

The Pritzker Architecture Prize

2024 Laureate
Riken Yamamoto
Japan

Image Book



Riken Yamamoto

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**Yamakawa
Villa**
1977
Nagano, Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

The architect's earliest work is a private residence situated in woods, designed to feel entirely like an open-air terrace and enjoyed during the warmer months. The non-prescriptive terrace seamlessly transitions into a living room and dining room, while sleeping quarters and the kitchen are contained in small dispersed rooms. The wooden beams that cover the floor below and pitched ceiling above run in parallel throughout the length of this narrow building, inducing serenity and evoking the nature of its immediate surroundings.

**Yamakawa
Villa**
1977
Nagano, Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

Ishii House
1978

Kawasaki,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Shinkenchiku Sha



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

Built for two artists, this residence features a pavilion-like room with a wide staircase that serves as a stage to host performances. A curtain wall beckons nature and neighbors, while living quarters remain embedded beneath, resulting in a home that is engrained in the public realm, where all visible areas offer a threshold of opportunity for the neighborhood.

GAZEBO

1986

Yokohama,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Ryuuji Miyamoto



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

Yamamoto's own home is designed to invoke interaction with neighbors from terraces and rooftops. The Land Readjustment Act (1954) significantly widened the main road from 4- to 26 meters, drastically changing the environment—socially, emotionally and architecturally. The fraternity of small houses that once nurtured the community gave way to the emergence of four- and five-story mixed-use buildings that satisfy the new infrastructure and pace of life, with commerce on the ground floor and leased apartments on the top floors. The architect creates thresholds above, giving way to exchanges with neighbors who garden and retreat respectively, yet together, from one terrace or rooftop to another.

GAZEBO

1986

Yokohama,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Shigeru Ohno

**Hotakubo
Housing**
1991

Kumamoto,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Shinkenchiiku Sha

Yamamoto's first social housing project encompasses sixteen clusters of housing that yield 110 units, arranged around a tree-lined central square that may only be accessed by passing through a residence. Inspired by traditional Japanese *machiya* and Greek *oikos* housing that fostered collectivism amongst neighbors, Yamamoto prompts a passage from private to semi-public space, resulting in a threshold that creates a subsociety, enabling the "Local Community Area" while respecting privacy of individual families. Occupational limitations enforced by the Public Housing Act result in small units, so each features a terrace that faces the square, expanding living areas and connecting residents to the natural environment.

**Hotakubo
Housing**
1991

Kumamoto,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

**Hotakubo
Housing**
1991

Kumamoto,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

**Hotakubo
Housing**
1991

Kumamoto,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

**Iwadeyama
Junior High
School**
1996

Ōsaki, Japan



Photo courtesy of Mitsumasa Fujitsuka



Photo courtesy of Mitsumasa Fujitsuka

Situated atop a hill in a region of north winds, the curved “wind wing” mitigates the severe weather and also reflects light into the school, which is useful during the winter months of fleeting daylight. Inside, the generous atrium is the hub of the school, supporting the society of students. A large multipurpose room known as the “student forum” is located centrally on the second floor with locker spaces that expand into student lounges floating above. A conventional teacher’s lounge is replaced by a dedicated research room for educators to pursue specialties. The community must enter the school through a transparent promenade above “Forest Plaza,” a flexible public space designed to evolve as the population of the school expands and lessens over time.

**Iwadeyama
Junior High
School**
1996

Ōsaki, Japan



Photo courtesy of Shinkenchiku Sha

**Saitama
Prefectural
University**
1999

Koshigaya,
Japan



Photo courtesy of GA Photographers

Specializing in nursing and health sciences, this university is composed of nine buildings connected by terraces that transition into walkways through sloping green spaces and courtyards. Each transparent volume allows views from one classroom to another, but also from one building to the next encouraging interdisciplinary learning and interaction. All laboratories are located on the first floor, furthering the relational qualities between each specialty. The classrooms, auditorium, library, gymnasium, cafeteria and faculty rooms are located throughout the campus, however, distinguishing where one building ends and another begins is intentionally blurred, prompting an architectural language of its own.

