

BUNDESKUNSTHALLE

Press kit

KENGO KUMA ONOMATOPOEIA ARCHITECTURE

8 March – 1 September 2024

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Exhibition Information

Duration	8 March – 1 September 2024
Press officer	Sven Bergmann
Artistic direction	Kengo Kuma
Exhibition curated by	Chizuko Kawarada Roberta Perazzini Calarota
With the scientific contribution of	Marco Imperadori, Politecnico di Milano
Exhibition management	Susanne Annen
Combined ticket for all exhibitions	13 €/reduced 6,50 € All visitors up to and including 18 years of age have free admission
Cultural partner	

General Information

Director	Eva Kraus
Managing Director	Oliver Hölken
Opening Hours	Tuesday 10 am to 7 pm Wednesday 10 am to 9 pm Thursday to Sunday 10 am to 7 pm Holidays 10 am to 7 pm
Public Transport	Underground lines 16, 63, 66 and bus lines 610, 611 and 630 to Heussallee / Museumsmeile Deutsche Bahn / UN-Campus: Lines RE 5 (Rhein-Express), RB 26 (MittelrheinBahn), RB 30 (Rhein-Ahr-Bahn) and RB 48 (Rhein-Wupper-Bahn)
Parking	There is a car and coach park on Emil-Nolde-Straße behind the Bundeskunsthalle. Navigation: Emil-Nolde-Straße 11, 53113 Bonn

Press Information (German / English)

www.bundeskunsthalle.de
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General Information
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Media information

KENGO KUMA **ONOMATOPOEIA ARCHITECTURE**

8 March – 1 September 2024

"Onomatopoeia does not treat architecture as the object of operations of superior actors (architects), but treats architecture and people on the same level. Architects do not stand at the top of architecture, but walk around architecture with the users. Onomatopoeia is a kind of animal-like voice that is emitted on a physical and experiential level." KENGO KUMA

The exhibition *Kengo Kuma. Onomatopoeia Architecture* presents around two dozen models of some of the Japanese architect's most important buildings. The focus is on the dialogue between man and material and the architect's associated recourse to onomatopoeia.

In Japanese, onomatopoeia often consist of double syllables, the doubling of which in turn makes the language sound. The internationally renowned architect uses onomatopoeia to categorise his projects, and as a design language from early conception: from the selection of the materials to the construction of the entire building. In doing so, he is guided less by rational decisions than by working from the substance of the material. Starting from onomatopoeia, the invention or use of words that contain sounds associated with what is named, Kengo Kuma gives a physical sensation a form that expresses his idea of sustainable architecture, in which materials are reused and people and physical things are reconnected.

For his projects, Kengo Kuma mainly uses wood, paper and metal – also Japanese traditional materials – and applies them in his own unique and contemporary way. In his vision, the surfaces appeal not only to the sense of sight, but also to the senses of smell and touch. The exhibition consists of models of some of his most significant buildings that encourage visitors to discover the sound of the different materials.

His approach to projects is often tactile, sensory and even sensual. His sensibility also involves flow and rhythm, typical elements of music. Kuma's buildings often have an unexpected lightness or a kind of movement that he attributes to his own musical concept. Avoiding concrete as much as possible, his buildings seem to rest lightly on the ground. Occasionally they also seem ephemeral. Kuma describes himself as a 'materialist', in the physical sense of the word.

Kengo Kuma (*1954) was born in Yokohama. He has built all over the world, his buildings are located in Japan, but also throughout Europe, the United States, China and Australia.

The exhibition is a takeover from the Palazzo Cavalli-Franchetti, developed on the occasion of the Architecture Biennale 2023



Exhibition Texts

Kengo Kuma was born in 1954. Before establishing Kengo Kuma & Associates in 1990, he received his Master's Degree in Architecture from the University of Tokyo, where he is currently a Professor of Architecture. Kengo Kuma is one of the greatest masters of contemporary architecture. The only architect included in *Time Magazine's* list of the 100 most influential people in 2021, a leading name on the architectural scene for decades with his works and his intense theoretical output, especially the dialectical relationship between nature and artifice.

Having been inspired by Kenzo Tange's Yoyogi National Gymnasium, built for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, Kengo Kuma decided to pursue architecture at a young age, and later entered the Architecture program at the University of Tokyo, where he studied under Hiroshi Hara and Yoshichika Uchida. During his Graduate studies, he made a research trip across the Sahara, exploring various villages and settlements, observing a unique power and beauty. After his time as a Visiting Scholar at Columbia University in New York, he established his office in Tokyo in 1990 and in Paris in 2008. Since then, Kengo Kuma & Associates has designed architectural works in over twenty countries and received prestigious awards, including the Architectural Institute of Japan Award, the Spirit of Nature Wood Architecture Award (Finland), and the International Stone Architecture Award (Italy), among others. Kengo Kuma & Associates aims to design architecture which naturally merges with its cultural and environmental surroundings, proposing gentle, human scaled buildings. The office is constantly in search of new materials to replace concrete and steel, and seeks a new approach for architecture in a post-industrial society.



