

California Architectural  
**FOUNDATION**

**Let's Learn About Architect**

**Rafael Viñoly**

**& the Urban Room**



All presentation photos courtesy of Rafael Viñoly Architects



# What is Architecture?

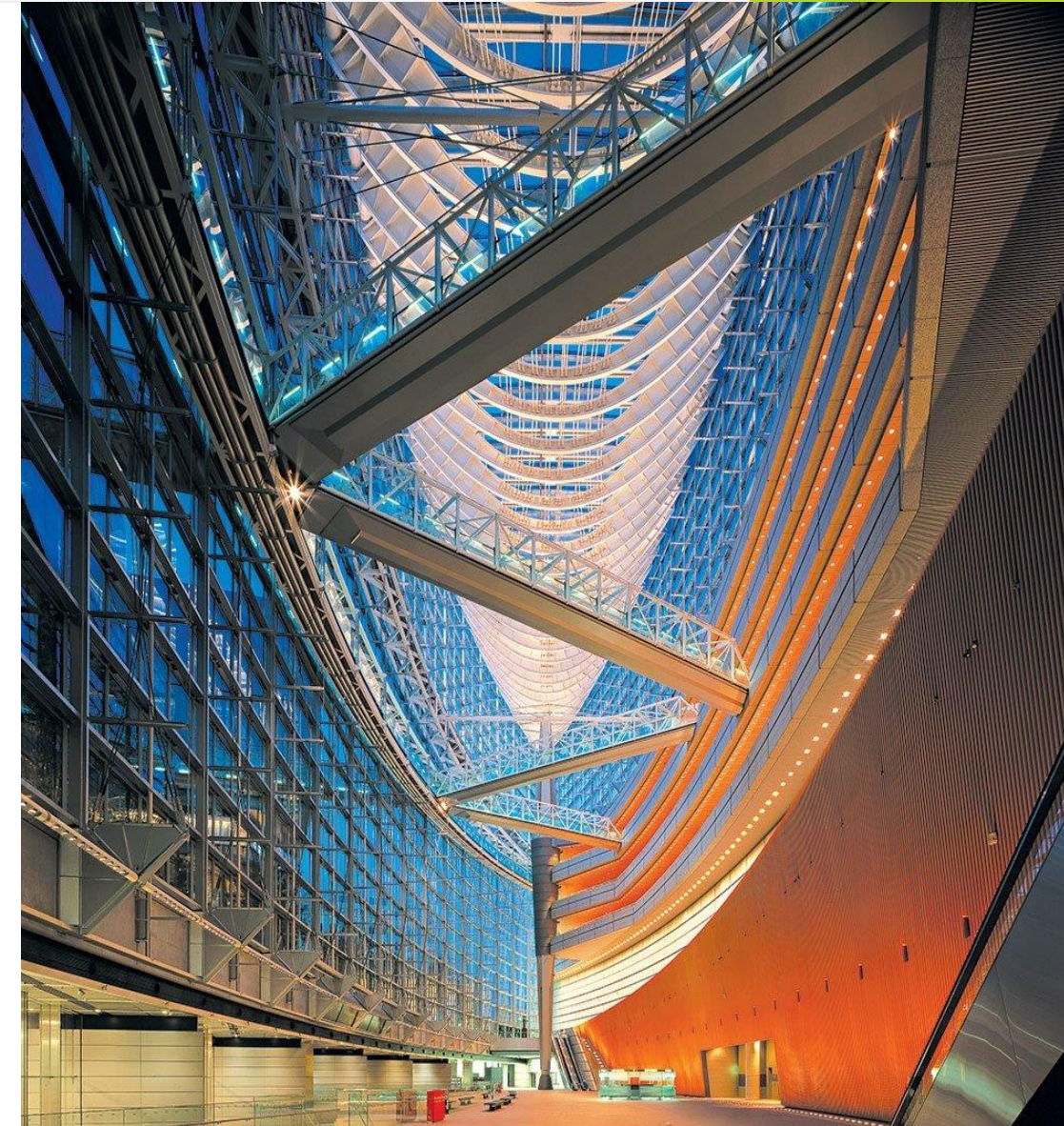
Architecture is the art or practice of designing and building structures.

