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| Kitawaki, Noboru (北脇昇展) (1901-1951) |
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| Noboru Kitawaki was among the most inventive artists linked to interwar Surrealism in Japan, and an acquaintance of its keenest apologist, Shūzō Takiguchi. He trained in Kyoto under Seifū Tsuda, and first showed his work with the Nika Society before promoting avant-gardism through initiatives such as the Art and Culture Society, founded in 1939. A number of pictures from the end of the 1930s indicate Kitawaki’s turn away from academic Realism toward Surrealism, as well as a melancholic withdrawal from an increasingly nationalistic and militarized culture into the realms of the mind. *Perishing in the Sky* (1937) is one of many paintings with objects suspended in mental landscapes. Here, flitting maple leaf seeds, cloud formations, and a sinister shadow are cast against a dark blue ground. Around this time, Kitawaki experimented with automatism, collage, and decalcomania, and in 1941 completed his better-known series of diagrammatic paintings called *Analysis of Chinese Divination of the Chou Period*. These works used geometric shapes, tables, and symbols on blank backgrounds for the purpose of exploring ideas from Zen, Kantian philosophy, and the *I Ching*, in addition to mathematics and the life sciences, which Kitawaki explored in a number of theoretical essays. |
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| Further reading:  (Matsumoto)  (Nakamura) |