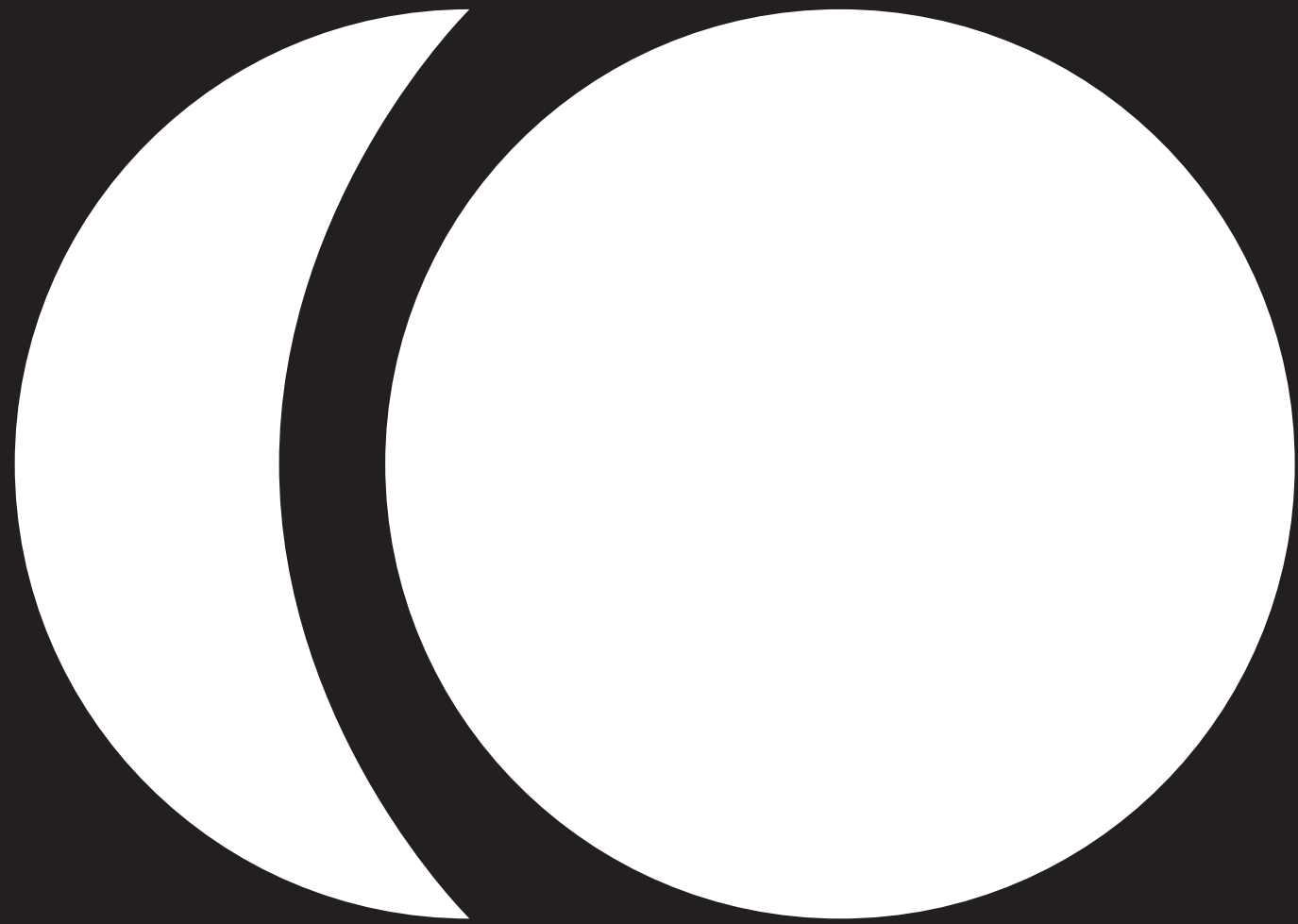


TAKING SHAPE



THE AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES OF ISAMU NOGUCHI

TAKING SHAPE



auction

30 March 2023
11 am cst

exhibition

21 – 29 March 2023
507 W 27th Street
New York NY 10001

WRIGHT

Wright

1440 W Hubbard St Chicago IL 60642
t 312 563 0020 wright20.com

TAKING SHAPE

THE AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES OF ISAMU NOGUCHI

CURATED BY ADAM EDELSBERG



A lot has changed for design dealers, over the last thirty years. We started as a group of object-driven, like-minded people—colleagues, friends and fellow enthusiasts—scattered around the country. While our interests and specialisms developed, diverged and evolved over the decades, for most of us there was a common beginning: the experience of a single object that inspired us. That moment of encounter pulled us toward post-war American design, compelling us to learn about its history and cultural context.

For many of us, there were two gateway objects in particular: the Eames' 670 Lounge Chair, and Noguchi's IN-50 coffee table, both designed for Herman Miller. Both were instant icons in their own time, and have continued to hold their energy and magic seven decades later.

For me, the Noguchi was the one. I was twelve years old when I first saw it in my grandparents' apartment. It was a quintessentially urban American moment: they didn't beam over a new Chevrolet in the driveway, but a biomorphic table in the living room. It was urbane, at once a symbol of having attained success, and an emblem of forward-thinking. Even though the IN-50 would already have been 36 years old by then, it seemed to me full of promise, infused with the power of the "new," of inherent modernity, suggesting the possibility of other forms, maybe even other politics, accessibility for all. I guess I thought it was "cool". It was both furniture and sculpture, not just a functional thing in front of the sofa.

My grandparents proudly owned and kept that table for the rest of their lives. My grandfather, the quintessential retired potter, would make Brancusi-like forms and place them on the IN-50; I remember sitting right by it when he showed me a photo of a Henry

Moore sculpture. I have the fondest, most sentimental memories of those times with my grandparents. Decades would pass before I understood their power and significance for my own future. Even as a young teenager, though, I knew I'd never look at furniture the same way again. Noguchi opened the door for me, showing me that one apparently simple object could be functional, and at the same time have great beauty and power, both formally and personally.

Since that first encounter, I have been fortunate to handle many objects that Noguchi designed. But it is his Akari that for me best symbolize his unique place in the world of design—the ultimate example of the bridge he built between artistic expression and everyday life. There are very few designers who were able to do that, and none more successfully in America after the war—with the exception of Charles and Ray Eames. While the Eameses created the foundation of an American modernist language, at once playful and sophisticated, their trajectory was rooted in industrial design, mathematics, and engineering. Noguchi's objects and furniture, especially his Akari, are FORM in its purest sense. Each lamp is imbued with sculptural qualities, while also being totally functional and accessible.

Even as Noguchi was making these miracles in paper and bamboo, he was using other, weightier materials—clay, bronze, steel, aluminum and many kinds of stone. These sculptures are replete with weight, solidity, and permanence. They give form not just to space, but time itself. But with the Akari, Noguchi made something more evanescent, shaping light itself. It has been deeply meaningful for me to spend time with these sources of illumination (in all senses of the word), as I have gathered them together over these years. And it is a privilege, now, to put them back out into the world.

— Adam Edelsberg

I want to thank Emilie Sims, Jennifer Mahanay and Megan Whippen for their expertise, creative vision, and endless support, I'm honored to work with such a great team.

Big thanks to Robert Gaul for his meticulous efforts and beautiful design aesthetic which brought this exhibition to life.

