

# ' FUTURE VISION OF KYOTO FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY ' INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

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A First Prize

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yume no ukihashi

*Floating Bridges of Dreams*

京の夢浮橋

Though the sound  
Of the cascade  
Long since has ceased  
We still hear the murmur  
Of its name .<sup>1</sup>

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# yume no ukihashi

*Floating Bridges of Dreams*

## ***I have a Dream***

Kyoto in the Third Millenium

### *I have a Dream*

**I see Kyoto as a modern city where thousands of its citizens and visitors convene every night to enjoy the spectacle of the lit-up Dream-Bridges floating over the Kamogawa; only the rainbow could have possibly measured up to such a sight.**

### *I have a Dream<sup>3</sup>*

**I see Kyoto as the future role model of an environmentally friendly city embedded by green - the mountains - and penetrated by green up into its very center - the Seasonal River Garden all along the Kamogawa; only celestial gardens could possibly surpass such sight.**

## ORIGIN

**In Kyoto ORIGIN is always PRESENT,  
Thus, a vision of the FUTURE implies  
a vision of the PAST .<sup>4</sup>**

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The life-supporting foundation of ancient Kyoto, the original Heiankyo, is still vital in the component features of the contemporary City . Kyoto's reputation as a world-renound historic city and its resultant touristic attraction attests to the validity of the principles of its initial foundation:

- Its NATURAL GENIUS LOCI, the geomancy of Kyoto's placement into nature: embedded into a horseshoe of mountains in the north, east and west; the Kyoto basin slopes gently from the north to the south which is open.
- Its RIVER OF LIFE; Kyoto is blessed with an abundant supply of water . Its Kamo River transverses the entire City; it was considered sacred and its waters were and still are used for many purification rituals.

- Its RELIGIOUS GENIUS LOCI, a sequence of Buddhist Temples, Gardens, Shinto Shrines and Early Imperial estates along the foot of the mountains.
- Its urban URBAN GENIUS LOCI, the grid pattern of its townscape giving the City its basic spatial rhythm and human scale.
- Its HUMAN INGENUITY, a seemingly inexhaustible abundance of human energy expressing itself in the spatial, cultural and commercial life of the City.

These are the FIVE BASIC ELEMENTS or *go-gyo* of this unique city, paralleling the five elements which comprized a universe postulated by ancient East Asian science. These Basic Elements also stand as the inspiration for our Future Vision of Kyoto.

## SYMBOL

We begin by offering the City a New Symbol for KYOTO IN THE THIRD MILLENIUM..

This symbol should be read as a representation of Kyoto's geomantical situation. The outer line of its two constituent parts stands for the mountains that embrace the city on three sides; the inner line, for the river that carries the Spirit of the Mountains into the heart of the city.

In no other city on earth, has the bond between nature and built-form been more deeply felt and expressed than in Kyoto. For over a thousand years, this bond has in fact been the great underlying creative tradition of the city. Now, at the end of a century of intense world-wide urban industrial development, this historic bond is threatened. In order to more clearly signal Kyoto's commitment to a renewal of its age-old harmony between Nature and



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## PRESENT

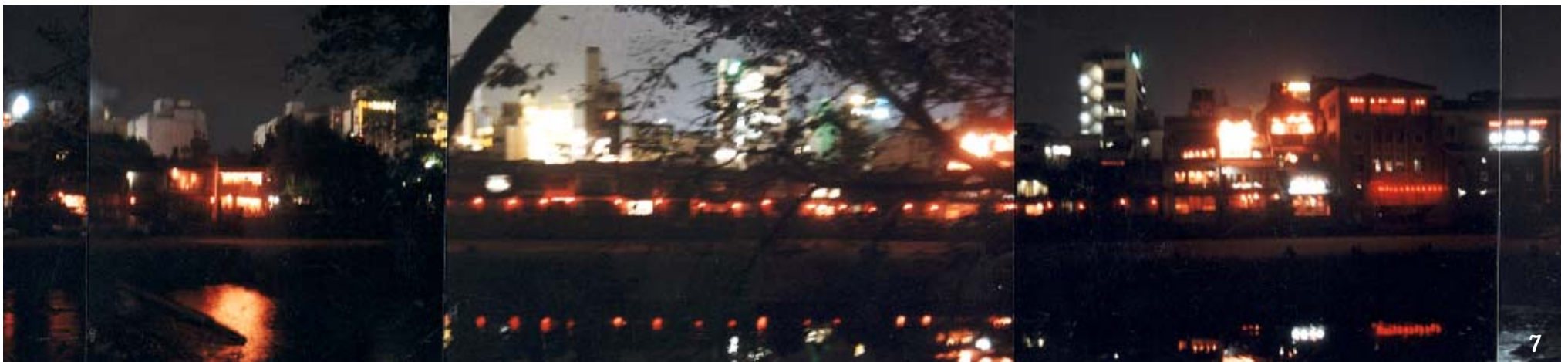
Humankind. The new City Symbol could be seen as a constant public reminder of Kyoto's mission in the Third Millennium.

