

Onomichi City Museum of Art

The Onomichi City Museum of Art stands in Senkoji Park, on a hilltop overlooking the city center, accessible on foot or via the Senkoji Ropeway. First opened in 1980, the museum was redesigned in 2003 by renowned Japanese architect Ando Tadao. Ando renovated the original building and added an annex, which is now the main entrance. The annex in particular showcases Ando's preferred materials: large glass panels paired with plain, unadorned concrete. Although the annex and the main building appear separate from the outside, on the inside they are seamlessly joined.

The traditional tiled roof of the main building is designed to mimic the shape and structure of the roof of the city's Saigo-ji Temple, and the bay windows on the museum's second floor offer a view over Onomichi which rivals the artwork on the walls for sheer beauty. There are many such open, quiet spots inside the museum, architectural white spaces designed for visitors to simply enjoy the view.

The museum is home to an eclectic selection of art by local and international artists, mostly relating to Onomichi, but it is the collection of modernist furniture which seems most at home in Ando's building. Chairs by modernist American designers including Charles (1907–1978) and Ray Eames (1912–1988) and George Nelson (1908–1986) are dotted throughout the museum for visitors to use. In typical Ando style, the floor-to-ceiling glass of the annex building faces a raw concrete wall with all its knots and ridges on display. The clean lines of the annex building create stark shadows on the floor and walls as the sun moves across the sky.