

## Profile of the architect Mozuna Kiko

Mozuna Kiko (1941–2001) was a famous architect from Kushiro City whose work has earned both domestic and international acclaim. In 1985, he was awarded the prestigious Architectural Institute of Japan Prize for his designs for the Kushiro City Museum and Kushiro City Marsh Observatory. His designs are renowned for their unique blending of features of Kushiro's natural environment with the architect's distinctive style.

## Kushiro Marsh Observatory

Mozuna Kiko's Kushiro Marsh Observatory was inspired by *yachibozu*, a rare form of sedge that can be seen in the surrounding marshes. The roots of this plant are lifted out of the soil by freezing each winter, and over many years they come to resemble a peculiar floating head. Like *yachibozu*, the observatory was intended to look like a vessel floating in the marshlands. The elegantly curved, cave-like interior of the building represents the core elements of the marshland.

## Kushiro City Museum

The Kushiro City Museum building represents the open wings of a red-crowned crane as it embraces its chick. The staggered roof design reflects the contoured pattern of the hills surrounding Lake Harutori, located adjacent to the museum. The first, second, and fourth floors of the museum are exhibition spaces. Each floor is connected by a double helix staircase.

## Kushiro Fisherman's Wharf (MOO) and EGG

The Kushiro Fisherman's Wharf (MOO) is an expression of the main characteristics of the city: the abundance of fish; the close connection to the beautiful ocean; and a place where people gather. Located along the waterfront adjacent to Nusamai Bridge, the wharf was created to give people a chance to enjoy the splendor of the sea and the fish that inhabit it. Next to MOO is a greenhouse known as EGG. Popular among both local residents and visitors, EGG provides the opportunity to see flowers and greenery throughout the year.

## Kushiro Nusamai Junior High School

The Kushiro Nusamai Junior High School was designed so that its students would always remember it. On top of the building are seven large arches resembling rainbows, while light shines through stained glass windows onto a domed, open space in the foyer. Curved stairs in the center of this space create a soft and inviting atmosphere, and this curved design continues throughout the corridors of the school building. Along with Kushiro City Museum, this school considered to be Mozuna Kiko's masterpiece.