The New Symbol can also be interpreted as representing a Japanese drum-bridge in stylized form, with one column and one beam span. It is this inner part of the Symbol, the River and its Bridges, that we have chosen for the focus of our proposals.

Bridges link, connect in time and space; bridges span the hearts of individuals and whole nations. Symbolically they cannot only suggest links in space but links to the past and the future. They can link us back to nature, the real source of our energies. And most importantly, the proposed bridges would have the potential power to suggest symbolical links the City wants to establish in a human sense; Kyoto is building human bridges to other nations on this beautiful globe.

**From subjects to citizens – from a rigid grid city to a flexible vitalistic city :** Kyoto's history can be read as a struggle of over one thousand years of its population to overcome the original fixed pattern of a *cosmic sacred city* or *city beautiful* of Chinese descent and become a *city vital and ever changing*, just like other typical Japanese cities. That expressed itself in the change from the original city-structure as a whole, a structure based on absolute symmetry and centered on the imperial palace, into a structure which in stages took the Kamo River into its center; in other words, the *Blue Dragon* now dwells in and animates the belly of Kyoto from inside.

It also expressed itself in the change of its basic initial neighbourhood unit the *cho*, originally in the shape of one square, surrounded by a street and a wall, to a unit which opens itself to and takes the street into its center. Kyoto's society changed from a



closed aristocratic state to an open society, a state of townspeople, basically merchants, artisans and entertainers.

Truly one can not predict the future of any city, but one can say something about the special urban characteristics of the Japanese city. The Japanese city does not follow the well honored and shared aesthetic principles of European urban design.

The next transformation of the structure of Kyoto, the one which is to take place in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and which is the contents of this proposal, will see Kyoto still subject to the five basic elements, the wisdom of the earth, and the the spirit of the place, as it were, but changing from a national to an international city.

**From national to world citizens – from a street- to a green-oriented city :** Kyoto's mission could very well be to play a role model on this Planet Earth as an environmentally friendly and ecologically sustainable modern city.

## KYOTO IN THE THIRD MILLENIUM

A crucial inspiration for our proposals is contained in the **<Declaration of Kyoto as a City Open to the Free Exchange of World Cultures>**, stating that the City-Fathers see Kyoto in its next historical phase to be culturally renewed by international exchanges. Kyoto has been the national political capital of Japan initially, then the national cultural one, and is now preparing to become an international historic city.

For our vision of Kyoto in the Third Millenium we suggest the adoption of a strategy to create an INTERNATIONAL WORLD THEME-PARK OF LIVING BRIDGES: in a setting of the EARTH'S LARGEST URBAN RIVER GARDEN to be created along both sides of the Kamogawa.

## THE FLOATING BRIDGES OF DREAMS

Many countries, especially those with sister-city relationships with Kyoto, should be invited to contribute one bridge along this RIVER GARDEN UNDER THE FLOATING BRIDGES OF KYOTO; so that after twenty to fifty odd years Kyoto will have a completely restructured urban center dominated visually by the sequence of elegant bridges spanning over a contiuous river-garden, to be created equally in stages on both sides of the river. The bridges should be lit-up every night to present to the citizens and visitors a view equally breathtaking than the *o-kuribi* on O-Bon in mid-August, or the light-up of the cherry trees along the upper reaches of the Kamo River in April every year. As an image for what Kyoto could look like at night along its bridges we include the 1947 project of a three-level bridge for the center of Pittsburgh by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Various colorful World Exhibitions have been hosted over the last 150 years by individual countries at tremendous expenses, both financially and environmentally. In our proposal each country donating one bridge would be reimbursed for its expenses by being given a space at the bridge-head of the bridge they donated to





represent their country culturally, and, thus, be granted a permanent cultural presence in one of the most beautiful historic cities.

The townscape of many historic cities now declared World Heritage Sites owe their urban beauty and attraction to a sequence of beautiful bridges, which were constructed over long periods of time; one only needs to mention Venice, Paris or Prague. Kyoto has neglected that aspect of its townscape completely. The old attractive and skillful wooden bridges, which we still see in woodcuts and on the *Rakuchu-Rakugai zu* Folding Screens, have been replaced by inconspicuous and utilitarian concrete car bridges. Not even one of them shows a unique Japanese flavor or structural excellence.

