

SHINZAN YAMADA

DRAWINGS FROM "THE DAILY OKINAWAN" MILITARY
NEWSPAPER IN 1946, YAMADA WORKED FOR THE MILITARY
NEWSPAPER AS AN ILLUSTRATOR.

THE DAILY



Okinawan

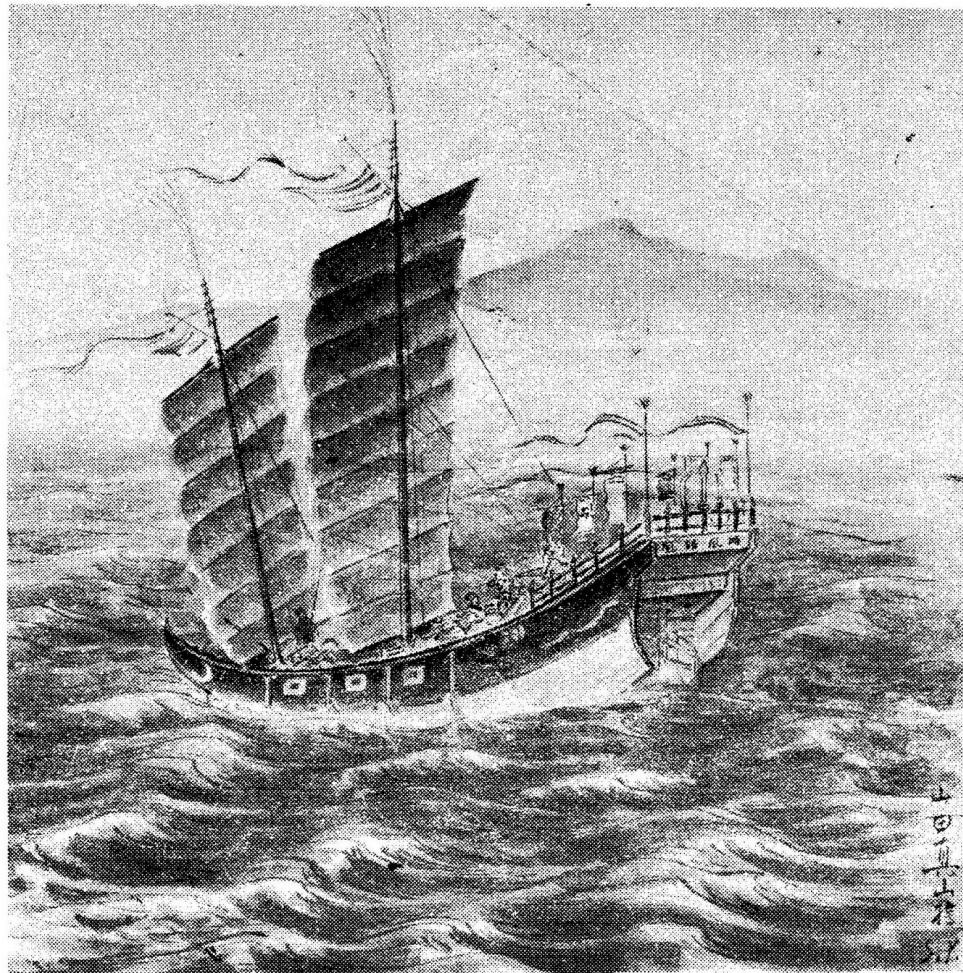
VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

NEWSPAPER OF ALL THE ARMED FORCES IN THE RYUKYUS

1 FEBRUARY 1946

OKIES

by Yamada

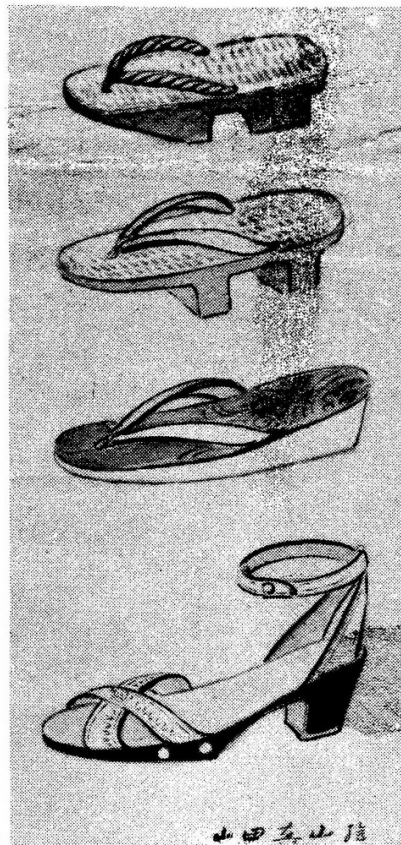


This is the vessel Chin Ko Sen, which, more than 200 years ago was the principle vessel of the Okinawa merchant fleet and sailed between Naha and the Chinese ports.

