

2025 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS' DIRECTORY

This issue's deep dive into landscape architecture comes with a refreshing shift in our long-standing Architects' Directory, our annual listing of promising practices from across the globe. This year, our survey of exciting studios goes outside, as we sample the international talent that is transforming the environment around us – shaping everything but our buildings. While the directory traditionally focuses on residential work and emerging professionals, this year's profiles spotlight creatives in the landscape sector, casting a net far and wide, from young to established practices, exploring diverse iterations of what landscape is, and spanning Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania. Welcome then to our 2025 Landscape Architects' Directory

PHOTOGRAPHY: DEVASHISH GAUR WRITERS: ELLIE STATHAKI, DAVEN WU, VAISHNAVI NAYEL TALAWADEKAR, DANIELLE DEMETRIOU

Landscape Architects' Directory

Transparency in all its forms plays a pivotal role in Terremoto's ethos. The landscape architecture practice was founded in LA in 2013 by David Godshall and Alain Peuroi (who passed away this January – 'the biggest thing that our studio has endured to date,' says Godshall); but now, its team runs as a thriving collective and has a second base in San Francisco. Its openness about its values – ecological, philosophical, social, moral – makes it a powerful proposition in its field and defines both its methods and output. 'It's important to our team to practice in ways that reflect these beliefs. For example, we have a stance on labour, in that we proactively acknowledge, credit and advocate for the individuals and crews who build our projects, and this public stance is almost non-existent in our industry. Speak up!' says Godshall.

It was an early encounter with the book *City Form and Natural Process* by Michael Hough, following a suggestion from his mother to look into landscape architecture, that led Godshall to his current career path. Blown away by the depth and importance of the book's thesis, which examines 'why wildlife in urban environments was mostly present in feral, wild or non-designed spaces,' he decided to go into the profession and change that. 'Why shouldn't landscape be purposefully designed for wildlife, too?' he wondered.

Now, the studio has several projects on the go, including some that sit adjacent to architectural icons, of which California is not short of. It is 'a fun philosophical territory to swim into,' says Godshall. The team is currently working on Richard Neutra's Lovell Health House in LA, reconciling early

Below, co-founder David Godshall (far left) with the Terremoto team at the Burn Scar Test Plot in LA's Elysian Park, where native fire-adapted plants are being planted to replace the invasive eucalyptus and black mustard that burned down in a fire in September 2023

modernist architecture and philosophy with today's push towards using mostly indigenous plants and local materials. They have been reworking the planting around the Hollyhock House by Frank Lloyd Wright and just wrapped up phase two of a project at the Sea Ranch Lodge. 'We quietly believe that historic architecture is perhaps best brought into its next era through revitalising the landscapes around them,' he says. 'Architecture is inescapably a more fixed medium, whereas in the landscape, things live and die and thrive and age, and we're thus honoured to bring these buildings into their next, more ecologically astute eras.'

This also aligns with the studio's belief that gardens can never quite be deemed 'finished'. Landscape is in a constant process of change: growth, death, life and maintenance. It's all ultimately about stewardship, a challenge that Terremoto are keen to highlight and take on. 'Our best projects, we get to tinker on forever,' adds Godshall, who notes that embracing the land and understanding this process is important in carving out a sustainable path to the future. 'We believe that America urgently needs an ecological revolution, and to do so, we're going to need to endow the citizenry of our country with the bravery, skills and ecological literacy they will need to collectively will this revolution into existence.' terremoto.la

TERREMOTO, US





STUDIO KNIGHT STOKOE, UK

Landscape architecture is an often overlooked area of design, Martin Knight and Claire Stokoe argue; and while a focus on climate and biodiversity emergencies has emerged strongly in recent years, putting the outdoors more and more into the spotlight, the pair feel there's more to be said about a particular aspect of the profession. 'An area that has huge potential is a focus on a retain, reuse, recycle agenda for existing landscapes, and questioning whether wholesale replacement of spaces is the right approach, just to deliver a particular vision. Can these elements not be woven into the fabric of the landscape solution for a place? Are they not part of the established character and material memory of place?' they ask.

Knight and Stokoe co-founded their namesake landscape and urban design practice in the south-west of England in 2022. Aiming to remain boutique and nimble, the studio follows the same approach in its projects, valuing quality and craft over volume – with just the two directors as permanent members of staff, and a family of skilled collaborators bringing specialised expertise where needed. This also allows them to have hands-on involvement in each project.