The urban rivers, and their edges, might very well be seen as the next frontier of urban development not only in Japan but all over the world. After the War Japanese cities generally didn't treat their rivers gently. Urban rivers were either filled in to give way to roads,

or they were built over with urban motorways and consequently turned into sewers. The fate of the Horikawa in the west of Kyoto is sad.

The Kamo River is beautiful and has been cleaned up over the last ten years. Cranes visit now even the city center; anglers decorate its river banks. Perhaps no other city of Kyoto's size can boast of such clean river water. Our proposal directs the citizen's attention towards this immense resource and suggests to upgrade it into a continuous river garden reflecting and celebrating the seasons and being interrupted by a symphony of the most elegant bridge structures the human being is capable of designing in the Third Millennium. Kyoto should remember that some of Japan's most creative cultural movements started along the Kamo River, such as the Muromachi era gardens built by the kawaramono and the Kabuki Theatre in early Edo times. Our vision is that the next cultural renewal will again spring from the river.



In the choice of symbol and content of our vision we were inspired by the legend of the moment of the creation, that is, the ORIGIN of Japan as documented in the ancient cosmogonic myth in the Kojiki and Nihongi, and by the cultural sentiment prevalent at the creation, that is, the ORIGIN of Heian culture 1200 years ago. One speaks of a sense of creativity, the other of a sense of transience, both unique aspects of the enduring Japanese culture.

**AME NO UKIHASHI : “The Floating Bridge of Heaven”**  
 – **Symbol of Creativity**

In the cosmogony myth in the Kojiki and Nihongi: Izanagi no mikoto and Izanami no mikoto stood on the FLOATING BRIDGE OF HEAVEN, perhaps on the rainbow, and searched for land in the oceans underneath, and then mysteriously created a first island in it with a spear. The ancient Japanese word for “island”, *shima*, could very well also be translated as “garden”. This then became their first place to live on earth. What transpires in this myth is

really a sense of the creation of land in the form of a garden. We have to relearn to dream in terms of such energies.

**YUME NO UKIHASHI : “The Floating Bridge of Dreams”**  
 – **Symbol of Transience**

The title of Murasaki’s final book in the Genji Monogatari, the FLOATING BRIDGE OF DREAMS is usually understood as the supreme clue to the book and the prevailing sentiment of life in Heiankyo: human life seen as dream-like bridge over which we pass from one state of existence to another, in other words, a sense of the ephemeral, of impermanence, transience, and floating, all values which were and are very much inspiring Japan’s architecture and town building.

While we can not determine the architectural form of the bridges we can, nevertheless, suggest a particular formal language and strategy which links them to their surrounding district and the

