

Project: Corrugated House

Team: monotrum

Size: 134 m²

Location: JAPAN



Feature:

Project - Japanese architecture firm monotrum has breathed new life into a pioneering 1960s residence by transforming it into a distinctive boutique hotel. The Corrugated House cleverly adapts the experimental corrugated pipe structure, originally designed by Kenji Kawai as his own home and recognized by DOCOMOMO for its Modernist significance.

Rather than preserving it as a static museum piece, monotrum's renovation allows visitors to intimately experience the iconic architecture through an overnight stay. The building's original tunnel-like space made of exposed corrugated steel pipes has been thoughtfully reimaged with new partitions to carve out guest rooms and amenities.

Newly constructed dark wood-paneled walls provide a warm contrast against the industrial rawness of the structure. Furniture pieces like beds, desktops and air conditioning covers were crafted from matching timber tones to harmonize the interiors. An ingenious movable shelving and lighting system was custom fabricated to integrate with the existing pipe framework.

A standout feature is the revitalized oval skylight on the south facade. Originally sealed due to excessive brightness, the aperture now houses a honeycomb-patterned light installation visible from the guest quarters through polycarbonate wall panels.

By thoughtfully layering new functional insertions onto the vintage bones, monotrum has transformed the Corrugated House into an immersive hospitality experience. The adaptive reuse project poetically preserves the architectural spirit while introducing contemporary comforts.

Design Team - Established in 2018, monotrum is an emerging Japanese practice spearheaded by principals Nobuhiko Kitazato and Takuya Ishii. With multi-disciplinary backgrounds encompassing architecture, urban planning and industrial design, the duo brings a diversified creative lens to their work.

Kitazato cut his teeth at esteemed firms like Kentaro Ataka Architectural Design and graf after completing his master's at Hyogo Prefectural University. Meanwhile, Ishii honed his skills at Tetsuo Kawabe Architectural City Planning Office and ETLA inc. following his studies at Aoyama Technical College and Kyoto University of Art and Design.

This cross-pollination of influences manifests in monotrum's innovative approach that deftly straddles conceptual vigor and technical precision. The firm's portfolio showcases an adroit handling of materials, spatial strategies and contextual responsiveness across residential, commercial and hospitality typologies.

With studios in Osaka and Tokyo, monotrum exemplifies a new generation of design thinkers adept at uncovering the extraordinary potential latent within ordinary circumstances. Their work elicits fresh perspectives while remaining firmly rooted in pragmatism and functionality.