



Universität
Zürich^{UZH}

Chair in East Asian Art History

University of Zurich
Institute of Art History
Rämistrasse 73
8006 Zurich
www.khist.uzh.ch/ostasien

Zurich Lectures in East Asian Art History

November 7, 2024
18:15–19:30

University of Zurich
Rämistrasse 71
8006 Zürich
Room KOL-H-317

Rethinking Sacred Space: A Case Study of Late Chosŏn Buddhist Temples

Prof. Dr. Maya Stiller
University of Kansas





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Abstract

In this talk, Prof. Stiller calls for a considerable expansion of commonly accepted historical narratives about sacred space in pre-modern East Asia, challenging the conventional understanding of Buddhist temple halls as purely Buddhist spaces. Wall paintings as well as literary source material show that these halls functioned as transmitters of hegemonic cultural discourse, which resonates with contemporary discussions about the social and cultural influence of religious institutions. Focusing on late Chosŏn Buddhist temples as a case study, this talk proposes an expanded understanding of religious space, highlighting the roles of artisan-monks actively engaged with elite artistic trends.

Maya Stiller is an Associate Professor of Korean art history and visual culture at the University of Kansas. Based on her multi-disciplinary background in art history and Buddhist Studies she has published several journal articles on Korean pilgrimage traditions, Buddhist/Daoist art, Buddhist fundraising, and patronage networks. Her first book, *Carving Status at Kŭmgangsan* (University of Washington Press, 2021) won two book awards (American Historical Association 2022 Patricia Buckley Ebrey Prize and Association for Asian Studies 2024 James B. Palais Prize Honorable Mention). She is currently working on her second book project which discusses the multi-layered cultural and religious context of Korean Buddhist architecture.