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Artpolis Legacies

Proliferation of Public Architecture Programs for Urban Regeneration in Turn of the Century Japan

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Inspired by the Berlin International Building Exhibition (IBA) 1987, Kumamoto Prefecture's Artpolis program (1988-present) initiated a new paradigm for public architecture in Japan. Artpolis introduced a novel commissioner system, which reformed procurement processes, and provided poignant alternatives to master planning approaches. The multi-faceted program was established with a tripartite organizational structure divided between the Governor with the Artpolis Administrative Office, Advisor and Commissioner, all collaborating through three key enterprises – projects, awards and public relations. Entrepreneurial administrators around Japan quickly recognized the potentials of Artpolis, which was subsequently emulated by a range of prefectures and municipalities who adopted variations of the model. Examining the legacies of Artpolis and its impacts on architectural culture in Japan, this paper compares the strategies and outcomes of four progeny public architecture programs. Toyama Prefecture's Machi-no-Kao ("face of the city") program (1991-1999) was the earliest emulator established in conjunction with the 1992 Toyama Expo and it focused on bringing international architects to develop catalytic projects in rural Japan. Okayama Prefecture imitated the Artpolis project enterprise with their Creative Town Okayama program (1991-1999), and neglected Artpolis' other key public relations and awarding enterprises. Shiroishi's Mediapolis (1992-2004) created a city scale variation of the Artpolis project enterprise guided by a notion of urban acupuncture. Hiroshima 2045: City of Peace and Creativity (1995-present), the last of the Artpolis inspired programs, was a city-wide effort that expanded from a commissioner to a rotating selection committee for municipal projects. This paper compares and contrasts the programs to understand the broad influences of Artpolis and



to discover why Artpolis has persisted despite the limited lives of its progeny. While tracing the evolution of approaches to catalytic public architecture in Japan, the paper also highlights broader issues of precedent, emulation and expanding public architecture.

The early 1990s in booming Japan saw the fortuitous intersection of entrepreneurial leaders trying to distinguish their regions and cities, the expanding cultural economy and increasing recognition of the catalytic potentials of architecture to stimulate communities, connections, attraction and attention. The Kumamoto Prefecture Artpolis program (1988- present), which was inspired by the Berlin International Building Exhibition (IBA, 1979-1987), is a premier example of this intersection and the program that instituted a new paradigm for public architecture in Japan. Artpolis introduced a novel commissioner system, which reformed procurement processes, and provided poignant alternatives to master planning approaches. Artpolis attracted a lot of attention across the general and architectural press, and like the proliferation of pursuing “Bilbao effects” with star architect cultural institutions, entrepreneurial administrators around Japan quickly recognized the potentials of Artpolis, which was subsequently emulated by a range of prefectures and municipalities who adopted variations of the model.¹ This paper examines a cross-section of prefectural and municipal endeavors across four public architecture programs—Toyama Prefecture’s Machino-Kao (“face of the city”) program (1991-1999), Okayama Prefecture’s Creative Town Okayama program (1991-1999), the Shiroishi City Mediapolis (1992-2004), and Hiroshima 2045: City of Peace and Creativity (1995-present)—that followed Artpolis, comparing and contrasting the programs to understand the broad influences of Artpolis and the evolution of approaches to producing catalytic public architecture in Japan.

1. See “Urban Design 90’s,” *Nikkei Architecture* (February 5, 1990): 58-100; “Urban Design 90’s, part 2,” *Nikkei Architecture* (February 19, 1990): 84-129; “New Era of Public Architecture from Local Governments,” *Fusion Planning* 43 (December, 1991): 15-44; Hiroshi Watanabe, “The Possibilities for Public Architecture in Japan,” *GA Document* 33 (1992): 8-13; Carola Hein, “Prestige and Diversion: Grand Projects in Japan,” *Archis* 6 no.1 (1998): 48-61; Naomi Pollock, “Designing for the Japanese Public,” in *Japan 2000 Architecture and Design for the Japanese Public*, ed. John Zukowsky (Munich: Prestel, 1998), 31-47.

