

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: **MADE VISIBLE: WOMEN ARTISTS AND THE PERFORMANCE OF FEMININITY IN MODERN JAPANESE ART, 1900-1930**

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This dissertation offers a new framework for understanding individual Japanese women artists' work and the systems of gender oppression that characterized modern Japanese art. It does so by engaging with the visualization of Japanese women artists in the early twentieth century. In response to societal anxiety about the increase of women artists in the perceived male domain of the professional art world, women artists were pressured to conform to standards of normative femininity. Those standards, I argue, can be united under a single archetype, the "female artist," which came to dominate the visual representation and social imagining of women artists. This study offers a nuanced investigation into the reciprocal relationship between women artists and the "female artist" by focusing on four establishment women painters: Kajiwara Hisako, Shima Seien, Yoshida Fujio, and Kametaka Fumiko. Chapter One establishes the ideological grounding that defined women artists by their gender and pressured them to perform hegemonic femininity, thereby creating the marginalized "female artist" archetype. Chapter Two explores the "female artist" as a visual type, established through photographic

reproductions of women artists in women's magazines and by a painted representation of the type by Kajiwara Hisako. The chapter evaluates the complex ways women artists participated in the construction of the visual type, arguing that women made micro-adjustments to the type that valorized women's artistic skill even as they upheld oppressive gender ideals. Chapter Three details Shima Seien's use of self-portraiture to protest the dehumanizing elements of the "female artist" archetype and assert an alternative vision of herself as an artist and individual. Chapter Four considers Yoshida Fujio's embrace of the "female artist" as part of a journey towards personal and artistic self-determination. The Coda uses the case study of Kametaka Fumiko and the false attribution of her self-portrait, *Hanare yuku kokoro*, to her deceased husband, Watanabe Yohei, to reflect on how the "female artist" archetype continues to diminish women artists' position within scholarship. The goal of this study is to make visible the diverse ways modern Japanese women artists negotiated systemic gender discrimination in an effort to recover a sense of their agency and individuality.

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FEMININITY IN MODERN JAPANESE ART, 1900-1930

by

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Cod:

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Introduction:

The “Female Artist”

We have to reduce the lies that there were no women artists, or that the women artists who are admitted are second-rate and that the reason for their indifference lies in the all-pervasive submission to an indelible femininity—always proposed as unquestionably a disability in making art. But alone historical recovery is insufficient. What sense are we to make of information without a theorized framework through which to discern the particularity of women’s work? This is itself a complicated issue. To avoid the embrace of the feminine stereotype which homogenizes women’s work as determined by natural gender, we must stress the heterogeneity of women’s art work, the specificity of individual producers and products. Yet we have to recognize what women share— as a result of nurture not nature, i.e. the historically variable social systems which produce sexual differentiation.

-Griselda Pollock

Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and the Histories of Art, 1988¹

This dissertation offers a framework for understanding the particularities of individual Japanese women artists’ work and the systems of gender oppression that characterized modern Japanese art. It does so by considering the visualization of Japanese women artists in the early twentieth century. By visualization I mean both the actual representation of women artists in two-dimensional media such as photographs, paintings, and illustrations as well as the formation of a mental image, or stereotype, of women who were artists. The major intervention this study makes is to identify this stereotype and the insidious ways it historically displaced the individuality of Japanese women artists and continues to influence their marginalized position in scholarship. Seeing this stereotype makes it possible to discard it, and to

¹ Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and the Histories of Art*, Routledge Classics Edition (London: Routledge, 2003), 77.

engage in a new form of visualizing Japanese women artists: that of recognizing their personhood and agency.

The primary period of study is the first three decades of the twentieth century, roughly 1900-1930. These decades, which encompassed the end of the Meiji period (1868-1912), the Taishō period (1912-1926), and the early Shōwa period (1926-1989), represent “a generation of Japanese experience during which Japan rose in the international community as a world power and experimented with what the early twentieth century world had to offer, including political philosophies, new technologies, imperial possibilities, economic systems, art, and cultural forms.”² One might categorize these years as a period of tension and possibility, a moment between the wholesale adoption of Euro-American technologies, institutions, and ideas that characterized the end of the nineteenth century and the rise in militarism after Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931. For the purposes of this study, these years are significant, too, because they not only saw an increase in women artists, but an increase in their visibility. Women artists were present throughout Japan’s history but new learning opportunities led to greater numbers of women pursuing professional careers.³ The Women’s Art School (Shiritsu Joshi Bijutsu Gakkō, henceforward referred to as Joshibi), the first women’s higher school specializing in the arts, was founded in

² Sharon A. Minichiello and others name this period the “Greater Taishō.” While I agree that these years constitute a distinct period within the larger modern period, I do not adopt the name “Greater Taishō” because my discussion extends slightly beyond it and I wish to avoid placing artificial boundaries on the flow of time. Sharon A. Minichiello, “Introduction,” in *Japan’s Competing Modernities: Issues in Culture and Democracy 1900-1930*, ed. Sharon A. Minichiello (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1998), 2.

³ Information on Japanese women artists prior to 1900 can be found in Patricia Fister, *Japanese Women Artists 1600-1900* (Lawrence, KS: Spencer Museum of Art, 1988); *Her Brush: Japanese Women Artists from the Fong-Johnstone Collection* (Denver: Denver Art Museum, 2023) <https://her-brush.denartmus.org/>; Marsha Weidner, ed., *Flowering in the Shadows: Women in the History of Chinese and Japanese Painting* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1990).

1900, and basic instruction in the arts was also a part of the curricula of the newly established compulsory and secondary education systems.⁴ The establishment of national exhibitions, such as the Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai (Ministry of Education Art Exhibition, henceforward the Bunten) in 1907, provided new forums for artists to show their work to a growing public audience.⁵ Furthermore, the growth of mass media and the introduction of photographic reproduction brought women artists to the forefront of public discourse.⁶ Especially during the Taishō period, women artists were treated like celebrities, their lives and activities breathlessly reported on and

⁴ In 1872, the Ministry of Education established a national compulsory education system for all children and issued the Fundamental Code of Education. In 1899, the Girl's Higher School law (Kōto joshi gakkō rei) mandated that there be at least one higher school for women in each prefecture. For more on women's education in the modern period, see Koyama Shizuko, *Ryōsai Kenbo: The Educational Ideal of 'Good Wife, Wise Mother' in Modern Japan*, *The Intimate and the Public in Asian and Global Perspectives*, V. 1. Boston: Brill, 2013; Melanie Czarnecki, "Bad Girls from Good Families: The Degenerate Meiji Schoolgirl," in *Bad Girls of Japan*. ed. Laura Miller and Jan Bardsley (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005): 49-64; Mariko Inoue, "Kiyokata's *Asasuzu*: The Emergence of the Jogakusei Image," in *Monumenta Nipponica*, 51, no. 4 (Winter, 1996): 431-460; Margaret Mehl, "Women Educators and the Confucian Tradition in Meiji Japan (1868-1912): Miwada Masako and Atomi Kakei," *Women's History Review* 10 no. 4 (December 2001): 579-602; Susan C. Townsend, "Lost in a World of Books: Reading and Identity in Pre-War Japan," *Literature Compass* 4, no. 4 (2007): 1183-1207; Sally A. Hastings, "Women Educators of the Meiji Era and the Making of Modern Japan," *International Journal of Social Education* (Spring 1991): 83-94; Rebecca L. Copeland, "Fashioning the Feminine: Images of the Modern Girl Student in Meiji Japan," *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal*, no. 30/31 (2006): 13-35.

⁵ For more on the exhibition system in the Meiji era, see Kojima Kaoru, "Introduction," in *Bunten no meisaku [1907-1918] (Masterpieces from the Bunten Exhibition 1907-1918)* (Tokyo: National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, 1990), 11-15; Satō Dōshin, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State: The Politics of Beauty*, trans. Hiroshi Nara (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2011); See also, Omuka Toshiharu, "The Formation of the Audiences for Modern Art in Japan," in *Being Modern in Japan: Culture and Society from the 1910s to the 1930s* ed. Tipton, Elise K, and John Clark (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000): 50-60; Chelsea Foxwell, *Making Modern Japanese-Style Painting: Kano Hogai and the Search for Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015, especially chapter one.

⁶ On the growth of the mass media in the modern period, see James L. Huffman, *Creating a Public: People and Press in Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997); Sarah Frederick, *Turning Pages: Reading and Writing Women's Magazines in Interwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006); Jason G. Karlin, *Gender and Nation in Meiji Japan: Modernity, Loss, and the Doing of History* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014); Nathan Schokey, *The Typographic Imagination: Reading and Writing in Japan's Age of Modern Print Media*, Studies of the Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020).

scrutinized. By 1930, women artists had become a knowable category of woman in Japanese public life.

Women artists' very visibility, however, was disquieting in a cultural context where respectable women were secluded in the domestic sphere. Modern Japan's gender ideology enforced a clear division between men and women and relegated women to a "feminine" realm. The public, professional, and art worlds were seen as male domains and women who trespassed upon them risked disrupting a social order that was predicated on gender segregation.

In response to societal anxiety about women artists transgressing into male domains, women artists were pressured to conform to standards of normative femininity. Those standards, I argue, can be united under a single identifier, the "female artist" (*jogaka*). The "female artist" was an evolving stereotype that came to dominate the visualization of the ideal professional woman artist. As we will see, the conceptualization of the "female artist" displaced the individual woman in the early twentieth century through repeated visualizations of a formulated archetype. This archetype can be generally defined as a *nihonga* (neo-traditional Japanese-style painting) painter of feminine subjects like *bijinga* (paintings of beautiful women) or *kachōga* (paintings of birds and flowers) who was young, beautiful, and embodied feminine ideals such as modesty, diligence, and filial piety. Kajiwara Hisako's (梶原 緋佐子, 1896-1988) painting, *Tranquility* (Figure 2.1a), is one example of the visual manifestation of the "female artist," and the performance of it by a woman artist (the painting is discussed further in Chapter Two). The most important criterion, however, was "female." In articulating a separate category of artist that was defined by

hegemonic, homogenous femininity, the “female artist” type offered women a socially acceptable way to be professional artists but limited their activities, self-presentation, and artistic expression on the basis of gender, and kept them on the periphery of the establishment art world.

The idea of the “female artist” came to obscure the individuality of actual women artists. The displacement of the individual woman by a female ideal was a common phenomenon in modern Japan, which saw the proliferation of various new female types that reacted to historical changes in women’s roles. These new types, which included the *jogakusei* (female student), the *atarashii onna* (new woman), and the *moga* (modern girl), declawed the threat of the new by circumscribing women into recognizable roles.⁷ Like these other female types, the “female artist” combined the experiences of real women artists with what linguistic scholar Miyako Inoue

⁷My identification of the “female artist” as a social type follows the literature on female types in modern Japan, including: Melanie Czarnecki, “Bad Girls from Good Families”; Miriam, Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Barbara H. Sato, *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan*, Asia-Pacific (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 2003); Laura Rasplica Rodd, “Yosano Akiko and the Taisho Debate Over the ‘New Woman,’” in *Recreating Japanese Women 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 175-198. For information on how those types were visualized, see Inoue, “Kiyokata’s *Asasuzu*”; Honda Masuko, *Jogakusei no keifu: saishoku sareru Meiji* (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2012); Alicia Volk, “Inventing the Self: the New Woman and the Revolutionary Artist,” in *In Pursuit of Universalism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010); Allen Hockley, ed., *The Women of Shin Hanga: The Judith and Joseph Barker Collection of Japanese Prints* (Hanover, NH: Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, 2013); Kendall H. Brown and Sharon A. Minichiello, *Taishō Chic: Japanese Modernity, Nostalgia, and Deco* (Honolulu: Honolulu Academy of Arts, 2001); Jackie Menzies, ed., *Modern Boy Modern Girl: Modernity in Japanese Art 1910-1935* (Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 1998); Kendall H. Brown, Jennifer Jaskowiak, and Mary L. Lenihan, *Light in Darkness: Women in Japanese Prints of Early Shōwa (1926-1945)* (Los Angeles: Fisher Gallery, University of Southern California, 1996); Asato Ikeda, “Modern Girls and Militarism: Japanese-Style Machine-ist Paintings, 1935-1940,” in *Art and War in Japan and Its Empire, 1931-1960*, eds. Asato Ikeda, Aya Louisa McDonald, and Ming Tiampo, *Japanese Visual Culture 5* (Leiden: Brill, 2013): 91-108; Alison J. Miller, “Wintry Women: Skiing, Modern Girls, and the Body Politics of Sport As Represented in 1930s Nihonga,” *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 47, no. 2 (2021): 313–48.

might call the “vicarious experience” of women artists.⁸ Inoue, in her study of “women’s language” in modern Japan refers to “a space of discourse—understood as a complex ensemble of practices, institutions, representations, and power—in which the Japanese woman is objectified, evaluated, studied, staged, and normalized through her imputed language use and is thus rendered a knowable and unified subject both to herself and to others.”⁹ Inoue deals primarily with the *jogakusei* and states they were:

...both the first subject and first object of the modern Japanese woman whose experiential realities were interchangeable with a “reality” that was accessible in mediated, imagined, and consumable forms. It was the *copies* of the schoolgirl that became “the original” in the process of citational accumulation, and these copies became complexly inscribed on the bodies of living young women.¹⁰ (emphasis in original)

The “female artist” functioned similarly to the *jogakusei*. It emerged as a representational copy of living women artists but through repetition, gradually became seen as the “original,” setting a standard that would come to govern the lived realities of actual women artists.¹¹ It was only by copying the “female artist” ideal that women artists were able to gain legitimacy and recognition in the modern art establishment. As a result, their personhood was concealed by their performance as the “female artist.”

⁸ Miyako Inoue, *Vicarious Language: Gender and Linguistic Modernity in Japan*, Asia—Local Studies/Global Themes, 11 (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2006), 21.

⁹ Inoue, *Vicarious Language*, 1.

¹⁰ Inoue, *Vicarious Language*, 43.

¹¹ Maki Isaka Morinaga might call this the “labyrinth of citationality.” Writing about the relationship between *onnagata* (male actors who play female roles in *kabuki*), women, and the construction of “femininity,” Morinaga notes the importance of imitation as “a mutual act by which all the doers of femininity, that is, not only *onnagata* but also women, reciprocally cited one another. *Onnagata* and women together participated in the labyrinth of citationality, which was made possible by the notion of femininity independent of the woman’s body and by the medium of circulation.” Like Inoue, Morinaga notes the phenomenon, in this case in eighteenth century Japan of constructing feminine ideals through citational copying of both women and the vicarious experience of women as enacted by *onnagata*, only for that citational copying to become misunderstood as the original. Maki Isaka Morinaga, “The Gender of *Onnagata* As the Imitating Imitated: Its Historicity, Performativity, and Involvement in the Circulation of Femininity,” *positions* 10, no. 2 (Fall 2022): 266.

This study offers a nuanced investigation into the relationship between the heterogenous particularities of women artists and the constructed “female artist” type. As a point of clarification, “female artist” is used to indicate the socially imposed ideal while “woman artist” is used to refer to women who were artists. “Female” is a biological term which emphasizes reproductive organs, while “woman” indicates an individual, human being. The term “female artist” (*jogaka*) itself is anachronistic to the early twentieth century.¹² Early twentieth-century terms for women artists included *joryū gaka* (女流画家, painter of the feminine school), *keishū gaka* (閨秀画家, painter with feminine talent), or simply the honorific suffix *joshi* (女史, lady). I have decided not to use one of these terms for two key reasons. First, as I discuss more fully in the Coda, the “female artist” is not merely a historic phenomenon but continues to influence how contemporary scholarship visualizes modern Japanese women artists. Using a historic term risks the misreading of this phenomenon as being settled in the past, absolving us of our obligation to critically examine, and put an end to, inherited biases. Second, because the work of this dissertation is in part to make this phenomenon identifiable, I felt that adopting a single term provided more clarity than would be attained by oscillating between the various period terms. Indeed, I use “female artist” as an umbrella term for the sprawling and sometimes contradictory set of “feminine” expectations that governed women artists’ activities and self-presentation. While Chapter One traces the complex and ever-shifting

¹² I have chosen *jogaka* (女画家) as the Japanese translation of the “female artist” type because it similarly conveys the reductive, gendered qualities of the English term. I also wanted to create a distinction between it and *joseigaka* (女性画家), which is the most common term used in the twenty-first century to refer to artists who were women. My thanks to Alicia Volk for her translation suggestion.

boundaries of the “female artist,” the point of this dissertation is not to prove that sexist systems existed, but rather to understand how those systems influenced the artistic expression of select women artists. A utility of the “female artist” as a conceptual framework is that it neatly contains the sprawl of sexism under one term and efficiently highlights the central point that gender was the determining factor in how modern Japanese women artists were visualized.

Another value of the term “female artist” is that it creates cognitive space between the idealized archetype and the real people who were women artists. The idea of the “female artist” was deeply entangled with the lives and careers of women artists, to the point that it is difficult to know when women artists were performing as the “female artist” versus themselves. Although it is not possible to completely disentangle women artists from the “female artist” ideal, articulating a distinction between the two at least highlights the presence of the type and alerts us to the possibility that the “female artist” persona was in fact incongruous with the personalities and artistic ambitions of specific women.

Further, the identification of the “female artist” archetype is critical for restoring a measure of agency to modern Japanese women artists. The “female artist” represented a set of expectations, not rigid rules. As will be shown throughout the following pages, there was a significant gap between what the “female artist” was expected to do, and what women artists actually did. In that gap lay possibility. Because the “female artist” was anchored to the behavior of women artists, a reciprocal relationship developed, and it was responsive to shifts in women artists’ activities. I maintain that women artists had a complex but active role in shaping the

“female artist” archetype, finding within it both oppression and opportunity. Locating the areas where women artists responded to the type, both positive and negative, provides insights into how these women, despite being disempowered, leveraged the tools available to them to further their individual goals and expand the definition of the “female artist.”

The goal of this study is to make visible the diverse ways modern Japanese women artists negotiated a system of gender oppression to recover a sense of their self-determination and individuality. With this in mind, I have chosen four painters to ground my discussion: Kajiwara Hisako, Shima Seien (島成園, 1892-1970), Yoshida Fujio (吉田ふじを, 1887-1987), and Kametaka Fumiko (亀高文子, 1886-1977).¹³ I emphasize these four women because their diverging and converging stories gesture towards a diversity in modern Japanese women’s painting practice while still demonstrating how gender was an overdetermined force in their lives and careers. These women were all professional painters of the same generation and their prominent positions in the establishment art world made them central to the visualization of the “female artist” stereotype. They represent a range of styles and subjects. Kajiwara Hisako was a *nihonga* painter of *bijinga* and women laborers, Shima Seien was a *nihonga* painter of *bijinga*, Yoshida Fujio was a landscape and still life *yōga* (Western-style painting) watercolorist, and Kametaka Fumiko was a

¹³ In the following pages, I will often refer to each woman by her given or artist name. Name order follows the Japanese tradition of family name, first/artist name. In Japanese art, *nihonga* painters regardless of gender are referred to by their artist names instead of their family names. *Yōga* painters, however, are called by their family names. In the case of Yoshida Fujio and Kametaka Fumiko, I have chosen to refer to them by their given name to avoid confusion. Yoshida Fujio was married to a prominent artist, Yoshida Hiroshi, who I also refer to by his given name. For Kametaka Fumiko, she married twice and changed her family name from Watanabe to Kametaka after her career was established. Secondary scholarship on her is not consistent and she is referred to by both names.

yōga painter of children and still lifes. They were active in different geographic centers— Kyoto, Osaka, Tokyo, and Kobe—and had differing experiences with class, marriage, and family obligations. All, however, faced a major conflict with how to accommodate their artistic vision and desire for self-governance with restrictive gender ideology.

Each artist negotiated and legitimized her position in the art world by adopting parts of the “female artist” persona, although their responses to and uses of the type differed. All leveraged the permeable boundaries of the “female artist” definition to make micro-adjustments that improved the social position of women artists. Most embraced the stereotype, adopting the persona for strategic reasons or because it suited their conception of self. One protested the intrusion of the stereotype on her artistic and personal expression and offered a vocal counterpoint to the status quo. This dissertation investigates each woman’s active engagement with the archetype and focuses on the strategies they used to garner greater agency for themselves and their peers. In so doing, I hope to make visible the expansiveness of each artist’s personhood.

Engagement with Existing Scholarship

This dissertation is feminist in orientation. My method of framing questions and skepticism of established value systems is inextricably linked to feminism, which I define as the belief that: 1. all people are fundamentally equal, 2. systemic sexism prevents the realization of that equality, and 3. it is necessary to combat that inequality. The study of patriarchal power structures is a step towards dismantling

them, just as the identification of historical strategies of resistance can be of use in pushing for a more equitable world order. My approach is grounded in the diverse intellectual landscape of feminist art history.¹⁴ Although the field is far from monolithic, a major project of feminist art history has been the investigation of the social forces and power dynamics that have kept women artists marginalized in their own time and in art history itself.¹⁵ My critical interrogation of the position of women artists in modern Japan, my investigation into the extent of their agency, and my questioning of how art history has assigned value to their work has been formed by this scholarship. My thinking has been further deepened by gender studies, particularly the work of Judith Butler, who argues against an essentialist understanding of sex and gender, and that gender is a construction, created through

¹⁴ Reflections on the history of feminist art history include: Kristen Frederickson and Sarah E. Webb, *Singular Women: Writing the Artist* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Joshua S. Mostow, "Introduction," in *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field*, eds. Norman Bryson, and Maribeth Greybill, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003): 1-15; Victoria Horne, and Amy Tobin, "An Unfinished Revolution in Art Historiography, or How to Write a Feminist Art History," *Feminist Review*, no. 107 (2014): 75–83; Paris A. Spies-Gans, "Why Do We Think There Have Been No Great Women Artists? Revisiting Linda Nochlin and the Archive," *The Art Bulletin* 104, no. 4 (2022): 70–94. For an overview of the development of Japanese women's history, see Marnie S. Anderson, "The Forgotten History of Japanese Women's History and the Rise of Women and Gender History in the Academy," *Journal of Women's History* 32, no. 1 (2020): 62–84.

¹⁵ Canonical texts in Euro-American feminist art history include: Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists," *ARTnews* 69, no. 9 (1971): 22-39, 67-71; Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981); Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrad, eds., *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1982); Nanette Salomon, "The Art Historical Canon: Sins of Omission," in *(En)Gendering Knowledge: Feminists in Academe*, eds., Joan E Hartman and Ellen Messer-Davidlow (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991): 222-236; Corine Schleif, "The Roles of Women in Challenging the Canon of "Great Master" Art History," in *Attending to Early Modern Women*, eds. Susan D. Amussen and Adele Seef (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1998): 74-92; Giselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference*; Griselda Pollock, *Differencing the Canon: Feminist Desire and the Writing of Art's Histories* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999); Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society*, Fifth Edition, World of Art (London: Thames & Hudson, 2012); Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrad, *Reclaiming Female Agency: Feminist Art History After Postmodernism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

reiterated social performance.¹⁶ Although this dissertation focuses on women and femininity, I position this study as belonging to gender studies, acknowledging that gender is a spectrum and that patriarchal systems are harmful to all people.

My study balances inquiries into gender systems with individual narratives centered on women's agency in modern Japan. It thereby offers a significant contribution to feminist art history, which is dominated by Euro-American narratives. A remarkable facet of studying art history through the lens of feminism is the repetition of patterns in "how women attempted to claim power and agency, and how masculinist culture acted and continues to act to negate and neutralize those efforts."¹⁷ Indeed, starting with Linda Nochlin's foundational essay "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" scholars have noted the existence of stereotypes, such as the "lady painter" in Nochlin's fashioning, that have influenced the way women artists moved through their worlds.¹⁸ There are many such resonances to be found. Adding a detailed account of early twentieth century Japanese women artists to this body of scholarship augments our understanding of how patriarchal power structures are repeated or conceived in different cultural contexts. My method of naming and making visible the "female artist" stereotype, and consequently the particularities of individual women artists, is specific to modern

¹⁶ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990); Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "sex"* (London: Routledge, 1993).

¹⁷ Broude and Garrad, "Reclaiming Female Agency," in *Reclaiming Female Agency*, 3.

¹⁸ Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?"; Mary D. Sheriff, *The Exceptional Woman: Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun and the Cultural Politics of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Lieke van Deinsen, and Beatrijs Vanacker, *Portraits and Poses: Female Intellectual Authority, Agency and Authorship in Early Modern Europe* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2022).

Japan but may be adapted to deconstruct the sexist stereotypes that have displaced the identities and legacies of women artists in other geographies and time periods.

My research is also indebted to the existing literature on gender and modern Japanese art, which has explored diverse topics such as male-dominance in the structure of art history, questions of masculinity, and the visualization of the female form.¹⁹ I engage most directly with a subset of gender-based scholarship that focuses on twentieth century Japanese women artists.²⁰ My understanding of women artists'

¹⁹ Important studies on gender outside of a specific focus on women artists include Chino Kaori, "Nihon bijutsu no jendā," *Bijutsushi* 43, no. 2 (March 1994): 235-46; Kumakura Takaaki and Chino Kaori, eds., *Onna? Nihon? Bi? : arata na jendā hihiyō ni mukete* (Tokyo: Keiō Gijuku Daigaku Shuppankai, 1999); Wakakuwa Midori, *Sensō ga tsukuru josei zō: Dainiji sekai taisenka no Nihon josei dōin no shikakuteki puropaganda* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 2000); Joshua S. Mostow, Norman Bryson, and Maribeth Greybill, eds., *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003); Ayako Kano, "Women? Japan? Art?: Chino Kaori and the Feminist Art History Debates," *Review of Japanese Culture and Society* 15 (2003): 25–38; Doris Croissant, Cathern Vance Yeh, and Joshua S. Mostow, eds., *Performing "Nation": Gender Politics in Literature, Theater, and the Visual Arts of China and Japan, 1880-1940* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008); Bert Winther-Tamaki, *Maximum Embodiment: Yōga, the Western Painting of Japan, 1912-1955* (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 2012); John D. Szostak, "'Fair is Foul, and Foul is Fair': Kyoto Nihonga, Anti-Bijin Portraiture and the Psychology of the Grotesque," in *Rethinking Japanese Modernism*, ed. Roy Starrs (Leiden: Global Oriental, 2012): 362-383; Ryoko Matsuba, Asato Ikeda, and Royal Ontario Museum, *A Third Gender: Beautiful Youths in Japanese Edo-Period Prints and Paintings (1600-1868)*, trans. Joshua S Mostow (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 2016); Maki Kaneko, *Mirroring the Japanese Empire: The Male Figure in Yōga Painting, 1930-1950* (Leiden: Brill, 2016); Ikeda Shinobu, "Imperial Desire and Female Subjectivity," *Ars Orientalis* 47 (2017): 240–65; Asato Ikeda, "Uemura Shōen's *Bijin-ga*," in *The Politics of Painting: Fascism and Japanese Art during the Second World War* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018): 67-84; Kojima Kaoru, *Joseizō ga utsusu Nihon: awasekagami no naka no jigazō* (Tokyo: Buryukke, 2019); Ikeda Shinobu, *Teshigoto no teikoku Nihon: mingei, shugei, nōmin bijutsu no jidai*, Shirīzu Nihon No Naka No Sekaishi (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2019).; Miya Elise Mizuta Lippit, *Aesthetic Life: Beauty and Art in Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019); Alison J. Miller, "Imaging Industry: Woodblock Prints, Factory Women, and Sericulture in Meiji Japan," in *The Visual Culture of Meiji Japan: Negotiating the Transition to Modernity* ed. Ayelet Zohar and Alison J. Miller, Routledge Research in Art History (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2022): 92-109.

²⁰ Michiyo Morioka, "Changing Images of Women: Taishō Period Paintings by Uemura Shōen (1875-1949), Itō Shōha (1877-1968), and Kajiwaru Hisako (1896-1988)" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1990); Wakakuwa Midori, "Three Women Artists of the Meiji Period (1868-1912): Reconsidering Their Significance From a Feminist Perspective," in *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future*, eds. Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow and Atsuko Kameda (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1995): 61-74; Kokatsu Reiko, ed., *Hashiru onna tachi: josei gaka no senzen sengo 1930-1950 nendai* (Utsunomiya: Tochigi Kenritsu Bijutsukan, 2001); Alicia Volk, "Katsura Yuki and the Japanese Avant-Garde," *Woman's Art Journal* 24, no. 2 (Fall 2003 and Winter 2004): 3-9; Kokatsu Reiko, ed., *Zen'ei no josei, 1950-1975* (Utsunomiya: Tochigi Kenritsu Bijutsukan, 2005); Midori Yoshimoto, *Into Performance: Japanese*

activities as well as the constellation of terms, institutional policies, and social attitudes that were employed to contain those activities, is greatly indebted to this work. I have been particularly influenced by Kokatsu Reiko’s research, such as *Hashiru onna tachi: josei gaka no senzen sengo 1930-1950 nendai* (2001), which has proved an invaluable source for both studying individual women artists and understanding systemic gender discrimination in modern Japanese art.²¹ Further, my identification of the “female artist” builds on observations by Yamasaki Akiko, Kojima Kaoru, and Yurika Wakamatsu about how modern Japanese women self-fashioned their public personas to accommodate normative gender standards.²² I take their observations a step further by naming the “female artist” as an established phenomenon that was behaviorally and visually manifested and providing the first

Women Artists in New York (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2005); Ogawa Tomoko, ed., *Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigaka* (Osaka: Tōhō Shuppan, 2006); Kira Tomoko, “Kindai Nihon ni okeru josei to bijutsu no shakaishiteki kōsatsu,” in *Kindai Nihon no josei bijutsuka to joseizō ni kansuru kenkyū: 2003-2005 nendo (shakai bunkakagaku kenkyū-ka kenkyū purojekuto seika hōkoku-sho*, vol. 115 (Chiba Daigaku Daigakuin Shakai Bunka Kagaku Kenkyuka, 2006): 39-53; Yamasaki Akiko, “Shōwa shoki joshi yōga juku ni kansuru kenkyū – Sekisosha joshi kaiga kenkyūjo ni okeru bijutsu kyōiku ichi,” *Bijutsu kyōikugaku: Bijutsu kyōiku gakkaiishi* 29 (Mar. 2008): 591-603; Laura Allen, “Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives: Japanese Women Artists in the Interwar Years” in *Essays on Women’s Artistic and Cultural Contributions 1919-1939: Expanded Social Roles for the New Woman following the First World War*, eds. Paula Birnbaum and Anna Novakov (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009): 97-120; Kitahara Megumi, *Ajia no joseishintai wa ikani egakareta ka: shikaku hyōshō to sensō no kioku* (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2013); Kira Tomoko, *Sensō to josei gaka: mō hitotsu no kindai “bijutsu”* (Kunitachi-shi: Buryukke, 2013); Yurika Wakamatsu, “Painting In Between: Gender and Modernity in the Japanese Literati Art of Okuhara Seiko (1837-1913)” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2016); Nakajima Izumi, *Anchi Akushon: Nihon Sengo Kaiga to Josei Gaka*, Shohan (Kunitachi-shi: Buryukke, 2019); Alicia Volk, “Art and Women’s Liberation in a Newly Democratic Japan, with a Focus on Migishi Setsuko and Akamatsu Toshiko,” *US-Japan Women’s Journal* 57 (2020): 21-56; Kojima Kaoru, “Kindai nihon no joseigakatachi–kyoiku, tenrankai, shijō,” *Kokuritsu seiyō bijutsukan kenkyū kiyō* no. 24 (Mar. 2020): 45–57; Charlotte D. Eubanks, *The Art of Persistence: Akamatsu Toshiko and the Visual Cultures of Transwar Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2020); Simon Partner, “Art and Gender in an Age of Revolution,” *Japan Review*, Vol. 36 (2021): 61-88.

²¹ Kokatsu, ed., *Hashiru onna tachi*.

²² Yamasaki, “Shōwa shoki joshi yōga juku ni kansuru kenkyū”; Kojima, “Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi”; Wakamatsu, “Painting In Between,” especially her discussion of Noguchi Shōhin in the epilogue.

concrete and extended analysis of it as a critical force in modern Japanese women artists' lives.

My discussions of the four selected artists builds on the small body of secondary scholarship that exists for each woman. Each has been the focus of at least one retrospective exhibition catalog and a scholarly article.²³ The tenor of this scholarship is primarily biographical and comprehensive, providing an important overview of each woman's career and oeuvre. Since these four artists remain mostly unknown, especially within English-language contexts, this dissertation engages partly with feminist art historical projects of recovery, and offers the first extended English-language treatment of Shima Seien and Kametaka Fumiko. But because foundational scholarship exists for each woman, I have focused my analysis on how each artist interacted with the "female artist" type in the early twentieth century, building from the existing literature to bring new aspects of their lives and artistic output to light. In addition to the secondary scholarship, my discussions of each artist are reliant upon my own in-person surveys of their paintings and extensive archival research. I offer a detailed analysis of critical paintings that have so far received only cursory examination. Another important distinction of my work is the way it brings these four women together. Studies of modern Japanese women artists tend to be either monographs or confined to one mode of painting, *nihonga* or *yōga*. This follows the general trend in both English and Japanese language scholarship, which is

²³ Relevant scholarship is cited at the start of my analysis for each artist in the body chapters. For Kajiwara Hisako, see Chapter Two, fn 72. For Shima Seien, see Chapter Three, fn 3. For Yoshida Fujio, see Chapter Four, fn 2. For Kametaka Fumiko, see Coda, fn 8. Secondary scholarship on these women is predominately in Japanese and comes from exhibition catalogs, which have done invaluable work establishing the facts of their lives and in many cases, collecting primary source documentation on them.

divided between *yōga* and *nihonga*.²⁴ By bringing together painters from both styles, and these particular four artists for the first time, my dissertation offers a more holistic examination of how gender discrimination interfered with the careers of modern Japanese women painters.

Despite the existence of the above listed literature, gender remains understudied and peripheral in Japanese art history. Research on women artists is almost a separate field—women are largely excluded from major texts and surveys of modern Japanese art, *unless* the purpose of those texts is to focus on women.²⁵ It is one of my contentions that the “female artist” type is partly responsible for the continued treatment of women artists as a distinct group in scholarship. I do not intend to replicate that othering, even though this study centers on women artists. To the extent possible, I treat each woman as an individual existing within and interacting with the broader artistic trends and figures of her time. I join the recent trends in English-language scholarship that acknowledge that women’s issues are not

²⁴ Important exceptions to this are Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, especially chapter four; Furuta Ryo, *Yuragu kindai: nihonga to yōga no hazama ni (Modern Art in Wanderings: In Between the Japanese- and Western-style Paintings)* (Tokyo: The National Museum of Modern Art, 2006); Kokatsu, ed., *Hashiru onna-tachi*.

²⁵ One example of the exclusion of women from the narrative of modern Japanese art history is Satō Dōshin’s *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State*. In three major collections of essays on modern Japanese art, *Challenging Past and Present: The Metamorphosis of Nineteenth-Century Japanese Art* (2006), *Since Meiji: Perspective on Japanese Visual Arts, 1868-2000* (2012), and *The Visual Culture of Meiji Japan: Negotiating the Transition to Modernity* (2022), no essay focuses on women artists and mention of them is scant. The separation of women from the main thrust of art history is neatly characterized by treatment of women in discussions of the multigenerational Yoshida family of artists, to which Yoshida Fujio belonged. In two exhibition catalogs, the men artists are discussed individually and in order, from father to the two sons. The three women, however, are discussed as a group and after the men. See Tomita Tomoko, ed., *The Yoshida Family ten: sekai wo meguru Yoshida-ke yondai no gaka tachi* (Mitaka-shi: Mitakashi Geijutsu Bunka Shinkō Zaidan, 2009); Laura Allen et al., *A Japanese Legacy: Four Generations of Yoshida Family Artists* (Minneapolis, MA: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2002).

separate but in fact intricately linked to the formation of modern Japanese art.²⁶ Thus, even as this study significantly augments scholarship on gender in Japanese art history by providing a focused and comprehensive accounting of women artists in the modern art world, it also makes a critical intervention by refusing to treat gender as peripheral to the main narratives of Japanese art.

Finally, my research would not be possible without the nuanced and extensive investigations into women's activities in modern Japan conducted by Japanese studies scholars outside of art history. Particularly in the fields of history and literature, scholars have made significant strides in reconstructing the lives of women and their contributions to various aspects of Japanese society, including literature, tea culture, performing arts, entertainment, sex work, politics, labor, farming, publishing, and religion.²⁷ I have relied on these studies to gain a fuller picture of modern gender

²⁶ Noteworthy modern focused examples that address issues relevant to women within larger discussions related to the art world include a chapter discussing the female type *atarashii onna* in Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*; an essay on the female type *moga* in Ikeda, "'Modern Girls and Militarism'"; consideration of women art students of the male artist Taki Katei and perceptions of gender in Rosina Buckland, *Painting Nature for the Nation: Taki Katei and the Challenges to Sinophile Culture in Meiji Japan* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); the woman artist Uemura Shōen's perpetuation of fascist ideology in Ikeda, "Uemura Shōen's *Bijin-ga*" in *The Politics of Painting*; and a discussion of a woman patron and a woman artist in Winther-Tamaki, *Maximum Embodiment*.

²⁷ Some examples include: Sharon L. Sievers, *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983); Gail Lee Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Kathleen Uno, "The Origins of 'Good Wife Wise Mother' in Modern Japan," in *Japanische Frauengeschichte*, ed. Eric Pauer and Regine Mathias (Marburg: Förderverein Marburger Japan-Reihe, 1995): 31-46; Sheldon M. Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997); Vera Mackie, *Creating Socialist Women in Japan: Gender, Labour and Activism, 1900-1937* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Jennifer Robertson, *Takarazuka: Sexual Politics and Popular Culture in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Hitomi Tonomura, Anne Walthall, and Wakita Haruko, eds., *Women and Class in Japanese History* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1999); Rebecca L. Copeland, *Lost Leaves: Women Writers of Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000); Ayako Kano, *Acting Like a Woman in Modern Japan: Theater, Gender, and Nationalism* (NY: Palgrave, 2001); Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*; Jordan Sand, *House and Home in Modern Japan: Architecture, Domestic Space, and Bourgeois Culture 1880-1930* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Sabine Frühstück, *Colonizing Sex: Sexology and Social Control in Modern Japan*, *Colonialisms*, 4 (Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press, 2003); Vera Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship*,

ideology and women's strategies for navigating it. My methodology for identifying the "female artist" type is indebted to the discussions of modern types and their relationship to women's lives in the work of Barbara Sato, Miriam Silverberg, and Mayako Inoue.²⁸ My investigation of the interrelationship between the type and women artists was heavily influenced by Rebecca Copeland's *Lost Leaves* (2000), which considers how Meiji women writers were held to gender-specific criteria and marginalized, in their own time and in the intervening years.²⁹ The relevance of these studies suggests the mutual enrichment that comes with cross-disciplinary conversations. Only an art historian can delve into the rich visual archive left by the modern period, and in doing so this dissertation offers new dimensions to our conceptions of gender, patriarchal power systems, and women's agency in modern Japanese society.

Embodiment, and Sexuality (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Simon Partner, *Toshié: A Story of Village Life in Twentieth-Century Japan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004); Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno, eds., *Gendering Modern Japanese History*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Frederick, *Turning Pages*; Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense*; Indra A. Levy, *Sirens of the Western Shore: The Westernesque Femme Fatale, Translation, and Vernacular Style in Modern Japanese Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Jan Bardsley, *The Bluestockings of Japan: New Woman Essays and Fiction from Seitō, 1911-16* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2007); Elyssa Faissou, *Managing Women: Disciplining Labor in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Marnie S. Anderson, *A Place in Public: Women's Rights in Meiji Japan*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, 332 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2010); Mara Patessio, *Women in Public Life in Early Meiji Japan* (Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2011); Andrew Gordon, *Fabricating Consumers: The Sewing Machine in Modern Japan*, Asia: Local Studies/Global Themes, No. 19 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012); Andrea Germer, Vera C Mackie, and Ulrike Wöhr, eds., *Gender, Nation and State in Modern Japan*, Asian Studies Association of Australia Women in Asia Series (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014); Karlin, *Gender and Nation in Meiji Japan*; Julia C. Bullock, Ayako Kano, and James Welker, eds., *Rethinking Japanese Feminisms* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2017); Rebecca Corbett, *Cultivating Femininity: Women and Tea Culture in Edo and Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2018); Ann Marie Davis, *Imaging Prostitution in Modern Japan, 1850-1913*, New Studies in Modern Japan (Lanham, Lexington Books, 2019); Mamiko C. Suzuki, *Gendered Power: Educated Women of the Meiji Empress' Court* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2019).

²⁸ Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*; Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense*; Inoue, *Vicarious Language*.

²⁹ Copeland, *Lost Leaves*.

Caveats and Methodology

By necessity, I have made a few choices in approaching the vast question of how women artists were visualized in modern Japanese art that require some explanation. The first is my decision to focus exclusively on establishment women painters. The establishment is here primarily signified by the government sponsored art exhibitions such as the Bunten, which were the pathway to artistic prominence for much of the early twentieth century and constituted the center of the art world. Establishment women painters were and remain the most visible category of modern Japanese women artists. Since this dissertation explores the visualization of women artists, this was an appropriate choice. From a practical standpoint, their lives and works are the most documented—they have been the subject of secondary scholarship, their paintings exist in public collections, and because they were in the mainstream, archival sources about them are plentiful. It is precisely because of their proximity to male-dominated institutions and art practices that their work was recognized, valued, and saved. The full scope of women’s artistic activity in the modern era has been rendered mostly invisible because it lies outside our definitions of art, artistic success, and importance. For example, feminist art historians have established how women’s relationship to the decorative arts has led to their devaluation and marginalization in art history.³⁰ They have also illuminated how the prioritization of professional artists

³⁰ For some related discussions, see Bridget Elliot and Janice Helland, *Women Artists and the Decorative Arts 1880-1935: the Gender of Ornament* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002); Eli Bartra, ed., *Crafting Gender: Women and Folk Art in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Julia Bryan-Wilson, *Fray: Art Textile Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017; Megan Brandow-Faller, *The Female Secession: Art and the Decorative at the Viennese Women's Academy* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2020).

over amateur artists has disadvantaged women, who were often prevented from obtaining professional status.³¹ We know, even if we cannot always prove, that women's artistic practice is vibrant, active, and diverse. Within Japanese art, for example, Christine Guth and Marcia Yonemoto have demonstrated women's involvement in craft production, even though those women are now anonymous.³² I do not intend to endorse the idea that the only art of consequence was that which fit within the establishment, was professionally oriented, or that painting was the pinnacle of creative endeavors. But, as art historian Whitney Chadwick notes, "we must keep in mind the fact that it is the discipline of art history itself that has structured our access to women's contributions in specific ways."³³ Although I opted not to do so here, there is a critical need for studies on modern Japanese women's art activities that move beyond the establishment framework. I hope the reader will keep in mind, as this dissertation delves into the idea of the "female artist," all the art practices that are missing from that descriptor.

The second choice that requires explanation is my decision to look at each artist primarily through the lens of gender. This approach is hazardous because it risks reinscribing gender as these artists' defining trait in scholarship. I do so because gender was an ever-present force in their lives, dominating how they were visualized. Although I do not believe that each artist can be discussed only in relation to her

³¹ For a discussion on the prioritization of professionalism in the arts, see Kristina Huneault and Janice Anderson, eds., *Rethinking Professionalism: Women and Art in Canada, 1850-1970*, McGill-Queen's/Beaverbrook Canadian Foundation Studies in Art History, 9 (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012).

³² Christine Guth, *Craft Culture in Early Modern Japan: Materials, Makers, and Mastery*, The Franklin D. Murphy Lecture Series (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2021); Marcia Yonemoto, *The Problem of Women in Early Modern Japan, Asia: Local Studies / Global Themes*, V. 31. (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2016).

³³ Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society*, 15.

perceived gender, I do believe, given how much gender ideology influenced her ability to make choices, that to ignore gender in any analysis would be dishonest. One of the fundamental tensions in the study of women artists is how to discuss their gender as a critical force in their lives without further othering them. One example is the use of the term “woman artist.” Art Historian Paris Spies-Gans explains,

We are left with a dilemma for which decades of debates have yet to settle upon a satisfactory solution. While “woman artist” is a feminist term of rediscovery and acknowledgment, it still perpetuates a linguistic inequity by making women the exception to the artist rule, grouping them together as we never do for men while also reinforcing the false notion that women’s artworks can be categorized by virtue of their makers’ sex.³⁴

I would prefer, when referring to women who were artists, to simply refer to them as “artists.” But because the focus of this dissertation is on how these women were persistently gendered, it is necessary for clarity’s sake to indicate their gender. To avoid the suggestion that the default artist is male, I will indicate the perceived gender of any artist that is introduced.³⁵ In a similar vein, I recognize the issues with choosing these four artists precisely because they were women and how that might reinforce the perception of these artists as women first, artists second. This dissertation cannot resolve these tensions while we still exist in a society and discipline that understands women as *other*. But by illuminating how gender ideology in the form of the “female artist” worked to efface the personhood of women artists, I hope to call attention to the way gender ideology continues to do so and offer ways to see beyond that ideology to the individual underneath.

³⁴ Spies-Gans, “Why Do We Think There Have Been No Great Women Artists?” 83.

³⁵ Modern Japanese gender ideology created a binary between male and female, and I only make mention of men and women artists. This is not to suggest, however, that non-binary artists did not exist in this time period, nor is it my intention to reinforce a false gender binary. When possible, I refer to artists of all genders, rather than “both genders” to acknowledge that gender is a spectrum.

Finally, my approach to each woman was shaped by my focus on their engagement with the “female artist” type as well as my access to their works and archives. Each woman enjoyed a long life and career, but I mostly contain my analysis to their activities in the early twentieth century because this was the time when the “female artist” ideal developed, as well as when each artist was establishing her public identity. My analysis of each artist derives from close examination of her paintings and is further informed by biographical details as well as written texts and archival materials, and secondary scholarship. The artists are not given equal focus, however, due to uneven access to their archives and oeuvre. Kametaka Fumiko was the most challenging to study as she has the least secondary scholarship devoted to her and most of her work and archival material are in private hands and inaccessible. Although unable to devote a full chapter to her, I felt that the challenges of studying her work offered worthy insights into why women artists remain marginalized in art history and I have included her in a short Coda. Kajiwara Hisako, although probably now the most well-known of the four with a significant presence in Japanese museum collections, left less of an archival record during the period under study because she did not make her painting debut until 1918. As such, I fold my discussion of Hisako into a larger investigation of the visual representation of the “female artist” type. In contrast, Shima Seien’s archives are publicly available in the Osaka Nakanoshima Museum, which provide a wealth of personal material as well as newspaper clippings of articles and photographs that aid in the study of her visualization. Finally, I had complete access to Yoshida Fujio’s archival material and hundreds of her paintings thanks to the cooperation of her family. Fujio also wrote an autobiography. The

wealth of material available for Fujio necessitated a different approach from the one I take with the other artists, and I go the furthest in exploring her life and oeuvre. For the other women I have selected one key painting each to illustrate different facets of women's strategic engagement with the "female artist."

Chapter Summaries

The first two chapters explore the development of "female artist" as a distinct social identity and visual type. Chapter One establishes the historical processes and ideological grounding for the creation of the "female artist." It details how the forces of modernization led to an articulation of separate spheres for women and men and the development of a distinct category of art making known as "women's art," which inscribed the "feminine" onto women artists. The resulting "female artist" stereotype curtailed women artist's creative work, as well as their access to art education and art world power centers.

Chapter Two considers "female artist" as a visual type as well as the complex ways women artists participated in its construction. I analyze two spaces where women artists exerted some control over the visual representation of the "female artist": women's mass magazines (*fujin zasshi*) and women's professional activities. Women artists posed for photographs featured in magazines like *Fujin gahō* (婦人画報, *The Ladies' Graphic*), which followed a prescribed format that homogenized and subsumed women artists under the "female artist" label while also valorizing their

artistic skill and professional activities.³⁶ Recognizing the positive potential of the “female artist” visual type, Kajiwara Hisako adopted it in her painting *Tranquility*, advancing a vision of women painters as serious artists even as she upheld oppressive gender ideals. This chapter explores how women artists navigated gender limitations and used their limited power to make micro-adjustments to the “female artist” visual type that, while not unproblematic, increased the respectability of the profession.

Chapters Three and Four delve into Shima Seien and Yoshida Fujio’s diverging reactions to the “female artist” ideal. Chapter Three details Shima Seien’s use of self-portraiture to rebut the dehumanization of the “female artist” archetype and assert her individuality. The chapter provides a sustained analysis of her 1918 self-portrait, *Untitled*, in which she depicted herself with a large birthmark on her face (Figure 3.1a). Although she had no such birthmark, Seien used the device to express her feeling that being a woman painter in a patriarchal society was akin to being permanently marked. She addressed the oppression of the “female artist” stereotype by crafting her painting as a subversive work of *bijinga*, a genre of painting that upheld narrow ideals of feminine beauty and was commonly associated with women artists. She also used the painting to proclaim an alternative vision of herself as an artist that was rooted in her individuality and not her gender. As a rare, overt commentary on sexism by a modern Japanese woman artist, *Untitled* is an important example of how women artists, despite their disempowered positions, crafted strategies of resistance to patriarchal systems.

³⁶ The English translation of *Fujin gahō* varies across secondary scholarship. To avoid confusion, I have opted to use the Japanese title. The English title used here is the same as what was printed on the actual magazines during the modern period.

Chapter Four explores Yoshida Fujio's embrace of the "female artist" as part of an effort to gain more autonomy over her career and artistic expression. A pioneer woman *yōga* painter, Fujio's occupation as a professional artist, her medium, and even the subjects she drew were determined by her domineering husband, artist Yoshida Hiroshi (吉田博, 1876-1950). Hiroshi expected Fujio to model her career after his and pursue a conventional, male-coded path to establishment success. After tragedy struck her children, however, Fujio was unable to reconcile her seemingly opposing identities as an artist and as a mother, and she retreated from the art establishment. Instead, she chose to exhibit primarily with the women's art group the Shuyōkai (朱葉会) and turned to feminine subjects such as still lifes. In embracing the feminine sphere, Fujio was able to pursue an impressive variety of artistic expressions and was able to establish a unique sensibility. Fujio's example suggests how the "female artist" could be a source of liberation and opportunity to some women artists.

The Coda considers how the "female artist" stereotype continues to shape our analytical approach to modern Japanese women artists. I focus on the case study of Kametaka Fumiko's self-portrait, *Hanare yuku kokoro*, which is often partially (and falsely) attributed to her first husband, Watanabe Yohei (渡辺与平, 1889-1912) (Figure C.1a). I argue that Fumiko's self-presentation as a feminine ideal has led to an erasure of her identity as an autonomous artist and offer a method for reframing her work that restores her individuality.

Finally, the Conclusion asserts the key contributions this dissertation makes and considers how women artists' work may be reframed to better understand their

position in and contributions to modern Japanese art, and how the study of women artists advances the field of art history.

To move beyond the “female artist” paradigm requires several adjustments to our approach to Japanese women artists. The first is to question the perceived naturalness of women’s secondary status. As the following pages will demonstrate, the segregation of women artists and imposition of hegemonic femininity was a highly unnatural process. The second is to reconsider our attitudes toward femininity, to judge it neither as good nor bad, but as a mode of being that could be both oppressive and liberating. Finally, while keeping in focus the systemic nature of gender discrimination in modern Japan, it is important to treat women artists as active agents in their own stories with complex responses to their diverse circumstances. Locating sites where women artists exerted agency and interrogating their career decisions brings forth various strategies for coping with sexism and recaptures a sense of the individuals currently hidden behind the “female artist” facade. This reframing allows for not only a more authentic art history, it pushes us to question inherited categorizations and visualize a more equitable society.

Chapter One:

Segregated to the Feminine: The Ideological Establishment of the “Female Artist”

The “female artist” as the dominant visualization of women artists was a phenomenon specific to Japan’s modern period. This chapter establishes the historical processes and social discourses that defined women artists by their gender and pressured them to perform hegemonic femininity, thereby creating the “female artist” archetype. As discussed in the Introduction, I use the “female artist” to summarize a wide-ranging and evolving set of expectations that were imposed on women artists from multiple sources. Although this chapter offers a loose definition of the “female artist” based on the most frequently articulated gendered expectations, the reader should keep in mind that a concrete definition is elusive. The boundaries of the “female artist” like that of “femininity” were in constant flux, changing to suit a rapidly shifting society that was buffeted by modernization. Rather than conceiving of the “female artist” as constituting a set of rigid rules, it is more productive to think of it as a set of guidelines that were shaped by multiple authors, who had overlapping but distinct interests. The “female artist” was formed by state ideology, government and institutional policies, cultural mores, and individuals, such as art critics, cultural commentators, men artists, parents of aspiring women artists, and women artists themselves. These constituents sketched the contours of “female artist” both consciously (such as through government policy) and unconsciously (such as through ingrained misogyny). All of these forces combined, creating a systemic policing of

women artists' behavior and artistic expressions. This chapter looks at the concrete and nebulous ways the “female artist” was articulated to establish the guidelines for what “female artist” *should* be. The following chapters consider how the *should* was implemented, navigated, ignored, and transcended in the lives of individual women artists.

The foundation for the “female artist” was located in Meiji government-led changes to gender ideology, which created a social organization based on essentialist gender segregation. Women and men were to contribute to modernization through separate spheres of activity, with women tasked with the domestic sphere and preservation of Japanese traditions. Concurrent changes to art ideology categorized the fine arts as the male domain. When women continued to pursue art careers, governmental policies and social attitudes created a separate framework for women's creative activity that siloed them and limited their expressive possibilities to “feminine” genres, modes, and subjects. The segregation and marginalization of women artists was further accomplished through art education and exhibition system policies. Women had more limited access to institutional art education and faced discrimination from artists and parents when pursuing private learning opportunities. Misogynistic societal attitudes had a negative impact on women artists' ability to compete with men in the juried exhibitions and *dantai* (art associations) that were the pathway to artistic prominence and financial security. The persistent gendering of women artists and the pressures placed on them to perform ideal femininity coalesced as the “female artist,” a distinct and lesser category of artist whose purpose was not to give women a roadmap towards becoming professional artists, but to marginalize

women artists and maintain the male-dominated power structure of the modern Japanese art world and larger Japanese society.

Gender and Art Ideology in Modern Japan

The “female artist” emerged in the Meiji period, in the wake of significant ideological changes to conceptions of gender and art.¹ In response to the threat of Western colonization, Japan rapidly transformed from a pre-industrial, and internationally sequestered society into a cosmopolitan nation-state capable of competing militarily and economically with dominant Euro-American powers.² Every facet of Japanese life was interrogated for its utility to Japan’s modernization mission. Countless Western-derived technologies, institutions, and ideas were introduced, leading to immense social, political, economic, and cultural change. The class hierarchy of the preceding Edo period (1603-1868) was abolished and a new parliamentary government, overseen by the Meiji emperor, was adopted. Compulsory education was established, as was a postal system. Western-style brick buildings and European clothing began to dot urban centers, a rail network was built, and print media proliferated. Japan won the successive Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) and began its imperial project, colonizing Taiwan, Korea, and South Sakhalin. This dizzying change was accompanied by questions of identity, as individuals and the nation struggled with how to define “Japan” amidst

¹ For a discussion of ideology in modern Japan, see Carol Gluck, *Japan’s Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period*, Princeton Paperbacks (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985).

² Scholarship on modern Japanese history is particularly rich and expansive. For a comprehensive and accessible overview of the period see Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Time to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). See also Minichiello, ed., *Japan’s Competing Modernities*; Germer, Mackie, and Wöhr, eds., *Gender, Nation and State*.

Euro-American cultural imperialism and rising Japanese nationalism. The changes to gender and art ideology that are discussed below are reflective of the state's efforts to modernize while advocating a unique cultural identity. But it is important to keep in mind that state ideology was often inconsistent with individual ambitions, and the modern era, especially the early twentieth century, can be described as a period filled with tension between ideal and reality, the state and the individual, national and international, public and private, change and stasis. State ideology was ever shifting in response to the tenor of the times and the individual actors it sought to influence.

Women's lives were reshaped to actively support Japan's modernization goals. The Meiji government's overhaul of social expectations for women is best summarized by the slogan "Good Wife, Wise Mother" (*ryōsai kenbo*).³ A "Good Wife" was a woman who would support her husband by efficiently managing the household and creating a nurturing and restorative home environment. A "Wise Mother" was a woman who raised loyal and intelligent imperial subjects who would aid Japan in becoming a powerful empire. Moreover, women were expected to model "feminine" behavior such as chastity, modesty, submissiveness, filial piety, frugality, and productivity. The "Good Wife, Wise Mother" ideology was officially established by the Ministry of Education in 1899 but it built off of ideas about the purpose of girls' education as important for cultivating "wise mothers" as early as 1872. It was

³ For detailed information on "Good Wife, Wise Mother," see Sharon H. Nolte and Sally Ann Hastings, "The Meiji State's Policy Toward Women, 1890-1910," in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley and LA, University of California Press, 1991): 151-174; Uno, "The Origins of 'Good Wife Wise Mother'"; Koyama Shizuko, *Ryōsai Kenbo*; Koyama Shizuko, "Domestic Roles and the Incorporation of Women into the Nation-State: The Emergence and Development of the 'Good Wife, Wise Mother' Ideology," trans. Vera Mackie, in *Gender, Nation and State in Modern Japan*, eds. Andrea Germer, Vera C Mackie, and Ulrike Wöhr, Asian Studies Association of Australia Women in Asia Series (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014): 85-100.

primarily inculcated through the Meiji education system, but was also advanced by various intellectuals, activists, and print publications. Although the relegation of women to the domestic sphere may appear traditional, “Good Wife, Wise Mother” was undoubtedly a modern construction.⁴ Indeed, Edo period (1603-1868) ideals for women dictated that they be subservient wives and daughters-in-law but the responsibility for household management and educating children fell to the male household head.⁵ The “Good Wife, Wise Mother” ideology adjusted the scope of women’s domestic labor and redefined it as a form of public service, giving it a new, symbolic importance.⁶ But it was that very valuation that was used to further subjugate women and exclude them from many professional and public activities.⁷ Women were excluded from gaining political rights because participation in the political realm would, according to politicians, distract them from their vital domestic responsibilities.⁸ Mae Michiko argues that the state used the persuasive rhetoric of respecting motherhood, in particular, to convince women to integrate themselves into the nation state “even though they were in fact not eligible to be full citizens and suffered discrimination.”⁹ Indeed, it was the perception of being *included* and critical

⁴ For more on this argument and the influence of Western thought on the ideology, see Koyama, *Ryōsai Kenbo*.

⁵ See Koyama, “Domestic Roles and the Incorporation of Women into the Nation-State,” 86-87. See also Kathleen S. Uno, “Women and Changes in the Household Division of Labor,” in *Recreating Japanese Women 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 17-41.

⁶ Nolte and Hastings, “The Meiji State’s Policy Toward Women,” 156-57.

⁷ Anderson, *A Place in Public*.

⁸ Women were barred from attending political meetings from 1890-1922 and from voting until 1945. Nolte and Hastings, “The Meiji State’s Policy Toward Women,” 152-155.

⁹ Mae Michiko, “The Nexus of Nation, Culture, and Gender in Modern Japan: The Resistance of Kanno Sugako and Kaneko Fumiko,” trans. Leonie Stickland, in *Gender, Nation and State in Modern Japan*, eds. Andrea Germer, Vera C Mackie, and Ulrike Wöhr, Asian Studies Association of Australia Women in Asia Series (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014), 74-76.

to Japan's modernization through a defined and exclusive female role that led to what now seems like the puzzling cooperation of many modern women's rights activists with the Japanese state that actively oppressed them.¹⁰ The appeal of "Good Wife, Wise Mother" was that it appeared to give women authority, power, and public value, but in truth it chained women to the domestic domain.

"Good Wife, Wise Mother" also made women responsible for preserving the essence of "Japan." "Japan" in this case was, too, a modern invention comprised of nostalgia for an invented past wherein Japan was completely isolated and had developed unique cultural practices which were now in jeopardy due to the influx of Western ideas.¹¹ Anthropologist Partha Chatterjee, writing on social reform in early and mid-nineteenth century Bengal, describes a similar set of issues about women's role in modernization, describing a distinction made between the home, the "inner spiritual self," and the world, the "external, the domain of the material."¹² "The world was where the European power had challenged the non-European peoples and, by virtue of its superior material culture, had subjugated them. But it had failed to

¹⁰ For women's cooperation with the state in exchange for a measure of power and authority over the so-called feminine sphere, see Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*; Barbara Molony, "The Quest for Women's Rights in Turn-of-the-Century Japan," in *Gendering Modern Japanese History*, eds. Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005): 463-92; Hiroko Tomida, "The Controversy Over the Protection of Motherhood and Its Impact Upon the Japanese Women's Movement," *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 3, no. 2 (2004): 243-71; Suzuki, *Gendered Power*.

¹¹ For more on nationalism and the construction of an imagined community, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised and extended (London: Verso, 1991). For Japan-specific discussions, see Stephen Vlastos, ed., *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*. Twentieth-Century Japan, 9 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Marilyn Ivy, *Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan*, Twentieth-Century Japan, 6 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Karlin, *Gender and Nation in Meiji Japan*.

¹² Partha Chatterjee, "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question," in *Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History*, eds. Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 238.

colonize the inner, essential, identity of the East which lay in its distinctive, and superior, spiritual culture.”¹³ The world was the domain of men, while women came to represent the home, and by extension, the essential identity and superior culture of India. Indian historian Tapati Guha Thakurta further explains,

In fighting the onslaught of colonialism, women were designated their special roles in the nationalist project—as preservers of age-old customs and rituals, as embodiments of religiosity and virtue, as upholders of domestic order and stability, as nurturing mothers, faithful wives and devoted daughters, all sustaining the male in his public services to the motherland. . . .They were educated, modernised, brought into public life and political activity, all within certain defined codes of a new model of womanhood. Their subjectivity- their actual struggles and identities- continuously receded before their idealised symbolic presence.¹⁴

The Meiji slogan “*wakon yōsai*” (Japanese spirit and Western technology) represents a similar set of concerns, wherein “the ‘true’ Japan was identified with an unchanging spiritual (or feminine) sphere and Western influence was reduced to the material (or masculine) sphere lest it should pollute the purity of the Japanese spirit.”¹⁵ Japanese women, through the “Good Wife, Wise Mother” ideology, were given purview over both the physical and metaphorical home, which represented the inner spiritual self of Japan. Women themselves came to embody “the timeless values of tradition and the past.”¹⁶ Therefore, women, the home, and tradition became ideologically grouped, as did their inverse: men, the public, and the modern.

¹³ Chatterjee, “The Nationalist Resolution of the Women’s Question,” 239.

¹⁴ Tapati Guha Thakurta, “Women as ‘Calendar Art’ Icons: Emergence of Pictorial Stereotype in Colonial India,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 26, no. 43 (Oct. 1991), WS95-96.

¹⁵ Andrea Germer, Vera Mackie, and Ulrike Wöhr, “Introduction: Gender, Nation and State in Modern Japan,” in *Gender, Nation and State in Modern Japan*, eds. Andrea Germer, Vera Mackie, and Ulrike Wöhr, Asian Studies Association of Australia Women in Asia Series (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014), 6. See also Morris Low, “Technological Culture,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Japanese Culture*, ed. Yoshio Sugimoto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): 130-146.

¹⁶ Karlin, *Gender and Nation in Meiji Japan*, 5.

