

DRAGONPLANE

FARET TACHIKAWA ART PROJECT Urban renewal project

Tachikawa, Japan 1993-1994

Commissioner: Faret Tachikawa Art Project Committee
Organization: Housing and Urban Development Corporation, Tokyo
Art Planner: Fram Kitagawa, Art Front Gallery
Budget: \$ 50,000
Award: Urban Planning Design Prize for Faret, Tachikawa Art Project



Installation view

cast iron

The dragonfly is among the most primitive of all insects surviving from the Jurassic period. In early times Japan was known as the country of 'Akitsu,' or "land of the dragonfly," and swarms of dragonflies were surely seen in the Tachikawa area, which has been inhabited since the Jōmon era (circa 10,000 B.C.E.) and whose native ecology was swamp and marshland.

The first airstrip was built in Tachikawa in the Taisho era (1912-1925). With the U.S. occupation of Japan after World War II, the city served as an American military base and airfield. In a short time, war and industrial development transformed the flutter of dragonfly wings into the roar of airplane engines, as American aircraft cast their shadows on the city of Tachikawa.

With the installation of the seven tree grates and the planting of seven trees, the artist aimed to evoke the city's history, revitalize the urban ecology, and honor the massive tree planting campaign of 7,000 oaks by Joseph Beuys that took place in Germany a decade ago.