Kumamoto Prefecture’s Artpolis Program

Kumamoto Prefecture occupies 7,404 km² at the center of Kyushu Island in south-west Japan supporting a population of 1.81 million primarily through agriculture, forestry and tourism. In 1988, Governor Morihiro Hosokawa launched the Artpolis program. Artpolis is a paradigmatic program that revolutionized public architecture by modulating both the production and

consumption of architecture through three key enterprises— projects, awards and public relations. The project enterprise radically revised procurement procedures, instituting a commissioner system to raise the level of design and expand the possibilities of public buildings. Beyond simply facilitating public works, Artpolis is a comprehensive effort to produce innovative public projects, publicize architecture and foster public engagement with architecture. The organizers created new systems to commission architects for projects—ranging from public toilets to housing to museums—and support programs to stimulate public interest in architecture through a range of events—spanning from local tours to international conferences and exhibitions.

Artpolis is a variation on public-private partnerships combining public administration and independent coordination of architects, architecture, and events through a tripartite organizational structure divided between the Governor with the Artpolis Administrative Office within the Prefectural Government, the Commissioner with support staff, and the Advisor with a broad advisory committee. The program began with internationally renowned architect Arata Isozaki as Commissioner and Kumamoto University Professor Kiyoharu Horiuchi as Advisor. In the second phase, from 1998, Teiichi Takahashi took over as Commissioner with Toyo Ito as Vice-Commissioner. In 2005, Ito became the current Commissioner with an active advisory group.

Official program documents outline intentions to stimulate the region and its municipalities, with both tourism resources, landmark facilities and centres for activities. Administrators sought design excellence, buildings that could survive for posterity and high quality living environments. Through new architecture Artpolis organizers hoped to elevate regional culture and to express the region's independence and originality. Organizers believed that internationally recognized designs beyond simply functional public buildings, could impact lifestyles, foster dialogue and inspire new directions that extended the distinct environmental and historical characteristics of the region. Organizers also sought to increase peoples' interest in environmental design and to expand urban and architectural culture—through increased public awareness and the proliferation of projects. Projects were anticipated to create a network as individual interventions aggregated into lines and planes spreading across the prefecture.²

2. Kumamoto Artpolis Administrative Office, *Kumamoto Artpolis Information* (Kumamoto City: Kumamoto Artpolis Jimukyoku, 2005), 3.



The project enterprise is the most prominent part of the program.³ The novel commissioner system replaced granting projects to the lowest bidders with a matchmaking process, illustrated in Figure 1, revaluing architecture by placing design quality and lasting cultural expression on par with economic concerns. The Artpolis Office solicits clients, coordinates the Commissioner’s nomination of architect(s), provides advice as needed during the production stage, and promotes the completed project through marking participating projects with an Artpolis plaque and inclusion in various public relations enterprises. The Artpolis Office is not a client, but a bureaucratic structure for matchmaking architects, and a producer and promoter of projects.

3. The Artpolis project enterprise procedures have evolved in conjunction with each Commissioner, but for the purposes of this paper only the phase one process is presented since it directly influenced subsequent emulations of the program.

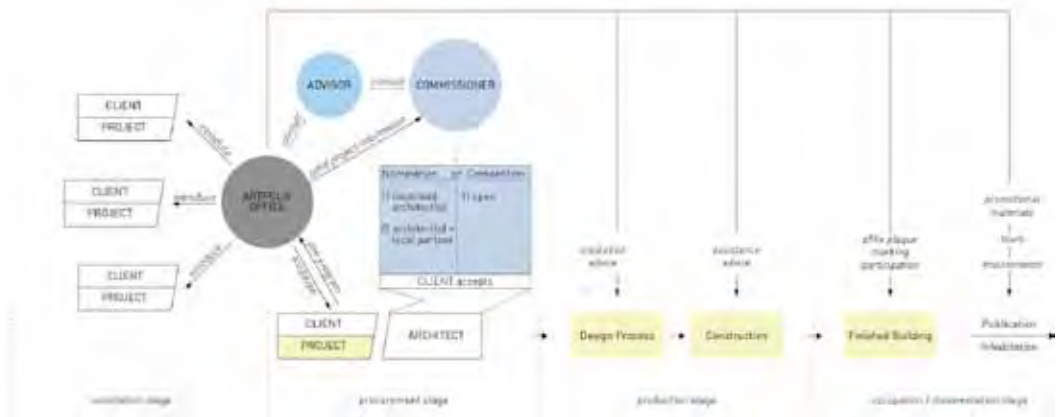


Figure 1: Artpolis project enterprise process (source: author)

As of 2012, Artpolis has produced 80 projects across a broad spectrum of building types—from public toilets to transportation facilities and from recreational to educational institutions—and diverse locations around Kumamoto. Overall, public housing complexes and small park facilities have been the most prolific types of Artpolis projects. This diversity reflects the ardent belief in Artpolis nurturing architecture as a catalytic form of culture.

