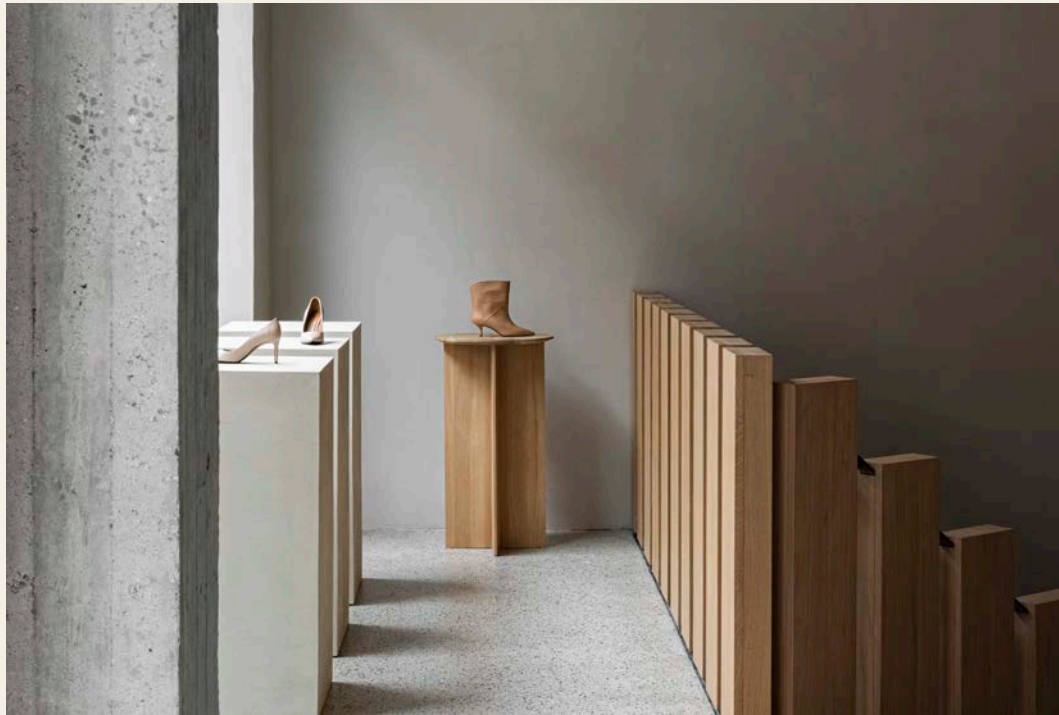


KARIMOKU  
CASE STUDY



CASE STUDY 05  
THE NOTABENE SHOE STORE  
NORM ARCHITECTS

PRESS RELEASE OCTOBER 2021



## KARIMOKU CASE STUDY

*KARIMOKU CASE STUDY PRESENTS CASE 05:  
THE NOTABENE SHOE STORE IN  
COPENHAGEN WITH AN INTERIOR DESIGN  
AND BESPOKE FURNITURE ITEMS  
BY NORM ARCHITECTS*

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Japanese lifestyle brand Karimoku Case Study presents its fifth case, the holistic flagship store for the shoe brand Notabene in the city centre of Copenhagen. The high-end shoe concept store has been designed and furnished with bespoke furniture items designed by Norm Architects and crafted by Karimoku Case Study. Echoing the brand's DNA, the striking Notabene shoe store marks the first Karimoku Case Study retail project in the row of international interior cases.

The new Notabene flagship store on Møntergade in the old city of Copenhagen is a showcase for high-end minimalist and striking interior design

as well as innovative retail design. Continuing the collaboration with Danish architecture and design studio Norm Architects, the store's bespoke interior and furniture items were specifically designed for this project by the Danish architecture and design studio, with a number of furniture pieces being incorporated into the permanent collection of the Japanese furniture brand.

