

# architecture institutions and change

---

## Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians Australia and New Zealand Vol. 32

Edited by Paul Hogben and Judith O'Callaghan

Published in Sydney, Australia, by SAHANZ, 2015  
ISBN: 978 0 646 94298 8

The bibliographic citation for this paper is:

Hsieh, Lisa. "New Wave ArchiteXt: Pulverising the Japanese Pyramid of Order." In *Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand: 32, Architecture, Institutions and Change*, edited by Paul Hogben and Judith O'Callaghan, 267-277. Sydney: SAHANZ, 2015.

All efforts have been undertaken to ensure that authors have secured appropriate permissions to reproduce the images illustrating individual contributions. Interested parties may contact the editors.

## **New Wave ArchiteXt: Pulverising the Japanese Pyramid of Order**

*In the 1960s, Japanese architectural journals characterised Japanese architecture, like Japanese society, as manifesting a hierarchical pyramid of order, with Metabolism at the peak. However, beginning in 1970, a nebulous expansion of powers – collectively known as New Wave – emerged and overshadowed this pyramidal structure. The Japan Architect depicted this phenomenon through an adaptation of Tawaraya Sotatsu's folding screen Fujin Raijin, wherein underneath two dominant Metabolist figures, Kisho Kurokawa (the Wind God) and Arata Isozaki (the Thunder God), 34 New Wave architects (represented by cumulonimbus clouds) surged and billowed. However, New Wave remained a cloudy phenomenon; its constellations of architects continued to shift. To throw some light on this nebulous movement, this paper centres on a cluster of the New Wave clouds: an informal non-group (of five individualists/architects), ArchiteXt, and its self-published architectural ephemera: ArchiteXt 0, 00, 1, 2 and Extra, 1970-72. The members convened at a local bar and originated their publications amid drinks and cheers. The casual format of ArchiteXt mirrored the formation of ArchiteXt – five loose, accordion-fold leaves of parchment (21cm x 105cm) in an envelope reflecting five individualists in a group. Despite this seeming light-heartedness, ArchiteXt proved to be critical and subversive at heart. This paper makes explicit certain political, social and cultural polemics in which ArchiteXt engaged. In two reciprocal forms with one form presaging and inspiring the other, ArchiteXt/ArchiteXt defied what they perceived as dominant values – such as the pervasive suppression of self and the premium placed on submission over self-expression – underpinning the Japanese moral hierarchy. Joining forces amid disjointedness, ArchiteXt (together with other New Wave architects) eventually instigated a paradigm shift, launching Japanese architecture into a freer, more egalitarian system.*

Charting a paradigm shift in Japanese architecture in the 1970s, *The Japan Architect* published a special edition on “Post-Metabolism” (October-November 1977) and depicted the shift as dissolving from a hierarchical pyramid of order into a nebulous expansion of powers. The magazine editor Shozo Baba argued that, previously structured by this hierarchical pyramid, Japanese architecture determined an architect’s place according to his/her education, professional experience, affiliations, talent, and age/seniority. Within this system, everyone strived to climb higher. During the 1960s, the Japanese avant-garde architectural group, Metabolism, conceivably mounted the peak.

With recourse to biology, the Metabolists had conceived a utopia of gargantuan architectural organisms that metabolised to renew vigour. Metabolism’s architectural philosophy responded to Le Corbusier’s message in 1958, sent as the Congrès International d’Architecture Moderne’s influence was declining, “The new age is started as the old age is finished and it’s your turn.”<sup>1</sup> Under architect Kenzo Tange’s mentorship, Metabolists gathered after-hours to discuss the future of architecture, and in conclusion, posited an “Age of Life” to replace the “Age of Machine.” At the World Design Conference in Tokyo in 1960, the group presented its manifesto, *Metabolism 1960: a Proposal for a New Urbanism*, and formally launched itself. Their visionary urban plans, such as Helix City (1962), consisted of DNA-like, spiral structures, which sweep around the existing streets with loop line highways, and swirl upward, making up multiple, multi-level cities. At the Osaka Expo ‘70, Metabolism’s architectural visions further materialised into actual built forms. But soon after, a downturn in Japan’s economy set in and dampened the architects’ optimism.

