Press Release

For Immediate Release

Massachusetts Seminars to Highlight Efforts to Save Japan's Endangered Traditional Structures — from Kominka Farmhouses and Kura Storehouses to Temples and Shrines

Boston, MA – [September 21, 2025] – Preservation leaders and timber framers from Japan and North America will gather in Massachusetts this October to present a seminar series on efforts to protect Japan's **endangered traditional wooden structures — including kominka farmhouses, kura storehouses, temples, and shrines — many of which are at risk of demolition due to depopulation, changing lifestyles, and economic pressures.**

Organized under the umbrella of the **Kominka Preservation Alliance**, the seminars will explore the cultural heritage embodied in these structures, the traditional building arts that sustain them, and the creative ways they are being preserved and reimagined both in Japan and abroad. Participants will learn about the history and significance of kominka, kura, temples, and shrines; current preservation challenges; and inspiring examples of adaptive reuse that connect these buildings to contemporary community life.

These seminars welcome anyone with an interest in Japan's culture and heritage—from traditional architecture and craft to rural life and community revitalization. Participation is **free of charge**.

Massachusetts Event Details

- **Martha's Vineyard**: October 16 at Stillpoint, 20 Stillpoint Meadows Road, West Tisbury, MA
- **Boston**: October 18 at Showa Boston Institute, 420 Pond Street, Boston, MA
- **Boston**: October 19 at MIT, 77 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA

Registration is required: www.kominkapreservationalliance.com

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Voices from the Alliance

Koji Toda, Managing Director of **Toda Komuten**, said:
"Our family carpentry company has been dedicated to traditional Japanese construction since the Taishō era. It is a profound honor to share these time-tested techniques with international colleagues and to see kominka find new life abroad while still honoring their origins."

Billy Dillon, Partner at **Kominka North America**, said:
"In North America, there is growing appreciation for sustainability and cultural authenticity. Relocated kominka embody both, offering a chance to live within history while shaping vibrant, cross-cultural futures. This seminar series is an invitation to be part of that journey."

Lauren Scharf, Communications Director of the **Minka Preservation Society**, said:
"These seminars are about more than learning—they are about building bridges. By sharing the beauty and resilience of Japan's wooden heritage, we hope to spark new collaborations that support rural revitalization and cultural exchange."

Andrea Carlson, Director of the **Kominka Collective** and Programs & Initiatives Director of the **Minka Preservation Society**, said:
"Kominka are more than houses—they are vessels of memory, community, and craftsmanship. By preserving and reimagining these structures, we ensure that the skills and stories they hold continue to inspire and connect future generations, both in Japan and across the world."

About the Kominka Preservation Alliance

The **Kominka Preservation Alliance** is a collaborative platform that unites four organizations in Japan and North America with a shared mission: to preserve Japan's disappearing farmhouses, machiya, kura, temples, shrines, and other traditional wooden structures; to pass on the building arts and craft traditions that sustain them; and to support the revitalization of rural communities.

Alliance members include: **Kominka Collective, Toda Komuten, Kominka North America, and the Minka Preservation Society (MINKA).**

Media inquiries and further information:
Andrea Carlson
Kominka Preservation Alliance
contact@kominkapreservationalliance.com