Many thanks to Glenn Adamson for his Illuminating essay, guidance and invaluable assistance on this project.

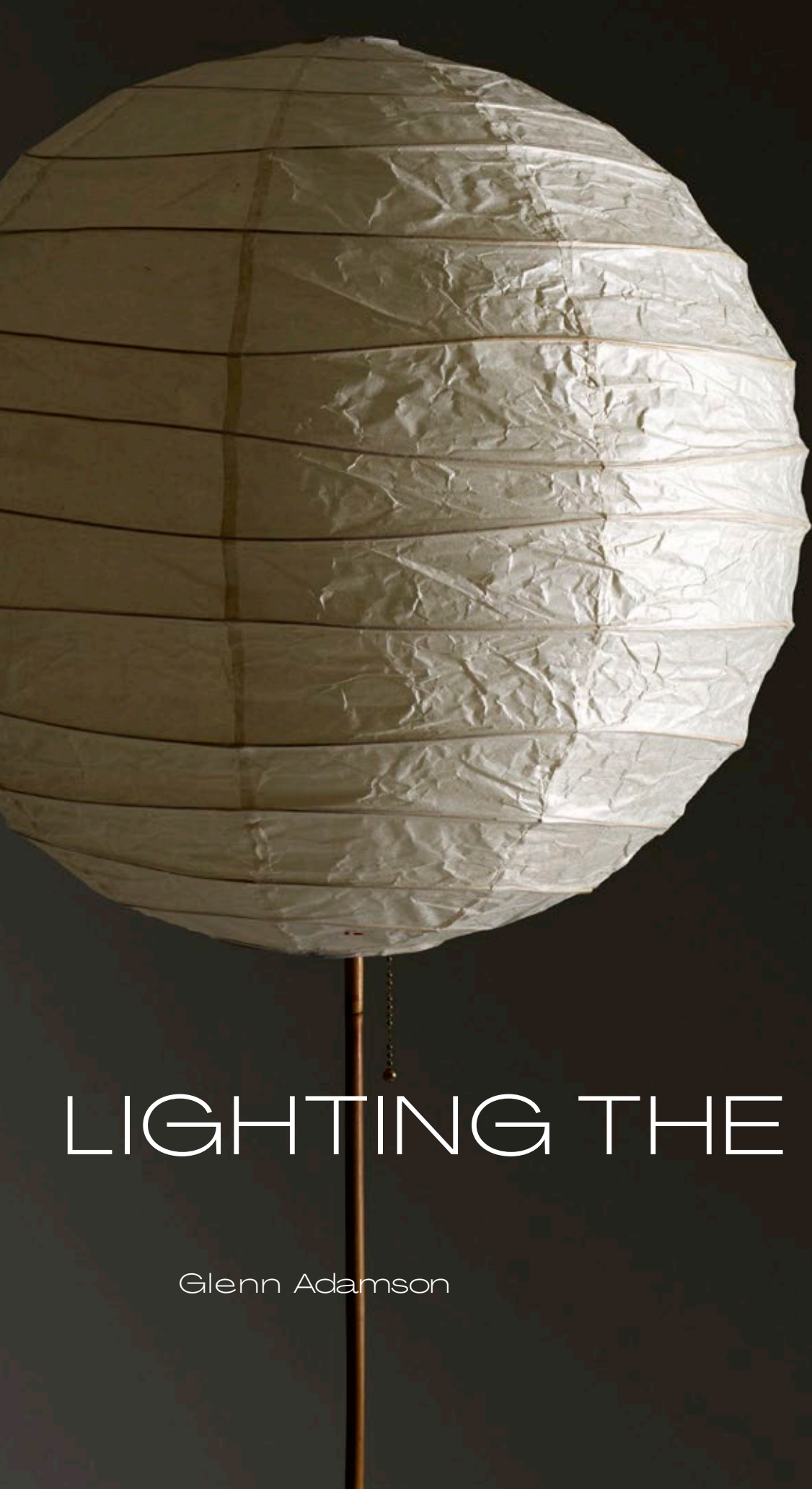
And lastly, a warm thank you to Bryce Aragon my indispensable collaborator without whom this project never would have happened.



I believe in the possibilities of art designed for multiple production (not reproduction). Art is art whatever it is called. Refinement and economy, the balance of tension and compression, these are also for me elements of art as is the resolving of complexities and asymmetries in which I am now involved.

ISAMU NOGUCHI, *SHAPES OF LIGHT* EXHIBITION CATALOG, 1968





LIGHTING THE WAY

Glenn Adamson

“Consonant with our appreciation of the ‘less-thingness’ of things, the less encumbered perceptions. Light as a feather they perch, some pinned to the wall, others clipped to a cord, and all may be moved with the thought.”

ISAMU NOGUCHI

“How little can you get away with and still be called sculpture?” So asked the London art critic John Russell Taylor, in 1986. He was writing about Isamu Noguchi’s Akari lights, and he didn’t mean it as a compliment.¹ Noguchi was representing America at the Venice Biennale that year, and had made the controversial decision to include his Akari alongside his stone sculptures. In those days, the lines between design and fine art were sharply drawn. Taylor was not alone in bristling at the sight of commercially available products in the US Pavilion: the temerity of it!²

In retrospect, we can see that Noguchi’s cross-disciplinary instincts, like so much else about the man and his work, were far ahead of their time. And while he certainly didn’t realize it, Taylor also put his finger on another aspect of the Akari that was equally prescient. For although they are certainly as sculptural as anything Noguchi carved in basalt or marble, there is indeed remarkably little to these luminous objects. The present gathering of them—seventy-two lights in all—weighs perhaps a hundred pounds. Total.

Long before digital culture brought domestic minimalism into vogue, and environmental concerns challenged our habits of consumption, Noguchi was already imagining a way to live light on the land.³ His Akari, he said, were “consonant with our appreciation of the ‘less-thingness’ of things, the less encumbered perceptions. Light as a feather they perch, some pinned to the wall, others clipped to a cord, and all may be moved with the thought.”⁴

This radical mobility gives the Akari an air of magic, with each new form a singular act of prestidigitation. The sorcery is compounded by the fact that they can be “packed knocked down,” as period advertisements put it—that is, collapsed flat for storage and shipping.⁵ This is extremely practical, while also enhancing the metaphor that Noguchi was after: “They do not encumber our space as mass or as possession, if they hardly exist in use, when not in use they fold

away in an envelope.”⁶ As he never failed to point out, the Japanese word *akari* is a direct equivalent of the English *light*; it means both illumination and weightlessness. In a sense—and this is why he insisted on presenting them in Venice—they are the purest sculptures he ever made, insofar as he thought of sculptures as “energy concentrations, irrational but meaningful... impalpable voids and pressures, the punctuations of spaces.”⁷

Yet even this lofty understanding of the Akari, as conjoined presence and absence, containment and emanation, doesn’t fully do them justice. To understand why, we have to return to the Akari origin story and see it in context. We can begin in May of 1950, when, following an extensive tour of Asia, Noguchi set foot in Japan for the first time in almost twenty years. It was a triumphant return.

below Isamu Noguchi seated with three Akari. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 03611. © 2023 The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



The real genius of the Akari, however, was not in their construction. Rather, it was the way they symbolized a new way forward for Japan, both artistically and economically.

His reputation preceded him, and the country's progressive architects, artists, and designers were eager to collaborate with him, among them Kenzo Tange, who was developing a synthesis of European-style modernism and traditional Japanese building styles. Tange was the overall planner for the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, and began discussions about involving Noguchi in designs for the site.