The “Good Wife, Wise Mother ” ideology created a social order that was premised on the enforcement of a strict gender binary and the articulation of “female” as a definable social category. By the mid-Meiji period gender had replaced class as the primary system of social and legal classification.¹⁷ Men and women were expected to support Japan’s modernization goals through separate spheres of activity.¹⁸ An important tenet of this ideology was that it justified the segregation of women from men on the basis of supposedly scientifically observable sexual differences.¹⁹ A woman’s place was in the home, but more broadly, her place was in an essentialist, “feminine” sphere. As many scholars have pointed out, women from

¹⁷ Anderson, *A Place in Public*. This is not to suggest that gender was not a factor in social categorization in the premodern period nor that class did not continue to matter in the modern period. Indeed, there was considerable nuance to social and legal classifications, as well as a gap between legal codes and individual circumstances, that is beyond the scope of this dissertation. For further reading on the variety of women’s experiences in relation to class and gender, see the essays in Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women*, and Tonomura, Walthall, and Wakita, eds., *Women and Class in Japanese History*; For a discussion on the gap between ideal and reality in the premodern period, see Anne Walthall, “Devoted Wives/Unruly Women: Invisible Presence in the History of Japanese Social Protest,” *Signs* 20, no. 1 (1994): 106–36; and Yonemoto, *The Problem of Women*.

¹⁸ For information on masculinity and male gender roles in modern Japan, see Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan*; Karlin, *Gender and Nation in Meiji Japan*; Donald Roden, *Schooldays in Imperial Japan: A Study in the Culture of a Student Elite* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1980); Earl Kinmonth, *The Self-Made Man in Meiji Japanese Thought: From Samurai to Salaryman* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981); Jason G. Karlin, “The Gender of Nationalism: Competing Masculinities in Meiji Japan,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 28, no. 1 (Winter, 2002): 41-77; Donald Roden, “Thoughts on the Early Meiji Gentleman,” in *Gendering Modern Japanese History*, eds. Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005): 61-98; Theodore F. Cook, Jr., “Making Soldiers’: Imperial Army and the Japanese Man in Meiji Society and State,” in *Gendering Modern Japanese History*, eds. Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005): 259-294; Gregory Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600-1950* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007); Sabine Frühstück and Anne Walthall, eds., *Recreating Japanese Men*, Asia: Local Studies/Global Themes, 20 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Sabine Frühstück, “‘The Spirit to Take up a Gun’: Militarising Gender in the Imperial Army,” in *Gender, Nation and State in Modern Japan*, eds. Andrea Germer, Vera Mackie, and Ulrike Wöhr, Asian Studies Association of Australia Women in Asia Series (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014): 163-179; Jason G. Karlin, “Narratives of heroism in Meiji Japan: Nationalism, Gender and Impersonation,” in *Gender, Nation and State in Modern Japan*, eds. Andrea Germer, Vera Mackie, and Ulrike Wöhr, Asian Studies Association of Australia Women in Asia Series (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014): 48-67.

¹⁹ Kano, *Acting Like a Woman*, 28-29; Koyama, “Domestic Roles and the Incorporation of Women into the Nation-State,” 90-91.

elite backgrounds were the focus of the “Good Wife, Wise Mother” ideology, which was primarily inculcated through women’s higher schools accessible only to women from wealthy families.²⁰ Women factory workers, for example, who formed the backbone of the Meiji industrial economy, were not expected to abandon their jobs.²¹ But by the end of the Meiji period, the ideology was part of the girls’ curriculum for compulsory elementary education.²² Thus, although the reality of many modern Japanese women’s lives diverged from the “Good Wife, Wise Mother” model, the ideology was still a powerful force in shaping their lives. As Ayako Kano succinctly explains, this ideology “defined womanhood in narrow terms, controlled women’s behavior and their energies, and marginalized those who failed to fit the ideal.”²³ It became the standard against which all women were measured, compressing the multitudes of women’s identities into a single category of “female.” It was important for women to embody the feminine ideal because doing so maintained a sense of

²⁰ See sources cited in Chapter One, fn 3.

²¹ See Barbara Molony, “Activism Among Women in the Taisho Cotton Textile Industry,” in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991): 217-238; Mariko Asano Tamanai, “Japanese Nationalism and the Female Body: A Critical Reassessment of the Discourse of Social Reformers on Factory Women,” in *Women and Class in Japanese History*, eds. Hitomi Tonomura, Anne Walthall, and Wakita Haruko, Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies, No. 25 (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, the University of Michigan, 1999): 275-298; Janet Hunter, “Gendering the Labor Market: Evidence from the Interwar Textile Industry,” in *Gendering Modern Japanese History*, eds. Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005): 359-392; Faisson, *Managing Women: Disciplining Labor in Modern Japan*; Himeoka Toshiko, “The Gendering of Work and Workers in the Process of Modernising the Textile Industry,” trans. Leonie Stickland, in *Gender, Nation and State in Modern Japan*, eds. Andrea Germer, Vera Mackie, and Ulrike Wöhr, Asian Studies Association of Australia Women in Asia Series (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014): 119-140; Miller, “Imaging Industry.”

²² By 1910, the compliance rate for girls attending elementary school was 97.4 percent. “Good wife, Wise Mother” ideology was included in elementary education after 1911. Nolte and Hastings, “The Meiji State’s Policy Toward Women,” 157-58.

²³ Kano, *Acting Like a Woman*, 41.

social stability and connection to the past amidst the rapid changes brought by modernity.

Concurrent with the rise of the “Good Wife, Wise Mother” ideology was the gendering of the fine arts as masculine, and therefore outside the appropriate sphere for women. In the Meiji period, the meaning of “art” underwent a dramatic transformation as European conceptions of “fine art”—its categorization, hierarchy, social purpose, and institutions were transplanted and intermingled with Japan’s pre-modern visual arts practices.²⁴ The visual arts became a critical component of the government’s modernization and industrialization goals.²⁵ In the early years of the Meiji period, the visual arts were valued primarily for their contribution to the country’s economy through trade and export and fell under the purview of the Ministry of Industry (Kōbushō). Under this conception, women’s creative activity was critical to increasing Japan’s economic competitiveness through the export of art goods. For example, the silk produced by a majority of women workers earned recognition at World’s Expositions, such as the Vienna International Exposition of 1873, boosting Japan’s international reputation and the value of its exports.²⁶ But as

²⁴ Satō Dōshin argues that the conceptualization of art, what it was and what purpose it served, changed in the Meiji period as Japan imported European art institutions and understanding of the social role of art. See Satō Dōshin, “*Nihon bijutsu*” *tanjō: Kindai Nihon no “kotoba” to senryaku* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1996); Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State*; See also Chelsea Foxwell, Introduction to *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State: The Politics of Beauty*, by Satō Dōshin (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2011): 1-24; Kitazawa Noriaki, *Me no shinden: “Bijutsu” juyōshi nōto* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shupansha, 1989); Michael Marra, ed. *A History of Modern Japanese Aesthetics* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001); Michael Marra, “The Creation of the Vocabulary of Aesthetics in Meiji Japan,” in *Since Meiji: Perspective on the Japanese Visual Arts, 1868-2000*, ed. J. Thomas Rimer (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2012): 193-211; Ellen P. Conant, *Challenging Past and Present: the Metamorphosis of Nineteenth-Century Japanese Art* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006).

²⁵ Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, 19.W

²⁶ For more, see Miller, “Imaging Industry.”

the Meiji period progressed, arts administration came under the control of the Ministry of Education (Monbushō), which was responsible for the promotion of education and culture.²⁷ It was under the direction of the Ministry of Education that the three key institutions of the establishment art system were founded: the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō, est. 1887), the Museum (Hakubutsukan, est. 1882) and the Bunten Exhibition (est. 1907).²⁸ Under this framework, which was modeled on European institutions, “fine art” (*bijutsu*) became distinguished from the visual arts more broadly, and took on symbolic importance, serving as a form of soft power that would demonstrate Japan’s cultural sophistication on an international stage. In other words, creative work during the second half of Meiji was segmented, and what we now call fine art was transformed into an “autonomous cultural field embodying the spiritual character of the nation.”²⁹ As the fine arts took on the public, political work of representing modern Japan’s cultural sophistication to an international audience it became categorized as part of the male domain.³⁰

²⁷ Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, 20-21.

²⁸ For information see Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State*; Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, especially chapters one and two. On the Museum, see Alice Tseng, *The Imperial Museums of Meiji Japan: Architecture and the Art of the Nation* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008); For information on the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, see Victoria Weston, “Institutionalizing Talent and the Kano Legacy at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, 1889-1893,” in *Copying the Master and Stealing His Secrets*, eds. Brenda G. Jordan and Victoria Louise Weston (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2003): 147-177; Ellen P. Conant, “The Tokyo School of Fine Arts and the Development of *Nihonga*, 1889-1906,” in *Nihonga: Transcending the Past*, ed. Ellen P. Conant (Saint Louis, MO: Saint Louis Art Museum and Japan Foundation, 1995): 25-35; For information on the Bunten and national salons, see Ellen P. Conant, “‘Bunten’: A National Forum, 1907-1908,” in *Nihonga: Transcending the Past*, ed. Ellen P. Conant (Saint Louis, MO: Saint Louis Art Museum and Japan Foundation, 1995): 36-43; J. Thomas Rimer, “‘Teiten’ and After, 1919-1935,” in *Nihonga: Transcending the Past*, ed. Ellen P. Conant (Saint Louis, MO: Saint Louis Art Museum and Japan Foundation, 1995): 44-56; Kojima, “Introduction”; Alicia Volk, “Authority, Autonomy, and the Early Taisho Avant Garde,” *Positions: East Asia Culture Critique* 21, no. 2. (Spring 2013): 451-473.

²⁹ Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, 20.

³⁰ For discussions of the modern art world and masculinity, see Kojima, *Joseizō ga utsusu Nihon*; Ikeda, *Teshigoto*; Winther-Tamaki, *Maximum Embodiment*; Kaneko, *Mirroring the Japanese Empire*.

Professional women artists, by abandoning the domestic sphere and transgressing into the perceived-male territory of “Art,” disrupted modern Japanese gender norms. These women were part of a larger trend of women entering various professions in greater numbers.³¹ In the early years of the Taishō period, these women became affiliated with the “new woman” (*atarashii onna*), a social type that challenged the restrictions of “Good Wife, Wise Mother” and was closely associated with the burgeoning women’s movement.³² The increase of women in professional spaces led to societal anxiety over a perceived breakdown in the gender binary.³³

Historian Margit Nagy notes that in the 1920s,

³¹ For women in the white-collar professional sphere, see Sato, “Work for Life, for Marriage, for Love,” in *The New Japanese Woman*; Margit Nagy, “Middle-Class Working Women During the Interwar Years,” in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1991): 199-216; Sally Ann Hastings, “Women’s Professional Expertise and Women’s Suffrage in Japan, 1868-1952,” in *Gender, Nation and State in Modern Japan*, eds. Andrea Germer, Vera Mackie, and Ulrike Wöhr, Asian Studies Association of Australia Women in Asia Series (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014): 211-229. See Chapter One, fn 21 for sources on women factory workers.

³² In particular, the “new woman” and women’s movement itself was championed in the literary magazine *Seitō*, founded in 1911. One of the leading contributors to *Seitō* was the poet and activist Yosano Akiko, who figures obliquely in the histories of each of the four women artists under discussion in this dissertation. Kajiwara Hisako was a noted fan of Yosano’s poems; Shima Seien was from the same hometown as Yosano and frequently compared to her in the press; Yoshida Fujio and Kametaka Fumiko participated with Yosano in the women’s *yōga dantai* the Shuyōkai. Although none of these artists were as outspoken about (proto-)feminist issues as Yosano, their connections to her suggest sympathies with the women’s movement causes. For more on the creation of the “new woman,” see Rodd, “Yosano Akiko and the Taishō Debate over the “New Woman.” For more information on *Seitō* and translations of the essays and fiction in the magazine, see Bardsley, *The Bluestockings of Japan*. For information on the women’s movement, see Molony, “The Quest for Women’s Rights”; Helen M. Hopper, *A New Woman of Japan: A Political Biography of Katō Shidzue* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996); Janine Beichman, *Embracing the Firebird: Yosano Akiko and the Birth of the Female Voice in Modern Japanese Poetry* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2002); Barbara Molony, “Women’s Rights and the Japanese State, 1880-1925,” in *Public Spheres, Private Lives in Modern Japan, 1600-1950*, eds. Gail Lee Bernstein, Andrew Gordon and Kate Wildman Nakai (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005): 221-258; Tomida, “The Controversy Over the Protection of Motherhood”; Mackie, *Creating Socialist Women in Japan*; Mae, “The Nexus of Nation, Culture and Gender in Modern Japan.” For information on Kajiwara Hisako’s connection to Yosano Akiko, see Fujita Takeshi and Baba Kyoko, *Kajiwara Hisako/Hirota Tazu/Kitazawa Eigetsu Gendai Nihonga bijinga zenshu*, vol. 7 (Tokyo: Shueisha, 1979), 77. For Shima Seien’s connection to Yosano Akiko, see Shima Seien, “Itsumademo wakawakashii kibun de: chōetsu shita jibun na e wo egakitai,” *Kaiga seidan* 5 no. 9 (Sept. 1917): 38-39.

³³For anxieties about dissolving gender binaries, see Donald Roden, “Taishō Culture and the Problem of Gender Ambivalence,” in *Culture and Identity: Japanese Intellectuals During the Interwar Years*,

Bureaucratic reports, onsite surveys, journalistic accounts, and personal narratives from this period reveal that the phenomenon of middle-class working women (*chūryū shokugyō fujin*) created profound anxieties about the future of family life and national unity, especially since the middle class was viewed as the bastion of social stability in an era of social and political turmoil.³⁴

Nagy details a number of negative questions being asked about working women, including whether women would retain their virtue, how they could manage work and home responsibilities without shortchanging both, how working women would affect male unemployment, and what the adverse effects would be on a generation of Japanese citizens raised by working mothers.³⁵ This anxiety extended into the arts, where women artists faced censure for intruding on perceived masculine territory. It was feared that women artists would become too masculine or engage in unregulated sexual behavior, thereby disrupting Japan's gender segregated social structure.³⁶

In sum, the concept of the professional woman artist, by the logic of modern Japanese gender ideology, was an unsettling paradox. Women were not supposed to have professional careers and were not supposed to be artists of the ilk that would publicly represent Japan's national interests. That was a man's sphere of responsibility. Yet women were, and in increasing numbers, professional artists, as contemporary commentators were prone to remark.³⁷ Women artists were treated like celebrities, their professional activities and personal lives reported on by the popular

ed. J. Thomas Rimer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014): 37-55. See also Karlin, *Gender and Nation in Meiji Japan*; Czarnecki, "Bad Girls from Good Families"; Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense*.

³⁴ Nagy, "Middle-Class Working Women During the Interwar Years," 199-200.

³⁵ Nagy, "Middle-Class Working Women During the Interwar Years," 200.

³⁶ For some examples of fears that women artists were too masculine or sexually promiscuous see Seien, "Itsumademo wakawakashii kibun de," 38-39; Shirosuisei, "Hahaoya no mita Shima Seien joshi," *Seikatsu* 6, no. 6 (June 1918): 50-52. See also Morioka, "Changing Images of Women."

³⁷ For example, see Fujikake Shizuya, "Meiji Taishō no keishūgaka," *Fujin Gahō* no. 203 (Sept. 1922), 66; Fujikake Shizuya, "E no jozū na mukashi no fujin," *Fujin Gahō* no. 88 (Nov. 1913): 67.

press (see Chapter Two). They were highly visible, and for many young women, aspirational figures. There was obvious tension between the ideal—the *supposed* to—and the reality of women’s goals that led to societal anxiety that professional women artists would endanger modern Japanese society.

The Creation of “Women’s Art”

The response was the inscription of the “feminine” onto women who elected to be artists. Indeed, Koyama Shizuko notes that the “Good Wife, Wise Mother” ideology subtly shifted to accommodate the fuller participation of Japanese women in society and the workforce, allowing women to enter the male domain so long as they enacted their femininity in society.³⁸ Women artists could be tolerated, and indeed become role models for other women, so long as it was clear that women artists were “female” and not “male.”

The process of placing women’s creative activity under a feminine umbrella can be tracked linguistically. As the Meiji period progressed, terms for creative work and artistic identities became gendered. This gendering occurred as new terms were invented to describe art forms, systems, and ideas that were imported from European models, and existing terms were redefined to fit the new art ideology.³⁹ The primary locus for this gendering occurred in the establishment of gender segregated education, under the model of “Good Wife, Wise Mother.” The establishment of a “female artist” type began with the separation of men’s and women’s creative activity into

³⁸ Koyama, “Domestic Roles and the Incorporation of Women into the Nation-State,” 98.

³⁹ See Chapter One, fn 24.

different categories: “fine art” (*bijutsu*) and “women’s fine art” (*josei no bijutsu*).

These two categories were given different societal values and purposes, following the larger modern Japanese gender structure.

To understand the process and the stakes of this separation, it is helpful to consider the transformation of the meaning of *shugei* (手芸, handicraft).⁴⁰ At the beginning of the Meiji period, *shugei* was simply another, non-gendered term for *teshigoto* (手仕事, lit. “hand work”), which encompassed skills completed by hand, such as but not limited to weaving, dying, sewing, embroidery, and some painting.⁴¹ But starting in the mid-Meiji period, when “Good Wife, Wise Mother” became national policy, *shugei* became gendered as female and gradually became an essential component of girls’ education, meant to teach women how to skillfully use their hands and cultivate a habit of diligence.⁴² This curriculum was consistent for girls across class and was part of the socialization and nationalization of all women in the modern period.⁴³ By the turn of the twentieth century, *shugei* was most closely

⁴⁰ My discussion of *shugei* is derived from the following sources: Yamasaki Akiko, “Joshi bijutsu kyōiku ni okeru ‘shugei’ no ichi: jendā riron ni yoru ‘shugei’ gainen no kentō,” *Bijutsu kyōiku-gaku: Bijutsu-ka kyōiku gakkaiishi* 28 (2007): 373-82; Ikeda, *Teshigoto*, 54-58; Kojima, “Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi.”

⁴¹ Yamasaki, “Joshi bijutsu kyōiku ni okeru ‘shugei’ no ichi,” 375-76.

⁴² The incorporation of *shugei* in girls’ education began in 1872 when it was introduced as an elective subject for elementary school girls. Yamasaki posits that the non-gendered meaning of *shugei* persisted throughout the Meiji 10s. A 1879 education ordinance established a “sewing course” for girls only which included instruction in making related handicrafts. The gendering of *shugei* further developed in 1895 when it was made a mandatory course in girls’ higher schools. The 1901 Ordinance of Girls’ Higher School Regulations declared that *shugei* was appropriate for girls to learn, with the aim of skillfully using their hands and learning to like diligence. Yamasaki, “Joshi bijutsu kyōiku ni okeru ‘shugei’ no ichi,” 376.

⁴³ Ikeda, *Teshigoto*, 56; Yamasaki, “Joshi bijutsu kyōiku ni okeru ‘shugei’ no ichi,” 378. Sewing, which was closely tied to *shugei*, had been an important part of women’s education, both moral and practical, in the premodern period, too. For how sewing fit into women’s self-cultivation, see Yonemoto, *The Problem of Women*, 67-68. See also Guth, *Craft Culture*, 143-148; Christine Guth, “Theorizing the *hari kuyō*: The Ritual Disposal of Needles in Early Modern Japan,” in *Encountering Things: Design and Theories of Things*, ed. Leslie Atzmon and Prasad Boradkar (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017): 65-80; Gordon, *Fabricating Consumers*, chapter 3.

associated with sewing, but could also encompass knitting, embroidery, artificial flower creation, cord braiding, and other small crafts that supported and beautified home life.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, as Ikeda Shinobu and Yamasaki Akiko have pointed out, what is critical to understand about *shugei* is that its use as a descriptor for creative activity was not determined by the object made, but rather by the gender of the creator.⁴⁵ Men also engaged in sewing and similar crafts, but this identical activity was understood as *kōgei* (工芸, craft). Furthermore, *shugei* might be invoked if an object could be described using gendered language such as “small,” “elegant,” “feminine,” “amateur,” “domestic,” etc.⁴⁶ In other words, when it came to classifying an aesthetic object or practice, gender was the deciding factor.

But what does *shugei* have to do with the fine arts (*bijutsu*)? If an identical work of embroidery was *shugei* when created by a woman, and *kōgei* when created by a man, was a painting’s categorization similarly determined by gender? In the case of fine art, the term for painting (*kaiga*) was the same regardless of gender, but the evaluative framework was gendered. Women’s fine art work—in this case painting and sculpture—become distinguished by the term “women’s fine art” (*josei no bijutsu*).⁴⁷ Within women’s education, *bijutsu* was closely tied to *shugei*.⁴⁸ The girls’ education curriculum in the mid-Meiji period placed *bijutsu* along with *shugei* under the umbrella of *gigei* (技芸, technical art). By the Meiji 30s (1898-1908), *shugei* was positioned as a sub-category of *bijutsu*. Joshibi, for example, included departments

⁴⁴ Ikeda, *Teshigoto*, 58.

⁴⁵ Ikeda, *Teshigoto*, 58; Yamasaki, “Joshi bijutsu kyōiku ni okeru ‘shugei’ no ichi,” 374.

⁴⁶ Yamasaki, “Joshi bijutsu kyōiku ni okeru ‘shugei’ no ichi,” 375.

⁴⁷ Kojima, “Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi,” 46.

⁴⁸ The following discussion of *shugei* in relationship to *bijutsu* comes from Yamasaki, “Joshi bijutsu kyōiku ni okeru ‘shugei’ no ichi,” 378-79.

for the fine arts and crafts (see discussion below), but used the term *bijutsu* in its name. In other words, in women's education, *shugei* and *bijutsu* were part of the same category of women's creative activity (regardless if the umbrella term was *gigei* or *bijutsu*). This was further borne out by how two prominent men artists discussed women's creative work. In a 1907 essay, *nihonga* painter and illustrator Kajita Hanko (梶田半古, 1870-1919) defined sewing, artificial flowers, knitting, music, painting, tea ceremony, and ikebana as women's *gigei* (*joshi no gigei*).⁴⁹ The following year, *yōga* painter and Joshibi instructor Isono Yoshio (磯野吉雄, 1875-1948) defined women's painting and *shugei* as an art-like *gigei* (*bijutsuteki gigei*).⁵⁰ In men's art education, *kōgei* and *bijutsu* were separated.⁵¹ For example, the male-only Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō), initially contained only departments for painting and sculpture.⁵² The logic of categorization was not based on the types of objects made, but the gender of the creator. Men's fine art activity was not referred to as "men's art," it was simply understood as "fine art" (*bijutsu*). Women's painting activity was identified as "women's fine art," "women's technical art," or as "fine-art-like technical art," but it was *not* "fine art."

The placement of women into a separate, female-gendered category of art making is confirmed by the distinct way women artists were referred to in written sources. Early twentieth century appellations for women artists included *joryū gaka* (女流画家, painter of the feminine school), *keishū gaka* (閨秀画家, painter with

⁴⁹ Yamasaki, "Joshi bijutsu kyōiku ni okeru 'shugei' no ichi," 379.

⁵⁰ Yamasaki, "Joshi bijutsu kyōiku ni okeru 'shugei' no ichi," 379.

⁵¹ See Satō, "Art and Social Class: The Class System in Early Modern Japan and the Formation of 'Art'," in *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State*.

⁵² Information on the Tokyo School of Fine Arts can be found in Weston, "Institutionalizing Talent."

feminine talent), or simply the honorific suffix *joshi* (女史, lady).⁵³ In contrast, men artists tended to have either the honorific *shi* (氏, Mr./Ms.) or *gahaku* (画伯, master artist) added to their names, which did not explicitly gender them.⁵⁴ As these terms indicate, women artists were positioned via their gender, as if “these artists have done their creative work in tandem with ‘being a woman.’”⁵⁵ Moreover, in the case of *keishū gaka*, *kei* (閨) means the women’s quarters or bedroom in a palace, so that even when used as an honorific, it is qualified by the association of women with interior, domestic spaces.⁵⁶ This attitude was so entrenched that most *nihonga* women artists signed their works with *jo* (女), the Japanese character for woman, or *joshi* until the 1920s.⁵⁷ Although it is possible that some of these women used this convention as a point of pride—to “identify themselves as women of culture”⁵⁸ at a time when being a woman and an artist was rare, the practice nevertheless othered

⁵³ Hashimoto Shinji, “Japanese Painting and Women Painters [Résumé],” trans. Stanley N. Anderson, in *Hashiru onna tachi: josei gaka no senzen sengo 1930-1950 nendai*, ed. Kokatsu Reiko (Utsunomiya: Tochigi Kenritsu Bijutsukan, 2001), 181. *Keishū* as a term for talented women (writers and artists) comes from China and predates the Meiji period. *Keishū* and *joryū* were also used to refer to women authors, with *gaka* replaced by *sakka*. Sometimes, however, visual artists were also referred to as *sakka*. For more on women writers and how they were referred to in the Meiji period, see Copeland, *Lost Leaves*, 37-38.

⁵⁴ This information is based on my own observations of how men artists were referred to in early twentieth century periodicals.

⁵⁵ Hashimoto, “Japanese Painting and Women Painters,” 181.

⁵⁶ Suzuki Kaoru, “The Activities of Women *Nihongakaga*, Japanese-Style Painters Outside the Government Exhibitions [Résumé],” trans. Stanley N. Anderson, in *Hashiru onna tachi: josei gaka no senzen sengo 1930-1950 nendai*, ed. Kokatsu Reiko (Utsunomiya: Tochigi Kenritsu Bijutsukan, 2001), 183.

⁵⁷ This practice also existed in the premodern period, see Fister, *Japanese Women Artists*. The signing of 女 seems to have been mostly confined to *nihonga* painters; *yōga* painters typically signed their works using roman characters and women like Yoshida Fujio and Kametaka Fumiko did not write “woman” after their names. Shima Seien did write “女” after her name, albeit inconsistently, until c. 1920 while Kajiwara Hisako, born a generation later, only appears to have signed her name with 女 once, on her painting *Dressing Room of a Traveling Troupe* (旅の楽室) from c. 1925. According to Michiyo Morioka, prominent *nihonga* artist Itō Shōha stopped using 女 in her signature around 1920 and Uemura Shōen stopped around 1926. Morikoka, “Changing Images of Women,” 31.

⁵⁸ “Exhibition Catalog: Introduction,” *Her Brush*, np.

them. Men did not sign their work with *dan* (男, man). Under this system, men were “artists” and women were “female artists.”

The organizing principle of gender extended even to women’s individual artist names. The kanji character “en” (園) appeared in the artist names for Uemura Shōen (上村松園 1875-1949), Ikeda Shōen (池田蕉園, 1886-1917), and Shima Seien, and collectively these women were known as the “three ens.”⁵⁹ This was not a coincidence. Uemura Shōen was already a prominent painter by the time Ikeda Shōen and Seien decided to study painting and served as a model for how to attain success as a woman artist. Her *bijinga* paintings came to dominate the genre, depicting paragons of femininity whose immaculate and placid appearances signaled their morality and virtue (Figures 1.1 and 1.2). Consequently, Ikeda Shōen and Seien

⁵⁹ Information on Uemura Shōen can be found in English in Morioka, “Changing Images of Women”; Helen Merritt and Nanako Yamada, “Uemura Shōen: Her Paintings of Beautiful Women,” *Women’s Art Journal* 13 (Fall 1992/Winter 1993): 12-16; Ikeda, “Uemura Shōen’s *Bijin-ga*” in *The Politics of Painting*; Wakakuwa, “Three Women Artists of the Meiji Period (1868-1912)”; Michiyo Morioka and Paul Berry, *Modern Masters of Kyoto: Transformation of Japanese Painting Traditions, Nihonga from the Griffith and Patricia Way Collection* (Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 2000). In Japanese, see: Kusanagi Natsuko, *Uemura Shōen* (Tokyo: Shinchō Nihon bijutsu bunko, 1996); *Josei gaka ga egaku Nihon no joseitachi ten: Shōen, Shōha, Shōen, Seien, Hisako no bijinga* (Osaka: Asahi Shinbunsha Bunka Kikakukyoku Osaka Kikakubu, 1998); *Uemura Shōen ten* (Tokyo: Asahi Newspaper Company, 1999); *Bijinga no keifu ten: Uemura Shōen, Kaburaki Kiyokata, Itō Shinsui* (Kagoshima: Kagoshima City Museum, 1999); *Uemura Shōen ten* (Tsu: Mie Prefectural Museum, 2004); *Uemura Shōen: Kindai to dentō* (Fukushima: Fukushima Prefectural Museum, 2007); Katō Ruiko, *Uemura Shōen to sakuhin* (Tokyo: Toky bijutsu, 2007); *Bi no daikyōen: Uemura Shōen, Kaburaki Kiyokata, Itō Shinsui* (Aichi: Meito Art Museum, 2008); *Uemura Shōen gashū* (Kyoto: Seigensha, 2009); *Uemura Shōen* (Tokyo: National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, 2010); Nakamura Reiko, Tsurumi Kaori, Ogura Jitsuko, and Matsubara Ryuichi, *Uemura Shōen ten* (Tokyo: Nikkei Inc., 2010); Yamatane Bijutsukan, *Shōen to karei naru josei gakatachi: tokubetsuten Uemura Shōen seitan 140-nen kinen* (Tokyo: Yamatane Bijutsukan, 2015); Kojima, *Joseizō ga utsusu Nihon*, 170-189; Kojima Kaoru, “Uemura Shōen no ‘Honō’ no seisaku ito to sono haikai ni tsuite,” *Jissen joshi daigaku bungakubu kiyō* 62 (2020): 1-15; *Uemura Shōen, Shōkō, Atsushi sandaiten: kindai ga hokoru joryu gaka to sore ni tsuranaru bi no keifu* (Hachioji: Tokyo fuji bijutsukan, 2020); Uemura Shōen has two essay collections: Uemura Shōen, *Seibishō* (Okaya, Naganō: Sōseisha, 1947) and Uemura Shōen, *Seibishō sonogo* (Tokyo: Kyuryudo/ Tsai Fong Books, 1986); Information on Ikeda Shōen is less developed. See Matsuura Akiko, “Ikeda Shōen no hito to geijutsu,” *Sansai* (1988): 84-90. Yamamoto Yuri, “Ikeda Shōen ga egaku bijinga no kenkyū (bijutsu ni kansuru chōsa kenkyū no hōkoku,” *Kajima bijutsu zaidan nenhō* 37 (2019): 324-334. Brief information on the “three ens” can be found in Ogawa, *Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigaka*, 49; Hashimoto, “Japanese Painting and Women Painters,” 181.

adopted artist names that evoked Uemura Shōen, as well as followed in her footsteps in painting primarily *bijinga*. Their choice to take a character from Uemura Shōen's name departed from naming conventions. Traditionally, Japanese artists, upon completing their training, were given one kanji character from their teacher's name to form their artist name. For example, Uemura Shōen received the character *shō* (松) from the name of her first teacher, man artist Suzuki Shōnen (鈴木松年, 1848-1918). But Ikeda Shōen and Shima Seien had no such teacher-pupil relationship with Uemura Shōen, nor any other connection aside from also being women painters. In the case of Ikeda Shōen, her artist name was chosen by her teacher Mizuno Toshikata (水野年方, 1866-1908) specifically because he hoped she would rival Uemura Shōen.⁶⁰ For his male students such as Ikeda Shōen's husband, Ikeda Terukata (池田輝方, 1883-1921), and her contemporary Kaburaki Kiyokata (鏑木清方, 1878-1972), Toshikata followed convention by granting them both the character *kata* (方).

Uemura Shōen was not flattered by this imitation, and the constant comparisons between the three that it engendered. In a 1918 essay titled "An Abundance of Contemporary Women Painters Who Follow Blindly," Shōen complained that young women painters have no originality and instead of following their individual natures, imitate her by painting *bijinga* and copying her name.⁶¹ Shōen's frustrated desire to be seen as an individual artist, and her ire at being compared with all the other women artists was palpable. Ironically, her anger was

⁶⁰ Ogawa, *Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigaka*, 49.

⁶¹ Uemura Shōen, "Raidōsei ni tomu gendai joryū gaka," in *Seibishō sonogo* (Tokyo: Kyuryudo/ Tsai Fong Books, 1986): 19-22.

directed towards other women, rather than the societal impulse that grouped women together by gender and viewed them as interchangeable.

The Pressure to be “Feminine”

Women artists faced societal pressure to conform to feminine stereotypes, which imposed significant, but not insurmountable boundaries on women’s choice of painting genre, subject, and mode. No matter what women painted, there was a social expectation that their work would abide by criteria that displayed their femininity. For example, Taishō period art critic and art historian Fujikake Shizuya (藤懸静也, 1881-1958), in an overview article about modern women painters, advised that it was important for women to draw “feminine pictures,” rather than try to imitate men. Only then could women show off their unique perspectives.⁶² Women artists, too, justified their existence in terms of their femininity, claiming that it was because they were women that they offered something to the art world that men could not. For example, while decrying the limitations imposed upon her as a woman artist, Kitani Chigusa (木谷千種, 1895-1947) wrote that it was necessary to be self-aware of her identity as a woman and that were she to unnaturally imitate the work of men, she would lose “the special aroma of femininity” that characterized her work.⁶³ Hanihara Kuwayo (埴原久和代, 1879-1936) expressed similar sentiments, arguing that while men enjoyed greater freedoms in subject matter, men were unable to paint the same

⁶² Fujikake, “Meiji Taishō no keishū gaka,” 74.

⁶³ Kitani Chigusa, “Josei to shizen sono hoka,” from “Gendai jorū gaka ikkagen,” *Geien* 1, no. 9 (Feb. 1920), 24.

things in the same ways as she could as a woman.⁶⁴ Fujikake, Chigusa, and Hanihara each insisted that artists should create work that exhibited their unique sensibility, and on its face, this was good advice for artists of any gender. The problem is that uniqueness in these cases was equated with gender, as if any woman's personality and life experience could be succinctly and sufficiently encapsulated with the identifier of "female." Even though each expressed the idea that art by women was valuable, they tied that value to the female gender.

One of the most significant limitations women artists encountered was a societal belief that *yōga* painting was inappropriate for women to learn. *Yōga*, most commonly described as oil-painting but encompassing Western-derived materials and painting practices, was understood as a modern, and foreign art practice.⁶⁵ *Nihonga*, while incorporating some aspects of Western painting such as atmospheric

⁶⁴ Hanihara Kuwayo, "Genei no jo[?] wo fute," from "Gendai jorū gaka ikkagen," *Geien* 1, no. 9 (Feb. 1920), 25.

⁶⁵ For more information on *yōga* see Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*; Winther-Tamaki, *Maximum Embodiment*; Kaneko, *Mirroring the Japanese Empire*; Kojima, *Joseizō ga utsusu Nihon*; Toru Haga, "The Formation of Realism in Meiji Painting: The Artistic Career of Takahashi Yuichi," in *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, ed. Donald H Shively, Studies in the Modernization of Japan 5 (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1971): 221-256; John M. Rosefield, "The Arts in the Meiji period: Western style painting in the early Meiji period and its critics," in *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, ed. Donald H Shively, Studies in the Modernization of Japan 5 (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1971): 181-220; Shūji Takashina, J. Thomas Rimer, Gerald D. Bolas, Washington University (Saint Louis Mo.), Gallery of Art., Japan House Gallery, and Frederick S. Wight Art Gallery, *Paris in Japan: The Japanese Encounter with European Painting* (St. Louis: Washington University, 1987); John Clark, "Yōga in Japan: Model or Exception? Modernity in Japanese Art 1850s-1940s: An International Comparison," *Art History* 18, no. 2 (June 1995): 253-285; Christine Guth, Emiko Yamanashi, and Alicia Volk, *Japan & Paris: Impressionism, Postimpressionism, and the Modern Era* (Honolulu: Honolulu Academy of Arts, 2004); Mayu Tsuruya, "The Ascent of *Yōga* in Modern Japan and the Pacific War," in *Inexorable Modernity: Japan's Grappling with Modernity in the Arts*, ed. Hiroshi Nara (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007): 69-100; Jaqueline Berndt, "Nationally Naked? The Female Nude in Japanese Oil Painting and Posters (1892-1920s)," in *Performing "Nation": Gender Politics in Literature, Theater, and the Visual Arts of China and Japan, 1880-1940*, eds. Doris Croissant, Catherine Vance Yeh, and Joshua S. Mostow (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008): 265-306; Alice Tseng, "Kuroda Seiki's *Morning Toilette* on Exhibition in Modern Kyoto," *Art Bulletin*, Vol. 90, No. 3 (Sept. 2008): 417-440; Emiko Yamanashi, "Western-Style Painting: Four States of Acceptance," in *Since Meiji: Perspective on the Japanese Visual Arts, 1868-2000*, ed. J. Thomas Rimer (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012): 19-33.

perspective, used indigenous materials and subject matter.⁶⁶ During the prewar period *yōga* was coded as masculine and therefore unsuitable for women. The practice of *yōga* required artists to venture into public spaces, to school and for open-air sketching. The public sphere was perceived as a male domain, and women who crossed into it were seen as either masculine or sexually available.⁶⁷ Moreover, the social image of a *yōga* painter was closely tied to that of the Parisian bohemian lifestyle, which was viewed as socially deviant.⁶⁸ Because sketching nude models became the bedrock of *yōga* instruction, it was seen as not only improper for women students, but also, according to Kojima Kaoru, served the purpose of reinforcing male homosocial relationships through the collective objectification of women models.⁶⁹ The masculine coding of *yōga* acted as a deterrent to women painters and consequently, the number of women practicing *yōga* during the early twentieth century was extremely small.

Nihonga, however, was perceived as a feminine accomplishment and women who wished to study painting were encouraged in its (amateur) practice. As a neo-traditional style, *nihonga* had long roots in Japanese culture and women's education, and it was a skill that could be practiced entirely indoors.⁷⁰ Katsura Yuki (桂ゆき,

⁶⁶ For more information on *nihonga* see, Ellen P. Conant, ed., *Nihonga: Transcending the Past* (Saint Louis, MO: Saint Louis Art Museum and Japan Foundation, 1995); Morioka and Berry, *Modern Masters of Kyoto*; John D. Szostak, *Painting Circles: Tsuchida Bakusen and Nihonga Collectives in Early 20th-Century Japan*, Japanese Visual Culture, V. 11 (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Foxwell, *Making Modern Japanese-Style Painting*.

⁶⁷ This was true especially for women of high socio-economic stations, who were expected to fulfill the "Good Wife, Wise Mother" role. Female students (*jogakusei*), writers, teachers, activists, etc. were all viewed with suspicion. See Copeland, *Lost Leaves*; Copeland, "Fashioning the Feminine"; Czarnecki, "Bad Girls from Good Families"; Levy, *Sirens of the Western Shore*.

⁶⁸ Kira, "Kindai Nihon ni okeru josei to bijutsu no shakaishiteki kōsatsu," 42.

⁶⁹ Kojima, "Gakatachi no 'dansei dōmei,'" in *Joseizō ga utsusu Nihon*, 16-32.

⁷⁰ Allen, "Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives," 101; Kojima, "Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi," 51.

1913-1991), an avant-garde oil painter, was actively discouraged from studying *yōga* by her parents and instead was enrolled in *nihonga* because it was more feminine.⁷¹ The parents of *yōga* painter Migishi Setsuko (三岸節子, 1905-1999) also turned down her request to study oil painting, recommending *nihonga* instead.⁷² This gendering of *nihonga* as feminine was conditional, for men faced no proscription against practicing it, and in fact, dominated in the genre. *Yōga* was a major genre of painting, intricately linked to Japan's modernization goals and engagement with international art currents. Yet most women were prevented from engaging with this facet of Japan's modernity and the expressive possibilities inherent only in oil paint.

Regardless of *nihonga* or *yōga*, women were encouraged to paint primarily “feminine” subjects such as flowers, children, or other women. In *nihonga*, *kachōga* (paintings of birds and flowers) was frequently cited as appropriate to women. The reasons for this recommendation included a perception that women were more suited to dainty subjects and that the subject itself was relatively easy. For example, in a 1913 article titled “Women's *kachōga*: Elegant *kachōga* is Suitable for Women” for the art magazine *Bijutsu no Nihon*, an anonymous author argued that *kachōga* was the easiest of the painting subjects, which the author subdivided into human figures (*jinbutsu*), landscapes (*sansui*), and *kachōga*.⁷³ Therefore it was most suitable for women, who the author charged were incapable of taking on any sort of big enterprise and who should focus on their sacred tasks of housekeeping and childrearing. The

⁷¹ Alicia Volk, “Katsura Yuki and the Japanese Avant-Garde,” 3.

⁷² Kira, “Kindai Nihon ni okeru josei to bijutsu no shakaishiteki kōsatsu,” 42-43.

⁷³ XYsei, “Josei no *kachōga*: 1, josei ni wa yūbi na *kachōga* ga tekisu,” *Bijutsu no Nihon* 5, no. 7 (July 1913): 9-10.

author further argued that women, whose nature was inherently elegant and delicate, should paint only birds and flowers that exhibited the same characteristics. The author suggested women paint swallows or doves, but not eagles and hawks, which had sublime, strong characteristics that were alien to their sex.⁷⁴ In an article from 1912, the man literati painter Yamaoka Beika (山岡米草, 1867-1913) stated that women's innately graceful and delicate dispositions made them best suited to painting the natural world, and that it was difficult for women to paint the complicated and dynamic mental state of the human figure.⁷⁵ Man *bijinga* painter Kaburaki Kiyokata, in a 1919 article advising women on how to become artists, recommended *kachōga* over figure painting because it was more appropriate for women's nature and because figure painting could be a heavy burden for women.⁷⁶

Still, many women artists were active in other *nihonga* subjects, suggesting that women were both able to overcome some gendered pressures as well as the role women's choices played in articulating the boundaries of the "female artist." In the Meiji period, the majority of professional women artists were *bunjinga* (literati) painters and by the Taishō period, prominent women artists were more often than not *bijinga* painters, following the example of Uemura Shōen.⁷⁷ Once pioneering women

⁷⁴ The author does not offer an opinion on which flowers are "feminine" or "masculine."

⁷⁵ Yamaoka Beika, "Gendai no keishūgaka," *Bijutsu no Nihon* 4, no. 7 (July 1912), 4-5.

⁷⁶ Kaburaki Kiyokata, "Onna ga gaka ni naru tame," *Bijutsu no Nihon* 11, no. 10 (Oct. 1919): 30-31.

⁷⁷ For information on Meiji *bunjinga* painters such as Okuhara Seikō and Noguchi Shōhin, see Wakamatsu, "Painting In Between"; Yurika Wakamatsu, "Imagined Selves: Mediating Desires and Subject Positions in the Japanese Literati Art of Okuhara Seiko (1837–1913)," *Archives of Asian Art* 70, no. 2 (Oct. 2020): 119-149; Fister, *Japanese Women Artists; Her Brush*; Martha J. McClintock and Victoria Weston, "Okuhara Seiko: A Case of *Funpon* Training in Late Edo Literati Painting," in *Copying the Master and Stealing his Secrets: Talent and Training in Japanese Painting*, ed. Brenda G. Jordan and Victoria Louise Weston (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003): 116-146. For the history and development of *bijinga*, see Lippit, *Aesthetic Life*; Conant, ed., *Nihonga: Transcending the Past*; Tanaka Keiko, "Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai ni okeru bijinga yōshiki no hensen ni kansuru kōsatsu – dai 9 kai bunten bijingashitsu ronsō kara mieru mono," *Core Ethics* 1 (2005): 29-39; Nakano

established a connection between the subject matter and women's activity, *bunjinga* and *bijinga* were gradually seen as acceptable subjects for subsequent women painters. In other words, women became *bunjinga* and *bijinga* painters not just due to individual interest, but because other women were associated with the subjects. Women could paint *bijinga* because women painted *bijinga*, marking the genre as "feminine." The fact that *bijinga* depicted women was likely not a coincidence. Perhaps it was assumed that it was easier for women to paint other women, given their familiarity with the subject. Additionally, it was consistent with the segregation of women from men. Depictions of adult males are relatively rare in work by *nihonga* women artists during the early twentieth century. The *bijinga* painter Kurihara Gyokuyō (栗原玉葉, 1883-1922), for example, discussed the difficulty of depicting a male figure for her 1916 painting *Butaiura* (舞台裏), for which she had no prior experience.⁷⁸

Women faced similar subject restrictions in *yōga*. Still lifes, especially of flowers, were perceived as the most appropriate for women painters. One reason is that still lifes could be painted from home. In contrast, landscapes necessitated painters to spend extensive time outdoors, on sketching and painting excursions. Many *yōga* painter Ishii Hakutei (石井柏亭, 1882-1958) explained that the reason for the (perceived) lack of excellent women *yōga* painters was because painting *yōga* required an artist to go sketching in the fields and mountains, often under a hot

Noriyuki, "Bijingashitsu saikō: bijin gaka no hyōka to hyōgen," *Kindai-ga-setsu: Meiji bijutsu gakkaiishi* 27 (2018): 32-53.

⁷⁸ Kurihara Gyokuyō, "Gashu wa kodomo kara," *Fujin sekai* 11, no. 11 (Oct. 1916): 107-08, original quoted in Tadokoro Tai, "Shiryō shōkai: ehagaki `butaiura (sonoichi) (Tōkyō) Kurihara Gyokuyō joshi-hitsu," *Ajisai: Bijinga kenkyū kaishi* 6 (Dec. 2021), 15.

summer sun, and to do so required one to work hard, be healthy, and have a strong will. Women's painting, in his opinion, failed to show such signs of exertion.⁷⁹ Women were also limited when it came to figure painting. The nude painting genre (*rataiga*) was seen as morally injurious to women.⁸⁰ Women who took up figure painting were encouraged to depict women and children. In his review of Kametaka Fumiko's painting *Daniel's Story* (Figure C.12), man painter Okada Saburōsuke (岡田三郎助, 1869-1939) remarked that it was only because Fumiko was a mother that she was able to effectively communicate the three children's expressions.⁸¹ In other words, it was not only appropriate subject matter for Fumiko, but her success as a painter was tied to her identity as a mother.⁸² Although women *yōga* painters took up all subjects, in general, their publicly displayed work was confined to still lifes, portraits of women or children, and some landscapes, as a 1922 *Fujin gahō* feature on the women's *yōga dantai* the Shuyōkai shows (Figure 1.3).⁸³ As with *nihonga*, adult male figures were rarely depicted by women *yōga* painters, highlighting how the system of gender segregation extended onto the painted canvas.

⁷⁹ Ishii Hakutei, "Yōga wa fujin ni ha madamada," *Bijutsu no Nihon* 12, no. 9 (Sept. 1920), 26.

⁸⁰ The nude was eventually censored in public exhibitions, either partially covered with a cloth or placed in "special rooms" (*tokubetsu shitsu*), to which only artists and art students were permitted entry. Female art students were excluded. Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, 60. For more on the position of the nude in modern Japanese art, see also Tseng, "Kuroda Seiki's 'Morning Toilette'"; Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State*, especially part two, chapter four.

⁸¹ Okada Saburōsuke, "Bijutsu no aki: Bunten no joryū yōgaka," *Fujin gahō* no. 154 (Dec. 1918), 23.

⁸² Kojima, *Joseizō ga utsusu Nihon*, 195.

⁸³ Further examples of paintings exhibited throughout the modern period at the Shuyōkai exhibitions can be found in a history of the group *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi: joryū yōgaka no hajimari to sono ayumi* (Tokyo: Shuyōkai, 2022). Examples of the diversity of women's *yōga* work can be found in Kokatsu, ed., *Hashiru onna tachi*. I suggest there is a difference between women's publicly exhibited work and the entirety of what any individual artist created based on my observations of Yoshida Fujio's oeuvre, see Chapter Four.

Separate and Unequal: Women's Art Education

The marginalization of women from the fine arts and segregation to the feminine sphere was reinforced through women's formal artistic education opportunities, which were limited and lagged behind those available to aspiring men artists. Initially, women were allowed admittance in Japan's first state-sponsored art school, the Technical Art School (Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō), established by the Ministry of Industry in 1878. During the schools' brief six-year tenure from 1876-1883, seven women enrolled, although no woman graduated (Figure 1.4).⁸⁴ The school taught exclusively *yōga* and sculpture and brought on European instructors, most notably Antonio Fontanesi, to implement a program of study that followed the European academic model. Women were taught the same curriculum as men but they were placed in separate classrooms and enrolled in a women's division.⁸⁵ By the time the state established its second art academy in 1887, the Ministry of Education-sponsored Tokyo School of Fine Arts, women's position within Japanese society and the arts had shifted due to "Good Wife, Wise Mother" and education beyond the elementary

⁸⁴ By 1878 there were at least six women students enrolled but by the time the school closed in 1882, all the women had withdrawn. The longest enrolled female student attended under four years. Information on the careers of some of these women can be found in Kojima, "Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi," 45. Yukiko Yokoyama lists the seven women enrolled as Yamashita Rin (山下りん, 1857-1939), Yamamuro Masako (山室政子, 1858-1936), Akio Sono (秋尾園, 1863-1929), Sugawa Chō (dates unknown), Ōshima Hinako (大島雛子, dates unknown), Kawaji Hanako (川路花子, dates unknown), and Jinnaka Itoko (神中糸子, 1860-1943). The reasons for withdrawing from school include marriage, illness, and dissatisfaction with the instructors after Fontenesi resigned. Yukiko Yokoyama, "A History of Western-Style Yōga Painting in Japan and Women Yōga Artists from the Meiji Period to the Pre-War Era," *Archives of Women Artists, Research and Exhibitions magazine*, Apr. 2023, np. URL: <https://awarewomenartists.com/en/magazine/le-style-occidental-au-japon-yoga-et-les-peintres-japonaises-entre-louverture-du-japon-en-1868-et-la-deuxieme-guerre-mondiale/>. Accessed 8 August 2023. Further information on Akio Sono can be found in Kaneko Kazuo, "Akio Sono to Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō," *Kindai gasetu* 24, Meiji Bijutsu Gakai (2015): 4-33.

⁸⁵ Kokatsu Reiko, "Kindai Nihon in okeru josei gaka wo meguru seido," in *Hashiru onna-tachi*, 10; Yokoyama, "A History of Western-Style Yōga Painting," np.

level was gender segregated. Women were excluded from enrollment in the Tokyo School of Fine Arts until 1946.⁸⁶ Women were also excluded from Kyoto City Specialist School of Painting (Kyoto Shiritsu Kaiga Senmon Gakkō) until 1945.⁸⁷ The only place for women to learn painting systematically was the private, women only Joshibi, which opened in 1901.

A comparison of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and Joshibi reveals the differences in ideological purposes and practical training men and women received. The Tokyo School of Fine Arts was to become the most important pipeline to establishment success for aspiring men artists. An express purpose of the school was to produce professional artists, who would contribute to Japan's articulation of a national art that would enhance its standing on the international stage.⁸⁸ The school initially only offered instruction in indigenous styles, most notably *nihonga* painting and sculpture, but in 1896 expanded its course offerings to include *yōga* and Chinese painting. By 1923 the school had expanded to ten departments: *nihonga*, *yōga*, sculpture, architecture, design, metal work (*kinkō*), metal casting (*chūzō*), lacquer, photography, and art education.⁸⁹ The curriculum systematized instruction, endeavoring to implement a set of uniform standards and practices that would elevate

⁸⁶ Foreign women were allowed to enroll in the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. Kojima, "Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi," 55, fn 2.

⁸⁷ Kokatsu, "Kindai Nihon in okeru josei gaka wo meguru seido," in *Hashiru onna-tachi*, 9. Women were initially allowed to enroll in the Kyoto Fine Arts School before being denied admittance after the institution of gender segregated educational policies, in 1899. Uemura Shōen attended this school from 1887-1888. Kojima, *Joseizō ga utsusu Nihon*, 177.

⁸⁸ Kira, "Kindai Nihon ni okeru josei to bijutsu no shakaishiteki kōsatsu," 41.

⁸⁹ Yoshida Chizuko, "The Tokyo School of Fine Arts," in *Nihonga: Transcending the Past*, ed. Ellen P. Conant (Saint Louis, MO: Saint Louis Art Museum and Japan Foundation, 1995): 87.

and unify Japanese art for the modern era.⁹⁰ For both *yōga* and *nihonga*, the timeline to graduation was five years, two years for the general program taken by all students and then three years in the specialized courses (painting, sculpture, or applied arts).⁹¹ Upon graduation students received a teaching certificate, which in addition to their professional art training, provided them with a wealth of employment opportunities.⁹²

In addition to offering a systematic and specialized fine art education, the Tokyo School of Fine Arts also provided an important networking opportunity for aspiring male artists. The modern art establishment functioned on a system of relationships and enrollment in the Tokyo School of Fine Arts was an entry point to these critical relationships and circles of power.⁹³ The school was closely tied to the Bunten, with instructors from the school serving on the salon's judging committees. Graduates were frequently selected for the exhibitions. Being selected for the Bunten was widely understood as the pathway to artistic success and financial well-being.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ For a brief history of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts from the *nihonga* perspective, see Yoshida, "The Tokyo School of Fine Arts," 86-87. For information from the *yōga* perspective, see Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, chapter one.

⁹¹ Subjects in the general program included painting, design, modeling, perspective drawing, descriptive geometry, science and mathematics, history, aesthetics and art history, Japanese and Chinese literature. For further details, see Weston, "Institutionalizing Talent," 151. The *nihonga* curriculum was an amalgam of Kano and Western teaching methods and included *rinmo* (copying), *shasei* (sketching from nature), and *shin'an* (development of original compositions), as well as lecture courses on human and animal anatomy, the properties of various materials and techniques, architectural decoration, aesthetics and art history. Weston, "Institutionalizing Talent," 152-53. The *yōga* curriculum, based on the European model, "took a student from the basics of dessin, beginning with plaster cast drawing, to life drawing, oil paintings of the figure, and finally, composition—the completion of a tableau, which served as the student's graduation work. The coursework also included such subjects as European art history, anatomy, and the study of foreign languages." Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, 48.

⁹² Weston, "Institutionalizing Talent," 153.

⁹³ Kojima argues that Meiji *yōga* functioned essentially like a boys' club, see Kojima, *Joseizō ga utsusu Nihon*; see also Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, chapters one and two, and Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State*, chapter two.

⁹⁴ Kaburaki Kiyokata wrote that one could only be considered a full-fledged artist after exhibiting at the Bunten, suggesting that a successful exhibition record at the Bunten was the critical marker for artistic success. Kaburaki Kiyokata, "Onna ga gaka ni naru tame," 30.

Artists on the outside of this power structure, such as man artist Yoshida Hiroshi (see Chapter Four), complained bitterly about the discrimination they endured. Denied admission, all women painters were shut out of this crucial network.

Joshiibi, which was the first and one of the only women's higher schools in the modern era that specialized in art, had a different mandate from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts.⁹⁵ Joshibi was founded with three goals: "women's independence through art," "women's social advancement," and "training female art educators."⁹⁶ On the one hand, Joshibi participated in progressive efforts to expand women's opportunities and elevate their standing within Japanese society. At the same time, like other components of the women's movement, Joshibi came to occupy a contradictory position, simultaneously expanding and reinforcing societal gender structures. For example, "women's independence and social advancement" could be both broadly and narrowly defined. "Independence" was tied to hopes that women would use their art and art education training to become financially self-reliant, even as there remained the expectation that women would contain their work to either pre-marriage or to a piece work.⁹⁷ "Social advancement" was linked to ideas of self-cultivation, but was often justified as a means to increase a woman's marriage prospects as well as prepare her to raise intelligent children.⁹⁸ The profession of teaching was itself in line

⁹⁵ Women were also able to enroll in the coeducational Japan Art Institute (Nihon Bijutsu Kenkyūjo), which was established in 1915. Female students comprised about ten percent of the student body and about 200 women graduated between 1917-1945. The school had four departments: *nihonga*, *yōga*, sculpture, and design. The aim of the school was to train artists, not art teachers. See Kokatsu, "Kindai Nihon in okeru jōsei gaka wo meguru seido," in *Hashiru onna-tachi*, 10-14.

⁹⁶ Yamada Naoko, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō ni okeru nihonga kyōiku," in *Nihonga wo manabu: joshi bijutsu gakkō ni okeru nihonga kyōiku* (Sagamihara: Joshi bijutsu daigaku bijutsukan, 2010), 5.

⁹⁷ Ikeda, *Teshigoto*, 57; Koyama, "Domestic Roles and the Incorporation of Women into the Nation-State," 94.

⁹⁸ Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*, chapter four; Barabara Sato, "Commodifying and Engendering Morality: Self-Cultivation and the Construction of the "Ideal Woman" in 1920s Mass Women's

with the spirit, if not the letter of the ideology, for it was responsible for cultivating intelligent children. Women teachers were most often employed by girls and women-only schools, thereby remaining siloed in the female domain. Purpose aside, women graduates of Joshibi did not automatically receive a teaching license like the male students at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts.⁹⁹ There were two methods for obtaining a license to teach drawing at women's higher schools (the only license women could obtain during the Meiji period): non-test and test certification. Men who had received course credit in painting at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts could obtain a license through the non-test method. But women from Joshibi had to take the examination to qualify.¹⁰⁰ The result was that few women obtained a drawing license until 1924, when Joshibi graduates from the painting section were able to be certified without examination.¹⁰¹

Not included in these founding goals was an intention to train women to become professional artists.¹⁰² This attitude was adopted not just by Joshibi but by cultural commentators. In a review of the school for the women's magazine *Jogaku*

Magazines," in *Gendering Modern Japanese History*, eds. Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005): 99-132.

⁹⁹ Yamada Naoko, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō/joshi bijutsu gakkō (1900-1929) ni oekru seiyōgaka kyōiku," *Joshi bijutsu daigaku kenkyū kiyō* no. 41 (2011): 3-13.

¹⁰⁰ Women graduates from some schools, such as the Tokyo Women's Higher Normal School, were able to get a license through the non-test route. For men, in addition to the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, graduates from the art programs at all Tokyo Higher Normal Schools could receive a license without examination. Yamada, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō/joshi bijutsu gakkō (1900-1929) ni oekru seiyōgaka kyōiku," 10.

¹⁰¹ In 1917, most of the women's higher school teachers were graduates from Joshibi's embroidery or sewing departments. After 1924, the number of graduates from the *yōga* department teaching in regional schools steadily increased. Prior to the change in policy, the number of graduates from the *yōga* department was small but once the pathway to becoming a teacher became easier, the number of students increased. Yamada, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō/joshi bijutsu gakkō (1900-1929) ni oekru seiyōgaka kyōiku," 10-11.

¹⁰² Kojima, "Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi," 46; Kira, "Kindai Nihon ni okeru josei to bijutsu no shakaishiteki kōsatsu," 41.

sekai, man writer Kawaoka Chōfu discussed graduates' prospects. Kawaoka saw the value of a Joshibi education as improving women's marriage prospects, especially to Japanese men who were sent abroad, as well as for improving women's ability to raise intelligent children. Kawaoka expressed doubts about the merits of women devoting themselves exclusively to the arts although he conceded that in the special cases where women possess extraordinary talent and persist in an art career, they should not be criticized.¹⁰³ Although not speaking of Joshibi, Fujikake Shizuya advised women to cultivate an appreciation for painting to nurture a refined atmosphere for her home.¹⁰⁴ The purposes of an art education for women were defined in terms of financial necessity or of enhancing women's domestic responsibilities. Art education was meant to serve a practical purpose for women, oriented towards the home. It was not meant to foster women's contributions to the enhancement of national prestige and fulfillment of personal ambition that men's art education was intended for.

Consequently, the programs of study at Joshibi were more limited than those available at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and geared towards preparing women for work or life in the feminine sphere. The school initially had eight departments: *nihonga*, *yōga*, sculpture, lacquer (*maki-e*), embroidery, knitting, artificial flower making (*zōka*), and sewing.¹⁰⁵ The sculpture department was soon abolished,

¹⁰³ Kawaoka Chōfu, "Jogakkō hyōbanki: joshi bijutsu gakkō," *Jogaku sekai* 9, Dec. 1909: 38-44.

¹⁰⁴ Fujikake Shizuya, "Kaiga no kanshō to biteki shumi yōsei," *Fujin gahō* no. 58 (July 1911): 64-68.

¹⁰⁵ Each department had a regular and an elective course, which were divided into two levels, regular and advanced. Students entering at the regular level were required to have graduated from elementary school, and students entering the advanced level had to either have finished the regular level or graduated from another women's higher school. Information on the curriculum structure comes from Kawaoka, "jogakkō hyōbanki," 38-44.

however, with only two graduates, while the lacquer department never had any students.¹⁰⁶ Of the six functioning departments, embroidery, knitting, artificial flowers, and sewing were typically understood as *shugei*. The most populous department by a significant margin was sewing.¹⁰⁷ From 1902-1929, the total number of graduates from the sewing department was 2923. In comparison, the number of graduates from the *yōga* department was 189 and from *nihonga*, 514. The average number of students per year in sewing was 104.4, versus 6.75 in *yōga* and 18.4 in *nihonga*.¹⁰⁸ That the overwhelming majority of Joshibi students were enrolled in the *shugei* curriculums is evidence of the gendered split in art, where even at the only school where women could gain an academic art education, women who opted for a fine arts education were in the minority.

Joshibi instruction in painting was systematized, following a progression of study that emphasized the fundamentals of drawing before moving on to painting instruction and allowing students to make their own compositions.¹⁰⁹ Several of the instructors were affiliated with the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, either as alums or as

¹⁰⁶ Kojima, “Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi,” 46. According to Kawaoka’s account, the department was still extant in 1909 but no students were enrolled. Kawaoka, “Jogakkkō hyōbanki: joshi bijutsu gakkō,” 40.

¹⁰⁷ Every year from 1902-1929, students from the sewing department consisted of, at minimum, half of the graduating class. See Chart 3 for the number of graduates by department, Yamada, “Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō/joshi bijutsu gakkō: (1900-1929) ni okeru seiyōgaka kyōiku,” 7.

¹⁰⁸ Yamada, “Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō/joshi bijutsu gakkō: (1900-1929) ni okeru seiyōgaka kyōiku,” 7.

¹⁰⁹ For information on *nihonga* instruction at Joshibi, see Yamada, “Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō ni okeru nihonga kyōiku.” For information on *yōga* instruction at Joshibi, see Yamada, “Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō/joshi bijutsu gakkō (1900-1929) ni okeru seiyōgaka kyōiku.”

current teachers.¹¹⁰ The course of study was similarly rigorous.¹¹¹ Of particular note was the inclusion of model drawing in the *yōga* curriculum, which was unusual for women's art education (Figure 1.5). The female models would pose nude, but the male models wore underwear.¹¹² Access to live models was difficult in the Meiji period—professional models were in short supply and expensive—and beyond the means of most aspiring artists.¹¹³ Joshibi was practically the only institution where women students could gain access to models and develop their anatomical drawing abilities.

