



Greetings

Poet Sakutaro Hagiwara (1886-1942). Many must have been struck by the vivid imagery and rhythm of his poems when they encountered them for the first time in school textbooks or other publications. Sakutaro spent his final years and last days in a house he built in Setagaya. His exhibition was held in our museum in 2011 and as part of the *Sakutaro Hagiwara Taizen 2022* held across Japan this year which marks the 80th anniversary of his death, we will try to get to know the extraordinary poet from a new perspective.

In the preface to *Tsuki ni Hoeru*, he writes, “A person, individually, is always terribly lonely forever and ever.” Sakutaro, who was one of the greatest poets of modern Japan was also an extremely lonely and solitary man. From the time of his childhood when he was unable to find his place in school and yearned for the unknown world through books and music, to his young adult life in Tokyo when his family life broke down, forcing him to move back to his hometown, a shadow of loneliness always followed him. While he was finally able to enjoy the company of society in his late forties in Setagaya where he made his home, he wrote numerous essays and critiques of his own solitary experiences overlapped on the passage of modern poetry and Japan in the modern era. As if reading through a book, this exhibition traces the life of Sakutaro and the materials he left behind, together with works by present-day artists that express his lonesome world in a new way. Following the line quoted earlier, Sakutaro continues, “We are no longer lonely forever” when people find something in common with one another. It can be said that a book through solitary reading is also something that connects people across the ages. We hope you can enjoy in depth the poems and words of the solitary great poet, Sakutaro.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to Maebashi City Museum of Literature and the authors who submitted their works, as well as everyone else who was involved, for their generous support and cooperation in organizing this exhibition.

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