

INAUGURAL EXHIBITION IN NEWLY REOPENED MoMA CELEBRATES YOSHIO TANIGUCHI'S MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE

Exhibition Highlights the Museum of Modern Art's New Building and Includes Models and Videos of Taniguchi's Museums in Japan

Yoshio Taniguchi: Nine Museums

Special Exhibitions Gallery, third floor
November 20, 2004—January 31, 2005

NEW YORK, November 15, 2004—The commission to design the expansion of The Museum of Modern Art, awarded in 1997, brought the work of Yoshio Taniguchi (Japanese, b. 1937) to international attention. Although MoMA's new building is the architect's first outside Japan, in his native country he has distinguished himself in the last twenty years with his rare talent for designing architectural spaces that are ideal for the display of works of art. To coincide with the reopening of MoMA, an inaugural exhibition on view in the third-floor Special Exhibitions Gallery, ***Yoshio Taniguchi: Nine Museums***, celebrates and illuminates Yoshio Taniguchi's museum architecture and design with detailed studies of each of the architect's museums. The museums are represented through new large- and small-scale architectural models being made for the occasion and video tours of the museums in Japan produced by NHK. The exhibition was organized by Terence Riley, The Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture and Design, The Museum of Modern Art, with the assistance of Tina di Carlo, Assistant Curator. In addition to making the models, Yoshio Taniguchi designed the layout of the exhibition.

Mr. Riley said, "Museums comprise a large portion of Taniguchi's built and future projects, and they are key to understanding his overall approach to architecture and the art of building. Each of his museum designs reflects the influence of overlapping contexts, from the singular aesthetic traditions and history of museums in Japan to the Western, modernist tradition in which Taniguchi was educated at Harvard University. The results are extraordinary compositions of materials, proportion, circulation, and light."

With the completion of The Museum of Modern Art, Taniguchi's museum designs are being thrust into the international debates that surround the very conception of what a museum is supposed to be in contemporary society. Rather than disembodied manifestos for all museums everywhere, each of Taniguchi's designs speaks to both the immediate physical and cultural context and the programmatic requirements of a specific institution. This exhibition presents a range of museum types with unique solutions, including large multi-function urban art museums, such as the Toyota Municipal Museum of Art (completed 1999), as well as smaller museums devoted to the works of a single artist, such as the Higashiyama Kaii Museum to be completed this year in Sakaide City, Japan. In addition to these museums for art, two commissions for the

National Museums of Tokyo and Kyoto, the Gallery of Horyuji Treasures (1955) and Centennial Hall respectively (projected 2007), were both designed to house important cultural artifacts—such as ritual objects and religious statuary—rather than works of art in the contemporary sense. In every instance, Taniguchi's museums achieve a single objective: to heighten the viewer's awareness in an environment of rich sensory experience.

In the catalogue accompanying the exhibition, Riley analyzes the important cultural, social, and governmental factors that create similarities as well as distinctions between museums in the West and museums in Japan. Additionally, the essay reveals the historical roots found in the integrative relationship between Taniguchi's Western influences and Japanese cultural and architectural traditions. The projects presented in the catalogue and exhibition range from Taniguchi's first independent architectural commission, the Shiseido Art Museum (1978) to his two projects yet to open: Higashiyama Kaii Museum (winter 2005) and Kyoto National Museum, Centennial Hall (2007). (A complete list of projects is attached).

The Shiseido Art Museum (1978) was commissioned by the Shiseido Corporation to display its collection of traditional Japanese craft, painting, and sculpture, as well as traditional Western objects and its own cosmetics packaging and advertisements. Shiseido Art Museum sits among factory buildings in a small industrial town, where the high-speed bullet train—from which the museum's design was derived—runs directly in front of the museum.

The Ken Domon Museum of Photography (1983), one of the two Taniguchi-designed museums devoted to a single artist's work, bears more of a resemblance to the Western concept of a memorial building than to a traditional museum. The buildings are meant not only to memorialize the art of realist photographer Ken Domon (1909–1999) but also to inspire reflection on the artist's life. Taniguchi designed the man-made lake that forms part of the site of the Ken Domon Museum, located Sakata City near the bank of the Mogami River at the point where it flows into the Sea of Japan.

