

Exhibition of Architecture KUMAMOTO ARTPOLIS 2024

Main Symposium

What is the New Public Nature?

A small community of young architects

2024 November 23 Saturday

VENUE / Hotel Kumamoto Terrsa

KUMAMOTO
ART
POLIS

“What is the New Public Nature?”

~ A small community of young architects ~

November 23, 2024 (Saturday) [Part 1] 13:05~14:05 [Part 2] 14:15~15:35 [Part 3] 15:45~17:15

■ VENUE / Hotel Kumamoto Terrsa

Part 1 Keynote Speech “From now on, Creating Public Architecture as a ‘HOME-FOR-ALL’”

Toyo Ito (Kumamoto Artpolis Commissioner)

Part 2 Case Report “Case Studies by Young Architects and Others Involved in Creating Small Communities”

“The Commons Rising from the People” / Chie Konno (teco)

“Osaka Kitakagaya, C.S.A.Corpo Kitakagaya, Chidori Bunka” / Toshikatsu Ienari (dot architects)

“The Situation in Nagasaki” / Sho Sasaki (INTERMEDIA)

“Creating a Place for ‘Our Own Thing’” / Hideyuki Morita (MANABINOTANE)

Part 3 Discussion “What is the New Public Nature?”

Coordinator Masashi Sogabe (Kumamoto Artpolis Advisor)

Commentator Toyo Ito (Kumamoto Artpolis Commissioner)
Hideaki Katsura (Kumamoto Artpolis Advisor)
Kaoru Suehiro (Kumamoto Artpolis Advisor)

Presenter Chie Konno (teco)
Toshikatsu Ienari (dot architects)
Sho Sasaki (INTERMEDIA)
Hideyuki Morita (MANABINOTANE)



Greetings from the Organizer

» Takashi Kimura, Governor of Kumamoto Prefecture

Good afternoon. I am Takashi Kimura, Governor of Kumamoto Prefecture. I am very grateful and happy to see so many of you here today at the Kumamoto Artpolis Symposium. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Commissioner Toyo Ito, the panelists, and the advisors for taking time out of their busy schedules to join us.

This architecture exhibition is not only being attended by people from Japan, but also by many people from Taiwan and Korea are present. Students and people from Taiwan and Korea from the architecture industry have come to attend the exhibition. I believe this was made possible solely through the support of Commissioner Ito, and I would once more like to express my sincere gratitude to him.

Every year, many people from overseas come to visit the Artpolis facilities, which helps to promote tourism in Kumamoto Prefecture and the local area, and we hope that this architecture exhibition will serve as an opportunity to further increase exchanges with people from overseas in the future.

This year marks the 36th anniversary of Artpolis, which started in 1988. Artpolis, a project unique to Kumamoto Prefecture, has been creating outstanding buildings for future generations in Kumamoto Prefecture, taking advantage of the rich nature, history, and climate of the region. In addition, through workshops, tours, symposiums, and other events, we are working with architectural professionals, students, and many other citizens of Kumamoto Prefecture to connect architecture and the com-



■ Governor of Kumamoto Prefecture, Takashi Kimura

munity, and to develop human resources that will contribute to the revitalization of the community.

In the aftermath of the Kumamoto earthquake and the torrential rainstorm that hit the Kuma River four years ago in July 2020, we have been strongly supporting the creative reconstruction and local development of the affected areas in the prefecture, including “HOME-FOR-ALL (Minna no Ie)”, a place of relaxation for those affected by the earthquake, the Kumamoto Earthquake Museum KIOKU, which was completed last year, and the Kawabe River Charm Creation Business and Interchange Base Facility in Sagara Village, which is our 121st and newest project in the series. In order to widely disseminate the efforts of the Artpolis, both domestically and internationally, we are holding the Architecture Exhibition 2024 under the theme of “Lasting Will - 36 Years of Kumamoto Artpolis.”

Today's symposium will open with a lecture by Toyo Ito, the commissioner of Kumamoto Artpolis, on the theme of “From now on, Creating Public Architecture as a ‘HOME-FOR-ALL’”. As I mentioned earlier, Kumamoto Prefecture has suffered from repeated disasters, and in order to achieve the emotional recovery of the people affected by the disasters we have been working on the development of “HOME-FOR-ALL” in the affected areas, leading to the revitalization of local communities.

Amidst nationwide issues such as population outflow and depopulation, the creation of such small communities is now becoming more important than anything else. I hope that this seminar will provide an opportunity for you to think together about this very theme, “What is the New Public Nature?”

In conclusion, on behalf of the organizers, I would like to express my sincere hope that today's symposium will be meaningful for all of you who are attending. Thank you very much for your cooperation today.

“From now on, Creating Public Architecture as a ‘HOME-FOR-ALL’”

» Toyo Ito, Kumamoto Artpolis Commissioner

Good afternoon and thank you for your cooperation.

I would like to thank the Governor for his warm and strong words of encouragement. As the Governor mentioned, I would also like to thank the many students and teachers from Korea and Taiwan who came to this exhibition. The last architecture exhibition (2021) was held right in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, so it was difficult to hold such a large event, but this time, many people attended, and I would like to thank all of them and the various organizations that supported us. Thank you very much.

Let me begin by talking about the relationship between “HOME-FOR-ALL” and the future of public architecture under the theme of “From now on, Creating Public Architecture as a ‘HOME-FOR-ALL’” is already quite familiar to the people of Kumamoto Prefecture, but I would like to begin today by talking about what “HOME-FOR-ALL” means.

Thirteen years ago, approximately 22,000 temporary housing units were built across the three prefectures of Tohoku in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake. At that time, most of the temporary housing units were container-type, or rather, container-lined temporary housing units. The container-type temporary housing at that time

consisted of 2x4 ken, the largest one is called 2K type and is 8 tsubo, it's about 25 m². On the other hand, the smaller 1K type was only 2x3 ken, 6 tsubo. When we were shown the inside of one of the houses, it was in a really miserable condition. There were a married couple and an elderly person affected by the disaster living there. The couple said that they had to stride over the elderly person in order to go to the bathroom. Even though the rooms are so small, they are still called 2K or 1K, indicating a number of bedrooms and a kitchen or dining room. I thought this was very strange. So, with the help of advisors from Artpolis, the first “HOME-FOR-ALL” was built in Sendai City with the support of Kumamoto Prefecture. This is a shot of the completion ceremony. At the time, we thought of “HOME-FOR-ALL” as a communal hut where people who had lost their homes could gather, talk, and find peace of mind. The first one was built with the support of Kumamoto Prefecture, with the hope of creating a place where people living in the disastrous temporary housing facilities mentioned earlier could have more opportunities to discuss things with each other. We would like to create a place while discussing and cooperating about this project between residents and builders. We also want to create a place that will serve as a base for discussing reconstruction.

About three months after 3.11 (the Great East



Commissioner of Kumamoto Artpolis
Toyo Ito



Container-type temporary housing units
(Great East Japan Earthquake)



“HOME-FOR-ALL” in
Miyagino-ku, Sendai City



Japan Earthquake), we called out to people around the world and asked them what they imagined “HOME-FOR-ALL” to be like. We received sketches from more than 200 people, and I would like to introduce some of them.

This is Tadao Ando’s. It is an image of a reservoir of light, where we all dip our feet in and light falls from above. Then there is Nobuaki Furuya’s. This is an image of everyone sitting at a very large table, eating and discussing, with a tent-like hut with a cloth over it. This is Frank O. Gehry’s, but I have no idea what it is. And when we get to Zaha Hadid’s, I was even more confused. I was like, “What is a ‘HOME-FOR-ALL’?” Then this is from Katsuhiro Hibino, who is now the president of Tokyo University of the Arts. I think I can understand why he thinks of a big tree as a house. Then there is Kumiko Inui’s. I think she gave a lecture here (in Kumamoto Prefecture) just a few days ago. Ms. Inui’s was very unusual in that she sent us a picture of a “HOME-FOR-ALL,” a collection of warehouses, barns, and other such huts in the disaster-stricken area of Sanriku. Then this is a ‘HOME-FOR-ALL’ by Hideaki Katsura, an advisor who will appear in the discussion. I am not sure about this one, but I think the square part is “HOME-FOR-ALL” and the terraces extend in all directions. This is a picture of an elementary school child with the words “Let’s do our best, East Japan” written on it, which makes the “HOME-FOR-ALL” quite charming. It seems like fireworks are going off. I guess they are trying to cheer up the people. This is a picture of Kazuhiro Kojima, who passed away. I am not sure about this one, but it shows everyone sitting around a table with a light shining through the table, thinking in a similar way to Mr. Ando. I was also not sure about

Masashi Sogabe’s laboratory, who is also serving as an advisor. I looked at it again too, but if you want to know, please ask him directly. Mr. Sogabe will moderate the discussion today. And these are Masanori Watase and Ayumi Nagayoshi from Tokyo, who are also here today. They have been working on “HOME-FOR-ALL” after the earthquake in Kumamoto, and are currently designing and building three “HOME-FOR-ALL” in Kumamoto Prefecture. Anyway, three months after the earthquake, when no one really had an idea what “HOME-FOR-ALL” meant yet, they came up with their own ideas for “HOME-FOR-ALL”.

When I visited the people who had just started living there and asked them what kind of things they wanted, one of them said, “I used to live in a 100-square-meter house until yesterday, and now I have to sleep in such a small place, are you going to build something this small again? The “HOME-FOR-ALL” we proposed was only about 1.5 times the size of a temporary housing complex, and at first they were quite indignant. However, they gradually opened their hearts to us and began to say things like, “if you build it for us, it would be nice to have a wood stove,” or “if there is a porch, we can sit and talk on it. Listening to these ideas, the “HOME-FOR-ALL” was created. This is the plan, and you can see a little bit of the assembly hall in the upper part. However, the meeting hall was really only a meeting place for holding gatherings. Even though people were living in temporary housing, they did not go to this meeting place. So, we connected the meeting place with the porch. “HOME-FOR-ALL” is a 3×4 ken, 12 tsubo, which is only 1.5 times the size of one 2K-type temporary housing unit of 8

tsubo. However, we proposed “HOME-FOR-ALL”, which has an earthen floor, oriented tatami mats, a kitchen, a toilet, and a wood stove. As you can see when you compare it with the meeting house above it, this meeting house has an entrance, a tatami room, a large space on the right side that serves as a meeting room, and an office on the left side. If there were an entrance, it would be difficult to enter. Children especially would not be able to enter. This is the difference between “HOME-FOR-ALL” and the meeting house, a big difference. There was a meeting room that was not utilized very much even though it was so spacious.

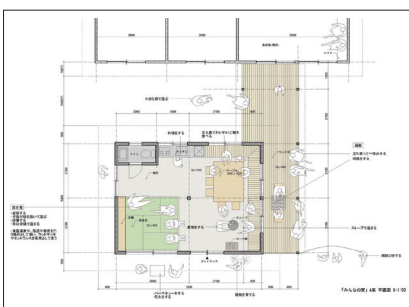
This is “HOME-FOR-ALL” that we proposed and just completed in Miyagino-ku, Sendai City. It is made of wood from Kumamoto Prefecture. A wood stove is placed in this front corner, and the presence of a wood stove means that it will not last unless that someone comes in one day to make a fire. Therefore, communication is naturally created here. There was also a kotatsu, a very small 4.5 tatami mat room, and a large table that the students had made for us. Unfortunately, you can't see it in this picture, but the symbol of Kumamon was displayed on the table. Every time we go to the temporary housing, the people who live there are always happy to welcome us, and they bring side dishes from their homes and start drinking together. They said that even though they had the temporary housing they did not feel like they had their own house back, but with “HOME-FOR-ALL,” even though it is a communal house they felt as if they had their own house back. The reason for this is the smell of wood and the warmth of the house. I think it was because this felt like a smaller version of the pri-

vate house they use to live in.

The local government provided the land and co-operated with us, but the management of the “HOME-FOR-ALL” was done by the residents' association of the temporary housing complex, which I think was very unique. I think this was the most important factor in the creation of the community. Also, as I mentioned earlier when I compared it to a community center, the fact that it is a one-room apartment, with a porch and a dirt floor, allows anyone to enter.

When I was a small child, I lived in the countryside, and when I visited my friends' houses, such as when I was in elementary school, I never entered through the front door. The porch is a place that connects people to each other as well as the outside and inside of the house. I would go around from the porch and ask, “Is OO-chan (my friend) there?” If an elderly person is sitting on the porch in the morning, another person who has come for a walk can sit down and talk with him or her. The house has an earthen floor, a porch, and a wood-burning stove, and although it is a smaller version of a private house, a very small version indeed, I think it was important to convey the feeling of a private house in some way. So, “HOME-FOR-ALL” was initially conceived as a place to support the residents affected by the disaster, but it gradually transformed into a public facility to revitalize the community. We created it to share these implications with young people.