With Metabolism’s decline, *The Japan Architect* portrayed the dissolution of the hierarchical pyramid of Japanese architecture. Christening the post-Metabolism era “New Wave,” the magazine depicted it graphically with an adaptation of artist Tawaraya Sotatsu’s legendary folding screen, “Wind God and Thunder God” (*Fujin Raijin*). Underneath two dominant Metabolist figures – Kisho Kurokawa (the Wind God) and Arata Isozaki (the Thunder God) – 34 New Wave architects (represented by cumulonimbus clouds) emerged, including the members of an atypical architectural group, ArchiteXt. The magazine’s introductory essay, “The New Wave in Japanese Architecture,” compared this new generation of architects to “clouds,” and classified them into three groups based on who’s “energetic and billowing” and who’s “misty and thin.” This taxonomy, in conjunction with the adaptation of *Fujin Raijin*, showed the breadth and diversity of New Wave praxes and theories, revealing an egalitarian system on the rise.

Notwithstanding *The Japan Architect*’s vivid illustration, New Wave remained a nebulous phenomenon; its constellations of architects continued to shift. New Wave’s ostensibly indeterminate nature thwarted any unifying view of it by critics or historians. To date, there remains limited scholarship related to this period. This paper seeks the logic of the amorphous “clouds” in the local and the details – echoing what cultural theorist Michel de Certeau calls a “science of singularity,” which relates disjointed practices to a particular circumstance.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, the paper focuses on one cluster among the clouds: ArchiteXt,

and its self-published ephemera, *ArchiteXt*, 1970-72. ArchiteXt manifested a microcosm of New Wave. Reflecting the ethos of the new era, the group avoided a collective ideology. Its five members converged and diverged freely and each member ran an office of his own. ArchiteXt's character was elusive, its identity obscure, and its totality fragile. Even in *The Japan Architect's* illustration, the five members of ArchiteXt were listed individually, rather than as a group. But they came together in their magazine and conjoined their powers.

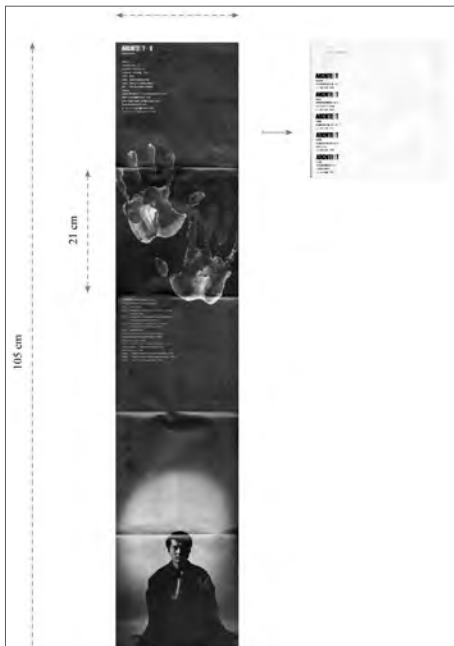
### ArchiteXt/ArchiteXt

Takefumi Aida, Takamitsu Azuma, Mayumi Miyawaki, Makoto Suzuki and Minoru Takeyama made up the novel alliance that constituted ArchiteXt. Each trained in a prestigious university: Aida, Suzuki, and Takeyama at Waseda University; Azuma at Osaka University; and Miyawaki at Tokyo University. This would give them a head start in their profession, but they chose to operate outside of the pyramidal system in a (seemingly) frivolous manner. On a spring day in 1970, at a small Japanese bar called Brook, these five fledgling architects met and pledged fraternity, and yet they avoided a common architectural philosophy. At this carefree setting of a bar, which in Japanese tradition is considered a "laughter place,"<sup>3</sup> imaginably, the mood was bubbly, even intoxicating – glasses slammed and clanged, laughter reverberated. ArchiteXt's inaugural meeting thus is likely to have contrasted starkly with the birth of Metabolism that formed around pensive discussions about the future of architecture, under the mentorship of a master architect. Renouncing formality, ArchiteXt flouted the hierarchical order and conventions of Japanese architectural praxis. Takeyama recalls their gatherings: "We got together within this vicinity, sharing lunch or dinner. By the end of the meal, we would decide on what's next. We enjoyed meeting, all of us, more than putting efforts to a publication."<sup>4</sup> Yet as it transpired, the polemics that arose from these casual meals were nothing like the happy-go-lucky picture the members painted of themselves.