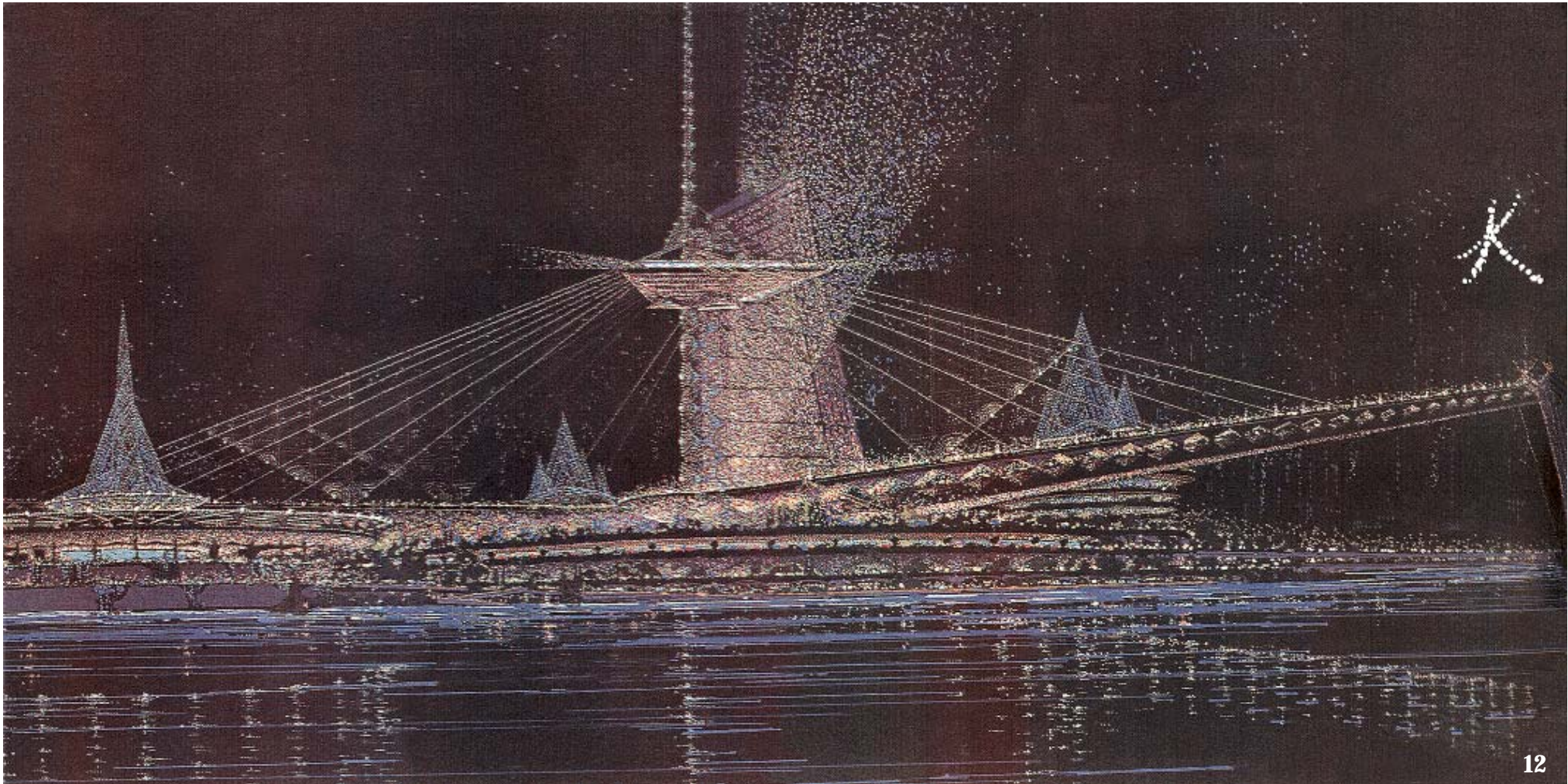
proposed gardens along the edges of the Kamo River. We feel the bridges should each be devoted to a particular theme which will give birth to their form. Here a few suggestions: There should be a *Bridge of Birds*, perhaps in the north of Kyoto at Kitayama Dori; here you would walk through a birds' sanctuary as you pass the bridge. There should be a *Bridge of Pleasure*, with two-or three-storied restaurants, coffees and bars on top of, somehow in the manner of the old London Bridge. A *Theatre Bridge* should be constructed on Shijo, the very district where Kabuki was born and still is represented by the Minamiza Building. A *Pottery Bridge* at Gojo might be the first of its kind in human history. It could accommodate stalls, shops and galleries of various brands of Kiyomizu Yaki and other typical Kyoto handicrafts. A *Science Bridge* should find its natural place on the present Imadegawa Bridge which is just at equal distance from Kyoto and Doshisha University. We can imagine a *Bridge of the Flowers of the Four Seasons*, as a purely pedestrian bridge spanning the Kamo River elegantly from Pontocho to Gion Shimbashi. Last not least, a *Yume no ukihashi* which could be designed for exhibits from Kyoto's origin of Heiankyo on. It could be placed on Nijo, a bridge with very little car traffic.

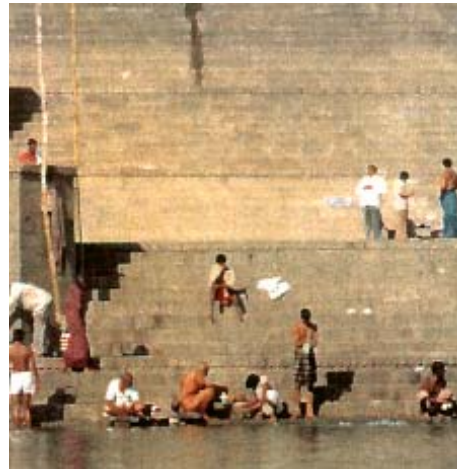
We do not want to deny or belittle Kyoto's present image as a world-renowned historic city of precious ancient temples, shrines, palaces and gardens, but we want to supplement it by an additional future image meant for the third millennium, an image of a modern city centering around the **Seasonal Gardens under Floating Dream Bridges**. The present controversy over a simple footbridge between Sanjo and Shijo could be laid to rest if the City adopted an urban

strategy which simply included the renewal of all of its bridges over the Kamo River within a manageable period of time.

The creation of such new image in no way means a death-sentence to the heroic efforts the City has undertaken since the 1930's to preserve its historic treasures. Nor is it a plea for high-rise buildings in the city center. Our proposed urban strategy would lead to a massive injection of creative energy to ultimately build a completely new architectural and urban image for the center of the City.