Kumamoto Prefecture supported the first such project in Tohoku, and when Kumamoto was hit by frequent natural disasters, including a subsequent earthquake, the prefecture took the initiative in building “HOME-FOR-ALL”. This was a proj-



■ “HOME-FOR-ALL” in Miyagino-ku, Sendai City (ground plan)



■ “HOME-FOR-ALL” in Miyagino-ku, Sendai City © Sendai City

ect to turn what were called “meeting places” and “common rooms” into wooden “HOME-FOR-ALL” and with this, they truly became public buildings. It became the first public building in Kumamoto Prefecture. In Tohoku, 16 “HOME-FOR-ALL” were built, but they were built with donations that we collected with young people. In Kumamoto, however, “HOME-FOR-ALL” was built as a public building. In Kumamoto, 95 buildings were built in temporary housing complexes as common rooms and meeting places. Also, many of the “community centers” were damaged by the earthquake and they are still being built today, and through a donation From the Nippon Foundation, ten buildings (“HOME-FOR-ALL” for community center) are planned to be built.

This is the largest type of “HOME-FOR-ALL” in Kumamoto, and it is supposed to be relocated and used now in Mashiki Town. In this house, people do not only talk, but also host children's movie nights, and workshops for making zabuton (Japanese cushions) under the guidance of Yoko Ando, a textile designer. Also, the “HOME-FOR-ALL” community center was completed this year. Kumiko Inui traveled a great distance to build this “HOME-FOR-ALL” in Hitoyoshi City. The inside of the house has a large roof like a private house.

Now, I would like to take a moment to think about what a community center was. It is said that community centers were started in 1949, but they were created in various places in the name of post-war democracy under a law called the Social Education Act, which regulates museums and libraries. In fiscal year 2015, there were about 14,000 community centers nationwide. But community centers are not visited by many young

people these days. In some places, they are called “social education centers,” “lifelong learning centers,” “exchange centers,” or “community exchange centers.” In these places, the image of public architecture comes to mind. The community center business, then, includes the holding of regular lectures, discussions, seminars, lectures, exhibitions, etc., the installation and use of books, records, models, materials, etc., the holding of physical recreation, etc. liaison with various groups and institutions, and the provision of facilities for residents' gatherings and other public purposes. The Social Education Act also states that such facilities should be created for public purposes.

So, we have done some of these, and there are a number of libraries being built all over the country, and there is talk that there should be a library in those community centers as well. The difference is that public libraries create relationships between people and books, whereas community center libraries create relationships between people through people and books. Therefore, I would say that the library I am involved in is rather similar to that community center type library or reading room. So today, I would like to introduce two projects. I would like to introduce how the community center or “HOME-FOR-ALL” is expanding as public architecture.

The competition for “Minna no Mori: Gifu Media Cosmos” was held just before the 3.11 earthquake. We went into the competition not thinking about such things, but as a result, we ended up with something very similar to “HOME-FOR-ALL.” It is located in the center of Gifu City, a town with a population of 400,000, and was built on a very large



■ “HOME-FOR-ALL” in Mashiki Town, Kumamoto



■ “HOME-FOR-ALL” in Mashiki Town, Kumamoto



■ HOME-FOR-ALL for Permanent Housing (Hitoyoshi City)



site on two levels. There is a tree-lined avenue on the west side, and a small stream flows next to it. This plays a very important role. The reason is that this area is close to the Nagara River, which is very rich in underground water, which is borrowed to provide radiant cooling and heating, and the air that comes up from the floor is channeled by natural air flow and discharged from the very back, or closed in the winter and circulated in a large umbrella called a globe. The facility also uses solar panels and other equipment, and overall, the total energy consumption of the facility is about one-half that of a conventional facility. The borrowed subterranean water is returned to the underground by flowing into the stream I mentioned earlier.

I won't go into details today, but here is the plan for the first floor. Here, too, we wanted to make it as easy to enter as possible, just like the dirt floor of the "HOME-FOR-ALL," so that people can pass through it from all directions. This facility is located in a residential area, so we took that into consideration as much as possible. In the middle is a closed stack of books, which is very environmentally stable. The first floor is a very open space, with open and closed galleries, a small auditorium with about 200 seats, the library office, and on the left, the

area facing the stream and tree-lined street, is a community center. Children always stop by this open space on their way home from school. Children nowadays have no place to play after school and before they go home. Therefore, this is a place where they can spend a whole day talking for free, and junior high and high school students always come by and talk here until the evening. This facility is also characterized by the mixing of people from different generations.

The first director of this library was quite an interesting person, and he decided to introduce the concept of a children's librarian. He created the children's librarian system because he believed that after 10 years, children would grow up to be adults and would definitely come back to the library. This was about two years after the library opened, and the person on the left is the director, Mr. Yoshinari. This is a scene from a dialogue with the children's librarians. 180 children's librarians have now been appointed. Among them, this girl, the second girl from the right in the front row, is a very interesting girl, and she wrote a letter to Director Yoshinari. This letter says that she loves books, that she goes to Medicos when she has free time, when she gets home from school, that her priority is visiting Medi-



■ "Minna no Mori: Gifu Media Cosmos"
©Kai Nakamura



■ Tree-lined street/stream
©Kai Nakamura



■ Children's librarians
© Gifu City

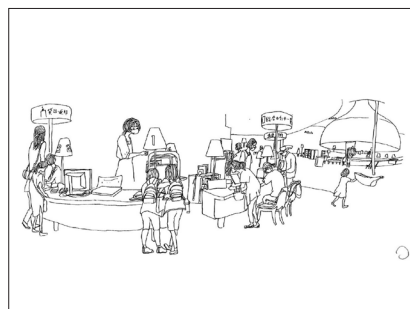
cos, and that she stops by Medicos even if it is only for five minutes. So, in the end, she wrote that she had created her own library in a closet in her house. She is a college student now, and maybe she even already graduated, but I would love to meet her when she comes back from studying abroad. I think a children's librarian is a really great idea.

When you go up to the second floor, you may have seen a large umbrella-like object, which we call a “globe,” and there are 11 of them hanging from the ceiling. Beneath them is the most comfortable environment for reading books. The overall appearance is that we call it a big house under this kind of wavy roof, but it has a wooden roof over it, and 11 “globes” are hanging from it. Yoko Ando, the textile designer I mentioned earlier, worked very hard to create these “globes. A sketch journalist named Masako Okaku, who visits this facility on a daily basis, drew dozens of sketches, some of which are shown below. This is a person stopping by the information “globe to make a request or ask a question. This is the largest “globe,” a very relaxing place to read a book. There are many different globes, but Mr.Yoshinari asked me to make a small one that could accommodate a parent and child, or two to three children because children like to stay in small places, so it was placed under the globe I just showed you. It was made in Indonesia using rattan-like material and named “Koron” and this is a sketch of a child in it. A “globe” was also prepared for parents and children to talk and play together. This is a small child studying. A few years ago, some years after the opening, we tried to interview some of the people who frequent the place. Here are some of the answers that people and their children gave us.

Someone said, “The globe is like a big living room,” which is really the “HOME-FOR-ALL.” Someone else said, “The space between the globes is a walkway,” in other words, it is like an outside space. I thought this was also a very good comment. Another comment was “a place where you can feel like you are with someone else, but you can also be alone.” This person had just moved to Gifu and was feeling very lonely at home, but when he heard about the Media Cosmos facility, he went there and found that he could be alone but could also feel as if he was together with everyone else. Then, this really touched me, he said, “it is hot or cold, and even if you’re inside, you feel like you’re outside, and the brightness and temperature change from morning to night.” Modern architecture is really homogenous, morning to night is the same, and it’s said that the best thing is to create an environment that’s the same in summer and winter, but it’s only natural that the temperature changes between summer and winter. I think that if we don’t do that, humans will gradually lose their animalistic sensitivity, so when I create this kind of architecture, I want to make it important that you can feel like you’re outside even when you’re inside. Then, parents and children who come every day said, “It’s fine if you just look around at the new books and the world of children and then go home.” In other words, it’s like a walk, they come almost every day in the evening. When they get home, their mothers are waiting for them, making dinner, and the children come with their fathers. When I was little, my father always took me to the public bath before dinner. I talked to the local people at the public bath, and when I came back, my mother was waiting for me, making dinner, and Mr.Yoshinari was very impressed to hear that it was a place like that. Then, someone said, “You



Globe
©Kai Nakamura



Sketch (Globe)
©Masako Okaku



Sketch (Koron)
©Masako Okaku

don't have to make a reservation to have a meeting. If you just say, "Let's hold it at Medicos," everyone will come and there will be a place where we can talk." That was also a very nice comment.

That facility is called "Gifu Media Cosmos," there is another one called "Ibaraki City Culture And Child-Rearing Support Complex Onikuru," a facility that combines childcare and cultural facilities in Ibaraki City, a town with a population of 300,000 on the outskirts of Osaka. It opened at the end of November last year, so I would like to introduce it to you.

In this overall view, the facility is in the middle and in the back. Also there is the city hall on the right and a green belt stretching north and south in front. In the orthogonal direction, the building stands at the intersection of a road with a continuous shopping street that connects the Hankyu and JR Ibaraki stations. A grassy plaza is on the north side, and the city hall is visible on the right. It is a wonderful place. On the opposite south side, the fly tower of the theater inevitably appears, so there is a concrete wall rising up, and we thought we had to do something about this, so we asked an artist named Kohei Nawa, a graduate of Ibaraki High School, to design a ring that looks like the moon. This is the lawn square, which was created based on the concept of a three-dimensional park, where the lawn square continues even after entering the building. The mayor and the city staff had a lot of ideas, and this was the first time we had such a wonderful collaboration. This is just one example. At the opening ceremony, usually the mayor or the chairman of the city council cuts the ribbon, but here it was a ribbon cutting by 100 people, so a long ribbon was dragged along and

participation was open to all residents from 0 to 100 years old.

This place is a combination of various things, such as a hall and a facility for childcare support, and we were wondering how we could combine them into one space. We were particularly concerned about whether it would work out well, since facilities like a theater and childcare support originally have nothing to do with one another. We created a 10-meter-diameter circular vertical passage with an atrium and connected it with escalators. This is the plan for the ground floor. Entering from the grass plaza, there is a 200-seat multipurpose hall in the center. The light blue area above is the children's playground. The terrace on the second floor sticks out and is shaped like a pilotis, which is a kind of veranda. When you enter the first floor, it is messy, but this is an indoor plaza-like place where exhibitions are sometimes held, and the 200-seat multipurpose hall that you can see at the back is used almost entirely open. There is a cafe just inside the first floor, which I think is one of the reasons why it is so easy to enter. Here is the entrance to the multipurpose theater on the right. The building has just celebrated its first anniversary, and there was an event recently, and the place was bustling with people. In about a year, about 2 million people will have visited, even though the city has a population of only 300,000.

This is the second floor and one of the facilities here (the Comprehensive Child Support Center). What made this fusion work so well was that part of the library's functions were brought down to each floor as a library corner. The director of the library was proactive in suggesting that we do this, and I think it was quite significant that there are



Globe
©Kai Nakamura



Ibaraki City Cultural and Comprehensive
Childcare Facilities "Onikuru"
©Nacasa & Partners Inc.



Ribbon cutting ceremony
©Kai Nakamura

books on each floor, such as books about culture and art where the theater is located, and books for children where the children's play area is located. This is the part of the facility where children can play while waiting, just before entering the childcare support area. Then, on the terrace on the second floor, there is a strangely shaped house placed, which is a room for reading to the children. This house was designed by a local painter named Naohisa Inoue. Then, going up to the third floor, which is at the same level as the stage, there are dressing rooms and studios. Here, too, there is a reading corner, and then a studio. This is what we call the "Vertical Path."

Going up to the fourth floor, this is where the main foyer of the theater is located. Only the theater's opening was delayed about six months, so they are having a bon dance in the foyer area only. The fifth and sixth floors are the library floors. The green area is the library. This is also a part of the "Vertical Path." This is a view from the 5th and 6th floor atrium, looking down on the library below. Yasushi Fujimori, a furniture designer, worked very hard to create a lot of good furniture to be placed on all the floors. Unfortunately, he passed away, and this is his last work. He mentioned how he would like to visit after completion, but he passed away before he could come. This

was a project of the museum, and this summer they prepared several tents and invited several families to spend the night. I think it was quite a challenging project for the museum. However, this project has helped us to realize our idea of having visitors feel as if they were outside, even when they are inside.

