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Admire

Special Issue

Story of the Cycle of Life Told in Cardboard

Color

Paper Companions to Brighten
Long Autumn Nights

Explore

KPP Group Sustainability Vision 2030: Toward a
Company That Creates Global Environmental Value

TSUNAGU is a public relations magazine published by KPP GROUP HOLDINGS CO., LTD. An exploration in rediscovering a fascination with paper, we link paper and culture, paper and business, and paper and people.

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Story of the Cycle of Life Told in Cardboard

Wild animals in full 3D — charming, yet powerful, with such rich expressions and in dynamic poses that they radiate vitality, as if you can hear them breathing. These sozo* sculptures are created with cardboard previously used as packing materials. Sculptor Taki Tamada uses her unique sculpting techniques to transform everyday cardboard into captivating works of art. Bringing together the concepts of recycling materials and restoring life, her work quietly speaks to the future of our society.

*Sozo: Soft materials, usually clay, but also paper or plaster, shaped into three-dimensional sculptures of people, animals, and other motifs.



Pressure (2022), shoebill motif, Wood One Museum of Art



Jikoai ("Narcissism") (2018), orangutan motif, Wood One Museum of Art



Providence (2016), deer motif



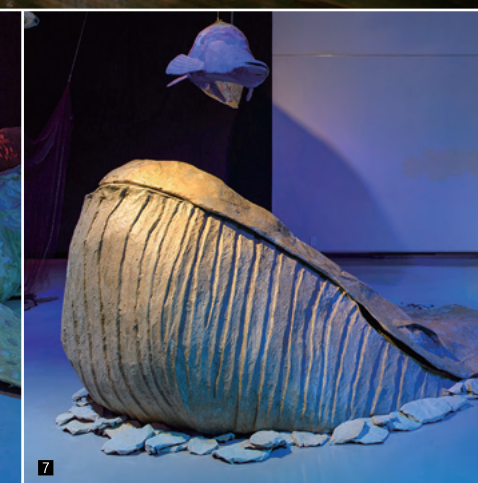
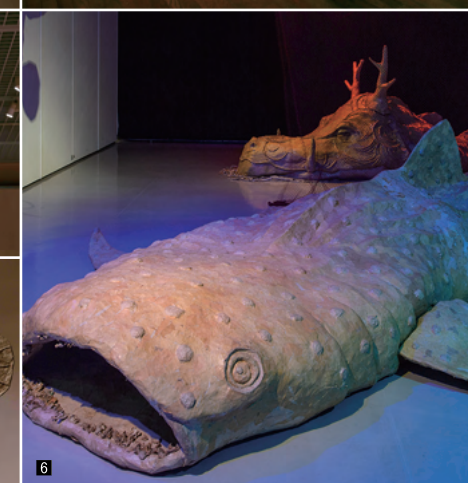
My way (2023), dodo motif, Wood One Museum of Art



Pattern (2022), tiger motif, Wood One Museum of Art



nonsense (2023), pangolin motif, Wood One Museum of Art



Photos 1 - 5 : Tomohiro Inazawa

“I want to breathe life into used cardboard and convey the ‘living reality’ of the wild animals that are facing extinction.”

An orangutan, arms wrapped around its body, seems to speak with its gaze, tinged with sorrow. A tiger, mouth open wide, displays fierce fangs. The shoebill stands with serene dignity, caught perched on a moment of time. Although the smooth surface of these endangered wild animals makes them appear to be sozo sculptures made of clay, they are in fact created entirely from cardboard. Their fur, wrinkled skin, undulating muscles, even the depth of emotion in the eyes and the facial expressions that engage the viewer — all brim with amusing personality that seem somehow human.

“I am not simply looking for realism. I layer and rearrange images I have in my mind,” says Taki Tamada, a sculptor whose medium is cardboard. She guides us straight away to the vast storage facility that houses her work. Here, specimens of wildlife, freed from their wrappings, lay quietly in rows. Most of Tamada’s work features creatures of the land and sea. Among them, her recently released series *Zetsumetsu Kigushu no Monogatari* (“Tales of Endangered Species”) has garnered a great deal of attention for the questions her pieces pose about dangers to ecosystems from the point of view of the creatures that inhabit them. “I didn’t start creating these works with endangered species in mind. I chose motifs based on the sculptural beauty and fascinating characteristics of certain animals. But before I knew it, most of my works were of endangered animals. I express the concept of regeneration — breathing new life into endangered species — through the use of discarded cardboard. This is the fundamental theme of my

creative work.”