**Saitama
Prefectural
University**
1999

Koshigaya,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

**Saitama
Prefectural
University**
1999

Koshigaya,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Riken Yamamoto & Field Shop



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

**Hiroshima
Nishi Fire
Station**
2000

Hiroshima,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

The façade, interior walls and floors of this building are constructed of glass, lending the appearance of an entirely transparent volume. The atrium is central to the building, where the training and activity of firefighters is spotlighted, encouraging passersby to view and engage with those who are protecting the community, resulting in a reciprocal commitment between the civil servants and the citizens they serve. Fire prevention and public education for all ages are integral to the program, and the exhibition lobby and fourth floor terrace space are programmed for public use.

**Hiroshima
Nishi Fire
Station**
2000

Hiroshima,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

**Hiroshima
Nishi Fire
Station**
2000

Hiroshima,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

**Hiroshima
Nishi Fire
Station**
2000

Hiroshima,
Japan

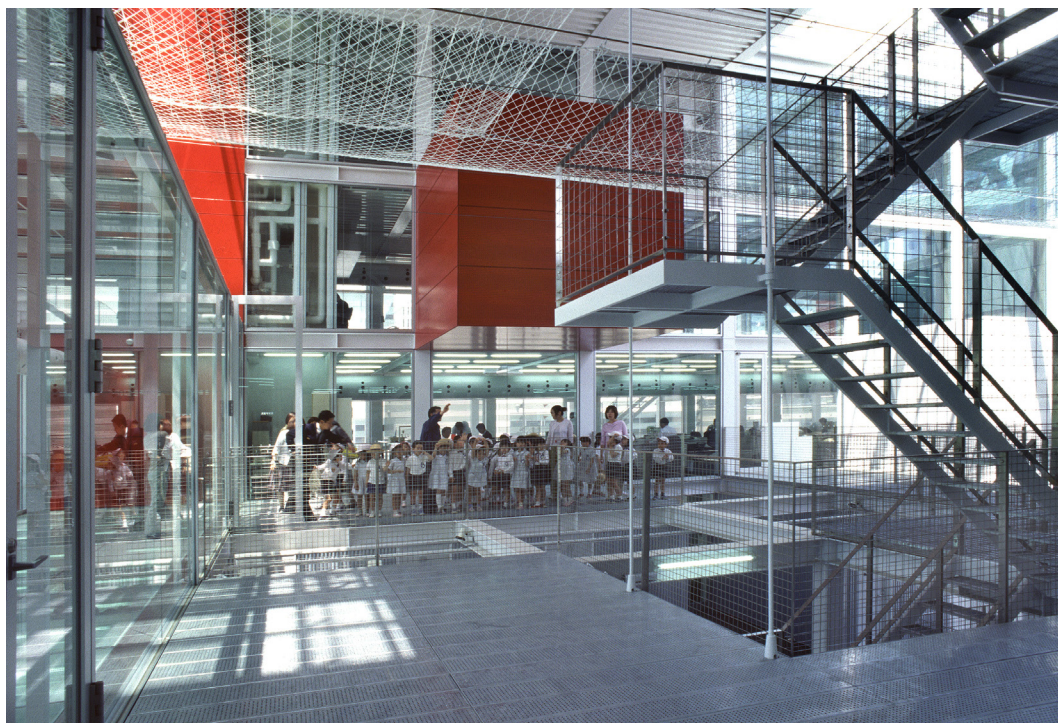


Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

**Future
University of
Hakodate**
2000

Hakodate,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Isao Aihara

The university, focusing on information sciences, is designed to create a relational society between students and teachers, prioritizing mutual accessibility within the community. Intimacy is achieved amidst the vast scale of the building. The reception area features large sunken circular pods, flexible areas to host presentations and discussions, available to students and the public alike. The classrooms, auditorium and library are lined with glass walls providing the possibility for everyone to peer, engage and learn. Open common areas are placed just outside of the transparent rooms, on overlapping levels, allowing users to feel connected to activities all around them. Even the interiors of professor research rooms are visible from beyond their walls, and surrounded by lightweight aluminum furniture, encouraging students to draw near.

