

NEWS



IMPERIAL HOTEL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Mr. Tomoyuki Sakakida Appointed Interior Designer for New Imperial Hotel in Kyoto

Tokyo, Japan; December 23rd, 2022: Japan's famed Imperial Hotel Co., Ltd. (President Hideya Sadayasu) will open a new hotel in Kyoto in the spring of 2026. The new hotel is being designed to preserve and utilize part of the existing Yasaka Kaikan building in Gion, Kyoto. The interior of the new hotel is being created by The New Material Research Laboratory Co., Ltd. The Imperial will commission architect Mr. Tomoyuki Sakakida to serve as representative director of the company and be responsible for its interior design.

The building to be renovated is the Yasaka Kaikan, originally completed in 1936 and recognized nationally as a registered tangible cultural property and an historic building in Kyoto. It is located in Gion, the center of the world-famous Maiko area. Maikos are girls in the process of training to become fully fledged geikos, or geishas, respected and accomplished professional entertainers. Originally a theater, the building was closed due to aging and earthquake resistance structural issues, and most of it is no longer in use. The famed historical and culturally valuable building will be rebuilt as an Imperial Hotel and will be the fourth Imperial Hotel brand property after its Tokyo, Kamikochi, and Osaka hotels. The new hotel will occupy a renovated landmark and is expected to be the Imperial Hotel, Ltd.'s first new business in 30 years, following the opening of the Imperial Hotel, Osaka, in 1996.

Competition was held for the post of interior designer and architects active in Japan and overseas were candidates. The significance of this project is that the Imperial Hotel, which was born to play the role of a Japanese state guest house, will take on the challenge of creating an enhanced identity occupying the Yasaka Kaikan building, which has been respected by the local community in a special place symbolizing Gion and Kyoto, Japan. The owners asked for design concepts and proposals that would embody the structure's uniqueness.

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The New Material Research Laboratory Co., Ltd., headed by Mr. Sakakida, boasts a reputation for interior design using traditional Japanese natural materials and construction methods. Mr. Sakakida proposed creating a one-of-a-kind charm by treating and harmonizing the old and new. The New Material Research Laboratory Co., Ltd.'s proposal was evaluated as highly compatible with this plan, which aims to contribute to the development of the local community by preserving and utilizing the building and passing it on to future generations. In Kyoto, where various brands open regularly, the hotel decided to appoint a company that will create an element of originality for the Imperial Hotel.

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Image: Main Building's southwest exterior



Image: Entrance to new Imperial Hotel in Kyoto

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Preliminary stage and subject to change as developed.

Tomoyuki Sakakida



Photo: Mie Morimoto

Architect. Born in Shiga, Japan in 1976.

Sakakida finished his Master's degree in architecture at Kyoto Institute of Technology in 2001 and worked for Nihon Sekkei Inc. before establishing his own practice Tomoyuki Sakakida Architect and Associates co., Ltd. in 2003. In parallel with running the practice, he worked for Waro Kishi + K. Associates/EX from 2003 to 2006. In 2008 Sakakida founded New Material Research Laboratory with the artist Hiroshi Sugimoto, and since 2013 Sakakida is the director. He is currently teaching at Kyoto University of Art and Design. Sakakida was appointed the official ambassador of oya stone at a ceremony in Utsunomiya City in 2020. In 2019 he won the 28th BELCA Award.

Selected works:

MOA Museum of Art, Shizuoka, 2017

Odawara Art Foundation Enoura Observatory, Kanagawa, 2017

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden: Lobby Revitalization, Washington D.C., 2018

Guesthouse Washin, Kiyoharu Art Colony, Yamanashi, 2019

Odagaki Shoten, Hyogo, 2021

Kanda, Tokyo, 2022

Villa Coucou, Tokyo, 2022

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden: Garden Revitalization, Washington D.C., scheduled 2025

Monograph:

Hiroshi Sugimoto and Tomoyuki Sakakida, "Old Is New: Architectural Works by New Material Research Laboratory", Lars Müller Publishers, 2021