

TSUKUYOMI

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

Saitama, Japan 1999-2000

Commissioner: Ministry of Construction

Architect: Koichi Moto, Nikken Sekkei

Art Coordinator: Environmental Planning Laboratory, Inc.

Consultant: ALS Inc.

Budget: \$500,000

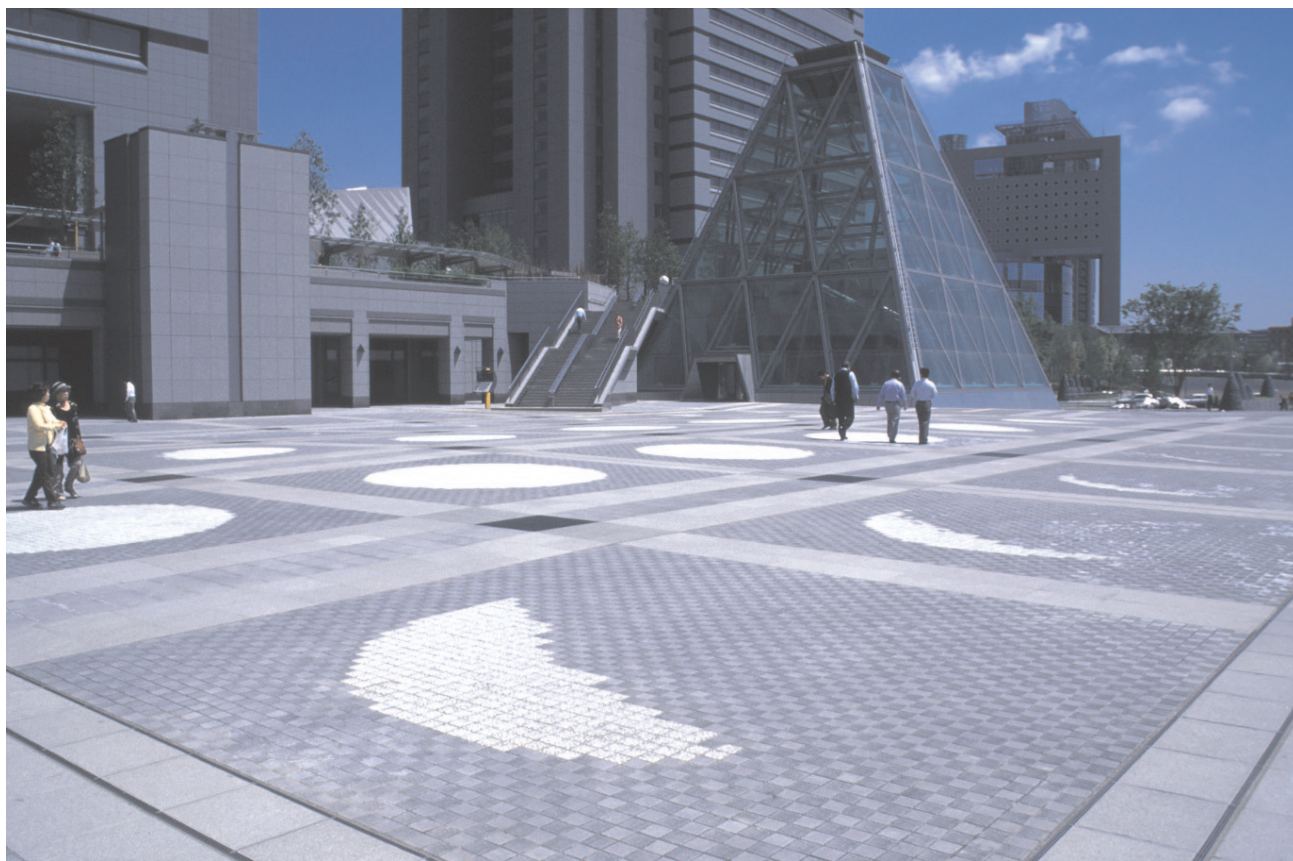
TSUKUYOMI: an ancient Japanese word for moon-night-viewing, and moon-reading.

phosphor, granite, concrete, mist fountain

For many ancient civilizations, the moon was an important factor in the measurement of time. In the 7th century in Japan, a type of water clock was developed as a further refinement of the means to mark the passage of time. Thus the moon and water have long been linked as temporal and ritualistic elements in Japanese culture. In fact, an ancient custom still remaining in the Japanese calendar is a day to observe the moon.



Plaza overview



As an experiment with light and water, the design of Tsukuyomi plaza combines a mist fountain and phosphorescent pavement images of a lunar calendar. Through this juxtaposition of ancient ritual and contemporary technologies, the project questions basic perceptions of time and space in the contemporary urban world.

The central paving design mimics the 28 cycles of the moon in the month of the year 2000 when the government plaza was opened to the public. The moon-image paving is a composite of glow-in-the-dark phosphor and granite developed and manufactured specifically for this project.

At certain times of day and night, the fountain slowly mists over the moon cycle paving. As dusk approaches and all throughout the night, the plaza takes on the characteristics of a magic carpet, blue light glowing from within each moon, and luminescence rising from the mist fountain.

The moon is not a fixed star that shines by itself but a mirror reflecting sunlight. Similarly, this moonscape acts as a mirror for its plaza environment, where as many as 50,000 people may flow through daily.



Construction in process