

# Travis Seifman

Art Research Center, Ritsumeikan University  
56-1 Toji-in Kitamachi, Kita-ku, Kyoto 603-8577 JAPAN  
〒603-8577 京都市北区等持院北町 56-1 立命館大学アート・リサーチセンター  
seifman@fc.ritsumeai.ac.jp

**EMPLOYMENT:** **Associate Professor / Project Manager**, *Art Research Center, Ritsumeikan University, 4/23-present*

**Project Researcher**, *University of Tokyo Historiographical Institute (Shiryōhensanjo), 9/19-3/23*

**Lecturer**, *Sophia University, 4/21-8/21, 4/23-8/23*  
Topics in History: History of Okinawa

**Teaching Associate**, *UC Santa Barbara, 6/16-7/16*  
Japan under the Tokugawa Shoguns

**Teaching Assistant**, *UC Santa Barbara, 9/15-3/16*  
Academic Writing

**Teaching Assistant**, *UC Santa Barbara, 9/12-6/15*  
World History 1000-1700; Japanese History through Art & Lit.;  
East Asian Traditions (Premodern); East Asian Civilization;  
Western Civilization (1000-1700); Western Civ. (1700-present);  
African History (1945-present)

**Graduate Assistant**, *University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, 9/11-5/12*  
Global Survey of Art History

## EDUCATION:

### **University of California, Santa Barbara**

PhD, History, June 2019

Dissertation: “Performing ‘Lūchū’: Identity Performance and Foreign Relations in Early Modern East Asia”  
(Luke Roberts)

### **University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa**

MA Art History, May 2012

Thesis: “Pictures of an Island Kingdom: Depictions of Ryūkyū in Early Modern Japan” (John Szostak)

### **School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London**

MA Japanese Studies (History focus), Sept. 2007

Thesis: “Seals of Red and Letters of Gold: Japanese Relations with Southeast Asia in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century” (Angus Lockyer)

**Brandeis University**

BA History & East Asian Studies, May 2004

Study Abroad: Sophia University (CIEE), Tokyo, Spring 2003

- PUBLICATIONS:** “Displaying Foreignness for Prestige: Lūchūan Embassy Processions in Early Modern Japan, 1644-1850,” in Richard Morris (ed.), *Crossing Boundaries: Festival and Diplomatic Encounters in the Early Modern World*, Brepols Publishing (forthcoming)
- “A Real Thing that Exists Only in Shuri: Ryukyuan Arts Traditions & Memory at Shurijo Castle Park” in Alison Miller and Eunyoung Park, (eds.), *Transposed Memory: Visual Sites of National Recollection in Twentieth and Twenty-first Century East Asia*, Brill (Feb 2024)
- “Exhibition Review: “Portraits of Ryukyu”” (*Ryūkyū no yokogao* contemporary art exhibition, Okinawa Prefectural Art Museum (Nov 2021-Jan 2022)), in *Critical Asian Studies* 54:4 (Dec 2022).
- “Nihonmachi in Southeast Asia in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Centuries,” in Gary Leupp and Tao Demin (eds.), *Tokugawa World*, Routledge (2021)
- “Hokusai’s ‘Eight Views of Ryūkyū’: Islands of Imagination,” in *Andon* 106 (Dec 2018).
- “Seals of Red and Letters of Gold: Japanese Relations with Southeast Asia in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century” *Explorations* (UH Graduate Student Journal of Southeast Asian Studies), Spring 2010, 5-22.
- BOOK REVIEWS:** Review of Gregory Smits, *Maritime Ryukyu, 1050-1650* (University of Hawai‘i Press, 2019), *Japanese Studies* 40:3 (Sept 2020)
- PUBLISHED TRANSLATIONS:** Kyan Chie and Taira Yūki, “Research Report on the Current Status and Prospects for Nineteenth-Century Ryukyuan Paintings on Wooden Doors in the Historic Miyara dunchi House,” *Journal of Asian Humanities at Kyushu University (JAH-Q)*, vol. 6 (2021), 113-127.
- NON-ACADEMIC** “The loss of Shuri castle is a devastating blow for the people of

