



*International Symposium:*

*Rethinking the Life and Work of Nagasawa Rosetsu*

University of Zurich, Switzerland  
October 20-21, 2018

**Conference Abstract**

The Japanese painter Nagasawa Rosetsu (1754–1799) has increasingly been a source of interest during the last years from popular and academic audiences with numerous exhibitions in Japan and in the West. Rosetsu has long been a name in Western studies of Japanese art, starting with a groundbreaking exhibition at the Denver Art Museum in 1973 and the publication by Robert Moes from the same year. Presently he is represented at an outstanding exhibition at the Museum Rietberg, Zurich, that feature key works of the artists, seldom seen outside of Japan.

Rosetsu has been the center of controversy over a long time, from the different versions of his contested biography to the questions of how to interpret the artist and his work. For decades he has been relegated to a list of eccentric artists, which serves little but to obscure a serious discussion of the artist and his remarkable works. At this time of great popularity and exposure to the public in the East and the West, a rethinking of the artist and his works seems highly overdue.

For this purpose, the University of Zurich has invited the top Japanese scholars who have been working on Rosetsu over the last years. We have planned a two-day conference with presentations and discussions and are inviting both younger and more established scholars, including Professors Yasuhiro Satō and Motoaki Kōno, who has been working on Rosetsu since the 1970s. Among the younger stars in the field, we are inviting Momo Miyazaki and Hideyuki Okada who have recently changed Rosetsu scholarship in significant ways.

The aim is to gather these scholars and to have them engage with each other and pool their knowledge into meaningful discussions. The expected result of the conference is to spread wider knowledge of this outstanding artist among the scholarly community and among the public. We also hope that discoveries in the life and works of the artist will be a lasting result of this conference.