

Stanford Program in Kyoto Course Offerings – Autumn Quarter 2026

フィールドトリップが講義時間外（平日、週末含む）にも実施される予定です。フィールドトリップも講義の一環となり、日時の確定は、学期開始後となります。

Structure and Shape: From the Middle Ages to the Present

by Professor Adrian Lew

Thursday, 3rd (13:10-14:40) & 4th (14:55-16:25)

In any trip to historical locations, it is impossible not to wonder how the magnificent and monumental buildings of the middle age were constructed without the availability of the omnipresent cranes and construction elevators of nowadays. More perplexing yet, is how the architects of yesteryear managed to design them without the understanding of structural mechanics we have today.

The course will explore some of the considerations behind these designs, and how they affected the shape of the buildings, moving through locations, from Europe to Asia, as well as through the ages, up to today's structures. In the process, we will introduce basic ideas on strength of materials and structural mechanics. We will also touch upon similar observations on the relation between shape and function in some biological structures. Classes will consist of lectures, hands-on designs, discussions, and visits to some landmark structures.

Adrian Lew is a Professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Stanford University. Prof. Lew's interests lie in the broad area of computational solid mechanics. He is concerned with the fundamental design and mathematical analysis of material models and numerical algorithms. Currently the group is focused on the design of algorithms to simulate hydraulic fracturing. To this end we work on algorithms for time-integration embedded or immersed boundary methods.

A Journey into the Buddhist Visual Arts of Japan

by Professor Catherine Ludvik

Monday, 3rd (13:10-14:40) & 4th (14:55-16:25)

Buddhism has had an enormous impact on the arts and culture of Japan, and nowhere is this more visibly manifest than in the ancient capital of Kyoto, renowned for its numerous temples and their visual arts.

Amidst the ideal setting of this old, traditional, yet vibrantly contemporary city, we will explore the historical as well as modern Buddhist visual arts of Japan, in the context of the ritual, devotional, and meditative traditions of various sects of Japanese Buddhism.

Focusing on selected historical temples and their icons, we will study image production, iconography, representational strategies, as well as the ritual and visual functions of Buddhist sculpture and painting. We will also examine architectural and landscape elements of temple layouts, within which iconographic programs are framed, images are enlivened, and practices centered on these devotional and ritual artworks are performed. Drawing on the magnificent visual arts of Kyoto and nearby Nara, classes will be conducted also at temples as well as museums.

The goals of this course are to familiarize students with the Buddhist artistic traditions of Japan, to recognize characteristic forms of production, and to understand the development of the forms and functions of artworks within their respective ritual, devotional and sectarian contexts, spanning from the period of the introduction of Buddhism to Japan in the 6th century through to contemporary times. Visits to temples and museums will serve as catalysts for critical discussions, fostering an understanding of how

Buddhist visual arts are choreographed to convey Buddhist teachings, values and interests, and also how such expressive artworks articulate responses to fundamental human needs.

Prof. Ludvik obtained a Ph.D. at the University of Toronto in the Centre for the Study of Religion and teaches Japanese religion, visual arts, culture and history at Doshisha University and Kyoto Sangyo University. Spanning Indian and Japanese religions and their visual arts, her research interests focus on the metamorphoses of originally Indian deities in texts, images and rituals of Japan, as well as on ascetic practices and pilgrimage. Prof. Ludvik is the author of books and articles on the goddess Sarasvatī/Benzaiten, on the circumambulating practice of the monks of Mt. Hiei, and on the Shikoku Henro pilgrimage. She has taught courses on Japanese religion, visual arts and gardens on the Stanford Program in Kyoto since 2001.