

Aso

69 Oguni Town Kitazato Elementary School Gymnasium (Oguni Town)
 ●Architects: Kaoru Suehiro + NKS Architects
 ●Completed in March 2003
 ●Developer: Oguni Town

The exterior metal wall acts like a screen that reflects the sky and nature. Inside, cedar wood creates a soft, wooden space. A soft light shines down from a skylight and envelops the gymnasium. This is the stage to raise the future of Oguni Town.

kumamoto artpolis

guide map

71 Ichinomiya Quaint Country Market Processing Factory "Kobo Aso Monogatari" (Aso City)
 ●Architect: Noriaki Otake ●Completed in March 2004 ●Developer: Aso City

The building, which has a 360-degree view of the ring of mountains surrounding Mt. Aso's crater, was built to blend into the park's natural environment. The contrast between the white walls and soft light streaming in through the high windows on the north side, the red kitchen inspired by Aso's famous tomatoes, and exquisite and subtle ceiling lined with cedar wood creates a bright and festive space.

What is Kumamoto Artpolis?

Kumamoto Artpolis makes use of Kumamoto's rich natural environment, history, and natural features to construct outstanding buildings that can be passed down as a cultural legacy to succeeding generations. We aim to raise peoples' interest in urban culture and architecture, and energize local regions by creating wonderful living spaces unique to Kumamoto.

- 1 We will construct a cultural legacy to pass on to succeeding generations.**
 Kumamoto Artpolis works with both excellent and imaginative architects and designers active throughout Japan and the world, as well as the residents of local communities, to create high-quality and outstanding buildings while still protecting the diversity of local cultures and traditions.
- 2 We will have an effect on local communities.**
 Kumamoto Artpolis projects do not just exist as buildings; they become part of residents' lives and bring a breath of fresh air to communities. In addition to increasing the number of tourists, these projects invigorate local communities by acting as landmarks or centers of development.
- 3 We will create a new culture.**
 The commissioner has recommended accomplished and imaginative architects and designers with global perspectives to design excellent buildings. Through conversations with businesses and the people who will use the facilities, we will create a unique and new culture that respects the distinctive regional environment and history.
- 4 We will expand to the entire prefecture.**
 Projects exist as scattered "points" in each region. When more projects finish, "lines" linking projects will form. Finally, as even more projects are completed, all of Kumamoto will be covered in one, large "surface".

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Kumamoto Artpolis Search Issued in 2012



Kumamoto City

77 Kumamoto Station Shirakawa Exit (East Exit) Square Tentative (Kumamoto City)
 ●Architect: Ryue Nishizawa
 ●Completed in March 2010
 ●Developer: Kumamoto Prefecture

This is an image of what Kumamoto Station's Shirakawa Exit Square will look like when completed. The design was created by Ryue Nishizawa and selected in 2007 from among other proposals sent in by the public. The foreground-half of the second roof from the left has already been constructed.

80 Kumamoto Station Shinkansen Exit (West Exit) Square (Kumamoto City)
 ●Architect: Mitsuhiko Sato
 ●Completed in February 2011
 ●Developer: Kumamoto City

Connecting the station with the town, this Station Square resembles a semi-enclosed park with a roof and "screens" (walls with large holes). These screens and roof provide shelter, display signs, and serve all the functions of a station square. The roadside screen was designed to both evoke the long wall of Kumamoto Castle and complement the surrounding scenery.

84 Kumamoto Minami(South) Police Station Kumamoto-eki Police Box (Kumamoto City)
 ●Architects: Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham (Klein-Dytham Architects)
 ●Completed in March 2011
 ●Developer: Kumamoto Prefectural Police Headquarters

A wide, curving balcony protrudes from a robust, black, outer wall on the first floor. The color gradations on the outer wall of the second floor are visible through the holes in the white screen.

