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BRIEFING
Architecture/Design

Q & A

Yasuhiro Yamashita
Founder of Atelier Tekuto
Japan



Japanese architect Yasuhiro Yamashita's studio Atelier Tekuto has just completed a new house in Yokohama, the second in an ongoing project to explore the use of aluminium in house building. Like the first house, this one is based on a wooden structure but uses long-lasting aluminium units for the partitions, lighting fixtures and radiators. Last year, Yamashita's Aluminium Project won a government subsidy for its contribution to reducing CO2 emissions in construction. — FW

The Aluminium Project is a collaborative effort. Who else is involved?

We started the project three years ago with the Kanazawa Institute of Technology. I'm the project leader but there are about 20 other companies and organisations, including the university and local government, a bank, an aluminium manufacturer, a toilet manufacturer and a heating system manufacturer.

Why aluminium?

We tend to think of aluminium just as a structural material. We're using it to create an energy-efficient heating system.

What else are you working on?

We're relocating old Japanese houses – relocation creates only a fifth of the CO2 of demolition. In 2008, we moved the frame of an old wooden building from Japan to Ethiopia, blended it with local wooden materials and built a Japanese Cultural Hall. We're now moving the frame of a building in Japan and wrapping it in environmentally friendly panels that we developed – they are multi-functional, providing structure, heat insulation and humidity control.

Cabinet meeting

Canada [FURNITURE RETAIL]

LeftRight Designs, the young furniture firm set up in Toronto by carpenters Pablo Pineda Willis and Joel Dunkley (see its elegant bench prototype in issue 13), is launching its first retail collection. This walnut cabinet is by rising Polish designer Monica Olejnik. — LR leftrightdesigns.ca



Down to the woods

Switzerland [RESIDENCE]

This small home in Ticino, Switzerland, has a facade crafted from wood offcuts. Nestled between a forest and vineyard in the quiet village of Verscio, it is designed by Swiss architects Jachen Könz and Ludovica Molo (the husband and wife team behind the Casa dell'Accademia halls of residence, see issue 6). The fuss-free design features floor-to-ceiling windows. — SLB koenzmolo.ch



Home goal

Slovenia [PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT]

With its clean, graphic look, this residential development by Slovenian architects Bevk Perović is set to become Ljubljana's new landmark. Located in an old lime quarry along the city's ring road, Pilon Housing comprises 140 apartments and opens up a formerly uninhabited part of town. There are single flats on the ground floor and a "floating village" of more spacious family houses and penthouse flats on the upper floors. Simplicity, storage and noise reduction were key considerations in the design, according to lead architect Vasa Perović. — LR bevkperovic.com



One to wash

Made in: Japan

Awagami stationery

"I love making paper," says Yoichi Fujimori, speaking from his firm's booth at Maison et Objet in Paris. He's the seventh-generation owner of Awagami Factory, a traditional washi paper mill based in Tokushima, Shikoku (washi is a type of paper handcrafted from natural fibres). The region is famous for its traditional paper and cloth production and Awagami is keeping the craft alive with its design-led approach. It's the first time Awagami has presented in Paris and on show is a new collection of stationery (from pencils to notebooks) by designer Craig Anzelowitz. "It's important to reach new markets," says Fujimori. — SLB awagami.or.jp