Then, on the top floor, there is a planetarium, next to which there is a space for children's workshops, a courtyard, and a Japanese-style room, so it is a floor with a mixture of various things. The courtyard on the top floor was initially created as a place where children could only play at the bottom and gradually move up as they got older, but since the opening, that is no longer the case. The courtyard has become a very popular place for children, and with students studying and eating lunch on the side it is a real mix of things.

As a final comment, I believe that public architecture in the future should once again recall the spirit of what community centers originally advocated during the post-war democracy, and I think that "HOME-FOR-ALL" is a small model that can serve as a catalyst for this. Although I have rushed through, this concludes my speech, and I hope to discuss this together with you all again later in the discussion. Thank you very much.



■ Vertical Path



■ Library



■ Courtyard

“Case Studies by Young Architects and Others Involved in Creating Small Communities”

» “The Commons Rising from the People” – Chie Konno (teco)

My name is Konno, and I run an architectural design firm called “teco” in Asakusabashi, Tokyo.

I finished my doctoral studies in 2011, the very year of the Great East Japan Earthquake that Mr.Ito mentioned earlier, and immediately after that I started my own architectural design firm. I have been working as a designer while at the same time working at a university for about 14 years now. I have worked at various universities, and now I am engaging in research activities with about 20 students in my laboratory at the Kyoto Institute of Technology. The office called “teco” has this kind of atmosphere, and we work there with 7 to 8 people. I was a student at the Tokyo Institute of Technology (now:Institute of Science Tokyo), where I studied in the laboratory of architect Yoshiharu Tsukamoto from Atelier Bow-Wow. The laboratory was a place where research and architectural practice were always working in tandem, we were constantly designing, observing and surveying the city, and establishing these as expressions of our work. Today, I would like to talk a little about some examples of research and investigation, and then I would like to introduce one of my works.

I have been researching these kinds of semi-outdoor roofed spaces since around 2006, when I was

a master's student. For both my master's thesis and doctoral dissertation, I conducted research on these roofed semi-outdoor spaces that are open to the town. For example, this is a picture of Bhaktapur, Nepal, which is one of my top three favorite cities. In Bhaktapur, this pavilion-like place is called a “pati.” This pati is a space that is built and maintained by the local people, who provide the materials, are involved in the construction, clean the pati, come every week to light candles, and so on. There are so many of them in the old town area that you can probably find one in every 30 meters or so. In this picture, which I happened to take in this town, there are people reading newspapers, men sitting in a group in the back, and sometimes people doing farm work, but there are an old man and a child in the middle who seem to be relaxing together. I kept looking at this child, and he went to talk to various older people, so it did not seem like he was related to them. However, I felt the possibility of a place where people of different generations can naturally interact with each other, where they can relax in their spare time, and where they can have free time and space, by having a place where they can feel open and free in the town. I am currently writing a book about this while conducting research in various places around the world, and it will be published around February. I hope you will



■ Chie Konno (teco)



■ Bhaktapur, Nepal

take a look at it in your local bookstore. This is a promotion.

In the progress of this research, I would like to introduce another town and architecture that I feel is relevant to the theme of today. This is a picture of Bali, Indonesia. Not only in Bali, but also in Indonesia, there is a community unit called “banjar.” It is a community similar to the one I mentioned earlier. It is a kind of local government with about 400 to 800 members. When I happened to pass by, I saw that they were preparing for a festival under this big roof. The people of this banjar have a base for each area and banjar, and they call it “bale banjar.” They have these big roofed spaces that are completely exposed to the outdoors. Here they practice singing and dancing, hold community meetings, and at this time, were preparing for a festival. I thought it was a very interesting system, and when I began my research, I became more and more interested in the depth of it. I am now in my third year of research, and I go there regularly to conduct surveys. Indonesia is still in a transitional stage of growth, so the average age of the population is about 29 years old, and the population is still continuing to grow. Against this backdrop, the government's plans to create institutions and build facilities have not kept pace with the speed of growth. What they are doing, for example, is discussing with the members of the banjar, who say that the number of children is increasing, so they decide to build a daycare center. They are also thinking of buying land in the suburbs of the banjar to prepare for a peaceful life in their old age, since the population is aging and there is not enough land in the dense urban areas. For such operations, basically money is collected from everyone and such constructions are built with donations, but when some families have a hard time paying the bills, the banjar builds a co-op and does business, and then sustains the community with the profits from this co-op. They discuss and set up things autonomously. If necessary, they build things, and sometimes they set up a system as a soft framework, such as health check-ups and children's services. The people are doing all these things on their own. Witnessing the energy of the people, I wonder what we Japanese can absorb and reconstruct. Japan has a better public service

and support infrastructure than Indonesia, but I think there are many unknowns as to how long these services will be sustained in the future. At our office, about half of our projects are welfare-related architecture projects, but when we are involved in this field and see the super-aging population, we feel that we do not know what will happen to social security 10 years from now. At such times, I feel the need to start thinking about how we can create a sustainable lifestyle for ourselves, and recently I have been thinking about communities such as the banjar and the environment that supports the activities of the people living there.

I was independent in 2011, the year of the Great East Japan Earthquake, and realized that I did not know anything about my daily life. For example, where our electricity came from or what kind of water went into our mouths. I often go back to the basics and have been thinking a lot about how we live and what kind of resources support us.

Today, I would like to introduce just one project. This is a project called “Kasugadai Center Center,” which took about seven years to build. This center is located in an area called Aikawa town in Kanagawa Prefecture, about 40 km from the center of Tokyo. The population is about 40,000, the aging rate is over 31%, and the percentage of foreign residents is about 9%. This is actually very high in Japan and is the highest in Kanagawa Prefecture. The town is located on a river terrace with two rivers running through it and has a terraced topography that is easy to understand, with a rich rural landscape located near the river and an industrial area at the top of the hill. It is a town made up of



■ Kasugadai Center

old agriculture, post-war industry, and residential areas that have supported them. There is no train service, so it is like an isolated island on land, and it takes a long time to get there from Tokyo.

This project was planned in the center of a shopping district in a residential complex that was created to support the industrial park. The first time I visited this site, I was actually there to hear from a welfare business operator who wanted to open up a corner of the shopping district in the row houses next to the final building and turn it into a home-care facility. More than half of the shutters were closed, but at the same time, after school, children would gather there in droves, and I felt that this camphor tree that was there was very impressive and had great potential. I was listening to various people talking when the owner of the supermarket, the building with the wavy roof on the right called “Kasugadai Center,” said that he wanted to close it because a large shopping mall had just arrived nearby and the business was very difficult to manage. It certainly did not look like a supermarket where things were flying off the shelves, but it was a so-called old-fashioned supermarket where children went to buy candy and croquettes loved by everyone were being sold, and we were talking about how difficult it would be to lose it, yet four months later it closed down. They said that the glass would be dangerous after it closed, so they put up boards and installed security cameras, and the number of signs saying “〇〇 is prohibited” increased. I felt that the visiting station I mentioned earlier in the corner of the shopping street did not touch on the fundamental problems of this town, nor did it contribute to the essence of the town,

and that I could not get involved. At that time, after many discussions, we decided to return this plan together with a client who is in the welfare business to start over from scratch. Instead, we decided that we wanted to discuss with local people what was really needed here, so we set up a support group called the “Aikawakurasu Lab” or “Ai Lab.” At first, through inviting friends and acquaintances, we started out with 15 or 20 people, and the number of people quickly grew to 40 or 50. One day, someone wanted to host the super revival festival I mentioned earlier, so the members of this support group became the initiators and decided to organize a festival. A total of about 400 people came to the festival, and we made things, gave lectures on the boarded-up supermarket front, and experienced the local atmosphere. At this time, the architectural plan had once been blanked out, so we thought about what we could do as members who shared the same place and began to create a newspaper to record words and activities. We recorded the conversations of the old men who gathered at the support group and the junior high school students who came to talk to us, as well as various other conversations, which were not written in the town history or the town guide, but everyone was talking about interesting things, so we thought it would be better to record them and ended up creating something like a bulletin board every time we visited.

During this activity, I learned that the second generation of workers in the industrial area I mentioned earlier are mostly foreign workers, and that their children withdrew from school due to language problems. I have come to realize that



■ Kasugadai Center Center
©morinakayasuaki



■ Doma-dori(Kasugadai Center Center)
©morinakayasuaki

there are grandmothers who teach those children how to study. At one point, when I learned that a bamboo grove was overgrown, we all spent a day working in the field in the bamboo grove. In this way, we continued to get to know the community for three years. In this process, we began to think about whether the Kasugadai Center, which had looked after the first and second generations since 1960 when there was nothing in the Kasugadai area, could be turned into a town center once more, and the client said that he wanted to create a base with welfare work at its core. We made plans and submitted them to the owner of the land and to the government, and every year we made several more plans and brushed them up, until finally, around the fourth year, we were ready to start the project. It took a long time, but during that time, we were able to raise awareness for the project while consistently continuing to build the community.

In the end there were residences and day services for the elderly, and an after-school service for children with special needs. In addition, this laundry service and croquette stand are places where people with disabilities work. The Terakoya is a place where children can study, as I mentioned earlier, and also a place that they can use freely. The reason we named it "Kasugadai Center Center" is because we wanted to make the Kasugadai Center into a center once again with a complex of seven functions. It is easy to become a reasonably large box as an architectural structure because it is difficult to manage so many functions. However, we have been talking with local residents about the town for a long time, and decided not to build

a huge facility, but rather to draw in the axis of the street leading to the town park, extend the roof of the arcade of this shopping center over here, and create a building that would appear similar in size to somewhere between a residential house and a nursery school-like facility.

The building is divided into three wings, and the functions within each wing are mixed, but we also aimed to create a base where people can feel like they are continuously going in and out, with town streets drawn in between the buildings and a street, which we call "Doma-dori" running through the inside of the building. This is the view from the arcade. This is the facade seen from the front, which is now a place where many children gather after school. People naturally gather under this tree, and it has become a place where children talk with their grandmothers, people with disabilities mingle with those who come to buy croquettes, and so on. This small tatami floor is technically also a welfare floor, but the children don't know about it, so they come in and play here because it looks comfortable, and this natural overlap is born.

Finally, I would like to show a video that gives a good idea of the atmosphere of this center. This is not only a daytime activity center, but also includes housing for the elderly, so there are times in the morning when it is very quiet, from when children come in it is then a place where many different people can mingle until dusk. Although it is a welfare facility, there are no fences, gates, or surveillance cameras, so it is a center where everyone can just enter with ease, find a comfortable place to spend time, and use it on their own.

That concludes my presentation. Thank you very much.



» "Osaka Kitakagaya, C.S.A. Corpo Kitakagaya, Chidori Bunka" Toshikatsu Ienari (dot architects)

Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for inviting me here today. I run an architectural design firm called "dot architects" in Osaka, and I would like to talk about our base of operations and some of the properties we have renovated in the neighborhood, as well as some reference cases behind them.

First, this place called Kitakagaya in Osaka is located in the southwestern edge of Osaka City. It used to be a swamp until around the latter half of the Edo period, when land reclamation projects were carried out and rice paddies were established. However, as modernization progressed rapidly from the Meiji period onwards, a Chinese goods merchant in downtown Osaka bought up the entire rice field, rented it out, and switched it to land management business, and as a result, factories were built one after another in the area. In the Taisho era, the area was so crowded that its population exceeded that of Tokyo. After the war, more and more factories were built in the area as it entered a period of rapid economic growth. Originally, the shipbuilding industry flourished along the Kizu River, and there were about three shipyards here. However, as the industrial structure changed, the shipbuilding industry moved out of the prefecture, since the world's ships became larger and larger and there was a limit to the number of ships that could be built at these docks. The 20,000 workers who were working there at that time

also disappeared or aged out of industry, resulting in a hollowing out of the city.

As I mentioned earlier, the company that bought the land that used to be rice paddies is a real estate company that still owns half of the land in Kitakagaya. They rent out the land, but after the person who leased the land passes away or moves out, there are no tenants when the land is returned, so for the time being, the land is turned into coin parking lots. As a result, the town became full of coin-operated parking lots, which was not affluent at all, so in 2009 we started inviting artists, designers, and other people to work in Kitakagaya to help develop the community. This was called the "Kitakagaya Creative Village Concept" but we came to the town before the project started and began our activities based on an empty factory. With a name like "Kitakagaya Creative Village Concept," more and more artists and designers came to Kitakagaya, and a map like this was created, with galleries, cafes, and various other stores. For example, there is a gallery that utilizes a former ironwork to house a huge sculpture, a private art museum for artist Yasumasa Morimura, a studio where artists can stay and work, a hostel, a vacant lot that can be turned into a rental farm, a vacant factory that can be used as a club, and a former shipyard. A former shipyard is also being used as an event space.