83 Shirakawa Bridge Left Bank Public Restroom (Kumamoto City)
 ●Architects: Hiroshi Ota/Design Neuob
 ●Completed in March 2011
 ●Developer: Kumamoto City

A small landmark on the banks of the Shirakawa River, this public restroom is located only a few minutes from Kumamoto Station. For those crossing the bridge, this charming structure adds a fun and uplifting touch to a landscape featuring a magnificent river.

1 Kumamoto Kita(North) Police Station (Kumamoto City)
 ●Architects: Kazuo Shinohara and Taiko Architects Office
 ●Completed in November 1990
 ●Developer: Kumamoto Prefectural Police Headquarters

Known as the "glass police station" for the reflective glass covering the entire facade, this building has completely renewed the public's image of the police.

8 Kumamoto Municipal Shinchi Public Housing Complex Brock A (Kumamoto City)
 ●Architect: Kunihiko Hayakawa
 ●Completed in May 1991
 ●Developer: Kumamoto City

Inner courtyards are surrounded by two- and three-story buildings, which themselves are placed between two 170-meter high, five-story apartment buildings. As a result, this residential district contains high-quality, outdoor spaces. Received the AU (Architectural Institute of Japan) Award in 1994.

35 Kumamoto Prefecture Ryujabira Public Housing Complex (Kumamoto City)
 ●Architect: Makoto Motokura
 ●Completed in February 1994
 ●Developer: Kumamoto Prefecture

This building incorporates two types of design: a staggered, stepped-type with broad terraces and a pillar-type used on the 1st floor. The pillars create a visual continuity between the street and the inner part of the housing project. Received the AU (Architectural Institute of Japan) Award in 1995.

33 Prefectural Museum of Art Chibajo Branch (Kumamoto City)
 ●Architects: Elias Torres and Jose Antonio Martinez La Penya/Daiwa Architects
 ●Completed in October 1992
 ●Developer: Kumamoto Prefecture

Set in a quiet location, this building was built to complement the gallant stone walls of Kumamoto Castle nearby; it seems to call out and respond to the majesty of the Castle. The roof protrudes upward like the helmet of a samurai and is designed to be able to store exhibit panels. Inside, the building takes on a warmer atmosphere thanks to the floor-to-ceiling wood panels that stretch all the way to the 4th floor.

Amakusa

16 Ushibuka Haiya Bridge (Amakusa City)
 ●Architects: Ranzio Piano and Peter Rios
 ●Completed in March 1997
 ●Developer: Kumamoto Prefecture

A suspension bridge or cable stayed bridge would have been structurally too assertive. A much simpler system of continuous girders was selected instead so that the bridge might appear as a single line floating in the landscape and thus blend in with the natural environment. The windbreak and curved surface of the bottom of the bridge divide the five-meter high, concrete girders into three parts, creating a rhythmic pattern of light and shadow. The bridge is a delicate and highly expressive curved line that floats 19 meters above the water.

Southern Kumamoto

5 Yatsushiro Municipal Museum (Yatsushiro City)
 ●Architect: Toyoo Ito
 ●Completed in March 1991
 ●Developer: Yatsushiro City

Located on top of a hill, the museum features an airy roof that seems to float above the entrance hall, café, and other open spaces below. The storage house is wrapped in a metallic membrane and located above the roof. It serves as a symbol of the museum and is the "Shosoin of the future".

Central Kumamoto

23 Ayunose Bridge (Yamato Town)
 ●Architects: Miyoko Ono and Chuo Gijutsu Consultants
 ●Completed in June 1999
 ●Developer: Kumamoto Prefecture

This bridge emphasizes the tension expressed in a cable-stayed bridge and offers a response to the rugged, precipitous character of the valley. The metallic-orange cables seem to change their character from moment to moment against the valley's green backdrop. In addition to giving people the opportunity to walk across, Ayunose Bridge also provides an open area near its foundations where people can view the landscape.

