

Washi Transformed: New Expressions in Japanese Paper



October 4th, 2025 - January 11th, 2026
Exhibition, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts

Washi ("Japanese paper"), a 1,000-year-old cultural cornerstone of Japan, blends traditional production with innovation. Valued for strong natural fibers, translucency and malleability, it traditionally served calligraphy, painting and printmaking. Modified via oiling or lacquering, it now spans architecture, fashion and art, thanks to Japanese artists who craft textured art, sculptures and installations. The exhibition "Washi Transformed: New Expressions in Japanese Paper" showcases 30+ works by 9 artists, highlighting washi's vast potential and its role in connecting past, present and global cultures.



Takeout Tuesdays: Diwali

Monday, November 3rd, 3 p.m. (noon PST)

Online Talks, Asian Art Museum

[Registration required](#)

“Take out” a taste of art! Join museum docents and fellow art lovers for interactive lunchtime encounters with selected artworks from the collection. Gathering on Zoom to look closely at compelling works using high-resolution images and uncover fun facts. Each weekly session explores a different topic; unmute to join the conversation.

When AI Meets Chinese Language Teaching: How Teachers Can Thrive in the New Era

Monday, November 3rd, 3:30 - 5 p.m.

Guest Lecture, Timothy Light Center for Chinese Studies,
WMU [Free registration](#)

Will AI replace or empower teachers? Generative AI is reshaping students' writing, speaking, and real - world communication prep. Dr. Shi's experiments show AI aids Chinese learning but brings challenges. The key is guiding students to use AI productively with integrity. This talk shares insights, practical AI tools, and strategies, helping attendees integrate AI and understand evolving teacher roles.

When AI Meets Chinese Language Teaching: How Teachers Can Thrive in the New Era
Dr. Zhongshi Shi
Columbia University

3:30 - 5 p.m. EDT, Monday, November 3, 2025
2025 Green Hall

Please join us for this talk, co-sponsored by the Timothy Light Center for Chinese Studies.

Free registration at [https://www.wmu.edu/zhongshi](#)

For more information, contact: 2686-587-5858, light@wmu.edu, <http://www.wmu.edu/light>

Abstract: With AI replacing teachers, is this a disaster? This talk will explore the challenges and opportunities of AI in teaching Chinese language, and explore the role of teachers in the future. The talk will focus on the role of teachers in the future, and the role of AI in teaching Chinese language. The talk will explore the challenges and opportunities of AI in teaching Chinese language, and explore the role of teachers in the future. The talk will focus on the role of teachers in the future, and the role of AI in teaching Chinese language.



[The Highest Exam — How China's Gaokao Shapes a Nation](#)

Tuesday, November 4th, 10 - 11 a.m.

Panel Discussion, Asian Society Policy Institute

[Registration required](#)

China's Gaokao, the national college entrance exam, is taken by over 10 million students yearly. This crucial academic milestone decides not only their university admission but also access to jobs, housing, healthcare, and social mobility.

This program will bring Jia (UC San Diego Economics Prof), Li (Stanford China Economy Center Co-Director), and Jennifer Choo (China Analysis Research Director) together to discuss how China's education system reflects and shapes its society, and global lessons from the "highest exam."



[Eat and Celebrate](#)

Tuesday, November 4th, 1 – 2 p.m.

[Registration required](#)

Tuesday, November 18th, 3 – 4 p.m.

[Registration required](#)

Virtual Tour, Asian Art Museum

Investigate works of art across Asia to discover how people past and present celebrated through food and rituals. Learn about what foods are eaten in different cultures and the special meanings these cuisines have.

[Artificial Intelligence and the Complexities of Love and Creativity in Ishiguro's Klara and the Sun](#)

Wednesday, November 5th, 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Lecture, Western Michigan University



This talk explores how Kazuo Ishiguro's novel Klara and the Sun helps us think about the ethics of artificial intelligence and other technological advances in relation to the perennial philosophical question of what it means to be human. It examines three of the ways the novel explores this question. The first involves narrative and identity: how we tell our stories to ourselves. The second involves love: how our words, stories and conversations foster complex relationships. The third involves Ishiguro's subtle metafictional meanings: how we are driven to make and learn from art and creative representations of ourselves.



