

On Isamu Wakabayashi's "Transition" Around 1990

Masao Kitatani

The sculptor Isamu Wakabayashi, when referring to his "Oscillating Scale" concept, which he formulated in the 1970s for his sculptural work, offered in his later years the following explanation: "'Oscillating Scale' is a made-up term derived from the word 'oscillate', and is fundamental aspect of my sculpture. But when it comes to our work, we have to deepen thought and sensitivity while producing a piece, or else the concept never stands on its own, and remains something incompletely formed." Accordingly, after having defined the "Oscillating Scale" concept in the 1970s, Wakabayashi explored the development of this concept/artwork repeatedly, and attempted to "deepen thought and sensitivity".

In this essay, my goal is to trace the development of Wakabayashi's concept/artwork in the period around 1990. By focusing on two exhibitions held in the latter half of the 1980s, I have examined both the gaps and the threads of continuity found in his works of that period.

Specifically, the following points are addressed: the same works were shown in the two exhibitions; however, those works were displayed in different ways and with different titles in each exhibition, and this acts as an indicator of Wakabayashi's development during that period; and furthermore, within this development, the consideration of his "Oscillating Scale" is maintained. By discussing these points, I hope to shed light on the deepening and development of the concept of "Oscillating Scale", which is so fundamental to the sculptural creation of Isamu Wakabayashi.

(Translated by Seth Yarden)

Modeling Architecture on Natural Phenomena: Focus on Junya Ishigami

Yoko Nose

For the exhibition "Another Scale of Architecture" (Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, 2010), Junya Ishigami developed five projects modeling an architecture based on natural phenomena, or on natural environments. These projects were experimental re-creations of museum exhibition space as architectural site, but this was no mere mimicking of nature so as to endow architecture with poetic or fantastical aspects. Rather, in response to the dramatic environmental changes currently taking place around us, the work is a contemplation and drawing-out of the potential of architecture both now and in the future.

Ever since man's first structures in primordial times, the world of "architecture" erected by humans and the world of "nature" in which humans exist have been inextricably linked. This essay starts with a survey of twentieth-century modernist architecture, wherein the links between "architecture" and "nature" were severed and "nature" was supplanted with "machines", and then delves into the architecture of the 1960s, when mounting environmental issues led to a renewed interest in "architecture" in tandem with "nature". By comparing the architecture of modernism, with its great developments reflecting those of the age of machines, to 1960s architecture, with its fantastical vastness that was inspired by the broadening environmental viewpoints of the time, we will explore the meaning and background of scale in the architecture of Ishigami and the modeling of that scale in "natural environments".

(Translated by Seth Yarden)