When art and culture are introduced into a hollowed-out town, it is usually expected that land prices and rents will rise, and the people who were originally there would be forced to move out. However, we are operating in a rented abandoned factory called Coop Kitakagaya, and with the understanding of the landlord, we have been able to keep the rent unchanged.

We are a place where various people cooperate, including an architectural team, art NPO, artists, vi-



■ Toshikatsu Ienari (dot architects)

sual artists, digital fabricators, woodworkers, and designers. This is the first floor of our space, it is a shared factory where each of us have our own office spaces at the back of the building. There is also a common space on the second floor, this is where my office is, and each artist has their own studio, and we are always working in a messy place. This is a cross-sectional view, or rather a photo of a cross-sectional view, but we go out to the site and make various things ourselves, so we stock the scrap wood and other materials that come out and share them with everyone. This is the shared factory on the first floor where we make various things ourselves, and there is also a tool storage and a room with a computer where we design our products. At the same time, we also use this space to hold talk events and run a bar for gatherings, etc., all of which are based in this place called Coop Kitakagaya. As I mentioned earlier, seven teams are based here and they all attend the meetings called “Coop Meeting,” where we discuss and decide how to manage this place.

I rent this place for 320,000 yen per month, and if you divide that by 7 teams, it is roughly 40,000 to 50,000 yen per team, but one of these people has been behind on his rent for 3 years, and I have not received any money at all. Since it has been 3 years it is a huge amount of money, and with a normal real estate agency, if you forget to transfer the rent for two days they immediately call you, but we are trying to manage the place by helping each other out, even if there is one member who is not able to work under the situation of COVID-19. The model for this place called Coop Kitakagaya was a place called Soci-

ety Center.

Society Center is a place that does not receive any subsidies from companies or the government but operates only through its own activities in a vacant building.

Since we need to create our own tools to actually do this, I would like to think a little about said tools. Ivan Ilyich divides tools into two types: industrialist tools and tools that expand the scope of an individual's freedom. Industrialist tools are basically tools that are mass-produced with very expensive and highly specialized machines, it might be easy to image a Tesla factory or semiconductor plant or something like this. On the other hand, tools that expand the range of an individual's freedom are in the form of hand tools, hammers, pocketknives, etc. They are inexpensive, readily available at home centers, and are very simple to use and easy to learn. I believe that we can create places around us with such tools, and we are actively creating spaces and objects with simple hand tools that expand the scope of our freedom as a daily practice.

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, engineers from the United States came to Cuba to help the Cuban people with manufacturing. However, after the Cuban Missile Crisis, all the U.S. engineers left Cuba, so then what and how did the Cuban people manufacture things? They made television antennas from aluminum lunch plates, converted a washing machine motor into a fruit peeling machine, or converted a bicycle into a motorcycle by loading it with a plastic bottle and an engine. They created their own lives by combining their skills, tools, and resources.

These kinds of wisdoms of life were made into a book called “Our Own efforts (self-supporting efforts)”, which states we are supposed to do our own manufacturing. The book was distributed and included many things, such as how to maintain a bicycle or how to build shelves, among many more things.

Based on this idea of creating spaces, and creating space by ourselves, I would like to intro-



Coop Kitakagaya
©Yuma Harada

duce one property today. There is a building called “Chidori Bunka” at a 3-minute walk from our office, “Coop Kitakagaya.”

The second floor of this building was originally occupied by workers in the shipbuilding industry, and the first floor was used as a store. The first floor housed shops such as a coffee shop, okonomiyaki shop, haircut shop, etc. These are what we call getabaki residences. It was built around 1955, and after being used, it became vacant. We were asked to turn it into a community center, so we proceeded with the design. Entering the building from the street, there is an atrium, which leads to a dining room, moving on there is an old lumber bank, a bar, a gallery hall, three shops, and a community farm in the back. The old lumber bank and bar were originally run by us, dot architects. The old lumber bank was a place where we would take materials that had been demolished around us and sell them here once again, but we closed it after one year of operation because it was not selling at all. We also ran the bar every Friday and Saturday and local people were our customers, but as the COVID-19 infection spread we had to close the bar for a while. Now, however, the regulars from that time have taken over the bar, and it has become very lively. Basically, the first floor is like that, but the second floor is the layout of the original residence, and since it is a very strange layout, we decided to leave it as it is, and lease this floor under the jurisdiction of a real estate company. The carpenters at that time collected scrap materials from nearby and built this building, and it was in a very precarious structural condition, so we investigated all the pillars and beams and made a structural model and reinforced it in consultation with structural engineer Eisuke Mitsuda. This is the view from the road, and on this side is the farm. This is the main entrance to the atrium. Once you enter the atrium, you will find a place where you can wander and take a rest, and there is also a book exchange corner located here. Turn to the left and you will see a cafe space in the back. Then there is the old lumber bank, which is now gone, and the space is used to operate an expanded cafete-

ria, since the cafeteria is doing very well. This is the atrium, and if you go up to the second floor, cross the bridge, and go to the back, you will reach the old residential space. If you go back from the atrium on the first floor, there is a gallery space, and the second floor is the residential space, but there is a part that is currently used as an artist's gallery, and another part that retains its original appearance. The gallery is usually used for holding various exhibitions and live performances. We also keep bottles at the bar, which would run out where we have a lot of visitors, but if you would like to come and have a drink, please feel free to do so. We are now in the process of managing the place so that it can be enjoyed by local residents and visitors alike, while flexibly adapting to the location, discussing with everyone, and changing the form of the space. Thank you very much for your attention.



■ Chidori Bunka
©Yoshiro Masuda

》 “The Situation in Nagasaki” - Sho Sasaki (INTERMEDIA)

My name is Sho Sasaki from “INTERMEDIA.” Pleased to meet you. First of all, let me briefly introduce myself. I live in Nagasaki, and I am 40 years old, born in Nagasaki Prefecture. My university was in Fukuoka, and my previous job was in Tokyo, where I studied under Mr. Suematsu of SUEP. Then, at the age of 30, I returned to my hometown Shimabara, and this year 10 years have passed since then. “INTERMEDIA,” which I represent, is a design firm founded by my father 35 years ago, and I work together with my father and many staff members who relocated here. Incidentally, since I am in Kyushu, I am a part-time lecturer at many universities, and there are quite a few people I know in the front row, and I think everyone here is probably sitting in front to support me, rather than joining us late (laughs), and that gives me a lot of energy.

This is Nagasaki Prefecture, and this is the Shimabara Peninsula, and here is “mio” in Shimabara which is where I work. For the first five years after I returned to Shimabara, I worked on requests that had a set purpose. You may think that this is obvious, but I will explain it step by step. For example, these are some of the architectural projects we have worked on. We have built offices, guesthouses and of course, this has continued since 2019 and beyond. We are working on a variety of architectural projects in and around Nagasaki, such as a pre-school and a wooden office, as our main business is a design firm.

Meanwhile, the very curious thing is that we started to receive requests with no specific purpose set since about 2019. You may not understand what I mean, but for example, these are the kinds of architecture we see. The top left is a renovation, the top right is a new construction, the bottom left is just the interior, the bottom right is just furniture, etc., so there are many ways to get involved. I would like to talk a little bit more about the “HOGET” project in 2019, as it is one of my current public projects. This is a view of “HOGET” before its renovation. It is located in Saikai City, Nagasaki Prefecture, on the Nishisonogi Peninsula, which is on the edge of an area that is rapidly depopulating, as there are no railroads or highways here, and the main infrastructure in the prefecture runs through Nagasaki, Isahaya, Omura, and Sasebo, etc., so it is a place that has been left behind. The request was something like a desire to create a place where people would gather. There was no specific purpose in mind, all we knew was that they wanted us to do something with that vacant private house I showed you earlier, and there was no decision made at all about, for example, putting in a cafe. So, I did not know where to start, but I found it all rather interesting. I wondered why they wanted a place for people to gather in a place where there were no railroads or highways, and why architecture was needed there in the first place, and why a field or a park would not suffice? In other words, I felt like I was being asked a fundamental question about whether architecture was necessary there, and if so, for what purpose,



■ Sho Sasaki



■ “HOGET” before its renovation

so I wanted to get involved and moved forward. The exterior looked like this, but there were already a few initiatives going on inside, for example, an event with children organized by the client. When I visited the site for the first time, the inside of the building was in an intense state, and it was rented as an art-in-residence for a local calligrapher. It was a moderately spacious house, and I could imagine how a variety of activities could take place inside without us having to make any major changes.

On the other hand, at the same time, I felt that it was difficult to understand these activities from the outside. For example, I thought that if the outside was built in a different way, the relationship between the outside and inside would continue, and various activities would be born outside as well. In contrast, we could see the physical size of the space and the relationship between the two, so we spent about a year and a half discussing various issues, such as how it would be used if such a function was added, focusing on dialogue rather than deciding on a plan.

The finished product is as shown in the beginning. The outside of the house was covered by a 2-meter-high stone wall, and the vacant house was closed off from the surrounding area, so we focused on that and created a relationship that was connected to the land. If we could create a relationship where the inside is connected to the outside and the inside is connected all the way, what is going on inside will naturally flow out to the town and the national highway. The inside of the building was originally like this, but with only white expanded metal inserted, we imagined that it would be used

in such a way that the various activities taking place in Saikai would be visualized here. For example, this is a photo of a pop-up from an artist in Saikai who makes bags. The products can be hung on the expanded metal and can be bought as is, and it also serves as an opportunity to get to know the artist. The works of Rintaro Hashiguchi, the calligrapher I mentioned at the beginning of this article, are also exhibited in the same energetic situation. Also, for the record store event, there was an extraordinary place deep in the mountains of Saikai that has a collection of 150,000 records. However, it is very difficult to access, so people don't have a chance to know about it, hence we are organizing an event called "HOGET" to make it visible. This is the scene at an event held in memory of Ryuichi Sakamoto and Yukihiro Takahashi who passed away.

Now, let me talk a little about the process. This is the stone pot that the facility is named after. In Saikai, this stone pot is called "hogget," and it is said that 90% of stone pots in Japan were made on the Nishisonogi Peninsula 1,000 years ago, and even today, you can still find them rolling out from the fields. However, we around here did not know about it, and local children were also gradually becoming unaware of it. In fact, there are still ruins like this one, and if you look closely, you can see many marks where they tried to dig stone pots. We held an event where we tried to recreate the rough hand carvings from those days with the children of today on the concrete part of "HOGET."

Another client is a sewing company that prints T-shirts, and they had about 40 years' worth of wooden crates for silkscreen printing left over, so



■ HOGET
©YASHIRO PHOTO OFFICE



■ Hoget(Stone pot)
©little comm.

we held workshops with local children to put them on the floors and counters. Even now, I still meet with parents and children every year who express things like "here is where I put it" seeming to make it their own.

In the completion photos, the outside of the building looks quite dry, but during the summer festival, for example, the town with a population of only about 6,000 people becomes overflowing, and a saxophone player from the area plays on the adjacent lawn. When fruit sandwiches are sold here, the people standing in line are visualized, and when a marching event of a nearby nursery school is held here, it can be seen from the national highway. All these things are beginning to take place in these steps, inside and out, in various places. For those of us who have been commissioned to do something for a predetermined purpose, it was quite a shock to see what has been happening in this way in Saikai Town, which has a population of about 6,600 and what has been created since construction was completed.

Another request came in a slightly overlapping fashion: a town with a population of about 7,000 wanted to build a place where people would gather, just like "HOGET," but they did not know how to do this. This was a new construction, but just like with "HOGET," we identified the conditions of the site and the possibilities within the budget, and through dialogue, we came up with a plan. In the end, we ended up with a sewing room, laundromat, and cafe, and this common area is used for events and as a YouTube streaming space. The building has a right-angled isosceles triangle plan, and the tables are also made as the same right-angled isosceles triangle. We designed the table with a good yield from the 366 boards and worked with local people to create it. At the time of the ridgepole raising, rice cakes were scattered, and other things were set up before the completion of this facility as well.

This is a case study of "DS Branch" in Nagasaki City. An IT company wanted to create a rest area on the first floor of an apartment building that was originally a bank. However, since the space is open to the surrounding area, they wanted to make it a place where they could give back to the residents of the

condominium and the local community, but they did not know how to do this. As a result, it has become a free place like a park, with Wi-Fi and power supply free of charge, where you can bring your own food and drinks, and you are not charged for using the space no matter how long you stay. It is also a place like a mountain that can be used for events utilizing digital technology unique to IT companies or, like the box seats at the Okunchi in Nagasaki.