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REVISED 9 JULY 2012

OKIES by Yamada



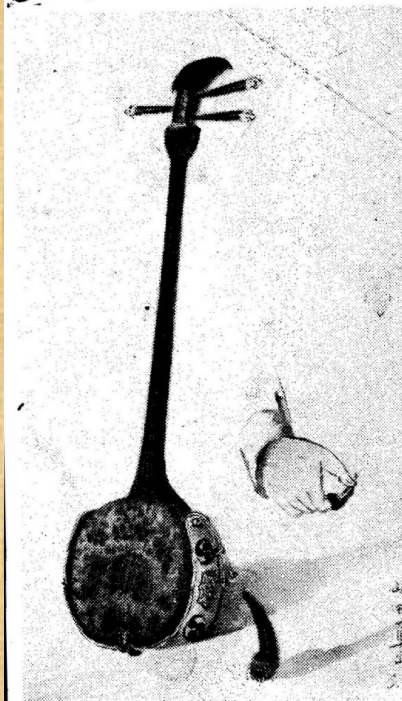
Evolution of the Geta (Okinawan footwear.) The upper picture is the oldest model. Just below it appears the type now most common on Okinawa. Second from the bottom is a type normally used indoors as a house slipper. The type second from the top gained its popularity because Okinawan mud does not cling to it so easily as the others. Trend today is toward the open shoe shown at bottom (which, incidentally, can be worn with "American" style stockings.) When wearing a geta in winter a tabi (stocking with stall for the big toe, similar to a mitten) is worn.

OKIES by Yamada



This is the Nanyo-dani, brought from the South Sea islands as a beautifying shrub for Okinawan gardens.

OKIES by Yamada



Many of the samisen (three-stringed instruments) have histories. The one pictured above is named the edo yuna. It was the custom of Okinawan statesmen to visit Tokyo and to take their samisen to entertain. Edo is the ancient Okinawan name for Tokyo. Yuna was the craftsman who made edo yuna, one of the finest ever constructed. Three different Okinawan statesmen carried it to Tokyo on their visits. It bears the national emblem on its side. Tsune is the name of the pick. (The same word means fingernail.)

THE SECTION BELOW IS FROM WILLARD A. HANNA'S REPORT "OKINAWA TEN YEARS LATER" PUBLISHED IN 1955.

HE TALKS ABOUT SHINZAN YAMADA AND HOW HE MET HIM IN 1945 WHEN HANNA WAS HEAD OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT SECTION OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS.

