

design anthology

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Jo Nagasaka / Schemata Architects

by Jo Nagasaka
(Frame Publishers)

Architect Jo Nagasaka has released his first monograph covering the first 19 years of his Tokyo-based practice. Prefaced by several highly personal essays, the book begins by offering insight into the designer's personal journey and serves to explain his unique approach.

After setting the stage, the book sees each of Nagasaka's projects listed in chronological order and fully explored, including a revisiting of each project brief, floor plans, work-in-progress images to show process and, of course, polished photographs of the final result. The firm's portfolio is as diverse as it is extensive, including cafes and restaurants, studios and retail spaces, exhibition displays, furniture design and residential projects. Projects can also be highly conceptual; for example, the Paco home pushes the boundaries of what constitutes a living space. Nagasaka's spaces are not 'beautiful' in any conventional sense, but what they are is highly Japanese in their pared-back appreciation for essential form and organic materiality. And that's what makes this book such a compelling addition to any design lover's library.



Neri&Hu Design and Research Office: Works and Projects

contributions by David Chipperfield and
Alejandro Zaera-Polo (Park Books)

The first book ever published on the internationally acclaimed design duo Neri&Hu, this monograph presents a broad selection of the Shanghai studio's work in architecture and product design between 2004 and 2014.

With the core content divided between three sections (buildings and interiors, products, and ongoing projects), the book opens with essays by design legends David Chipperfield and Alejandro Zaera-Polo. Chipperfield pays respect to the studio's distinctive regional voice, saying: 'They have found an approach that gives form to the ideas of "Chinese-ness" but with a distinctly Western view of design, found a bridge between tradition and modernity, between East and West.' Meanwhile, Zaera-Polo admires the designers' embrace of what he describes as 'urban decay', citing respected examples 'The Waterhouse at South Bund, set in a building from the 1930s, and Neri&Hu's own store, Design Collective, described by the designers as 'a stoic relic from the turn of the century'. The duo's approach to redevelopment stands at odds with Asia's otherwise overwhelming preference for polished newness.

This book is a nod to how far the firm came in just ten years, and a teaser for what we might expect in proportion in the upcoming decade and beyond.