This project was requested by a person living in the Kanto region who wanted to do something with his old family house in Shimabara, but did not know what to do with it. As with the previous two, we discussed the potential of the project and ultimately came up with an exchange experience facility for children and inbound travelers, with a focus on overnight farm stays. The opening event is being held today.

Next up, this is a former bank building in the center of the arcade in Isahaya City. This is a large space of about 300 square meters, and it was already decided that there would be eating and drinking, but we also wanted to hold various events such as weddings, and since the budget was very limited, we only designed the furniture. We designed and made about 20 pieces of furniture in the same shape, even though they are organic tables with a slightly distorted shape. They were created with the idea that the furniture alone could be used in a variety of ways. You can make them into a small island, or for events, they can be connected like a semi-circle so that people can face each other, or if they are all connected, they can be used as a single unit for discussion, or they can be used like this for weddings, or more organically for music events. This is yet another building that opened just three days ago.

As a final example, I am involved in the renovation of a vacant fish processing store into a home nursing station that also offers a place for community interaction. Not only is it used as a conference venue for local doctors, but it is also used as one of the so-called social prescriptions, events are held to familiarize local residents with medical care and nursing care, and it has become a place where the outside is already freely open to the public. I

have spoken about it all at once, but I feel that in Nagasaki, places like this, where a moderate public nature can be felt, are becoming more and more scattered here and there. These red areas are the ones we were involved in, but there are probably many more white areas that are beginning to appear, and I feel that such places are becoming more and more common in Nagasaki.

I summarized it in my own way, but first of all, these are all privately managed. I think the fact that they are privately run is distinctive. The size of the space is moderate, and I think the maximum is about 300m². Also, I feel that the intention is to lower the threshold for people to get involved in it, while still having some kind of function. This is a hidden feature that I do not understand, but it seems that most of the businesses know each other, share information, and cooperate with one another. Since I live in Shimabara, I have always felt envious of this situation, and I fantasized that if such places were scattered around Nagasaki little by little, Nagasaki as a whole would become a more affluent and comfortable area to live in. Thinking about this, I began to think that I would like to have such a place in Shimabara, where I live.

It is in this midst of all this that we started a place called “mio” in 2023. Shimabara is rich in spring water, so we named the place “mio,” written as “water vein,” with the hope that it would become a place where people can flow like water, stagnate, accumulate, and then flow again. Located in the middle of Mancho Arcade, it is a historic old house built 175 years ago. The building is owned by Shimabara City, which selected us as the archi-

tect for the renovation proposal, and we are now operating the building under a lease agreement. It faces the arcade, and on the first floor there is a cafe with a wide entrance. Entering from separate entrances, there are two guest rooms, and on the second floor there is a co-working space, where we at INTERMEDIA are based. From the design office's point of view, it is as if we are opening a design office. The cafe is also very unique in that it has a spring running through it, and spring water also flows through the guest rooms. The building itself was already a strong representation of Shimabara's cultural characteristics, so we made a conscious effort to create a plan that would stay in the theme with that. Since the building faces an arcade, we collaborated with neighboring stores to offer dinner and breakfast, and we designed the building to provide access to the town from all sides. Usually, it is open to the public as a cafe, but on the second floor is a co-working space, and although we make a mess there during the week, there are also co-working users, and on weekends high school students study there. The cafe space is a good size, so we can use this small area as a stage for music events, dance events led by high school students, and opportunities to let people know about the activities of local artists, mainly architects of the same generation that I know. We have been holding events such as town development, with architects from Kyushu, and gradually a wide variety of people have started to participate. We also had a university student who based his graduation design on Shimabara, so we held events where we could hear directly from the local community. Recently, I have been working with about 40 local high school students on research



■ mio
©Masaki Sakata



■ Engaging with Local High School Students (mio)

activities. They asked me to be involved as an advisor, so I decided that we should work at “mio,” which is more open to the local community, rather than at the high school, and we are working on a number of projects that I hope will lead to the development of a community school. Last month, we expanded to the point of creating a place for public discussion and presentation of thoughts with citizens at an arcade in connection with a local festival. Shimabara has no university, so when I put myself in the shoes of a high school student, when I turn 18, I almost always move outside of the prefecture or the peninsula. Considering this situation, I think that being in Shimabara until the age of 18 is a very precious thing, and I hope that we can use this precious time together to think about our hometown, and even if they leave Shimabara, it may be an opportunity to think about Shimabara again, or in some cases, it may be an opportunity to get involved in some way even though they are far away from Shimabara, or to contribute to the future. We are doing this in the hope that Shimabara may become a place where people can live in affluence despite its decline. This is a simple diagram of the relationships that are connected through “mio.” If you look at it from the perspective of a design office alone, you will see these kinds of connections, but I feel that the presence of “mio” is expanding various connections.

Lastly, I would like to add a little consideration to the four keywords that I mentioned earlier as things that give a sense of public nature. As for “being privately managed,” for me, I think it is rather hard for the public to create free places in these trying times. In an age when people are often scolded for playing with a ball in the park, I wonder if there is a spirit in Nagasaki to create a free place in the private sector. Also, the fact that “the size of the place is moderate” is because it is privately operated. Large spaces are owned by municipalities and governments, so I think that because it is a moderately sized space it is easy for the private sector to start. I also think that there is the desire for a comfortable place for a small group of people, even if only for 5 to 10 people. Talking about “having some kind of function but with the intention of lowering

the threshold for people to get involved, it is hard to be profitable if you do not have a function. Since it is privately run, it is difficult to maintain the place without such benefits, so I wonder if they are trying to strike a balance between the two and, physical communication is not easy. In rural areas, society is based on cars, so there is almost no physical meeting occurring in a casual manner. Therefore, I wonder if there are some activities where people want a place to gather in order to have this type of physical communication. The last point, “most of the businesses know each other and are in a co-operative relationship while sharing information” is interesting. Depopulation and population outflow are very much a concern in Nagasaki, and I think that awareness of this crisis is at the root of everyone's mindset. It is a bit ironic that everyone is living while facing the same direction, but in a sense, I think it makes it easier to move. Also, from a designer's point of view, there is no leeway to build a building. I am involved in this project with the feeling that if we fail in this area, the town may disappear. From now on, we will continue to work as an architectural firm, creating architecture that allows the people involved in the construction to live a fulfilling life, and at the same time, we think that this moderate publicness is something that we can be involved in as architects to ensure that the Nagasaki area where we live will continue to prosper. And as the operator, we hope to be able to contribute to our hometown of Shimabara by providing a place where we can put this into practice.

Finally, what do you think when you look at this map? It is actually very close to here. Don't you think it would be nice if you could cross here by boat? There is actually a ferry that takes only 30 minutes, so you can get there in time for the last flight, which is around 3:30 pm. I hope everyone will come and visit us at “mio,” and if you would like to participate in the social gathering, it will start at 7:30 a.m. tomorrow. I hope you will come and see what we are doing. Amidst all this, Mr. Sogabe was one of the first to come, so we took a photo of us in something like a pair look. I hope everyone will come and visit us in this way. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

» "Creating a Place for 'Our Own Thing'" - Hideyuki Morita (MANABINOTANE)

I will say in advance that I will probably go over-time. We had a preliminary meeting earlier, and we agreed that we would end after 20 minutes, so I may end in the middle of the discussion, but if there is interest, I would be happy to talk about it during the discussion. I am not an architect, and I am not a designer, as I am about to explain to you. The client for the place I will introduce today is in a similar position. For 30 years, I have assisted in the planning of various libraries and museums. I have assisted in the planning of many different places. I originally majored in physics, but then I started working in the field of creating new media information environments, and in fact, I assisted with the creation of the information environment of the "Sendai Mediatheque," which was designed by Toyo Ito. I experienced this kind of unique, pillar-less, wall-less space, and it was a very valuable experience for me to see how a space like this could become a public place. It opened in 2001, and a studio talk session called "Thinking About Shared Design" was held in 2002 and 2003. The talk session was moderated by Yasushi Watanabe, and in this talk session, the phrase "our thing" came up. I cannot go into the details of how it came up as time is short, but there was a discussion on how to design a place that combines both "one's own things" and "other people's things," or "other people's" matters as it is written. For about 10 years since then, Mr. Watanabe had been developing this project of "our own thing," but 11 years ago, just before the completion of this book, he suddenly

passed away. I have been using the phrase "our own thing" ever since because I think it is very important.

After the opening of the "Sendai Mediatheque" in 2001, I also worked as the director of the Cyber Japan Pavilion at the Expo held in Aichi, Japan in 2005, in parallel with the opening project of Shimane Museum of Ancient Izumo. Since the theme of the Expo was the global environment, I wanted to know what was happening to the global environment, so I interviewed various experts and read interview articles sent to me by writers. All of them said that the earth is already broken. For example, they said that the earth had passed through the gates of hell a long time ago. The word "gates of hell" means that there is no turning back, and there is no turning back now. They said that even if we live the primitive life of the past, global warming will continue to increase, albeit at a slower pace, and that we will be living in a scorching hell for the next 100 years, with unprecedented typhoons coming, desertification advancing, and global food shortages. Unfortunately, because the Expo was run by the government, I was unable to convey that much information. I began to wonder if I could continue to commute to work in Tokyo.

In the following year of 2007, I quit my job and moved to Miyota Town in Nagano Prefecture, and began experimenting together with my family to see how hard it would be to grow our own food. We learned a lot from one year of growing rice, and from the second year we started inviting people to help out in the rice fields, and we have been doing activities together like this. It has now been 15 years, and 300 people having entered the program, with about 50 to 100 people coming to work in the rice paddies to grow rice.

As for energy issues, I learned at the Aichi Expo



■ Hideyuki Morita (MANABINOTANE)

2005 that wood biomass energy is the most effective energy source in Japan. So, in 2008, the year after I moved here, I began to make firewood. The man in the blue jacket is my mountain work master, I have been learning mountain work from him for about 16 years, and we cut down trees in the winter. Now, what started with two people has become a group of about 20 people who work together to learn and maintain the mountain.

This is the place in which development I assisted after moving, "Musashino Place". I assisted in the creation of the basic plan for this facility, which includes a library and is located just off Musashi Sakai Station on Tokyo's Chuo Line, as well as supporting its opening. Nagano Prefecture, where I moved to, has the largest number of community centers in Japan, so I had experience in exchange activities at community centers. If we are to work together to solve various issues that come up in the community, the community center should not be a place where only book lovers come, but a place where all sorts of people can gather. So, to eliminate the library etiquette of people using the library quietly by themselves, we created a cafe in the middle and did various other things. One of the most distinctive features of the library was the creation of a youth space on the second basement floor. We named it "Teens Studio," and when we first started planning the project, we interviewed junior and senior high school students. When we asked them "We are going to create a place like this, will you come?" they responded, "I think that it is a good idea, but I don't think we will go." When I asked them why, they replied "We have homework, cram school, club activities, want

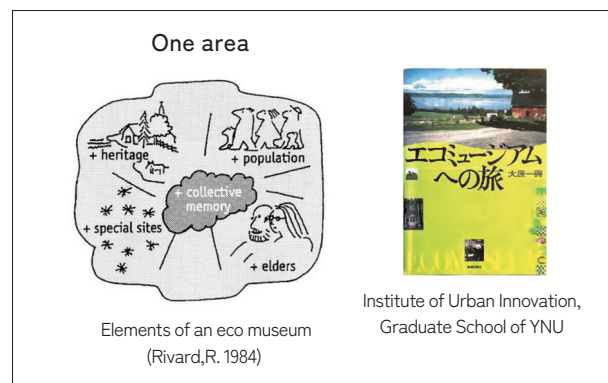
to hang out with friends, and play games. We don't have the time to come here." I said, "Well, unfortunately, we cannot do the club activities, but what if you could stop by here after school to talk and have a snack?" They said "Then I will go," so I decided to allow them to do everything here. You can even eat cup noodles here.

After making these preparations we opened the museum in 2001, but in March of the same year the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred, and I was invited by Makoto Yokomizo from Toyo Ito & Associates, Architects, with whom I had worked at Sendai Mediatheque, to help with the reconstruction efforts in the peninsula of Ishinomaki City. I joined with top civil engineering and architectural experts, but since I was not a specialist in any field, I did not know what to do. But the residents told me that there used to be a "town" in that area and that they wanted to live there once again. However, I could not picture that town at all. Even if someone said "There used to be a shrine here" I can not understand it. Then a photo happened to be found on a computer that had survived the tsunami. It was this photo. The shrine was holding a New Year's festival. I began to somehow see and understand the town that everyone was talking about.