**PUBLICATIONS:** Okinawa,” *Apollo: The International Art Magazine*, 5 Nov 2019.

**MEDIA** News Briefs, Channel News Asia (CAN), 31 Oct 2019

**APPEARANCES:** (discussing fire at Shuri castle, Okinawa, that day)

“Shuri castle on the Record,” Japan on the Record podcast,  
12 Feb 2020. <https://share.transistor.fm/s/42993688>

**SELECTED  
ACADEMIC  
HONORS:**

**Early Modern Japan Network AAS Conference Award**

Funding attendance and paper presentation at the annual  
Association for Asian Studies conference, March 2019

**Graduate Division Dissertation Fellowship (UCSB) (2018)**

Funding continued dissertation research, Fall 2018

**Humanities & Social Sciences Research Grant (2018)**

Funding brief dissertation research overseas, Summer 2018

**UCSB History Department Research Travel Grant (2018)**

Funding brief dissertation research overseas, Summer 2018

**UCSB History Department Dissertation Fellowship (2018)**

Funding continued dissertation work, Winter 2018, Winter 2019

**Interdisciplinary Humanities Center (UCSB) Pre-Doctoral  
Fellowship (2017)**

Funding continued dissertation research, Fall 2017

**Japan Foundation Japanese Studies Fellowship (2016-2017)**

Funding dissertation research for 11-month residency at University  
of the Ryukyus & University of Tokyo, Fall 2016 – Summer 2017

**National Museum of Japanese History / Graduate University  
for Advanced Studies Grant (Summer 2013)**

Funded research at the museum/graduate university in Japan as  
part of a partnership between that institution and U. of Hawai‘i

**East-West Center Assoc. Alumni Scholarship (2010-11)**

Scholarship awarded to University of Hawai‘i graduate students  
specializing in Asia-Pacific topics. Provides for residence at the  
East-West Center and involvement in the EWC scholarly  
community

**Center for Japanese Studies Graduate Fellowship (2010-11)**

Scholarship awarded to University of Hawai'i graduate students specializing in Japanese Studies

**LANGUAGES  
& SKILLS:**

**\*Japanese** – near fluent reading proficiency  
upper advanced conversational / writing proficiency,  
incl. reading proficiency in premodern / early modern documents

**\*Spanish** – intermediate reading ability

**\*Mandarin** – elementary level

**\*Okinawan** – elementary level

**PROFESSIONAL  
ACTIVITIES:**

***CURATORIAL:***

**Co-curator, (Freelance) *Picturing the Ryukyus: Images of Okinawa in Japanese Artworks from the UH Sakamaki/Hawley Collection, University of Hawai'i Art Gallery, 2/13***

**Intern, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 6/11-8/11**

- Handled 2,000 museum objects of various age, material, conservation status (17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> c. Japanese books)
- Photographed Pulverer Collection of Japanese books for online publication

**Gallery Intern, Japan Society Gallery, 9/08-8/09**

**Curatorial Intern, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 12/05-8/06**

***EVENT ORGANIZATION:***

“Networks and Negotiations: UCSB Graduate Student Conference on Premodern Japan,” co-organizer (with K. Saltzman-Li and E. Simpson), February 12-13, 2016

“Love, Peace, Dreams, and Bombs,” collaborative art exhibition / panel discussion, co-organizer (with Y. Glover, C. Gabrielson, N. Matsushima, and C. Raymond), February 26 – March 4, 2017

**PROFESSIONAL  
SERVICE:**

History Graduate Student Association (HGSA), UCSB  
Vice President (2014-2016)

Graduate Student Association (GSA), UCSB  
History department representative (2013-2016)

**ADDITIONAL  
AFFILIATIONS:**

Okinawa Prefectural University of the Arts  
Institute of Okinawan Arts and Culture  
Research Affiliate 共同研究員, 2019-present

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:** Association for Asian Studies (AAS)  
Japan Art History Forum (JAHF)  
Premodern Japanese Studies (PMJS)  
Early Modern Japan Network (EMJNet)  
Modern Japan History Association (MJHA)  
Okinawa Bunka Kyōkai (Assoc. of Okinawa Culture [Studies])  
Ryūkyū Okinawa Rekishi Gakkai (Ryukyu Okinawa History Ass.)