After a trip back to New York City—during which he met film actress Yoshiko Yamaguchi, whom he would marry the following year—Noguchi was back in Japan again, arriving in the spring of 1951. It was in June of that year that he encountered the paper *chochin* (lanterns) of Gifu for the first time. In an early account, he described the moment in picturesque terms, focusing on the cormorant fishing festival held at night: “fires dance upon the waters which, fast approaching, are seen to blaze from the prows of long slender fishing boats... It is like a chariot race of birds in which we take part, caught in the excitement, drifting along beside the busy fishing in our lantern-bedecked boat.”⁸



The spectacle doubtless did make an impression, but more consequential was a pragmatic request from the mayor of Gifu. Like so many Japanese craft industries, the city's lantern-making enterprise had been devastated by the war. An introduction was made to Tameshiro Ozeki, whose family had been making lamps since 1891, using traditional materials: paper made from the inner bark of *kozo* (a type of mulberry tree), a bentwood rim, and a continuous spiraling rib of bamboo to provide structure. Fascinated by the process, Noguchi began thinking about how he might adapt it. By October he had developed all the key innovations that distinguished the Akari from their historic precedents: the use of electric lighting, in place of a candle; stands in metal wire; and the elimination of the rigid rim, enabling the creation of varied freeform shapes.⁹

The real genius of the Akari, however, was not in their construction. Rather, it was the way they symbolized a new way forward for Japan, both artistically and economically. During the initial phase of postwar reconstruction, the country's economy had necessarily re-oriented itself toward exports. Cheap goods marked “Made in Japan,” often mass-manufactured in imitation of higher-quality handmade products, flooded the American market. Domestically, these export goods were referred to as *kurafto*, a transliteration of the English word “craft,” as opposed to the indigenous term, *kogei*.¹⁰

With the end of the US Occupation—announced on September 8, 1951, even as Noguchi was designing his first Akari—questions of economic development became even more pressing. There was a strong impetus to rebuild the country's industrial base, but also a fear that this would endanger the continuity of its traditions. What emerged was a bifurcated situation, with investment in craft and consumer electronics occurring simultaneously: the Living National Treasure program had its inception in 1955, the same year that the first Sony transistor radio was introduced.



opposite Display with 5A, 10A, 3A (floor); Early versions of 45A & 30A with collars (hanging). The Noguchi Museum Archives, 03581. Photo: Stephen Michael. © 2023 The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



above Isamu Noguchi, *Atomic Man* (Genshi Jin), Kasama ceramic, 1952. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 01731. © 2023 The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York
below Isamu Noguchi, *Model for Memorial to the Dead, Hiroshima*, 1952. Plaster. Dimensions unknown. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 088435. Photo: Isamu Noguchi. © 2023 The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



or film noir. Noguchi himself was a key protagonist in the radicalization of ceramics, then little regarded in the USA, but in Japan, a hallowed art form. The experiments in clay that he created in 1952, right in parallel with his Akari, were presented in an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in Kamakura, providing key inspiration for such avant garde potters as Yagi Kazuo and his colleagues in the groundbreaking Sodeisha group.¹³

Yet, if the Akari embodied modernization, they communicated respect for the past just as strongly. Their transmutation of the harsh glare of an electric lightbulb into a soft glow is comparable to the effect of *shoji* screens, which lend the Japanese interior such nuance. During his first postwar visit, in 1950, Noguchi wrote of his conversations with the Japanese: “I suggested that to be modern did not mean to copy us but to be themselves, looking to their own roots for strength and inspiration... I told them that many Americans were not at all sure about progress being such a good thing.”¹⁴ He himself needed no reminder that technology could be a destructive force: in the same months that he was working on his first Akari, he was developing proposals for Tange’s Hiroshima project, including sculptural handrails for two bridges (which were realized) and an imposing arch-shaped cenotaph (which was not), which he described as “a mass of black granite, glowing at the base from a light beyond and below.”¹⁵

The Akari floated free of this apparently contradictory situation. While early examples shipped to the USA are stamped “Japan”—underneath the sun and moon logo that Noguchi devised—the lights themselves did not fit into any existing export categories. Instead, they bring the opposing forces acting on postwar Japan into a harmonious union, symbolized by the combination of *washi* paper, subtle, tough, and translucent, with electric light, an American invention. This “deflection of an old tradition,” as Noguchi put it, was closely paralleled in other arts at the time in Japan.¹¹ The *sosaku hanga* (“creative prints”) movement, for example, created modernist compositions using *ukiyo-e* woodblock techniques which dated back to the Edo period.¹² Filmmakers such as Akira Kurosawa (whose great *Rashomon* was released in 1950) reinvented Japanese mythology with the pacing and style of a contemporary western,

Another very American thing about the Akari is that they are recognizably “modern design.” Their spidery stands have a family resemblance to the metal legs of an Eames DCM (designed in 1946), while the overall conception is similar to George Nelson’s contemporaneous Bubble lamps (designed in 1952, and inspired not by the Akari but by a Scandinavian hanging fixture that Nelson liked, with a silk shade; his version used plastic). Noguchi had already had considerable success in this field, of course, with his biomorphic IN-50 coffee table (1944) one of the signature designs of the era.



left New York: *The World Journal Tribune Magazine* (18 December 1966); Cover: *The Noguchi Museum Archives*, BM_MTN_1000_1966. © New York Magazine. Artwork © 2023 The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Yet he never saw himself as a purveyor of commodities. The Akari did sell well through various outlets—including Bonniers, the premier showcase for Scandinavian design in New York City—but Noguchi always prioritized his creative energies over his commercial interests. Unlike the Eameses and Nelson, he constantly changed the product line, constantly introducing new shapes and structural variants. The forms cross an extraordinary range: spheres and ellipses, articulated totems, torqued pillars, even an allusion to the *Endless Column* of Constantin Brancusi, in whose studio Noguchi had apprenticed at the beginning of his career. Even the numbering system for the Akari is sufficiently complex as to baffle the uninitiated (for example, A designates regular and closely spaced ribbing, D a more open and meandering pattern, and F a narrow but irregular spacing). Matters are complicated further by a longstanding tendency to mix and match shades and bases, which Noguchi actively encouraged, viewing the system as modular.

Bonniers tried to impose order, informing its customers in 1964 that Noguchi had progressed from “rounded shapes, then sculptured lights, now the squares, and he has given the bamboo strips an elusive random wind.”¹⁶ In fact, the development of Akari was never so linear. It was an ongoing improvisation, made possible by artisan production methods. The fact that the Akari were so widely

knocked-off in inferior versions made him all the more defiant: “I’m always fleeing them by going on and on to seek new forms.”¹⁷

Of course, people did want them; they were prepared to follow Noguchi on his path of restless invention, wherever it led. The resulting diversity makes the Akari a unique phenomenon in design history, at once elusive and pervasive. Eventually, Noguchi came to recognize that the omnipresence of his creation had itself become part of its meaning: “It may be said that an art that has gained such status of familiarity must influence the way of life. For poor or rich they are a mark of sensibility, not of status, but as an accent of quality, giving light to whatever may be our world.”¹⁸

And if, as Noguchi also liked to say, all one really needs to start a home is a room, a futon, and a single Akari hanging above, they are that much more powerful when installed *en masse*. This is certainly the case with the present gathering, a rare opportunity to see and compare a wide range of pristine early examples. And here we arrive at one last intriguing duality, in a story filled with them: objects originally intended to gesture toward the immaterial have themselves become relics, of a kind. Each light is a fragile monument to a whole way of thinking. Akari stands as luminous proof that seemingly intractable oppositions can indeed be transcended. Noguchi was often expected to choose between old and new, east and west, art and design. His answer was always yes.



