Tokyo-Berlin/Berlin-Tokyo:
A Continuing Dialog of Modern Cities

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A Mutual Regard

Since the middle of the 1980s a number of international exhibitions have examined the absorption of modernity into Japanese art and culture.[1] These have generally treated this as an import into Japan from the West as part of a general program of modernisation that was necessary after over two hundred years of self-imposed isolation. In a cultural sense, this form of modernity has usually been associated with the political, philosophical and scientific advances of the eighteenth century European Enlightenment. Yet at the time of the Enlightenment, Edo, as Tokyo was then known, had already sustained a culture that, in its size, lively use of images and media and levels of consumption of goods, could already be regarded in some ways as "modern". This kind of modernity, however, was framed within a feudal social and economic structure that had been unaffected by the revolutionary republican ideals and industrial innovations that had impacted so strongly on the countries of the Atlantic Rim.

Certainly by the 1880s – the starting point for this exhibition - Tokyo and Berlin, now the new capitals of two newly re-invented countries, were more evenly balanced and there were striking similarities in the situations in which they found themselves. Uncomfortable with the post-Napoleonic world order because they had played no part in its formation, the recently united German Empire and the newly constituted Japanese government under the Meiji Emperor both sought assertively to develop their

[1] Among the earliest were "Reconstructions: Avant-garde art in Japan 1945-1965", Oxford, Museum of Modern Art, 1985; "Japon des Avant-Gardes," Paris, Centre Pompidou, 1986; Japanese Art after 1945: Scream against the Sky , Yokohama, New York and San Francisco, 1994. Among the most recent have been "The Unfinished Century: Legacies of 20th Century Art", Tokyo, National Museum of Modern Art, 2002; "Remaking Modernism in Japan 1900-2000," Tokyo, Metropolitan Museum of Art and Gedai, 2004; "Cubism in Asia", Tokyo, National Museum of Modern Art, 2005.

industries and economies and to establish themselves as world powers.[2]

This exhibition focuses on cultural links between these two capital cities – both on their concrete contacts and on the parallel developments between them - from the end of the nineteenth century until the present. As a result it takes a somewhat different approach from previous exhibitions in that it examines a cultural flow that has continued to run in many directions – each side taking what they needed most from the other at the time. In particular, it also shows how Berlin has been an important cultural model for Tokyo, how its avant-garde art, architecture, photography, theater and dance provided inspiration for Japanese artists – and how Tokyo, with its radically different forms of expression and ways of looking at the world, gave a strong impetus to the innovations of Berlin artists, designers and architects.

The beginning of modern art in Tokyo is generally attributed either to the introduction of realism around 1900, as seen in Akamatsu Rinsaku's painting "Night Train", 1901, [Cat. 1-1] or to the avant-garde experiments of the early 1920s many of them influenced by direct encounters with Russian Futurism and Berlin Dada [Cats. 4-1 to 4-48]. In this analysis an important transitional stage from around 1912 to 1915 has been overlooked when a number of young Tokyo artists were reacting to such diverse influences as Symbolism, Post-impressionism, French Cubism, Italian Futurism and German Expressionism.

There was no single dominant tendency in Tokyo at this time and artists felt free to try, appropriate or even "misunderstand" many different foreign influences and art styles. At the very beginning of the century they would have seen the most advanced art of Berlin, Germany and Central Europe in the pages of the Berlin-produced "Pan," a journal that included original prints, as well as in other

[2] The Restoration of the Meiji Emperor took in 1868. This marked the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate and the changing of the capital's name from Edo to Tokyo. The new German Empire was constituted in 1871 after the war with France with Berlin as its capital.

