

# Akari Light Sculptures

Isamu Noguchi, 1951

**vitra.**



In 1951 the Japanese-American artist Isamu Noguchi began to design the Akari Light Sculptures, a group of works handcrafted out of washi paper that eventually comprised over 100 luminaires – table, floor and ceiling lamps. He chose the name ‚akari‘ for these objects, a word that means ‚light‘ in Japanese, connoting both illumination and physical lightness.

‚The harshness of electricity is thus transformed through the magic of paper back to the light of our origin – the sun – so that its warmth may continue to fill our rooms at night.‘ Isamu Noguchi

Each luminaire is meticulously crafted by hand in the Ozeki workshop, a traditional family-run company based in Gifu. In a first step, bamboo rods are stretched across the original wooden forms designed by Noguchi to make the framework that determines the object’s shape. Washi paper, derived from the bark of the mulberry tree, is cut into strips and then glued to the bamboo ribbing. After the glue has dried, the wooden form is removed and the shade can be folded.

The Akari Light Sculptures are marked with a stylised sun-and-moon logo, which also resembles the corresponding Japanese characters. This symbol guarantees the authenticity of each product.

## Materials

- **Lampshades:** washi paper, some partially painted. Some models with end pieces in wood/bamboo.
- **Structure:** bamboo/steel wire.
- **Legs:** painted steel wire.
- **Light source:** 4W LED
- **Socket:** E27
- **Dimmability:** not dimmable.
- **Kelvin:** 2700 K (warm white).
- **Plug:** Euro flat, 2-pin (type C plug).
- **Max. watt:** 12W
- **Energy efficiency:** F
- **Cable length for table lamps:** 130 cm.
- **Cable length for floor lamps:** 300 cm.
- **Cable length for ceiling lamps:** 220 cm.