



## Kikuo Saito

Kikuo Saito (1939-2016) was born in Tokyo Japan in 1939 and moved to New York City in 1966 where he lived and worked until his death in 2016. Saito studied at the Art Students League and began to exhibit in the early 1970s he has had over sixty solo exhibitions. Saito is associated with Color Field painting and was a studio assistant to Helen Frankenthaler, Kenneth Noland and Larry Poons. A great colorist, Saito's calligraphic gestural abstractions are full of both energy and contemplation.

Significantly, Saito was also known for his theater collaborations with such luminaries as Robert Wilson, Peter Brook, Jerome Robbins and with his first wife, dancer and choreographer, Eva Maier. His productions combined wordless drama in the poetic framework of light, costumes, music and dance. The choreography of his productions significantly influenced the compositions of his paintings. As Karen Wilkin explains, "It is as if we were watching an unfamiliar, deeply moving play preformed in a language we do not understand." Saito's approach to painting is rhythmic and lyrical. Much like the dancers he directed in his stage productions, Saito alternated from painting on the floor to the easel. Saito moved around the canvas creating powerful intervals in floods of color.

Kikuo Saito was an artist-in-residence at Duke University, a visiting professor at Musashino Art University in Tokyo, Japan and a painting instructor at the Art Students League of New York. His work has been included in exhibitions at the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University; Portland Art Museum; the Andre Emmerich Gallery; Tibor de Nagy Gallery; Salander-O'Reilly Galleries; Leslie Feely Gallery, Jill Newhouse and Octavia Gallery. His work is included in the following permanent collections: The Museum of Modern Art; the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, CT; Bain & Co., MA; Central Bank Collection, MO; Estee Lauder Collection, NY; Peter Stuyvesant Foundation, Netherlands and the Queens University, Canada.