**Future
University of
Hakodate
2000**

Hakodate,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Mitsumasa Fujitsuka



Photo courtesy of Mitsumasa Fujitsuka

**Shinonome
Canal Court
CODAN**
2003

Tokyo, Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi



Photo courtesy of Riken Yamamoto & Field Shop

This mixed-use building creates a community for those who work in this redeveloped district of Tokyo Bay. The upper levels consist of housing units designed for a range of occupants, from families with young children to seniors, to those individuals requiring flexible work space, while the lower levels support urban living, with commercial retailers, restaurants, art galleries, facilities for seniors and a childcare center. The six blocks are connected by a common deck, terraces and green spaces on the second floor, creating a miniature city for the neighbors residing together and the public passing through.

Ecoms House
2004

Tosu, Japan



Photo courtesy of Shinkenchiku Sha

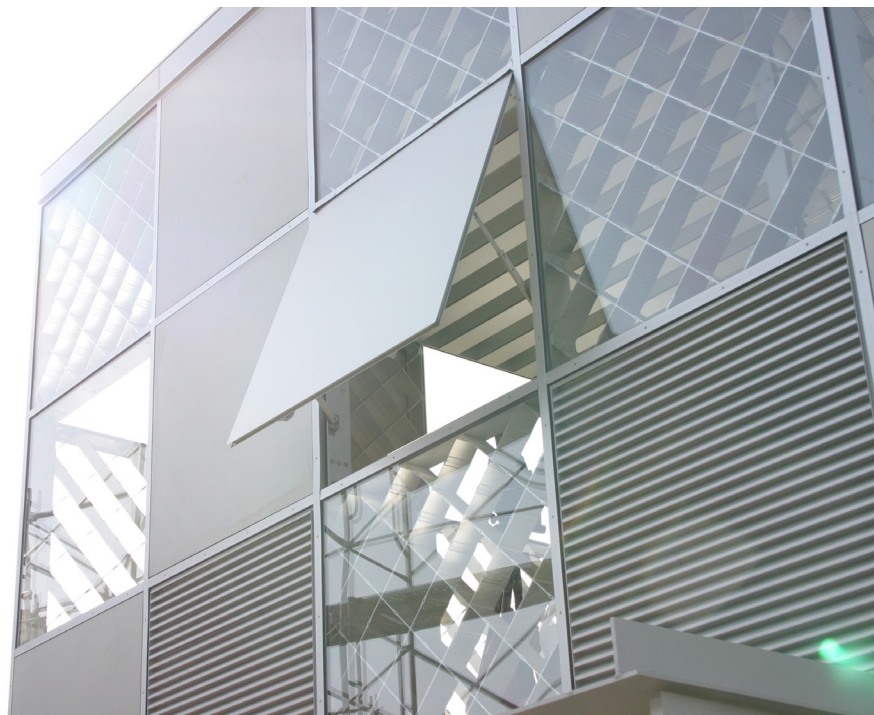


Photo courtesy of Riken Yamamoto & Field Shop

This 115-square meter SOHO (small office home office) is a prototype that showcases the efficiency of aluminum as a building material. Lightweight, durable and recyclable, aluminum lattice panels are alternated with aluminum sheets and glass, creating a checkered exterior skin, which may be interchanged and replaced by a variety of mechanisms including louvered or projected windows, in glass or aluminum, offering adaptability and affordability. This model features a high second level ceiling at 3.4-meters, and future editions of this flexible space may be extended to include a third level.

