Abstract:

In this presentation I will draw on M. Pratt’s notion of “contact zones” and Lionnet’s and Shih’s concept of “minor transnationalism” in a discussion of recent works by two interdisciplinary artists who have been active in Okinawa, Korea and Japan. Yamashiro Chikako’s Mud Man~And I Go through You (『土の人~あなたをくぐりぬけて』 Kyoto Experiment, 2018), follows on earlier works by the artist, many of which are set along the borders of present-day U.S. military installations and local agricultural or communal lands and coastal areas in Okinawa. In Mud Man, the artist continues to explore border-crossings and liminal underground and underwater spaces in her works, juxtaposing fragments of fictional and documentary film footage that simultaneously link and undo contested historical narratives and point to present-day tensions in Okinawa, Jeju Island and Vietnam.

Through interdisciplinary works using film, live performance and poetic narrative, Soni Kum also makes powerful interventions that explore complex personal and geo-political aspects of ‘minor’ transnationalism from the perspective of a third-generation Zainichi Korean. Here, I will discuss Kum’s vegetation (2010) and Heaven’s Gate (2014), two works that interweave fictional narrative, literary text, interview and live performance; these works help make visible the complexities of ‘minor transnationalisms” in post-war and present-day Okinawa, Korea and Japan.

Representative works:

“Postmemory” in the work of Oh/Haji and Soni Kum,” Still Hear the Wound: Toward an Asia, Politics, and Art to Come (Cornell East Asia Series), Renaissance Books Ltd, 2015. (also in『残傷の音』、岩波書店、2009)

“Precarity, Performance, and Activism in Recent Works by Ito Tari and Yamashiro Chikako,” Performance, Feminism and Affect in Neoliberal Times, ed. by Elin Diamond, Denise Varney and Candice Amich, ALGRAVE, 2017