

# Kagawa Prefectural Government Office East Building

Kagawa Prefectural Government Office Architecture Gallery  
(East Building, 1st Floor)

The East Building of the Kagawa Prefectural Government Office was completed in 1958 (the original main building and east building, design by Kenzo Tange) and is seen as a representative piece of post-war Japanese architecture. Even now it receives a steady stream of visitors. With design plans, sketches, and photographs from the time of completion, this exhibition will look at the ideas behind its conception and design, how it was completed, and the contribution it has made to Japanese architectural history.



Kagawa Prefectural Government Office at the time of completion (center) and Takamatsu City (1958) / Owned: Kagawa Prefecture

## Modernist Architecture and the Kagawa Prefectural Government Office

In the early years of the 20th century a new form of architectural expression was born against the backdrop of modern lifestyles and industry. “Modernist Architecture” brought with it new technology and new materials, including iron, glass, and concrete, coming to replace the historicist architectural styles (classicist, gothic) that had been prevalent up to that point.

From the 1920s onwards, modernist architecture in Japan surpassed the historicist styles that had been studied since the Meiji period (1868-1912), and while developing traditional Japanese ideas and concepts of architectural space, undertook to utilize the results of modern technological innovation and develop a model and style that would speak to people’s hearts. Japan in the 20th century is shown in the design, the structure, and the use of space found here. Modernist architecture in this sense is a “cultural property” that reflects its period.

In 1999, “DOCOMOMO Japan” (an international organization for the documentation and conservation of buildings, sites, and neighborhoods of the Modern Movement) selected twenty buildings for “Modernist Architecture as Cultural Properties”. The East Building of the Kagawa Prefectural Government Offices was selected and praised for its spacious composition, in particular the area dedicated for the use of residents in the city, its expression of tradition, cooperation with artists during construction, and its core system for protection against earthquakes. It was the only government building to be selected.

### The Battle with Historicism



Sumitomo Building [1926] YS  
Sumitomo Eizen Design Office Eikichi Hasebe / Kenzo Takekoshi



Chochikukyo [1928] YS  
Koji Fujii



Kameki Tsuchiura House [1935] EK  
Kameki Tsuchiura



Chichibu Cement Plant (Taiheiyō Cement Plant) [1956] YS  
Yoshiro Taniguchi + Nikken Sekkei

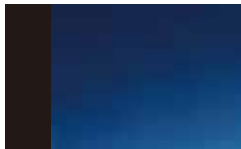
### The Approach of Modern Technology



Dojunkai Building [1926-1934] YS  
Dojunkai Building Department



Keio Gijyuku Grade School [1937] YS  
Yoshiro Taniguchi + Sone Chujo Architects



Kagawa Prefectural Government Office [1958] TM  
Kenzo Tange



Gunma Music Center [1961] YS  
Antonin Raymond



Hizuchi Grade School [1958] YS  
Masatsune Matsumura Important Cultural Properties



Kanagawa Prefectural Library and Music Hall [1954] EK  
Kunio Mayekawa



Hara House [1954] EK  
Makoto Masuzawa



Tokyo Central Post Office [1931] YS  
Tetsuro Yoshida (Building Section of Post Telephone Telegraph Office)



Kosuge Prison (Tokyo Detention Center) [1929] YS  
Shigeo Kanbara (Building Section of Judicial Office)

### Pursuing Dynamic Models



Palaceside Building [1966] EK  
Nikken Sekkei (Shoji Hayashi)



Kagawa Prefectural Government Office [1958] TM  
Kenzo Tange



National Gymnasiums for Tokyo Olympics [1964] YS  
Kenzo Tange



Miyuki-no-ma, Hasshokan [1950] YS  
Sutenji Horiguchi



Ube City Public Hall [1937] YS  
Togo Murano Important Cultural Properties



Inter-University Seminar House [1965] EK  
Takamasa Yoshizaka (AtelierU)



Hiroshima Peace Center [1952] EK  
Kenzo Tange Important Cultural Properties



The Museum of Modern Art, Kanagawa [1951] EK  
Junzo Sakakura

### Japanese Tradition and Creation



Photo : Keiichi MASUDA

## Open Space for the People of the Prefecture

The offices have a plaza where people can gather and relax. The widely spaced pillars, the lobby on the first floor, and the south garden with its small rolling hills offer an abundantly spacious, gently interwoven composition.



Photo : Toshihiro MISAKI

## Creation from Tradition

Traditional Japanese architectural features, like the combination of pillars and beams creating the impression of a wooden structure, and the railing on the veranda, are all constructed using modern materials. Even after half a century has passed, the concrete remains strong. The south garden stretches out in front of the building and was made in a Japanese style incorporating a desire to improve the lives of the people of the area.