art magazines that circulated freely.[3] By 1914 they could have directly experienced the work of leading European expressionists in the exhibition of the Berlin-based Der Sturm gallery that took place in Tokyo [Fig.1]. But even before this an intensifying subjectivity in the treatment of landscape and portraiture in the work of such artists as Yorozu Tetsuguro, Kawakami Ryoka and Onchi Koshiro argues for the significant influence of German Expressionism, which itself had been influenced by Edvard Munch, Van Gogh, Gauguin and Post-Impressionism [Cats 3-11 to 3-13, 3-6, 2.17 to 2.22]. Yorozu's "Self Portrait with Red Eyes", 1912, is not only one of a series of penetrating studies of individual psychology, but is also, in its way, a homage to the power of radical German art – why else would Yorozu, who had never visited Europe, have written on the back of the canvas in perfect German *Selbstbildnis* (Self Portrait)? [Fig 2.].

But it takes a while to be able to see each other clearly and in early encounters between Tokyo and Berlin visual mismatches often had a creative outcome. When the first Westerners entered Japan they were depicted as strange – almost monstrous - hairy folk in popular woodcuts. On the other side, Japan's customs, culture and style of dress seemed out of step with western efficiency and technology and the first Japanese to travel abroad, with their baggy *hakama* trousers, straw hats and samurai swords, looked to the West as if they came from another universe [Fig.3].

Yokohama had been opened as a free port in 1859 with a compound where foreigners had to live. Then in 1867, in one of its last acts, the Tokugawa Shogunate allowed non-Japanese to live also in Tokyo and the Prussian Eagle flew with other western flags over the roofs of the Tsukiji district, where the famous Fish Market is situated today [Fig.4]. Japanese students and envoys started to travel across the world and in between 1871 and 1873 over a hundred top politicians, administrators and scholars circumnavigated the globe in a government sponsored survey of

[3] "Pan" was published in Berlin between 1895 and 1900 and was edited by O.T. Bierbaum and Julius Meier-Graefe.

the most important cities in the United States and Europe. Their aim was to provide a firm basis of knowledge about different ways of living, systems of governance and economy that would help Japan in its forward development. But they also wanted to look out for possibilities for trade.

The Iwakura Mission

The Iwakura Mission, as this group was known, arrived in Berlin, on 9th March 1873 and stayed there as the guest of the Emperor until 27th March.[4] Prussia was already respected in Japan for its "political skill, flourishing literature and the success of its military system"[5] and the report reflected ideas about economic and military development as well as different things that the visitors found strange.

Building with bricks was important evidence of modern life for the inhabitants of the predominantly wooden capital of Tokyo who were then just starting to point proudly to their own modern, fireproof brick constructions in the expanding shopping district of Ginza and soon to their first "skyscraper," the twelve storey Ryounkaku tower situated in an amusement park by the Asakusa entertainment district [Cat. 1-7].

Although he could see that Berlin was not as industrially developed as Paris or London, Kume Kunitake, the writer of the Iwakura Mission's report, was aware of its potential: the growth of rail networks to Vienna and the South and the recent opening of the Suez Canal meant that quicker trade links to the East could be established. As things stood, Prussia's trade with the East had been second only to that of America, but now that Berlin had become the capital of a united Germany he could see that there would be even greater opportunities for trade.

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[4] The mission was named after Iwakura Tomomi, its head and one of the Meiji Emperor's closest advisors.
[5] Kume Kunitake,"The Iwakura Embassy 1871-73 The True Account of the Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary's Journey of Observation through The United States of America and Europe," Matsudo, The Japan Documents, 2002, Vol 3, p.302

The Mission was lodged at the Hotel de Rome on the Unter den Linden and, as it had previously done in a number of other cities, visited the most advanced factories and public buildings. At the Siemens Works they were impressed by the new electrical machinery for conveying telegraphs, and at the Royal Porcelain manufactory by the semi-automated production processes that seemed very different to those used in Japan. The field of medicine was particularly important, the Meiji Emperor's personal physician was German, and many Japanese doctors, including the novelist Mori Ogai, trained in Berlin. The Charité and new Augusta Hospitals were noteworthy for exposing recovering patients to as much fresh air as possible and the physiological reasons for this were enumerated at length.[6]

