

Oscar Tuazon
Circle House
(2026)

Oscar Tuazon's *Circle House* (2026) extends a practice that has consistently tested the thresholds between sculpture, architecture, and lived environment. Across his career, Tuazon has approached building not as a purely functional discipline nor as a metaphorical device, but as a site of tension: between autonomy and use, between formal rigor and bodily occupation, between conceptual systems and material contingency.

Tuazon's work has long drawn from structuralism in both its architectural and philosophical dimensions. Structurally, his constructions often foreground load, joinery, and the logic of assembly; beams bear weight visibly, fasteners remain legible, and materials are neither disguised nor subordinated to illusion. Conceptually, this structural exposure aligns with a broader inquiry into systems – how meaning, space, and subjectivity are organized through frameworks that precede individual expression. In *Circle House* (2026), structure and symbol converge in the figure of three “circles.” Rather than treating these circles as abstract motifs, Tuazon renders them spatially, experiential, and inhabitable.

The work explicitly channels the concept of the *ensō*, the single-brush circle associated with enlightenment, emptiness, and disciplined spontaneity. The *ensō* is not simply a shape; it is a record of a moment – gesture made visible, mind made trace. Traditionally, it is executed in one continuous stroke, revealing the state of the artist at the instant of its making. By translating this calligraphic act into architecture, Tuazon performs a significant transformation: the ephemeral mark becomes a durable enclosure; the instantaneous gesture becomes a site of sustained occupation. The circle ceases to be an image and becomes an environment.

This translation recalls the spatial logic of traditional Japanese tea houses, whose architecture is inseparable from ritual, temporality, and philosophical orientation. Emerging from the aesthetics of *wabi-sabi* and Zen-inflected minimalism, the tea house is deliberately modest. Constructed of natural materials – wood and paper – it privileges tactility and proportion over monumentality. Its entrance encourages guests to pause, symbolically leveling social hierarchies and preparing the body for contemplative presence. The interior is sparse, defined by *tatami* mats that regulate spatial rhythm and bodily orientation. Every element, from the *tokonoma* alcove to the kettle's placement, participates in a choreography of attention.

Oscar Tuazon *Circle House* (2026)

Tuazon's *Circle House* (2026), while conceptually framed, resonates within this lineage. It operates both as a sculptural object to be viewed and as a spatial condition to be entered. The invitation is literal and figurative, as the work proposes a mode of gathering oriented toward reflection and shared time. Commissioned by rocky's matcha and activated through traditional Japanese tea ceremonies, the installation is both artwork and functional environment. The circular plan destabilizes hierarchies of front and back, dispersing focus evenly and encouraging relational presence. Like the tea house, it frames a shared interior defined less by ornament than by proportion and atmosphere. Emptiness, central to the ensō, is reinterpreted architecturally: the interior void is not absence but potential, a space activated by bodies, ritual, and time.



Circle House, 2026
Cardboard, wood, and tatami mats
173 x 175 x 110 inches
(440 x 444.5 x 279.5 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, rocky's
matcha, and Morán Morán

Oscar Tuazon works with natural and industrial materials to create objects, structures, and installations that can be used, occupied, or otherwise engaged by viewers. With a strong interest and influence from architecture and minimalism, Tuazon turns both disciplines on its head as he mangles, twists, combines, and connects steel, glass, concrete, two-by-fours, tree trunks, burnt wood, and found objects. The artist produces objects and environments that draw out humanity's relationship to buildings, interior and exterior spaces, and other objects and structures. He focuses on raising awareness and presenting alternatives – rethinking the tools and equipment that we use to build, as well as the construction techniques we employ, and the ambitions we have for building; inhabiting and being part of a landscape while preserving it.

Oscar Tuazon (b. 1975, Seattle, WA) lives and works in Los Angeles, CA, and Oil City, WA. Recent institutional solo exhibitions include *Water School*, Kunsthalle Bergen, Bergen (2023); *What we need*, Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Bielefeld (2023); *Building*, Kunst Museum Winterthur, Winterthur (2023); *Oscar Tuazon: Fire Worship* at the Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO (2020); *Oscar Tuazon: Collaborator* at Bellevue Arts Museum, Bellevue, WA (2019); *Oscar Tuazon: Water School* at MSU Broad Museum, East Lansing, MI (2019); *Oscar Tuazon: Hammer Projects* at the Hammer Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles, CA (2016); *Studio* at Le Consortium, Dijon, France (2015); and *Sensory Spaces 1*, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, The Netherlands (2013). He has been commissioned for numerous public art works including *To Our Teachers deq^ualed (Houseposts)*, Waterfront Park, Seattle, WA (2024); *Growth Rings* for Central Wharf Park in Boston, MA (2019); a large-scale installation *Une colonne d'eau* in the Place Vendôme, Paris, France (2017); and *Un pont sans fin* for Nouveaux Commanditaires, Belfort, France (2016). Tuazon's work has been exhibited in numerous institutional group exhibitions around the world, among them the 34th Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2021); Chicago Architecture Biennial, Chicago, IL (2019); Skulptur Projekte, Münster, Germany (2017); Documenta 14, Athens, Greece (2017); Triennale d'art contemporain de Beaufort, Ostend, Belgium (2015); Whitney Biennial, New York, NY (2012); and the Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy (2011).