

## Original Landscape of Salvation #4

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"field" oil on canvas 1625x1320mm 1976

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In the summer of 1976, Kenichiro Terada held a solo exhibition at Toa Gallery. The works were beautiful and joyful with clear echoes of color, like playing in a sunny meadow. The novelist Kuninobu Noro (deceased) dropped by.

"Terada-san, don't you like Kandinsky as a painter

"Yes, I do."

Such a conversation ensued.

Noro must have felt that Terada's works, with their free and dynamic use of red, green, yellow, and blue, had something in common with Kandinsky's predecessors in musical color abstraction.

Kandinsky's aphorism about color.

Vermilion attracts people like an enchanting flame.  
The intense lemon yellow is a trumpet that rings high.  
We seek calm and repose in blues and greens.

From the 1970s onward, Kenichiro Terada departed from his earlier depressive and rigid style to create a world of large gray surfaces and lines that swell like music in an unrestrained manner. I am not able to give a precise date for what triggered the move, but I would guess that it started around the time of the atelier relocation.

After returning home and getting married, Terada moved out of his studio in Yakuin, where he had been based for nine years, and built a new studio in Ropponmatsu on top of a small hill in 1966. Surrounded by lush greenery, the area is quiet and free from the noise of the city. Terada told me about the construction of his studio with a look of utter admiration on his face.

“Midori (Mrs. Terada) is a great person. She had no money to build a house, but she went to a bank by herself, with which she had no business, and asked for a loan.” The spacious atelier was ready, with the seasonal breezes blowing briskly through it. He seemed happy.

Then, after a while, he said to me,  
"This picture is very good, isn't it?"  
He showed me a small piece of artwork.

A blue-gray sphere, reminiscent of silver, was cloaked in a red color.  
The dark green color had disappeared and the dark brown color was gone. His paintings had a more gentle tone and less of the hardness of Dubuffet's work. Now I think that he had a premonition in his mind that he was going to shed something. It had a quiet softness, but it did not have the intensity that would make it an epoch-making work. I have heard him say several times since then, "I like that painting. The painting "Floating" is one of his works.

In 1972, six years after moving into his studio, he joined a delegation that traveled to China for a month, shortly after the restoration of diplomatic relations between Japan and China. As if triggered by this trip, he often traveled abroad to France, Spain, Portugal, and Canada.

It was also around the same time that he began frequenting Yufuin, Oita. He had always been a friendly painter, but he was not a man of action who traveled far and wide. He had changed. Whenever I didn't see him for a while, he would bring me tales of new destinations. His travelogues were increasingly published in newspapers and on television, and his essays about his specialty, cooking, and his skills were often showcased in the media.

“It seems to me that in all of these processes lies the opportunity for the flood of primary colors in his paintings. He removes each of his burdens by taking action. By freeing himself from mental bondage, he achieved bold colors and forms. One of them, I observe, is his departure from the Nika-kai, in which he has been involved for 24 years  
“ And I wrote in a magazine before. Thinking back, I still think it is true.

It is difficult to prove the theoretical support for the development of his painting style, since he was not a painter who talked about his paintings. It seems that the opportunities were accumulated in layers over a fairly long period of time. I believe that his countless trips from Yufuin to Kujyu played a major role. I am convinced that most of his works, which are reminiscent of the landscapes of the late 1970s and 1980s, are based on Yufuin and Kujyu. There are numerous sketches of the area.

The work "Field" (1976) is a scene in which clouds take light steps, trees sway and sing, and grass and flowers seem to be intoxicated by a loud chorus, blessed by the light filling the bright autumn sky. This is one of a series of works harvested from the Yufuin-Kujyu line.

What happened in Yufuin-Kujyu? It would be natural to say that he had encounters with people and with nature, but I think there was an internal opening for him. He never tired of telling me stories inspired by the people of Yufuin, who pioneered the so-called "mura" (village) movement. In fact, he took me there several times.

Kenichiro Terada, a genuine Hakata native and a city boy, saw the countryside not as an object to be "gazed upon" by the artist's eyes, but as a space where people lived and breathed, and where people presented it as a new space to be transformed. When he looked at the mountains and flowers with open eyes, they must have appeared to Kenichiro Terada as having a decidedly different appearance and existence than they had before.

His first work, "A Girl on a Farm," was an emotion felt by a young urban youth in a landscape outside of the city. Since then, neither landscapes nor figures have appeared in any of his works. It is not to say that he did not paint figurative pictures; he painted both flowers and figures in small works. However, they were motifs inserted in bottles in his studio, and the figures served as models for his paintings.

In the case of abstract works, he says, "My paintings are called abstract, but I consider them figurative" The original landscape of the figurative images was not one that left the city and entered into the life and atmosphere of nature. Rather, it was a mental image of a sick city.

From there, he had to be rescued. His encounter with Anformel, where he learned the pleasure of "the act of painting itself," did not cure him of the crushing pain he felt, even though it helped him break free from the established patterns. The discoveries of people and nature, of existence itself, that he made on his travels gave color to Kenichiro Terada's paintings. In my memorial essay, I quoted Artur Rimbaud's exhortation.

I discovered the colors of my vowels.

A is black.

E is white

I is red

O is blue

U is green

"Artur Rimbaud discovered color in vowels, but Kenichiro Terada got his vowels in color."」

To repeat once again, it was the existence of the mura, which breathes, cultivates, and harvests together with nature, which Kenichiro Terada came in contact with in his far-and-distant travels, that helped him overcome his painful unformel period. The works of Kenichiro Terada, who decorated the latter half of his life with colors, are not colorism as a theory, but are dyed with colors created from the mother earth. In this sense, Kenichiro Terada's art was the work of a master painter who obtained the gradation of the "mother" of color and played with it.