**Jian Wai
SOHO**
2004

Beijing,
People's
Republic of
China



Photo courtesy of Mitsumasa Fujitsuka



Photo courtesy of Riken Yamamoto & Field Shop

Located just east of Tiananmen Square, this expansive project including nine residential towers and four SOHO (small office home office) buildings proved a novel concept in Beijing at the time, integrating work spaces with residences. The three lower levels of the complex support 177 commercial spaces, while the upper levels comprise the residences. The bustling square is lined with shops, restaurants, public facilities and a sunken garden, inviting all into this urban experience. Traffic patterns are diverted subterranean, furthering a continuous space for pedestrians.

Jian Wai SOHO
2004

Beijing,
People's
Republic of
China



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

**Yokosuka
Museum of Art**
2006

Yokosuka,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

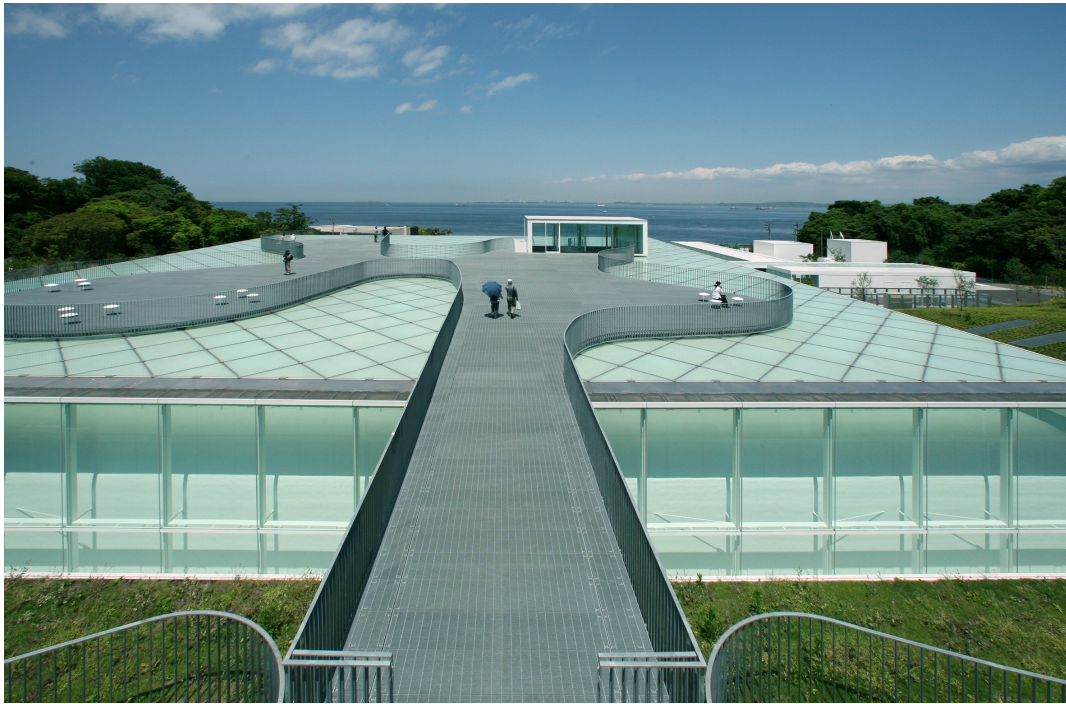


Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

Considering the user experience first, Yokosuka Museum of Art is envisioned as both a destination for travelers and a daily reprieve for locals. The inviting serpentine entrance evokes the surrounding Tokyo Bay and nearby mountains, while many of the galleries are underground, providing those who approach with a clear, undisturbed visual experience of the natural geography. Visitors may view through to the landscape and other galleries from round cutouts in all common spaces, uniting these otherwise distinctive environments so that those inside are impressed upon not only by the artwork, but by the place and activity of others alongside them. The restaurant, with glass windows spanning the entire length, is on the ground floor, evoking a resort-like venue during all seasons.