Northern Kumamoto

21 Prefectural Decorative Tumulus Museum (Yamaga City)
 ●Architect: Tadao Ando
 ●Completed in April 1992
 ●Developer: Kumamoto Prefecture

The Decorative Tumulus Museum is the first museum in Japan that specializes in ancient burial mounds. The museum uses models, images, or the actual items themselves to display what has been excavated. The museum, which is shaped like a key-hole and resembles a modern-day burial mound, sits in a landscape dotted by actual ancient burial mounds.

44 Ushibuka Fisherman's Wharf "Kaisaikan" (Amakusa City)
 ●Architect: Hiroshi Naito
 ●Completed in March 1997
 ●Developer: Amakusa City

This facility was built in Ushibuka Town, Amakusa City, the southern-most point of the Amakusa Islands. It contained a bus and ferry terminal and serves as a hub for tourists who come by land or by sea to enjoy marine tourism. The whole building is an exhibition room centered on a large tank full of fish where people can get together and relax. A large roof covers the entire facility and creates a feeling of open space. This facility has the potential to bring the town of Ushibuka to life.

34 Yunomae Cartoon Museum and Community Center (Yunomae Town)
 ●Architect: Hideaki Katsura
 ●Completed in November 1992
 ●Developer: Yunomae Town

This building was based on the shape of the traditional toy "peasant horses" made in the Miyoshi/Kuma region. The townfolk have come to recognize the five pairs of parent and child peasant horses playing in the green hills as the new symbol of Yunomae.

78 Uto Municipal Uto Elementary School (Uto City)
 ●Architects: Kazuhiro Kojima and Kazuko Akamatsu/CAI
 ●Completed in July 2011
 ●Developer: Uto City

L-shaped walls support flat slabs on each floor and create a single, expansive space interspersed with courtyards. Ceiling-high folding doors that border the building can be closed during winter and opened to create a spacious area the rest of the year.

29 Tamama City Observatory Museum (Tamama City)
 ●Architect: Masaharu Takasaki
 ●Completed in September 1992
 ●Developer: Tamama City

This museum is composed of three layers. The ground floor is the "Seat of Earth" where people can interact with one another. Going up the stairs one finds the "Seat of Clouds" where one can exchange good wishes with the surrounding nature. The last layer, the "Seat of Stars", reaches toward the sky. The treasure room, located in the center of the building, is a micro-cosmos. It contains a lotus flower that symbolizes happiness and three arrows that represent the development of Tamama. Like a living organism, the building's environment is complex and wondrous.

68 Reihoku Community Hall (Reihoku Town)
 ●Architects: Hitoshi Abe and Yasuaki Onoda
 ●Completed in March 2002
 ●Developer: Reihoku Town

This facility consists of a hall with 207 seats and a community center for the Shiki District. It is simple in organization; all superfluous elements have been eliminated. The hall includes a stage set at the same level as the seats so as to give a feeling of expansiveness. The seats are set at an angle to provide a good view of the stage. Large doors at the rear of the seating area can be opened to make the hall spatially continuous with the community center. This enables the space to be used more efficiently and in more diverse ways. Received the AU (Architectural Institute of Japan) Award in 2003.

76 Ashikita Community Hall (Ashikita Town)
 ●Architects: Akiko Takahashi and Hiroshi Takahashi/Workstation
 ●Completed in January 2009
 ●Developer: Ashikita Town

The 5 irregular-shaped arcs that look like they have been clipped, as well as the wooden ceiling made with local timber to resemble weaved bamboo are the distinguishing features of this facility.

20 Seiya Bunraku Puppet Theater (Yamato Town)
 ●Architect: Kazuhiro Ishii
 ●Completed in March 1992
 ●Developer: Yamato Town

This is a theater for a form of bunraku that has been performed in Seiya since the late Edo period. This conventional wood-construction structure was made as large as the Building Standard Law permits: 13 meters. The eaves are 9 meters tall.