Still, the painting curricula were not equivalent to those taught at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts or other male-only art academies. They were insufficient preparation for women who aspired to be professional painters, able to compete with their male peers. One example of this was the limitations placed on subject matter

¹¹⁰ In the *yōga* section, Joshibi shared instructors with the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, such as Kume Keiichirō (久米 桂一郎, 1866-1934) and Okada Saburōsuke. These male instructors often came once a week or month to give lectures and critique student's work. Regular instructors, however, were primarily women, most notably Asuke Tsune (足助恒, 1879-1962). For nihonga, male instructors included graduates from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts such as Shimada Tomoharu (島田友春, 1864-1947). Women instructors drew from prominent artists such as Kawanabe Kyosui (河鍋暁翠, 1868-1935), Takemura Kōai (武村耕靄, 1852-1915), Kurihara Gyokuyō, and Kakiuchi Seiyō. Information on the instruction at Joshibi can be found in Yamada, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō ni okeru nihonga kyōiku"; Yamada, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō/joshi bijutsu gakkō (1900-1929) ni okeru seiyōga kyōiku"; Kokatsu, "Kindai Nihon ni okeru joshibaka wo meguru seido," in *Hashiru onna-tachi*; Kira, "Kindai Nihon ni okeru josei to bijutsu no shakaishiteki kōsatsu."

¹¹¹ In *yōga*, the general course took three years, and the specialized course took two years. Students progressed from copying and charcoal drawing to sketching and watercolors, advancing to oil painting only in their fourth and fifth years. In addition to painting instruction, women were also schooled in self-cultivation, housework, Japanese, English, mathematics, history, calligraphy, sewing, music, and gymnastics. Information on the curriculum at Joshibi can be found in Yamada, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō/joshi bijutsu gakkō (1900-1929) ni okeru seiyōga kyōiku," 6. The *nihonga* department also spanned five years, with the program progressing from copying and sketching to new design, and design, Yamada, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō ni okeru nihonga kyōiku," 6.

¹¹² Yamada, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō/joshi bijutsu gakkō (1900-1929) ni okeru seiyōga kyōiku," 9.

¹¹³ Yoshida Fujio wrote that the artists of her circle would often pose for each other or would pool their money to hire a non-professional model. A specialized nude model cost about one yen 20 sen per day, while a clothed model cost about 50-60 sen. Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki* (Tokyo: Taiyō Publishing Co., 1978), 23.

based on gender stereotypes. Despite the inclusion of nude drawing in the *yōga* curriculum, the favored subjects remained only portraits of children and women, still lifes and flowers.¹¹⁴ It was the same in the *nihonga* department. Women were encouraged to paint *kachōga* and instruction in figure painting was not included in the curriculum until the early Taishō period.¹¹⁵

Graduates of Joshibi who aspired to be professional artists often had to continue their education by entering private *juku* (tutoring school) or *kenkyūjo* (research center), which were targeted primarily towards men.¹¹⁶ Kurihara Gyokuyō entered man artist Terasaki Kogyō's (寺崎広業, 1866-1919) studio, where she received the necessary instruction in figure painting.¹¹⁷ Kakiuchi Seiyō (柿内青葉, 1892-1982), also unable to learn figure painting at Joshibi, became a student of Kaburaki Kiyokata after graduation.¹¹⁸ Kametaka Fumiko entered man artist Mitsutani Kunishirō's (満谷国四郎, 1874-1936) atelier after graduation and participated in the Taiheiyōgakai kenkyūjo (太平洋画会研究所). Hanihara Kuwayo, the first woman to exhibit at the Nikakai exhibition, also studied at the Taiheiyōgakai kenkyūjo.¹¹⁹ These private painting ateliers were also crucial networking centers and offered the protection of prominent men artists. For that reason, the majority of

¹¹⁴ Kojima, "Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi," 46.

¹¹⁵ Yamada, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō ni okeru nihonga kyōiku," 9. Kurihara Gyokuyō, Joshibi graduate, remarked that when she was a student, she was only instructed in *kachōga* and felt very inconvenienced as someone who loved painting the human figure. Interview with Kurihara Gyokuyō, "Joshi bijutsu no kyōben wo toru: Kurihara Gyokuyō joshi," *Yomiuri shinbun* June 15, 1915, original quoted in Yamada, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō ni okeru nihonga kyōiku," 9.

¹¹⁶ Kokatsu, "Kindai Nihon ni okeru joshibaka wo meguru seido," in *Hashiru onna-tachi*, 12.

¹¹⁷ For more on Kurihara, see Tadokoro Tai, "Kenkyū nōto: Kurihara Gyōkuyō ni kansuru kiso kenkyū," *The Bijutsu Kenkyū Journal of Art Studies* no. 420 (Dec. 2016): 105-142.

¹¹⁸ Yamada, "Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō ni okeru nihonga kyōiku," 8.

¹¹⁹ For information on Hanihara Kuwayo, see Morikawa Monami, "Gaka: Hanihara Kuwayo no shōgai to sakuhin," *Yamanashi kenritsu bijutsukan kenkyū kiyō*, no. (Mar. 2017): 23-36.

artists, of any gender, were affiliated at some point with these training centers. But for men, these *juku* and *kenkyūjo* often served as preparatory training for entering the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, while for women they were supplementary training, a way to continue their artistic development post-graduation from Joshibi, a discrepancy that neatly illustrates the different levels of training men and women received at each institution.¹²⁰

Women's access to private training, in the form of *juku*, *kenkyūjo*, or by becoming a disciple of an artist (*deshi*) was limited due to the male-dominated nature of these environments. On the one hand, women needed the permission of their families to study painting and many families were reluctant to send them into a predominantly male environment, which was perceived as inappropriate for young women from good families. The pioneering women painters in the Meiji and Taishō periods came from artists' families (Kametaka Fumiko, Yoshida Fujio, Shima Seien) or from progressive-minded families (Kajiwara Hisako). On the other hand, the men in charge of these environments may have been reluctant to accept women pupils due to pervasive stereotypes that women were less capable and dedicated students. Even among man artists that were receptive to female students, such as Kitano Tsunetomi (北野恒富, 1880-1947), these opinions were common. Tsunetomi wrote:

A general characteristic of women painting students is that they have an early passion and reach some small success—there are, of course, exceptions—but after they reach a certain point, they often come to a dead end. In terms of making an extra effort, men are superior. In particular, there are a lot of women who have a “relying on others” disposition and their lack of independent spirit is a remarkable fault. These beautiful little birds, their

¹²⁰ Kokatsu, “Kindai Nihon ni okeru joshibaka wo meguru seido,” in *Hashiru onna-tachi*, 12.

hearts are too weak, narrow, and timid. They don't have sufficient courage to use the power of their wings to go over the first hurdle.¹²¹

The concern that women were not willing to work hard and were only pursuing a career as a professional painter out of vanity also appears in articles meant to advise women on how to become artists. An article by an anonymous female author that appeared in the women's magazine *Fujin gahō* belabored the point that becoming an artist requires not only talent, but great effort, concluding that "If you aspire to be an artist simply out of the vain desire to make a name for yourself, then you will surely fail."¹²² Contributing to the reluctance to teach women students was the assumption that most women would abandon their studies upon marriage.¹²³ As a result of these attitudes, there were relatively few teachers and institutes willing to accept women students.

The pathway to becoming a professional artist for women in the modern period was highly individual. In addition to studying at Joshibi, women were introduced to the fundamentals of painting through elementary and higher school curriculums or by their families, and if they could find a willing teacher, continue their education through private ateliers or independent study. Of the four women under primary consideration in this study, only Kametaka Fumiko attended Joshibi. Kajiwara Hisako was introduced to painting at her secondary school, the Kyoto Prefectural Second Girls' Higher School, where her instructor, man painter Chigusa Sōun (千種掃雲, 1873-1944) recommended she continue learning under the tutelage

¹²¹ Kitano Tsunetomi, "Futatsu no mondai," *Daimai bijutsu* no. 13 (Oct. 1923), original quoted in *Kitano Tsunetomi ten*, ed. Hashizume Setsuya (Tokyo: Tōkyō Sutēshon Gyararī, 2003), 178.

¹²² Fujin kisha, "Gaka ni naru made," *Fujin gahō* no. 121 (Apr. 1916), 61.

¹²³ Kojima, *Joseizō ga utsusu Nihon*, 196.

of man painter Kikuchi Keigetsu (菊池契月, 1879-1955) (See Chapter Two).

Yoshida Fujio was primarily trained at the Fudōsha (不同社), a private *yōga* school (see Chapter Four). Shima Seien was mostly self-taught and never became an official student of any artist, a fact that made her unique (See Chapter Three). It was not that women were unable to become professional painters, but that they had to face numerous obstacles due to their gender. The women who successfully navigated these obstacles were few and far between.

Exhibition System Discrimination

The marginalization of women artists was manifested in the exhibition systems. The most important exhibition space, in terms of attaining mainstream artistic success, was the national salon (known colloquially as the Bunten from 1907-1918, followed by the Teiten from 1919-1935). Exhibition at the Bunten was determined by jury selection, with the jury comprising government officials, prominent intellectuals, and well-established artists. There was extreme factionalism within the juries and a strong tendency for jury members to promote their own pupils, regardless of artistic merit (see Chapter Four). The data surrounding women's participation in the national salons shows a clear pattern of discrimination. At the first Bunten, in 1907, out of ninety-nine artists, only seven women were accepted, four in *nihonga* and three in *yōga*. In the 1915 exhibition, only two female *yōga* painters and nine female *nihonga* painters exhibited works. All nine *nihonga* paintings by women were in the genre of *bijinga*.¹²⁴ In 1918 at the twelfth Bunten ten women were

¹²⁴ Morioka, "Changing Images of Women," 25.

accepted, three in *yōga*, nine in *nihonga*, and one in sculpture. Uemura Shōen also exhibited, having received the honor to exhibit without needing to be selected, bringing the total number of women to eleven.¹²⁵ The first time a woman took home the top prize in the *yōga* division of either the Teiten or Bunten was in 1926, awarded to Arima Satoe (有馬さとえ, 1893-1978). Women were not selected as members of the jury in the *yōga* division until after the second world war.¹²⁶ In the *nihonga* division, the first woman to receive the top honors at the Bunten was Ikeda Shōen in 1916 at the tenth exhibition. Uemura Shōen became the first female jury member of the Teiten in 1924.¹²⁷

Women were also marginalized in the *dantai* system. *Dantai* played a crucial role in the modern Japanese art world, a period during which art criticism, art audiences, the art market, and even the concept of “fine art” (*bijutsu*) itself was nascent.¹²⁸ The various *dantai* competed bitterly with each other for the limited resources of patronage, prestige, and national importance. They created exhibition venues as well as *kenkyūjo* and journals and became loci for networking and camaraderie. In particular the group exhibitions were a key method through which

¹²⁵ “Bunten keishū gaka sakuhin kenbutsu: sakushū ni masaru konshū nyūsen no seiseki: hoka (Fujin furoku), *Yomiuri shinbun*, October 15, 1918.

¹²⁶ For further information, see Kokatsu, “Kindai Nihon ni okeru joshibaka wo meguru seido,” in *Hashiru onna-tachi*, 14-15.

¹²⁷ Morioka, “Changing Images of Women,” 31.

¹²⁸ For more on the role of *dantai* in Japanese modern art see Volk, “Authority and Autonomy”; John D. Szostak, “Art Is Something Born”: The Rise and Fall of the Kokuga Society (1918-28) and the Emergence of the Kokuten Style,” *Positions: Asia Critique* 21, no. 2, Spring 2013: 268-308; Reiko Tomii, “Introduction: Collectivism in Twentieth-Century Japanese Art with a Focus on Operational Aspects of *Dantai*” *Positions: Asia Critique* 21, no. 2 (Spring 2013): 225-267; Erin Schoneveld, *Shirakaba and Japanese Modernism: Art Magazines, Artistic Collectives, and the Early Avant-Garde*, Japanese Visual Culture, Volume 18 (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

artists unable, or unwilling, to submit to the Bunten could showcase their work to the public and raise their profiles.¹²⁹

Acceptance into a *dantai* could be fraught. Many of the exhibitions were juried and most *dantai* had a strict hierarchical structure with various grades of membership, from *kaiin* (regular member), *kaiyū* (associate member), to *ippan* (common member). The top rank of *kaiin* often included the prestigious honor of *mukansa shuppin* (exhibiting without having to go through a selection committee). Typically, an artist would advance through the ranks of membership, commensurate with their time and successful entries to the exhibitions.

Women artists' access to these groups was significantly impaired by sexism. Women members were few and they were often shut out of the top levels of the organizations. For example, the Nihon Bijutsuin (日本美術院) was founded in 1913 but it wasn't until 1916 that Hara [Suzuki] Kenko (原 [鈴木] けん子, dates unknown) became the first female *kaiyū*, and not until 1932 that Ogura Yuki (小倉遊亀, 1895-2000) became the first female *kaiin*. The second female *kaiin*, Kitazawa Eigetsu (北澤映月, 1907-1990), was accepted in 1941. That year, women comprised two of the forty-two *kaiin*, and nine of the ninety-six *kaiyū*.¹³⁰ The Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai (国画創作協会) had no female members and during its tenure exhibited only one work

¹²⁹ Exhibitions of prominent *dantai* could demand impressive audience numbers. For example, the 1918 Kokuten held in Kyoto had 28,339 visitors over a fifteen-day period, while the Kyoto run of Bunten had 68,407 visitors over the same time frame. This was the Kokuten's first year and it only displayed twenty-one works while the Bunten was an established exhibition and displayed three hundred and fifty-one works. Szostak, "Art is Something Born," 291-92

¹³⁰ Suzuki Kaoru, "Zaiya dantai no josei nihongaka tachi," in *Hashiru onna tachi: josei gaka no senzen sengo 1930-1950 nendai*, ed. Kokatsu Reiko (Utsunomiya: Tochigi Kenritsu Bijutsukan, 2001), 26-27.

by a woman, Kajiwara Hisako's *Train Station in Early Evening* (Figure 2.35). The Nika-kai (二科会), founded in 1914, was relatively friendly towards women artists but it was not until 1936 that Fujikawa Eiko (藤川栄子, 1900-1983) became the first woman to receive a distinction award at the annual exhibition.¹³¹ Starting in 1902, Yoshida Fujio regularly exhibited with the Taiheiyōgakai but was not made a *kaiin* until 1915.¹³² The underrepresentation of women across the various *dantai* meant that women had fewer exhibition opportunities than men. The women who were accepted into *dantai* were kept from reaching the higher levels of membership, despite meeting the same advancement criteria as their male peers.¹³³ Women could not accrue the power and influence that would allow them to challenge or shift sexist attitudes towards the “female artist” label. They were locked into an unequal position.

Conclusion

Changes in gender and art ideology in the Meiji period, driven by concerns over the rapid social transformations brought by modernization, resulted in the creation of the distinct, and lower status category of “women’s art.” Once women’s creative activity became subsumed under this gendered umbrella, it became subject to idealized notions of “femininity” that worked to confine and limit women’s expressive potential. Women faced restrictions on what style and subject they could paint and were expected to always display a nebulous femininity in their work. The

¹³¹ Kokatsu, “Kindai Nihon ni okeru joshibaka wo meguru seido,” in *Hashiru onna-tachi*, 14-16.

¹³² “Chronology,” in *Yoshida Fujio ten*, eds. Yamamura Hitoshi, Nose Akiko, and Yamamoto Kazuko (Tokyo and Fukuoka: Fuchu Art Museum and Fukuoka Art Museum, 2002), 124-125.

¹³³ Kokatsu, “Kindai Nihon ni okeru joshibaka wo meguru seido,” in *Hashiru onna-tachi*, 14-16.

gender pressures and expectations women artists faced resulted in the creation of the “female artist” ideal. Defined by her gender, the “female artist” was envisioned to be a *nihonga* painter of feminine subjects like *bijinga* or *kachōga*, who was herself the embodiment of feminine ideals. The “female artist” expectations were reinforced through the single-sex art education system, which provided women with more limited, and inferior training opportunities. Marginalized in this fashion, and compounded by prevalent misogynistic stereotypes, women artists faced a more difficult pathway to becoming professional artists and found themselves largely shut out of the major exhibitions and *dantai*. Women artists, due to this unnatural process, occupied a disempowered position within the modern art world. The following chapters discuss the strategies women artists used to negotiate this gendered landscape in pursuit of personal and professional autonomy.

Chapter Two:

Positive Potential: The “Female Artist” as Visual Type by and for Women

In a 1919 letter to a friend quoted in the art magazine *Geien* (芸苑, *Arts*), Kajiwara Hisako described the mess of painting.¹ Inviting her friend to laugh, she wrote of paint oozing from her fingertips, the remnants of two to three days of pigments staining her hands—black, dark gray (*nezumi'iro*), and light pink (*usubeni*). The dishes she used to mix those pigments remained unwashed and left out. In *nihonga*, paint is made by using one's fingertips to first crush powdered mineral pigments (*iwaenogu*) into a fine dust, and then mix those pigments with animal glue (*nikawa*) and water on small, shallow white porcelain dishes.² Even with vigorous washing, sometimes the pigments can stain one's fingers for several days. The animal glue, at the time Hisako was painting, was unstable, good for only a few hours in the hot humid summer months or one to two days in the winter. This meant that paints needed to be mixed almost daily and it was typical for artists to mix only the colors and amount of paint necessary for the day's work. Hisako mixed the pigments and painted the sections that required light pink on a different day from the black and dark gray portions, and by the time she wrote her letter, the pigments on those dishes had

¹ Kajiwara Hisako, “Hitorigoto,” from “Gendai jorū gaka ikkagen.” *Geien* 1, no. 9 (Feb. 1920): 32.

² My description of preparing *nihonga* paints is based on first-hand experience learning *nihonga* methods at the Rinpa Sumie Heritage Club under Sase Tomoko, summer 2022. Further information on traditional Japanese painting methods can be found in Sandra Grantham, “Some Painting Techniques and Materials Used in Japan and the Far East,” *The Paper Conservator* 30, no. 1 (2006): 11-24. See also Koyano Masako, “*Nihonga* Materials and Techniques,” in *Nihonga: Transcending the Past*, ed. Ellen P. Conant (Saint Louis, MO: Saint Louis Art Museum and Japan Foundation, 1995): 110-112.

long since dried and become unusable. Hisako implied she was so absorbed in the act of painting that her studio had become cluttered with the remnants of her work.

The letter also offers a glimpse into the emotional turmoil Hisako felt as an artist. Hisako wrote of her desire to depict women as “flowers that bloom in the dark” rather than the more typical, shallow sentimentality found in orthodox *bijinga*, as typified by artists like Uemura Shōen. But Hisako grappled with self-doubt about her ability to depict the emotions of her female subjects, which during the Taishō period were primarily marginalized and impoverished working-class women. While her self-perceived inadequacy made her sad, she wrote that she motivated herself to keep painting by thinking of what tomorrow would bring. She expected that she would improve as long as she kept painting. In just a few short sentences, Hisako expressed a complicated mix of feelings: inspiration, insecurity, sadness, hope, ambition, and determination.

The disorder described in her letter is absent in Hisako’s *Tranquility* (静閑, 1938), an orthodox *bijinga* that depicts a woman painting (Figure 2.1a). Kneeling on a purple cushion, the woman gazes calmly and fixedly at her unfinished painting of irises, her right arm extended with brush in hand. The woman is fashionably dressed in an expensive blue kimono with a morning glory pattern and a pale purple, aqua, brown, yellow, and white geometric patterned *obi*. Her permed hair is cut short, neatly held back from her face with a black and gold barrette. The woman’s skin is a pale, unblemished white, with only the slightest bit of rouge decorating her lips and subtle pink hues at the ends of her fingers and toes. Next to the woman are several brushes atop a bamboo brush-holder mat, vials of green and yellow mineral pigment,

and a red painting tray. On and around the tray are a black ink stone (*suzuri*) upon which is a stick of ink (*sumi*), a white bifurcated, round water dish, a large brush and several dishes with different color pigments mixed on them. On the right edge of the composition is a floral and phoenix patterned vase containing hydrangea and other flowers.

In *Tranquility* Hisako provided a remarkably detailed depiction of the *nihonga* painting process. The painting-within-the-painting is attached to a long, wooden board, just as the actual painting is. Several of the brushes still have their labels affixed to them, the *hiragana* and *kanji* almost readable. The brush tips are varied, indicating different materials, sizes, and stiffnesses. The paint mixing dishes are accurately rendered, with traces of the circular motion used to mix the pigments as well as the drips formed from squeezing excess paint off a brush along the rims of the dishes (Figure 2.1b). The exact stage of the painting-within-the-painting is legible, too. The flowers have been outlined and received their first layer of pigment: a gray-brown color for the stems and white *gofun* for the blossoms. The woman's brush hovers over one of the center stems, which she has just lightly painted the next shade, green.³ The care Hisako put into these details is both loving and insistent. Only someone as deeply enmeshed with painting as Hisako could have painted it.

Yet, *Tranquility* is also an inaccurate depiction of painting. The woman's kimono is too nice to be worn while painting. At the very least she would wear a protective apron and tie her long sleeves back. The hydrangeas, morning glories, and

³ *Nihonga* is painted in layers, with different colors layered on top of each other to bring out different color effects.

irises indicate the season is early summer and yet the woman's hair is perfectly kempt, no trace of the sweat and frizz that is a constant feature of the hot and humid months. The brushes are all immaculate, aside from a single brush shaft that is speckled with a few drops of green pigment (Figure 2.1c). The water dish is filled with clean water. The woman's hands are pristine. Moreover, aside from the green and black, the mixed paints do not match the colors being used. While it is possible that the reds, yellows, and blue will eventually make their way into the painting, it is improbable that they would all be mixed and used on the same day, especially when summer heat shortens the lifespan of the paint. These colors were all, however, used in making *Tranquility*, their use in the pigment dishes enhancing the color harmony of the composition.

Despite its title, *Tranquility* is a painting that is suffused with tension between reality and ideal. Even as Hisako peppered the composition with precise details, she sanitized her depiction of a woman painter. The real and metaphorical mess Hisako wrote of almost twenty years earlier has been cleansed. Instead of a woman who blooms in darkness, Hisako has portrayed a conventional *bijin*, her placid expression and fashionable attire a model of femininity. Indeed, this idealized depiction epitomizes the “female artist.” Yet, Hisako's meticulous rendering of the various painting tools conveys the depth of work *nihonga* requires and confers on the depicted woman a respect for her occupation. In Hisako's visualization, the “female artist” is just as much an artist as a paragon.

Hisako's depiction likely derives from the predominant way women artists were photographed in late Meiji and Taishō women's mass magazines. A 1913

photograph of *nihonga* painter Kawasaki Ranko (河崎蘭香 1882-1918) from *Fujin gahō* is one example of many (Figure 2.2). The artist poses in front of an unfinished painting, brush in hand. Although the reproduction is dark and it is difficult to tell the quality of her clothing, it is clear that Kawasaki is not wearing an apron or anything to protect her kimono. Next to her are neatly lined up tools—her brushes, paint plates, and water dishes—on top of a lacquer tray. The photograph is cropped so the focus remains on Kawasaki and her practice—the rest of her studio, aside from the bottom of a *bijinga* painting behind her, are excluded. The angle of the photograph makes Kawasaki’s face visible, allowing the viewer to gaze at her as she looks down at her painting. Like *Tranquility*, this photographic representation is sanitized and idealized, upholding the “female artist” persona but respectfully acknowledging Kawasaki’s competence as a painter.

Together, these two images demonstrate the complex, reciprocal relationship between women artists and the “female artist” in the visual representation of Japanese women artists. The striking similarity between the photographic representation of Kawasaki and the generalized scene in the painted *Tranquility* suggest the existence of the “female artist” as a visual type—a formula for representation that homogenized and subsumed individual women artists into the conceptual, and now visually concrete, category of “female artist.”⁴ Intriguingly, the “female artist” visual type was

⁴ In identifying how images reinforce the ideological concept of the “female artist,” I follow Kevin Carr’s discussion of how images became part of a viewer’s “cognitive map,” which help situate them in their “conceptual landscapes.” Carr notes that “[a] painting—concrete, direct, and sensually overpowering—thrusts into the viewer’s consciousness a comprehensive and compelling picture of the world ‘as it really is.’ If a particular map became lodged in a person’s mind, it could serve as a schema that in turn conditioned subsequent experience and interpretation.” Kevin Carr, *Plotting the Prince: Shōtoku Cults and the Mapping of Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2012), 15-16.

present even in photographic representations of women artists. In these cases, the photographs document these women not as individuals but as interchangeable examples of the “female artist.” At the same time, the “female artist” visual type could not exist without the participation of individual women artists, who had to agree to pose in this fashion. The type was further replicated by women artists, like Hisako, in paintings. Why did women artists participate, albeit from a disempowered position, in the construction of the “female artist” visual type, which had so much oppressive potential?

This chapter considers the visual representation of the “female artist” through the spaces where women had some influence: women’s mass media and women artists’ activities and work. Japan’s mass women’s media was a key site for the enforcement and negotiation of the “female artist” type. Women’s magazines were a complex space that siloed women, upheld conservative gender values, and publicized and celebrated the accomplishments of women who were active in challenging gender norms. On the one hand, women’s magazines were controlled by men, and were conceived of as instructive spaces for enforcing the “Good Wife, Wise Mother” ideology. At the same time, as commercial ventures, they had to be responsive to their consumers in an increasingly competitive market. Women artists were more likely to receive coverage in women’s magazines, where they were held to repressive standards of feminine comportment. An analysis of articles in women’s magazines illuminates a clear expectation for women artists to soften and adapt their self-presentation to fit the homogenous and idealized stereotype of the “female artist.” Still, women’s magazines were potent sites for the normalization of women’s artistic

activities and there is evidence that women artists leveraged the “female artist” persona to further their agendas and expand the boundaries of the type.

There was similar complexity in the photographic representation of women artists. An extended analysis of these photographs in the magazine *Fujin gahō* demonstrates the oppression and potential inherent in the “female artist” type. The photographs dehumanized women artists, treating them as commodities and exemplars of hegemonic femininity. Still, women artists, by persisting in their professional activity and challenging the status quo, were active shapers of the photographs that appeared in women’s magazines. Their activities, as reported on by the media, inspired more women to become artists. As more women artists challenged the boundaries of feminine acceptability, their career opportunities gradually expanded. This phenomenon is visible through an increased variety of photographic depictions of women’s artistic activities.

The chapter concludes by turning back to Hisako’s *Tranquility* as an example of how modern Japanese women artists used their power as artists to shape the “female artist” type. Hisako was one of the most institutionally successful women artists of her time and no stranger to gender discrimination. At stake for Hisako in *Tranquility* was the very concept of a woman who was an artist. She could not represent the true mess of being an artist because it was not acceptable for a woman to be messy. It was not yet permissible for a woman to be, publicly, the full complexity of herself. It was only possible to be a “female artist.” So Hisako used the iconography that was available to her to thread the needle of honoring women’s artistic activity without endangering her own position in the art establishment.

I argue that in these areas, women were able to enact micro-adjustments to the “female artist,” shaping the ideal to be an aspirational figure that appealed to other women, respected not just for her femininity but also for her skill as an artist. Participation in the construction of the visual type represented a compromise women artists made to survive systemic gender discrimination while still improving their position in modern Japanese society.

The Construction of the “Female Artist” in Women’s Mass Media

Women’s magazines, which proliferated in the early twentieth century, were an important discursive space in the construction of modern Japanese womanhood.⁵ The history of women’s magazines in the modern period and its position as a site for gender construction has been well documented by scholars such as Sarah Frederick, Barbara Sato, Miriam Silverberg, Rebecca Copeland, Jan Bardsley, and Miyako Inoue.⁶ As these scholars have discussed, women’s magazines were initially forums

⁵ Between 1899 and 1912, 106 different women’s magazines were published. Inoue, *Vicarious Language*, 116. Magazines continued to proliferate throughout the Taishō and early Shōwa periods, which was dominated by such mass publications as *Shufu no tomo*, *Fujin kōron*, and *Fujin kurabu*. For more on interwar women’s magazines, see Frederick, *Turning Pages*.

⁶ See Frederick, *Turning Pages*; Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*; Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense*, especially chapters one and four; Copeland, “Educating the Modern Murasaki: *Jogaku Zasshi* and the Woman Writer,” in *Lost Leaves*, 7-51; Jan Bardsley, “The New Woman Exposed: Redefining Women in Modern Japanese Photography,” in *New Woman International: Representations in Photography and Film from the 1870s through the 1960s*, ed. Elizabeth Otto and Vanessa Rocco (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011): 40-53; Bardsley, *The Bluestockings of Japan*; Inoue, *Vicarious Language*. Additional discussions of the relationship between women and mass media can be found in Lippit, *Aesthetic Life*; Maeda Ai, “The Development of Popular Fiction in the Late Taishō Era: Increasing Readership of Women’s Magazines,” trans. Rebecca Copeland, in *Text and the City: Essays on Japanese Modernity*, ed. James A. Fuji (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004): 163-222; Sarah Teasley, “Home-Builder or Home-Maker? Reader Presence in Articles on Home-Building in Commercial Women’s Magazines in 1920s’ Japan,” *Journal of Design History* 18, no. 1, Publishing the Modern Home: Magazines and the Domestic Interior 1870-1965 (Spring, 2005): 81-97; Lise Skov and Brian Moeran, *Women, Media, and Consumption in Japan*, Consumasian Book Series (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1995); Mara Patessio, “Readers and Writers: Japanese Women and Magazines in the Late Nineteenth Century,” in *The Female Subject: Reading and Writing in Early Modern Japan*, eds. P. F. Kornicki, Mara Patessio, and G. G. Rowley (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese

for predominately male intellectuals and policy makers to debate and promulgate modern gender ideology and to enlighten an increasingly literate population of Japanese women in how to be productive citizens of the Japanese empire. While mass women's magazines never abandoned their conservative gender rhetoric, increasingly they adapted their content to cater to the interests and desires of their female audiences in a bid to increase their readership, resulting in "certain ironies, complexities, and contradictions" in gender construction.⁷ Magazines were motivated to appeal to the desires of their readership because they were commodities in a crowded marketplace. Magazine content was targeted towards elite and middle-class women but readership was much wider, crossing gender and class.⁸ In 1911, most women's magazines sold an average of two to three thousand copies while the most popular magazine, *Fujin sekai* (婦人世界, *Ladies' World*), sold seventy to eighty thousand copies.⁹ By the mid-1920s, leading magazine *Shufu no tomo* (主婦の友, *The Housewife's Friend*) circulated over 300,000 issues.¹⁰ According to Barbara Sato,

“...to label [mass women's magazines] mere repositories of established routines and gender conventions downplays the complexities, both

Studies, The University of Michigan, 2010): 191-214; Nozomi Naoi, *Yumeji Modern: Designing the Everyday in Twentieth-Century Japan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2020); Kimura Ryoko, “Fujin zasshi no jōhō kūkan to josei taishū dokushasō no seiritsu: Kindai nihon ni okeru shufu yakuwari no keisei tonon kanren de,” *Shisō* no. 821 (1992): 231-52; Miki Hiroko, “Kindai fujin zasshi kankei nenpyō,” in *Nihon no fujin zasshi, kaisetsu*, ed. Nakajima Kuni (Tokyo, Ōzorasha, 1986): 167-219.

⁷ Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*, 80.

⁸ Inoue, *Vicarious Language*, 117. Magazines were reasonably priced—*Shufu no tomo*, which launched in 1917, cost 17 sen, which was less than one percent of a professional woman's monthly salary. Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*, 96. Surveys of women conducted between 1920-1934 suggest that twenty percent of factory girls, eighty-five percent of white-collar working women, and over ninety percent of women students read magazines. Frederick, *Turning Pages*, 7. Frederick notes that men also read women's magazines, *Turning Pages*, 33.

⁹ Inoue, *Vicarious Language*, 116, fn 6.

¹⁰ Frederick, *Turning Pages*, 6.

ideological and economic, marking their production. In a culture of consumption, mass women's magazines naturally included their own categories of articles. This was evidence that editors and publishers recognized some obligation to women as consumers both in the sense of spenders and in the sense of readers. Just as magazines were in the process of redefining their readers, women were in the process of redefining themselves.”¹¹

Women's magazines and women readers had a “reciprocal relationship,” both driving and receiving shifting attitudes towards women's roles in modern Japanese society.¹²

In this way, women's magazines can be understood as sites of *possibility*: places for women to learn who they should and could be, as well as platforms for women to give voice to their own hopes and identity construction. The complex relationship between women and women's magazines is reflected in the magazines' content. Typical content for women's magazines in the early twentieth century comprised didactic essays and commentaries by prominent men and women, color illustrations and postcards by famous artists, photographs of modern spaces, events, and activities, photographs of prominent women and schoolgirls, articles on home management (cooking, tips for frugality and hygiene, beautifying the home, how to manage servants, child rearing), etiquette instruction, fashion and makeup, interviews with prominent women, works of art and literature, reports on current events, anthropological reports on “primitive” cultures, reader's contributions (letters to the editor, works of calligraphy or art, poems and literary endeavors), and advertisements for consumer goods.¹³ This content was heavy on instructing women in “Good Wife, Wise Mother” ideology as well as proper feminine behavior. But it also offered a

¹¹ Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*, 81.

¹² Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*, 7.

¹³ This summary is based on both my own observations and Inoue, *Vicarious Language*, 118-19.

forum for women to learn about the activities of women who diverged from this model and to dream of different identities for themselves. It exposed them to current events, ideas, and modes of living that could be very different from their daily lives. Sato explains, “Certainly the role women readers played in the construction of mass magazines was secondary to that of editors and publishers; and one must take care not to exaggerate their voices. Nevertheless, judging from the women who seized the chance to assert their will through reader participation, mass women’s magazines were sites for a partial redefinition of femininity.”¹⁴

Mass women’s magazines were an important space for the enforcement and negotiation of the “female artist” ideal. Women artists, as prominent women of their day, were regular fixtures of these magazines. Women artists were the subject of photographs, interviews, and articles. Their major paintings were photographically reproduced, and they also contributed illustrations and *kuchi-e* (frontispieces) to the magazines. The visibility of women artists in women’s magazines stands in contrast to their limited presence in male dominated magazines, such as the art magazine *Chūō bijutsu* (中央美術, *Central Art*). Discussion of individual women artists can be found either in the major exhibition reviews or in the gossip sections of *Chūō bijutsu*, but articles written by or about women were rare.¹⁵ Although they were included in art magazines, they occupied a peripheral position. The greater inclusion of women artists in women’s magazines was in part a reflection of the siloing of women into

¹⁴ Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*, 89.

¹⁵ Articles about women artists mostly occurred upon their deaths, as was the case with Noguchi Shōhin and Ikeda Shōen. See for example articles about Noguchi Shōhin in *Chūō bijutsu* 3, no. 4 (Apr. 1917) and about Ikeda Shōen in *Chūō bijutsu* 4, no. 1 (Jan. 1918). The table of contents for each issue can be found in *Kindai Nihon bijutsu zasshi sōmokuji*, Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Yūshōdō Ākaibuzu, 2009).

feminine spaces and the marginalization of women from the mainstream art world. But it was also a reflection of a real interest in women artists on behalf of female readers. Women's magazines, with their overlapping interests in instructing women and appealing to them, had to find a way to present women artists that was aspirational but non-threatening. Although the magazines had a stake in defining and upholding the idealized "female artist" as a model to female readers, they also had to be responsive to their readers' desire for positive representations of women artists.¹⁶

Women artists were active in constructing the "female artist" through their participation in women's magazine articles and interviews. Coverage of women artists was remarkably uniform, with the artists conforming to feminine behavioral ideals of filial piety, diligence, and modesty. For example, Shima Seien positioned herself as a dutiful daughter, extremely modest in disposition, and so singularly focused on painting that she had no time for romantic entanglements.¹⁷ Kajiwara Hisako told anecdotes about getting up early and working all day during the hot summer months, proving her commitment to productivity.¹⁸ Other women such as Ikeda Shōen, Kurihara Gyokuyō, and Kametaka Fumiko exhibited modesty by downplaying their abilities and intellect.¹⁹ Ikeda Shōen, in an autobiographical essay for a section on women artists for *Fujin gahō*, dismissed her ambition by claiming she "didn't think very deeply" about deciding to become a painter and took pains to credit

¹⁶ Nozomi Naoi makes a similar argument about women consumers' influence on Takahisa Yumeji's *bijinga* and the reciprocal relationship between women and female visual types. See Naoi, *Yumeji Modern*, especially chapter one.

¹⁷ Examples include Shirosuisei, "Hahaoya no mita Shima Seien joshi;" Matsuda Tsuruko, "Gendai onna meijin den: keishūgaka Shima Sein joshi," *Shufu no tomo* 5 no. 8 (Aug. 1921): 115-122; "Risshi denchū no hitobito: gadan no myōjō, Shima Seien jyoshi," *Shōjo no tomo* 15 no. 4 (Apr. 1922): 71.

¹⁸ *Yomiuri shinbun*, "Kansai no joryūgaka ga teiten wo mae ni hikaete - ase to tomoni shiboridasu seisaku gakō," Aug. 11, 1921.

¹⁹ Kojima, "Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi," 51-52.

her teachers for her success. She repeatedly emphasized her passivity and ignorance, writing “even though I am someone who doesn’t understand anything” and “I think I am someone who is completely useless without the teachings from [my teachers].”

With appropriate humility she conceded that she was happy but also embarrassed by her second place prize at the 1910 Buntan exhibition, as if she were unworthy.²⁰

Kurihara Gyokuyō, who was a strong student and tutored factory workers to cover her Joshibi tuition fees, remarked in an interview for the women’s magazine *Fujokai* (婦女界, *Women’s World*) that “I have a dull brain, so compared to others it is

embarrassing how slow I progress.”²¹ Kametaka Fumiko walked a fine line between denigrating herself and presenting an image of a proper housewife in an interview with newspaper *Yomiuri shinbun* for the “ladies supplement” (*fujin furoku*). She was interviewed as she prepared a painting of her daughter for the annual Shuyōkai exhibition and claimed that although she knows it is better to start painting early, she procrastinated and needed the pressure of the exhibition to motivate her to paint.

While when she was younger she was selfish and was devoted to painting, now she had other duties and interests that made her less productive.²² Complete devotion to painting was perceived as a negative trait for women like Fumiko who had children to raise and a household to run, whereas it was lauded for unmarried women. By putting herself down, Fumiko was behaving properly for a lady, ultimately giving off a humble and polite appearance. Fumiko was in fact the opposite of disorganized—in

²⁰ Sakakibara [Ikeda] Shōen, “Watashi no kinnichi aru ha mattaku shi no tamamono,” *Fujin gahō* no. 51, special issue (Jan. 1911): 50-52.

²¹ Kurihara Gyokuyō, “Gaka toshite no keiken to risō,” *Fujokai* 11 no. 5 (May 1915), 35, original quoted in Kojima, “Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi,” 52.

²² *Yomiuri shinbun*, “Ojōsan wo moderu ni: Shuyōkai shuppin wo kaku Kametaka Fujiko san,” Sept. 4, 1924.

addition to her domestic duties, she at various times balanced painting production, *dantai* activities, creating magazine and novel illustrations, and running her own painting academy (see Coda). As Kojima Kaoru points out, these activities required serious managerial skills and financially successful women like Fumiko and Gyokuyō paired their artistic talents with considerable intellect and organization, traits that were almost never reported on in the press or in interviews.²³

This homogeneity in gender performance suggests that it was the product of social pressure, likely the only acceptable way to behave and achieve mainstream success as professional artists.²⁴ Women who did not conform to this behavior, such as the assertive and confident Kitani Chigusa, were punished with spurious romantic rumors and claims that they were not the true authors of their paintings (see Chapter Three).²⁵ To avoid becoming a target of extreme sexism, it was necessary for women artists to adopt the “female artist” persona, even if it conflicted with their true selves. It is difficult to determine the extent of women artists’ agency in their self-presentation in the mass media, given the professional and social consequences inherent to any perceived transgression against gender norms. These women were socialized in a culture that valued a specific gender performance. Women artists likely consciously and unconsciously adopted the “female artist” persona in the absence of alternative pathways to professional success.

²³ Kojima, “Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi,” 52.

²⁴ For comparable behavior among women writers see Copeland, *Lost Leaves*.

²⁵ Ogawa Tomoko, “Kitano Tsunetomi to Osaka no joseigaka - Shima Seien to Kitani Chigusa,” in *Kitano Tsunetomi ten*, ed. Hashizume Setsuya (Tokyo: Tōkyō Sutēshon Gyararī, 2003), 166; See also Shirotsusei, “Hahaoya no mita Shima Seien joshi,” 50.

Still, there is evidence that women were strategically adopting the “female artist” persona to protest gendered stereotypes. Artists such as Ikeda Shōen, Hanihara Kuwayo, and Kitani Chigusa cloaked their critiques of sexist attitudes towards women artists by softening their language and position to adhere to feminine behavioral norms. Paired with the article “Women’s *kachōga*: Elegant *kachōga* is Suitable for Women” that was discussed in Chapter One was Ikeda Shōen’s “The Reason Why I Did Not Become a *Kachōga* painter.”²⁶ Ikeda Shōen disputed that *kachōga* (paintings of birds and flowers) was easy and that women were particularly suited for it, but she did so subtly. Rather than directly state her opinion she used humble language and personal anecdotes to suggest her viewpoint. She claimed she did not learn *kachōga* because she found human figures more interesting, and because she had little experience, she could not say if *kachōga* was appropriate to women or not. She thought, though, that just like other genres, the more in-depth one went, the harder it became, and now that she was prompted to think about it, she would have liked to have learned *kachōga*. She concluded by noting that even among the women artists who were senior to her, very few were *kachōga* specialists—most painted landscapes or genre scenes (*fūzokuga*, to which *bijinga* is a subset). Ikeda Shōen had a very careful needle to thread, navigating expectations around what women should paint while asserting her right to paint *bijinga*. Hanihara Kuwayo also softened her critique of the attitude that women’s work was automatically lesser than men’s by stating that while in normal circumstances, women *were* inferior to men, when it

²⁶ Ikeda Shōen, “*Kachōga ni naranada riyū*,” *Bijutsu no Nihon* 5 no. 7 (July 1913): 10.

came to art, more substantive judgments were called for.²⁷ She went on to criticize the disparity between men and women's expressive freedom before reverting to an essentialist argument that the value of her work lay in the fact that she was a woman. She upheld the hierarchical gender binary even as she simultaneously critiqued it. Kitani Chigusa lamented that her work would be narrowly defined as "woman's painting" and expressed a desire to break free of the stifling mold of the female artist, even as she upheld similar essentialist arguments as Hanihara.²⁸ These examples illustrate the difficult position many women artists found themselves in, chafing at the gendered limitations placed upon their artistic expression even as they employed those same gender stereotypes to justify their position as professional artists. Nevertheless, they finessed the limited platform and vocabulary available to them to push for more positive conceptualizations of the "female artist."

***Fujin Gahō* and the Micro-Adjustments to "Female Artist"**

The reciprocal relationship between women's magazines, women readers, and women artists in the shaping of the "female artist" as an aspirational figure is best examined by focusing on the presentation of the "female artist" in one women's magazine, *Fujin gahō*. The magazine, which was founded in 1905 and still runs to this day, covers the period under study, making it useful for tracking changes in the "female artist" type. It is a representative example of women's magazines from this period, and according to a 1911 survey, was the third best-selling women's magazine

²⁷ Hanihara Kuwayo, "Genei no jo[?] wo fute," 25.

²⁸ Kitani Chigusa, "Josei to shizen sono hoka," 24.

in Tokyo.²⁹ A distinguishing feature of *Fujin gahō* was that the first half of each issue was composed of high-quality photographs of prominent women, the lifestyles of high-society families, and activities attendant to modern life.³⁰ The large number of photographs created a sumptuous visual experience that was a primary selling point. The back half of the magazine was filled with articles. In tenor, the magazine has been described as having “nationalist overtones”³¹ and being “conservative,”³² primarily aimed at an audience of upper-middle-class women, although its reach grew wider.³³ To be sure, the magazine upheld the “Good Wife, Wise Mother” ideology and was not purposefully engaged in challenging gender inequality. Nevertheless, as a popular women’s magazine, it was necessary to present an image of modern Japanese womanhood that was appealing to its readers. Hisako, Kametaka Fumiko, Shima Seien, and Yoshida Fujio all engaged with *Fujin gahō*, sitting for interviews and photographs and contributing *kuchi-e*, and their work was consistently reviewed in the magazine’s art coverage.

Editorial choices in *Fujin gahō* reinforced the segregation of women artists to the “female artist” category. Critical reviews of major exhibitions such as the government salons or Inten (Nihon Bijutsuin exhibition) often focused exclusively on women artists, rather than discussing their work within the broader art milieu. Titles of such articles included “Work by Female Painters at the Ministry of Education

²⁹ The survey was of the sales of women’s magazines at Tokyo bookshops. The top two magazines were *Jogaku sekai* and *Fujin sekai*. Jordan Sand, “Was Meiji Taste in Interiors ‘Orientalist’?” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 8, no. 3 (Winter 2000), 640.

³⁰ Sand, “Was Meiji Taste in Interiors ‘Orientalist’?” 640.

³¹ Bardsley, “The New Woman Exposed,” 41.

³² Morioka, “Changing Images of Women,” 107.

³³ Frederick, *Turning Pages*, 8-9.

Exhibition,”³⁴ “Female Painters and the Bunten,”³⁵ and “Female *Yōga* Painters at the Bunten.”³⁶ Around 1918, a shift occurred and exhibition reviews began to cover artists of all genders, but even still these articles contained subsections that treated the work by women as a group.³⁷ The collective treatment of women artists can be seen in articles by art historian Fujikake Shizuya that crafted an art history for women artists, living and past.³⁸ These articles did not fold women artists into (male) histories of art but treated women’s work as a distinct lineage. Articles by women artists were often grouped together in the same issues and sections of the magazine. For example, a January 1911 special issue devoted to contemporary notable women featured several articles by women artists under the heading “*Keishū gaka*” (painter with feminine talent).³⁹ Occasionally there would be one-off articles by or about an individual artist.⁴⁰ The grouping of women artists under the organizing principle of gender advanced the ideology that the most important feature of women artists was that they were female.

At the same time, however, the articles treat women’s artistic activity with a degree of respect and dignity that was often absent in male-dominated magazines. The art historical articles by Fujikake are of particular interest. His article “Women of

³⁴ Fujikake Shizuya, “Monbushō tenrankai ni okeru keishūgaka no sakuhin,” *Fujin Gahō* no. 62 (Nov 1911): 84-86.

³⁵ Fujikake Shizuya, “Bunten to jorūsakka,” *Fujin Gahō* no. 129 (Dec 1916): 41-43.

³⁶ Okada, “Bijutsu no aki: Bunten no jorūyōgaka,” 22-24.

³⁷ For example, see Fujikake Shizuya, “Aki no bijinga: Taika to shinjin no araso: Teiten no nihonga hyō,” *Fujin Gahō* no. 179 (Dec. 1920), 16-19.

³⁸ Fujikake, “Meiji Taishō no keishūgaka”; Fujikake, “E no jozū na mukashi no fujin.”

³⁹ Articles were written by Okuhara Seisui, Atomi Gyokushi, Ikeda Shōen, Yoshida Fujio, and Noguchi Shōhin. “Keishūgaka,” *Fujin Gahō* no. 51 (Jan. 1911): 45-56.

⁴⁰ For examples, see Hisanoko, “Bunten shuppin seisakuchū no Shima Seien joshi,” *Fujin Gahō* no. 164 (Oct. 1919): 18-20; Tsuda Toshiko, “Joryū yōgaka no atsumari Shuyōkai,” from “Kindai no fujinkai,” *Fujin Gahō* no. 156 (Feb. 1919): 43-43.

the Past Who Were Skilled in Drawing” posited that Japanese women had participated in drawing and painting throughout Japanese history, even if their works had been lost to time.⁴¹ This openness to considering women’s contributions to art history contrasted with commonly espoused opinions that women artists had contributed nothing to the history of art,⁴² and that very few women of talent existed among Japanese women artists.⁴³ Fujikake also pointed out that it was likely aristocratic women who painted during the “Fujiwara and Heike periods” (roughly the Heian (794-1185) and Kamakura (1185-1336) periods), and daughters and wives of artists in the Edo period, in contrast to the great number and diversity of young women taking up the brush in the modern period. Rooting women’s drawing and painting activity deep in Japan’s past, and moreover in the vaunted halls of the imperial court, Fujikake positioned women’s artistic activity within a long tradition of elite, feminine accomplishment. Even though the article did not contextualize women’s painting beyond the feminine realm, it treated the activity as valuable. “Meiji and Taishō Female Painters,” written several years later, offered a brief historical overview of women painters and advice for readers who wished to become artists.⁴⁴ Fujikake advised readers to draw feminine pictures and demonstrate their uniqueness as female painters. He also wrote that women had an “intrinsic vanity” and the women artists who flourished were those that burned with envy. He advised women that a career as an artist was the most appropriate for satisfying their vanity, for it did not contain the stigma and social danger of acting but was still glamorous.

⁴¹ Fujikake, “E no jozū na mukashi no fujin.”

⁴² Ueda Juzō, “Maua no mitaru joryūgaka,” *Geien* 1, no. 9 (Feb. 1920): 1-2.

⁴³ Yamaoka, “Gendai no keishūgaka,” 4-5.

⁴⁴ Fujikake, “Meiji Taishō no keishūgaka.”

Fujikake recommended that women should pursue *nihonga* because it was popular, but he did not offer any proscription against *yōga* and indeed noted the wonderful work created by artists such as Yoshida Fujio and Kametaka Fumiko. He offered information on training, noting which artists took female students, and covered the various women's *dantai*. Although not free of sexist language and assumptions, Fujikake's article treated the topic of women artists with seriousness and offered comprehensive advice for aspiring painters. An article by an anonymous woman author that appeared in the April 1916 issue also dealt with the question of how young women could become painters. The article was less encouraging than Fujikake's—it warned readers that becoming a professional required not only great talent but great effort, should not be pursued out of vanity, and that financial success could take several years to attain—but it did not dismiss the idea that women could become artists or that women were intrinsically incapable of the hard work required.⁴⁵ This is counter to the opinion of male writer Okada Banyō, who, in a special issue devoted to women painters in the short-lived arts magazine *Geien*, wrote that “true art must express absolute joy” and that because women painted out of loneliness from the lack of a husband and children, it was impossible for them to create true art.⁴⁶ In the same *Geien* issue, Yatsu Atari wrote “vanity and jealousy, innate characteristics of women, prevent them from producing great art. . . . People who honestly praise the paintings by women artists at exhibitions are big fools. The hands of their teachers are at least half responsible for their paintings.”⁴⁷ It was not

⁴⁵ Fujin kisha, “Gaka ni naru made,” *Fujin gahō* no. 121 (Apr. 1916), 61.

⁴⁶ Okada Banyō, “Joryūgaka,” *Geien* 1, no. 9 (Feb. 1920): 33.

⁴⁷ Yatsu Atari, “Jūō mujin,” *Geien* 1, no. 9 (Feb. 1920): 39, as translated in Morioka, “Changing Images of Women,” 29.

that sexist attitudes were absent from *Fujin gahō* but that their manifestation and tenor differed due to their predominantly female audience. Women readers were interested in the lives of women painters and keen to follow in their footsteps. As a business, *Fujin gahō* likely had to meet this demand even as it also had a vested interest in selling normative femininity. Ironically, it was because *Fujin gahō* was a segregated, feminine space that it had the imperative to present a more positive image of the “female artist,” one that would be aspirational to the very female readers who were supposed to dedicate their lives to the domestic sphere.

The visual representation of women artists in *Fujin gahō* also positioned them as aspirational female types. Before discussing the particular features of photographs of women artists, it is important to discuss how photographs functioned in the pages of *Fujin gahō*.⁴⁸ Consisting of half of each issue, the photographs were enormously varied, accompanied by explanatory captions in both Japanese and English. A

⁴⁸ By the time *Fujin gahō* began publication, photography of women had undergone a dramatic change in meaning. Photographs published in magazines belonged to the public sphere and were commodities for sale. Traditionally, women who were visible in public were perceived as sexually available, an attitude that was compounded by the fact that images of women (in woodblock prints, advertisements, and other visual media) prior to the twentieth century were predominantly of sex workers. Therefore, “respectable women” from good families refrained from having their photographs publicly circulated. An important exception to this were images of the Meiji Empress and aristocratic women, who had a necessary public role to fill. But as photography became more commonplace and social norms changed, the stigma against public photography lessened. This was in part due to the 1907 beauty contest run by the newspaper *Jiji shimpō* in response to an invitation from the *Chicago Daily Tribune* for an international competition. The newspaper specifically requested photographs of women from good families to represent Japan. The popularity of the contest, the greater numbers of upper-class women pursuing professional opportunities, the growth in women’s magazines, and the improvement in photographic technology led to a normalization of photographic representations of “respectable” women. For further information on the history of photographs of women in modern mass media publications, see Bardsley, “The New Woman Exposed”; Karen Fraser, “Beauty Battle: Politics and Portraiture in Late Meiji Japan (1868-1912),” in *Visualizing Beauty: Gender and Ideology in East Asia*, ed. Aida Yuen Wong (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2012), 11-22; Alice Tseng, “Imperial Portraiture and Popular Print Media in Early Twentieth-Century Japan,” *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 46, no. 2 (Summer 2020): 305-344; Alison J. Miller, “Imperial Images: The Japanese Empress Teimei in Early Twentieth-Century Newspaper Photography,” *Trans Asia Photography Review*. 7, no. 1 (2016): np; Lippit, “*Bijin Graphic*: Illustrated Magazines and the Popular Ideology of Beauty,” in *Aesthetic Life*, 101-124.

substantial subset of the photographs were of prominent women: members of the imperial family, aristocratic and wealthy women, writers, artists, and pioneering women like the first woman doctor. Women's school activities, such as graduations, sports days, and school fairs, were also common. Another subset of photographs was of women engaged in various "feminine" accomplishments, such as *ikebana* and calligraphy. Photo essays such as "A Day of a Young Wife" (Figure 2.3) could be featured alongside images of modernity, such as factory interiors, parks, and industrial exhibitions. As with the written articles, the photographs in *Fujin gahō* were instructive—they presented women who exemplified feminine ideals. Readers were expected to see these women as aspirational role-models.⁴⁹ But because these photographs included professional women, like artists, writers, and doctors, the magazines tacitly acknowledged a more expansive social role for women than was contained in "Good Wife, Wise Mother." No doubt their inclusion was partially driven by their readers' interests. In this sense, the photographs were commodities that sold an appealing vision of femininity to savvy female readers. Because the photographs were arranged en masse, they functioned collectively, each informing the meaning of the other and creating a montage of modern femininity.⁵⁰ The individual women photographed had distinct meanings, but the gathering of diverse photographs together created a "'social tableau' of the imaginary modern Japanese woman and her bourgeois family."⁵¹ The positioning and repetition of photographs of women artists

⁴⁹ Lippit, *Aesthetic Life*, 109.

⁵⁰ For more on the idea of montage as it relates to modern Japanese mass women's media, see Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense*, especially the introduction, and Inoue, *Vicarious Language*, 113, 154.

⁵¹ Inoue, *Vicarious Language*, 154.

within this context worked to enfold professional women artists within the matrix of ideal femininity, turning her individual image into a symbol of that femininity.

The presentation of women artists as aspirational feminine icons is demonstrated through the studio portraits that constituted one of the common formats for their photographic representation. Examples of this format can be found in a 1911 issue of *Fujin gahō* which collaged studio portraits of Yoshida Fujio and Ikeda Shōen together with a photograph of bamboo leaves (Figure 2.4). In a narrow, rectangular photograph Fujio stands against a dark background, her body swathed in a Western-style, white-bustled dress, her face turned three-quarters towards the viewer. She holds a rose stem in her hands, which are demurely clasped in front of her. Ikeda Shōen, in a roundel photograph with a dark background, appears to sit or lean against a chair, wearing a dark kimono with light colored *obi*, her hair styled in traditional fashion. The photograph of Ikeda Shōen is placed slightly over the photograph of Fujio. The bamboo leaves make up the background of the collage, except for one leaf, which cuts across the bottom of Fujio's photograph. The women are identified as female painters (*keishū gaka*) in the text captions. From the photographs alone, however, they could be any one of the well-to-do ladies that populated *Fujin gahō*. Their static, demure poses that show off their expensive clothing and the natural associations of the bamboo are identical to how women from elite families were represented (Figure 2.5). The use of this format for women artists visually categorized them as belonging to the same social stratum as other privileged women. The repetition of this format creates a certain sense of interchangeability—that any individual woman could be replaced by another without radically altering the

message of the photospreads. This impression is furthered by the fact that the photograph of Fujio dates to c. 1903-5.⁵² Fujio the person as she existed in 1911 was less important than Fujio as paragon of modern femininity.

The impression of interchangeability continues even when portraits of multiple women artists are paired with reproductions of their paintings. One example is a December 1918 photo spread entitled “Bunten Selected Female Artists and Their Work” that arranges three roundel studio portraits of Kametaka Fumiko, Okawa Shūkun (大川秀薫, dates unknown), and Inoue Yoshiko (井上よし子, dates unknown) (Figure 2.6) with three painting reproductions. Logic would dictate that the three paintings correspond to the three women, however, Inoue Yoshiko’s work is not reproduced and instead there is an image of a work by Araki Geppo (荒木月畝, 1872-1934), who is not photographed. The Bunten of 1918 featured eleven women artists, a relatively large representation, but only three women and three paintings are included.⁵³ Rather than functioning as news reportage, these pages serve as decoration of the idea of the “female artist.” The inclusion of the paintings acknowledges the value and appeal of work by women artists, and indeed the reproduction of Fumiko’s *yōga* painting is significant for its counterprogramming on the appropriateness of *yōga* for women. The studio portrait photographs of the women themselves furthers the idea that professional artist is an esteemed career for women. But the mismatch of photographs and painting reproductions imply that any

⁵² The photograph was likely taken during Fujio’s trip to America and Europe. She did not adopt Western-style dress until she arrived in America and the same photograph is used in a Japanese newspaper article soon after her return to Japan. Yoshida Fujio archival materials, private collection.

⁵³ *Yomiuri shinbun*, “Bunten keishū gaka sakuhin kenbutsu: sakushū ni masaru konshū nyūsen no seiseki: hoka (Fujin furoku),” October 15, 1918.

individual or any painting could be swapped out with another without changing the meaning. The photo spread upholds the idea of the “female artist” as valuable without conferring the same value on the individual women. These women are in the pages of *Fujin gahō* because they are “female artists,” not because they are seen as people in their own right.

The homogenization of individual women artists into the “female artist” type is best represented by the most predominant way women artists were photographed—what I am terming the “in-production” format. In this format, the artist is shown alone, at work in an interior studio space, sitting *seiza* on the floor with her tools—brushes, paint splattered dishes, and a painting tray—scattered around her. She gazes down at a *nihonga* painting, brush in hand. She wears a fine kimono and her hair is nicely arranged (Figures 2.2, 2.7-9). A variation on this format depicts the artist standing or sitting, her painting propped up vertically while she works on it (Figures 2.10 and 2.11). The repeated use of this “in-production” format solidified the “female artist” as a distinct visual type, so that when it came time to represent a woman painter, this was the natural choice. There is a startling sameness to these images, which is reinforced when comparing them to non-photographic, two-dimensional representations of women artists such as Oka Yoshie’s (岡吉枝, dates unknown) *A Lady Painter* (女絵師, 1907) (Figure 2.12), an illustrated depiction of Shima Seien (Figure 2.13), a *suguroku* illustration by Kaburaki Kiyokata (Figure 2.14), and Kajiwara Hisako’s *Tranquility*. Rather than approach each artist as a specific individual, the photographer (and perhaps the artist herself) positioned the artist *as* the type. The woman conformed to the visual type.

A fair question that arises when discussing the “in-production” format is, what other way could a painter be represented? Indeed, artists of all genders, across temporal and geographic positions, have been represented as “in-production.”⁵⁴ Depictions of artists at work or with the tools of their trade is an efficient way to communicate their profession. But is an artist’s identity dictated by their tools, or the posture of their bodies while at work? Even if this were the case, one must determine *which* tools and at which *point* in the production process, is the most “artist-like.”⁵⁵ Why did the “in-production” format settle on the moment the paint tip touched silk, instead of the moment pencil was brought to sketchpad (Figure 2.15) or hand leafed through a reference book (Figure 2.16)? Although these other activities were photographed, one must ask why this “in-production” format was predominant. Even though the “in-production” format appears natural, it was not a neutral choice and conveyed specific messaging about women’s artistic activity that had great influence on how they were visualized, in two-dimensional media as well as in the social imagination.

The specific representational choices featured in the “in-production” photographs of Japanese women artists standardize acceptable female artistic activity to that which can be completed indoors and with indigenous materials and traditions, i.e. *nihonga*. Other forms of artistic activity, such as *yōga* and sculpture are rarely

⁵⁴ See for example self-portraits by Sofonisba Anguissola, Judith Leyster, Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, Vincent van Gogh, Frédéric Bazille, Archibald John Motley Jr., Maxwell Ashby Armfield, and Norman Rockwell.

⁵⁵ For a discussion on what specific tools communicated about an artist in early modern Europe, see Céline Talon, “Catharina Van Hemessen’s Self-Portrait: The Woman Who Took Saint Luke’s Palette,” In *Women Artists and Patrons in the Netherlands, 1500-1700*, ed. Elizabeth Sutton, Visual and Material Culture, 1300-1700 (Ser.Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019): 27-53.

represented, and consequently, rarely suggested as a possible artistic avenue for well-to-do women. These women are photographed in interior spaces, containing them within the domestic realm. They are almost always pictured alone, or rarely, in the company of another woman. Their engagement with male teachers, for example, is not acknowledged. These images reinforce the feminine, domestic, and Japanese triad that was at the heart of the “Good Wife, Wise Mother” ideology, and by extension the definition of the “female artist.”

In the few cases of photographs of an “in-production” *yōga* painter, compositional and editorial choices took care to emphasize artists’ domestic and Japanese identities. For example, a photograph of Takayasu Yasuko (高安やす子, 1883-1969) depicts her sitting in front of an easel with a landscape painting on it (Figure 2.17). Takayasu is wearing a kimono and turns to face the camera, a palette in one hand and a brush in the other. The background is non-descript, similar to backdrops used in photography studios. The title of the page is “sketching” (*shasei*), and the caption identifies Takayasu as the wife of Takayasu Michinari, the President of Takayasu Hospital in Osaka. The text does not identify her as an artist. The message conveyed is that Takayasu is notable because she is married to a prominent man. The line between amateur and professional women painters is often difficult to ascertain but Takayasu would go on to participate in the Shuyōkai *dantai*, which indicates the seriousness of her painting practice.⁵⁶ Here, however, her painting is interesting, but ancillary.

⁵⁶ Takayasu was a common member (*ippan*) of the Shuyōkai in 1919 and exhibited two paintings of a still life and of roses at the first exhibition. By 1924 she had become a regular member (*kaiin*). A reproduction of a landscape painting she submitted to the 1924 exhibition can be found in the 6th

The only “in-production” photograph of Yoshida Fujio that appeared in *Fujin gahō* during the modern era was published in a July 1911 issue under the title “Lady Yoshida Fujio in the Painting Room” (Figure 2.18). Fujio wears a kimono, overcoat, and scarf and sits in a chair in front of a small canvas on an easel in her home studio. Fujio’s body and canvas only occupy half of the composition, and the contents of her painting are indecipherable. The other half of the composition is taken up by an enormous figure painting by her husband, Yoshida Hiroshi. A round photograph of Hiroshi’s head is placed over the top left corner of the photograph. The caption identifies Fujio as an artist known for her watercolors and as the wife of Hiroshi, with whom she recently returned from travel to Europe. The rest of the caption discusses Hiroshi’s work and notes that he submitted the *kuchi-e* for this month’s issue. Although she sits in front of a canvas, Fujio is not photographed in the act of painting and there are no painting implements visible. Her presence and painting are dwarfed by her husband’s image and work. As with Takayasu, Fujio as *yōga* painter is rendered less transgressive by the mediating presence of her husband, and by her demure body language and adoption of native dress.