**Yokosuka
Museum of Art**
2006

Yokosuka,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi



Photo courtesy of Tomio Ohashi

Fussa City Hall
2008

Tokyo, Japan



Photo courtesy of Riken Yamamoto & Field Shop



Photo courtesy of Sergio Pirrone

Fussa City Hall is conceived as two mid-rise towers, rather than one high-rise, to compliment the surrounding neighborhood of low-rise buildings. Low hills on the site are reflected in the sloped curved edges of the building. The continuity of material evokes natural terrain as the concave base invites visitors to recline and rest, while the green public rooftop and lower levels are designated for flexible public programming.

Fussa City Hall
2008

Tokyo, Japan



Photo courtesy of Riken Yamamoto & Field Shop

**Pangyo
Housing**
2010

Seongnam,
Republic of
Korea



Photo courtesy of Nam Goongsun



Photo courtesy of Kouichi Satake

A complex of nine low-rise housing blocks is designed with nonprescriptive transparent ground floor volumes that catalyze interconnectedness between neighbors, assuring that even those residents who live alone don't dwell in isolation. A communal deck across the second floor encourages interaction, featuring spaces for gathering, playgrounds, gardens and bridges that connect one housing block to another.

**Pangyo
Housing**
2010

Seongnam,
Republic of
Korea



Photo courtesy of Nam Goongsun



Photo courtesy of GA Photographers

Tianjin Library
2012

Tianjin, People's
Republic of
China



Photo courtesy of Riken Yamamoto & Field Shop

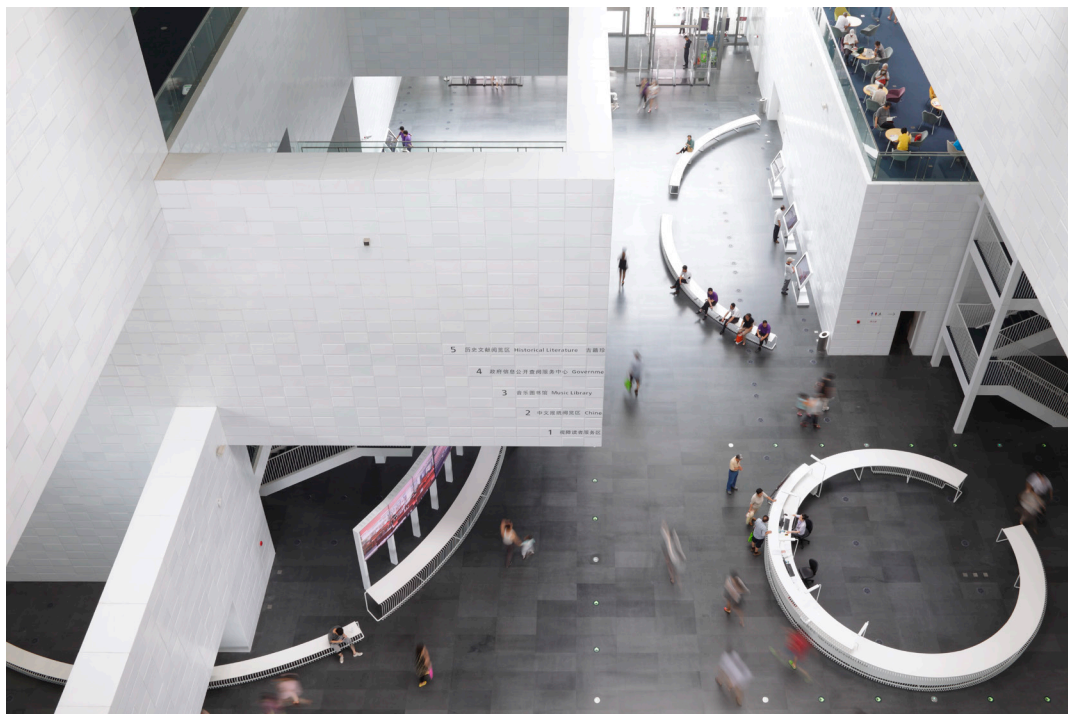


Photo courtesy of Nacasa & Partners

A large entry hall spans north to south along the entirety of Tianjin Library, yielding maximum access of this large-scale building. The collection of six million books lines its bookshelves, which are incorporated into the intersecting grid of wall beams, up to 30-meters in length, resulting in seemingly floating stacks. Each of the five levels features a mezzanine, so that the building appears as ten crisscrossing levels, and from any floor, visitors may view several other levels around them due to the vast openness of the design. The outer skin of the library is composed of stone louvers to not only mitigate the effects of yellow dust conditions but also achieve transparency. A resulting soft light lends to the ambience of the many diverse reading rooms, reflecting the wide range of readers, across generations, identities and interests, who frequent this public venue.

Tianjin Library
2012

Tianjin, People's
Republic of
China



Photo courtesy of Nacasa & Partners

Tianjin Library
2012

Tianjin, People's
Republic of
China



Photo courtesy of Nacasa & Partners

**Koyasu
Elementary
School**
2018