But there were other, more strange and "exotic" sights: the multileveled, cave-like aquarium just by the Brandenburg Gate presented a wondrous reptilian and undersea world with the spectacle of a rabbit being eaten live by a python at feeding time. Paintings in the Royal Museum met with general approval but at the Academy of Fine Arts, Kume was taken aback to see that "men and women are paid to pose in the nude, standing, lying down or crouching, to enable artists to depict the human form accurately, and to allow sculptors to create models of their figures from clay. Today there was a beautiful young woman lying naked on a bed....taking a break only once every one and a half hours....Copying the human form is a technique which requires the utmost care on the part of the artist, but even so, it seems disgraceful that the pursuit of refinement [in art] should lead to such a shocking situation."[7] But it would not be long before western style painting with its different materials and ways of conceiving the world became absorbed within Japanese culture.[8]

Although there were already a few Japanese works of art in the Royal Collections, it would not be until 1885 that Berlin would

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[6] Ibid. pp.316-319.
[7] Ibid. p 323.
[8] During the Meiji period Japanese art and art education were divided into two main categories. *Nihonga* – Japanese style painting – characterised by traditional materials and subject matter and *yoga* – Western style painting – that adopted foreign models.

have the opportunity of seeing a wide range of Japanese culture at first hand in an exhibition that showed examples of art, architecture, theater and religion. Here, Adolf von Menzel the Berlin Realist who was famous for his monumental paintings on the life and achievements of King Frederick The Great as well as for a series of equally large and heroic images of the new heavy industries that had grown around Berlin, was moved to paint a small impressionistic gouache of a Japanese artist at work [Cat.1-24]

The levels of security and hospitality afforded to the Iwakura Mission were the best provided by any city they had visited and while they were impressed by "the many parks laid out all over the city [where] there is always a café" where men and women could sit and drink together, they were surprised by the very high level of alcohol consumption. The city seemed to have become "decadent" and this was attributed to the "volatile and wild" behaviour of its inhabitants. The cause was thought to be the "recent spate of military campaigns" – the Franco-Prussian War had ended only two years previously - and "the domineering bearing of soldiers and students." Prostitution was also running rife and struck the visitors as being completely unregulated in comparison with the closed and carefully ordered zone of Tokyo's *Yoshiwara*.[9]

The way in which the new German constitution protected the authority of the Emperor was of great interest to the Meiji administrators because they were just starting to draft a constitution of their own. But the words that must have been still ringing in their ears when they left Berlin en route for St. Petersburg were those of Bismarck, the Foreign Minister, whom they had met informally when he shared his insights into the difficulties of small countries, patriotism and *Realpolitik*. They should not be taken in, he admonished, not everything was as it seemed "Nations these days all appear to conduct relations with

[9] Ibid. pp.296, 298. The *Yoshiwara* was a moated, closed licensed quarter set up just north of Asakusa on the edge of Tokyo in the late 17th century. See J.E. de Becker, "The Nightless City or the History of the Yoshiwara Yuwaku," Yokohama/Bremen, Max Nössler & Co., 4th edn., 1904.

amity and courtesy, but this is entirely superficial, for behind this face lurks a struggle for supremacy and mutual contempt." He warned them to take care of the territorial ambitions of the great colonial powers, adding that for the Japanese "friendship with Germany should be the most intimate of all because of the true respect in which we hold the right of self-government." An affinity had been established. As Kume wrote, "we relished our chance to learn from the prince's eloquent words, knowing full well what a master tactician he is in the world of politics."[10] [Fig.5]

From East to West and Back Again

Yet, over the next sixty years, the most significant contacts between Tokyo and Berlin were to be cultural rather than political. In the middle of the 1880s Berlin architects Hermann Ende and Wilhelm Böckmann were, with their assistant Hermann Muthesius, working in the Japanese capital designing eclectic, western-style buildings for the Government and in Muthesius's case a neo-Gothic church.. Yet on return to Berlin they brought back an exotic oriental style of architecture that was used to good effect in the buildings for the new Zoological Gardens that were then being built. [Figs.6 & 7]