For the Higashiyama Kaii Gallery, Nagano Prefectural Shinano Art Museum (1990), Taniguchi situated a display space for the works of painter Higashiyama Kaii (1875–1947) next to a reflecting pool and garden. Housing more than several hundred works by the landscape artist, the gallery sits in an urban setting that posed potential barriers to Taniguchi's peaceful design. While editing out views of nearby parking lots and tennis courts, the shallow water garden and low walls focus the visitor's view on the natural perspectives, emphasizing the subject of the artist's work. In both the Ken Domon Museum and the Higashiyama Kaii Gallery, there are areas meant for silent meditation, a consistent Taniguchi design element unique to Japanese museums.

Taniguchi again tackled the integration of a museum's structure into an urban landscape for the Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art (1991). The Marugame facade incorporates a four-story eave that encloses a large white marble mural designed by Inokuma and faces an outdoor public plaza essentially integrating the outdoor public space into the museum design. Devoted primarily to the work of Genichiro Inokuma (1902–1993), the Marugame Museum is situated across from the city's railway station and was designed to include a plaza that connects

the museum with the station. The museum also includes a restaurant, two libraries, a temporary exhibition gallery, and a craft studio accommodated by multiple points of entry.

The Toyota Municipal Museum of Art (1995) encompasses four structures—two smaller galleries, a central gallery, and a lounge for reflection—that Taniguchi connected with a long, green slate arcade. In the Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, built on the old castle site of Komoro City, Taniguchi created views to both the modern Toyota City below and the historic area, while also linking the four programmatic purposes of the museum's galleries: contemporary art, Western and Japanese Modern and contemporary works, the lacquer works of Setsuro Takahashi, and the contemplation lounge overlooking a water garden.

When Taniguchi designed The Gallery of Horyuji Treasures in the Tokyo National Museum (1999), the architect drew inspiration from the traditional form of the nested box used to safeguard artistic treasures. The ancient objects found in the Horyuji Gallery date back to 607 a.d. and were originally from a famous Buddhist temple. Out of respect for the sacred objects, Taniguchi created glass displays that resist seismic vibration in galleries of concrete, stone, and plaster—materials impervious to fire.

Taniguchi returned to the subject of renowned artist Higashiyama Kaito to create a museum in his honor, Higashiyama Kaito Museum (winter 2005). Again employing the facade wall and an inner lounge for reflection with views of the sea, Taniguchi's completed structure is due to open this winter. The Vermont green slate, also found in MoMA's design, complements the panoramic views and diffused light that provide a contemplative mood in which to view the artist's works.

With the opening of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, this week, Taniguchi's work will become familiar to an entirely new group of museum visitors. Unlike the Japanese museums, MoMA is a combination of new structures with expanded existing buildings. The Museum boasts a massive central atrium and a public lobby connecting West 53 and 54 Streets and the restored heart of the Museum, The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden. The new public lobby space integrates city life into the Museum. Taniguchi transformed the former linear space by connecting the International-Style Goodwin & Stone (1939) building, the Philip Johnson (1964) building, and the new spaces with multiple points of entry and connection while keeping the Sculpture Garden as a visual and physical center point. Complementing the increased natural light with bridges and windows for unexpected views into and out of the building, Taniguchi designed spaces meant to accommodate the special needs of each of the six collecting departments while focusing attention on contemporary exhibitions and installations. The new Museum also includes dining facilities, stores, and film theaters.

Currently under construction, the Kyoto National Museum, Centennial Hall (scheduled for completion in 2007), will hold artifacts from various periods of Japanese history. Centennial Hall will connect to the 1895 Beaux-Arts-style building designed by Tōkuma Katayama and replace a smaller exhibition hall built in 1965. The modern elements of the design, made of glass, steel, and concrete, complement such traditional Japanese architectural references such as the outdoor garden and canopy, celebrating the Neoclassical layout of the adjacent building.