Yokohama,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Mitsumasa Fujitsuka



Photo courtesy of Riken Yamamoto & Field Shop

The construction of nearby large condominiums caused an influx of students within the growing community, resulting in the need to expand and rebuild the neighborhood school. Even the youngest citizens comprise a society at Kosayu Elementary School. Large undivided terraces extend and connect every classroom, creating flexible areas that allow views into and from the learning spaces, and encourage interaction amongst the 1000 students.

**Koyasu
Elementary
School**
2018

Yokohama,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Riken Yamamoto & Field Shop

**Koyasu
Elementary
School**
2018

Yokohama,
Japan



Photo courtesy of Riken Yamamoto & Field Shop

**THE CIRCLE at
Zürich Airport**
2020

Zürich,
Switzerland



Photo courtesy of Flughafen Zürich AG



Photo courtesy of Flughafen Zürich AG

Situated between a highway and a large park, THE CIRCLE, itself, is the threshold between the airport and local city. Demonstrating a diverse mastery of scale, one side of the building features an expansive uniform façade, while the other unlocks its own city that evokes medieval towns of Switzerland imbued with new technologies evolved for present and future lifestyles. The main passageways, inspired by the German *gasse*, translating to “alley,” lead to a convention center, hotels, restaurants, wellness centers, retail storefronts and a public events space. Indoors and outdoors blend seamlessly, as glass walls and ceilings yield maximum transparency. On upper floors, the frontal walls of business headquarters and office spaces and are lined with thin concrete columns spaced equidistantly, continuing an illusion of visibility.

**THE CIRCLE at
Zürich Airport**
2020

Zürich,
Switzerland



Photo courtesy of Flughafen Zürich AG

**Nagoya Zokei
University**
2022

Nagoya, Japan



Photo courtesy of Riken Yamamoto & Field Shop



Photo courtesy of Shigeru Ohno

Located in Aichi Prefecture, a neighborhood consisting of government offices and dated municipal housing, Nagoya Zokei University is conceived with sensitivity to the preexisting. Spaces and programming are designed for students and the community alike. The upper floor features the sizable “Studio,” a transparent nonprescriptive creative space, while the arena, library, gallery, hall and cafeteria are below. The exterior lattice wall, of precast concrete and steel plates, filters ambient light into the building by day and serves as a lantern to the city by night.

**Nagoya Zokei
University**
2022

Nagoya, Japan



Photo courtesy of Shinkenchiu Sha



Photo courtesy of Shinkenchiu Sha

**Nagoya Zokei
University**
2022

Nagoya, Japan



Photo courtesy of Shinkenchiku Sha