**SELECTED CONFERENCE PAPERS:** “Photography by Terada Kento: Challenging, Imagining, and Performing Gender,” Association for Asian Studies AAS-in-Asia conference, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 9 July 2024.

“Communication and Cooperation: Logistical Coordination between Seto Inland Sea Towns for the Passage of the Ryukyu Kingdom’s 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century Embassies to Edo,” Association for Asian Studies (AAS) annual conference, Seattle WA, 16 Mar 2024.

「近世琉球使節のビジュアル・マテリアル・パフォーマンス文化における数点」 (“Visual, Material, and Performance Culture Aspects of the Ryukyu Kingdom's Embassies to Edo”), International ARC Seminar 国際 ARC セミナー, Art Research Center, Ritsumeikan University. 26 July 2023.

“Arms for Display: A Ryukyuan Lacquerware Halberd,” Archival Kismet 2023: Stuff: Thinking About Things. Online conference. 15 April 2023.

“Reaffirming Relations: Ritually Incorporating the Lūchū Kingdom into Imperial Japan,” Association for Asian Studies annual conference, Honolulu, Hawai‘i, 26 Mar 2022.

“The Ryukyu Kingdom’s Embassies to Edo as seen in Samurai Diaries,” Historians at Work Series, public lecture, IMAP/IDOC program, Kyushu University. Zoom. 20 Jan 2022.

“Introduction to the Ishin Shiryō Kōyō Database, a Chronology of Events Leading up to the Meiji Revolution,” Historians at Work Series, student session, IMAP/IDOC program, Kyushu University. Zoom. 13 Jan 2022.

「維新史料綱要と英語圏での利用」 (“Ishin Shiryō Kōyō and its use in Anglophone scholarship”) + 「英語圏におけるペリーの琉球訪問研究：阿部正弘「琉球の儀に付応接方大意」の英

訳から」 (“Research on Perry’s visit to Ryūkyū in Anglophone scholarship: focusing on the translation into English of Abe Masahiro’s ‘Thoughts on the Matter of Ryūkyū.’ ” ) 日本史史料英訳ワークショップ第五回「琉球外国関係文書の回」 (Translation Workshop on Japanese Historical Materials, vol. 5). Historians’ Workshop, University of Tokyo. Zoom. Mar 11, 2021.

Roundtable participant, “Historical and Regional Perspectives” Heritage from the Margins? Shuri Castle and the Politics of Memory, Kyushu University. Zoom. Mar 5-6, 2021.

「首里城：ウフグシクの復元（1992年）から火災（2019年）までの意味と意義」（“Shuri Castle: Its Character and Significance from its 1992 Restoration to its 2019 Destruction”） Global Japan Studies at the University of Tokyo seminar series, Zoom. June 16, 2020.

“The Ryukyuan Embassies to Edo in Japanese Procession Scrolls” Okinawan Art in its Regional Context conference University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK, Oct 10-11, 2019

“Emulating the Central Flowering: Confucian Civilizational Rhetoric and Practice in Lūchūan Embassies to Edo” Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference Denver, CO, Mar 24, 2019

“Displaying foreignness for prestige: Luchuan embassy processions in Edo, 1644-1850” Perceiving Processions Early Modern Postgraduate Symposium The Courthauld Institute of Art, London, Nov 24, 2018

“Music and Ritual Diplomacy: Ryukyuan at the Shogun's Court” The Society for Ethnomusicology, Southern California and Hawaii Chapter (SEMSCHC) Annual Conference Pomona College, Claremont CA, Feb 24-25, 2018

「『中華』を演じる：琉球使節の江戸・北京での謁見儀礼」 "Performing the "Central Flowering": Protocols for the Ryukyu Ambassador’s Ceremonial Audiences in Edo and Beijing" USC/Meiji University Exchange University of Southern California, Los Angeles CA, Feb 8, 2018

“Okinawan Art Today,” Love, Peace, Dreams, and Bombs event, University of California, Santa Barbara, Mar 1, 2017

“The Okinawa Prefectural Museum: Native Voices or National Narrative?”

Western Museums Association Conference, Honolulu, Sep 2011