

ノエミ・レーモンドの建築と意匠

和で紡ぐモダンライフ

Noémi P. Raymond's Architecture and Design:
Inspired by Japanese Aesthetics



The Silent Brilliance of Noémi Raymond

Antonin Raymond is widely recognized as a pioneer who fused Western modern architecture with traditional Japanese aesthetics, contributing to the development of postwar Japanese architecture. However, the achievements of his wife, Noémi Raymond, have gone much less acknowledged to date.

Antonin and Noémi arrived in Japan in 1919, where upon they saw landscapes lined with wooden houses and people going about their daily lives. Antonin extolled this ambiance as one where nature, food, clothing, and shelter all harmonized, and saw in it the roots of modern architecture. The openness of Japanese houses allowed one to feel the natural changes of the seasons, and all of this aligned perfectly with Noémi's sensibilities. Noémi's interest extended to crafts: ceramics, textiles, bamboo work, and washi (traditional Japanese papermaking). The skill of Japanese artisans at that time amazed her.

My research into Noémi's archives became a journey to understand her true character through the few traces left behind. Her assistant, Kuniko Kobayashi, recounts Noémi's kindness—how she would gently reassure staff members, saying, "Don't worry, you're doing a great job!," offering daily encouragement in contrast to her husband's strictness towards them. Naoki Kajimoto, who oversaw the design of St. Michael's Church, stated, "I want people to know that Noémi, grieved by the devastation of postwar Japan, designed necklaces by bending thin, round silver plates into a chain despite the scarcity of materials, and donated them to orphanages and churches." He added, "After work at the summer house in Karuizawa, when I joined the couple for an evening stroll, I once tried to pick some pampas grass. Noémi said, 'Even plants shouldn't have their lives taken needlessly.' I still treasure those words today." The remaining notes for her orders to Yamagata Dantsu (Oriental Carpet) include meticulous instructions regarding thread colors. In these, one senses her keen sensitivity to light and color.

Her correspondence with Junzo Yoshimura, who was invited to Raymond Farm before the war, and with Masanori Sugiyama, who maintained the office in Japan during that time, is also noteworthy. How profoundly the great upheaval of war between Japan and the United States must have cast a shadow over their work is difficult to fully fathom for us today. Yet, the Raymonds' architecture, still captivating today, endures and emits a quiet radiance.
The fusion of Noémi's aesthetic sensibility with traditional Japanese beauty left an indelible mark on the development of modern design in Japan. Though her talent remained in Antonin's shadow, she actually left behind a body of work that was both independent and rich in creativity, and I believe she was a significant figure at the dawn of "modern life" in Japan. We hope this exhibition will provide an opportunity for you to find this out for yourself.

Michiyo Okabe
Director, Gallery A4

A Modern Life Woven with Japanese Aesthetics

Noémi Pernessin Raymond (1889–1980) spent her childhood in France and Switzerland, moved to New York in her teens, and established herself as an illustrator and graphic designer after graduating from college. She became involved in architecture after marrying the Czech-born architect Antonin Raymond, and after coming to Japan with him in 1919, she would spend a total of about 40 years in the country.

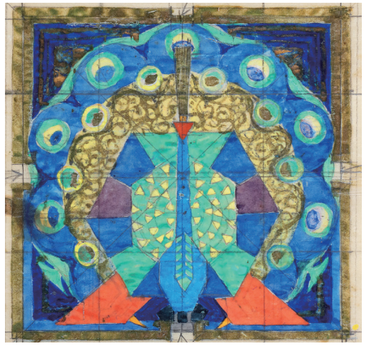
Noémi connected deeply with all things rooted in Japanese culture—from architecture, such as traditional houses, to regional handicrafts like washi paper and textiles, as well as the sophisticated skills of artisans, Eastern philosophy, and the reverence for nature. She went on to create her own unique style by weaving together the design sensibilities she had cultivated in Europe and the United States with the traditional aesthetics suffusing every aspect of Japanese life. Although her work was always a collaboration with Antonin, they spent nearly half a century in a "two-as-one" relationship, creating architecture as a comprehensive art form in which architecture, interiors, furniture, textiles, and landscaping all harmonized seamlessly.

The spirit of "wa" clearly lived within Noémi. "Wa" meant "Japan," yet it also signified "harmony" and "harmony among people." She formed friendships with countless individuals, including key figures of the Mingei movement—such as Shoji Hamada—as well as artists and thinkers.

This booklet focuses on Noémi's work in "architecture and design," shedding light on her residential projects, which ranged from architecture to interior design. She not only created architecture but also beautifully wove the spirit of "wa" into the "modern life" conducted within it—a style of work that deserves to be reexamined now more than ever.















Left: A fire dog (fireplace log holder) designed by Noémi, shaped to evoke its name (Collection: Kitazawa Architects) Right page: Clockwise from top left / Noémi practicing the tea ceremony / Decorative study for the "Peacock Room" at the Imperial Hotel (Collection: Kitazawa Architects) / Stencil and screen work (Collection: Raymond Family, New Hope, Pennsylvania) / Standing at a construction site / Triangular chairs (see p. 22; Collection: Raymond Architects) / The Former Cunningham Residence (see p. 12). Photographed in 1997.

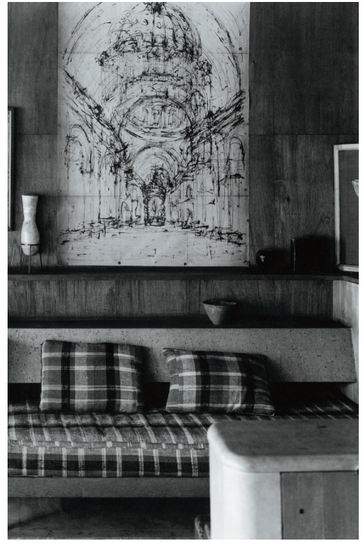
Raymond Home and Studio in Kogai-cho

(1951, Minato Ward, Tokyo)









Top: A stone-paved patio set beneath a wisteria trellis. On sunny days, a dining table was placed here for meals; on rainy days, the table was moved to the living room on the left. Bottom left: Southern exterior view. The patio is located in the center. Bottom right: The living room, which also served as the master bedroom. Two built-in sofa beds were installed and used as beds at night (see page 24).

Here, we present three of the residential buildings created through the collaborative efforts of Noémi and Antonin Raymond. Although their style gradually evolved from the prewar period onward, their private residence and studio in Kogai-cho, built after the war, is considered the prototype that defined their later style. In his autobiography, Antonin would later write that in this home, they succeeded in incorporating honesty, directness, simplicity, and, above all, economy. What kinds of innovations went into its design?

The design consists of two single-story wooden structures connected in a U-shape around a central courtyard. When Antonin sought to create a building that integrated living and working spaces amid postwar material shortages, he turned his attention to the slender scaffolding logs used on construction sites. He devised a method of assembling these logs—split lengthwise—into scissor trusses to support the beams from below. The structural members were left exposed and unfinished, creating a simple, unadorned space. Furthermore, by employing the "off-center" technique—where doors and windows are positioned outside the columns—the openings can be fully opened by freely moving the doors and windows. The living room and patio share the same floor level, and when the sliding doors between them are fully opened, the interior and exterior spaces merge into a single, continuous area. While visually connecting the interior and exterior is a hallmark of Japanese architecture, the couple took great pleasure in dining on this patio and experiencing the nature of the garden. Noémi swam daily in the pool set up in the garden, and staff members would sometimes swim there as well. Their life philosophy—one that valued both daily life and work—is clearly evident.

The building no longer exists; parts of it were relocated (see page 21).





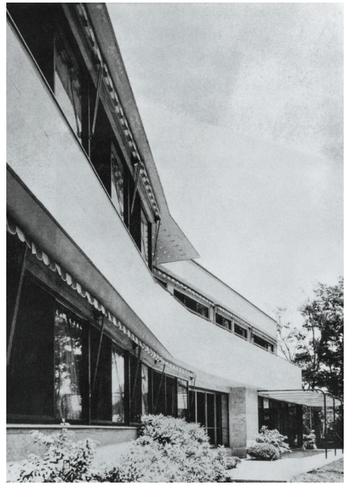
Top: The studio's living room. Scissor trusses support the beams, and the ceiling is left exposed to reveal the structure. The fusuma sliding doors and the light streaming through the shoji screens create a warm atmosphere. There is a metal fireplace, a familiar feature of Raymond architecture. Bottom: The studio, lined with drafting tables.

Former Tetsuma Akaboshi Residence

(1934, Musashino City, Tokyo)







Top left: The stairwell, notable for its striking spiral design. The study of the homeowner, Tetsuma Akaboshi, was located directly above it. Top right: A view of the Japanese-style room from the wife's room. The reflection in the large mirror on the right allows one to see the children's rooms lined up in the back—a well-thought-out layout that also facilitated supervision. Bottom left: The exposed concrete exterior. These three photos were taken around 1934.

A representative example of concrete housing in the Raymonds' architectural work. The client was Tetsuma Akaboshi, a businessman with whom they were close friends, who had studied in the United States. The interior features a blend of Japanese and Western styles befitting such a client. Western-style rooms make extensive use of folding doors to enhance flexibility, while the adjoining Japanese-style and Western-style rooms are harmonized through the use of shoji screens and fusuma sliding doors. This three-story reinforced concrete structure extends in a slightly angled form that seems to envelop the garden. The south-facing second-floor windows, arranged in a row, utilize the "off-center" technique that they were experimenting with at the time. The first-floor openings also employ this off-center design, allowing the interior and garden to merge into a single space when fully opened. Noémi's comprehensive interior design—including furniture, built-in storage, and carpeting—represented a novel approach in Japan at the time. A separate T-shaped wooden annex was connected to the main building, housing staff quarters and other facilities.

Only the reinforced concrete structure remains today. In 2022, it was designated a National Registered Tangible Cultural Property, and Musashino City has begun implementing a preservation and utilization plan.