[Streaming Samurai: Historical Japan in Contemporary Media](#)

Thursday, November 6th, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Guest Lecture, Soga Japan Center, WMU

Although the age of samurai ended more than 150 years ago, medieval Japanese warriors continue to fascinate people today as characters in video games, movies and on television. This talk analyzes the depiction of samurai in three recent streaming shows: “Shōgun” (2024), “Blue Eye Samurai” (2023) and “Age of Samurai” (2021). Can they promote historical understanding while conveying entertaining stories? How do they balance accuracy with viewer expectations?

[Made of Paper](#)

Friday, November 7th, 11 – 11:45 a.m.

In-person event, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts

[Preregistration is encouraged](#)



Join us for a guided walk through Washi Transformed: New Expressions in Japanese Paper, with interactive activities along the way. This exhibition features two-dimensional works, sculptures, and installations. Discover the remarkable ways nine Japanese artists transform paper into art.



[Washi Collage with Collage Crew Kzoo](#)

Friday, November 7th, 5 – 8 p.m.

In-person event, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts

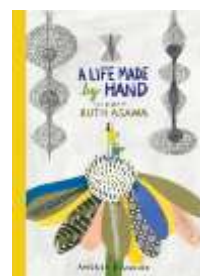
Come to the library and express yourself through collage with a sampling of washi paper, a traditional Japanese handmade paper. Some washi paper and tape will be provided to incorporate into your pieces. Be inspired by the exhibition on view, Washi Transformed: New Expressions in Japanese Paper. All supplies will be provided.

[Art Detectives: A Life Made by Hand: The Story of Ruth Asawa by Andrea D’Aquino](#)

Saturday, November 8th, 10:30 a.m. – noon

Program for Children, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts

[Preregistration is encouraged](#)



Participants will learn about Japanese American artist Ruth Asawa.

We’ll explore the exhibition *Washi Transformed: New Expressions in Japanese Paper*. Michiko Yoshimoto from the WMU Soga Japan Center will join us to guide an origami activity.

Art Detectives is a free program for children 4-8 years old (but all ages are welcome). Join us as we read a story, look at art, and make a project to take home. Caregivers must stay with their children at all times. This is a free program; preregistration is encouraged. Adults, remember to register your children!



[Washi Community Day](#)

Saturday, November 8th, 11 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

In-person event, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts

Join us for a paper-inspired Community Day! Explore the exhibition *Washi Transformed: New Expressions in Japanese Paper*. After viewing the exhibition, get creative with members from the WMU Soga Japan Center who will guide you through origami folding and Japanese calligraphy. You can also join the Collage Crew Kzoo in the library for a collage-making session.

[Relax and Meditate with Tai Chi](#)

Saturday, November 8th, 11 a.m. – noon

Culture Event, Kalamazoo Public Library, Oshtemo

Branch [Registration required](#)



Join us for an introduction to Tai Chi, presented by Asian Initiatives of Western Michigan University. Learn basic moves that you can do at home!



[Takeout Tuesdays: Island of Gold: Indonesian Body Ornaments](#)

Tuesday, November 11th, 3 p.m. (noon PST)

Online Talks, Asian Art Museum

[Registration required](#)

[Takeout Tuesdays: 1000 Compassionate Hands](#)

Tuesday, November 18th, 3 p.m. (noon PST)

Online Talks, Asian Art Museum

[Registration required](#)



[Meditation and Mindfulness](#)

Each Tuesday and Friday, Noon - 12:45 p.m.

Online Workshops, Asian Art Museum

[Registration required](#)



Meditation helps us build a relationship to a place of inner quietude. Whether you're a beginner or a skilled practitioner, join us for free online meditation sessions each week led by DC-based meditation teachers on Tuesdays and Fridays. Friday sessions take inspiration from art in our museum's collections. All are welcome! No previous experience is required.