

WORKSHOPS: EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS IN JAPANESE ART MUSEUMS

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PART 1: EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS AT JAPANESE MUSEUMS, MAINLY DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF MODERNISM

1. Introduction

THE BOOM IN THE CONSTRUCTION of modern art museums in Japan started in the early 1970s and continued into the '80s and '90s, a little later than the construction of local or regional museums. Built by well-known architects who were commissioned by local municipal governments, these museums were often closed for long periods of time twenty or thirty years later in order to undertake renovations or remodeling due to the deterioration of the facilities, or construction work to increase the size of the exhibition areas or storage spaces.¹ In the wake of the collapse of the 1980s bubble economy, these museums entered the twenty-first century and are experiencing an unprecedented shakeup in terms of their operations and the way they ought to be run, due to institutional reforms that have affected the independent administrative agency and designated manager systems. Thirty-eight years have now passed since the boom in the construction of modern art museums began with the opening of the Museum of Modern Art, Hyogo (now the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art) in 1970.²

The 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (2004), the Aomori Museum of Art (2006), the Yokosuka Museum of Art (2007), and the Towada Art Center (2008), all of which have attracted much attention in architectural circles in recent years, are notable examples of museums that have departed from existing models and become ambitious testbeds for experimenting with innovative ideas. In terms

[In this text, when a date is mentioned, it is based on the year 2008, when the original text in Japanese was written.]

1 The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo was closed from 1999 to 2001 for the expansion of its exhibition galleries, the construction of an art library and restaurant, and the strengthening of its earthquake-resistant structure; the Museum of Modern Art, Gunma was closed from 2005 to March 2008 for major renovations; the Miyagi Museum of Art was closed from November 2007 to October 2008 for the refurbishment of its air conditioning system; and the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts closed for a year, from April 2007 to March 2008.

2 The history of modern education and public programs dates back to the 1970s, starting with the opening of the Museum of Modern Art, Hyogo (now the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art) in 1970; as of this year, 2008, thirty-eight years have passed. Some museums that opened after the 1970s are labeled “modern” while others are not, so they are referred to here as “modern” ART museums. Incidentally, the formation and verification of the terms “modern art” and “contemporary art” are discussed in detail by Mitsuda Yuri in “*Bijutsu hihyō* (1952-1957) magazine and its era: the formation of ‘modern art’ and ‘contemporary art criticism,’” *Fuji Xerox Bulletin*, Fuji Xerox Co., 2006.

of “soft” human and cultural capital, while the increase in corporate and private patronage is a development that should be cause for some optimism, there has been no dramatic progress in terms of the vital relationships between art museums and the government. In fact, phenomena suggesting just the opposite are often observed, with the number of curators at public art museums transferring to the main government office having increased over the past two to three years. What impact might this have on the future of Japan’s art museums?

If one were to look for something to commend, it would be the increased breadth of the collections that Japanese art museums have been diligently amassing. While some museums, including our own Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, have seen cuts to their purchasing budgets, many public museums steadily continue to collect. This was likely the impression that many visitors received from the National Art Center, Tokyo, which opened in 2007 in Nogizaka, in Tokyo’s Minato Ward, with its inaugural exhibition *Living in the Material World: “Things” in Art of the Twentieth Century and Beyond*. In addition to works from abroad, this exhibition was supported by all national art museums in Japan and consisted of a vast array of works, including masterpieces from the collections of domestic museums, in a bid to offer a retrospective of art from the twentieth century. The number of so-called modern masterpieces from the West that had come to Japan was not inconsiderable, and it was evident at a glance that the depth of works in the collections of Japanese museums had indeed become more substantial.

If we were to go further and identify some other advances made by these art museums, the two areas that most would agree on would be the conservation and restoration of works of art, and education and public programs. The former is the remit of an important vocation charged with conservation, preventive measures, and restoration in relation to artworks, but it is a persistent and low-profile activity that, by its very nature, does not disclose information to the outside world. It has developed in parallel with the pioneering period of modern art museums, however, and its scope is steadily expanding. Yet there are still only a few museums that have personnel specializing in

conservation and restoration within the museum. On a more positive note, the number of research institutes that undertake restoration, a system unique to Japanese museums, has been increasing. In addition, it is well known that the evolution of painting composition and the scientific analysis of painting materials have made progress thanks to the development of lighter techniques and machinery, with a variety of results having been reported.³

What has seen significant development over the past thirty-eight years is the field of education and public programs. Even though this is the most important part of the mission of museums and art galleries, interest in education and public programs was, to put it mildly, taken very lightly up until about twenty years ago. At the time, people were told to “appreciate art quietly in museums,” and while history and science museums were always crowded with children, it was almost unthinkable for children to be walking around in art museums then, to the point where visitors would actually be reprimanded if they brought children with them.

In museums in Europe and the United States, these education and public programs are called “museum education” (“gallery education” in British museums), and there are people called education curators and educators, including artists, who are actively involved in these activities. The field is very well-developed, with considerable know-how, a history of organization, and, most importantly, a mission statement. In recent years, museums in Asia that are still considered somewhat underdeveloped have also been devoting significant efforts to education. Taiwan, South Korea, and China are already actively dispatching curators to Europe and America and raising the professionalism of their organizations to the same level as those in the West in order to make their institutions more appealing to a global audience. In December 1997, I was invited to the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts for the “International Workshop on Art Museum Education” (an education and outreach symposium), and at the time, the museum’s considerable enthusiasm was palpable. Art museums in Asia are steadily beginning to plan various departments that function at the same level as those in Europe and America, and to establish the

³ In recent years, analyzers have become lighter and more portable, making it possible to conduct a variety of material analysis surveys. Works that have recently been discussed include Itō Jakuchū (Shōkokuji Temple) and Ogata Kōrin’s *Irises* (Nezu Museum) and *Red and White Plum Blossoms* (MOA Museum of Art).

kind of art museum organizations that Japan has been unable to get off the ground even after nearly forty years of building art museums.

These kinds of education and public programs were also rolled out rapidly in Japan during the 1990s. Various movements emerged, and the number of students who wanted to study these education and public programs at universities increased. Recently, an increasing number of museums have also hired curators specializing in education and public programs. Consequently, the outreach that used to be carried out exclusively by curators now tends, somewhat disturbingly, to be entrusted to newly hired staff in charge of education.

The twenty years I spent as a curator at the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, which opened in 1987 at the height of the bubble era, coincided with a period of rapid growth in the educational activities of Japanese art museums. This paper will look back on the educational programs at these Japanese art museums from the perspective of my involvement in such activities at museums that opened during this era. The first part will offer an account of the thirty-eight years after 1970, during which the education and public programs of Japanese art museums became more active, while the second part will focus on the workshops that I have been conducting at the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo.

As such, the starting point of this essay will naturally be the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, with the content thus focused on Tokyo. Moreover, since my activities are centered on workshops, I would like to state in advance that the content will naturally consist of my actual experiences for the most part: in other words, a focus on what I have observed on the ground while conducting educational activities at the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo over a period of twenty years.

The re-evaluation of the workshop that will be discussed in the second part of this paper should be understood as a single case study illustrative of broader trends in the educational activities of Japanese art museums.

A careful survey of educational activities that have been held in major

regions outside of Tokyo would also reveal many interesting examples. These activities will have to be documented in detail. There may be different insights to be gained from a Kansai or Kyushu perspective, and it should be noted that a study based on such a broad and multifaceted perspective will be necessary in the future.

⁴ The Museum Law is included in the Education Law, along with the Social Education Law.

2. The definition of education and public programs at art museums, and the reality

SO WHAT EXACTLY IS MEANT by “education and public programs”? Article 2 of the Museum Law enacted in 1951 defines a museum as follows:

“A museum is an institution that collects, preserves (fosters), and exhibits materials related to history, art, folklore, industry, and the natural sciences, making them available to the general public under educational considerations, and conducts activities necessary to contribute to public education, research, and recreation, as well as research and study related to these materials. Among the institutions whose purpose is to research and study these materials are institutions established by local governments, corporations under Article 34 of the Civil Code (Act No. 89 of 1896), religious corporations, or any other corporations specified by government ordinance, which have been registered under Chapter II.”⁴

It could be argued that our efforts are based on the phrase “under educational considerations,” and that we are developing various activities around these considerations. Article III, moreover, lists the following as projects designed to achieve these objectives.

3. To provide the general public with explanations and advice necessary for the use of museum materials, or to set up research rooms, laboratories, workshops, libraries, and other facilities, and make them available for use.

7. To preside over and assist in the holding of lectures, seminars,

screenings, study groups, and other events related to museum materials.

11. To cooperate with and assist the activities of schools, libraries, research institutes, community centers, and other educational, academic, and cultural institutions.

In addition, if we look through the regulations governing several museums and practical books on museum projects that also encompass those of art museums, the following activities can be found as examples of education and public programs:

1. Gallery talks
2. Lectures on practical training
3. Hands-on learning
4. Lectures
5. Educational courses
6. Courses on art appreciation (for elementary school students)

Today, activity names that were previously expressed with Japanese terms have come to be known by their katakana English equivalents—gallery talks, gallery tours, workshops, lectures, seminars, and so on—while the content of these events has also gradually evolved. For example, what used to be referred to as *sakuhin kaisetsu* (literally, “commentary or explanation on exhibits”) is now called “gallery talks.”

The notion of “education and public programs” has a wide range of meanings, and each museum has its own interpretation of the terms “education” and “public programs,” which sometimes includes public relations. The museum needs to fulfill two contradictory functions at the same time: it must be a research facility while simultaneously providing services to the public, which involves both challenges and rewards that come from considering this question. In other words, the museum must understand both “research” and “communication with visitors” and essentially function as a kind of service industry. In the early 1980s, when the necessity for staff specializing in education and public programs began to be discussed, the challenge for museums was

how to balance these conflicting functions of “research” and “service.” At the time, there were still no staff specializing in education and public programs, which resulted in curators performing both of these functions.

Furthermore, there used to be instances where the outreach section was also responsible for sending out exhibition posters, flyers, and other publicity materials. In other words, there was a time when the outreach section undertook all tasks other than the research work of the curator. Today, the idea that publicity plays an important part in the operations of a museum is gaining popularity, and the fact that publicity can make all the difference in terms of attracting visitors is taken seriously. Newly opened museums are increasingly employing specialists in this area in order to conduct publicity more efficiently and effectively, instead of simply sending out flyers and other materials.

However, many public art museums in Japan are divided into two sections—the curatorial section and the administrative or general affairs section—and there are still many museums where curators must hold exhibitions, collect artworks, provide education, and publish printed materials all by themselves. In larger museums, the curatorial section and the outreach section sometimes function in parallel, or operate as two sections with different names. Whatever the case, it was common for curators to rotate among them.⁵ In other words, although there were lectures on education and public programs in museum courses, there was no specific education on the relationship between art and children or the general public during the 1980s. Starting in the 1990s, “art management” courses began to be introduced, and universities gradually began to create curricula with an educational perspective that recognized the connection between society and art. Curators in charge of education in the 1980s and ‘90s learned about this institutional domain mostly through self-study using books, or via overseas research and training. Each of these curators would travel to Europe and America to conduct research, either at their own expense or with a scholarship.

⁵ In the 1980s, the Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art had such a system, while the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art had the names “Curatorial Department” and “Outreach Department.” The Miyagi Museum of Art was probably the first to make education and outreach a department.

Here, I would like to offer a brief discussion of how education and

public programs are organized in Western art museums. At the American museums I surveyed in the 1990s, specialization is valued, while the majority of the major museums are subdivided according to the type of work they do.