Yusuvara Wooden Bridge Museum © Kengo Kuma & Associates



ARCHITECTURE AND NATURE

The essence of Kengo Kuma's approach lies in the use of natural materials harvested in situ, and assembled in such a way as to create open spaces, playing with natural light – the first universal resource. The method of approaching the design of a new architecture must be open and polymorphic. Its structure must be in harmony with the human body. The whole must be light and peaceful. Light must be filtered through the building. These principles are the opposite of what the concrete building represents. It is by taking this path that architecture can finally become one with nature.

THE RELATIVITY OF MATERIALS

The tactile richness of a material is nothing if it appears as an opaque mass. For Kengo Kuma, the closed volume appears lifeless, without the ability to change expression. If a material breaks down into particles, then they appear moving and evanescent, like a rainbow. Sometimes they seem to screen, then by the change of the ever-shifting natural light or by the mobility of the observer, the material immediately seems to disperse like a cloud and evaporate like mist. The claustras, at first perceived as walls, suddenly open up and tend to abstract themselves until they disappear. It is this fragility and transparency that make Kengo Kuma's architecture their very essence.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH

Kengo Kuma & Associates has an extensive track record of design and implementation. The firm has a proven track record in the use of natural materials and in the consideration and reinterpretation of cultural, regional and environmental resources. The Hiroshige Ando Museum received the Spirit of Nature Wood Architecture Award in 2002 for its use of natural wood as a metaphor for the spirit of the ukiyo-e artist Hiroshige Ando. The Hiroshige Museum, the Yusuhara City Hall and the Buddah Resting Place in Adobe are CASBEE Class A certified and won the Energy Performance + Architecture Award in 2008. The Cité des Arts et de la Culture in Besançon is BBC-effinergie and HQE certified, with a maximum consumption target of 50 kWh/m²/year. The Hikari project in Lyon Confluence is part of a BEPOS approach. In 2016, Kengo Kuma received two international awards for his sustainable approach and his environmentally friendly projects: The Wood Design Award and the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture.



The 13 onomatopoeia in Kengo Kuma's architecture

PARA PARA solid / void

This is the tangibility of the interstice, the elements separated from each other and the particles manifested in an alternation between solid and void where substance emerges from absence. It is through this substance that we perceive the void that, according to Zen philosophy, is the central fifth element, uniting with those also known to us in the West: earth, air, water, and fire. The space seems to release and radiate light, the atmosphere is peaceful, and *para para* focuses on the dimension of the interstice.

The new National Stadium for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics expresses this onomatopoeia to the full: the atmosphere is calm and the architecture seems to “breathe light, shadows, and air” that are projected onto the relaxed and festive crowd. The construction merges with the surrounding forest, as if it were rooted in the site. The Jingu forest inherits, for the future, the greenery that spreads from the inner garden of the Meji Jingu temple to the Imperial Palace in Otemachi, picturing the scenario one hundred years from now. The large overhangs of the different floors of the stadium provide shelter from the sunlight and rain, creating areas of half-light and varied textures that are enriched both by the texture of the wooden stave cladding and by the living and ever-changing hanging greenery. The architectural order and progressive overhangs recall an ancient pagoda, perfectly interpreting the genius loci. The natural ventilation, achieved through openings, ensures wellbeing during the torrid and humid Tokyo summers. The use of a mixed steel and glulam structure, with both external and internal cladding in solid Japanese larch wood staves of equal dimensions, generates rhythm and continuous alternation between solids and voids.

The porosity of the new National Stadium is *para para*, a tranquil permeation of natural elements with a harmonious balance of public, architecture, and nature.

SARA SARA fluid / softness

Sara sara represents fluidity and focuses on the direction and speed that penetrate the interstices. The fluidity is visible in the plan; exterior and interior permeate each other as was the case in traditional Japanese houses. They were made of sliding screens able to create different configurations for using and managing the indoor climate with respect to the season. They often had a loggia/portico known as an *engawa* that separated the outdoor environment from the indoor one. The *shōji* slide around the perimeter, with the *fusuma* used internally, creating an “impermanent,” ever-changing result. An extraordinary example of this fluid softness, made of light, half-light, and air, is the Imperial Villa Katsura in Kyoto, which whispers the onomatopoeia *sara sara* that we can also find in Portland Japanese Garden Cultural Village in Oregon, USA (2018). Here, the built spaces are organized to form a kind of protected square embraced by the forest. The pitched roofs are prominent and covered in both hanging greenery and metal, dematerializing in thinned edges. The spaces can be opened and extended towards the outside in the warmer months or sectioned off and closed in winter. The architecture and definition of the space change, fluid and soft, according to the assonance with the external environment. It is never visually separated and the group of buildings merges harmoniously with the dense conifer forest that surrounds them.



