John Szostak

220 words

**Takamura, Kôtarô 高村光太郎 (1883-1956)**

Takamura Kôtarô was a sculptor, poet, and essayist associated with several important modern Japanese art and literature movements, including the Folk Art (*Mingei*) and White Birch (*Shirakaba*) movements. The son of sculptor Takamura Kôun (1852-1934), Takamura studied both sculpting and oil painting at the Tokyo School of Fine Art. After graduating in 1906, he travelled to New York, London, and Paris, learning widely about Western art movements and aesthetics. After returning to Japan in 1908, he authored ‘Green Sun’ (*Midori iro no taiyô*), a famous essay which argued for the inalienable right of an artist to absolute freedom of self-expression. Takamura’s expressive sculptural style demonstrates a profound inspirational debt to Auguste Rodin, whose writings he translated and introduced to Japan. A prolific poet as well as artist and essayist, Takamura’s poetry was predominately written in free verse, which he helped establish in Japan. His best-known poetry is his 1941 collection of poetry known in English as *Chieko’s Sky*, written about his wife, Chieko, who was hospitalized for acute schizophrenia.

**References and Further Reading:**

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