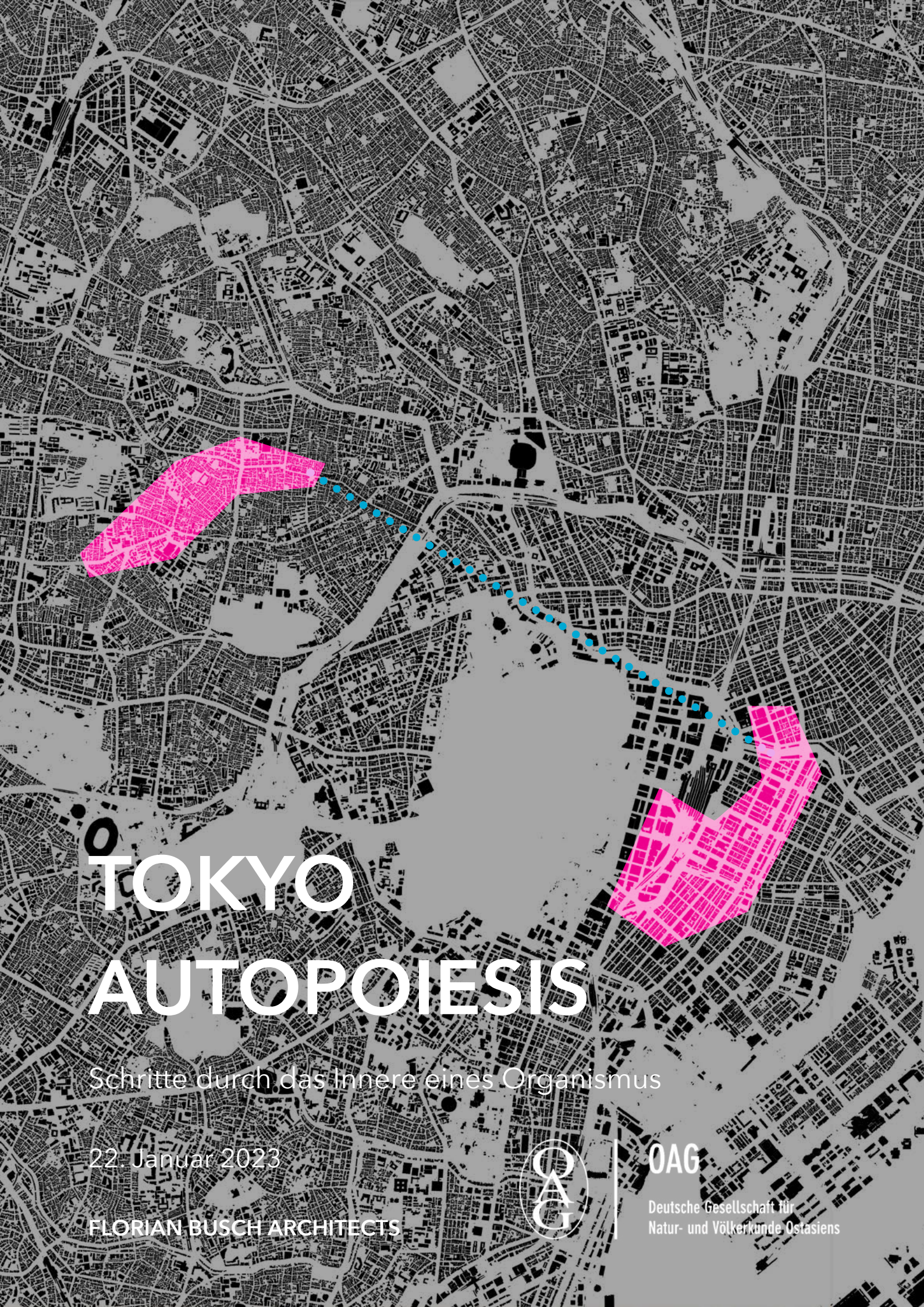


TOKYO AUTOPOIESIS

Schritte durch das Innere eines Organismus

22. Januar 2023

FLORIAN BUSCH ARCHITECTS

OAG

Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens

PART 1

1
NOBORI BUILDING
Year: 2023
Architect: Florian Busch Architects

When your maximum footprint is 80% of 48 m² and an ambitious brief calls for a restaurant and several apartments above, the strategy tends to be straightforward: extrude this maximum footprint as far up as possible. Any freedom to explore what is possible must be found in vertical generosity.
As if the client had anticipated the challenges, Nobori, the name given to the project long before there even was a site, means to rise, to climb. The question is –pleasantly pragmatic– how? Where convention would suggest a compact core for circulation, we propose a counter-intuitive move: Dissolve the core to let the stairs climb up and down around the periphery. Entering the building from the street is like turning into one of Tokyo's myriad back alleys, which are de facto residential lobbies mediating between the scales of the city.