GURU GURU

fluid / tornado-vortex

Guru guru represents a whirling, curvilinear fluidity like a watermill. The tornado physically illustrates this onomatopoeia, which connects what is solid to what is fluid through a kinetic and dynamic perception, which is always changing according to the point of fruition of the architecture. These aspects are illustrated particularly well by two works: The Darling Exchange in Sydney (2019) and the brand-new H.C. Andersen Museum in Odense (2021).

The building in Sydney is just like a small “urban tornado” surrounded by other buildings for which it becomes the focal point, a hub of energy and life at various levels. The plastic vorticity is achieved by a series of solid wood blades that wrap around the various levels of the building and define the parapet-facade as an urban sculpture to be inhabited. The porosity and different perception between day and evening make it changeable and pulsating with life and energy.

In the Andersen Museum in Odense, fluidity is achieved through the composition of the buildings and the rounded, curvilinear routes. The vortex is created in the material dialectic between the various spaces, all built in wood and with green roofs, which evoke the fairy tales and enchanted world of the Danish writer in a sort of constructed tale, made of liquid, light and contact with the nature of the recreated surrounding landscape.

SUKE SUKE

horizontal / flat

Suke suke does not mean transparent but instead defines a space layered in planes, where “transparency” is induced by the horizontal plane. Kuma recalls the concept of “affordance”, developed by Gibson in his book *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (1979), according to which we do not perceive objects solely as they are, as pure forms, but also by the use we can make of them, by the idea we put into them. Space is therefore perceived according to position, material order, light, and textures. Space can be defined thanks to the horizontal plane, starting from it. Kuma recalls how Le Corbusier defined the horizontal ribbon window, one of his dogmas, as a “window painted by the landscape,” whereas for him the window is vertical, stemming from the horizontal plane and creating a strong link with the outside world. This link is not contemplative, as in the case of the horizontal window, but integrates and incorporates the landscape inside and vice versa: we have the sensation of being part of the nature outdoors. The onomatopoeia *suke suke* translates the fluidity of the passage through the various spatial planes.

The Glass/Wood House in New Canaan (2010) strikes up a twoway conversation with the Modern Movement and with Nature. There is an evident “dialog” with Philip Johnson, who built his renowned Glass House in New Canaan, but also with Ludwig Mies van der Rohe’s Farnsworth House. Kuma’s work, however, seems to free itself from the geometry of the two architectures, symbolizing transparency through a process of perceptive dissolution generated by the subtlety of the construction elements and the use of wood alongside steel and glass. The *suke suke* effect is amplified by the vibration and rhythm of slender metal columns and wooden beams, the reflections of the dense forest on the flowing, glazed surfaces, while the horizontal plane detaches itself, breaking away from the ground in a surprising and original manner, like a nest supported by the trunks of the surrounding trees.



GIZA GIZA

hardness / folds

Giza giza expresses a tectonic pressure caused by the gaps between the constructive particles. The onomatopoeia refers to the sensation of hardness and rigidity of the particle and can sometimes create an illusion. For example, when a roof is very thick, *giza giza* folding can reduce this sensation of excessive thickness and restore an illusory perception of thinness, of pleating.

In the Galilée de Saint-Maurice in Angers (2020), the solidity and folds of *giza giza* are the plastic signature of the new gallery/gateway that defines the entrance. It was built to protect the valuable medieval (twelfth-century) polychrome sculptures on the west portal, where there are also modern sculptures from the seventeenth century. The twelfth-century portal itself had to be protected from weathering and aggressive external conditions. In his choice of material, Kuma has therefore put himself into the shoes of a medieval builder, but has used stone in a subtle form, defining an elegant, splayed pleat that, through the arches, evokes the historic portal behind. The stereotomy of the latter remains free and protected at the same time, so that history and contemporaneity coexist in the onomatopoeia of stone hardness, of folds generating shadows and light.


In Towada City Plaza (2014) too, this concept materializes in a series of pitched roofs joined in rows, with different angles and different widths, creating a long fold as if the building were a large piece of architectural origami.

ZARA ZARA

rough / perception

Zara zara is a texture and represents a sensation of a scabrous, rough surface. Depending on the size, distance, and speed with which the work is approached, the particles that make it up are perceived as a single entity or as separate details of it. For Kuma, this onomatopoeia means that multiplication generates a global unit through a series that varies in the shape and size of the objects. However, we can also go down to the detail of the individual particle, almost as if zooming through a microscope to the intimate "stoichiometric" constitution of the architecture. In both cases, it is about the perception of texture, made up of "warp and weft," of solids and voids that substantiate each other.