45 Shiranui Culture Plaza (Uki City)
 ●Architects: Atsushi Kitagawa and Ito Architects and Associates
 ●Completed in June 1999
 ●Developer: Uki City

Shiranui Town, Uki City is famous for the sea fire (Shiranui) phenomenon, a mysterious shadow of fire that floats on the sea. Located in the town's cultural zone, the Shiranui Culture Plaza uses the sea fire phenomenon as the theme for a lower screen that softens the light. The Art Museum and Library inside are conceived as open and flexible spaces that permit great freedom of activity. The plaza in front is intended to be a place where people can visit, relax, and sense the long history of Shiranui.

74 Kyusendo Recreation Village "Final Wooden House" (Kura Waga)
 ●Architect: Sosuke Fujimoto
 ●Completed in July 2008
 ●Developer: Kuma-mura Forestry Cooperative

The Wooden House was constructed by stacking impressive cedar beams 350mm wide and 350mm thick on top of each other. Inside is a three-dimensional space that utilizes the varying levels of the beams.

79 Uto Municipal Amitsu Elementary School (Uto City)
 ●Architects: Kazunari Sakamoto/Atlier and I
 ●Completed in March 2011
 ●Developer: Uto City

In this facility students learn under a thin and continuous vaulted roof; play with teachers on the veranda under the eaves, and around the school grounds; and interact with community members in a school open to community members.

46 Mamihara Bridge (Yamato Town)
 ●Architects: Jun Aoki and Chuo Gijutsu Consultants
 ●Completed in June 1995
 ●Developer: Yamato Town

This bridge is located in the center of Mamihara, Yamato Town, which lies on the Kumamoto-Miyazaki prefectural border and was once a flourishing town where people rested for their night. The bridge gradually splits into two the closer one moves towards the middle. The upper level leads to a pair of rocks joined by a sacred rope. The lower level is a "reverse arched bridge" that dips down toward the river; through two round holes in the floor one can look down on the water. The planks are made by local cedar. The bridge is one unified structure without breaks that contains two layers and columns.

52 Kumamoto Prefecture Ashikita Youth Center (Ashikita Town)
 ●Architects: Eila Zengheis and Eleni Gigantes
 ●Completed in June 1998
 ●Developer: Kumamoto Prefecture