Poaching and deforestation has dramatically reduced the orangutan population and the area they inhabit. Looking at the orangutan that Tamada has created, the viewer is met with a gaze that seems cold and emotionless.

“The label endangered species is one that humans have come up with. The animals themselves don’t give it a second thought; they simply go quietly about their daily lives. I’ve adopted their perspective, accepting human action without resistance, to express the self-centered egotism of humans who act without regard for others,” she says.

Cardboard is a material that is essential to our lives. Lightweight, yet strong, it is used in so many ways as the best packaging material to protect products. Tamada began using cardboard in her work while at art college.

“I was majoring in oil painting, but I began using cardboard, tearing it up and gluing it down to create flat collages. In a sense, I became fascinated by the properties of cardboard while playing around with it. It is solid and strong, but has a flexibility when you bend or crush it, so it can be shaped relatively easily to create whatever form you want. It’s readily available and easy to use, and above all, it’s light, so even large three-dimensional pieces are easy to transport. It suited me perfectly, I think.”

Not just any cardboard will do, though, when she is making her art.

“I usually get what I need from a nearby drugstore, but I’ve had



1 | Bend and roll torn pieces of cardboard to soften them, then shape them into a mold (see step 5 for its finished form).



2 | Soak in water to separate into three layers: top and bottom sheets of paper and corrugated core.



3 | Apply craft glue to top sheets of paper, then affix to mold to create animal body or other object.



4 | Make clay-like material by mixing craft glue with wet paper and rolling into ball, and use for fine, detailed shaping.



5 | Once dry, the paper affixed with craft glue will adhere without peeling.



6 | Smaller works of art, prototypes and rough sketches displayed in the studio

more opportunity lately to get cardboard from workshops and other places that no longer need it. We use the word cardboard as if it's all just one thing, but it comes in quite a wide range of colors, so it's difficult to find a close match to repair my older works. If I can't find the color I need, I sometimes leave cardboard in a sunny spot so that the color fades."

Tamada mostly uses cardboard in its natural state without any added color.

"The cardboard's look and feel lends a warmth to the animal's expression," she says. "And since the eye tends to move first to color, I deliberately choose not to add color so that viewers can first focus on the form itself. After fully taking in the form, I hope people will then appreciate the different shades of the cardboard."

Her works stand distinctly apart from the arts-and-crafts-like cardboard art made with usual cardboard. Tamada achieves a smooth texture that looks at a glance like clay sculpture using unique techniques that she developed through a process of experimentation.

"First, I create a rough mold using cardboard. I then take more cardboard, bending and crushing it to soften it, and soak it in a basin of water to peel the flat paper on the front and back away from the corrugated core. I tear pieces from the peeled paper and glue them directly onto the cardboard mold or mix them with glue to form a substance more like clay that I use for shaping. I layer these pieces onto the mold, patching and layering again and again," she explains.

Tamada does more than simply use cardboard as it is. She softens it back to its soft raw paper state and manipulates it to achieve fine details that evoke everything from muscles, fur, and bumpy skin to scales. The animals she made appear

poised to spring to life. This sense of vitality emerges from her unique techniques perfected through trial and error, the natural warmth of cardboard's color, and a purely hand-crafted process that avoids any cutting instruments.

In addition, Tamada shares all of the unique sculpting techniques that she has developed through years of hard work on social media and in workshops.

"As an artist, I very much want to leave behind not only my art, but also the sculpting techniques that I have developed. I don't just want my name to go down as an inventor. I want the people who view my work to be inspired to create something themselves. In fact, I couldn't be happier that, after seeing an exhibition or participating in a workshop, so many people say they want to try it themselves at home. For that reason, too, my goal is to be included in all art and crafts textbooks for elementary through high school."

Tamada actively holds workshops alongside her exhibitions, as well as those hosted by local governments, public facilities, schools, and other educational institutions, to teach people about her sculpting techniques.

"I mostly hold workshops for parents and children to participate in together. I give them two hours to create together one piece of art based on a living creature, and as I think about how to break the instructions down in a way that children can understand, I often come to new realizations. I want to keep doing this because the children's ideas can open up new perspectives for me," she says. "The fact that people tell me they want to see my work and that they ask me to teach them how to do it is what drives me." This motivation will surely only continue to build for Tamada.