The Victoria & Albert Museum in Dundee suggests *zara zara* starting with the concept of "topography" out of which Kuma starts to define both the exterior and interior. This impressive volume on the River Tay draws inspiration from the rough fragmentation of Scottish cliffs, where light and shadow are dramatic and intense. The definition of the facade elements as long horizontal particles, rough and washed precast concrete planks with exposed aggregate, reduces the volumetric impact and brings the architecture back to a more human scale. The resulting texture is scabrous and is felt, even touched, thanks to the "blades" of the cladding that introduce a "smallness" needed to balance the human scale against the surrounding architectural and cosmic scale. This sort of cladding "grain" creates variation, shadows, and paradoxically dematerializes a weighty building, which looks like a hill, permeable moreover in the archway towards the river, and defines a new waterfront for the city of Dundee. The built volume, which is concave and convex at the same time in a fluid and continuous relationship between interior and exterior, looks like a large, petrified vessel, ready to set sail illusorily in the cold Scottish fog.



In *Owan* (which is the Japanese word for the bowl used to serve miso soup) created in Basel in 2016, the hardness of a 2-mm thick 2D sheet of steel is engraved and transformed into an organic 3D shape. Everyone can move freely in the empty, fluid space and in the porosity generated by the hardness of the metal folds and their sculptural deformation, which generates a rigidity given by the displacement of the resistant matter with respect to the structural neutral axis. The geometry induces the structural performance of the material and the esthetic contrast is provided by the ephemeral and “light” perception achieved through the hardness of the metal and its straightening/pleating.

TSUN TSUN

pressure / explosion

Tsun tsun is like imagining *zara zara* boiling: the pressure increases and the matter is exploded, projected into space, a deflagration of constructive and compositional elements, the result of an overwhelming centrifugal energy.

This pressure that is extruded from within is clearly visible in the GC Prostho Museum Research Center (2010) where the wood is not just a skin or an envelope, but the very structure that supports the pressure of the building. The wooden elements with their reduced section are redundant, multiple, and this generates the esthetic perception of porosity and fragmented light, while at the same time creating a deliberately redundant structure where, in the event of an earthquake, the many nodes distribute the load and dissipate it more easily than in a structure with a few concentrated nodes. The ephemeral nature of the supporting structure, reminiscent of filigree work, shows how the ancient Japanese knowledge of carved interlocking knots (the artisans who still make them are considered national heritage in Japan) has been “digested” and re-interpreted through parametric design and CNC machine cutting. All the rods have identical cross-sections and their heads are painted white, creating a very elegant pixel effect that derives from the ancient tradition of painting the heads of the rafters of temples and pagodas to prevent the wood from being soaked by water and rotting. *Tsun tsun* resonates here in a triple void: the convex building exterior, the concave and almost ovoid interior, and the space in between, the porosity between the lattice of structural rods. This sensation can also be observed in Sunny Hills in Tokyo (2013), in the beating heart of Omotesandō, a street famous for fashion and luxury. This store, which only sells pineapple cakes, is made entirely of thin rods of Japanese cypress (the highly prized and fragrant *hinoki*), all with the same section. The structure resembles a large nest on four levels with four different tiers in the facade, supporting the same wooden trellis. The joints here are slanted and are reminiscent of the ancient *jigoku gumi* (literally “devil’s knot”) system, which is very complex and difficult to achieve.

The light and shadow that are defined by this tangle create a cathartic and relaxing effect that the Japanese call *satori*, the breath of the soul.



PATA PATA light / fold

Pata pata is onomatopoeia that sounds similar to *giza giza* but here the folds and particles consist of ephemeral and immaterial light. The pressure created by the gaps between the particles releases the filtering light, while the void triggers the esthetic and physical action of the particles, whose hard or soft skin exerts a pressure. This "illumination" creates a peaceful, relaxing, and idyllic atmosphere. We find this onomatopoeia expressed in a sort of bundling of volumes for public tourism services in the Asakusa Culture Tourist Information Center in Tokyo (2012). This new steel, wood, and glass pagoda overlooks the Sensō-ji temple and the Kaminarimon, the path of the gods leading to the heart of the temple and the ancient pagoda annexed to it. The folds of the facade are defined by blades of laminated wood, with triangular cross-section cuts at varied specular yet random angles. These cause the facade to vibrate, filtering and controlling the internal light, which illuminates various public spaces. From the elevated terrace, which is also covered with portions of solid and hollow sunshades, one can look out over the temple and the old Asakusa district which, before the 1923 earthquake, was composed of low-rise wooden houses with pitched roofs that Kuma evokes in his new building.


