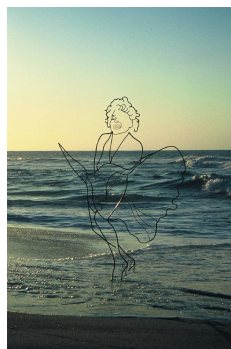




Tekkin-choko ku

iron sculpture

1993-2015 translated by Alex Ginnan



My entry into the world of art began from my interest in ukiyo-e Japanese woodblock prints. After gaining an overall understanding of hanga printing techniques, I held a solo exhibition in New York in 1989. I spent my nights at jazz clubs. Mesmerized by the sound of jazz, I began sketching musicians on paper napkins. Though more than twenty years have passed, I continue my jazz drawings to this day.

From 1993, my illustrations appeared regularly in the Japanese jazz magazine *Swing Journal*. I travelled on tour with Terumasa Hino, Eddie Gomez, and other jazz musicians to assist with live performances and deepen friendships.

In 1996, I held my second exhibition in New York; this time in the Bronx, as part of a group exhibit with four other artists. My works have been showcased at Tokyo Jazz and other jazz festivals, numerous times and in various places.

In 1993, I began the production of my tekkin-chokoku iron rod sculptures. This original series, which I continue to make today, is an attempt at creating a three-dimensional representation in the unique Japanese tradition of using only lines, as opposed to Western sculptures which consist of solid material and form.

Ukiyo-e Japanese woodblock prints have a distinct representational style which even had a strong influence on impressionism. The lines which are carved into the printing block or plate are characteristically sharp; the flat coloration is also due to the unique attributes of the hanga medium. Although the contours of subject matter in nihonga Japanese-style paintings are represented with lines, these brushstrokes can never match the reality and affect created by the lines of hanga, of which the finest example can be seen in ukiyo-e representations of figures.

My tekkin-chokoku sculptures consist of wrought iron rods of various widths, which are contorted, cut, and welded into shape. I purposely leave the lines discontinuous.

Many people have commented that they can see a continuous shape, even though there is no line. The discontinuity of my lines can be associated with the Japanese concept of "ma", which can be loosely translated as interval or pause. These gaps are the brief halts in my breathing which arise each time I draw with lines.