

# Philosopher Nishida Kitarō

## Chronology

■ In front of the blackboard ■ Lecturing from the Blackboard ■ Leaving the blackboard

Born on May 19 in Mori, which is now part of Kahoku City, as the first son of a family that served as district officials under the Tomura system in the Edo period.	Age 0 1870	Meiji 3
Entered Mori Elementary School (Present-day Utsunomiya Elementary School).	Age 5 1875	8
Learned Chinese literature and mathematics at a private school in Kanazawa.	Age 12 1882	15
Entered teachers' college in Ishikawa Prefecture. Contracted typhoid.	Age 13 1883	16
Learned mathematics from Tokiyuki Hōjō. Entered the old Ishikawa Prefectural College.	Age 16 1886	19
Entered preparatory course of the Fourth Higher Middle School (Shikō). Among his classmates were Suzuki Daisetsu, Yamamoto Ryōkichi, and Fujikawa Sakutarō.	Age 17 1887	20
First year student in main course of the Fourth Higher School. Studied philosophy.	Age 18 1888	21
Established Gaseikai (philosophy study circle) with friends.	Age 19 1889	22
Dropped out of school due to insufficient conduct marks.	Age 19 1889	22
Quit the Fourth Higher School. Contracted eye disease and got hospitalized.	Age 20 1890	23
Entered Tōkyō Imperial University, School of Literature, Department of Philosophy as non-regular student.	Age 21 1891	24
Became a head teacher at Nanao branch school of Ishikawa Prefecture's Jinjō Junior High School. Married Tokuda Kotomi.	Age 25 1895	28
Became a part-time German teacher at the Fourth Higher School.	Age 26 1896	29
Began Zen training under Setsumon Zenji of Senshin Temple.	Age 26 1896	29
Became a part-time teacher at Yamaguchi Koto Gakko.	Age 27 1897	30
Began Zen training under Kokan Zenji of Myōshinji Temple.	Age 27 1897	30
Became a professor at the Fourth Higher School.	Age 29 1899	32
Received the name "Sunshin" as a Buddhist layman from Setsumon Zenji.	Age 31 1901	34
Answered the kōan "Mu" (a question of Zen meditation) under Kōshu Zenji of Daitokuji Temple.	Age 33 1903	36
Became a professor at Gakushūin.	Age 39 1909	42
Became an assistant professor of literature at Kyoto Imperial University.	Age 40 1910	43
Published "An Inquiry into the Good".	Age 41 1911	44
Became a professor at Kyoto University. Received Ph.D. in literature.	Age 43 1913	Taishō 2
Construction of his first own house (Nishida's study room, Kotsuseikutsu) completed.	Age 52 1922	11
Wife Kotomi deceased.	Age 55 1925	14
Retired from Kyoto University.	Age 58 1928	Shōwa 3
Named professor emeritus of Kyoto University.	Age 59 1929	4
Remarried Yamada Koto.	Age 61 1931	6
Began traveling back and forth between Kamakura and Kyoto.	Age 62 1932	7
Presented with the Order of Culture.	Age 70 1940	15
Presented lecture, "On historical philosophy" in the presence of the Emperor.	Age 71 1941	16
Contracted rheumatism.	Age 71 1941	16
June 7 Died in Kamakura.	Age 75 1945	20



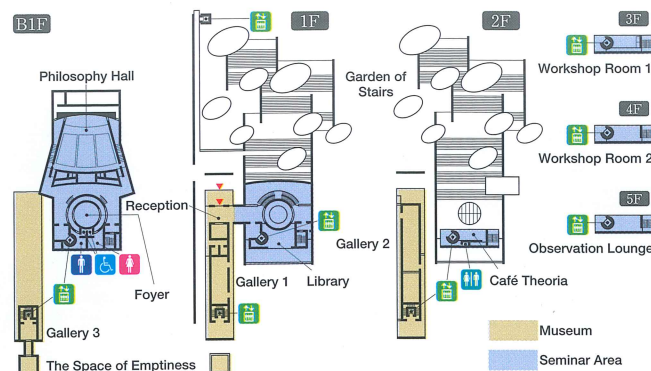
My life has been quite a simple one. In the first half of it, I sat facing the blackboard. In the second half, I stood up with the blackboard behind me. I only changed my position in relation to the blackboard. This, in a nutshell, is my biography!

