Popular music in Japan dethroned the cinema as 'king of mass entertainment' during the 1960s. At the same time, Japanese cultural producers, especially those involved in the newly emergent youth culture, operated in a highly fluid environment in which boundaries between mass-culture entertainment and avant-garde art were under constant pressure. All of this occurred under conditions of rapid economic growth during which the state explicitly adopted a position encouraging mass consumption and in which new modes of cultural identity were being promulgated and resisted. This conference will explore the instabilities, possibilities, and breakdowns of this moment in Japanese cultural history – with particular attention to the film/music interface.

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