

Tanaka Kyokichi : a Retrospective  
In Commemoration of the 120th Anniversary of the Birth

**Sat. Sep. 1 - Sun. Oct. 14, 2012**  
**The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama**

In the 1910s, a Youth Devoted His Life onto Pieces of Paper

The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama (MOMAW) celebrates the 120th Anniversary of TANAKA Kyokichi's Birth. For the first time in 12 years, this great retrospective show gives a full picture of his career, including *Tsukuhae* [Reflections of the Moon,] the pioneer works of modern prints, which TANAKA created with his close friends ONCHI Koshiro and FUJIMORI Shizuo, and *Shingen-yushu*, a series of ink drawings which is well known as illustrations for HAGIWARA Sakutarō's first poetry book *Tsuki-ni-Hoeru* [Howling at the Moon.]

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TANAKA Kyokichi, who was born in Wakayama in 1892, went up to Tokyo to be a painter at the age of 18. First he learned at Haramachi branch of Hakubakai Art School and then enrolled in Tokyo Fine Arts School. That was just the time when literary magazine *Shirakaba* was first published and began to introduce European art energetically, through which post-impressionists such as Van Gogh and Edvard Munch came to be well known in Japan. And also TAKEHISA Yumeji dominated the world with his lyrical Yumeji Gashu, a collection of his illustrations and poetries. In these circumstances, TANAKA started to grope an expression for that new time and had a passion for ink drawings and poetries, making friends with TAKEHISA Yumeji, or creating magazines to circulate among close friends.

It is, however, quite ironic that his creation was boosted up by disease. When TANAKA spat blood, he noticed that he wouldn't live long, despite his abundant ambition for art. His fear of death and longing eye on vital plants and nature were expressed on sharp lines of his ink drawings and self-carved block prints, which he had begun to try at that time. As his interest in block prints influenced his closest friends ONCHI Koshiro and FUJIMORI Shizuo, they three began to create a magazine *Tsukuhae* [Reflections of the Moon,] for poetry and prints. Like TANAKA's worldview in *Tsukuhae* hit strongly the other two, the work still affects and attracts us as an absolute gem in the modern art history.

TANAKA kept working on *Tsukuhae* in his hometown where he came back for recovery. But eventually he became too weak to make block prints, and devoted all his left energy into ink drawings and poetry. And in 1915, he passed away at the

age of 23. His representative work *Shingen-yushu I*, which consists of 16 pieces of ink drawings, is what he had taken in life as illustrations for HAGIWARA Sakutarō's first poetry book *Tsuki-ni-Hoeru* [Howling at the Moon.] Although TANAKA himself couldn't see the completion of the book, his friend ONCHI exerted himself and now we can see the surprising harmony of Hagiwara's poetries and TANAKA's drawings.

In the show, including representative works such as block prints for *Tsukuhae* and *Shingen-yushu I*, about 300 works will be on view, from his early works in his school days to very late works. This will be too good a retrospective show to miss, giving a full picture of his career for the first time in 12 years.

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Organized by: The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama and The friends of MOMAW  
Sponsored by: The Mitsubishi UFJ Trust Cultural Foundation

Lecture by INOUE Yoshiko (Curator)

*TANAKA Kyokichi's Life and His Works*

Sun. Sep. 23, 14:00-, at Auditorium

Guest Lecture by SAKAMOTO Masami (Paper Conservator)

*A Secret of TANAKA Kyokichi: Matière and Expression*

Mon. Oct. 8, 14:00-, at Auditorium

Curator's Talk: Sat. Sept. 1 and Sun. Sept. 16 / 14:00-, at Gallery (ticket required)

- The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama, the 2nd floor
- September 1, 2012 - October 14, 2012
- Open 9:30 to 17:00
- Closed on Monday, except for September 17 and October 8 (closed on September 18 and October 9, instead)
- 500 (400) yen for adults, 300 (250) for college students, free of charge under 18, over 65, disabled, and foreign students studying in Wakayama. Prices in brackets indicate group rate.

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