Kodama, in the beautiful park of Arte Sella at Villa Strobele in Trentino, is also an expression of *pata pata*, with its interlocking and discrete Italian larch construction elements, which create a kind of spheroid with a diameter of approximately 5 meters. The space is conceived as if it were a small tea room in the middle of the forest, a nest in which clear light filters between the wooden particles and again defines a triple void made up of exterior, interior, and porosity between the structural tesserae. The perfect, millimetric geometry of the interlocking structural elements contrasts with the vision of irregular natural geometries that occurs between the folds of light and void defined by the supporting grid.

PERA PERA flat / fineness

Pera pera is not monumental but is achieved by dismantling the roughness of *zara zara*; it is light, thinness, sweetness, and fineness. André Malraux's "museum without a facade" concept, which inspired Kuma for the Frac in Marseille, proposes an idea of a facade made up of particles that are light and lightness, fluctuating in the air.

In Shanghai, at the Shang Xia Maison (2014), a new brand from Hermès, the interior design in a 1909 brick building uses a special fabric that creates the impression of a semi-transparent cave. A special hot-woven polyester structure with an innovative triaxial system forms a three-dimensional weave. This 3D fabric is then joined to create the internal cavity reminiscent of a primitive cranny in the rock. In this case the membrane has something uterine about it, a protective cocoon within a stony, mineral construction.

Its elasticity is soft and containing, like a nest of light, free from sharp edges and hardness. *Pera pera* can be grasped in this anti-monumentality, in the beauty of the fragility and frugality faced with the power of Nature.



FUWA FUWA
elasticity / membrane

Fuwa fuwa expresses the sense of elasticity, of reversible an deformation. The internal pressure of the architecture seems escape, to free itself, and this generates a tension that is con released and recharged.

This onomatopoeia is also echoed in Mème House at Memu Taiki-cho Hokkaido (2011). This small volume has a pitched ro traditional Ainu aboriginal dwellings called chise. The load-bea is a wooden lattice, while the surprising translucence of the en achieved by means of two polyester membranes, one internal external, creating a comprehensive seal, with insulation in the PET panels from recycled bottles.

The result is pure light, both day and night, thinness, and diffusion like a huge Akari lamp by Isamu Noguchi. Living in this protective “cocoon” (outside temperatures in winter reach -25°C) obtained by recycling plastic material and with a wooden structure brings us back to a direct link with seasonality and empathy with the light filtering in from outside, which is rare in winter given the proximity to the polar circle.

In *Breath/ng* (2018), made using an origami technique by folding 175 square meters of an innovative fabric called breath technology, a spiral cloud over 6 meters high is suspended in space and floats there, thin and graceful. Composed of 120 panels, all hand-folded and connected together, it could absorb the harmful emissions of 90,000 cars per year. The thinness of the weave and the pleating that make the volume strong and perceptible in its spiraling development sum up *fuwa fuwa*.

MOJA MOJA
wave / line

When the particle is heated, it becomes soft, supple: from a thin, rigid rod, it becomes a flexible cord, a thread that can be woven and braided. According to Gottfried Semper, the first examples of architecture we experience on ourselves are our clothes, a shield that protects us from external bad weather. The discussion about the relationship between the structure and the “skin”, that is to say the envelope, of a building is a key issue debated in architecture. With Kuma, this theme is developed in an original concept that merges structure and skin. The architectural envelope counterbalances the structure like the weft and weave of an item of clothing.

In the atrium and along the stairs of Gaudí’s Casa Batlló in Barcelona (2021), *moja moja* is clearly materialized in the multiple suspended wave defined by 164,000 meters of aluminum chains that create an ethereal, shimmering mesh, in contemporary dialogue with the organic forms conceived by Gaudí. This sort of metal curtain, made of tiny particles that together define chains, which then form voluptuous waves, adorns the atrium and the new staircase. It connects the first floor to the new exhibition spaces in the former coal store in the basement. The zenithal light is directed downwards by reflections generated on the aluminum: a “rain” of light that also adorns the entire emergency staircase up to the eighth floor of the building. The waves of *moja moja*, defined by the small chains, capture the light as if they were fishing nets (the maritime allegory is widespread in Gaudí’s building). For Kuma, using a single material is fundamental when talking about light and only light through onomatopoeia.

FUNYA FUNYA

relaxed / soft

The onomatopoeia *funya funya* implies the operation of creating a relaxation in the material, subtracting the hardness it can formally convey. The material must give a soft sensation and this is achieved by eliminating the perception of rigidity and force. The result induces a serene and relaxed perception in people.

