

**Advanced High Resolution Imaging Technology
for Conservation of Important artifacts in Libraries and Archives**

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City University of Hong Kong , Hong Kong

Speaker's bios & abstract

Country	Japan	
University/Institute	Ganjoji Temple	
Department		
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Title (position)	Head priest	
Title of Lecture	Old Meets New: How the advanced digital technology can help preservation of world heritage in Japanese temple	
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BIO

November 1943 Born in Anan, Tokushima Prefecture

March 1966 Graduated from Koyasan University Department of Literature, Esoteric Buddhist Studies

- Faculty at Tasueji Temple Senior Highschool, Jorakuen Service, & Tokushima Youth Center
- Hakujukai Executive Director (Anan Senior Citizen's Home Director)
- Tokushima University Medical Care Junior College Clinical Pathology Professor

Presently

Head priest, Ganjoji Temple

Executive Officer, Ninnaji Temple

Shingon Sect Omuro School Financial Affairs Chief

Director of Omuro School of Flower Arrangement

Director & General Manager of Social Welfare Organization Hakujukai

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ABSTRACT

Along the foothills to the west of Kyoto, many nobles of the Imperial court built summer villas during the Early Heian period (794-1185). At the time, the nobility were followers of the newly flourishing Amida sect of Buddhism and many of their villas were converted to temples. The 58th Emperor Kodo ordered a temple to be built in the district, enshrining the Amida Buddha and two attendant deities. This was the origin of Ninna-ji (temple). The main hall of the temple was completed in 888 (4th year of the Ninna era) by 59th Emperor Uda. Emperor Uda abdicated and took a monk's vows at the age of 31, retiring to Ninnaji as its abbot. From then on, the temple was known as the Omuro Imperial Palace and the practice of having an Emperor's son as abbot continued until 1869. This established Ninnaji as one of the countries preeminent temples. Today, Ninnaji is the headquarters of Omuro School of Shingon Sect of Buddhism. The temple was largely destroyed by fire during the Onin War in the 15th century. Most of the current structures date from the restoration in the 17th century, carried out under the 21st abbot Prince Kakushin with sponsorship of the Tokugawa shogunate. In December 1994 Ninna-ji was inscribed as a UNESCO World heritage Site as one of the Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto.

Today, Ninna-ji houses the National Treasure Kondo (金堂); Buddhist sculptures and painting; more than 30,000 pieces of documents from the old days; and some newly added religious and artistic objects. These very important cultural assets are kept in different temple buildings and are exposed to changing humidity and temperature, which cause serious degradation of the assets.

Ninna-ji started extensive activities to protect these assets through collaboration and site observation of the museum storage rooms, humidity and temperature control of the storage houses, removing of bugs and fungi from the cultural assets. These activities are still on-going.

The cultural assets which are used for religious ceremonies are exhibited in museums (19 objects in 7 museums) are investigated by researchers (11 cases, 6000 objects) every year. It is expected that more history researchers will visit and use these old documents and objects.

The registered cultural heritage, among them the Goten buildings include the fusuma portraits by Harazai Senn and Doumoto Insho which are on permanent display and subject to natural environment. Conservation and preservation of these and other artworks is a financial burden. For these reasons, in view of preservation and conservation, Ninnaji has digitized part of the collections of Buddhist sculptures, Mandara, portraits, folding panels (Byobu), wall paintings (shohekiga) and wood block prints.

We believe that it is the responsibility of Ninnaji to preserve and transfer these cultural heritages to future generations. The original objects should not only be accessible to the public but must also be protected at the same time for future generations. One way to address these two contradicting issues is the use of Digital technology. This technology may be used for archiving and utilization of these assets; recording the color and conditions of the assets; having access to the objects through digital information without direct contact with the objects; and total administration of the objects. These open new possibilities on how cultural assets may be utilized.

We are developing our own model for administration and utilization of cultural heritage assets by exploring the potentials of digital technology.