

# ***Latin American Artists of the Twentieth Century***

## **PREVIEW: THE TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FORUM BY RAFAEL VIÑOLY ARCHITECTS**

June 12 - August 3, 1993

The winning design for a major architectural complex in Tokyo, designed by Uruguayan-born New York architect Rafael Viñoly, is the subject of an exhibition on view at The Museum of Modern Art from June 12 through August 3, 1993. Organized by Terence Riley, director, and Anne Dixon, study center supervisor, Department of Architecture and Design, **PREVIEW: THE TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FORUM BY RAFAEL VIÑOLY ARCHITECTS** explores the possibility of contemporary civic architecture on a grand scale in the heart of Tokyo's commercial district. It is concurrent with **LATIN AMERICAN ARTISTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**, a major exhibition devoted to nearly eighty years of Latin American art (June 6 - September 7).

Viñoly's 1989 design for the combination performing arts and convention center, which encompasses four theaters, two exhibition spaces, forty conference rooms, reception facilities, public spaces, and restaurants, is the architect's largest project to date. The exhibition presents the project from a variety of perspectives and through an array of mediums. Computer-manipulated photographs, drawings, study models, and plans accompany a walk-through model of the Forum, which served as a study-in-progress for the actual structure, to be completed in 1996.

The focal point of the complex is an immense marquee-shaped glass-and-steel reception hall, with a 680-foot glass roof supported by columns at two points. The near-parabolic steel roof structure, resembling the wooden

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framework of a ship's hull, is interwoven by long, undulating tension cables and arced compression beams. Hanging from the perimeter of the roof trusses is a 190-foot-high glass wall. Ramps and bridges traverse the interior space and cross a plaza to connect the glass hall to the theaters, one of which will be the largest in Tokyo.

The use of glass as a building material is especially notable in Tokyo, which is prone to earthquakes. Viñoly has stated that he sees the resistance to glass structures as psychological, rather than based on insurmountable technical problems. Still, the glass adds a sense of daring to the project, which will have the largest glass roof in Tokyo and will be a prominent feature of the city's skyline.

The site, which spans nearly seven acres, is located in central Tokyo, adjacent to a dense commercial district and bordered by rail and subway lines. In response to this hectic environment, Viñoly massed his design at the perimeters, creating open and calm public space at its center. The landscaped plaza provides a natural pedestrian route to and from the rail and subway stations.

The Tokyo International Forum design competition was held in 1989 under the auspices of the Union Internationale des Architects. The jury, which included Arthur Erikson, Vittorio Gregotti, Fumihiko Maki, I. M. Pei, and Kenzo Tange, selected Viñoly's design from nearly 400 entries.

Rafael Viñoly, born in 1944, studied and practiced architecture in Buenos Aires, Argentina, before setting up an independent practice in New York in 1979. His previous commissions include Chácara Tangará, a ninety-acre planning project in São Paulo, Brazil (1989); the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, New York (1988); The Manhattan, an office and residential tower, New

York (1983); and the Mendoza Sports Complex stadium, Cerro de la Gloria, Argentina (1976).

**PREVIEW: THE TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FORUM BY RAFAEL VIÑOLY ARCHITECTS** is made possible by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, with additional support from Taisei Corporation and Obayashi Corporation. It is the third exhibition in The Museum of Modern Art's **PREVIEW** series, which is devoted to small, focused investigations of important current developments in design and architecture.

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