Sentual: Asakusa - Tokyo, Japan

Traditional Sento Public Baths

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Traditional baths were once a pleasure for many as a centre of community, an act of interaction, and an oasis away from the urban sprawl of Tokyo. Of recent times, and with the nature of a progressive society, the Japanese have long forgotten the ritual to bathe publicly. As such there is an unfortunately decline of Sento baths, closing at an alarming rate annual.

"Sentual" is a proposal to engage with the community, to inform and convey the importance of traditions, and to rekindle lives with a long forgotten ritual.

The premise of the Sentual proposal is one of dualism and interwoven connectivity between public and private spaces. The whimsical play with gender sensitivities is apparent, as gender specific baths are expanded, though linked with a public milk bar, a traditional past time foraney. Naturally to convey a strong sense of Japanese culture, ritual plays a symbolic role to the program, not only as a symbolic gesture, but as a carefully crafted experience. The female baths play on the notion of the Japanese tea ceremony, with a slow circular motion, whilst the male baths toy on the idea of the art of origami, with enclosed spaces enveloping on one another.