The studio's B Corp certification is further proof of their commitment to accountability and sustainable practice. 'We're guided by three interconnected principles: resilience, regeneration and empathy,' they say. 'We craft landscapes that harmonise society and nature, and that can adapt to challenges while actively enhancing the environments they inhabit.'

Their first completed project, Plant in Basingstoke, not only perfectly embodies these values, but was also a landmark project for the young firm. The task outlined the reimagining of some renowned Grade II-listed 'hanging gardens', and required delicate tackling of the existing environment, respecting designer James Russell's original 1970s vision. As a result, the scheme achieved wide acclaim, as well as a BREEAM Outstanding certification, showcasing seamlessly the pair's 'craft-to-high-tech' approach that favours a balance between artistry and functionality.

Since the project's completion, the studio has been going from strength to strength. It has an ongoing stewardship role at Plant, where the directors guide the establishment of its gardens over time ('It is very rare to secure such a role,' they highlight); it is also currently involved in the retrofit and reuse of the Grade II-listed building on the harbourside at Canons Wharf in Bristol, creating new outdoor amenity spaces; and it is working on a new micro-urban forest school in the heart of Westminster, in London. These and more, across the UK, from private gardens to commercial and public spaces, make for an exciting future for the young practice. knightstokoe.co.uk

Above, Martin Knight and Claire Stokoe at Plant, their 2024 redesign of the gardens at the Grade II-listed modernist Mountbatten House, near Basingstoke, Hampshire, which were originally created in 1976 by James Russell

The idea of 'balance' sits at the heart of Estudio Ome's work. The young landscape architecture firm from Mexico City, founded in 2018 by the Franco-Mexican duo Hortense Blanchard and Susana Rojas Saviñón, has always questioned 'how we interact with nature and where to intervene to get the perfect balance between what is built and what is alive,' they say.

This duality appears in various other aspects of their work – they combine practice and theory, use drawing as a means for exploration, as well as to shape a place; and seek to unite art and ecology. 'Art is the search for beauty, for the poetic; our goal is to provoke, even through a subtle detail, an experience, a source of inspiration,' they explain. 'Ecology is the utmost respect towards nature; each time we have a commission, we ask ourselves: is the place going to be better with our intervention or is it better to do nothing?'

As a result of their delicate yet impactful designs, the awards have kept coming. The pair scooped Outstanding Project at the 2025 Mies Crown Hall Americas Prize (MCHAP); the top gong at the 2024 Rethinking the Future Awards in the Private Landscape category; and a special mention at the 2023 Landezine International Landscape Award's Private Gardens category. This has also afforded them a growing portfolio of international work. Working on both sides of the Atlantic, they have been broadening their practice in Mexico and France, expanding this year to the UK, too. The 2022 project The Ruins, a private garden in Mexico, has been central to the evolution of their practice. Here, they worked with a series of existing ecosystems and hydrology management

Below, Susana Rojas Saviñón and Hortense Blanchard at Reserva Peñitas, a few hours' drive west of Mexico City. The project aims to protect a cloud forest by developing a regenerative community rooted in a collectivist model

strategies for harvesting runoff water from the site to create a thriving composition of stone, water and planting. Every four months, they return to it for maintenance, which adds to their deep understanding of the place, and enriches its present and future.

The five-strong studio is currently working on an art foundation project with Mexican architect Frida Escobedo, for which they have been developing their landscape solution in a rich dialogue with the buildings on site. 'From the very beginning, the process has been shaped by an accumulation of notes from the clients and architects,' they say. 'We have included drawings of plants observed at Mexico's Botanical Garden of the National University. In these, our intention is to show the foliage, the patterns, the movement of the stem, the density, qualities often difficult to express in a project presentation otherwise. For us, drawing by hand brings movement and the notion of time, and isn't that what landscape is all about?'

Even though they are optimistic about the future of their field, Rojas Saviñón and Blanchard flag the need for more learning opportunities. 'In Mexico, what's missing is more education, more possibilities to study. There is a growing number of people interested in the field, and there is work. Our hope is that through broader visibility of the possibilities that landscape holds, richer collaborations will arise.' *estudioome.com*

ESTUDIO OME, MEXICO





RURAL FUTURISMS, SOUTH AFRICA

Lesego Bantsheng and her non-profit organisation Rural Futurisms hope to shake up the notion of landscape – and that, they do. Founded in 2023 and working in Southern Africa, the studio is a collective of researchers, designers, a historian and a climate activist, all ‘interested in imagining a collective future of rurality that stems from its rich heritage’. Bantsheng is also a practising urban designer at Maccreeanor Lavington in Rotterdam, as well as a contributor at the African and diasporic spatial practitioners network Matri-Architecture. In her many hats, Bantsheng works internationally, challenging perceptions of what landscape is and how it can affect communities.