1|2 Outdoor dinosaur sculptures exhibited at Echigo-Tsumari Art Field in Niigata in 2024. Photo 1 was taken on June 30, the day of installation; photo 2 was taken on October 7 after the event ended. 3 The life-sized rear ends of animals are the motif of the *Oshiri no Monogatari* ("Tales of Rear Ends") series. 4|5|6 Works displayed at her studio; Tamada has also created numerous cardboard art works depicting subjects other than animals.



"Cardboard is a material that can return to the earth and is easily recycled."

I hope that my work will allow people to enjoy the aging process of cardboard."

Another charming aspect of Tamada's work is her impressive outdoor exhibits of massive animals. Last year, she exhibited an outdoor work of a dinosaur over 5 meters long at the Echigo-Tsumari Art Field held in Niigata Prefecture.

"This work depicts the process of change, as the material decays over the course of the 86-day exhibition. The dinosaur was toppled by heavy rain just before the exhibit opened. After the exhibition ended, it was removed and permanently installed on private property in the mountains, but it was later flattened by the weight of heavy snowfall. It still lies there in that state today, and in a few years, it will be completely eroded by microbial activity. I only use

cardboard and glue in my work, so it can be recycled and return as cardboard again, and over time, it can return to earth. Trees become cardboard, are reborn as artwork, then return to the earth to nourish the forest, and then become paper again. This cycle is only possible because of the unique advantages that paper offers."

Tamada says becoming a mother has changed her perspective on her creative work. Not only does her work breathe new life into cardboard that has served its original purpose, but her creative approach — shaped by a vision for future generations and the environment — continues to invite reflection on what lies ahead.

Taki Tamada | Sculptor

PROFILE

Born in Hyogo Prefecture in 1983. Graduated from the Department of Art and Design, Faculty of Art and Design, Tama Art University. Tamada creates three-dimensional artwork using original techniques that leverage the unique properties of cardboard. In addition to exhibiting at museums and public spaces both in and outside Japan, she is active across a wide range of fields, including window displays, media appearances, and workshops in educational settings. Her work is part of the collections of The World Children's Art Museum in Okazaki and the Wood One Museum of Art in Hiroshima.



Paper Companions to Brighten Long Autumn Nights

As the summer heat fades and the first whispers of winter draw near, autumn emerges as the most pleasant season of the year. With its crisp, clear air and tranquil nights, autumn is the perfect time to immerse yourself in your favorite hobbies, nourish the soul with some reading, and unwind as you enjoy quiet moments all your own. Here, we introduce paper items that will enrich your time at home. If any of them catch your eye, give them a try, and craft an autumn uniquely your own.

A paper-folded teapot for authentic outdoor tea experience

Paper Teapot and Tea Leaves

Sold by: Kami no Kyusu to Cha no Ha Jimukyoku
<https://www.kaminokyusu.com/>

Autumn nights offer the serene luxury of deep quiet and the gentle flow of time. On such long nights, savoring tea becomes a precious moment of profound calm and relaxation. Teabags offer convenience, but for the Japanese, the process of steeping tea leaves in a teapot, patiently waiting for them to unfurl, and pouring the infusion into cups is a small ceremony that soothes the mind. For tea connoisseurs, we recommend the paper teapot, an item that lets you enjoy authentic tea anywhere. Simply fold the flat-packaged sheet of paper along the lines, and in no time you will have a Japanese teapot with a spout. Made of the same material as milk cartons, this teapot is waterproof, so there is no need to worry about hot water leaking. It is a must-have companion for enjoying the autumn moon-viewing tradition, whether in the garden or by the river.

Available in three options: one, three, and five foldable paper sheets. Four set options with premium tea leaves are also available.



01



Adorable animal-shaped bookmarks with a ballpoint pen at their toes, perfect for tucking into your planner or book

Tiptoes

Sold by: SUGAI WORLD, Inc.
<https://sugaiworld.com/>

Tiptoes is a tool that combines two functions: a bookmark to mark where you left off, and a pen to jot down any ideas or impressions that come to mind. It blends practicality with the charm of adorable animal designs. Slip it into your book, letting the page rest between the animal's paws and body, and it becomes a cute bookmark peeking out from the top. At just 4mm thick, it is slim enough to fit into a planner or book without adding bulk. The ballpoint pen at the animal's toes is retractable, so you do not have to worry about staining the paper. The product is made of FSC-certified paper that is environmentally-friendly and biodegradable, yet sturdy and resilient like plastic. As autumn deepens, let it be your charming little companion during moments of reading or work.