1 John Russell Taylor, “Slipping So Easily into the Surreal,” *The Times* (London) (July 1, 1986).

2 See Glenn Adamson, “Representing America: Isamu Noguchi at the 1986 Venice Biennale,” online feature, 2020, The Noguchi Museum.

3 See Kyle Chayka, *The Longing for Less: Living With Minimalism* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2020).

4 Noguchi, “Sculpture as Invention,” 1952. Isamu Noguchi Foundation Archive, MS_WRI_017_001.

5 Bonniers advertisement for Akari Jr., ca. 1956. Isamu Noguchi Foundation Archive, B_AD_2000_1956.

6 Isamu Noguchi, “On Washi,” in Sukey Hughes, *Washi: The World of Japanese Paper*, (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1975).

7 “From an Interview with Isamu Noguchi,” 1949; in Diane Apostolos-Cappadona and Bruce Altschuler, eds, *Isamu Noguchi: Essays and Conversations* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994).

8 Isamu Noguchi, “Japanese Akari Lamps,” *Craft Horizons* 14/5 (Sept./Oct. 1954), 17–18: 17.

9 Hayden Herrera, *Listening to Stone: The Art and Life of Isamu Noguchi* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2015), 283.

10 Yuko Kikuchi, “Russel Wright and Design: Bridging Japonisme and Good Design Through Craft,” *Journal of Modern Craft* 1/3 (Nov. 2008), 357–382.

11 Noguchi, “Japanese Akari Lamps,” 18.

12 Alicia Volk, *Made in Japan: The Postwar Creative Print Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press/Milwaukee Art Museum, 1995).

13 Louise Cort, *Isamu Noguchi and Modern Japanese Ceramics: A Close Embrace of the Earth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

14 Isamu Noguchi, “Recent Work Exhibited in Japan” (1950), in Isamu Noguchi: *Essays and Conversations*, 95.

15 Isamu Noguchi, “Project: Hiroshima Memorial to the Dead,” *Arts & Architecture* 70/4 (April 1953), 16–17. See Dakin Hart, “Noguchi’s Memorials to the Atomic Dead,” online feature, 2021, The Noguchi Museum.

16 Bonniers newsletter, April 1964. Isamu Noguchi Foundation Archive, B_CLI_2000_1964.

17 Tamotsu Ogata, “Isamu Noguchi: The Wandering Artist,” *Japan Illustrated* (Summer 1974), 2–7: 5.

18 Isamu Noguchi, “The Meaning of Akari,” in *Space of Akari and Stone* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1988), 94.

Do not hesitate to wrinkle AKARI.
They are more beautiful so.

ISAMU NOGUCHI, NEW AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE BY ISAMU NOGUCHI, 1977
MANUFACTURER'S CATALOG



The Evolution of Akari

In the summer of 1951, Isamu Noguchi traveled to Gifu, Japan where he visited the lantern factory of Ozeki and Co. Ltd.; the trip marked the beginning of the production of Akari, a creative endeavor that would last the rest of the artist's life.

Noguchi's fascination with the use of light in his art was not new. In 1933, he created *The Luminous and Musical Weather Vane* and by the 1940s he had created a series of *Lunar works*—sculptures, landscapes and voyages—that employed light as a medium for evoking depth, ambiance, and topography. When the Mayor of Gifu asked Noguchi to help revitalize the lantern industry, the artist saw an opportunity to create sculptural works—art—for everyday use.

Using traditional and regional materials, Noguchi created bold and striking forms that were constructed to be easily collapsible and were therefore easily (and cost-effectively) distributed. They were modern both in form and their use of electricity: as Noguchi explained, "I thought lanterns could be luminous sculptures and set about to integrate the use of electricity and methods of support into their structure, to eliminate the traditional wooden rims, and to utilize Mino or mulberry bark which best diffuses the light to the surface – in sum, to ennoble and renew the use of lanterns. These I named AKARI, meaning light." (*Shapes of Light* exhibition catalog, 1968, The Noguchi Archives, MS_AKA_001_017)

The first of Noguchi's Akari were designed in 1951, to immediate success. By August of that year, conversations were already taking place about wider distribution of Akari in the United States. (Letter to Shoichi Mutoh, The Noguchi Archives, LBD_50S_009_003). The following year, there were at least fourteen variations of Akari available on

The present collection features more than 50 early and rare examples of Noguchi's Akari from the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. All examples have the earliest presentation of Noguchi's sun and moon ideogram. Presented together, in the first dedicated auction of its kind, this impressive and comprehensive collection demonstrates that Noguchi's Akari continue to stand the test of time.

opposite Steph Simon "Nouvelle Collection" illustrated brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_024. © 2023 The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

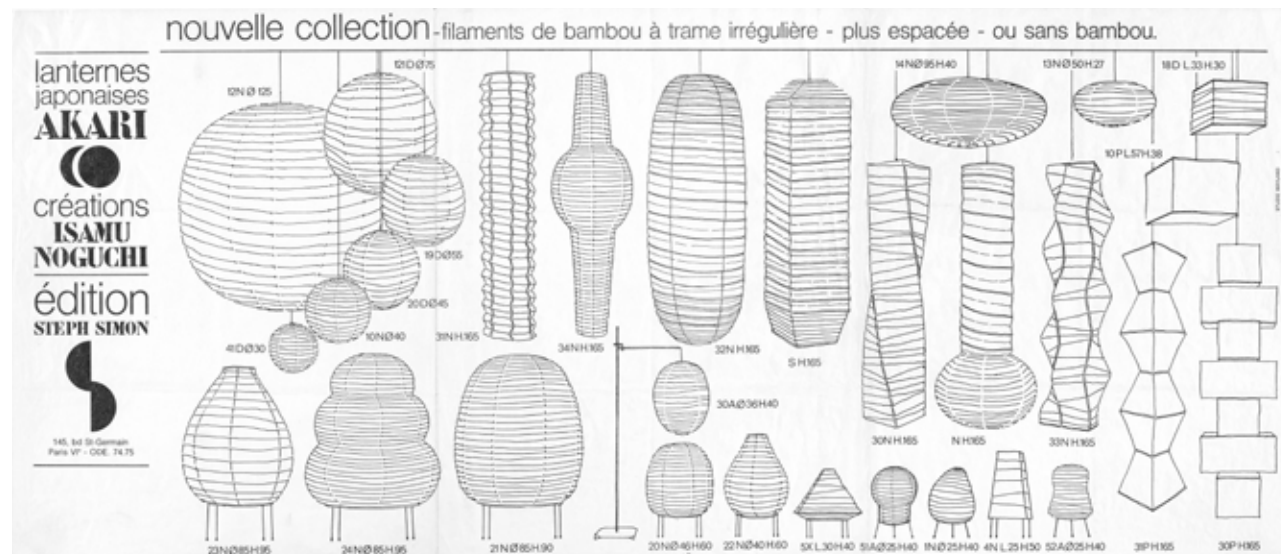
the Japanese market and in the fall the Kamakura Museum of Modern Art hosted *Isamu Noguchi*, the first exhibition to feature Akari.