source: www.florianbusch.com/projects/ycm

2
YAYOI KUSAMA MUSEUM
Year: 2017
Architect: Kume Sekkei Co., Ltd.

The museum spirals upwards through 5 storeys, allowing visitors to appreciate the works from various angles and heights as they move through the building.
Kusama Yayoi is an avant-garde artist and novelist. Experiencing visions and auditory hallucinations as a child, she began creating paintings with motifs of mesh patterns and polka dots.

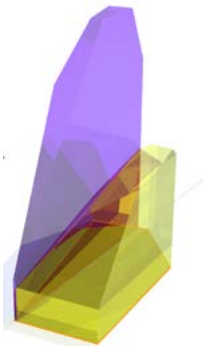
-KY

source: www.cinra.net, setouchi-artfest.jp

image: Kawasumi-Kobayashi Kenji

3
YRC Site

Year: 2017-2018
Architect: Florian Busch Architects

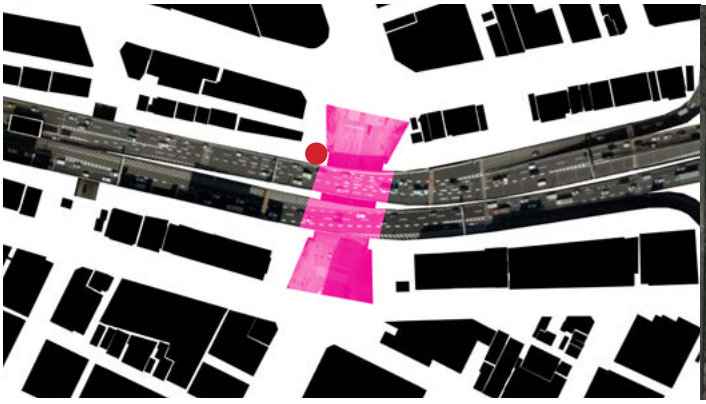


FBA were approached by a client to turn their home, which had become too large after the children had left, into a place that could sustain them, both physically and mentally, for the coming decades. Located in a side street of Kagurazaka, central Tokyo, the site straddles two zones of building regulations, one rather strict, the other quite permissive. Simultaneously, the desired program is ambitious: On ground level, a restaurant to lure life (people) into this side street; at the top level: the clients' own apartment; flats they can rent out in the levels between; underground, a martial arts dojo. The scheme developed into a building formed by a structural grid, consisting of varying degrees of porosity. Between a uniform and finely structured grid, varying scales of openings breathe in individual rhythms; a template for the diversity of life.

source: www.florianbusch.com/projects/yrc

PART 2

4
JAPAN ZERO MILESTONE / NIHONBASHI BRIDGE
Year: 1603
Project leader: Ieyasu Tokugawa (1st Shogun in Edo era)



The Nihonbashi bridge, built in 1603 as a general wooden bridge, became the starting point of the Five Routes (Tokaido, Nakasendo, Nikko Kaido, Oshu Kaido, and Koshu Kaido) laid out in 1624 by Shogun Ietsuna Tokugawa. In 1911, it became the reference point for the location of Tokyo, and in 1920, the center of the bridge was defined to be the milestone of the national highway network. At that time, the railway ran through the bridge, and its rail poles were used as the milestone. However, in 1972 it was relocated to the square northwest of the bridge during the road renovation. A new Japanese milestone was buried in the original location, and the replica of it can be seen at the square. The kylin on the Nihonbashi bridge has wings, which ordinary kylin do not have, to signify that they will "spread their wings from here". The current one, built in 1911, is the 20th generation.