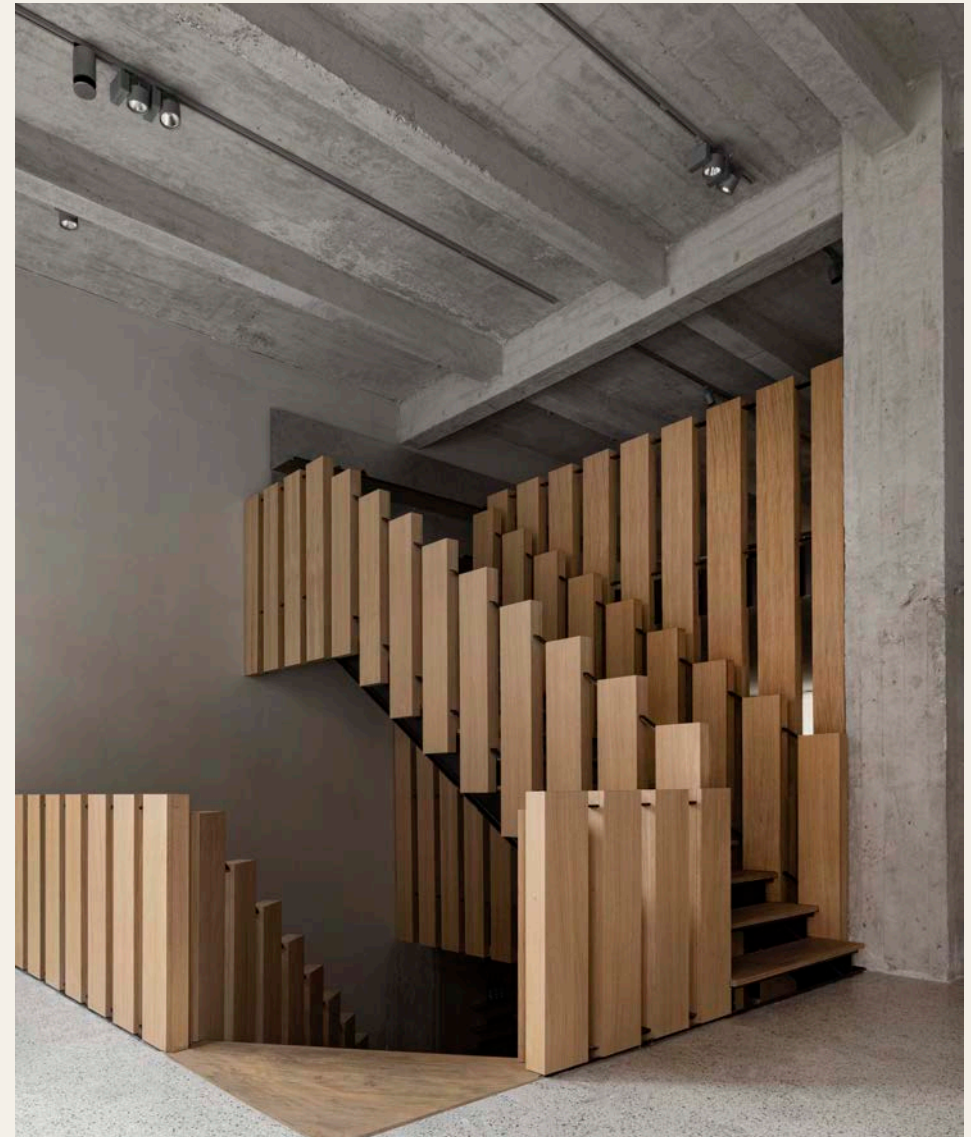
Since the founding of Karimoku Case Study in 2019, five successful and unique case studies have been completed, including the three private housing projects, the inaugural Kinuta Terrace Apartment Project in Tokyo in 2019

and the Azabu Residence Project in Tokyo in 2021, both by Keji Ashizawa Design and Norm Architects, the Archipelago House Project in Sweden in 2020 by Norm Architects as well as the interior design of the Blue Bottle Coffee Minatomirai Cafe in Yokohama in September 2020 by Keji Ashizawa Design. The Notabene shoe store presents the Japanese lifestyle brand's fifth case and the first retail project. Ranging from both private housing to public hospitality and retail projects, all Karimoku Case Study cases are real-life projects, featuring custom-made interior design concepts and bespoke furniture that respond to the given native setting of each case study and thereby create a holistic universe and collection of furniture.

For case study 05, the Notabene shoe store, Norm Architects implemented a cohesive design and retail concept that connects all three floors of the high-end concept store, creating a true brand to retail experience. The Danish architecture and design studio created a hub where all things surrounding shoe design and shoe care are unified in a big industrial space comprising retail, shoeshine bar and creative lab. By preserving the architectural characteristics of the space, a stylized and simplified warehouse atmosphere

was created that is complemented by the use of light oakwood for the bespoke and elegant Karimoku Case Study furniture items. The material combination of high-end wooden details, lush bouclé fabrics, hand-brushed aluminium surfaces and rippled concrete creates an edgy universe that is both relaxed, refined, and luxurious at the same time.