At Brook, amid drinks and cheers, the five architects ambitiously decided to produce an alternative self-publication – alternative, that is, to the mainstream Japanese professional magazines which mainly reported on current building activities in Japan, leaving little room for conceptual work or discussion, much less space for young architects to voice their opinions. To christen their collective and their magazine, these Japanese architects looked to two groups for inspiration, the London-based Archigram and the Florence-based Archizoom. They wanted their name to be *Archi-something*, and settled on *text*. Noting the visual similarity between the words *architext* and *architect*, they magnified the letter X to symbolically cross out the second letter *c* in *architect*. This gesture is both playful and critical. According to ArchiteXt, crossing out the letter *c* – that is, the first letter of the word *convention* – suggested ArchiteXt's denial of architectural conventions.<sup>5</sup>

To fashion their magazine's format, the editors adopted the style of the Paris and Helsinki-based magazine *Le Carré Bleu*. Instead of the customary bookbinding, *ArchiteXt* opened from a 21cm square (the maximum square that can be cut out of the standard A4 size of 21 x 29.7cm) five times back and forth into an extended 21 x 105cm accordion fold (Figure

1). The same construct was multiplied five times. Each issue contained five strips, one per architect/editor. The strips were put into a specially designed square envelope for mailing; the magazine was mainly circulated among friends for free. By design, the physical format of *ArchiteXt* mirrored the formation of ArchiteXt: five loose leaves of parchment in an envelope reflecting five individualists in a group. Within the strip, each architect/editor was free to design his own squares/pages. Informality formed both ArchiteXt's medium and message.



**Fig. 1** *ArchiteXt*, accordion fold, 21 x 105cm. Courtesy of Takefumi Aida.

Takeyama claims that “We wanted to avoid a big statement, a manifesto kind of thing, which Metabolism did.”<sup>6</sup> He was obviously referring to *Metabolism 1960*, which in a grave tone proclaimed the goal of restructuring the whole society through architecture. *ArchiteXt* began with a page nearly identical in size to *Metabolism 1960*'s – 21 x 21cm vs. 21 x 20.3cm – yet opened vertically to an accordion fold, in opposition to the weightiness of Metabolism's manifesto in the form of a formal book. Inside *ArchiteXt*, humour, comics, parody, hyperbole, melodrama, and play saturated its squares/pages.

For its pilot issue, *ArchiteXt* chose the theme “self.” This “self” theme would continue in the next issue, *ArchiteXt 00*, followed by “the earth” for *ArchiteXt 1* and “my home” for *ArchiteXt 2* – *ArchiteXt Extra* was an insert to another magazine, *Toshi Jutaku* (August 1972) and fitted with the “collective dwelling” theme of that issue. Eventually, *ArchiteXt* was published five times between 1970 and 1972, as *ArchiteXt 0, 00, 1, 2, and Extra*.

### **ArchiteXt 0: self**

In the first issue, published in the summer of 1970, *ArchiteXt 0*'s theme was “self.” More than a means of introducing their alliance, this chosen theme expresses *ArchiteXt*'s advocacy for *shutaisei* (independence/individuality). This needs to be understood in relation to the

concurrent emphasis on the value of autonomy in post-war Japan.<sup>7</sup> In 1971, pioneer social psychologist Hiroshi Minami published his book *Psychology of the Japanese People* in English translation. The author argued that since the Tokugawa shogunate (1603-1868), a moral code of “no self” had been ingrained in the minds of the Japanese people. To inculcate compliance so as to secure a firm foundation for feudal society, the shogunate adopted *shingaku* teachings (which integrate Confucian tradition and principles from Zen Buddhism), admonishing the Japanese not to hold on to self, and rejecting every spontaneous impulse as selfish.<sup>8</sup> According to Minami, this mindset of “no self” still pervaded Japanese society even after the Meiji modernisation (1868-1912) as reflected in a national survey on the “common life philosophy,” conducted by the Japanese Ministry of Education in 1953. People voted “to live a pure and just life” – that is, selfless and disinterested – as the optimal life philosophy.<sup>9</sup> This changed in the 1960s. In 1968, at the height of the social turmoil, the Ministry of Education again administered the very same national survey on common life philosophy. This time, discarding the doctrine of “no self,” the Japanese chose instead “to live one’s life according to one’s own tastes.”<sup>10</sup>

