

# A STUDY ON HIROSHI MANABE'S CONCEPTUALIZATION OF FUTURE CITIES

## — Towards the Establishment of a New Vision of Urban Living —

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### [SYNOPSIS]

This study intends to clarify the conceptualization of the cities of the future held by the illustrator Hiroshi Manabe (1932-2000), who is known for his large number of illustrations depicting the future.

Hiroshi Manabe is known as the man who created the stereotype of the “rose-colored city of the future.” Originally, he began a exploration of satire and human nature through oil paintings and manga. However, he quickly transformed his style in line with the “future boom” that occurred during Japan's high-growth era, and began producing what were described together as “paintings of the future.” In parallel with this, he published many essays which took the future as their subject. These creative activities were developed amongst the cross-disciplinary cooperation between the arts active before and after the Osaka Expo, and his interactions with a variety of experts and researchers. In particular, we can confirm that he was active in the Mirai gakkai (Future research society) and the Metabolists.

There is a tendency for Manabe's paintings to be seen as a symbol of the supremacy of science and the glorification of urban civilization, as at first glance they appear to be drawn in a gorgeous style with bright colors. However, what becomes clear after reading his views regarding the cities of the future is that he had an out-of-the-box way of thinking filled with puns, plays on words and analogies, a respect for localities and minorities, an aerial image of the city that takes a holoscopic view of the global environment, and a warm gaze aimed at the people who live there. In addition, Manabe's origins as a caricaturist give the unique personality to his conceptualization of the cities of the future. In other words, one can judge that his main goal was not to draw a desirable future, but to design an image of the future that would nurture the desire in people contemplating the drawings to create their own futures.