For the Notabene shoe store, Norm Architects specifically designed a new sofa and matching lounge chair as a lounge group with soft upholstery as well as new bespoke versions of an existing coffee table and side table.







## CASE STUDY 05

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### THE NOTABENE SHOE STORE

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With over 20 years of experience in the shoe industry, Notabene designs high-quality footwear, focusing on select materials, craftsmanship and great comfort. All shoes are designed locally in Copenhagen and are manufactured in select family-owned workshops in Italy, combining the Scandinavian design aesthetic with traditional craftsmanship.

The Notabene Møntergade flagship store is located in the vibrant city centre of Copenhagen, surrounded by an eclectic mix of Danish brand shops, historical buildings, various restaurants and bars and with the Copenhagen harbour in close proximity. Spreading over three floors, the high-end concept shoe store contains a retail space and fitting area on the ground floor, a shoeshine bar for shoe care as well as a coffee shop and lounge area in the basement and a creative Shoe Lab on the mezzanine floor where sketches,

material samples and prototypes of the upcoming collections can be experienced by the visitors.

Commissioned with the renovation of the interior of the Notabene Møntergade store, Norm Architects created an interior design concept that preserves the unique characteristics of the building, such as the double height ceilings and beautiful terrazzo flooring, embracing the leading idea to create a stylized and simplified warehouse atmosphere. Challenged with the task to provide space for the wide range of activities within the concept store while visually connecting all areas and floors for a cohesive store experience, Norm Architects implemented a coherent design language with a focus on the use of select materials and colours that recur in the bespoke furniture items as well as the interior furnishings.

The raw concrete surfaces of the basic structure of the space have been

exposed and wall shelves made of sanded stainless-steel sheets have been applied that are being used as display stands, creating an industrial and tactile feel. As a contrast to the brutalistic spacial construction, a rich material palette and warm colour scheme has been implemented, including transparent curtains, sculptural display stands with a leather or clay finish, textured textiles and rich oak wood that provide a more intimate, haptic spatial experience. The existing stair construction connecting all three floors of the Notabene Møntergade store has been clad with wooden slats, highlighting the architectural structure while simultaneously creating a transparent and dynamic effect. To invite visitors to further explore the store and the Notabene product range, Norm Architects worked with free-standing display items and clay podiums that stand out in the otherwise industrial space.

#### THE BESPOKE FURNITURE

For the furnishing of the Notabene shoe store, Norm Architects selected and modified existing pieces from the Karimoku Case Study collection and created bespoke furniture items that match the tactile and calm interior design and meet the needs of the diverse visitor amenities offered within

the store. Custom-made furniture items for the Notabene shoe store include a comfortable sofa and matching lounge chair in smoked oak that provide comfortable seating in the in-house coffee shop of the shoe store as well as a coffee table and a side table serving as display stands.

Through the strategic use of contrasting materiality, Norm Architects created a warm and calm interior that welcomes visitors to linger and provides a pleasant and holistic brand experience for the Notabene shoe store. Following the brand's philosophy of creating unique and bespoke interior design solutions working with the given architectural framework, Karimoku Case Study launches its fifth successful case study and continues the collaboration with Norm Architects.







## ABOUT KARIMOKU CASE STUDY

Emerging from shared design values, Karimoku Case Study is a contemporary lifestyle brand based in Japan and born out of admiration and love for serene beauty, material richness and timeless appeal. The Case Study collections are brought to life by the world's leading architects through individual cases, and the story of each collection is told through its native setting. With Karimoku Case Study, Karimoku introduces its fourth high-end, contemporary furniture brand, following Karimoku New Standard, Karimoku Kunst and Ishinomaki Laboratory by Karimoku.