In the 1960s, the political climate in Japan instigated a culture of protest. At the outset, the protests were directed against the US-Japan Security Treaty in 1960. In May and June that year, the streets of Tokyo were not free of protesters for a single day. The demonstrations continued to spill over into the streets of the major cities and, through the medium of television, to citizens in their own homes. More profound than merely expressing disapproval of pro-US foreign policy or even anti-Americanism, the activists explicitly advocated *shutaisei* as part of Japan’s post-war liberal democracy. Toward the end of 1968, the protests turned violent. Echoing the student riots overseas, Japan’s universities erupted. Students barricaded school buildings and fought with the police force, confronting authority and demanding autonomy from the government. The tumult lasted until the end of 1969.<sup>11</sup>

Those in the younger generation, especially, sought passionately to create their own identities and explore their individuality. The shared aspirations for *shutaisei* persisted in the 1970s, but now in a nonviolent way. Instead of destructive action, the young Japanese

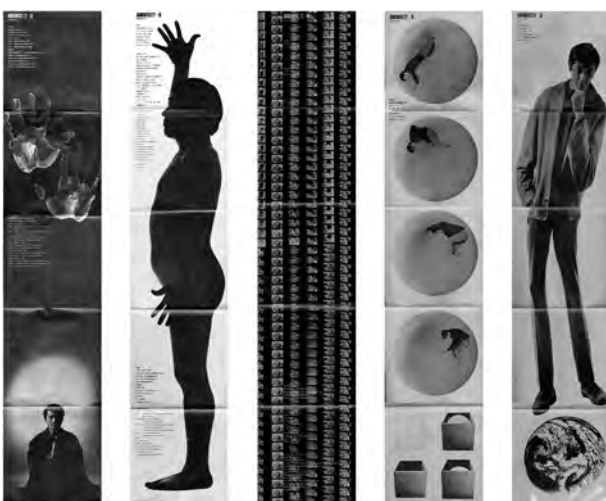


Fig. 2 ArchiteXt 0: self. Courtesy of Takefumi Aida.

engaged in constructive outlets for self-expression. For the architects who formed *ArchiteXt*, *ArchiteXt* was their conduit.

In *ArchiteXt 0*, the five editors/architects introduced themselves in conspicuous graphics (Figure 2). A devout Buddhist, Aida presented himself practicing zazen meditation in the lotus posture; Azuma showed a side profile of his naked self, his left hand teasingly placed to hint at the sex organ as if it were erect; Miyawaki employed repetitive shots of himself engaging in varied architectural activities: drafting, building models, visiting a site, etc.; Suzuki turned a somersault across the squares of his strip; and Takeyama showed an enlarged, elongated self standing on top of the earth. The five men featured themselves distinctively: long profiles across the strip (Azuma and Takeyama), orderly depictions in each square as if it were a separate page (Aida and Suzuki), and just pixels (Miyawaki). Besides the varied format, *ArchiteXt 0* showed intriguing contradiction in content. Aida, sitting zazen, wore a befitting Japanese kimono with wide sleeves, tied with a sash, whereas Takeyama, standing tall above an earth, clothed himself in the western attire of a jacket and pants. Azuma wore nothing. Moreover, Aida scribed his signature in meticulous Japanese calligraphy, while Azuma quoted a western poem from Robert Sheckley's science fiction *Mindswap*. Perhaps Azuma was suggesting that his consciousness has been swapped into the body of an alien life form, which contrasted with Aida, whose physical body was transfixed in the world while his mind indwelt a meditative spiritual realm. Resulting from five distinct "self" expressions, *ArchiteXt 0* was teeming with eastern and western exchanges, and corporeal, mental, and spatial transpositions. Even as an editorial team, these were clearly five unhitched individuals, five characters, in five strips. Clearly in favour of individuality, *ArchiteXt* eschewed the traditional Japanese premium placed on self-negation for a self-radiant and self-centred presence.