Karuizawa New Studio

(1963, Karuizawa Town, Nagano Prefecture)

For about two months each summer, Noémi and Antonin stayed at this vacation home in the summer resort with their staff, devoting themselves to their work. It is a single-story wooden structure built on a small hill. The 12-sided studio features a concrete fireplace serving as a central pillar, topped by a roof with an umbrella-like structure made of interlocking logs, with the structural elements left exposed. When the large south-facing windows were opened, the interior merged with the outdoor terrace and the natural surroundings, and on sunny days, they would sometimes remove all the fittings. A service wing extended to the west, and a wing containing bedrooms and a Japanese-style room extended to the east. They also built a separate annex housing simple beds for the staff. All the furniture was designed by Noémi, and the washi paper used for the sliding doors and other items was handmade by her. Many of the Raymonds' homes featured fireplaces, something Noémi noted in her writings as signifying "the center of the home"; and the large fireplace surrounded by drafting tables here may have been a symbol of "team unity." During breaks from work, they would sometimes enjoy barbecues or go hiking.







Top: Studio. The fireplace was once surrounded by drafting tables designed by Noémi. Bottom left: Southern exterior view. A terrace extends from the windows. Bottom right: Japanese-style room. The washi paper for the sliding doors was handmade by Noémi. These three photos were taken in 2014.



In the living room of their home and studio in Kogai-cho (page 6). Around 1965.

Re-examining Noémi: From a Contemporary Perspective

Mari Nakahara

(Ph.D, Co-curator of Antonin & Noémi Raymond Exhibition, 2006-2007)

Antonin Raymond, born and raised in the Czech Republic, and Noémi Pernessin, born in France, met in a fateful encounter in 1914 and spent around 60 years together as husband and wife, and as architectural design partners.

Noémi moved to New York as a teenager. At Columbia University's Teachers College, she cultivated her foundational design skills under Arthur Dow. She then worked as an illustrator, handling projects for prominent New York newspapers and companies such as Lily Cup, a sanitary cup manufacturer.

She came to Japan in 1919 with Antonin, who was involved in the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Imperial Hotel project. This marked the establishment of Japan as their primary base of activity. It goes without saying that Noémi's immense contributions were fundamental to the recognition of Antonin as the "Father of Modern Japanese Architecture" in his later years. It was commonplace for Noémi to serve as the confidante for staff members in the shadow of the hot-tempered Antonin; indeed, Antonin's ability to retain clients was largely due to Noémi's assistance. Noémi's boundless curiosity inspired Antonin and connected him to the wider world.

Noémi possessed a keen sensibility and abundant talent. She quickly absorbed the beauty of Japan's nature and folk crafts and reflected these influences in her work, such as the textile designs she began exploring by the mid-1920s. Through her collaborative work with Antonin, Noémi also ventured from two-dimensional into three-dimensional design. In a letter to Antonin in 1925, she expressed her determination to design private residences.



It was part of their daily routine to eat meals on the patio adjoining the living room. Around 1952.

While Noémi gained fame for her animal welfare activism, recognition of her contributions to architecture took time. Her works, such as those exhibited in the 1940-41 MoMA Textile Design Competition, were often presented under Antonin's name, though this was later corrected.

The architectural world of their era was even more male-dominated than today, with significant gender disparities. Setting that context aside, whether her name was made public or not was probably not important to Noémi. She firmly believed she and Antonin were one heart and soul, and found beauty—a "Japanese-like beauty", even—in contributing as the "inner support" behind her husband's success.

However, nearly half a century after their passing, with women's positions having changed significantly, it is both essential and deeply meaningful to reevaluate Noémi's great achievements in the context of her collaboration with Antonin.

Chapter 2: Residences Designed by Noémi Raymond



It is estimated that Noémi designed more than a dozen homes, handling everything from architectural design to interior design. She would incorporate her understanding of the clients' personalities into her designs. True to the Raymond architectural style, her work brings out the inherent beauty of the materials while creating space-efficient, well-considered layouts, with built-in storage solutions that are both functional and beautiful…
Here, we present two examples of such residential architecture.

The Former Cunningham Residence

(1954, Minato Ward, Tokyo)

Left page: A view of the living room from the staircase. After the owner's death, Yoshimura Design Office was commissioned to renovate the house to preserve and repurpose it. Photographed in 2001. Top right: The living room features a metal fireplace, a hallmark of Raymond architecture. Photographed in 2025. Bottom left: Exterior view before the addition.

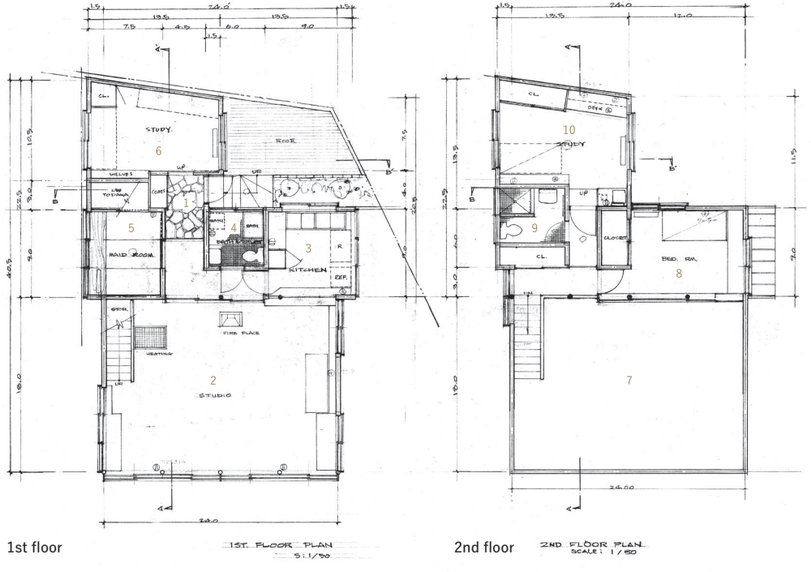




The client, Eloise Cunningham (1899–2000), was a musician and music educator. Brought to Japan from the United States at the age of two by her missionary parents, she lived in Japan for some 70 years. Driven by a desire for children to experience high-quality live music, she founded "Music for Youth" in 1939. She had been friends with Noémi since they met in prewar Japan. Both women loved animals and plants, and after the war, they devoted themselves to social activities for the Japanese people.

Eloise, who had returned to the United States in 1941, came back to Japan shortly after the war and commissioned the Raymond Office to design her private residence. She requested “a house with a balcony for listening to music.” The site was a residential tract adjacent to the Nezu Museum, located near the Raymond Office in Kogai-cho, Azabu. Noémi designed a small, two-story wooden house with a total floor area of 85 square meters. Although its exterior appears compact, the interior features a spacious double-height space, with log beams dynamically supporting the steeply pitched ceiling. This space offers exceptional acoustics, and the second-floor bedroom served as the “balcony for listening to music” during small concerts. By opening the sliding doors, one could enjoy the music while watching the performers on the first floor.

Furthermore, the openings employed the “off-center” technique, allowing them to be opened wide and connecting the living room and small garden into one continuous space. Despite the limited space of the grounds, the design skillfully incorporated the vast gardens of the Nezu Museum as a borrowed landscape, bringing comfort to Eloise, a lover of plants. The walls and ceilings feature exposed Lauan plywood, which, after more than 70 years, has aged to a beautiful amber hue. This house, in which Noémi’s talent was fully realized, received high praise and was featured in numerous media outlets, while Noémi was said to be delighted that this also brought attention to Eloise’s work. Eloise lived out her life to the age of over 100 in this house, and the building is now utilized by “Music for Youth,” a general incorporated association that carries on her legacy.



First Floor
1 Entrance Hall
2 Living Room
3 Kitchen
4 Bath & Toilet
5 Maid Room
6 Study

Second Floor
7 Double-Height Space
8 Bedroom
9 Toilet
10 Study

Floor plan of the former Cunningham Residence Floor plan drawn up when an addition was planned in 1969.



Former Ito Residence

(1963, Ota Ward, Tokyo)

Top: The living room of the former Ito Residence. Soft light filters through the shoji screens, and the concrete fireplace with a plaster finish is striking. The dining room is in the foreground. Photographed in 2017. Bottom right: View of the entrance hall from the living room and dining room. A sliding door once separated the entrance hall from the living room, but it was removed in later years. Bottom left: The fireplace tools were also designed by Noémi. (Courtesy of the former Ito Residence)







The second-floor bedroom. Noémi collected crafts such as washi paper while traveling to various production regions, and the gold paper on the fusuma sliding doors is part of that collection. The built-in storage along the wall features shallow drawers, as requested by the client. Photographed in 2017.

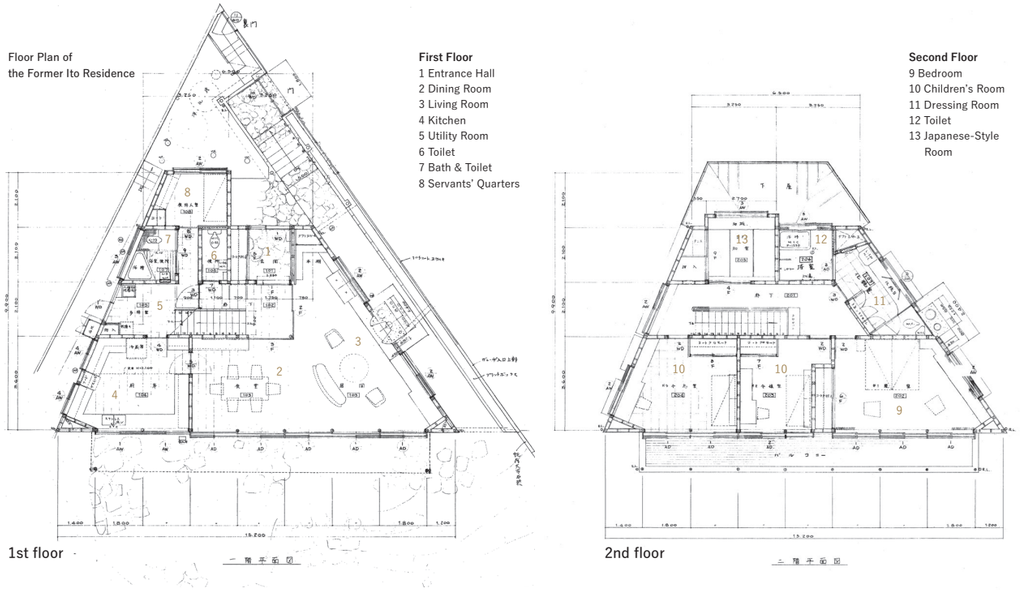
Built on an irregularly shaped lot, this residence was designed with a floor plan that closely follows the site's contours, resulting in a layout that is nearly trapezoidal. A reinforced concrete garage and storage area are located in the basement, while the living spaces on the first and second floors are constructed of wood. Entering through the entrance and passing through the dining room at the front, one rounds a corner to find a spacious, triangular living room. The walls and ceiling feature exposed plywood, creating a warm space where light filters softly through the shoji screens. The openings employ off-center framing to create a wide, open space; by keeping the ceiling height low and the eaves low, the line of sight extends smoothly outward. The layout is also well-thought-out: in addition to the route through the dining room, an alternative path through the utility room provides access from the entrance to the kitchen, which is convenient when guests are in the dining room or living room. Noémi wrote that her design philosophy was to "place the kitchen on the south side," and this house is a perfect example of that—it offers views through large windows and enjoys good ventilation. Built-in storage is incorporated throughout the house, and various pieces of furniture designed by Noémi are still cherished and used today, having undergone repeated repairs (see page 25).