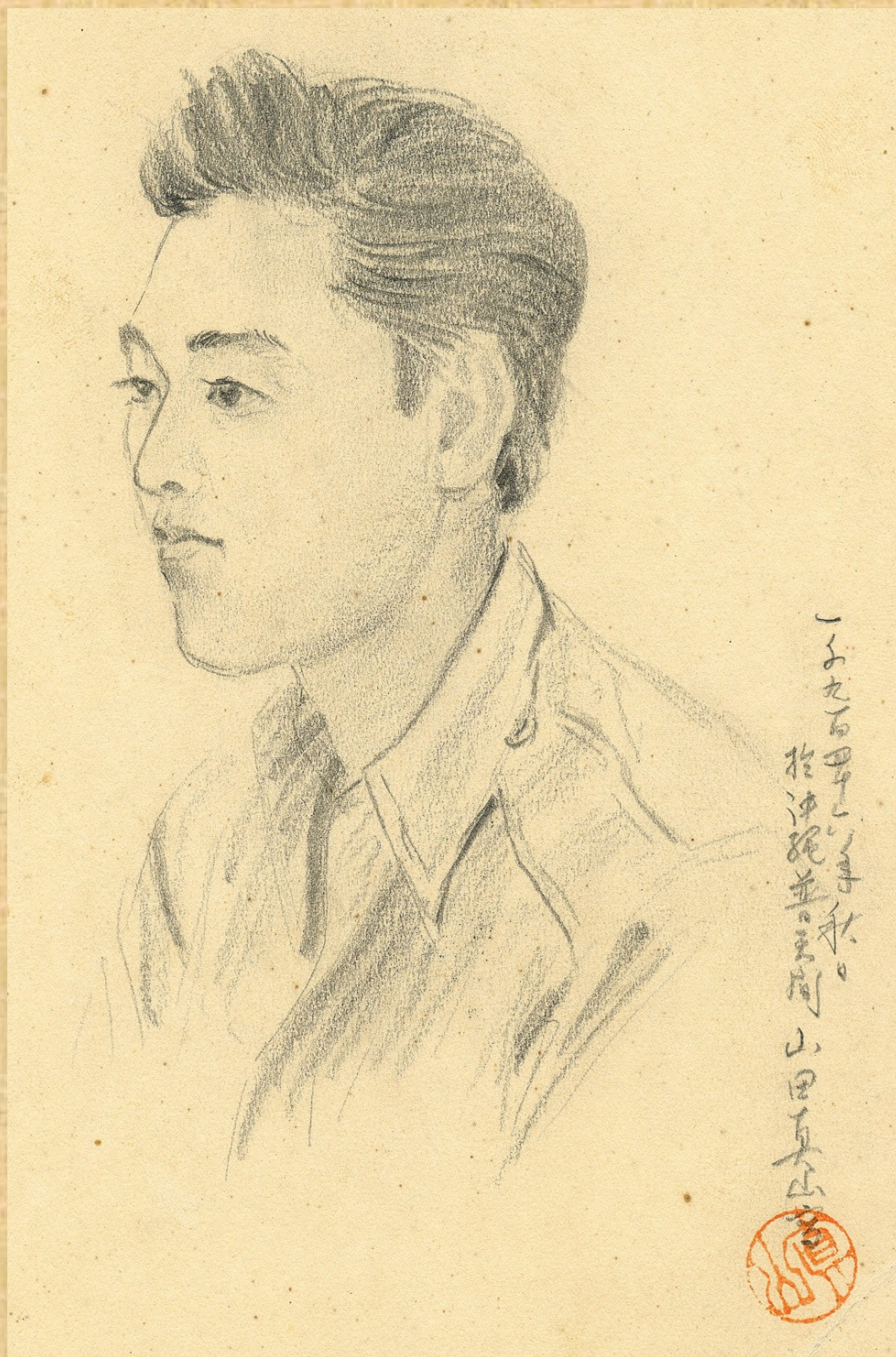
One of the most enthusiastic viewers of the 1955 dance performance was Yamada Shinzan, Okinawa's leading painter in the Japanese traditional school. For Yamada-san, back in 1945, we had built a small retreat on the edge of the education headquarters, near the spot where the dancers held their dress rehearsals. We had dug an Okinawan home clear of most of the coral rock which the road builders had bulldozed into it, had reinstalled floors and sliding panels, and had even gone to the unheard of extremes of attaching a ceiling, albeit of Wavy sheeting rather than fine-grained cryptomeria. We had provided Yamada-san with paper, paints, and brushes, most of which I had purchased on a quick trip to Kyoto. By talk of artistic inducement, we had got him illegally fitted out by a Navy ophthalmologist with a pair of steel-rimmed GI glasses. Then had come a day of crisis, when Yamada-san discovered that the cool, clean comfort of his studio had been pre-empted by a family of snakes — quite innocent and nonpoisonous snakes, we finally persuaded him, as contrasted with the lethal Habu which we had exterminated from the area. Finally, Yamada-san had got back into production, and in celebration of the event we had held a moonlight party to view the night-blooming cereus and Yamada-san's recreation of it in strokes synchronized with the flower's unfurling.

The day after our Shoka Restaurant reunion, we visited Yamada-san at Futema. Close to the newly-renovated Futema Shrine from which, in 1945 we just barely managed to deflect the bulldozers--Yamada-san has acquired his own property. On it he has built a beautiful Japanese house and garden, also a detached studio, and also, to the amazement of his colleagues, a Western-style restaurant which his very competent wife is operating at what seems to be a quite satisfactory profit. Yamada-san has recently been practicing both sculpture and wood-carving, in addition to painting. He has just received a commission to do a striking series of carved panels for the RYCOM officers' club. He has sent paintings to post-war exhibitions in Japan, has published two volumes of reproductions of his postwar works, and has made artistic pilgrimages to the off-lying islands in search of subjects unaltered by the changes which have overtaken his own island and his own way of life. He has developed a steady and profitable clientele among the American community whose insatiable taste for genuine signed Yamadas assures him a considerably more attractive artistic and financial future than that which threatened him in 1945. Cigarette-bearing would-be clients then commonly wished to commission him to paint red, gold and lavender dragons on green bush jackets.