### **ArchiteXt 00: self**

*ArchiteXt*'s distinct "self" expressions continued in *ArchiteXt 00*. Its focus, however, shifted from the architects to their architecture. Each author's physical self either diminished (Aida's zazen self was pushed to a corner; Takeyama now stood on top of a high-rise building), became a background (Azuma's previously blank, dark body profile was now filled with architectural images head to toe), or disappeared altogether (no Miyawaki or Suzuki in sight). Reflecting the editors'/architects' individual interests, diverse architectural conceptions populated the pages of *ArchiteXt 00*; the work conveyed their inward/thinking "self," extended from their outward/physical portrayal in *ArchiteXt 0*.

For instance, Takeyama was especially keen on marrying architecture with semiology. His theory of "Heterology" identifies three hypothetical scales and qualifiers – *analogy*, *homology* and *heterology* – to measure likeness and unlikeness among different entities.<sup>12</sup> For Takeyama, architecture means creating "relators" of varying degrees of likeness and unlikeness to govern form, function, content, structure, space, effect and spectacle, and therefore deriving multiple architectural meanings through the processes of signifying and relating. Accordingly, his *ArchiteXt 00* with heterogeneous contents defies a single



comprehensive reading. Each strip, square, or image, is a locus; each bears a signifier without a fixed signification – reflecting Roland Barthes' *Empire of Signs*, which reads Japan into a fictive system of “empty signs.”<sup>13</sup> To a degree, Takeyama's strip is an empire of empty (architectural) signs in itself.

In Takeyama's representation, one architecture especially signifies the post-war *harenchi* (shameless) culture, which epitomises the rise of self in the extreme: Ichibankan (aka No.1 Building), in the red-light district of Tokyo, Kabukicho. This building was actually constructed. Ichibankan belonged to a building type in Japan called *zakkyo biru*. The term literally means a “multi-tenant building,” which assigns its inside units to different uses. *Zakkyo biru* in Kabukicho nevertheless took on a new meaning; the building specifically housed sex clubs and shops. For that reason, the authors of *Made in Tokyo* (2001) re-labelled it “sex building.”<sup>14</sup>

To understand Ichibankan both as an image and a building, the concept of *harenchi* must be accounted for within the context of Kabukicho. Emerged as a deviant by-product of post-war Japan's struggle over *shutaisei*, *harenchi*, though literally translated as “shameless,” came to mean “the fashionable thing to do.”<sup>15</sup> On television, the most popular shows were replete with sexual thrills and exploits, while the radio played pop songs that would heretofore have been considered vulgar. Individual freedom came to be equated with freedom of sexual expression. In some sectors of Japanese society, sex thrills, speed, shock and sensation were sought openly without shame.

*Harenchi* also altered the cityscape of Japan. A red-light district, that is, Kabukicho, emerged in the Shinjuku ward. During World War II, the area had been razed to the ground. When a kabuki theater was planned there afterward, the town changed its name to Kabukicho, i.e. kabuki-town (though the theater was never actually built). Subsequently, in Japan's resuscitated economy in the 1960s, a proliferation of sex shops and clubs opened in the area near Shinjuku station, through which swarms of humanity passed daily. Piece by piece, this district changed into a neon-drenched enclave.

Situated at the heart of Kabukicho, Ichibankan relays the idiosyncratic Japanese sex culture of *harenchi* in symbol (on paper) and in practice (on site). At the outset, Takeyama's Ichibankan signifies *harenchi* by form. The building comprises a zebra-patterned tower, spiky thin panels, and oblique masses of reflective surfaces. Its overall shape is manifestly phallic, especially as portrayed in *ArchiteXt 00* from a skyward angle, and among and above a surrounding crowd of low-rise buildings in Kabukicho (third square). Typically a sex building feigns the austere look of a Japanese office building – inside with conventional entrance foyers, elevators halls, and so on. Ichibankan not only dispenses with disguise but flaunts its prurient identity with showy forms in bold geometries and super-graphics. In *ArchiteXt 00*, Building No. 1 further serves as a pedestal for Takeyama, upon which the architect stands (second square) (Figure 3). Even as Ichibankan shows off its selfhood, Takeyama elevates himself all the higher.





