This presentation explores the early dissemination of, and market for Nihonga (Japanese style painting), and in particular its sub-category, Shinpa, or ‘New School’, during the late-Meiji period. It will address Nihonga’s exposure and appreciation among the general public, and specifically the development of its distribution channels, following the move from traditional patronage to that practiced by the newly rising middle class. The talk will focus in particular on the Nihonga artist Hishida Shunsō, a painter who was the object of criticism in his own lifetime, but has been hailed by later generations as a national icon.

Eriko Tomizawa-Kay obtained her Ph.D. under the title “Breaking Boundaries in Modern Japanese Art: Hishida Shunsō and Nihonga in the Meiji Period” in 2013 from the School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS) at the University of London. She was co-organizer of the International Japanese Modern Art History Symposium (New Boundaries in Modern Japanese Art History: Extending Geographical, Temporal and Generic Paradigms) held at SOAS, June 2013. Following the completion of her doctorate, she was awarded an Andrew W. Mellon Art History Fellowship at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where from September 2013 to August 2014, she focused on the Museum’s collection of modern Japanese paintings and prints, and the Art Market of the United States during the late-19th to early-20th centuries. Currently, she is a Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Fellow, at the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures, Norwich.

(Image Credit Eisei Bunko, Tokyo)

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