

Erica Heartquist, Communication Manager  
Portland Japanese Garden  
+1 503.542.9339  
eheartquist@japanesegarden.org

## KENGO KUMA CREATES MASTERPIECE FOR PORTLAND JAPANESE GARDEN

Portland, Oregon: [Portland Japanese Garden](#), celebrated as the most authentic Japanese gardens outside Japan, opened its \$37M Cultural Village expansion in April 2017. Designed by world renowned architect [Kengo Kuma](#), who is also spearheading the National Stadium for the 2020 [Tokyo Olympics](#), the organization's new LEED-gold Cultural Village not only provides additional space to accommodate its rapid visitor growth, but also - and most importantly - enhances its ability to immerse visitors in traditional Japanese arts and culture. It is the first public commission project for Kuma in the United States.



“In this increasingly plugged-in, distracted world, we find many of our guests seek out the peace and respite they find within the Garden,” said Steve Bloom, Chief Executive Officer for Portland Japanese Garden. “With this new Cultural Village, we will extend the Garden’s mission and purpose to provide a heightened sense of tranquility, a more robust educational experience, and preserve significant Japanese cultural traditions and art forms.”



### Architectural Inspiration

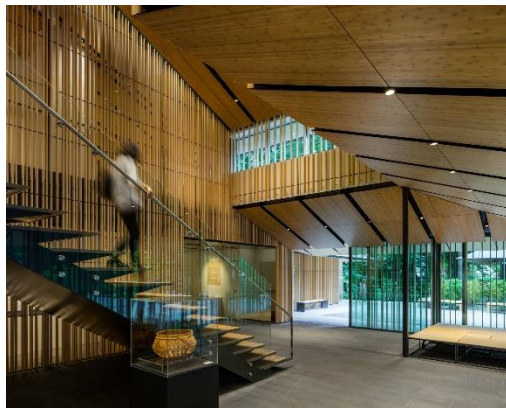
Kuma’s design principle of harmony between nature and architecture, as well as his commitment to natural materials and Japanese tradition made him the perfect architect to create a Cultural Village outside the historical gardens, evocative of the *monzenmachi* or “gate-front towns” outside of Japanese temples. Together with the Portland Japanese Garden’s Curator, third generation master garden craftsman Sadafumi Uchiyama, Kuma designed the new

Cultural Village, his first public commission in the U.S., to honor the singular experience of each visitor and ensure the serenity is protected for future generations.

“Given its proximity to nature, [Portland, Oregon is unlike any place in the world](#). The architecture in the Cultural Village serves as a connector to the stunning Oregon landscape, Japanese arts and tradition, and the original Garden which is, in itself, perfect,” said Kuma. “Working on this project has influenced my approach, especially integrating green and wood. For example, the National Stadium in Tokyo will be rich in vegetation, evoking a feeling of forest in the city.”



With this expansion, Kuma and Uchiyama created an immersive, fluid journey from beginning to end. To better welcome visitors, the **Tanabe Welcome Center** entrance features a water garden with cascading ponds, introducing the transition from city to tranquility.



The [Jordan Schnitzer Japanese Arts Learning Center](#) is home to a gallery space, a multi-purpose classroom, the Garden Gift Shop, and the [Vollum Library](#), a comprehensive resource on Japanese gardening and related arts. The centerpiece of the Learning Center is a stunning staircase designed to also serve as seating for performances and demonstrations.

The third building is a new **Garden House**, where an expanded offering of horticulture classes and workshops take place.

Kuma designed living roofs atop the two structures to absorb rainwater while transitioning the eye gradually from the forest backdrop to the architecture below. A unique roof tile designed by [Komatsu Seiren](#) allows the razor thin, straight lines to be achieved.

At the heart of the village, visitors find an authentic, intimate [Umami Café](#) which provides a place to rest and refresh while experiencing gracious Japanese-inspired service firsthand. The café’s unique location floats over the hillside at the east side of the Village providing scenic views of the area’s surrounding beauty, reminiscent of the Kiyomizu-dera temple in Kyoto. Constructed using Port Orford cedar and Tyvek, which emulates rice paper, the café floats in nature and fuses harmoniously into its surroundings.



### About Portland Japanese Garden

*Portland Japanese Garden is a nonprofit organization originally founded in 1963 as a place for cross-cultural understanding following World War II. It has become a global destination for Japanese art, nature, and peace in Portland, Oregon. It is considered the most authentic Japanese garden outside of Japan and the foremost Japanese cultural organization in North America.*

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