

Institute for Korean Studies Lecture Series

Gender and Socio-Economic Diversity in Korean Embroidery of the Joseon Period (1392-1910)

2020-2021

IKS
LECTURE
SERIES

Wednesday, November 18

4:00-5:30 pm

Online



Sooa Im McCormick

Cleveland Museum of Art

In the Korean Peninsula, embroidery arts flourished as commodities of luxury for ruling elites as well as sacred objects in Buddhist religious practices since the Three Kingdoms Period (57 BC–AD 668). Yet, most surviving examples are dated to the Joseon dynasty (1392-1910), a period where the division between men and women, as well as their corresponding jobs, Korean embroidery arts have been discussed conventionally as the product of women’s leisure activity. Furthermore, the distinctive aesthetic elements and artistic expressions of embroidery art from this period have been simply considered “folkcraft,” in contrast with fine or high art. This presentation explores the issues of gender and socio-economic diversity and complexity within the tradition of Korean embroidery by debunking some of existing misconceptions in the current state of the field. The exhibition ‘Gold Needles: Embroidery Arts from Korea,’ which I have curated at the Cleveland Museum of Art (from 8 March to 26 July 2020) will serve as a case study to examine the limits of the current scholarship and to build new contextual trajectories for Korean embroidery arts.

Sooa Im McCormick is Curator of Korean Art at the Cleveland Museum of Art. McCormick holds a PhD from the University of Kansas and Master’s degree from the Rutgers University. Recently, she curated the exhibition Gold Needles: Korean Embroidery Arts

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Free and open to the public

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