

Things I thought about from the time I was a student

Yasuyoshi Kuro (Completed studies in 1986; Architecture Design Dept., Yamashita Sekkei Inc.)

□ What Architect Shin Isozaki thought about

When writing these words, it was right that the Nikkei Shimbun monthly article “My Resume” was written by architect Shin Isozaki wherein he described his childhood and youth, the process that took him to where he is now starting with his activities at the Tange laboratories he respected so much, the architecture and people from other fields that he encountered sharing many details in the gently self-humbling way he is known for. It struck me that in the course of this recounting he didn't spend too much time on his own works but how much of the article was about the people connected to the process and the activities and their results.

□ Things I thought about during competitions and research

By chance, I was provided with a great place to think about the connections between self, people and team as a student. I began entering my works in architectural design competitions from my days in college. I remember clearly the many days and nights I worked to raise my chances of winning. It goes without saying that I worked through the night on many occasions as the deadlines for the contests and research overlapped. One time I'll never forget it had progressed to the point that I felt too weak to climb the stairs from the Watanabe lab to get a copy from the office. Even this kind of lifestyle is full of people that you meet and while the experience is difficult, it is shared and thus you can find enjoyment and encouragement.

□ What I have gained from connecting with people

The greatest impact on my life from being at a technical institution like this was that I was not alone. I encountered other human beings that shared my passions, people that I could respect. By connecting with these people our shared entries in competition and research came to be recognized by broader society and I still make opportunities to meet them today.

□ Society means connecting with people

After graduation I was hired by an organization and was happy to discover that the work there did not differ much from what I had been doing at the laboratory. Since the place I was hired was the same place that had hosted my practicum in my fourth year of studies I was given the opportunity to work together with the practicum supervisor as my direct manager. That manager went on to become president of the company and this year was instated as chairman of the board. It goes without saying that I have been blessed to meet people in many fields and to have strong connections with them.

□ What I experienced at Roppongi Hills.

I'd like to share for a moment about Roppongi Hills, which is well known for many appearances in various media outlets. The design of this building involved collaboration of more than ten foreign and domestic companies, myself included, and the partnership of various specialists, designers and university professors. With the extremely short schedule, no one tried to push their own agendas, but while mutually working to advance each other's ideas we see the results of ongoing praise from society for environmental technology. In particular, we were able to use the earthquake measures installed on the roof as green space, a new technology discovered with the client enriching the daily lives of local people, not just the office workers that work in the building. Every year high school students have requested to speak directly with people that designed Hills and come all the way out to us.

□ I would like to remember “Regional Planning” in future projects

While researching and designing buildings at the laboratory when I was still at the Department of Architectural Engineering, I always remained aware of the term “Regional Planning.” Thinking back on it, when considering buildings I would always look for ways to connect to the local society (the community of people). In my work moving forwards as well, I would like to use this concept that could be said to be a core experience that one gains at this alma mater. It is my hope to create and take pride in buildings with social capital sought by society in each time as a result.



■ The weight of the Roppongi Hills rooftop garden functions to reduce seismic action, while having space for local children to plant rice. Each year in the fall we harvest Roppongi Rice.