Although I had worked with architects before I felt a little disappointed or guilty that I knew nothing about architecture, so in 2012 I knocked on the door of the laboratory of an architectural planning professor at Yokohama National University and was admitted. His name is Professor Kazuoki Ohara, and he specializes in facilities such as libraries, museums, senior citizen homes, and nursery schools,



■ Teens Studio, Musashino Place



■ Road to the eco-museum (by Kazuoki Ohara)

and he is also a leading expert in Japan on the “eco-museum,” an approach that began in Europe in the 1960s in which the entire community is considered to be a museum.

I found this picture on the left in Professor Ohara's book. There are residents, there is life, there are famous historical places. In the center of the picture is a hollow space where the word “collective memory” is written. It is translated as “collective memory” in Japan, but it means that there is a shared memory. I was desperate to collect the collective memory of this area, so I asked around to the mothers and fishermen on the beach. I made a newspaper of the memories I had gathered and printed it in large quantities. The people from the shore handed them out to people who came to volunteer and various other people. It turned out there were other memories, so we decided to create a sequel and asked residents to participate in the planning meetings, take pictures, and write texts to complete the project. After the project was completed, a woman came to me and said, “I have come to realize that I really like this place, I will continue to live here.” She was crying. That is when I thought to myself “A town is made of memories.” Or to put it differently, I thought “the world” is made of memories.

At that time, I was working on various community development projects around the country, and I came up with the hypothesis that the strength and depth of people's bonding and ability to live together is related to how large or deep the shared memory of the people in that community is.

Since we could not build buildings on these types of

low-lying lands in the disaster area, we worked with architects to bring three trailer houses and created a place where people could discuss their collective memories together, while also posting updates on the progress of the construction of the elevated relocation site.

After four and a half years of providing support in Ishinomaki City, I assisted in the opening of a library in Miyakonojo City in Miyazaki Prefecture. Miyakonojo City is the second largest city in Miyazaki Prefecture. There used to be three department stores, but they have all disappeared. We helped convert the last remaining shopping mall building, the Daimaru Center Mall, into a library. We used the power of furniture and interior design to convert this typical shopping mall building into a library. The concept was “for each person to find ‘something important.’” Actually, I am also the head of the designated management company that runs this facility and have been doing it for 7 years now. The staffs work really hard, and they hold various events. However, I ask them to make it their main goal to identify the needs of the citizens rather than holding events. They also do things for children, and we all look at what would make them happy. We created a public library that is open to many people, but we ran into the question of whether a “public” place should be open in the first place. The opposite of “public” is “private.” There is also the word “common.” I think everyone imagines that “common” is between the “public” and the “private.” I think that the common is on the opposite side of the public, beyond the private. It is an extension of something very personal, something very private, where you work hand in hand



■ Exhibition of collective memory (Ishinomaki City, Miyagi)



■ Miyakonojo City library

with your friends to realize things and to solve problems. On the other hand, public means that everyone is welcome. This is a very good thing, but it does not make the identity an issue, in other words, it does not demand or seek to define a relationship. If you try to do something "common" in such a "public" environment, I think there is a huge barrier to build trust and credibility. So lately, I have been thinking that we need to create a new "common place." What is very good about a "common place" is that each person can have a role and say, "You do this, and I will do that." In the case of "public places," the relationship between the host and the guest is almost fixed, making it difficult to assign roles. I think this is a very big difference.

From now on it will become increasingly difficult to protect farmland and forests. We were thinking about how we could protect them and decided to try our hand at it by creating a "common place." The result is the place I would like to introduce to you today, "CORDMARK MIYOTA."

This is Miyota Town in Nagano Prefecture, where I live. Mount Asama is on the other side, and the forest behind it is where we cut down trees in the winter. A river flows down from here, and we cultivate rice fields in the river basin. We have created a small "common place" at the boundary between the mountains and the village. Currently, about 60 people have invested in the project, and it is operated as a corporation. This approach is similar to that of the J-League, where fans interested in soccer join a fan club and support a soccer team. The fan clubs use the membership fees collected

to invest in the company that manages the team. Similarly, here we have created a Satoyama (undeveloped woodland) fan club in the form of a shareholding association, and the membership fees collected are invested in a joint corporation as capital. This method was created in consultation with lawyers and certified public accountants. For example, if there are 1,000 shares at 50,000 yen per share, the total cost is 50 million yen, and it is an arrangement that can protect something on that scale. The day when this photo was taken was just after the rice planting season, and everyone was having a party afterwards to thank everyone for their hard work. It's now the third year since we established a base to think and reflect on how we need to protect and survive in these undeveloped woodlands and how we should move forward to continue living in the future. We asked AIDA ATELIER to design the building. It is an architectural firm run by Tomoro Aida. The first floor is a cafe, and we hold a double license for both a restaurant and a manufacturer of sealed packaged foods. We use miso made from rice and soybeans that we grow ourselves to make our meals. We also bring sweet potatoes, pumpkins, blueberries, and other produce that the villagers produce too much to eat, and we use it to make ice creams and jams. The members of the mountain work team also hold their meetings here. People from the prefectural forestry department, the Forestry General Center that trains professional foresters, and the prefectural library also come to the meetings and collaborate with us. We are trying to lower the threshold for people to learn about various aspects of undeveloped woodlands, such as going into the mountains to pick up trees that smell good and extract aromatic water, roasting chestnut leaves and dyeing them, cutting down bamboo and making bamboo crafts with its strands, and many other things related to undeveloped woodlands.

I believe that the first step in creating a place for "our own thing" is to create a good place for us to be. When you have a good place to be, you feel at ease, and when you feel at ease, you want to stay there forever, and you want to protect and cherish that place. A place is not only a space, but also a person and oneself as part of the environ-



CORDMARK MIYOTA
© Tatsuya Noaki

ment, and when we think in this way, we take care of both people and ourselves. We will prepare the place for ourselves and become the creators of the place. When people experience joy and do “their own thing” through trial and error, they will not be bound by preconceived notions but will spontaneously aim for a better life. I think this is how a sense of self-governance will emerge.

I am sometimes asked how to create a good place to be, and I believe the key word is “yuru yuru”. In Japanese, the first “yuru” means “looseness,” the other “yuru” means “tolerability.” Flexibility allows for something, for example, if the boundaries of space are loose, a variety of environments can be created. Also, when rules are loose, freedom and ideas are born. Attributes are not all the same, and when there are people with varying attributes, there is no need to feel peer pressure. If rights and responsibilities are flexible, people can say, “I will do this.” If responsibility is demanded, you cannot say that. Also, the purpose and function are not well defined. If the purpose and function are fixed, rationality and efficiency are questioned, especially in the case of architecture, and people say, “this part is useless,” which causes those types of play

and quality-related aspects to be removed. In addition, objective indicators, such as KPIs, are not respected, which makes it difficult to respect individual subjectivity, and this makes people feel uncomfortable.

To sum it up, I believe that creating a space is related to people's inner selves. It is about matching the place to the person's inner self. It is about adapting the place to the inner selves of the people. Normally, people think it is the other way around, but first, you have to match the person's inner self, and then you match the place to that. This can be done from the architectural planning stage, or even at the design stage, or even at the furniture stage if you like. I think it is necessary to be flexible in order to match people's inner selves. That is why I think it is very important, as Mr.Ito mentioned earlier, that there are no partitions in HOME-FOR-ALL. And if you cannot forgive various things, you cannot see a person's inner self. Even if someone seems to be in trouble, if the rules are strict, it is difficult to see how they are feeling. Therefore, in order to create a place where self-governance and a sense of self-awareness can be nurtured, I think it is important that how to design “yuru yuru”.

Masashi Sogabe (hereafter, Sogabe) Now I would like to start the discussion. In the second part we had four speakers talking about their respective activities. The content of each activity was suited to the characteristics of the region in which they are involved, and the standpoints of each involved were different, making for some very interesting discussions. What I was most interested in was their motivation to get involved in such activities. Also, many of the people gathered at the venue are involved in architectural design, run design offices, offices, or are young people studying architecture and one thing they are concerned about is how they make their income. Mr. Sasaki mentioned earlier that requests can be divided into those with a specific purpose and those without. For requests with a definite purpose, I can somehow imagine how they make money, but in other cases, how is it positioned as a new architect's profession? I know Mr. Morita is in a different position, but if you have any thoughts on this, I would like you to briefly explain one by one what motivates you to do your job and how you position it as a profession. May I ask about today's presentations?

Chie Konno (hereafter, Konno) Regarding motivation and the profession of an architect, I believe that thinking about life is a fundamental and large part of the work of architecture. When doing so, I feel compelled to also think about how I want to live. I think this is an extension of Mr. Morita's last point about “our own thing,” but it is not just a matter of



■ Masashi Sogabe, Kumamoto Artpolis Advisor

saying, “this is what we are going to do because the purpose, deadline, and budget have all been decided,” but also of thinking about what is necessary, what the architect should do, and what he or she should not do, I feel that there are new possibilities in working together to think about what is needed and what architects should and should not do.

Sogabe I don't want to go into too much detail here, but, for example, did it take you seven years to realize the project? Did you receive no compensation for those whole seven years?

Konno That is a direct question. For the first three years, I only received a little bit when I was preparing documents for the government, and thereafter there was none. But actually, I was working on three other projects with the same corporation during that time, and I continued to attend meetings in parallel with those projects.

Sogabe Thank you very much. I may have overstepped. How about you, Mr. Ienari?

Toshikatsu Ienari (hereafter, Ienari) As for my motivation, when I put aside my role as an architect and think of myself as a resident, I always feel like there are few moments when I truly enjoy life, and that this is a very difficult society to live in. One of the reasons is that in this system you inevitably become passive and consumer-oriented, and thus one of my motivations is that I want to be more proactive in creating my own situation, and I think for this there are many things that can be achieved through architecture. In terms of my profession, I do not only design architectural structures, but also create them, and also think about how to manage the places I have created. At the same time, I also make films, and when I feel that architecture is not in demand, I try filmmaking. I believe that I can change what I do according to the occasion, so I think that what I have learned and am doing through architecture includes things that are not confined to the narrow scope of so-called architecture.



Sogabe Regarding the “Creative Village Concept,” is that being implemented as a business?

Ienari That project is being run as a business by the real estate company that commissioned Chidori Bunka. Since I do not know all the artists in Kitakagaya I feel like I am interacting with the “Creative Village Concept” from a moderate distance.

Sogabe There are some points I would like to explore in a bit more depth. What do you think, Mr. Sasaki?

Sho Sasaki (hereafter, Sasaki) My motivation for getting involved in this project is something I mentioned earlier, Nagasaki is experiencing huge depopulation and population outflow, and I have personally seen my favorite stores disappearing. Also, as a designer, I feel that if I mistakenly design something that will never be used, it will have a great impact on the city. I explained it in an easy-to-understand way by saying that there is no definite purpose for the building, but I feel more of a craving for something that does not fit into existing uses, or rather, I can understand what this architecture is needed for in this day and age. There is the feeling that cannot be captured by the word “office” alone anymore, and I often ask myself the question, “for what purpose do we need an office?” In short, I find it very interesting to be able to talk about what architecture is needed for, and as a designer I find it very fascinating. I may be a bit old-fashioned, but I am also very

interested in the possibility that new architecture may be created through this process, and that I am involved in it.

Sogabe Mr. Morita, is there anything you would like to add? You might not be a designer, but for example, I think you have just covered the topic of running CordMark. Could you sum it up in one sentence?

Hideyuki Morita (hereafter, Morita) Recently, I was thinking about what my role is, and I came across the phrase “standing in the middle.” It does not mean standing prominently in the center, but rather, standing between people and acting as a bridge between them, conveying what this person is thinking and what this person is trying to say. I think that Kumamoto Artpolis is a wonderful place where the administration knows what they are doing and can make things work without an intermediary, but it does not always work out that way in the real world. I think that acting as such an intermediary is my role, as well as my motivation.

Sogabe I think what all of today's speakers are pointing at is relatively similar. Ms. Konno mentioned “The Commons Rising from the People”, and I think there is a considerable overlap in what Mr. Ienari is talking about and what the Social Center is trying to achieve. I thought that the moderate public nature that Mr. Sasaki is trying to achieve is also similar to what we are trying to follow. This is exactly what Mr. Morita is aiming for when he talks about “yuru yuru” as “our own thing. In this sense, I feel that the future of a new

kind of public space is starting to take shape. Do any of the commissioners or advisors have any questions?