Toyama Prefecture’s Machi-no-Kao Program

Toyama Prefecture covers 4247 km² on the north coast of central Japan supporting around one million inhabitants. In 1991, Governor Yutaka Nakaoki initiated the Machi-no-Kao (“face of the town”) program, which was the earliest offspring of Artpolis, with the intention for a series of small projects, acting

as stimulating new symbols for regional towns, to debut in conjunction with the 1992 Toyama Expo. Like Artpolis, Isozaki was nominated as Commissioner for this program and he delegated management to his staff member Shuichi Fujie and Tom Heneghan. Machi-no-Kao had oversight from the Prefecture's planning department and was administered through a local office in conjunction with Fujie and Heneghan in the Tokyo office. While Artpolis endeavored to expand opportunities for public work for atelier design offices, Machi-no-Kao was rationalized through the folklore notion of *marebito* ("influential stranger") as Isozaki sought international architects who could work with local people and architects to generate emblematic projects around Toyama.⁴ Like Artpolis, the organizers anticipated the growth of the program would generate a network of stimulating projects. Machi-no-Kao was explained as "a project to develop towns' expression through interactions between local citizens and artists from around the world."⁵ The program ambitions closely echoed Artpolis aiming to: 1) create new unique perspectives from the local conditions based on the nature, history and culture of the participating towns; 2) use design coordination of new symbolic projects to generate enduring facilities to improve lifestyle; 3) develop linkages between Toyama and the world through incorporating foreign perspectives to foster global views.⁶ Like Artpolis, Machi-no-Kao began with intentions to produce exhibitions, symposia and publications.⁷

4. See "Machi-no-Kao, Toyama," *Japan Architect* 1 (1994): 242-49; Hidetaka Hara, "Toyama, Machi-no-Kao to Kirameki Chashitsu de Yutaka ni Narou," *Kenchiku Bunka* (January 1993): 18; Shuichi Fujie, "Toyama-ken Machi-no-Kao Purojecto," *Shinkenchiku* 11 (1993): 263-84; Shuichi Fujie, "Toyama-ken Machi-no-Kao Zukuri Itayou na Fudo to Dokuji no Bunka," *Shinkenchiku* 11 (1999).

5. Machi-no-Kao Office, *Machi-no-Kao Information* (Toyama City: Toyama Prefecture, n.d.), 2.

6. Machi-no-Kao Office, *Machi-no-Kao Information*, 1.

7. The local office produced eight *Machi-no-Kao News* pamphlets, an international symposium in 1992, and a *Machi-no-Kao* book. Shuichi Fujie, Machi-no-Kao director, in discussion with the author, May 25, 2006; Yu Hane, Machi-no-Kao local program coordinator, in discussion with the author, August 15, 2006.



Figure 2: Machi-no-Kao projects- Uozu Observatory (1997) by Daniel Libeskind and Oshima Divided House (1993) by Benson + Forsyth with GA Kaihatsu Kenkyusho (source: author).

The resulting Machi-no-Kao projects emerged from evolving community meetings, consultation with the program coordinators, and dialogues with the nominated international architects. The majority of projects were small follies that incorporated local scenery, materials, or customs developed through exchanges between local architects and foreign architects,



who ranged from Daniel Libeskind and Enric Miralles to Ron Herron and Carlos Villanueva Brandt. Many of the architects, including Heneghan, undertook several projects. Organizers sought a diversity of projects reflecting regional variety and projects ranged from museums to observatory decks to bridges and bus stations. During its short duration Machi-no-Kao yielded eighteen projects all of which were funded locally and subsidized by the Prefecture. The first round of projects were completed around 1992 and 1993, and a second round of projects completed between 1997 and 1999. The program became dormant when Prefectural subsidies dried up. Unlike Artpolis, which produced projects with demonstrated need, it proved difficult to continue to produce small landmark Machi-no-Kao projects with unspecified needs in difficult economic conditions.