**Fig. 3** Minoru Takeyama, *ArchiteXt 00*, second square.  
Courtesy of Takefumi Aida.

On site, Ichibankan connoted *harenchi* pragmatically by content, saturating its interior spaces with erotic programs. There were eight floors above street level and two basements. A typical floor packed eight rooms close together with four on each side of a narrow corridor to maximise its capacity. These spaces were rented out to 67 nightclubs, shops, bars, cafes and game rooms.

A peek into this erotic underworld in Kabukicho, of which the contents of Ichibankan represented a microcosm, is found in the photo reportage by photographer Nobuyoshi Araki.<sup>16</sup> Nude women in odd poses in bed and the shower, businessmen in ties engaging in wild sexual exploits – erotic fantasies become tangible in Araki’s photos. They expose a murky, invigorating sex enclave, which at once feeds and is fed by the vigour of human lust and ostentatious hedonism. *Harenchi* gave rise to unforeseen sex programs, such as *nopan kissa* (no-panties café), where waitresses are pantiless under their mini-skirts and walk back and forth upon reflective surfaces as they wait tables; or “voyeur’s peep,” which consists of polygonal rooms with slots in the partitions to allow men to peep through and see the showgirl inside performing mundane tasks in an arousing manner: grooming hair, changing clothes, etc. Compacting 67 of these sex programs alike into itself, Ichibankan illustrated the ultimate spatial rendering of *harenchi*.

This ecstatic frenzy of *harenchi* inside Ichibankan extended outwardly to the illustration of the building’s context, Kabukicho. Schizophrenic in character, Kabukicho had distinctly different daytime and night-time personalities. In daylight, the place looked inhospitable and lifeless. Yet when darkness descended, the urban blight rapidly thinned out into a sea of neon lights. Imbued with alcohol, sex and fantasies, the town transformed into sheer thrill and folly. People from all walks of life poured in: flirtatious hosts, eager patrons, curious visitors and the like. At this hour all reserve melted, social norms and behaviours were left behind, and fantasies of all sorts were explored.

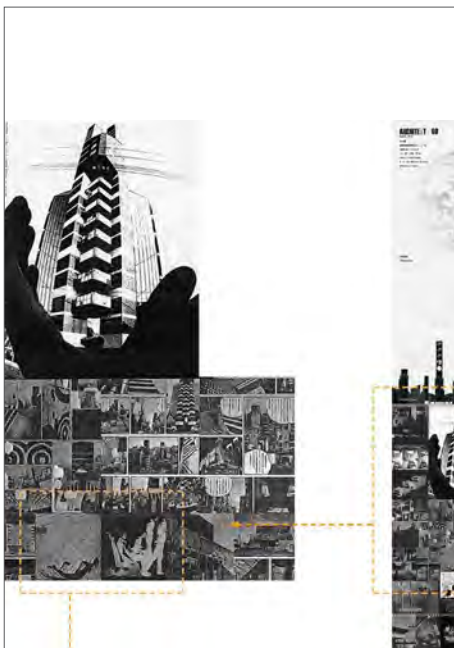
Ichibankan mirrored Kabukicho's schizophrenic change. During the day, while the town laid dormant, the black-and-white-striped tower stood majestically above the neighbourhood's derelict buildings. Yet as the night delirium began, the architecture would dematerialise into pure excitement. With regard to Ichibankan's building character at night, architectural historian Botond Bognar remarked, "The half-mirror glass walls are designed to perform fascinating animation with light and a range of visual illusions, as they reflect the surrounding cityscape throughout the day, while at night the electric illumination inside renders the glass walls transparent when seen from the outside, with the interior spaces appearing as if a kaleidoscope."<sup>17</sup> In the dark, Ichibankan's front tower humbly receded. In turn, lit up and transparent, its flanking glass volumes would expose the sex clubs and shops inside. In a flash, the *harenchi* desires awakened as the light flooded the interior, as if the switch also turned on the red-light district. Throughout the night, the structure performed live via animations (of light) and visual illusions (with half-mirror glass), shining a kaleidoscopic interior of sex programs to the fore.

