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Japanese houses, even today, always have a sunken space between the front door and the rest of the house. This area, which is considered dirty (and actually is), separates the home from the outside and is where shoes are placed (usually on a rack or in a shoebox) before entering. A genkan has long been a practical way of keeping the family living space clean.

Relationship with nature. House and Home is essential reading for scholars of Japan as well as for those interested in the multiple constructions of domesticity across the globe.


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ABSTRACT

In the 1870s and 80s, Britain experienced a craze for all things Japanese. Japanese art and design was seen as exciting and exotic by Europeans, because it was so different to Western culture. It offered a whole new way of looking at and representing the world.

Arthur Silver was a British designer of wallpapers and textiles. He established his company, the Silver Studio, in 1880. He and his colleagues were avid collectors of Japanese source material. The Silver Studio incorporated Japanese materials, methods and motifs these into designs for wallpapers and textiles for British consumers between about 1880 and 1930. The resulting designs are not straightforwardly 'Japanese' but are the result of a cross-cultural fertilisation of design ideas.

Today the Silver Studio Collection is the core collection of the Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture (MoDA), Middlesex University. This book accompanies an exhibition held at MoDA between 2009 and 2010. This is a text only version. A fully-illustrated version is available from www.blurb.com