Floor Plan of
the Former Ito Residence

First Floor
1 Entrance Hall
2 Dining Room
3 Living Room
4 Kitchen
5 Utility Room
6 Toilet
7 Bath & Toilet
8 Servants' Quarters

Second Floor
9 Bedroom
10 Children's Room
11 Dressing Room
12 Toilet
13 Japanese-Style Room



1st floor

2nd floor



South-facing exterior. The house is built on a hilltop and offers a beautiful view. The balcony railing is wide, inviting one to set down a drink and enjoy the scenery. Photographed in 2017.



Kitchen on the south side of the first floor. Photographed in 2025.

Noémi and Residential Design

Kiwa Matsushita
(Professor, Shibaura Institute of Technology / KMKa Architects)

After the war, Noémi designed houses. Although Antonin explicitly states this in his autobiography, Noémi is usually discussed solely as an interior and furniture designer, and her involvement in architectural design is largely unknown.

Noémi's textile and furniture designs were highly regarded even before the war, and she held solo exhibitions of her work. At that time, she handled most of the interiors for Raymond's buildings, and for residential interiors in particular, building a relationship with the residents was important. With her excellent communication skills, Noémi could discern clients' needs, and her understanding of both Japanese and Western lifestyles allowed her to craft beautiful, livable designs, so it was only natural that she would expand the scope of her work beyond interiors to encompass the design of entire houses. While she had designed homes before the war, she formally began overseeing residential design for the firm in the early 1950s, as the office's workload surged following the war. From that period onward, Noémi frequently offered opinions in the media as an "architect" and "housing expert," and gained some degree of social recognition.

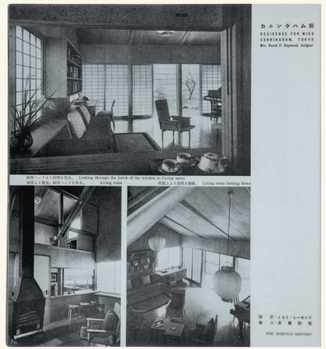
However, identifying specific houses within the Raymond Office's portfolio that Noémi likely designed in their entirety is not straightforward. Firstly, it is difficult to determine whether Noémi handled only the interior design for a given project or designed the entire structure. She received no formal architectural education, but she mastered drafting techniques through self-study. However, few signatures remain, and the drawings themselves offer no clear indication.

One clue lies in the credits accompanying magazine publications. The Cunningham House (currently the Cunningham Memorial House) (1954), featured in this exhibition, is the first house Noémi was credited with designing in a professional journal. Her letters also confirm that she designed it. Similarly, a careful examination of how other houses were featured in magazines suggests that over a dozen residences, including the former Ito Residence (1963), were likely designed by Noémi. Since only a limited number of houses were published in magazines, the actual number is likely much higher.

Both the Cunningham Memorial House and the former Ito Residence are masterpieces of postwar Raymond housing, yet attempting to extract the characteristics that are uniquely Noémi's from them may be largely meaningless. Even residences she designed independently were born from the couple's shared philosophy, and her writings on housing—emphasizing consideration for the residents' lifestyle, connection to the garden, simplicity, and economy—overlap with Antonin's principles. Conversely, as Antonin suggested, it could be said that Noémi shaped many of the postwar Raymond houses.

Furniture, interiors, houses, and exteriors—for Noémi, there were no barriers between them. She designed spaces that required her talent, regardless of scale. It is time for us, too, to remove these barriers and reassess the wide range of her designs.





The former Cunningham Residence, featured in the November 1954 issue of Kokusai Kenchiku (International Architecture) magazine (Bijutsu Shuppansha). "Design: Noémi Raymond" is listed in the credits. (Private collection)







Left: The living room of the former Cunningham Residence. The folding screen on the right was also designed by Noémi and served to conceal the storage space under the stairs. Right: To the right of the sliding doors is a window leading to the kitchen, which, when opened during small concerts, quickly transforms the space into a bar counter. There is also a folding dining table designed to match the counter's height. In the second-floor bedroom, the sliding doors are divided by the handrail, allowing each section to be opened separately. Both of these photos were taken in 2001.

Chapter 3: Interior and Design







Armchair
Wood, fabric, and igusa rush
W675 × D580 × H895

The photos on pages 20–24 were taken in the Memorial Room at the Raymond Office, which was created by relocating the living room from the Raymonds' home and studio in Kogai-cho (page 6). (The furniture pieces on these pages are part of the Raymond Office's collection.) The furniture production dates are listed where known.

In the Raymonds' architecture, the exterior (architecture) and interior form a unified whole, with neither taking precedence over the other. It was Noémi who designed most of the interiors.
In her furniture designs, she sensitively incorporated trends in modern European design while making full use of Japanese materials—such as solid wood and cast iron—and the exquisite craftsmanship of Japanese artisans to create simple, functional pieces. On the other hand, her textile designs were often modern yet organic, combining geometric patterns with motifs from the natural world, such as plants and insects. These designs are characteristic of Noémi, who had a career as a graphic designer and was a passionate lover of nature.
In her portfolio—compiled by Kuniko Kobayashi, who served as Noémi's assistant—the floor plan of the Price House (1963) features fabric and other material samples affixed to it. These are valuable artifacts that convey Noémi's sense of color through the actual materials used.

Left: Chair
Wood and igusa rush
W470 × D515 × H825
Right: Chair
Wood and igusa rush
W423 × D410 × H755

Many of the chairs designed by Noémi are characterized by slender lines and a lightweight appearance are lightweight, with slender lines, and it was the skill of Japanese cabinetmakers and other craftspeople that made this possible. An assistant would turn her freehand sketches into technical drawings, and the artisans would create a prototype, refining it by carefully whittling away excess material until it was complete. They are built using mortise-and-tenon joints without nails or screws, making them both delicate and sturdy. Another distinctive feature is that the back and seat are woven with rope made from twisted igusa reeds, rather than the paper cord typically used.







Triangular Stool (1951)
Wood
W390 × D310 × H440

This stool, inspired by milking chairs, was frequently used in the Raymonds' residential designs, including the former Cunningham Residence (page 12). The hole in the seat is designed for slipping one's hand through to carry the stool, and it is curved to make it easier to grip.

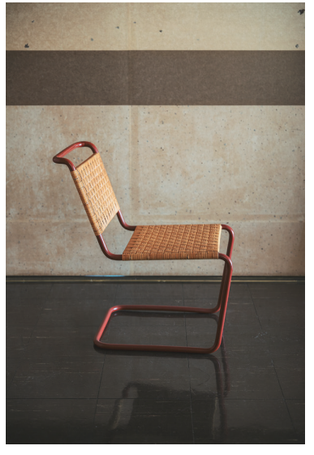


Shiro Akaboshi Villa Armchair (1931)
Round tubing and rattan weave
W600 × D680 × H730

Shiro Akaboshi Villa Chair (1931)
Round tubing and rattan weave
W425 × D630 × H720

Shiro Akaboshi Villa Desk (1931)
Round tubing and chestnut wood
W1210 × D675 × H740

Furniture made with tubing was designed by many of the leading architects of the time, and combining industrial products with handcrafted elements was a trend in modern design. The rattan weaving by Japanese artisans lends a delicate touch. The lighting fixture visible on the right side of the photo was designed by Antonin.









Sofa Bed (1951)
Bed: Wood, W1950 × D910 × H460
Storage: Wood and washi paper, W2300 × D300 × H715

A pull-out sofa bed. Two of these were placed side by side in the living room/master bedroom of the architect's home, serving as sofas during the day and as the couple's beds at night. The use of washi paper for the storage unit is a typical Noémi touch. The cover textile is "Blobs" (see page 27; Collection: Kitazawa Architects).

Left: The former Cunningham Residence Floor Lamp (1954)
Metal pipe, rattan-wrapped, washi paper
Shade: ϕ 510 × H 106
Stem: ϕ 20 × H 1400

The light source is mounted so that it faces directly to the side, and the shade is thin and delicate. The slender pipe base is wrapped in rattan bark, making it lightweight and easy to carry. It was also used as a reading lamp.

Right: Armchair
Wood and fabric
W800 × D700 × H960

The original fabric has been replaced.





Chair (1963)
Wood, fabric, and rattan
W380 × D360 × H660 (seat height 490)



Armchair (1963)
Wood and fabric: W680 × D770 × H860
Ottoman (1963)
Wood and rattan: W520 × D380 × H340



*Originally, the ottoman had a cushion.

Furniture from the Former Ito Residence

The furniture in the Former Ito Residence (p. 15), for which Noémi oversaw everything from the architecture to the interior design, has been carefully repaired over the years and continues to be cherished and used today.



Low table (1963)
Wood: ϕ 900 × H390
The tabletop is modeled after a chessboard and features compass directions.