But the flow from East to West did not stop here. Towards the end of the century Japanese style was the rage throughout Europe and the ex-geisha Sada Yakko introduced to Berlin to a new type of "classical" Japanese theater that was not yet recognised in her native country. . The taste for archetypical characters and the strong expression of emotions through gesture, movement and setting that could be discerned in Sada Yakko's form of neo-Kabuki, along with the colourful stylisations of traditional *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints, find affinity in elements of German Expressionist painting, theatre and film. This perhaps explains why Ernst Ludwig Kirchner made sketches of Japanese prints as well as large paintings of a theatre and other Japanese subjects [Cats.1-12, 1-13, 1-16 to 1-18]. After the First World War such

[10] Ibid. p. 323-325.

considerations also inspired Ishii Baku to take a new style of non-European dance to Berlin in 1923; Bertold Brecht to use masks and non-naturalistic alienation effects in his plays; and Mary Wigman and Niddy Impekoven to adopt extreme gestures and jerky movements in their *Ausdruckstanz* [Cat. 5-25].

The flow then turns back on itself and can be seen again, modified in Tokyo, in the Dada influenced constructions, political theatre and new dance developed by Murayama Tomoyoshi and others in the 1920s after his stay in Berlin [Cats. 4-12 to 4-17, 4-39 to 4-44]. Ohno Kazuo's encounter with the dance of Mary Wigman through the Tokyo performances of her disciple Harold Kreutztberg in 1934 was also important. After a long and terrifying gestation, this saw final light of day in the birth of the expressionistic dance form of Butoh in 1959 when, under Ohno Kazuo's supervision, Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Yoshito first staged their menacing and sinister version of Mishima Yukio's *Kinjiki* [Fig. 8].

As well as these radical forms of expression, Japanese culture also transmitted a quieter, more restrained sensibility to the West and Berlin was one of the most receptive centres. In the 1920s and '30s, the craftsmanship, simplicity of materials, efficient, rectilinear forms and relationship to nature in traditional Japanese architecture provided such Berlin-based modern movement architects as Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe and Bruno Taut with an ideal model which they could both invoke and extend.[11] After World War II the abstract composure of Zen painting and the popularisation of the ideas of Zen Buddhism had a strong influence on some German painters as well as on other artists in the West.

The impact of Japanese culture - its elegant line, compression of pictorial space and elision of narrative structure - on Impressionism, *Art nouveau*, *Jugendstil* and different aspects of Modernism was, therefore, only just the beginning of an East-West flow of imagery rather than information. In its way, this has

[11] See for example Bruno Taut, "Ich liebe die japanische Kultur! Kleine Schriften über Japan", reprint Berlin, Gebr. Mann, 2003.

been just as influential as the acquisition of material knowledge because it relates to the structures through which the world is perceived and to the various ways in which it may be apprehended.

The Modern Metropolis

Yet perhaps the closest affinity between Tokyo and Berlin has been in their continuing embellishment of the elements and ideas that constitute a modern city. In the middle of the eighteenth century, at the very dawn of modernity, Edo was one of the most developed urban centers in the world with a population of around 1,000,000.[12] Although still feudal in its social structure, arts, crafts and images of many different kinds were avidly consumed by large numbers of people from all walks of life. At this time Berlin had a population of only around 100,000 and the character of a garrison town. But slowly the balance began to change. In Tokyo philosophy, economy and the development of technology remained relatively static and it did not begin to benefit from the fruits of industrialisation until after the Meiji Restoration. By the 1870s, the time of the Iwakura Mission, the population of Berlin stood at around 826,000 but by 1900 it had more than doubled to 2,700,000.Tokyo, had not quite stood still but at the turn of the twentieth century its population was only around 2,100,000. Now Berlin was set to become the quintessential modern metropolis with all the characteristics that could be associated with it: an embodiment of what Kume had prophetically described as the "decadent", "wild and volatile" elements of the city.

