

## HIDAKA Shokoku: the 130th Birth Anniversary

The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama features HIDAKA Shokoku (1881-1961), a Japanese painting artist from Gobo, Wakayama, celebrating the 130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his birth.

Shokoku (real given name: Masakatsu, ne KIMURA, later succeeded IKEDA) was born to a doctor family in Gobo, Wakayama. He chose his painter name HIDAKA after his hometown Hidaka district. Shokoku was also an otolaryngologist. He graduated Wakayama Junior High School and Tanabe Junior High School, and then studied at Kyoto Prefectural Medical School. He also studied in the otolaryngology class at Kyoto Imperial Medical University. Afterward he came back to Wakayama to be the head otolaryngologist at Wakayama Red Cross Hospital, and later he opened his own ENT clinic.

Playing an active role as a doctor, Shokoku was keenly interested in art and learned from local artists and began to paint himself. Besides he set up a group with his art-loving fellow doctors and organized art exhibitions in Wakayama having interactions with many artists. His contribution to the development of the art and culture at that time was quite meaningful.

Until the middle of 50s, he worked as a doctor, and then turned over his clinic to his son to dedicate himself to painting. Working on his art vigorously, he came to take a great interest not only in Japanese or Eastern ancient art, but also in Western art like Impressionism and studied these various styles. Moreover he walked around many rural areas and mountains, which brought him deep insight to nature. Around the end of the Second World War, at around the age of middle 60s, he became physically challenged. Yet he kept sincerely facing nature, and tried to educe its resonance, insomuch that his own expression with purity and high spirituality became deeper and deeper.

In this exhibition we will look back to the artist with about 30 works from the beginning till the very end of his career, along with about 20 works by related artists such as TOMIOKA Tessai and MURAKAMI Kagaku to whom Shokoku looked up as his model, NONAGASE Banka and HAYASHI Takeshi who had friendship with the artist, and his first teacher SAKAI Hosen.

- The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama, the 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- December 20, 2011 - February 19, 2012
- Open 9:30 to 17:00
- Closed on Monday and the year-end and new year holidays (December 29 to January 3), except for January 9 (closed on January 10, instead)

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