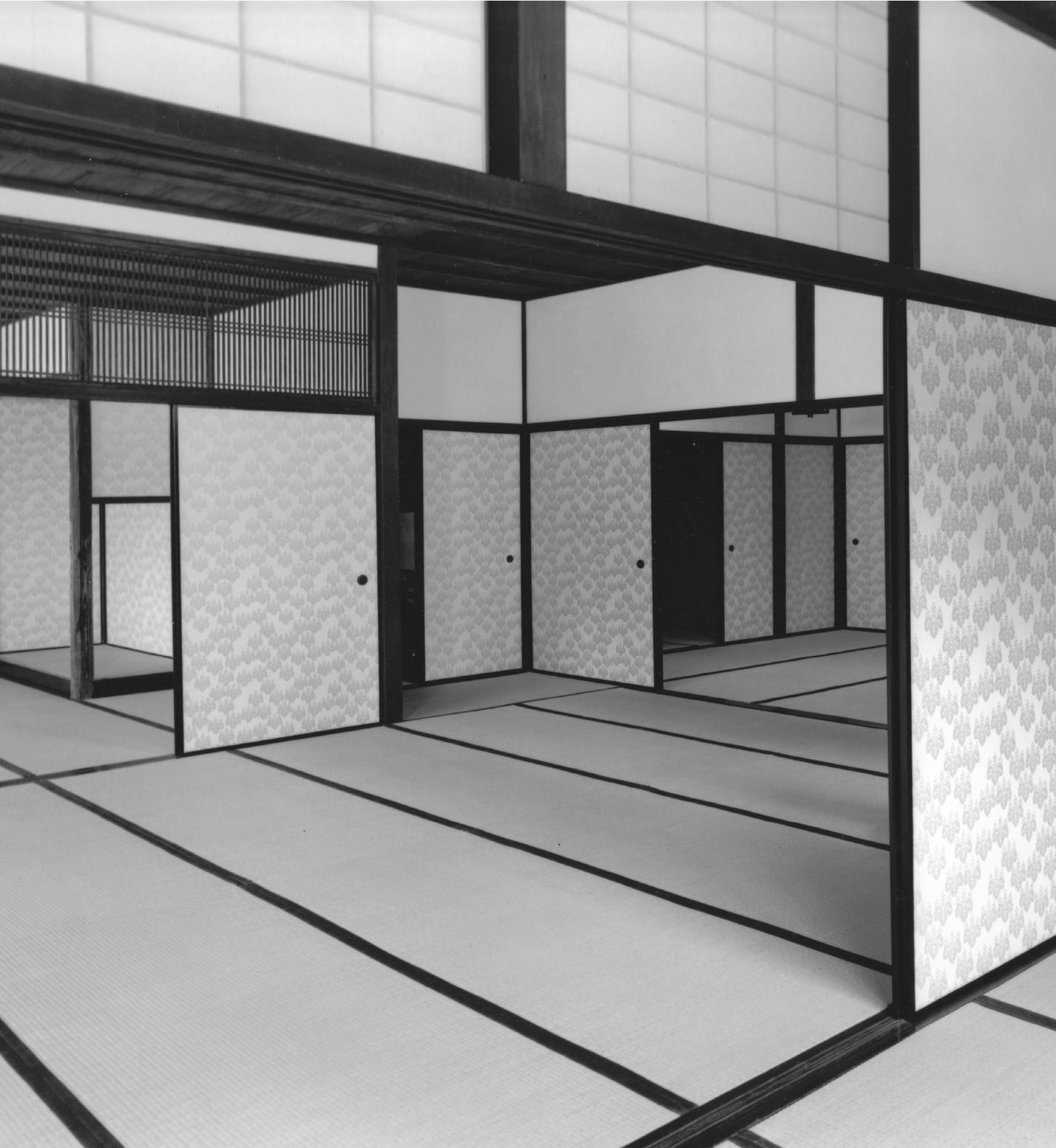


Art in the Garden

Katsura Imperial Villa:
The Photographs of Ishimoto Yasuhiro

Winter 2011



Katsura Imperial Villa: The Photographs of Ishimoto Yasuhiro

This exhibition celebrates one of the most exquisite architectural and garden treasures of Japan—Katsura Imperial Villa in Kyoto—and one of its finest living photographers, Ishimoto Yasuhiro, whose 1953 images of Katsura introduced this unrivalled masterpiece to the world.

Born in San Francisco in 1921, and raised in Japan, Ishimoto returned to the U.S. at the age of 17 to study agriculture at the University of California. His studies were interrupted with the outbreak of WWII, when Ishimoto was detained in 1942 at an internment camp in Colorado. There, he first picked up the camera that eventually led him to pursue a career in photography.

After the war, Ishimoto enrolled in the Institute of Design, Chicago, also referred to as the New Bauhaus, where he studied photography with

Harry Callahan and Aaron Siskind. He received the Moholy-Nagy Prize awarded to top students of the Institute for two consecutive years in 1951 and 1952.

In 1953, Ishimoto returned to Japan to photograph Katsura Detached Palace, and published the book, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture*, in 1960 with text by Walter Gropius and Tange Kenzo, two of the greatest architects of the 20th century. They saw Ishimoto's photographs as a way to communicate their vision of the minimalist and, hence, the modernist nature of traditional Japanese architecture.

Ishimoto lived in Chicago from 1958-61, where he photographed street scenes, which were published in Tokyo in 1969 in the photo collection *Chicago, Chicago*. A selection of Ishimoto's Chicago photographs was also included in Edward Steichen's

magnum opus 1955 exhibition titled *The Family of Man* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

In 1966, Ishimoto returned again to Japan, where he became a professor at the Tokyo University of Art and Design. In 1969, he became a Japanese citizen. He visited Kyoto again in 1982, re-photographing Katsura in color to capture his own personal vision of the richer, more complex character of this very special place. In 1996, Ishimoto Yasuhiro was designated a Person of Cultural Merit by the Japanese Government in recognition of his many accomplishments.

Today at the age of 89, Mr. Ishimoto makes his home in Tokyo—his work and his life a living bridge between the cultures of America and Japan.

THE MA OF MODERNISM: THE BOX CONSTRUCTIONS OF DANIEL FAGERENG

The box constructions of Daniel Fagereng were on view in conjunction with the Katsura photography exhibition. The artist reinterprets the elements and components of traditional Japanese architecture in these mixed media constructions using light, line, and shadow as compositional elements. With an MFA from the Art Center College of Design in California, Fagereng lived and worked in Kyoto, Japan, for ten years studying Noh mask carving and observing the intricacies of the traditional Japanese townhouse.



PRESENTED BY:

The Japan Foundation and the Consulate General of Japan in Portland

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📷 All Photos: Jonathan Ley

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