1. Curatorial Department (areas of responsibility are divided into Contemporary Art, 20th Century Art, Far Eastern Art, Crafts, Metal Ornament, and so on)
2. Education Department (in charge of schools, adults, children, families, those with disabilities, volunteers, evaluation, and so on)
3. Artwork Management Department (storage of artworks, management of images, and so on)
4. Conservation and Restoration Department (among these, there is a Scientific Department for materials analysis and the like, and a Restoration Department for the actual restoration of works, within which there are departments for Western paintings, Asian paintings, three-dimensional works, textiles, metals, and so on)
5. Library Department (sometimes also divided into general art books and artist-related archives)
6. Public Relations Department (to publicize each exhibition and the museum as a whole in an efficient manner)
7. Design Department (graphic design)
8. Production Department (for the production of panels, fixtures, signboards, and so on for the installation of exhibitions)
9. Editorial Department (all printed materials, catalogs, and so on)
10. Administration and Facilities Department (office and building management)
11. Security Department
12. Museum Store Department (in Western museums, this is an important source of income, so it is an independent department that also handles merchandise development)

These organizations are made up of broad categories, such as education and conservation, and within these categories responsibilities and roles are further subdivided. Even in small museums with only two curators, there is always someone in charge of education and conservation.⁶

⁶ The Textile Museum, part of the Smithsonian Institution, is located away from the Mall in the heart of Washington, DC, but it is a wonderfully compact museum that houses pre-Columbian dyed textile and woven works. In addition to two curators, it had one other staff member in charge of education, one part-timer, and two staff members in the restoration department.

Japanese curators can answer most questions about public relations, education, restoration, and other curatorial tasks in relation to their own museums. At foreign museums, however, visitors and researchers are advised to direct specific inquiries to each person in charge of the respective department, as the organization is subdivided into groups of specialists. Furthermore, when it comes to large museums such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art or the Museum of Modern Art in New York, even the Education Department is subdivided into separate sections for adults, children, people with disabilities, schools, and volunteers. These organizations are subdivided to the point where one has to make an appointment to see the person in charge of a department if one wants to conduct specific research on education and public programs as a whole.

Museums in Europe and America, in particular, are well known for their education and public programs. Underlying this, however, is the fact that museums in America and other countries have been tasked with the mission of obtaining sponsorship from corporations and individuals; as such, devoting effort to educational activities is good PR for the museum, and also helps build the museum's reputation. In some places, moreover, no art education at all is offered at public schools, which is another reason why this education is provided by institutions outside of schools.

In Japanese art museums, the aforementioned gallery talks, lectures, lectures on practical training, and courses on art appreciation were conducted with educational considerations in mind. Such activities were considered to be education and public programs, and there was a fairly deep-rooted conviction that these programs to understand artworks or promote the art museum played a kind of "enlightening role" in the education and public programs of art museums and galleries in the first place.

In order to examine the nature of these activities, let us first take a broad overview of the education and public programs of art museums and galleries.

Art museums are one type of museum, but in terms of education, museums of history, science, and so on have a longer history than art museums, and they have been providing education for children from a very early stage. These museums, which are themselves closely related to social education, were among the first to be built to preserve and study buried cultural properties, historical materials, and other artifacts excavated from the local area. Examples of these are historical museums and local archives, which developed as places for local elementary schools to learn about their own areas and regions, and are often used for social studies and general education classes. In this context, physical activities involving hands-on learning, such as weaving sandals, making earthenware, and actually experiencing the lifestyles of people in the past, are not easily replaceable. Although it is now possible to experience these things virtually through computer programs, for example, many things that appeal directly to the human senses, such as touch, smell, sound, and speed, can facilitate learning, after all; this kind of learning is still being actively done and becoming increasingly important.

In terms of education and public programs as a whole, history and science museums have developed ahead of art museums and various learning programs are commonly conducted, such as guided tours. During summer vacation, some museums set up a consultation service while others organize events that support children's learning, indicating that children continue to be a key target audience.

Incidentally, museums represent a system that was originally developed based on a Western concept of understanding, evaluating, and classifying objects in an objective manner. In Japan, where the concept of the museum differs from that of other countries where things are viewed objectively, there is still some difficulty in accepting and shaping the museum system and allowing it to grow organically. The difference between the Japanese term *kyōiku* and the English "education," moreover, has always been a problematic topic of discussion among curators who are actively considering what education and public programs involves. It is often said that *kyōiku*

implies a one-way process of teaching or being taught, whereas “education” also entails drawing out qualities from individuals through their active participation.

As mentioned earlier, museums of history, science, and so on were quicker and more active in pursuing education and public programs due to their necessity and the function they fulfilled in relation to local schools. As such, while museums had active education and public programs during the 1970s, the activities of art museums rapidly overtook those of science and history museums starting in the 1990s, and the term “art museum education” became popular.

In the 1980s, when the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo opened, the boom in the construction of art museums spread to smaller municipalities below the prefectural level. This first art museum boom in Japan emerged from local governments’ implementation of cultural policy. The construction of one art museum per prefecture, as well as the launch of art museum policies by municipalities and other smaller units of government, might be said to be unique to the art museum boom of the 1980s.

⁷ In Europe, the Louvre Museum has a long history dating back to 1801 and the Vatican Museums to 1784, while in the USA, where the boom in world’s fairs at the end of the nineteenth century accelerated the pace, the Metropolitan Museum of Art was founded in 1877, the Museum of Modern Art in 1929, the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1877, the Art Institute of Chicago in 1879, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1876, meaning that museums in Japan got started a hundred years after the American museums.

3. Before modern art museums

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO TURN my attention to the art museums and galleries that existed before the boom in their construction. This was an era where museums also housed art: the National Museum of Modern Art, which developed out of the National Industrial Exhibition, opened in 1872, followed by the Nara National Museum in 1895. Around the year 1930, the Ohara Museum of Art and other museums opened.⁷

Before the advent of the modern art museum, many museums centered on the private collections of industrialists: they were either established or began opening their doors to the public by taking over family heirlooms originally owned by feudal families. Examples of the former are Ishibashi Shojiro’s Bridgestone Museum of Art (1952) and Ohara Magosaburo’s Ohara Museum of Art (1930), or the Okura

Museum of Art (1917), the Nezu Museum (1940), the Gotoh Museum (1960), the Suntory Museum of Art (1961), Mitsui Bunko (1965), and the Idemitsu Museum of Arts (1966) in the field of Japanese antiques. The majority of examples of the latter are prestigious museums that hold many masterpieces, such as the Tokugawa Art Museum and the Eisei Bunko Museum of the Hosokawa family. Some of these museums were built on private property, and from the outset, part of the use of the museum included the opening of the gardens and rental of the tea ceremony rooms on the premises. The education and public programs at such art museums consist mainly of explanations of the works by curators, commentary on the exhibits, and lectures in the auditorium, and the usual way to view the works is for visitors to take a respectful step back and simply look at them. This is also one of the reasons why art museums were considered daunting: they involved looking at high-quality works in a quiet environment. In particular, museums that collect antiques provide these sorts of quiet spaces, and this is the real pleasure of viewing art in a museum, where one can confront the power and presence of things and spend a blissful moment in their presence. One of the important functions of an art museum is to be a place where one can have a dialogue with beauty that refreshes the spirit. At the time, this quiet and comfortable environment was typical of the atmosphere of an art museum, and it was generally accepted that commentary, explanatory panels, and other educational materials should be kept to a minimum, and that activities that would disrupt this quiet atmosphere should be discouraged. Most people believed that it was important to view artworks quietly, and without commentary. The attitude of art museums focused on antiquities, especially when viewing tea ceremony utensils, has long influenced the way that Japanese art museums confront works of art. In a certain sense, it is this depth of awareness that has made it difficult to break out of the conventional framework of education and public programs. This is neither a good nor bad thing, but rather a basic and important approach to the viewing of art that has been passed down from one generation to the next, and which is reflected in the posture and manner with which Japanese people interact with artworks.

Although the education and public programs at the museums

mentioned here have mainly been in relation to individual interactions with artworks, lectures on art have also been actively organized, attracting many fans. The Saturday Lecture Series at the Bridgestone Museum of Art has the longest history of any of these, having been held ever since the museum opened in 1952.

To digress for a moment, I would like to mention a unique art museum in Japan that was built with a thorough awareness of “showing” and “displaying” in the era before modern art museums: the Japan Folk Crafts Museum in Komaba, Meguro Ward, run by the Japan Folk Crafts Association [Mingei kyōkai]. The museum opened in 1936 on the site formerly belonging to the Maeda family in Komaba, Meguro Ward, with Yanagi Soetsu as its first director. The planning was based on Yanagi’s concept, with an awareness of how the audience would “appreciate” folk art. The setting was designed to blend into the space starting from the facade, inviting visitors to view the exhibits with an active gaze. Captions are written in red ink on black lacquered boards, the display cases have wooden borders, and the wall cloth is woven from fibers taken from the *bashō* banana plant native to Okinawa. The works of folk art showcased and the environment in which they are displayed are considered in their totality, and the building and garden have been thoroughly designed to create an inviting atmosphere down to the last detail, a philosophy that continues to be applied today. The explanations for the exhibits are kept to a bare minimum, with just one or two general commentaries. If necessary, visitors can purchase a booklet called *Mingei* published by the Japan Folk Crafts Association for more detailed information. Although this approach is now considered quite standard, the Japan Folk Crafts Museum’s policy of “showing” is an important example of education and exhibition, consciously presented in the context of the *mingei* folk crafts movement.

4. *The 1970s: the construction of “modern” art museums in Japan*

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Hayama, which opened in 1951, was the first modern art museum, while the National Museum of Modern Art opened the following year in 1952. The National Museum of Western Art opened in 1959, at a time when there were still few public art museums. The first boom in modern art museums occurred in the 1970s, when Japan entered a period of rapid economic growth following the 1964 Tokyo Olympics and Expo '70 in Osaka and prefectural art museums began to be built one after another. These museums were designed either through direct commissions of famous architects by governors' administrations or the selection of designers through nominated competitions, with construction starting before curators were hired.

The year 1970 saw the opening of the Museum of Modern Art, Hyogo (now the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art), designed by Murano Tōgo. This was followed by a rush to design and build large-scale museums in a kind of boom: Isozaki Arata designed the Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art, Gunma in 1974; Maekawa Kunio designed the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum in 1975, in addition to the Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art, the Kumamoto Prefectural Museum of Art, the Saitama Prefectural Museum of History and Folklore, among others; while Ōtaka Masato designed the Chiba Prefectural Museum of Art. In each of these museums, visitors are first greeted by a wide, high-ceilinged entrance hall, while the exhibition galleries are designed with a sense of homogeneous space and uniform lighting in order to accommodate various types of exhibitions. Square, box-shaped exhibition galleries were also planned to be able to handle a wide range of exhibitions, including Japanese-style painting, Western-style painting, and crafts. The distinct separation between the public and exhibition areas was a unique characteristic of this period. The basic philosophy underlying the construction of these museums often included the phrase “museums that are open,” and a movement that sought out a new and fresh direction emerged out of the phrase “a place for members of the public to relax.” However, it was rare at the

time for a curator to be hired before a new museum was built. In many cases, the facilities maintenance section and designers first proceeded with the project based on the advice of a committee of construction experts. Most of the time, the curator was appointed only a few months or even days before the opening, and it was the architectural side that took the lead in making decisions regarding the building plan and zoning.

While there was a perceived need for the establishment of art museums in some places during this period, due to donations of works by local collectors and artists, they were often sarcastically referred to as the product of “box governments” overly focused on the construction of boxlike public buildings. The firms that designed many art museums, however, accumulated a certain amount of expertise, and in this sense, they arguably established the style of modern art museums in Japan.

So what differentiates these modern art museums from their predecessors? One difference has to do with how their collection and management policies have shifted to focus on art created after the modern period, as well as postwar art.

Major changes were also made to the education, outreach, and service functions of these museums. This is an important point, as education and outreach elements have been incorporated into the hardware, while the common spaces have been equipped with facilities and rooms that allow visitors to spend a certain amount of time in the museum. The concept of the art museum itself changed dramatically during this period, as can be seen in the floor plans for each of these museums.