# Kagawa Prefectural Government Office

## Towards Open Government Offices and the Integration of Art



Photo: Kouji KAMIYA

### Those involved with the construction of the Government Offices (1955)

Masanori Kaneko, then the Governor of Kagawa Prefecture, stands in the center in a white suit. To the right are Kenzo Tange, and Yoshikatsu Tsuboi (who worked on structural design). Governor Kaneko asked Tange to create a design that was "fitting for government offices in the age of democracy", and "fitting for the main building of tourism in Kagawa".



Photo: Kouji KAMIYA

### Building the steel frame (1956)

The use of reinforcing steel was still extremely rare at the time, and it served to increase the strength of the concrete. The most advanced technology at the time was being put to use, and included gas pressure welding, another unusual technique, for the fittings of the steel bars.



Photo: Kouji KAMIYA

### Moving stones (1957)

Aji granite, chosen as a symbol of good harvest, was brought to the site over the period of a day, and laid at the pond.



Photo: Kouji KAMIYA

### Fifth proposal for the South Garden: model (1957)

The Kenzo Tange Laboratory was responsible for the design of the garden. Oil-based clay was used in many layers of the study, and the garden stones were laid in the pond as a "symbol of good harvest" and part of the wish for the rich lives of the local people, which was contrary to the typical ideas that go into Japanese gardens, like the wish for the long youth and longevity of the owner.

# Four Highlights of the Kagawa Prefectural Government Offices



Photo : Toshihiro MISAKI

## Integration of Art

In the first floor lobby, open planned with floor-to-ceiling glass windows, is "Wakeiseijaku – Harmony, Respect, Purity, Tranquility" by the artist Genichiro Inokuma, to welcome people into the building. Inokuma considered the ideas of post-war democracy to be in the spirit of the Japanese tea ceremony, and created this piece. The Kenzo Tange Laboratory produced the designs for wooden and ceramic chairs, wooden shelves, and stone tables. All serving to contribute to the "integration of art" into public spaces.



Photo : Seiji IZUMI

## The Core System

At the center of the high rise building (the old main building), is the architectural "spinal cord" of the construction, the concrete anti-seismic wall, the first of its kind in Japan. The public facilities including the stairs, elevator, and toilet are centered on the core and office space is provided by partitions which run along the small beams.



Photo: Yasushi ICHIKAWA

## The Governor's Desk

This desk was made by the international designer Isamu Kenmochi. He aimed to produce a "Japanese Modern" style, which combined traditional Japanese designs with modern techniques and materials. It is currently on display in the Kagawa Prefectural Museum.



Photo: Kouji KAMIYA

## The production of the reception desk in the 1st floor lobby

At the time many desks were produced in a geometric style which utilized the shape of the materials. This photo shows Governor Kaneko inspecting the production of the Aji granite desk.



Owned : Kagawa Prefectural

## The hall of the Prefectural Office at the time of completion (1958)

The furniture was designed by Isamu Kenguchi, and is still in use today.



Photo : Toshihiro MISAKI

## The roof in the present day (off limits to visitors)

## Open Space on the Roof

At the suggestion of Governor Kaneko, the roof was made an open space. Visitors could enjoy coffee and beer from the restaurant while enjoying the view out over the Seto Inland Sea. It was popular among residents as a place to come and relax.