In 1954, Chuo Koron Gallery in Tokyo hosted a seminal exhibition of Noguchi's Akari designs. It was also in 1954 that Noguchi's Akari crossed the ocean; light sculptures were included in the renowned Museum of Modern Art's *Good Design* exhibition and the department store Bonniers was distributing Akari. Akari were the subject of an article published in the April 1955 issue of *Interiors* magazine where editor Lois Wagner wrote, "Giant fantasies show sculptor Noguchi's inclinations at their most free...they are impressive and low-cost sculptures." By the time the decade ended, Akari could also be purchased in several European countries, illustrating growing demand and global appreciation for the pieces. As both design commodities and affordable art for the home, Noguchi's Akari were making a statement.

Noguchi would go on to add more models to his Akari line nearly every year. He wrote, "To me they were always beyond commercial or industrial design—a medium of art. My constant concern with the further development of AKARI has grown out of this fascination and out of wanting to foil my many imitators, through innovation, to reach a point where they could no longer follow. But to achieve this meant that one had to sell them, and the economy of manufacture is based on standardization. Stores do not want continual change, nor are they organized for showing or selling a line of objects repeated serially but constantly redesigned and improved." (*Shapes of Light* exhibition catalog, 1968). And yet, Noguchi did continually redesign, improve, and add new Akari throughout his lifetime.

Among his innovations, Noguchi introduced the idea of irregular bamboo ribbing, adding diversity and complexity to the structure of existing shade forms. He varied the sizes and often featured interchangeable metal armatures that allowed the shades to hang from the ceiling or sit on supports as floor or table models. The bases, too, evolved over time, from wire forms and "single stem" bamboo rods to later variants of the bamboo model, today known as BB1, BB2 and BB3, and more. Similarly, the support for the lighting elements also evolved over the years and the lighting sources ranged from traditional bulbs to fluorescent tubes. The variety of options and the interchangeable nature of these elements leads to Akari's complicated lineage, and the scholarship on identifying and dating the works continues to evolve today.

Amassed over several years, the present collection attests to Noguchi's sustained attention to changing and adapting the Akari. The curated selection features more than 50 early and rare examples from the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. All examples have the earliest presentation of Noguchi's sun and moon ideogram. From early floor models with the Bonniers mark to a wall-mounted light sculpture originating at the notable Parisian Galerie Steph Simon, and a variety of other forms, sizes, and constructions, this exceptional and comprehensive collection illustrates the depth and beauty of Noguchi's vision. Presented together one may begin to consider the designs as a complete body of work with its own vocabulary, an ongoing series of light sculptures that have become a prized icon of the seamless integration of art and design.



100

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 3A-UKAI

designed 1952

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

screenprinted washi paper, bamboo, wood,
enameled steel, cane

11½ dia × 22½ h in (29 × 57 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade. Impressed
manufacturer's mark to hardware 'Made in Japan'.

Sold with original packaging.

Literature

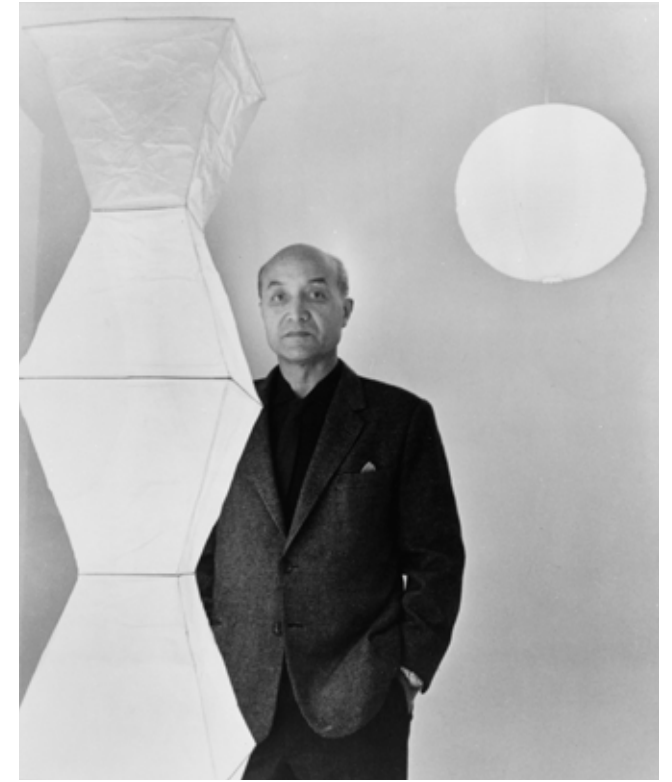
Akari Lamps by Isamu Noguchi, early promotional sheet
with original eighteen models, c. 1952, The Noguchi Museum
Archives, LBD_50S_025_025, illustrates related model

\$5,000–7,000





Isamu Noguchi standing between hanging and standing Akari, 1960s, The Noguchi Museum Archives, 07028. © 2023 The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



101

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 31PW
designed c.1975
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper, bamboo
18 w × 18 d × 62 h in (46 × 46 × 157 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

\$6,000–8,000

102

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 75D

designed by 1970

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo

29 dia × 26½ h in (74 × 67 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$4,000–6,000





103

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
 AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES MODEL T1–45XN, PAIR
 shade designed 1978
 Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
 washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron,
 enameled steel, enameled brass
 8½ w × 8 d × 43½ h in (22 × 20 × 110 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to each shade.
 Cast manufacturer's mark to underside of each
 base 'Made in Japan'.

LITERATURE
NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly
 brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020
Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu
 exhibition catalog, unpaginated
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori,
 Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 102

\$5,000–7,000

104

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
 AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 17D
 designed c.1961
 Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
 washi paper, bamboo
 18¼ w × 18¼ d × 18¼ h in (46 × 46 × 46 cm)

Model 17D later became known as the 45X.
 Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to shade.
 Sold with original packaging.

LITERATURE
New Akari Light Sculpture, brochure for Bloomingdale's,
 The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_COR_288_021
Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu
 exhibition catalog, unpaginated
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori,
 Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$3,000–5,000



105

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES MODEL 41S, PAIR

designed 1956

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron

12 dia × 25¾ h in (30 × 65 cm)

The present model was marketed in early Bonniers publications as the 41S; the shade model would become known as the 30A and the bamboo base was later known at the BB1. Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to each shade. Cast manufacturer's mark to underside of each base 'Made in Japan'.