A shift occurred in the thinking behind the art museum: visitors were now encouraged to use it in a relaxed, enjoyable manner with the provision of spaces for a variety of functions, including an art library,⁸ video booths, auditorium, coffee shop, and restaurant. Visitors are thus not only there to take in an exhibition, but also to look at art books, watch videos introducing the collection, and enjoy meals and coffee, literally using the museum as “a place for members of the public to

⁸ There are still only a few art libraries in Japan that are well-stocked and open to the public, including the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo (relocated from the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum in Ueno), the Yokohama Museum of Art, the Art Library of the National Art Center, Tokyo, and the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

relax.” The majority of this kind of zoning of modern art museums can be seen as identical to each other. As the construction of modern art museums continues, the new relationship between art museums and the public promises to operate in a more positive direction through these architectural transformations.

5. *Architect-led zoning in art museums*

THIS SECTION OFFERS A MORE detailed description of the relationship between architecture and education and public programs in modern art museums that emerged out of new ways of thinking. The idea of social education and lifelong learning became popular during the 1980s, and the basic concept behind the art museum was often based on the phrase “Appreciate, Discuss and Create” (as coined by the Chiba Prefectural Museum of Art, opened in 1974), which not only actively promotes the appreciation of art, but also other educational aspects such as “creating” and “discussing.”

What was even more revolutionary in the era of modern art museums was the fact that they now had spaces for education and outreach activities, such as rooms for “practical training” and “creation,” as seen in the phrase “making.” The creation of these spaces was based on the thinking at the time that in order to understand art and artworks, it was important to first learn practical skills, and so visitors were offered the opportunity to engage in such training in these rooms. As previously mentioned, while educational activities before the advent of modern art museums consisted mainly of commentary on and explanations of exhibits as well as lectures, when the functions of public museums of modern art shifted, the active pursuit of hands-on experience was incorporated into the museum, and most modern art museums that opened in the 1970s and ‘80s had “practical training” rooms for such activities. These rooms at the Museum of Modern Art, Hyogo (1970, now the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art), the Chiba Prefectural Museum of Art (1974), the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (1975), the Museum

of Modern Art, Saitama (1982), the Setagaya Art Museum (1986), and the Shizuoka Prefectural Museum of Art (1986) are usually closed to the public. They are opened only when lectures are being held and closed at all other times, so most visitors never see them, with the result that these spaces are only accessible to a small group of people. They are called “practical training rooms,” “training rooms,” and “creative rooms,” and are all between 100 and 150 square meters in size.

The entrance hall with its wide atrium, the square and homogeneous exhibition spaces, the library, the coffee shop, and the common spaces are the main areas that see a high volume of foot traffic, while the auditorium, the practical training rooms, and other rooms of the education and outreach section are located away from the main flow of traffic that allows members of the public to visit the museum, view the exhibitions, rest, and leave. This was the typical zoning arrangement in major modern art museums in the 1970s and ‘80s, and standard practice in terms of architect-led zoning, something that is clearly evident if one looks at the floor plans of the Museum of Modern Art, Gunma, the Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art, the Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, and the Chiba Prefectural Museum of Art before its renovation.

In particular, the Chiba Prefectural Museum of Art, which opened with the concept of “appreciating” and “creating” in mind, was the first art museum to establish a studio wing housing a number of practical training rooms, planned with a clear separation from the exhibition gallery wing. The building was planned in a way that separated the exhibition and practical training functions because of differences in the populations who came to the museum to use one wing or the other, the timing of their visits, and the “seeing” and “making” functions. These spaces were therefore segregated in order to address these problems from the perspective of function and management.

The flow of people to the various education rooms and those in the exhibitions were clearly separated from each other, so that visitors heading to the exhibition galleries would not end up in the practical training rooms. These galleries were also located at the furthest

possible distance from the practical training rooms. Most visitors, when asked if they have ever seen these rooms, are typically unaware of their presence, since they are arranged so that only those who have participated in such activities would know they exist. This is because it has been taken for granted that education and public programs are not being conducted all the time, and are carried out in unassuming places that can be closed off when not in use, an approach that has become standard practice. One of the reasons for this is that rooms used for practical training may sometimes be dusty, there may be noise issues when machines are used, and also because hours of operation may vary when night classes are held, for example. The architect-led plan was therefore based on the thinking that it would be desirable to separate these rooms from the flow of people to the exhibitions, in consideration of these issues.

When developing a project, the environmental setting of the building is extremely important. The zoning position of a building can inadvertently restrict the development of a project, and more attention should be paid to this issue.

These kinds of zoning arrangements show that the modern art museums built in the late 1970s and early '80s with architect-led zoning did not yet make a direct link between education and outreach activities and exhibitions. In other words, providing the public with a place to learn practical skills such as painting, sculpture, and printmaking was seen as a forward-thinking approach to museum education and public programs during this period. Nevertheless, if we consider the installation of a library, video room, and coffee shop in addition to the exhibition spaces to be on the same level as the establishment of new galleries, then the introduction of new practical training rooms where visitors can learn practical skills should also be considered a significant step forward.

6. *Education and public programs and space: The Beauty of Space exhibition*

THE EXHIBITIONS THAT ALWAYS come to mind when I think of these buildings and their educational programs are *The Beauty of Space: Beauty is Alive in a New Visual Space* (September 23–November 23, 1978) held at the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts and *In Search of the Museum of Tomorrow: Art Theater* (April 28–May 30, 1982) at the Museum of Modern Art, Hyogo (now the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art). These exhibitions presaged a new direction for art museums at the time, and their structure provided opportunities for the audience to become actively involved with the exhibits in a very natural way.

Opened in 1972, the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts was a groundbreaking building in terms of its floor plan for an early modern museum.⁹ Designed by Kawasaki Kiyoshi, the museum featured a giant sycamore tree slightly displaced from the central axis, a large pond in front, and exhibition galleries surrounding the pond with large windows opening onto it, an altogether unique configuration even among the many box-shaped art museums of the time. Although the building has been remodeled several times and has deviated somewhat from the original plan, it was unusual for an art museum from this era to privilege its relationship with the outside world. Surrounding the pond is a stepped piazza with a gently undulating design reminiscent of an agorà in an Italian city. This piazza has been used for a variety of outdoor exhibitions in unique ways.

In the *Beauty of Space* exhibition, these architectural spaces of the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts were connected from the exterior through the interior, and I remember that the indoor exhibition spaces were made up of an unusual combination of various genres of art, including works by artists like Motonaga Sadamasa, Mio Kōzō, Fukuda Shigeo, Nakagawa Chihaya, and Mizuno Masao. In particular, the experience of putting on the clothes exhibited by costume designer Mizuno Masao in the exhibition gallery was so shocking in terms of how it demolished the notion that museum exhibits are sacred objects that

⁹ Museums of this type include the Karuizawa Takanawa Museum of Art (now the Sezon Museum of Modern Art) designed by Kikutake Kiyonori, which opened in 1981.

¹⁰ The Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts was one of the first museums to hold performances in a museum, starting around 1974.

can never be touched. During the exhibition, a program of performing arts combining Mizuno's costumes with dance and music was staged in the museum's front garden with a pond, under the title "An Evening of Fashion, Modern Dance, and Music."¹⁰ In Europe and America, the concept of "hands-on," in which visitors learn through experience by physically touching the exhibits, has been widely adopted in history, science, and children's museums. In addition, when it comes to contemporary art, there are many works that can be experienced in this way, and many of them come to mind as examples of the interactive exhibits recently organized by art museums. An exhibition by the Brazilian artist Ernesto Neto that toured Tokyo and Kagawa in 2007 was well-received for the way in which it conveyed a host of strange feelings and sensations, as visitors were able to become one with the exhibits made of textile fibers.

7. Education and public programs and space: "This is a very uncanny, strange, weird painting"

"THIS IS A VERY UNCANNY, strange, weird painting." Thus read the copy on a poster designed by Minami Shinbō for the *In Search of the Museum of Tomorrow: Art Theater* exhibition held at the Museum of Modern Art, Hyogo in 1982. Designed by Murano Tōgo in 1970, this museum was one of the earliest modern art museums in Japan and has always led the art scene in the Kansai region with its innovative projects. It was also unique in terms of its facilities: a large exhibition hall on the second floor could be freely divided to produce flexible spaces accommodating art of any size. Although the museum sustained severe damage from the Great Hanshin earthquake in 1995, it was restored to its original state. Today, it no longer functions as an art museum, and is instead used by the public under the name Harada no Mori Gallery. The original museum institution was renamed the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art and reopened in 2002 in a new building designed by Ando Tadao. It is well-known that all of the museum functions were transferred.

As the copy above indicates, *In Search of the Museum of Tomorrow: Art Theater* was curated to explore the possibilities of art museums in a world where the concept of art was expanding and diversifying. It was a groundbreaking initiative that showcased a wide variety of creative expression and a kind of Dadaist approach to organizing an exhibition, and thus provoked a great deal of controversy as a rare instance of an exhibition that presented the thinking behind an interactive exhibit visitors could participate in, in addition to being a project that re-examined the nature of art itself. The unique lineup of exhibitors included The Play, a collective centered on poster designer Minami Shinbō, Yamaguchi Katsuhiko, Shimamoto Shōzō, Fukuda Shigeo, and Yamamoto Keigo, among others, and featured films, video art, performances, and even a kamishibai show. In Hyogo, this curatorial philosophy was followed by activities called “art theater”; creative dance, improvisational performances, and concerts with percussion and wood and sound sculptures continued to be held as forms of artistic expression coexisting with the artworks in the generously proportioned spaces that were one of the distinctive features of the museum.

It is interesting to note that the late Senda Takashi, who led children’s workshops in Yokohama, showcased the activities of these workshops themselves at the 1982 *In Search of the Museum of Tomorrow: Art Theater* exhibition, and that the activities of the children themselves was also on display in the gallery during the exhibition. These activities were later opened to the public in the exhibition galleries as the *Summer Children’s Art Museum*, an initiative that continued up until 1988.¹¹ While the examples of the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts and the Museum of Modern Art, Hyogo are now quite commonplace in terms of curatorial projects at art museums, they both demonstrated a sense of direction reflecting on the potential of the art museum that was rather ambitious for such institutions around the year 1980. Both museums had unique spaces, and the idea of leveraging these unique features to engage with the public that gathered there in an interactive way was suggestive of a number of things. The Museum of Modern Art, Hyogo and the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts were the first examples of museums that incorporated the

¹¹ The Museum of Modern Art, Hyogo (now the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art) paid attention to contemporary art trends from early on, and its *Art Now* series, which showcased contemporary art from the Kansai region with a focus on young artists, was a groundbreaking project. As the series continued, moreover, the works became bigger, and since there was no venue for solo exhibitions that could accommodate such large works at the time, the large exhibition galleries in Hyogo were a good example of the willingness of young artists to use the space, stimulating each other in a positive sense. This was also the result of the fact that there was a wide range of spaces, which has grown to become one of the unique characteristics of the Kansai region, a clear indication of how it has created and supported the era of art museums.

function of interactive communication with an emphasis on space into the art museum. Although they did not go so far as to call these activities “education and public programs,” these institutions might be considered to have had an important and prescient perspective on art and education in museum spaces as a whole.

8. The relationship between works in the collection and education and public programs

IN THE LATE 1970S AND 1980S, when modern art museums were equipped with “creative rooms” and “practical training rooms” and began to offer “lectures on practical training” to provide visitors with opportunities to learn and experience technical skills, these programs had not yet reached a point where they were closely related to the exhibitions, as mentioned earlier. The vital mission of museums during this time was based not on the question of how to display artworks, but rather how to attract more visitors. It was in this context that the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, which underwent renovations and established a new planning department in 1975, began to actively engage in education and public programs that were in line with certain trends regarding exhibitions and collections.

