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Designboom

KIAS pairs textured brick facade with planted atrium for headquarters in Japan

Rough Brick and GRC Create a Layered Street Facade

Kawamura Electric's new headquarters in central Nagoya brings together [workplace](#), culture, nature, and social interaction within a seven-story building. Designed by [KIAS](#) as a new base for the company, whose origins are in Seto, [Aichi Prefecture](#), the project accommodates offices alongside an art gallery and a multipurpose hall for approximately 110 people. The building is organized as a hybrid workplace intended to connect employees, clients, and the wider community.

The exterior is composed of two contrasting material systems. The lower volume facing the street is clad in rough, heavily textured bricks manufactured in Hekinan, while the upper volume is wrapped in a fine grid of GRC (glass-fiber reinforced [concrete](#)). The two volumes are subtly displaced in section, creating a shifting shadow line and allowing them to read as distinct masses. Within a neighborhood of temples, apartment buildings, and small parks, the change in scale reduces the perceived mass of the seven-story building and relates it more closely to its surroundings.

The GRC lattice serves both environmental and architectural functions. It moderates solar gain while incorporating the window system within its depth, giving the facade a layered and permeable appearance. Its sectional proportions were developed through a series of full-scale mock-ups and prototypes using actual GRC members, steel structure, and window frames. The studies examined dimensions and junctions as well as the sequence of construction. The [brick facade](#) is similarly defined by small variations in dimension. The bricks were produced in three different lengths, with mortar joints recessed by 2 mm and approximately one in every four bricks randomly projecting by 4 mm. These small shifts create changing shadows across the surface, emphasizing the outline, mass, and texture of individual units. The arrangement makes the assembly of the brickwork visible as part of the building's architectural expression.



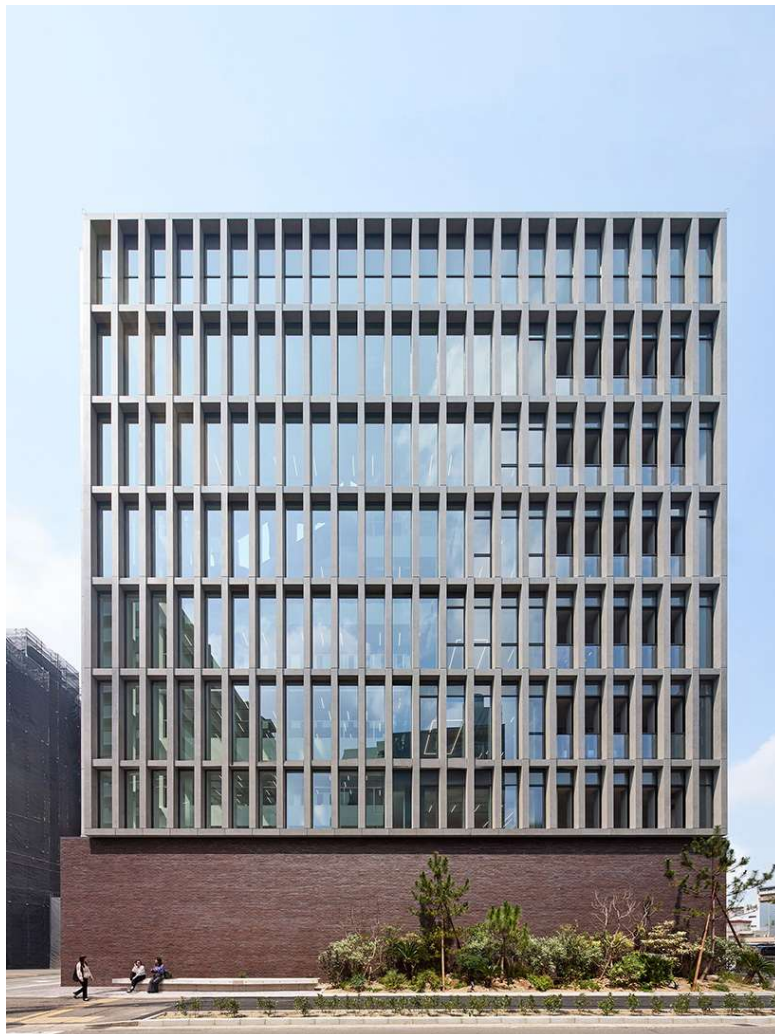
the neighborhood is characterized by temples, apartment buildings, and small parks | all images

