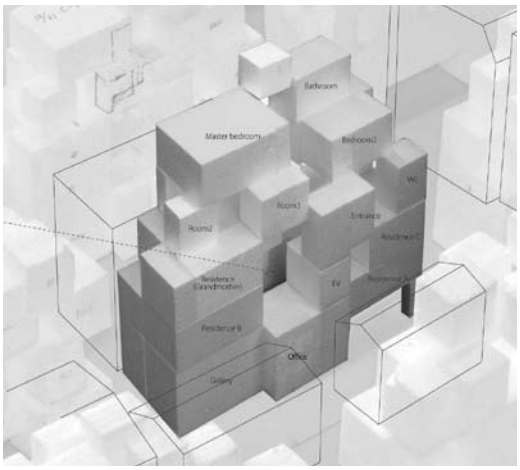
Tree-ness House

Otsuka, Tokyo

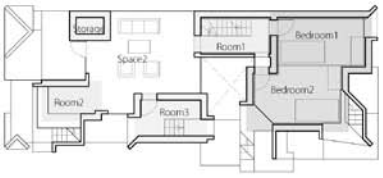
Akihisa Hirata Architecture Office

The intention of this project is to develop the potential for a nature-like architecture explored in our previous work, but the approach is developed further here. A tree consists of different parts such as roots, a trunk, branches, leaves and flowers, but these parts are not totally independent. The trunk and leaves differ in appearance, but are very similar in their basic structure – their inter-relationship creates a kind of nested or layered organic structure. It is possible to create an architectural logic that creates a similar organically layered and "tangled" structure. The design seeks to develop this new architectural principle, with the intention of creating a complex ecosystem connected to the city.

This building is a residential complex with spaces for commercial tenants and is located in the Otsuka district of Tokyo. The site is narrow and deep, thereby defining the building as a narrow volume. In contrast to typical buildings that are simple stacks of floors, this design employs an organic layering system. It draws in elements not typically included in architecture, such as the street and other exterior spaces, generating fully three-dimensional spaces. Much as a tree defines various spaces in the air, this design creates for its occupants a "tangled" space characterised by ambiguous interior-exterior relationships.

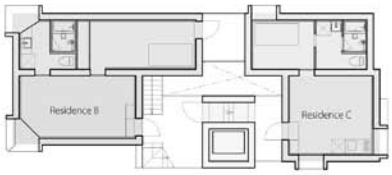


+14000 level plan



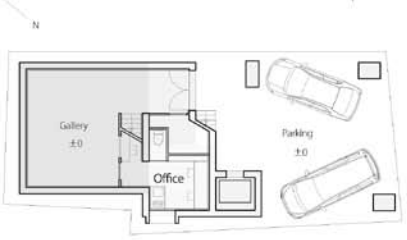
+12000 level plan

+9000 level plan

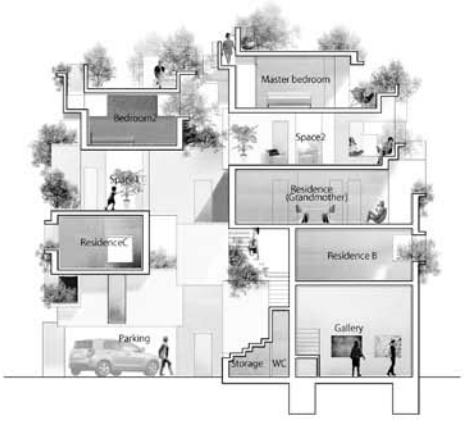


+6000 level plan

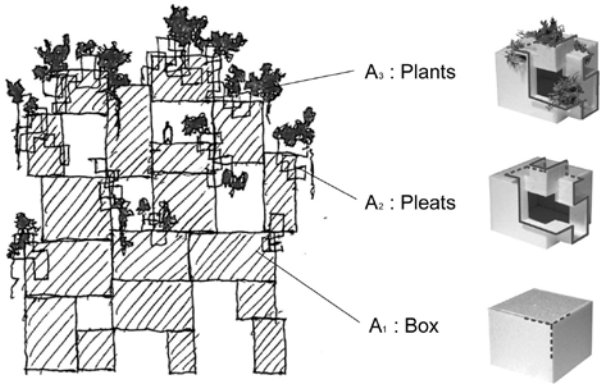
+3500 level plan



+1000 level plan 1/300



Section 1/300



BOXES: Boxes are composed into a layered volume that includes numerous voids. Within this volume, internal boxes define enclosed spaces like bedrooms and external boxes create terraces; more open interior spaces are defined with the voids by glass walls.

PLEATS: The openings in the boxes have been pleated, creating an ambiguous relationship between inside and outside.

PLANTS: Greenery is planted around these pleats, resulting in three-dimensional gardens around the building's perimeter. The arrangement of functional volumes and voids, openings, and greenery integrates and entangles the building into a single organic whole.