Funya funya also repropose the concept of elasticity and membrane, in a more organic form comprised of interwoven and braided structures. The particles are therefore thin threads, resistant only to tension and deformable, compressible. The result is soft, with the structures recalling spongy, porous, yet strong cotton wool. Sometimes the sensation is even that of "non-woven fabrics" where the fibers come together randomly and define a tangle of air and porosity, made up of interstices into which light filters. The onomatopoeic perception is also necessarily tactile: the absence of sharp edges and the perception of softness trigger a desire to touch, to be enveloped in the embrace of the material, to be protected by the architecture. If we think about it properly, this is certainly the primary, ancestral need of architecture itself: to protect even before playing an aesthetic and sculptural role.

The Tao temple in Taiwan (2018), dedicated to Taoism Kikoku-shi and located in the Shinpu mountains 70 km from Taipei, sits like a large leaf on the ground. The undulation defines a soft structure, where the curve of pressure grapples with the curvilinear and intertwined construction elements in pure traction. The tectonics create a kind of clump that is released from the ground, in telluric tension, ready to rise like a spring. *Funya funya* evokes the effect of a membrane where there can be no compression but only traction and strain along the wood fibers, which are pulled like a strand of rope.

ZURE ZURE

displacement / flexible

The onomatopoeia *zure zure* brings us back to the concept of displacement and flexible. It is as if it can trigger a phenomenon of physical process osmosis, selecting part of them and conducting another part. Selectivity is defined by the grain of the constituent particles, while light, air, and sound are transmitted through the interstices that generate the porosity of the membrane itself. Environmental conditions therefore always appear filtered, fragmented into rays of light, mists, raindrops, sounds and noises, olfactory perceptions that permeate the architecture and reach our senses.

With *Komorebi* at Château La Coste (2017) on the hill overlooking Sainte-Victoire in southern France, Kuma conceives an organic pavilion as if it were a tree growing out of the ground. The crossribbed wooden structure hovers in the air with surprising lightness and loses itself in the sky in progressive leaps. The shadows on the ground are constantly changing and form a kinetic, vibrant weft. The abstraction recalling a tree is directly inspired by the way in which Paul Cézanne depicted Sainte-Victoire. In Japanese, *komorebi* literally means the light that filters through the leaves of the trees, through the gaps. It defines a brief moment, a feeling that is as fleeting as a state of mind, as ephemeral as the sun's rays penetrating the leaves of the forest and drawing columns of light and shade that resonate *zure zure* with the columns of the tree trunks themselves. The onomatopoeia of the *Komorebi* pavilion in France is elastic and the membrane, made of thin 20-mm wooden blades reinforced with 4-mm steel plates, forms a grid that seems to rise from the contours of a slight hillock and hover in the air like a bird's wing.



ALBERO DELLA BARCA

When climbing the steps of Palazzo Franchetti, we are welcomed by the wooden Albero della Barca [Ship's Mast] sculpture, designed specifically to greet visitors to this exhibition. Wood is the material that supports Venice, with its hidden underground palisades that shore up the foundations. The onomatopoeias *tsun tsun* (explosion, pressure) and *zure zure* (displacement, flexible) are suggested by this image in which the planking of a wooden boat seems to disintegrate in the surrounding space. The structure is progressive and develops in stages, made from solid planks of Veneto chestnut, all cut with a CNC machine, with a 24 × 133 mm section. They are connected by hemp cords running over nylon threaded rods. The lower part is defined by isostatic frames, while hard beech pins connect the elements to prevent unwanted relative rotations.

The perception of the particles changes depending on the observer's kinetic experience of the work; it evokes a large wave (Hokusai's?) capable of using its visual energy to propel the visitor towards the exhibition entrance. The structure's plan fans out and the chestnut staves create progressive weaves reminiscent of the frames of a film. The material lines vibrate, with the venetian venue.

LAGUNA

Outside Palazzo Franchetti, in the courtyard on the Grand Canal, Kengo Kuma's onomatopoeia exhibition climaxes with Laguna [Lagoon], evoking *zara zara*, and recalling roughness and perception. The seemingly soft and undulating shape, almost like that of a lagoon wave, is obtained by CNC milling an aluminum sheet (57/54 alumen) with plastic yielding and deforming it according to the force of gravity. The various pieces that make up the structure are joined by small M5 screws and, overall, the effect is one of softness and elasticity.

The scabrous texture and the rough effect are created by the sand of the River Piave, reminiscent of that of the lagoon, used to coat the metal, while the perception aspect is generated by the sun's reflections on the edges of the aluminum sheet.

Laguna is a porous work, where the light filters through the gaps like a sort of large fishing net that has been overturned. The hole in the ground allows you to radically change your vantage point and be captured for an instant by Kuma's architecture and the magic of Venice that surrounds it. The hole at the top and the view of the sky, however, always allow our thoughts to flow freely, resonating from the earth, close to the water, with the caress of the air, towards the fire of the sun and, ultimately, into the void and its typically Eastern purity.

Publication



Kengo Kuma. Onomatopoeia Architecture

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication of the same name.