Although not from *Fujin gahō*, a photograph of Kametaka Fumiko that appeared in a 1917 issue of the women’s magazine *Shukujo gahō* (淑女画報, *Lady’s Pictorial*) depicts the artist sitting *seiza* in front of her oil painting (Figure 2.19). Oil painting was typically done with an artist sitting in a chair, so Fumiko’s position on the floor in the formal, traditional Japanese fashion is noteworthy. The photograph

exhibition catalog. It is unclear when Takayasu stopped her involvement with the Shuyōkai. Lists of Shuyōkai members at various dates and a reproduction of the exhibition catalog are published in *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi*, 103-111.

conforms to the “in-production” format, down to the prominently placed jar of brushes. In each of the three photographs, the Western, and therefore masculine-perceived, genre of *yōga* has been made more “feminine,” either through the use of Japanese dress and body posture or by emphasizing the marital status of the artists. In these cases, *yōga* could be understood as a feminine pursuit acceptable for women.

The “in-production” photographs emphasized the women’s bodies, treating them as aesthetic objects, and thereby reinforced feminine beauty ideals. In a 1919 photograph Kajiwara Hisako is positioned in the middle of a round frame, her eyes downcast as if she is absorbed in her painting and unaware of the camera (Figure 2.20). Her paintings—the one before her and the one behind—are both cropped. They do not matter. They are just accessories to the idea of the “female artist.” Most of the “in-production” photographs are taken from an angle where the artist’s face is visible (Figures 2.8 and 2.9). Despite being in the midst of painting, the women are almost always shown in nice kimonos, their protective aprons absent. Their hair is done neatly, too. A woman’s hair was emblematic of her femininity and beauty, and properly arranged hair was symbolic of a woman’s virtue.⁵⁷ Painting is a messy process but the photographic visualization of the “female artist” ignores such facts in favor of presenting an orderly and beautified image.

⁵⁷ The importance of women’s hair to their perceived femininity was so great that the Japanese government banned women from cutting their hair short in 1873. For information on the ideological importance of women’s hair in the modern period, see David L. Howell, “Girl with the Horse-Dung Hairdo,” in *Looking Modern: East Asian Visual Culture From Treaty Ports to World War II*, eds. Jennifer Purtle and Hans Bjarne Thomsen, Center for the Art of East Asia Symposia (Chicago: Center for the Art of East Asia, University of Chicago, 2009): 203-219. See also Copeland, “Fashioning the Feminine.” Throughout Japanese history, the cutting of a woman’s hair signaled her renunciation of the world and an end to her sexual and reproductive identities. This practice was commonly adopted by women who took the tonsure, for example. See Lori Meeks, “Buddhist Renunciation and the Female Life Cycle: Understanding Nunhood in Heian and Kamakura Japan,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 70, no. 1 (2010): 1–59.

In fact, the “female artist” photographs, with their restricted range of poses and behaviors and the emphasis on ideal physical appearance, are reminiscent of *bijinga* conventions. *Bijinga* is a genre of *nihonga* that depicts beautiful women, or *bijin*. A manifestation of ideal beauty, the *bijin* is young, her placid face perfectly made-up, and her hair is immaculate. She wears elaborate clothing and accessories and is frequently associated with seasonal motifs. It was rare in orthodox *bijinga* to paint female figures expressing negative emotions, and in general the female forms appear more like perfectly composed dolls, rather than living women. *Tranquility* is an example of conventional *bijinga*. The interrelationship between concurrently developing photography, women’s magazines, and *bijinga* has been well explored by Maya Lippit.⁵⁸ Photographs of young women, such as the studio portraits discussed above, were understood as *bijin* and were entered into beauty contests run by mass media publications during the late Meiji period.⁵⁹ These contests were judged by prominent artists such as Okada Saburōsuke, who himself painted images of beauties. The photographs appeared in women’s magazines, alongside illustrations of beautiful young women by artists who specialized in *bijinga*, whose painting work was also featured in the same magazines. In other words, the photographs of women artists were part of a montage of the *bijin*, which was a physical manifestation of ideal femininity. Notably, magazine articles instructing female readers on beauty and comportment used reproductions of *bijinga* as models of ideal femininity.⁶⁰ Lippit writes, “*Bijinga* promotes an aesthetic that asks not for the replication of woman, but

⁵⁸ Lippit, *Aesthetic Life*, chapters 4, 5, and 7.

⁵⁹ Lippit, *Aesthetic Life*, 106-111; Fraser, “Beauty Battle: Politics and Portraiture in Late Meiji Japan (1868-1912).”

⁶⁰ Yamamoto Yuri, “Fujin zasshi ni nimru bunten bijinga,” *Meiji bijutsu gakkai shi* 23 (2014), 137.

promotes being *like* a woman—more than or better than a real woman.”⁶¹ I argue that the photographs of women artists function in a similar manner, not replicating real women and their artistic activity, but promoting the “female artist” ideal. The photographs blurred the distinction between women artists and the “female artist,” dehumanizing and transforming women artists into paragons of femininity.

The identification of women artists with *bijinga* was reinforced through the frequent presence of *bijinga* paintings in the photographs of women or on the same pages as these photographs. For example, in a photo spread from 1918, Itō Shōha, Uemura Shōen, and Kitani Chigusa are photographed in the same postures as the female figures in their paintings, a visual repetition that creates a strong correlation between artist and *bijin* (Figure 2.11). In a similar photo spread from 1917 titled “Female artists in the midst of painting,” five out of the seven photographs show a woman artist in front of her painting (Figure 2.10). Curiously, the other two photographs only reproduce a pair of paintings by Kurihara Gyokuyō. The artist herself is not photographed. Gyokuyō’s *bijinga* stand in for the artist. (For more on the connection between women artists and *bijinga*, see Chapter Three).

The influence of feminine beauty standards on the “female artist” photographs is illuminated by comparing these images with photographs of men artists “in-production.” Men artists were photographed in *Fujin gahō* to a significantly lesser degree than their female counterparts. While photographs of women artists were featured several times a year, photographs of men artists were included during the late Meiji period, then were largely absent from the magazine through the 1910s, before

⁶¹ Lippit, *Aesthetic Life*, 228.

appearing again in the 1920s. In the late Meiji period, the photographs were primarily of *yōga* painters. Although these photographs also showed the man artist with brush in hand, the framing is different—the photographs are taken from farther away and more of the artists' studio space is revealed. A photograph of Nakazawa Hiromitsu (中澤弘光, 1874-1964) from 1911 depicts the artist working on a large canvas, his body in profile and face in shadow (Figure 2.21). His spacious studio is hung with multiple paintings and his work-in-process is clearly visible. A model wearing the outfit of an Ohara woman stands to the left of the composition. Rather than Nakazawa's body, the photograph emphasizes the production of painting. Photographs of Mitsutani Kunishirō (Figure 2.22) and Takamura Shinpu (高村真夫, 1876-1964) (Figure 2.23) follow the same conventions, down to the model posing on the left side of the composition. If not with a model, men painters are often photographed with their wives looking on, as was the case in a photograph of Okada Saburōsuke and his wife, the writer Okada Yachiyo (岡田八千代, 1883-1962) (Figure 2.24). *Nihonga* painter Kawabata Mosho (川端茂章, 1883-?) works on a painting in his home studio, his new wife Haruko gazing at him, in a photograph from 1912 (Figure 2.25). Again, the photograph is taken at a greater distance than those of women artists, with more of the studio space revealed. The persistent inclusion of a woman in these photographs is interesting and deserves further study into how masculinity was constructed in women's media. Photographs of men artists from the 1920s frequently included the artists' families, such as a photo spread of Okada Saburōsuke and Ishikawa Toraji (石川寅治, 1875-1964) and their respective paintings from 1921 (Figure 2.26). Perhaps it was important to present these men as

family men, or perhaps the editors of *Fujin gahō* thought their readers would be more interested if women were included in the photographs. Regardless, the physical presence of women in these photographs helps pull attention from the man artist. Unlike the photographs of women artists, which focus tightly on their physical appearance, the photographs of men include their production process and home life, creating a fuller picture of them as people.

Men artists began to be depicted in similar fashion to the “female artist” in the Taishō period. While their visualization still lagged behind that of women artists, the photographs of men became more closely cropped to show just their bodies and the work they were creating (Figure 2.27). At times, even the paintings were cropped in the photographs, emphasizing the artist’s body, as can be seen in a photo spread from 1921 (Figure 2.28). Even so, men were photographed in a greater range of postures and clothing, and the works they were shown making had a greater diversity (Figure 2.29).

Despite the imposition of feminine ideals on the photographs of women artists, the decision to represent these women in the process of painting was a significant acknowledgement of the seriousness and skill that these women applied towards their careers.⁶² In addition to state-imposed gender ideology, women artists contended with charges that they were not capable of making great art and their work was actually painted by their teachers. Critiques of women artists included assertions

⁶² On the similar role of the “in production” format for European women painters, see: Mary D. Garrard, “Artemisia Gentileschi’s Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting,” *The Art Bulletin* 62, no. 1 (1980): 97–112; Sheriff, *The Exceptional Woman*; Melissa Hyde, “‘Peinte Par Elle-Même?’: Women Artists, Teachers and Students from Anguissola to Haudebourt-Lescot,” *Arts Et Savoirs* 6, no. 6 (2016); Laura Auricchio, “Self-Promotion in Adélaïde Labille-Guiard’s 1785 Self-Portrait with Two Students,” *The Art Bulletin* 89, no. 1 (2007): 45–62.

that they chose a professional career due to female vanity or because they were too ugly to find husbands.⁶³ The visualization of women in the act of painting was an important rebuttal to beliefs that women should not, and could not, be artists. The emphasis on the numerous tools at the artists' disposal highlights the complexity and training required to paint at a high level. In putting brush to painting, the women artists are unambiguously claiming ownership of their work. It is significant, too, that these women were shown creating large-scale paintings intended for exhibition in the highest, professional spheres of the modern art world. There was more that went into being an artist than this particular moment, but no other moment so efficiently communicates the idea that women were artists capable of succeeding professionally. These photographs, for all the ways they reinforced normative gender, also had the potential to be agents of change, for they presented readers with proof that proper Japanese women were, and could be, professional painters.

Representation Matters

There is evidence that women were inspired to become painters due to the content of women's magazines. Cultural critics complained that the increase of women painting *bijinga* was due to the influence of *kuchi-e* and popular illustrations found in women's magazines. Uemura Shōen for example, criticized the influx of young women painters, who she perceived as lacking originality and only interested in copying magazine *kuchi-e*.⁶⁴ A critic for the art magazine *Chūō bijutsu* similarly

⁶³ Morioka, "Changing Images of Women," 26-30.

⁶⁴ Uemura Shōen, "Raidōsei ni tomu gendai joryū gaka."

criticized the women who painted “cheap *bijinga* of the type seen in women’s magazines’ *kuchi-e*.”⁶⁵ As can be inferred from these comments, the visual content of magazines shaped some women’s production, encouraging them towards *bijinga*.⁶⁶ The photographs of women artists, as part of that visual matrix, may have worked in a similar fashion, inspiring women readers to pursue a career in the arts.

Women artists themselves were even more responsible for encouraging a new generation of women to pursue a professional career in the arts. Kitani Chigusa was studying *kachōga* but decided to become a figure painter and move to Tokyo to study with Ikeda Shōen after she saw Shima Seien’s debut success at the Bunten.⁶⁷ The professional women artists who were active in the late Meiji and Taishō periods—the ones most prominently photographed in *Fujin gahō*—were responsible for creating new study and education opportunities for younger women. Starting in the mid-Taishō period, a wave of women-only *dantai* and private schools were formed, including Shima Seien’s Society of Four Women (女四人の会, 1916), the *yōga* group the Shuyōkai (1918), Kurihara Gyokuyō’s Getsuyōkai (月耀会, Moon Glow Club, 1920), Kametaka Fumiko’s Sekiso-sha Girls’ Painting School ((赤艸社女子絵画研究所, 1924), the Women’s Western Painting Association (婦人洋画協会, 1925), and Kitani Chigusa’s Yachigusakai (八千草会, 1926).⁶⁸ The purpose of these groups

⁶⁵ “Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai (dai jū kai),” *Chūō bijutsu* 2, no. 11 (Nov. 1916), 20, original quoted in Nakano, “Bijingashitsu saikō,” primary source #25, 38.

⁶⁶ Yamamoto, “Fujin zasshi.”

⁶⁷ Ogawa Tomoko, “Shima Seien–Taishō ni kirametai Osaka no joseigaka,” *Osaka no rekishi/Osaka-shi shi hensan tokoro* 64 (2004), 36.

⁶⁸ An overview of women’s *yōga dantai* and training centers can be found in Kokatsu, ed., *Hashiru onna tachi*, 162-63. For information on the Society of Four Women, see Ogawa, “Shima Seien–Taishō ni kirametai Osaka no joseigaka”; Ogawa Tomoko, “Kindai Osaka ni okeru joseigaka no kenkyū: Shima Seien to ‘onna yonin no kai’ no gaka wo chūshin ni,” *Kashima bijutsu zaidan nenpō* no. 20

was explicitly to improve the training and exhibition opportunities for other women artists. Writing about the Shuyōkai, Tsuda Toshiko explained that the group was meant to correct for the insufficient training opportunities for aspiring women *yōga* painters (see also Chapter Four).⁶⁹ Most women artists also took disciples, dramatically increasing the number of teachers willing to take on female students. These women-only environments, by their segregated nature, were perceived as more appropriate places to study for young women and were at times marketed as a form of finishing school that would prepare women with the accomplishments necessary to become good wives and wise mothers.⁷⁰

The success of these new spaces in increasing the number of women artists is evident in the numerous group photographs of women painting students that began to appear in *Fujin gahō* in the early 1920s. Members of the Shuyōkai were regularly featured (Figures 2.30 and 2.31) as well the Getsuyōkai (Figure 2.32). A substantial number of photographs were of various artists' New Year's gatherings with their students, including those of Kajiwara Hisako (Figure 2.33), Kitani Chigusa, Shima Seien, and Itō Shōha (Figure 2.34). In contrast to the single "in-production" female artist, which contained women's painting activity within narrow frames and presented

(2002): 172-182; Hashizume Setsuya, "Kindai Osaka to joseigaka no jidai (dai yon kai): 'onna yonin no kai' kara Tsunetomi, Seien, Chigusa monka no gaka tachi," *Yasoshima* no. 8 (Nov. 2014): 64-103. For information on the Shuyōkai, see Omura Satoshi, "āto to sekai (dai 16 wa): Kametaka Fumiko to Shuyō (poinsechia)"; Allen, "Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives"; and *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi*. For information on the Getsuyōkai, see Tadokoro, "Kenkyū nōto: Kurihara Gyokuyō ni kansuru kiso kenkyū"; Toshiaki Gomi, ed., *Kurihara Gyokuyō: Nagasaki ga unda yosetsu no josei gaka* (Nagasaki: Nagasaki bunkensha, 2018). For the Sekisho-sha Girls' Painting School, see Yamasaki, "Shōwa shoki joshi yōga juku ni kansuru kenkyū"; For information on the Yachigusakai, see Hashizume Setsuya, "Kindai Osaka to joseigaka no jidai (dai ni kai): Kitani Chigusa," *Yasoshima* 6 (Oct. 2012): 4-41.

⁶⁹ Tsuda, "Joryū yōgaka no atsumari Shuyōkai," 42.

⁷⁰ Yamasaki, "Shōwa shoki joshi yōga juku ni kansuru kenkyū."

women artists as extraordinary, these group photographs show numbers of women out of their homes, participating in exhibitions and activities at the studios of famous women artists. While still aspirational in nature, the photographs of large groups of women artists helped normalize the career. Representation mattered, begetting greater and greater numbers of women artists.

Over the course of the modern period, the complex relationship between women's magazines, women readers, and women artists both upheld and subtly expanded the boundaries of the "female artist" type. A close examination of interviews, articles, and photographs of women artists in women's magazines reveals how individual women were transformed into symbols of feminine accomplishment. This homogenization was oppressive. It suppressed women artists' individuality, asked them to mask their ambitions, intellect, and accomplishments, and reinforced the relegation of women artists into a separate, and secondary class of artists. But by molding women artists into paragons of femininity, the "female artist" offered a socially acceptable pathway towards a professional career. The representation of women artists as model women enhanced their appeal and tacitly endorsed the idea that women could be professionals. As more women were inspired to become "female artists," they opened up new possibilities for other women, expanding the types of styles women could acceptably paint as well as educational and exhibition avenues.

Kajiwara Hisako's *Tranquility*

I posit that it was the positive potential of the "female artist" visual type that prompted Kajiwara Hisako to paint *Tranquility*. Even in 1938, when Hisako

submitted this painting to the government salon, the Shin-Bunten, women artists were in the minority and continued to face severe gender discrimination. Within this cultural context, and amidst growing social conservatism and heightened militarism after Japan's invasion of China, it was necessary to both conform to patriarchal gender standards and prove that women could be artists.⁷¹ It was no mistake that in trying to find a compromise Hisako settled on replicating the “in-production” “female artist” visual type. The format offered a ready-made vocabulary for representing women's artistic activity with dignity without disrupting gender ideology. Advancing the “female artist” stereotype made Hisako complicit in her own oppression. But it also presented an opportunity for her to subtly push back against harmful attitudes towards women's creative work. It was maybe the best she could do with the tools that she had.

To understand Hisako's position by the time she painted *Tranquility* it is necessary to elaborate on Hisako's personal views, career, and artistic goals leading up to this point.⁷² Hisako was born to a prosperous sake brewing family and she was

⁷¹ The Second Sino-Japanese war began in July, 1937. The Nanjing Massacre occurred in December, 1937. Andrew Gordon characterizes the period 1937-1945 as a regime of imperial facism. Traditionalist rhetoric and censorship was rife, growing increasingly oppressive as Japan mobilized for total war. For a quick primer on these years, see Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 204-225. For Gordon's discussion of the war years in relation to facism, see Andrew Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan*, *Twentieth-Century Japan: The Emergence of a World Power*, 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), chapters 11 and conclusion. For discussions on the influence of militarism on Japanese art, see Ikeda, *The Politics of Painting*; Kaneko, *Mirroring the Japanese Empire*; Ikeda, McDonald, and Tiampo, *Art and War in Japan and Its Empire, 1931-1960*; Lawrence Smith, “Japanese Prints During the War Years: 1937-1945,” in *Japanese Prints During the Allied Occupation 1945-1952* (Chicago: Art Media Resources, 2002): 17-21; Kendall H. Brown, “Out of the Dark Valley: Japanese Woodblock Prints and War, 1937-1945,” *Impressions* 23, no. 23 (2001): 64-85.

⁷² The most extensive scholarship on Hisako in English is Morioka, “Changing Images of Women.” Hisako has been the subject of a few articles and exhibition catalog essays in Japanese, including Yomuri Shinbunsha, *Kajiwara Hisako isaku ten: yōen na josei wo kakitsuzuketa* (Osaka: Yomuri Shinbunsha, 1991); *Josei gaka ga egaku Nihon no joseitachi ten: Shōen, Shōha, Shōen, Seien, Hisako no bijinga*; Fujita and Baba, *Kajiwara Hisako/Hirota Tazu/Kitazawa Eigetsu; Kajiwara hisako ten:*

precisely the type of wealthy woman to whom the Meiji government most aggressively targeted its “Good Wife, Wise Mother” ideology. She was also the sort of reader magazines like *Fujin gahō* tried to cultivate. She had the privilege to attend a girls’ higher school when access to such an education was reserved for the elite.⁷³ Still, from an early age Hisako was intent on pursuing a professional career and establishing an independent life.⁷⁴ She loved literature and was especially enthralled with the poetry of Yosano Akiko (与謝野晶子, 1878-1942), prominent women’s rights activist, and considered becoming a writing teacher.⁷⁵ She decided to become a painter after meeting the man painter Chigusa Sōun, her art teacher at her higher school.⁷⁶ Sōun recognized Hisako’s talent and encouraged her to become a painter, going so far as to persuade her father to grant permission and arranging for her to become a student of Keigetsu Kikuchi (菊池契月, 1879-1955).⁷⁷ That Hisako used her education to advance a professional career, rather than to prepare for marriage as

Tsuyayakana joseizō o egaku (Ōsaka: Sankei Shinbun Oosaka Honsha Jigyō Honbu, 1979); Shiokawa Kyoko, “Kajiwara Hisako no sakuhin sekai,” *Geijutsu shinchō* 2 (February 1991): 32, 45-47; Tanaka Hisako, “‘Jinseiha’ ni modorenakatta bijingaka Kajiwara Hisako,” *Geijutsu shinchō* 4 (April, 1991): 77-81; Kyoto Prefectural Insho-domoto Museum of Fine Arts, *Josei ga egaita Shōwa no eregansu: Kajiwara Hisako, Hirota Tazu, Mitani Toshiko, Kitazawa Eigetsu* (Kyoto: Kyoto Prefectural Insho-domoto Museum of Fine Arts, 2013).

⁷³ She attended the Kyoto Prefecture Second Girls’ Higher School from 1909-1914. In 1907, the average tuition for girls’ higher schools was 25 yen per year while the average starting monthly salary for a government official was 50 yen and for a policeman was 12 yen. In 1903, only 1.2% of eligible girls were enrolled in a girls’ higher school. Czarnecki, “Bad Girls from Good Families,” 50, 62 fn.5.

⁷⁴ Morioka, Fujita and Baba, and the catalog essay for *Kajiwara Hisako ten: Tsuyayakana joseizō o egaku* all suggest that the death of Hisako’s mother during her childhood influenced her decision. Morioka argues that the absence of her mother, who would have been principally responsible for raising Hisako to conform to gender norms, allowed Hisako to grow up with a less traditional attitude towards women’s roles. Morioka, “Changing Images of Women,” 114.

⁷⁵ *Kajiwara hisako ten: Tsuyayakana joseizō o egaku*, np.

⁷⁶ Sōun was a student of Takeuchi Seihō (武内栖鳳, 1864-1942) as well as Asai Chū (浅井忠, 1856-1907). His work was influenced by the naturalism that was a feature of the Kyoto art world. Further information on Sōun can be found in *Chigusa Sōun: Nihonga kakushin no yume* (Tokyo: Nippon hōsō shuppankyōkai, 1992).

⁷⁷ *Kajiwara hisako ten: Tsuyayakana joseizō o egaku*, np.

the state envisioned, was in line with many women of her generation who were well practiced in using gendered spaces and messages to their own divergent ends.⁷⁸

Hisako did not marry, for fear that a husband would interfere with her professional ambitions.⁷⁹ Her class enabled this decision for she was able to rely on her father's support for much of the prewar period and did not have to worry if her paintings did not sell.⁸⁰

During the Taishō era Hisako departed from gender norms by creating sympathetic portrayals of working-class women, highlighting their interiority as well as the harm done to them in an unequal society. She was encouraged in this direction by Sōun, a progressive painter who favored working-class themes and who told her “it is meaningless to paint only images of women just looking pretty. Only if you are capable of painting women who look like they could bleed when cut, will I help you study painting.”⁸¹ Hisako fulfilled this mandate with her debut work, *Train Station in Early Evening* (暮れゆく停留所, 1918) (Figure 2.35), which she submitted, without her teacher Keigetsu's permission, to the first exhibition for the anti-establishment

⁷⁸ Czarnecki, “Bad Girls from Good Families”; Suzuki, *Gendered Power*; Inoue, *Vicarious Language*; Copeland, *Lost Leaves*.

⁷⁹ Morioka, “Changing Images of Women,” 126.

⁸⁰ Most of Hisako's salon works were purchased by a private collector, and many of those were destroyed or lost during the war. Many of the works that remain from this period were discovered in her home after her death in 1988. For more information, see Morioka, 123. See also Morioka, “Kajiwara Hisako,” in *Modern Masters of Kyoto: The Transformation of Japanese Painting Traditions, Nihonga from the Griffith and Patricia Way Collection*, eds. Michiyo Morioka and Paul Berry (Seattle, WA: Seattle Art Museum, 1999), 293. Shima Seien was forced into an arranged marriage because her father was dying, and she needed the financial assistance of a husband (see Chapter Three). Kametaka Fumiko also likely entered her second marriage for financial reasons (see Coda).

⁸¹ Quoted and translated by Michiyo Morioka, “Changing Images of Women,” 117. The original Japanese as recalled by Hisako is quoted in Shikawa Kyoko, “Kajiwara Hisako no sakuin ni tuite,” in Yomuri Shinbunsha, *Kajiwara Hisako isaku ten: yōen na josei wo kakitsuzuketa* (Osaka: Yomuri Shinbunsha, 1991), 105.

dantai the Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai.⁸² In the painting, an exhausted woman sits slumped over on the edge of a wooden bench. Too tired after work to even hold herself up, she rests her hands and head on the handle of her umbrella. Her fatigue permeates the world around her. Even the pillar and window frames of the train station she occupies cannot stand up straight, as if they too can no longer bear the weight of the world crushing down on them. The woman's eyes are open but unfocused, a stray strand of hair falling across her face. Her lips are a sickly, unnaturally dark color, uncomfortably standing out against her starkly white skin. The world around her is all browns and grays. The only color comes from a poster depicting a winding road lined with blooming cherry trees. The cheery, artificial, beautiful world in the poster contrasts sharply with the woman's sad, gritty reality.

Hisako based this composition on a scene she witnessed at the Chūshojima station of the Keihan Railway in Kyoto.⁸³ This area was a red-light district, and this woman was a seasonal waitress—a precarious, unstable occupation that required a continuous search for employment at brothels, restaurants, and cafes.⁸⁴ The transitory nature of the waitress's life is heightened by the setting of the train station. This is just a momentary respite from eking out an existence, carrying the weight of her exhaustion and poverty with her, working herself to death. The cropping of the composition—close to the woman's body with a minimum of setting—creates a feeling of claustrophobia. There is no escape for this woman, nor an escape for the viewer—we are forced to confront this woman's grim reality. With *Train Station*

⁸² For more on the Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai, see Szostak, *Painting Circles*.

⁸³ Fujita and Baba, *Kajiwara Hisako*, 110.

⁸⁴ Tanaka, “‘Jinseiha’ ni modorenakatta,” 78. For more on the circumstances of women in this type of work, see Silverberg, “The Café Waitress Sang the Blues,” in *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense*, 73-107.

Hisako created an extraordinarily frank depiction of a woman's suffering at a moment when such acknowledgement was rare, especially from a woman artist expected to represent aspirational femininity.

Hisako's radical depiction of working-class women was paired with a stylistic evolution that combined *yōga* and *nihonga* techniques. One example is *Woman of Yamashiro Spa* (山代温泉の女, c. 1921-23) (Figure 2.36). Hisako took up the traditional *bijinga* subject of a geisha but ripped away the genre's idealized conventions. The depicted woman was a young country geisha named Katsumi, a frequent model of Hisako's who would later commit suicide with her lover in 1924.⁸⁵ Katsumi sits hunched over in front of a folding screen depicting ancient Chinese women in a landscape, a long red pipe in her right hand. She gazes warily up at the viewer, defiant and guarded at the same time. Again, Hisako used the technique of compressed space to evoke the inescapability of Katsumi's life and to force a confrontation with the viewer. Hisako used traditional *nihonga* materials like the white pigment *gofun*, but with expressive brushstrokes borrowed from *yōga*. Katsumi's figure is convincingly solid and three-dimensional. The sleeve of her kimono crumples in a naturalistic manner and her face has been modeled. It is clear the painting depicts an individual. The naturalist depiction of Katsumi's form contrasts with the unnatural coloring of her face and body, which were rendered in shades of white and cream. Her black hair has been highlighted, its volume

⁸⁵ Information for this painting comes from Morioka, "Changing Images of Women," 272-274. It is the only source I have found that discusses the painting extensively. An illustration of the painting and brief description can also be found in Kokatsu Reiko, *Taishō no atarashiki nami, nihonga 1910-20 nendai* (Tokushima: Tokushima Kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan, 1991), 146.

exaggerated by expressive white brush strokes. Along the back of her hair and down her back, and down the front of her face and right arm, Hisako added a loose, white outline that reads like a ghostly aura, as if death is haunting Katsumi with a malevolent energy.

Hisako's depictions of impoverished women and her experimentation with *yōga* and *nihonga* techniques firmly locate her work within progressive trends in *nihonga*, particularly the modern Kyoto *jinseiha* (humanist) movement, which sympathetically depicted human subjects at society's margins, and stylistic experimentation led by Tsuchida Bakusen (土田麦僊, 1887-1936).⁸⁶ Moreover, her rejection of conventional *bijinga* and efforts to capture the harsher reality of women's lives was in dialogue with other *nihonga* artists like Shima Seien and Kitano Tsunetomi (see Chapter Three).⁸⁷ Still, there is a pointedness and empathy in her depictions of working class women that is singular. Hisako saw repeated institutional success at the government salon the Teiten with these types of progressive paintings, such as *Market of Used Clothes* (古着市, 1920) (Figure 2.37) and *Archery Parlor* (矢場, 1926) (Figure 2.38).

Hisako's style and subject matter underwent a dramatic change at the end of the Taishō period. *Tranquility* typifies this change. Hisako's palette became brighter, and she returned not only to conventional *nihonga* painting styles, but her brushwork, which had been somewhat messy during the Taishō period, became neat and exact.

⁸⁶ On the *jinseiha*, see Tanaka, "'Jinseiha' ni modorenakatta bijingaka Kajiwara Hisako." For Bakusen and his circle, see Szostak, *Painting Circles*.

⁸⁷ For more on this trend, see Szostak, "'Fair is Foul, and Foul is Fair.'"

Her female subjects transitioned from impoverished women to those of the upper classes. In sum, she became an orthodox *bijinga* painter.

The reasons for this change in style and subject matter have not been concretely established. Michiyo Morioka posits that the economic depression at the end of the period meant that Hisako had to switch to producing more marketable paintings to provide for her father and younger sister.⁸⁸ In 1930 Hisako became an art instructor at the Osaka Prefectural School of Vocation for Women. As an educator, she may have felt pressure to refrain from the radical themes of her earlier paintings.⁸⁹ Shikokawa Kyoko and Fujita Takeshi suggest that the change was perhaps related to influence from her teacher, Keigetsu, who had moved toward a more conventional approach.⁹⁰ Indeed, most progressive *nihonga* painters shifted their styles in similar manners, embodying neoclassical motifs and methods, at the turn from Taishō to Shōwa (See also Shima Seien, Chapter Three). It may well be that the progressive trends of the Taishō period were no longer permissible in the increasingly authoritarian Shōwa. Finally, it should be noted that despite her seemingly feminist leanings, Hisako had always sought establishment success and was consistent in her employment of the latest painting trends.⁹¹ Even after the war, Hisako continued to adopt new modes of expression, painting healthy, robust women with looser brush work such as in *Cape of Zampa* (残波岬, 1978) (Figure 2.39). She

⁸⁸ Morioka, “Changing Images of Women,” 128.

⁸⁹ Morioka, “Changing Images of Women,” 128.

⁹⁰ Fujita and Baba, *Kajiwara Hisako*, 77; Shikokawa, “Kajiwara Hisako no sakuhin ni tsuite,” 107.

⁹¹ For more on *bijinga* in the 1930s, see Miller, “Wintry Women”; and Ikeda, “Modern Girls and Militarism.”

did not return to her Taishō period idiom or subjects. Her style shift may simply indicate, too, Hisako's evolution as an artist.

What did not change in Hisako's work, however, was her deep empathy for her female subjects. Works like *Rain at a Hot Spring* (いでゆの雨, 1931) (Figure 2.40) have the bright palette, seasonal associations, and richly clothed women that are common to orthodox *bijinga* but retain an emotional sensitivity that encourages the viewer to empathize with the depicted woman. With this feature of her work in mind, it is easier to understand the potential message Hisako wanted to convey through *Tranquility*. As a *bijinga* painting that conformed to the “female artist” “in-production” format, *Tranquility* furthered the sanitized depiction of women artists that kept them oppressed in the feminine sphere. The painting does little to challenge the status quo. In the cultural climate of the early Shōwa period, when traditional rhetoric was at an all-time high and neoclassicism ruled the art world, Hisako had to adapt her oeuvre to fit the tenor of the times and safeguard her position in the art world establishment.⁹² Nonetheless, Hisako imbued her painting with a sense of respect for the woman's activities. The key to the painting is the way that the red painting tray's handle frames the woman's hand as she touches her brush to her composition. This framing makes this moment of production the focal point. The curve of the woman's body and her gaze downwards directs the viewer to her hand, as do the arching green leaves in the floral arrangement. Hisako's careful attention to the painting tools enhanced her emphasis on creation—she armed her artist with the

⁹² On the turn towards neoclassicism in nihonga, see Tanaka, “Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai ni okeru bijinga,” 32.

tools necessary to prove her status. Significantly, Hisako put this painting on exhibit at the Shin-Bunten, a male-dominated space that was the authority on modern Japanese painting. As a dignified representation of a “female artist,” *Tranquility*, for all its seeming conservatism, offered a positive valuation of women artists in a space that often diminished them.

Conclusion

Like the photographic representations in women’s magazines, Hisako’s painting might be understood as a micro-adjustment to the visualization of the “female artist.” Undoubtedly, the “female artist” visual type upheld the repressive gender ideology that marginalized women artists and impeded their expressive options. The visual type treated women artists as interchangeable *bijin* and valorized a limited range of art practices. Even so, women artists participated in its construction because, like the “Good Wife, Wise Mother” ideology, it conferred value and dignity on their activities. These women’s interaction with the type is an example of how women artists complied with patriarchal systems in furtherance of greater professional acknowledgement and social respect. At the same time, several women artists used the language and visuality of the “female artist” to subtly protest gender discrimination and to expand the meaning of the ideal to include an acknowledgement of their skill as painters. By presenting themselves and their profession as aspirational to other women, they grew their numbers and were able to expand the opportunities available to aspiring women artists. Women artists like Hisako used the platforms and gendered language that they had to shift the social meaning of the “female artist” into

more positive territory. In this way, they leveraged the potential of the type even as they bowed to its oppressions.

Chapter Three:

Marked: Shima Seien and the Curse of a “Female Artist”

In her self-portrait *Untitled* (無題, 1918), Shima Seien depicted herself sitting in front of an unfinished painting, a prominent birthmark covering her right eye and cheek (Figure 3.1a).¹ Although she faithfully recreated the actual shape of her features and her voluminous mass of disheveled hair, photographs of Seien reveal that the birthmark was a fiction (Figure 3.2). Seien painted *Untitled* for the exhibition of the Osaka Sawakai (大阪茶話会), a progressive group of artists who believed that the purpose of art was to foster human connections, and that the way to do so was by expressing in paint the interior depths of the artist. Seien answered this mandate by painting, in her words, “the feeling of cursing a world that had cursed a woman with a birthmark.”² In patriarchal Taishō society, a woman with a birthmark on her face, it can be inferred, failed to embody feminine beauty ideals and suffered for it. Seien was sympathetic to this fate, for she too struggled with conforming to prevailing gender ideology. In Seien’s painting, the birthmark is a metaphor for her perception that being a woman was a permanent mark against her pursuit of a professional art career.

¹ 無題 is how the painting is titled in the catalog for the Osaka Sawakai exhibition, where the painting was first shown. Osaka Sawakai, ed., *Sawakai gashū* (Kyoto: Unsōdō, 1918), n.p.

² The original Japanese is quoted in Ogawa Tomoko, “Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigakatachi,” in *Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigaka*, ed. Ogawa Tomoko (Osaka: Tōhō Shuppan, 2006), 11.

As a prominent woman artist, Seien was harshly scrutinized by the popular press and her career was curtailed by gendered expectations and restrictions.³ The dehumanizing sexist discourse Seien contended with is perfectly encapsulated by a satirical illustration that recreates *Untitled* as a marriage advertisement (Figure 3.3). Accompanying a review of the Sawakai exhibition in the newspaper *Osaka nichinichi shinbun*, the illustration copies the composition of *Untitled* but exaggerates the birthmark and replaces the unfinished painting with lines of text. The text explains that Seien is twenty-seven years old, has a monthly income of over three hundred yen, does not actually have a birthmark, and requests a groom that can be adopted into her family. The illustration mocks Seien for being past marriageable age, reassures the reader that she is indeed not so ugly, and exaggerates her decidedly unfeminine economic power.⁴ Grossly belittling Seien, it criticizes her ambitions as a professional artist and reduces her to the limiting category of “female,” whose true purpose, it intimates, is to serve as a sexual and reproductive object.

Untitled is Seien’s rebuttal to her misogynistic treatment and the damaging expectations of femininity placed on her. If her position as a woman artist was cursed,

³ Despite her once prominent status, Shima Seien has received little scholarly attention. There is almost nothing published on her in English, and within Japanese scholarship, she has been primarily discussed by art historians specializing in the modern Osaka art world. I am greatly indebted to the work of Ogawa Tomoko and Hashizume Setsuya for their in-depth treatment of Seien. For a detailed overview of Seien’s life and career, see Ogawa, ed. *Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigaka* and Hashizume Setsuya, “Kindai Osaka to joseigaka no jidai (dai ichi kai): josei no naimen wo kaita Shima Seien,” *Yasoshima* no. 5 (2011): 77-107. For a discussion of Seien’s self-portraits, see Itō Tamaki, “Shima Seien no jigazō ni tsuite,” *Geisō: Tsukuba daigaku geijutsu gaku kenkyū shi* (2002): 1-26; Morioka, “Changing Images of Women,” 241-43. Seien has also been included in scholarship and exhibitions devoted to modern *nihonga* women artists, such as *Josei gaka ga egaku Nihon no joseitachi ten: Shōen, Shōha, Shōen, Seien, Hisako no bijinga* (Osaka: Asahi Shinbunsha Bunka Kikakukyoku Osaka Kikakubu, 1998).

⁴ A 300-yen monthly income was an enormous sum for the time. In 1907 the average monthly starting salary for a government official was 50 yen. Czarniecki, “Bad Girls from Good Families,” 50.

Seien was unwilling to passively accept her fate. Although she aimed for an establishment career, Seien had a history of progressivism and provocation in her artistic activities that contextualizes her intentions with *Untitled*. One of the most significant forms of sexism Seien encountered was an expectation to soften and adapt her self-presentation to fit the “female artist” ideal. Although Seien, like many of her peers, publicly performed as the “female artist,” she was more vocal than most in her criticism of the archetype. Seien protested her typification by constructing *Untitled* as a work of *bijinga*, a genre that upheld narrow ideals of feminine beauty and was integral to the visualization of the “female artist.” She made several subversions, however, to expose the falsity of the stereotype. Seien also critiqued the persistent devaluation of women’s artistic ambitions in the Taishō art world by referencing a painting by Kitano Tsunetomi, which was at the center of art world debates about the sexualization of the *bijin*, the role of realism in the genre, and women painters’ abilities. Seien then used the device of the unfinished painting in the background of *Untitled* to proclaim an alternative vision of herself as an artist that was rooted in her individuality and not her gender.

Untitled is one example of how Shima Seien used her painting practice to reject the reductive and dehumanizing discourse of the “female artist.” A second, private self-portrait by Seien, *Self-Portrait* (自画像, c. 1924) (Figure 3.4), similarly protests her perceived lack of autonomy, after prevailing gender norms forced her into an arranged marriage. Beset by a reductive sexist discourse, Seien struggled for recognition as an artist and the ability to govern her own life. Painting was one area where she could exert power. Her self-portraits, I argue, were a vital space for Seien

to deny the idealization attendant to modern gender ideology and assert the truth of her experiences.

Shima Seien

Shima Seien was the preeminent woman painter in Osaka during the Taishō period. Osaka had a history of being relatively friendly towards women painters, with large concentrations of women *bunjinga* (literati), *kachōga* (birds and flowers), and genre painters in the Edo period.⁵ That legacy continued into the Meiji and Taishō periods, in part, Osaka art historian Ogawa Tomoko posits, because the Osaka art world was comparatively underdeveloped and rigid hierarchical relationships among artists did not exist to the same extent as in Tokyo and Kyoto, leading to a more collaborative environment where women were more welcome.⁶ Still, Osaka women artists still faced considerable barriers to becoming professional artists. Seien's approach to *Untitled* was shaped by both the liberal artistic climate of Osaka and her experiences with gender discrimination.

Seien was interested in art from an early age. She was born to a merchant family in Sakai, a port city south of Osaka, and moved with her family to Shimanouchi, a red-light district in Osaka, after she graduated from elementary school. Seien's parents operated a second-hand shop⁷ and her father, Eikichi (栄吉), was also a town painter (*eshi*), painting *fusuma*, signboards, and other objects.⁸ Her

⁵ Ogawa, "Shima Seien–Taishō ni kirametai Osaka no joseigaka," 33.

⁶ Ogawa, "Shima Seien and Women Artists of Osaka in the Early 20th Century," in *Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigaka*, 166.

⁷ Shirotsuisei, "Hahaoya no mita Shima Seien joshi," 50.

⁸ Ogawa, "Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigakatachi," 6.

mother, Chika (千賀), came from a family that operated a large *ochaya* (teahouse that employs *geisha*) in Sakai.⁹ Seien's older brother was also an artist, known by the artist name Gyofū (御風). Gyofū was selected for the Bunten twice but worked primarily as a commercial artist, illustrating serialized novels for newspapers and painting announcement fliers and *uchiwa* fans.¹⁰ As a child Seien liked to help her brother in his studio by washing brushes and preparing paints, her enthusiasm sometimes leading to trouble; she was scolded by Gyofū when she soiled his precious sketchbook.¹¹ Seien taught herself to draw by copying paintings from copybooks or *ukiyo-e* prints of beautiful women given to her by friendly neighbors.¹² Her family was initially against her becoming a professional artist, fearing it would make her less feminine, and her mother tried to have her learn the more gender appropriate pursuits of sewing and needlework.¹³ But Seien, who was described by one contemporary source as possessing a firm will, was able to convince her parents that she wanted to devote her life to art.¹⁴ Although her studies were largely self-directed, Seien received guidance in painting first from her father and brother, and later from leading Osaka painters such as Kitano Tsunetomi and Noda Kyūho (野田九浦, 1879-1971).

⁹ Seien was officially registered as an adopted daughter in her mother's family, and she was often taken care of by her grandparents at the *ochaya*. Ogawa, "Shima Seien-Taishō ni kirametai Osaka no joseigaka," 34.

¹⁰ Ogawa, "Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigakatachi," 6. A reproduction of Gyofū's 1917 submission to the eleventh Bunten can be found in *Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigaka*, 108.

¹¹ Tsuruko, "Gendai onna meijin den," 116.

¹² Shirotsusei, "Hahaoya no mita Shima Seien joshi," 51.

¹³ Shirotsusei, "Hahaoya no mita Shima Seien joshi," 52. In a 1917 interview Seien remarked that if she continued to paint instead of helping her mother with domestic chores, she would lose her femininity. Seien, "Itsumademo wakawakashii kibun de," 38.

¹⁴ Tsuruko, "Gendai onna meijin den," 117.

Seien was recognized as a talented painter early on, receiving accolades at regional exhibitions.

Seien's profile as an artist exploded when her painting *Evening at Soemoncho* (宗右街門町の夕) was accepted to the sixth Bunten in 1912 at the age of twenty (Figure 3.5). As an unknown woman artist from outside the major artistic centers of Tokyo and Kyoto, Seien's success at the Bunten became major news, rocketing her to celebrity status.¹⁵ This event not only greatly enhanced Seien's standing—she received commissions for paintings from all over Japan—but also was an influential moment for other aspiring women painters, some of whom flocked to her *juku*, the Hanazonokai (花園会, Flower Garden Society) (Figure 3.6).¹⁶ *Evening at Soemoncho* is characteristic of her early work, which were primarily conventional *bijinga* paintings. Seien continued to see success at the Bunten and was accepted at the seventh, ninth, eleventh, and twelfth exhibitions, as well as the second and eighth Teiten exhibitions.

Seien was an active participant in the progressive currents of the Osaka art world and her paintings grew gradually more experimental in style and subject throughout the Taishō period. Of particular note was her involvement with the Osaka Sawakai *dantai*, for which *Untitled* was painted. The Osaka Sawakai was formed on January 17th, 1918 and their first and only group exhibition was held from June 10th-

¹⁵ Hashizume points out how difficult it was for Osaka artists to be selected for the Bunten. At the first Bunten, out of ninety-nine artists, only one was from Osaka, while fifty-eight hailed from Tokyo and thirty-three from Kyoto. At the second Bunten, only two out of eighty-eight were from Osaka, at the third only one out of eighty-three, at the fourth only one out of eighty-one, and at the fifth, only five out of ninety-five. At the sixth Bunten, when Seien made her debut, she was one of four artists from Osaka, out of a total of one hundred twenty-seven. Hashizume, "Kindai Osaka to joseigaka no jidai (dai ichi kai): josei no naimen wo kaita Shima Seien," 81.

¹⁶ Ogawa, "Shima Seien-Taishō ni kirametai Osaka no joseigaka," 36; Ogawa Tomoko, "Shima Seien no shōgai to sakuhin," in *Sakai ni umareta josei nihongaka: Shima Seien*, ed. Matsuura Moeko (Sakai: Sakaiishi bunka kankokyoku bunkabu bunkaka, 2019), 8.

16th of the same year.¹⁷ The group was led by Kitano Tsunetomi and had ten members, of which Seien was the only woman.¹⁸ The artists specialized in various genres, including *bijinga* and *bunjinga*, but were brought together by their shared ideals. In a statement outlining their goals, the Sawakai voiced fears that art up to this point had failed to be truly meaningful.¹⁹ This fear was wrapped up in concerns that the increasing commercialization of the art market in Osaka, which favored conservative *kachōga*, would stymie the pursuit of a pure artistic expression.²⁰ The Sawakai hoped to enlighten Osaka art audiences, moving them away from materialistic preoccupations and towards a deeper connection with, and aesthetic appreciation of, the Sawakai's progressive art styles. Rather than cater to what they perceived as the uneducated demands of Osaka patrons, the Sawakai asserted that art was born from the artist's individuality and was a medium for self-expression and the fostering of human connections. In line with the group's ideals, Seien called on the

¹⁷ The Osaka Sawakai was initially conceived as a monthly forum to foster dialog between artists, critics, and art patrons, but in the end the group consisted only of artists and its activities included sketching trips, monthly reviews of each other's work, and the group exhibition. There were also rumors of an intention to create a joint *nihonga-yōga* group, which was abandoned when it proved to be an unpopular idea. The Osaka Sawakai disbanded shortly after its exhibition in June. The reasons for the disbandment are murky, but it was speculated that the artists were disappointed with the negative reception of the exhibition and that there was friction among the members. All 18 works shown in the exhibition can be seen in the catalog *Sawakai gashū*. For a contemporary source discussing the brief history of the group, see Murasaki, "Osaka sawakai wa naze kaisan shita ka," *Chūō bijutsu* 4, no. 9 (Sept. 1918): 64-65. Secondary scholarship on the Sawakai includes: Fujimoto Manami, "Kokuga sōsaku kyokai, Osaka sawakai ga umareta jidai (tokushū 'chihō bijutsu' tte nani?: mittsu no apurōchi bijutsu fōramu)," *Bijutsu forum* 21, no. 37 (2018): 32-38; Hashizume Setsuya, "Yuan Kitano Tsunetomi – sono geijutsu to gyakusetsu," in *Kitano Tsunetomi ten*, ed. Hashizume Setsuya (Tokyo: Tōkyō Sutēshon Gyārārī, 2003): 149-61; Hashizume, "Kindai Osaka to joseigaka no jidai (dai ichi kai): josei no naimen wo kaita Shima Seien."

¹⁸ The other members were Yamaguchi Sōhei (山口草平), Yano Kyōson (矢野橋村), Kuboi Suitō (久保井翠桐), Kanamori Kanyō (金森觀陽), Mizuha Chikuho (水田竹圃), Fukuoka Seiran (福岡青嵐), Kusano Ashie(?) (草野芦江), and Iwamoto Issei (岩本一成). Only nine members participated in the exhibition. Iwamoto did not exhibit.

¹⁹ The full written statement on goals of the Osaka Tea Party and an analysis of the group's intentions can be found in Hashizume, "Kindai Osaka to joseigaka no jidai (dai ichi kai): josei no naimen wo kaita Shima Seien," 90-93.

²⁰ Fujimoto, "Kokuga sōsaku kyokai, Osaka sawakai," 36.

ultimate form of self-expression, the self-portrait, to communicate a truth about her experience as a woman artist, unfettered by concerns with marketability and established conventions.

Seien's participation in the Sawakai speaks to a transgressive inclination in her work in the second half of the Taishō period, as well as her place at the forefront of contemporary art trends. The Sawakai was one of a proliferation of progressive artist groups that rejected establishment values in favor of artistic freedom, individuality, and experimentation.²¹ In this case the “establishment” is best exemplified by the Bunten, which was plagued with factionalism and favoritism and tended towards conservatism and upholding state-values. Dissatisfaction with the Bunten system grew throughout the Taishō period and led to the creation of various progressive *dantai*. The Sawakai coincided with the creation of the Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai, a *dantai* led by Tsuchida Bakusen and a coterie of young progressive *nihonga* painters who sought to push the boundaries of orthodox *nihonga* while advocating “freedom of creativity” and upholding “irrepressible individuality.”²² The creation of these societies was symptomatic of the pervasive dissatisfaction with the mainstream painting world and the perceived limitations that the establishment placed

²¹ Sculptor Takamura Kōtarō's (高村光太郎, 1883-1956) 1910 essay “Green Sun” is one example of calls for greater freedom and individuality in artistic expressions. See Takamura Kōtarō, “Green Sun,” trans. Robin Thompson, *Art in Translation* 7, no. 3 (2015): 405-411. For information on individualism in the late Meiji and Taishō periods see Volk, “Authority and Autonomy”; Szostak, *Painting Circles*; Schoneveld, *Shirakaba and Japanese Modernism*; Helen Swift, “An Artistic Nature: Kōno Michisei's *Self-Portrait* (1917),” *Ars Orientalis* 53, no. 0 (2023): 208-236.

²² The Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai was formally announced on January 16, 1918 and the Sawakai was announced on January 17, 1918. Rumors of both groups were swirling in the press since December, 1917. For more on the timing of these two groups and their relationship, see Fujimoto, “Kokuga sōsaku kyokai, Osaka sawakai”; and Hashizume, “Yuan Kitano Tsunetomi,” 155. A full translation of the Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai's manifesto can be found in Szostak, *Painting Circles*, 324-235.

on individual expression.²³ Prior to the Sawakai, Seien was also the only woman member of the Taishō Art Society (大正美術会) and the short-lived Ryōryō-kai (了々会), which both encouraged individualism and stylistic experimentation. Thus, even as Seien actively sought out success at the Bunten, she repeatedly indicated her discontent with establishment values and her desire to break with artistic conventions. Seien’s participation in these male-dominated *dantai* also indicates her central position within the greater Osaka art world—more than the other women artists discussed in this dissertation, Seien was accepted into male art circles.

Seien’s disruptions to the art world included defiance of gender ideology and efforts to create greater opportunities for women artists. She formed the short-lived Society of Four Women (女四人の会), with three other Osaka-based painters: Kitani Chigusa, Okamoto Koen (岡本更園, 1895-?) and Matsumoto Kayo (松本華羊, 1893-?).²⁴ The group’s only exhibition was held in 1916 at the Osaka Mitsukoshi Department store and had the theme of Ihara Saikaku’s (井原西鶴, 1642-1693) *Kōshoku gonin onna* (好色五人女, *Five Women Who Loved Love*, 1686), a famous Edo period story collection featuring the romantic and sexual exploits of five

²³ Fujimoto notes that while the Osaka Sawakai and Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai shared a similar conviction about the importance of individuality in artistic expression, there were key differences in focus. The Sawakai was more regionally focused, interested in enlightening their local audiences, and limited participation in their exhibition to their ten members. The Kokuga Sōsaku Kyōkai was nationally focused, invited participation from non-affiliated artists, and was interested in directly challenging establishment institutions. Fujimoto, “Kokuga sōsaku kyokai, Osaka sawakai,” 36.

²⁴ For information on the Society of Four Women, see Chapter Two, fn 67. For further information on Kitani Chigusa, see Hashizume, “Kindai Osaka to joseigaka no jidai (dai ni kai): Kitani Chigusa”; Ogawa, “Kitano Tsunetomi to Osaka no josei gaka,” 162-169; *Josei nihon gaka Kitani Chigusa: Sono shōgai to sakuhin: Heisei 14 nendo tokubetsuten* (Ikeda: Ikeda Shiritsu Rekishi Minzoku Shiryōkan, 2002).

women.²⁵ While the *Kōshoku gonin onna* was fertile ground for modern *nihonga* painters, the salacious subject matter and the fact that four young women painters organized an exhibition on the topic by themselves was seen as extremely provocative and impertinent.²⁶ Plans for a second exhibition never materialized. Seien also had unrealized plans for a democratically structured *dantai* that would foster an environment of exchange, support, and opportunity for women artists.²⁷

Despite her transgressive artistic activities, as a prominent woman artist, Seien was beholden to the “female artist” ideal. She was the target of intense scrutiny. Rumors swirled about her love life, her unmarried status was relentlessly mocked, and even relatively positive coverage of her noted that her mother spent restless nights worrying that her professional career would endanger her modesty.²⁸ For example, man art critic and novelist Yoshikawa Takeshi (芳川 起, 1895-1951) wrote an essay that lauded Seien for her lack of romantic scandals (despite several rumors) but criticized her for being unmarried at the advanced age of twenty-six.²⁹ To counteract these negative perceptions, Seien presented herself, and was presented, as a good daughter, uninterested in romance, and a hard-working and talented painter. A 1921 article in *Shufu no tomo* (主婦の友, *The Housewife's Friend*) noted the contrast

²⁵ Each artist was assigned a different female character from the story collection. Seien chose Oman, who falls in love with a homosexual male prostitute and pursues him by crossdressing. For more on Seien's paintings for the exhibition, see Ogawa, “Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigakatachi,” 9. A translation of the stories can be found in Ihara Saikaku, *Five Women Who Loved Love*, translated by William Theodore de Bary (Rutland, VT: Tuttle, 1977).

²⁶ Ogawa, “Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigakatachi,” 9. For a discussion of other *nihonga* representations of the stories, see Morioka, “Changing Images of Women,” 173.

²⁷ Ogawa, “Shima Seien—Taishō ni kirametai Osaka no joseigaka,” 47.

²⁸ Shirosuisei, “Hahaoya no mita Shima Seien joshi,” 50-52; Tsuruko, “Gendai onna meijin den,” 122.

²⁹ Yoshikawa Takeshi, “Toshi totonomi wakasa to wakareyuku: Shima Seien joshi no hiai,” in *Sakuhin ga kataru sakka no modae* (Tokyo: Taizanbō, 1918): 36-39.

between her reputation as a famous painter and her “meek, girlish demeanor,” and wrote that she worked tirelessly, completely devoted to her art and without interest in fame or fortune.³⁰ An article in the lifestyle magazine *Seikatsu* (生活, *Life*) took care to dispel recent and false romantic rumors about Seien and noted that Seien had no interest in marriage before going on to describe her family background and her early genius as an artist.³¹ A popular Seien anecdote was that she fainted twice from overwork during the creation of *Evening at Soemoncho*.³² The casting of Seien as a modest and diligent woman close to her family was meant to alleviate anxieties that professional women were somehow immoral because they operated in a traditionally male sphere of activity, or that they were selfish for pursuing individual desires. Moreover, the concentration on Seien’s artistic talents presented her as exceptional—she was not normal, and therefore could not be expected to live a normal life for a Japanese woman. Her accomplishments as a painter excused to a certain degree her defiance of normative gender roles.

As with other women artists, it is difficult to determine the agency Seien had in enacting the “female artist” persona. Throughout her career she sat for interviews and posed for photographs that conformed to the model (Figure 3.7). Adopting this persona was likely a survival strategy, one that allowed her to pursue her ambitions as a professional artist. Despite her *dantai* activities, Seien sought an establishment career and the financial success that came with that status. In addition to private commissions, Seien’s central position in the art world led to requests for paid

³⁰ Tsuruko, “Gendai onna meijin den,” 121-22.

³¹ Shirosuisei, “Hahaoya no mita Shima Seien joshi,” 50-52.

³² Tsuruko, “Gendai onna meijin den,” 120; “Risshi denchū no hitobito,” 71.

illustration work, such as for serialized novels in newspapers and covers and *kuchi-e* for women's magazines.³³ She could not veer too far from feminine ideals and retain her position. But as *Untitled* makes clear, Seien chafed at the role forced upon her.

Untitled as an Anti-Bijinga

One of the irritants Seien endured was the conflation of her person with the *bijin*. Within the Taishō public discourse, there was a strong association between women artists and *bijinga*. The most famous women artists were *bijinga* painters and there was a tendency in the press to conflate women artists with their female subjects. Precisely because the gender of the artist and the subject match, *bijinga* by women artists were frequently read as self-portraits.³⁴ In other words, the woman artist and the *bijin* were one and the same. In the same essay as above, Yoshikawa Takeshi complained that Seien's paintings of young, beautiful women were starting to feel sad because she was an old spinster.³⁵ In essence, he claimed that Seien had lost the authority to paint *bijin* because she was no longer a *bijin* herself. The presence of *bijinga* in many of the photographs of women artists in women's magazines reinforced the relationship between the woman artist and the *bijin*. As discussed in Chapter Two, the formulaic photographs of women artists might be read as a form of *bijinga*. In the context of the pages of women's magazines, the "female artist" was

³³ Seien illustrated serialized novels such *Nenmatsu* (年末, 1917), Nomura Aisei's (野村愛正) *Akeyuku michi* (明ゆく路, 1918), Nagata Mikihiko's (長田幹彦) *Shiranui* (不知火, 1918) and Satō Kōroku (佐藤紅緑)'s *Ōgon* (黄金, 1919.) She contributed graphic work to the magazines *Shufu no tomo*, *Fujin gahō*, *Fujokai*, *Goraku sekai*, *Shukujo gahō*, *Shūkan asahi*. For examples of her graphic work, see Ogawa, *Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigaka*, 110-120.

³⁴ Itō Tamaki, "Shima Seien no jigazō ni tsuite."

³⁵ Yoshikawa, "Toshi totonomi wakasa to wakareyuku," 36-39.

transformed into a *bijin* and functioned similarly as a female paragon. The extent of Seien's typification as the "female artist" *bijin* is demonstrated by an illustration of her in the magazine *Katei pakku* (家庭パック, *Household Puck*) (Figure 2.13). The stand-alone illustration by an unknown artist depicts Seien at work on a painting, with a completed *bijinga* in the background. Her facial features are not individualized, and without the caption identifying the figure as Seien, this could be any other illustration of a *bijin*, any other "female artist."

Seien painted *Untitled* as a subversion of the eliding of her individuality into the oppressive "female artist" category. She accomplished this by constructing *Untitled* as a *bijinga* painting, deliberately playing into the blurred lines between women artists and *bijin*, albeit to dissident ends.³⁶ Seien's employment of *bijinga* conventions might be best understood as an example of "disidentification." In the words of queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz:

The process of disidentification scrambles and reconstructs the encoded message of a cultural text in a fashion that both exposes the encoded message's universalizing and exclusionary machinations and recircuits its workings to account for, include, and empower minority identities and identifications. Thus, disidentification is a step further than cracking open the code of the majority; it proceeds to use this code as raw material for representing a disempowered politics or positionality that has been rendered unthinkable by the dominant culture.³⁷

³⁶*Untitled* was classified as a *bijinga* painting in a Taishō period compilation of the genre. *Gendai santo shoka bijinga shū* (Kyoto: Aoyabun seidō, 1920).

³⁷ José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*, Cultural Studies of the Americas, Volume 2 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 31. Another descriptor of Seien's strategy can be "mimicry," which occurs when "a woman artist mimics or acts out the roles of femininity, in order to expose, subversively, the thing that she mimics." Mary D. Garrard, "Here's Looking At Me: Sofonisba Anguissola and the Problem of the Woman Artist," in *Reclaiming Female Agency: Feminist Art History After Postmodernism*, ed. Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 28. I prefer "disidentification" because I believe Seien was not merely exposing the oppressions of the "female artist" label but using the framework of *bijinga* to propose a more expansive representation of herself.

In *Untitled*, Seien coopted the visual language of *bijinga* to empower a reading of herself as someone “unthinkable by the dominant culture”—a woman artist who was more than an essentialist trope.

Seien located *Untitled* in the *bijinga* framework by following certain genre conventions. She painted her figure in a passive position. She employed several seasonal motifs that were common in *bijinga* iconography.³⁸ Her *obi* features a spring motif pattern of cherry blossoms and mandarin ducks (Figure 3.1b). The ducks represented marital fidelity while the short-blooming cherry blossoms were commonly invoked to represent the fleeting nature of women’s beauty. In the unfinished painting in the background, on the right, are the leaves and flowers of *fuyō* (cotton rose), a late summer flower whose pink coloring and short life were closely associated with women. On the left side of the unfinished painting are chrysanthemums, a deep fall flower that represented toughness and longevity. Seien positioned her body in front of the *fuyō*, and together with her *obi*, played into expectations that youth, beauty, and marriage were paramount to women. Seien’s adoption of this iconographic language primed the viewer to expect a *bijinga* painting and its associated ideology.

Seien perverted *bijinga* norms in several key ways. The most obvious is the disfiguring birthmark. By marking her face with a large birthmark, Seien rejected the principal precept of orthodox *bijinga*, which was to paint women of unmarred beauty. In a culture that revered ideal beauty, a birthmark was a curse, a representation of a

³⁸ My thanks to Tomoko Sase, contemporary *Rinpa*-style painter, for her help identifying and explaining the flowers and motifs in *Untitled*. My analysis of these motifs is based on our conversations, September 2022.

woman's failure to conform to external visual norms. In Seien's hands, the birthmark, which might easily be confused for a bruise, becomes a manifestation of the psychological wounds she suffered under a misogynistic system.

Seien further departed from *bijinga* norms by clothing her body in a plain black kimono instead of the intricately patterned and seasonally appropriate clothing that was de rigueur. With spring, summer, and fall already represented in the composition, the black kimono might be interpreted as winter, a pessimistic choice that replaces the expected bloom of youth with the withering of old age. Along with the birthmark, the black kimono punctures the fantasy of the immaculate, bright, and contented world of the *bijin*. The muted colors of the entire composition extends the sense of depression. Seien depicted herself staring directly at the viewer, another departure from convention. In making these subversions, Seien presented herself as an anti-*bijinga*. The viewer is forced to acknowledge Seien as an individual, not ideal, and to consider the painful truth of her experiences battling against the dehumanizing "female artist" discourse.

Untitled as Counterpoint to the Devaluation of Women Artists

Seien used *Untitled* to contest a sexist art world discourse that devalued her artistic abilities. Women artists were generally viewed as inferior in talent to men, derided as amateurs, and often perceived to have value only as sexual objects. Seien used *Untitled* to combat these assumptions by referencing Kitano Tsunetomi's notorious *bijinga*, *Feeling Warm* (暖か, 1915) (Figure 3.8), a painting that was embroiled in debates over the role of realism in *bijinga*, and controversies about

women's abilities as artists.³⁹ Seien's engagement with *Feeling Warm* was complex, part direct commentary on the painting itself, but also part commentary on the commentary surrounding it. Seien cited *Feeling Warm* as a form of shorthand, using the more famous painting's involvement in various controversies to access and engage with larger art world debates that affected her as a woman artist.