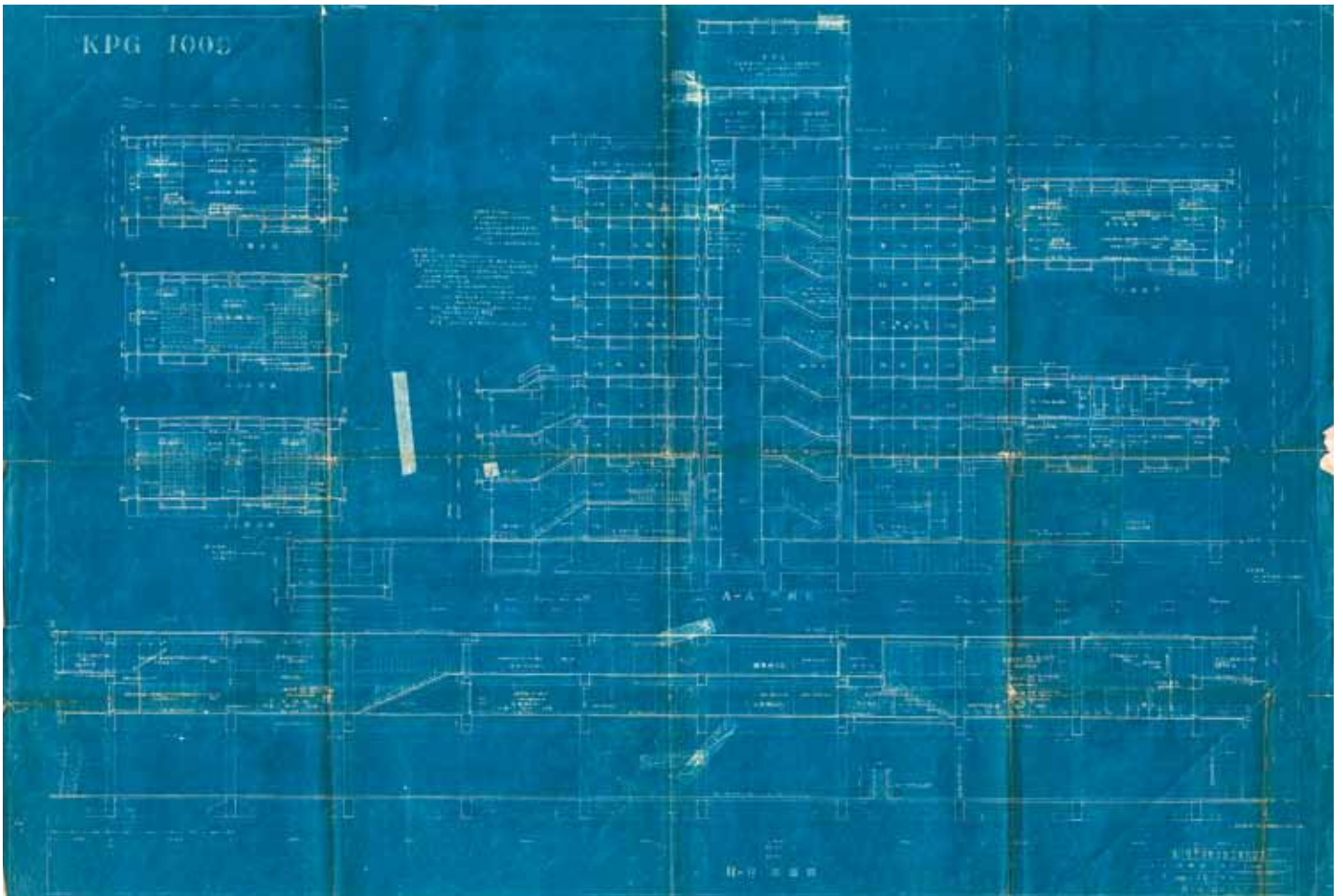
Photo: Kouji KAMIYA



Photo : Toshihiro MISAKI

## The entrance of the Prefectural Office Hall today

A red gotou painted door and shelves designed by Kenzo Tange.



**Blueprint design of the Kagawa Prefectural Government Office**

Owned : Kagawa Prefectural

The design is dated 10th of June, 1955. You can clearly see the design which places the core at the center of the building, and standing as if it were the building's spinal cord.

**Kagawa Prefectural Government Office Data**

Design / Kenzo Tange Laboratory (Kenzo Tange, Takashi Asada, Taneo Oki, Kouji Kamiya)  
 Structure Design / Yoshikatsu Tsuboi Facilities / Kenji Kawai, Toshio Sakawa  
 Furniture / Isamu Kenmochi, Testsuo Matsumoto, Yasuko Yoshida, Yasuji Kobayashi Mural / Genichiro Inokuma  
 Construction / Obayashi Corporation Design Period / 1954-1957 (including garden) Construction period / December 1955 – May 1958  
 Completion / 26th May 1958 Structure / 8 floors of steel reinforced concrete Total floor space / 12,066.20㎡ (at the time of completion)  
 Awards / 1st Building Contractors Society Award (1960), Top 100 Civil Architecture Award (1998), DOCOMOMO 20 Japan Award (1999)



Commemorative photograph of Kenzo Tange taken just before completion (Spring 1958) / Photo: Kouji KAMIYA

**The Architecture of Tange in the Setouchi**

Many of the early works of Kenzo Tange are found in the Setouchi area, and are in tune with Japanese traditions, local characteristics, and the prevailing post-war democracy. For Kenzo Tange, the Setouchi was where he discovered his unique identity, gained a large number of supporters and collaborators, and where he first developed architecture that was connected to real society. The Kagawa Prefectural Government Office is the result of his time here.

The works of Kenzo Tange that remain in the various areas of the Setouchi serve to inspire architects working here, and have given rise to a number of new distinctive works. His buildings have become the influential foundation of the architectural culture of the Setouchi area.



Kagawa Prefectural Gymnasium (1964) / Owned : Kagawa Prefectural



Ichinomiya Row Houses, Takamatsu (1960-64)  
 Not extant / Photo: Kouji KAMIYA



Model of Memorial for Students Who Perished in the War (1966) / Photo: Yasushi ICHIKAWA



Model of Imabari City Office Complex (City Office, City Assembly 1958, Public Hall 1965) / Photo: Yasushi ICHIKAWA