MGM Resorts Japan Holds Panel Discussion
‘Future of Architecture and Japan —Evolution Delivered by Encounter With Others’ to Celebrate Success of ‘Japan in Architecture’ by Roppongi Hills Mori Art Museum 15th Anniversary Exhibition

MGM Resorts Japan LLC has contributed to supporting arts and culture promotion in Japan as a diamond corporate member of the Mori Art Museum since 2017. As part of our efforts, we have co-sponsored Roppongi Hills and Mori Art Museum 15th Anniversary Exhibition: “Japan in Architecture: Genealogies of Its Transformation.” We also held a panel discussion and reception dinner to celebrate success of the exhibition and show part of our gratitude toward our customers’ continued patronage at the Roppongi Hills Club on Sept. 11.

MGM Resorts Japan President Jason Hyland gave an opening address, followed by a toast proposed by Mori Art Museum Director Fumio Nanjo. The panel discussion titled “The Future of Architecture and Japan —Evolution Delivered by Encounter With Others” welcomed Yutaka Hikosaka, an architect and environmental designer as well as the president of Space Incubator Inc. who designed Japan Pavilion in Shanghai Expo 2010, as a moderator. In the discussion, Japan’s leading creators and MGM Resorts International Chairman James Murren exchanged opinions about architecture of Japan that keeps evolving through encounters with “different cultures,” a theme shared by this exhibition, and its future.
Four panelists presented interesting issues from their own fields of expertise. Firstly, Tomohiko Yamanashi, an architect and senior executive officer of Nikken Sekkei Ltd., brought up “evolution of Japan’s architecture” and introduced how the ICT technology, which is transforming core manufacturing technology, is evolving a design process of architecture. He introduced six techniques: Computer Simulation that calculates the view of the landscape and the flow of air; Computational Design that comes up with an optimal shape with given parameters; Digital Fabrication that achieves a low price by having a computer process wooden architecture; Internet of Things that curbs the heat-island phenomenon by having architecture learn via the Internet; Building Information Model that archives an intricate shape which is hard to draw with the two-dimensional design; and Artificial Intelligence that creates the design that simultaneously fulfills conditions from various stakeholders.

Yuko Hasegawa, a professor of Tokyo University of the Arts, talked about the relationship between art and architecture and evolution delivered by encounters with others, using the works curated by herself. In the case of the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, she pointed out that a keyword changed from “3M,” which represented Man or male supremacism (individualism), Money or capitalism, and Materialism, in the 20th century, to “3C,” which represented “Co-Existence,” “Collective Intelligence” and “Intelligence” in the 21st century. In the Inushima project, it created a new art space linking daily life to art in a marginal settlement. She also introduced the “Fukami” exhibition at the Hotel Salomon de Rothschild as the case where a feature of the Japanese sense of beauty, which allows coexistence of opposing factors as “two as one” while swinging between them, was elevated to art.
Yuko Nagayama, an architect, delivered a speech entitled “Taking a Cue From Architect” and shared specific examples to introduce the figure of architecture created through the relationship with surrounding areas. In the case of the Teshima Yokoo House, which she renovated an old private house in Teshima, an island in the Seto Inland Sea, she mentioned interaction with residents and collaboration with works by artist Tadanori Yokoo. In the case of a hall in the Goddess of the Forest complex in Yamanashi, Nagayama determined the opening position under detailed simulation by adjusting building locations based on wind direction and adopted the “color pallet” concept for the landscape that placed tree species by color. In the 225-meter high-rise building project on the former site of the Tokyu Milano complex in Shinjuku, she is challenging an architectural design to overturn the conventional image of high-rise buildings to suit Shinjuku, an area with various diversities.

Murren, chairman of MGM Resorts International, expressed his deepest sympathies to all the victims of a typhoon in Osaka and earthquakes in Hokkaido. He also observed a moment of silence for victims of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, before addressing the value brought by encounters with different cultures. Murren, who majored in the history of art in his school days, also talked about the value that art and entertainment, of which he had a profound knowledge, were offering to our lives and the significance that architecture accomplished in the cities. He is also greatly interested in Japan’s unique culture, art and architecture from his experience in visiting Japan more than 30 times. He articulated that he would incorporate those features to his business in the future. More specifically, he introduced the Kabuki performance by Shochiku Co. held at Bellagio and MGM Grand owned by MGM Resorts.

In the following discussion, panelists talked about Japan’s history that had accepted diversity since the Jomon era and its unique culture born from there. They reaffirmed that encounters with other cultures were tied to creation of new culture and innovation. Moreover, panelists shared the view that the society would place more emphasis on diversification including diversity, active female participation and respect for culture, when the tide of the times was changing to “3C” from “3M.” As a role of the integrated reports, Chairman Murren hoped that foreign visitors to Japan would use them as a hub for tourism in Japan to visit areas other than Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka and enjoy diversity and new encounters. In closing, he said that he would like to not only offer large-scale architecture and entertainment events, but also proactively hold small community events to create opportunities for visitor to closely experience Japan’s various culture and arts.
The panel discussion attracted more than 100 guests, sharply exceeding our expectations. We are grateful for opportunities to have a number of encounters in the communities related to Japan’s art and architecture. MGM Resorts Japan and MGM Resorts International are more than willing to support promotion of Japan’s unique art, architecture and culture. We will greatly appreciate your further guidance and encouragement.