Seien's citation of *Feeling Warm* in her self-portrait was, in part, a rejection of the sexual objectification she endured. In *Feeling Warm*, a woman wearing a bright red under-kimono (*nagajuban*) sits casually slumped in front of painted *fusuma* panels. The woman gazes at the viewer, her lips slightly parted, her neck exposed, with her under-kimono almost slipping off her shoulders. The erotically charged red under-kimono is the focal point of the painting. There is nothing between the woman's underwear clad body and the viewer—she is casually available and unresisting. Exhibited at the ninth Bunten, *Feeling Warm* was praised for its vivid colors but harshly criticized for its perceived vulgarity.⁴⁰ The frank depiction of a woman in an under-kimono was seen as extremely provocative.⁴¹ Critics also thought that Tsunetomi's painting was inappropriate for the Bunten, which was meant to be a dignified venue for showcasing the height of Japanese art.⁴²

³⁹ For information on Kitano Tsunetomi, see Hashizume, ed., *Kitano Tsunetomi ten*; Kitagawa Hiroko, ed., *Kitano Tsunetomi ten: botsugo 70 nen* (Tokyo: Sankei Shinbunsha, 2017); Hakubutsukan Meijimura, ed., *Kitano Tsunetomi no bijinga: Egakareta naniwa jōcho* (Nagoya: Nagoya Tetsudō, 1991); Hashizume Setsuya, "Kindai Osaka no Nihon gaka to Osaka no insatsu-shuppan—Kitano Tsunetomi to sono shūhen o chūshin ni," *Kashima bijutsu zaidan* 18, no. 18 (2000): 94-104.

⁴⁰ Ishii Hakutei, "Bunten no nihonga," *Taiyō* 21, no. 13 (Oct. 1915): 138-39. The criticism of the painting is also discussed in Nakano, "Bijingashitsu saikō"; Tanaka, "Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai ni okeru bijinga," 33-35; Hashizume, ed., *Kitano Tsunetomi ten*, 152-53; Naoi, *Yumeji Modern*, 102-3.

⁴¹ Hashizume, "Yauan Kitano Tsunetomi," 152-54.

⁴² See primary source documents #5, #6, #8, #20, and #21 in Nakano, "Bijingashitsu saikō," 34-37.

Untitled's composition of a woman sitting leaning to one side in front of a painted background while staring at the viewer mimics *Feeling Warm*.⁴³ The facial expressions of the two figures resemble each other too. Both figures look directly at the viewer, their mouths slightly parted. Seien's figure, however, lacks the coquettish invitation of Tsunetomi's. Her head is less tilted, her gaze more straightforward and challenging. Seien employed the same color scheme as Tsunetomi, using black, red, and white to emphasize the female figure against a subdued background, but she inverted the red and black. Instead of Tsunetomi's richly elaborated red under-kimono, Seien clothed her figure in solid black, showing hints of a red under-kimono only around the sleeves. She desexualized the composition, covering up the passionate red with a void of blackness, rejecting the role of sexual object so often assigned to women.

Seien's invocation of *Feeling Warm* might also have been a way to declare herself as part of a progressive camp in contemporary debates about *bijinga*. Seien was in sympathy with Tsunetomi's efforts to reject *bijinga*'s idealism in favor of a greater sense of realism and pathos. Tsunetomi was frustrated with conventional *bijinga* and remarked that *bijin* looked like the crafted dolls displayed in the windows of prominent department stores and upheld a narrow standard of physical beauty.⁴⁴ *Feeling Warm* was an early attempt by Tsunetomi to reform *bijinga* by incorporating

⁴³ Itō Tamaki first made the comparison between Seien's and Tsunetomi's paintings, although she attributes the source of their similarity only to Tsunetomi's influence on Seien. Itō, "Shima Seien no jigazō ni tsuite," 8.

⁴⁴ Kitano Tsunetomi, "'*Bijinga*' to iu shōko," *Daimai bijutsu*, no. 16 (Jan. 1924), original quoted in Hashizume, *Kitano Tsunetomi ten*, 178-79.

Western style naturalism into his painting.⁴⁵ The palpable sexuality and realistically modeled face of Tsunetomi's sex worker model was interpreted by contemporary critics, however, as a debasement of *bijinga* and led to a backlash against other paintings of women that dealt with decadent or darker themes.⁴⁶ Indeed, *Feeling Warm* was part of what was known as the "bijinga room debate" (*bijinga shitsu ronsō*) that occurred at the ninth Bunten.⁴⁷ In response to an increase in accepted *bijinga* submissions and the popularity of *bijinga* among exhibition audiences, the 1915 Bunten grouped several of the *bijinga* in the same gallery, dubbed the "bijinga room."⁴⁸ In general, the collected works in the *bijinga* room were by young artists, many of them women and from Osaka, who challenged orthodox conventions and injected their depiction of female figures with a sense of realism. The *bijinga* room was condemned by art critics, who believed that realism was incompatible with *bijinga* and gave the impression of vulgarity.⁴⁹ The following year, at the tenth Bunten, the number of accepted *bijinga* decreased considerably. Naturalistic depictions of sex workers and women laborers were rejected in favor of classical and elegant beauties from Japanese history or exotic depictions of Korean and Indian women.⁵⁰ Unable to gain traction at the Bunten, progressive artists like Tsunetomi,

⁴⁵ Tsunetomi's reevaluation of *bijinga* through the incorporation of Western styles and new themes was part of a larger trend in *nihonga*. See Szostak, *Painting Circles*; Szostak, "'Fair is Foul, and Foul is Fair.'"

⁴⁶ Tanaka, "Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai ni okeru bijinga," 33-35.

⁴⁷ For further details on the *bijinga* room debate, see Tanaka, "Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai ni okeru bijinga," and Nakano, "Bijingashitsu saikō."

⁴⁸ What constituted a *bijinga* painting versus a genre scene (*fūzokuga*) was poorly defined and many works that may be categorized as *bijinga*, such those by Kaburaki Kiyokata and Uemura Shōen, were displayed in other galleries. There were also galleries dedicated to other genres, such as *nanga* and *tosa* style paintings, but they did not garner the same attention. Tanaka, "Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai ni okeru bijinga," 32.

⁴⁹ Tanaka, "Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai ni okeru bijinga," 33-34.

⁵⁰ Tanaka, "Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai ni okeru bijinga," 34.

Shima Seien, and Kajiwara Hisako turned to anti-establishment *dantai* exhibitions to display their unidealized *bijinga*. Hisako's *Train Station* (Figure 2.35) dates to the same year as Seien's *Untitled*. Seien's referencing of *Feeling Warm* aligned *Untitled* firmly in the realism faction of *bijinga*, deepening her attempts to dispense with the harmful ideal femininity represented in orthodox *bijinga* and expose the reality, however unpalatable, of women artists' experiences in modern Japanese society.

Finally, it is possible that Seien cited *Feeling Warm* as a commentary on the dismissal of women's artistic abilities and individuality within art world commentary. Seien's painting *Keiko no hima* (稽古のひま, 1915) (Figure 3.9) and Kitani Chigusa's painting *Memorial Service for Needles* (針供養, 1915) (Figure 3.10) were also shown at the ninth Bunten *bijinga* room, and both depict female figures sitting in front of *fusuma* panels in similar poses as the female figure in *Feeling Warm*. The compositional similarities between Seien's, Chigusa's, and Tsunetomi's paintings led to charges that Seien and Chigusa were merely imitators of Tsunetomi, and in the case of Chigusa, that her teacher Tsunetomi was the true author of her painting.⁵¹ Painter and art critic Ishii Hakutei criticized the depicted figures as all having the same face.⁵² The women painters represented at the ninth Bunten were maligned as being dilettantes who faddishly imitated *bijinga* seen in women's magazines and had no promise as true artists.⁵³ Tsunetomi's painting received its fair share of criticism,

⁵¹ Ishii Hakutei, "Bunten no nihonga," 138; Takeuchi Seihō, "Bijinga to joryū," *Hōchi shinbun* Oct. 12, 1915, original quoted in primary source #23 in Nakano, "Bijingashitsu saikō," 38. For the authorship controversy surrounding Chigusa's painting, see Ogawa, "Kitano Tsunetomi to Osaka no joseigaka," 166.

⁵² Ishii, "Bunten no nihonga," 138.

⁵³ See primary source documents #20-22, #25, and #30 in Nakano, "Bijingashitsu saikō," 37-39. See also Tanaka, "Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai ni okeru bijinga," 33.

but the tenor differed from that directed at Seien and her female peers. Tsunetomi's work was evaluated on its artistic merits—its use of color, mode, and composition—while the women artists were judged on the basis of gender stereotypes and their artistic contributions were dismissed as derivative of Tsunetomi.

The positioning of Tsunetomi as the originator, and Seien as his follower was not rooted in considered judgment, but in sexism. Tsunetomi was (and continues to be) misrepresented as Seien's teacher.⁵⁴ Their actual relationship was much closer to that of a *senpai* (senior colleague) and *kōhai* (junior colleague).⁵⁵ According to Seien's own words, she was primarily self-taught and as she matured as an artist, she received guidance from Tsunetomi and other experienced painters. In an interview Seien remarked that the special character of the Osaka art world is the mutual friendship and fraternity between artists, and that rather than being taken care of by anyone in particular, she was encouraged by and received guidance from everyone.⁵⁶ While it is evident that Seien was mentored to some degree by Tsunetomi, they did not have the rigid hierarchical relationship of a teacher-student. Instead, Seien and Tsunetomi were close collaborators. They rose to national prominence around the same time, with Tsunetomi debuting at the fourth Bunten in 1910 and Seien at the sixth Bunten in 1912. Seien and Tsunetomi participated together in a training camp to prepare for the Bunten in 1911, and as Ogawa Tomoko points out, the composition of

⁵⁴ Tsunetomi is credited as Seien's teacher in secondary sources such as Itō, "Shima Seien no jigazō ni tsuite"; Conant, *Nihonga: Transcending the Past*; Hashizume, ed., *Kitano Tsunetomi ten*; and Hirai Yoshinobu, ed. *Salon Culture and the Pictorial Arts of Kyoto and Osaka* (Kyoto: National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, 2022).

⁵⁵ Ogawa, "Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigakatachi," 6. I concur with this characterization of Seien and Tsunetomi's relationship based on my archival research.

⁵⁶ Seien, "Itsumademo wakawakashii kibun de," 38.

this group was of friends, rather than of teachers-students.⁵⁷ Both Seien and Tsunetomi were active in the same progressive Osaka *dantai*. Further, Seien and Tsunetomi collaborated on the illustrations for serialized novels that ran in newspapers, visiting each other almost daily to ensure style and quality consistency.⁵⁸ These facts suggest that Seien interacted with Tsunetomi more as an equal than as a disciple. Still, Tsunetomi was credited for Seien's artistic expression. Indeed, Tsunetomi is a constant presence in the scholarship on Seien, with her artistic developments credited to his influence. But the reverse, how he was influenced by her, has so far not been explored.⁵⁹ Because she was a woman, Seien was presumed to be less talented than Tsunetomi and she and Chigusa were positioned as Tsunetomi's imitators, their paintings dismissed as derivative of *Feeling Warm*.

After her experience at the ninth Bunten, it is strange that Seien chose to deliberately replicate the same composition for her self-portrait. She knowingly risked the same authorship controversy. It is possible that, as she did with her *bijinga* critique, Seien purposely positioned herself as the very stereotype she was refuting: a woman of secondary artistic talent, merely a beautiful object to be admired.⁶⁰ She made a key adjustment, however. *Untitled* is a self-portrait. Ishii Hakutei claimed that the ninth Bunten works all had the same face. Here, Seien literally painted her face

⁵⁷ Ogawa, "Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigakatachi," 6.

⁵⁸ These novels included Nomura Aisei's *Akeyuku michi* (1918), Nagata Mikihiko's *Shiranui* (1918), and Satō Kōroku's *Ōgon* (1919). They appeared in the *Osaka asahi shinbun*. See *Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigaka*, 113.

⁵⁹ The same phenomenon occurs in scholarship on the artistic relationship between the husband-and-wife duo of Yoshida Hiroshi and Yoshida Fujio and Kametaka Fumiko and Watanabe Yohei. See Chapters Four and Five.

⁶⁰ Seien's positioning of herself as the very stereotype she is critiquing is similar in strategy as those employed by other historically marginalized artists across global and temporal contexts. For some examples see James Ott, "Labored Stereotypes: Palmer Hayden's *The Janitor Who Paints*," *American Art* 22, no. 1 (2008): 102-115; and Hyde, "'Peinte Par Elle-Même?'"

onto the cited composition, a move that seems to be a clear assertion of authorship and individualism.

Untitled as a Statement of Artistry

Perhaps the most important strategy Seien employed to refute the sexist discourse on women artists was by offering a new and different vision of herself as an artist. Crucially, Seien chose not to represent herself in the mode of the “female artist” visual type. She did not surround herself with any painting tools, nor depict herself bent over a *bijinga* actively at work. There is nothing concrete in the composition that indicates the figure *is* an artist. This is because, for Seien, being an artist was not about possessing the right tools or adopting the right posture. It was about manifesting her inner thoughts onto the painted surface. Seien emphasized the *process* of creation by using the device of the unfinished painting. An unfinished work of this type is a *shita-e* (preparatory drawing). On a tan ground, the composition is sketched out with red ink and black lines made using a *yakifude* (a wooden stick with a burned tip). In *nihonga*, the *shita-e* is made close to the end of the artistic process, one step before producing the final painting and after numerous sketches have been completed. The *shita-e* is the same size as the final painting and serves as an opportunity to test and tweak the composition before committing one’s brush to silk. Given the large size of this *shita-e*, it is likely that the final painting is intended for a public exhibition. By depicting a painting in process Seien nodded to the many stages of creating a painting and the intellectual labor that is required.

The importance of the artist's mind in the creative process is underscored by the positioning of Seien's body in relation to the *shita-e*. Seien depicted herself facing the viewer, her upper-body in front of the densest portion of the *shita-e*'s composition. Around where her body overlaps with the *shita-e*, Seien painted a blurry black outline that mimics in tone and texture some of the shaded and reworked elements of the *shita-e* itself (Figure 3.1c). The colors in the *shita-e* are also those used on her body and clothing. These details create a strong correlation between Seien and the *shita-e*, as if a creative essence is emanating from her body and pouring onto the painting, forming the composition. Through the juxtaposition of her body with the background preparatory sketch, Seien explored what is truly required to be an artist, showing that art is born from the individual, and not dictated by societal demands.

It is puzzling, however, that the *shita-e* depicts grasses and flowers, a genre of painting that is not otherwise represented in Seien's oeuvre. The intention behind this choice is ambiguous. It is possible that Seien was again using *bijinga* tropes, which frequently depict women in natural settings or compare them to flowers. Grasses are typically autumnal, and maybe Seien is commenting on her age and the perceptions that she is past her prime. Another reading might relate to the Sawakai's concerns with the Osaka art market. *Kachōga* were the types of paintings most frequently commissioned by Osaka patrons. The Sawakai members worried that in catering to these patrons, they would slowly degrade their own artistic ideals.⁶¹ But reading through the lens of the discourse on women artists, it is possible that Seien was

⁶¹ Fujimoto, "Kokuga sōsaku kyokai, Osaka sawakai," 36.

responding to the common opinion that women should paint *kachōga* and avoid human figures (see Chapter One). Perhaps Seien used the *shita-e* to comment on the limitations imposed upon women's professional choices. The trick of the painting is that Seien demonstrated that she could paint grasses and flowers if she chose to do so. But instead, she focused her energy on the psychologically rich human figure. Counter to her performance of modesty in the press, in *Untitled*, Seien boldly asserted her interests and abilities.

Seien's unwillingness to bow to the sexist categorizations so often assigned to her is underscored by her choice of title. *Untitled* is uncategorizable, and therefore free of limitations. The choice was inflammatory, with contemporary critics complaining that it was sneaky and unsportsmanlike.⁶² As a compromise, she renamed the painting *Woman in the Painting Room* (画室の女). Yet this title, too, left room for ambiguity. She did not assign a concrete identity to the female figure, to herself. Instead, she created space for new interpretations and challenged audiences to see Seien as something more than a reductive stereotype.

Painting as a Site of Resistance

Six years following *Untitled*, Seien painted *Self-portrait* (Figure 3.4). In the bust-length portrait, a dazed and exhausted looking Seien is shown staring at the viewer, dark circles under her eyes stark against her ghostly pallor. Her clothes are in disarray, her hair bedraggled. A battledore depicting a male kabuki actor floats in the

⁶² *Osaka nichinichi shinbun*, June 12, 1918, original quoted in Ogawa, "Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigakatachi," 11.

background, his face echoing and contrasting with hers. The circumstances surrounding the creation of *Self-portrait* are unclear. She did not sign the painting, and it is not certain that *Self-portrait* is the title she gave the work.⁶³ It is probable that this painting was a private work, not intended for exhibition. According to art historian Itō Tamaki, *Self-portrait* was part of an effort to experiment with realism.⁶⁴ Certainly Seien rendered her features much more naturalistically here than in *Untitled*. It would be a mistake, however, to see *Self-portrait* as merely a straightforward experiment in realism. Rather, there is something theatrical about her exhaustion, and the dramatic way she continued to mark her face with signs of her discontent. Therefore, even though the audience for *Self-portrait* may have only been Seien, the painting should be treated as in line with her artistic goals to communicate difficult truths about her experiences within a patriarchal system that worked to deny her autonomy and individuality.

Self-portrait was painted after a series of devastating biographical events that rocked Seien's sense of identity. Two years after *Untitled*, Seien painted her most experimental work, *Fragrance of Aloeswood* (伽羅の薫, 1920) (Figure 3.11a). The painting, which depicts an older courtesan, departs from both Seien's earlier work and conventional *nihonga* painting styles. The female figure, modeled after her mother, is elongated and abstracted, her extremely thin body counter-balanced by an enormous white obi with a peacock pattern and large hair ornaments which form a halo around her face. Rather than the tight lines and sharp detail of conventional *nihonga*, here

⁶³ Itō, "Shima Seien no jigazō ni tsuite," 14, fn 1.

⁶⁴ Itō, "Shima Seien no jigazō ni tsuite," 11.

Seien lets the colors bleed together, creating a hazy effect that is somewhat reminiscent of *yōga* painting (Figure 3.11b). Seien seemed poised for a new era, and pleased with her work, she had decided that even if it meant a life of poverty, she would pursue an independent life as an artist, step outside the safety net of her family and never marry.⁶⁵ But just as Seien came to this decision, her father became terminally ill. Worried over Seien's ability to support herself, he and her brother secretly arranged for Seien to marry banker Morimoto Toyojirō (森本豊治郎, 1893-1977). Blindsided and wanting to follow "the correct path as a daughter," Seien felt compelled to agree to the match.⁶⁶ In January, 1921, she married Toyojirō in a small ceremony by her father's sickbed.⁶⁷ In discussing the marriage, a palpably bewildered Seien remarked:

It's so sudden for me that I am not able to tell people about my feelings, let alone all the preparations for marriage. For when a woman like me, a woman whose only life is painting, enters a family, I will try my best, but I have doubts about whether I will be able to continue to live the exact same life as my husband.

My father's final, this seems to be his final act of love and my brother's kindness...
Is this truly my destiny?⁶⁸

Seien's arranged marriage is emblematic of the Taishō attitude that the only secure life for a woman was one governed by a man. With her father's death imminent, her family had rushed to find another male caretaker for her. Despite Seien's professional

⁶⁵ Seien described her plans in an interview, "Shima Seien-san no kekkon monogatari," original source unknown, found in a scrapbook of newspaper clippings belonging to Seien, Osaka Nakanoshima Museum Archives.

⁶⁶ Information on the circumstances of her marriage and her feelings about it come from "Shima Seien-san no kekkon monogatari."

⁶⁷ Tsuruko, "Gendai onna meijin den," 121.

⁶⁸ "Shima Seien-san no kekkon monogatari."

success—which marked her as exceptional for an artist of any gender—her family ultimately did not believe she could survive outside the protective care of a man.

For Seien, marriage was an unpalatable prospect. Marriage meant not only the assumption of full-time domestic responsibilities, but also a surrendering of personal autonomy.⁶⁹ It was for this very reason that Kajiwara Hisako decided to remain unmarried (see Chapter Two). Seien was fortunate in that Toyojirō *allowed* her to continue painting after they were married and her mother performed all the domestic labor.⁷⁰ But Toyojirō’s job sent him to various international posts, taking Seien away from Osaka for considerable periods of time.⁷¹ The increased responsibilities, the decrease in personal autonomy, and the constant geographic upheaval were detrimental to Seien’s career.

Seien’s attitude toward her arranged marriage was at odds with societal expectations that marriage was the ultimate goal and joy in a woman’s life. These expectations are represented visually in an illustrated *sugoroku* board game, which depicts various life stages and occupations of women (Figure 2.14). Played like the Euro-American game of Snakes and Ladders, the goal of the game is to reach the

⁶⁹ The expectation at the time was that women would take on all domestic chores, which included cooking, cleaning, child-rearing, managing household finances, and acting as personal assistants to their husbands. For more, see Sand, *House and Home in Modern Japan*.

⁷⁰ Ogawa, “Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigakatachi,” 12. Women who continued in their professional careers after marriage, whether as artists or in other professions, did so with the permission of their husbands. For example, in the preface to Okada Yachiyo’s book *Enogubako* (絵具箱, 1912), her brother describes how her husband, artist Okada Saburōsuke, was happy to let her continue to write, as long as it was during her free time. Okada Yachiyo, *Enogubako* (Tokyo: Momiyama Shoten, 1912), 4.

⁷¹ Toyojirō worked in Shanghai, Bombay, Dalian, Zhifu, Yokohama, Matsumoto and Okaya (Nagano Prefecture). Seien initially split her time between Osaka and Shanghai, stayed in Osaka while Toyojirō was in Bombay for three years, and then joined him permanently on his assignments starting in 1936. They returned to Osaka in 1946, when Toyojirō was dismissed from his position, a consequence of working as a branch manager in Japan’s occupied territories during the war. See Ogawa, “Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigakatachi,” 12.

center image, here depicting a bride. One of the tiles represents a woman *nihonga* painter. From this tile, if one rolls a four, then the player proceeds to the bride tile and wins the game. The *suguroku* game's message is that a woman might try different occupations, but the best life was a married life. Seien's new marriage was reported in the press and a newspaper article described the couple as deeply in love; it notes that Seien was so happy that she was designing her own wedding outfit.⁷² The contrast between this article's perception of Seien's marriage and Seien's own perception of it highlights the dissonance between fantasy and bitter reality that was a common feature of many women's experiences in the Taishō period.

After the marriage, her painting production slowed dramatically, and her submissions to the major national exhibitions were repeatedly rejected. She retreated from the stylistic innovations of *Fragrance of Aloeswood*, and her work from this period lacks cohesion in style or point of view. Like Kajiwara Hisako and others, Seien's work in the early Shōwa period was characterized by neoclassicism, as evidenced by *ukiyo-e* inflected *bijinga*, *Vermillion Pipe with Bamboo Stem* (朱羅宇, 1934) (Figure 3.12).

The profound exhaustion she depicted in *Self-portrait* communicates her realization that as a woman, her life was not her own. A chasm of filial obligation stood between her professional dreams and her ability to realize them. The conflict between her passion for painting and her duty as a daughter may be referred to in the background kabuki figure. A secure identification of the character the kabuki actor is playing remains elusive. One possibility, according to Itō, is that the actor is playing

⁷² "Shima Seien-san no kekkon," *Yomiuri shinbun* Dec. 1, 1920.

Jihe, from *Shinjuu Ten no Amijima* (心中天網島, *The Love Suicides at Amijima*, c. 1721).⁷³ Set in Osaka, Jihei, a married merchant, falls in love with the prostitute Koharu. Jihei tries to purchase Koharu's contract, driving his family into financial ruin, and, unable to find a way to be together, the two eventually commit double suicide. The play is a meditation on the conflict between duty to one's family and the pull of one's heart, making Jihei a convincing attribution.⁷⁴

Regardless of the identity of the kabuki character, the juxtaposition of Seien's body with the male figure communicates a sense of an identity unmoored. The kabuki battledore elicits the idea of performance, its relationship to issues of gender, and the psychological costs of compromising one's identity to fit societal demands.⁷⁵ Seien compared herself with the male kabuki hero, her face resembling the actor's in coloring and the dramatic enhancement of the eyes. Yet the two figures are at odds with one other. The male actor is young and dynamic, the protagonist of his story. Seien is tired and still, subject to the whims of others' decisions. Try as she might, she cannot transform herself into the male hero. She cannot reconcile herself to the unattainable demands of being appropriately feminine. She is caught in an impossible

⁷³ Itō, "Shima Seien no jigazō ni tsuite," 11.

⁷⁴ Another possibility for the character is Yosaburō from *Yo wa nasake ukina no yokogushi* (与話情浮名横櫛, *The Love Affair of Yosaburo and Otomi*, c. 1853). In the play, the handsome Yosaburō has an affair with Otomi, the mistress of a gangster. Upon the discovery of the affair, the gangster stabs Yosaburō several times, leaving him scarred. Otomi attempts suicide, but unbeknownst to Yosaburō, survives and becomes the mistress of a merchant. Yosaburō turns to criminal activity, going by the appellation Scarface Yosaburō. Eventually the pair are reunited, after Yosaburō comes to extort money from the merchant. Yosaburō is typically represented with facial scars, and the figure in the background of the painting has none. If this is indeed Yosaburō, the representation would be of when he first encounters Otomi. It is tantalizing to claim that this is Yosaburō, considering Seien's penchant for transforming her internal wounds into external marks. But the connection seems tenuous. Hashizume, "Kindai Osaka to joseigaka no jidai (dai ichi kai): josei no naimen wo kaita Shima Seien," 98.

⁷⁵ On gender and performance, see Butler, *Gender Trouble*.

position, the damaging effects of these performative expectations on her psyche manifested in the dark circles around her eyes.

Seien's depiction of herself as profoundly exhausted was a radical rejection of normative beliefs that women would find fulfillment only through marriage. Unlike *Untitled*, when Seien painted *Self-Portrait*, she no longer had the energy to make a public protest. Despite her representation of herself as devastated, however, the existence of the painting is a testament to Seien's tenacity. Seien kept painting, continuing her artistic goal to communicate the truth of her experience without regard to prevailing feminine ideals. On painting Seien said, "There are days when I think painting is the most painful of all human work, and my hot blood flows when I am stabbed by those thorns, but when I think that my destiny is waiting, there is also a great comfort [in painting] that only I know."⁷⁶ The pursuit of a professional career as a woman was often a battering experience, involving compromise and disappointment. But when painting for herself, Seien found a pathway forward.

Conclusion

Through *Untitled*, Seien engaged deeply with the countless sexist stereotypes that plagued women artists in the modern period. Seien was caught in a society that defined her by her gender and denied her personhood. She was expected to embrace an identity as a beautiful, content *bijin* who existed for the pleasure of the male gaze without ambitions or use beyond finding a husband. Seien adopted the persona of the "female artist" in media interviews and photographs as a necessary compromise that

⁷⁶ Tsuruko, "Gendai onna meijin den," 122.

allowed her greater access to professional success. But in the space where she wielded the most control—in her painting—she resisted. *Untitled* is remarkable for the considered, multifaceted, and clear ways in which it impugned harmful gender structures. Seien co-opted the visual language of *bijinga* to interrogate and subvert the “female artist” ideal. She refuted the misogynistic expectations of women’s sexual availability and the devaluation of women’s artistic abilities by quoting *Feeling Warm* as a commentary on its attendant controversies. Finally, she envisioned a statement of artistry that avoided sexist stereotypes and emphasized the importance of her intellect and individuality. *Untitled*, and the subsequent *Self-Portrait*, are testaments to Seien’s tenacity and resilience in the face of constant, gender-based dehumanization. The paintings are important evidence for how women artists, despite their disempowered position, used the tools that were available to them to resist the impositions of the patriarchy and to expand the possibilities of who and what they could be. Seien created *Untitled* to declare her identity as an artist, and cursed those who did not agree.

Chapter Four:

On Her Terms: Yoshida Fujio, Self-Determination, and the Value of the Feminine Sphere

For Yoshida Fujio, the “female artist” model was an opportunity for liberation. Fujio initially had little desire to be a professional artist and felt uneasy about transgressing gender norms. But that was the life that was decided for her by her husband, the *yōga* painter and printmaker Yoshida Hiroshi, and so Fujio became a pioneer woman *yōga* painter, known for her naturalistic watercolors of landscapes and foreign vistas. Fujio spent the first decades of her career following the model of Hiroshi’s career, which typified a masculine ideal of a Meiji artist. He believed that *yōga* was an important part of Japan’s modernization and he tirelessly pursued institutional success and vigorously participated in art world politics. Under Hiroshi’s direction, Fujio received an artistic training that equaled her male peers and was one of the only women artists of her generation to travel and train in the West. She saw repeated success at the Bunten exhibition and overcame gender barriers to become one of the most institutionally successful women *yōga* painters of the Meiji period. She became exactly the professional painter Hiroshi had demanded of her. But she had very little personal autonomy and was ambivalent, at best, about her career.

When tragedy struck Fujio’s two young children, the tension she had long felt between being a woman and an artist came to a boiling point. Unable to reconcile these two identities, she abandoned the male-dominated art establishment and sought a new way to be an artist. She went in a direction Hiroshi could not follow: the realm

of the “female artist.” She devoted herself to the Shuyōkai, a women’s *dantai*, and the supposedly feminine genre of still lifes. As she sequestered her activity to the feminine realms, Fujio experimented with different painting styles that took her further and further away from the artist Hiroshi had molded her to be. A close analysis of Fujio’s brushwork across her career reveals a gradual shift from naturalism to abstraction, but also a change from a tense painting style suffused with a sense of obligation to a looser use of the brush and indulgence in idiosyncratic interests. Mapping Fujio’s stylistic changes onto her biography, as revealed through her memoir the *Shuyō no ki* (朱葉の記, *The Vermillion Leaf Record*) reveals how Fujio navigated contradictory gender pressures to find a pathway towards artistic autonomy and embrace art as an important part of her identity. I argue that Fujio embraced feminine stereotypes because it offered her a model for being an artist that she felt better accommodated her gender identity and facilitated her journey towards self-determination.

Centering Fujio’s Perspective

As with the preceding chapters, I seek to center Fujio’s perspective in her own narrative. In her life and in the subsequent years, Fujio has been overshadowed by Hiroshi and their two sons, Yoshida Tōshi (吉田遠志, 1911-1995) and Yoshida Hodaka (吉田穂高, 1926-1995) who both became prominent printmakers. Scholarship on Hiroshi is overwhelming, but even though Fujio was an instrumental part of his success and his lifelong art companion, she has been given little page space

in Hiroshi's story.¹ Scholarship devoted primarily to Fujio is scant, and Hiroshi looms large in her narrative.² The priority Hiroshi is given in scholarship has a gendered element. Hiroshi was by far the more famous of the two, receiving more institutional recognition during his life, and due to his later printmaking career, is represented in more museum collections. Fujio is best known today for her Meiji period career, when she was still active in the male-dominated modern Japanese art establishment. As discussed in the Introduction, the women who are present in art history are there because their careers conform to the type of activities that are perceived to be historically valuable—they participated in the male centers of power such as the salon exhibitions and influential art associations, and they sold their work to male patrons, which has led to their inclusion in museum collections. Yet gender bias prevented them from reaching the same heights of success as male artists, and so they still occupy a lesser position within scholarship. Fujio's choice to prematurely leave the establishment art world further diminished her visibility in art history. Most of her work in museum collections comes from her teenage years, when she was still immature as an artist and had the least agency and interest in art. Frankly, her work

¹ For more information on Hiroshi, see for example Yasunaga Koichi, "Lofty Mountains and Misty Valleys: The Art and Life of Yoshida Hiroshi," in *A Japanese Legacy: Four Generations of Yoshida Family Artists*, Laura Allen et al. (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2002): 24-69; *Yoshida Hiroshi ten: seishin to jojō: kindai fūkeiga no kyoshō* (Fukuoka: Fukuoka bijutsukan, 1996). Hiroshi has been the subject of innumerable exhibition catalogs. Some recent examples include: Zōho shinpan shohan, ed., *Yoshida Hiroshi: zen mokuhangashū* (Tokyo: Abe Shuppan, 2021); Yoshida Tsukasa, ed., *Yoshida Hiroshi ten: botsugo 70-nen* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 2019); Nishiyama Junko and Keiji Aihara, eds., *Yoshida Hiroshi ten: seitan 140-nen* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 2017).

² Comprehensive secondary sources on Fujio, to which I am greatly indebted, are: Laura Allen, "The Yoshida Women: Three Generations of Female Artists," in *A Japanese Legacy: Four Generations of Yoshida Family Artists*, Laura Allen et al. (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2002): 151-215; Allen, "Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives"; Yamamura Hitoshi, Nose Akiko, and Yamamoto Kazuko, *Yoshida Fujio ten* (Tokyo and Fukuoka: Fuchu Art Museum and Fukuoka Art Museum, 2002).

from this period does not compare favorably to the older Hiroshi's, furthering the false impression that she was less talented than he. Although Hiroshi looms large in this chapter, too, I have tried to bring Fujio into sharper focus by relying on two sources of evidence where her perspective was paramount: her paintings and her memoir.

The primary evidence I use are her paintings, which I treat as primary texts that offer insights into Fujio's efforts to define herself amid a socially imposed conflict between gender and art. Unlike my treatment of Kajiwara Hisako, Shima Seien, and Kametaka Fumiko, I do not concentrate on a single work of Fujio's but instead look at a range of paintings that I think are particularly representative of her painting style from different periods of her career. My evaluation of her brush style in any individual work is informed by close observation of hundreds of her paintings, which remain in her family's care. These paintings, which include exhibition and private works, sketches and complete paintings, have not been organized. A significant hindrance to studying Fujio's post-Meiji career is that when she transitioned away from the modern art establishment, she stopped signing and dating most of her works and experimented with different modes of painting with few discernible trends. I have roughly periodized these works, but I have not sought to concretely date them.³ Indeed, rather than seeking a coherent order to her works, I

³ There are a few ways to date her work from this period. One is to use contemporary exhibition catalogs and other records to date undated works or to compare undated works' style against the few dated works in her oeuvre. Unfortunately, works from the same period can differ dramatically in style, which makes this method highly unreliable. Another obvious method is to use her travel history—she has several undated works depicting Yosemite, which she only visited in 1924. Combined with stylistic analysis and the types of paper she was using, her work from her second international trip can be dated, even if she visited the same locations as her earlier journey. Fujio experimented with printmaking for two short periods, and sketches for these works can also be reliably dated. She created more oil paintings as she aged, and she turned to abstraction around the time of Hiroshi's death in 1950.

have chosen to retain some of the sense of disorder that characterizes this archive in a bid to honor Fujio's transition away from conventional art practices.

A second, significant source of evidence for this chapter comes from Fujio's 1978 memoir, the *Shuyō no ki*. Her memoir provides intimate details of Fujio's relationships, experiences, thoughts, and artistic practice. It is the most detailed and comprehensive source for her life and has been used as the foundation for existing secondary scholarship on her. Relying on a memoir, especially one written so long after the events Fujio described, has its risks. It is possible that Fujio's impressions changed with time and shifting cultural attitudes. What Fujio chose to recount and what she left out of her narrative should be questioned. There may be a performative element to her account; like other women artists from this period, when it comes to publicly shared words and paintings, it can be difficult to determine her true feelings versus the adopted persona of the "female artist." To account for this ambiguity, I have endeavored to make a distinction between when I am conveying Fujio's impressions of events versus historical fact. Still, I have chosen to rely on Fujio's words, despite these issues, because it is both the best source of information and the source that mostly clearly conveys her perspective.

Another possibility for dating is through an analysis of her signatures. Fujio primarily signed her work using the Latin alphabet ("F. Yoshida") but occasionally signed her first name in *hiragana* ("ふじを"). Yoshida Ayomi has posited that she used the *hiragana* signature during the war period, although evidence shows this was not an exclusive practice. Finally, there appears to be differences in the pigments she was using that distinguish her early work from her middle and later periods. I believe the colors in her watercolors became brighter and more saturated during the Taishō period. These observations were made following my personal, extensive survey of Fujio's watercolors.

The Choice to be an Artist

One of the most consequential choices in Fujio's life was the decision to be an artist. But in this she appeared to have little agency. It is not surprising that Fujio became an artist because she was born to an artist family.⁴ Her father, Yoshida Kasaburō (né Haruno, 吉田嘉三郎, 1861-1894), was an early practitioner and teacher of *yōga* in Fukuoka City (on Japan's southern island of Kyūshū).⁵ Kasaburō was adopted into the Yoshida family when he married Rui (吉田るい, 1864-1954) and together they had four daughters, of which Fujio was the third. Fearing they would have no male heir, they adopted Kasaburō's talented pupil, Ueda Hiroshi in 1891.⁶ Kasaburō died from cancer in 1894 when Fujio was seven years old and Hiroshi eighteen. While all of the Yoshida girls received artistic training, Fujio showed the most aptitude and persistence and so she was the one selected by Hiroshi for serious artistic training.⁷ Rui, Hiroshi, and Fujio moved to Tokyo in the fall of 1894 so that Hiroshi and Fujio could pursue their studies.

It was not unusual for daughters of artists to receive artistic training. Women were generally brought up with the expectation that they would participate in family

⁴ Information on the Yoshida family can be found in Allen et al., *A Japanese Legacy*; Tomita, ed., *The Yoshida Family ten*.

⁵ Information on Yoshida Kasaburō can be found in Matthew Welch and Yasunaga Koichi, "Looking to the West: The Meiji Era and Yoshida Kasaburō," in *A Japanese Legacy: Four Generations of Yoshida Family Artists*, Laura Allen et al. (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2002): 18-21.

⁶ Kasaburō and Rui did eventually have a son, Masao, but kept Hiroshi as the Yoshida heir.

⁷ Fujio's sisters were Iwa, Michi, and Aguri. Yoshida Ayomi has turned up evidence that Aguri was also an accomplished painter who continued to paint well into the Meiji period. Some of Aguri's paintings, which were signed A. Yoshida, have been attributed to Hiroshi because the A in her signature was altered to an H. It is unknown who made these adjustments, but Yoshida Ayomi speculates that art dealers were responsible, hoping to make a bigger profit off of Hiroshi's more well-known name. Personal conversations with Yoshida Ayomi, August 2022.

enterprises.⁸ It was necessary for women from artist families to be educated to some degree in art making to support the household economy. Shima Seien, for example, got her start as an artist when she was asked to help her brother and father with painting signboards.⁹ Fujio's mother, Rui, while not an artist in her own right, was instrumental to the Yoshida family business, helping to make oil paints for Hiroshi.¹⁰

Still, even belonging to an artist family, becoming a professional artist was extremely difficult for women in the early twentieth century. Attitudes towards women's role in households became more restrictive in the Meiji period. As part of industrialization, sites of work and education were increasingly divorced from the domestic environment, meaning men and children spent more time outside of the home and a greater share of domestic labor fell to women.¹¹ Furthermore, there was a concerted effort on behalf of the government in the late 1890s to redefine women's role in the family and nation as "Good Wives, Wise Mothers." While in practice many women, especially from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, continued to work, emerging cultural attitudes increasingly categorized working women as masculine and morally suspect (see Chapter One). Fujio grew up as "Good Wife, Wise Mother"

⁸ Women contributed domestic and reproductive labor as well as productive labor, such as working in the fields, running a shop, manufacturing products, or cultivating business networks. How women contributed to their households varied greatly by profession, class, and geographic location. For some specific examples of women's roles within household enterprises in the early modern and modern periods see: Partner, "Art and Gender in an Age of Revolution"; Uno, "Women and Changes in the Household Division of Labor"; Anne Walthall, "The Life Cycle of Farm Women in Tokugawa Japan," in *Recreating Japanese Women 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991): 42-70; Joyce Chapman Lebra, "Women in an All-Male Industry: The Case of Sake Brewer Tatsu'uma Kiyo," in *Recreating Japanese Women 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991): 131-148; Guth, *Craft Culture*.

⁹ Shirosuisei, "Hahaoya no mita Shima Seien joshi;" 50.

¹⁰ Eugene Skibbe, *Yoshida Toshi: Nature, Art, and Peace* (Edina, MN: Seascope Publications, 1996), 37.

¹¹ Uno, "Women and Changes in the Household Division of Labor," 37.

was popularized and it is probable that she was socialized to expect to marry and devote herself primarily to domestic life.¹² To become professional artists women had to rebel against the prevailing gender ideology and persist despite severe social critique and institutional discrimination. Usually, those women were motivated by intense personal desire to be artists, as was the case with Kametaka Fumiko and Shima Seien, who both had artist fathers.

Fujio was unusual because, as she claimed in her memoir, she initially had little desire to be a professional artist.¹³ Fujio described herself as a passive participant in the decision. In *Shuyō no ki*, she never discussed any internal motivation to paint, writing that it was simply natural that she learned given her family. She instead focused much of her memoir on the painful episodes of her early career. She did express, too, feeling conflicted about her status as a woman artist, writing that “it was rare for women to paint at that time, and there were times when I worried, wondering why even though I was a woman I was painting pictures.”¹⁴ Still, Fujio noted, “even now I still do not know if I had an innate aptitude for painting or not, but when I think about such things as my older sister throwing away her paintbrush in the middle of learning, I want to believe that it was not just ordinary

¹² Fujio was not of the elite class of women that was the primary target of “Good Wife, Wise Mother,” but nor were she or her sisters sent out of the house to find paid employment. The family struggled after Kasaburō’s death, but only Fujio was trained for a professional career, which suggests that a professional career was not the default expectation for the Yoshida women. Her sisters were primarily occupied with domestic life.

¹³ While Fujio suggests that she did have the motivation to be an artist, it is possible that she is downplaying her own interest due to gendered expectations of modesty (see Chapters One and Two). I believe, however, that her memoir contains too many references to her apathy towards professional art activities to be dismissed as performative. See for example passages in Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 20-21, 37, 59-60, 64-65, 66, 67-68, 76, 102-104, 114-115, and 130.

¹⁴ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 37.

persistence, but that there is something tying me to painting.”¹⁵ Her tenacity in learning suggests, at the very least, an unacknowledged motivation to become an artist.

According to Fujio, Rui and Hiroshi decided that she would become a professional painter. Fujio recounted that Rui wanted to fulfill Kasaburō’s wishes and instill in Fujio a sense of independence and purpose. Described by Fujio as “a new type of woman,” Rui wanted Fujio to have her own career, despite being a woman, and she regretted that she herself had only raised children.¹⁶ This suggests that Rui’s motivations were not financial, but about providing Fujio with a life beyond the “Good Wife, Wise Mother” confines.

The major driver of Fujio’s professional career was Hiroshi, although his motivations remain obscure. Fujio described Hiroshi as having a very progressive and a very traditional side to his personality.¹⁷ On gender attitudes, he was conservative. Unlike Rui, he probably did not find fault in conservative gender ideology. But when it came to art, Hiroshi was a fanatic. He was singularly devoted to painting and he left very little room in his life for anything else.¹⁸ Hiroshi, like Kasaburō, viewed art as a form of self-discipline, a way to strengthen the mind and body so as to be of use to the nation.¹⁹ Tasked with raising Fujio after her father’s early death, Hiroshi might have felt an obligation to instill in her the same moral and artistic training that

¹⁵ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 131.

¹⁶ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 129-130.

¹⁷ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 61.

¹⁸ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 77.

¹⁹ Yamamura Hitoshi, “Rekishi to shisen: Yoshida Fujio no shōgai to sakuhin,” in *Yoshida Fujio ten*, eds. Yamamura Hitoshi, Nose Akiko, and Yamamoto Kazuko (Tokyo and Fukuoka: Fuchu Art Museum and Fukuoka Art Museum, 2002), 9-11.

Kasaburō would have.²⁰ I speculate that once Fujio’s talent became apparent, Hiroshi could not have conceived of any other path than to cultivate it. Finally, it is probable that Hiroshi desired an artist wife—out of all the Yoshida daughters Hiroshi chose to marry Fujio, the only one of the Yoshida girls to persist with her artistic training. As the following pages will show, Hiroshi took responsibility for Fujio’s artistic training and early career, becoming a domineering and strict teacher who pushed her to paint.

Masculinity and Establishment *Yōga*

Before elaborating on Fujio’s early career, it is helpful to first discuss the masculine characteristics of the *yōga* art scene in the late Meiji period and Hiroshi’s position within it. As discussed in Chapter One, the fine arts were enlisted in Japan’s modernization project, used as a form of soft power to advance Japan’s standing in the international arena. The public, national importance of fine art was coded as masculine and *yōga*, in particular, was perceived as a masculine genre of art due to its origins as a Euro-American painting tradition. As scholars such as Norman Bryson and Kojima Kaoru have argued, the emphasis on the female nude as subject matter in *yōga* functioned as a male-bonding activity, unifying men artists in their supposedly heterosexual enjoyment of women model’s bodies.²¹ In another form of gatekeeping, women were shut out of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, which was the center of *yōga* education and career opportunities in the late Meiji period, and were further barred

²⁰ Yamamura, “*Rekishi to shisen: Yoshida Fujio no shōgai to sakuhin*,” 10.

²¹ Norman Bryson, “Westernizing Bodies: Women, Art, and Power in Meiji *Yōga*,” in *Gender and Power in the Japanese Visual Field*, eds., Joshua S. Mostow, Norman Bryson, and Maribeth Greybil (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003): 89–118; Kojima, “*Gakatachi no ‘dansei dōmei*,” in *Joseizō ga utsusu Nihon*.

even from looking at nude paintings. The nude was eventually censored in public Japanese exhibitions, either by being partially covered with a cloth or placed in “special rooms” (*tokubetsu shitsu*), to which only men artists and art students were permitted entry.²² Landscape painting was also masculine coded, because it required artists to venture outdoors. It was not simply that Fujio was transgressing against feminine norms by becoming a *yōga* painter, she was being asked to participate in spaces that were, in essence, a boy’s club and could be actively hostile to her.

The climate of late Meiji *yōga* was competitive and political, characterized by factionalism and power struggles. The *yōga* art world could be roughly divided into two camps: the “resin faction” and the “purple faction.” The resin faction, so called because of the darker colors favored by its Barbizon-style landscape painters, represented a lineage of *yōga* painters that dated to Antonio Fontanesi’s tenure at the Technical School of Fine Arts and continued with the 1889 founding of the Meiji Bijutsukai (明治美術界, Meiji Fine Arts Society), which aimed to promote *yōga* for the betterment of the nation.²³ The “purple faction” was formed by Kuroda Seiki (黒田清輝, 1866-1924) in 1893 after he returned from Paris with an impressionist-inflected style that was new to Japan (the faction was named for impressionist artists’ use of purple to depict shadows). Kuroda represented a new generation of *yōga* artists who had first-hand experience learning painting in Europe and his brighter, plein-air style was seen as more *au courant* and authoritatively “Western” than the resin

²² Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, 60.

²³ Emiko Yamanashi, “Japanese Encounter with Western Painting in the Meiji and Taishō Eras,” in *Japan & Paris: Impressionism, Postimpressionism, and the Modern Era* (Honolulu: Honolulu Academy of Arts, 2004), 31-33. Yoshida Kasaburō was a founding member of the Meiji Bijutsukai. Welch and Yasunaga, “Looking to the West,” 20.

faction.²⁴ As a result, the purple faction, with Kuroda at its head, was favored by the Japanese government and became the dominant force in Meiji *yōga*. Kuroda withdrew from the Meiji Fine Arts Society in 1896, the same year he was appointed by the government to teach *yōga* at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, and he established the Hakubakai (白馬会, White Horse Society). Kuroda's rule over Meiji *yōga* had an important class element; he and the Hakubakai artists belonged to powerful former samurai families with deep ties to the Meiji Restoration and subsequent government.²⁵ Hakubakai artists such as Okada Saburōsuke and Wada Eisaku (和田英作, 1874-1959) also received appointments to teach at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and were awarded Ministry of Education scholarships to study in Europe.²⁶ Members of the “resin faction” were not afforded the same opportunities.

Although Hiroshi was one of the most prominent *yōga* artists of his generation, he perceived himself to be a perpetual outsider fighting for institutional status, leading to a stubbornness and quest for recognition that would influence his treatment of Fujio. Hiroshi, and Fujio by extension, was aligned with the resin faction. Hiroshi trained under Fontanesi student Koyama Shōtarō (小山正太郎, 1857-1916) at the Fudōsha, after which he became a member the Meiji Bijutsukai.²⁷ According to Fujio, Hiroshi “burned with a sense of justice,” feeling that the

²⁴ Minoru Harada, *Meiji Western Painting*, trans. Akiko Murakata (New York: Weatherhill/Tokyo: Shibundo, 1974), 55-6.

²⁵ Satō, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State*, 84-85.

²⁶ Yasunaga, “The Art and Life of Yoshida Hiroshi,” 25.

²⁷ Other notable alumni of the Fudōsha included Aoki Shigeru, Nakamura Fusetsu, Mitsutani Kunishirō, Sakamoto Hanjiro, and Kanokogi Takeshirō (鹿子木孟郎, 1874-1941). For more on Shōtarō and the Fudōsha, see *Koyama Shōtarō sensei* (Tokyo: Fudōsha Kyūyūkai, 1934). On Hiroshi's time at the Fudōsha, see Taii Ryō, “Yoshida Hiroshi no suisai ni tuite: Fudōsha jidai wo chūshin ni shite,” *Shizuokakenritsu bijutsukan kiyō/shizuokakenritsubijutsukan* 17, no. 17 (2001): 11- 26.

government's favor of Kuroda's faction was based on nepotism and not merit.²⁸ Instead of receiving a government scholarship, Hiroshi financed his first European tour in 1899 by selling his work across the United States with a group of fellow artists.²⁹ Upon his return he reorganized the Meiji Bijutsukai into the Taiheiyōgakai (lit. "the group of artists who go over the Pacific Ocean"), a defiant name that was meant to distinguish the group from those who received government scholarships and could travel directly to Europe.³⁰ The Taiheiyōgakai and the Hakubakai were embroiled in a serious rivalry, which manifested in debates over the judging impartiality in government exhibitions and power struggles in *yōga* establishment spaces.³¹ Fujio expressed the opinion that Hiroshi's works were unfairly judged by the dominant Kuroda faction, which was a continual source of frustration for her and Hiroshi.³² Hiroshi's response to these perceived slights was obstinance—he consistently submitted work to the Bunten and Teiten while remaining active with the Taiheiyōgakai. His persistence was rewarded with judging positions at the fourth through seventh Bunten exhibitions and the fifth through eighth Teiten exhibitions, and he was also the first artist selected for the art journal *Bijutsu shinpō* series "Modern Virtuoso," followed by Kuroda Seiki.³³ Hiroshi, thus, was an artist who thrived on competition and who did not back down from a fight. He believed in the

²⁸ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 32. See also 68-70.

²⁹ Hiroshi's first trip was from 1899-1901. He traveled with Nakagawa Hachirō (中川八郎, 1877-1922) and was later joined by Mitsutani Kunishirō, Kawai Shinzō (河合新蔵, 1867-1936), Kanokogi Takeshirō, and Maruyama Banka (丸山晚霞, 1867-1942). All had been students at the Fudōsha together. Details of his travels and amounts of money made through various exhibitions can be found in the chronology in *Yoshida Hiroshi ten: seishin to jojō: kindai fūkeiga no kyoshō*, 173-175.

³⁰ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 32; Yasunaga, "The Art and Life of Yoshida Hiroshi," 27.

³¹ For details, see Yasunaga, "The Art and Life of Yoshida Hiroshi, 27-29.

³² Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 69-70.

³³ Yasunaga, "The Art and Life of Yoshida Hiroshi," 28-29.

modernizing mission of *yōga* and the merit of talent and hard work. Although he felt that he was mistreated, he was able to overcome the prejudices set against him and gain significant status, fame, and eventually, material wealth. His attitude helps contextualize his approach to Fujio's career.

An Artist in Hiroshi's Model

Fujio's early artistic career was authored by Hiroshi, who attempted to mold Fujio into a professional artist in his image. As a result, Fujio had access to an artistic education and establishment success that rivaled many of her male peers and was unprecedented for a woman of her time. But Hiroshi had failed to account for how gender shaped his and Fujio's careers, and he did not seem to appreciate that Fujio, try as she might to be his copy, was her own person. Fujio captured this sentiment in her memoir: "For Hiroshi, his ideal was that I would move as he expected, but we were by nature two bodies. To be one was impossible."³⁴ Hiroshi wanted Fujio to be an artist like him, without understanding the strain that put on Fujio, who as a woman, could not hold the title of "(male) artist." Consequently, her work from this period conveys her ambivalence and reflects the tension in her attitude towards painting.

Fujio credits Hiroshi with the major decisions of her early career. It is likely that Fujio specialized in *yōga* because that was her father and Hiroshi's medium. Within *yōga*, Fujio specialized in watercolors, also at the recommendation of Hiroshi.³⁵ Watercolors were a popular medium in the late Meiji period, thanks in part

³⁴ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 132.

³⁵ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 132.

to Ōshita Tōjirō (大下藤次郎, 1870-1911), who wrote the best-seller *A Guide to Watercolor Painting* (水彩画之葉, *Suisaiga no shiori*, 1901) and founded the magazine *Mizue* (みづゑ, *Watercolor*).³⁶ Hiroshi was attracted to watercolors in part because he believed they were a pathway to artistic success. He had witnessed watercolor pioneer Miyake Katsumi (三宅克己, 1874-1954) sell enough watercolors in America to fund an extended stay there—a strategy Hiroshi would adopt for himself and Fujio. Hiroshi eventually switched to oil paints, but Fujio kept watercolor as her primary medium until Hiroshi's death. It is possible that there may have been a gender component to this division but it remains obscure.³⁷ Regardless, Fujio appears to have had little agency in her choice of medium.

Hiroshi also controlled Fujio's artistic education, training her in the same manner that he was taught and providing her with the same opportunities. Under Hiroshi's tutelage, Fujio began learning to draw around age eight by using an English language textbook.³⁸ Permitted to use only pencil, Fujio followed the detailed

³⁶ Yasunaga, "The Art and Life of Yoshida Hiroshi," 25; Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, 46-48. For more on watercolors in the modern period see: *Kindai Nihon no suisaiga: sono rekishi to tenkai* (Mito-shi: Ibaraki-ken Kindai Bijutsukan, 2006); Hiratsuka-shi Bijutsukan, *Suisaga: Mizue no miryoku: Meiji kara gendai made* (Kyoto: Seigensha, 2013); Nihon suisaigakai, ed., *Kindai Nihon suisaiga 150-nenshi* (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 2015); Chinghsin Wu, "Colors of Empire: Watercolor in Meiji Japan," in *The Visual Culture of Meiji Japan: Negotiating the Transition to Modernity*, eds. Ayelet Zohar and Alison J In, eds. Routledge Research in Art History (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2022): 160-176.

³⁷ Yamamoto Kazuko, "Kodoku naru chūyō: senzen no Yoshida Fujio," in *Yoshida Fujio ten*, eds. Yamamura Hitoshi, Nose Akiko, and Yamamoto Kazuko (Tokyo and Fukuoka: Fuchu Art Museum and Fukuoka Art Museum, 2002), 21.

³⁸ There is some confusion around the exact age Fujio started to learn to draw. In an article from the *Providence Sunday Journal*, Feb. 21, 1904, Fujio stated that she began at eight years old. But other articles list her starting age as ten or eleven. In *Shuyō no ki*, Fujio does not give an exact age but mentions that she was being taught by Hiroshi for two-three years before she entered the Fudōsha in 1899 at the age of twelve. Therefore, she likely began learning from Hiroshi around age eight. See also *Yoshida Fujio ten*, chronology entry for 1895, 121.

instructions on how to depict landscapes and tree leaves for two to three years.³⁹ In 1899, at the age of twelve, she entered the Fudōsha, a private *yōga* school directed by Koyama Shōtarō. The Fudōsha taught academic realism and placed an emphasis on the objective recording of nature. The curriculum at the Fudōsha was regimented and progressed in a specific order. Fujio started with charcoal drawings of plaster casts and copies of Western works of art (Figures 4.1 and 4.2). After mastering the fundamentals of drawing, Fujio was permitted to move on to pencil sketches of nature and life drawing, and then finally to watercolors and oil painting (Figures 4.3 and 4.4).⁴⁰ A significant part of the Fudōsha curriculum, which emphasized objectivity and realism, was sketching from nature (*shasei*).⁴¹ Fujio went on innumerable sketching excursions, either with the Fudōsha, with Hiroshi, or by herself. These trips could be extremely rigorous—Fujio was often forced by Hiroshi to walk long distances to the point of tears and keep working even in a downpour.⁴² For Fujio, her training

³⁹ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 19-20.

⁴⁰ Fujio explains that the reason for this order of instruction is that when drawing plaster casts and human figures, it is difficult to add your own interpretation to their depiction and thus they are better suited for acquiring a thorough grasp of drawing and modeling. She believed that landscapes offered more interpretive freedom and were better for developing an artists' individuality. Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 89.

⁴¹ The practice of sketching outdoors as part of a Western painting curriculum was modern. As Alicia Volk has noted, Western-style painting introduced "a new way of apprehending nature and formulating the object of a painting." Differing from traditional conceptions of landscape as "sites mediated by literature, history, or memory," this painting practice introduced an unmediated and objective approach to the countryside. Volk, *In Pursuit of Universalism*, 26.

⁴² According to Fujio, Hiroshi was the type of man who would always strictly follow through on his plans to go sketching, even if the weather proved undesirable. She recounts a specific episode during a Fudōsha sketching trip from Koshigawa, Saitama Prefecture to Noda, Chiba Prefecture. The plan was to sketch the interesting scenery as they made their journey but when it started to downpour, all the Fudōsha students decided to stop drawing and hurry ahead to Noda. But Hiroshi continued and made Fujio sketch alongside him late into the night and she arrived at the inn soaking wet and miserable. Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 64. See also 103-104.

was often a painful experience and she remarked that she found Hiroshi to be a scary teacher.⁴³

Fujio had to contend with societal prejudices against women *yōga* painters during her time as a Fudōsha student. She was the only woman at the Fudōsha for most of her almost five years of study there (Figure 4.5).⁴⁴ Contemporary illustrations depicted women *yōga* students as inappropriately desirous of male attention. A 1917 cartoon from *Kōfū manga* (校風漫画, *School Customs Comic*), a book of satirical illustrations, depicts a Joshibi student haughtily walking by a large group of young men, who all turn to admire and point at her (Figure 4.6). The caption above states that the woman, dressed in the latest fashion and carrying all the accoutrements of a Western-style painter, has chosen the place where she will attract the most attention for her ostentatious and audacious display. Illustrations like this one normalized misogynistic attitudes that women artists were not serious students and instead were courting male attention. The reality was that the male gaze was a serious and dangerous obstacle for women.⁴⁵ Many women *yōga* painters complained about having to sketch outdoors, where they were treated as at best a curiosity, at worst as a target for sexual harassment. Asuke Tsune (足助恒, 1879-1962) and Kametaka Fumiko both remarked on the large, jeering crowds they attracted whenever they went sketching.⁴⁶ Photographs of Fujio show her surrounded by curious onlookers

⁴³ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 59-60.

⁴⁴ Fukuda Tane (福田たね, 1885-1968), partner of Aoki Shigeru, also studied at the Fudōsha and may have overlapped with Fujio briefly in 1903. For more on Fukuda, see *Fukuda Tane Aoki Shigeru no roman: Hagamachi sōgō jōhōkan kaikan kinenten* (Hagamachi, Tochigi-ken: Hagamachi Sōgō Jōhōkan, 2008).

⁴⁵ Kira, “Kindai Nihon ni okeru josei to bijutsu no shakaishiteki kōsatsu,” 43.

⁴⁶ Kira, “Kindai Nihon ni okeru josei to bijutsu no shakaishiteki kōsatsu,” 42-43.

(Figures 4.7 and 4.8). In an alarming instance recounted in her memoir, she was in her early teens when she was approached by a man while drawing lotus flowers in a secluded part of Ikenohata garden. The man tried to lure her to his home by complimenting her work and saying he wanted to show his friends. Naively, Fujio agreed to visit his house the next day. Fujio reported the incident to her mother, who advised her not to go to stranger's homes and decided to accompany Fujio the next day.⁴⁷ Fujio's expressed uneasiness with being a woman and a painter was probably reinforced by the unwelcome attention she received from men.

Fujio's works from this period convey her ambivalence towards her training and status as a woman artist. In an untitled sketch of a temple gate with a man standing in the threshold, Fujio carefully copies the scene as it appeared before her, working systematically from outline to the beginning of some shading and architectural detail (Figure 4.9). But she has left the composition half undone—the trees and grass are merely outlined. In another unfinished sketch of a temple veranda (Figure 4.10), the orthogonal lines leading to the vanishing point demonstrate Fujio's diligent application of the Fudōsha teachings, but her effort is perfunctory.

The Fudōsha taught Fujio to objectively transfer the natural world onto her paper, but it is clear from her early work that she preferred to capture the impression of a scene rather than all the details. In *Untitled (Room with a Wooden Floor)* (無題 (板の間)), c. 1901-03), Fujio depicted the interior of a decrepit wooden building,

⁴⁷ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 21.

opening onto a garden in the background (Figure 4.11).⁴⁸ Where and what the viewer is looking at is difficult to determine—is the human-shaped figure sitting in the background a person or a statue? Is this a house, a temple, or a storage room? It does not matter. Instead, Fujio gave over the majority of the composition to describing the play of light on the polished wooden floorboards, recording her impression of this reflective surface with great detail and naturalism. But the rest of the composition is given a far less enthusiastic treatment. The background vegetation has been quickly and carelessly rendered, a row of green blotches replacing her minute depiction of the polished floorboards.

The tension between her training and personal artistic interests and inclinations is also evident in *Untitled (Mt. Fuji)* (Figure 4.12a). This painting was likely made in preparation for her and Hiroshi's trip to the United States. They planned to fund the trip through the sale of watercolors of typical Japanese landscapes that would appeal to American audiences, then caught in the grips of Japonisme. Her choice of subject was likely determined by Hiroshi, who frequently dictated where she went and what she painted. In many of her early watercolors Fujio framed her subjects straightforwardly, from a removed distance. Here, Mt. Fuji occupies the center of the composition. Fujio also favored the device of a central human figure to anchor the composition and aid in the creation of perspective. The repetition of these compositional choices comes across as a regurgitation of her training rather than deriving from her own viewpoint. Still, a close examination of her brushwork reveals

⁴⁸ To avoid confusion, untitled works are given a parenthetical descriptive title and follow those established in *Yoshida Fujio ten*. In some cases, I have given descriptive titles to untitled paintings, which I do not translate into Japanese.

some of her personality (Figure 4.12b). Fujio built up color and volume through overlapping brush strokes, in a manner similar to oil painting. The end result is chaotic and splotchy, but what she loses in legibility she gains in conveying some of her exuberant personality. These two paintings suggest that Fujio was starting to develop a unique sensibility but her efforts were half-hearted and many of her paintings are suffused with a sense of obligation and constraint, as if her inclinations did not quite match the style of artist Hiroshi expected her to be.

