

SIDE GALLERY

ISAMU NOGUCHI



Akari Light Sculpture Model "BB2-K1"

Manufactured by Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

Japan, 1980s

Open-weave textile, wood and metal

Measurements

28 × 28 × 68,6h cm

11 × 11 × 27h in

Provenance

Private collection, Japan

Details

Signed by the manufacturer.

Rare BB series model featuring Noguchi's characteristic bamboo support structure and wooden base.

Literature

Catalog of Latest Akari, Ozeki & Co., Gifu, 1988.

NEW Akari Light Sculpture, Ozeki & Co., Gifu, 1977.

Bonnie Rychlak, Dakin Hart, Mutsuko Mori, Masayo

Murayama and Kengo Matsumoto, Design: Isamu

Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, The Isamu Noguchi

Foundation and Garden Museum, New York, 2022.

Dore Ashton, Noguchi East and West, University of

California Press, Berkeley, 1992.

About

Designed around 1980, the BB2-K1 belongs to the celebrated BB series within Isamu Noguchi's Akari Light Sculptures, distinguished by its elegant bamboo support column and architectural presence. Combining an open-weave textile shade with a wooden base and metal structure, the lamp reflects Noguchi's continued exploration of light as a sculptural medium.

Unlike the more familiar Akari models executed in traditional washi paper, this version features a woven textile diffuser whose visible weave produces a distinctive quality of light. The fabric softly filters the illumination while allowing the texture of the material to remain perceptible, creating a warmer and more tactile presence. Combined with the wooden base and slender supporting structure, the lamp possesses a quiet architectural character that distinguishes it within the BB series.

The BB2-K1 exemplifies Noguchi's lifelong pursuit of harmony between craftsmanship, material, and light. More than a functional lighting object, it is conceived as a sculptural presence that transforms the atmosphere of a room through the subtle interaction of texture, form, and illumination.

Biography

Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988) was one of the most important and intellectually ambitious artists of the twentieth century, whose work moved fluidly between sculpture, architecture, landscape, furniture, and industrial design. Born in Los Angeles to the Japanese poet Yone Noguchi and the American writer Leonie Gilmour, he grew up between the United States and Japan, an experience that profoundly shaped his artistic vision. Noguchi never accepted the division between East and West, art and utility, or sculpture and design; instead, he sought to create a unified visual language capable of shaping how people live, move, and experience space.

Noguchi's early artistic formation took place in New York, where he studied at Columbia University before training as a sculptor. In 1927 he traveled to Paris on a Guggenheim Fellowship to apprentice with Constantin Brancusi, an experience that proved decisive for his understanding of form and abstraction. Throughout his life he expanded sculpture beyond conventional limits, creating furniture, stage sets, landscapes, and environments that redefined the role of design in daily life.

His Akari Light Sculptures, begun in 1951, remain among his most influential creations and continue to embody his lifelong pursuit of harmony between tradition, technology, material, and human experience.