As is well known, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum in Ueno, a classic piece of architecture designed by Okada Ichirō and built in 1926, has long served as a venue for art association exhibitions. In 1970, the 10th Tokyo Biennale, *Between Man and Matter*, which continues even today to be discussed as something of a legendary contemporary art exhibition, was held during the era of this old building. In 1975, the museum reopened as a new building designed by Mayekawa Associates, Architects & Engineers. At the time, in addition to the typical department in charge of renting exhibition rooms to art associations, a projects section was established as part of the museum’s essential function and curators were hired. Special exhibition galleries, an art library, and “ateliers” were added to the museum, and a new start was made. The museum began collecting postwar art, building on

the collection that had begun during the era of its predecessor, the Tokyo Prefectural Art Museum, and expanded its collection of postwar contemporary art, especially contemporary prints. Incidentally, three specialized librarians were assigned to the art library, the first in Japan to develop an archive function, which has today been taken over by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, which actively promoted special exhibitions of postwar contemporary art, launched “open production” sessions where its methods of explaining technically complex printmaking techniques, from plate-making using tools and equipment prepared in advance to showing how artists actually print, always attracted a large number of participants. The artists who provided instruction were Nakabayashi Tadayoshi (copperplate), Baba Yusuo (lithograph), and Noda Tetsuya (woodcut), all of whom were also represented in the museum collection. With the support of these artists, samples that conveyed a detailed sense of the printmaking process were also made. The traditional “lectures on practical training” were renamed and relaunched as “lectures on modeling” held in the evenings. As a series of lectures based on active thinking, rather than the previous emphasis on acquisition of skills and techniques, these courses clearly went one step further in a bid to consider the nature of artistic expression itself. This approach was just what we had in mind when we started using the term “workshop.”

In considering the relationship between works in the collection and education and public programs, another program developed in the late 1970s bears mentioning. This was the *Children and Parents Museum* series at the Hokkaido Museum of Modern Art, which ran for a total of fifteen editions beginning with *Fast Things, Near Things* in 1978. These exhibitions, which also drew on the museum collection, were based on the themes of perspective, chiaroscuro, composition, color, and other modeling elements fundamental to art. They were composed of easy-to-understand explanations, photographs, illustrated panels, models, and other materials, and also included an experimentation and hands-on corner. Since 1993, the series has evolved into a project called *Amuse Land* targeted at children.

9. *The 1980s: new developments in the establishment of art museums in local municipalities*

AROUND THE TIME WHEN the construction boom at the prefectural level had settled down, the wave of art museum construction shifted to cities, wards, towns, and villages, and the movement to create art museums by local governments started to gain momentum. Municipal museums such as the Himeji City Museum of Art (1983), the Iwaki City Art Museum (1984), and the Takamatsu Art Museum (relocated and remodeled in 1988) opened. In the twenty-three wards of Tokyo, the Itabashi Art Museum was the first to open in 1979, followed by the Shoto Museum of Art (1981), designed by Shirai Seiichi, the Nerima Art Museum (1985), attached to a library, and the Setagaya Art Museum, a municipal museum boasting a size that rivaled a prefectural art museum, built by Uchii Shozo and opened in 1986. This was followed by the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, which opened in 1987. As for municipal art museums administered at the level of the ward, none have been established yet, although there has been some news of facilities being planned following the opening of this museum in Meguro. Incidentally, the Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts opened in the same year as the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo. The Yokohama Museum of Art opened in 1988, in conjunction with the Yokohama Exotic Showcase '89.

It was during the 1980s that education and public programs at museums, especially workshops offering hands-on experiences, were born. The '80s coincided with a period when the concepts of social education and lifelong learning were widely disseminated and actively studied.¹²

The Itabashi Art Museum, which opened in 1979 as one of the first municipal art museums, actively introduced art trends in real time. The 1970s were a time when various experimental activities in alternative spaces outside the framework of the museum flourished. The global economy was vibrant, and consumer culture was on the rise. In 1975,

¹² Yamada Kazutaka, "Organizing the Concepts of 'Social Education' and 'Life-long Education' and Social Approaches to 'Community Development,'" *Policy Science*, Vol.10-1, October 2002, Ritsumeikan University, Policy Science Society, pp.143-158.

the Seibu Museum was established in the Ikebukuro branch of the Seibu Department Store (renamed the Sezon Museum of Art in 1989) and held a series of exhibitions focusing on the twentieth century featuring avant-garde, contemporary, and exciting projects. The role played by the Seibu Museum and the Sezon Museum of Art in promoting art and design has been quite significant. Studio 200, located on the eighth floor of the Seibu Department Store and active from 1979 to 1991, was an enthusiastic promoter of theater, poetry readings, and avant-garde music supported by a large youth audience, which had a significant impact on the museum. Incidentally, Seibu Community College was established in 1975 and pioneered the phenomenon of cultural centers. The Takanawa Museum of Art (later renamed the Sezon Museum of Contemporary Art) in Karuizawa, which was also affiliated with Seibu, has held the “Karuizawa Workshop for Children, Art Classes in Nature” every summer since 1980 for children living in the nearby summer resort areas. This is the earliest example I have found of a Japanese art museum that used the term “workshop.”

It was in this cultural context that the Itabashi Art Museum launched the *ART NOW* series as part of its education and public program. In 1979, the first year of its opening, the museum held *From Surrealism to Laser Light*, which featured discussions by artists working with genres that went beyond art. In addition, the museum has been organizing *Lectures on Contemporary Art for Housewives* and the *Summer Children's Atelier* during the summer. This was a time when children were not yet familiar with art museums. The activities of the Itabashi Art Museum can perhaps be regarded as an early prototype of today's art museum workshops, although the term “workshop” had not yet been introduced. The exhibitions *The End of the Twentieth Century* in 1982 and *The House that Stands on a Cat's Forehead* in 1985 were both organized by the curator in charge of education. Held during these exhibitions were the *Dreampolis Project* and other bold activities, such as workshops in which participants were invited to dig holes in the front yard of the museum and build houses that visitors could spend the night in.

The Miyagi Museum of Art opened around the same time, in 1981. Professors from the Miyagi University of Education,¹³ which espouses

13 At the time, the Miyagi University of Education became the focus of much attention for its unique entrance examinations that used the five senses and incorporated performances.

14 The architecture of the Miyagi Museum of Art is summarized in *Miyagi Museum of Art: Looking Back on its Construction*, Tohoku Sekkei Service Co., 1982.

a unique educational philosophy, contributed to the establishment of the museum's philosophy. For the first time among Japanese museums, education and public programs were assigned to a department staffed by professional curators well-versed in the principles of art and capable of providing practical guidance. As mentioned earlier, the Miyagi Museum of Art had discussions with Mayekawa Associates, Architects & Engineers, which was in charge of the museum design, about the museum architecture from the preparatory office phase and produced a zoning plan. This is a rare example from this era of curators getting involved in the architecture.¹⁴ The museum's policy was to have two types of ateliers, for two-dimensional and three-dimensional works, and to allow visitors to create freely at any time. It began to actively incorporate "open production" sessions and workshops by Mono-ha artists such as Takayama Noboru, who was teaching at Miyagi University of Education at the time, as well as "Body Weather" performance training workshops developed by the butoh dancer Tanaka Min. Thanks to the activities of the Miyagi Museum of Art, the concept of workshops in art museums began to be recognized, presaging the many possibilities for education and public programs at art museums.

Around this time, curators who actively sought to be involved in education and public programs began to emerge, along with a certain willingness to think about and experience art through communication. Up until this point, some curators undeniably took a negative view of taking responsibility for education and public programs initiatives. Starting in the 1980s, however, the emergence of curators who seized the potential of education and public programs and put it into practice might be said to represent the point where education and public programs initiatives began to gain momentum in Japan.

Subsequently, the Nerima Art Museum, the Setagaya Art Museum, the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, the Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts, and the Yokohama Museum of Art opened during the late 1980s. What was most distinctive about this period, however, was the way in which movements in separate places to put education and public programs into practice and develop unique programs focused on

practical skills seemed to happen concurrently.

At the time, though “workshop” had not yet come to clearly refer to the philosophy and definition associated with the term, various approaches were freely experimented with as it was believed that the potential of museums lay in the untapped field of education and public programs, specifically programs beyond exhibitions whose physical form could not be disrupted. In this sense, “activities that demonstrated the possibilities” of art museums were generally called workshops.

It was also around this time in the 1980s that another non-museum facility with this same consciousness was born. Kodomo no Shiro (Children’s Castle) opened in 1985 in Jingumae, Shibuya Ward under the jurisdiction of the former Ministry of Health and Welfare, and Zokei Studio (“modeling studio”) for art was thus established alongside a music studio and other facilities. Kodomo no Shiro was also influenced by the children’s museums in America and the Atelier des Enfants (Children’s Studio) at the Centre Pompidou in France, and Zokei Studio held a Bruno Munari exhibition when it opened.¹⁵ This exhibition led the facility to acquire a collection of Munari’s works that is still being loaned out nationwide and exhibited at traveling exhibitions.

Zokei Studio at Kodomo no Shiro is actively involved in art education and has organized several ambitious exhibitions related to this topic, although it does not function as an art museum. In terms of its activities, children are allowed to interact with a variety of materials and create freely, while professional artists help them with their modeling. In the studio, an earnest effort has been made in terms of planning facilities and developing interesting activities. There is a large drawing board like the one used by the Atelier des Enfants at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and the work desks are based on those used by Bruno Munari in his workshops in Italy.

Incidentally, facilities like the Discovery Room, a kind of children’s museum often attached to science museums overseas, were established from the mid-1970s through the 1980s and further linked children and museums. In America, museums for children to have

¹⁵ In subsequent years, the museum has held exhibitions by Victor D’Amico and Franz Cižek among others to commemorate its anniversaries as a leader in the field of education.

hands-on experiences have been actively built since the 1960s, while in Japan, the Yokohama Science Center (1984), Hamamatsu Science Museum (1986), Toyama Kodomo Miraikan (1992), and others began to be built one after another during the 1980s, reflecting fresh and innovative developments in education within a science museum context.

In addition, the “Play and Space” course at the Visual Communication Design Department of Musashino Art University launched various programs that involved sending students to the aforementioned art museum workshops, while other loosely linked workshops were held outside of art museums, at children’s facilities for example.

In retrospect, the 1980s were also a period when museums and the universities and other institutions that surrounded them began to actively interact with and gradually influence each other.

Museum education and public programs connected to the present day began with workshops involving hands-on activities. Some time later, in the 1990s, the focus shifted to education on art appreciation.

16 May 3–9, Goethe-Institut Tokyo, the Japanese Council of Art Museums, Executive Committee for Japan-Germany Art Museum Educational Exchanges.

17 Organizers: *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Japan Association of Art Museums.

10. Education and public programs in the 1990s

DURING THE 1990S, interest in education and public programs increased further, and more and more students began writing their dissertations on the education and public programs of art museums as their research topics at university. In 1992, two major symposiums on education and public programs were held. One was “From the City to the Museum, from the Museum to the City: Japanese-German Museum Education Symposium and Action 1992”¹⁶ at the Goethe-Institut Tokyo, and the other was the “International Symposium on Art Museum Education and Public Programs 1992”¹⁷ organized by the Japan Association of Art Museums and held at the Yokohama Museum of Art. These events showcased activities from the 1980s, mainly workshops, and presentations by guests from abroad who were developing unique

education and public programs. This first ever symposium on education and public programs drew significant attention from many students with a potential interest in researching the topic.

The 1990s also saw the birth of the Society for Art Education, which examines the activities of art museums in Japan and abroad. Its activities began in earnest in 1993 with the publication of a research journal, and in 1998, it established a database of education and public programs at Japanese art museums, an achievement that deserves to be recognized.

During this period, many researchers actively surveyed foreign art museums and returned home overwhelmed by the wealth of examples they had seen.

The Japanese Council of Art Museums, a cooperative organization of museums, established a working group for education and public programs in 1993. The group is still active today as a forum for exchanging information and as a venue for learning about education and public programs.

With the exception of the Miyagi Museum of Art, the curators of the aforementioned museums, who belonged to the generation involved in the creation of museums during the 1980s, had been hired as curators tasked with collections and exhibitions, rather than just education and public programs. As such, some of these curators had the advantageous experience of holding both exhibitions and educational programs at the same time, something not seen in other countries.

