

Galley in Kiyosato

description

The building is a guesthouse with an art gallery for private art collections. One day in the late autumn of 2003, Client Mr. Aonuma rushed into my office with a magazine, in which House on Mt. Fuji is featured, and asked me to design "a house for arts" in a forest. He, an executive banker at the age of sixty who has lived in foreign countries for many years, had dreamed to build a facility for pleasure with friends and art collections of ancient Buddhism sculptures.

The site is located on the southeast foothill of Mt. Yatsugatake, 1300 meters above sea level, where coniferous woods densely spread out. In the site, approximately 17 meters wide and 63 meters deep from a front road, the terrain is slightly sloping down from west to east by about 4 meters gap. A stream runs on the east end boundary, from which a primeval forest, an untouchable nature, has been strictly protected.

When I visit the site in December 2003, the initial impact upon my mind was the verticality of larch trees; only their trunks were exposed because of the deciduousness in winter. Intuitively in front of the site, first of all, I imagined to make something slender existed in the site. I would defer the dignity of life on larch in verticality over a couple of century old against the harsh climate; for instance, it goes down to minus 20 centigrade in winter.

Second, I assumed something loosely lied among trees by which the object is incessantly severed and appeared like the painting, "*Le Blanc-Seing*" by Rene Magritte, 1966. Indeed I had a strange feeling of irritation that numerous tree trunks inevitably interrupt my desire for integrating whole image of a distant object. There is, for instance, a huge rock in the site. When I wanted to capture a whole figure of the rock, I was necessitated to stand remote from it. But still, paradoxically, I could hardly see it all the more because numbers of trunks in-between interfered with my sight to the rock. It is like an endless game between inevitability of nature and a human desire; the more distant I am for grasping wholeness, the less integrated is the wholeness. From the experience, I thought that the process of disintegration or fragmentation is effective for disposing an artifice in nature in terms of less exaggerating architecture itself to human eyes.

Finally, in the building, I would enjoy a variety of spatial scenes continuously changing from one to another with interplay between interior and exterior as well as light and shadow. As was in House on Mt. Fuji, for the sake of appreciating nature outside, I would like to trim a reality out of nature, with which one could imagine the real of nature more imaginatively. Here again, I tried to realize the appreciation of nature not by revealing a whole of nature around.

The design had begun with four curved lines, which I arbitrarily drew in a sketchbook, right after a short sleep in an airplane to New York. There were no documents and materials related to the site. All I had was a recollection from my own experience of the terrain, yet all the more because it is limited, I guess it was something essential extracted from my own experience in and around the site. When I drew the four lines, I imagined a major space defined by curved surfaces. In this project, I name it "**primary space**," a tube-like space, which is less articulated, and has rather ambiguous functions; accordingly it is a space of a large degree of freedom for human activity.

On the other, in reality, any building of use demands definitely functional spaces relevant to the primary space interactively. In order to generate them not by demolishing the primary space, I tried to swell each of four curved lines with fixing both ends, and make a void inside. As a result, each line turns to form a ship-shaped figure, possibly, the inside of which contains appropriate functions corresponded to the primary space. Here I name the ship-shaped space "**secondary space**." Its spatial dimension and shape; i.e. a degree of swelling, is defined by each function to predictable activities in the primary space. In this building; for example, the secondary space embraces kitchen, cocktail place, restroom, stairs, chimney, storage, closet, and gallery.

Supposed the primary space as *passage*, the secondary space might be regarded as an inside of a building facing to *passage*. Because the ship-shaped elements are intricately disposed, the passage becomes a switchback space of continuity in which a series of fragmental spatial scenes are sliding from one view to another, simultaneously previewing to reviewing. Every turning point in *passage* is visually opened with a transparent glass wall; basically, which only allows one to enjoy the surrounding forest outside.

