

*Kikuo Saito: To Paint with Drawing*September 5th – October 12th, 2019*Moor's Chair, 1990, Oil on canvas, 85 x 106 3/8 inches*

Loretta Howard Gallery is pleased to announce *Kikuo Saito: To Paint with Drawing* opening on September 5th, 6 – 8 PM. The show will consist of four paintings and several drawings created between 1985-1999, illuminating the artist's transition from traditional color field painting to the theater paintings.

Kikuo Saito was a major contributor at La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club painting backdrops, making props and costumes, and directing his own plays. During the late 1970s, Saito was showing his paintings in New York galleries. Though he devoted his time to painting rather than performance, he continued to work collaboratively with those in the theater community such as Robert Wilson, Jerome Robbins and Saito's first wife Eva Maier, a choreographer. This body of work serves as a transition between two eras of Saito, evoking the style of the color field painters he had admired, and his own symbols linked to theater. At times we see arrows, X's, and slashes that draw movement literally across the canvas, similar to that of a choreographed dance. The drawings for this show range from 1990-1999, charting both the beginning of his final two theater productions, *Toy Garden* [1996] and the end of his theater work with, *Ash Garden* [2001].

In Karen Wilken's 1991 essay, she quotes Saito saying, "I always wanted to paint with drawing", demonstrating the intentionality of his technique in abstract mark making. Whether, painting with drawing or drawing with paint, these works concern themselves with issues of movement in an expansive field.

KinoSaito a non-profit organization started by Saito's widow Mikiko Ino to honor the legacy of Kikuo's work and reinvent his old studio space –former St. Patrick's

For Immediate Release

School, century-old three-structure property. The organization will serve as an exhibition, performance, and artist-and residence space, opening fall of 2020 in Verplanck, New York.

A fully illustrated catalogue featuring an essay by John Dorfman - Senior Editor of Arts & Antiques Magazine, accompanies this exhibition. Also on view in our Grand Street Window project is a Poem by Robert Wilson, written for Saito at his funeral, and props made by Saito for productions at La MaMa. For additional information and press inquiries, please contact Gabby Johnson at gabby@lorettahoward.com.