In the 1990s, the keyword “appreciation” dominated education and public programs, and education guidelines at schools stipulated that the inculcation of “appreciation” should be enhanced and encouraged. Educational sheets and printed exhibition guides were actively created by taking pointers from materials produced by museums abroad. While some of them were interesting and well thought out, there was also a period when producing such materials became the primary objective in itself, with the focus turning towards elaborate designs and various

technically ingenious approaches.

When the Sezon Museum of Art hosted the *Guggenheim Collection* exhibition in 1991, a tool called Asobi-jutsu (“The Art of Play”) was created for viewing twentieth-century art and providing visitors a means to experience how art functions through touch and play.

In 1990, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York held an educational training session, which many Japanese museum professionals attended. The interactive art appreciation program implemented at the MoMA had been conceived on the basis of Dr. Abigail Housen’s theory of aesthetic development at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and was eventually introduced to Japan by Amelia Arenas. This program attracted the envious gaze of Japanese educators at the time. It has made a significant contribution to the development of Japanese art appreciation education and is still frequently referenced in Japan today.

Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that many high-quality workshops were also conducted in the 1990s in Japan. The Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography and the Hiratsuka Museum of Art carefully developed volunteer activities and appreciation programs, while Art Tower Mito held large-scale, action-oriented contemporary art workshops.

11. *The thinking behind workshops*

SO FAR, WE HAVE DESCRIBED a cross-section of the history of education and public programs at Japanese museums from the 1970s to the 1990s. In this next section, we will discuss the thinking behind these workshops. This term, which is now quite well-known, was not a familiar one when the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo first opened. Before workshops were held in museums, the term was widely used in the fields of architecture, theater, medicine, and welfare. The sense in which it is deployed in a museum context is close to the meaning by which it is used in architecture and urban planning, or theater.

According to the Shogakukan Random House English-Japanese Dictionary (1973), a “workshop” is defined in terms of facilities or methodologies, with a particularly strong connotation of being a place for lectures or classes in either case: “1. workplace (especially for machine work), 2. study group, discussion group, seminar, 3. place of creation (of writers, artists, etc.), creative method, 4. training room, laboratory.”

The term “workshop” has become one of the most common names used in museums for education and public programs. I myself use the term in a very broad sense, although I basically understand it as “a methodology by which multiple people can share a place, theme, and time, and acquire an active point of view on something.” For me, workshops stimulate active thinking and create new values by allowing participants, instructors, and staff to share themes and time together, as opposed to activities that previously involved the teaching of skills and techniques and the unilateral transmission of information in a one-way relationship that connected the museum to participants and visitors. By gathering in a workshop, children and adults alike can occupy the same footing and encourage their own abilities to take shape. What is essential here is the understanding that workshops are positive and interactive activities. The act of putting together these programs takes a long time and places an emphasis on the process. Although we can predict the outcome to some extent, the process may take an unexpected turn in a way that cannot be known from the outset. This is what makes workshops so interesting.

At the same time, however, we must also keep in mind the fact that programs for the acquisition of skills and techniques are quite popular in Japan. If we offer a self-discovery program and a lecture-style one for learning skills, it is the latter that people overwhelmingly sign up for, and a great number of people participate with that expectation in mind. It should be noted that these kinds of lecture-style programs are also necessary. The Citizens’ Atelier at the Yokohama Museum of Art and the specialized courses offered by the Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts play an important role as places where the public can learn bona fide techniques, facilitated by the planning and organization that can only

18 Sai Masahiro, “Workshops: Methodology-based Approaches,” *The Japanese Council of Art Museums Working Group on Education and Outreach Activity Report 1: Education and Outreach at Art Museums, Philosophy of its Practice and its Current State*, Japanese Council of Art Museums, 1997.

be found in a museum.

¹⁹ “Lawrence Halprin,” *Process Architecture*, no. 4 (February 1978).

According to Sai Masahiro of the Miyagi Museum of Art, the workshop as a methodology was started in the 1950s by Lawrence Halprin (1916–), ²⁰ *Ibid.* an American urban planner and landscape architect, and his dance choreographer wife Anna Halprin.¹⁸ According to Ching-Yu Chang, a researcher of the Halprin method, “in the case of urban renewal, when architecture is planned, ‘collective creativity’ is used as a method to get to know the city and build an image of it. Halprin’s method frees the creative mind of the individual and provides a technique for evaluating what the common goal is, while ‘collective creativity’ is a combination of individual ideas that does not dictate any criteria for unifying individual ideas. The final result is not to be summarized in a single defined item, but rather to reflect a combination of individual feelings.”¹⁹ This Halprin method is also used in architecture as an approach to urban planning.

One of Lawrence Halprin’s most interesting projects is the Sea Ranch, a communal housing complex built on a precipitous cliff facing the Pacific Ocean on the west coast of the United States. In order to build this residential development in a harsh natural environment with rough waves and strong winds, Halprin set up camp on the cliff and spent a year meticulously researching the natural environment, the nature of the wind, the forms of the waves, and even indigenous faiths. This Sea Ranch, a residential complex designed by Charles Moore, is a picturesque development that I would like to visit, and Halprin’s involvement in the project resonates strongly with me.

Before Lawrence Halprin began conducting workshops in urban design, his wife Anna Halprin developed a method of promoting collective interaction in her own avant-garde dance workshops. This inspired Lawrence to suggest holding a joint workshop with Anna, where creativity could be exercised in an art-oriented situation while leaving room for amateurs to participate as well.²⁰

From a contemporary perspective, Halprin’s methods have probably

exerted a major influence on contemporary methodologies of urban planning and development, which are often carried out with the participation of local residents. It may be necessary to point out, however, that workshops in urban planning today are sometimes conducted with the objective of inducing people to become receptive to the thinking intended by the organizers from the beginning, and to create a kind of alibi for the participation of local residents.

Revisiting Halprin's material today reminds me that the 1960s were a period in America that saw the emergence of a great number of activities with a keen consciousness of physicality and the body, such as happenings and performances. Many simultaneous elements can be seen in these activities.

Returning to the Japan context, in the nascent days of workshops, curators who had not learned these educational methods but had received training in practical skills were put in charge of these programs. The enjoyment of going through this pedagogical process was incorporated as action and put into practice in the education and public programs at museums. The fact that multiple movements called workshops subsequently occurred was, in a certain sense, quite inevitable for the time. The impetus for these activities, at a time when the activities at European and American museums had not yet become a model or benchmark, stemmed from a search for what had been lacking in Japanese art museums up until then; what art museums ought to have in the future; and the potential of art museums and their as-yet unknown activities.

The workshop in today's terminology is the result of these activities, and it should be noted that they emerged simultaneously and in rapid succession from the end of the 1970s through the 1980s.

Outside the museum, Suzuki Akira's "Architectural Urban Workshop" started up in the mid-1980s and offered courses on Itō Toyō and Buckminster Fuller among other topics. In addition, the Kodomo no Shiro Zokei Studio and "Playground Research" course at the Visual

Communication Design Department of Musashino Art University actively developed workshops according to their individual methods. In view of these programs' origin and content, they can be considered to have developed along a trajectory that is distinctly Japanese. From a broader perspective, however, it might be said that the physical art activities that began in America during the 1960s were transmitted to Japan before seeing an explosion in popularity, growing in the aftermath of these foundations.

The activities that began in this way were still chaotic, entailing a ceaseless back-and-forth between experience with practical skills, action, exhibition, and appreciation.

Most of the programs that began in the nascent days of workshops were conducted by curators in charge of exhibitions (with the exception of the Miyagi Museum of Art), so these workshops were conducted by incorporating elements of the exhibitions and artworks. At the time, the viewing of exhibitions and artworks was incorporated into workshops as a process. Workshops were invariably incorporated into exhibitions such as *The End of the Twentieth Century* and *The House that Stands on a Cat's Forehead* at the Itabashi Art Museum; *Opening Exhibition: Naïve Art* at the Setagaya Museum of Art; the Bruno Munari exhibition at Kodomo no Shiro Zokei Studio; and the *Adventure Plaza for Hands and Eyes: Interacting with Materials* series at the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo for wood, gold, and paper.

PART 2: WORKSHOPS AT THE MEGURO MUSEUM OF ART, TOKYO

1. Workshop spaces and their spatial design

IN THE SECOND PART OF THIS PAPER, I would like to discuss the programs that the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo developed over the past twenty years, mainly workshops, by focusing on the thinking behind them. Opened in 1987 as the sixth municipal art museum in the metropolitan area, the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo had a policy of actively holding education and public programs from the very beginning. The museum does not have a permanent exhibition gallery, focusing instead on holding four to five special exhibitions a year, including an annual exhibition of artworks from the museum collection, an exhibition of works by residents of Meguro Ward, and the *Children of Meguro* joint exhibition by elementary and junior high school children, as well as children with disabilities. The person in charge of each exhibition organizes an education and public program closely connected to its content, while I myself am in charge of overall exhibition planning, ongoing workshops, and basic art appreciation activities. I often plan the summer exhibition, sometimes holding education and public programs on the same theme, and at the end of the financial year, in the spring, I conduct a workshop-based program that is loosely connected to the exhibition on display.

First of all, I would like to discuss the architectural elements of the



Exterior of the Meguro Museum of Art,
Tokyo



Workshop space at the Meguro Museum of
Art, Tokyo

museum, based on my personal theory of how education and public programs relates to space, a topic I have already mentioned. This is because the space of the building constitutes an extremely important point of connection between the exhibition and the workshop activities that we have been developing at the museum.

The architecture of the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo is distinctive for its flexible workshop space, located just to the left of the entrance hall on the first floor, that can be used in a variety of ways. Since the museum uses “workshop” to refer to both the place and the activity, the term “workshop space” is used when referring to the workshop as a physical place.

In the summer and at the end of the financial year in the spring, when workshop activities are intensively combined with exhibitions, this workshop space becomes an open space. When other special exhibitions are being held, it is used as an exhibition gallery with glass walls and openings around the room, with special panels installed around the wash area. At other times, it is used as a kind of re-creation of an artist’s studio, serving as an intermediary between exhibitions of artworks and the public. Basically, the workshop space is an open venue with a large glass door at the entrance that allows visitors to look inside. The surrounding area is also enveloped in glass, and passersby often peek in. In other words, the architecture itself is designed to draw the gaze of outsiders inwards in a natural way. The architectural design incorporated the idea of allowing scenes of active creation unfolding in the workshop space to be viewed by the public in a proactive manner. This is an active attempt to show what is taking place in the workshop space and differs considerably from the modern approach to art, in terms of how the education and public programs rooms are laid out.

The layout of the rooms has been designed with a liberal use of glass surfaces so that they can be seen clearly from both the outside and inside, giving rise to various effects. In other words, during an exhibition in which workshop programs are discussed, visitors to the exhibition can also peek into the workshop space above the exhibition route, which encourages visual participation in a natural setting from both

the interior and exterior. This plan emerged from considering the strict architectural conditions of the limited area of the museum site, and conversely, by taking advantage of it.

The ideal modern art museum typically features a spacious and beautiful floor plan, and is housed over one or two levels in a park with lush greenery. Examples in this vein include the Setagaya Art Museum, the Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, the Aomori Museum of Art, and Art Tower Mito. The major issue for the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo was how to fit the functions of an art museum of approximately 4,000 square meters into a small site (1,900 square meters), which included land acquired on the site of the existing Meguro Citizens Center pending the removal of a private house, resulting in a proposed structure with three floors above ground and one below. The plan called for a storage room on the third floor, a machine room in the basement, and visitor spaces concentrated on the first and second floors. Due to the small size of the site, a decision was made to concentrate the exhibition galleries on the second floor and place the entrance hall, lounge, and workshop space on the first floor. As this distribution had to be done within an extremely restricted area, the workshop space ended up being located just inside the entrance hall.

