



**SCENIC
HUDSON**

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HIRO ICHIKAWA

March 23, 1959 – January 6, 2017

*Mountains and Rivers Without End
Paintings from a Trail*

Scenic Hudson's River Center
at Long Dock Park

Opening Reception
October 6, 2018 2:00 - 4:00 PM

On view Saturday/Sunday 12:00 - 5:00 PM
October 6 - 21, 2018

"Having lived in the Hudson Valley for many years, the influence of the strong presence of mountains and rivers became an integral part of my paintings. Even though my works are not straight depictions of the landscape we see around us, I try to transform the essence of nature into my pictorial space like traditional Shan Shui painters did."

Hiro Ichikawa/Thoughts from a Studio



Scenic Hudson is very pleased to present the exhibition, *Mountains and Rivers Without End / Paintings from a Trail* which includes thirty paintings by the late Hiro Ichikawa (March 23, 1959 – January 6, 2017) and is curated by Eleni Smolen, TheoGanz Studio. The opening reception is Saturday, October 6th from 2:00 – 4:00 PM at **Scenic Hudson's River Center at Long Dock Park**, 8 Long Dock Road, Beacon, New York 12508. The paintings will be on view Saturday and Sunday, October 6 through 21, 2018 from 12:00 – 5:00 PM. The exhibition is free and open to the public.

A well-loved member of the Beacon art community and a tireless volunteer for several organizations over the years both in Beacon and Brooklyn (Beacon Open Studios, Garrison Art Center's Printmaking Club, Little League, Soccer Coach), Hiro was generous with his time and energy when he wasn't in his own studio or at his job. **Anthony Coneski** at **Scenic Hudson** recalls Hiro joining their volunteer program in 2008 and states that "Hiro had a passion for the Hudson Highlands, with a special fondness for Fishkill Ridge. He patrolled the ridge and Mount Beacon weekly, removing countless bags of trash, guiding lost hikers, maintaining trails and adding blazes. Without a doubt, he was Scenic Hudson's best set of 'eyes and ears' on these trails."

Hiro Ichikawa was born on March 23, 1959 in Osaka, Japan and grew up in Kiryu, north of Tokyo, where his father was a designer of wedding kimonos. Growing up in this environment, surrounded by mountains and rivers which he described as very similar to the “feel” of Beacon, the artist was greatly influenced not only by the natural world but also by the rich colors, patterns and textures of the silk textiles. He had many childhood memories relating to this – the sound of the weaving machines, the sight of textiles being rinsed in the river and then dried in the sun, the large industrial buildings – now being occupied by artists – and the trails and hikes through the mountains.

He studied painting and drawing at Suidobata Art Academy from 1977 – 1979 and in 1980 moved to the United States where he attended Pratt Institute, graduating in 1984 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. After many years in Brooklyn, Hiro and his wife, Laura Currier, and their son, Kento, moved to Beacon in 2006. He showed his paintings locally, initially with RiverWinds Gallery, and later, TheoGanz Studio where, besides being in many group shows, his last solo show, *In-Between*, (December 13, 2014 - January 15, 2015/<http://theoganzstudio.com/hiro-ichikawa.html>) included oil paintings and his delicately rendered etchings. (A scheduled solo show in 2017 at TheoGanz Studio had to be cancelled after the artist became ill). A master printmaker, Hiro curated the gallery's *Prints Without Pixels*. On a volunteer basis, he oversaw the Printmaking Club at Garrison Art Center on Sunday afternoons and also occasionally taught etching there as well.

Hiro returned to Kiryu every summer to show his latest paintings with the Mogi Gallery. He also showed with Gallery Marya in Osaka on an annual basis. Represented by the Woodward Gallery in NYC, his work was included in many exhibitions throughout the Tri-State region. In addition to his oil paintings, watercolors and etchings, Hiro also completed a commission in Japan for a Buddhist Temple's Fusuma paintings (Japanese style sliding doors). This helped him more fully explore the idea of *san-sui*, the “creation of an imaginary or idealized landscape that doesn't exist in the physical realm.” Working on kumohada paper – a mixture of linen and kozo tree fibers, Hiro described the texture as “cloud-like” and feels it contributed to the ethereal qualities of the panels. The theme of the sixteen panels was the life of Prince Shotoku who was a high-ranking political figure in 7th Century Japan. The Prince was credited to bringing Buddhism to Japan and helping it become an official religion at the time. Hiro traveled to those areas where the Prince once lived and he studied the landscape; he thought “the way these mountains look now must be the same as in the Prince's time hundreds of years ago.” (Photographs of the Fusuma Paintings can be found in his blog, Thoughts from A Studio, users.rcn.com/yukey/)

Celebrating a life steeped in art and nature, *Mountains and Rivers Without End* includes some 30 abstract paintings, mostly oil on wood panel, infused with the organic, dreamlike qualities and delicate brushwork for which the artist became so well-known over the years. An online catalogue accompanies the exhibition (theoganzstudio.com) with a limited print edition. For further information, contact Eleni Smolen, curator, TheoGanz Studio at theoganzstudio@tds.net. Photographs of Hiro Ichikawa by Kei Tsujimura.



“Thanks to Hiro, Fishkill Ridge is cleaner, safer and more accessible, both for humans and wildlife. Scenic Hudson staff and fellow volunteers who toiled alongside him will miss his unflagging enthusiasm and friendly, can-do spirit. Hiro's legacy is the enjoyment experienced by all who travel through the natural beauty he worked so hard to preserve.

Anthony Coneski, Scenic Hudson