

# Ryoko Endo

## Education

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2006–present	The Art Students League of New York Ronnie Landfield, Frank O’Cain, Peter Reginato, Mariano Del Rosario, Peter Bonner (Abstract painting), 2016– Kikuo Saito (Abstract painting), 2006–16 Nicki Orbach (Life drawing), 2011–15 James McElhinney (Life drawing), 2009–10 Barney Hodes (Sculpture), 2007–9 Michael Burban (Life drawing), 2006–7
2006–7	Shingai Tanaka, Lyon (Calligraphy)
2004–5	Masako Inkyo, New York (Calligraphy)
1972–73	Musashino Art University, Graduate Junior College of Art and Design, Tokyo (Typography)
1970–72	Musashino Art University, Junior College of Art and Design, Tokyo (Graphic design)

## Exhibitions (all New York)

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### Solo:

2018	Cushman & Wakefield (Exhibition Outreach Program, Art Students League)
2017	Vartali Salon
2015	Squire Patton Boggs (Exhibition Outreach Program, Art Students League)
2014	Vartali Salon
2011	Pentomo Salon

### Group:

2007–18	Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery, Arts Students League
2018	“7on7th,” BBFL
2017	“7on7th,” BBFL “Open house exhibition,” 4W43 Gallery “Red Dot Exhibition,” Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery
2016	“Merit Scholarship Exhibition,” Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery “Works on Paper,” The Manhattan Borough Presidents Office
2015	“2 <sup>nd</sup> Eleven persons Exhibition,” Gallery onetwentyeight “Five Senses +1,” Elga Wimmer Gallery
2014	“Red Dot Exhibition,” Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery “10 persons Exhibition,” Tenri Cultural Institute of New York
2013	A. T. Kearney (Exhibition Outreach Program, Art Students League)
2011	Vartali Salon
2007	Buchman Tower (Exhibition Outreach Program, Art Students) “Red Dot Exhibition,” Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery

## Awards and Honors

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2015	The Trudy and Henry Gillette Painting Scholarship
2007, 2014, 2017	Red Dot Award (Best in Show, Abstract Art), Art Students League
2010	Fantasy Fountain Fund Scholarship Award, finalist
2007–17	Blue Dot Award (Abstract Art and Life Drawing), Arts Students League

## Statement

I love to create.

In all of my painting I look to express human feeling and a sense of cheering on for each life. Because one painting saved me.

I focus on color! Color is the most important essence of my work. Why is there COLOR in this world? Why and how COLOR expresses the feeling of person? I want to pursue the possibility in color. There are many unexpected color combinations. Some discord and disharmony between colors. It surprised me to see colors interact. Layers of color harmony was beyond my expectation.

Movement is also important—the way I move an element empowers my pictures. Shapes dissolve and become meaningless.

Brushstrokes vary according to speed, thickness, density, and rhythm. Calligraphy requires complete concentration, as it is an unforgiving practice. There are no second chances. In this respect it becomes a type of meditation. Like most Japanese children, I learned traditional Sumi ink calligraphy at school, but it was the dynamic, creative style of Master Shingai Tanaka, which blended classical and contemporary calligraphy, that truly inspired me. I met him at an exhibition of his work at the French Embassy in New York in 2002, and we continued to stay in touch until his death in 2007. The year before, I went to Lyons, France, to study with him.

Color, movement, and stroke all of these elements are members of my art orchestra and ramble discursive works grow together.

Every time I am in front of a new canvas, I want to make something different. I do not want to stay in my comfort zone. I work to break away, again and again. The process is never static. When I hit a wall and am struggling, I remember my mentor Kikuo Saito's words, 'Trust the color', 'More color'.  
Yes, I know color speaks, color has power.

## Biography

I was born into a traditional family in Fukushima, Japan and went to catholic mission school. My mother made me wear a glove on my dominant left hand so that I would learn to use my right—left-handed children brought shame on a family. To this day, I can paint with both hands.

The study of pure art was difficult to live before (also now), so I majored in graphic design and typography at Musashino Art University in Tokyo. I became the editor and art director for a food magazine, where I worked for twenty-two years. Good salary, benefit and title,,, nothing was wrong. In 1994, by which time both of my parents had passed away already, when I turned forty-three, one of my friend in New York asked if I would like to be a partner for a takeout sushi franchise. On the spur of the moment, I decided to join her. I wanted to challenge new and different things, forty-three years old me was still young and fulfilled energy. Although I had never visited, I decided to move alone to New York City. I took a risk.

I worked in the restaurant business, becoming the general manager for, among other places, the last Japanese restaurant at the World Trade Center. After many years, however, I realized that I was not fulfilled and again found myself questioning my future. This time I was fifty-four, in the autumn of my life; I was determined to discover what would gratify and feed my soul before the life winter season began.

One day in September 2006 I came upon the Art Students League. I entered the building, and the smell of oil paint immediately brought me back to happier days as a student. The gallery had an instructors show with abstract painting. There were brilliant vivid colors. Instructor Kikuo Saito's brilliant vivid splashes of colors were so refreshing and so moving to me that it drove away my sadness. I was bursting from within and felt like I wanted to paint as he did. It was Kikuo's one painting that motivated me to begin painting abstract.

I had not picked up a brush in more than thirty-two years when I began studying under Kikuo Saito. Six months later, my pictures were receiving honors in our class shows. Had it not been for my earlier misfortunes, I might never have realized my potential as an artist. In all my paintings I try to express a sense of gratitude, as painting saved me. I hope my work encourages others to find their true path in life.