-YO

source: Kanto Regional Development Bureau, MLIT

image: Hiroshige Utagawa

5
EDOBASHI EXPRESSWAY JUNCTION
Year: 1963
Architect: -

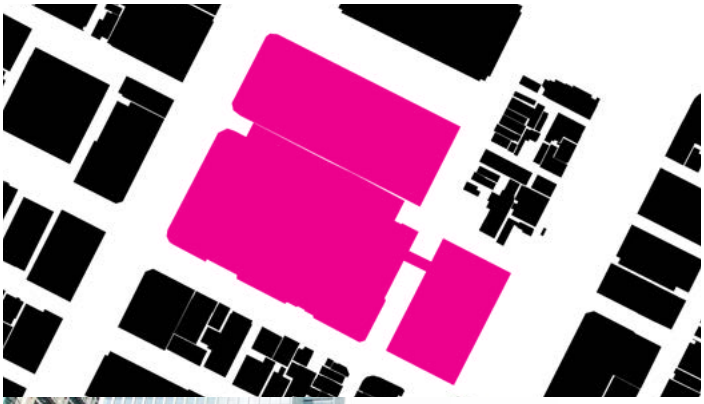
At the time of the construction of the Metropolitan Expressway, buildings were already densely built up in central Tokyo. Due to the time and cost of land expropriation, a route was taken to build the expressway on top of a trunk road and a waterway that had been in use since the Edo period, as streetcars were being discontinued. A simple calculation shows that about 100 piers were needed here. The pillars would have blocked both the flow and the view of the Nihonbashi River flowing below. The number of piers was reduced to about one-third by adopting a three-dimensional rigid-frame structure. This was the first time for a steel structure to connect square girders to circular pillars, a technique that had been used in temple construction for a long time. Currently, the bridge is undergoing a period of renewal, and about 1.3 km of the 1.8 km section will be moved underground at the Nihonbashi section.

-YO

source: Metropolitan Expressway Co. Ltd.

6
NIHONBASHI EXTRUSIONS

Year: 2019
Architect: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP
Nihon Sekkei + Plantec



History of the Site
The historical building was built in 1933. At that time, the building height was restricted to within 100-shaku (about 31m) by an old law. This building was the first department store building to be designated as an important cultural property in 2009.

New Architecture
The bottom part of the new building reproduces elements of the facade of the historical building by keeping the same cornice and setting back the high-rise part from the bottom. The road between both two buildings was turned into a pedestrian area and the rooftop at 31m is used as a green area. The redevelopment project aimed to blend historical and modern architecture and let them coexist.

-MK

source: Shinkenchiku May 2015 p.76

7
MIKIMOTO GINZA 2
Year: 2003-2005
Architect: Toyo Ito

Situated at the heart of the shopping district of Ginza, Toyo Ito's design for Mikimoto, a cultivator of luxury pearls, boasts a facade formed by a fractal composition of irregularly shaped apertures. The building expresses a fluid opening pattern as if capturing a moment of flux, in which the structural system plays an integral role.

Beneath the elegance of the facade, the innovative structural system consists of an exterior wall of concrete (t=200mm), which is poured between steel sheets (t=6-12mm), allowing for column-free interiors. An extremely thin structure with high strength and redundancy is achieved where openings are inserted freely. The apertures are generated with such fluidity that windows are placed in corners, where one might usually expect a column.

source: Toyo Ito, 2001-2005 : beyond modernism : El Croquis [no.] 123

8
MAISON HERMES / SONY PARK (BLDG)
Year: 2006
Architect: Renzo Piano

Year: 1966-2017-2022
Architect: Ashihara Architect & Associates

image: Michel Denancé, Sony Japan News Release

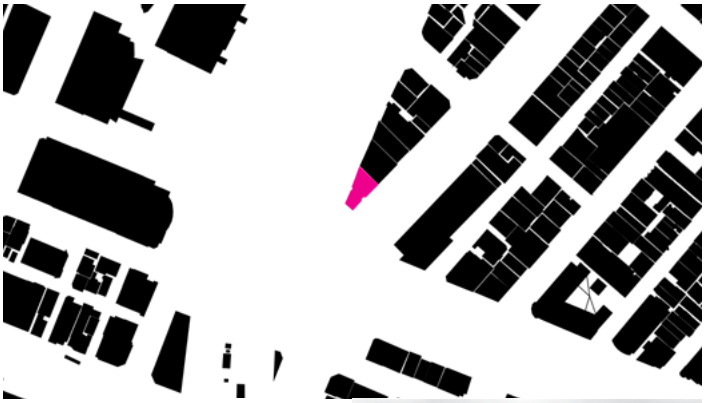
Architecture
Maison Hermes is clad in a glass block facade which allows natural light to enter the space and lights up Ginza at night.
This lantern idea represents the dual characters of day and night. Its tectonic also shows traditional and technological affinities.