The author Marco Imperadori is professor at the Politecnico di Milano, ABC - Architecture, Built Environment and Construction Engineering department.

Bilingual edition German / English

Format: 23 x 25 cm

Size: 144 pages

Publisher: Dario Cimorelli Editore

Museum edition: 25 Euro

Bookstore edition: 30 Euro



Educational Programme

GUIDED TOURS

Public guided tours

Tuesdays 5.30–6.30 p.m.

€ 3 / reduced € 1.50, plus admission to the exhibition

Tickets are available at the box office or at bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.

ArtCard reservation: T +49 228 9171-200

Mediation in the exhibition

Sundays, 12–5 p.m.

A contact person for the exhibition will be available during opening hours. You are welcome to ask questions and talk to us about what is on display and the themes of the exhibition.

Guided tours with the artistic director

With the artistic director Eva-Christina Kraus

Wednesday, April 24 at 5.30 p.m., Friday, June 21 at 5 p.m.,

Sunday, September 1 at 5.30 p.m.

€ 5 / reduced € 2.50, plus admission to the exhibition

Tickets are available at the box office or at bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.

Guided tour during the lunch break

Onomatopoeia

Wednesdays, March 20, May 22, July 17 and 31, 12:30–1 p.m. each day

We offer you an entertaining speed tour during your lunch break to balance out your daily working life.

€ 8 (guided tour and admission)

Tickets are available at the box office or via bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.

Registration required, can be booked individually for groups

Information and registration at buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de

Baby-Art-Connection

Guided tours and talks for parents with babies

From the changing table to the museum

Wednesdays, March 27, June 26, July 10, 10:15–11:45 a.m. each day

€ 15, incl. visit to the exhibition (one parent and baby)

Registration via buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de or in advance at bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets

Offer for integration and language courses

Culture_language_art_get to know

On a joint tour, the language learners discover the work of Kengo Kuma. Afterwards, they can all become artistically and practically active and develop a design for their own dream house.

The activities can be adapted to the respective language level.

Dates freely bookable

120 minutes, € 2 per person (integration courses)

Written registration required: buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de



Exhibition tour for intercultural groups

Dialogic guided tour for people with and without a refugee or migration background

Meet & Speak

Intercultural groups can discover the exhibition together, talk to each other and ask questions.

Come along, bring friends and your languages!

Bookable free of charge for intercultural groups

Max. 15 people/group

Written registration required: buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de

Group tours

60 minutes, € 70

90 minutes, € 90

60 minutes, guided tour with curator € 180

60 minutes, guided tour with director € 250

plus admission ticket € 13 / reduced € 6.50 per person

Written registration required: buchung@bundeskunsthalle.de

EVENTS

WEDNESDAY_LATE_ART

SPEEDGUIDES_DJ_DRINKS

ONOMATOPOEIA AND ACTIVATIONS

March 27, 2024, 6–9 p.m.

Your evening full of art, culture and music!

SPEED TOURS

(German and English)

"Images in the head, bodies in space". Franz Erhard Walther

Kengo Kuma. Onomatopoeia Architecture

Anna Oppermann. A retrospectpective

PARTICIPATORY ACTION/INTERVENTION

Folded with Frank Bölter

LOUNGE & DJ & DRINKS

With DJ ONONiiONIONIION (Japanese Pop on Vinyl)

13€/6,50€ with ELLAH-Card, including a drink

ELLAH – The annual pass for young art lovers

Tickets are available at the box office or via bundeskunsthalle.de/tickets.

Next date:

WEDNESDAY_LATE_ART

Wednesday, May 15



Current and Upcoming Exhibitions

IMMANUEL KANT UNRESOLVED ISSUES

Until 17 March 2024

The 22nd of April 2024 marks the 300th anniversary of the birth of the philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). To this day, Kant's ground-breaking contribution to the Enlightenment, his thoughts on ethics, emancipation, epistemology and international law have lost none of their significance as points of reference. The exhibition sets out to introduce his work to a general audience, and especially to young visitors, who do not necessarily have any solid grounding in philosophy.

The four famous Kantian questions: 'What can I know?', 'What ought I to do?', 'What can I hope for?', 'What is man?' will structure the exhibition. High-quality paintings, graphics, scientific instruments, maps and manuscripts will visualise the central themes of the Enlightenment. At the same time, the historical person Immanuel Kant, his environment and his networks will come into focus. Kant's biography was closely linked to the urban environment of Königsberg (today's Kaliningrad, Russia), where he lived for 73 years. As the intellectual centre of its time, the Prussian royal seat left its mark on the whole of Germany and Europe. This is why we are bringing the baroque city of Königsberg, which was completely destroyed in 1944/45, back to life in a virtual reconstruction. VR stations allow visitors to take an imaginary journey into the world of Immanuel Kant.

