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satoshi okada

project

Satoshi Okada

designers

Satoshi Okada, Isao Kato,
Masataka Yonemoto, Lisa Tomiyama

structures

Hirokazu Toki + Hojo structural laboratory

landscape

Paul Smither, OnBeat Co.

contractor

Sasazawa Construction Company

client

Hiroyuki Ando

location

Karuizawa, Nagano, Japan

dimensions

2317 sqm site area

484 sqm built area

timeline

2008-09: project

2009-10: construction

villa A nagano 2010

Villa A is set on a steep land lot in the mountains of Nagano Prefecture, northwest of Tokyo. Karuizawa is the nearest town, a kind of long-established summer retreat for residents of Tokyo, with lush landscapes and a mild climate in summer. The lot is almost triangular and slopes to the south, giving open views over the valley. The dense vegetation is made up of Japanese conifers, and maples that turn red in autumn. The villa has a fairly complex plan, with curving walls. It is sensitively related to the landscape, both in its topography and the choice of tree species by Paul Smither, a well-known British-born landscapist. The lower floor, in concrete, houses the most private part of the house, laid out along the north retaining wall. It contains niches, illuminated by overhead skylights, and houses artworks from the owners' collection. On the upper floor, in a steel structure, the living room and kitchen are set in a crescent-shaped volume, mostly glazed, overlooking the vegetation out-

side. The theme of the roof is central to the project: it emerges from the ground like a fragment of bark embedded in the soil to cover the living spaces. The roof was made by examining the technologies used in boat-building. It is made out of a series of panels assembled in situ, consisting of layers of steel bent and pressed in adherence. The last of the layers is corten steel and the first is white steel, forming the ceiling of the house itself.

The entrance to the house is at the back, on the north side, through lava-stone walls. They make the view from the first floor even more striking by the contrast between the dark, tactile stones and the continuous glass wall without visual limits. A long covered terrace on the lower floor, protected in turn by the broad curving roof, runs around the glazed façade. For the facing of some walls the architect experimented with traditional techniques such as *tsuchikabe*, which makes use of artisanal mixtures of clay rendering.

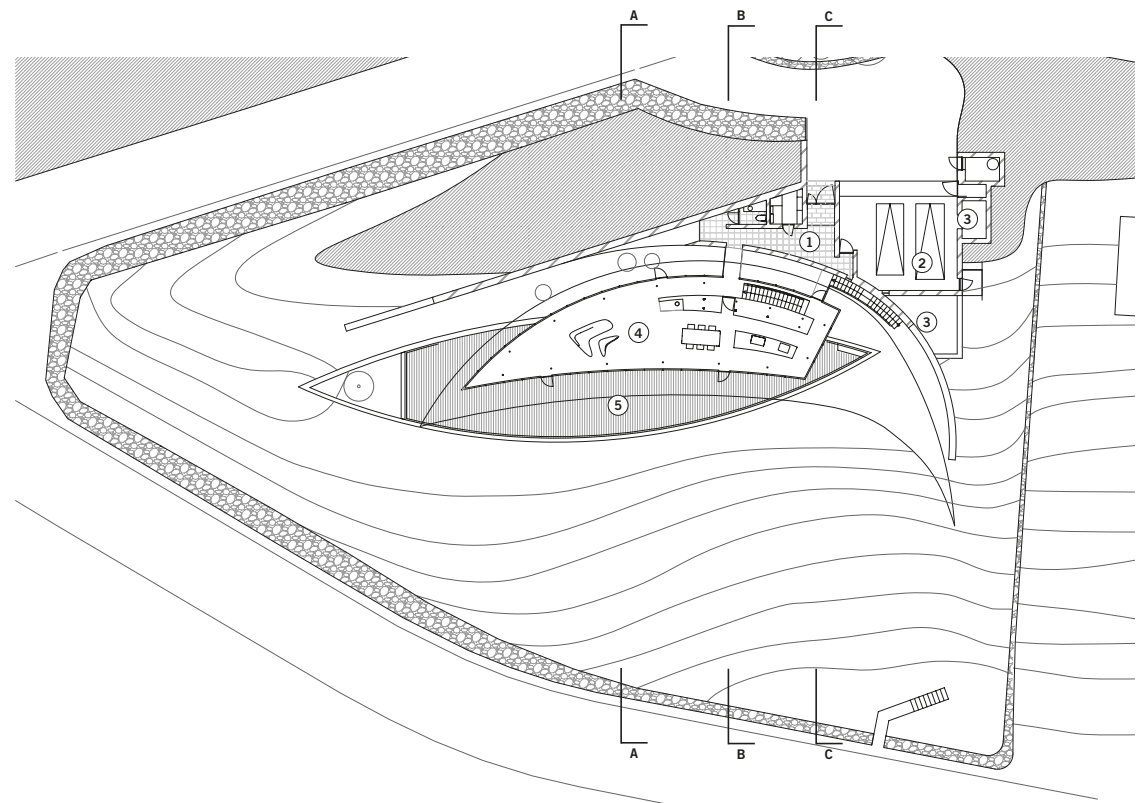
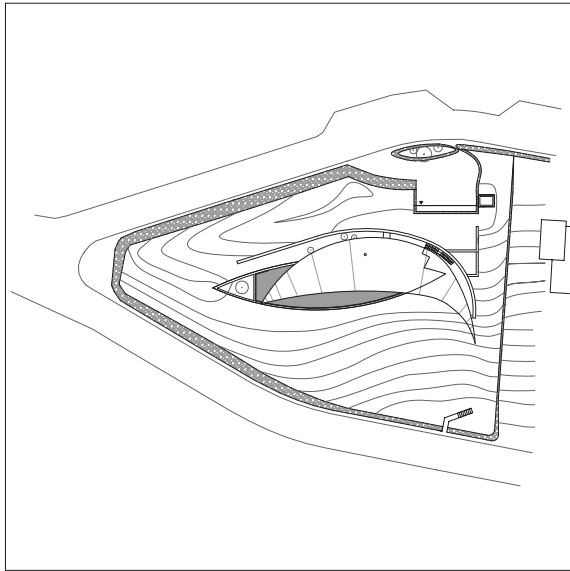