Okayama Prefecture’s Creative Town Okayama Program

Okayama Prefecture covers 7111 km² on the inland sea in south-west Japan supporting around two million inhabitants. In 1991, Governor Shirou Nagano began their Creative Town Okayama (CTO) program. Nagano eschewed criticism and openly acknowledged that he imitated Artpolis because he believed it was a beneficial model for improving the built environment.⁸ The ambitions of CTO mimicked Artpolis, aiming to: 1) respect the history and nature of the region while collecting skills and ideas from architects and designers inside and outside the prefecture; 2) raise the quality of architecture and urban design; 3) create environments that reflect the uniqueness and attractiveness of Okayama as well as being culturally rich and comfortable.⁹ More than national and international recognition or cultural economic and tourism potentials, Nagano was primarily concerned with improving the built environment through higher quality architecture.

8. Shinichi Okada, Commissioner of CTO, in discussion with the author, July 25, 2006. Masayuki Shintani, local coordinator for CTO, in discussion with the author, August 25, 2006.

9. CTO Office, *Creative Town Okayama Information* (Okayama City: Okayama Prefecture, 1996).

The governor appointed Shinichi Okada as Commissioner and set up a support office within the Prefectural government. CTO project procedures mirrored Artpolis procedures down to the application of a plaque marking participation in the program, with the minor addition of the Commissioner contributing a key sentence to guide the projects. Rather than a local advisor Okada enlisted three consultants to help with selection of external architects and a pool of consultants to help choose local



Figure 3: CTO projects- Nakasho Housing Phase II (1996) by Tsutomu Abe and Sekkei Gijutsu Center and Okayama West Police Station (1996) by Arata Isozaki and Osamu Kuramori (source: author)

10. For members of the advisory groups see CTO Office, *Creative Town Okayama Information*.

11. CTO Office, *Creative Town Okayama Information*.

12. Okada, in discussion with the author, July 25, 2006.

13. See also "Creative Town Okayama," *Shinkenchiku* 5 (1994): 255-267; "Creative Town Okayama," *Space Design* 1 (1996): 53-108.

architects.¹⁰ A majority of the projects produced by CTO were undertaken by collaborations between external and local architects, but no foreign architects were included. Even though its literature expressed interest in symposia and publications, CTO focused only on the production of public projects.¹¹ The range of CTO projects was very similar to Artpolis with the exception of producing more welfare related buildings. Like both Artpolis and Machi-no-Kao, the majority of projects were small park buildings. Over its eight-year existence CTO yielded twenty-one projects, but another fifteen projects were never realized.

Like Machi-no-Kao, CTO succumbed to poor economic conditions and shifting spending priorities. A shift in government in 1996 further reduced support for the program, which completed its last project in 1999. However, as of 2006 Okada was still lobbying to continue the program.¹² Like Artpolis, CTO drew most attention with its housing projects and police facilities, but CTO projects were generally more modest lacking the provocative pursuits and broad recognition that characterized early Artpolis projects.¹³

Shiroishi City's Mediapolis Program

Shiroishi City is a former castle town covering 286 km² with around 40,000 citizens on the east coast of northern Japan. Beginning in 1988, Mayor Tei-ichi Kawai, who was inspired by both European cities, such as Vienna and Artpolis' ambitions, developed efforts to fashion Shiroishi into one of the most livable cities in Japan. These efforts evolved into the Shiroishi Mediapolis through a design committee and then under Hideto



Horiike serving as City Producer from 1994 to 2004.¹⁴ Kawai and Horiike were keenly aware of the pressures of interurban competition and the potentials of the cultural economy. With the Mediapolis program they aimed: 1) to discover and develop Shiroishi's regional individuality, while seeking the highest standard of living in Japan; 2) to protect historical urban structures and nurture the future image of the castle town; 3) to develop the city through "self-healing" acupuncture strategies that stimulate points across the city.¹⁵