Available in three designs: Black Cat, Rabbit, and Panda.

03

Art-inspired jigsaw puzzles that let you appreciate the colors and compositions of famous paintings

Jigsaw Puzzles of Famous Paintings

Sold by: Beverly Enterprises Inc.
<https://be-en.co.jp/pages/jigsawpuzzle-top>

In autumn, as the days grow shorter and the nights stretch on, it is lovely to have a pursuit that invites deep concentration. For those seeking quiet time at home, these jigsaw puzzles inspired by famous paintings are the perfect choice. Assembling the pieces to reconstruct the paintings is a creative process. The time spent working on the puzzles itself can become a sort of meditative practice that helps to soothe the mind. In addition to the quiet excitement of nearing completion, piecing the puzzles together creates the sensation of following the artists' brushstrokes and uncovering the meaning hidden within the compositions. Once completed, the puzzles can be framed and displayed, becoming decorative pieces that bring rich colors to your space. Choose a masterpiece that resonates with your personal aesthetic.



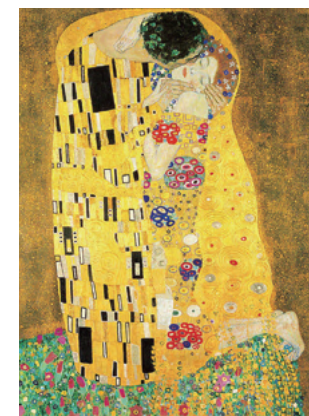
Woman with a Parasol - Madame Monet and Her Son by Claude Monet
(1000 micro-pieces / Size: 380×260mm)



The Actor Otani Oniji III as Edobei by Toshusai Sharaku
(300 pieces / Size: 380×260mm)



Young Woman Blowing a Popen by Kitagawa Utamaro
(300 pieces / Size: 380×260mm)



The Kiss by Gustav Klimt
(1000 micro-pieces / Size: 380×260mm)



The Milkmaid by Johannes Vermeer
(1000 micro-pieces / Size: 380×260mm)



Young Girls at the Piano by Pierre-Auguste Renoir
(1000 micro-pieces / Size: 380×260mm)

04



A journal that captures words and emotions discovered through reading, infused with the dedication of a writer and a bookstore

Dokusho Kotoba Saishu (lit. Harvest Words Notebook)

Sold by: HIRAKU INC.
<https://libropb.stores.jp/>

The beautiful sentences and memorable words that catch you by surprise while reading can offer hints when you face life's crossroads, or they can offer guidance to make your daily life more fulfilling. We recommend the Dokusho Kotoba Saishu as a journal for recording the words and phrases you encounter in your reading that truly touch your heart. Created in a collaboration between BUNKITSU, a popular bookstore known for its innovative style, and Miyu Otani, a model who is also active as a writer, this journal is compact enough to fit snugly even between the pages of a small-format paperback. From the texture and color of the paper, to the binding and the design that lets its owner freely record the words and impressions discovered when reading, this product has been crafted with exquisite attention to detail. Let this journal be your companion for recording words and emotions that touch you as you read.

Size: 138×95mm; 64 pages and covers; sold as a set of three.

The bookstore BUNKITSU, which created this product, is featured in the "Visit" section on the back cover. We invite you to take a look.

Presenting the KPP Group's Diligent Efforts toward Realizing a Sustainable Society

KPP Sustainable Times

The circulation and recycling of limited resources and energy is an extremely important issue in today's world. Based on the KPP Group mission of "Contributing to the realization of a recycling-oriented society," we are working to build a sustainable society through our business activities.

KPP Group's Resource Recycling-oriented Business Model Featured on TV TOKYO Network's *Unknown Gulliver*

The KPP Group was introduced on *Unknown Gulliver – Excellent Company File*, an economic documentary program produced by the TV TOKYO Network, which aired on August 2 (Saturday). The program featured our group as one of Japan's hidden gems, highlighting the possibilities of paper and the facts behind our resource recycling-oriented business model.

Filming took place from late June through early July. Thanks to the generous cooperation of our esteemed external partners and the support from within, the program provided a thoughtful, detailed introduction to the KPP Group's wide-ranging activities. Footage filmed at the recovered paper yard of Musashino Paper Recycling Co., Ltd., one of our principal affiliates, showcased how used paper products are collected and recycled into new resources while footage at KPP Logistics Co., Ltd. highlighted real-life operations at distribution sites, such as cutting and sorting various types of paper.