Toyo Ito (hereafter, Ito) Today, each of you spoke from a different angle, and I listened with great interest. One common point is that while the theme is public nature, it is not the work of the local government. As Mr. Sasaki mentioned, it is all privately managed. Another point is that you are all involved in design, and although Mr. Morita is not an architect, in a sense he is engaged in exactly the same kind of activities. As I was listening to your talks I was wondering if I was getting old or whether the job of an architect has now become one in which thinking focuses on such activities.

As for my question, I am still very much concerned about the work of the local governments. Of course, the current Japanese society is in a terrible state, and I think that within this society Artpolis is one of the better things, but it is very difficult to deal with local governments, whether in competitions or in actual activities, and we cannot do exactly what we want to do. However, I would like to confront the local government and make some kind of change. I am under the impression that you all seem to be avoiding that part from the very beginning, as if you think that you have no choice but to do it in such a way? To put it bluntly, this could be interpreted as thinking that it is easier and freer to do things that way. I would like to ask you what you think about that.

Konno The work I introduced today was for

the private sector, but I am currently working on about three public sector projects as well. I also try to engage in proposals and competitions once or twice a year. I would like to think that fundamentally there is no difference between the private and public sectors, but in reality, there are many things in our past work that are easier to realize in the private sector. I also realize that the public sector is more backwards and slower to make progress, and cannot take on the sharp challenges that the private sector can. However, I am currently challenging myself to find the best way to do this same thing in the public sector. For example, many public jobs start with a basic plan, so we are not only working with administrative officials who change departments every three years, but also with local residents to establish a circle of people who will think about the place together, and we are creating it through discussions with these people. I am starting to realize that even in the public sector, the energy of the people can take shape. In my opinion, as long as the private sector is persistently involved, the “commons” will emerge, whether it is a public or private project.

Ito Yes, that is a nice thing.

Konno Maybe I am being optimistic.

Ienari The project I introduced today is a community exchange center located near my office, so in a sense, I want to do something that I can enjoy with my colleagues, people whose faces I know. I think it is important to have a field where I can have fun, also when it comes to government



■ Toyo Ito, Kumamoto Artpolis Commissioner



■ Chie Konno

or national level local projects, both are important, but I have submitted to some competitions for jobs with large local governments, but have not been successful, and the people who offer me jobs are also very few, or rather no one at all, so even though I would like to do it I cannot.

I would like to work with the local governments to do the wonderful work that Mr. Ito introduced to us today, and with our own small-scale activities, I would like to turn this suffocating society upside down. However, I have hardly been involved in any local government work yet.

Sogabe I don't know if I am allowed to reveal this, but about 10 years ago, when I checked with Mr. Ienari to recommend him as the architect for a certain public project, he was not registered as an architectural design firm. In the first place, there was probably no central interest there, and although you mentioned sandwiches, I feel that you have a sense of trying to change the public from a different angle.

Sasaki I have two reasons. One is that, as Mr. Ito mentioned, I may have been running away from the project. I was in charge of public buildings in my previous job, and I had a very difficult time in my twenties. I was in charge of designing both small and very large public buildings, including a 13,000m² junior high school, a hall, and a 300m² gallery. I would talk with the people in charge of these projects, and even though Mr. Suemitsu, the representative of the firm, and I would appeal to them about the need for a place like this for the public, it was difficult for them to understand, or perhaps it was not their concern. Maybe it was because I was in charge of the project, but it was very difficult for me, but I wanted to try to create architecture for these people. On the contrary, I returned home with a bit of a craving for it, for the last 10 years or so, I may have been avoiding it just as Mr. Ito said. However, another thing is that the place I am based at, "mio," is a public building that is operated by a private company, so it has given me the opportunity to rethink the relationship of the public and private sectors. After 10 years of working in this way, I realized that if I design

for this person, I can see that he or she and others involved in the project enjoy using the building, but I think it is the role of public architecture to make people who have nothing to do with us happy, or to give them something to live for, and I feel that I am not involved in that process. So, I would like to work on what I have felt over the past 10 years and what I can do as a public architect for the next 10 years.

Sogabe The activities of "mio" are not only originally a public building, but it is also operated by the public, so I do not think there is no such relationship between the two.

Sasaki That is right. "mio" is a publicly owned building, and since it is operated under a lease agreement and not by a designated manager, we pay rent. So, in a sense, I feel that we are free to do what I want.

Hideyuki Morita My position and work in the field of architecture are a bit difficult, but since I grow rice and have firewood, I don't often go out to get jobs myself. In short, my role is to respond to request from local governments, and I am currently working as an advisor for the development of new facilities in Atsugi City and Adachi Ward, and I am doing work for places that I believe the public must change from now on. It seems that the public has been a bit misunderstood up to now, and all the staff members seem to think that they have to provide equal service to all citizens, prefectural residents, and townspeople. In reality, I believe that the government should provide more services to those who are inconvenienced, injured, or in poor physical condition, and provide unfair support. This is a bit of a complicated topic, but for example, public libraries should seriously consider how they can help a small number of people who are in need. This is something that cannot be done under market principles, so I think it should be done as a public service. Those who want to do this kind of thing are gathering and doing it together, so I feel that this is the new kind of public service.

Sogabe I am also working in a small town in the

south of Tokushima Prefecture. Basically, it is difficult to get things done there without government involvement. I am working together with the government, but as a matter of fact, in Ms.Konno talk earlier about Indonesia, she said that the local government is going to do more and more independently because public services can no longer keep up. Recently, I had the impression that local cities in Japan are similar to this, and if the public sector does not have much strength, they do not have the budget for many things. The public sector encourages the local people to “do it on their own.” So, I think there is a growing sense that this is no time to talk about equality.

Kaori Suehiro (hereafter, Suehiro) In the last part of Mr.Morita's talk, he talked a lot about shared memories. I got the impression that everyone is really having a lot of fun during their work, and I think that there are memories that everyone can share, and in the first place it is about the purpose of our lives, and how we can share our experiences and memories with others. Therefore, I would like to hear your thoughts on the value of such memories and experiences, and how we can nurture them.

Morita The film about the French National Library is titled “All the Memories of the World,” but public libraries in Japan are thought of as places where books, mainly literature, are stored, and not as places that deal with memories. I think we need more places that deal with memories, but museums are not quite the same thing. When I think about where such places should be, I also think that the commu-

nity center libraries that Mr.Ito mentioned earlier are very important. Instead of building huge central libraries, we should build more community center libraries in each village or district, where residents can share their memories with one other.

Sasaki I don't know if I can give you a precise answer, but in the earlier discussion of moderate public nature, I felt a common desire for a place where people can gather. However, when I heard Mr.Morita's talk about memories, I thought that the act of weaving memories together, in other words, shared memories, are being lost with the advancement of digitalization, and people becoming more and more individualistic, as if one person can do everything on their own. In such a situation, physical encounters and going together with others result in the accumulation of memories. I felt paradoxically that perhaps there is a craving for this kind of thing, and that this is being done.

Suehiro Mr.Morita, you are not an architect, but is there anything in architecture that you can be involved in? Please include that as well.

Sasaki What I think is that in the architectural design process, of course there is dialogue and discussion with the people involved, including the client. In short, we propose a design, and then we say, “let's do it this way,” and that is how it is completed. We take that process into account, thinking about what would be appropriate and then creating it, which is similar to what I mentioned earlier about not having the leeway to



■ Sho Sasaki



■ Kaoru Suehiro, Kumamoto Artpolis Advisor



build a public building. In the end, I feel that the process of designing the space is more important than the specific hardware, as it is the process of creating a place for everyone to share their memories and shared memories.

Ienari In terms of memory, I think we are now in an era where there is a lot of renovation work being done, so compared to new construction I think that the architecture itself evokes memories. One of the themes of “Chidori Bunka” was to preserve the atmosphere of life at that time and the carpenters' work as much as possible, and this can be considered as a part of the architecture. Also, many of the social centers have libraries, where the archives of the area are being preserved. I think it is wonderful that various people can come and access the history of the area. What I personally like about memory is that it is always vague, or that the past can be fabricated in a good way, or that you can look at the past once more and change your way of thinking. For example, even if you have a bad memory you may be able to look back at it and see a more pleasant side to it. So I have this image of memory as something that is not always fixed, but rather dynamic, a place where various things can be extracted depending on how it is handled.

Konno As I mentioned earlier, we usually spend six months to a year researching the town before we start designing. There are formal details that can be found in city and town histories, but there is also a lot of interest and charm in informal memories, such as the story of an old

man who used to know things and tells us about them. I would like to create a new environment by weaving together all these memories of the town. Therefore, even in our projects for new centers, we often think about how we can create an overall image that is incomplete and has to be complemented by the town's surroundings, as if to say, “this function is here in the town, so you don't have to have it at your own place.” Listening to the discussion, I was wondering if this is how we relate to experiences and memories in our projects.

Sogabe Professor Katsura, is this related to what we just discussed?

Hideaki Katsura (hereafter, Katsura) I might change the topic. It was the first time in a long time that I enjoyed both Professor Ito's lecture and those of the four speakers today, and I felt that it is no longer the time to gather only architects to talk. Speaking from my personal experience, the reason why public buildings are not good is, as Mr. Morita said, public buildings are not “yuru yuru”. After all, when you build a public building, you first have to apply for a budget, and at that time the budget is only a rough estimate, and it is only after the function of the building and the scale of the space are determined that the budget can be established, the application is submitted, and then the building begins. The budget is already dead, in terms of what we are talking about today, the start. With that ambiguity gone, I think what everyone is fighting for is how they are going to fight that ambiguity.

This is very difficult, and since the Kumamoto Prefectural Government is the one who is opening this project, I think Kumamoto Prefecture will be okay. To be precise, Artpolis may account for only a few percent or less of the architecture in Kumamoto. I still want to continue Artpolis because I have a hope that even 1% or 2% of that percentage will change public architecture in the future, and because Professor Ito is there with the people of Kumamoto Prefecture. I always say that Professor Ito is an excellent commissioner because he is a fighter, and there are not many Japanese architects who are fighters. The same is true for both Professor Sogabe and Professor Suehiro, but this is usually the problem, and even if we were to talk about it in detail today, it would still be very difficult at present. In the future, it is likely to become even more difficult. For example, speaking personally, back in the old days, there happened to be a unique chief, mayor, or village mayor who said, "you are interesting, therefore you can do whatever you want." Whenever I caused a problem because I was a little mischievous, I would ask the mayor or the village head to let me explain it to the assembly, and they would give me a chance to explain myself to the assembly.

However, such opportunities are increasingly disappearing. So, to put it another way, I am very happy to see that today, from the private sector's standpoint, you are gradually taking the opportunity to invade the public sector, or rather, to suggest something to the public sector.

This is a preface, but I would like to ask a ques-



■ Hideaki Katsura, Kumamoto Artpolis Advisor

tion. The question is, I would like to ask you what kind of activities you will be doing in 20 years' time. Here is my prediction. I think that Ms.Konno and Mr.Sasaki will probably shift their activities to space and design. Mr.Ienari may change his profession. I think Mr.Morita will continue his activities. I would like to know what kind of activities you will be doing, or what kind of activities you would like to do in 20 years from now. I am always famous for asking rude questions.

Konno Speaking about the difficulties of the public sector framework, I answered earlier that I am actually working on it in a very positive manner, but I have experienced that about half of the public projects I have been involved in have suddenly stopped for one reason or another. It is not all fun and games at all, and there are many things that can occur, such as the mayor losing the election, or strange processes in the proposal process, and so on, and I feel that there are still many public projects that reach an incomprehensible conclusion.

I would like to change the nature of the society itself, which is heavily influenced by politics and power. Also, before I became interested in architecture, I was interested in the landscape of towns and cities, and the different atmospheres of cities that ooze culture, and that is how I got into architecture. I feel that what I want to do now is return to my roots, and I really enjoy researching the town and talking with the people in order to draw the future landscape.

In recent projects, the scale of buildings has increased to over 10,000 square meters, so compared to my early work, I think I am getting closer to the creation of townscapes in terms of scale. Essentially, rather than wanting to build a big building, I would like to be involved in work that will last a long time and consider the landscape of the town one at a time, and I hope that 20 years from now I will still be involved in this kind of work.

Ienari I was thinking about Mr.Ito's question earlier, and I realized that the small-scale work

we are doing now is done with people whose faces we know from the beginning. I think that Mr.Ito's work is one where you can see the faces of the clients through the architecture. I have a hope that I will be able to do this kind of work for a large local government 20 years from now, or within the next 20 years. I have realized once again that there is a way to do this kind of work. The other reason is that I am from Kobe, where my house was completely destroyed in the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, and thus I have always wanted to create places by myself. One is a workshop(kouba) in Kitakagaya, Osaka, where we are based, and the other is a farmette (nou-ba), or rather, I would like to build one, and I have been going in and out of the north side of Mt. Rokko in Kobe, helping with the cultivation of vineyards, and now I am thinking of doing a little farming myself as well. I am being very greedy with the factory, farm, and local government. I am crossing a lot of fields, and I don't know whether I will be an architect or not, I may even have quit, but I would like to make it work.