14. Tei-ichi Kawai, "Kurashi Nihon-ichi no Machizukuri wo Mezashite," *Space Design* 1 (1996): 130-1.

15. Kawai, "Kurashi Nihon-ichi," 130-1.

Unlike the previous programs, the scale of Shiroishi enabled organizers to begin with an overall plan. However, rather than a typical comprehensive master plan Horiike employed a notion of urban acupuncture to determine strategic locations for improving the city and generated a "master image" to help choreograph interventions.¹⁶ Horiike proceeded to slowly develop identified areas with projects designed by himself or delegated to others. In collaboration Kawai and Horiike added twelve projects. The Shirasagi Bridge (1994) by Hitoshi Abe and the Shiroishi Second Primary School (1996) by Taro Ashihara and Koh Kitayama exemplify the early stages of Kawai's efforts. The Cube culture and recreation centre (1997) by Horiike and the Athens multimedia centre (1996) by Hajime Yatsuka exemplify the ambitions of creating a multimedia nexus in Shiroishi, which led to the Mediapolis moniker.¹⁷ The Cube project, which sits near the bullet train station connecting Shiroishi to Tokyo and nearby Sendai, created a culture based attractor in the region and an iconic local facility. The Athens project provided IT training and facilities for the community. In contrast to the previous programs, the majority of Mediapolis projects were educational and welfare facilities addressing

16. See Hideto Horiike "Ten wo semete Toshii wo utsu," *Shinkenchiku* 3 (1996): 186-7.

17. Horiike expressed intentions to use the power of media to build the city. Hideto Horiike, Producer of Shiroishi Mediapolis, in discussion with the author, July 21, 2006.

Figure 4: Shiroishi Mediapolis projects-Athens multimedia centre (1998) by Hajime Yatsuka and Katta General Hospital (2003) by Hideto Horiike, Taro Ashihara and Koh Kitayama (source: author)



community issues across the local demographics. Yet, all of the Mediapolis projects were emblematic contemporary buildings expected to project the vigor of the city.

Unlike Isozaki's efforts in Kumamoto and Toyama, Horiike did not seek to provoke local engagement with architecture, but to improve quality of life and built environment through a higher level of contemporary public buildings reflecting his predilections. As such, Shiroishi focused exclusively on producing projects and Horiike had the opportunity to be involved in the majority of buildings constructed by the city. The Shiroishi Mediapolis developed through a passionate mayoral patron and a perceptive architectural producer, and has succeeded in drawing national and international attention and visitors to the city.¹⁸ However, the program ended in 2004 when the next mayor took office.

18. Receiving the 2002 Italian Dedalo Minosse International Prize for Commissioning a Building is just one example of international attention generated. Shiroishi Mayor Tei-ichi Kawai, in discussion with the author, August 9, 2006. See also Tei-ichi Kawai, "Europa ga Mitometa Shiroishi no Machizukuri," *Keiwakai* (April 1 2005): 2-4.

Hiroshima City's Hiroshima 2045: City of Peace and Creativity Program

Hiroshima City is the capital of the prefecture and covers 905 km² supporting around one million inhabitants. In conjunction with the 1995 fiftieth anniversary of the atomic bombing of the city Mayor Takashi Hiraoka started the Hiroshima 2045: City of Peace & Creativity program to help ensure the creation of high quality public buildings to shape the quality of the built environment over the subsequent fifty years. Hiroshima 2045 is one of the last programs in the Artpolis lineage. It maintains the commitment to improved design, but also represents the attenuation of public architecture programs. Compared to the previous programs, Hiroshima 2045 documents express the most modest aims of selecting outstanding designers for key civic projects to create a unique identity for Hiroshima that draws on existing environmental characteristics and develops attractive urban environments that can heighten quality of life and make people feel culturally rich and peaceful.¹⁹

19. Hiroshima 2045: City of Peace & Creativity Office, *Hiroshima 2045: City of Peace & Creativity Information* (Hiroshima City: Urban Design Department of the Hiroshima City Government, 2006), 2.

Having the opportunity to witness the evolution of other public architecture programs around the country, Hiroshima expanded from a commissioner system to a rotating selection committee to decide on the architect(s) for municipal projects. The program focuses solely on procurement, and follows Artpolis in marking the completed projects with a plaque and creating project sheet



explanations of each building. Though operating at a smaller scale, Hiroshima 2045 also resembles the American GSA Design Excellence program, which shifted to preeminent selection committees to increase the level of design across federal buildings.²⁰ The urban design department of the municipal government oversees the program, which awaits municipal project directors joining the program and then organizes a selection committee for the project. The program has only been employed for a few projects since many project directors have been discouraged by the focus on symbolic projects and by cost implications.²¹

20. See GSA, *Vision + Voice, Design Excellence in Federal Architecture: Building a Legacy* (Washington DC: General Services Administration, 2002).

