

Father's Back

Junichiro Ishibashi (Yasuyuki Ishibashi's son)

When I was in or out of elementary school, my father quit his job at the West Japan Railway and became an artist. During his time at the Railway Company, he was assigned to the calendar production department and was encouraged to learn how to draw. It was probably through this connection that he came into contact with Kyushu-Ha.

In this time, he also taught painting to the town's children at the community center, and he took me with him. He taught them to draw "big". My father disliked coloring books and told the children: "draw what you want to draw."

One of the rooms in our house was transformed into his studio. When he was working on a theme, he was always deep in thought and could not talk to me. But when I asked him, "What kind of picture are you painting?" he would smile and tell me happily. He is usually reserved, but when he talks about painting, he is in a good mood.

He was good friends with Mr. Ochi, and he often came to our house. He drank alcohol with others, but not in the evening. My father liked to read books related to geometry, the three primary colors, the universe, and nature, which are also motifs of his works. I think for my father, expressing his thoughts was a pastime. Although he had no say in my education, I think he taught me to "live the way I want" behind my back.

My father, who was one of the founding members of Kyushu-Ha, did not leave the group until the end. He said that "Kyushu-Ha has been a revolution" and was proud of being a member all his life. He also said, "Don't worry, Kyushu-Ha will stay in the world even after I'm gone." I quit learning to draw from my father when I entered junior high school, and now I regret it. I keep thinking, "I should try painting in my own way."