The program also featured water-resistance strength tests of OJO⁺ paper yarn conducted on the roof of our Head Office building, along with scenes of OJO⁺ paper turf in use at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. These segments put the spotlight on our pioneering efforts to explore new ways to utilize paper. The program also showcased the sorghum cultivation operations of KPP Agri Solutions Co., Ltd., as well as our initiatives for global expansion via overseas mergers and acquisitions. Overall, it gave viewers a good picture of the wide-ranging activities of the KPP Group.

The program featured an interview with KPP Group Holdings President Yasuyuki Sakata, along with the comments from Hajime Hosogai, former member of Japan's national soccer team and now President of the J.League club Thespa Gunma. Incorporating the perspective of a university student reporter, the program explored new possibilities for paper for the next generation, with a composition that conveyed a creativity and hope for the future.

Through this program, we successfully communicated the KPP Group's resource recycling-oriented business model as well as our commitment to creating environmental value. We would like to once again express our sincere gratitude to all those who kindly supported the filming and broadcast of the program.



Unknown Gulliver – Excellent Company File

Airs every Saturday from 18:00 to 18:30 on TV TOKYO Network.

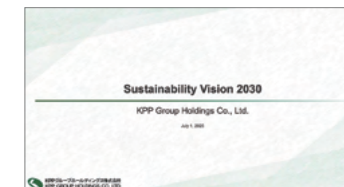
* Used with permission from Trusco Nakayama Corporation. Unauthorized reproduction or modification is prohibited.

A documentary program introducing the activities and philosophy of outstanding Japanese companies

Scan the QR code for more information about the program ▶



KPP Group Sustainability Vision 2030: Toward a Company That Creates Global Environmental Value



The KPP Group has established a new long-term management vision, "GIFT 2030," looking ahead to 2030. Guided by this vision, we have formulated the KPP Group Sustainability Vision 2030. What we value most, as stated in our mission, is helping to build a sustainable society.

The environment surrounding the paper and pulp industry is undergoing a major transformation. Companies are facing growing demand to reduce their environmental impact through recycled and eco-responsible products, and at the same time, new business opportunities are expanding. In line with the KPP GROUP WAY, we will boldly confront environmental and social challenges and steadily advance the implementation of our vision.

To respond effectively to sustainability challenges, we have established

committees in the fields of environment, society, and governance. Specifically, we have set up expert committees responsible for various themes, including compliance, risk management, environmental management, occupational safety, and information security. Each committee has formulated plans and goals, and is making steady progress toward their achievement. We are promoting these initiatives not only in Japan, but across the entire Group, through frequent exchanges of ideas with our overseas offices.

The latest activities are available on our corporate website. The KPP Group will continue to take on challenges, expanding the potential of paper to new horizons, while striving to create a sustainable and prosperous society.



KPP Group Sustainability Vision 2030

https://www.kpp-gr.com/en/csr/sustainability-vision-2030/main/0/link/Sustainability%20vision%202030_EN_01.pdf



KPP Group Way

https://www.kpp-gr.com/en/company/kpp_group_way.html

KPP Group Sustainability Vision 2030

Our goal for 2030

A company that creates global environmental value in response to sustainability requirements

Long-Term Goals for 2050

Achievement of net zero GHG emissions for Scope 1 and 2 in group consolidation

Medium-Term Goals

Reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions intensity by 3.3% annually (compared to the previous year) across the KPP Group

KPP Group Materiality

- Global expansion
- Implementation of eco-responsible business
- Promotion of human capital management
- Response to DX
- Climate change countermeasures
- Enhancement of governance

Environment

- Aim to measure and set targets up to Scope 3 for the entire Group
- Develop various circular businesses to reduce environmental impact

Social

- Promote human capital management, including DE & I, and recruit and utilize diverse personnel
- Ensure the fulfillment of occupational safety and health and other obligations that form the basis of corporate management

Governance

- Base business on compliance and risk management to address uncertainty
- Optimize group governance and generate group synergies

Data Management and Disclosure

- Introduce a global data management system and respond to disclosure requirements
- Receive high rating through compliance with international standards, leading to investment and branding

Making Letters Speak

Tomone Uemura

Humans are creatures who express their thoughts. I feel that letters are the most profound and noble form of human expression. When it comes to letters, hand-written letters are best. When we try to read between the lines, we can see the personality of the writer.