Stool (1963)
Wood
W295 × D285 × H605



Noémi P. Raymond’s Designs and Japan

Atsuko Tanaka (Architectural Historian)



1



2



3

1. Title unknown, screen print on paper, date unknown.
2. Title unknown, screen print on paper, date unknown.
3. Title unknown, stencil and screen, date unknown. Stencils for 1 and 2.
(All three works are in the collection of the Raymond Family, New Hope, Pennsylvania.)

From 1907, Noémi studied at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she was taught by art professor Arthur Wesley Dow. Dow had been mentored in Boston by Ernest Fenollosa through ukiyo-e and other Japanese art, and was so well-versed in Japanese art that he published a book titled “Composition” in 1899 that expounded on flat composition through line drawing, shading, and color.

Noémi’s next encounter with Japanese art occurred after she married Antonin, during a stay of over half a year at Taliesin in Wisconsin in 1916. The house was filled with Japanese arts and crafts including Ukiyo-e prints collected by Frank Lloyd Wright. This visit coincided with the start of Wright’s design work for the Imperial Hotel and ultimately led to Noémi’s journey to Japan three years later.

After arriving in Japan at the end of 1919, Noémi enthusiastically absorbed the language and culture while she worked at Antonin’s office, designing furniture, carpets, textiles, fireplaces, and fireplace accessories for residences that integrated Japanese and Western lifestyles. There was an abundance of traditional materials and craftsmanship, including washi paper, textiles, and wood. In 1936, she held her first solo exhibition, “Experiments Toward the Perfect Form of Utility and Beauty,” at the Ginza branch of the Kanebo Service Station, where bamboo candlesticks, tableware, textiles, lighting fixtures, dressing tables, and wicker chairs were displayed. While Noémi’s collection includes Meiji-era pattern books (*1), I think what defines her style is not so much the application of those designs, but rather her incorporation of the various faces of nature in Japan’s four seasons. Her designs, each captivating in its own way, include “Chinese Coins” featuring rows of small squares, “Blobs” with stain-like shapes, “Circles” formed by continuous rings, and variations building on these bases—adding motifs such as reeds, grasses, leaves, flowers, rice plants, fish, starfish, butterflies, dragonflies, and insects.

At the Organic Design competition hosted by New York’s MoMA in 1940, textiles such as “Blobs” (see page 24), “Circles,” and “Reeds and Grass” won prizes and were exhibited the following year. Though initially presented under Antonin’s name, they had Noémi’s name on them when they were commercialized by companies such as Knoll and Schumachers around 1948.

After the war, she also assisted in exporting Japanese ceramics and crafts to aid in reconstruction. For Noémi, capturing the essence was paramount. She wrote, “Quality represents not expensive value but something spiritual — the essential beauty of something. The Japanese understood this essential beauty of things better than any other people in the world.”(*2)

Notes:
*1 “Guide to the Koeki Irohabiki Monchō”, edited by Masatsune Yasuda, printed and published by Manjirō Suzuki, 1898
*2 Noemi Raymond, “A Simple Way of Living!”, Kenchiku Gahō (Visual Architecture), July 1954

4. A rug designed by Noémi and manufactured by Yamagata Dantsu (Oriental Carpet Mills, Ltd.).
Title: “Autumn Pond Lotus,” created in the 1930s. (Collection: Raymond Family, New Hope, Pennsylvania)

5. At the Raymond Farm in Pennsylvania, several rugs—including 4—are still in use today.

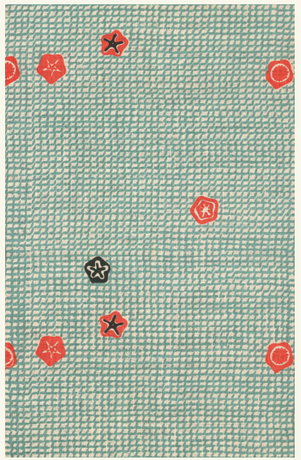
6. Sold by Schumacher around 1948.
Title: “MESH and STARFISH,” screen-printed on linen. (Collection: The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania)



4



5



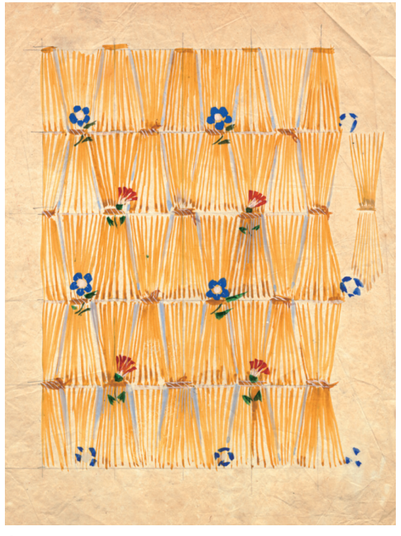
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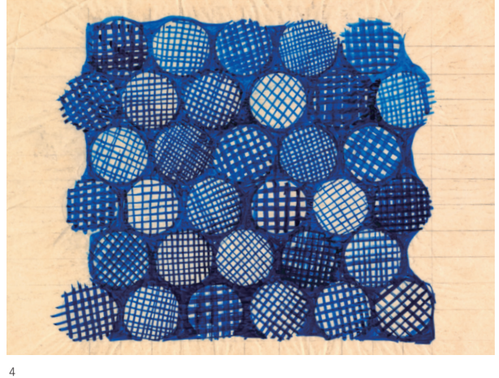


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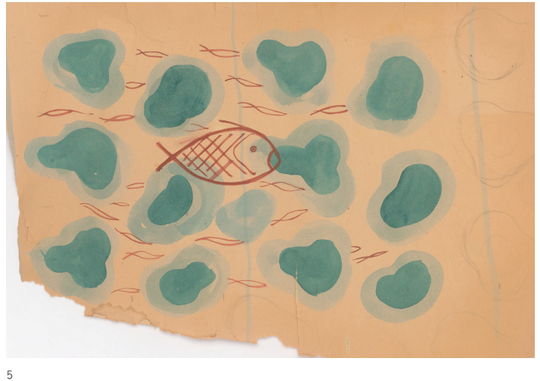


3

1. Title unknown; screen print on washi paper; date unknown. (Collection: Raymond Family, New Hope, Pennsylvania)
2. Pattern sketch. Ink and gouache on tracing paper, date unknown.
3. Pattern sketch. Pencil and gouache on washi paper, date unknown.
4. Pattern sketch. Ink and pencil on tracing paper, date unknown.
5. Pattern sketch. Watercolor and gouache on paper, date unknown. (Items 2, 3, 4, and 5 are held in the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania)

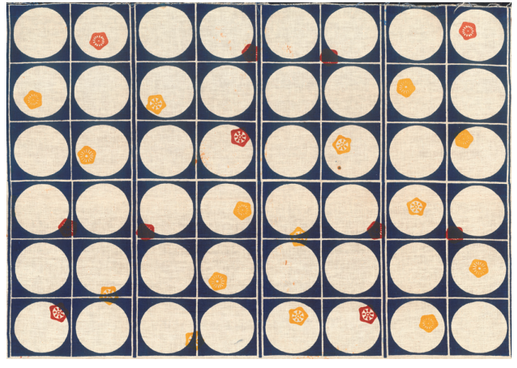


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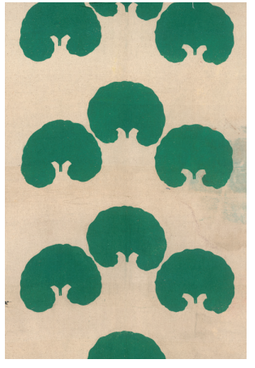


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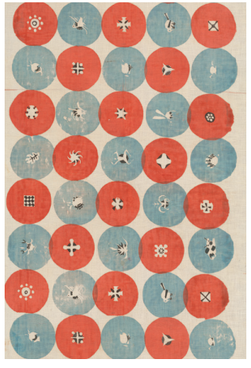
 *The works on this page were most likely created between 1930 and 1950.



6



7

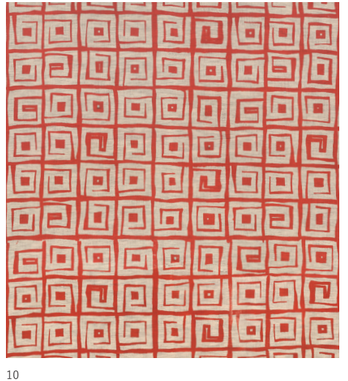


8

6. Title: “Circles and Starfish,” screen print on linen. The continuous pattern of circles was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York in 1941. This is a variation of that work and is believed to have been created in the 1930s or 1940s.
7. Title: “Leaf,” screen print on linen, created around 1935.
8. Title unknown, screen print on cotton fabric, date unknown.
9. Title unknown, screen print on cotton fabric, date unknown.
10. Title: “ALIDA,” screen print on linen, created in the 1940s.
11. Title: “Reeds and Moon,” screen print on linen, created in the 1930s–1940s. Variations include patterns featuring only reeds and patterns featuring reeds with thick straight lines.



9



10



11

The textiles on this page are held in the Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

Noémi Raymond's Network of Relationships

Francis Elbert Brooks
-1924

Father-in-law. An American French teacher. Married Marie in Geneva in 1899. Took his own life in Monterey, Massachusetts, in 1924.

Marie
-1929

Mother. Maiden name: Karcher. From a Calvinist family in Geneva. Her ancestors included the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Alfred Pernessin
-1892

Father. A banker born into an old Huguenot family in Marseille.

Arthur Wesley Dow
1857-1922

Painter, printmaker, and art teacher. He studied Japanese ukiyo-e under Ernest Fenollosa. As Noémi's advisor at Columbia University, he had a profound influence on her views on art and design.

Jeanette Allison

Half-sister. After divorcing John Allison, who became the U.S. Ambassador to Japan, she moved to New Hope, where she supported Noémi's activities. She ran Japan Artisans, a shop that sold Japanese crafts selected by Noémi.

Doris Raymond
1931-2025

Claude's wife. She raised six children. Even after her divorce from Claude, she continued to support the Raymonds, and later became owner of the farm.

Jean Francois Raymond
1926-2016

Son. Known as Claude. Worked as a facilities engineer.

