



Edward Suzuki – Buildings and Projects

With an introduction by Philip Drew. 208 pp. with 306 ill., 242 x 298 mm, hard-cover, English
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Suzuki's architecture revolves around a series of dualities or oppositions. It arises, in part, from a personal tendency to see the world in terms of duality, a dualism consisting of good and bad, male and female, plus and minus, life and death, etc.

Anarchitecture is one of Suzuki's major terms for dualism in architecture. Anarchitecture, put simply, is a paradoxical term that refers to opposites that express anarchy and order. It is concerned with pairing the destructive with the constructive. Neither tendency has the upper hand; instead, we are left in doubt as to which will win, and there is no longer a guarantee that order will triumph in the end.

There is a strong hint of mannerism in Anarchitecture; it expresses the same feeling of unease, the same perception that all is not well, that was so marked in Italy in the 16th century. It places in contention man's dominance and control, which it represents as being under attack by nature. The same feeling of insecurity emerged in the remarkable details of Giulio Romano's Palazzo del Te at Mantua in 1530. All its details were deliberately and extravagantly different: capricious, as in the Room of the Giants which seems on the verge of collapse. The façade of the Ueno Matsuzakaya Department Store has a grid of square panels with some panels missing in a random pattern that makes it look as though the façade is about to fall apart. It is deciduous, dropping squares onto the sidewalk, in much the same way that Giulio Romano drops the triglyphs on the garden façade of the Palazzo del Te to indicate collapse. Suzuki's buildings, too, succumb to gravity. This contrasts with High-Tech, which, because it appears so light and strong, seems no longer to be subject to gravity. High-Tech frees structure from the grip of gravity. In Suzuki's Anarchitecture, form is dragged down by the force of gravity, something has to give on the inside, a tendon snaps, and part of the architecture collapses. It suggests a breakdown in the human order, with nature advancing to reclaim what it has lost.

Edward Suzuki was born in 1947 as the son of a German father and a Japanese mother. After studying in the USA his employers included Richard Buckminster Fuller, Isamo Noguchi and Kenzo Tange, before he opened his own office in Tokyo. Philip Drew lives in Sydney and works as an architectural critic. His publications include monographs on Frei Otto, Arata Isozaki, Glenn Murcutt and the team of Martorell, Bohigas, Mackay.

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