## KARIMOKU

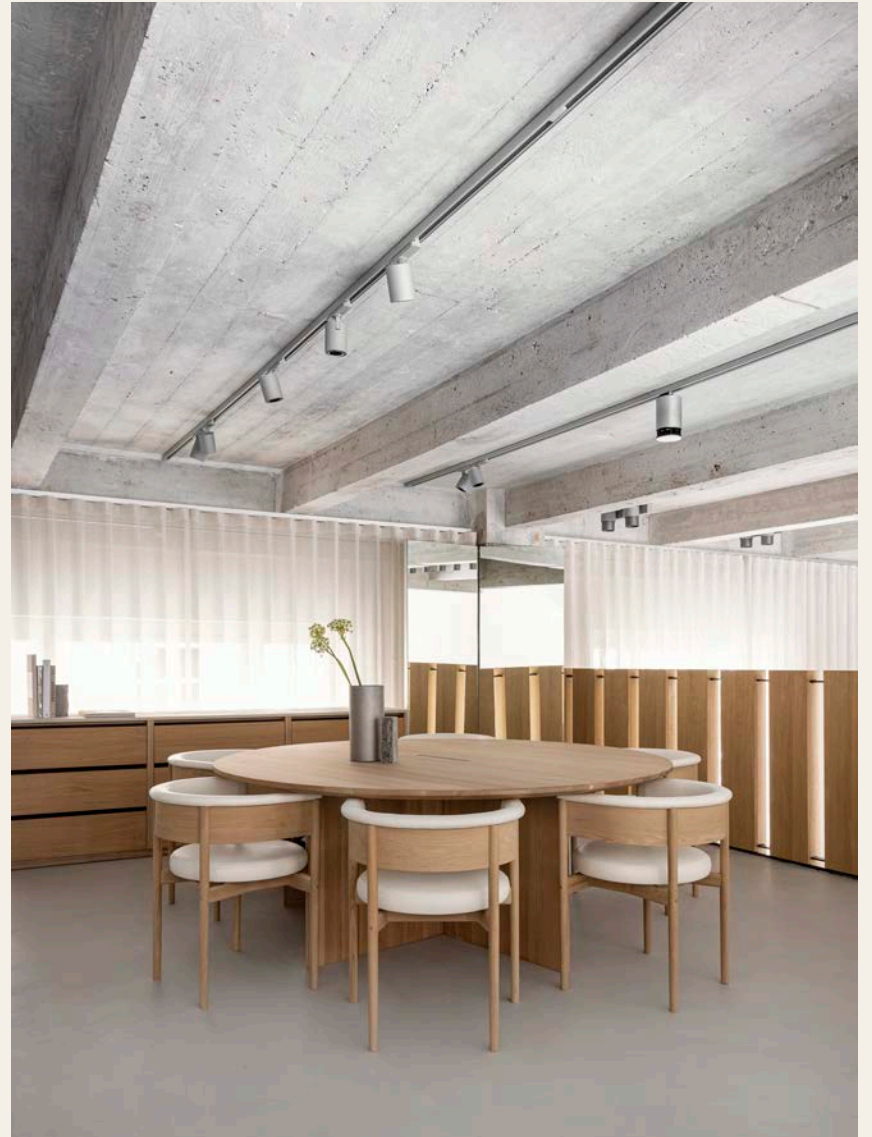
The origins of Karimoku date back to 1940, when Shohei Kato took over a longstanding timber company and established a small woodworking shop in the town of Kariya, Aichi. The company produced various wooden parts in the ensuing decades, developing a range of techniques before launching its own line of wooden furniture in the 1960s. Building upon the concept of manufacturing high-tech and high-touch products, the company established bases in timber production areas and soon developed into one of Japan's leading manufacturers of wooden furniture.

## NORM ARCHITECTS

Norm Architects was founded in 2008. The multidisciplinary design studio works within the fields of industrial design, residential architecture, commercial interiors, photography and art direction. Much like human well-being, the essence of Norm Architects' work is found in balance—between richness and restraint, between order and complexity.

## NOTABENE

With more than 20 years of experience in the shoe industry, Notabene produces beautiful and viable shoes of high quality and comfort from honest materials. The brand is locally rooted in Copenhagen and mirror themselves in the city, continuously tapping into the needs and trends unique to the surroundings - they design from Copenhagen, for the Copenhagen woman. Notabene strives to always honour the traditional craftsmanship behind every shoe design, to ensure a lasting design. It is all about buying less but better, why all shoes are created by hand in Italy with great respect for the craft and the traditions that have been passed down through generations.





