**Onchi, K­ōshirō (1890-1955)**

Onchi was a seminal leader of the modernist print movement in Japan known as Sōsaku Hanga and its most passionate advocate for recognition of the print as artistic expression and the artist’s control in its production. Born in a privileged Tokyo family, Onchi studied at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, but rather than its academism he was drawn to the images and poetry of Takehisa Yumeji (1884-1934). In 1914 Onchi, together with Fujimori Shizuo (1891-1943) and Tanaka Kyōkichi (1891-1915), published *Tsukuhae*, Japan’s first magazine dedicated to prints. In it he published *Lyric: Bright hours* (1915) accompanied by his own poem, which is considered the first purely abstract work produced in Japan. Although Onchi never travelled to Western countries, he was quick to respond to new information on art, taking inspiration from Western-style music, poetry and philosophy. His creative expression took many media other than prints: photography, poetry, book design, painting and doll-making. The marriage of image and poetry, in particular, remained a key concern. In printmaking Onchi worked in woodcut, but in later years he developed multi-block prints, each one a unique impression. After WWII, Onchi befriended with some American Occupation personnel such as Oliver Statler who appreciated and collected many of his prints, resulting in his important works now being housed in major American and British museums.

**References and Further reading**

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