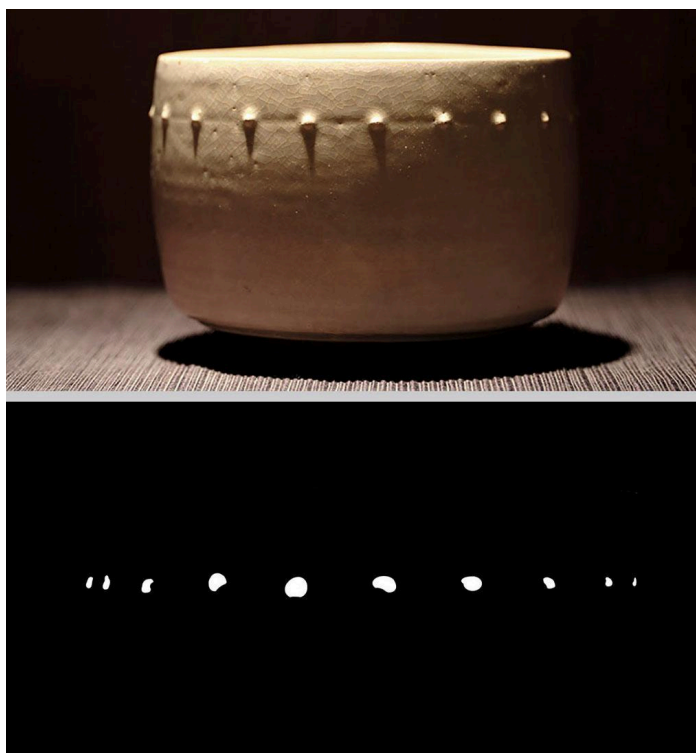


Asia Week New York Preview: Exploring Photography from Tradition to Innovation

Panel Discussion on Asian Influences and Contemporary Practice on March 12



NEW YORK, NY — March 3, 2026 — Asia Week New York invites art enthusiasts and collectors to an exclusive preview event on Thursday, March 12, 2026. In partnership with the SIGMA Foundation, this special event will feature a distinguished panel of artists, a curator, and an industry expert discussing the evolution of photographic practice—from its historical roots to today's bold contemporary expressions. The event marks the official kickoff of Asia Week New York, running March 19–27, 2026, a week-long celebration of Asian art, culture, and creativity, offering attendees an inspiring first look at the programs and exhibitions ahead.

The Art and Craft of Photography: From Asian Traditions to Contemporary Practice will explore how photography has developed over time, highlighting the influence of Japanese and broader Asian traditions on modern work and its significance in the global art scene. Panelists will examine the dynamic interplay between tradition and experimentation, the impact of technological innovation on artistic vision, and the curatorial opportunities and challenges of presenting Japanese photography to international audiences. Covering postwar photo

narratives through contemporary abstraction, the discussion promises to illuminate the ongoing dialogue between history, craft, and creative reinvention.

About the Distinguished Panel:

Gen Aihara is a Japanese photographer whose work investigates the interplay of materiality, light, and abstraction. Working primarily with photograms—one of photography’s earliest processes—Aihara creates images by placing and manipulating elements such as water directly on photosensitive paper and exposing them to light. Rooted in historic photographic techniques, his practice bridges past and present, transforming analog methods into a contemporary visual language. In addition to his own artistic practice, Aihara serves as production and installation manager for Hiroshi Sugimoto. This dual perspective informs his work, blending deep technical expertise with a visionary approach to contemporary photography.

Maggie Mustard is Assistant Curator of Photography in the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints, and Photographs at The New York Public Library. An educator, curator, and art historian, she earned her PhD in Art History and Archaeology from Columbia University, focusing on memory and photographic representation in the work of Japanese postwar photographer Kawada Kikuji. Previously, she served as Chief Curatorial Advisor for *The Incomplete Araki: Sex, Life, and Death in the Works of Nobuyoshi Araki*, was the Marcia Tucker Senior Research Fellow at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, and Visiting Assistant Professor at Wesleyan University. Her recent curated exhibitions at NYPL include *New York Subways 1977: Alen MacWeeney* and *The Awe of the Arctic: A Visual History*.

Kazuto Yamaki is the Founder of the SIGMA Foundation and CEO of SIGMA Corporation. Born in Tokyo, he joined SIGMA in 1993 after graduating from Sophia University Graduate School. He became Corporate Planning Director in 2000, Executive Vice President in 2003, and President of the Corporation in 2005, later assuming the role of Executive Officer in 2012.

Eric Zetterquist is an artist who draws on the millennium-old Chinese tradition of painting portraits of art objects to celebrate their beauty and the accomplishments of collectors. Following this practice, he creates portraits of Asian ceramics dating from 2500 B.C. to 1400 A.D., isolating forms and emphasizing the negative space they create. His large-scale, black-and-white images with “painterly” edges and matte textured surfaces evoke Asian calligraphy and offer what he calls “warm minimalist” abstractions. Not merely photographs of objects, Zetterquist’s work challenge viewers to explore concepts of form and negative space in both ancient and contemporary contexts, and remind us that we are part of a human chain that stretches back through the millennia, whose core values of beauty and artistic integrity are stalwart.

About Asia Week New York

About Asia Week New York Asia Week New York is a nine-day celebration, bringing together top-tier international Asian art galleries, the six major auction houses, 27 museums, and Asian cultural institutions. It features simultaneous gallery open houses, Asian art auctions, museum exhibitions, lectures, and special events. Participants from the United Kingdom, Japan, and the United States unveil an extraordinary array of museum-quality treasures from China, India, the Himalayas, Southeast Asia, Tibet, Nepal, Japan, and Korea. Asia Week New York Association, Inc. is a 501(c)(6) non-profit trade membership organization registered with the state of New York.

About SIGMA Foundation

The Sigma Foundation was founded by Kazuto Yamaki, president of Sigma Corporation, to support and promote photography as an art form. Sigma is a Japanese manufacturer of photographic lenses and cameras. A deep respect for the arts guides Sigma's engineering, as the company continues to develop and innovate products that support the passion of artists. As part of their commitment to supporting the arts, Sigma Foundation collaborates with artists from around the world to produce and showcase their work, regardless of whether they use Sigma products.

Caption

Thanh Hoa Whiteware Bowl, Ly-Tran Dynasty, 13th-14th c., Vietnam, 60 x 120 cm. Copyright Eric J. Zetterquist, 2021

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