The new idea of the city was most eloquently articulated in 1927 when film director Walter Ruttmann made a full length, "symphonic" documentary montage about a day in the life of Berlin. Speed, machinery, dynamism, neon lights, and night clubs were rhythmically cut against a cycle of despair, alienation, ugliness and suicide as if the city itself were a vast machine that had to be fuelled by such disparate elements.[Fig.9] .[13] Fritz Lang's science fiction film "Metropolis", released in Berlin in the

[12] Edo was renamed Tokyo [Eastern Capital] at the time of the Meiji Restoration in 1868.
[13] Die Sinfonie der Großstadt, 1927.

same year, showed the city in a similarly contrasting light - dream and nightmare [Fig.10]. On the land and in the sky the hi-tech city of the future throbbed with energy – like Tokyo, it even had a pleasure quarter called the *Yoshiwara* - yet underground the worker masses toiled, brutalized like machines. Encouraged by the son of The Industrialist, who was in love with a girl who had taken sympathy on their plight, the workers planned revolt. At the last moment, however, in a disquieting compromise, the rebellious son became reconciled with the inflexible father in a scene that saw the willing subjugation of the workers to paternalistic authority. Not all such views of Berlin had the same ostensibly "happy" ending.[14]

For many Expressionist painters and writers, the city was a swamp of alienation in which the individual was either disorientated or drowned. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's angular, darkly coloured street scenes of around 1914 show prostitutes dressed like war widows, plying for trade on one of the main shopping streets [Cat. 1-14]. George Grosz's view was equally dystopian: uniform office blocks seem to be toppling over onto streets populated by faceless mannequins and, after the end of the First World War, no drawing or painting was complete without its due complement of profiteers, cripples, murderers and tarts [Cats. 4-2, 4-3, 4-34]. But another film from the late 1920s shows a very different, almost rural side of Berlin, an aspect still present today. Robert Siodmak's "People on Sunday", 1929, is a pseudo-documentary - almost without a plot - using amateur actors in a gentle aimless love affair in which the strongest impression is how working people find refuge in the lakes and rivers that are scattered around and run through the capital.[15] Seen today, this slow, silent film seems to show almost another world, yet its pace, innocence and relationship to nature are still an important and necessary part of contemporary Berlin.

[14] Siegfried Kracauer's "From Caligari to Hitler: a Psychological History of the German Film", Princeton, 1947 still provides one of the best analyses of these two films.
[15] "Menschen am Sontag". Billy Wilder co-wrote the screenplay.

After the widespread destruction of the Kanto Earthquake of 1923 Tokyo, too, started to assume a similarly double-edged identity. Sandwiched between heaven and hell, it expressed all that was good and bad about present and future. The Tokyo, its street life, crime and colourful inhabitants, depicted in such novels as Tanazaki Junichiro's "Naomi", 1924,[16] , Kawabata Yasunari's early novel "The Scarlet Gang of Asakusa," 1930 or in Shimizu Hiroshi's lost film "Undying Pearl," 1929 could have easily been recognised as a *doppelgänger* of Berlin. In this floating world of pleasure and pain, confidence tricksters, bar girls, gangsters, fashionably dressed modern girls and boys [moga, mobo], or just people trying to keep their heads above water – everyone - shimmied to the ecstatic melodies of *ero, guro, nansensu* – the erotic, the grotesque and the nonsensical – a compact that was in itself derived from a long standing taste in Edo period art and literature for such sensations [Fig.11].

