

NURTURING DREAMS

COLLECTED ESSAYS ON ARCHITECTURE AND THE CITY

FUMIHIKO MAKI

EDITED BY MARK MULLIGAN

FOREWORD BY EDUARD SEKLER

THE MIT PRESS CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS LONDON, ENGLAND

© 2008 Massachusetts Institute of Technology

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means (including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval) without permission in writing from the publisher.

MIT Press books may be purchased at special quantity discounts for business or sales promotional use. For information, please email special_sales@mitpress.mit.edu or write to Special Sales Department, The MIT Press, 55 Hayward Street, Cambridge, MA 02142.

This book was set in Bembo and Helvetica Neue by Graphic Composition, Inc., Bogart, Georgia. Printed and bound in Spain.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Maki, Fumihiko, 1928–

Nurturing dreams : collected essays on architecture and the city / Fumihiko Maki ; foreword by Eduard Sekler.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-262-13500-9 (hardcover : alk. paper)

1. Maki, Fumihiko, 1928– —Philosophy. 2. Architecture. I. Title.

NA1559.M24A35 2008

720—dc22

2007045947

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

EDITOR'S NOTE

When I first met Fumihiko Maki, in the spring of 1990, I was an architecture student at Harvard's Graduate School of Design completing my thesis work and nervously contemplating postgraduation employment. Having been a genuine fan of Maki's architecture for years, I introduced myself after his lecture and—with the naive, nothing-to-lose self-assurance of a Harvard student—proceeded to arrange a meeting with him the following day so that I could question him in detail about his work and his writings. Little did I imagine that within a few months of that conversation, I would be working in Tokyo as a designer at his office.

During the six intense years I spent as one of two or three *gaikokujin* (foreigners) he employed in an otherwise Japanese-speaking office of thirty-some architects, I collaborated on the design and construction supervision of several projects, most notably the Tokyo Church of Christ (1995). Through firsthand experience, I learned not only about Maki's precise approach to materials and detailing, for which he is justly famous, but also—and perhaps more unexpectedly—about the importance he placed on a strong urbanistic approach as the basis for architectural design. Nothing in my previous employment experience had prepared me for the depth of Maki's investment in the intellectual life of his office. Having devoted many years to university teaching, Maki paid great attention to mentoring his young staff members. On those Saturdays when we were putting in extra hours on competitions, he would sometimes invite us to lunch, and there we would discuss architecture and enjoy his stories.

My role at the office sometimes involved helping Maki prepare various texts in English. I enjoyed the chance to advise my mentor on how to express an idea most clearly in my native tongue, particularly for the insight it gave me into his

thought process. Maki always chose his words with the most precise attention to detail and nuance. Texts were written iteratively in successive drafts until the parts fit together smoothly and produced a precise effect—yet without losing a certain spontaneity. This process was completely in keeping with the gradual, evolutionary process by which he arrived at his refined architectural designs. After a few years of working on occasional writing and editing projects, Maki invited me to collaborate with him in writing a major new essay in English. “Space, Territory, and Perception” (included in this volume) was originally prepared for a conference at the University of Weimar, Germany. Though I eagerly dove into the theme and worked very hard on that text, earning a coauthor’s credit, I must admit here my feeling that the genius of the essay lies in ideas Maki brought to it from the start.

Having enjoyed those earlier writing collaborations in Tokyo, I was delighted when, more than a decade after my return to Cambridge, Massachusetts (where I now teach and have my own architecture firm), Maki proposed to me the idea of editing a new collection of his essays to be published by the MIT Press.

Intended as the definitive English-language anthology of Fumihiko Maki’s most important writings, this book presents twenty-one essays selected to appeal to practicing architects, to students and scholars of modern architecture and urban theory, as well as to a general audience of readers. The essays are drawn from a variety of sources—full references to each text’s provenance are found in a separate appendix for those who are interested—and together they reflect nearly a half-century of Maki’s evolving interests and philosophy as architect, academic, and critic from the early 1960s up to the present day. Although a few essays were originally conceived and written in English, the majority were written in Japanese and then translated into English by Maki’s longtime friend and collaborator, Hiroshi Watanabe. The extraordinary skill that Watanabe has brought to bear on his translations, with equal attention to Maki’s precise meaning and to his uniquely poetic phrasing, has certainly made my job of editing a great deal easier.

My guiding ambition as text editor has been to leave the essays in their original state as much as possible, particularly given the importance of the contemporary historical context to many of Maki’s arguments. However, in considering the experience of general readers, I decided at an early stage to allow three kinds of revisions that would give greater coherence to the volume, and for these I beg the indulgence of those purists who would have preferred an unedited form of anthology. First, nearly all time expressions appearing in the essays have been

rephrased so that they make sense to the contemporary reader—a specific date is given, for example, in place of a phrase like “last year.” The fact that such relativistic time expressions have occurred frequently throughout Maki’s essays, particularly those contributed to magazines, shows that he has always been keenly aware of the timeliness of his thoughts. A second, more complex task has been to identify repeated accounts of Maki’s experiences as they appeared originally in multiple texts and to condense or delete those repeated instances without breaking the flow or meaning of each essay—a delicate task indeed, given the tightly wrought nature of his writing. Lastly, while retaining all original notes and bibliographic references that appeared in the original essays, I have also inserted additional references wherever the text seemed to demand it. I hope that, in spite of such well-intended editorial intrusions, the unique cadence and rhythm of Maki’s prose will be immediately recognizable, and that his ideas will reach and inspire the reader as effortlessly as when they first appeared in print.

Mark Mulligan