21. Hiroyuki Inoue, past coordinator for Hiroshima City of Peace and Creativity, in discussion with the author, August 29, 2006.

Like the previous programs, the types and locations of projects have emerged without an overarching coordinated plan and contribute to an incrementally expanding network. Comparatively, Hiroshima 2045 has produced a similar variety of projects, the majority of which have been park and education buildings. Yet, the volume of Hiroshima 2045 projects has been limited, with only ten completed since 1995. Officially the program still continues today, but the last project, an administrative office in Asaminami ward, was completed in 2008.²² Since Hiroshima 2045 was conceptualized with a mandate for fifty years of architectural production the program persists, but the production of projects has been severely hampered by economic and political conditions, including new mayors in 1999 and 2011.

Figure 5: Hiroshima 2045 projects: West Hiroshima Fire Station (2000) by Riken Yamamoto and Motomachi High School (2000) by Hiroshi Hara (source: author)

22. Hiroshima 2045 maintains a website presence on the city website and in 2011 conducted a survey of the value and effects of the ten completed projects. See www.city.hiroshima.lg.jp/www/contents/0000000000000/1263793

Comparative Reflections

The programs surveyed in this paper represent a paradigm shift in the production of public architecture in Japan at the end of the twentieth century. The programs, summarised in Figure 6, demonstrate the shift to commissioner systems as alternat-



	Artpolis	Toward Public for Area	Shinjuku Green Program	Shinjuku Parklands	Shinjuku Plaza & Living City 2005
Year/Start	1988 (1981)	1991 (1988)	1997 (1993)	1992 (1981/1992)	1995 (2001)
Primary Aim	Company's activities with new architecture to capture cultural spaces and attraction of international attention	Local symbols by design architecture	Regional renaissance with better architecture	Private initiative for urban development and improved quality of life	Government (central) capital with public design
Initiative Method	Government	Government	Government	City Authority	Public-Private Partnership
Initiator	Gen. Hosokawa	Gen. Akaiwa	Gen. Ego	Mayor Ego	Mayor Hosokawa
Producer	01: Institute of Architecture and Landscape 02: Tachibana & Co. 03: Kuroki Architects	01: Institute of Architecture and Landscape	01: Osaka 02: Osaka of Foreign, et. al.	01: Osaka	01: Institute of Architecture and Landscape
# Completed Projects	79	6	10	12	10
Building types					
Park	10	1	3	1	1
Residing	12	1	4	1	1
Administrative	1	1	1	1	1
Cultural	1	1	1	1	1
Public	1	1	1	1	1
Living	1	1	1	1	1
Community center	1	1	1	1	1
Sports facility	1	1	1	1	1
Office	1	1	1	1	1
Museum	1	1	1	1	1
Site	1	1	1	1	1
Leisure	1	1	1	1	1
International	1	1	1	1	1
Hotel	1	1	1	1	1
Apprentice	1	1	1	1	1
Department	1	1	1	1	1
Retail	1	1	1	1	1
Industrial	1	1	1	1	1
# Planned (Total)	1	1	1	1	1
Number of employees		1	1	1	1

Figure 6: Summary comparison of programs, (source: author).

ives to procurement by lowest bidder, creating a mechanism intended to improve the quality of the built environment. All of the programs adopted a coordinated incremental approach in sharp contrast to top-down master planning and demonstrate the efficacy of incremental strategies, especially for developing regions. Each program developed branding to distinguish outputs from general public works. The plaque affixed to each project as a brand logo is one of the few things that identify projects as part of the program’s network. All of the programs were initiated by strong leaders investing in the catalytic potentials of architecture as local symbol and resource, as well as global attractors of people and attention.

23. “Interview: Hosokawa Morihiro-Shi ‘Kenchiku Haku’ Nikometa Chiiki Kaihatsu Senryaku No Nerai,” *Nikkei Architecture* (1988, August 8): 23. Morihiro Hosokawa, in discussion with the author, April 20, 2006 and Hideyaki Katsura, in discussion with the author, November 5, 2005.

