



The town of Higashikawa, Hokkaido, in partnership with Kengo Kuma, has started a new 「Kengo Kuma & Higashikawa」 KAGU Design Competition, defining the value of “KAGU”

Higashikawa, the "Town of Photography", together with world-renowned architect Kengo Kuma, is holding a new furniture design competition: the "Kengo Kuma & Higashikawa Town" KAGU Design Competition, open to young people from around the world. For the first year of the competition, the theme is "Wooden Chair Designs" and applications will be accepted until March 31, 2012.



◆**Launching a competition aimed at fostering human resources, proposing new ways of life, and promoting local industry**

Higashikawa, a major producer of Asahikawa furniture, has established the "Kengo Kuma & Higashikawa" KAGU Design Competition in collaboration with architect Kengo Kuma, and is currently accepting applications for the competition. We are seeking designs for "KAGU" that will lead to the creation of a new, careful lifestyle for the young people who will lead the next generation.

The theme of the first call for entries is "Wooden Chair Designs". Participants must be students and 30 or younger at the time of submission. The deadline for submissions is March 31st (advance registration required by February 27). Ten works will be selected from among the entries, and a public presentation will be held in Higashikawa in June for the final selection.

On December 25, Kengo Kuma and the Mayor of Higashikawa exchanged a "Letter of Confirmation for the Implementation of the Kengo Kuma & Higashikawa Town KAGU Design Competition" in Tokyo, defining "KAGU" as a term for a concept that connects people to the world and expands the

conventional idea of furniture. The project has three main objectives: (1) to nurture young people who will spread their wings in the future (human resource development), (2) to nurture rich and mindful lifestyles (proposal of a lifestyle with KAGU), and (3) to nurture the community (promotion of local industries).

◆Context

Higashikawa, with its small size and thriving furniture production industry, has long implemented programs that would only be possible here: It starts with the “Your Chair” project, which gives the children a sense of safety and belonging from a young age. In Elementary School, the children learn while surrounded by wooden furniture. When they graduate Junior High School, as a graduation present, they take home their wooden chairs that they have used and cared for three years. It is now time to start a new project and train the young people who will be the leaders of the next generation.

As the world endures the new Coronavirus crisis, the problems with our overcrowded metropolitan lifestyles have become clearer, and a search for a new lifestyle has begun. The resources and possibilities in each region are beginning to provide inklings of ideas for the development of this new lifestyle. Architect Kengo Kuma has joined us in supporting our town and our region. He is an early advocate of promoting the appeal of regional communities through architecture, with a strong interest in expanding the use of local resources and educating the next generation of young people. In a sense, Kengo Kuma, who is working on regional revitalization through the world of architecture, and Higashikawa, a sparsely populated town blessed with a rich environment and a thriving furniture industry, are working together to propose a new way of life.

◆Theme : Wooden Chair Designs

◆Eligibility : Students under 30 years of age

◆Awards: 1 Kengo Kuma Award (Grand Prize) - 500,000 yen / 3 Awards of excellence - 100,000 yen/
6 Honorable Mentions

◆Official Homepage (English) : <https://www.kagu-higashikawa.jp/english/>

◆Head Judge

Kengo Kuma (Architect, professor at the University of Tokyo)

◆Judges

Toshiko Mori (Architect, professor at Harvard Graduate School of Design)

Masahiro Harada (Architect, associate professor at Shibaura Institute of Technology)

Teppei Fujiwara (Architect, associate professor at Yokohama National University)

Katsuhiko Hibino (Artist, Professor at Tokyo University of the Arts)

Asao Tokolo (Artist)

Noritsugu Oda (Chair researcher and design advisor to the town of Higashikawa)

Hiroshi Nakamura (Architect, NAP Architectural Design Office)

Eisuke Tachikawa (Design Strategist, Evolutionary Thinker, Representative of NOSIGNER)

◆Schedule

- December 2020 Application period opens
- February 27th, 2021 Pre-registration deadline
- March 31st, 2021 Application period ends
- April 2021 First round of judging
- June 2021 Final judging and awards ceremony (In Higashikawa)

◆Competition Organizer

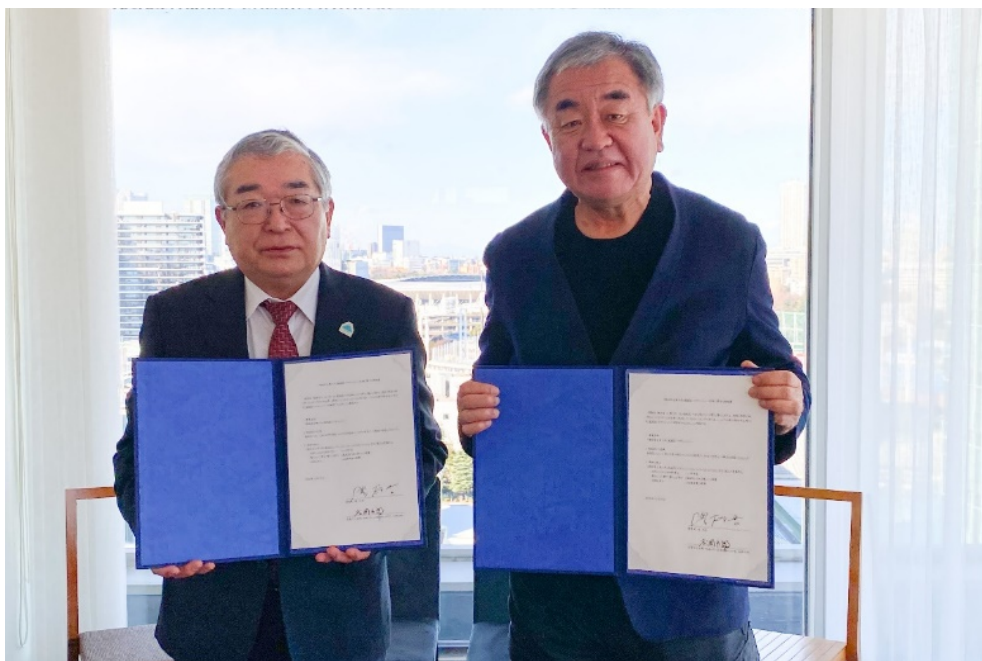
“Kengo Kuma & Higashikawa” KAGU Design Competition Executive Committee

(The Town of Higashikawa, Higashikawa Chamber of Commerce, Higashikawa Tourism Association, Higashikawa Agricultural Cooperative, Higashikawa Construction Association, Higashikawa Forestry Association, Higashikawa Promotion Corporation, Asahikawa Furniture Cooperative, Higashikawa Town Council, and the Higashikawa Board of Education)

◆A message from Kuma Kengo about the KAGU Design Competition

Due to the Coronavirus crisis, the world is about to change dramatically. Getting out of the enclosed quarters, getting out of the city, and getting closer to nature will be the theme of the post-Corona world.

In this new world, furniture as a device to connect humans and the environment will attract more attention than ever before. There is also a possibility that the definition of "furniture" itself will change. Please propose furniture suitable for such a new era with new and bold ideas. From Higashikawa, a place rich in nature, I would like to send out to the world a new way of thinking about furniture.



▲Higashikawa Mayor, Ichiro Matsuoka (left) and Kengo Kuma (right)

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