In addition, the ceiling and walls in the interior were designed to the same specifications as the exhibition galleries, while temporary panels were erected at the wash area with the sinks and on the glass surfaces so that they could also be used for exhibitions. Spaces where activities are held, like arts and crafts rooms in schools, are usually designed to be less expensive than other rooms, but for this workshop space, which is open to the public, the sinks, shelves, and ceilings were finished to the same standards as the exhibition galleries. These finishes allow the space to be used in a variety of ways. Staircases in the interior lead up to the smallest room on the second floor, Room C, establishing a meaningful sense of distance from the exhibition. Although it is a small museum, these residence-like staircases, in addition to the main staircase in the entrance hall, allow for a variety of flows to each of the regular exhibitions to manifest.

The sinks, which are a water feature, are also one of the elements that serve to activate the functions of this room. They are located at the bottom of the stairs that connect to the smallest exhibition gallery on the second floor, Room C. They can be used from both sides, and the sinks themselves are spacious. The top is covered with granite, making it very easy to use. These features were planned by GK Design, a firm commissioned to plan the interior of the workshop room as part of the exhibition design. As the sinks can be used from both sides, various forms of communication can occur while using the water, just like the informal chatter that happens next to the village well, so to speak.

In terms of putting education and public programs into practice within a workshop space with this sort of planned configuration, the Museum of Modern Art, Hyogo and the Tochigi Prefectural Museum of Fine Arts, both mentioned above, were used as references for the direction of the concept. What both of these museums have in common is their interactive way of thinking about visitors, exhibitions, and museums.

2. The Adventure Plaza for Hands and Eyes *at the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, and what came after*

The spatial setting for the thinking behind the museum's education and public programs has the ability to establish certain relationships between the exhibitions, artworks, visitors to the exhibitions, and workshop participants. The act of deliberately bringing rooms that previously occupied completely different paths closer together can offer visitors unexpected stimuli. Although this is a concept that museums have never had before, we are convinced of its effectiveness, based on our observations of visitors to the museum thus far.

Everyone has had the childhood experience of gazing at a downtown storefront where craftspeople are busy building or working on something. By activating this kind of psychology, the visitor's desire to view works of art in the museum will be heightened. There are several

facilities that open their workshop activities to the public. The Machida City Museum of Graphic Arts, which opened in the same year as the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, has an excellent printmaking studio, which one can steal a glimpse of through glass. Among examples located outside Japan, the Harbourfront Gallery in Canada, an institution that also stages exhibitions, has a workshop that visitors can get a peek of as well. The Exploratorium in San Francisco, an art and science museum, also has a similar space.

21 These workshops are summarized in the workshop document “Labyrinth of Lines II: Melody of Pencil and Graphite,” published in March 2008.

The Adventure Plaza for Hands and Eyes started to develop from this sort of spatial setting. The thinking at the time was to have an art experience by fully mobilizing the senses, actively using the hands and getting the eyes to move. Here, the term “workshop” was used in both its broad and narrow senses. In the broad sense, the entirety of the contents, including the exhibitions and experiences, was referred to as the *Workshop: Adventure Plaza for Hands and Eyes*, while workshops as specific programs were included within this framework. At the time that the museum opened, we first took up the materials section from *DRAWERS: The Museum Inside—Painting Materials, Wood, Paper, Metal* that we had begun to produce during the preparatory office stage, and launched the *Interacting with Materials* series, with the wood and gold installments in 1988, followed by paper in 1990. These exhibitions comprised works from a wide range of contemporary artists, designers, and traditional industries, while the workshop program was tailored around the exhibiting artists. At the same time, the individual components of the *Drawer Museum* were each enhanced in their own way.

The museum’s workshop program is always held in conjunction with the exhibitions. Workshops are planned at the same time as exhibitions during the summer, and loosely linked to concurrent exhibitions at the end of the financial year in the spring.

The workshops held over the past twenty years can be categorized according to the following themes: *Interacting with Materials*, *Architecture Class*, *The Anatomy of Colors*, *Examining the Body*, *Art Picnic*, *Labyrinth of Lines*, *Sensations and Phenomena*, and *Family*

Workshop. As previously mentioned, *Interacting with Materials*, *The Anatomy of Colors: Red*, and *Labyrinth of Lines* were developed into exhibitions and workshops by taking teaching materials from *DRAWERS: The Museum Inside—Painting Materials, Wood, Paper, Metal* as a starting point.

Let us take the *Labyrinth of Lines II: Melody of Pencil and Graphite* exhibition (July 7–September 9, 2007) as a recent example. This exhibition, which featured nine artists who used pencils and mechanical pencils as the main media for their distinct modes of artistic expression, was configured so that each artist could exhibit their works in their own booth. The following is a list and overview of the eight related workshops that were held, from Course A through I.²¹

A. “The Power of the Pencil: Drawing Your Inner Self”

Instructor: Kinoshita Susumu (artist and exhibitor)

July 28 (Sat), 29 (Sun); August 5 (Sun), 18 (Sat), 2007

11:00am–5:00pm

Twenty-four participants, high school students and older

B. “Infinite Landscape Painting 3: Participating in the Works of Ogawa Shinji, Which Connect the World”

Instructor: Ogawa Shinji (artist and exhibitor)

August 2 (Thu), 3 (Fri), and 7 (Tue), 2007

11:00am–5:30pm

Fifteen students from third grade to junior high school

Five students from high school and older

Total: twenty students

C. “The Beauty and Power of Pencil: Abstract Portraits”

Instructor: Sekine Naoko (artist and exhibitor)

August 26 (Sun) and September 1 (Sat), 2007

11:00am–5:00pm

Twenty junior high school students and older

From the workshop held during the *Labyrinth of Lines II: Melody of Pencil and Graphite* exhibition, July 7–September 9, 2007

“The Power of the Pencil: Drawing Your Inner Self”

July 28 (Sat), 29 (Sun); August 5 (Sun), 18 (Sat)

11:00am–5:00pm

Bring along an object that you cherish and let the pencil help you capture this emotion.

The instructor, Mr. Kinoshita, remarked quite memorably that “it doesn’t matter how good or bad you are at drawing, but rather how well you can draw to convey your feelings.”



Gallery talk by Mr. Kinoshita
Photo: Okagawa Sumiko



Workshop space that can be seen from
outside
Photo: Okagawa Sumiko



Photo: Okagawa Sumiko



Works by participants

Photo: Okagawa Sumiko



Works by participants
Photo: Okagawa Sumiko

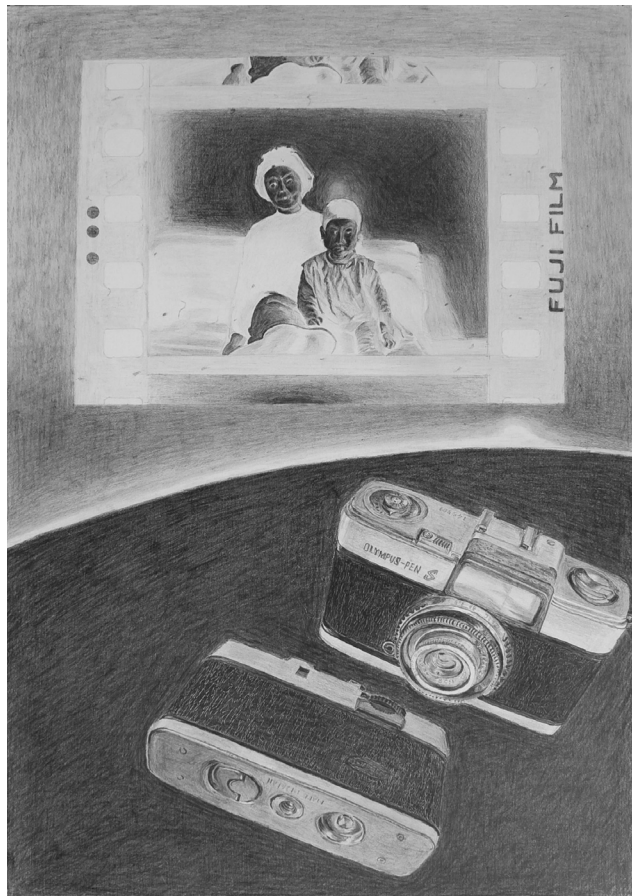


Photo: Okagawa Sumiko



Photo: Okagawa Sumiko



Photo: Okagawa Sumiko

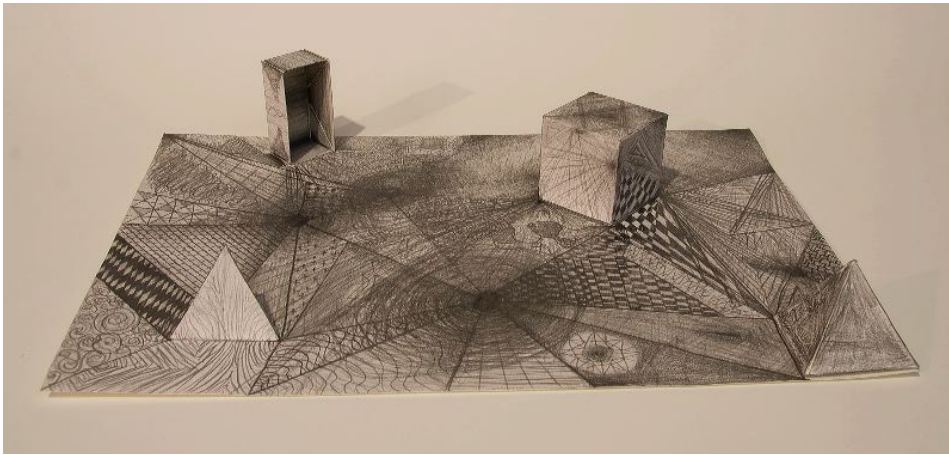
“The Beauty and Power of Pencil: Abstract Portraits”

Instructor: Sekine Naoko

August 26 and September 1

11:00am–5:00pm

Using erasers, kneaded erasers, and pencils, participants will create abstract drawings using hexahedrons and tetrahedrons made of paper as a starting point, in line with the concept of Sekine Naoko's works.



Works by participants
Photo: Okagawa Sumiko

“Infinite Landscape Painting 3: Participating in the Works of Ogawa Shinji, Which Connect the World”

Instructor: Shinji Ogawa (artist and exhibitor)

August 2, 3, 7

1:00pm–5:30pm

A series of works collaboratively produced by Ogawa Shinji and his workshop participants. Ogawa made paintings that connected the drawings by participants, composed of elements selected from twenty photographs presented by Ogawa, into a circle. The lines of adults and children intermingled to create a unique tone.



Collaboration between participants and Mr. Ogawa

The completed work, *Infinite Landscape Painting* (2007)

Photo: Okagawa Sumiko



Ogawa Shinji connects the participants' works on both sides with his paintings

Photo: Okagawa Sumiko

“Ten Pitch-Black Fingers: Drawing the Universe”

Instructor: Enomoto Hisanori (workshop editor)

August 16, 10:30am–4:30pm

Children drew pictures to their heart's content with pencils on large sheets of paper. Carefree graphite strokes frolicked on the surface of these pictures, a form of artistic expression difficult to achieve at school.