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Planted Atrium Forms the Headquarters' Social Heart

Beyond the five-meter-high entrance door, a seven-story atrium forms the central social and environmental space of the headquarters. The void supports natural ventilation while creating visual and acoustic connections between the offices, executive floors, and cafeteria. Movement and activity can therefore be perceived across different areas of the workplace. A twelve-meter-long vertical garden, together with planting distributed throughout the atrium, was designed by French artist and botanist Patrick Blanc. More than 180 plant species introduce a dense layer of vegetation into the interior, shaping the atmosphere of the central space as a luminous forest ravine.

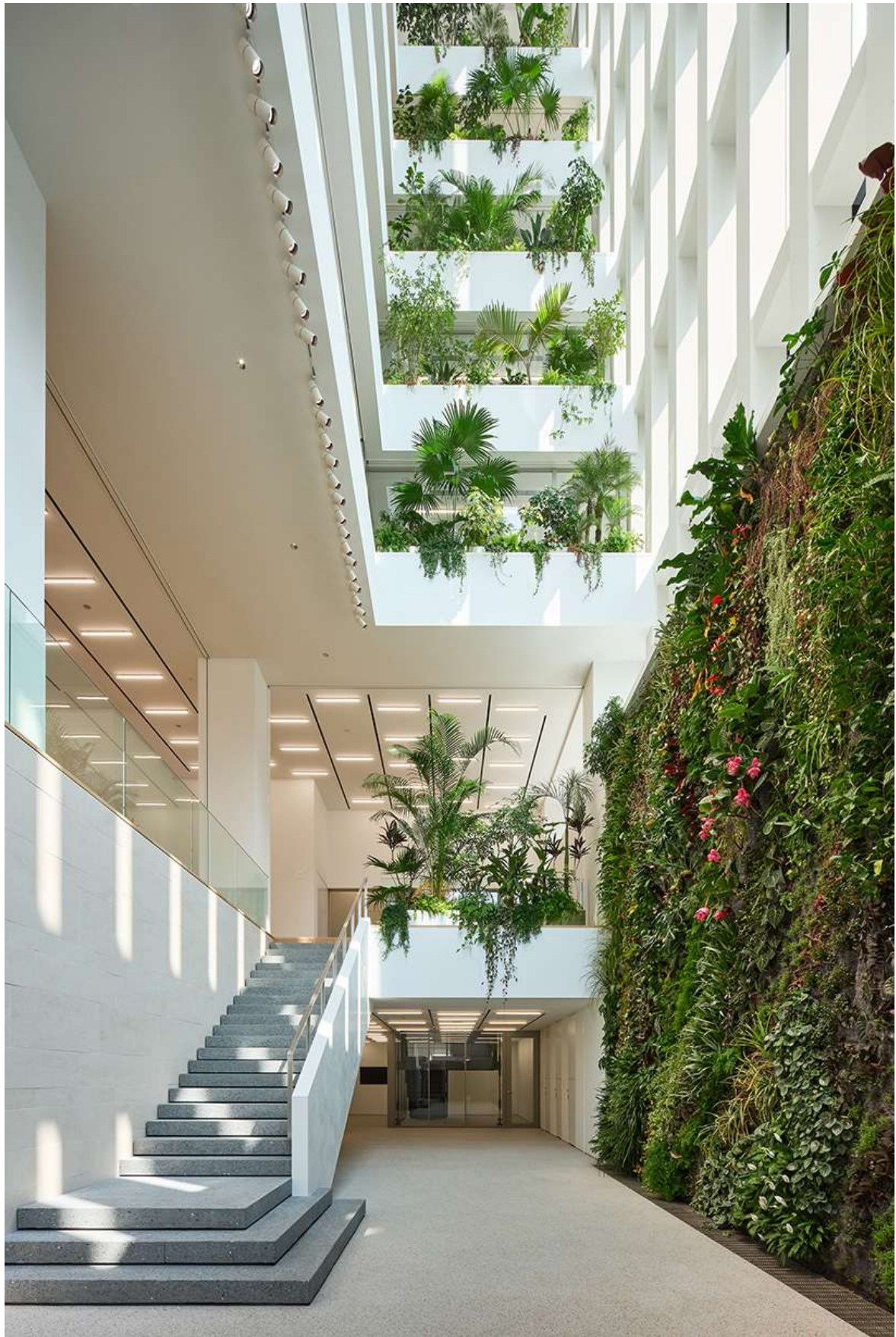
Artworks by Yojiro Imasaka, Takuro Kuwata, and Hirosuke Yabe are incorporated throughout the building alongside terrazzo stairs, handmade tiles, and brick counters. These elements extend the material palette from the exterior into the interior, combining art, planting, light, and tactile surfaces within the workplace. By combining offices with cultural and communal programs, the headquarters expands the workplace beyond a purely functional setting. Its architecture places particular emphasis on connections between departments and people, while bringing nature, art, and material details into everyday working spaces.