Charlotte Raymond (second daughter)

Granddaughter. Photographer. Her siblings are Victor, Susan, Leslie, Janet, and Christina. She currently serves as co-director of the Raymond Farm Center in New Hope, where she carries on the Raymond family's farm and legacy.



Noémi Pernessin Raymond
1889-1980

The Raymon



George Katsutoshi Nakashima
1905-1990

Architect and furniture designer. Second-generation Japanese American. From 1934, he worked at the Raymond Office on projects such as St. Paul's Church and the Golconde project in India. After returning to the United States, he was interned at a Japanese American internment camp in 1942; the following year, with the support of the Raymonds, he moved to Raymond Farm. After the war, he established a furniture workshop in New Hope.



Masanori Sugiyama
1904-1999

From 1921 to 1941, he worked at the Raymond Office, where he was in charge of projects such as the former Tetsuma Akaboshi Residence (see page 8). After 1941, he worked at Mitsubishi Jisho Design. When the Raymond Office was reestablished in 1948, he continued for about a year to split his time equally between Mitsubishi Jisho and the Raymond Office, working half a day at each.

The Theosophical Society

St. Clair Breckons LaDow
1892–1961

Designer. She met Noémi while Noémi was studying painting at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière, a private art school in Paris, and through her, Noémi was introduced to Theosophy. During her time in Paris, St. Clair became acquainted with Miriam Noel, who was Frank Lloyd Wright's partner.

Beatrice Erskine Lane Suzuki
1878-1939

Wife of Daisetsu Suzuki and a theosophist and scholar of Buddhism. She enrolled in graduate school at Columbia University and met Daisetsu in 1906 at a lecture given by his mentor, Soyen Shaku. She came to Japan in 1911, and they married. Together with Daisetsu, she founded the Eastern Buddhist Society. She was an ardent advocate for animal welfare.

Daisetsu Suzuki
1870-1966

Buddhist philosopher. After graduating from Tokyo Senmon Gakko, he entered Tokyo Imperial University. While a university student, he practiced Zen meditation at Engaku-ji Temple in Kamakura and was given the lay Buddhist name "Daisetsu." Soetsu Yanagi was one of his students during his time at Gakushūin.

Garakutashu (我楽他宗)

Gurcharan Singh
1896-1995

Indian ceramic artist. A member of the "Garakutashu" art network and a theosophist. He came to Japan in 1919 and studied at what is now the Department of Ceramics at Tokyo Institute of Technology. He also interacted with members of the Mingei movement, including Muneyoshi Yanagi. In 1920, he met the Raymonds and introduced them to the work of Yanagi, Bernard Leach, Kenkichi Tomimoto, and Shoji Hamada.

Heibonji Mita
1876-1960

A collector of rare items. He named his Tokyo residence "Heibonji" and founded the Garakutashu in 1919. Collectors, intellectuals, and artists from across the country gathered there to exchange collectibles and discuss diverse topics such as tradition and modernity, history, and religion, sharing their insights through a magazine. Foreign-born members, including the Raymonds, also participated. Noémi studied ink wash painting and calligraphy under Mita.

Mingei (民藝)

Muneyoshi Yanagi
1889-1961

Philosopher. Inspired by his encounter with Korean ceramics, he turned his attention to the beauty inherent in everyday vessels and tools created by anonymous artisans. While researching and collecting folk crafts from various regions, he coined the term "Mingei" in 1925 and launched a full-scale movement to promote the value of folk crafts. In 1936, he became the first director of the Japan Mingei Museum.

Kanjiro Kawai
1890-1966

Ceramic artist. In 1920, he established his studio, Shokeiyo, on Gojozaka in Kyoto, and in his early years, he attracted attention with works that drew on the techniques of ancient Eastern ceramics. After meeting Muneyoshi Yanagi, his artistic style underwent a major transformation. In 1925, he worked alongside Yanagi and Shoji Hamada to shape the philosophy of the Mingei movement, and from then on, as a leading figure in the movement, he guided many craft artists.

: married couple ····· : children —— : master-pupil relationship



Frank Lloyd Wright
1867-1959

One of America's leading architects. In 1916, the Raymonds stayed at Taliesin, Wright's studio and creative hub. At Wright's invitation, the couple came to Japan in 1919 as members of the design team for the Imperial Hotel.

Miriam Noel
1869-1930

Sculptor. She was Wright's partner; they married in 1923 but divorced shortly thereafter. At the request of St. Clair Breckons LaDow, she introduced the Raymonds to Wright.

d Office



Antonin Raymond
1888-1976



Kunio Maekawa
1905-1986

Studied for two years at Le Corbusier's studio in Paris after graduating from Tokyo Imperial University. He joined the Raymond Office in 1930 upon returning to Japan, and established Mayekawa Kunio Associates, Architects & Engineers in 1935.



Junzo Yoshimura
1908-1997

While a student at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (now Tokyo University of the Arts) in 1928, he began working part-time at the Raymond Office, and became a full-time employee there after graduating in 1931. In 1940, he traveled to the United States and worked at Raymond Farm in New Hope for about 14 months, living with the Raymonds. In 1941, he established the Junzo Yoshimura Architectural Design Office.

Paul Claudel
1868-1955

Arrived in Japan in 1921 as the French Ambassador to Japan. He was also a poet and playwright, and a leading figure in French theater and Catholic circles. In 1923, the Claudel residence and office (a temporary wooden dwelling) was built according to Antonin's design. In 1931, he contributed an essay to The Raymond House (Koyo-sha).

Tashiro Shiraishi
1887-1954

First president of Komatsu Ltd., son of Naoharu Shiraishi, and nephew of Shigeru Yoshida, he made their acquaintance through the Tokyo Golf Club. After the war, he and Antonin conceived the idea of Pacific Consultants, but he fell ill and passed away.

Takiko Omura
1916-2012

Wife of Junzo Yoshimura. After studying at the Juilliard School in the United States, she married Yoshimura in 1944. In 1961, she opened a solfège class at a music school (renamed the Solfège School in 1967).



Eloise Cunningham
1899-2000

Musician and music educator. She came to Japan at the age of two and devoted her life to promoting Western music among Japanese youth. The home she built at Noémi's suggestion is known as the former Cunningham Residence (see page 12).



Shoji Hamada
1894-1978

Ceramic artist. He met Kanjiro Kawai as a student and created works while conducting glaze research at the Kyoto Municipal Institute of Industrial Technology and Culture. In 1920, he traveled to England with Bernard Leach, and after returning to Japan, he moved to Mashiko in 1924. He was deeply involved in the Mingei Movement alongside Soetsu Yanagi and others. Noémi studied ceramics under him.

Kazuo Yagi
1918-1979

Ceramic artist. Founded the avant-garde ceramic group Sodeisha. Influenced by Pablo Picasso and Paul Klee, he created "objet ceramics," which sought artistic expression through form. After Noémi met Yagi on Gojozaka in Kyoto, his work was selected for the MoMA exhibition "Japanese Household Objects," bringing him international fame.

Isamu Noguchi
1904-1988

Sculptor. He spent his youth in Japan and moved to the United States in 1918. From March 28 to July 5, 1951, he visited Japan to work on the landscaping plan for Reader's Digest, designed by the Raymond Office. The Raymonds were also friends with his wife, Yoshiko Yamaguchi. He was active in a wide range of fields, including sculpture, stage design, environmental sculpture, and landscape design.

John Davison Rockefeller III
1906-1978

The third generation of the Rockefeller family, which had amassed a fortune in the oil industry since the late 19th century. In 1952, he became president of the Rockefeller Foundation and chairman of the Japan Society. He had a deep interest in Japanese culture and proposed the exhibition of the Japanese house "Shofuso" at MoMA, as well as the establishment of the International House of Japan.

Blanchette Ferry Rockefeller
1909-1992

Wife of John D. Rockefeller III. She was involved in the management of MoMA and the international touring of its exhibitions, and her close friendship with the Raymonds played a major role in making the "Japanese Household Objects" exhibition a reality.

Crafts

Bruno Julius Florian Taut
1880-1938

German architect. He lived in Japan from 1933 to 1936. At the Ministry of Commerce and Industry's Craft Training Institute in Sendai—Japan's first national design training institution—he instructed Isamu Kenmochi and others. Through Fusaiichiro Inoue, he was appointed to the Takasaki Branch of the Gunma Prefectural Industrial Research Institute. In 1934, he visited the Raymond residence in Hayama, and in September of that same year, Noémi visited Taut's residence near Takasaki. In his diary, he described Antonin as having a "businessman's temperament."

Fusaichiro Inoue
1898-1993

An industrialist who supported the arts and culture of Takasaki. As a consultant for the Trade Bureau of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, he played a leading role in the fields of furniture, woodworking, and textiles. He became friends with the Raymonds after Noémi visited his furniture and crafts shop, Mirates, which opened in Karuizawa in 1933. In 1952, Antonin constructed Inoue's residence in Takasaki, modeling it after his own home and studio in Kogai-cho (see page 6). The chairs for St. Paul's Church were contracted to Inoue's Takasaki Woodworking Production and Distribution Cooperative.

Yokichi Ogawa

Designer. Collaborated with Noémi as production manager on an exhibition of Noémi's furniture and textile works held in 1935, where textiles produced by Ogawa were also displayed. The Noémi-designed fabric used on rattan chairs designed by Anderson and Bellah—and featured in a MoMA exhibition in 1941—was made by Ogawa during Noémi's stay in Japan.

Chapter 4: Postwar Church Architecture

In 1949, following the end of the war, Noémi and Antonin reestablished their office in Tokyo. With the support of Masanori Sugiyama and other staff members who had been with the firm since before the war, they worked energetically to realize various architectural projects across the devastated regions of Japan. Eventually, they turned their attention to church architecture; many of these projects, undertaken under limited financial conditions, featured ingenious solutions in both structure and interior design.

St. Anselm Catholic Meguro Church was jointly designed by Noémi and Antonin, with Jun Masuzawa serving as project manager. Built on a narrow lot, the complex includes a church with approximately 500 seats, a monastery, and a kindergarten. A distinctive feature of the reinforced concrete church is its structure, in which zigzag folded plates are erected in eight spans along both long sides of the building. The slits between the folded plates allow beautiful western light to stream in.

