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| **Kawabata, Ryûshi (川端龍子) (1885-1966)** |
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| Kawabata Ryûshi was one of the few artists who was adept at both *Nihonga* (Japanese-style painting) and *Yôga* (Western-style painting). Originally trained in the latter, Ryûshi’s successful pointillist Impressionist works were exhibited at the Tokyo Industrial Exposition (1907) and the government-sponsored exhibition, the Bunten. In 1912, Ryûshi travelled to the United States where his encounter with the collection of Japanese art at the Boston Museum made him turn towards *Nihonga*. The switch was successful, and Ryûshi’s works were accepted for the Taishô Exposition in 1914 as well as for the Japan Art Institute’s second annual exhibition. After Ryûshi was made a full member of the Institute, he left his illustration job to become a full-time artist. Following his departure from the Institute in 1929, Ryûshi established the Blue Dragon Society (Seiryû-sha). There, he advocated painting large-scale works meant for exhibition purposes. This was a radical departure from traditional *Nihonga* works that were conventionally designed for smaller spaces, such as the interiors of Japanese homes. Some of Ryûshi’s better-known works are paintings created during Japan’s participation in World War II, and include narrative paintings based on the Japanese mythical creature known as the kappa. In 1956, Ryûshi painted dragons on the ceilings at the Asakusa Sensôji Temple. In 1959, he was awarded the Order of Culture by the Japanese government. |
| Further reading: (Conant)  (Furuta) |