POSED QUESTIONS:
BEING & IMAGE IN ASIA & EUROPE

21st January – 27th March 2010

In 2008-9, five Japanese venues hosted a touring exhibition, Self & Other: portraits from Asia and Europe, which traced a history of intra- and intercontinental influence on the human image in paintings, sculptures and installations. Breaking visitor records, it was curated by cultural and art historians and initiated a lively interdisciplinary dialogue.

Posing Questions, at the Brunei Gallery, SOAS in London (21 January – 27 March 2010), is the first and only U.K. exhibition of four independent exhibitions designed to compliment the Japanese show. Each will offer a further distinctive take on portraiture to appeal to local audiences and prompt debate.

Using an interdisciplinary approach like the Japanese exhibition, and thought-provoking images from several time periods, Posing Questions highlights key issues in the social significance of portraiture itself.

This exhibition is organised through ASEMUS, the Asia-Europe Museums Network, and generously supported by ASEF, the Asia-Europe Foundation.

Themes covered include: attributions of animation and agency; role, character and personhood; options and interplay between graphic, sculptural and verbal/textual expression; subject, artist and audience in creative process; ground, group and figure; head, face and eyes; perspective, gaze, glance, peripheral vision and the moving image; renown and anonymity; resemblance and ‘fictions of the pose’; and art discourse as a status-marker.

The survey draws on the rich traditions of two continents as an antidote to ethnocentrism.