John Szostak

**Hasegawa, Saburô (長谷川三郎, 1906-1957)**

Hasegawa Saburô was a Japanese abstract painter, a writer and an art historian. Born in Yamaguchi prefecture, as a youth he trained under the oil painter Koide Narashige (1887-1931). At Tokyo Imperial University he studied Japanese art history while continuing to paint. After graduating in 1929, he moved to Paris for three years, where he studied the work of abstract painters, particularly Mondrian, whose style he found inspirational. On his return to Japan he contributed to exhibitions organised by the Nikakai. In 1936 he published *Abstract Art* [*Abusutorakuto âto*], one of the first authoritative Japanese-language texts on the subject. The next year he joined with several other artists to create the Free Artist Society (Jiyû Bijutsuka Kyôkai), an influential pre-war avant-garde collective. Paintings such as *Locus of a Butterfly* (*Chô no kiseki*, 1937), contributed to the Free Artist Society’s first exhibition, demonstrate Hasegawa’s interest in combining Western-style abstraction with East Asian calligraphy. During a visit to New York in 1951 he gave lectures on Zen and East Asian aesthetics attended by Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning, and other New York School painters. From 1955 he worked as a lecturer in art history, painting, printmaking and calligraphy at the California College of Art and Crafts.

**Further reading:**

Alexandra Munroe, *Japanese Art After 1945: Scream Against the Sky*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996.

Gordon Chang, Mark Johnson and Paul Karlstrom (eds.), *Asian American Art: A History, 1850-1970*. Stanford: Stanford General Books, 2008.