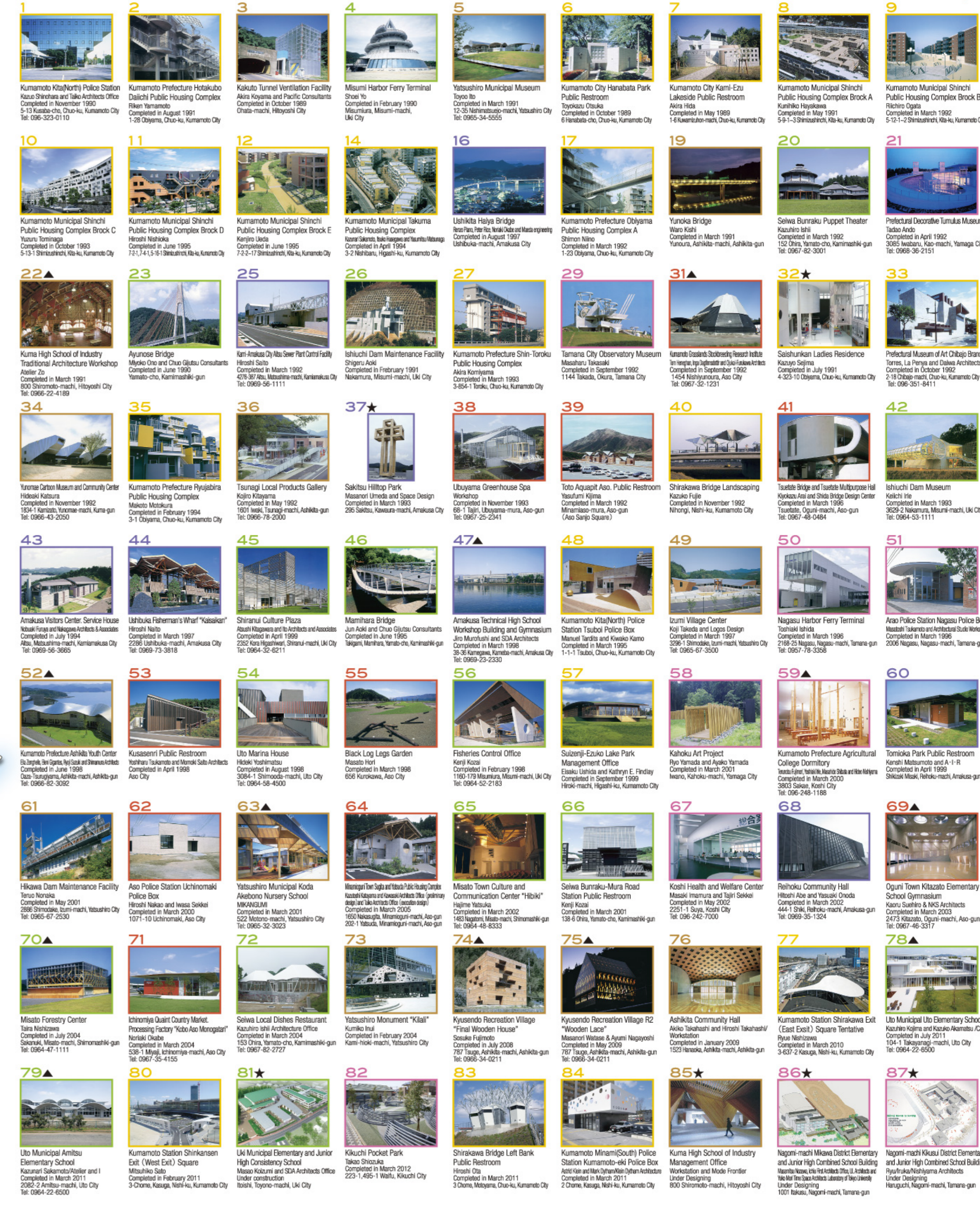
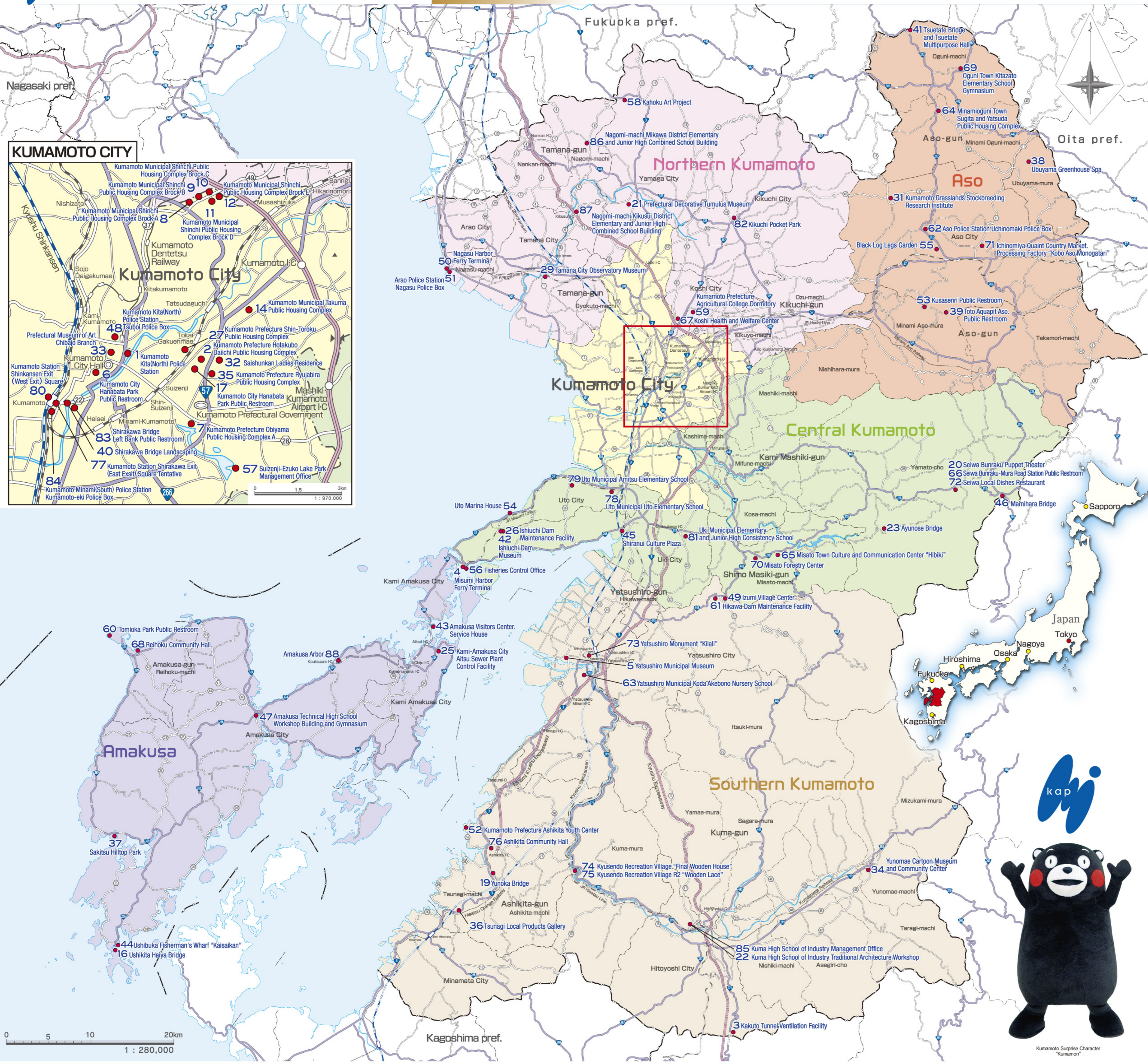
The goal of this project was to create a facility that allows visitors to enjoy the natural environment in Ashikita. The facility is divided into three buildings, each of them connected by corridors. The buildings are placed on two hills each with steep slopes, preserving views of the sea.