Hiroshi continued to fashion Fujio into an artist after his own model by taking her with him to the United States and Europe in 1903 for a three-year period. Fujio was sixteen years old. Direct study of European art conferred on early *yōga* painters significant authority and gave them an edge in an increasingly competitive market. The opportunities for women to travel abroad for art study were almost nonexistent. Fujio was one of the only women of her generation to study painting in the West. Based primarily in Boston, Fujio and Hiroshi mounted exhibitions around the East Coast, spending summers studying painting in the Berkshires and joining the artist colony in Gloucester, Massachusetts.⁴⁹ After a successful two and half years in the States, Fujio and Hiroshi set sail for Europe, traveling to England, Paris, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, as well as to Tangiers and Egypt. Despite delighting in the travel experience, Fujio had little agency in what she was painting. Hiroshi set their itinerary and determined what they painted.⁵⁰ They would

⁴⁹ For a detailed description of Fujio's travels abroad see the chronology in *Yoshida Fujio ten*, 122-24.

⁵⁰ Fujio recounts in her memoir that the Japanese embassy in Madrid had warned Hiroshi against taking Fujio to Tangiers because it was thought to be a dangerous place for women. He did not heed the warnings and Fujio spent much of her time there worried about being abducted. *Yoshida Fujio, Shuyō no ki*, 10-12.

set up side by side, producing very similar compositions in similar styles (Figures 4.13 and 4.14). As a result, in contemporary accounts, Hiroshi was given primacy as an artist, with Fujio perceived as a lesser copy. In Natsume Sōseki's (夏目漱石, 1867-1916) novel *Sanshirō* (三四郎, 1908), the main characters visit an exhibition of Fujio and Hiroshi's travel paintings. So similar are the styles that the titular character Sanshirō mistakes the exhibition as being by a solo artist. The more sophisticated Mieko sees the difference between the artists and judges Hiroshi to be the more talented.⁵¹ Although Hiroshi trained Fujio to be just like him, societal gender attitudes made it impossible for Fujio, however exceptional, to be given equal status as Hiroshi. Like Kametaka Fumiko and Shima Seien, Fujio's gender meant she was understood as secondary in talent to her closest male peer.

As Fujio's technique improved under Hiroshi's tutelage, her sense of individuality lessened. As can be seen in *Venice* (ベニス, 1906) (Figure 4.15a), her brushwork became tighter and more controlled, and her paint application was thicker and dryer. Displaying a more sophisticated and cropped framing than her earlier work, *Venice* captures a curving canal with two buildings on either side and joined by a small bridge. In the middle ground, a man in a gondola reaches up towards a woman standing on the street at the edge of the water. Fujio took pains to capture the details of this scene—every ripple and reflection in the water is documented, every stone and brick on the buildings. The blue sky is perfectly flat, with no evidence of any wayward blotches of water and pigment that characterized earlier paintings. Still,

⁵¹ Natsume Sōseki, *Sanshirō*, 144th edition (Tokyo: Kadokawa, 2015), 211-12.

however, *Venice* conveys a tightness and stiffness that is incongruous with the flowing water of the canal (4.15b). Fujio was so focused on recording the scene exactly that she lost some of her ability towards impression.

Per Hiroshi's plans, Fujio's time abroad cemented her as a celebrated and high earning artist. She attracted enormous press attention, primarily because she was a young, Japanese girl. Treated as a charming novelty, there was frequent mention of her diminutive stature and mode of dress. For example, *The Providence Journal* wrote:

Miss Fuji Yoshida is but 16 years old and is the first Japanese woman artist to come to America. She was a very picturesque figure in her kimono of a lavender crepe with shaded border, which was embroidered in floral design, and a gorgeous brocaded "obi" folded about her waist. She wore also the Japanese shoes, and every detail of her costume was in keeping.

Mr. Yoshida also appeared in full Japanese costume.⁵²

In another article titled "Pretty Japanese Girl: Studying Art in 'Western Way' in New England," the article devotes scant attention to her painting and instead details her physical appearance, taste for hats, and idiosyncratic mixing of American and Japanese garments. It also details her attachment to a duckling, named Admiral Togo, who follows her around Gloucester (Figure 4.16).⁵³ Many of the articles also included photographs and sketches of Fujio, and to a lesser extent, of Hiroshi. The press attention Fujio and Hiroshi received was racialized and informed by gender stereotypes. In the latter regard, it was similar in tone to the Japanese media presentation of the "female artist." The American media's obsession with Fujio had the positive effect, however, of driving audiences to the Yoshida's exhibitions.

⁵² Author unknown, *The Providence Journal* (Feb. 18, 1904), from a scrapbook of newspaper clippings, private collection.

⁵³ Author unknown, newspaper unknown, from a scrapbook of newspaper clippings, private collection.

Financially, the exhibitions were a great success. At the Rhode Island School of Design exhibition in February, 1904, Fujio sold seventeen out of seventy-five paintings, with sales totaling \$405.⁵⁴ This was a remarkable sum for any Japanese artist, and especially for a woman artist. Fujio was able to contribute meaningfully to her and Hiroshi's travel fund, and when she returned to Japan in 1907, she did so with the authority of a decorated artist, just as Hiroshi had done before her.

For the next few years, Fujio continued to grow her career at the center of the Japanese art establishment. She was an active participant in the Taiheiyōgakai exhibitions, and her watercolors were selected for the *yōga* division for the first four Bunten exhibitions. Fujio exhibited three paintings at the first Bunten and sold two, *Ruin of Carnac* (カーナックの建跡, c. 1907) (Figure 4.17) for one hundred yen, and *Lotus Pond* (蓮池, c. 1907) for fifty yen (Figure 4.18).⁵⁵ At subsequent exhibitions she displayed one painting each: *Mount Fuji* (富士山, 1908), *Lotus* (蓮, 1909), and *Spirit Grove* (神の森, 1910) (Figure 4.19a). She won a commendation prize for *Spirit Grove*. Being selected for the Bunten was a difficult task for any artist, but even more difficult for women (see Chapter One). Her sequential entries to the Bunten made her

⁵⁴ Fujio and Hiroshi exhibited seventy-five works each and the total sales from the show were \$1475. The sales amount was double the amount earned by Hiroshi and his friend Nakagawa Hachirō in Detroit in 1899. Chronology, *Yoshida Hiroshi ten: seishin to jojō: kindai fūkeiga no kyoshō*, 177. Allen lists a slightly different amount for an exhibition at the same location, writing that Fujio sold sixteen watercolors at fifteen to forty-five dollars each for a total of \$380. Allen, "The Yoshida Women," 155.

⁵⁵ *Yoshida Fujio ten*, 124. The third painting, *Nara Teahouse* (奈良の茶屋), was listed for one hundred yen but did not sell. For comparison, Hiroshi exhibited three paintings, priced between two hundred and five hundred yen. Aside from *Lotus Pond*, all of Fujio's Bunten works were priced at one hundred yen. Lists of paintings exhibited and their prices can be found in Tokyo Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo Bijutsubu, ed., *Taishōki bijutsu tenrankai shuppin mokuroku* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 2002), 7, 9, 11, and 14.

one of, if not the most, institutionally successful woman *yōga* painters during the Meiji period.

Fujio's Bunten works represent the height of her naturalistic watercolor period. The one surviving painting, *Spirit Grove*, demonstrates Fujio's mastery of her craft. The painting depicts an old stone road through a forest of tall cedar trees on the way to Nikkō. Fujio skillfully conveyed the various textures of the landscape and the way sunlight filters in through gaps in the trees. A detail of the tree in the right midground reveals the care she took in capturing the roughness of the tree bark—she painstakingly worked and reworked this section, letting her paint dry before applying more layers of color and line (Figure 4.19b). As with her earlier work, Fujio used a thick and dry application of paint, treating the watercolor more like oil paints. She used almost no wash and aside from a few blotchy sections in the foreground (Figure 4.19c), she was in tight and deliberate control of her paints. Combining her technical skill for visual fidelity with her ability to express her impression of a scene, Fujio effectively conveyed what it must have felt like to stand amongst these impressive trees, moving through the quiet of the forest, admiring the sun beams, and wondering at what spirits inhabited this old forest.

Pushed along by Hiroshi, Fujio had firmly cemented herself as a successful, professional artist, who, on paper, was no different from many of the men artists jostling for position in the late Meiji period. She had a thorough education in *yōga* technique thanks to her time at the Fudōsha and the authority of an artist who had studied abroad and received praise from Euro-American audiences. Her unique access to male-dominated spaces and experiences facilitated her ability to overcome some

sexist barriers to become, albeit reluctantly, a pioneer woman *yōga* landscape painter. The cost for this status, however, was a suppression of her agency and a dampening of her artistic individuality.

The Choice Between Art and Gender

Fujio's ability to reconcile her profession and her gender identity grew increasingly strained as she began to shuffle the demands of her career with marriage and motherhood. Fujio and Hiroshi were married soon after they returned from abroad (Figure 4.20). Fujio claimed that the marriage was a surprise, decided by her mother and Hiroshi.⁵⁶ Fujio wrote that she was not aware that Hiroshi had probably long intended for her to be his wife—she had never thought of marrying him.⁵⁷ Fujio's lack of choice in marriage partner was not unique. In fact a major strain of the women's rights movement in early twentieth century Japan was focused on advocating for greater autonomy for women in choosing a marriage partner.⁵⁸ The first year of marriage to Hiroshi was emotionally difficult for Fujio.⁵⁹ She was used to seeing him as her stern elder brother, and because they continued to live with her natal family in the same residence, Fujio reflected that she failed to treat Hiroshi as her husband and head of the household and consequently he was dissatisfied and scolded her.⁶⁰ She found him strict and scary, writing that it was not the “sweet,

⁵⁶ Even at the time she wrote her memoir Fujio was still unclear on the circumstances and reasoning for her marriage to Hiroshi. See Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 19-22, 59-62.

⁵⁷ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 59-60.

⁵⁸ Rodd, “Yosano Akiko and the Taishō Debate Over the “New Woman””; Sato, *New Japanese Woman*.

⁵⁹ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 60-3.

⁶⁰ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 62-3. Hiroshi's position as an adopted son-in-law (*mukoyōshi*) likely played a role in this dynamic. Although adopted with the intention of heading the family, the adopted son-in-law traditionally held less power in the family than a biological son, and the biological daughter he married would have more authority than was typical. The case for Fujio and Hiroshi is a little more

dream-like life” one would expect of newlyweds.⁶¹ Things softened between Fujio and Hiroshi after the birth of their daughter, Chisato, in 1908. Fujio and Hiroshi were deeply enamored with Chisato and filled her baby book with illustrations and photographs of her first milestones (Figure 4.21). Fujio and Hiroshi welcomed their first son, Tōshi, in 1911, and second son, Hodaka, in 1926.

A source of difficulty for Fujio was that Hiroshi expected her to behave in a manner atypical of a standard housewife. If Fujio spent her whole day painting and neglected the household, Hiroshi would be happy. But if she spent her time in the kitchen his mood would sour.⁶² Hiroshi even gave her painting homework assignments while he went out on solo sketching trips. It is possible that some of Fujio’s still lifes from this period, which feature unusual arrangements of vases and figurines, were assignments given by Hiroshi (Figure 4.22). According to Fujio, she procrastinated and preferred to spend her time chatting with her sisters. But when she would hear Hiroshi returning, she would rush into the studio and frantically move her paintbrush around, pretending she had been working all day. Discovering her lies, Hiroshi would reprimand her.⁶³ For some women, the reprieve from domestic chores and their husband’s support of their careers would have been welcome.⁶⁴ But Fujio

complicated, however, because Hiroshi entered the family when Fujio was four years old, and he became the head of the household when Fujio was seven. Therefore, his authority in the household began well before his marriage to Fujio. Moreover, Hiroshi had always been a domineering figure in Fujio’s life. Still, Fujio suggests that because Hiroshi was adopted, she should have tried better to treat Hiroshi more like a typical husband. My thanks to Magdalena Kolodziej for pointing this dynamic out to me. For another example of this type of adopted son-in-law dynamic see Partner, “Art and Gender in an Age of Revolution.”

⁶¹ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 64.

⁶² Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 65.

⁶³ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 66-7.

⁶⁴ Fujio was fortunate that her mother and sisters could help manage the household while she was busy painting.

was not eager to adhere to the strict regime of painting that Hiroshi required of her. Instead, one feels that Fujio was anxious about not conforming to the wifely role she had been socialized to assume. It is possible that *her* gendered expectations for how she should behave as a wife were not being met and that the contradictory pressures from Hiroshi and society were difficult for her to reconcile.

Fujio also found it difficult to balance the demands of her career with child rearing. Fujio continued to create paintings for the Bunten and Taiheiyōgakai exhibitions even as she gave birth to her first two children. She made daily sketches and paintings and traveled around the Japanese countryside. One of Fujio's sketchbooks demonstrates how she juggled her professional activity with motherhood. One page has a sketch for *Spirit Grove* and on the adjacent page are Chisato's scribbles, scrawled across another of Fujio's sketches (Figure 4.23). Fujio and Hiroshi had brought Chisato and a maid with them on the trip to Nikkō. It was hard, Fujio remembered, to play with Chisato and draw pictures.⁶⁵ Often Fujio would entrust the care of the children to others so that she could spend the day painting.

The conflict Fujio felt between painting and her responsibilities as a mother came to a head after Chisato's sudden death in September, 1911 and Tōshi's contraction of polio the following year. In both cases, her children became ill while in the care of others.⁶⁶ Chisato became ill with dysentery while on a trip with Fujio's sister and died shortly after she returned home. Tōshi became feverish after spending a day at a maid's home. He was paralyzed in one leg and required extensive

⁶⁵ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 132.

⁶⁶ Descriptions of the circumstances surrounding their illnesses can be found in Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 107-109.

rehabilitation. In her memoir, Fujio wrote that she felt she had focused on painting to the detriment of her young children, and she deeply regretted it.⁶⁷ Her guilt was likely compounded by the fact that she had sacrificed precious time with her children in pursuit of a career about which she was ambivalent. When her daughter died and her son became ill, it seemed to confirm for Fujio the societal messaging that she had received her whole life—that there was something fundamentally irreconcilable about being an artist and a woman. In response to what she saw as evidence of her failure to be a good mother, she decided to abandon painting and she stopped creating for several years.⁶⁸ Her decision to stop painting was perhaps the first active choice she made about her career.

The poignancy of Fujio's loss can be felt in one of her last dated works from this period, a 1912 portrait of a little girl, *Untitled (Child Playing with Dolls)* (無題 (人形遊びをする子供)) (Figure 4.24). Fujio's practice was to paint what she saw before her, so it is likely that the girl is one of her nieces. Still, the girl is reminiscent of Chisato, and bears a resemblance to Hiroshi's painting *Pigeons and a Girl* (鳩と少女, c.1910-11) (Figure 4.25), which is believed to be of Chisato. Fujio created a number of figure paintings during the last years of the Meiji period, suggesting a new direction in her artistic focus. Despite the dramatic change in subject, however, Fujio was still able to bring a sense of immediacy to her work. There is an undeniable truth to the way Fujio captured the little girl's posture, her feet turned in and tucked beneath her, her attention fully absorbed by her doll. Fujio's interest in light is

⁶⁷ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 109.

⁶⁸ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 109.

another throughline in her work, and here she conveyed the softness of light filtered through shoji screens and falling on the chubby cheeks of what was obviously an adored little girl.

Embracing the “Female Artist”

When Fujio returned to painting production, she shifted her practice away from Hiroshi’s model of the establishment artist. In her memoir, Fujio indicates that her painting pause was of significant duration, and other scholars have claimed that Fujio did not return to significant painting activity until 1920.⁶⁹ But Fujio continued to exhibit at the Taiheiyōgakai every year and a survey of her paintings still in her archive shows that she returned to making paintings as early as 1915.⁷⁰ I suspect that when Fujio said she “stopped creating for several years” what she meant was that she stopped painting for professional purposes. For the first twenty-five years of her life, she had been pursuing the identity of an artist as defined by men like Hiroshi. These men took a competitive and uncompromising approach to painting and were consumed with the task of creating art for national advancement. Their activities were rewarded with prestige, accolades, and wealth. So Fujio trained to exhaustion, pushing herself across continents and through two pregnancies, seeking establishment success. This is what she quit. But she kept making paintings.

⁶⁹ Allen, “The Yoshida Women,” 157; Yamamura, “Rekishī to shisen: Yoshida Fujio no shōgai to sakuhin,” 12.

⁷⁰ She did not exhibit in 1914. It is possible that her submissions to these exhibitions were already completed works. *Yoshida Fujio ten*, 125-126.

This supposition is supported by two significant changes Fujio made to her career. One was her decision to stop exhibiting at the national salon. She had hated the factionalism and inequity at the core of the art world. She explained,

The root of my exasperation with the painting world was my bitter memories of seeing the antagonism between the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and the Taiheiyōgakai.... During that period, there was a strong ethos of respecting bureaucrats and rejecting commoners, and I had personally seen how Hiroshi stood at a disadvantageous position because of this. Even though his work was good, it wasn't acknowledged...Perhaps it is just because I am a woman that I emotionally saw it this way, but even if one did good work, there was no hope of getting ahead in the art world politics. Wasn't the reason why I had no hope of getting ahead was that I had children, and had been severed from my paint brush for many years and absent from production? But when I look around me, afterall I too had bitter feelings. ⁷¹

Fujio was repelled because she felt that the painstaking effort she and Hiroshi put in was meaningless—they would always struggle for recognition. In addition to class, Fujio had the added discrimination against her gender. She pointed out the consequences of taking time away from painting to raise her children but noted that ultimately it was never a matter of skill that prevented her from attaining more institutional success, but art world politics. Fujio may have felt that her fate in the art world was a *fait accompli*, but stepping away from the Bunten and the center of the modern art world was still an active choice.⁷² Hiroshi continued to participate in the government salons. Her split from Hiroshi in this manner demonstrates a new exercise of her will.

⁷¹Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 114-15.

⁷²Fujio was privileged in being able to make this decision because of her financial security, which had grown considerably with Hiroshi's fame. Unlike Kametaka Fumiko or Shima Seien, and later Kajiwara Hisako, Fujio did not need to rely on art making to support herself or her children. For more on how financial precarity influenced women artists' choices, see Kira, "Kindai Nihon ni okeru josei to bijutsu no shakaishiteki kōsatsu."

The second significant shift in Fujio's approach to her career was that she largely stopped selling her paintings. According to her granddaughter, Yoshida Ayomi, Fujio felt that she could not paint if it was for sale.⁷³ There were two major exceptions to this decision. After the Great Kanto earthquake in 1923 Fujio and Hiroshi sold paintings and prints across the United States and Europe to raise money for the economic relief of affected artists. She also made works for sale prior to a year-long trip abroad with her son, Hodaka, and his wife, Chizuko (吉田千鶴, 1924-2017), in 1957. In both cases, Fujio appears to have been motivated by helping her friends and family and furthering her love of travel. Her choice to mostly stop selling her work suggests a shift away from catering to external demand and toward creating work that was for her own purposes. Concurrently, Fujio mostly stopped signing and dating her works. In her early period, she had been meticulous with record keeping, perhaps a necessary function of marketing her work. The absence of dates and signatures indicates a privatization of her practice.

In the second phase of her career, from roughly the start of the Taishō period until the Second World War, Fujio embraced the feminine expectations that characterized the “female artist” idea. She narrowed the focus of her production to perceived feminine spaces: the women's *dantai*, the Shuyōkai and the private realm of her home. She introduced so-called feminine subjects like still lifes. She made these changes, I propose, to better accommodate her identities as a woman and mother. As she removed the pressures of gender transgression and opted for a less

⁷³ Personal conversation with Yoshida Ayomi, July 2022.

establishment-oriented career, Fujio's painting style grew more experimental and reflective of her individual perspective.

The Shuyōkai and the Purpose of Women Only Spaces

After her pause, Fujio centered her professional activity in the gender segregated space of the women's *yōga dantai*, the Shuyōkai.⁷⁴ Established in 1918, the group was formed as an offshoot of a women's *yōga* exhibition from the previous year, which Fujio also participated in.⁷⁵ As reported in the media, the artists from that exhibition subsequently split into two groups, seemingly over a dispute about judging and how to proceed after most of their paintings were rejected from the major exhibitions such as the Bunten and Nitten.⁷⁶ The founders of the Shuyōkai aimed to create a "serious *dantai*" where they could improve their artistry as well as raise their public profile and better compete at the Bunten.⁷⁷ Fujio remained in the opposing camp until 1920, when she too joined the Shuyōkai. Like other *dantai*, the primary activity of the group was an annual, juried exhibition but it also functioned as a site

⁷⁴ Founding committee members were Koderia Kikuko (小寺菊子), Tsuda Toshiko (津田敏子), Yosano Akiko, Tsugaru Teruko (津軽照子), Ogasawara Sadako (小笠原貞子), and Shō Momoko (尚百子). Kametaka Fumiko was also a member from the beginning. For more history on the Shuyōkai, see *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi*; see also Kokatsu, ed., *Hashiru onna-tachi*, 16-17, 162.

⁷⁵ "Niha ni wakareta onna yōgaka: Shuyōkai arata ni umaru," unknown publication (Jan. 1919), as reproduced in *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi*, 16.

⁷⁶ Unknown publication (Jan. 1919), as reproduced in *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi*, 22. A review of the first exhibition mentions an issue over judging which led to the split, see "Tenrankai geppyō: Shuyōkai tenrankai," *Chūō Bijutsu* 5 no. 3 (1919), 92. This schism was refuted by Ataka Fukumi, supposedly in the opposing faction, in a letter published in the gossip section of *Chūō Bijutsu* 4 no. 12 (1918), 74-75. Akata claimed that she was consulted by Koderia Toshiko from the beginning about doing a more serious exhibition with male judges but there was a minor disagreement and misunderstanding about limiting the number of participating artists to ten only, which then snowballed in the press as a more major dispute between the women, an exaggeration that she claimed had caused her significant trouble.

⁷⁷ Unknown publication (Jan. 1919), as reproduced in *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi*, 22.

for members to discuss artistic technique, expression, and professional strategy, as well as an outlet for social activity.

As the women artists of Fujio's generation matured, they settled on a common strategy of establishing *dantai*, *kenkyūjo* (research centers), and *juku* (private schools) that were specifically for women. Fujio, Kametaka Fumiko, Shima Seien, Kurihara Gyokuyō, Kitani Chigusa, among several others, were keenly aware of how gender bias had placed a ceiling on their careers and was continuing to hinder the development of up-and-coming women artists. As these women grew in prominence, they were able to establish spaces that would improve the training and exhibition opportunities for other women artists (see Chapter Two). The Shuyōkai was one of the earliest of these women-only art organizations that began to flourish around the middle of the Taishō period.

The Shuyōkai, as a women's only group, has a complex legacy. While men-only *dantai* were prevalent, their organization was ostensibly based on stylistic grounds, affiliation to certain institutions, or art world political viewpoints. This is not to suggest that gender was not a factor in their organization—indeed as discussed above, masculinity was an important force in *yōga*. Rather, gender was not an overt reason for men-only *dantai*, because being a man artist was considered the default. For women artists, however, gender superseded all other forms of artistic categorization. The Shuyōkai, by sequestering women artists, reinforced the same gender segregation it was trying to dismantle.⁷⁸ Still, the women of the Shuyōkai

⁷⁸ Kojima makes a similar point about women artists' engagement with illustration work for women's magazines. Kojima, "Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi," 52.

were blocked from participating in male-dominated spaces, and took the incremental step of creating a socially acceptable space in which to operate. Art historian Laura Allen positions the Shuyōkai and women's *dantai* as part of a larger trend in women's collective action in the Taishō period.⁷⁹ Indeed, Yosano Akiko, a prominent voice in the women's movement, was a founding member of the Shuyōkai and named the group after her collection of waka poems, *Shuyōshū* (朱葉集, 1916). There were certainly proto-feminist elements to the formation of women's art groups, which aspired to improve the status of women artists. Moreover, Allen points to a tactic of the women's movement to use women's creative endeavors as proof of their status as individuals worthy of full rights.⁸⁰ As with the photographs of women's groups discussed in Chapter Two, the Shuyōkai exhibitions might have functioned as an invitation to other women to consider a professional identity in the arts as a legitimate option.⁸¹ In this respect, the Shuyōkai is another example of how women artists used the ideals of femininity and gender segregation to expand the visualization of the "female artist."

In its organization and reception, the Shuyōkai is representative of the fraught position many women found themselves in between attempting to overcome and acquiescing to prevailing gender attitudes. As part of its efforts to create a pathway to establishment success for women *yōga* painters, the Shuyōkai selected four prominent men artists to serve as advisors and judges for their exhibitions: Okada Saburōsuke, Yasui Sōtarō (安井曾太郎, 1888-1955), Arishima Ikuma (有島生馬, 1882-1974),

⁷⁹ Allen, "Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives," 105.

⁸⁰ Allen, "Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives," 100.

⁸¹ Allen, "Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives," 107.

and Mitsutani Kunishirō.⁸² The male advisory judging system remained in place until after the second world war. The idea was that these powerful men would legitimize the Shuyōkai's activities by giving their stamp of approval, which would hopefully lead to admittance to higher profile exhibitions. Given women's exclusion from art world leadership positions (see Chapter One), there were no women *yōga* painters who could match the power and influence of any of the men judges. In addition, women were not granted the same cultural capital as men and needed to be legitimized by paternal figures. This attitude is evident in how the Shuyōkai was reported on in the popular press. When listing the female participants, newspaper articles would first list the name of a male relative, the woman's relationship to him, and then finally her name. In light of this, the Shuyōkai's inclusion of men judges is understandable—they could not achieve their goals of advancing women artists without male support. But it also undermined their position, ultimately reinforcing the status quo where men were the arbiters and gatekeepers to success.

Although the original intention of the Shuyōkai was to provide a pipeline to establishment success, in practice the group supported a range of women's activities, both professional and amateur. The Shuyōkai held its first exhibition in January, 1919 on the fifth floor of the Mitsukoshi Department store. About twenty-seven artists participated, exhibiting a total of one hundred fifty works.⁸³ Newspaper coverage of

⁸² The judges represented members of the Bunten, Nikakai, and Nihon Bijutsuin, the three most prominent exhibition venues in the early twentieth century.

⁸³ There is some discrepancy among the primary sources in how many women participated. A table on page 103 of the *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi* lists 35 women in total, with 31 artists exhibiting works. Of those 31, four were committee members. This chart lists only 58 works, however. A chart on page 162 however gives the total number of artists as 27, 13 of which were regular members (*kaiin*), and a total of 150 works. These latter numbers are supported by an article in the *Tokyo asahi shinbun* (Jan 20, 1919), as reproduced on page 26.

the exhibition took care to separate the participating artists into separate categories, including: professional artists, the wives of artists, and notable women.⁸⁴ Fujio herself characterized the group as a mix of professional and society women, influenced by the women's movement to which the "new woman" (*atarashii onna*) belonged:

"The Shuyōkai was an organization for women painters, but men like [the prominent Western-style artist] Mitsutani Kunishirō were also involved at the time of its founding. It began as a group for what might be termed "young lady's arts," around members of the nobility like Tsugaru Teru and the Ryūkyū queen Shō Momoko, but later professional painters joined as well. In any event, it was a group exclusively for women, and "young lady's arts" notwithstanding, one could say that for the time they were women of the "new type."⁸⁵

Her son, Yoshida Hodaka, in noting the diversity of women involved in the group, described the Shuyōkai as a kinder atmosphere than *dantai* that were singularly focused on art world success.⁸⁶ The women-only, not-strictly professional nature of the Shuyōkai led to a perception of the group as more of a ladies' society than an art organization. The press was more focused on these prominent and affluent women's social networks than their paintings and critical reviews of the exhibitions included phrasing characterizing the works as executed in a manner appropriate to women.⁸⁷

Fujio did not say what attracted her to the Shuyōkai, but it is possible that the mixture of professional and amateur activities, as well as its perception as a feminine environment, helped Fujio resolve some of the conflict she felt about being a woman

⁸⁴ *Tōkyō asahi shinbun* (Jan. 20, 1919), as reproduced in *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi*, 26; *Miyako shinbun* (Jan. 20, 1919), as reproduced in *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi*, 27.

⁸⁵ Translated by Allen, "Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives," 105. Original quote is from Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 125.

⁸⁶ Yoshida Hodaka, "Showa nijū nendai no Shuyōkai to haha, Yoshida Fujio," in *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi*, 72-73.

⁸⁷ "Tenrankai geppyō: Shuyōkai tenrankai," *Chūō Bijutsu* 5 no. 3 (1919), 92.

and an artist. She could still participate as a professional painter but by electing to center her activity with the Shuyōkai, she retreated into the female domain. As with the “female artist,” Fujio reinscribed femininity onto her practice. Fujio’s preference for the small, peripheral Shuyōkai may indicate, in part, the role internal sexism played in her decision making.

At the same time, it is important to highlight what Fujio gained by recentering her artistic activity in such a consciously feminine space. I posit that it was precisely because the Shuyōkai was different in character and makeup from male-dominated art organizations that Fujio chose it as the focus of her professional career. The Shuyōkai offered Fujio and other women something they could not get elsewhere—professional support and personal camaraderie, a space to pursue their interests and ambitions, and take on leadership roles. Additionally, the Shuyōkai accommodated a wider range of artistic activities, including those that were not aiming for establishment success. It was a space where Fujio could engage with different ideas about the purpose of art beyond Hiroshi’s vision. Finally, it was a space where Fujio did not have to expend as much energy worrying about defying gender norms. By conforming to gendered expectations, Fujio liberated herself from Hiroshi and the masculine-model of art making represented by the establishment.

Fujio was devoted to the Shuyōkai for the rest of her life. She exhibited with the group almost every year from 1920 until 1983. During the war she worked hard to keep the exhibitions going, carrying paintings over to Ueno when there was a shortage of available labor and manning the reception by herself.⁸⁸ In the occupation

⁸⁸ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 125.

period, Fujio negotiated renting exhibition venues from the American forces and organized dance parties at her house to raise money.⁸⁹ Fujio served as administrator from 1952 and became president in 1968 at the age of eighty-one. She named her memoir *Shuyō no ki* after them. The Shuyōkai was a motivation for Fujio to keep painting well into her old age.⁹⁰ Through the Shuyōkai, Fujio supported the careers of numerous women *yōga* painters, and found a way to embrace an artistic career on her terms.

Still Lives, Femininity, and Stylistic Liberation

Fujio's embrace of a more "feminine" painting practice is evident in an increase in still lifes in her oeuvre. Still lifes were perceived to be a subject matter appropriate to women (see Chapter One). These expectations were particularly pronounced for women *yōga* painters, who were already seen to be transgressing against gender norms. While Joshibi included instruction in all subject matter, the curriculum focused primarily on the "feminine" genres of flowers, women, and children.⁹¹ Okada Saburōsuke, who taught at Joshibi, also ran a private *juku* for female students where the focus was on painting flowers and still lifes. For women to learn other subjects such as figure painting, they had to advance into Okada's male-centered *juku*.⁹² One of the reasons still lifes were seen as appropriate to women was because they could be completed in the domestic sphere. Fujio turned to still lifes

⁸⁹ These parties were kept secret from Hiroshi, who strongly disapproved of dancing. For more on these parties, see Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 125-28; Yoshida Hodaka, "Showa nijū nendai no Shuyōkai to haha, Yoshida Fujio," 74-75.

⁹⁰ Yoshida Hodaka, "Showa nijū nendai no Shuyōkai to haha, Yoshida Fujio," 76.

⁹¹ Kojima, "Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi," 46.

⁹² Kojima, *Joseizō ga utsusu Nihon*, 194-97.

around the time she gave birth to Chisato (千里) and was consequently spending more time at home. Fujio's childrearing years were extended (there was a fifteen-year gap between Tōshi and Hodaka) and the greater presence of still lifes, especially flower paintings, maps neatly onto this period. She was anxious about leaving her children in the care of others and elected to be at home, while Hiroshi continued to spend significant time away on sketching trips.⁹³ Many of these works are undated and unsigned, suggesting they formed part of a more private engagement with art making. Fujio's retreat from the male-dominated professional world and into home life gave her a reprieve from Hiroshi's influence and a chance to develop a subject matter that helped distinguish her as an artist while accommodating her identities as a mother and housewife.

Fujio's increase in publicly exhibited flower paintings was likely influenced by her efforts to resolve her unease with being a woman artist.⁹⁴ She still submitted some landscapes, her favorite subject matter, to the Shuyōkai exhibitions (Figures 4.26 and 4.27), but her public work came to be dominated by flower paintings.⁹⁵ For the 1920 Shuyōkai exhibition in Osaka, Fujio submitted five works in total, a still life of apples and grapes, three flower paintings, and one landscape of Mt. Myōkō. Laura Allen interprets the inclusion of the landscape painting as a "declaration of rights, of sorts, in a period when landscapes were very much the province of male-painters" and that Fujio was staking a claim in this territory for women painters.⁹⁶ While I agree

⁹³ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 110.

⁹⁴ Yamamoto Kazuko also makes this point. Yamamoto, "Kodoku naru chūyō: senzen no Yoshida Fujio," 21.

⁹⁵ She wrote of this decision only that "...landscapes were my favorite subject but I came to successively draw a lot of flowers." Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 132.

⁹⁶ Allen, "Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives," 107-108.

that Fujio's landscape subject matter marked her as unique among her female peers, I do not interpret the inclusion of mountain landscapes in Shuyōkai exhibitions as an attempt to proclaim "her ability to compete in a 'man's world.'"⁹⁷ Fujio by this time was already celebrated for her landscape painting and she had already proven herself capable of competing in male-dominated spaces. The shift that occurs is that still lifes and flower paintings become increasingly present just as Fujio decided to turn away from male-dominated establishment spaces. I believe this is evidence of her conscious embrace of the "female artist" model.

In addition to the Shuyōkai, she contributed flower still lifes to women's magazines such as *Fujin gahō* (Figure 4.28) and for the women-edited art magazine *Nyonin geijutsu* (女人芸術, Women's Arts) (Figure 4.29). The *Nyonin geijutsu* cover is noteworthy given the nature of the publication.⁹⁸ A spiritual successor to the proto-feminist magazine *Seitō* (青鞞, Bluestockings), *Nyonin geijutsu* featured political and cultural essays, literature, and poems. The first eight covers all featured reproductions of *yōga* by women artists.⁹⁹ The covers are, as Allen points out, somewhat discordant

⁹⁷ Allen, "Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives," 111.

⁹⁸ For more information on *Nyonin geijutsu*, see Frederick, "Women's Arts/Women's Masses: Negotiating the Literature and Politics in *Women's Arts*," in *Turning Pages*, 137-177; Angela Coutts, "Imagining Radical Women in Interwar Japan: Leftist and Feminist Perspectives," *Signs* 37, no. 2 (2012): 325-55; Mats Karlsson, "Thirst for Knowledge: Women's Proletarian Literature in *Nyonin Geijutsu*," *Japan Forum* 25, no. 3 (2013): 346-61; Angela Coutts, "How Do We Write a Revolution? Debating the Masses and the Vanguard in the Literary Reviews of *Nyonin Geijutsu*," *Japan Forum* 25, no. 3 (2013): 362-78; Barbara Hartley, "The Space of Childhood Memories: Hasegawa Shigure and Old Nihonbashi," *Japan Forum* 25, no. 3 (2013): 314-30; Sreedevi Reddy, *Zasshi "Nyonin geijutsu" ni okeru jendā, gensetsu, media* (Tokyo: Gakujutsu Shuppankai, 2010); Iida Yūko, Nakaya Izumi, and Sasao Kayo, eds., *Josei to tōsō: zasshi "Nyonin geijutsu" to 1930-nen zengo no bunka seisan* (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2019).

⁹⁹ The covers were by Hanihara Kuwayo, Hasegawa Haruko (長谷川春子, 1895-1967), Arima Satoe, Yoshida Fujio, Fukazawa Kohko (深沢紅子, 1903-1993), Kai Hitoyo (甲斐仁代, 1902-1963), Kametaka Fumiko, and Fumiko's daughter, Kametaka Miyoko (亀高みよ子, 1910-?). For more on the covers, see Allen, "Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives," 111-114; Ogata Akiko, "'Nyonin geijutsu' to gaka tachi," in *Hashiru onna tachi: josei gaka no senzen sengo 1930-1950*

with the more radical magazine content—collectively they project an image of modern femininity that is affluent, self-assured, and domestically centered.¹⁰⁰ Fujio’s connection to the magazine and the circumstances for her cover are unknown, yet as a prominent, well-to-do female cultural figure, her inclusion is consistent with the other women involved in the magazine. Like the Shuyōkai, *Nyonin geijutsu* exemplifies a complex response to modern gender structures, with women participants navigating their desire to expand opportunities and rights for women while contending with societal and self-imposed expectations toward appropriate feminine behavior. Fujio’s involvement with the Shuyōkai and *Nyonin geijutsu* mimics this dynamic. She was certainly sympathetic with and perhaps even an advocate for the women’s movement even as she consciously decided to limit her activities to female-only spaces, thereby confining herself within the realm of the “feminine.” Allen views the flattening and abstraction present in the *Nyonin geijutsu* cover, *Untitled (Yellow Dahlias)* (無題 (黄色いダリア), c. 1928) (Figure 4.30), as a Fujio “restless to escape from the tyranny of ‘suitable’ subject matter, seeking new, progressive styles, and hoping to express an original vision.”¹⁰¹ In contrast, I would argue that Fujio was embracing the “suitability” of still life, finding not tyranny, but possibility. Her turn to still lifes brought her closer in line with performing an idealized femininity, which ironically freed her to seek new, progressive styles and ideas.

nendai, ed. Kokatsu Reiko (Utsunomiya: Tochigi Kenritsu Bijutsukan, 2001): 121-126; Frederick, *Turning Pages*, 166-170.

¹⁰⁰ Allen, “Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives,” 112-13.

¹⁰¹ Allen, “Modern Girls, Working Women and Housewives,” 114.

Fujio's redefinition of her professional activity towards feminine acceptability was concurrent with an exploration of new painting styles. There was a clear disruption between her early period and the works she produced after she returned to painting. Compared to *Spirit Grove* (Figure 4.19a), *Untitled (Cherry Trees at a Temple)* (Figure 4.31a) feels like the work of a different artist. The painting depicts the grounds of a temple during cherry blossom season, a small *temizuya* (water basin for ritual cleaning) in front of a tangle of tree trunks and light pink blossoms. The watercolor is thinly and quickly applied in loose brush strokes. Rather than striving for naturalistic fidelity, Fujio is now merely suggesting the texture of the tree bark (Figure 4.31b). The jumbled, haphazard brushstrokes are reminiscent of her very early work, such as *Cherry Trees* (桜, 1903) (Figure 4.32a), as a comparison of her treatment of the blossoms in each shows (Figures 4.31c and Figure 4.32b). Her return to her early inclinations towards impressionistic, albeit messy, brushwork suggests a resetting of her style and an effort to move in a more idiosyncratic direction.

The fruits of Fujio's transition are evident in *Untitled (Mountain Stream)* (無題 (溪流)), (Figure 4.33a). An undated, unsigned work, it depicts a rushing stream against a rocky outcropping with vegetation growing from its crevices. The bottom third of the composition is a careful study of the shifting colors of the water as it slips over rocks. A comparison between this work (Figure 4.33b) and *Venice* (Figure 4.15b) highlights the shift in her approach. While *Venice* also labors to express the minute differences in the canal's waters, Fujio's thick use of watercolor created a stilted and belabored impression. In *Mountain Stream* Fujio loosened up and moved a step away from naturalism, employing short lines of different colors to convey the

motion and color spectrum of the stream. The upper portion of the composition is an even further step away from naturalism and verges on abstraction. As Fujio moved up the composition the natural forms became less and less legible, lines dissolving into patches of color (Figures 4.33c and 4.33d). Unlike her prior work, which used a more expansive vantage point, in this painting Fujio tightly cropped the composition, leaving few clues to the stream's location. In her earlier work, the viewer could always situate themselves in time and place. Gradually, Fujio's work post-Meiji narrowed in focus, zooming in to create more intimate scenes. At the same time, the physical size of her paintings became larger, lending a sense of monumentality to her depiction of small vistas. The result is a more authorial impression. As *Mountain Stream* attests, she was able to use a wide range of techniques to bring forth her unique experience of a time and place. In place of naturalistic fidelity, she depicted the feeling of warm sunlight bouncing off the rocks and stream, the sound of water rushing, the cool air of the deep crevice in the rocks. The exact shape of the green leaves is unimportant next to her feeling of this moment.

Fujio's experimentation with new styles and expressions comes across clearly in her still lifes. Fujio favored compositions that were dominated by a vase filled with a bouquet of flowers. Yet her mode of painting was quite varied, as a comparison between *Untitled (Cattleyas)* (無題 (カトレア), (Figure 4.34a) and *Untitled (Flowers by a Window)* (無題 (窓辺の花) (Figure 4.35a) illuminates. In *Cattleyas*, Fujio indulged in her tendency to overpaint—the surface of the paper is teeming with brushstrokes. The resulting effect is one of flatness, with every object seeming to have the same texture. This flatness is emphasized by the introduction of hard

outlines to portions of the two vases and some of the flower petals. Although she was a master at texture and naturalism, Fujio here seems more preoccupied with studying color. A detail (Figure 4.34b) demonstrates Fujio's minute attention to the shifts in color on the small yellow vase and the shades of pink on each flower petal.

In *Untitled (Flowers by a Window)*, however, Fujio was enthralled with the effects of light filtered through lace on a sunny afternoon. Fujio experimented with diagonal lines across the flowers and lace, dissolving the flowers' distinct forms and creating an ethereal impression that contrasts with the solidity of the objects in *Cattleyas* (Figure 4.35b). The painting's sense of lightness is reinforced with Fujio's treatment of the reflective surface of the wooden table. Rather than feeling solid and heavy, by cropping the composition to the area of the table that reflects the sky, Fujio has given the entire composition an airy feel.

Her work from this period can often feel disjointed. *Untitled (Three Vases)* offers a stark contrast between hyper-naturalism and flatness (Figure 4.36). The glossy surface of two indigo blue vases are so convincingly replicated that one could almost reach into the painting and hold them. Yet the perspective on the table is awkward, and Fujio's depiction of the tablecloth flattens the space. The non-descript brown background further compresses the space of the painting. The vases do not sit on the table in a three-dimensional space so much as hover on the paper. In *Untitled (Blue Vase with Carnations)* (Figure 4.37) and *Untitled (Red Vase with Flowers)* (Figure 4.38), Fujio lavished attention on the reflective surfaces of the vases, creating an accurate depiction of their texture and mass that fools the eye into believing they

are tangible objects and not just paint on paper. In contrast, the flowers retain their painted quality. The petals, stems, and leaves all have the same muted, chalky tone.

Free from the pressures of creating work for commission or the competitive exhibitions, Fujio was able to explore aspects of painting that had long interested her—color and light. Each of the above discussed paintings was a private, unexhibited work. The uneven treatment of individual elements in the paintings is not a reflection of Fujio’s skill, but rather her increased freedom to paint as it interested her. In the process, Fujio increased the presence of her painterly hand and individual perspective.

The surprise of Fujio’s work from this period is that in accommodating gender norms, she found the self-assurance to develop her unique voice. *Untitled (Blue Vase with Pomegranates)* (Figure 4.39) exemplifies a dynamism that had been absent from her early period. A burst of pomegranates spill out from what was clearly one of Fujio’s favorite vases. As with other paintings of this type, Fujio lavished attention on the glossy blues of the vase but rendered the pomegranates and background with the same matte finish. Here, however, the differing treatments of the vase and plants works to the composition’s advantage. The blues and greens of the vase shift and pool into each other, contrasting with the sharp spikiness of the branches. The tension between the two is charged, offering a powerful, vital impression. Fujio, as with her other works from this era, cropped the composition, cutting off the edges of the branches. But because the work is so large, the overall impression is not of a Fujio turning inward, but rather exploding outward. In her hands, Fujio transformed the everyday into something monumental.

Fujio's long period of experimentation led her to a new, more positive relationship with art making and after the war she was able to fully assert herself as an artist.¹⁰² Starting as early as 1949 and extending into the 1970s Fujio turned to abstraction, painting close up flower compositions such as *Flower (Rhythm)* (花 (リズム)), 1951) (Figure 4.40)¹⁰³ and *Untitled (Abstraction in Pink)* (無題 (抽象 ピンク)), (Figure 4.41). She would use a glass bowl filled with water to distort the shape of the flowers.¹⁰⁴ These works should be understood as a natural evolution of Fujio's practice and her readiness to experiment with new modes of painting. In referring to her abstract work in her memoir, Fujio wrote that she did not consider herself to be an artist of great ambition and that rather than pursuing a specific style agenda, she seriously considered each work and used painting to explore her own world.¹⁰⁵

Abstraction marked a new way of engaging with her world.

¹⁰² Fujio's wartime activities are outside the scope of this chapter and deserve fuller consideration elsewhere. As with most artists alive during this period, Fujio and Hiroshi created war propaganda images. Fujio painted figure paintings of women and girls working in factories to support the war effort. She also participated in the Joryū bijutsuka hōkōtai (女流美術家奉公隊, Women Artists' Public Service Corps). Hiroshi was sent to the front as a war artist and created several images of planes and soldiers. During the Allied Occupation, Fujio and Hiroshi had strong ties to American service members and their families. Jean MacArthur, wife of General MacArthur, visited the Yoshida residence and Fujio formed the Japanese-American Ladies' Club to strengthen ties with American patrons of Hiroshi's prints. For a brief discussion of this time from Fujio's perspective, see Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 137-39. In secondary scholarship, see Allen, "The Yoshida Women," 158. Reproductions of Fujio's wartime paintings can be found in *Yoshida Fujio ten*, 86. For information on the Joryū bijutsuka hōkōtai, see Kira, *Sensō to josei gaka*; Maki Kaneko, "New Art Collectives in the Service of the War: The Formation of Art Organizations during the Asia-Pacific War," *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 21, no. 2 (2013): 309-50; For information on Hiroshi's wartime activities, see Brown, "Out of the Dark Valley."

¹⁰³ These compositions are reminiscent of Georgia O'Keeffe's work but the Yoshida family denies that Fujio was consciously influenced by O'Keeffe. Allen, "The Yoshida Women," 159. A contemporary comparison between Fujio and O'Keeffe is: Elise Grilli, "Woshida Like O'Keeffe," *Nippon Times* (Nov. 25, 1953).

¹⁰⁴ Personal conversation with Yoshida Ayomi, summer 2022.

¹⁰⁵ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 116.

Fujio's shift to abstraction was significant because it represented the culmination of her efforts to develop an artistic identity that was distinct from Hiroshi and the establishment painters he symbolized. Hiroshi abhorred abstract styles and strongly disapproved of modern trends.¹⁰⁶ That Fujio would attempt such a style was a significant assertion of individuality. Hiroshi had tried to mold Fujio in his image, dictating what and how she painted. But gradually Fujio asserted herself, reclaiming art making as an occupation she enjoyed and voluntarily pursued. Hiroshi died in 1950, one year after Fujio began experimenting with abstraction. Although Fujio deeply mourned his passing, his absence freed her. While she had worked in watercolors at Hiroshi's suggestion, after his death oil painting became more common in her oeuvre. She felt that oils were easier because they were slower to dry and could be reworked as many times as she wanted.¹⁰⁷ Hiroshi's attitude towards painting had always been stern and serious, but Fujio preferred a more lighthearted approach. This outlook was reflected in her decision to try printmaking in the mid-1950s (Figures 4.42 and 4.43).¹⁰⁸ Fujio related her reasons in her memoir, after describing an episode in her youth when Hiroshi ordered her to sketch hydrangeas a long way from their house, which she walked to while crying:

With such a spartan education, Hiroshi was my husband but also a fearful teacher throughout my life, and as other people saw, his influence on my painting was strongly expressed. I could not stand by like this, and so several years after Hiroshi died, suddenly, I tried woodblock prints. In a modern mode I made many flower works. I made these prints on impulse and I wonder what

¹⁰⁶ Hodaka refused to show his abstractions to Hiroshi, who had criticized them. He would sneak into the studio to paint after Hiroshi went to sleep and would only share his work with Fujio. Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 116.

¹⁰⁷ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 132.

¹⁰⁸ Fujio had made a few prints in the 1920s, around the time Hiroshi was establishing his own print studio. For more on her printmaking in the 1950s, see Oliver Statler, *Modern Japanese Prints: An Art Reborn* (Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle, 1956), 171-172.

face Hiroshi would have made if he saw them, I think he would have quickly stuck his tongue out. I took one bunch of ornamental kale and drew it largely and made a print, and another of a small morning glory-like flower called [Nasturtium]. I used *bokashi* and printed it dozens of times. It is beautiful to layer colors over and over again. Then I made several prints of flowers and I had fun by myself, but when I suddenly remembered Hiroshi's severe, daily training, I was startled all over again. After that, I stopped making prints.¹⁰⁹

This quote illuminates the complicated dynamic between Fujio and Hiroshi, and the scars his domineering and exacting personality left on Fujio and her relationship with art making. Hiroshi wanted Fujio to give herself over to painting and be willing to sacrifice personal comfort. He wanted her to be the same as him. But Fujio wanted to be herself. She enjoyed art production but was not willing to go as far as Hiroshi in pursuit of an establishment career. After Hiroshi died, Fujio felt free to try new styles that she knew he disapproved of, and she had fun doing so. But the painful memories remained, and she was not willing to pursue print making to the same level of obsession as Hiroshi. Once again, Fujio shied away from becoming Hiroshi's copy—she stopped creating prints before the process overtook the pleasurable aspects of art making that she had worked to restore.

By the end of her life, Fujio had embraced her identity as an artist. At the age of ninety-two she held her first solo exhibition and got dressed up every day to visit the show.¹¹⁰ She continued to paint, moving between abstraction and naturalism, oils and watercolors, up until she was bed-ridden. Hiroshi was no longer there to push her to paint—she was doing so because she wanted to. Fujio reflected that “For a time I

¹⁰⁹Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 103-4.

¹¹⁰ Personal conversation with Yoshida Ayomi, summer 2022.

had been troubled and lost, but for me, after all, painting ended up being my life companion.”¹¹¹

Conclusion

Fujio’s journey towards artistic self-determination by embracing the “female artist” archetype is, in many respects, the opposite of the other women artists discussed in the pages of this dissertation. Her goal was not establishment success, yet she started her career in an insider position, benefiting from access to artistic training and professional spaces that were male domains. Kajiwara Hisako, Shima Seien, and Kametaka Fumiko all fought to be included in the establishment, while Fujio fought to be outside it. Each artist, however, had to contend with pervasive and varied forms of sexism which hindered her agency and self-actualization. Fujio is an important case study for nuancing our understanding of how sexism manifested and how women artists responded to it in modern Japan. In Fujio’s case, gender bias was most tangible in her relationship with Hiroshi, who dominated her personal and professional lives. As a *yōga* painter, Fujio was in an impossible position, forced by Hiroshi to try and be the unachievable—a (male) artist. After the tragedies with her children, Fujio was further subject to internalized sexism, believing that she could not, and realizing that she perhaps did not want to be, both a good mother and a professional artist. Yet, Fujio loved art making. The conundrum she faced, that all the women artists discussed faced, was how to pursue her passion for art within a

¹¹¹ Yoshida Fujio, *Shuyō no ki*, 120.

discriminatory system. Fujio chose to retreat into the feminine realm: her work became more private, adhered to gendered subject matter, and was exhibited primarily with the Shuyōkai. The female gendered nature of her later career was undoubtedly a marker of oppression, but it was also, contradictorily, a source of freedom. It is ironic that Fujio's adoption of the constricting "female artist" led to her expansion into new styles, subjects, and mediums. Her choice and the results are understandable, however, when one considers that her goals were not professional accolades but the ability to make art for the pure pleasure of it.

Fujio is important, too, because of the ways her choices challenge our valuation of the feminine and the metrics of artistic success. Fujio has fallen out of art history because she left male centers of art world power, and her diminished position might be mistaken as an example of failure. Fujio spent the establishment part of her career conforming to the expectations of the institutional art world and of Hiroshi. I have argued that the second part of her career, when she acted as the "female artist," was characterized by an increase of agency and a purposeful quest for a mode of art making that afforded her greater self-determination and happiness. Is that not, also, a form of success? A reframing of Fujio's career that centers her goals affords us a new appreciation of Fujio's choices and the unique opportunities that were available in feminine domains. It also suggests a pathway to evaluating the work of other women who similarly operated at the margins of the art world. For every exceptional Shima Seien or Kajiwara Hisako, there were countless women who participated in art making beyond the establishment framework. Instead of seeing these women as irrelevant, Fujio's case study reveals the necessity of considering not just their

contributions to art history, but also how art contributed to their sense of self and facilitated their individual ambitions. Once Fujio redefined the role of art in her own life from obligation to companion, she emerged from Hiroshi's shadow to become an artist on her own terms.

Coda:

The “Female Artist” Perpetuated

Kametaka Fumiko’s *Hanare yuku kokoro* (Figure C.1a) is a self-portrait with a puzzling feature—it partly recreates a portrait of Fumiko by her late husband, Watanabe Yohei (渡辺与平, 1889-1912) (Figure C.2).¹ Yohei’s *Study* (習作, 1910) is a small, bust-length oil painting that depicts Fumiko, aged twenty-four, with an enigmatic expression on her face. Her eyes are downcast and turned to the right and her lips hold just the slightest hint of a smile. Yohei paid the most attention to Fumiko’s face, modeling her full cheeks using expressive, diagonal brush strokes and slight modulations in color. The rest of the painting has the appearance of a sketch. Her voluminous black hair is reduced to a planar shape, with bits of the canvas peeking through the thinly applied paint. The nondescript gray background is made up of parallel, vertical brush strokes and Fumiko’s plaid white kimono is merely suggested. In *Hanare yuku kokoro*, Fumiko expanded Yohei’s portrait to include her torso, depicting herself in an *igeta* (well) patterned navy kimono with a circle patterned *obi* over which she wears a white apron. The background wall is divided

¹ The English translation given by the Sen-oku hakukōkan, which owns the work, is *Out of Sight, Out of Mind*. I believe this translation does not capture the emotional complexity at play in the painting and will read as too nonchalant to English readers, so I have opted for *Disengaging Heart*, the translated title given in *Watanabe Yohei ten*. The Japanese phrase 心が離れる (*kokoro ga hanareru*) means to fall out of love, or drift apart from. Fumiko’s title, which modifies the verb *hanareru* (to be separated) with the directional phrase *yuku* (to go) suggests distance from the speaker; *kokoro* means heart. In this case, other possible translations could be “A Heart, Disengaging” or “Love, Falling Away.” See Sen-oku Hakukōkan Tokyo, *Sumitomo Collection: Paintings and Sculpture of the 19th-20th Centuries from Europe and Japan* (Kyoto: Sen-oku Hakukōkan, 2022), 177; Nagasakiken bijutsukan, *Watanabe Yohei ten: zuroku*, Nagasaki no bijutsu 3 (Nagasaki: Nagasakiken bijutsukan, 2008), 56. My thanks to Esteban Ramos for his translation assistance.

into an upper beige portion and a small band of dark gray at the bottom. Unlike the pervasive gray tone of Yohei's work, Fumiko's painting is much brighter—she used pigments with whiter tones, added more red to her face, and created greater contrast through her clothing choices. Fumiko made further, subtle changes to her face and hair (Figure C.1b). She rounded the contour of her hair and made it narrower. She thinned her face, created harder lines along the outline of her cheeks and jaw, and contoured her nose. The brighter palette makes her brush strokes more evident—the highlights on her eyelids make them seem heavy, while the diagonal brush strokes on her cheeks pull her face downward. These changes age Fumiko, who was then twenty-seven, and turn her expression more wistful. Yohei's name in the upper left has been replaced by Fumiko's signature in the bottom right corner.

Hanare yuku kokoro is not a well-discussed painting but the brief mentions of it in scholarship emphasize Fumiko's "copying" of Yohei's painting.² More than just indicating the replication of Yohei's *Study*, these sources question Fumiko's authorship of her painting. In *Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen: tokubetsuten Kōbe no bijutsuka*, the only exhibition catalog devoted to Fumiko and the most comprehensive source on her to date, the catalog entry for *Hanare yuku kokoro* states, "Fumiko's work during this period, whether it's her illustration work or exhibition work, give off the feeling that they may have been painted by Yohei, or that they have a lingering echo of Yohei's work."³ Tsuji Tomomi's essay further asserts that Fumiko "copied exactly" Yohei's portrait and suggests that Fumiko adopted Yohei's painting

² Sen-oku Hakukōkan Tokyo, *Sumitomo Collection*, 177; *Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen: tokubetsuten Kōbe no bijutsuka* (Kōbe: Kōbe Shiritsu Koiso Kinen Bijutsukan, 2009), 21.

³ *Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen*, 21.

style in the years immediately following his death, reusing some of his compositions and illustration work.⁴ Similarly, when *Hanare yuku kokoro* was exhibited in the summer of 2022 at the Sen-oku Hakukokan Museum, Tokyo, the gallery label suggested that it was Yohei who had painted Fumiko's head. At best, Fumiko is positioned as a follower of Yohei, her work derivative of his. At worst, Yohei is credited as the true artist. Regardless, Fumiko's autonomy in painting her self-portrait has been greatly diminished.

The primacy Yohei is given over Fumiko is, this coda seeks to prove, the result of ongoing gender bias in scholarship. The crediting of modern Japanese women artists' painting style to a male figure—her husband or her teacher—was, and remains, a common pattern.⁵ Questions of stylistic influence in art history have long been plagued with power imbalances, creating the perception that disempowered artists are passive imitators of trends that have been popularized by empowered artists, almost always male and hailing from Euro-American countries.⁶ At the heart of these issues of stylistic influence is the privilege of who gets to be called an artist—

⁴ Tsuji Tomomi, "Kametaka Fumiko no kaiga," in *Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen: tokubetsuten Kōbe no bijutsuka* (Kōbe: Kōbe Shiritsu Koiso Kinen Bijutsukan, 2009), 111.

⁵ Modern Japanese women writers' work was also dismissed as being authored by or derivative of men writers. See Copeland, *Lost Leaves*.

⁶ For discussions on how geo-political power relations have influenced the reception of non-Western modern art, see Partha Mitter, "Prologue," *The Triumph of Modernism: Indian's artists and the avant-garde 1922-1947* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2007); Inaga Shigemi, "The Impossible Avant-Garde in Japan: Does the Avant-Garde Exist in the Third World? Japan's Example: A Borderline Case of Misunderstanding in Aesthetic Intercultural Exchange," *Yearbook of comparative and general literature* 41 (1993): 67-75; Volk, "Introduction," *In Pursuit of Universalism*; Erjavec Aleš, ed., *Aesthetic Revolutions and Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde Movements* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015). For general discussions of how women's work has been overshadowed by their male peers, see Whitney Chadwick and Isabelle De Courtivron, eds., *Significant Others: Creativity & Intimate Partnership* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1993); Salomon, "The Art Historical Canon"; Schleif, "The Roles of Women in Challenging the Canon of 'Great Master' Art History"; Kristen Frederickson, "Introduction: Histories, Silences, and Stories," in *Singular Women: Writing the Artist*, eds. Kristen Frederickson and Sarah E. Webb (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003): 1-20; Hyde, "'Peinte Par Elle-Même?'"

a title that confers on individuals the desirable traits of creativity, originality, and even, genius.⁷ The pervasive positioning of women artists as mimicking men “originators” diminishes their artistic abilities and maintains the male-dominated status quo, where men are Artists and women are artists*, their work qualified as somehow lesser. In modern Japanese art history, the secondary status of women artists is compounded by the legacy of the “female artist.” Fumiko is yet another example of an establishment woman artist who cultivated a performance of the “female artist” in exchange for professional success and social respectability. As a result, her individuality, creativity, and ambition were obscured and she fed, unwittingly, into biased perceptions of women artists that continue to be perpetuated to this day. To restore the title of “Artist” to modern Japanese women artists, the art historian is required to identify and question the reductive patterns that have been written and recycled in the historical record. This coda begins that work for Kametaka Fumiko. I start by questioning the idea that Fumiko copied Yohei in her self-portrait, and prove that it was her own work. I then turn my focus to Fumiko’s biography and self-presentation, arguing that changing our analytical framework and centering Fumiko’s goals and consequent decisions in the making of *Hanare yuku kokoro* is necessary to overcome her art historical effacement.

⁷ Nochlin, “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists”; Christine Battersby, *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics*, A Midland Book, Mb 578 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990).

Copy versus Adaptation

A comprehensive, comparative analysis of Fumiko and Yohei's painting styles was not possible for this study. In Yohei's case, his early death at age twenty-two meant his painting production was small, and I was only able to survey two of his paintings.⁸ Fumiko has only a handful of paintings in museum collections and most of her work and archival material remain in private hands.⁹ Attempts to contact Fumiko's descendants went unanswered. The lack of published resources on Fumiko, who had a long and prominent career, is itself evidence of sexism—scholarship on women artists has long lagged that of men artists.

Still, even a cursory investigation into the two artists reveals that it is false to credit Yohei with *Hanare yuku kokoro*'s painting idiom.¹⁰ Yohei favored visible brush strokes that gave his paintings a textured surface and he was influenced by pointillism. A representative example of his style is *Flannel Kimono* (ネルのきもの,

⁸ In addition to *Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen*, the best source of information on and analysis of Fumiko is Yamasaki, "Shōwa shoki joshi yōga juku ni kansuru kenkyū". Discussions of Fumiko also appear in studies of women's art education during the early twentieth century, such as Kira, "Kindai Nihon ni okeru josei to bijutsu no shakaishiteki kōsatsu." Or in discussions of women and modern art systems, such as Kojima, "Kindai Nihon no joseigakatachi"; and Kokatsu, ed. *Hashiru onna tachi*. Fumiko's activities with the women's art group the Shuyōkai are discussed in Omura, "āto to sekai (dai 16 wa): Kametaka Fumiko to Shuyō (poinsechia)"; and *Dai 100 kai kinen: Shuyōkai shi*.

Information on and reproductions of Fumiko's illustration work can be found in *Katō Masao - Sudō Shigeru - Watanabe Fumiko*, *Nihon No Dōga*, 5. Tōkyō: Daiichi Hōki Shuppan, 1981. The best sources of information on Yohei are *Watanabe Yohei ten* and *Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen*.

⁹ Fumiko's paintings are held in the collections of the Sen-oku Hakukokan Museum Tokyo, the Nagasaki Prefectural Art Museum, the Otani Memorial Art Museum, Nishinomiya City, and the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art. Her illustration work for women's and children's magazines is more widely accessible; many examples can be found in the Center for International Children's Literature, Osaka Prefectural Central Library.

¹⁰ A more convincing case can be made for Fumiko's adoption of Yohei's illustration idiom, which was known in the modern period as "Yohei style" (*Yohei shiki*). Yohei's illustrations featured children and women with big eyes and heads atop deliberately amateurish bodies, reminiscent of the now much more well-known work of Takehisa Yumeji (竹久夢二, 1884-1934). Fumiko's illustrations are very similar in style, and Tsuji has demonstrated instances of direct copying. Research into Fumiko's illustration and graphic work are beyond the scope of this discussion but deserve further study. See Tsuji, "Kametaka Fumiko no kaiga."