The square wall at the front is adorned with an abstract motif of overlapping circles, and the concrete canopy above the altar is finished with gold leaf and features a suspended cross. According to Antonin's autobiography, this mural of circles was originally intended as a temporary measure until a fresco could be completed, but it lends a solemn impression to the simple, exposed-concrete space.

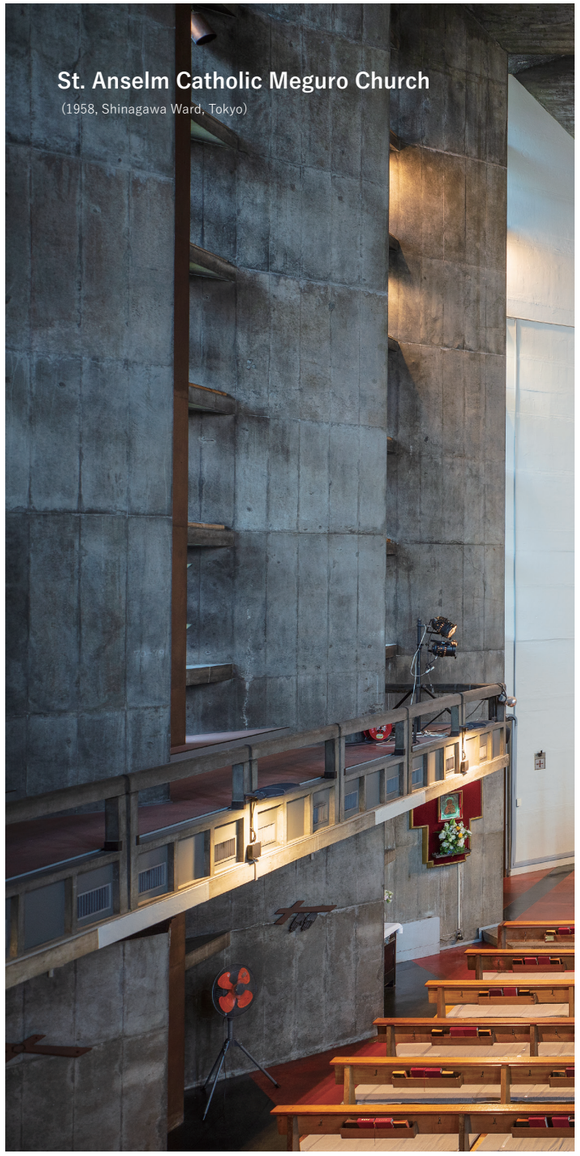
Furthermore, the tabernacle and candlesticks showcase the exceptional craftsmanship of Japanese artisans, featuring wrought iron and cloisonné. The 14 Stations of the Cross adorning the walls were designed by Noémi. Several of them use hands as a motif to symbolically represent the stations.



Top: One of the "Stations of the Cross," featuring wrought iron and rusted iron.
Right: Front view of the altar. Photographed in 2024.

St. Anselm Catholic Meguro Church

(1958, Shinagawa Ward, Tokyo)











All photos were taken in 2025. Top left: Raking beams are assembled above the altar. Top right: Candlesticks designed by Noémi. Bottom right: Washi paper design. Bottom: Exterior view.

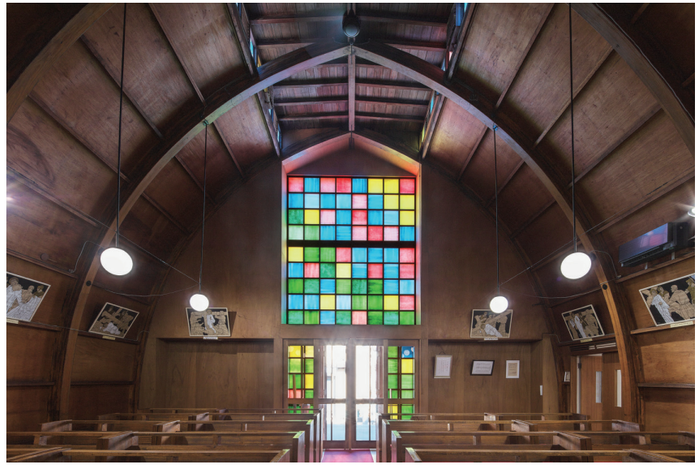
Catholic Shibata Church

(1966, Shibata City, Niigata Prefecture)

The church consists of a cedar-log roof structure set atop brick masonry walls. Building upon the scissor-truss structure of interlocking logs established at Raymonds' home and studio in Kogai-cho (page 6), here it is utilized in a more dynamic form.

The layout features a hexagonal space housing the altar, surrounded by a semicircular arrangement of pews. Noémi designed the pews so that each person would have their own prayer stand, using durable igusa rush for the backs and seats. As with St. Michael's Church in Sapporo (1961), washi paper is affixed to the glass to resemble stained glass; this design is also by Noémi. Parishioners can replace this washi paper themselves using the same pattern, ensuring that the design is still carefully preserved today.







Tokyo Holy Cross Church

(1961, Setagaya Ward, Tokyo)

The curved structural materials are among the very first examples of laminated wood, originally developed for aircraft hangars. From the walls to the ceiling, thin layers of lauan plywood are gently curved and laminated to create a space that feels enveloping. The cross was also constructed from assembled timber, and the church interior was left unfinished, allowing it to develop a beautiful amber hue over time. The only colorful element is the wall on the façade side; this was created by spray-painting plastic panels and sandwiching them between glass to achieve a stained-glass effect. Here, too, Noémi's characteristic ingenuity can be seen in the use of color to add warmth to an otherwise simple space. Photographed in 2026.



Catholic Toshima Church

(1956, Toshima Ward, Tokyo)

The interior of the church is exposed concrete. The walls on the second floor and above feature a zigzag corrugated panel structure, similar to that of St. Anselm Catholic Meguro Church (page 32). The slits in the corrugated panels feature openings with stained glass on the side facing the altar; when light streams in, it illuminates the opposite wall, creating a dramatic effect. The altar canopy is made of concrete and left in its natural state. Originally, the exterior featured a square grid pattern emerging from the exposed concrete walls, but it was painted white in later years. Photographed in 2024.



Serving Society

Kiwa Matsushita
(Professor, Shibaura Institute of Technology / KMKa Architects)

Noémi's extraordinary energy and affection extended far beyond her design work at the office. Nicknamed the "animal-loving grandma" by the office staff, she adored animals and took in and cared for numerous stray dogs. She loved nature and had extensive knowledge of plants, and whenever she had time, she would spend hours walking through the hills and fields with her dogs. When friends were in trouble, she would listen to their concerns and support them both emotionally and materially.

That same spirit also extended to her engagement with society at large. Before the war, soon after arriving in Japan, she became a board member of the Japan Humane Society. She designed a "Love Horses" poster to promote animal welfare and organized film screenings to raise funds. After returning to Japan following the war, Noémi was shocked by the devastation she found and immediately threw herself into relief efforts. She sought support primarily from women's groups in the United States, supported tree-planting efforts, and made donations to children in orphanages. When she learned that elementary school children could not afford textbooks, she appealed to the Ministry of Education and worked to have textbooks provided free of charge. When she heard of the hardships facing coal miners in Kyushu, she worked with the U.S. military to send them supplies. Regardless of the scale of the issue, she devoted herself passionately to whatever she believed was right. Noémi was a woman of action.

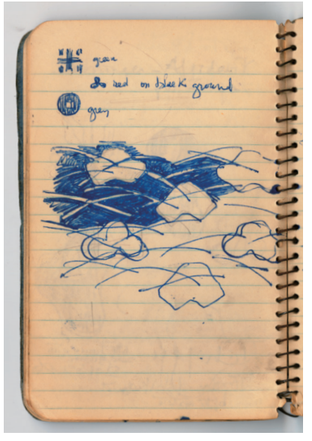
Of all these activities, Noémi devoted the most energy to providing financial support to the artisans who carried on the traditions and skills of the Japanese crafts she loved. In 1951, she not only showcased her personal collection of Japanese objects at exhibitions held at MoMA in New York and the Reader's Digest building in Tokyo, but also opened a shop called "Japan Artisans" in New Hope, Pennsylvania, in partnership with her sister Jeanette to sell these crafts. Noémi devoted a great deal of time to traveling throughout Japan to source ceramics, baskets, textiles, kimono, paper, and other merchandise. This work of "discovering" crafts, which also led her to new materials and inspired new design ideas, not only supported the artisans but also brought great joy to Noémi.



From a 1924 article in Tokyo Asahi Shimbun. Noémi and the staff at the design office handcrafted posters advocating for the protection of horses.









Clockwise from top left: Photograph from the newspaper article on the left page, showing her with pets she had rescued and cared for / Pottery believed to have been fired by Noémi, who studied ceramics under Shoji Hamada (Collection: Raymond Architectural Design Office) / A page from a family photo album featuring flowers resembling red spider lilies / A drawing, presumably of a plant, found in her sketchbook (Collection: The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania)

Interview_1

A Person Who Was One With Nature

Charlotte Raymond
(Noémi Raymond's granddaughter, photographer, and co-director of the Raymond Farm Center)



Design with a Human Touch

While working alongside my grandfather Antonin, Noémi managed every aspect of the household. She was thoughtful toward everyone—family, housekeepers, and guests alike—which was something my grandfather wasn't particularly good at. I think that's precisely why she was able to pour her creativity into residential designs that allowed families to live comfortably and harmoniously. Even in her work for churches and universities, the things Noémi designed—even something like a concrete bench—had a soft quality to them. They're full of humanity and attention to detail. I believe that's the hallmark of Noémi's design.

Relationship with Antonin

My grandparents got along very well and were almost always together. My grandfather was a strict man who always dressed neatly when going out, but my grandmother was more laid-back. Once, when they went to a party, Noémi was dressed just as she usually was, and Antonin told her, "Go touch up your makeup." But when Noémi returned from the restroom with a smile, her makeup had been applied rather haphazardly (laughs). However, she wasn't the least bit flustered, and was brimming with confidence. Antonin didn't need to pretend to be anything other than himself around Noémi. Even when my grandfather harshly scolded staff members for their mistakes, my grandmother would comfort and encourage them; she always served as the peacemaker with contractors and clients as well. I think my grandfather needed Noémi to make his grand ideas a reality.

