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Announcement of 2024–2025 Sōshitsu Sen XV Distinguished Lecture on Japanese Culture

The Donald Keene Center of Japanese Culture at Columbia University in the City of New York announces the 2024–2025 Sōshitsu Sen XV Distinguished Lecture on Japanese Culture.

***Etoki* (Picture-Storytellers) from Japan Performance and Music by Yamaoka Bumyō, Masuda Eishin, and Nagino Akihito, With Hanging Scrolls of the Life of Prince Shōtoku**

Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at the Forum at Columbia University

A thousand-year-old tradition of *etoki* (picture-storytelling) will be presented in North America for the first time, with three *etoki* masters, who will present the life of Prince Shōtoku, the legendary founder of Buddhism in Japan. The event begins with the oldest tradition of picture-telling, transmitted at the Shitennōji Temple, which was established by Prince Shōtoku himself. Next is a performance of “super-*etoki*,” incorporating new media. Last is a performance with the traditional *biwa* (lute). Fourteen hanging scrolls of *The Life of Prince Shōtoku* will be exhibited at the venue.

The “Sen” Lecture will be held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at the Forum at Columbia University, which is located at 605 West 125th Street, New York, New York 10025. The exhibition of Prince Shōtoku Paintings opens at 5 PM EDT, and the main performance starts at 6 PM EDT.

This event is free and open to the public; pre-registration is required at www.keenecenter.org. Members of the media are invited and should contact donald-keene-center@columbia.edu for a press kit.

About the Sōshitsu Sen XV Distinguished Lecture on Japanese Culture

The Sōshitsu Sen XV Distinguished Lecture on Japanese Culture was established in 1988 by an endowment from the Urasenke Foundation of Kyoto, Japan, and named in honor of Sōshitsu Sen XV, the former Grand Master (Iemoto) of the Urasenke School of Tea. This public lecture series is held annually at Columbia University, in order to expand awareness and understanding of Japanese culture. Past lectures include Toru Takemitsu, Shiba Ryōtarō, Setouchi Jakucho, Shigeru Ban, Mizumura Minae, George Takei, Ruth Ozeki, and Naomi Watanabe.

About the Donald Keene Center of Japanese Culture

Founded in 1986 at Columbia University, the Donald Keene Center of Japanese Culture (DKC) is named in honor of Professor Donald Keene, internationally renowned scholar, Columbia University teacher, and interpreter of Japanese literature and culture to the West. The Center is dedicated to advancing the understanding of Japan and its culture through university instruction, research, and public events.

Contact:

Yoshiko Niiya, Assistant Director

Donald Keene Center of Japanese Culture

1-212-854-5036 / donald-keene-center@columbia.edu

<http://www.keenecenter.org>

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