

Brown Bag Seminar No. 231

2026

5.20 (wed.) 12:10
12:50

12:10-12:15

◆ Introduction

12:15-12:40

◆ Seminar
(Presentation)

12:40-12:50

◆ Q&A

Online
(Zoom)Scan here for
Registration ▶▶https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_nk6YIPqKSIWFlucrYLXsmw

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Connecting Modern J-POP with the Reception of Western Music Theory in the Taisho Era



Key Words

Music

Japan and the West

Harmony

Cultural interaction

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Born in Chiba Prefecture, Hiroko Nishida is a Professor at Kyushu University's Faculty of Design. She was awarded the Acanthus Music Award in 2002 and earned her Ph.D. in 2009 from Tokyo University of the Arts, later expanding her expertise at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna. Her research encompasses music theory, Western music history, and broader music culture, including popular music and contemporary arts management. Her major publications include *Heinrich Schenker's Musical Thought: Beyond Music Analysis* (2018) and the co-edited *Modern Japan and Western Music Theory: Towards a Global History of Theory* (2025). She also co-authored "Agency in Ensemble Interaction and Rehearsal Communication" (Oxford University Press, 2021) and "Reception of Hugo Riemann's Theory of Functional Harmony in Japan" (2025), while contributing to modern music experiences through presentations such as "How do Music Streaming Services Change Japanese Popular Music?" (2023).

Today, the majority of Japanese listeners access popular music through streaming services, but how has this digital medium fundamentally transformed the structure of J-POP? This seminar explores "music theory"—a scholarly field dedicated to identifying the structural characteristics of music—with a specific focus on the harmonic theories used to analyze the chord progressions of modern hit songs. Crucially, these theoretical frameworks were not indigenous to Japan. They were only established after the Meiji and Taisho eras through the active, and often challenging, importation of Western musical systems. This session will delve into how early Japanese scholars and musicians grappled with adapting these foreign concepts into a local context. Furthermore, we will examine how Japanese music was perceived by Europeans during this transformative period, uncovering the historical interactions that continue to shape the music we listen to today.