Indeed, nothing is conventional in the work of Rural Futurisms. ‘We are not merely designers but also agents for catalytic change in conversation with the colonial and apartheid legacy of South Africa and its effect in disempowering rural dwellers. I do not practise conventional landscape architecture, as I have not found it particularly useful for addressing these issues. Rather than implementing landscape practice as I was taught, I have paused and listened instead – to the landscape and the people of that landscape – about how they want to interact. In the contexts we have worked in, the answer has not been through a Renaissance garden,’ she explains. ‘A decolonised landscape and architectural practice in the African context is complex and requires deep listening and unlearning.’

Bantsheng and her colleagues work with the material libraries, systems and ‘cosmologies’ of the

places they engage with, inviting local communities into their processes. Their deep dives result not only in spatial deliverables, but also ‘conversational and archival’ ones. Ultimately, a landscape is all about relationships rather than a ‘time-bound production’.

The studio’s pilot project, addressing the landscape of Makgobistad, a South African village on the border with Botswana, was a landmark moment for the organisation. It included looking at everyday objects within homes, and experimenting with mycelium-based composites in combination with local earth. It all culminated in a Hut-Lab, an earth roundhouse for the community. More recent work includes Cybersyn 2, a collaboration with digital technology and artist collective Radical Data that looks at food distribution systems in rural towns and villages.

‘Landscape architecture in South Africa has come a long way, but it often reflects middle-class aspirations rather than the collective heritage of the majority in South Africa,’ Bantsheng says. ‘I am optimistic when I see younger practices like Matri-Architecture, eSapha and Yes& Studio finding ways to colour outside the lines, whether through practice, aesthetic or process – which is truly what we need in a country like ours.’ ruralfuturisms.org

Above, Lesego Bantsheng next to a parklet in the Middelland neighbourhood of Rotterdam, where she works as an urban designer for Maccreeanor Lavington



STUDIO ZEWDE, US

‘Every project begins with listening, to the land and to people,’ says Sara Zewde, founder of the Harlem-based Studio Zewde. ‘Materials, forms and planting are chosen to reflect and resonate with both. We’re defined by our commitment to designing landscapes that are deeply rooted in cultural narratives, ecology and memory.’ Driven by these values, the landscape architect set up her independent practice in New York in 2018, focusing on landscape, urban design and public art. It now employs about 15 people. Zewde leads a rich variety of projects across the US, while also teaching as associate professor in Practices of Landscape Architecture at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design.

The studio’s ongoing projects include many highlights from the current US arts and culture scene, such as the Dia Beacon Art Museum landscape in Beacon, New York, where it is set to transform eight acres of land into a resilient, publicly accessible sculptural landscape with more than 90 species of meadow plants; the Watts Towers Arts Center landscape in Watts, LA; Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Ohio; and the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, whose roof garden, designed by Zewde, is due to open its doors with the institution’s launch this autumn. Past projects include the sensitive reimagining of Philadelphia’s landmark Graffiti Pier.

No matter the location, scale or scope, however, all of the studio’s projects are seen as exciting opportunities by Zewde, whose portfolio ranges from urban residential gardens to a 200-acre

national park. Zewde chooses not to single one out as a ‘landmark’ moment and thrives in the diversity of her commissions. ‘We don’t really see the trajectory of our work as such! There have been so many years of research of learning, of growing as a team, that we really don’t see any one particular moment or project as defining in some way. Rather, each project and moment represent various aspects of continued learning.’

Her approach for each project is, fittingly, equally varied. There is no single, signature aesthetic at Studio Zewde. All works are united in their methodology and investigative research, which challenges assumptions, tailored to each site’s conditions and client and communities’ ambitions. ‘Landscape architecture is a discipline quietly constrained by historical precedents,’ she says. ‘There is a sense of how landscapes should look and function. However, if landscape architecture were to expand and evolve as a creative discipline, the profession has the potential to become a truly transformative field, serving to address ecological challenges and create deeply moving places of beauty and cultural resonance.’ studio-zewde.com

Above, Sara Zewde photographed in New York’s Central Park, co-designed in 1858 by Frederick Law Olmsted, the father of modern landscape architecture in the US. Zewde’s upcoming book explores how Olmsted’s journeys through the southern US states informed his work

Varna Shashidhar didn't always know that her heart, and hands, belonged outdoors. But by the time she earned her master's in landscape architecture from Harvard's Graduate School of Design in 2006, she was sure of one thing: a desk job in an air-conditioned office just wasn't on the cards. 'Harvard introduced me to fantastic friends and mentors, and led me to the best scientists, ecologists and designers at the cutting edge of the discipline,' says the founder and principal of the Bengaluru-based VSLA. To her mind, the final frontier was working in her own country, but she didn't mind taking a little detour first.