rough textured bricks form the lower volume, while the upper volume is wrapped in a lattice of GRC



heavily textured bricks custom-made in Hekinan, Aichi Prefecture, compose the south facade



a twelve-meter-long vertical garden and planting adorn the atrium, designed by botanist Patrick Blanc



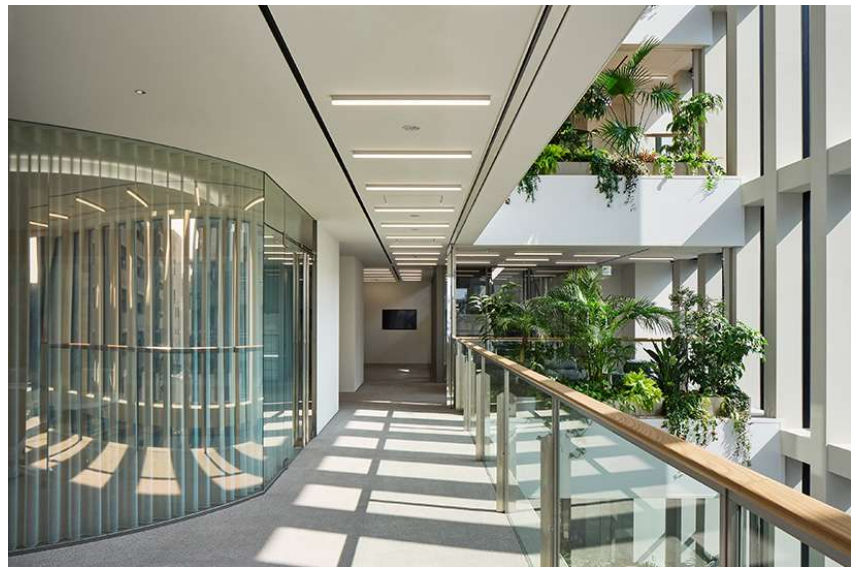
art gallery at the second floor acts as a social space that welcomes outside visitors through art events



workspaces are surrounded by greenery and natural light



views of the surrounding buildings through the atrium



a view toward the executive meeting room enclosed by curved glass



window systems are integrated within the depth of the GRC lattice



a cafeteria, where employees and guests can relax, offers a variety of work settings



the cafeteria terrace features a small Shinto shrine



a multipurpose hall for approximately 110 people



view towards the atrium with a mirrored staircase at the cafeteria

project info:

name: Kawamura Electric Headquarters

architect: [Kentaro Ishida Architects Studio – KIAS](#) | [@kias_studio](#)

location: Nagoya, Aichi, Japan

client: Kawamura Electric Inc.

site area: 808.90 sqm

built area: 540.93 sqm

total floor area: 3,068.44 sqm

design team: Kentaro Ishida, Satoshi Iiyama

executive architect: Daiwa House Industry Co., Ltd.

main contractor: Daiwa House Industry Co., Ltd.

interior contractor: Nomura Co., Ltd.

green wall contractor: Ryokuensha Inc.

structural consulting: Building Structure Institute

air flow simulation: ZO Consulting Engineers

photographer: Daici Ano

designboom has received this project from our [DIY submissions](#) feature, where we welcome our readers to submit their own work for publication. See more project submissions from our readers [here](#).

edited by: Christina Vergopoulou | designboom