Sogabe It seems to me that from the beginning of their activities Mr.Ienari and his team have not been so particular about creating things as architects. That stance has not changed at all.

Sasaki Regarding what Professor Katsura mentioned earlier about the process before public orders, I also sympathize with this. It may still be difficult to change this process in the public sector, because when we receive a request from the private sector the purpose of the building is often not yet decided. For example, we have seen an increase in the number of cases where we receive requests from clients wanting to build an office complex or factory, but they have not yet decided on the specifics of what they want to do with it. I think there is a growing trend for us to take on more work starting from the planning and basic conception stage rather than from the design stage. I think that getting involved in the process before the purpose of the building has been decided is a good opportunity for the building to be used for a longer period of time.

I am thinking about the future, but things are changing rapidly, and people are really disappearing from Nagasaki. I would like to continue to be involved in such small public activities for the sake of the survival of Nagasaki as a whole. I think it is inevitable that the number of people will continue to decline, but I believe that even if the number of people decreases, people will still be able to live a fulfilling life, and I would like to have the skills to be able to be involved in creating that. In that sense, I believe that without the necessary professional skills I would not be able to be involved in the creation of the type of spaces that Mr.Katsura is talking about, so I will continue to create architecture on a daily basis, and, as a result, I hope to be in a position to enrich Nagasaki.

Morita I don't have an occupational title, and I can't always give a name. I think I am a common person. It means a hundred jobs, but a common person sometimes grows crops, cuts down trees, builds huts, creates spaces for libraries, runs a travel agency, a café, or a bookstore. In fact, that is the situation I find myself in right now. I think that I will probably continue to do what is needed for my role, but I also think that society will considerably change in the near future, and that there will be many different jobs, not just the ones that we have had up until now. Therefore, although the "standing in the middle" will not change, I think the overall position will probably change rapidly. But I think I will continue to be a common person.

Sogabe In addition to the Japanese audience, many people from Taiwan and Korea are with us here today, so we have people from different backgrounds listening to us. I would like to take questions from the audience, not just from Taiwan and Korea, so if you have any questions, please let me know by raising your hand.

Ito I would like to talk a little about the premise behind this. Before I get to that point, I have a prelude, as Mr.Katsura said earlier, the Kumamoto Prefectural Government is wonderful. I have been a commissioner for 16 years, and I would

not be able to do what I do if it were not for the help of these three advisors.

Almost all of the current Artpolis projects are carried out through a proposal system, but not once has anyone from the prefecture interfered. In other competitions the local government would say things like "do not do this," or "do not do that," but no matter what we choose, they never interfere, they support us. I am sure there are various problems, but Professor Katsura and other people from the prefecture are compensating for them. That is why I do what I do, and although people from various other prefectures come to see what we do, no prefecture has ever tried to follow in our footsteps.

On a personal note, I heard that the mayors and town heads of the surrounding municipalities are all coming to see the construction of "Onikuru," which I introduced earlier. Although people come to see it and say it is good, there are no local governments that are willing to do the same. I really think Japan is pathetic. Like in Sendai, people come to see the project, but there are no local governments that are willing to do the same.

Now the real story begins from here. The reason why we had people from Korea and Taiwan come all the way to Japan this time is that both countries are very energetic. In Taiwan, I have been involved in about 12 projects. In Korea, this year, I was the jury president for a campus project competition, and all the people I nominated for the competition were foreigners. There was not a single architect from Korea. Of the seven members of the jury, four were foreigners. The

judges chose this one proposal that I thought the president of the university would not like if it were to be chosen. I was very worried and asked the members of the jury many times if it would be all right for me, as the chairman of the jury, to select this proposal, but they said it would be alright. They said they would definitely persuade the president. The president didn't seem to like it very much, but when I asked him today, he said that it is making progress, and the reason we took the trouble to have people from South Korea and Taiwan come was because we really wanted people from such energetic countries to attend. By all means, please speak up. That is the premise. It is okay to say that Japan is not energetic.

Sogabe Well then, please comment or ask questions with that premise in mind. The bar to speak up may have been raised, but do not worry about that.

C David Tseng (hereafter, Tseng) (Interpretation by Karin Hu) My name is Tseng and I am from Taiwan. I am very interested in the keyword of "memory" that you mentioned earlier. I am especially impressed by the memories that are shared across different regions, and I believe that architecture has the power to create new memories. In particular, the "Taiwan Opera House" that Mr. Ito has built in Taiwan has become a new memory for the current generation of young people, who can often be found there. One of my questions is directed to young architects, what do you think about the power of architecture to create new memories?



■ Toshikatsu Ienari



■ Hideyuki Morita

Also, as a comment, besides Mr.Ito's "Taiwan Opera House" I believe there is another project called "Sky Tower." The "Sky Tower" is a project that has preserved old gardens in front of its building, and I think it is very interesting that there are both new and pre-existing memories present, and I would like to ask you all about the power of architecture to create memories.

Konno Compared to our contemporaries, our office has probably done far more new construction projects and fewer renovations. When we think about the fact that we are creating new architecture, which will probably be limited in number in the future, I feel that it will have a great impact on what architects of today can pass on to the next generation, and what kind of environment and original landscape the next generation will have. With that in mind, I think it is important for us to think carefully about where we ourselves are taking over the time that has passed since, and without being shortsighted, we would like to create an original landscape in which we can feel various depths from the architecture and the town.

Ienari I also believe it is true that new architecture creates new memories. I would like to think about how we can do this while respecting the history, culture, and other backgrounds of the place.

Sasaki Like Ms.Konno, I too have mostly been involved in a large number of new construction projects. In the situation in Nagasaki, renovations are increasing, but we are still receiving requests for new construction as well. Also, renovations,

which used to be done on a certain scale without the need for a construction company or architect, are gradually being requested, and people are willing to pay a design fee. I feel that perhaps the general public is beginning to feel and believe in the power of hard architecture. For example, I created a place called "HOGET" when I returned to Japan 10 years ago, and after seeing it there were people who wanted to request small companies again. I hope that the general public may be gradually sensing that architecture can create new memories. This motivates me to continue to work in architecture and as an architectural designer.

Morita I think it is very important to design time and space for remembering. This is something that can be done with or without new architecture. It is the same in libraries and movie theaters, and when you read or watch something and find something important that cannot be named, something, "something," you can talk about it with each other. I believe that the power of such places is something that architects can do, and that everyone involved in architecture can do.

Tseng There is actually a reason why I love architecture so much and want to talk to people in the field of architecture so much, and that is because I think unique memories are created from the "common." Unique memories created from the "common" become a new "common, and I find that very fascinating.

Ito I really empathize with what Mr.Morita said



■ C David Tseng



about the issue of memory, and I believe that we all have a common memory. Looking at the project that Mr. Ienari is working on now, I also went to see the site of the Expo, which is currently being held in Osaka. Mr. Ienari may think I am a terrible person, but when I went to see the site, I took a boat on the way and passed by a huge factory area, a factory area that was hardly being used. As I was looking at it I really wished they had held the Expo there. I thought to myself that it would have been wonderful if the Expo had been held in the vast number of vacant buildings in this factory zone, instead of in that empty landfill area. In other words, people have a common memory, and this is not limited to among Japanese people, but especially among Asian people. There is a common, shared memory that can be understood without the need for words, and I feel that this is the driving force behind the creation of architecture.

Therefore, I think that it is only when you replace the old memories with something new that they begin to give you a sense of comfort. I feel that like Mr. Morita mentioned, memories and the sense of comfort are really connected.

Sogabe Both shared memories and new memories created by the new "common" are interesting topics that could still be explored further, but we are already a few minutes past the scheduled time, and I would like to ask some of the Korean people to speak as well. What do you think?

Dongwook Han (hereafter, Han) (Interpreta-

tion by Kang Raesu) Thank you very much for today's symposium. My name is Dongwook Han, and I am from Korea. I would like to ask three questions. The first one is about your role in public architecture. You have been serving as commissioner and advisor for a long period of time, 16 years in particular, so I would like to ask how that has been possible.

Secondly, I feel that there are differences between countries when it comes to politics, culture, and especially democratic awareness between Japan and Korea. I would like to ask how you think these factors affect the situation.

Thirdly, in modern society local governments need to involve the general public in its efforts, especially in the area of private housing, but how can the issue of matching the needs of users with public buildings be addressed? Also, as was mentioned earlier, we would like to ask about the budget shortfall and how much of it can be used to meet the needs of the users.



HAN, DONGWOOK

Iiji Cheong (Interpreter) I would like to add one more comment. The last question was about the gap between the users and the architects who create public buildings. Riken Yamamoto is quite well-loved in Korea, he won a competition, and is in the process of creating more and more works, but there have been cases where users have expressed dissatisfaction with his work, and some arrangements have been made without their permission.

Sogabe Thank you very much. I do not think there is enough time to answer all three questions, so I think especially the last question is the most important one. How do you respond to the needs of the general public in today's society? I think the first question is about the role of public architecture, and the second question is about the cultural and political differences between Japan and Korea. May I ask for an answer from anyone who can answer quickly?

Morita Regarding the last question about creating something with citizen participation, I am of the very cautious type. This is because, when you are trying to create something completely new, you cannot create it based on the image of the old, the conventional. For example, we would create a new temporary movie theatre based on our ideas, and then ask people what they think we should do after they have experienced it. When asked what is needed for a new movie theater, it is hard to imagine it other than current movie theaters.

Some may say that such an approach does not listen to the citizens' true voices, but I believe that various discussions will be more likely to take place if people understand that it is okay to take such a leap of faith. So, I would like to ask the

government to change the way they do things when they tell us to conduct citizen participation workshops. Oh, a "movie theater" is a private facility and not a good analogy for a public facility, please replace it with a "library."

Ienari I agree with Mr.Morita.

Konno I completely agree, and I think the workshop itself is good, but we never ask people what they want. Rather, we ask them what kind of places they like in this town, or what kind of places leave an impression on them, such as places to play. I thought that was probably asking about memories. I always hold workshops with the attitude that I want local people to teach me the environmental literacy required to engrave such memories, and then leave it to me to design from there!

Sasaki My opinion is also close to all of yours, and I feel that if we listen to various opinions at the same time, we will end up with something that we can't really grasp. Therefore, I would rather have the core members discuss and narrow down the issues and come up with what we have discussed, or, suggest a direction that would be better. Aside from the hearings, I think it is our role to suggest a direction that would be appropriate when we create a specific forum. I think it is important to have a good discussion with a little direction for the dialogue.

Sogabe Thank you very much. We are running out of time, so do you have any final words Mr.Ito? Everything is alright? Then we will move on to the reception. Thank you very much for your time today. Please give another round of applause to all the speakers.

》 Closing Remarks

Mamoru Shojinaga Good afternoon everyone. I am Mamoru Shojinaga, Bureau Chief, Housing and Architecture Bureau, Department of Civil Engineering of the Kumamoto Prefecture and I would like to thank you all for attending the three-part symposium until its conclusion. I would like to once again express my gratitude to everyone who participated from within and outside of Kumamoto Prefecture, as well as those from Korea and Taiwan. I would also like to thank Commissioner Ito for his keynote speech, the four panelists for their reports on their activities, and the Artpolis advisors for their participation in the discussion.



Mamoru Shojinaga Bureau Chief, Housing and Architecture Bureau, Department of Civil Engineering

As the Governor stated in his opening remarks, this year marks 36 years since Kumamoto Artpolis was launched, and the themes have been set by each successive commissioner in line with the social background. I believe that responding to these everchanging social needs is the reason for the longevity of the project.

This theme is currently being promoted by Commissioner Ito as “Open to Nature – In Harmony with People,” and the widely recognized “HOME-FOR-ALL” initiative and the Kumamoto-style temporary housing are also in line with this direction. Furthermore, through a series of community-oriented disaster responses, I believe that the question of “What is the New Public Nature?” will become increasingly important in our society in the future.

I believe that the activity reports presented by the four panelists today are most appropriate for the overall theme of the Artpolis Architecture Exhibition 2024, which is “Lasting Will,” and that they provide valuable content that has given us hints for our future activities as an architectural and cultural movement. In closing, I would like to express my hope that each and every one of the participants today will develop an awareness of the “new public nature” and that it will blossom in their respective communities. Thank you very much for your kind attention today.



