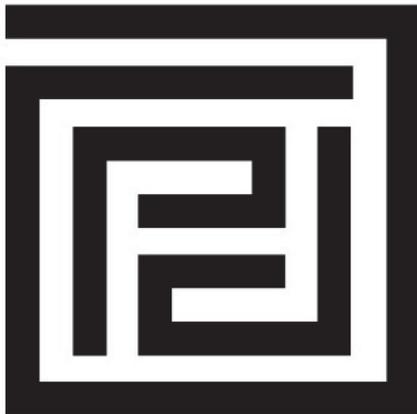


Image 1: Logo of the Printmaking Digital Archive is a labyrinth of the acronym PDA

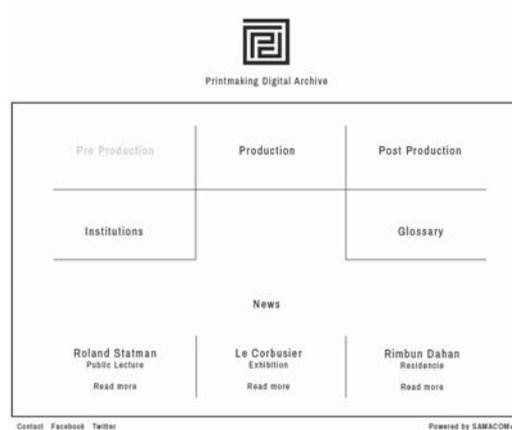


Image 2: Home page of the Printmaking Digital Archive

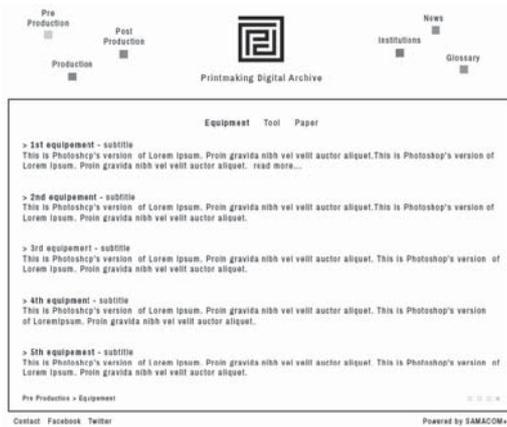


Image 3: Colour coded categories of the Printmaking Digital Archive



Image 4: Under the Pre Production category an example of the sub-category; Equipment page of the Printmaking Digital Archive, temporarily with dumb text



Image 5: Equipment page, temporarily with dumb text, of the Printmaking Digital Archive

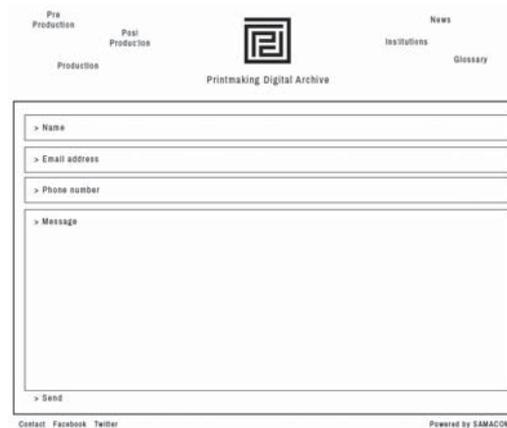


Image 6: Contact page for feedbacks, inquiries and suggestions for links or postings

NOTES

ⁱ “Homepage,” *Akiruno City Hall*, accessed December 3, 2012, www.city.akiruno.tokyo.jp.

ⁱⁱ “Printmaking Artists and Residency,” *Akiruno City Hall*, accessed December 3, 2012, www.city.akiruno.tokyo.jp/contents_detail.php?frmId=3370.

ⁱⁱⁱ “Homepage,” *Musashino Art University*, accessed April 22, 2014, www.musabi.ac.jp/english/.

^{iv} “Musashino Art University” (brochure, 2011).

^v “Musashino Art University 2012-2013” (handbook, 2012).

^{vi} “Homepage,” Musashino Art University Museum & Library, accessed April 22, 2014, mauml.musabi.ac.jp/en/.

^{vii} “The Exhibition of Digital Archive V: Rare Books of Musashino Art University Museum & Library,” Musashino Art University Museum & Library, accessed April 22, 2014, mauml.musabi.ac.jp/museum/archives/1459.

^{viii} Hideki Kondo, 近藤英樹 *Works: Lithographs / Sculpture* (blog), April 22, 2014, hidekikondo-works.blogspot.com.

^{ix} “Homepage,” Kawalabo! Kawara Printmaking Laboratory, accessed April 24, 2014, kawalabo2010.web.fc2.com/kawalabo/access.html.

^x “Basic Information,” *Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts*, accessed April 24, 2014, hanga-museum.jp/English.

^{xi} From October 6-25, November 2012 it held a ‘blockbuster’ travelling exhibition ‘Hokusai and Hiroshige: the Competing Landscapes of Edo’

^{xii} “Home,” *PAPERNAO*, April 25, 2014, www.paperna.com.

^{xiii} “PAPER NAO Japanese paper, handcrafted,” GMW, accessed April 25, 2014, www.gmw-shop.de/shop-uk/

japanpapier---repatex/paper-nao-japanpapiere-handgeschoepft/index.php.

^{xiv} A paper free of lignin is appropriate for conservation.

^{xv} “Japanese Paper Museum Ino Town” (brochure, 2012).

^{xvi} Taken from ‘Handbook on the Art of Washi’ printed by the All Japan Handmade Washi Association

^{xvii} Tatsuya Tanami (Tatsuya, Tanami. Presentation at the API Fellowships Country Workshop 2013, Subang Jaya, Malaysia, October 6, 2013).

^{xviii} Pangrok Sulap has a community page on Facebook.

^{xix} Farish A. Noor, “Can we be less ‘Asian’? Asian Performance Art Beyond the Nation-State” (presentation, Association of Asia Pacific Performing Arts Centres Singapore Conference 2014, April 28-30, 2014).

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Hideki Kondo, 近藤英樹 *Works: Lithographs / Sculpture* (blog), April 22, 2014, hidekikondo-works.blogspot.com.

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“Home,” *Kawalabo! Kawara Printmaking Laboratory*, accessed April 24, 2014, kawalabo2010.web.fc2.com/kawalabo/access.html.

“Home,” *Musashino Art University*, accessed April 22, 2014, www.musabi.ac.jp/english/.

“Home,” *Musashino Art University Museum & Library*, accessed April 22, 2014, mauml.musabi.ac.jp/en/.

“Home,” *PAPER NAO*, April 25, 2014, www.papernao.com.

“Japanese Paper Museum Ino Town” Brochure, 2012.

“Musashino Art University” Brochure, 2011.

“Musashino Art University 2012-2013” Handbook, 2012.

Noor, Farish A. “Can we be less “Asian”? Asian Performance Art Beyond the Nation-State.” Presentation at the Association of Asia Pacific Performing Arts Centres Singapore Conference 2014, April 28-30, 2014.

“PAPER NAO Japanese paper, handcrafted,” *GMW*, accessed April 25, 2014, www.gmw-shop.de/shop-uk/japanpapier---repatex/paper-nao-japanpapiere-handgeschoepft/index.php.

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Tatsuya, Tanami. Presentation at the API Fellowships Country Workshop 2013, Subang Jaya, Malaysia, October 6, 2013.

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