LITERATURE

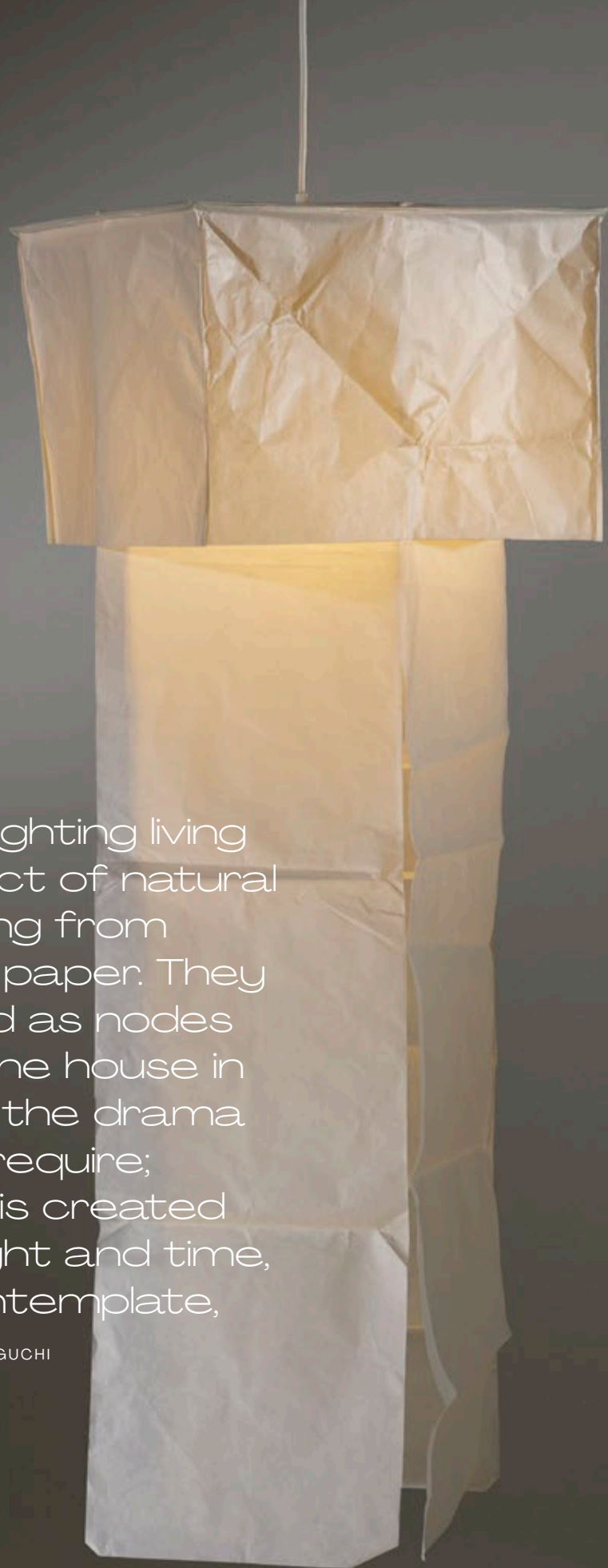
NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 100

\$6,000–8,000



Akari is a system of lighting living space with the effect of natural light, as of light coming from outside through the paper. They should be considered as nodes of light throughout the house in different shapes as the drama of the space might require; with their use there is created intervals of space, light and time, environments to contemplate, live in and enjoy. ISAMU NOGUCHI





106

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 22N

designed 1968

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, enameled steel

15 dia × 24 h in (38 × 61 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to shade.

LITERATURE

New Akari Light Sculpture, brochure for Bloomingdale's,

The Isamu Noguchi Museum Archive, MS_COR_288_021

Akari, illustrated dimensions brochure, The Noguchi Museum

Archives, MS_AKA_008_021

Akari, 1988 manufacturer's catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori,

Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$3,000–4,000

107

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 32N

shade designed 1969

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron, enameled steel

22 dia × 66¾ h in (56 × 170 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$6,000–8,000



Everything is sculpture.
Any material, any idea without
hinderance born into space,
I consider sculpture. ISAMU NOGUCHI



Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 10A

designed 1952

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, wood, enameled steel, cane

20 ½ dia × 49 h in (52 × 124 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

Akari Lamps by Isamu Noguchi, circa 1952 early promotional sheet with original eighteen models, The Noguchi Museum Archives, LBD_50S_025_025

Akari Lamps, Bonniers catalog brochure,

The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_015

Akari Lamps by Isamu Noguchi, 1956 Bonniers assembly instructions, The Noguchi Museum Archives,

B_AD_2001_1956

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 99

\$6,000–8,000





109

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 43L

designed 1954

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron

21 dia × 75 h in (53 × 191 cm)

This floor lamp was marketed by Bonniers as the 43L; the lamp is comprised of a 19A shade, later known as the 55A, and a 60-inch single stem bamboo base, later known as the BB3. Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to shade. Cast manufacturer's mark to underside of base 'Made in Japan'. Sold with original packaging.

LITERATURE

Akari Lamps, Bonniers accordion catalog brochure,

The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_015

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly

brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu

exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori,

Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 100

\$4,000–6,000

110

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 27N

designed by 1977

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled steel

24 w × 28 d × 48½ h in (61 × 71 × 123 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$4,000–6,000





111

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES MODEL S1, PAIR
designed by 1977
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper, bamboo
11½ dia × 21 h in (29 × 53 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to each shade.

LITERATURE
NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020
Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 102

\$4,000–6,000

112

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 4N
designed 1968
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper, bamboo, enameled steel
8½ w × 8½ d × 20¼ h in (22 × 22 × 51 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to shade.

LITERATURE
NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020
Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$2,000–3,000



113

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL E

designed 1954

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo

18 dia × 99 h in (46 × 251 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu
exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori,
Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 99

\$10,000–15,000



Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES MODEL T1-V2, PAIR
shade designed 1977

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron and steel
13¼ w × 13¼ d × 42¼ h in (34 × 34 × 107 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to each shade.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 102

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 102

\$5,000–7,000



Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL L4
designed c.1976

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo
25 w × 25 d × 59 h in (64 × 64 × 150 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$6,000–8,000



116

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL BB3–50EN

shade designed by 1970

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron

19½ dia × 68 h in (50 × 173 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade. Cast manufacturer's mark to underside of base 'Made in Japan'.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$5,000–7,000





117

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES MODEL S2, PAIR

designed by 1977

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo

17 dia × 36 h in (43 × 91 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to each shade.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 102

\$5,000–7,000

118

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL H

designed by 1961

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron, enameled steel
20 3/4 dia × 75 1/4 h in (53 × 191 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade. Metal
manufacturer's tag to underside of base 'A'.

LITERATURE

Lampes japonaises AKARI créations, Steph Simon accordion
brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_017

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu
exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Lampes japonaises Akari créations, Steph Simon
brochure, undated

\$7,000–9,000



...Akari has its rationale in being in relation to people... I was told early on that all a young couple needed in starting life together was a 'futon' and an Akari above—a pad and a light, that is, not only just light, but the Akari light which is a difference because it has a shape, a sense of being which is more than merely lighting a room, it is lighting itself, that is, the paper of which the Akari is made becomes luminous as a result of the light inside, on its surface, however distant the light may be from the light bulb, it all becomes a luminous surface.

ISAMU NOGUCHI



119

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 24N

designed 1968

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled steel

15 ¾ dia × 22 ¾ h in (40 × 58 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade. Distributor's decal to socket 'Akari-Gemini Akari Lamp'.

LITERATURE

New Akari Light Sculpture, brochure for Bloomingdale's, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_COR_288_021

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$4,000–6,000





120

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL K
designed by 1962
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper, bamboo
17 dia × 44 h in (43 × 112 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

Literature
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori,
Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 100

\$6,000–8,000



121

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES, GROUP OF THREE
designed 1954
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper, bamboo
17½ dia × 16½ h in (44 × 42 cm)

Lot is comprised of three light sculptures model 20A. Model 20A would later become known as the 45A. Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade of each example. Stamped 'Japan' to two examples.

