



東京大学
THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO

The Unknown Woman of the Seine: *Portraying the Vanishing Lady of Modernity*

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Nov. 22, 2016 (Tue), 13:00-14:40, Fac.Let., Bld. 3, Rm. 301

LECTURE

The German art historian Aby Warburg defines art history, the history of images, as “a ghost story for grown-ups.” This lecture tells such a story as it studies the extraordinary destiny, in the history of world literature and culture, of a mask, simply and enigmatically named L’Inconnue de la Seine. The figure of the young girl, who supposedly drowned herself in the Seine at the end of the nineteenth century, enjoyed astonishing popularity during the 1920s and 30s and still belongs today to a collective imaginary. This presentation will examine how the moving portraits of the anonymous girl track the main shifts in the cultural history of the last two centuries, and how they constitute points of negotiation through which to understand modernity.

ORGANIZERS:

Faculty of Letters, Departments of
English Language and Literature,
French Language and Literature,
German Language and Literature



L’Inconnue de la Seine (masque mortuaire),
1900