



ISAMU NOGUCHI (1904-1988)

Untitled

Signed on base with symbol.

balsa wood, concrete

15 x 6 x 4 1/2 in.

c. 1947

29550

PROVENANCE:

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Isamu Noguchi was a twentieth century artist who is known for both his sculpture and design work. Working in a variety of mediums, Noguchi incorporated steel, marble, iron, wood, bronze, and stone into his sculptures while he also created large-scale public works, gardens, furniture, lighting designs, ceramics, and architecture. Noguchi was born to an American mother and a Japanese father and lived in Japan until he was thirteen, when he moved to Indiana. He studied at Columbia University in a pre-med program before transitioning into the field of fine arts. He was profoundly inspired by the work of Constantin Brancusi, and received a major sculpture commission for the Associated Press building at Rockefeller Center in 1938. As a Japanese American, Noguchi was profoundly affected by the outbreak of World War II after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. He became a political activist and voluntarily requested placement at a Japanese internment camp in Arizona for a period of seven months. He also spent time in Japan after the war exploring its effects on society. Though Noguchi did not associate strongly with any particular artistic movement, he continued to work as an artist and jumped at the chance to create design work that could be mass-produced and sold. In 1947, he designed a glass-top table which remains in production today.

The sculpture Sentry dates from 1958, which was a period in Noguchi's career when he received a number of prestigious public commissions such as the UNESCO Garden and Headquarters in Paris. Standing over six feet tall, Sentry stands as a monument of modernist architecture and midcentury design. Noguchi demonstrates the elegant geometry and simplicity of form embraced by contemporaries such as Frank Lloyd Wright and I.M. Pei. Composed of anodized aluminum, Sentry reflects the light and colors of its surroundings, creating shimmering soft golden hues at some angles, while a metallic silver sheen dominates at others.

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