LITERATURE

New Akari Light Sculpture, brochure for Bloomingdale's, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_COR_288_021
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 99

\$6,000–8,000

122

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 21N

designed 1968

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled steel

32½ dia × 43½ h in (83 × 110 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

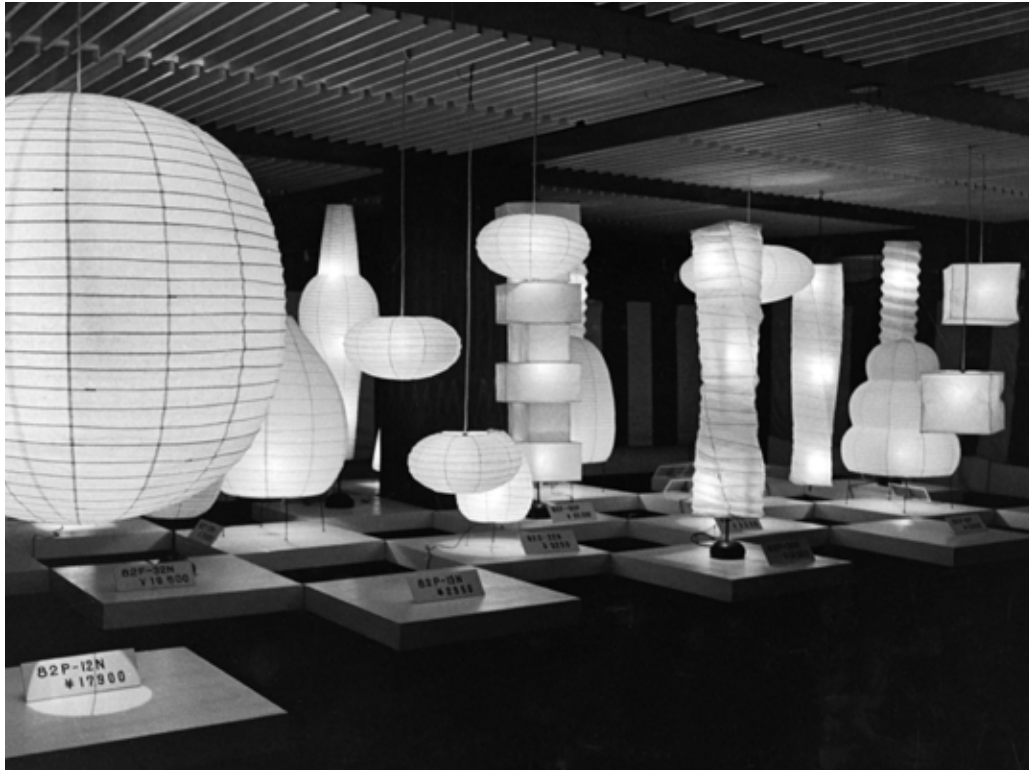
LITERATURE

New Akari Light Sculpture, brochure for Bloomingdale's,
The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_COR_288_021

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori,
Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$7,000–9,000





above left Akari on display in unknown retail store in Japan, 1970s. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 03693 Photo: Michio Noguchi. © 2023 The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York left FC Gundlach: "Etude in chiaroscuro", Judy Dent in a dress by Heinz Oestergaard, Berlin 1962 © FC Gundlach Foundation



Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 40AS

designed 1964

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled aluminum, enameled steel
12¼ dia × 24¼ h in (31 × 62 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to shade.
Impressed manufacturer's mark to base 'Japan'.

LITERATURE

Lampes japonaises AKARI creations, Steph Simon brochure,
The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_017

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly
brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori,
Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 100

\$5,000–7,000



Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 140XL

designed by 1970

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo

15½ w × 15½ d × 48 h in (39 × 39 × 122 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

New Akari Light Sculpture, brochure for Bloomingdale's,
The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_COR_288_021

\$6,000–8,000





125

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 9AD

designed by 1952

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, wood, enameled steel, cane

17½ dia × 26¼ h in (44 × 67 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to shade.

LITERATURE

Akari Lamps by Isamu Noguchi, circa 1952 early

promotional sheet with original eighteen models,

The Noguchi Museum Archives, LBD_50S_025_025

Akari Lamps by Isamu Noguchi, 1956 Bonniers assembly

instructions, The Noguchi Museum Archives,

B_AD_2001_1956

Akari Lamps, Bonnier's catalog brochure,

The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_015

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum,

Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

\$6,000–8,000





126

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 31N

designed 1961

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo

11 dia × 56 h in (28 × 142 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Akari, illustrated dimensions brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_021

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 100

\$5,000–7,000





127

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL L1

designed c.1976

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, silk thread

11¼ w × 11¼ d × 43 h in (29 × 29 × 109 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

Sold with original packaging.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$5,000–7,000





128

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES MODEL V2, PAIR
designed c.1977
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper
13½ w × 13½ d × 23½ h in (34 × 34 × 60 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to each shade.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020
Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rycklak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$5,000–7,000



129

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 33NW
designed c.1975
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper, bamboo
24 w × 24 d × 63 h in (61 × 61 × 160 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to shade.
Sold with original packaging.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020
Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rycklak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$5,000–7,000





130

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES MODEL 19D

ON SINGLE STEM BASES, PAIR

designed 1954

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron

21¾ dia × 74½ h in (55 × 189 cm)

The 19D shade model would later become known as the 55D. Similarly, the single stem bamboo base would become known as the BB3. Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to each shade. Cast distributor's mark to underside of each base 'Bonniers Made in Japan'.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 99

\$8,000–10,000

131

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 1N

designed 1968

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled steel

10 w × 9 d × 15½ h in (25 × 23 × 39 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rycklak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$3,000–5,000





132

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES, GROUP OF THREE

designed 1971

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo

13¼ w × 13¼ d × 11 h in (34 × 34 × 28 cm)

Lot is comprised of three light sculptures, two model 33X and one 45X. Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to each shade. Sold with original packaging for each example.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archive, MS_AKA_008_038

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$7,000–9,000

The harshness of electricity is thus transformed through the magic of paper back to the light of our origin—the sun—so that its warmth may continue to fill our rooms at night. ISAMU NOGUCHI



133

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL I

shade designed 1961

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled iron and steel

18 w × 18 d × 77½ h in (46 × 46 × 197 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

Sold with original packaging.

LITERATURE

Akari, illustrated dimensions brochure,

The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_021

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak,

Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 100

\$7,000–9,000





*Akari on display at Bonniers gift show,
The Noguchi Museum Archives, 03688.
Photo: Michio Noguchi. © 2023 The Isamu
Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum,
New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS),
New York*



134

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 23N

designed 1968

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled steel

33 dia × 46 h in (84 × 117 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

Akari, illustrated dimensions brochure,

The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_021

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum,

Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rycklak,

Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$7,000–9,000



135

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 3A UKAI

designed 1952

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

screenprinted washi paper, enameled steel, wood, cane
11 dia × 23 h in (28 × 58 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram shade.

Sold with original packaging.

LITERATURE

Akari Lamps by Isamu Noguchi, circa 1952 early promotional sheet with original eighteen models, The Noguchi Museum Archives, LBD_50S_025_025, illustrates model 3A

\$5,000–7,000



136



Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 32N
designed by 1970
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper; bamboo
22 dia × 55 h in (56 × 140 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$6,000–8,000

137

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL BB1–30DL
shade designed c.1978
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper; bamboo, enameled cast iron
7½ dia × 23 h in (19 × 58 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade. Cast manufacturer's mark to underside of base 'Made in Japan'.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 102

\$4,000–6,000



138

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES, GROUP OF FIVE

designed 1954–1964

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo

21 dia × 20 h in (53 × 51 cm)

Lot is comprised of five light sculptures, models 19A, 20A, 20D and two 30D. Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade of each example. Stamped 'Japan' to two examples.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, brochure for Bloomingdale's, The Isamu Noguchi Museum Archive, MS_COR_288_021

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, ppg. 99–101

\$10,000–15,000





139

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 31PW

designed c.1975

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo

17 ½ w × 17 ½ d × 63 h in (44 × 44 × 160 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

Sold with original packaging.

