2019 Laureate
Arata Isozaki
Japan

Image Book

Arata Isozaki
The following pages contain images of and text about the architecture of Arata Isozaki. On the pritzkerprize.com website, a selection of these photographs and drawings have been linked to high resolution images that may be used for printing or broadcast in relation to the announcement of Arata Isozaki being named the 2019 Pritzker Architecture Prize Laureate. Photographs may not be reproduced for commercial or personal use without written consent from the photographers.

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Isozaki’s early career began with the postwar rebuilding of Japan in his hometown of Ōita on the island of Kyushu. Ōita Prefectural Library (renamed Ōita Art Plaza) was one of the architect’s first commissions and part of a larger plan that emphasized “growing architecture,” his theory that city planning should never remain static, but be intended for growth and evolution.

An analogy with the human body was an inspiration for the organization of the building, which was realized mainly in exposed concrete and gives way to environments of lightness and darkness through skylights and windows.
Ōita
Prefectural Library
1962-66

Photo courtesy of Yasuhiro Ishimoto
Ōita
Prefectural
Library
1962-66

Ōita, Japan
The Museum of Modern Art
1971-74
Gunma, Japan

The Museum of Modern Art, Gunma, was the first of Isozaki's museum commissions, and is based on the architect's concept of the "art gallery as void." It is comprised of a system of cubes that form a primary rectangular backbone with two projecting wings. The concept of the cube extends to interior spaces such as the lobby and galleries, as well as exterior areas including the reflecting pool. The museum has since been extended to accommodate a restaurant (1994) and contemporary art gallery (1997), all of which continue the original geometric approach.
The Museum of Modern Art
1971-74
Gunma, Japan

Photo courtesy of Yasuhiro Ishimoto

Drawing courtesy of Arata Isozaki and Associates
The Museum of Modern Art
1971-74
Gunma, Japan

Photo courtesy of Yasuhiro Ishimoto
Kitakyushu Central Library
1973-74
Fukuoka, Japan

The Kitakyushu Central Library was inspired by Étienne-Louis Boullée’s proposed design for the French National Library (1785). Izosaki realized a modern interpretation of the neoclassical vaulted ceilings through precast concrete. The building’s two large barrel vaults, which run parallel prior to curving separately, contrast with the rectangular windows that line the exterior.
Kitakyushu Central Library
1973-74
Fukuoka, Japan
Kitakyushu Central Library
1973-74
Fukuoka, Japan

Rendering courtesy of Arata Isozaki and Associates
Tsukuba Center Building
1979-83
Ibaraki, Japan

Tsukuba Center Building, located in one of the first postwar cities of Japan, is a civic center designed to evoke both ruins and reinvention. This complex is comprised of a concert hall, information center, hotel, restaurants and shopping—all of the facilities needed to give life to a new city. The focus of the project is a sunken plaza or “forum.” The façades facing the plaza display a variety of forms and are finished with contrasting materials such as sleek aluminum and concrete, rough and smooth granite, and polished and unpolished tile.
Tsukuba Center Building
1979-83
Ibaraki, Japan

Photos courtesy of Yasuhiro Ishimoto
Tsukuba Center Building
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Photo courtesy of Yasuhiro Ishimoto

Drawing courtesy of Arata Isozaki and Associates
The Museum of Contemporary Art
1981-86
Los Angeles
California, USA

The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles was the architect’s first international commission outside of his native Japan. Faced with a challenging site, the sunken red sandstone building is in purposeful contrast to the surrounding area’s high-rise buildings. The barrel-vaulted library and copper-clad pyramids are part of the three stories that are above ground, while visitors must descend downstairs to the underground galleries that comprise four subterranean floors.
The Museum of Contemporary Art
1981-86
Los Angeles
California, USA

Photo courtesy of Yasuhiro Ishimoto
The Museum of Contemporary Art
1981-86

Los Angeles
California, USA

Photo courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
Palau Sant Jordi
1983-1990
Barcelona, Spain

Designed for the 1992 Summer Olympic Games, Palau Sant Jordi remains Barcelona’s largest covered sports facility. Situated on the Montjuïc hillside, the versatile structure is positioned partially below ground to minimize the profile of the 17,000-person facility. The massive domed roof, with its signature convex windows, was constructed on the ground and then elevated atop the building over a period of 20 days. Rising 148 feet above the arena floor, the roof encloses the generous interior space with a feeling of lightness. Local materials including brick, tile, zinc and travertine were used as finishes.
Palau Sant Jordi
1983-1990

Barcelona, Spain

Photos courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
Palau Sant Jordi
1983-1990
Barcelona, Spain

Rendering courtesy of Arata Isozaki and Associates

Photo courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
Commissioned to celebrate the centennial of Mito, Art Tower Mito was built as a cultural complex consisting of a theater, performance hall and contemporary art gallery. The iconic tetrahelix tower was inspired by Constantin Brancusi’s *Endless Column* (1938), and is comprised of fifty-six triangular panels in varying orientations.
Art Tower Mito
1986-90
Ibaraki, Japan

Photos courtesy of Yasuhiro Ishimoto
Art Tower Mito
1986-90
Ibaraki, Japan
The Nara Centennial Hall, the object of an international competition won by Isozaki, was completed for the centennial of the municipality and eloquently combines past, present and future. Taking into account location, site and orientation, the building is designed as an independent monolith. The design also honors the nearby and prominent Todaiji Temple (734 AD) through its sloping form and gray ceramic tile. The building interiors were designed to be versatile, changing to accommodate a range of events, conventions and conferences.
Nara Centennial Hall
1992-1998
Nara, Japan