1910) (Figure C.3), a portrait of Fumiko painted soon after the birth of their first child. A tired-looking Fumiko sits in a wicker chair, staring at the viewer. Yohei has rendered Fumiko's face with textural, crisscrossing brushstrokes similar to those seen in *Study*. The green background wall is composed of thinly painted, diagonal brush strokes. The edge of a curtain on the left-hand side is made up of dots of different pastel colors. Without denying Yohei his own artistic agency, it is important to note that this style of oil painting was consistent with trends in the late Meiji period (1868-1912), and can be seen in the work of peers such as Aoki Shigeru (青木繁, 1882-1911) and Sakamoto Hanjiro (坂本繁二郎, 1882-1969) (Figures C.4 and C.5).¹¹ Moreover, it is similar to Fumiko's early work, *Girl with Japanese Hair Style* (日本の少女の髪, 1909) (Figure C.6), which also features divided brush strokes in the background. Certainly, *Hanare yuku kokoro* is very similar in style to Yohei's idiom, but this is unsurprising, given the artistic trends of the time and the fact that Yohei and Fumiko were classmates at the Taiheiyōgakai kenkyūjo, a prominent training center for *yōga* artists. In addition, they had an intimate relationship, and it is logical that they had a mutual influence on each other. Finally, as a close comparison of *Study* and *Hanare yuku kokoro*'s has already revealed, the two paintings are similar but not identical. Fumiko did not "copy," she *adapted*, and did so using a painting style that was just as much hers as Yohei's.

¹¹ For more on Aoki Shigeru and Sakamoto Hanjiro, see: Ito Eriko et al., *Futatsu no tabi: Aoki Shigeru, Sakamoto Hanjiro: seitan 140 nen* (Tokyo: Ishibashizaidan Artizon bijutsukan, 2022).

Fumiko's Motivations

Fumiko did not lack artistic ability or originality. Moving beyond these gendered assumptions opens up a new line of inquiry, one centered on Fumiko's motivation for citing *Study*. Fumiko's reasons were both personal and professional. She was clearly attached to *Study*. She refused to sell it even as she struggled for money after Yohei's death, and she hung it in her studio for decades, as an early Shōwa period (1926-1989) photograph of her teaching students at her Sekishosha Girls' Painting School attests (Figure C.7).¹² *Hanare yuku kokoro* likely conveys Fumiko's complex grief, remembering a special, shared moment with Yohei even as she acknowledges the passing of time through the changes to her face. The title suggests the process of moving on—Fumiko disengaging from her heart. In this way, *Hanare yuku kokoro* can be viewed as a deeply personal homage to her life with Yohei.

There is, however, another, more strategic motivation for her quotation of *Study* that comes into focus by considering Fumiko's status as a Japanese woman artist in the early twentieth century. Fumiko was a pioneer woman *yōga* painter and one of the most prominent Japanese women artists during the first few decades of the twentieth century. Fumiko's ability to become a professional artist was facilitated by her father, artist Watanabe Hōshū (渡辺豊州, 1863-1915), who had an extensive collection of foreign art books, lent her his painting materials, and supported her in her enrollment in the *yōga* division of the Joshibi (see Chapter One).¹³ After

¹² *Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen*, 81.

¹³ Hōshū was a commercial artist working for a foreign trading post and he was well versed in *nihonga* and watercolor painting, see *Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen* 18, 101. Examples of his western-style

graduation, Fumiko became a lifelong pupil of man artist Mitsutani Kunishirō (満谷国四郎, 1874-1936) and continued her training at the Taiheiyōgakai kenkyūjo under the tutelage of man artist Nakamura Fusetsu (中村不折, 1866-1943). Fumiko made her debut at the Bunten with *Shirokasuri* (白かすり, 1909) (Figure C.8). Fumiko had repeated success at the national salons throughout the modern period and can be described as an establishment painter. To reach this status required enormous determination, not only because the modern Japanese painting establishment was extremely competitive, but because she encountered gender discrimination at every stage of her career.

Fumiko balanced her professional ambitions with significant home responsibilities. She married Yohei in 1909 and gave birth to her daughter, Miyoko (みよ子), in 1910 and her son, Ichirō (一郎), in 1912. After Yohei died due to an illness, Fumiko refused her father's suggestion to remarry and she left her natal home to live independently, experiencing several years of financial hardship.¹⁴ Throughout the 1910s, Fumiko took on illustration and graphic design work to support her young

watercolor landscapes are reproduced in the same catalog, 54-57. Western art books and oil paints were rare and expensive in this period. Fumiko was also exposed to her father's circle of artist friends, who offered advice on her work and career. Her upbringing in Yokohama, an international port city, was also instrumental in exposing her to Western customs. Fumiko grew up eating Western foods, including tomatoes and cheese. Ōta Motoko, "Fumiko no e no ayumi: Yokohama · Tokyo · Kobe · Nishinomiya," in *Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen*, 10. Hōshū's support of his daughter's career is credited to his regrets at not becoming a fine artist himself and encouraging Fumiko to pursue their shared dream. *Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen*, 18.

¹⁴ Multigenerational households were common at this time. It is likely that Fumiko and Yohei lived with her parents, as Yohei was adopted into the Watanabe family. Fumiko's choice to leave her parent's home would have put added financial stress on her. It is unclear why she made this decision. *Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen*, 20.

children while continuing her painting production for the national exhibitions.¹⁵ In 1918, Fumiko married the wealthy ship captain Kametaka Goichi (亀高五市, d. 1931), with whom she had two sons, Yōsuke (洋介, b. 1919) and Sokichi (素吉, b. 1926). Fumiko was a founding member of the Shuyōkai and exhibited with the group from 1918-1929. She moved to Kobe in 1923 due to her husband's job and there established her Sekishosha Girls' Painting School. By 1941 she had mostly ceased her activities with the establishment art world and turned her attention to her school and local exhibitions.¹⁶ She continued to paint and teach until her death in 1977.

Fumiko's prominent position in the Japanese art establishment in the early twentieth century was due in no small part to how she molded her public image to fit hegemonic standards of femininity. Fumiko actively cultivated an image of herself as a "female artist," playing into gendered expectations that she be beautiful, accomplished, and devoted to her family. I posit that Fumiko's quotation of Yohei was part of her cultivation of the "female artist" persona. *Hanare yuku kokoro* was created as Fumiko was trying to make a name for herself as an artist while shouldering the sole financial responsibility for her family. She exhibited it at the seventh Bunten exhibition, a prestigious and popular venue, and she listed the painting for sale.¹⁷ Regardless of the personal dimension of the work, *Hanare yuku kokoro* was intended for a public audience. Fumiko as viewed through Yohei's eyes

¹⁵ Among her illustration work were *kuchi-e* (frontispiece illustrations) and illustrations for the magazines *Shōjo sekai*, *Shōjo gahō*, and *kodomo no tomo*. She also illustrated part of Yoshiya Nobuko's *Hanamonogatari*. See Kametaka Fumiko to sono shūhen, 11-12.

¹⁶ Tsuji, "Kametaka Fumiko no kaiga," 110.

¹⁷ The list price was one hundred yen. List prices for works exhibited at the Bunten can be found in Tokyo Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo Bijutsubu, ed., *Taishōki bijutsu tenrankai shuppin mokuroku*. The painting was sold to the Sumitomo family in 1914, along with *Flannel Kimono*, through the intermediary Kanokogi Takeshirō. Sen-oku Hakukōkan Tokyo, *Sumitomo Collection*, 177.

was an important part of her public persona as a “*bijin* artist.”¹⁸ Fumiko’s *bijin* reputation was solidified through Yohei’s portraits of her, *Flannel Kimono* and *Obi* (帯, 1911) (Figure C.9). Both paintings were exhibited at subsequent Buntens, bringing Fumiko as *bijin* into the national consciousness. Both portraits depict Fumiko in a domestic setting, presenting her not as a professional artist but as an object of beauty. The soft pastel color palette and mention of Fumiko’s flannel kimono in *Flannel Kimono* suffuse the painting with a quiet warmth appropriate to a loving scene of one’s wife after she has given birth. *Obi*, painted a year later, depicts Fumiko standing, in the midst of tying her bamboo patterned *obi* over her dark, striped kimono. Drawers open in a small vanity in the left background contribute to the painting’s intimate theme of Fumiko getting ready in their shared home. Through Yohei’s eyes, Fumiko was presented to the Japanese public as the ideal wife and mother.

The collapsing of Fumiko as individual with Fumiko as Yohei’s construction within the public consciousness is demonstrated by a photograph of her in front of *Obi* and staring at *Study* which appeared in the March 1912 edition of *Fujin gahō* (Figure C.10). The photograph is accompanied by an inset reproduction of Fumiko’s *Girl with Japanese Hair Style* and the text title “female artist and work.” The Japanese caption explains that Fumiko is Yohei’s wife and a graduate of Joshibi, identifies the work behind her as Yohei’s 1911 Buntens submission, and notes her work, *Reading*, was accepted to the Buntens the prior year. Curiously, the magazine does not reproduce *Reading* and makes no mention of the painting that is actually

¹⁸ Yamasaki, “Shōwa shoki joshi yōga juku ni kansuru kenkyū,” 595.

reproduced. The magazine acknowledges Fumiko as a decorated artist but positions her relationship with Yohei, and his images of her, as of greater importance and interest.

Hanare yuku kokoro strategically reinforces this perception of Fumiko. She painted herself, literally, as Yohei saw her. Like his *bijin* portraits of her, Fumiko presented herself as a passive figure, her white apron a nod to her domestic responsibilities.¹⁹ The touches of sadness she adds to her face enhance her self-presentation as devastated by the loss of her beloved husband.²⁰ It was a compelling narrative for a public that expected women to be completely devoted to their families, even to the point of self-effacement.

Fumiko would continue to present herself as a paragon of feminine virtue throughout her career. Her exhibition paintings such as *After Dinner* (食後, 1916) (Figure C.11), *Daniel's Story* (ダニエルの話, 1918) (Figure C.12), and *Reading* (読書, 1925) (Figure C.13) were scenes of domesticity that played with autobiography. *After Dinner* depicts a scene of a mother reading a story book to her daughter, who would have been about the same age as Fumiko's own daughter. The girl in each of the paintings seems to grow along with Fumiko's child, and indeed Fumiko often used her daughter as a model. Fumiko's focus on children as a subject might have

¹⁹ For more on the domestic symbolism of the white apron in early twentieth century Japan, see Sand, *House and Home in Modern Japan*, 68-73.

²⁰ Not everyone was persuaded by Fumiko's performance of a grieving widow. Art critic Yoshikawa Takeshi eviscerated Fumiko for, in his opinion, only putting on the act of a caring wife and mother when in reality she was cold and heartless. Yoshikawa's judgment of Fumiko comes from a book wherein he gossiped about the circumstances between various paintings. His writing on women artists was consistently misogynistic and the information he conveyed should be critically interrogated. Yoshikawa Takeshi, "Ihai ni tsumoru chiri: nazo no ai danieru no hanashi," in *Sakuhin ga kataru sakka no modae* (Tokyo: Taizanbō, 1918), 15-18.

been partly driven by expediency—a way to combine her painting and child rearing responsibilities—but it cannot be separated from the societal expectation that if women were to paint, they should paint feminine subjects like children or flowers. Fumiko adhered to gendered expectations while reminding viewers that she was a devoted mother, thereby softening her own transgression as a professional artist.

Fumiko followed a similar strategy of gender conformity when it came to her Sekishosha Girls' Painting School.²¹ The school was groundbreaking—one of the only places for young women from the Kobe region to learn *yōga* at a high level. Although none of her students became professional painters, they did compete in national exhibitions, and the school itself helped shift the perception that *yōga* was unsuitable for women. Fumiko accomplished this by presenting the school as a home-like environment where young girls could gain an appreciation for art and build the cultural capital necessary to marry well and raise intelligent children. In the book celebrating the school's tenth anniversary, Fumiko compared her students to jewels that would decorate their future spouses, implying that the purpose of an art education was not for women's own self-fulfillment but for the utility of their husbands.²² This is a seemingly hypocritical statement coming from a woman who had determinedly pursued a professional career and independent existence. Were these Fumiko's true sentiments, or the rhetoric she needed to espouse in order to enjoy that career? It is impossible to know. But the wealthy fathers of her students would not have sent their daughters, raised to become wives and mothers, to a school that was in any way

²¹ Information on the school and the gendered dynamics that surrounded it come from Allen's extensive analysis in "Shōwa shoki joshi yōga juku ni kansuru kenkyū."

²² Original quoted in Yamasaki, "Shōwa shoki joshi yōga juku ni kansuru kenkyū," 601.

disruptive to the gender status quo.²³ Fumiko's self-presentation as a model woman was instrumental to her painting and teaching career.

Conclusion

With this context, it becomes clear that *Hanare yuku kokoro*'s is both a deeply intimate self-portrait of Fumiko and a depiction of the "female artist." In this way, the painting is emblematic of how the "female artist" archetype was superimposed onto actual, living women artists. The "female artist" was a facade externally and internally imposed on women as a way to accommodate their professional ambitions without disrupting the dominant gender ideology. By necessity, Fumiko obscured her drive to be an artist, her savvy self-promotion, her organizational and managerial skills that aided her in running a successful school, and her dedication to advancing women's *yōga* opportunities behind a veil of normative femininity. In the intervening years that veil has only grown more opaque. Continuing systems of gender bias have equated femininity with insignificance, making it easy to discount Fumiko to the point that even her own painting abilities are erased. Perhaps this is why, when scholars have viewed *Hanare yuku kokoro* they did not see Fumiko, but Yohei's version of her.

To borrow the words of Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, "To discover the history of women and art is in part to account for the way art history is written. To expose its underlying values, its assumptions, its silences and its prejudices is also to

²³ Yamasaki, "Shōwa shoki joshi yōga juku ni kansuru kenkyū," 599-601.

understand that the way women artists are recorded and described is crucial to the definition of art and the artist in our society.”²⁴ Gender bias has led to the dismissal and devaluation of the stereotypically “feminine.” As a result, modern Japanese women artists, who by choice and by coercion were inextricably bound with the “female artist,” continue to be treated as secondary, their individual identities elided into a tokenized category. Extending Fumiko the courtesy of self-agency is necessary to bring her back into focus. Her career was marked by the impositions of sexism, but those need not be perpetuated. Centering Fumiko’s motivations, actions, and responses in the wake of gender bias helps dismantle the persistent positioning of her as a stereotypical “female artist.” Instead, we can see her as a person, and not just someone else’s copy.

²⁴ Parker and Pollock, *Old Mistresses*, 3.

Conclusion

This dissertation has uncovered, and expanded beyond, the entrenched visualization of modern Japanese women artists as the “female artist.” It points the way forward to a fuller consideration of modern Japanese women artists’ work, as well as a more equitable art history that can be reshaped to account for and value the contributions of heretofore marginalized artists.

One of the key contributions this dissertation makes is the identification of the “female artist” as the dominant way women artists were, and continue to be, visualized in social and scholarly settings. The dissertation engaged in this work through two streams. First, it laid out the systemic nature of gender discrimination in Japan’s modern period, whereby separate categories of artists were formed under the logic of gender segregation. Although contemporary readers will not be surprised by the existence of systemic sexism, gender discrimination took many forms, both general and specific, and formal and informal. This dissertation provided the most comprehensive examination to date, in English and Japanese language scholarship, of how modern Japanese gender ideology overwhelmingly conditioned the experiences of women painters, and set cultural expectations for their behavior and their art that did not exist for men. Although I focused on establishment women painters, these societal conditions may be extrapolated to other types of women artists who were equally subject to dominant gender ideology. The discussion of this history makes obvious the numerous and artificial ways gender was used to diminish women’s creative activities. It thereby discredits persistent myths that women’s secondary status in the arts and in society at large may be explained by the natural order of

things. Most importantly, it shows why an understanding of modern Japanese gender ideology is necessary. Gender bias literally conditioned the expressive choices these artists could make and the manner in which they presented themselves to the public, often concealing their true identities. These artists' work cannot be evaluated accurately without understanding the model to which they were expected to conform. Knowing this context allows us to engage with these women as they existed and to understand the coded language they were using, whether in words or in paint.

Second, the dissertation offered a shorthand through the naming of the "female artist" that contains and gives shape to what was often a complicated, contradictory, and changeable discriminatory environment. The "female artist," this study demonstrated, was a historical type that went by many names and permutations, a fact that has allowed it to remain unidentified to insidious effect in the historical record. But by considering the "female artist" phenomenon as a historical subject, this dissertation has made it visible and easily comprehensible. Exposing the existence of the "female artist" offers a way to *intervene* in the writing of art history. The biased patterns perpetuated in the scholarly discussions of modern Japanese women artists are now visible and nameable. It also allows the art historical conversation to move beyond merely acknowledging the marginalization of women artists, whether due to historical and historiographical roadblocks. By acting as a shorthand for a more complicated system, the "female artist" offers scholars a way to point to that system without expending their intellectual energy reiterating the existence of gender-based discrimination. Instead, scholars can use the "female artist" as a contextual foil in analyzing the complex and diverse strategies modern Japanese women artists

employed to further their artistic and personal goals within an oppressive system. What is necessary is an accounting of what women artists *did* with the limited power they had. In this way can the conversation shift from seeing them as gendered examples to autonomous agents.

The point of engaging with women artists is not merely to add better representation to the field of art history, but to explode the prevailing art and social categorizations that have flattened our understanding of the past and prevented us from embracing the rich complexity of diverse lived experiences. It is in the juxtaposition of the “female artist” with individual women artists that their personhood can stand in relief, and the inadequacy of the “female artist” as a stereotype becomes obvious. Through the discussions of four artists and their diverging interactions with the “female artist,” the dissertation revealed four unique personalities, life histories, ambitions, and artistic expressions. Individually, the analysis of each artist enhances our understanding of modern Japanese painting practices, art associations, artistic self-fashioning, the role of the mass media in the arts, and the role art plays in gender construction. Viewed in the aggregate, these artists disprove the lingering validity of the “female artist” stereotype. Their heterogeneity is a clear denial of the prevailing homogeneity with which art history has treated them. In successively examining each woman’s use of or departure from the “female artist,” and by privileging her voice and motivations, the dissertation demonstrated the rich art historical record that results from an adequate accounting of these individuals’ work.

Chapter Two began the methodological shift away from a focus on discrimination to how women artists navigated, compromised with, and expanded the boundaries of acceptable feminine artistic behavior. An important component of that shift was to acknowledge that even when disempowered, women artists were still active agents in their lives and exerted, to varying degrees, a measure of agency in their work and self-presentation. I focused my discussion on the spaces where women artists had some influence: women's magazines and their professional activities. Centering on Kajiwara Hisako's painting *Tranquility* and the press photographs of women artists in magazines, the chapter questioned the unnatural homogeneity in visual representations of the "female artist" and the reasons why women artists may have consciously participated in their own typification. Performing as the "female artist" was necessary for professional success, but many women chafed at the restrictive nature of the type and yearned for professional acknowledgement that extended beyond their gender. The chapter found that many women artists adopted a subtle strategy of compromise and micro-adjustments, agreeing to pose as the "female artist" who was, crucially, "in-production," visually representing themselves as serious artists. The detailed depiction of the *nihonga* painting process and tools Hisako employed in *Tranquility* can be interpreted as an attempt to confer value and authority on women's actual painting activity. *Tranquility* is often read as a conservative work, both a departure from Hisako's Taishō era depictions of working-class women and an endorsement of establishment values. Understanding Hisako as both an artist who aimed for establishment success and someone with a history of empathetic portrayals of women, however, reveals a new understanding of the

painting as an example of how women artists used the tools and visual language available to them to gradually improve the visualization of women artists.

Understanding women artists as not just beholden to, but in fact participants in shaping the visualization of the “female artist,” and investigating the reasons for that participation, illuminates facets of women artists’ agency and individuality that have so far gone unacknowledged.

Chapter Three continued to center the perspective and agency of women artists by diving into Shima Seien’s self-portraits and considering her painting practice as a site of resistance against the dehumanizing elements of the “female artist.” As explored in the chapter, Seien publicly performed as the “female artist” even as she struggled with gender discrimination. This discrimination, in the form of an unwelcome arranged marriage, led to an artistic depression that waylaid her later career and contributed to her diminished position in art history. The chapter, the first extended English language discussion of Seien and the only deep analysis of *Untitled* to this date, emphasizes Seien’s attempts to visualize the complexity of her identity and evade simplistic categorizations. Indeed, revealing how Seien saw herself exemplifies the problems with the labels we use to describe artists, as well as what is on offer when we give artists space to expand the fullness of their personhood. In Seien’s case, not only is the identifier of “female artist” inadequate, but so too are the labels of *nihonga*, *bijinga*, painter, and establishment artist. Alluded to in the chapter, and to be more fully explored in future research, is the boundary-crossing nature of Seien’s work, which combined different painting modes, expanded into graphic design, and moved between different artistic spheres. Meeting Seien as she was, not

as she was perceived, is an important step in questioning the utility of conventional art historical classifications.

On the other end of the spectrum from Seien was Yoshida Fujio, who embraced the “female artist” as part of an effort to gain more, not less, autonomy over her artistic expression. In many ways, Fujio was the anti-model of the establishment woman painter for her rejection of conventional measures of success, and her narrative does not fall neatly into oft-repeated feminist binaries of oppression and resistance. Fujio’s form of resistance was to accept normative femininity, and her case study thereby expands our understanding of the value and purpose of gender performance and pushes us to see gender-segregated spaces as both potentially oppressive and liberating. Moreover, her work, which is largely uncategorized, undated, and unsold, prompts us to question conventional art historical methods. It is impossible to establish, under a traditional approach, a concrete chronology of her work or determine which paintings were most important. But in this absence was an opportunity to focus on different aspects of her oeuvre and to privilege Fujio’s voice, as conveyed through her memoir and innumerable watercolors, to bring out a narrative of her goals and the means through which she realized them that was less shaped by traditional grooves. By listening to Fujio, the chapter shifts the interpretation of her from an artist who faded into obscurity due to gender discrimination into an artist who liberated herself from a domineering husband and found a new, more personally satisfying way to practice painting. Fujio’s example offers a way of reframing art historical metrics of value and considering how art was an important space for women’s self-actualization.

Moreover, Fujio, given her initial prominent position in the establishment and later move into more private realms of making, acts as a bridge to the currently anonymous women artists who operated outside the establishment and professional art worlds. What stories wait to be written, and how will they alter our understanding of the past, of human creativity, and the meaning and purpose of art? The organizational and archival challenges of studying Fujio's work are likely even more pronounced in unknown women artists' work. Instead of expecting the study of these women to conform to current art historical standards and methods, Fujio's case study suggests the need for methodological flexibility and creativity to recover their stories.

In a similar vein, the Coda interrogates the art historical biases that continue to marginalize women artists while highlighting the rich narratives that await scholars if we can move beyond inherited sexism. My discussion on Kametaka Fumiko was the least developed of the four artists because I had the least access to her archival materials and oeuvre. Despite her former prominence, Fumiko's work has been little collected, little studied, undervalued, and at times, misrepresented. But what I could uncover about her was compelling, and counter to how she is commonly discussed. The quandary I faced was whether to present her as an underdeveloped case study or to wait in the hope that I would one day receive better access to her work. I felt that to wait, however, was to perpetuate the structures of art history that continue to prevent the study of women, who are often less present in the historical record.¹ More work is

¹ Magdalena Kolodziej has discussed similar quandaries in her work on modern Japanese women artists, particularly in the case where the work itself has been destroyed and only exists in documentary photographs. Magdalena Kolodziej, "Jiko ni chūjitsu ni ikyōtoshita gaka – Funakoshi Mieko," *Kindai gassetsu*, no. 29 (2020): 93-105.

required on Fumiko, but I offered a start from which future analysis can be built.

Waiting does nothing to advance these critical conversations. My discussion of her is the first in the English language, and the first in any language to provide a detailed analysis of any of her paintings. The lack of information on Fumiko was illustrative of one of this dissertation's major arguments, that the "female artist" continues to condition how we visualize women artists. As with the other artists I discussed, to overcome the "female artist" requires acknowledging its existence as well as the possibility that Fumiko was someone more than the persona she performed in the press. Reframing the discussion of Fumiko to center on her motivations and choices within a gendered social system opened the door to seeing Fumiko anew as a complex individual and artist.

The opportunities for future research are limitless. By design, my discussion of Kajiwara Hisako, Shima Seien, Yoshida Fujio, and Kametaka Fumiko was limited to the issue of the "female artist," but each artist and her various paintings are worthy of more extended treatment, and consideration from multiple analytical modes. More can be said about "femininity," its permutations both within and outside the "female artist" paradigm and the spectrum of ways women artists, broadly conceived, interacted with it. To this end, women's artistic practices beyond establishment painting need attention. Women's sculptural practice, for example, is almost completely unexamined, and women makers outside the fine arts deserve sustained analysis. Not only is it important to expand our knowledge of women artists and their diverse practices from a representational perspective, the study of women artists is also vital to uncovering new methodological approaches and narratives, which may

be of use in envisioning a different type of art history, free from structural bias. It is critical that scholars address gender regardless of the artist. Equating gender with only women is inaccurate, outdated, and reinforces the othering of women artists. I do not believe the answer to this othering is to somehow transcend gender in our discussion of artists that were women. To do so would be to ignore the reality that gender ideology heavily conditioned their work. As exemplified by Yoshida Hiroshi, gender ideology shaped the work of all artists active in Japan's modern period. Much more work can be done to investigate the intersection between the concepts of artist, gender, and selfhood. Thoughtfully using gender as an analytical mode, as the work and artist requires it, leads to a better understanding of who these artists were, how they saw themselves, and what they were trying to communicate through their work. This dissertation has moved the conversation on women artists in modern Japanese art into a more accurate and expansive direction, but it is just one project. To really make an impact on addressing gender bias in the field, more and diverse voices are needed. It is only in the aggregate that real change can be accomplished and felt.

Art history is about the past, but it is equally about the present and the future. As long as we have a historical record that is substantially influenced by gender bias, we have an inaccurate understanding of the past, and we rob ourselves of the ability to see, comprehend, and move beyond the structures that facilitate inequality. The import of my work is in its refutation of societal and scholarly stereotypes and value systems, and its demonstration of how a feminist practice that treats marginalized subjects as inherently valuable and necessary can enrich scholarship and contribute to the building of an equitable future. This work demands a reconsideration of

established narratives and contributes a methodology for seeing women artists for who they were. It pushes us towards a fuller understanding of women's position in the world and the arts, the contributions they have made, and the potential they embody.

Images



Figure 1.1: Uemura Shōen, *Miyuki* (娘深雪), 1914, hanging scroll, color on silk, 153.0 x 84.0 cm. Adachi Museum of Art.



Figure 1.2: Uemura Shōen, *Preparing to Dance* (舞仕度), 1914, two-panel screen, color on silk, 160.0 x 188.0 cm. The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto.



Figure 1.3: “Shuyōkai yōga exhibition” (Shuyōkai yōga tenrankai), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 195 (Mar. 1922). National Diet Library.



Figure 1.4: Photograph of Antonio Fontanesi with a translator and women students from the Technical Fine Arts School, 1878. Front row from the right: Yamashita Rin, Kawaji Hanako, and Jinnaka Itoko. Back row from right: Akio Sono, Ōshima Hinako, Antonio Fontanesi, Yamamuro Masako, and Takemoto Gorō (translator). Image Source: Kaneko Kazuo, “Akio Sono to Kōbu Bijutsu Gakkō,” *Kindai gasetu* 24, Meiji Bijutsu Gakai (2015), 5.



Figure 1.5: Photograph of women students in a live model class at Joshibi, 1914. Image Source: Yamada Naoko, “Shiritsu joshi bijutsu gakkō/joshi bijutsu gakkō (1900-1929) ni oekru sei-yōgaka kyōiku,” *Joshi bijutsu daigaku kenkyū kiyō* no. 41 (2011), 8.



Figure 2.1a: Kajiwara Hisako, *Tranquility* (静閑), 1938, framed, color on silk, 159 x 202 cm. Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art.



Figure 2.1b: Kajiwara Hisako, *Tranquility* (detail)



Figure 2.1c: Kajiwara Hisako, *Tranquility* (detail)



Figure 2.2: Photograph of Kawasaki Ranko, “Female Artist in the Painting Room (Gashitu ni okeru keishūgaka), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 87 (Oct. 1913). National Diet Library.

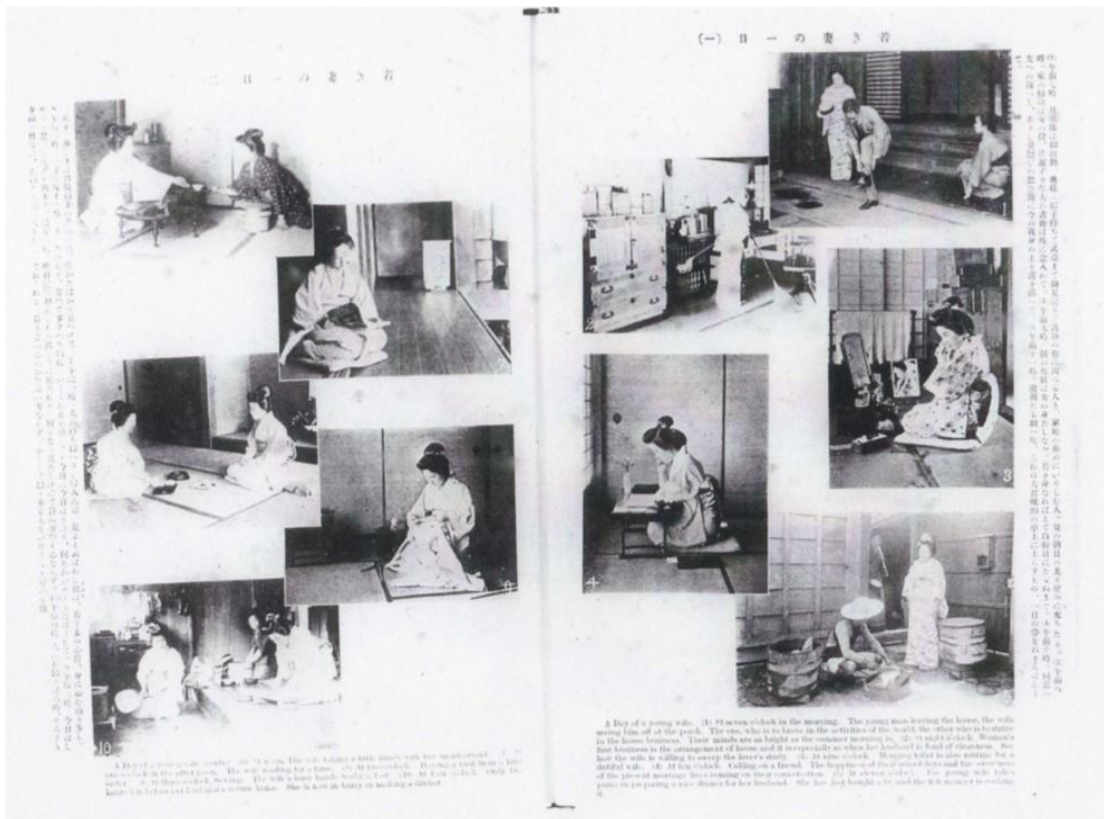


Figure 2.3: “A Day of a Young Wife” (Wakaki tsuma no ichinichi), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 44 (July 1910). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.4: Photograph of Yoshida Fujio and Ikeda Shōen, “Lady Yoshida Fujio and Lady Sakakibara Shōen” (Yoshida Fujio joshi to Sakakibara Shōen joshi), from *Fujin Gahō*, Special Issue (Jan. 1911). National Diet Library.

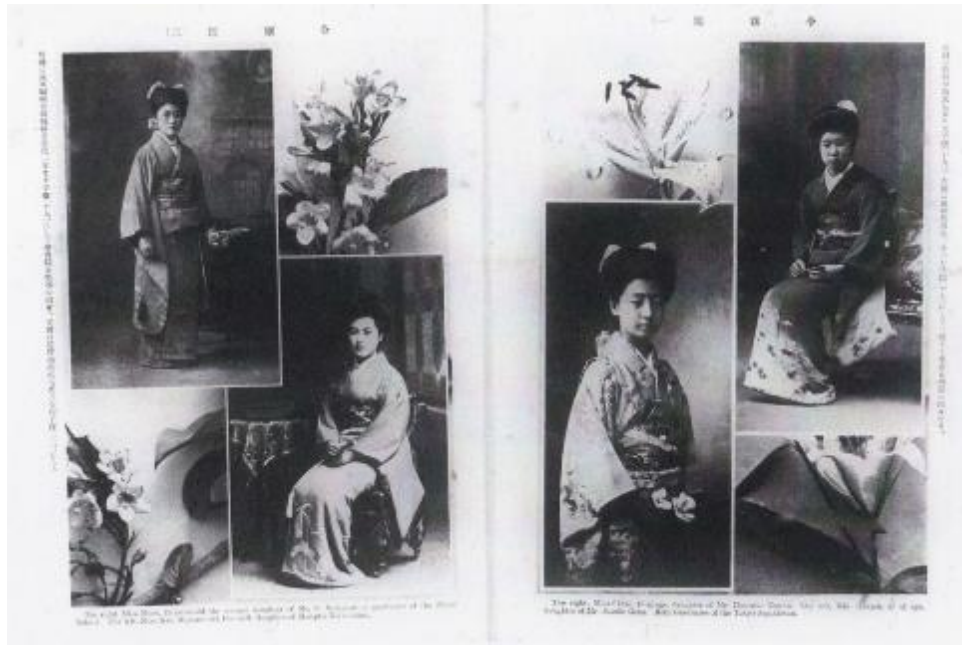


Figure 2.5: “Model Young Women” (Reijō kan), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 44 (July 1910). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.6: Photographs of Okawa Shukun and her work (top right), Inoue Yoshiko (bottom right), Kametaka Fumiko and her work (upper left), and work by Araki Geppo (lower left), “Female artists and their work selected for the Bunten” (Bunten nyūsen no keishūgaka to sono sakuhin), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 154 (Dec. 1918). National Diet Library.

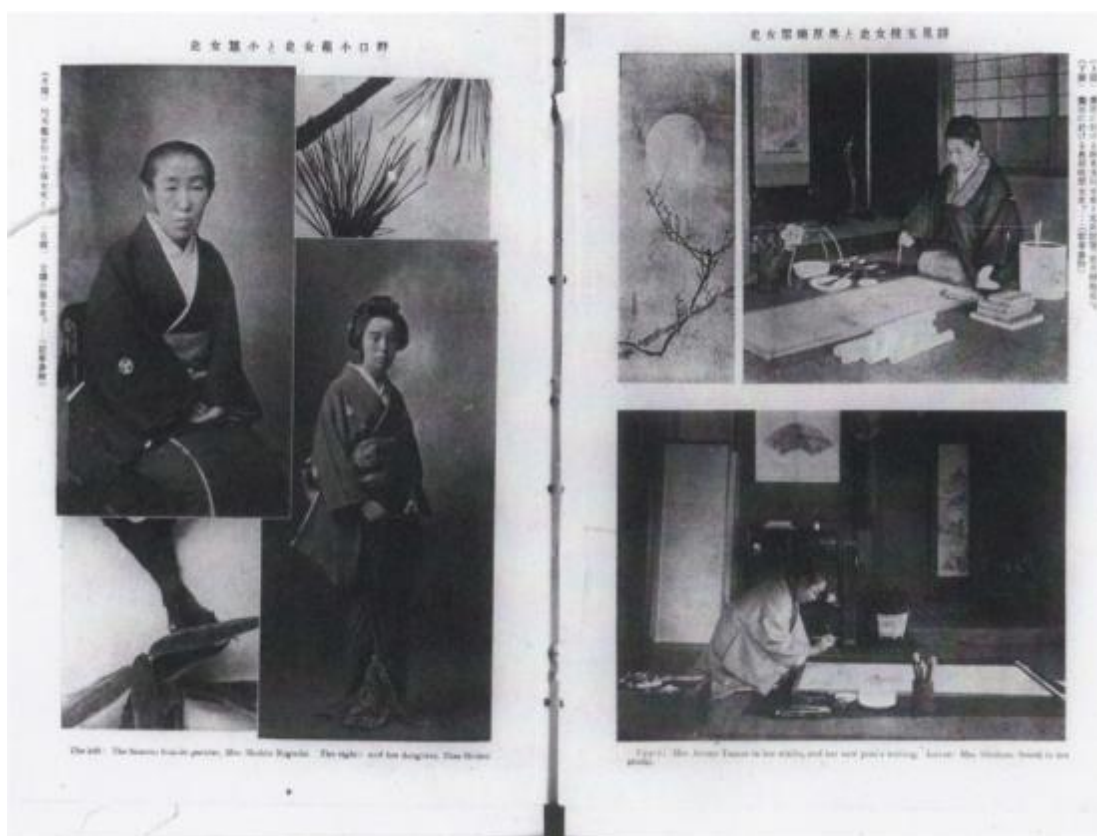


Figure 2.7: Photographs of women artists Atome Tamae (top right), Okuhara Seisui (bottom right), Noguchi Shōhin (top left) and Noguchi Shokei (bottom left). “Lady Atome Tamae and Lady Okuhara Seisui” (Atome Tamae joshi to Okuhara Seisui joshi) and “Lady Noguchi Shōhin and Lady Shokei” (Noguchi Shōhin joshi to Shokei joshi), from *Fujin Gahō*, Special Issue (Jan. 1911). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.8: Photographs of Kurihara Gyokuyō and her painting *Sasurahi*, "Sasurahi," from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 88 (Nov. 1913). National Diet Library.

新築畫室に於ける二名秀畫家



上は、京都に於ける新築畫室にて丹精の至りにいそしみつつある
下は、大阪なる新築畫室に於て揮毫中の光景です。



Upper:—Mochizuki Kenzō, a famous lady artist in Kyoto, painting a picture in her new studio.
Lower:—The lady artist Seien Shima, of Osaka, painting a picture in her new studio.

Figure 2.9: Photographs of Uemura Shōen (top) and Shima Seien (bottom), “Two Female Artists in [Their] Newly Constructed Studios” (Shin Chiku ni oite ni keishūgaka), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 106 (Mar. 1915). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.10: Photographs of Itō Shōha (upper right), Kitani Chigusa (upper middle), Matsumoto Kayo (lower middle), Lilian Fisk (upper left), Hayami Shokin (lower left) and two paintings by Kurihara Gyokuyō (bottom right), “Female Artists Mid-Production” (Kigōchū no keishūgaka), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 140 (Nov. 1917). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.11: Photographs of Uemura Shōen (top left), Shima Seien (top middle), Itō Shōha (top right), Hoshino Kōen (bottom right), and Kitani Chigusa (bottom left) with their paintings, “Five Female Artists Mid-Production” (Seisakuchū no go keishūgaka), from *Fujin gahō*, no. 153 (Nov. 1918). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.12: Oka Yoshie, *A Lady Painter* (女絵師), 1907, framed, oil paint, dimensions unknown, location unknown. Image Source: *Monbushō dai ichi kai bijutsu tenrankai zuroku* (Tokyo: Monbushō, 1907), 94.



史女園成島家畫秀畫

Figure 2.13: Illustration of Shima Seien, “Female Artist Lady Shima Seien” (Keishūgaka Shima Seien joshi), from from *Katei pakku* 2, no. 3 (Mar. 1913). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.14: Kaburaki Kiyokata, Kamiya Kakuhan, and Miyagawa Shuntei, *Shōjo shusse sugoroku*, from *Shōjo kai* 9, no. 1 (1910). National Library of Australia.



Figure 2.15: Photograph of Uemura Shōen sketching, “In the Painting Room” (Gashitsu ni te), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 114 (Oct. 1915). National Diet Library.

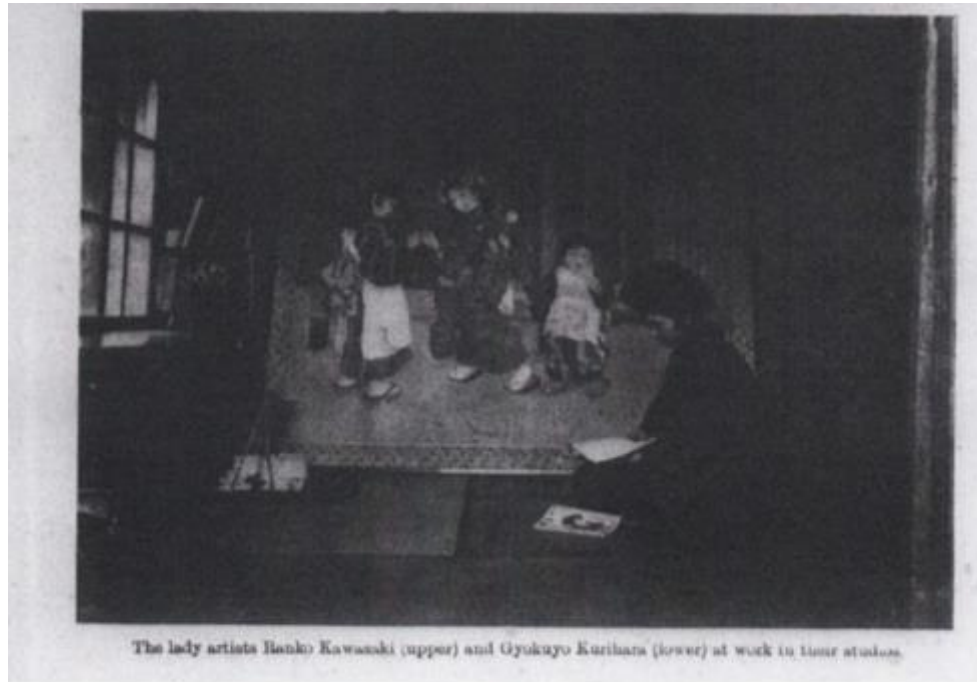


Figure 2.16: Photograph of Kurihara Gyokuyo in her studio (detail), “Two Female Artists Mid-Production” (Kigōchū no ni keishūgaka), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 94 (Apr. 1914). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.17: Photograph of Takayasu Yasuko, “Sketching” (Shasei), from *Fujin Gahō*, Special Issue (Apr. 1916). National Diet Library.

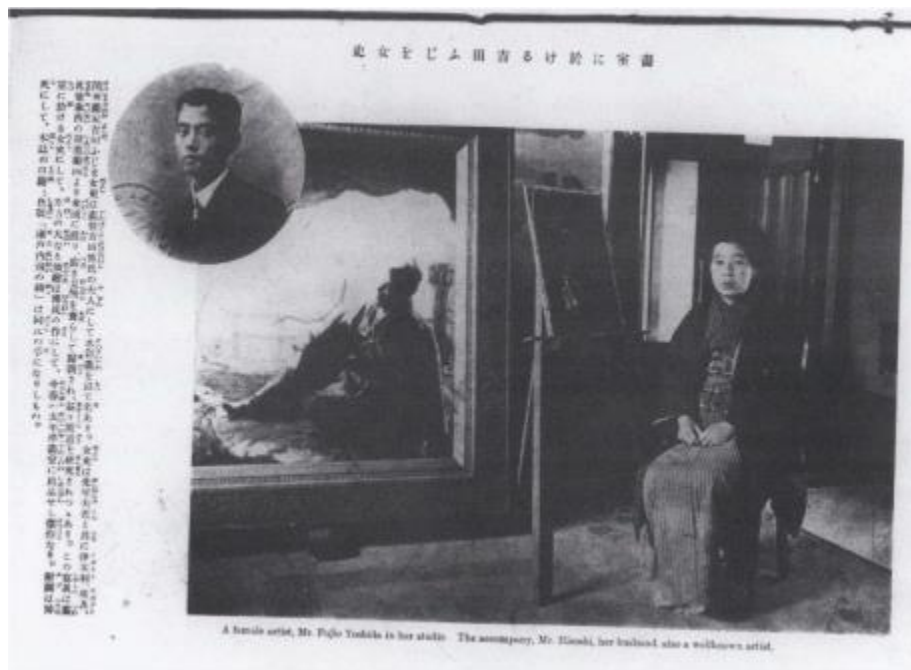


Figure 2.18: Photograph of Yoshida Fujio in her studio with inset photograph of Yoshida Hiroshi, “Lady Yoshida Fujio in the Painting Room” (Gashitsu ni okeru Yoshida Fujio joshi), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 58 (July 1911). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.19: Photographs of Kurihara Gyokuyō (top) and Kametaka Fumiko (bottom), “Female Artists in production for the Bunten” (Bunten seisaku no keishūgaka) from *Shukujo gahō* 6, no. 11 (Nov. 1917). National Diet Library.

品出展帝の家畫秀聞都京



Figure 2.20: Photographs of Kajiwara Hisako (top) and Itō Shōha (bottom), “Teiten Submissions by Kyoto Female Artists” (Kyōtō keishūgaka no Teiten shuppin), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 165 (Nov. 1919). National Diet Library.

伯 齋 澤 中 の 中 齋 揮



この写真は、東京の著名な画家、中澤伯齋の筆によるものである。伯齋は、明治時代の中期に活躍した、浮世絵、人物画、花鳥画などに長けた画家である。この写真は、伯齋が、東京の有名な画家、中澤伯齋の筆によるものである。伯齋は、明治時代の中期に活躍した、浮世絵、人物画、花鳥画などに長けた画家である。この写真は、伯齋が、東京の有名な画家、中澤伯齋の筆によるものである。伯齋は、明治時代の中期に活躍した、浮世絵、人物画、花鳥画などに長けた画家である。

Two women disguised as *chura maizens* posing for Mr. Nakazawa Hiromitsu, a famous artist of Tokyo.

Figure 2.21: Photograph of Nakazawa Hiromitsu, “Master artist Nakazawa Mid Production” (Kigōchū no Nakazawa gahaku), from *Fujin gahō*, no. 60 (Sept. 1911). National Diet Library.

人夫と伯畫田關る於に室畫



Mr. Okada Saburōsuke, a Mombusho inspector of fine arts, painting a nude picture for the exhibition in his own studio at Shibuya. A lady by his side is his wife, Mrs. Yachiyo, who is wellknown as a female writer.

文部省美術調査委員岡田三郎助畫伯が畫行なる自居畫室に於て、目下開催中の文部省美術展覧會に出品の裸體圖(前掲)に、夫人の側中に立てるは夫人にして、閑秀作家として有名なる八千代女史なり。繪の具の秀ひ、ゆかしく優とらつへ本社寫眞室攝る。

Figure 2.24: Photograph of Okada Saburōsuke and Okada Yachiyo, “Master Artist Okada and his Wife in the Painting Room” (Gashitsu ni okeru Okada gahaku to dōfujin), from *Fujin gahō*, no. 62 (Nov. 1911). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.25: Photograph of Kawabata Mosho and his new wife, Haruko, “Bride and Groom” (Shinrōshinpu), from *Fujin gahō*, Special Issue (Jan. 1912). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.26: Photographs of Okada Saburōsuke and Yachiyo (left) and Ishikawa Toraji and his family (right) and their respective paintings, “Two Teiten Judges and Master Artists and their families and works” (Teiten shinsain ni gahaku no kazoku to sakuhin), *Fujin Gahō*, no. 191 (Nov. 1921). National Diet Museum.



Figure 2.27: “Various Master Artists Mid-Production in the Painting Room” (Gashitsu ni oite kigōchū no sho gahaku), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 204 (Oct. 1922). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.28: Photographs of Tsuda Seifu, Yamashita Shintarō, Arai Kampo, Yamamura Kōka, and Yasui Sōtarō, “Various Master Artists Mid-Production” (Kigōchū no sho gahaku), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 191 (Nov. 1921). National Diet Library.

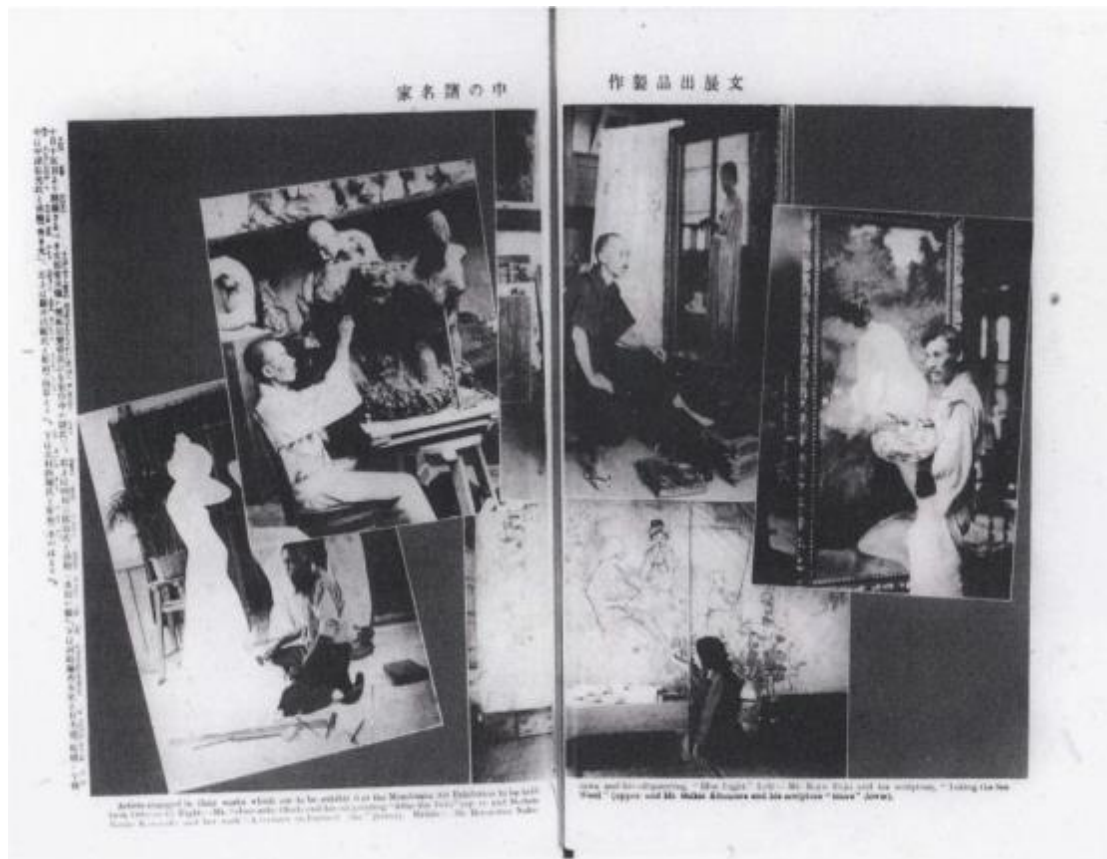


Figure 2.29: Photographs of Okada Saburosuke, Kawasaki Ranko, Nakazawa Hiromitsu, Fujii Koyu, and Kitamura Shikai, “Various Eminent Artists Mid-Production on Their Bunten Submissions” (Bunten shuppin seisakuchū no sho Meika), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 127 (Oct. 1916). National Diet Library.

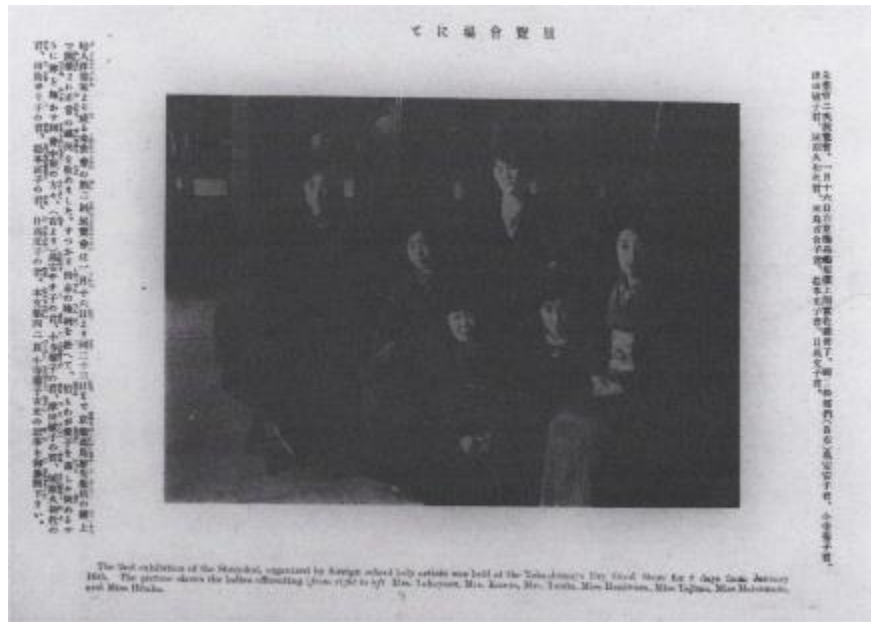


Figure 2.30: Photograph of members of the Shuyōkai at their second exhibition. Artists photographed from right to left are: Takayasu Yasuko, Kodera Sakuko, Tsuda Toshiko, Hanihara Kuwayo, Tajima Yuriko, Matsumoto Masako, and Hidaka Fumiko. “At the Exhibition Hall” (Tenrankaijō ni te), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 169 (Mar. 1920). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.31: “Shuyōkai,” from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 182 (Mar. 1921). National Diet Library.

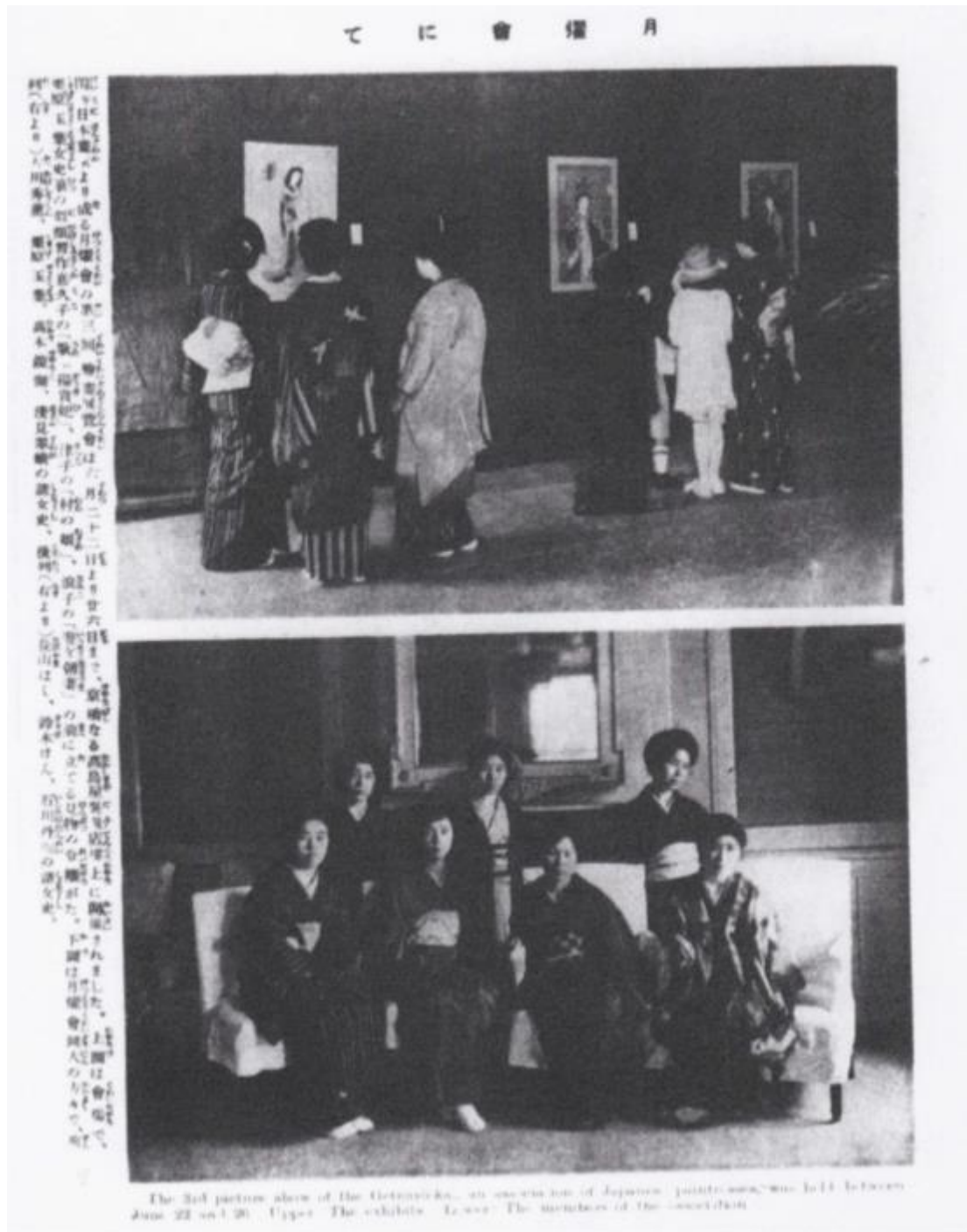


Figure 2.32: Photographs of the Getsuyōkai exhibition (top) and members (bottom), “At the Getsuyōkai” (Getsuyōkai ni te), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 202 (Aug. 1922). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.33: Photograph of Kajiwara Hisako and pupils at a New Year's party (detail), "Lady Kajiwara's New Year's Party and Stalls at the Imperial Hotel" (Kajiwara joshi no shinnenkai to Teikoku Hoteru no baiten), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 209 (Mar. 1923). National Diet Library.

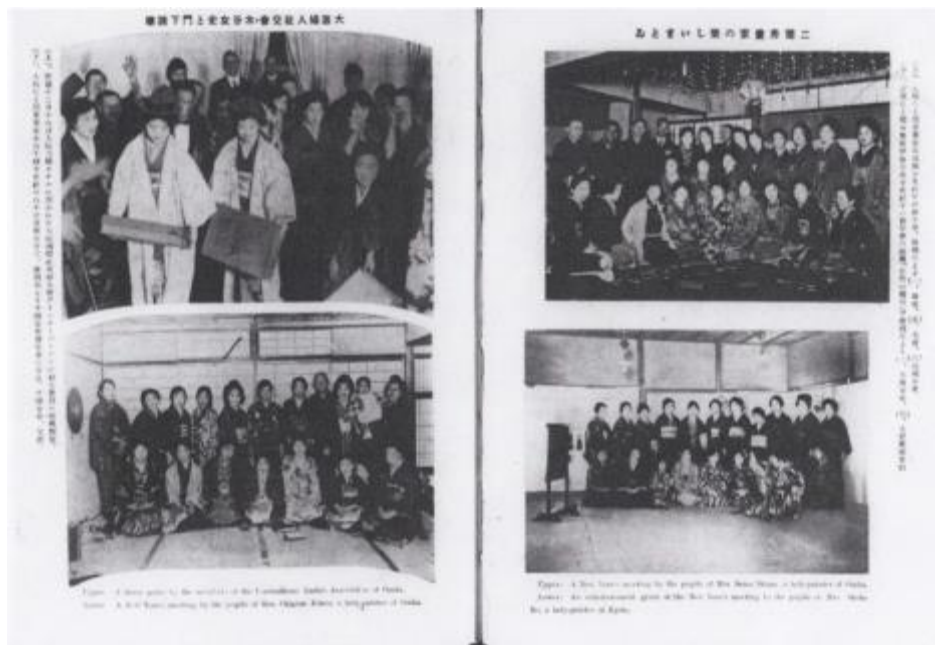


Figure 2.34: Photographs of New Year's Parties by Kitani Chigusa (bottom left), Shima Seien (upper right), and Itō Shōha (bottom right), "Two Female Artists' Fun Gatherings" (Ni keishūgaka no tanoshii matoi) and "Ladies Association of Osaka and Lady Kitani and her Various Students" (Ōsaka fujinshabunkai to Kitani joshi to monka sho jō), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 209 (Mar. 1923). National Diet Library.



Figure 2.35: Kajiwara Hisako, *Train Station in Early Evening* (暮れゆく停留所), 1918, framed, ink and color on silk, 189.0 x 83.0 cm. Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art.

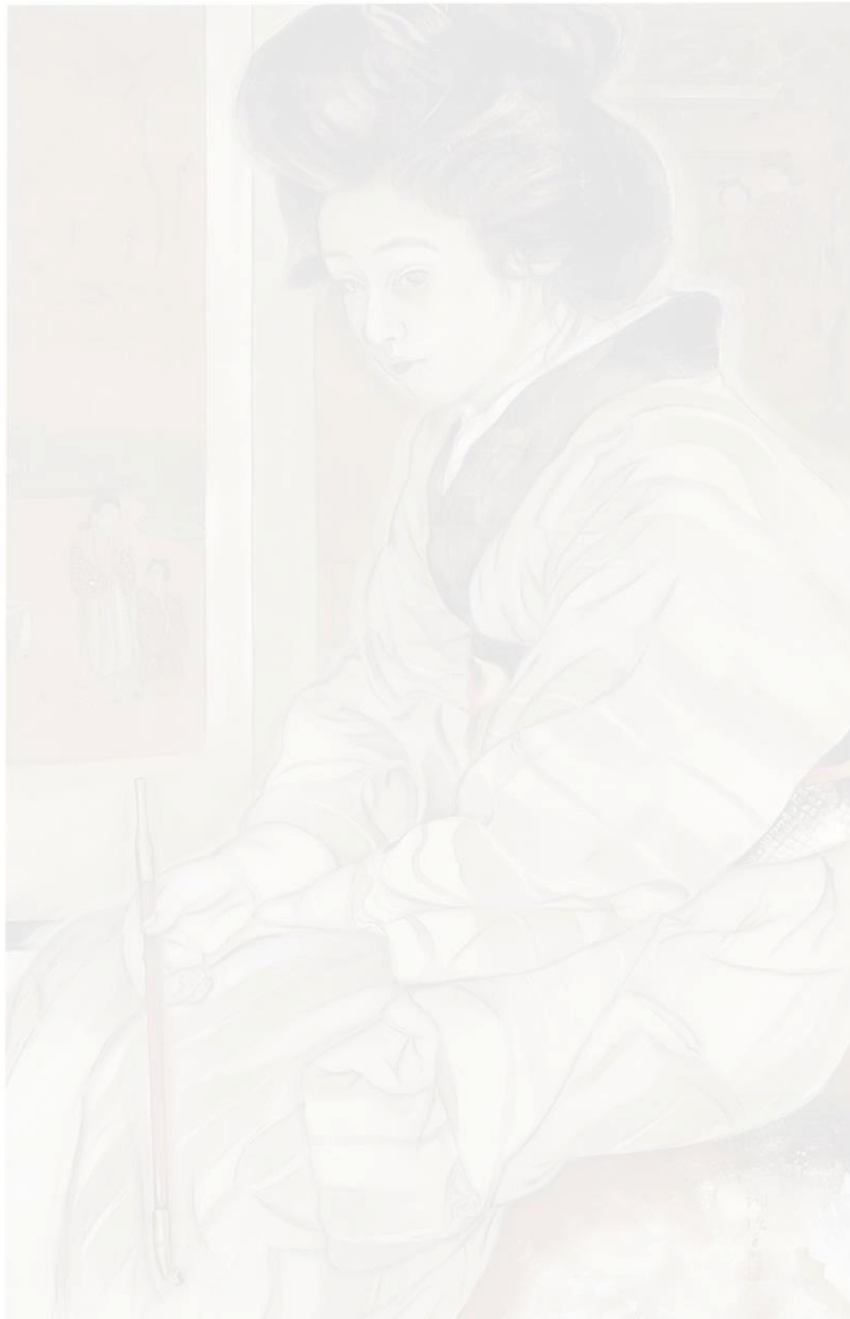


Figure 2.36: Kajiwara Hisako, *Woman of Yamashiro Spa* ((山代温泉の女), c. 1921-23, framed, ink and color on paper, 129.0 x 83.0 cm. Fukutomi Tarō Collection. Image Source: Kokatsu Reiko, ed., *Taishō no atarashiki nami, nihonga 1910-20-nendai* (Tokushima: Tokushima Kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan, 1991), 146.