Moreover, Ichibankan ushered, even rushed, customers inside in anticipation of an erotic destination/climax. With no entrance at its front tower, the opening sucked customers straight to the elevators and stairs, and then speedily to their destinations. This open circulation reinforced a sensation of a continual movement from the street straight up into the air, smooth and seamless. Ichibankan consequently connoted *harenchi* in speed as well. As a multivalent sign, Ichibankan interlaced form, content and context – that is, skin, space and site – into one epic architecture of shamelessness.

In *ArchiteXt 00*, besides Ichibankan, the connotation of shamelessness is equally unmistakable in the illustrations of Takeyama's *Body Lighting* and *Body Furniture*, 1970. *Body Lighting* resembles a fashion mannequin with a wavy, fuzzy wig. The fixture lights up from the wig, creating patchy glows on the body parts, highlighting particular female features: luscious lips, a slender neck, thin shoulders and breasts. Turned into a sex object, the glowing woman can be eyed and fondled at will. This blend of eroticism and servility intensifies in *Body Furniture*, which consists of a three-piece chair set, each chair made up of several copies of a woman's profile laminated together. In its pronounced female form, each chair evokes a distinct sex position: hands and knees on the floor, backbend in a crescent shape in the prone position, and legs lifted with the torso in the recumbent position. A man using the furniture will complete the image of intercourse. Although Takeyama claims that *Body Furniture* merely expresses the individual's yearning to reaffirm existence, which resonates with the yearning for self (but rather than personifying things, the human being itself is converted into a thing), *harenchi* permeates the chair set. Paralleling the contents of Ichibankan (*nopan kissa*, voyeur's peep, etc.), *Body Lighting* and *Body Furniture* cater to sexual fantasies. There is a nonchalant note of shamelessness in them.

Extending from these shameless signs/designs, Takeyama's *ArchiteXt 00* strip, on the whole, operates under his specific logic of "Heterology." Locally, each of its heterogeneous images serves as a "relator." For example, the picture of *Body Furniture* in a recumbent position also includes a man in a sequence of motions from sitting on the woman to standing up and

walking away (Figure 4). The four layers of lamination in the chair echo the four movements of the man. This image institutes an erotic qualifier of *heterology* between the chair/woman and the user/man beyond their formal associations; the culmination of intercourse is suggested, and the man leaves. Globally, across the squares of the magazine strip, the placement of these images/relators institutes further relationships through their organised adjacency. On the left of the picture of the man walking away from the recumbent woman (fourth square, top row), we see a piece of empty Body Furniture; only the woman in the backward crescent position, no man; above, through a rich collection of fragmented images of Ichibankan, presented in an array of Japanese manga templates (third square, bottom rows), this relator arrives at an enlarged picture of the phallic structure in its entirety, rising majestically skyward (third square, top row). Finally, the signified climaxes. Just as Ichibankan variously signals *harenchi*, *ArchiteXt 00* operates as a master relator, semantically and thematically relating and weaving its heterogeneous contents together. Therefore hosting an empire of signs, Takeyama's *ArchiteXt 00* connotes discursively to no end.



**Fig. 4** "Heterology:" an illustration of Takeyama's logic of "relator" at play in *ArchiteXt 00*. Courtesy of Takefumi Aida.

## discontinuous continuity

With *ArchiteXt*, *ArchiteXt* created a forum entirely for free self-expression. Their negation of conventions pitted against the Japanese pyramid of order and its underpinning values loomed large in their heterogeneous editorial works. As exemplified by Takeyama's *ArchiteXt 00* featuring an empire of *harenchi* signs, the editors embroiled their magazine strips with social, cultural, and political polemics underneath their light-hearted presentation, informal graphics and literary devices. Among others, Takeyama concocted a comic strip and a melodramatic dialogue, insinuating Metabolism's arrogance and architectural grandiosity (*ArchiteXt 1*); Suzuki wrote a spatial poem, evoking Japanese Non-Art's critique of the Japanese art institution (*ArchiteXt 2*); Aida composed a series of architectural jests: turning

a Japanese castle upside down to derive a pseudo wall section, jamming dwelling units in-between a shrine gateway to create an apartment tower, and so on, in defiance of the Japanese default code of “emotionless behavior” (*ArchiteXt Extra*).