ANNA OPPERMANN A RETRO PERSPECTIVE


Until 1 April 2024

Anna Oppermann (1940–1993) is the author of a large body of work that awaits rediscovery. The Bundeskunsthalle is organising the first comprehensive retrospective of the rich and complex oeuvre by the German conceptual artist. Interest in Oppermann's work has grown in recent years, and the exhibition will incorporate the latest insights.

A key exponent of German conceptual art from the 1960s onwards, Oppermann maintained a fruitful exchange with artists of her time. As a result of her participation in numerous important exhibitions, among them documenta 6 and 8 in Kassel, she became internationally known at an early stage. The term 'ensemble,' which she coined in the early 1970s for her process-based arrangements, encompasses both the installed work and the underlying method of its construction. Composed of notes, drawings, photographs, printed matter and found objects, these ensembles demonstrate the artist's radical conceptualisation of what constitutes a work: they are open and dialogical in equal measure, and the process is an integral part of the finished work. Alongside the sculptural elements, language is an essential component of the ensembles. Expansive, complex ensembles, proliferating rhizome-like constellations as well as smaller assemblages invite visitors to immerse themselves in Anna Oppermann's questing creative practice.

The exhibition is curated by Susanne Kleine and Anna Schäffler.

The exhibition is organised in cooperation with the Estate Anna Oppermann.



„Images in mind, bodies in space“

FRANZ ERHARD WALTHER

22 March until 28 July 2024

Media conference: Wednesday, 20 March 2024, 11 a.m.

Due to its continuing actuality and relevance for contemporary art and also in honour of his 85th birthday, the Bundeskunsthalle is planning a major survey exhibition on the work of Franz Erhard Walther (*1939) for the year 2024.

At the beginning of the 1960s, Franz Erhard Walther formulated a new concept of the work – in the context of minimalism and beyond the classical understanding of sculpture and painting – that included the viewer as an actor. In this way, the artist fundamentally questions the concept of sculpture and that of the recipient and understands the executed "action as a form of work": Gestures and actions become an essential part of the work. Franz Erhard Walther became one of the most important and influential artists and teachers in Germany – not least due to his outstanding commitment as a professor at the Hamburg University of Fine Arts. The art-historical significance of his work is undisputed.

The exhibition will present a concentrated, representative selection of action-based works as well as drawings "as an interior view" from different periods. Film documents, including new recordings on site, also document the temporality of the various actions / activations by the artist and the participants. Some exhibits in the exhibition, as well as specially made 'exhibition copies', can be activated. Through the interaction between body and object, each person becomes part of the artwork.

The exhibition is a cooperation between the Bundeskunsthalle and the Franz Erhard Walther Foundation and is designed for further international venues.

INTERACTIONS 2024

1. May until 27 October 2024

Media conference: Monday, 29 April 2024, 11 a.m.

In 2023, the Bundeskunsthalle has organised a summer programme of interactions, play and visual and acoustic impulses around the building, complementing the existing artworks in the outdoor space: the *Circular Appearing Rooms* water pavilion by Jeppe Hein, which presents itself in the square every summer, the *Bonn Slide* by Carsten Höller, which winds around its own axis up the façade, and *The Curve* by Bettina Pousttchi, which is also dedicated to movement.

Interactions 2024 will once again occupy various places in the public space of the Bundeskunsthalle: from the roof to the foyer to the inner courtyard and the forecourt, selected artworks, performances or workshops will be offered that invite interactive play, but also deal with visual languages, music or sound as a cross-border and universal form of communication. This year, works by Gabriel Lester, Temitayo Ogunbiyi and Esra Gülmen, among others, will be added. As in 2023, the programme will open with a weekend of performances and work-shops as well as a Dance into May.



ALL IN!
RE-DESIGNING DEMOCRACY

30 May until 13 October 2024

Media conference: Wednesday, 29 May 2024, 11 a.m.

Does democracy need an update? Have we relied too long on the notion that nothing can shake it? The thing about democracy is that it only exists if we keep working at it. In a world that changes every day, it needs to be kept fit. It is thus high time to strengthen our democratic muscles!

Visitors will experience first-hand what it means to be empathetic, to show perseverance, or to negotiate compromises. *All In! Re-Designing Democracy* explores the current social desire for greater participation and inclusion as well as traditional forms of democracy. How has democracy been fought for in the past, how has equality and freedom been fought for? In addition to art and design, the exhibition will feature exhibits from the history of political culture, as well as from architecture, film, and photography. The exhibition will be an excursion to the turning points of history, to the beginnings and landmarks of democracy, as well as a bold speculation towards the future: What will the democracy of tomorrow look like?

An exhibition project of the Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn
and the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

Subject to change
Status: March 2024

You can find the 2024 exhibition programme at www.bundeskunsthalle.de/presse