(From *Philosophical Contemplation and Life Experience*, part 2)

### Nishida Kitarō

Philosopher. Nishida was born in the year Meiji 3 (1870) in Ishikawa Prefecture. He dropped out of the Fourth Higher School and began studying philosophy at the Imperial University of Tōkyō. After teaching at the Fourth Higher School and Gakushūin, he began teaching philosophy at Kyoto Imperial University. *An Inquiry into the Good* (1911) is a book on Nishida's philosophy based on "pure experience," where subjective and objective views are not differentiated, unlike western philosophy where subjectivity and objectivity are opposed. It is said to be Japan's first book of philosophy. Nishida's philosophy transcends the dichotomous standpoint through the key words "self-awareness" and "place". He deepens his own original speculations resulting in the world of "Nishida's philosophy" that has become famous worldwide. Because of this, prodigies gathered at Kyoto Imperial University from around the country wanting to study under Nishida. This eventually developed into the Kyoto School, which, for a long time, led Japan's philosophy movement. Nishida received the Order of Culture in 1940. He died in 1945 at the age of 75.

## Floor Map



## General Information

Hours	9:00 – 17:00 (Last admission: 16:30)
Closed	<b>Monday</b> (If Monday is a holiday, the following weekday) New Year holiday (December 29 – January 3) Exhibition change period, Maintenance period
Admission	<b>Adults: ¥300</b> (¥250/person for groups of more than 20) <b>Senior (65 and up): ¥200</b> <b>Students (High School and below): Free of charge</b>

The museum consists of two buildings: the Museum building and Seminar building (Observation Lounge, Workshop Rooms, Café Theoria, Library, Philosophy Hall). An admission fee is required only for entering the Museum building.

■ To use our facilities  
The Workshop Rooms, Philosophy Hall, and Foyer are open for public use.  
For more information about how to use our facilities, please see our website below.



### Access

By vehicle: Approx. 20 min. by National Route 159 from Kanazawa-Higashi IC on the Hokuriku Expressway  
Approx. 5 min. from Shiroko IC on Noto Satoyama Kaidō  
By JR train: Approx. 25 min. from Kanazawa Sta. to Utsunomiya Sta. on the Nanao Line

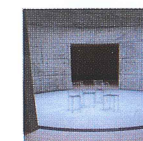
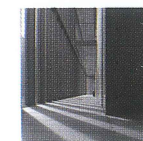


Ishikawa  
**Nishida Kitaro Museum of Philosophy**

1 Uchiyama I, Kahoku, Ishikawa 929-1126 TEL: (076) 283-6600

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E-mail [nishida-museum@city.kahoku.lg.jp](mailto:nishida-museum@city.kahoku.lg.jp)



## The Beginning of Philosophy.

See. Take action. Think.



Ishikawa  
**Nishida Kitaro Museum of Philosophy**



# Welcome to the Museum of Philosophy

Philosophy means "the love of wisdom."

This doesn't mean merely the collection of more information.

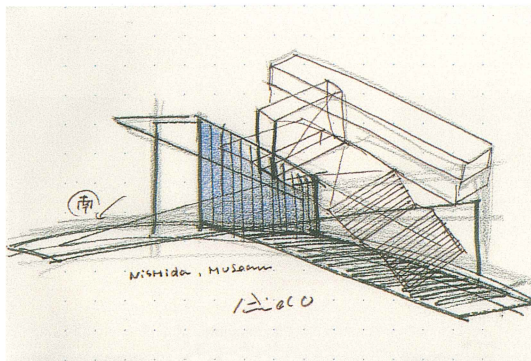
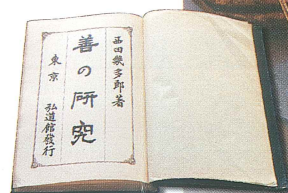
Philosophy is to wander and get lost, think, and seek the truth by oneself.

There is no need to understand right away.

Philosophy also cannot be explained in one word.

Walk on your own, pause, and go back again the way you came.

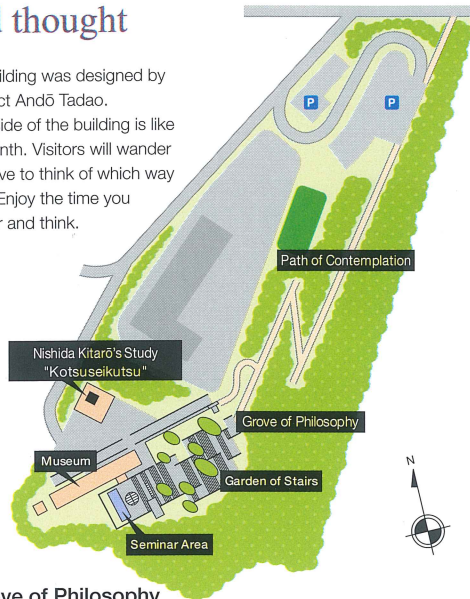
Do not seek an immediate answer, but think and take your time.