This apotheosis of decadence no doubt stimulated the resistance of the strong proletarian movements in art, literature, film and theatre that flourished at the same time in both cities. These were underwritten by the Soviet Union through the activities of its Comintern. It also seems as if, in many cases, Tokyo proletarian artists took their lead from Berlin rather than directly from Moscow and for a time, until the police began systematically to suppress such manifestations, their novels and films were extremely popular[17].

[16] The female protagonist was a Japanese equivalent of the temptress Lulu in Frank Wedekind's eponymous play cycle and the anti-heroine in G.W. Pabst's film "Pandora's Box" 1929. The Japanese title of "Naomi" can be translated as "A Fool in Love"[Chijin no ai].

[17] Suzuki Shigekichi's film "What made her Do It? [Nani ga kanojo wo so sasetaka" 1930 based on the novel by proletarian writer Fujimori seikichi was claimed to have caused local riots and was so popular that it was the highest earning silent Japanese film. Film director Mizoguchi Kenji also cut his teeth on films that spoke out against the plight of the oppressed masses as in for example in "Blood and Spirit" [Chi to rei], 1923, "Tokyo March" [Tokyo koshinkyoku], 1929, "Metropolitan Symphony" [Tokai kokyokyoku], 1929. For a discussion of proletarian film made in Tokyo at this time see Donald Richie, "A Hundred Years of Japanese Film", Tokyo, Kodansha, 2001. In Berlin Prometheus Film was one of the main production companies for proletarian cinema. Throughout the 1920s Left Front proletarian organisations for all the arts flourished in both Tokyo and Berlin and were subject to increasing government censorship and harassment.

But the global depression of the early 1930s brought profound changes. Now both Tokyo and Berlin became overshadowed by the spectres of militarism, racism, nationalism and dictatorship and in the face of official persecution any independent and critical culture had to struggle to survive. In 1936 Tokyo and Berlin signed the Anti-Comintern Pact, later joined by Rome, and then became embroiled in aggressive wars on a global scale [Fig.12]. By 1945 both cities – and countries - lay in ruins and for a time their futures were isolated and very different. After World War II West Berlin became a symbolic island of Western values floating alone in a sea of Soviet power. Untrammelled by such physical and ideological constraints, Tokyo's development saw the former "Metropolis" inflate into a Megopolis with a population that has now expanded to around 35 million[18]. This process was gradual, but not without sadness, because Tokyo, like Berlin, is an amalgam of many different neighbourhoods that all have their own histories, memories and identities. This has been communicated by artists, writers and film-makers in a sense of melancholy and displacement as seen in paintings by Ishii Shigeo, Kawara On and Yamashita Kikuji {Cats. 9-3 to 9-5, 9-10, 9-11] and perhaps most poignantly expressed in Ozu Yasujiro's film, "Tokyo Story" 1953, an elegiac record of the break up of a family between generations as new values and pressures assert themselves. A similarly downbeat sensibility continues in much contemporary fiction that reflects the alienation and disorientation of the youngest generation of Tokyoites [Fig.13].

Two "Unfinished" Cities

For both cities the process of post-war reconstruction has been not only a matter of bricks and mortar but also spiritual, mental and cultural. From 1949 to 1989 Berlin was split into two separate cities and only very recently has it been able to think of itself as whole. Artistic contacts between Tokyo and Berlin slowly began to be re-established, initially and tentatively through Subjective Photography [Cats. 9-12 to 9-19] and Zen-style painting in the

[18] Berlin's population in 2005 is around 3.5 million.

mid-1950s then more strongly, in the early 1960s, through Fluxus and Neo-Dada – in their spirit of youthful revolt echoing former contacts in the 1920s [Cats. 10-12 to 10-49]. Now in a more globalised world exchanges between artists and musicians from both cities seem to be happening all the time.