YAMADA (ON RIGHT) WITH OTHER ARTISTS AT THE ORIGINAL ARTIST COLONY STARTED BY LCDR HANNA AT ISHIKAWA/HIGAONNA IN 1945-46





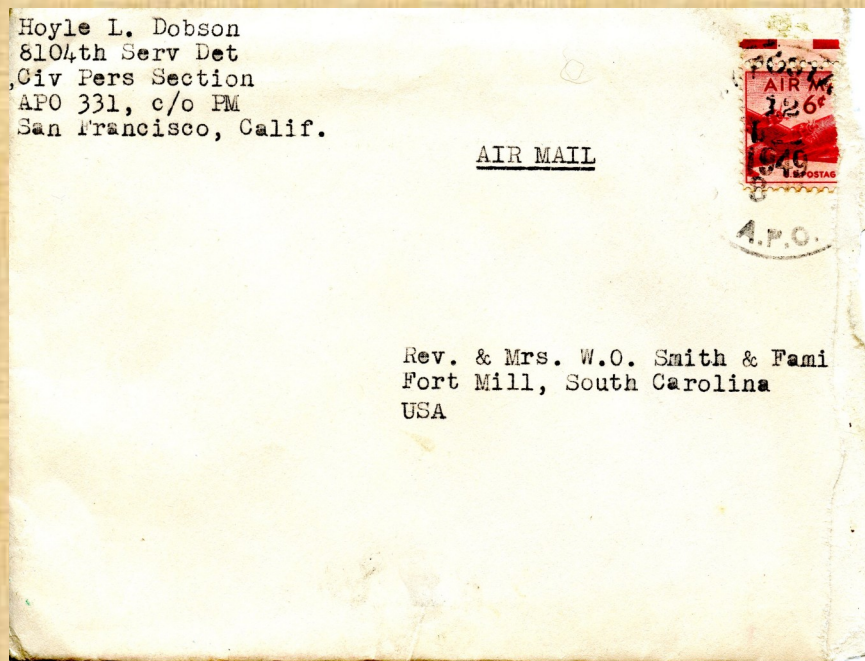
PENCIL SKETCH 1946

TRANSLATION

1946
AUTUMN
IN OKINAWA
FUTENMA
SHINZAN YAMADA



YAMADA WATERCOLOR CARD SENT HOME BY GI IN 1949





SHINZAN YAMADA



SHINZAN YAMADA IN HIS ART STUDIO AT FUTENMA

Mr. Shinzan Yamada was one of Okinawa's foremost artists. Mr. Yamada is probably best known for his 18 year labor to create a "Tsuikin" lacquer statue (36 feet high by 24 feet wide) as a peace memorial and tribute to those who died in World War II on Okinawa. Mr. Yamada began the project at the age of 72 and completed it when he was 90+ years old. The statue, known as "The Prayer for Peace Statue," is located in the Heiwa Memorial Hall on Mabuni Hill in southern Okinawa.

Shinzan Yamada contributed many stamp designs for Ryukyu Islands stamps and postal cards during the U.S. possession period 1945 to 1972. He designed the following stamps and post cards:

- Scott C4-8, 1951-4, Heavenly Maiden, 2nd airmail series
- Scott 27-8, 1953, Perry Centenary commemorative set
- Scott C9-13, 1957, Heavenly Maiden Playing a Flute, 3rd airmail series
- Scott 55, 1958, Lion Dance, New Year stamp for 1959
- Scott C24-8, 1961, Wind God, 6th airmail series
- Scott 92, 1961, Sun & Eagles, New Year stamp for 1962
- Scott UX18, 1961, Coral, Summer Greetings Card for 1961
- Scott UX21, 1962, Ie Shima, Summer Greetings Card for 1962
- Scott UX26, 1964, Bitter Melon, Summer Greetings Card for 1964

Minoura Sera in his *Ryukyus Handbook, Philatelic and History*, 1962, noted that Shinzan Yamada opened a studio in Ginowan after WWII. Sera noted that Shinzan Yamada is considered the "elder statesman of Ryukyuan Art."

A photograph of Shinzan Yamada at work taken by Blackie the Photographer which was published in his (Blackie's) book *This is Okinawa*, ca 1954.



