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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Japan Society & Portland Japanese Garden Present

***The Japanese Garden:
Living Classroom of Nature, Architecture & Culture***

Inaugural Live Webinar of the *Living Traditions* Series, A Five-Part Program Designed to Examine Iconic Facets of Japanese Culture, from Ancient Roots to Modern Day

Tuesday, September 28, 7–8:15 pm EDT / 4–5:15 pm PDT



Photo credit: PJG/Michael Drewry

New York, NY (September 14, 2021)—The Japanese garden is known as a place of beauty, serenity, and contemplation. Grounded in a long tradition, it is also a holistic art form for discovery and innovation that continues to evolve through cross-pollination with other cultural modes. This live webinar explores the historical journey of one of the world's oldest land art forms and examines its evolving relevance across the globe. Experts from various creative

fields delve into how Japanese landscape design principles and aesthetics have impacted the ways in which modern society approaches art and architecture while helping mold the human relationship with nature. *This is the first of the five-part Living Traditions webinar series.*

The series is produced through an inaugural partnership between two top-tier, non-government Japanese cultural organizations – [Japan Society](#) and [Portland Japanese Garden](#). Japan Society is the premier organization connecting Japanese arts, culture, business, and society with audiences in New York and around the world. Portland Japanese Garden is a non-profit cultural organization, considered the most authentic Japanese garden outside of Japan. Both entities, while located on opposite sides of the U.S., share a common mission of inspiring people around the world to connect with each other through Japanese culture.

Agenda: Discussion and Q&A, 7:00-8:15 pm EDT / 4:00-5:15 pm PDT

Admission:

This is a free event, with advance registration required. The program will be live-streamed through [YouTube](#), and registrants will receive the viewing link by email on the event day. Participants can submit questions through YouTube during the live stream.

Speakers:

Kendall Brown (Speaker) is Professor of Asian Art History in the School of Art at California State University Long Beach. He publishes actively in several areas of Japanese art history and has curated exhibitions for museums across the country on topics ranging from woodblock prints to Art Deco. He is a leading figure in the study of Japanese gardens in North America, having published several books and various essays on the social history of these gardens. He was a co-founder and past President of the North American Japanese Garden Association.

Dana Buntrock (Speaker) is a Professor at the University of California, Berkeley's Department of Architecture. She has held the Chair of the Center for Japanese Studies and the first Tomoye Takahashi endowed chair from 2017-2020. She was selected as a Distinguished Professor of the (North American) Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture in 2018. Her work focuses on Japanese architecture and construction, starting with her first book, *Japanese Architecture as a Collaborative Process: Opportunities in a Flexible Construction Culture* (London: Spon, 2000). Her second book, *Materials and Meaning in Contemporary Japanese Architecture: Tradition and Today* (London: Routledge, 2010) covers contemporary architects drawing from Japanese traditions. Professor Buntrock has conducted fieldwork in East Asia and the U.S., supported by the US National Science Foundation, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars, and the Social Science Research Council. Her work has been translated into Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Spanish.

Dakin Hart (Speaker) is Senior Curator at The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum (Long Island City, NY). In this role, Hart oversees the Museum's exhibitions, collections, catalogue raisonné, archives, and public programming, and has the daily good

fortune of collaborating with Isamu Noguchi in absentia. His previous positions include Assistant Director at the Nasher Sculpture Center (Dallas), Artistic Director and Director of Artists in Residence at Montalvo Center for the Arts (Saratoga, CA), and Assistant to the Director of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. He has also worked as an independent curator and writer. Recent exhibitions and publications include: *Lawrence Weiner: South of the Border* (Casa Wabi, Puerto Escondido, Mexico, 2020), *Noguchi: Body-Space Devices* (The Noguchi Museum, 2019); *Akari: Sculpture by Other Means* (The Noguchi Museum, 2018-19); *Isamu Noguchi Archaic/Modern* (Smithsonian American Art Museum, exhibition and catalogue, 2016-17); *Self-Interned, 1942: Noguchi in Poston War Relocation Center* (The Noguchi Museum, 2017-18); *Tom Sachs: Tea Ceremony* (travelling, 2016-17); and *Tom Sachs: Tea Manual* (catalogue, 2016).