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Access area at the rear of the house.

Night view from the valley.

Details of attachment of the pressed steel roof and the convex concrete wall to the west.

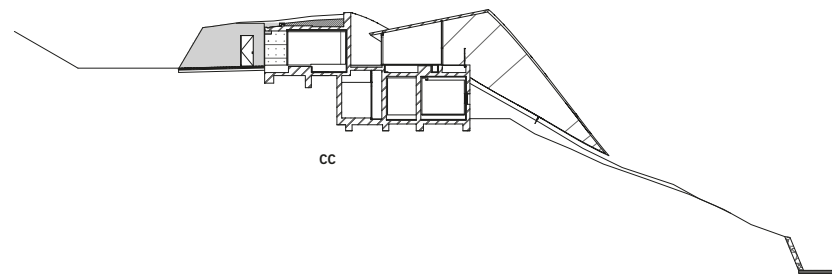
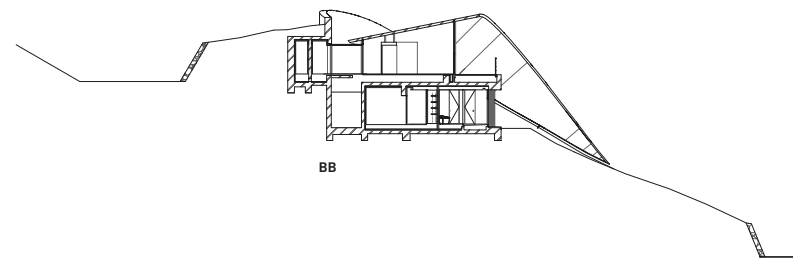
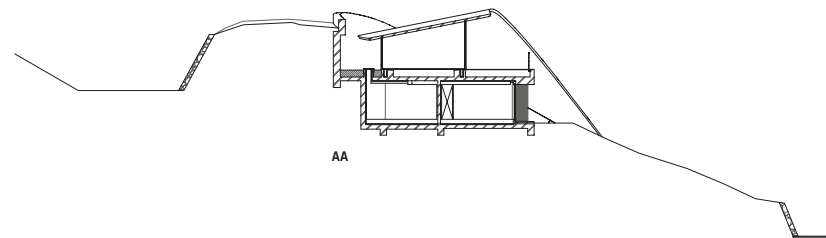
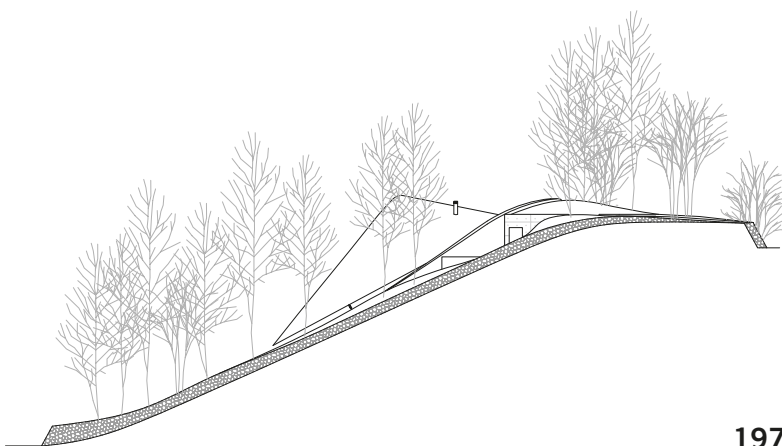
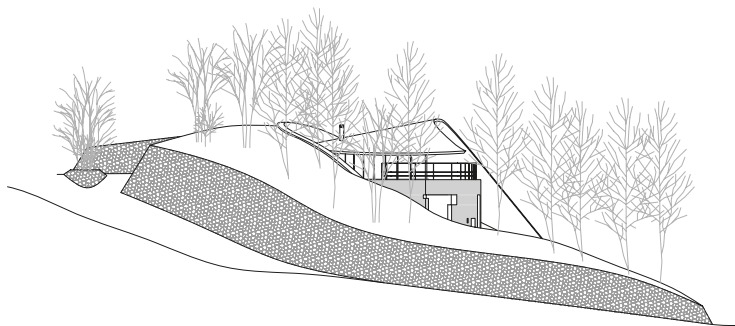
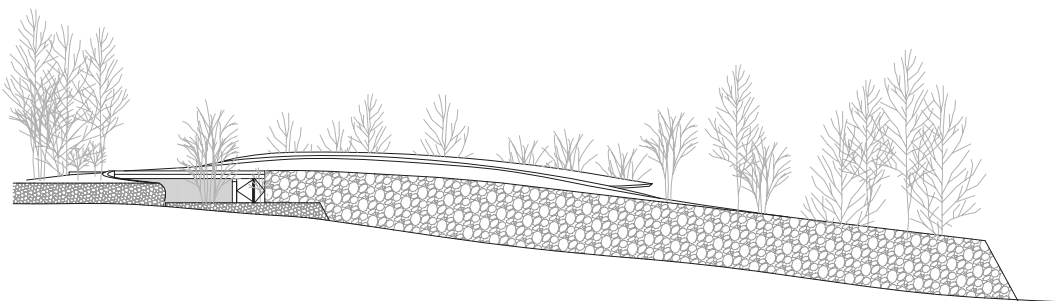
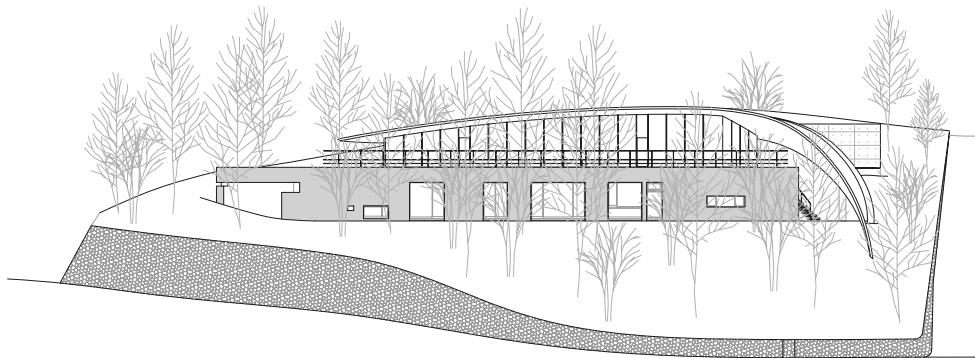