OKinawa

—Her beauties and tradition—

NO. 1



Painted by

INSIDE FRONT PAGE TO SHINZAN
YAMADA'S BOOK
"OKINAWA - HER BEAUTIES AND
TRADITION" PUBLISHED IN 1952

INSIDE FRONT PAGE TO SHINZAN
YAMADA'S BOOK
"OKINAWA THE COMMODORE PERRY
CENTENNIAL ISSUE" PUBLISHED IN 1953

The Commodore Perry Centennial Issue

“OKINAWA”

沖縄繪物語

1853—1953

Commemorating 100 years of Ryukyuan
American friendship



Printed by

S. Yamada

THIS ARTICLE BY YAMADA APPEARED IN THE JUNE 1959 ISSUE OF
"THIS MONTH ON OKINAWA".

ART WORLD

PEACE MONUMENT

by Shinzan Yamada, Sculptor

It is only recently that desire for world peace has begun to be voiced. The Ryukyuan people in the past had their hands full in trying to establish peace in their native land, for in this small island of Okinawa, three feudal lords were contending for supremacy.

Okinawa, where World War II ended, is an unforgettable land where a large-scale war was fought. The wish not to repeat such an unfortunate event must be a common desire throughout the world. In order to materialize this desire Shinzan Yamada, an Okinawan artist, determined to erect a 50-foot peace statue in Okinawa. The archetype of the monument is almost complete.

It is planned that the peace statue will be surrounded by founders of various religious sects and the sages of all times, thereby symbolizing mercy, magnanimity and friendship throughout the world, irrespective of race. The folded palms of the central statue symbolize unification and cooperation, and is a manifestation of mercy, void of opposition and antagonism, as well as mutual concession, harmony and cooperation. This spirit is the unchangeable concept of mankind and is believed to be the universal truth which transcends faith and denomination.

Okinawa which is situated in the midst of areas where the Pacific War was fought, is an unparalleled land in that the souls of the wardead of various countries rest peacefully here. We wish to honor the memory of these war dead for a long time to come. Therefore, it is believed to be of great significance to establish on Okinawa a sacred area for symbolizing peace of the world.

From this point of view, the undersigned determined to seek contributions of sacred stones from various countries in constructing the pedestal upon which the peace statue will be erected. It is my firm belief that this plan will win the ardent support of all people from the viewpoint of establishing a harmonious world, thus bringing about lasting peace.

Celebrated Okinawan born artist, Shinzan Yamada was born in 1885 and died in 1977. Several of his major works are stored in the collection of the Meiji Shrine Memorial Art Museum in Tokyo. Though throughout his life he created many masterpieces, one piece in particular stands out above all the others. It is known as the Peace Prayer Statue enshrined in the Okinawa Peace Memorial Hall (Heiwa Kinendo) in Southernmost Okinawa.

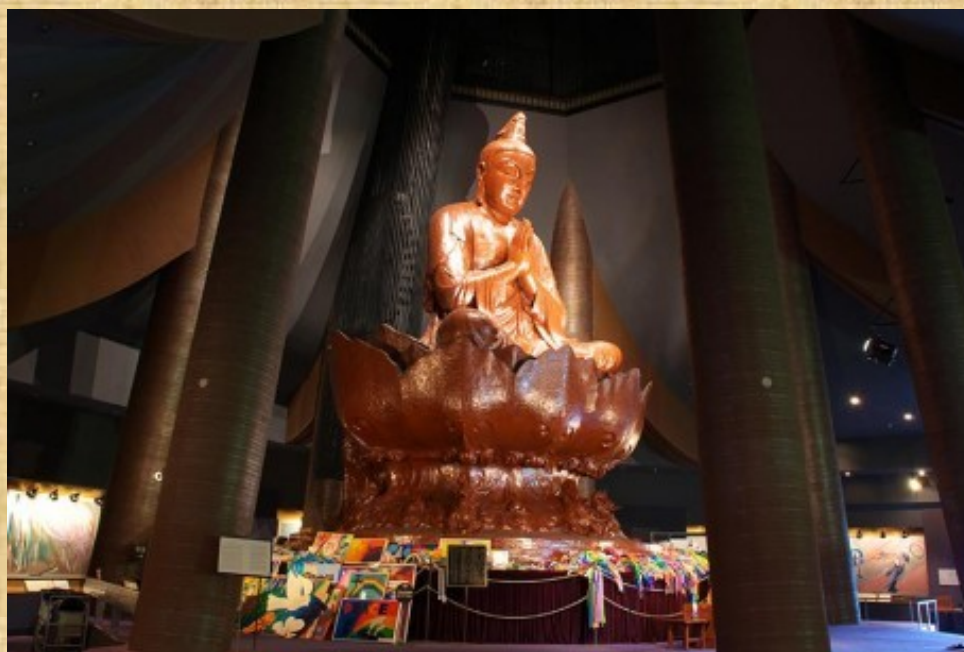
Yamada entered the Tokyo Art School in 1906 and majored in sculpture. After graduating in 1910, he went to the Beijing Art School to take an instructor position and worked there for two years. Upon his return to Japan he lived and worked mainly in Tokyo and became a celebrated member of the Japanese art community.