An internship with renowned Sri Lankan architect Chelvadurai Anjalendran led her to Colombo, where, for the first time, she experienced architecture by immersing herself in natural and cultural landscapes, and in the quiet rhythm of her mentor's home studio verandah. 'Just sitting there, by the parijat tree, watching how the house breathed with the landscape – it taught me more than any lecture ever could,' she recalls. That open-air classroom would become the seed of her future practice: one guided by observation, intuition and a profound respect for place. 'These experiences helped me see my own country from a different perspective; to really examine things I had taken for granted, and recognise the beauty of what we have,' says Shashidhar, who spent three years honing her skills at landscape architecture firms Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates in Boston and WRT in Philadelphia. But the pull to return home became impossible to ignore. Her vision took root in 2013 when she founded VSLA in her Bengaluru garage.

Below, Varna Shashidhar at the Broadway Brewery in Hyderabad's Jubilee Hills, for which she designed a verdant garden of native edibles and medicinal plants in 2018

'Landscape has a way of touching your *chitta*,' she says, using the Sanskrit word for consciousness. 'In India, you encounter a different terrain every day. One day, you're walking barefoot on a pilgrimage; the next, you're tending to wildflowers in your garden. Everything here feels deeply personal.' Though her studio has grown over the years, she's intentionally resisted scaling up. 'I see the benefit of maintaining a small practice. It allows for an intimacy of spirit, with each other and with the landscape,' she explains. Her team rarely exceeds four members. And 'the more challenging the project,' she says, 'the better.'

Her portfolio span a wide range of projects, from a didactic landscape for a school in 2015 to a garden of native edibles and medicinal plants for a microbrewery in 2018. The following year, she turned a one-acre site in Bengaluru into an urban remediation landscape, featuring more than 75 species of indigenous and adapted vegetation. She's currently working on a healing garden in Madhya Pradesh, and the landscape of a museum near Hampi, another step in her ongoing pursuit to root design in care, context and culture. In Shashidhar's world, the grass isn't just greener – it's native, intentional and quietly revolutionary. 'I've always seen private homes as a space to experiment and learn. But ultimately, the goal is to give back and create impact at a more public scale.' @vslalandscape

VSLA, INDIA



Something compelling is taking shape in the offices of Melbourne-based landscape architecture practice Emergent Studios. Here, creative collaboration between landscape architects and digital innovators is revealing an unexpected truth: that the best landscapes are never really finished. 'There's a lack of control that we welcome as designers,' says director Sarah Hicks, who joined forces with Matt Hamilton and Niki Schwabe in 2020. This insight stems from emergence theory – the idea that complex systems end up being more than the sum of their parts – which also gives the studio its moniker. 'We see the role of emergence as being intrinsic to landscape design,' says Hicks, explaining that landscapes evolve over time through growth and the interactions of other species, far beyond their original design.

Emergent's six-person practice has spent more than a decade perfecting what it calls 'all hands on deck' collaboration. Its bijou scale enables something relatively rare in landscape architecture: director input across all projects, from social housing developments to health and education facilities.

Crucially, at the heart of this approach lies a sophisticated digital toolkit. 'We are a paperless office, starting all design work from digital hand-drawing,' Hicks explains, describing the organic process of moving from initial sketches on digital tablets to technical modelling and complete documentation through specialised software. This mix of intuitive hand-drawing and computational precision reflects Emergent's broader philosophy: embracing both the art of landscaping and cutting-edge technology.

Below, Emergent Studios' directors Niki Schwabe, Matt Hamilton and Sarah Hicks on the rooftop terrace of the Narm Ngarrgu Library in Melbourne's Queen Victoria Market, with a bold façade artwork by Rose Nolan

The most striking expression of this approach is the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence in Shepparton, which opened this year as an education and sporting facility honouring First Nations culture. Working with ARM Architecture, the studio created a landscape entirely through co-design with Yorta Yorta community members. It includes plantings of cultural significant species, such as the yam daisy, an indigenous wildflower that can be harvested for community workshops, and a ceremonial sand circle.