Vol. 42: Ichiro Sugai

Hito ni Rekishi Ari (“Everyone Has a Story”) was a television program that used interviews to explore the life story of accomplished individuals. As a member of the programming department, I was involved with the program from the initial planning stage. While negotiating to book Shinpei Ikejima as the guest for the premiere episode to be broadcast on May 15, 1968, I was moved from programming to the production section, where I was put in charge of directing the show just six months later, in October. I directed the episodes for some two and a half years. Although I was rather good at coming up with concepts for programs and enjoyed that work, I was not cut out for hands-on production work and was initially averse to making the move. Before I knew it, though, I had met many people and found myself blending into a workplace that offered quite a flexible time schedule, as well. I loved the people and was happy to be able to express myself through the programs that I produced.

Film actress Takako Irie was booked as the main guest in June 1970. Although few people know of her these days, she was descended from the former aristocracy and was one of the great actresses of the Showa era (1926–1989). Before the war, she had her own production company, producing dozens of films like *Taki no Shiraito* (“The Water Magician”) while also starring in them. Her big hits included

Tsuki Yori no Shisha (“Messenger from the Moon”) and *Otto no Teiso* (“Husband’s Chastity”). Although she did not have much great success after the war, she still appeared in a number of films and made quite an impression in Akira Kurosawa’s *Tsubaki Sanjuro* (“Sanjuro”) as the chamberlain’s wife.

Looking at the script for that episode, I see the names include not just Takako Irie, but also classmates from Bunka Gakuin such as Shizue Natsukawa and Satoko Date, as well as Tomu Uchida, Eiji Nakano, Minoru Takada, Wakaba Irie, and Ichiro Sugai. After graduating from Bunka Gakuin, Irie joined the Kyoto-based *shingeki* (new style theater) troupe Elan Vital, where she proved to be very popular. It was the young director Tomu Uchida who invited her into the world of film, directing her silver screen debut *Kechinbo Choj*a (“Stingy Millionaire”). This was the first of over a dozen films she appeared in that year. Eiji Nakano became her co-star from her third film, *Gekijo* (“Passion”), and Minoru Takada co-starred with her in such major hits as *Tsuki Yori no Shisha* and *Otto no Teiso*.

When she appeared on *Hito ni Rekishi Ari* in 1970, she would have been only 59 years old. Some may already know that in her later years she appeared in *bakeneko* (shape-shifting cat) movies and was dubbed the “ghost cat actress.” In response to the host Jiro Yagi’s question, she replied, “Not long after my marriage, I fell ill and went through a divorce. So I was left with two children to care for, and my film work wasn’t going as I’d hoped. I did the *bakeneko* films to make a living. I simply thought if I’m going to do these films, I might as well make them good.”

For the finale, the program ended with a message from her daughter Wakaba, “From the time I became aware of things, my mother never showed any sign of hardship. She lived each moment to the fullest. No matter what others may say, I applaud the way my mother lived life.”

Wakaba was the lovely actress who played Otsu in the five-film masterpiece directed by Uchida, *Miyamoto Musashi*. I may be tooting my own horn here, but regardless of the program’s quality, I still consider it a remarkable achievement that we were able to bring together the leading figures of Japanese cinema’s early days, including Irie, as well as Natsukawa, Uchida, Nakano, and Takada.

I have talked too long about Irie, though, when what I want to discuss is Ichiro Sugai and the postcard that he sent me. Sugai was both a film actor and a director. In *Hito ni Rekishi Ari*, Sugai introduced the story of how Irie became the first Japanese actress to have her own production company. Irie Productions, he said, was merely a front created by the film studio Shinko Kinema to poach Irie’s popularity from Nikkatsu Studios. Largely a company in name only, there were just five people on staff: Irie; her older brother, Yasunaga Higashibojo; her brother-in-law and screenwriter Chiyou Kimura; Sugai; and Irie’s apprentice. The real story, he said, was that they were simply paid a salary by Shinko Kinema. It seems to me, though, that this story is somewhat exaggerated. The company’s first production, *Manmo Kenkoku no Reimei* (“The Dawn of Manchuria and Mongolia”) directed by Kenji Mizoguchi, was a major undertaking, involving overseas location shoots and taking half a year to film. The production company also had a studio in the Kyoto neighborhood of Omuro and, though short-lived, it did operate for the five years from 1932 to 1937, releasing more than ten films, so it wasn’t entirely a production company in name only.