Photo: Okagawa Sumiko



Photo: Okagawa Sumiko





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<http://www.mmat.jp>

雑踏から逃げたくなつたらここにおいで。

線の迷宮Ⅱ

鉛筆と黒鉛の旋律

2007年7月7日[土]~9月9日[日]
午前10時~午後6時(入館は5時30分まで)
月曜休館(7月16日は開館、17日[火]は休館)
観覧料:一般600(500)円、大中学生・65歳以上400(300)円、小中学生無料
(7月20日以前は団体料金あり、要予約)
交通:JR山手線・有楽町線・東横線・京浜東北線・都営三田線・目黒駅下車徒歩10分
東急バス=梅之町駅(目黒通り)下車徒歩5分・田端小学校入口(山手通り)下車徒歩3分

主催:目黒区美術館
助成:芸術文化振興基金

出品作家
磯邊一郎 ISOBE Ichiro
小川信治 OGAWA Shinji
小川百合 OGAWA Yuri
木下 晋 KINOSHITA Susumu
齋藤逸郎 SAIKA Itsuro
佐伯洋江 SAEKI Hiroe
篠田教夫 SHINODA Norio
関根直子 SEKINE Naoko
妻木良三 TSUMAKI Ryoza

Labyrinth of Lines II: Melody of Pencil and Graphite exhibition poster

Design: Ōmori Yūji

D. “Black Light 100%: Paint It In, Write It In with Pencil”

Instructor: Enomoto Hisanori (workshop educator)

July 15, 2007 (Sun)

10:30am–4:30pm

Eighteen elementary and junior high school students

Four high school students and older

E. “This Guy is Amazing! Pencil Landscapes You’ve Never Seen Before”

Enomoto Hisanori (workshop educator)

July 22, 2007 (Sun)

10:30am–4:30pm

Fourteen elementary and junior high school students

F. “Ten Pitch-Black Fingers: Drawing the Universe”

Enomoto Hisanori (workshop educator)

August 16, 2007 (Thu)

10:30am–4:30pm

Thirty-three elementary and junior high school students

G. “My Memory: Painting Body Parts”

Enomoto Hisanori (workshop educator)

September 2, 2007 (Sun)

10:30am–4:30pm

Two elementary and junior high school students

Six high school students and older

H. “Let’s Play with Long Sheets of Paper and Shiny, Shiny Pencils”

Facilitator: Toy Collection Volunteer Team

July 21 (Sat) and 22 (Sun), 2007

1:00pm–4:00pm

Twenty-six families of two people, ages four and up

I. Playground:

“Good Luck Laugh”

“Burnt Sandwiches”

“Coloring Book”

In Courses A through C, led by the exhibiting artists, the unique methodology of each artist was showcased. Kinoshita Susumu, who creates monotone drawings of people for whom he feels a particular empathy among all those he has encountered, had participants bring in their own cherished items and belongings and draw them on A3-size paper with twenty different pencils ranging from 9B to 9H in his course, for example. The five-day course was impressive for how the participants earnestly confronted these objects with their pencils. Kinoshita remarked how “it doesn’t matter how good or bad you are at drawing, but rather how well you can draw to convey your feelings,” and although there were some rather harsh criticisms, there were also instances in which the participants stood up admirably to the task at hand. This course was set up for a relatively long day, from 11am to 5pm, so that the participants could concentrate on and sustain their emotions. In Course C, Sekine Naoko demonstrated a method of constructing a small three-dimensional object out of paper, drawing from that object, and then developing it into a flat paper format in order to be able to make abstract drawings using pencil in a straightforward way. The participants were amazed at how this could be done with pencil and worked enthusiastically on their own creations.

Basically, the three aforementioned courses were open to all ages from upper elementary school onward, depending on the artist, so that several high school, junior high, and elementary school students were able to participate alongside adults. This age composition was very important, and other architectural courses sometimes stipulated a range of ages from elementary school to the general public.

There is a tendency in today’s society for people to cluster within the same age group, with few opportunities in daily life for university students, adults, and children to meet in one place. By making an effort to hold these kinds of workshops, however, communication

that transcends age groups can take place, and relationships where adults and children mutually acknowledge each other can be created through the medium of art, which is very important. At first, some adult participants may wonder why children are in the same course. These adults may treat them dismissively as “just children” at first. However, those adults will come to understand that children are also capable of making accomplishments by working alongside them for an extended period of time. When children are included in these opportunities, they are able to express their opinions as equals among adults, and they certainly step up to the plate in this sense. In the installment of this workshop held last year, Courses A through C were all structured in this way, with positive results.

Courses D through I, which were aimed mainly at children, challenged the participants to try their hand at all manner of artistic expression that can be done with pencils. The most significant outcome of the workshop was how it verified that pencils actually hold significant potential for artistic expression, even though students usually learn how to use them in school for writing or making sketches and outlines for arts and crafts. This was made abundantly clear in the exhibition, so when we accepted elementary school students into these educational courses for the appreciation of art, we were able to conduct various experiments and show the children that they can draw unique lines using pencils in a variety of ways, and that the possibilities are endless. Even in the children’s courses, the children discovered their own distinct modes of expression by viewing the exhibition multiple times. Shuttling back and forth between the exhibition and the workshop also leads to the acquisition of an active gaze, which is the most important feature of this structure in the relationship between the museum’s workshops and exhibitions. The fact that the exhibitions and workshops are connected and related to each other demonstrates the significance of the workshops held at the museum. Through these connections, various forms of communication can be created.

“Architecture Class” and “Examining the Body,” on the other hand, are unique among the museum’s workshops. “Architecture Class” has been held five times with Suzuki Akira, who has a unique approach to

architecture. The goal is to create a dome, an arch, or some other space in which one can be enveloped with one's own abilities, and in order to reach this goal, various structural and polyhedral assemblies are constructed as a collaborative effort. "Examining the Body" is the kind of physical workshop that the museum's workshop educator Enomoto Hisanori specializes in. Previous sessions have been conducted by inviting butoh dancers Ikemiya Nakao and Ohno Yoshito to participate. The bodily expression with Ikemiya has been based on the idea of viewing the exhibited works with the body, such as at the "Painted Bodies" exhibition of works in the collection, and the "Colors" series of exhibitions. In the spring of 2006, Enomoto held a workshop to activate the body in a room he had borrowed at the Reversible Destiny Lofts Mitaka, created by Arakawa Shusaku and Madeline Gins. All participants—both children and adults, naturally—were delighted to have had this rare experience.

22 Co-presented with Niki Tiki, which imports products from Naef, the manufacturer of Clahsen's toy objects, Musashino Art University, and Joshibi University of Art and Design.

In order to develop these exhibitions and workshops in a way that connects them to each other, it is essential to have regular mental and visual training for both. Here, I would like to mention the artists whose design pedagogy I always refer to for my own mental training, and in the actual execution of workshops in particular. One is Peer Clahsen from Germany, and the other set is Charles and Ray Eames. As I plan exhibitions and workshops at the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, I have always used the work and thinking of these artists in my own mental training and thought workshops. What they have in common is an equal gaze on children and adults, and the fact that they always discover and construct things through the act of active looking.

3. Educational and thought training 1: Peer Clahsen as educator

In 2004, the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo held an exhibition called *Seven Windows in a Cube: The World of Peer Clahsen* from May 7 to 18.²² Born in 1938 in northern Germany, Clahsen is an artist who has developed a wide-ranging practice in the plastic arts, including



*View of Seven Windows in a Cube: The
World of Peer Clahsen, 2004*

architecture and furniture design, writing, and teaching. Since 1967, he has been involved in the work of Naef, a Swiss manufacturer of fine toys, and has produced about sixty different toy objects, each based on the theme of how to divide a cube. The best examples from this series are *Cubicus*, a cube with ten parts in beautiful gradations of color that fit into a single cube, and *Diamant*, an octahedron divided into nested pieces in the form of a frame.

Until recently, the only work by Clahsen that I got to know about while in Japan has been thanks to the uniquely shaped building blocks produced by Naef, a top Swiss toy manufacturer that accounts for the majority of the museum's toy collection. The non-Naef works in the exhibition were very interesting. Works by Clahsen that were being exhibited publicly for the first time, including *Typoem*, which combines similarly spelled words in rhyme, a book of poetry that is read by rotating it, and modular furniture that all fit into a box of 120 cubic centimeters, attracted a great deal of attention. I sometimes use the toy collection to organize special exhibitions at the museum. Previous examples in this vein include the exhibitions *Stacked Shapes*, *Assembled Forms* and *Kaleidoscope of Colors and Shapes*. Each time, I create a place where visitors can have fun with the exhibits, but the adults invariably get caught up in them and play with them instead of the children.

During his lecture, Clahsen emphasized the importance of moving one's hands and feeling with them. One of the most interesting things he mentioned was the fact that we humans have far fewer opportunities to look at the palms of our hands these days.

Whenever we make or touch something, the palms of our hands are always facing each other, and this is how objects come into being. When we hold something, the palm of the hand curves inward, creating a concave shape, a beautiful curve on the inside. In the past, the palm of the hand was oriented toward the face, but as we approached the modern age, it was the back of the hand that gradually came to supplant the palm. In other words, the palm of the hand always faces downward now due to the widespread use of personal computers.

In the past, all objects (when designing or simulating architectural models) were created with the palms of both hands. Today, however, since all design drawings are produced with a computer, people are looking at the backs of their hands all the time. Manual creation has existed since prehistoric times. In this age, however, the energy in the palm of the hand is not focused inward, but has instead diffused outward and become chaotic, as Clahsen has it.

Furthermore, the hand is said to be able to grasp things with nine fingers because there are four invisible fingers between the five. Ah, so it becomes difficult to touch things when fingers are attached. Due to the gaps between the fingers, we are able to grasp things reliably and enjoy the process of creation. Backed by these firm principles, Clahsen's toys have a perfect form that encompasses the psychology of the universe. Although these abstract building blocks seem difficult at first glance, people who play with them become astonishingly absorbed.

At the exhibition, a museum volunteer casually handed a *Diamant* (Clahsen's masterpiece in its most ambivalent form) to a one-and-a-half-year-old girl who had initially been playing with the colorful building blocks, and the somewhat bored child concentrated on this brown teak object and began to play with it. The volunteer and the staff were surprised, since adults typically want to give colorful and pretty things to children, and the children also usually enjoy such things. The staff member later recalled seeing the child's eyes gradually light up. We naturally asked Clahsen what it was about his toys that was so abstract, and whether he had an age range in mind for them, to which he replied that he didn't have a specific age group in mind for each toy. "There are two-year-olds who can play adeptly with the most advanced *Diamant* toys, just as there are five-year-olds who can only play with the more structured *Angular* toys as a kind of hammer."

The thinking behind Clahsen's toy objects contains principles pertaining to natural mineral crystals and the numbers of the universe. The toy objects born from this kind of thinking are beautiful just as they are, and the compositions of their forms can be developed in any way. In other words, they are not toys made to be toys, but rather objects that



The Work of Charles and Ray Eames: A Legacy of Invention, October 8–December 11, 2005, Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo



Screening of *Powers of Ten*
Gallery tour for elementary school students at the Eames exhibition

express the truth of numbers, which can be dismantled, enjoyed in various permutations, and put back together again inside the hand. Clahsen's objects show us how important it is to feel, think, and see with our hands.

4. Educational and thought training 2: the Eameses as educators

CHARLES AND RAY EAMES are well known as leading postwar American designers of the twentieth century. They were the exclusive designers for Herman Miller, a long-established American office furniture company, where their work included not only furniture design but also retail interiors and graphics for materials such as pamphlets. Charles and Ray always worked as a perfect combination of husband and wife, and the scope of their work was truly broad, covering architecture, chairs, furniture, film, photography, lectures, playground equipment, and even education, as was also the case with Clahsen. In Japan, the Eameses are often introduced as designers of chairs like shell and lounge chairs.

What I appreciate most about the Eameses are the short films that they continued to make throughout their lives. The Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo has come to own nearly forty Eames films since it opened. Their most famous film is *Powers of Ten*, in which the camera pulls up from the back of a man's hand while he sleeps in a park and zooms out until the end of the universe—to a field of view of 10^{26} meters—before zooming back in at twice the speed in order to travel from the back of his hand into the microscopic world, right down to the level of carbon atoms deep within DNA to a view of 10^{14} meters. Taking points of reference from the 1900 comic *Jump to Outer Space*, the Eameses, together with scientists, created this spectacular film that allows viewers to travel through space in fourteen minutes.

Tops is a film that features scenes from all over the world in only seven minutes of footage, and despite the differences in form, filming methods, and mechanisms, the principle behind it is the same as the

act of turning a thumbtack around on a table, expressed only through images and music. There are several types of Eames films, but this type of film that puts various principles and truths into perspective is quite a sight to behold. I often use these Eames films in my children's programs, and they all look at the screen with rapt attention.

