

Trained in Japan and the United States , Satoshi Okada opened his practice in Tokyo in 1995 and has taught at the Graduate School of Architecture of Chiba University since 2002. His work is notable for the invention of an original construction system, the Container Structure System (CSS), which he developed, together with the engineer Hirokazu Toki, for the Gallery in Kiyosato. The technology is based on a system of ship-shaped structures that contain the functional spaces of the house-the kitchen and bathroom, for example-which Okada calls 'secondary spaces'. These prefabricated, ship-shaped secondary spaces act as load-bearing walls, positioned freely around the primary space of the house.

The high-density urban setting defines the composition elements of Okada's House in Ogikubo in the Sugunami area of Tokyo. The program for this two-family house is a response to the contemporary Tokyo phenomenon of younger families living with their parents due to the high cost of urban housing. On the small trapezoidal site, Okada articulated the plan in three irregular elements linked as a single building but providing independent spaces for the two families.

The House in Wakabadai emphasizes the evolution of Okada's research, based mainly on the definition of the volume and experiments with building methods. The single-family house is a new opportunity to explore the potential of his CSS, now perfected to offer protection against earthquakes. Its signature ship-shaped load-bearing components are positioned to shape an unusual-morphology with a strongly expressionist character.

The Agri-Community Center responds to the request for a building that would intrigue and attract visitors. The CSS elements adapt easily to functionally diversified interiors (collective spaces, cooking areas, areas for displaying and selling the local products, and guestrooms), achieving a flexibility particularly well-suited for its public functions. As with his work in general, Okada's expressive vocabulary is the result of figurative ideas attuned to the environment and innovative construction methods, based on the reinterpretation of traditional practices. His achievements to date confirm him as one of the most original of young contemporary architects .
(text by Mercedes Daguerra; "10 x 10/3 – 100 Architects 10 critics" Phaidon, New York, 2009, pp. 272-275)