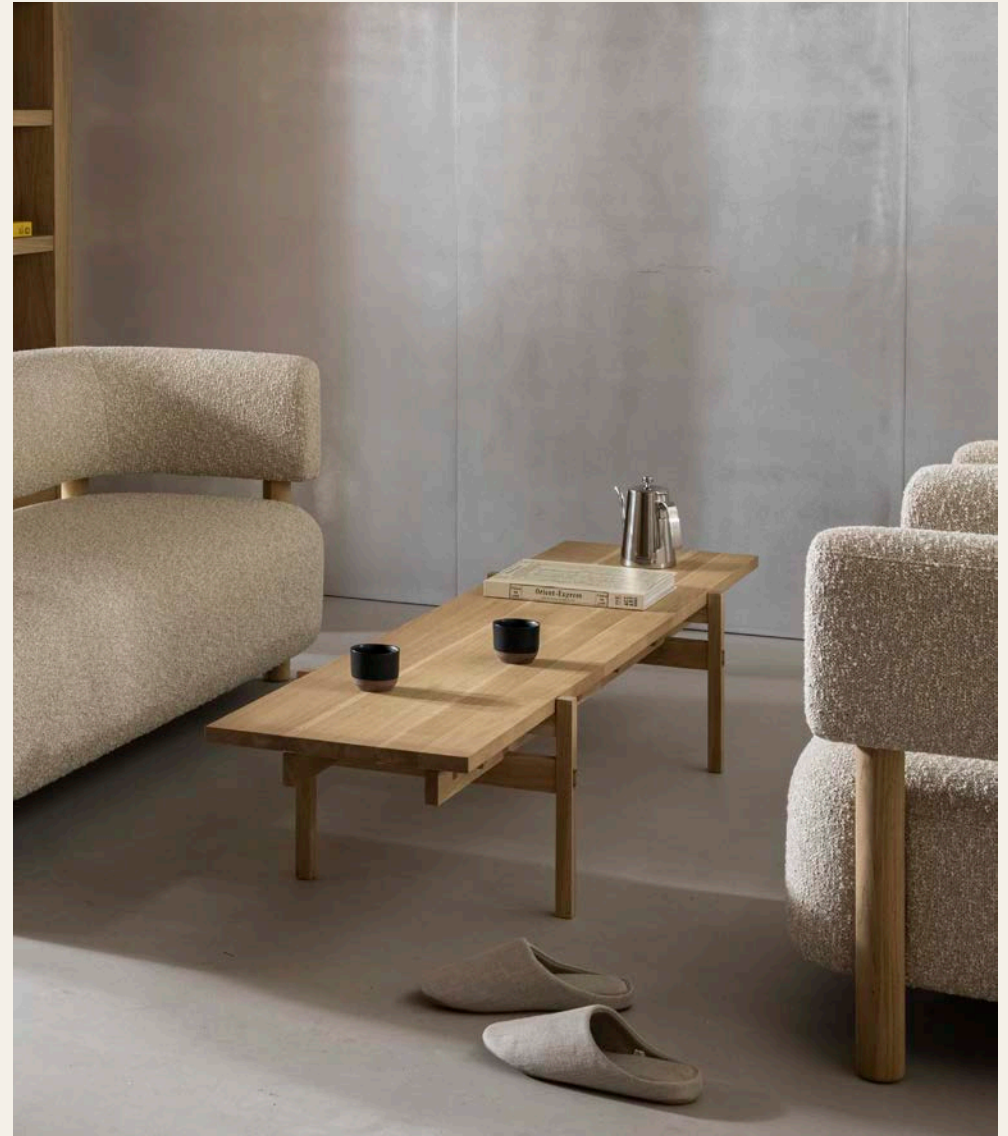




*“The expressive raw building structure tells tales of various use over time and is juxtaposed by refined Japanese cabinet making, echoing the refinement and precision of the shoemaking process itself.”*

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PETER ELAND, NORM ARCHITECTS





*“All the furniture pieces are designed bespoke for the store in close collaboration with Karimoku Case Study and while some pieces will remain as such, others might find their way to the permanent collection of the brand. This way of working with design, that is created for specific needs, is the core principle of product development at Karimoku Case Study”*

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FREDERIK WERNER, NORM ARCHITECTS



*“The intention to form a retail space resembling that of an artist’s atelier, combined with a simplified and stylized warehouse feeling is enhanced by the many freestanding plinths, displaying shoes as artwork in a versatile, yet harmonized, material palette.”*

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JONAS BJERRE-POULSEN, NORM ARCHITECTS





*“What we have really worked with is the materiality and the design language of the space to ensure that the downstairs shoeshine bar has the same feeling as the store area on the ground floor and likewise as the design lab on the mezzanine, all the while the different areas still needed to have their own character and to stand out as unique and diverse experiences.”*

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PETER ELAND, NORM ARCHITECTS



PHOTOGRAPHY

KARIMOKU CASE STUDY

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