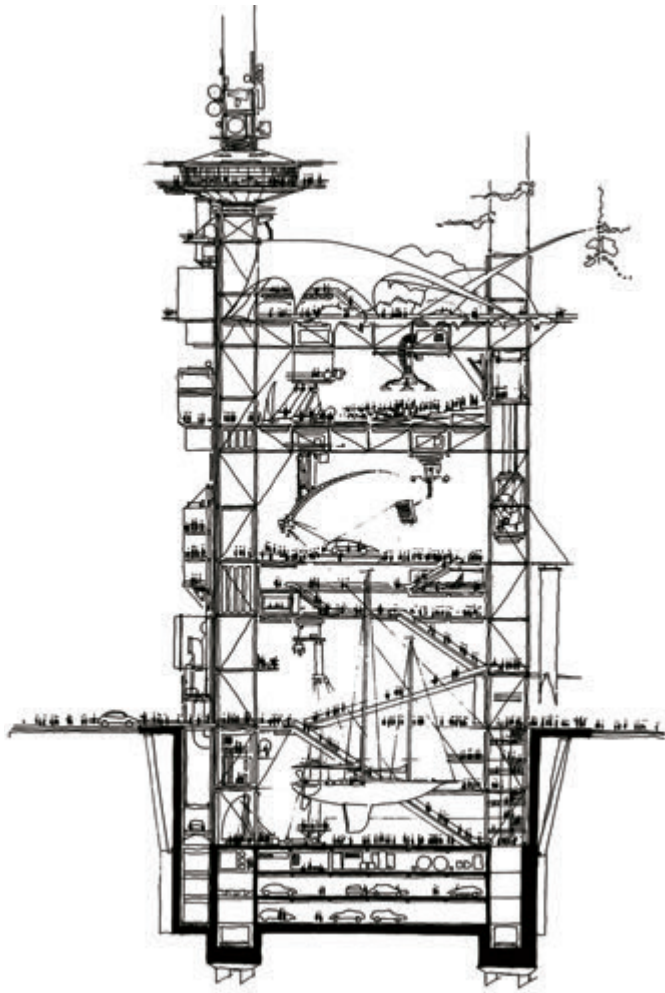


Tomigaya Exhibition Building

Tokyo, Japan



Location
Tokyo, Japan

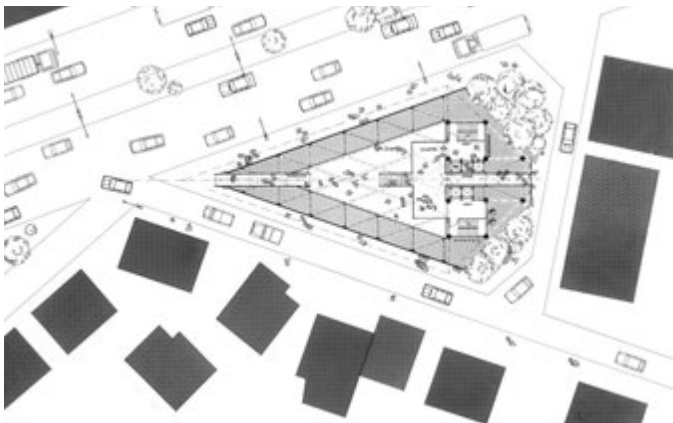
Date
1990-1992

Client
K-One Corporation

Co-Architect
Architect 5

Structural Engineer
Umezawa Design Office

Services Engineer
ES Associates/Arup



Our scheme was a radical response to the constraints of extremely tight planning restrictions – optimising the space potential on this tiny site was the driver

The Tomigaya project provides an illustration of the problems and opportunities offered by Tokyo and of the way in which RSHP tackled the issues raised by the unique urban form of the metropolis. The result was one of the most satisfying and dramatic of the practice's smaller schemes, but the drama is linked, as usual, to a calm analysis of functional requirements and the overall ingenuity of the structural diagram.

The project site was a tiny, triangular area of land surrounded by low-rise housing. Only three floors were allowed by the planning permission, but RSHP demonstrated how extra floor space could be created by means of moveable platforms within the building, while the top floor, with fine views and

intended for restaurant use, would be covered only by a fabric canopy and could thus be excluded from the planning equation (the basement was also to be deeply excavated and naturally lit). Everything is cantilevered off two supporting towers, to which stairs, lifts and services are also attached. Inside are tall, brilliantly lit, highly flexible spaces capable of holding very large objects – yachts or aircraft, for example.

The project was initially presented by means of a Meccano model. If it had been built, it would have resembled a huge shelving system – a display cabinet on the street.