Her Only Flaw

She was elegant, funny, playful, and full of joy, but at times she could be very serious. And Noémi's artistry blows my mind. I wonder how she managed to achieve all this while running a household and overcoming various difficulties—but perhaps being that perfect was also a burden, which is why she needed a sense of humor. Her only flaw was her cooking—during the time she was in charge of the kitchen at Raymond Farm, staff members quit one after another (laughs).

Finding Inspiration in Nature

Noémi was a deeply spiritual person, and everyone in the family used to say that she was one with nature. After meals, we would often walk for miles across the fields together. She noticed the faded grasses, the fresh shoots of new growth, and the subtle hues of wildflowers. Those were the colors she wanted to bring into her paintings and textiles, and nature was always the source of her inspiration. Once Noémi said, "Try looking at the scenery upside down." The way the colors changed, the way the air felt different, and even the sight of the clouds below—it all filled me with joy. The time I spent walking with her, connecting with nature, was my favorite time of all. She would find the most beautiful colors in the fields and distinguish the songs of birds that we couldn't see. Those are probably my fondest memories of her.

Interview_2

Layout, Functionality, and Comfort

Mika Kanai (current resident of the former Ito Residence)
Atsuko Kawazu (President, Mikazuki Design Office)

Our Connection to This House

Kanai: Originally, my husband's grandparents (Koji and Kimiko Ito) built and lived in this house. After they passed away, my mother-in-law (Jun Kanai), who inherited the house, asked Ms. Kawazu—an old acquaintance—to renovate it. It's a house with deep sentimental value for my mother-in-law, but since she lives overseas, she couldn't live there herself. Since our family had just returned from living abroad, we decided, "Let's preserve this house by living in it."

Kawazu: I've been close friends with Jun's younger brother, Makoto, since junior high school, and I used to visit often. I fondly remember how their father would gather us young people around the sofa in the living room and ask, "What should we talk about today?" I believe that experiencing this house over the course of our long friendship was the starting point that led me to pursue a career in architecture and design.



Stories of the House's Construction

Kanai: My husband's grandmother was a modern woman who was interested in Western lifestyles. I heard she owned a lot of jewelry and small accessories, so she requested built-in storage with a row of shallow drawers to make it easier to store them.

Kawazu: Since the lot was irregularly shaped, almost triangular, it was apparently Kimiko who suggested, "Why don't we design a trapezoidal house to fit it?" While the design was basically left to Noémi, I heard that Kimiko specifically asked her to include a kitchen cabinet large enough to hold 25-centimeter dinner plates. I imagine it must have been easy for her to discuss such details with Noémi.

Favorite Features

Kanai: Since this place is located on a hill, even within Tokyo, it's wonderful to be able to look out from the balcony onto the garden and the distant scenery. Also, the kitchen window is large, so birds and butterflies come right up close. Even though we're in Tokyo, it feels like we're in a summer retreat.

Kawazu: The layout is really well thought out. It has excellent circulation—you can enter the kitchen from the living and dining areas or go around through the utility room from the back. I also love the soft, bright light filtering through the shoji screens and the low height of the openings. The design makes good use of



sliding doors, balancing them effectively with regular doors. The layout, functionality, and comfort are all perfectly balanced, creating a gentle, physically welcoming feeling.

To Keep Living Here for Years to Come

Kawazu: Since this house is 60 years old, its airtightness and insulation are different from those of modern homes. During the renovation we carried out in 2017, we aimed to preserve the house's original character while improving the thermal environment—for example, by adding plenty of insulation to the attic. A house will last a long time if you take meticulous care of it over the years, so I'd like to see young people continue to do that.

Kanai: We live here by combining the original furniture with pieces we've brought in ourselves, but we're careful not to make the space look mismatched. As Ms. Kawazu said, this house offers both functionality and comfort—it doesn't feel old-fashioned. Since the renovation was completed, we've been able to live here without any stress. As for how we can maintain it for the long term going forward … there's no easy answer, but it's something I want to keep thinking about.

Noémi Raymond: A Chronology

Year	(Age)	Major Events	Major Works by the Raymond Office (● Architecture / ■ Publications / ◎ Exhibitions) Architectural works featured in this exhibition are listed in red, and those believed to have been designed by Noémi are marked with an asterisk*.
1888		On May 10, Antonin Raymond is born in Kladno, in what is now the Czech Republic.	
1889	0	On June 25, Noémi Pernessin is born in Cannes, France.	
1900	11	She moves to New York with her mother, Marie, and her stepfather, Francis.	
1901	12	She enrolls at the Horace Mann School, where Francis works. As co-editor of the school yearbook, she demonstrates her talent for painting and caricature.	
1907	18	She enrolls in the two-year art program at Teachers College, Columbia University. One of her instructors is painter Arthur Wesley Dow.	
1909	20	She moves to Paris to study painting at the École de la Grande Chaumière.	
		After returning to New York the following year, she opens a graphic design studio, producing theater posters, advertisements, and illustrations.	
1914	25	In August, she meets Antonin aboard a ship bound for New York from Naples, and they marry in New York in December.	
1915	26	Through one of Noémi's friends, Antonin secures a position at Frank Lloyd Wright's firm, starting the following year.	
1916	27	They live and work together with Wright at Taliesin, and create woodblock prints depicting Wright's redesign plans for Taliesin, with Noémi handling the coloring. They return to New York in January of the following year.	
1919	30	Antonin, who has been stationed in Geneva as an Army attaché, is discharged and returns to New York with Noémi. Wright asks them to accompany him to Tokyo for the construction of the Imperial Hotel, and Noémi, Antonin, Wright, and Miriam Noel arrive in Yokohama on December 31.	
1920	31	Antonin works on the design of the Imperial Hotel as a member of Wright's staff.	
1921	32	Antonin leaves Wright's firm and establishes an office with Leon Whittaker Slack in Yurakucho, Tokyo. Noémi and Antonin move into a small traditional Japanese house in Shinagawa Ward. Noémi's first essay, "Tokyo's Hermit Crabs: Our Artistic Immorality and Decorative Barbarity," is published in Far East magazine.	● Tokyo Women's Christian University Master Plan (Tokyo)
1922	33		● Tokyo Lawn Tennis Club (Tokyo)
1923	34	They lose their home in the Great Kanto Earthquake.	● Kikuzaburo Fukui Residence (Tokyo)
		In December, Noémi travels to New York, staying for about four months. The possibility of designing the U.S. Embassy in Japan is discussed.	● Temporary Residence and Office of French Ambassador Paul Claudel (Tokyo)
1924	35		● Hoshi Commercial School (Tokyo)
1925	36	In February, their first child is born at St. Luke's International Hospital in Tokyo, but the child passes away on March 23. Antonin welcomes Alec R. Sykes as a new partner in the firm.	
1926	37	Noémi travels to New York in January to give birth. In March, her eldest son, Jean-François (nicknamed Claude), is born in New York. In June, mother and son arrive in Yokohama, and the family settles into their newly built home on Reinan-zaka in Tokyo.	● Private Residence on Reinan-zaka (Tokyo)
1927	38	Sykes resigns from the firm. The firm is renamed Antonin Raymond Architectural Design Office.	● Viscountess Hamao's Villa (Tokyo)
1928	39		● Rising Sun Oil Company Building (Yokohama) / Standard Oil Company Building and Employee Housing Complex (Yokohama)/Italian Embassy Villa in Nikko (Tochigi) / Soviet Embassy (Tokyo)
1931	42		● Shiro Akaboshi Villa (Kanagawa) / Troedsson Villa (Tochigi)
1932	43	They set off on a round-the-world trip lasting about four months. They reunite with Wright at Taliesin, and in Paris, Noémi selects furniture for the French Embassy. They visit family members living in Prague and Geneva.	● Tokyo Golf Club (Saitama) ● Kisuke Akaboshi Residence (Tokyo)
1933	44	The firm relocates to the Kyobunkan-Seishokan Building in Ginza.	● Summer House (Nagano) / Kyobunkan-Seishokan Building (Tokyo)
1934	45		● Tetsuma Akaboshi Residence (Tokyo) / Morinosuke Kawasaki Residence (Tokyo) Brazil Coffee Shop Interior (inside Kyobunkan) (Tokyo) Gymnasium and Auditorium of Seibo Jogakuin (Osaka)
1935	46	Noémi's essay, "Some Random Thoughts on 'Interior Decoration,'" is published in Architectural Knowledge.	● St. Paul's Church (Nagano) ■ Works of Antonin Raymond (Jonan Shoin)
1936	47	The "Exhibition of Mrs. Raymond's Designs: Experiments Toward the Perfect Form of Function and Beauty" is held at the Kanebo Service Station in Ginza, featuring furniture and textiles.	● Fujiya Restaurant (Yokohama) ◎ Exhibition: "Photographic Exhibition of Works by the Antonin Raymond Architectural Design Office" (Shiseido Gallery, Tokyo)
1937	48		● Tokyo Women's Christian University Chapel and Auditorium (Tokyo) Ford Motor Plant Proposal (Yokohama)
1938	49	Due to the war situation, the Raymond family leaves Japan and spends six months working on-site in India. Along the way, they visit Shanghai and Angkor Wat.In August, Noémi and Claude stay in Geneva. Antonin reunites with his family for the last time in Prague.	● Golconde (India) ■ Antonin Raymond Architectural Details *Reprinted in 1948