Photo courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
Nara Centennial Hall
1992-1998

Nara, Japan
This interactive science museum, dedicated to the exploration of humankind, sits overlooking Orzan Bay on a site that was once a quarry. The seaside-facing exterior forms a curved protective wall, resembling a windsail or a shell, that is clad in slate panels. The opposite exterior wall, composed of local granite, zig-zags similarly to a folding screen.
Domus: La Casa del Hombre
1993-1995

A Coruña, Spain

Photo courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
Domus: La Casa del Hombre
1993-1995

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Domus: La Casa del Hombre
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A Coruña, Spain

Photo courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
This ceramics museum, which includes gallery spaces, conference halls, tea houses and a public workshop, is situated in a cascading valley. It preserves its surrounding vegetation while serving as an extension of the topography through outdoor terraces, observation decks and a glass curtain wall. Two light boxes that rise up from the building hint at what lies inside. Materials such as regional stoneware bricks and ceramic are used throughout, and pendulum-like structures and suspension pillars secure the galleries against the dangers of earthquakes, thus protecting the museum's contents.
Ceramic Park
Mino
1996-2002
Gifu, Japan

Photo courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
Ceramic Park
Mino
1996-2002
Gifu, Japan

Photo courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
Originally designed for the 2006 Winter Olympic Games, the 12,000-person capacity stadium was developed from the concept of “invisible architecture.” The building remains sensitive to its surrounding context, as two of its four stories are sunken underground so that the overall height complements that of the neighboring 1934 World Cup stadium. On the outside, stainless steel and glass compose the exterior, creating a glow throughout the day and night. On the inside, adaptable features such as retractable bleachers and a moveable deck allow for the evolution of the space to accommodate other sporting events, concerts and conventions.
Ice Hockey Stadium
(Renamed Pala Alpitour in 2014)
2002-2006
Torino, Italy

Photo courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
Ice Hockey Stadium
(Renamed Pala Alpitour in 2014)
2002-2006

Torino, Italy

Photo courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
Ice Hockey Stadium
(Renamed Pala Alpitour in 2014)
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Photo courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
Allianz Tower is one of the tallest skyscrapers in Italy and serves as a new landmark for the city of Milan. The narrow stature of the 50-stories tall building emphasizes its verticality. The exterior triple glass curtain wall is curved in billowing six-floor sections to diminish the reflection of the sun, while showcasing the natural light that illuminates the building. This vertical succession of rounded forms creates a feeling of slight movement as the building arises. Four exterior buttresses, accentuated in gold, counter oscillations, while a versatile interior structure allows for flexible office spaces. Isozaki, who often works with local architects, relied on the Italian studio of Andrea Maffei in this case.
Allianz Tower
2003-2014

Milan, Italy

Photos courtesy of Alessandra Chemollo
As one of the largest exhibition centers in the Middle East, the Qatar National Convention Center can accommodate up to 10,000 people within its three main halls and flexible meeting spaces. The exterior evokes two trees—inspired by Sidrat al-Muntaha, a holy Islamic tree that symbolizes the end of the seventh heaven—which surround the glass façade and support the roof canopy. Using careful design and the latest techniques in water conservation and energy efficiency, the building has achieved exemplary results in terms of sustainability.
Qatar National Convention Center
2004-2011

Doha, Qatar
Qatar National Convention Center
2004-2011

Doha, Qatar

Photo courtesy of Hisao Suzuki
The 2014 opening of Shanghai Symphony Hall celebrated the 135th anniversary of Asia’s oldest orchestra, the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. In collaboration with acoustician Yasuhisa Toyota, the two halls seat 1200 and 400 guests respectively, each achieving an intimate aural balance for users through the use of latest technology and sensitive materials. Located in the heart of Shanghai’s French Concession, the performance art building sits on springs to offset the vibrations from the subway tracks below. The interior features reflector boards covered in woven bamboo and stage floors fabricated from Hokkaido cypress, while terra cotta bricks and a Chinese garden highlight the exterior of the building.
Shanghai Symphony Hall
2008-2014
Shanghai, China

Photo courtesy of Chen Hao

The Pritzker Architecture Prize 2019 Laureate Arata Isozaki, Shanghai Symphony Hall, 2008-2014, Shanghai, China
Ark Nova, or "new ark," was commissioned by the Lucerne Festival and designed by Anish Kapoor and Isozaki as a response to natural disaster. The PVC-coated polyester membrane of the orb-like structure inflates and deflates quickly, allowing this concert hall to be transported from one location to another, originally touring areas that were affected by the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami. The inflatable mobile performance venue can showcase a range of performing arts for audiences of up to 500 guests, and has become a symbol of the spirit of rebuilding.
LUCERNE FESTIVAL ARK NOVA (designed by Anish Kapoor and Arata Isozaki)

(2011-2013, 2014) Miyagi, Japan

(2015) Fukushima, Japan

(2017) Tokyo, Japan

The Pritzker Architecture Prize 2019 Laureate Arata Isozaki,
LUCERNE FESTIVAL ARK NOVA
(designed by Anish Kapoor and Arata Isozaki)

(2011-2013, 2014)
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Drawing courtesy of Arata Isozaki and Associates