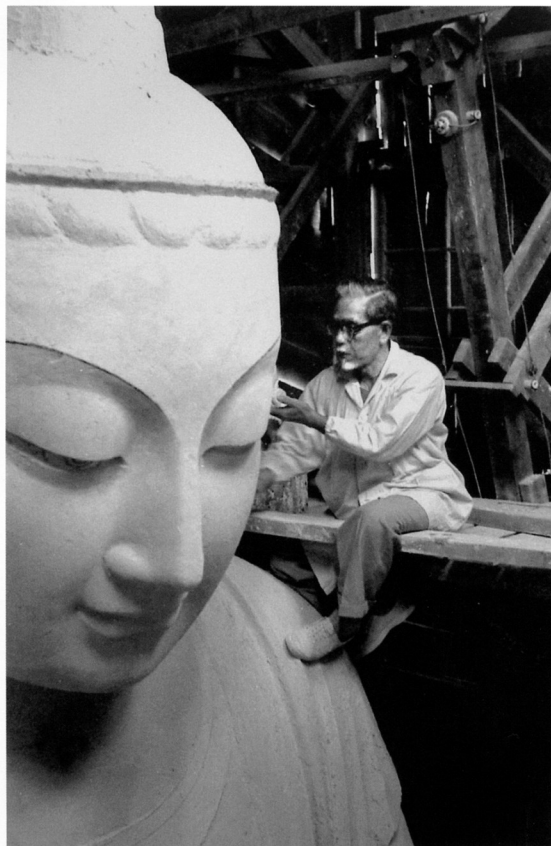
He returned to Okinawa in 1940 and remained here for the rest of his life. The Battle of Okinawa fought in the spring of 1945 and known locally as the “Typhoon of Steel,” was the largest and most devastating land battle of the Pacific theater and claimed an estimated quarter-million lives. It was in this battle that Yamada lost his eldest and third sons, an incident that would change him forever.

In 1957, at the age of 72, Yamada announced that he would finally pursue his long cherished dream of building a statue dedicated to the prospect of peace, “so people would never have war again.” Though he did have a little help with the fund raising he worked mostly on his own to construct the massive statue. The entire project took him eighteen years to complete. Construction was halted several times due to lack of funds as well more than a few times when he fell from the scaffolding and was injured, two times very seriously.

The statue, completed just two years before his death at age 92, stands 36 feet high and is 24 feet across. It is made entirely from lacquer using the Tsuikin lacquer technique and weighs 3.5 tons! Though it resembles a statue of Buddha, it is said that this one differs from other statues in that this one is non-religious.

The Peace Hall is now part of the massive Peace Prayer Park (Okinawa Heiwa Kinen Koen) It serves as one of the focal points for the Seimei festival in April, Children’s Day Festival (May 5), the Okinawa Memorial Day Eve service (June 22) and the Fire and Bell Festival (Dec 31 – Jan 1).





1960年 宜野湾村普天間(宜野湾市普天間)／山田實
平和祈念像制作中の山田真山氏。
普天間のアトリエを訪ね
高い足場に登り、制作の妨げにならないよう
フラッシュを使わず撮影した。
当時は現像不足だったが、
40数年経ってデジタル処理で鮮やかに蘇った一枚。

**YAMADA AT WORK ON HIS PEACE PRAYER STATUE IN 1960 ABOVE
YAMADA THE ARTIST 1970 BELOW**

**PHOTOS FROM THE BOOK “OKINAWA PHOTOGRAPHS 1953-1972”
PUBLISHED IN 2006**



1970年代／山田實
旅先で制作をしている画家の大嶺政寛氏。