When the ship-shaped element came out in mind, I simultaneously thought it was also useful in

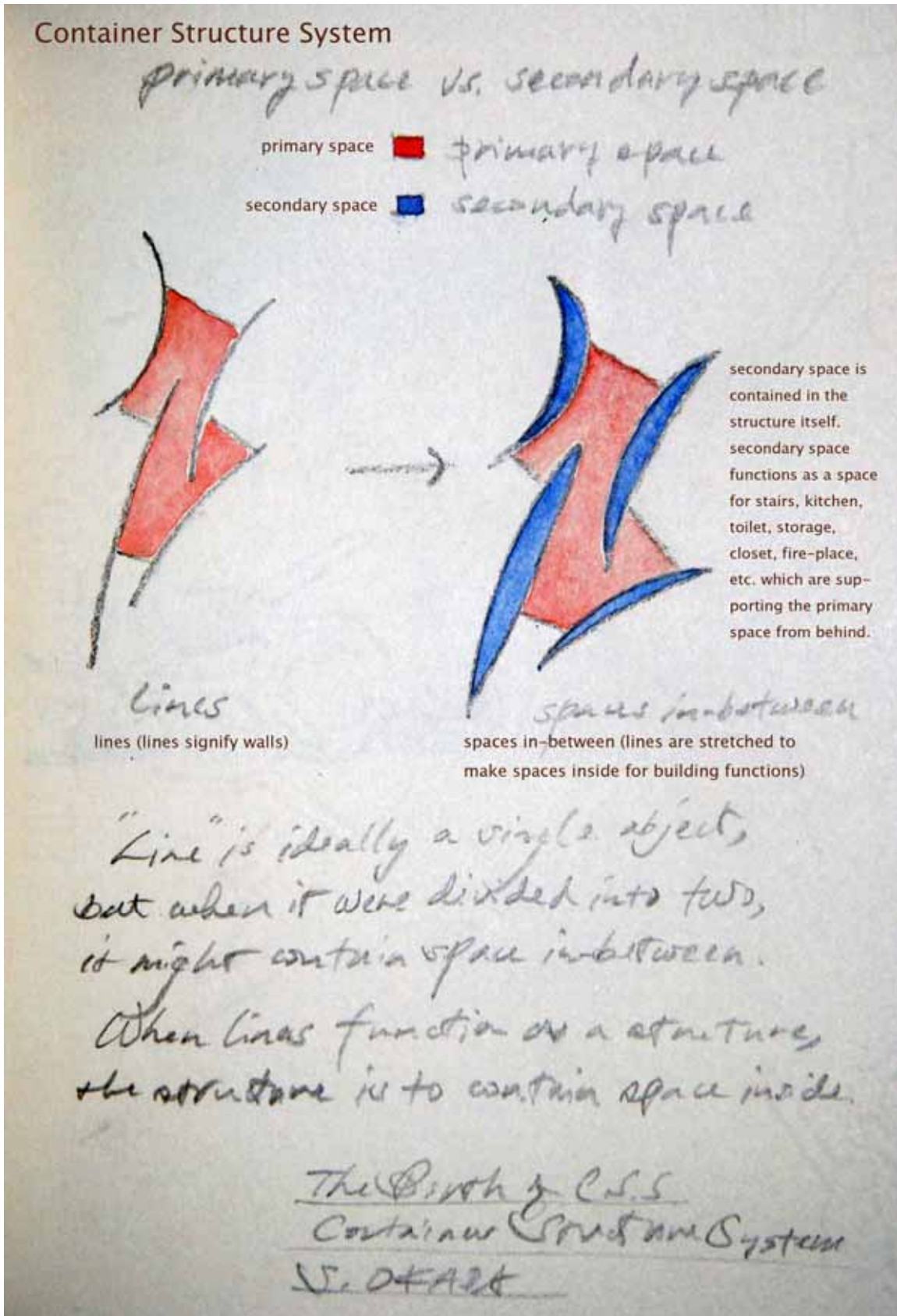
functioning as a structure, identical to baring walls upon which roof plates are set for determining interior space. Within a limited budget, the building is to be constructed of a wooden structure, but it is never based upon a traditional system. Mr. Hirokazu Toki, a structural designer and colleague of my school faculty, plotted out a whole structural system in calculation, and finally we reached to create a new structural system with using ship-shaped elements. We name it CSS, Container Structure System*, in which each ship-shaped structural element contains a secondary space inside; and at the same time, each interactively sustains roofs to shape a primary space sheltered into a united building. In terms of the roof structure, because the roof plates are composed of a series of differentiated small beams, the roof can easily accept any irregular plane even though it is three-dimensionally distorted. The construction procedure is quite simple and less expensive because of a construction period shortened. After basements are made, ship-shaped elements, prefabricated in a factory, are brought to a construction site; then roofs, partly prefabricated, are joined for tightening into a whole structure.