## Towards a new perspective of life and thought

The building was designed by architect Andō Tadao.

The inside of the building is like a labyrinth. Visitors will wander and have to think of which way to go. Enjoy the time you wander and think.



### ● Grove of Philosophy

You can enjoy walking through a forest of trees such as acacia, plum, cherry, Japanese bush clover, azalea, and Japanese pagoda trees as you contemplate philosophy.

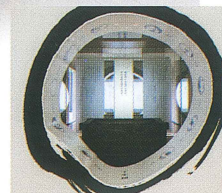
### ● Garden of Stairs

This stairway approach on a hilly landscape will let you feel a cool breeze brush against your cheek with each step you take

## Museum

### 1F Gallery 1 "Invitation to Philosophy"

With the motifs of a circle, a well, and a window, this "Introduction to Philosophy" area lets you understand the different ways of philosophical thinking. The different images and sounds will help you experience philosophy. Using a tablet terminal, you can enjoy a game of virtual philosophical discussions that lets you listen to the different opinions of famous philosophers.



Gallery 1

### 2F Gallery 2 "The World of Nishida Kitarō"

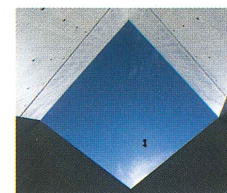
There is an exhibition of some 200 items related to Nishida. They include some things that he used every day, his manuscripts, letters, etc. Each item is exhibited with an explanation to let visitors understand the path of his philosophical development, and his character as a person. It will let you understand Nishida, not only as a philosopher, but also from different perspectives, including Nishida as a family person, a teacher, and a friend. You can also listen to his recorded voice.



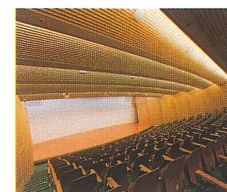
Gallery 2

### B1F Gallery 3 "Calligraphic Works of Nishida Kitarō"

Nishida was not just engaged in philosophy, but he also enjoyed writing Japanese poems, and doing calligraphy. This is where you can see his calligraphy works. Calligraphy is a distinct feature of Eastern culture different from the West. And through calligraphy, you will be able to connect with his ideas and spirit.



The Space of Emptiness



Philosophy Hall

### The Space of Emptiness

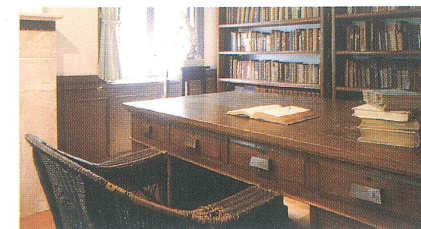
From the sky cut into a square shape, raindrops will fall on a rainy day, and snowflakes will pile up on a snowy day. Four straight walls stretch from the basement to the sky, creating an empty square space that will let you contemplate all you want.

### ● Museum Shop (1F)

This is "an oasis of the mind".

Philosophy up close and easy to understand.

Experience the joy of contemplation at this museum.



Nishida Kitarō's study "Kotsuseikutsu"

## Seminar Area

### 1F Library

Aside from books on Nishida Kitarō, there is a collection of more than 9,000 books on philosophy, including introductory books and specialized books. This is a library of philosophy open to everybody.

### 2F Café Theoria

### 3F Workshop Room 1

### 4F Workshop Room 2

The workshop rooms can be used for study meetings, seminars, conferences and other purposes.

### 5F Observation Lounge

You can get a spectacular view of the beaches of the Sea of Japan, with white sand and green pine trees, the magnificent Kahokugata Lagoon, and a panoramic view of the spiritual mountains of the Hakusan mountain range.

### B1F Foyer

A basin shaped circular space with curved concrete walls stretching toward the skylight in the ceiling. It is a meditation space where you can see the blue sky cut out in the shape of a circle.

### Philosophy Hall (303 seats)

Every year, the "Summer Philosophy Course" is held here, as well as other discussions about the knowledge of the world. Movies, concerts, and other events can also be held here aside from symposiums and lectures.