Artpolis spawned subsequent programs in Japan, but none simply copied Artpolis enterprises. Hosokawa visited and was inspired by the 1987 Berlin IBA. Originally, organizers maintained that “Artpolis took a hint from IBA” and that IBA was a catalyst to start conversations.²³ The Japanese progeny subsequently took hints and strategies from Artpolis



for their own conversations. In Machi-no-Kao Isozaki drew on his Artpolis experiences, but shifted to focus on input from foreign architects. CTO acknowledged its emulation with the minor modification of a Commissioner's guiding sentence and a preference for pairing local and external architects. In contrast, Shiroishi relied heavily on Horiike's preferences including establishing an overall image to guide interventions, which made the program more deliberate and less dependent on the ad-hoc participation of clients that encumbered the other programs. Hiroshima strayed furthest from the Artpolis model preferring a rotating selection committee to a singular commissioner. Artpolis initially built on the Berlin IBA and the subsequent programs represent further variations on evolving approaches to public architecture.²⁴ The diversity of programs reinforces that architecture's roles in urban/regional regeneration does not provide simple repeatable formulas or pattern book approaches. Strategies need to be calibrated to the exigencies of each context.

24. Artpolis quadrennial events located the program in comparison to national and international efforts. For comparisons with Toyama see "Toyama-ken Machi-no-Kao" in *Urban Design 12 Cities*, ed. Kumamoto Artpolis '92 Executive Committee (Tokyo: INAX, 1992), 146-155. For comparisons with Okayama and Shiroishi see "Creative Town Okayama" and "Shiroishi Mediapolis" in *Soft Urbanism: 15 Projects*, ed. Kumamoto Artpolis '96 Executive Committee (Tokyo: INAX, 1996), 32-44, 52-59.

Artpolis introduced flexible multi-faceted approaches and it is difficult to argue that adaptations in subsequent programs represent improvements. Similarly, the limited life spans of the subsequent Japanese programs calls into question why Artpolis has been able to survive for over twenty-five years across four governors and three Commissioners while the progeny programs have been short-lived? All of the programs were susceptible to economic and political changes and the progeny programs often ended with new governments or shifting spending priorities. The limited longevities are not related to the transformability or the efficacy of the Artpolis model but to its selective implementation. The multi-faceted robustness of Artpolis has contributed to its resilience. The combination of projects, public relations and award enterprises stimulates both the production and consumption of architecture. In contrast, the progeny programs focused primarily on project production. However, Artpolis efforts to also attract attention and facilitate public interactions through public relations enterprises have been vital. Fostering engagement with the general public has been a crucial vehicle for securing political support within dynamic political and economic environments. Comparatively, Kumamoto also had a stronger base to build up its architecture culture. Artpolis developed connections with local architecture through the Advisor, through a large number of architecture schools in the region and through the award enterprise spurring local architectural production. Artpolis organizers have also been more savvy with

media and politics. Artpolis generated much more national and international attention through the public relations enterprises, especially publications, travelling exhibitions and quadrennial international events. Artpolis organizers leveraged earning the first Architectural Institute of Japan Culture Prize for a public architecture program and international publicity to be the only survivor when Governor Hosokawa's successor abolished all of the previous regime's initiatives. Overcoming the first transition of prefectural governments shifted Artpolis from being seen as a patronage program of the governor and increased the difficulty of subsequent governors terminating the program. Presently, Artpolis is operating under a supportive governor who has helped breathe new life into the program, which continues to evolve shaped by subsequent commissioners and dynamic political and economic contexts.

Artpolis was pivotal in reforming public architecture in fin de siècle Japan by introducing new procurement systems that reoriented pure pragmatic and economic concerns with increased recognition of the value of design and the need for quality built environments. Subsequent programs followed suit with their own variations while maintaining a growing commitment to the catalytic potentials of architecture for urban/regional regeneration through stimulating locales, fostering communities, increasing attractions and enabling broader connections nationally and internationally. Artpolis also expanded architectural culture in Japan, evident in its emulation across the country and in the concerted public relations enterprises, which were not adopted by progeny programs but have been vital for Artpolis to survive the conditions that most of its successors succumbed to. Together Artpolis and its descendant programs demonstrate the evolution of public architecture in contemporary Japan offering hints and cautions for related regeneration efforts and public architecture programs around the globe.

