

中原中也記念館

Nakahara Chūya Memorial Museum



Admission Information

Hours

May – October 9:00 am– 6:00pm (last admission 5:30pm)
November – April 9:00 am– 5:00pm (last admission 4:30pm)

Closed

Mondays (If Monday falls on a public holiday, the museum will be open that day and closed the following day.)
The last Tuesday of the month (Subject to change)
The year-end and New Year holidays (December 29-January 3)
The museum may close temporarily between exhibits.

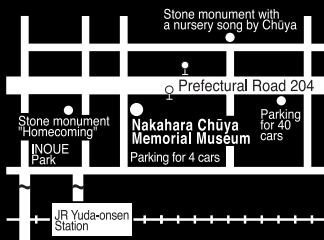
Admission fees

Adults : ¥320(¥270) ; Students : ¥210(¥162)
Free admission for visitors below 18 and visitors 70 and above.
*The fees in parentheses indicate the group rate (for 20 or more).

Access

JR Shin-Yamaguchi Station — 10 minute walk from Yuda-onsen Station (JR Yamaguchi Line)
20 minutes by bus
1 minute-walk from Yuda-onsen bus stop

(JR Shin-Yamaguchi Station is approximately 40 minutes by bus from Yamaguchi-Ube Airport.)



Nakahara Chūya Memorial Museum

1-11-21 Yuda-onsen, Yamaguchi City, Yamaguchi Prefecture

〒753-0056

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Nakahara Chūya: A Poet Who Died Young

Nakahara Chūya is a modern poet who greatly shaped the history of Japanese literature. He was born on April 29, 1907, into what is now known as the Yuda-onsen area of Yamaguchi City.

He attended the Shimounoryō Elementary School and then, transferred to the Yamaguchi Elementary School, which was attached to the local Teacher's Training College. He then went on to Yamaguchi Middle School. When he was in the upper grades of elementary school, he started writing *tanka*, a type of short, traditional Japanese poem consisting of 31 morae. It was around that time that he began to submit his writing to magazines and newspapers. After that, he became so absorbed in literature that he dropped out of middle school. He moved to Kyōto to enter Ritsumeikan Middle School, where he fell under the influence of the Dadaist poets Takahashi Shinkichi and Tominaga Tarō. From that point on, Chūya aspired to become a poet. In 1925 he moved to Tōkyō, where he met Kobayashi Hideo, Kawakami Tetsutarō, and Ōoka Shōhei, all of whom were aspiring writers but went on to leave a big mark on modern Japanese literature. In 1929, they published their first coterie magazine titled *Hakuchi-gun (A Band of Idiots)*. Chūya then published his first volume of poems titled *Yagi no uta (Songs of the Goat)* in 1934, which earned him recognition from the poetry world.

Following his first publication, he published his poems in various magazines including *Shiki (Four Seasons)*, *Rekitei (The Course of History)*, and *Bungakukai (Literary World)*. Chūya also translated French poetry into Japanese and published a volume of translations entitled *Rimbō shishū (Poems by Rimbaud)*. Although Chūya hoped to return to Yamaguchi, Chūya's brief life ended at the age of thirty years old on October 22, 1937. Before his death, he compiled a manuscript of a second volume of poems entitled *Arishi hi no uta (Songs of Days Past)*, which he entrusted to his friend Kobayashi Hideo. This work was eventually published in April 1938 with support from Chūya's friends.

Chūya spend his entire life absorbed in poetry. The poems he left behind are gems that have been appreciated by many subsequent generations of readers both in Japan and all over the world.

冬の長門峡

Chōmon Gorge in Winter Nakahara Chūya

Water flowed down the
Chōmon Gorge.
What a cold, cold day it was.

I was in a restaurant.
I poured myself some saké.

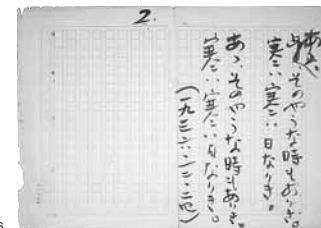
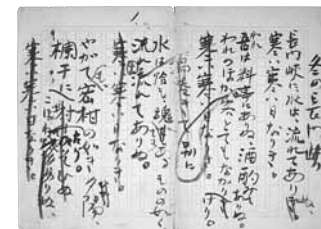
No one there but me,
Not a single customer at all.

The water flowed down,
Downward as if it had a soul.

Before long, the tangerine sun set,
Spilling onto the railing.

Ah! — I recall that day,
What a cold, cold day it was.

Translated by Jeffrey Angles



Chōmon Gorge in Winter

On December 24, 1936, Nakahara Chūya wrote the poem "Chōmon Gorge in Winter." It was published in the April issue of *Bungakukai (Literary World)* in 1937, then included in his book of poems *Arishi hi no uta (Songs of Days Past)*, which was published after his death. Chōmon Gorge is located on the Abugawa River in the northeast of Yamaguchi City. The gorge is well-known for its scenic beauty. Chūya would often visit Chōmon Gorge during his boyhood and once invited a friend from faraway to go visit it with him.