Equally transformative was Emergent's breakthrough project in late 2023, the rooftop terrace at Melbourne's Narm Ngarrgu Library. Featuring outdoor learning and play areas, the garden connects the children's library with family services to create a secure yet welcoming environment where indigenous plants are visited by native birds and butterflies.

Looking ahead, the three partners are busy scaling their digital innovations with the upcoming release of DOCOplant, a comprehensive planting tool featuring an authentication system and online plant database, which will be accessible by the broader industry. Meanwhile, they're deep into an ecological restoration project transforming a south-eastern cattle farm back to swampy woodlands, while also investigating how agricultural landscapes can regenerate around centuries-old river red gums. emergentstudios.com.au

EMERGENT STUDIOS, AUSTRALIA





RODRIGO OLIVEIRA, BRAZIL

‘A garden has to be imperfect, intuitive, instinctive,’ says Rodrigo Oliveira. It’s a philosophy that has made him one of Brazil’s most sought-after landscape architects. A naturalistic perspective – inspired by Japanese garden methodology and the asymmetric beauty of nature itself – has defined his 30-year career. Rather than imposing order on the landscape, he creates what he calls ‘spontaneous-looking gardens that blend seamlessly into the surroundings’. The result is deceptively simple: gardens that appear as if nothing was deliberately done there, yet achieve profound harmony between built form and nature.

The journey to this mindset began in Oliveira’s hometown of Paraná in southern Brazil, where gardens were an intrinsic part of his childhood. ‘I used to take care of the gardens in all of the houses we lived in,’ he recalls. And when landscaping was not yet a ‘big thing’, he studied agronomy at the Federal University of Viçosa, graduating in 1993. After working with other companies and studying arboriculture in Florida for a year, he then established his own independent practice Rodrigo Oliveira Paisagismo in 2005.

Today, his São Paulo-based studio employs 40 people, including architects, engineers, marketing specialists and gardeners. The breakthrough that transformed Oliveira’s career came in 2005 when Isay Weinfeld invited him to create a garden for the house the architect was designing for Brazilian film director Héctor Babenco in São Paulo. Oliveira seized the opportunity to create something genuinely natural.

‘That was the key point at the start of my career and changed my path completely,’ he reflects. The garden featured a dramatic approach where visitors entered from the street down a long meandering walk through dense foliage without sight of the house, until a sudden turn brought it into view. This cinematic experience, befitting a collaboration with a film director, established Oliveira’s reputation for creating landscapes that unfold like carefully crafted narratives. The project led to ongoing partnerships with Brazil’s architectural elite, including Studio MK27, Bernardes Arquitetura and Studio Arthur Casas. He is currently working on the Amauri 306 Building in São Paulo, another Isay Weinfeld project, where gardens are distributed across different floors.

Oliveira’s naturalistic approach offers a compelling alternative to more formal design traditions. By embracing what he calls the ‘irregularity’ of natural systems – their textures, movement and seasonality – he is creating gardens that evolve beautifully over time while requiring minimal maintenance. In a world increasingly concerned with environmental stewardship, his philosophy resonates. The best gardens don’t fight nature. They celebrate it. rodrigooliveirapaisagismo.com.br

Above, Rodrigo Oliveira at Ubá Pinheiros, in São Paulo, a residential development by Jacobsen Arquiteturas, where Oliveira’s lush landscaping transforms the private gardens into natural living scenes

The awards keep coming. UN Global Climate Action Awards. BBC 100 Women. Bloomberg's The Green 30. But for Kotchakorn Voraakhom, the real measure of success isn't the recognition, but whether Bangkok will still be above water in 50 years. As founder of Bangkok-based Landprocess, the Thai landscape architect has made it her mission to transform one of the world's most flood-prone cities – Bangkok is sinking 2cm each year – into a model of climate resilience. The broader mission is to help 'shift cities to a carbon-neutral future and confront future climate uncertainty', she explains from her studio, where 15 designers work on what many might consider impossible urban challenges.

Since founding Landprocess in 2012, Voraakhom has pioneered a nature-based approach using living plants as infrastructure. 'Nature is our medium, our process and our teacher,' she says. 'We are inspired by its systems, where nothing is wasted, where beauty emerges not from form alone but from function.'

