

# CONFERENCE REPORT

## ‘Global Barthes’ Meiji University, Tokyo, Saturday 18 May 2024

Andy Stafford

Tokyo was recently the setting, perhaps fittingly, for the first event in the ‘Global Barthes’ project. It was also the moment to celebrate the launch of *Intermedial Encounters Between Image, Music and Text: With and Beyond Roland Barthes*, co-edited by Fabien Arribert-Narce and Alex Watson (Peter Lang, 2023). Hosted by Meiji University, in conjunction with the University of Edinburgh, the seminar brought together researchers working on Barthes from Japan, China, the USA and the UK. The papers covered a wide range of Barthesian concerns.

The first session saw Barnaby Ralph (University of Tokyo) speaking on ‘Contested Classicism: Barthes and Rhetoric’, which led neatly into the presentation by Fuhito Endo (Seikei University) on ‘Barthes’/Freud’s Leonardo: A Comparative Reading’. Session two was opened by Fabien Arribert-Narce (University of Edinburgh) on ‘Barthes and the Haiku: In Search of the Absolute’, after which Kyoko Koma (Meiji University) spoke on ‘Fashion Research and its Possibilities in Relation to Roland Barthes’. Clark Lunberry (University of North Florida) began the final session, with a paper on ‘Roland Barthes and the Poetics of the Postcard’, followed by Yue Zhuo (East China Normal University) on ‘Haiku, Notation and Incidents in Barthes’s *Preparation of the Novel*’; and Andy Stafford (University of Leeds) ended the day with an overview of the ‘Global Barthes’ project.

The event, kindly funded by an JSPS Kakenhi grant and supported by the British Academy, provided an opportunity to consider Barthes’s work and influence through the prism of intermediality. It is therefore very timely that ‘Global Barthes’ has been launched at the same time as a new book series with Edinburgh University Press, ‘Edinburgh Critical Studies in World Literature and Intermediality’, co-edited by Fabien Arribert-

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Narce and Shuangyi Li (University of Bristol). All book proposals for the new Edinburgh series should be sent to the co-editors.

Global Barthes, coordinated by Alexandru Matei (Brasov University, Romania) and Andy Stafford, is planning a post-doctoral symposium to be held in Leeds in early autumn 2025, with early career researchers from across the globe.

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### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andy Stafford has recently published *Roland Barthes Writing the Political: History, Dialectics, Self* (Anthem Press, 2023) and co-edited with Claire Lozier and Jivitesh Vashisht a special number of *Paragraph* on 'Samuel Beckett and Roland Barthes: Unspoken Dialogues' (July 2022). He is Professor of French and Critical Theory at the University of Leeds (UK).

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