CSS is capable of producing a variety of architectural space. It accepts any construction material enabling prefabrication, any scale of construction from a small residence to a large public facility such as a museum or a library. Ideally, CSS enables architecture to grow endlessly when the ship-shape element is ever added to an existing building. To the contrary, it is easy to reduce a part of building by cutting some ship-shaped element off the main body. CSS thus provides a quality of sustainability to architecture.

(*CSS is now being patented for authorizing its construction systems.)

data

1. name of project: Gallery in Kiyosato
2. location: Kiyosato, Yamanashi Prefecture, Japan
3. client: Joji & Chie Aonuma
4. architect in principal: Satoshi Okada, Satoshi Okada architects
5. project architect: Isao Kato, Lisa Tomiyama
6. structural designer: Hirokazu Toki
7. area:
 - site area: 1115.6sqm
 - building area: 181.5sqm
 - total floor area: 207.1sqm
8. structure: timber construction (wooden structure)
9. materials: laminated timber board, granite, marble, elastic paint on mortar, synthetic rubber water proof sheet, vinyl floor panel
10. completion: March 2005
11. photo credit: Satoshi Okada architects & Nacasa & Partners



Container Structure System: primary space & secondary space integrated to a whole building function



façade



rear towards primeval nature



gallery for entrance



two galleries on a wall



gallery on ramp toward passage-end



gallery for living



gallery for dining to living

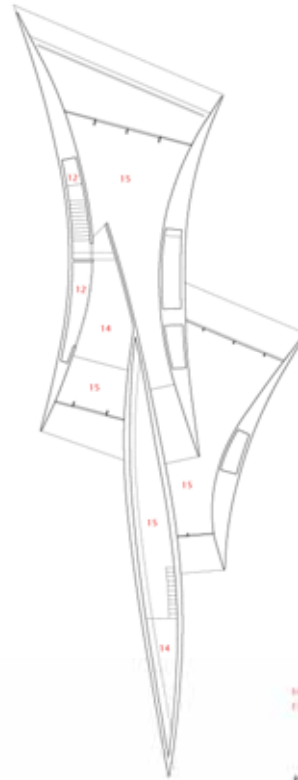


gallery for living



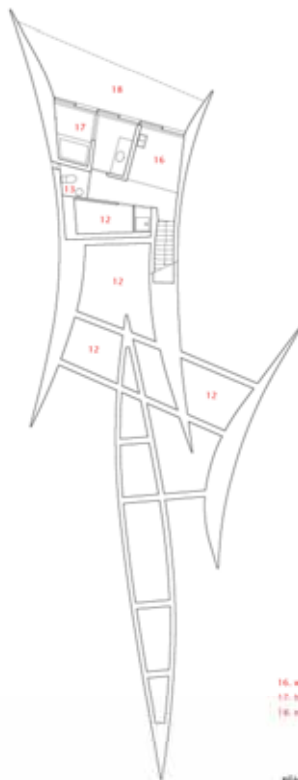
- 1. entrance
- 2. gallery for exhibition
- 3. gallery for meeting
- 4. gallery for dining
- 5. kitchen
- 6. gallery for sitting
- 7. gallery for storage
- 8. gallery for sleeping
- 9. gallery for rest
- 10. entrance
- 11. stairs
- 12. stairs
- 13. stairs
- 14. stairs
- 15. stairs
- 16. stairs
- 17. stairs
- 18. stairs
- 19. stairs
- 20. stairs

plan: ground floor
Gallery in Kiyosato



- 12. gallery for bath
- 13. stair

plan: first floor
Gallery in Kiyosato



- 16. workshop
- 17. bathroom
- 18. material workshop

plan: basement floor
Gallery in Kiyosato