I first met Sugai when working on the program about Irie. He was 63 years old at the time and a remarkably smart and intelligent actor and filmmaker. From the silent film era until his death in 1973 at age 66, he appeared in approximately 300 movies and directed two films at Nikkatsu Studios, as well, *Dorodarake no Seishun* (“Muddy Youth”) and *Franki no Uchujin* (“Franky is an Alien”). As an actor, he was a distinctive character actor with a commanding presence, highly valued by such masters of Japanese cinema as Akira Kurosawa, Kenji Mizoguchi, Yasujiro Ozu, Shiro Toyoda, Kon Ichikawa, Kozaburo Yoshimura, and Kaneto Shindo. At the suggestion of Hiroshi Mizutani, who was art director on such films as *Chikamatsu Monogatari* (“The Crucified Lovers”), *Akasen Chitai* (“Street of Shame”), and *Sugata Sanshiro*, Sugai took up painting, a hobby he pursued for his entire life.

The *Hito ni Rekishi Ari* episode was filmed on June 2, 1970. About ten days before that, I received a postcard from Sugai. It was handwritten, which I think is wonderful. It has a Showa era feel to it and is dated May 23.

“Thank you for the other day. After leaving Tokyo in the pouring rain, I wondered if you arrived in Kyoto to beautiful moonlight and headed to your place in Higashiyama. I hope you are doing well. I, too, have arrived at my lodging in Arashiyama. Please take good care of yourself as you attend to your work. See you soon.”

The postcard drawing shows Kyoto’s cityscape in the foreground, with deep green mountains unfolding above it. A three-story pagoda is depicted on the mountainside. I spent many years in the television industry, but with little to do with television dramas, I had almost no connections to actors. For me, this is a rare instance of receiving a postcard from an actor. Every time I see it, a sense of nostalgia wells up inside. I must have met and interviewed Sugai about ten days before we recorded the program. It was pouring rain that day. I think maybe Sugai

and I went travelled separately to Kyoto that day. I cannot remember much of what we talked about in the interview. I am the nephew of Sanjugo Naoki, who collaborated with Shozo Makino on film productions from 1925 to 1927. I don’t remember if I even mentioned it in our interview, but my uncle was working in film in the same era as both Irie and Tomu Uchida. I believe it was fate. Perhaps Sugai’s kindness toward me flowed from seeing me as the nephew of a fellow filmmaker who had experienced the bitter taste of failure in that industry.



Author
Tomone Uemura
Essayist

After graduating from the Department of History, the Faculty of Letters, Arts and Sciences at Waseda University in 1962, he worked at Toei Co., Ltd. before entering TV Tokyo Corporation, where he was later appointed to managing director of TV Tokyo and president and representative director of PROTX.

Ichiro Sugai

Actor, Film Director
1907–1973



Photo: Mainichi Shimbun, Aho

Born in 1907 in Kyoto, Sugai made his film debut with Nikkatsu Studios in 1925, appearing in over 300 films from the silent era through the postwar period. Coming to the attention of audiences in his role as Inspector Javert in *Jean Valjean*, directed by Tomu Uchida, Sugai cemented his status as a renowned character actor in films such as Kenji Mizoguchi’s *Taki no Shiraito* (“The Water Magician”). During the war, he formed the Daiichi Kyodan theater troupe, and after the war, appeared in numerous films by such directors as Akira Kurosawa, Yasujiro Ozu, Kaneto Shindo, and Kozaburo Yoshimura. In 1954, he also took on directing with the film *Dorodarake no Seishun* (“Muddy Youth”). In his later years, he expanded into television dramas, his deep and nuanced performances earning the trust of many directors. Sugai passed away at the age of 66 due to heart failure.



Employee Family Members Invited to Company Visit

On August 19, KPP held its first Family Company Visit (Family Day) in six years at four locations — Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, and Fukuoka. A total of 58 people participated in what turned out to be a lively day for employees and the family members who visited each office.

The children explored offices, a place they normally would not set foot in. Getting to know the actual environment and vibe of the place where their parents work each day was a valuable.

An online meeting connecting participants from the four locations energized everyone with a unique quiz contest that mixed animal and dinosaur trivia with regional culture. The kids tackled questions about each region's culture with keen focus. A sense of unity formed even despite the distance, filling each location with laughter and cheers.

