The Houses of Karuizawa

By Hanya Yanagihara New York Times February 27, 2017

The avant-garde structures in Karuizawa, mostly designed by Japanese architects, are as humble as they are jaw-dropping. The architect Ryue Nishizawa was commissioned to build a museum that would house works by Hiroshi Senju — an artist whose monumental waterfall paintings adorn many Japanese public buildings.





The Hiroshi Senju Museum opened in Karuizawa in 2011.

The 730-square-foot Polygon House is almost completely bare of furniture, comprised of mainly steel, glass, concrete and white walls.





It was completed in 2003 by Makoto Yamaguchi for two musicians.

In such houses, says
Yamaguchi, "the interior
and the exterior lie side
by side, gently joining
together."





TNA architects intended the reedlike supports of the Square House to evoke blades of bamboo grass shooting up from the ground.

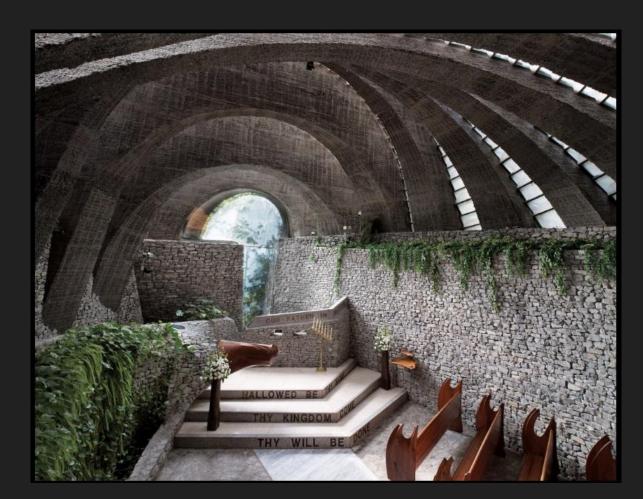
Enveloped in a glass skin, the house is without walls and has few interior divisions of space.





Kendrick Bangs Kellogg, the San Diego-based organic Modernist architect, built the Hoshino Wedding Chapel in the late 1980s.

There is not a single right angle in the Hoshino Wedding Chapel's cascading concrete arches and soaring interior of inlaid stone.





The exaggerated gable of the Omizubata N House by Iida Archiship studio creates a spectacular terrace.

Inside, the windows follow the roof line, giving the sleeping loft views of the forest.





Shaped like a wedge, the steel-plated wood Stage House by TNA opens up to a tall wall of glass with living areas on elevated platforms looking outside.

The minimalist entrance, carved into the acute back angle of the structure, gives no hint of the panorama within.





The house was completed in 2007.