\$5,000–7,000

140

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL UF4–31N

shade designed 1969

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled steel

21 w × 19 d × 76 ¾ h in (53 × 48 × 195 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

Lampes japonaises AKARI créations, Steph Simon accordion brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_017

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$5,000–7,000





141

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 10N
WITH WALL-MOUNTED STEM
shade designed 1954
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper, bamboo, enameled steel
16 w × 38 d × 19 h in (41 × 97 × 48 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to shade.
Sold with original packaging.

LITERATURE
Lampes japonaises AKARI creations, Steph Simon brochure,
The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_017
New Akari Light Sculpture, brochure for Bloomingdale's,
The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_COR_288_021
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori,
Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 99

PROVENANCE
Galerie Steph Simon, Paris
Private Collection, Paris

\$6,000–8,000

142

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 1AD
designed 1954
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
screenprinted washi paper, bamboo, enameled steel
9 dia × 16¼ h in (23 × 41 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE
NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension
and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives,
MS_AKA_008_020 illustrates variations
Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum,
Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak,
Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 99

\$4,000–6,000





Isamu Noguchi in his Gently Studio at 11 rue Dedouvre with "Loud Whisper," "Beguine," and other works in process, and various bases. The Noguchi Museum Archives, 03716. Photo: Atelier Stone. © 2023 The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



143

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 31P

shade designed 1969

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron, enameled steel

13 w × 13 d × 72¾ h in (33 × 33 × 185 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

Akari, illustrated dimensions brochure,

The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_021

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$6,000–8,000



144

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 30N

shade designed 1968

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo

14½ dia × 65 h in (37 × 165 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

Akari, illustrated dimensions brochure,

The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_021

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak,

Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$5,000–7,000



Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
 AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES MODEL BB2–45XN, PAIR
 shade designed c.1978
 Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
 washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron
 7¾ w × 7¾ d × 30 h in (20 × 20 × 76 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to each shade.
 Cast manufacturer's mark to underside of each base
 'Made in Japan'.

LITERATURE
NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly
 brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020
Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum,
 Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori,
 Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 102
 \$6,000–8,000



Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
 AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 5A
 designed 1952
 Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
 washi paper, bamboo, wood, enameled steel, cane
 10½ dia × 23¼ h in (27 × 59 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE
Akari Lamps by Isamu Noguchi, circa 1952 early promotional
 sheet with original eighteen models, The Noguchi Museum
 Archives, LBD_50S_025_025
Akari Lamps by Isamu Noguchi, 195 Bonniers assembly
 instructions, The Noguchi Museum Archive, B_AD_2001_1956
Akari Lamps, Bonnier's catalog brochure, The Noguchi
 Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_015
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori,
 Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 99
 \$4,000–6,000



147

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL L2

shade designed c.1976

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper

16¼ w × 16¼ d × 47 h in (41 × 41 × 119 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rycklak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$5,000–7,000



148

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL BB3–70XL
shade designed by 1970
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron
8 w × 8½ d × 76½ h in (20 × 22 × 194 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to shade. Cast manufacturer's mark to underside of base 'Made in Japan'.

LITERATURE
New Akari Light Sculpture, brochure for Bloomingdale's, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_COR_288_021
Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$5,000–7,000



149

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988
AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES MODELS 3X, PAIR
designed c.1961
Ozeki & Co., Ltd.
washi paper, bamboo, enameled steel
9 w × 9 d × 13¼ h in (23 × 23 × 34 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to each shade.

LITERATURE
NEW AKARI Light Sculpture, 1977 dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_020
Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum, Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated
Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 100

\$4,000–6,000





All sizes and shapes are possible
with Noguchi's Akari solution,
so simple that you feel silly not
to have thought of it yourself.



150

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL BB2-21A

shade designed 1954

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron

25½ dia × 26 h in (65 × 66 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram and 'Japan' to shade.
Distributor's decal to underside of base 'Kovacs'. Cast
manufacturer's mark to underside of base 'Made in Japan'.

LITERATURE

Akari, illustrated dimensions brochure,

The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_021

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak,
Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 99

\$5,000–7,000

151

Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURES MODEL BB3–45X, PAIR

shade designed 1971

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, enameled cast iron

18 w × 18½ d × 70 h in (46 × 47 × 178 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to each shade.
Cast manufacturer's mark to underside of each base
'Made in Japan'. Sold with original packaging for shades.

LITERATURE

Akari, 1988 manufacturer's catalog, unpaginated

Isamu Noguchi "Akari", Craft and Design Museum,

Gifu exhibition catalog, unpaginated

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak,

Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 101

\$8,000–10,000



Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 4A

designed 1952

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, wood, enameled steel, cane
12½ dia × 22½ h in (32 × 57 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

Akari Lamps by Isamu Noguchi, circa 1952 early promotional sheet with original eighteen models, The Noguchi Museum Archives, LBD_50S_025_025

Akari Lamps by Isamu Noguchi, 1956 Bonnier's assembly instructions, The Noguchi Museum Archive, B_AD_2001_1956

Akari Lamps, Bonnier's catalog brochure,

The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_008_015

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 99

\$4,000–6,000



Isamu Noguchi 1904–1988

AKARI LIGHT SCULPTURE, MODEL 22A

shade designed 1952

Ozeki & Co., Ltd.

washi paper, bamboo, wood
19½ dia × 15½ h in (50 × 39 cm)

Stamped 'Sun and Moon' ideogram to shade.

LITERATURE

Akari Lamps by Isamu Noguchi, dimension and assembly brochure, The Noguchi Museum Archives, MS_AKA_013_003

Design: Isamu Noguchi and Isamu Kenmochi, Rychlak, Mori, Murayama, and Matsumoto, pg. 100

\$4,000–6,000





Louise Dahl-Wolfe portrait of Isamu
Noguchi, 1955. The Noguchi Museum
Archives, 03705. Photo: Louise
Dahl-Wolfe. © 2023 The Isamu Noguchi
Foundation and Garden Museum,
New York / Artists Rights Society
(ARS), New York



The use of lanterns happens to fit in my preoccupation with the quality and sensibility of light. This had to do not with general lumination, but with the luminous object, which like fire (like sculpture) has an evocative power. ISAMU NOGUCHI, *ARTS & ARCHITECTURE* 72, MAY 1955

auction

30 March 2023
11 am cst

exhibition

21 – 29 March 2023
507 W 27th Street
New York NY 10001

TAKING SHAPE
THE AKARI LIGHT
SCULPTURES
OF ISAMU NOGUCHI

CURATED BY ADAM EDELSBERG

WRIGHT

Wright

1440 W Hubbard St
Chicago IL 60642
wright20.com

Bid Department

t 312 563 0020
f 312 235 4182
bid@wright20.com

© 2023 Wright
ISBN 978 0 9994614 3 3
Richard Wright Auctioneer no. 041000341
visit wright20.com for terms & conditions of the sale

WRIGHT

CURATED BY ADAM EDELSBERG