

The Museum of Modern Art

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TADAO ANDO

October 3 - December 31, 1991

The fifth exhibition in The Museum of Modern Art's GERALD D. HINES INTERESTS ARCHITECTURE PROGRAM is devoted to the work of Japanese architect Tadao Ando. A self-taught architect, Ando has gained international recognition for a series of projects built in Japan since the mid-1970s. His spare and subtle buildings of concrete and glass offer a contemporary synthesis of modern western and Japanese traditions, joining occidental rationalism with an oriental sense of nature.

On view from October 3 to December 31, 1991, TADAO ANDO was organized by Stuart Wrede, director, Department of Architecture and Design, and is sponsored jointly by Hines Interests and Yoshida Kogyo K.K. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue, *Tadao Ando**, featuring an essay by Kenneth Frampton, professor of architecture, Columbia University, and a preface by Mr. Wrede.

The exhibition focuses on twelve projects that reflect the developing interaction between Ando's buildings and nature, as well as his refinement of interior architectural space. The projects are represented by models, drawings and sketches, and photographs, including designs for houses, ecclesiastical buildings, museums, and an urban plan for Osaka (list of

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projects attached). The installation for the exhibition has been designed by the architect.

In his early work, Ando responded to the often chaotic Japanese urban environment by turning inward around courtyards protected by concrete walls. Mr. Wrede writes, "Highly sensitive to nature, but with a dearth of nature to respond to in his early work, Ando honed his subtle sensibility and minimalist architectural vocabulary by manipulating the delicate play of light on stark concrete walls or by capturing within the buildings themselves the shifting atmospheric changes of the sky, thus intensifying the experience of nature."

The experience of nature is distilled with particular intensity by three modestly scaled Christian chapels designed and built between 1985 and 1989 where the serenity of Ando's austere architecture combines with the play of light and shadow to create a truly sacred architecture. Ando has written that architecture "transforms nature through abstraction, changing its meaning. When water, wind, light, rain, and other elements of nature are abstracted within architecture, the architecture becomes a place where people and nature confront each other under a sustained sense of tension. I believe it is this feeling of tension that will awaken the spiritual sensibilities latent in contemporary humanity."

As he balances the natural and the geometric, Ando may also be seen to reconcile the traditional and the modern, the occidental and the oriental. This is apparent, for example, in his Rokko Housing complex where he juxtaposes glass-block windows with traditional shoji (paper screens). Mr. Frampton writes, "Ando regards occidental form-making as irreducibly geometrical, volumetric, and vertical in contradistinction to

the traditional Japanese mode of building which can be seen as natural, horizontal, and comparatively spaceless."

Ando's recent commissions for cultural and religious buildings have given him the opportunity to integrate built form with nature in new ways. He uses the freestanding walls of the Children's Museum, completed in 1989 on a dramatic site in Hyogo, to reach out into the surrounding landscape, and two recent archaeological museums, the Forest of Tombs Museum, Kumamoto, and the Chikatsu-Asuka Historical Museum, Osaka, display a kind of earth architecture of stepped platforms and semi-buried spaces. The architect's interest in integrating landscape, urban design, and interior space is seen to best advantage in his proposal for the redevelopment and refurbishing of Nakanoshima Island, situated in the middle of downtown Osaka. In this project, the architect, who has been highly critical of Japan's cities, offers an alternate vision of their renewal.

Tadao Ando, who was born in Osaka in 1941, ostensibly taught himself architectural design by traveling during the late 1960s through Europe and the United States. Except for a brief apprenticeship with a Japanese carpenter, he emerged as an architect of world stature without ever attending a school of architecture or serving as an assistant to a master architect. In 1969 Ando established his own office in Osaka, and, in 1976, received his first international recognition with his prize-winning Row House (Azuma Residence), Sumiyoshi. In all, he has built over forty buildings.

Following its New York showing, the exhibition travels to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (July 2 - August 30, 1992) and other national locations (to be announced).

On Thursday, October 3, at 6:30 p.m., Ando will deliver a lecture titled "Beyond Horizons in Architecture" in the Museum's Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2. Admission is \$8.00 for the public, \$7.00 for members, and \$5.00 for students. Tickets are available at the Museum's lobby information desk.

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*PUBLICATION *Tadao Ando* by Kenneth Frampton, Professor of Architecture, Columbia University. Includes preface by Stuart Wrede and a text by the architect. 80 pages. 130 black-and-white illustrations. Published by The Museum of Modern Art and distributed by Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Paperbound, \$17.50; available in The Museum Book Store.

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For further information or photographic materials, contact the Department of Public Information, 212/708-9750.