

**communiqué /press release****For immediate release****EMERGING JAPANESE ARCHITECTS OF THE 1990S**

An exhibition at the CCA from 17 April to 30 June 1991

**Montréal, 16 April 1991** - This exhibition presents the work of a new generation of Japanese architects. Modern Japanese architecture is known in the West primarily through the activities of the three generations of architects active since the end of World War II. In the generation immediately following the War, Kenzo Tange's role was to build the architecture of a new Japan, a modern Japan. Tange's commissions ranged from the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Center to the Olympic Stadium. His architecture embodied strong Western formal influences, particularly from Le Corbusier and Eero Saarinen, which he combined with visual references to the Japanese architectural tradition-post and lintel structure, motifs from shrine roofs, and wooden beam patterns. With Tange's buildings, a new image for Japan could be asserted on a national and international level - one that did not abandon the roofs of Japanese culture, but reworked them in the context of the new post-war reality.

Tange's students defined the next generation, the Metabolists of the early 1960s. The chief protagonists were Fumihiko Maki, Arata Isozaki, and Kisho Kurokawa, architects who continue to wield a powerful influence in contemporary Japan. This second generation was called on to fill in the architectural and social infrastructure, to build the civic and cultural monuments of the country. Maki, who was educated and worked in the United States during the 1950s, focused on educational facilities-libraries, university campuses, gymnasiums. Isozaki concentrated on museums, galleries, and concert halls. As Japan became wealthier, the size of these commissions increased, but the building types required remained fundamentally the same. Thus, Isozaki's career as a museum builder has spanned more than twenty years and extends beyond Japan.

The old crisis of the early 1970s heralded the debut of the third generation of architects, a group that includes Tadao Ando, Toyo Ito, Monta Mozuna, and Takefumi Aida, among others. This generation concentrated on small, private houses to which they ascribed philosophical significance. Each of these architects asserted his link to a different part of Japanese tradition. For Ando, it was the reworking of traditional building types (such as the row house) and proportions, and the incorporation of nature and light in evocative

ways. For Ito, it was the ephemeral nature of architecture, as well as life, which became the key to his light, tent-like architecture. His concept of shelter lay equidistant between Kamo no Chomei's 13th-century *Account of My Hut* and Marc-Antoine Laugier's 18th-century primitive hut.

As the Japanese economy improved, this third generation began to receive much larger commissions. By the late 1970s, the nature of these commissions had shifted fundamentally to commercial projects. Tadao Ando may have been the most successful in making the transition to commercial architecture, and he has had a profound impact on the next generation, the fourth, the Emerging Japanese Architects of the 1990s.

The fourth generation, the generation represented in this exhibition, was born about 1950 and reached architectural maturity in a Japan of unprecedented wealth. There are extraordinary possibilities for building—a situation familiar as well to the many famous foreign architects currently working in Japan. This generation is talented and capable, but most of all, it is blessed. They have opportunities to build that colleagues in other countries might only dream about. At age 33, for example, Kiyoshi Sey Takeyama built OXY Nogizaka, a fashion headquarters in the middle of Tokyo; at age 34, Hiroyuki Wakabayashi, with no formal architectural education, built Life Inn Kyoto, a senior citizens' home overlooking the Katsura woods. For this generation architectural opportunities, particularly commercial ones, are abundant. These are halcyon days.

From the fourth generation we have chosen these six architects for the breadth and diversity of their styles: Kiyoshi Sey Takeyama/AMORPHE; Norihiko Dan; Hiroyuki Wakabayashi; WORKSHOP; Hisashi Hara; and Atsushi Kitagawara. They freely incorporate Western and Japanese architectural traditions. Although their works are primarily commercial, they still grapple with larger issues. Norihiko Dan is concerned with the interaction of the building with its environment and the need for public good. Takeyama reifies the fragmentary nature of the post-modern metropolis in buildings which are themselves elements of a non-existing larger whole. Wakabayashi, working in Kyoto, attempts to destroy staid conventions of Japanese beauty and to bring dynamism, colour, and excitement to architecture. WORKSHOP builds microcosmic worlds within their architecture, designing scenarios in which to play out dramatic fantasies, a life separate from the daily routine. Hara concentrates on the joy and childhood dreams of the client by creating houses that offer a respite from the rigid schedule of standard Japanese life. Kitagawara, even in his most public buildings, creates a world apart, one parallel to cinema or literature or abstract sculpture, visually unrelated to the surrounding context.

These architects are young, and the works presented here are those they have built while in their 30s. This exhibition presents three works per architect – representations of actual built works – in sketches, plans, photos, models and video. It is our hope to give a sense of the work of the architect within the dynamic context of contemporary Japan; to balance sketches done in studio against the energy of the city, to show the process as well as the product. While each architect has built considerably more than the three works shown, we

may look forward to even richer work in the future as each continues to develop. These are the architects who will be building into the 21st century.

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SHIMIZU CORPORATION is the builder of Place Canada in Tokyo which will house the new Canadian Embassy. A presentation of the Place Canada project is displayed in the lobby of the Maison Alcan at 1188 Sherbrooke Street West until 30 June 1991 to coincide with the presentation of **Emerging Japanese Architects of the 1990's**. This presentation was made possible with the cooperation of the Department of External Affairs Canada, the Délégation du Québec à Tokyo, Alcan Aluminium Limited, the Canadian Centre for Architecture and Moriyama & Teshima Architects.

*Une nouvelle génération d'architectes japonais/Emerging Japanese Architects of the 1990s* is an 11 page bilingual brochure published by the CCA which contains a narrative essay by Jackie Kestenbaum and biographical notes on the architects whose works are exhibited. The brochure is available at the CCA Bookstore for \$3.50.

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