Almost in spite of itself, and perhaps because of its location in an earthquake zone, in art, film and architecture, Tokyo has become both an experimental laboratory and a symbol of a post-apocalyptic vision of what the city could become in the future. The endless expressways in Andrei Tarkovsky's science fiction film "Solaris" 1972 recur in Ridley Scott's "Blade Runner, " 1982t where robotised hybrids try to escape from dripping concrete canyons in the urban chaos of an imaginary amalgam of Asia, Europe and America. In Chris Marker's "Sans Soleil," 1983, however, the "strangeness" of actual Tokyo becomes a metaphor for memory and history across the world that touches on West Africa, Iceland and the films of Andrei Tarkovsky and Alfred Hitchcock. Wim Wenders's "Tokyo-ga" is also a kind of meditative voyage based on a discovery of the city by trying to find or recapture the unique vision of Ozu's films. Otomo Katsuhiro shares the pessimism of many *manga* and *animé* artists; in "Akira", 1982-90, bike gangs run wild in the ruins of a post-World War III Neo-Tokyo.[19] [Fig.14]. Yet in spite of this Tokyo continues to renew itself and plays host to some of the most imaginative architects working in the world today who in their radical use of structure, materials and form have transformed the way we think about the city.[20]

If the countdown LED numerals on Miyajima Tatsuo's flickering walls suggest a void of non-existence at some unspecified time in the future, so the childlike forms in the work of such *manga*-related artists as Murakami Takashi suggest another kind of tabula rasa: that of a knowing but child-like refuge in fantasy. In

[19] Futuristic scenes from both "Blade Runner" and "Solaris" were shot in Tokyo.

[20] The first generation of such architects were the Metabolists in the 1970s [Kawazoe Noboru, Kikutake Kiyonori, Kurokawa Kisho, Maki Fumihiko, Otaka Masato,] as well as others such as Yange Kenzo, Isozaki Arata, , Ando Tadao, Ito Toyo, Aoki Jun, Kuma Kengo and SANA.

a recent exhibition and book called “Little Boy” – the name of the atom bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima - Murakami has attributed the infantilistic strain of *otaku* culture within contemporary Japanese art to the country’s acquiescence and subsidiary role in current world politics [Fig.15].[21]

Since the reunification of Germany in 1989 and the demolition of the Wall, Berlin also has started to re-examine its place in the world. Promoted during the Cold War as a centre for free artistic expression, such traditions have continued to the present with many sponsored artists’ studio programs that attract applicants from across the world. Also the fact that for forty years Berlin was two separate cities has meant that under unification concerts halls, ballet, opera and theatre are well provided for and the Berlin State Museums have been re-amalgamated. Constraints on growth have also meant that Berlin has been able to retain its green spaces and, unlike almost any other city in the world, many potential sites remain vacant at its centre. But a number of flagship redevelopment projects employing world famous architects have already been completed around Potsdamer Platz and Mitte.

It is perhaps their greatest strength that Tokyo and Berlin are both in a sense “unfinished” cities - this exhibition may only be regarded as an interim report on their continuing development. As a result, the two exhibitions shown in Tokyo and Berlin differ in their treatment of the present. In Tokyo the last section concentrates on how contemporary artists in Berlin reflect the diverse culture of their city and its environment and on how this is different from the situation in Japan. In Berlin the main focus is on contemporary artists from Tokyo and on the particular ways they reflect Japanese urban culture.

As time passes we have no doubt that the relations between Tokyo and Berlin will continue to grow, deepen and intensify. If culture, leisure and the enjoyment of nature are to be valued, the economic

[21] Takashi Murakami (ed.), “Little Boy. The Arts of Japan’s Exploding Subculture”, New York, The Japan Society, 2005.

and cultural need to attract visitors of all descriptions must also be recognised. Culture in its many manifestations – art, film, literature, music, dance, museums, concert halls, theatres, libraries, universities, bars, restaurants, clubs – is at the heart of any civilized city. In their different ways Tokyo and Berlin have been working to develop these cultural assets as they, more than anything else, will ensure that both cities remain places where people really want to live. This in turn will lead to a greater complexity of experience, growth, understanding and enjoyment of life.