		Antonin opens an office in New York.	
1939	50	They purchase a 150-acre farm in New Hope, Pennsylvania, and begin renovating it.	● Stone House (New Jersey) / Raymond Farm (Pennsylvania) ◎ Exhibition: "Antonin Raymond: His Latest Work in Japan and India" (Rockefeller Center, New York) ■ U.S. edition of Antonin Raymond Architectural Details
1940	51	Noémi's work wins first prize in the printed fabrics category of the "Organic Design	● Proposal for the Hiroshi Saito Memorial Library (Washington, D.C.) ● Carrera Residence (New York)
1941	52	in Home Furnishings Competition" organized by the MoMA in New York, and also receives an honorable mention for "Furniture for a One-Room Apartment." The award-winning fabrics are displayed in an exhibition of the same name in September and are produced and sold in limited quantities. The Tokyo office is closed.	◎ Exhibition: "Organic Design in Home Furnishings" (MoMA, New York)
1942	53	Antonin establishes the firm Tuttle, Seelye, Place & Raymond in New York, which specializes in large-scale military projects (until 1945).	
		The architectural firm Raymond & Rado is established in New York.	
1946	57	Antonin makes his first postwar visit to Japan.	
1948	59	Around this time, Knoll begins commercializing textiles designed by Noémi.	
1949	60	In October, Antonin returns to Japan and reopens the Tokyo office in a temporary building on the site for the Reader's Digest building. In December, Noémi makes her first postwar visit to Japan.	
1950	61	In April, they return to the U.S. together, and in October, Antonin travels to Japan alone.	
1951	62	Their home and studio in Kogai-cho, Azabu, is completed.	● Home and Studio in Kogai-cho (Tokyo) / Standard Oil Company Housing (Yokohama/Tokyo) Reader's Digest Tokyo Office (Tokyo) / Nippon Gakki Building and Yamaha Hall (Tokyo)
		Noémi stays in New York from January to prepare for an exhibition at MoMA.	◎ Exhibition: "Japanese Household Objects" (MoMA, New York)
		In March, the office is relocated to a temporary barracks on the site of the US Embassy staff housing project in Japan. In May, Noémi returns to Japan.	◎ Exhibition: "Contemporary Japanese Ceramics" (Reader's Digest Tokyo Office)
1952	63	Noémi stays in the United States from May through September. In October, their son's family visits Japan (where they remain until 1955). In December, Antonin receives the Architectural Institute of Japan Award for the Reader's Digest design.	● U.S. Embassy Residence (Perry House) (Tokyo) ● Fusaichiro Inoue Residence (Gunma)
1953	64	Noémi and Antonin travel to the United States, Mexico, and Europe, returning to Tokyo in April of the following year.	● MGM Tokyo Film Office (Tokyo) / U.S. Embassy Housing (Harris House) (Tokyo) Claude Raymond Residence (Tokyo) / Hayata Residence (Tokyo)
1954	65	The Cunningham Residence is completed. Noémi is credited as a designer for the first time in publications such as International Architecture and Modern Living.	● Cunningham Residence (Tokyo)* / Harada Residence (Tokyo)* / Yaskawa Electric Headquarters Building (Fukuoka)
1955	66	A special feature titled "Designer Noémi Raymond, Woman of Many Talents" is published in Japan Times.	● Yamashita Residence (Tokyo)*
1956	67	Noémi and Antonin stay in the United States from February through October. From December to September of the following year, Noémi returns to the U.S.	● Toshima Catholic Church (Tokyo) / Yawata Steel Gymnasium (Fukuoka)
1958	69		● St. Anselm Catholic Church, Meguro / Hayama Villa (Kanagawa)
1959	70		● Ito Residence (Tokyo)* / Kawasaki Residence (Tokyo)* / Tokio Yamashita Residence (Tokyo)* International Christian University (I.C.U.) Master Plan (Tokyo) / St. Alban's Church (Tokyo)
1960	71	They travel to Spain, Portugal, France, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, and Turkey.	● Iranian Embassy (Tokyo) / Kestenbaum House (Tokyo)*
1961	72		● Holy Cross Church (Tokyo) / St. Michael's Church, Sapporo (Sapporo) Shiraishi Residence (Tokyo)* / Gunma Music Center (Gunma)
1962	73		■ "The Works of Antonin Raymond," Architectural Association Journal (Special Issue)
1963	74	The Ito Residence in Ota Ward, designed by Noémi, is completed.	● Ito Residence (now Kanai Residence) (Tokyo)* / New Studio in Karuizawa (Nagano) / Price Residence (Hyogo) / St. Paul's Chapel at Rikkyo High School (Saitama) / Tokyo Golf Club (Saitama)
1964	75		● Divine Word Monastery (Tokyo) / Nanzan University Master Plan (Nagoya)
1965	76		● Rikkyo High School Faculty Housing No. 4 (Saitama)*
1966	77	The Adachi Villa, designed by Noémi, is completed.	Adachi Villa (Nagano)* / Nanzan University Divine Word Seminary (Nagoya) Catholic Shibata Church (Niigata)
1967	78		■ Me and Japanese Architecture (Kajima Publishing)
1969	80		● Israeli Embassy (Tokyo)
1970	81	They travel to the United States, Ireland, France, and Switzerland.	◎ Exhibition: "Antonin Raymond Exhibition" (Ginza Matsuzakaya, Tokyo) ■ Autobiography of Antonin Raymond (Kajima Publishing)
1971	82		■ Complete Works of Contemporary Japanese Architects, Vol. 1: Antonin Raymond (San-ichi Shobo)
1972	83	Noémi and Antonin travel to the U.S. in August and return to Japan in January of the following year.	
1973	84	They leave Japan and move into the studio they designed in New Hope. They officially retire from architectural practice.	■ English edition: Antonin Raymond: An Autobiography
1974	85		● New Hope Studio (Pennsylvania) ◎ Exhibition: "Hommage à Antonin Raymond" (Yoshii Gallery, Tokyo)
1976	87	On October 25, Antonin passes away at St. Mary's Hospital in Pennsylvania at the age of 88.	
1980	91	On August 19, Noémi passes away in New Hope at the age of 91.	

Scenes from the Venue





Clockwise from the top left: Exhibition of chairs featured on pages 22–24 (Collection: Raymond Architectural Design Office) / Exhibition area featuring paper works such as stencils / In the 1960s, Noémi designed necklaces using scrap silver sheet metal to raise funds for orphanages and other charitable causes. This is a prototype of one such necklace; Naoki Kajimoto, a staff member at the firm, won it at a company party and has carefully preserved it ever since (see page 3; Collection: Naoki Kajimoto) / Model of the former Ito Residence (created by the Matsushita Kiwa Laboratory at Shibaura Institute of Technology) / Model of the former Cunningham Residence (created by the Kanagawa University Nobuhiro Suzuki Laboratory) / Chairs for parishioners at the Catholic Shibata Church. The chair on the left is a prototype; pencil lines drawn by Noémi remain on the prayer stand of the backrest (Collection: Catholic Shibata Church)









ノエミ・レーモンドの建築と意匠

和で紡ぐモダンライフ

Noémi P. Raymond's Architecture and Design: Inspired by Japanese Aesthetics

March 19 (Thursday) – June 18 (Thursday), 2026

Organization / Planning Public Interest Incorporated Foundation Gallery A[4]
Michiyo Okabe / Kei Tokuhira / Chiaki Nishida /
Akimichi Yamaguchi / Yoriko Manabe / Kazumi Futo / Hideo Kitahara

Cooperation Raymond Architectural Design Office, Kitazawa Architectural Design Office,
Yamagata Dantsu (Oriental Carpet Mills, Ltd.),
Raymond Farm Center for Living Art & Design,
The Architectural Archives of the University of Pennsylvania,
Music For Youth, Inc., Junzo Yoshimura Memorial Gallery,
Catholic Shibata Church, Mika Kanai, Atsuko Kawazu, Kuniko Kobayashi,
Naoki Kajimoto, Shibaura Institute of Technology Matsushita Kiwa Laboratory,
Kanagawa University Nobuhiro Suzuki Laboratory

Co-planning Charlotte Raymond, Atsuko Tanaka, Kiwa Matsushita

Support Koto Ward, Czech Center Tokyo

Venue Production N-tec co., Ltd.

Advisors Tadayasu Sakai (Former Director, Setagaya Art Museum)
Naoyuki Kinoshita (Director, Shizuoka Prefectural Museum of Art)
Masako Wake (Representative, AWP Co. Ltd.)

Booklet

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Related Events

Talk Show "Noémi Raymond, Architect and Designer"

Date Thursday, March 19, 16:00 - 18:00

Instructors Kuniko Kobayashi (former assistant to Noémi Raymond)
Charlotte Raymond (photographer and co-director of Raymond Farm Center)
Atsuko Tanaka (architectural historian)
Kiwa Matsushita (Professor, Shibaura Institute of Technology / KMKa Architects

Facilitator Michiyo Okabe (Director, Gallery A[4])

Talk Show "Preservation and Legacy of the Architecture of Antonin & Noémi Raymond"

Date Friday, April 24 2026, 16:00 - 18:00

Instructors Ken Tadashi Oshima (Professor, University of Washington Department of Architecture)
Yu Kishi (Research Fellow, Institute of Asian Cultural Studies, International Christian University)
Hiroshi Matsukuma (Professor, Kanagawa University /
Professor Emeritus, Kyoto Institute of Technology)
Toshinobu Miura (President, Raymond Architectural Design Office)

Facilitator Kiwa Matsushita (Professor, Shibaura Institute of Technology / KMKa Architects)

*Both events were held at Toyocho green+ 2F Hall (2-5-14 Minamisuna, Koto-ku, Tokyo)

Photographs and Illustrations

Charlotte Raymond (Photography)
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Shuhei Tonami (Photography)
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Hori Locks & Builders' Hardware (Courtesy)
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Raymond Family, New Hope, Pennsylvania (Courtesy)
p. 5 (upper left, middle right); p. 36; p. 37 (upper left, lower right)
Isao Imbe (Photography)
p. 5 (lower left)
Kitazawa Architectural Design Office (Courtesy)
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The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation Archives
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Shoji Hamada Memorial Mashiko Sankokan Museum (Courtesy)
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Public Interest Incorporated Foundation Gallery A[4]
1-1-1 Shinsuna, Koto-ku, Tokyo 136-0075
Takenaka Corporation Tokyo Head Office 1F
Tel: 03-6660-6011 / Fax: 03-6660-6097
Email: gallery@a-quad.jp
Official website: https://www.a-quad.jp
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