Soon after its beginning in 1970, ArchiteXt caught the Japanese architectural media’s attention. In 1971, *Kindai Kenchiku* featured a “Secret Recording” of an ArchiteXt meeting (though the recording was obviously staged, not stealth).<sup>18</sup> In 1976, *The Japan Architect* (the English edition of *Shinken-chiku*) dedicated a whole issue exclusively to ArchiteXt, with an introduction penned by Charles Jencks. In response to Jencks’ question concerning the commonalities of ArchiteXt, Takeyama followed Takamasa Yoshizaka (former president of Architectural Institute of Japan) and described their connections as “discontinuous continuity.”<sup>19</sup> Observing the danger of chaotic disintegration in post-war Japanese architecture, Yoshizaka proposed “discontinuous continuity” as a theory to enable “energies of multifarious directions and numerous people to develop and still direct their potentialities toward coalescence in one strength.”<sup>20</sup> ArchiteXt attested to such a convergence in praxis. Joining forces amid disjointedness and rebelling in a light-hearted fashion, ArchiteXt (together with other New Wave architects) stepped out the pyramid, and into the clouds.

- 
- 1 Le Corbusier’s message was forwarded to many parties, and one of them went to Metabolist Kisho Kurokawa.
  - 2 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), ix.
  - 3 Writer Shokichi Oda coins the term *warai no ba* (“laughter place”) to denote the place where laughter is socially permissible, as prescribed by Japanese conventional wisdom and culture. Shokichi Oda, “Laughter and the Traditional Japanese Smile,” *Understanding Humor in Japan*, ed. Jessica Milner Davis (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, c. 2006).
  - 4 ArchiteXt interview transcript by Lisa Hsieh, September 8, 2006.
  - 5 Hsieh, ArchiteXt interview transcript.
  - 6 Hsieh, ArchiteXt interview transcript.
  - 7 See Rikki Kersten, “The Intellectual Culture of Postwar Japan and the 1968-1969 University of Tokyo Struggles: Repositioning the Self in Postwar Thought,” *Social Science Japan Journal* 12, 2 (2009): 227-245.
  - 8 For the concept of “no self,” see Hiroshi Minami, *Psychology of the Japanese People* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1971).
  - 9 Minami, *Psychology of the Japanese People*, x.
  - 10 Minami, *Psychology of the Japanese People*, x.
  - 11 Kersten, “The Intellectual Culture of Postwar Japan and the 1968-1969 University of Tokyo Struggles.”
  - 12 See Minoru Takeyama, “Heterology in Architecture,” *A New Wave of Japanese Architecture* (New York: Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, 1978), 86-95.
  - 13 Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982). Barthes perceives in each Japanese practice or object a signifier, from pachinko game to the custom of bowing. However, the reading of the signifier is for him multivalent, owing to Japan’s cultural heterogeneity, and hence “empty.”
  - 14 Momoyo Kajijima, Junzo Kuroda and Yoshiharu Tsukamoto, *Made in Tokyo* (Tokyo: Kajima Institute Publishing, 2001).
  - 15 Minami, *Psychology of the Japanese People*, xi.
  - 16 Nobuyoshi Araki, *Tokyo Lucky Hole* (Køln; New York: Taschen, c. 1997). The book compiles over 700 pages of Araki’s photos of various sex scenes shot in the night clubs of Kabukicho.
  - 17 Minoru Takeyama, ed., *Botond Bognar* (London: Academy Editions, 1995), 33.
  - 18 *Kindai Kenchiku* 25 (June 1971).
  - 19 Charles Jencks, “ArchiteXt and the Problem of Symbolism,” *The Japan Architect* (June 1976): 21.
  - 20 Takamasa Yoshizaka, “Five Individuals in a Group,” *The Japan Architect* (June 1976): 80.