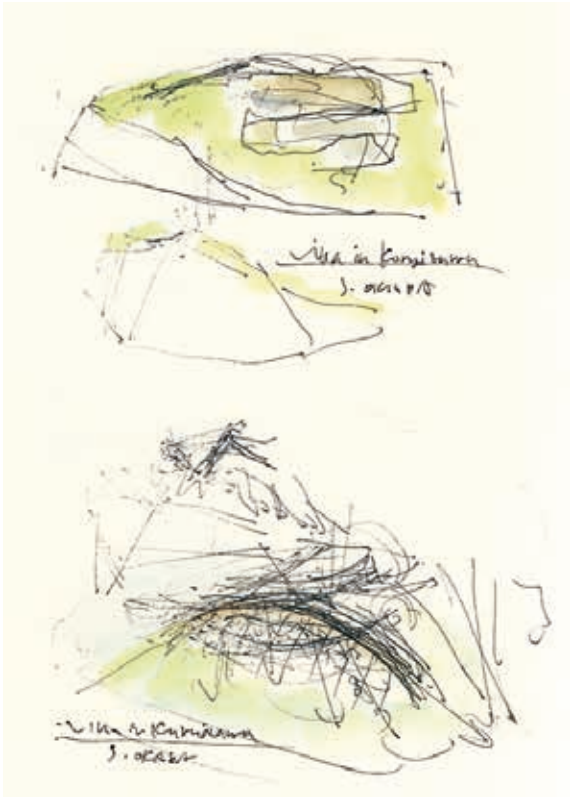
Layout and plans of the ground and basement floors. Key: 1 entrance
2 garage 3 storage 4 living/dining 5 terrace 6 secondary entrance 7 boiler
8 exhibition gallery 9 traditional room 10 cloakroom 11 children's room
12 master bedroom 13 laundry room.

South, north, west, east and sections AA, BB, CC.

0 4 8m









The entrance to the house is through lava stone walls. The west part of the house with the convex courtyard on the lower floor and the end of the steel roof on the upper level with the living room.
Sketches of the project.

View of the large terrace overlooking the steep, thickly wooded slope.





Upstairs living room.

Views of the layout on the lower floor, with niches for exhibiting artworks receiving light from skylights above.