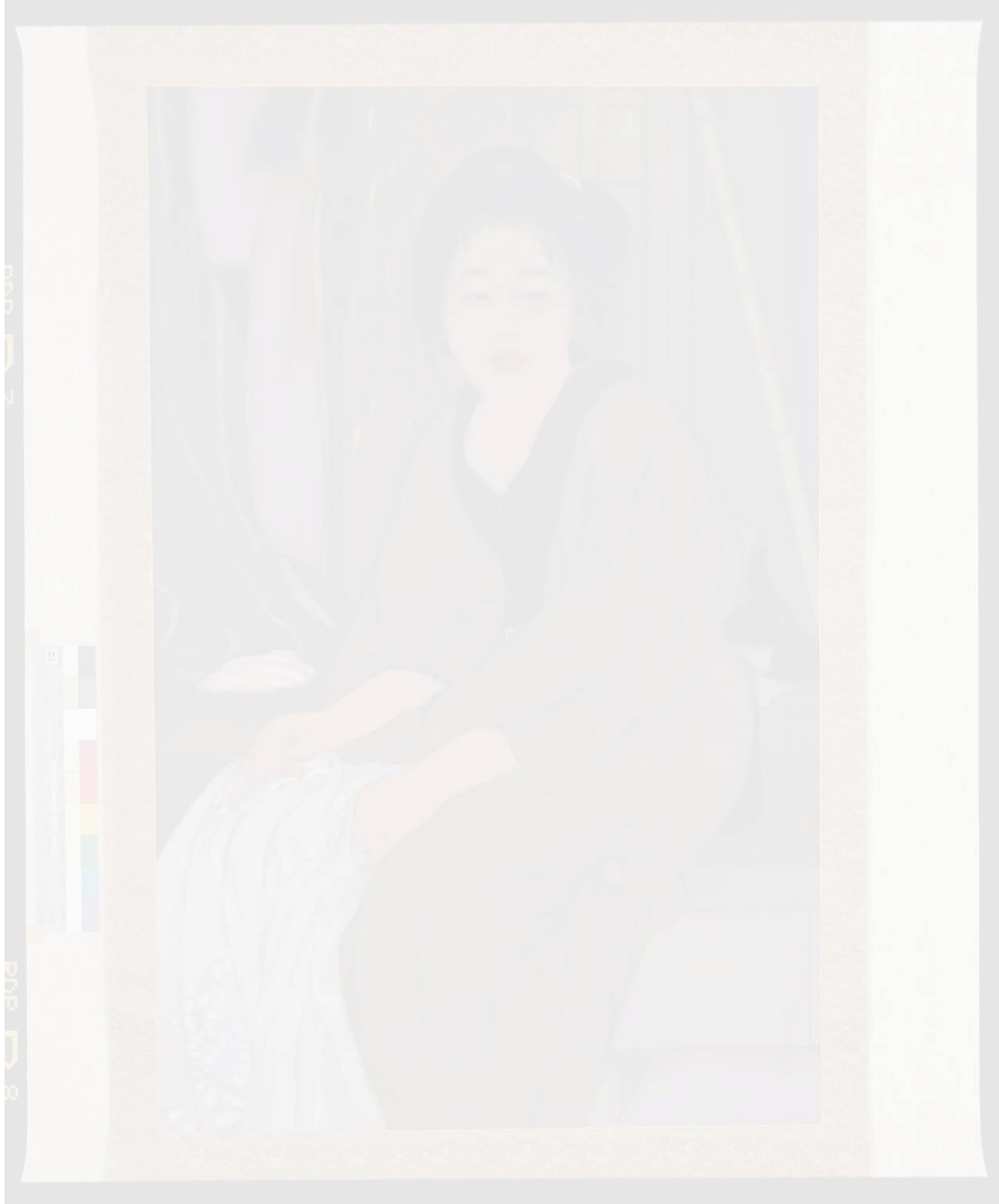


Figure 2.37: Kajiwara Hisako, *Market of Used Clothes* (古着市), 1920, hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, 130.0 x 88.0 cm, color on silk. Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art.

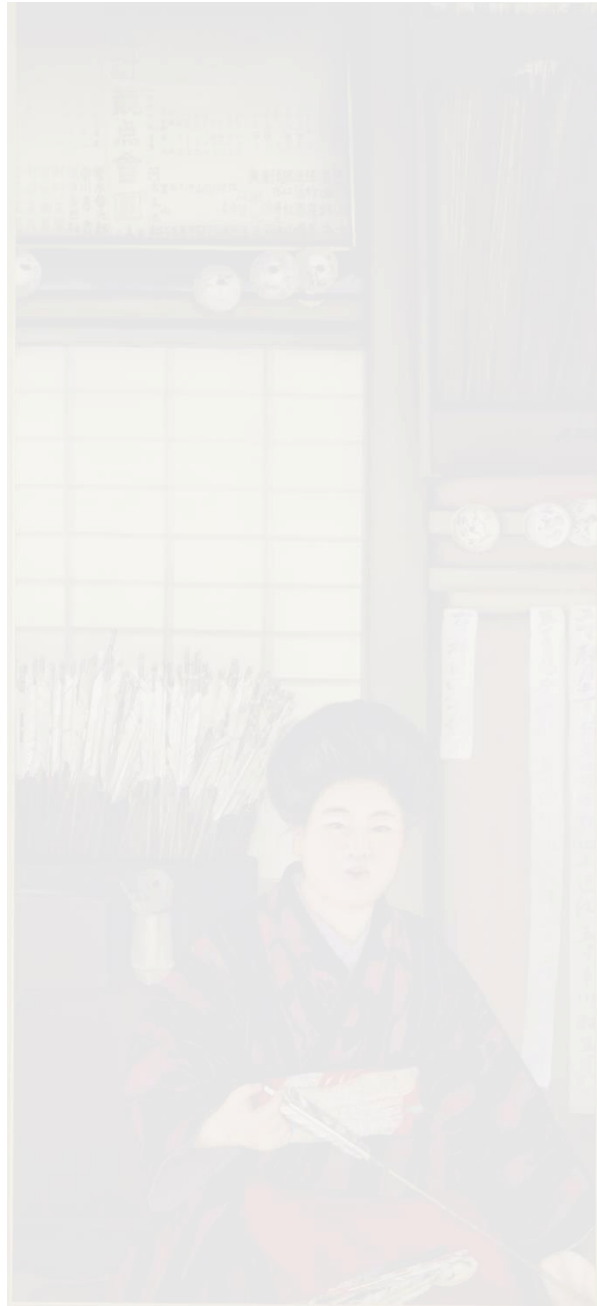


Figure 2.38: Kajiwara Hisako, *Archery Parlor* (矢場), 1926, framed, color on silk, 248.0 × 111.5 cm. The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto.



Figure 2.39: Kajiwara Hisako, *Cape of Zanpa* (残波岬), 1978, framed, ink and color on paper, 163.5 ×90.5 cm. The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto.

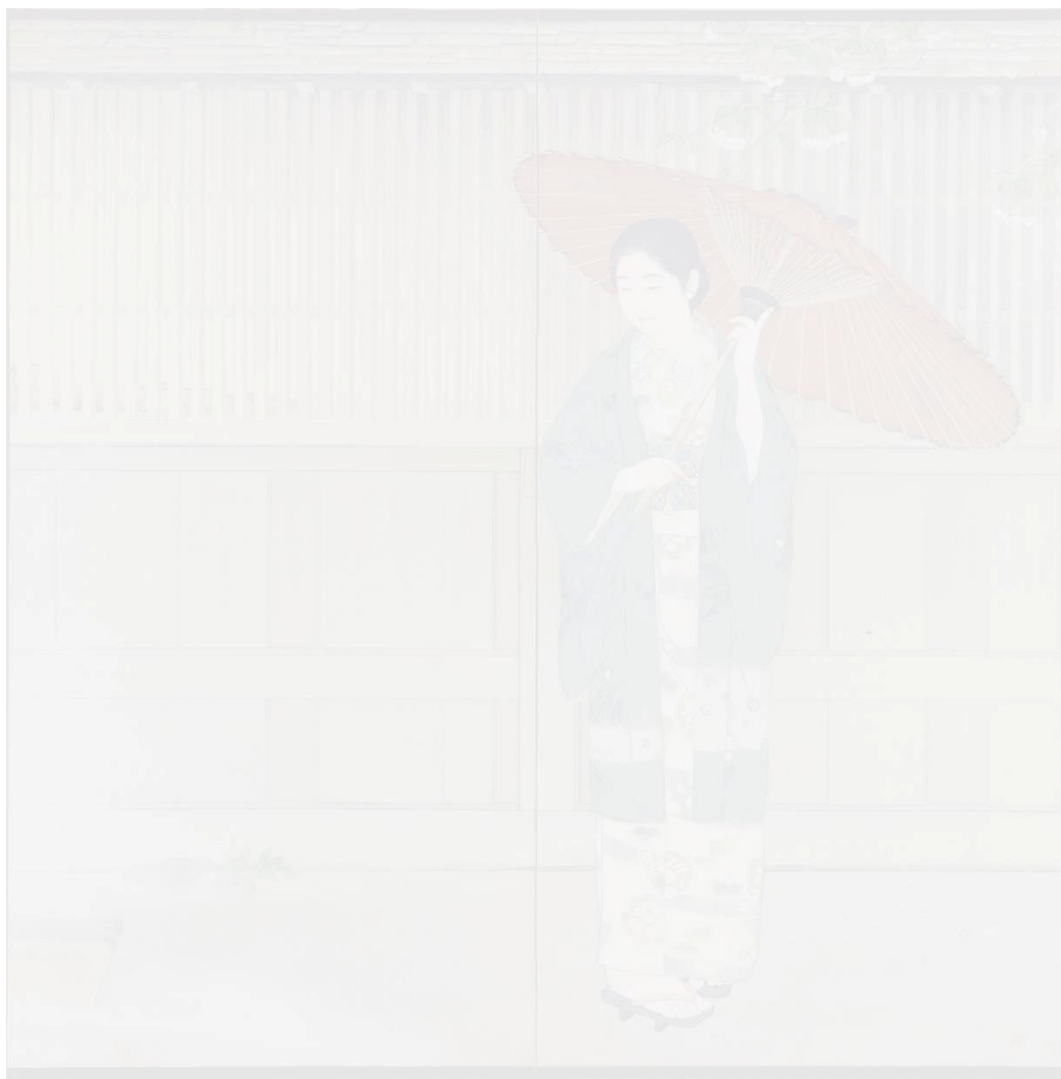


Figure 2.40: Kajiwara Hisako, *Rain at a Hot Spring* (いでの雨), 1931, framed two-panel screen, ink and color on silk, 179.0 x 180.5 cm. Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art. [REDACTED IMAGE]



Figure 3.1a: Shima Seien, *Untitled* (無題), 1918, framed, color on silk, 85.0 x 108.0 cm. Osaka Municipal Museum of Art.



Figure 3.1b: Shima Seien, *Untitled* (detail). Photograph by author.

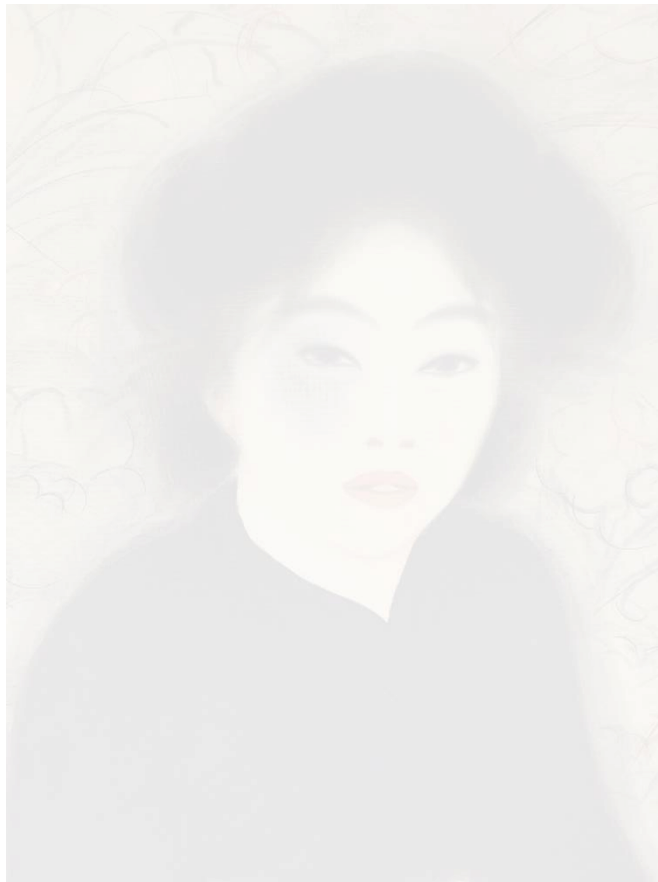


Figure 3.1c: Shima Seien, *Untitled* (detail). Photograph by author.



Figure 3.2: Photograph of Shima Seien, Taishō Period. Osaka Nakanoshima Museum Archives. Photograph by author.



Figure 3.3: Satirical illustration of Seien's *Untitled*, from *Osaka nichinichi shinbun*, June 1918. Image Source: Ogawa Tomoko, *Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigaka* (Osaka: Tōhō Shuppan, 2006), 11.

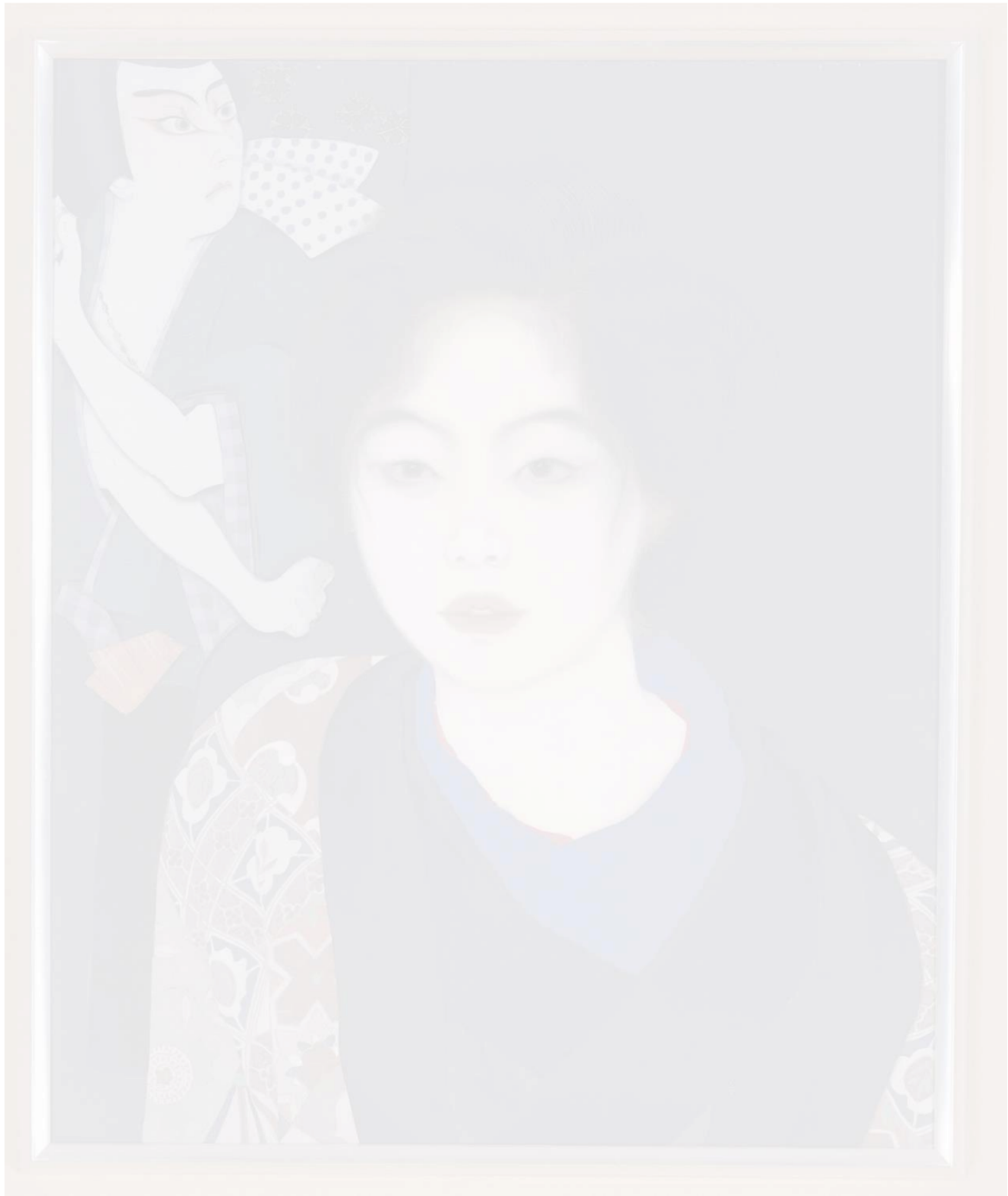


Figure 3.4: Shima Seien, *Self-portrait* (自画像), 1924, framed, color on silk, 43.5 x 35.0 cm. Osaka Municipal Museum of Art.



Figure 3.5: Postcard of Shima Seien, *Evening at Soemoncho* (宗右街門町の夕), 1912, original painting not extant. Image Source: <https://aucfree.com/items/r1079326419>



Figure 3.6: Photograph of Shima Seien and students at her *juku*, the Hanazonokai, Taishō Period. Osaka Nakanoshima Museum Archives. Photograph by author.



Figure 3.7: Photograph of Shima Seien, Taishō period. Osaka Nakanoshima Museum Archives. Image Source: Ogawa Tomoko, *Shima Seien to Naniwa no joseigaka* (Osaka: Tōhō Shuppan, 2006), 17.

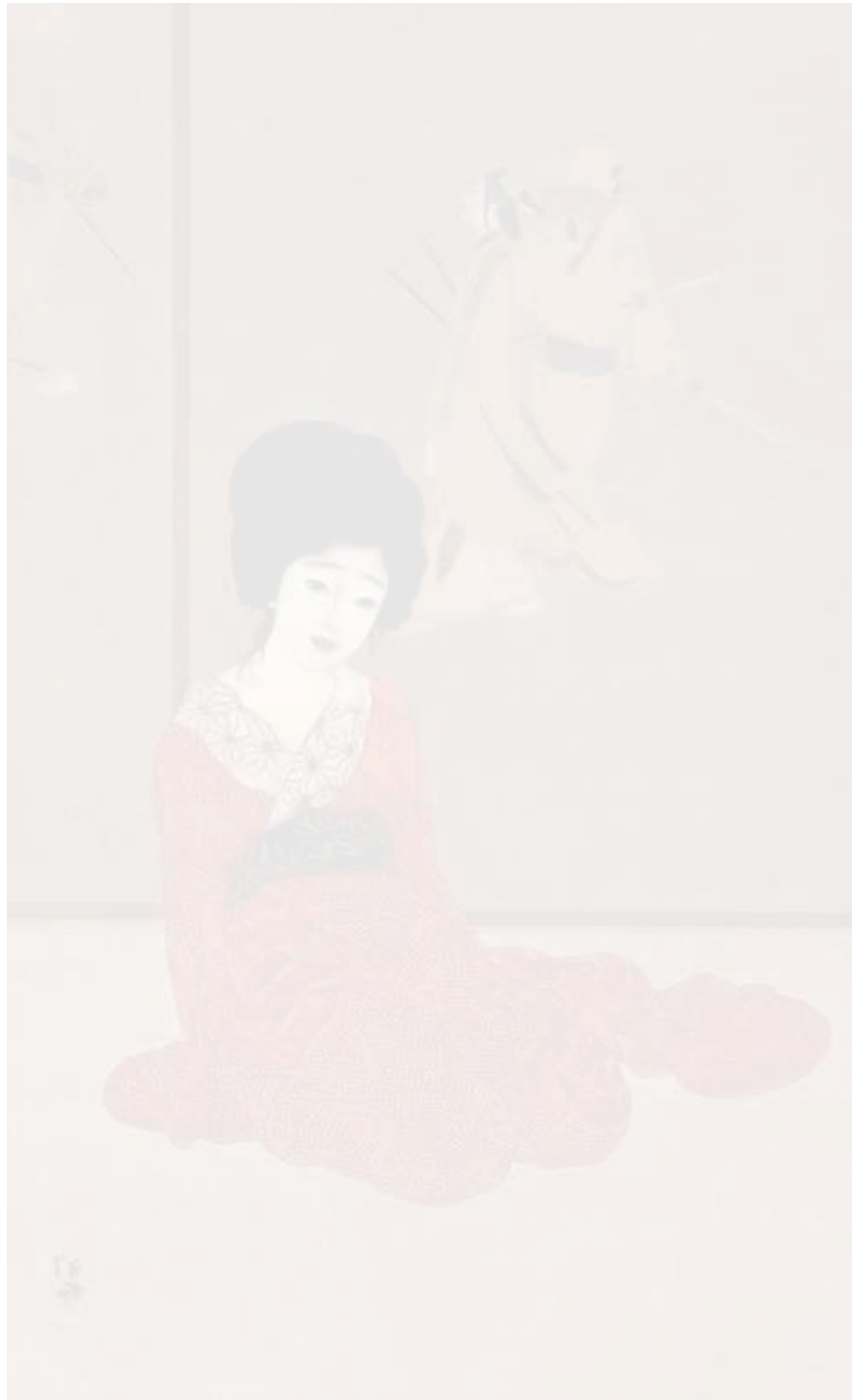


Figure 3.8: Kitano Tsunetomi, *Feeling Warm* (暖か), 1915, hanging scroll, color on silk, 185.6 x 112.0 cm. Shiga Museum of Modern Art.



Figure 3.9: Postcard of Shima Seien, *Keiko no hima* (稽古のひま), 1915, original painting not extant. Image Source: <https://aucfree.com/items/w262323852>



Figure 3.10: Postcard of Kitani [Yoshioka] Chigusa, *Memorial Service for Needles* (針供養), 1915, original painting not extant. Image Source: <https://taishou-kun.tumblr.com/image/131028430512>

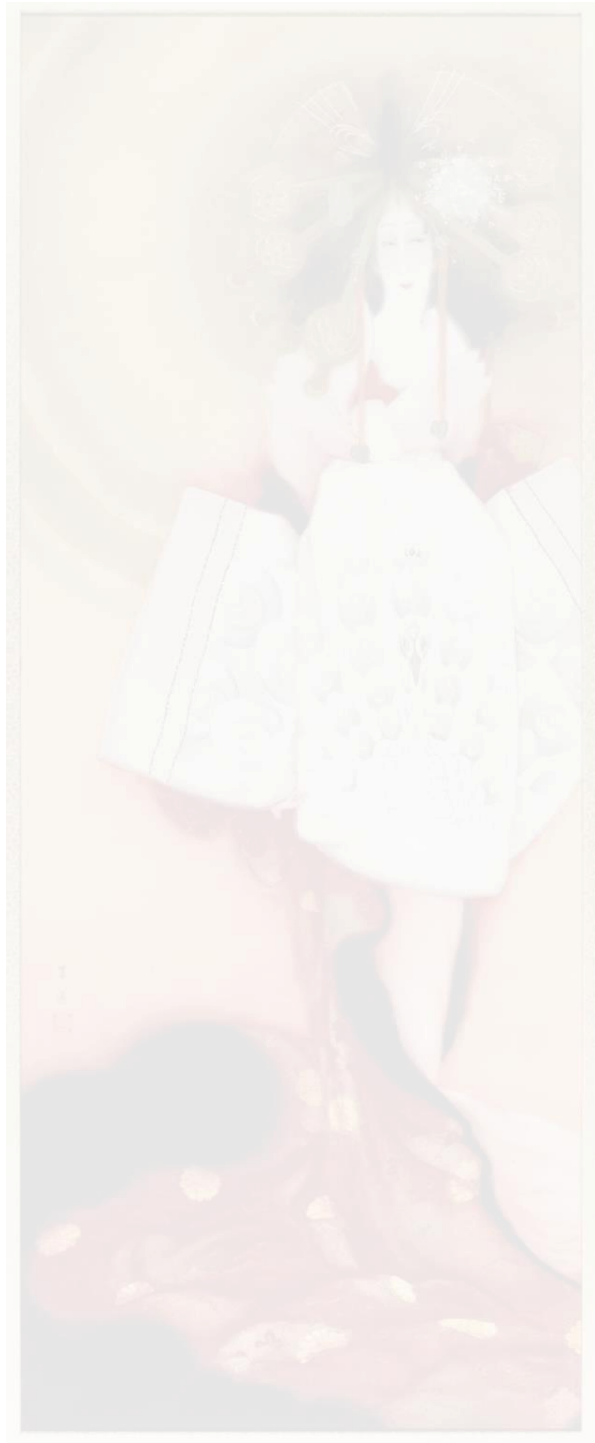


Figure 3.11a: Shima Seien, *Fragrance of Aloeswood* (伽羅の薫), 1920, framed, color on silk, 212.3 x 82.7 cm. Osaka Municipal Museum of Art.

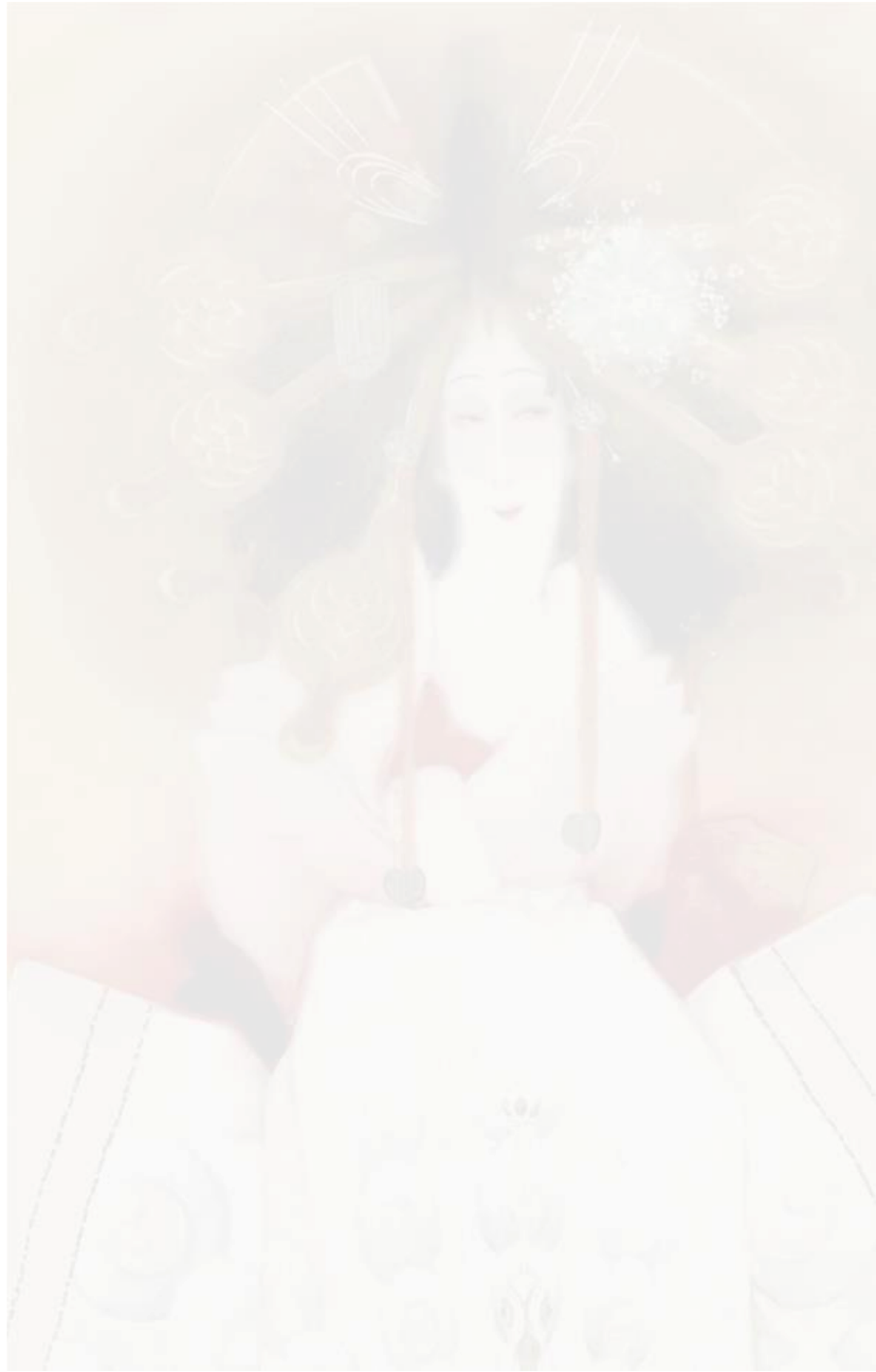


Figure 3.11b: Shima Seien, *Fragrance of Aloeswood* (detail).



Figure 3.12: Shima Seien, *Vermillion Pipe with Bamboo Stem* (朱羅宇), 1934, hanging scroll, color on silk, 88.0 x 131.6 cm. Osaka Municipal Museum of Art.



Figure 4.1: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Copy after Cassagne)* (カッサーニュ模写), 1899, pencil on paper, 28.8 x 15.1. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.2: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Copy of European work)*, 1902, graphite on paper, dimensions unknown. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.3: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled*, 1902, pencil on paper, dimensions unknown. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.4: Yoshida Fujio, *Bessho (別所)*, 1902, pencil and watercolor on paper, 28.8 x 38.0 cm. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.5: Photograph of Fujio with Koyama Shōtarō and students of the Fudōsha, 1900. Image Source: *Koyama Shōtarō sensei* (Tokyo: Fudōsha Kyūyūkai, 1934), 262.



Figure 4.6: Satirical illustration of Joshibi yōga students. Kondō Kōichiro, “Seven tools” (Nanatsu dōgu), *Kōfū manga* (Tokyo: Hakubunkan 1917), 232. National Diet Library.



Figure 4.7: Photograph of Yoshida Fujio surrounded by onlookers while sketching, late Meiji period. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.8: Photograph of Yoshida Fujio surrounded by onlookers while sketching, late Meiji period. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.9: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled*, 1901, pencil on paper, dimensions unknown. Private Collection. Photograph by author.

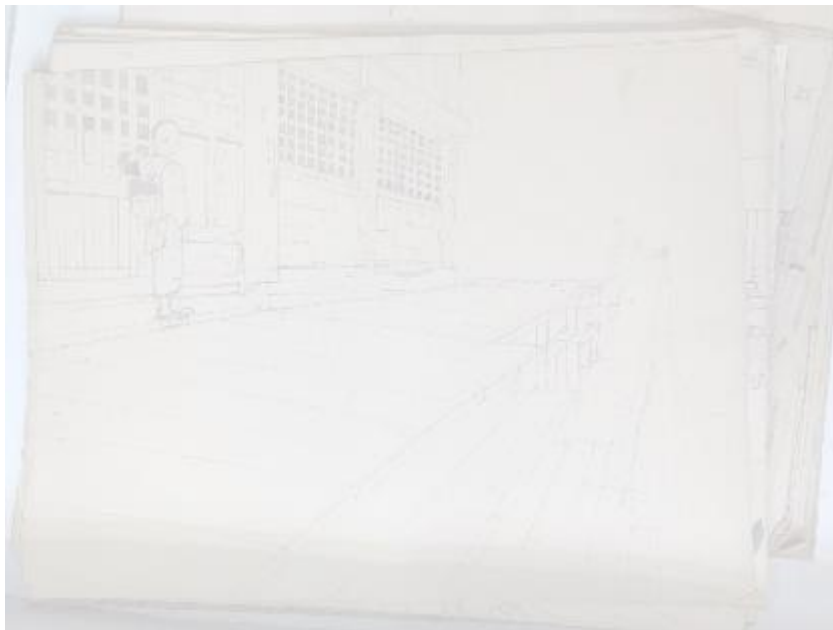


Figure 4.10: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled*, c. 1900, pencil on paper, dimensions unknown. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.11: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Room with a Wooden Floor)* (無題 (板の間)), c. 1901-03, watercolor on paper, 32.0 x 48.8 cm. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.12a: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Mt. Fuji)*, c. 1901-03, watercolor on paper, dimensions unknown. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.12b: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Mt. Fuji)* (detail). Photograph by author.



Figure 4.13: Yoshida Hiroshi, *Courtyard of Ponce de Leon Hotel* (ポンシでレオン・ホテルの中庭), 1906, watercolor on paper, 35.5 x 51.0 cm. Private Collection.



Figure 4.14: Yoshida Fujio, *Courtyard of the Ponce de Leon Hotel* (ポンシでレオン・ホテルの中庭), 1906, watercolor on paper, 27.1 x 37.6 cm. Private Collection.



Figure 4.15a: Yoshida Fujio, *Venice* (ベニス), 1906, watercolor on paper, 51.3 x 35.6 cm. Fukuoka City Art Museum. Photograph by author.

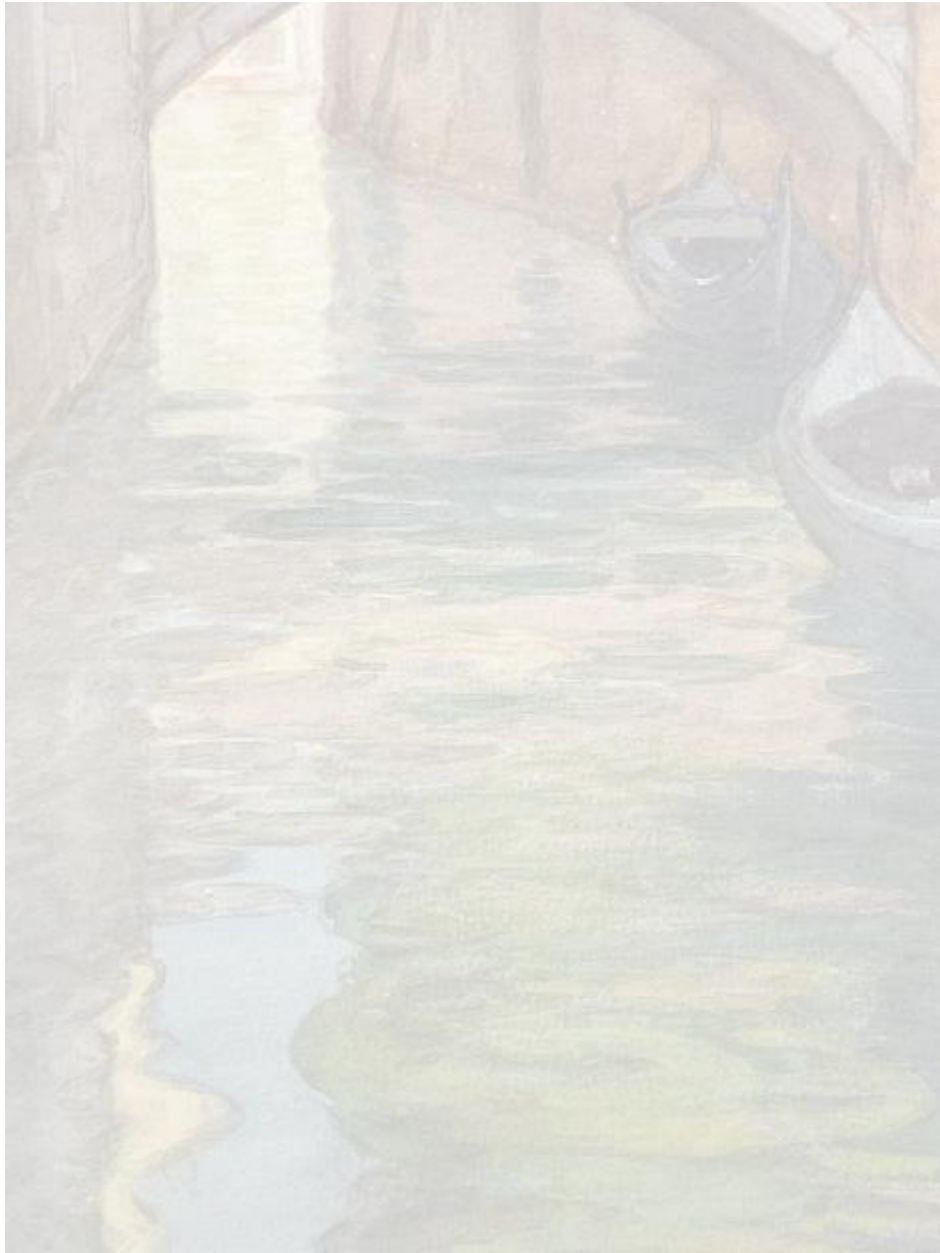


Figure 4.15b: Yoshida Fujio, *Venice* (detail). Photograph by author.

17. 1905. 5

PRETTY JAPANESE GIRL

Studying Art in "Western Way" in New England.

Miss Yoshida Takes Strolls at East Gloucester With a Little Duck—
Delights in a Collection of Shirtwaists—Later Will Show Her
Pictures in Boston.



"HICKORY FARM"
ONE OF MISS YOSHIDA'S
AMERICAN PRINTINGS



FUJI YOSHIDA
of TOKYO,
JAPAN.



**MISS
FUJI
YOSHIDA
HAND HER
TAME GOOSE**



the last being for a small duck, not long escaped from the sled. The white breast of light yellow down and the lightly decorated African legs are decorated with her own special order of violet. It is a sight for a moment in the town for a bright morning going for a walk. Miss Park is a very interesting sight, a woman carrying one of her head, packs up her traps and starts down the path through the fields, and the little yellow "African" sets a "Polaris" clock round the table along with her, making up its part.

Every good day directly after breakfast Miss Yoshida goes out to walk, and she has a very large collection of...

Figure 4.16: "Pretty Japanese Girl Studying Art in "Western Way" in New England," newspaper unknown, 1905. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.17: Yoshida Fujio, *Ruin of Carnac* (カーナックの建跡), c. 1907, watercolor on paper, location unknown. Image Source: *Bijutsu gahō* 22, no. 8 (Dec. 1907).



Figure 4.18: Yoshida Fujio, *Lotus Pond* (蓮池), watercolor, c.1907, location unknown. Image Source: *Monbushō dai ichi kai bijutsu tenrankai zuroku* (Tokyo: Monbushō, 1907), 105.

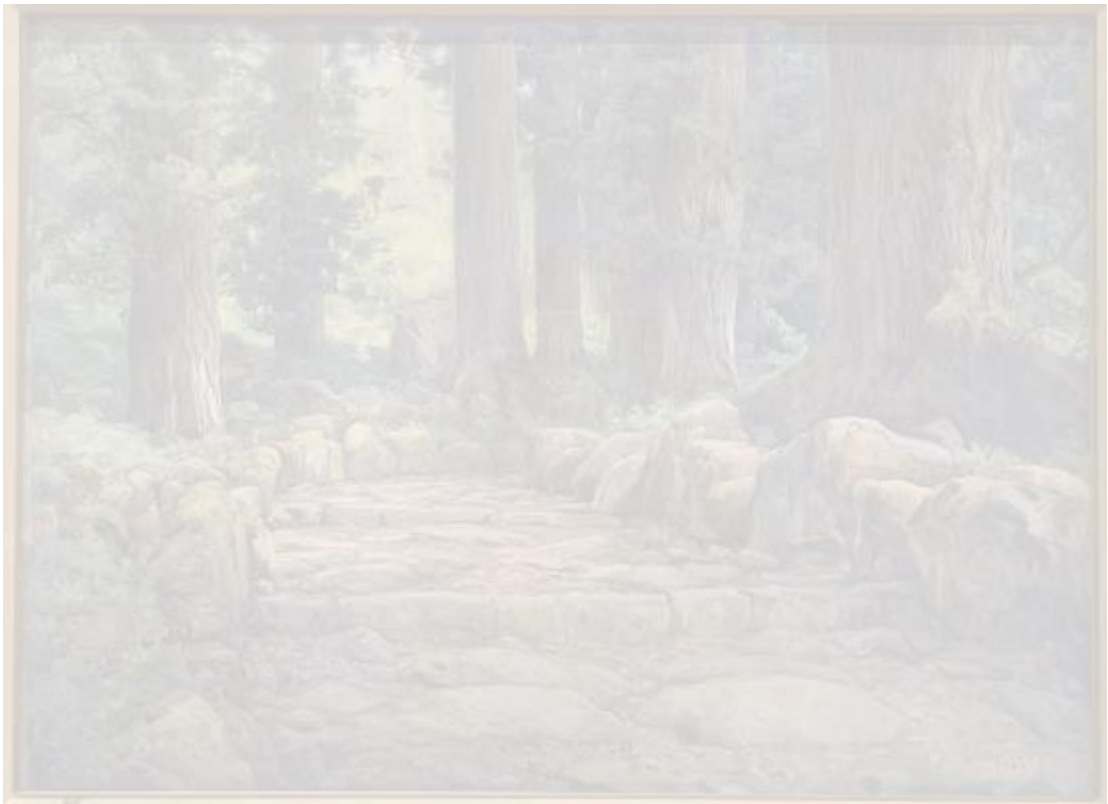


Figure 4.19a: Yoshida Fujio, *Spirit Grove* (神の森), 1910, watercolor on paper, 47.7 x 66.5 cm. Sen-oku Hakukokan, Tokyo. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.19b: Yoshida Fujio, *Spirit Grove* (detail). Photograph by author.



Figure 4.19c: Yoshida Fujio, *Spirit Grove* (detail). Photograph by author.



Figure 4.20: Wedding Portrait of Fujio and Hiroshi, 1907. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.21: Photographs of Fujio and Hiroshi with Chisato, page from Chisato's Baby Book. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.22: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Still Life)* (無題 (静物)), 1911, watercolor on paper, 50.8 x 34.8 cm. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.23: Yoshida Fujio and Yoshida Chisato, sketchbook, c. 1910-1912. Private Collection. Photograph by author.

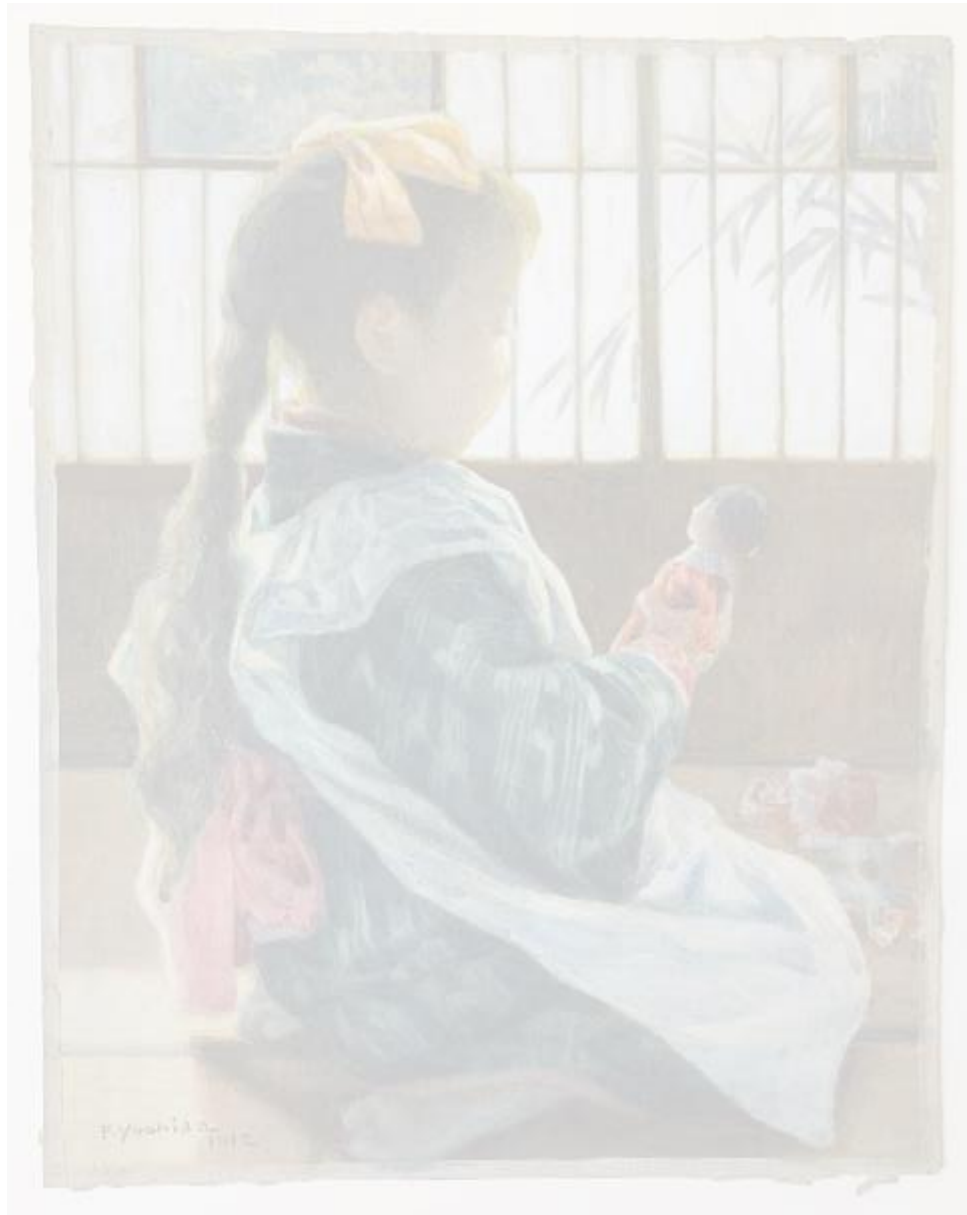


Figure 4.24: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Child Playing with Dolls)* (無題 (人形遊びをする 子供)), 1912, watercolor on paper, 37.5 x 29.5 cm. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.25: Yoshida Hiroshi, *Pigeons and a Girl* (鳩と少女), c. 1910-11, oil on canvas, 114.0 x 81.0 cm, Fukuoka Art Museum.



Figure 4.26: Postcard of Yoshida Fujio's submission to the #2nd Shuyōkai Exhibition, 1920, Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.27: Postcard of Yoshida Fujio's submission to the #17th Shuyōkai Exhibition, 1935. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.28: Yoshida Fujio, *Flowers* (はな), *kuchi-e* for *Fujin gahō*, no. 205 (Nov. 1922) Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.29: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Yellow Dahlias)* (無題 (黄色いダリア)), cover for *Nyonin geijutsu* (Dec. 1928). National Diet Library.



Figure 4.30: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Yellow Dahlias)* (無題 (黄色いダリア)), c. 1928, watercolor on paper, 69.8 x 51.8 cm. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.31a: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Cherry Trees at a Temple)*, 1915, watercolor on paper, dimensions unknown. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.31b: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Cherry Trees at a Temple)* (detail). Photograph by author.



Figure 4.31c: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Cherry Trees at a Temple)* (detail). Photograph by author.



Figure 4.32a: Yoshida Fujio, *Cherry Trees* (桜), 1903, watercolor on paper, 33.4. x 50.5 cm. Fukuoka Art Museum. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.32b: Yoshida Fujio, *Cherry Trees* (detail). Photograph by author.

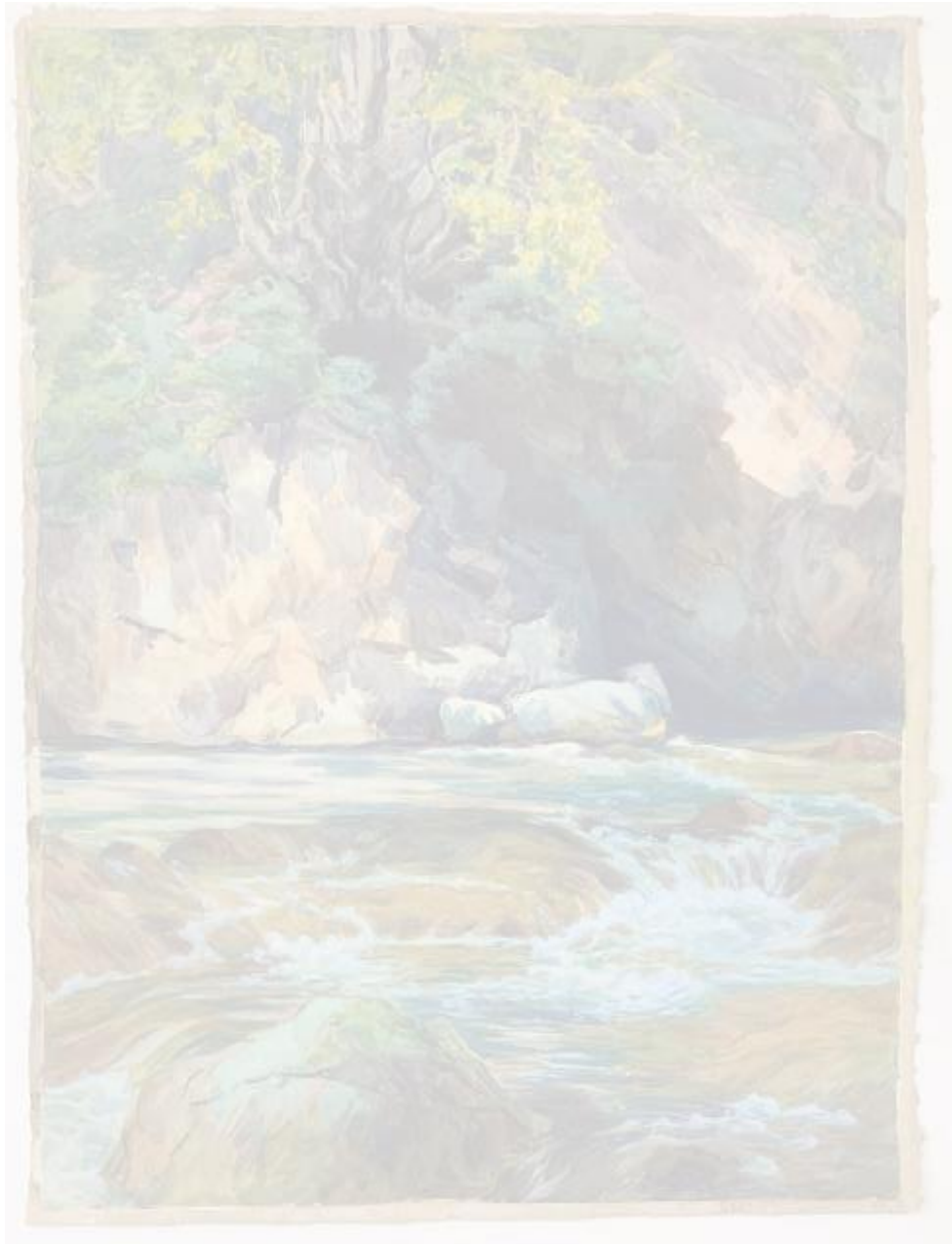


Figure 4.33a: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Mountain Stream)* (無題 (溪流)), date unknown, watercolor on paper, 67.4 x 50.0 cm. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.33b: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Mountain Stream)* (detail). Photograph by author.

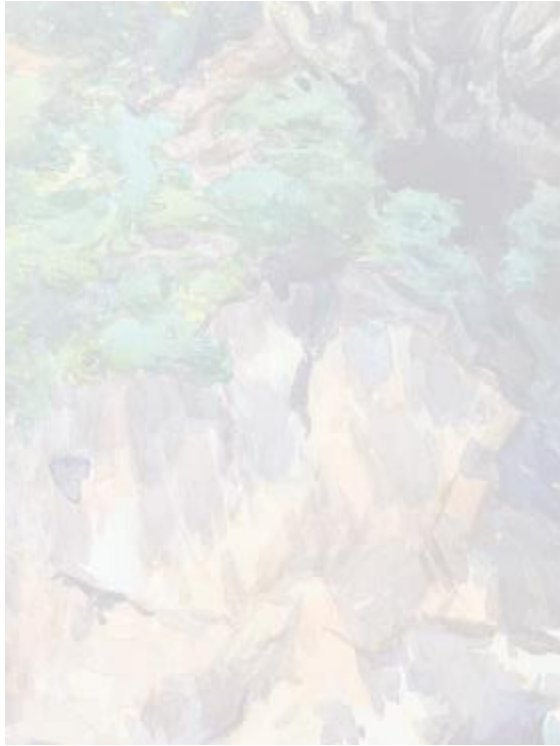


Figure 4.33c: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Mountain Stream)* (detail). Photograph by author.



Figure 4.33d: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Mountain Stream)* (detail). Photograph by author.



Figure 4.34a: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Cattleyas)* (無題 (カトレア)), date unknown, watercolor on paper, 69.4 x 50.0 cm. Fukuoka City Art Museum. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.34b: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Cattleyas)* (detail). Photograph by author.



Figure 4.35a: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Flowers by a Window)* (無題 (窓辺の花)), date unknown, watercolor on paper, 67.5 x 49.5 cm. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.35b: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Flowers by a Window)* (detail). Photograph by author.

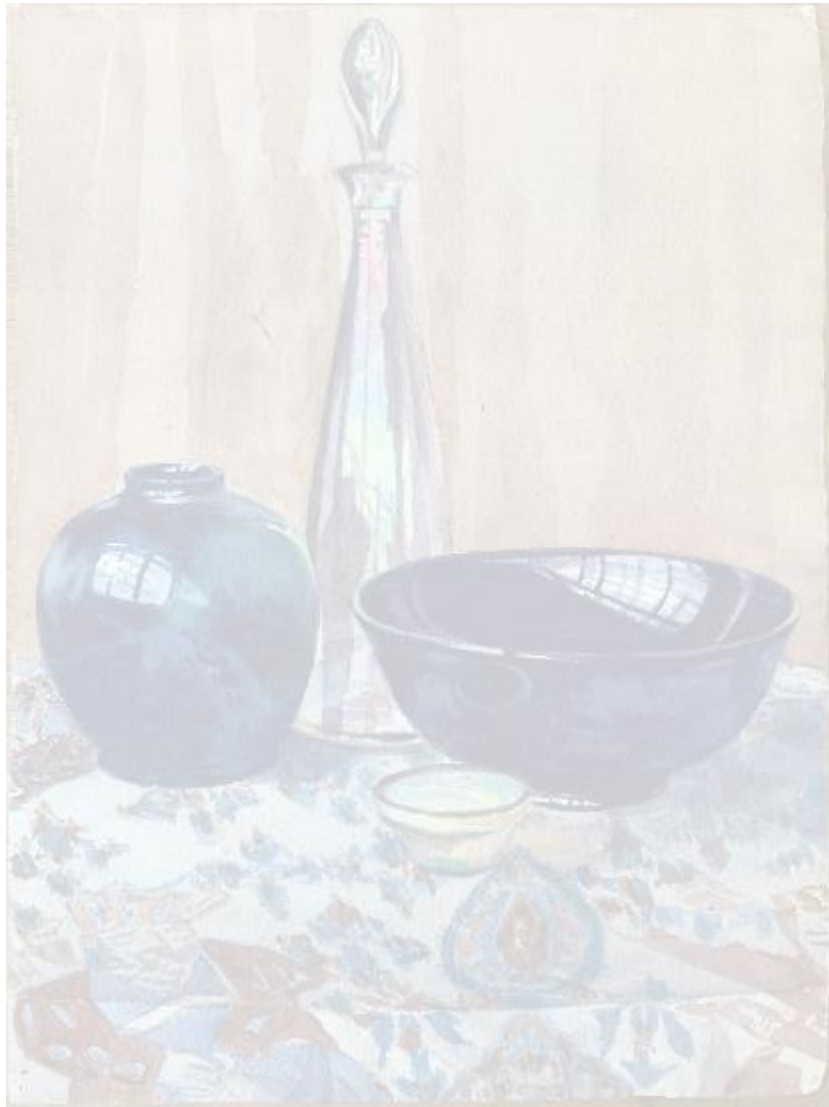


Figure 4.36: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Three Vases)*, date unknown, watercolor on paper, dimensions unknown. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.37: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Blue Vase with Carnations)*, date unknown, watercolor on paper, dimensions unknown. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.38: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Red Vase with Flowers)*, date unknown, watercolor on paper, dimensions unknown. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.39: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Blue Vase with Pomegranates)*, date unknown, watercolor on paper, exact dimensions unknown, approximately 70.0 x 50 cm. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.40: Yoshida Fujio, *Flower (Rhythm)* (花 (リズム)), 1951, oil on canvas, 91.4 x 73.0. Fukuoka Museum of Art. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.41: Yoshida Fujio, *Untitled (Abstraction in Pink)* (無題 (抽象 ピンク)), 1966, watercolor on paper, 72.2 x 56.1 cm. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.42: Yoshida Fujio, *Flowering Kale* (はばたん), 1954, woodblock print, 36.4 x 24.4. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure 4.43: Yoshida Fujio, *Nasturtium* (ナスターション), 1954, woodblock print, 37.6 x 24.4 cm. Private Collection. Photograph by author.



Figure C.1a: Kametaka [Watanabe] Fumiko, *Hanare yuku kokoro* (離れ行く心), 1913, oil on canvas, 81.0 x 61.0 cm. Sen-oku Hakukokan Museum, Tokyo.



Figure C.1b: Kametaka Fumiko, *Hanare yuku kokoro* (detail). Photograph by author.



Figure C.2: Watanabe Yohei, *Study* (習作), 1910, oil on canvas, 41.5 x 35.1 cm. Private Collection.



Figure C.3: Watanabe Yohei, *Flannel Kimono* (ネルのきもの), 1910, oil on canvas, 88.5 x 114.5 cm. Sen-oku Hakukokan Museum, Tokyo.



Figure C.4: Aoki Shigeru, *Seascape* (海), 1904, oil on canvas, 36.5 x 73.0 cm. Artizon Museum, Ishibashi Foundation.



Figure C.5: Sakamoto Hanjiro, *Newspaper* (新聞), 1910, oil on canvas, 80.5 x 60.7 cm. Private Collection. Image Source: Ito Eriko, Moriyama Hideko, Haraguchi Kae and Hara Sayuri, *Futatsu no tabi: Aoki Shigeru, Sakamoto Hanjiro: seitai 140 nen* (Tokyo: Ishibashizaidan Artizon bijutsukan, 2022), 119.



Figure C.6: Kametaka [Watanabe] Fumiko, *Girl with Japanese Hair Style* (日本髪の少女), 1909, oil on canvas, 60.0 x 45.6. Private Collection.



Figure C.7: Photograph of Kametaka Fumiko (center) instructing students at the Sekishosha Girl's Painting School, early Shōwa period. Watanabe Yohei's *Study* hangs on the wall in the middle left. Image Source: <https://chinchiko.blog.ss-blog.jp/2020-02-17>



Figure C.8: Kametaka [Watanabe] Fumiko, *Shirokasuri* (白かすり), 1909, oil on canvas, not extant. Image Source: *Bijutsu gahō* 26, no. 12 (Dec. 1909).



Figure C.9: Watanabe Yohei, *Obi* (帯), 1911, oil on canvas, 151.7×91.0 cm. Nagasaki Prefecture Art Museum. Photograph by author.



Mrs. Fumi Watanabe, a female artist and her productions.

Figure C.10: Photograph of Kametaka [Watanabe] Fumiko standing with portraits of her by Watanabe Yohei. Inset of her painting, *Girl with Japanese Hair Style*. “Female Artist and Paintings” (Keishūgaka to sakuhin), from *Fujin Gahō*, no. 67 (Mar. 1912). National Diet Library.



Figure C.11: Kametaka [Watanabe] Fumiko, *After Dinner* (食後), 1916, oil on canvas, 84.7×78.8 cm. Nagasaki Prefectural Museum of Art.

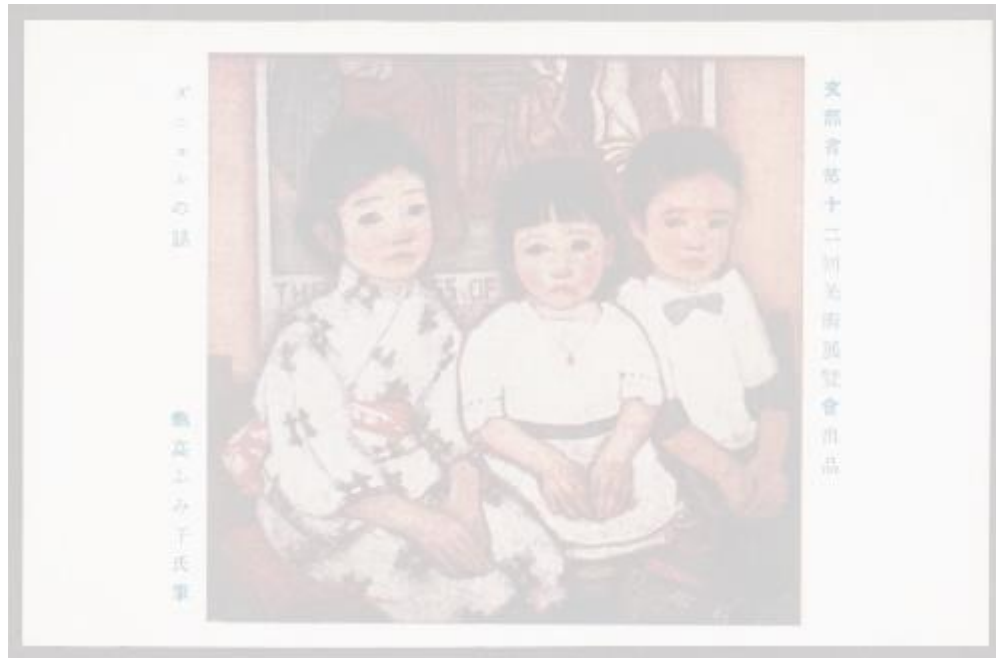


Figure C.12: Postcard of Kametaka Fumiko, *Daniel's Story* (ダニエルの話), 1918, oil on canvas, original painting not extant. Image source: Bijutsu tenrankai ehagaki dijitaru ākaibu, University Museum, the University of Tokyo. <http://umdb.um.u-tokyo.ac.jp/DBijutus/Ehagaki/recordlist.php?-max=100&-action=findall&-skip=0>

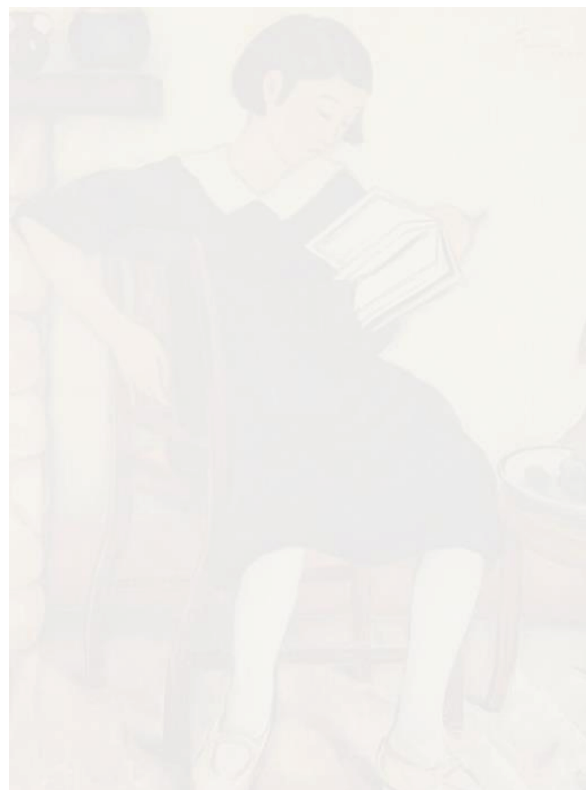


Figure C.13: Kametaka Fumiko, *Reading* (読書), 1925, oil on canvas, 91.0 x 72.7 cm. Private Collection.

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