

VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA BY PROMINENT JAPANESE ARCHITECT PROFESSOR KENGO KUMA – AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS!



Professor Kengo Kuma speaking at the University of

Auditorium which was packed to capacity. Professor Kuma amazed the audience not only with his designs, but also the ideas behind his designs and the closeness to which he works with nature.

The month of November saw prominent Japanese architect, Professor Kengo Kuma, gave a series of lectures in Pretoria, Johannesburg and Cape Town to capacity audiences. Professor Kuma's first stop was the University of Pretoria on November 6th. He first made time to visit the department of Architecture where several few students showed him their work. Then it was on to the University's



The Sanlam Auditorium which was packed to capacity to see Professor Kengo Kuma



Panel discussion at the Centre for Japanese Studies at GIBS

On November 7th, Professor Kuma's lecture was followed by a panel discussion at the Centre for Japanese Studies at GIBS. Panelists Professor Seiichiro Yonekura, Mr. Thorsten Deckler and Mr. Henning Rasmuss joined Professor Kuma and the discussion was moderated by Mr. Hugh Fraser. A lively discussion ensued which included many interesting questions and observations from the audience who were predominantly from the field of Architecture in South Africa.

Then it was on to Cape Town where at UCT there was an audience of 350 with another 300 on the waiting list. Certainly, Professor Kuma is a "Super Star" in the field of Architecture not only in Japan but in South Africa, too. In his designs, Professor Kuma aims to use as much natural and local material as possible. This, he said, is not only to reduce the cost of transporting materials to the building site, but also local materials "perform" better in their natural surroundings in terms of strength, beauty and longevity.



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Overall, Professor Kuma's visit was an outstanding success, hopefully opening up a gateway for more and more South African Architects and designers to visit Japan in the future.