## Who is an Architect?

A skilled professional who plans, designs, and oversees the construction of buildings or structures.

## Why does it matter?

Where you live, work, and play is affected by architecture. Buildings which make up our “built environment” make a big difference in how things look and work. They can help us feel better, connect us to each other, and even do better in school. Good architecture is important for all parts of our lives.



# Who was Rafael Viñoly?

Rafael was a well-known and respected architect who designed buildings all over the world. He is admired for his creativity, bold designs and ability to blend function and design. Some of his buildings, like the Tokyo International Forum, a big glass building in Japan, and the Walkie Talkie, a tall, curvy skyscraper in London are iconic landmarks.

He used lots of windows and open spaces to make his buildings bright and welcoming. He brought different ideas and materials together to create something special, helping people work, learn, and enjoy their surroundings. His buildings continue to inspire others and have left a lasting impact on cities worldwide.

- Uruguayan-born architect known for redefining urban spaces
- Founded Rafael Viñoly Architects, recognized for bold, innovative designs
- Emphasized transparency, openness, and interaction with surroundings



# Rafael's Work:

- Redefined how architecture engages us and how we experience cities & public spaces
- Balances function, artistry & societal impact
- Inspires architects to prioritize social engagement
- Advanced the Urban Room concept, which remains central to urban design



# The Urban Room Concept

- Blurs the line between public & private domains
- Encourages openness, connectivity & social interaction
- Functions as an extension of the city, enhancing urban life



# Examples of Rafael's Urban Rooms

## Tokyo International Forum (1996)

- Large glass atrium for public gathering
- Natural light enhances openness





## Kimme Center for the Performing Arts (2001)

- Central public space as a social hub
- Glass canopy invites interaction



# Carrasco International Airport (2009)

- A welcoming urban threshold
- Transparency fosters seamless transition



## 20 Fenchurch Street (2014)

- Sky Garden as an elevated Urban Room
- Public access with panoramic city views



## Cleveland Museum of Art (2012)

- Central atrium connects museum wings
- Encourages visitor engagement



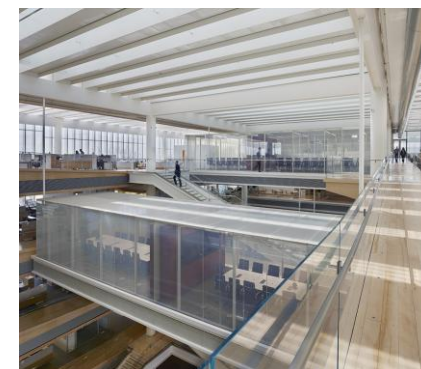
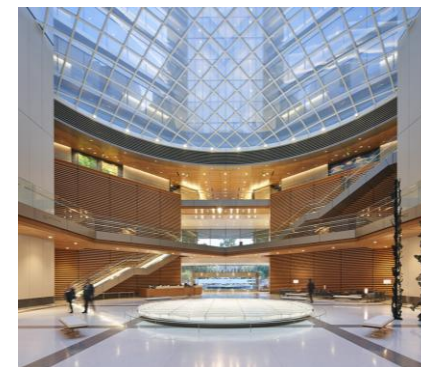
## Battersea Power Station Redevelopment (2023)

- Historic structure transformed into a vibrant mixed-use hub
- Public gathering space preserves history



# What Inspired Rafeal?

- Emphasis on light, spatial continuity, and openness
- Large atriums, expansive glass facades
- Urban Room extends beyond individual buildings to city planning





How can architects apply the Urban Room concept today?

What challenges exist in balancing transparency, accessibility, and functionality?



# Now It's Your Turn!

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