

Fuji Gazo's Oil Painting French Landscape and His Paris Marriage Certificate

Syuji Takahashi

I conducted research on French Landscape (collection of the Tokyo National Museum), the only oil painting that remains in Japan by Fuji Gazo, who was the first Japanese painter to study under Raphaël Collin before Kuroda Kiyoteru. Results indicated that in 1912 the work was given by Fuji to Hori Ichiro, a photographer from Matsue who was living in New York at the time. This indicated that Fuji Gazo, who was primarily active in the United States after completing his studies in Paris, had connections among Japanese expatriates in New York in his later years, which were unknown until now. French Landscape was subsequently donated by Hori Ichiro to The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo in 1955, and was transferred to the Tokyo National Museum in 1964.

Mr. David Boroff who is a collector and researcher of vintage lamp and Fuji Gazo's work in US and I were also able to find a document (a marriage certificate) with information on the French woman that Fuji married in Paris, who had previously been known only through the recollections of Matsuoka Hisashi, an acquaintance of Fuji's during the Paris years. It reveals her name, which differs from that recalled by Matsuoka, as well as her date of birth, the identities of her two sons from a previous marriage that the couple adopted, and other details. Furthermore, it was determined through Japanese and American newspaper articles that prior to this, when studying in Paris, he had left behind a Japanese wife and a daughter.

An Examination of the Formation and Continuity of Joto-kai

Naruse Miyuki

Joto-kai: Painters of the Showa Era was an exhibition jointly organized and held by two museums, the Koiso Memorial Museum of Art and the Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, between October 2020 and March 2021.

Joto-kai, featured in this exhibition, was both an artists' organization and an association of alumni who graduated from Tokyo Fine Arts School, Department of Western Painting in March 1927. They held their first exhibition in September of that year, six months after graduating, and exhibited together continually until 1994. There have been any number of exhibitions held by groups of Tokyo Fine Arts School alumni, but no other example of an association that endured as long as Joto-kai.

The members of Joto-kai began drawing attention as a highly talented group as soon as they graduated. Ushijima Noriyuki, Koiso Ryohei, Ogisu Takanori (later a recipient of the Order of Culture), Yamaguchi Takeo, Okada Kenzo, Nakamura Toshio, Inokuma Genichiro and other well-known painters were all Joto-kai members who had been same-year classmates at the Tokyo Fine Arts School.

Why was it that these artists, highly diverse in style and orientation and rich in individuality, were able to stay so strongly connected through Joto-kai so that they could continue exhibiting together for over half a century? Looking back to the Taisho Era (1912-1926), which ended the year before they graduated, we can identify some reasons and circumstances that differ from those of today.

Joto-kai was formed on the basis of foundations laid when the members were still students at Tokyo Fine Arts School. This paper examines the formation and development of Joto-kai, which established and maintained relationships premised on respect for one another's ideals, in relation to its historical context.