Since more or less all the property in the center of Kyoto is in the hands of private ownership, to execute any large-scale urban and architectural reorganization to a new urban image would be outright impossible for the City financially. But the bridges are not in private hands, nor are the river-edges. The latter two spaces could thus easily be used for the amenities and the visual renewal of the City in the Third Millennium. The City's honorable efforts to protect its past should not lead us to the slavish reproduction of it, and thus deprive us of the landmarks of the future. If you dream, dream big.





## THE RIVER GARDENS ALONG THE KAMOGAWA

Matching the FLOATING BRIDGES, like the Earth matches Heaven, are the RIVER GARDENS stretching along both banks of the Kamo River. They will have to differ from section to section between the bridges. Here some suggestions for the RIVER GARDEN on the Eastern side of the Kamogawa between Imadegawa and Kojinguchi. The garden is organized here vertically on three separate, interconnecting levels. These levels run throughout the garden allowing for continuous horizontal circulation along the edge of the Kamo River as well as, vertical circulation between the levels.

### THE GROTTO LEVEL

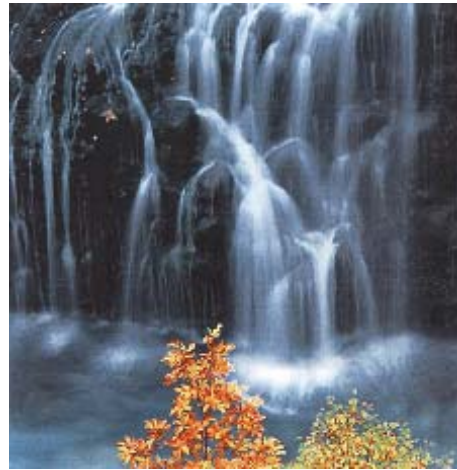
Grottos, Caves and Tunnels running along the shore, form the lowest level in the RIVER GARDEN. Here we find a series of fantastic hideaways, that allow us to go behind the waterfalls, very much as

constructed in the famous gardens of Suzhou. These waterfalls originate on the garden level above. This level could easily be inundated at high waterlevels in spring or during taifuns and then reappear at low tides, as experienced in Benares every year.

### THE GARDEN LEVEL

The GARDEN LEVEL, set above the flood line, invite us to a stroll through modern garden scenery with flowers and plants and rocks grouped between the various bridges to reflect the delights and essence of the four seasons.

We propose the construction of many WATERFALLS along the eastern stone wall of the Garden Level. These cascades should have different sizes and character like we witness in real nature. Some of the Falls should be placed in deep recesses of rocks allowing the visitor to withdraw into them and spend moments of silence as if he were in the distant mountain glades which surround Kyoto.



## THE SKY – WALK LEVEL

On the third level we suggest the construction of a sequence of light structures housing simple shops, coffees, kiosks, restaurants, and other recreation amenities. They will all be connected by a SKYWALK, that is shaded walkways and terraces from which the GARDENS and BRIDGES can be viewed in leisure.

The purpose of the integrated SKYWALK and GARDEN structure is manifold: to veil the noise and pollution of the heavy car traffic on the north-south Kawabata Dori from the river and the gardens. To provide ample recreational facilities in the center of the City; and to develop an example of modern environmentally friendly marriage between architecture and gardening.

As is well known, the Kamogawa is not a natural river; it is a man-made one. The metaphor we are suggesting for the design of this RIVER GARDEN, again, is clearly represented in the SYMBOL

mentioned at the outset. In a way, the RIVER GARDEN is an introduction of the spirit of the surrounding virgin mountains to the center of the city. A completely new type of garden should be created here which is structurally and aesthetically closer to a natural jungle, a man-made one, than to a stylized garden, whether of Japanese, European or Chinese origin.

In a sense, only an absolutely new garden-type, reflecting the environmental and ecological plight of our age, would have the power to suggest a rebirth of the ancient Name and reality of Kyoto as **Hana no miyako**, A CAPITAL OF FLOWERS.

Acknowledgements:

1. Poem by Dainagon Kinto.
2. Painting of 'yume no ukihashi' from *genji monogatari*, Heibonsha.
3. Taken from the opening words of Dr. Martin Luther King's famous speech.
4. Freely translated and adapted from Jean Gebser's *Origin and Present*.
5. Scenery from *rakuchu-rakugai-zu hyobu*, 17th century.
6. City Symbol, co-designed with R. K.
7. Night rendering by Frank Lloyd Wright of Twin Cantilevered Bridges and Civic Center, Pittsburgh, 1947.