A good example is Chulalongkorn Centenary Park, completed in 2017 as Bangkok's first critical green infrastructure project. Where others saw an underused urban plot, Voraakhom envisioned wetlands and detention lawns that collect, clean and reuse a million gallons of rainwater while providing public recreation space. Then there's the Thammasat Urban Farm, completed in late 2019. Asia's largest organic rooftop farm, it mimics rice paddies, using native plants to slow runoff 20 times more efficiently than concrete while producing 20 tons of organic food annually. Her current work spans from training government teams across Southeast Asia on flood-resilient plantings to

Below, Kotchakorn Voraakhom at the Landprocess office in Bangkok. Her practice is currently adding green corridors and roof gardens to the sprawling Chaeng Watthana Government Complex in the Thai capital

the ambitious reimagining of the Chaeng Watthana Government Complex in Bangkok. Rather than adding conventional landscaping to the existing 178 acres, Voraakhom is inserting green corridors and cooling plant systems that naturally regulate building temperatures for the 40,000 workers. 'Government buildings worldwide often reflect authority,' she says. 'But what if civic architecture embodied transparency, sustainability and human connection instead?' The idea is to move beyond traditional design to co-create transformative processes where communities, policymakers and ecosystems all shape the outcome.

If nothing else, she's learnt that lasting change requires bringing together people who don't usually collaborate: bureaucrats and community leaders, engineers and botanists, residents and officials. Which is why, in 2017, Voraakhom launched Porous City Network, a social enterprise that aims to mobilise communities to transform vast concrete wastelands into a city-wide web of permeable public green spaces, such as urban farms, green roofs, rain gardens and canals filled with water-absorbing plants. Landprocess creates the built projects, she explains, while Porous City empowers. 'Landscape architecture has never been more critical,' Voraakhom argues. 'Our discipline holds vital solutions for the climate crisis, but the key lies in collaboration.' landprocess.co.th, porouscity.org

LANDPROCESS, THAILAND





DAISHIZEN, JAPAN

A subterranean library cocooned in soft slopes of grass. An elliptical shrine from which seasonal trees rise into skies. Vivid greenery bursting through the futuristic angles of a buzzy urban development. The varied projects of Japanese landscape architect Taichi Saito all share the same aim: to rekindle a sense of harmony with nature. 'I hope to create gentle landscapes that allow people's hearts to feel at ease, even just for a moment,' he says. 'By creating spaces where people can feel the subtle pauses and movement that only nature can give, I hope to slowly rebuild a meaningful relationship between humans and the natural world.'

Since launching his studio Daishizen in 2011, Saito has worked with a raft of top-tier architects, from Sou Fujimoto to Hiroshi Nakamura & NAP, on projects across the country – in addition to his own progressive initiatives. Daishizen's main brand is Solso, which creates green environments for a wide range of projects, with every element managed in-house. The company also runs Keep Green, a nationwide platform that aims to connect people with plants through expert-led installations, maintenance, product development, and even a digital app that uses AI technology to help people integrate greenery into their lives and spaces.

For Saito, the seed for his green journey is rooted in a nature-steeped childhood in Iwate, north Japan, with numerous early memories of helping out at his family's gardening shop and foraging for wild orchids in forests. A turning point came around the age of 16, when he stumbled across a book featuring Frank Lloyd Wright's

Fallingwater and woke up to the possibilities within the relationship between architecture and nature. Training took place through a mix of self-study and working at a flower and plant shop in Tokyo, paving the way for his first horticultural business in 2003.

Key projects include Library in the Earth in Chiba, with sloping lines of greenery wrapping a meditative subterranean space designed by Hiroshi Nakamura & NAP; collaborations with Fujimoto, such as the circular garden of Not a Hotel Earth in Okinawa; and Forestgate Daikanyama, a Kengo Kuma-designed development in Tokyo. Aiming to bring the 'forest' to the city, with a stacked structure packed with plants and trees, it is also home to Daishizen's head office.

'I never want to impose my vision. I believe a landscape designer's true role is to be a good listener. Each plant carries its own history – and I treat that as part of the landscape,' says Saito, whose work is deeply imprinted with a Japanese philosophy. 'Animism, the appreciation of *ma* [negative space], sensitivity to shifting light – these are all part of my design language. Whether it's the placement of a stone, the shimmer of shade beneath a tree or the quiet changing of the seasons, I believe these subtle elements strongly reflect Japanese aesthetics.' taichisaito-atelier.jp

Above, Taichi Saito at Forestgate Daikanyama in Tokyo, a Kengo Kuma-designed mixed-use development that is home to the head office of Daishizen, the landscape architecture studio he founded in 2011