

THE PACE GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE

TO: ART LISTING EDITORS
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ISAMU NOGUCHI: BRONZE AND IRON SCULPTURE
MAY 13 - JUNE 11, 1988

The Pace Gallery is pleased to present a retrospective exhibition of cast bronze and iron sculpture by Isamu Noguchi opening on May 13th through June 11th.

While the creation of stone sculpture extends throughout Noguchi's long and productive career, the majority of the cast works occupy two specific periods in the artist's life. The first group, editioned bronze sculptures from the mid to late 40's, combines a European sculptural idiom, fostered by the artist's association with Brancusi in the late 1920's, with Noguchi's Oriental sensibilities. His subsequent travels through China where he absorbed the techniques of ancient bronze casting, and in Japan, where he rediscovered Zen gardens, Japanese pottery and the prehistoric cylindrical grave monuments known as haniwa, complemented a Surrealist interest in natural relics, bones and found objects. In a work from this period entitled Cronos, 1947, Noguchi carved his model in balsa wood. In her text for the catalogue accompanying this exhibition, Dore Ashton writes "It is clear that the long strokes of his knife in the exceptionally soft wood gave him great pleasure; clear that the suspension of forms swinging free in space had to do with his vision of weightlessness, his quarrel with gravity."

In the bronze and iron sculpture of the mid 50's and early 60's, the influence of Cronos is apparent, especially in the bronzes. With the casting of freely carved balsa models, Noguchi was able to achieve expressive and calligraphic imagery, and although the European sculpture tradition remains, the Eastern spirit seems to dominate.

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Ms. Ashton writes further, "A long life of restless travelling has endowed Noguchi with countless memories. We all have memories. But for Noguchi, whose spirit of inquiry is in the service of his art, these memories surge up actively, goading him toward "the possible." Not only does he examine his cache of images for their formal inspiration, but he brings to his task of inquiry an ability to think "as if." If he examines an ancient Greek kouros, or an Indian shiva, or a Japanese haniwa idol, he probes the experiences of others."

Isamu Noguchi was born in 1904 to the Japanese poet Yone Noguchi and the American writer, Leonie Gilmour and he moved to Japan in 1906. Although he returned to the United States in 1918, he regularly visits the Far East and maintains a second studio in Japan.

For further information and photographs, please contact Encarnita Rivera at (212) 421-3292.