**Okamoto, Tarō**

Tarō Okamoto (岡本太郎) (1911–1996), one of Japan’s most visible artists during the post-WWII period, was born in Kawasaki, Kanagawa, his father a cartoonist and mother a writer. In 1929, having enrolled at Tokyo Fine Arts School he travelled to Europe and began living in Paris from 1930. A member of the Abstraction-Création group between 1933–37, Okamoto associated with the likes of Georges Bataille, André Breton, Pablo Picasso, and Man Ray before returning to Japan in 1940. Working in many media and courting abstraction, biomorphic surrealism, and an abstracted figuration, his political-allegorical paintings are seemingly emblematic of the post-war decades, examples including the paintings *Heavy Industry* (1949), an indictment of capitalism, and *Law of the Jungle* (1950). In 1954 he exhibited in the 27th Venice Biennale, also establishing the Institute of Esthetic Research. The1960’s saw him working in Mexico on a large-scale commission, the nuclear themed *Myth of Tomorrow* (1970) mural subsequently returned and installed in Tokyo’s Shibuya Station in 2008. Okamoto’s sculptural output included *Tower of the Sun* for Osaka’s World Expo ’70, for which he was also artistic director. The Taro Okamoto Memorial Museum in Tokyo opening 1988 occupies his former Aoyama home and studio site, while The Taro Okamoto Museum of Art, opening 1999 in Kawasaki, holds an extensive collection of his work.

**References and further reading:**

The Taro Okamoto Museum of Art:

<http://www.taromuseum.jp>

The Taro Okamoto Memorial Museum (Japanese):

<http://www.taro-okamoto.or.jp/>

Okamoto’s *Tower of the Sun* sculpture:

<http://www1.u-netsurf.ne.jp/~kitada/doc/taiyo/us.htm>

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<http://www.moma.org/visit/calendar/exhibitions/1242>

OTANI, Shōgo; Murata Keinosuke (2011) *Okamoto Taro – The 100th Anniversary of His Birth*, Tokyo: NHK and NHK Promotions (catalogue accompanying the exhibition at The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, 2011).

<http://www.momat.go.jp/english/artmuseum/okamoto_taro/index.html>

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