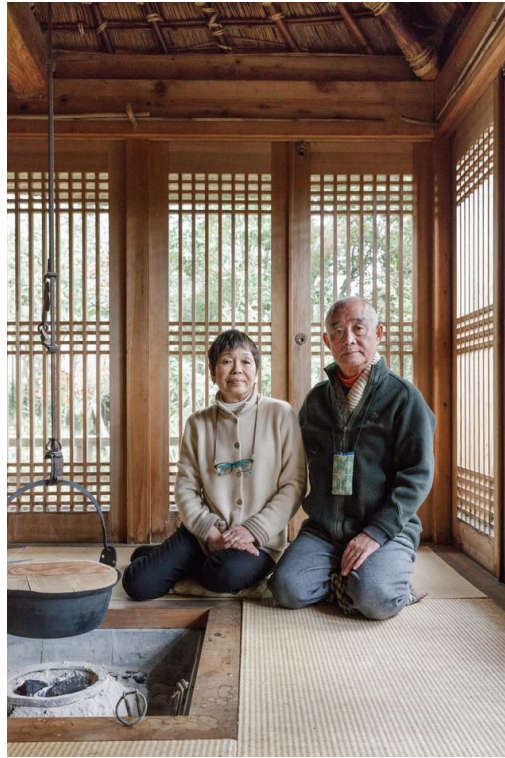


# SHOES OFF — — JAPAN MINKA



**LUCY ALEXANDER**  
Feb. 16, 2017

Japanese home design is admired everywhere in the world—except in Japan. The aesthetic of minimalism, clean lines and natural wood is usually rejected in favor of brand-new, factory-built concrete boxes. Across the country, classic wooden houses called minka, or “people’s houses,” built prewar using immaculate Japanese carpentry, lie empty and rotting, abandoned by a declining population and rebuffed by city dwellers.

Now, minka are getting another look from a younger generation that prioritizes energy conservation, sustainability and traditional crafts. One increasingly popular solution is to dismantle minka, move them from their original, often remote, locations and rebuild them with modern facilities somewhere new.

The government will launch a searchable database of empty houses this year—there are 211,437 empty minka in Japan, according to a 2015 report by the Development Bank of Japan—as well as “a ¥50-billion public-private fund to invest in old houses,” says Nobu Takahashi of the Japan Minka Revival Association. The percentage of households buying existing homes is predicted to rise to 48% in 2030 from 29% in 2015.

Architects who specialize in relocating minka say business is picking up. German architect Karl Bengs says he has relocated and sold more than 40 minka. After a career spent trying to fathom why Japanese people “travel to see old buildings in England and Italy” but then “destroy everything in their own country,”



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NEW YORK  
BASED  
FILMMAKER

# CASEY NEISTAT

Break Rules, Reinvent, Make Money.



OCT  
27/15

**Casey Neistat** is a New York-based filmmaker. His films have been viewed nearly 300 million times to date. He is the writer, director, editor, and star of the series *The Neistat Brothers* on HBO and won the John Cassavetes Award at the 2011 Independent Spirit Awards for the film *Daddy Long Legs*. His main body of work consists of dozens of short films he has released exclusively on the Internet, including regular contributions to the New York Times critically acclaimed *Op-Docs* series.

He is also the founder of Beme, a startup aiming to make creating and sharing video dead simple. Casey Neistat is excellent at breaking every rule imaginable and having people thank him for it. We dig into his

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history, techniques and habits. As a YouTube sensation he’s helping to reinvent the way advertising is done on the Internet. Neistat isn’t your typical ad man. “I f\*\*king hate ads,” he said during a panel discussion at the Northside Innovation Festival in Brooklyn, N.Y., earlier this summer. “The idea that somebody would go to my YouTube channel and want to watch movies and then be subjected to some terrible car commercial — I don’t like that.”

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