These are not films made for children, however. What I appreciate most about the Eameses' films is that they can be enjoyed on an individual level by both adults and children. Charles and Ray, moreover, were pioneers in visual communication, and their presentation techniques were also widely used in the field of education.

The work of Peer Clahsen and the Eameses contain elements that cannot be summed up in the single word "design," and have several things in common. I use Clahsen's toy objects and the Eameses' films as introductions to their methodologies in various kinds of workshops, and it is essential for me to ruminate on these methodologies as image training for exhibitions and workshops at my own museum.²³

I created teaching materials that applied the Eameses' perspective to the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo when the museum was in its preparatory office stage before it opened. This formed the framework for workshops at the museum, which developed into workshops using the Drawer Museum, as well as exhibitions and study groups in various other fields derived from them.

5. Workshop teaching materials: DRAWERS: The Museum Inside— Painting Materials, Wood, Paper, Metal

*DRAWERS: THE MUSEUM INSIDE—Painting Materials, Wood, Paper, Metal*²⁴ was a project that subsequently became a major part of my own research interests and gave me a sense of direction. There are currently four versions of this Drawer Museum: paints, wood, paper, and metal, each of which contains drawers stored in a wooden box

²³ The 2005 global touring exhibition *The Work of Charles and Ray Eames: A Legacy of Invention* (sponsored by the *Yomiuri Shimbun*) traveled to the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, and as this was the last stop on its international tour, staff from the Eames office and their family members also visited Japan. During this time, workshops were held as Charles Eames's granddaughter Carla Hartman was conducting education and public programs at the Denver Art Museum.

²⁴ For more information, see Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, *DRAWERS: The Museum Inside—Painting Materials, Wood, Paper, Metal*, Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1995.

that also functions as a cart, and the number of drawers currently stands at eighty-one. These drawers can be stored in the form of carts, or displayed as they are and pulled out to be viewed. They can also be taken out individually and hung on the wall to be exhibited. The drawers can be displayed alone or in combination with works of art. They can be used in a variety of ways, in terms of presentation and usage. The museum occasionally receives requests to loan them out to a wide range of institutions, including art galleries, museums, children's science museums, and schools. The drawers have now become one of the selling points of the museum's education and public programs, and are used as important tools.

When I joined the preparatory office at the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, I was assigned to examine its architecture and programs from a curatorial perspective. As someone who originally studied materials at a practical college, I was looking for possibilities that were different from what most museums do, such as exhibiting works and offering explanations regarding the artists and the background behind the art, or inviting local artists to give lectures on skills and techniques. I was trying to find new ways to develop objects and things that would serve as links between the artworks, their exhibits, and the viewers. The main tasks involved here were the creation of explanatory panels and commentary on the exhibited works in order for them to be viewed and understood, as well as the creation of pamphlets that convey basic knowledge about paintings in an easy-to-understand manner, with themes such as chiaroscuro and perspective. My goal was to create things—in other words, objects that could be used as communication tools in workshops. I wondered if there was anything that museums had never made before: something that would awaken our sense of sight, actively engage the viewer's ability to see, and facilitate the kind of training that would cultivate the senses in order to see and feel the artwork. With this in mind, we set out to create a series of teaching materials in the form of drawers that would help people learn about materials and paints, and stimulate their ability to look at them.

A specific reference in this respect came from an exhibit of storage units at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, where textiles are



View of *Drawer of Paints* exhibition



View of *Drawer of Materials—From Wood* exhibition

View of *Colors from Wood* drawer



Looking at *Drawer Museum of Paints and Materials: Metal*

stored in frames and viewed by opening the doors. Similar exhibits of storage units were also on display at Sir John Soane's Museum in London, where large architectural paintings appeared behind hidden doors when you opened them, and the Gustave Moreau Museum in Paris. These are the types of exhibits that can sometimes be seen in old European museums. In addition, the samples of printmaking processes produced around the time when the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum began to actively promote contemporary prints, as mentioned above, were also interesting as a new educational tool of the museum. Like these exhibits, displaying drawers is also a device for the enjoyment and satisfaction of seeing and knowing. The Drawer Museum is not only an educational tool for understanding practical techniques and art materials: it also actively encourages the act of "seeing" visually and engages everyone from children to adults, from the general public to experts. This is a perspective shared by Clahsen and the Eameses. Particular attention was paid to the visual arrangement of the paints and materials and their unique characteristics, and much effort was made to design them in a way that would be easy to visualize. Together with the designers, we considered multiple possibilities and worked repeatedly to create an unprecedented set of educational materials.

6. The Anatomy of Colors *series*

FINALLY, I WOULD LIKE to discuss *The Anatomy of Colors*, which has become the most significant project among the exhibitions and workshops I have conducted. This project, which was born out of the workshop teaching materials for *DRAWERS: The Museum Inside—Painting Materials, Wood, Paper, Metal* has become the museum's main education and public program over the course of the accumulated initiatives of the past twenty years. This series of exhibitions and workshops focuses on the basic colors familiar to both children and adults and looks back on the relationship between the raw materials used to make colors and paints and the culture and people associated with them through archaeology, folklore, history, and art. Personally, I have always positioned exhibitions and workshops as equivalent, as far as possible. The exhibition itself is not organized from the perspective

of art history, as is usually the case in museums. Rather, it is designed to be viewed by adults and children alike, satisfying specialists up to a point while also being enjoyable for children. To this end, the exhibition is configured by applying the visual communication techniques of Charles and Ray Eames and the compositional methods of their 16mm films *Powers of Ten*, *Black Top*, and *Tops*. Underlying this approach, in other words, is the thinking that the exhibition is also a workshop, and the workshop is also an exhibition.

This colors series began with *The Anatomy of Colors: Blue—Eternal Fascination* in 1992; continued with *The Anatomy of Colors: Red—Mysteries Unraveled* in 1994, *The Anatomy of Colors: Black & White—Traces of Light* in 1998, *The Anatomy of Colors: Green—The Richness of Shadows* in 2001; and temporarily concluded with *The Anatomy of Colors: Yellow—Earth-force + Celestial Light* in 2004. Looking back, we have continued to hold exhibitions and workshops on the “culture of colorant” (as we call it) over the past ten years, interspersed with other exhibitions. The idea behind the *The Anatomy of Colors* exhibitions was inspired by *DRAWERS: The Museum Inside—Painting Materials, Wood, Paper, Metal* when I was working to produce drawers of colorant, such as the “Colors of Tenpyo Era” and “Natural Pigments 2” (colors of fifteenth century Italy) drawers. As I was putting together these drawers using materials available today, based on the names of colors found in books on materials at Horyuji temple and documents from the Shōsōin Repository dating from the Nara period, and tables of colorant in the *The Book of the Art of Cennino Cennini*, an Italian treatise on practical techniques from the beginning of the fifteenth century, I realized that the distinctive characteristics of the raw materials themselves played a significant role in how the meanings of colors in each era and field were determined. It also became clear to me that these characteristics are largely unknown today. Colors come from raw materials, and the distinctive traits of these raw materials become transformed into the meanings of colors. As my research progressed, it became clear that in some cases—with the blue color lapis lazuli and the red color vermilion, for instance—a single color material could have a relationship to archaeology, folklore, crafts, and art, and each relationship had emerged separately. A careful examination of colors and their raw



Exhibition view of works by contemporary artists at *The Anatomy of Colors: Red*



“Playground” being held in the workshop room for *The Anatomy of Colors: Red*

Exhibition view of benihana red and color materials for *The Anatomy of Colors: Red*
Lapis lazuli crystals and ultramarine blue extracted during the workshop

Ultramarine blue, a kind of medieval blue, extracted during the workshop



Exhibition view of beni-hana red and color materials for *The Anatomy of Colors: Red*



Posters of the *Anatomy of Colors* : blue, red, black and white, green, yellow 1992-2004

materials also led me to understand how certain folkloric and historical practices that cannot be captured by art history alone are expressed in works of art. I realized that we can look at various things from the perspective of the “culture of colorant.”

Based on these ideas, the exhibitions traced the raw materials used to obtain colorant on the theme of color, reconsidered how people went about obtaining colors, and drew links between the meaning of historical colorant and interpretations of contemporary artworks through the display of these raw materials, historical materials, and artworks. The exhibitions were thus put together, while the workshops held at the same time developed a variety of programs designed to broaden the scope of thinking, zoom in on unique themes, and reaffirm the creative sense of curiosity and wisdom that people once possessed.

7. Achievements, and in conclusion

IN THIS WAY, the museum has continued to hold exhibitions and workshops, actively open to the public, that have evolved from education and public programs as a starting point. Over the past twenty years, we have held various types of workshops, and a total of five thousand people have participated in them. The first workshop, held in 1986 when the museum was still in its preparatory office stage, was attended by senior kindergarten students who are now twenty-five years old, one of whom has reportedly become a professional photographer.

Other children who attended our workshops for four to five years during their elementary school years have now become respectable members of society who lend support to our activities. There are also children today who support our activities together with these people. In addition, the Toy Collection Volunteer Team and the Architecture Volunteer Team within the Volunteer Association at the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo have been very active. If I were to reflect on what the achievements of the past twenty years have been, it would probably be these human assets that come first to my mind. Considering the

activities that have won the support of these people, there are still many possibilities for education and public programs at the museum.

It goes without saying that education and public programs efforts by art museums have been carried out for the purpose of the education and dissemination of art and to spread the culture of art museums. However, one feels the need to further promote the fact that there are “educational” objectives that can only be accomplished at art museums, and there remain many more activities that can be further developed, especially in terms of workshop programs.

While there appears to be room for further research on the phenomenon of the simultaneous emergence of these successive phenomena called workshops during their early pioneering period, what they all have in common is the fact that the term “workshop” was a perfect fit for a time in which museums were seeking new possibilities after the modern era. This was a time before the meaning and definition of a workshop had been fixed; it was during this period that new communication-based programs began in the 1980s, and the term “workshop” was used to distinguish these activities from the course- or lecture-like programs that preceded them.

The function of an art museum is not only to disseminate art, but also to serve as a place where communication, consideration for others, and creativity can be nurtured, and it seems fairly evident that these roles have not been previously discussed. Such functions are born out of contact with actual, living art and direct contact with artists, offering us clues to training people of all ages on how to deal with and communicate with others, which is an issue in contemporary society. By taking the time to work carefully on these issues, stimulate the senses, and experience them in a hands-on manner, the body regains its natural functions.

This is a form of education that cannot be provided either at school or at home, or at the level of the community: it is related to the act of restoring a sense of our humanity. It is art, the artists who work with it, all the staff who gather around it, and the curators who aspire

towards a career in education who are capable of providing this, and it is when all of these forces rally together that this education can be demonstrated effectively. This is something that I can clearly vouch for as an outcome of my twenty years of experience in charge of these programs.

We should not overlook the fact that museum education has come to a point where it encompasses the function of restoring a sense of our humanity through art. We must affirm the fact that art and creative practices possess this great power, and that art museums are places where we can put into practice what we cannot accomplish at school, at home, or in typical painting classes offered to the public.

In this chapter, I have outlined the thinking behind the education and public programs practiced at the Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo, mainly workshops; described the work of Peer Clahsen and the films of Charles and Ray Eames that have served as a continuous source of inspiration since the days of the museum's preparatory office; and elaborated on the teaching materials, exhibitions, and workshops that built on this foundation. I have described these developments because I believe that education and public programs should be unconventional in this day and age, and that individuals should each explore their potential based on their own personal qualities. As we enter the twenty-first century, education and public programs have become an indispensable part of the activities of museums, and the number of people aspiring to become involved in this field has been increasing. While the field of education and public programs is currently flourishing, it is still too early for it to enter a stable phase. Given that there is still much potential for such activities, museums should be more proactive in their education and public programs, including those that involve art appreciation. In order to consider these questions, I feel that it would be ideal if the planners and organizers themselves constantly honed their own thought processes, and trained their visual and sensory faculties.

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