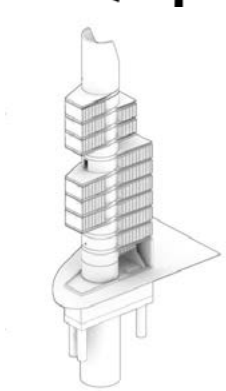
Park
The Sony Building, designed by Ashihara in 1966, was demolished due to usage and structural reasons in 2017. Sony Park was built on the emptied site. The park will remain for 2 years before the construction of Sony park phase 2 (vertical). The park idea stands out for its location on some of the most expensive land in Japan.

-SC

source: A+U Magazine 2010/May, www.rpbw.com, www.sonypark.com

9
SHIZUOKA PRESS AND BROADCASTING CENTER
Year: 1967
Architect: Kenzo Tange





The Shizuoka Press and Broadcasting Center is the first spatial realization of Tange's Metabolist ideas of organically-inspired structural growth, developed in the late 1950s. The narrow, 189 square-meter, triangular site inspired Tange to design a vertical structure, consisting of a main infrastructural core, which could develop into an urban megastructure, into which an ever-growing number of prefabricated capsules could be "plugged-in", an idea which never materialized. The infrastructural core was a 7.7 meter diameter cylinder, reaching a height of 57 meters, containing stairs, two elevators, and a kitchen and sanitary facilities on each floor. The core served as an access shaft to the modular office units: cantilever glass and steel boxes of 3.5 meters which punctuated the main core on alternating sides.

-CB

source: www.archdaily.com, www.domusweb.it

10
TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FORUM
Year: 1997
Architect: Rafael Viñoly

Architecture
This building complex, resulting from Japan's first international architectural competition, features one of Japan's most daring steel and glass structures as well as a popular public plaza funneling pedestrian traffic between Yurakucho and Tokyo station.

History of the Site
The site is located along the former Daimyokouji, which housed the city residences of feudal lords during the Edo period. From 1894 onwards the Tokyo Metropolitan Government offices were located here until they were moved to Shinjuku in 1991.

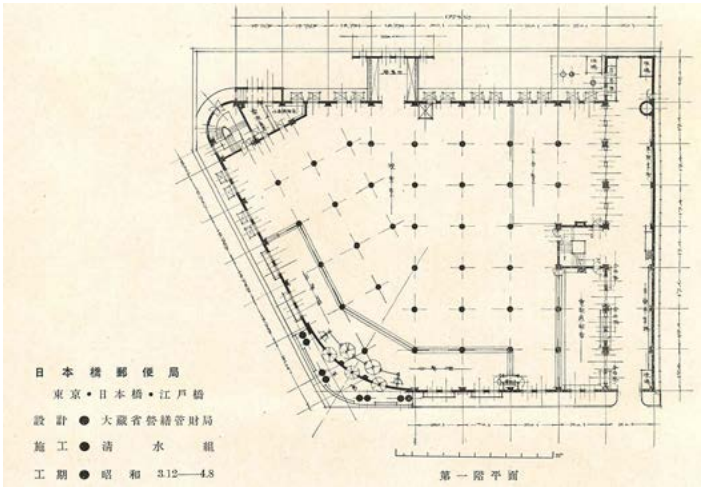
Statue of Ōta Dōkan
A bronze statue in the glass hall is dedicated to the 15th century warrior who built Edo castle and is credited as the founder of Tokyo.

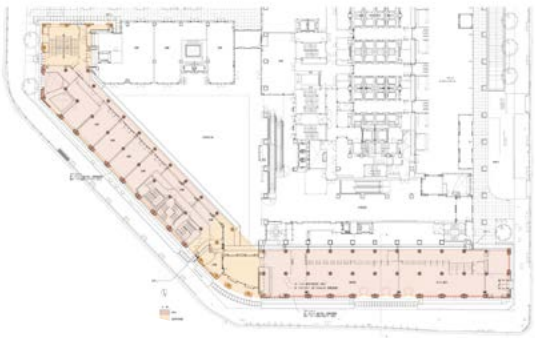
-JN

source: www.t-i-forum.co.jp

11
KITTE MARUNOUCHI

Year: 2007-2012 (1931)
Architect: Mitsubishi Jisho Sekkei
Associated Architect: Murphy/Jahn
Commercial space designer: Kengo Kuma Associates





Kitte is an intervention on the Tokyo Central Post Office building by Tetsuro Yoshida. The reconstruction was carried out using the remaining available buildable volume under the floor-area ratio regulation. Two spans of the existing building facing the plaza in front of Tokyo Station were preserved as a low-rise building. For safety reasons, most of the exterior tiles were produced again, but tiles from the original construction were installed on the exterior walls of the first floor.

-DY

source: Shinkenchiku, Shinkenchiku 11 2012, p.68-79.