SPONSORSHIP

The exhibition is supported by Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro. Additional funding is provided by The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art, Elise Jaffe + Jeffrey Brown, and Forbes.com.

ABOUT YOSHIO TANIGUCHI

Over the past 20 years, architect Yoshio Taniguchi has designed a wide range of structures in Japan including art museums, libraries, gymnasia, schools, a hotel, an aquarium, and a tea house and garden. In 1997, he won an invited competition to design the expansion of The Museum of Modern Art, which was both his first competition and his first international commission. His design for the new Museum reflects the unique vitality of midtown Manhattan and sensitively draws upon and transforms the language of modernism.

Taniguchi was born in Tokyo in 1937. He earned a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering degree at Keio University (1960) and a Master in Architecture degree at Harvard University (1964). He worked in the studio of Kenzo Tange between 1964 and 1972 before establishing his own practice. Since 1979 he has been president of Taniguchi and Associates, based in Tokyo, Japan. Taniguchi has taught at Harvard University and the University of California at Los Angeles as well as at the University of Tokyo.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Terence Riley has been Chief Curator of the Department of Architecture and Design at The Museum of Modern Art since October 1992, one year after joining the staff as Curator. Mr. Riley organized the highly regarded exhibitions *Tall Buildings* (2004), *Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect* (1994), and *Mies In Berlin* (2001; co-organized with Barry Bergdoll). He has also organized three surveys of contemporary architecture: *The Un-Private House* (1999), *Fabrications* (a collaboration with the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Wexner Center for the Arts, 1998), and *Light Construction* (1995). Mr. Riley is a limited partner with Keenen/Riley Architects, New York.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

A version of this exhibition, called *Museums by Yoshio Taniguchi* and including additional projects, will travel to the Art Gallery Tokyo Opera City, the Marugame Genichiro Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Toyota Municipal Museum of Art. Dates of exhibition to be announced. The traveling portion of the exhibition is made possible by Takenaka Corporation. Generous support is also provided by Kajima Corporation and Obayashi Corporation. Additional funding is provided by Shimizu Corporation and Taisei Corporation.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The exhibition will be supported by programs for adults including a Brown Bag Lunch Lecture by Steven Zucker, "Yoshio Taniguchi and MoMA's Architectural Legacy," on November 30 at 12:30 p.m. (Please see separate press release for more information.)

PUBLICATION

Yoshio Taniguchi: Nine Museums discusses the plans of each of the nine museums designed by Taniguchi with an emphasis on The Museum of Modern Art's new building. Hardcover, 10 x 10 in./204 pgs / 141 color and 64 b&w. ISBN: 0870706071, publication date: November 2004, \$50.00. Available in MoMA Stores and at www.momastore.org.

No. 52

Press Contacts: pressoffice@moma.org

Yoshio Taniguchi: Nine Museums
November 20, 2004–January 31, 2005
The Museum of Modern Art, New York

1. Shiseido Art Museum
Kakegawa, Shizuoka Prefecture
Completed: 1978
2. Ken Domon Museum of Photography
Sakata, Yamagata Prefecture
Completed: 1983
3. Higashiyama Kairi Gallery, Nagano Prefectural Shinano Art Museum
Nagano, Nagano Prefecture
Completed: 1989
4. Marugame Genichiro-Inokuma Museum of Contemporary Art
Marugame, Kagawa Prefecture
Completed: 1991
5. Toyota Municipal Museum of Art
Toyota, Aichi Prefecture
Completed: 1995
6. The Gallery of Horyuji Treasures, Tokyo National Museum
Ueno, Tokyo
Completed: 1999
7. Higashiyama Kairi Museum
Sakaide, Kagawa Prefecture
Design, 2002; projected completion, winter 2005
8. The Museum of Modern Art
New York, New York
Completed: 2004
9. Centennial Hall, Kyoto National Museum
Kyoto, Kyoto Prefecture
Design, 1998–2000, projected completion, 2007