Introduction

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Around Chigusa explores the cultural milieu in which a humble large jar of Chinese origin dating to the thirteenth or fourteenth century became Chigusa, a revered, named tea-leaf storage jar in the context of chanoyu in sixteenth-century Japan (fig. 1). Chigusa stands at the nexus of interlocking personal networks, cultural values, and aesthetic idioms of tea, poetry, painting, calligraphy, and Noh theater during this formative period of Japanese tea culture. Key themes include the centrality of tea to the social life of and interaction among warriors, merchants, and courtly elite; the multifaceted relationship in Japan between things wa (Japanese) and kan (Chinese) and between tea and poetry; the rise of new formats for display of the visual arts; and collecting and display as an expression of political power. The sixteenth century was, in Japan, a generative moment of fertile intersection among these many arts and among their practitioners.

The Freer Gallery of Art acquired Chigusa in 2009, initiating eight years of research, exhibitions, lectures, publications, and a symposium about Chigusa, which led to this book. The first foray involved Cort, Watsky, and two colleagues from Japan, Takeuchi Jun’ichi and Oka Yoshiko, who in 2011 met twice in Washington, DC for concerted study of Chigusa and its accompanying accoutrements and documents. They presented the findings of their research at the end of 2011 in a webcast sponsored by the Toshiba International Foundation and joined by an international audience in the hundreds.

Chigusa required a wider scope of expertise to tell its complex story, however, so eleven other specialists were invited to join the initial group to examine Chigusa in all its fullness. The 2014 culmination of this collaboration was the monograph Chigusa and the Art of Tea, which traced the history of the jar from its origins in China, through its centuries in Japan, to its current home in the United States, delving into such topics...
as Chigusa’s original manufacture, its role as an exemplar of Japanese aesthetics and utility in *chanoyu*, its belongings accrued over time, and its long lineage of dedicated owners. Two exhibitions accompanied the book, first at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery in Washington, DC and then at the Princeton University Art Museum. Both centered on Chigusa and its array of boxes, textiles, and documents, and featured a tearoom assemblage (*toriawase*) of tea utensils from the collection of Peggy and Richard M. Danziger with a digital duplication of Chigusa in the alcove (fig. 2). The Sackler exhibition incorporated tea utensils, borrowed from the Eisei-Bunko Museum, the Nezu Museum, and the Tokugawa Art Museum, that represented the objects with which Chigusa was used in sixteenth-century *chanoyu* gatherings, as carefully recorded in period tea diaries. Part of the Princeton exhibition was a group of objects that addressed Japan’s appropriation of Chinese ceramics, paintings, clothing, and concepts.

The present volume grew out of the symposium “Chigusa in Context: In and Around *Chanoyu* in Sixteenth-Century Japan,” which coincided with the Princeton exhibition. Two workshops followed, one in Princeton and the other in Kyoto, gathering groups of symposium presenters, as well as discussants, to probe the papers and draw out their common threads—and be alert to those threads that needed to remain loose. Each author made revisions with these discussions in mind. This deliberative process transformed the papers into the essays that follow; each stands on its own, but together they trace a series of contiguous and overlapping, though never completely congruent, cultural practices of sixteenth-century Japan.

The essays set tea in dialogue with these other practices, revealing larger cultural paradigms that informed the production, circulation, and reception of the artifacts used and displayed in tea. This book focuses on Japan but also considers the existence of a different type of tea practice in China, Chigusa’s place of production though not its place of use in tea gatherings. In the first section, “Tea Objects,” Steven Owyoung presents case studies of Chigusa in Japan and a tea object in China, emphasizing the differences between them. Oka Yoshiko examines Japan’s use of objects in different contexts, especially Buddhism and tea, tracing shifts in terminology that reflect shifts in thinking about “things.” The second

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section, “Around Tea,” engages ceramics, poetry, theater, and painting, each essay invoking to a different degree the place of tea in these arts. Morgan Pitelka studies the circulation of Chinese ceramics and the roles they played in social interactions, particularly those that were tea-related, among warriors. Tomoko Sakomura takes up the poet Fujiwara no Teika and traces the entrance of his poetry and calligraphy into the realm of tea practice. Using a tea diary entry noting the display of a famous Konparu libretto as his starting point, Tom Hare analyzes social interactions among Noh actors and tea practitioners and their attitudes toward performance. This section concludes with an essay by Matthew McKelway, who explores fan paintings by the celebrated Kano Eitoku and their place in tea gatherings. The two essays in the “Tea Materiality” section address problems raised through close, informed inspection of objects fully connected now to Chigusa: Andrew Hare writes about a letter by the prominent tea master Sen no Rikyū, and Melissa M. Rinne discusses the jar’s textile mouth cover. In the “Japan|China” section, Melissa McCormick interrogates Japan’s mediation of China — an essential concern throughout Japan’s history and an essence of Chigusa itself — through a careful reading of the 1560 painting Murasaki Shikibu at Ishiyamadera by Tosa Mitsumoto. The book closes with an essay by Owyoung that reminds us of concurrences, though not necessarily parallels, in Chinese tea practice. Taken as a whole, this book serves as an invitation to think about how the practices of tea, in Japan and beyond, both shaped and were shaped by objects and the people who treasured them.