Aki Nakanishi (Moderator) is the Arlene Schnitzer Curator of Culture, Art, and Education at the Portland Japanese Garden. Nakanishi is a cultural leader and public diplomacy expert with two decades of experience in government relations, public communication, artistic exchanges, and cultural programming. Prior to his current position, Nakanishi served as the Cultural Affairs Specialist at the United States Embassy in Tokyo for 10 years, where he oversaw a wide spectrum of embassy involvement in cultural, creative, and educational activities while being special aide on cultural affairs to U.S. ambassadors, including Ambassadors John V. Roos and Caroline B. Kennedy. In his private capacity, Nakanishi has worked as an independent art director producing exhibitions, performing art, art fairs, and literary events, in addition to running his own nonprofit organization for regional revitalization and leadership development across Japan since 2015. Nakanishi also serves on foundation boards as Advisor to Chair, including The Ogasawara Toshiaki Memorial Foundation (Tokyo, Japan) and The Kiyoharu Art Foundation (Yamanashi, Japan).

About the *Living Traditions* Series

Many of today's most popular and newest trends are rooted in ancient Japanese tradition going back centuries, if not millennia. Through five distinct, single-topic webinars, the *Living Traditions* series unravels the historical journeys of some of the most iconic facets of Japanese culture through conversations between thought-provoking experts and cultural stewards on how they maintain deep-rooted traditions in the present day. [The Japanese Garden: Living Classroom of Nature, Architecture & Culture](#) is the inaugural event of the five-part *Living Traditions* series. Additional webinar topics will be announced and held throughout the fall season and early 2022.

About Japan Society

Japan Society is the premier organization connecting Japanese arts, culture, business, and society with audiences in New York and around the world. At Japan Society, we are inspired by the Japanese concept of *kizuna* (絆)—forging deep connections to bind people together. We are committed to telling the story of Japan while strengthening connections within New York City and building new bridges beyond. In over 100 years of work, we've inspired generations by establishing ourselves as pioneers in supporting international exchanges in arts and culture,

business and policy, as well as education between Japan and the U.S. We strive to convene important conversations on topics that bind our two countries together, champion the next generation of innovative creators, promote mutual understanding, and serve as a trusted guide for people everywhere who seek to appreciate the rich complexities and abundance of Japan more fully. From our New York headquarters, a landmark building designed by architect Junzo Yoshimura that opened to the public in 1971, we look forward to the years ahead, which will be defined by our digital and ideational impact through the *kizuna* that we build. Our future can only be enhanced by learning from our peers and engaging with our audiences, both near and afar.

This year, Japan Society is celebrating our heritage through the 50th anniversary of our landmark building with the launch of a new distinct modern logo and visual identity. The “JS” monogram is created via overlapping, interconnected lines and shapes, reinforcing the idea of *kizuna* and that Japan Society acts as a platform that connects across, cultures, people, and time.

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About Portland Japanese Garden

[Portland Japanese Garden](#) is a nonprofit organization originally founded in 1963 as a place for cross-cultural understanding following World War II. A hallmark in the City of Portland, the Garden was founded on the ideals of peace and mutual understanding between peoples and cultures. Portland Japanese Garden is considered the most authentic Japanese garden outside of Japan and offers programming that seeks to use Japanese gardens, arts, and culture as a lens for engaging diverse people and helping them transcend their differences to embrace commonalities. The Garden is a place for convening and collaborating across the community and globe, attracting nearly half a million visitors each year. Follow the Garden on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).

Living Traditions webinar series is co-presented with Portland Japanese Garden and supported by the Government of Japan. Talks+ Programs at Japan Society are generously sponsored by MUFG (Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group) and ORIX Corporation USA. Additional support is provided by an anonymous donor, the Sandy Heck Lecture Fund, and Helen and Kenneth A. Cowin.

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