

A Wind Blows over Mother Earth

Kishio Suga

Nobuo Sekine's *Phase—Mother Earth* (1968) was a fine work of great scale. Inevitably, Sekine was asked over and over how he came to make such a thing, but what matters most under any circumstances is the experience of a work in person. One could say that a large part of the impetus originated in what he learned from Yoshishige Saitō. It was the same for the rest of us young artists: Saito's ability to perceive the trends of the times was like a beacon of light in the midst of a stormy sea. Whether or not someone can see the light depends on the talent of the people around them, so in that sense Nobuo Sekine had set his sights firmly on the direction that he felt he should take.

There is another work of his that intrigues me: the one made with oilclay. All it consisted of was unadulterated mounds of oilclay, but when I saw it, I knew that he truly understood what he was doing. And yet I felt it was a shame that he did not have a process for developing those ideas further. In those days, he had a sharp sense of “things.” But I couldn't help feeling that he was too easy on himself about how he made things.

I feel lucky to have been in Yoshishige Saitō class with him, where we breathed the same air, bathed in the same light, and watched the events of the era gather pace.

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Translated by Ashley Rawlings