70 Misato Forestry Center (Misato Town)
 ●Architect: Taira Nishizawa
 ●Completed in July 2004
 ●Developer: Misato Town

This mostly flat building consists of a space equivalent to two mini-volleyball courts that can be used for citizens' meetings or recreation. An irregularly shaped, wooden structure is increased by an outer glass cube. Looking from the outside in, the building resembles a man-made bush on the hillside.

2 Kumamoto Prefecture Hotakubo Daiichi Public Housing Complex (Kumamoto City)
 ●Architect: Riken Yamamoto
 ●Completed in August 1991
 ●Developer: Kumamoto Prefecture

Apartment blocks are normally arranged to face south in orderly rows at regular intervals. Here, however, each housing unit is arranged around a central open space intended to provide a place for all residents of the 110 housing units to come together and share.



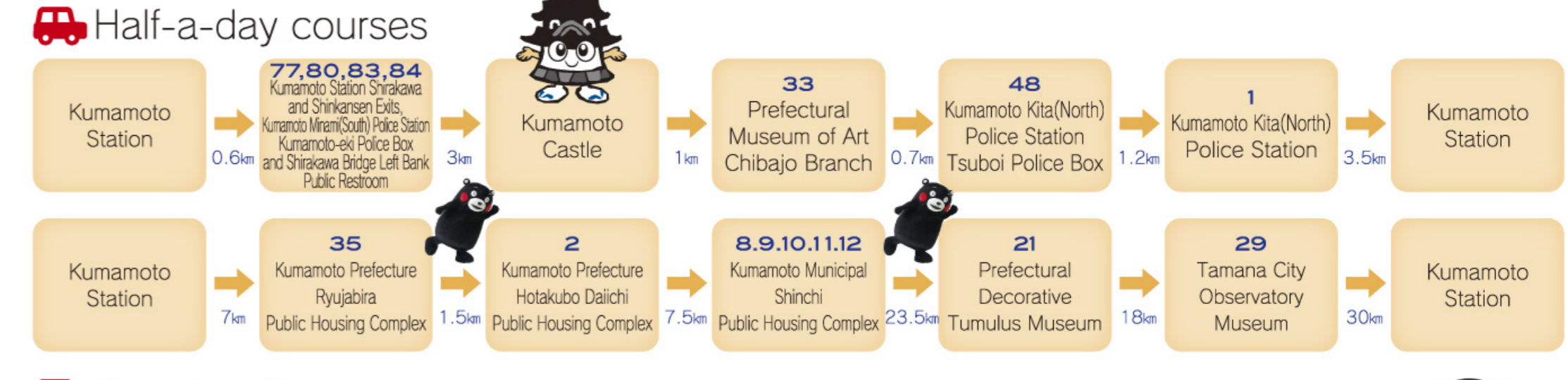
Requests for visits to buildings

- *Some buildings such as police stations, schools, residences, and facilities used by private business require visitors to submit an application to building administrators in advance. Some facilities do not allow photography. Contact building administrators or the Office for Artpolis beforehand to confirm.
- *Facilities marked with ★ are available for visits.
- *To visit facilities marked with ▲ contact building administrators or the Office for Artpolis in advance.
- *Visits to any facility by groups with 10 or more people must contact the Office for Artpolis.
- *Some facilities charge entrance fees. Please confirm in advance.
- *When visiting or taking photos, please be considerate of your surroundings and avoid causing trouble to facility administrators and users. (Please respect the privacy of those using the facilities.)

Photographers
 Shoichi Ishimaru: 1, 12, 14, 16, 29, 34, 39, 44, 45, 46, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56, 59, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87
 Masatsugu Miyagi: 1, 9, 22, 32, 52, 55, 56, 59, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87
 Seiji Tomshige: 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87
 Masaki Miyai: 61, 63, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, 73
 Koichiro Hamaguchi: 74, 75, 76



Model Courses for Visits



Access to Kumamoto

By JR		By air		By car (using highways)		By Highway Bus	
Nagasaki	Shin-Tosu (about 6h)	Tokyo (Haneda Airport)	1h 40min.	Fukuoka I.C.	(about 1h 17min.)	Nagoya	(about 1h 11min.)
Oita	Trains Kyushu Express (about 2h 55min.)	Nagoya (Chubu International Airport)	1h 20min.	Nagasaki I.C.	(about 2h 27min.)	Kyoto	(about 1h 11min.)
Kagoshima Chuuo	Shinkansen Mizuho (44min.) Sakura (49min.)	Nagoya (Komaki Airport)	1h 25min.	Oita I.C.	(about 2h 31min.)	Fukuoka	(about 1h 11min.)
		Osaka (Itami Airport)	1h 5min.	Miyazaki I.C.	(about 2h 19min.)	Nagasaki	(about 1h 11min.)
		Kobe Airport	1h	Kagoshima I.C.	(about 2h 7min.)	Kyoto	(about 1h 11min.)
		Naha Airport	1h 30min.			Nagasaki	(about 1h 11min.)
						Oita	(about 1h 11min.)
						Miyazaki	(about 1h 11min.)
						Kagoshima	(about 1h 11min.)

Notes
 *The distances between facilities are approximate figures.
 *Please confirm closure days of facilities beforehand when you plan visits.