



# The Genius of Japanese Carpentry: Secrets of an Ancient Craft

*Azby Brown*

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## **The Genius of Japanese Carpentry: Secrets of an Ancient Craft** Azby Brown

This new edition of this Azby Brown architectural classic contains a new preface by Brown, fully revised chapters, along 25% new photography and in color for the first time.

An extraordinary and ambitious work of architectural reconstruction is underway in twenty-first century Nara. *The Genius of Japanese Carpentry* is the story of the twelve-hundred-year-old Yakushiji monastery and the dedicated modern-day craftsmen who are working to restore what has been lost to the depredations of time, fire, and warfare.

In the eighth century, anonymous carpenters first erected the intricately-designed timber temples and pagodas that compose the Yakushiji Buddhist monastery. Then as today, these buildings were considered marvels of architectural elegance and traditional Japanese craftsmanship. Although the full restoration will not be complete until 2030, one of the main temples, the Picture Hall, has been completely reconstructed, employing the original methods, architectural style, and largely the same woodworking technology as its predecessors. Azby Brown chronicles the Picture Hall's painstaking restoration through photographs, extensive interviews with the carpenters and woodworkers, and original drawings based on the plans of Japanese master carpenter Tsunekazu Nishioka. An inspiring testament to the craftsmen, their dedication to excellence, and their philosophy of work as personal fulfillment, *The Genius of Japanese Carpentry* offers detailed documentation of this singular project and a moving reminder of the humanity that bridges past and present.

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