A special activity unique to a paper-handling company — the Paper Tower Competition — added extra excitement. The children eagerly embraced a simple yet challenging task: "Using only paper, who can build the tallest tower?" Working in teams, they brainstormed ideas and experimented through trial and error, showcasing spontaneous teamwork and creativity.

Original business cards were printed up for the participating children, so that they could experience *meishi koka* (business card exchange) with employees. The experience with this uniquely Japanese business custom let them bask in a sense of pride, feeling a part of society.

This Family Day was full of kid's smiles and curiosity. For employees, it was a chance to show their families their workplace, and to reaffirm the meaning of their daily work and their pride in it, along with the importance of their family bonds. The KPP Group will continue to foster a people-centered corporate culture that highly values family ties.



Event Details

Date: August 19 (Wed)
Venues: Tokyo Head Office / Chubu Branch / Kansai Branch / Kyushu Branch
Participants: 58



The kids get an explanation about the event activities.



At the quiz contest, the children focused intensely, determined not to lose to the kids on the other side of the monitor at the other locations.



They racked their brains to come up with ideas to build the highest tower possible.



The sight of children having fun building paper towers naturally left accompanying guardians and staff brimming with smiles.



On the employee work floor, the kids interacted with their parents' colleagues and bosses.



At the end of the day, business card exchanges took place with four executives. They may have been nervous, but the children greeted them boldly.



Sendai Tanabata Decorations Displayed to Share the Charm of Traditional Paper Culture

Ginza Shochiku Square, a mixed-use building near our headquarters in Chuo City, Tokyo, was decorated with Tanabata ornaments as part of our initiative to share the charm of paper culture. Tanabata is a traditional Japanese event held every July 7, when people write wishes on *tanzaku* paper strips and tie them to bamboo grass. We installed colorful Tanabata decorations in the open space of the building's entrance hall so that people in the community could experience this summer tradition in an intimate way.

The highlight of the exhibit was a 6-meter-long streamer created by Narumiya Kami-shoji Co., Ltd. of Sendai City, a KPP Group company known for producing bamboo decorations for the Sendai Tanabata Festival. This vibrant decoration, woven from vividly colorful Japanese paper, stood out prominently amidst the Ginza buildings, inviting visitors into a world of fantasy. We set up a *tanzaku* area where people could freely write down their wishes. Local children, office workers, and tourists wrote their wishes,

resulting in the tying of a total of 1,448 *tanzaku* and creating a vibrant, cosmopolitan scene with messages in Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, and more. The *tanzaku* were loaded with wishes that extended across generations as well as borders — from serious ones like "good health," "academic success," and "peace," to children's dreams such as "I want to be a soccer player" and "I want to travel the world."

After the exhibit, the *tanzaku* were taken to a shrine near our headquarters, where prayers were offered for each and every wish to come true. For us, this was a meaningful effort to preserve traditional culture in modern times and share the experience of consigning wishes to paper with people in the area.

Going forward, the KPP Group will continue to embark on activities together with local communities, while we cherish paper's inherent expressive power and cultural value as a material.



Narumiya Kami-shoji Co., Ltd

A paper specialty trading company based in Sendai with a history of over 140 years. It handles diverse paper products and also carries on traditional crafts today as the Sendai Tanabata Festival's official producer of decorations.



Editorial postscript

Born in the Heisei era (1989-2019), I grew up in a world where "products" meant ready-made. There were plenty of cute and convenient items, so I never felt any inconvenience. Why bother making things when I can just buy my favorites? This was my reality. Then I joined the TSUNAGU editorial team and stumbled into the world of paper crafts. I discovered something unexpected: the thrill of creating with my own hands and the quirky personality of paper itself. That experience sparked a desire in me to ignite

the same "I want to try making something" feeling in our readers. And so, I began planning various themes and motifs for TSUNAGU. This issue features Taki Tamada's cardboard art. She's on a mission to pass her work and spirit to future generations, and luckily for us, she generously shared every detail of her process (see page 5 for more). The materials are simple: cardboard, glue, water, and a brush. I immediately picked up supplies at a 100-yen shop on my way home and began crafting a little

bear bit by bit, day by day. Since I had plenty of cardboard at home, I decided to make it big — big enough to spill out of my lap. Bending straight cardboard by hand was tougher than I imagined, but kneading it with all the day's frustrations (!) turned out to be oddly satisfying. The result is rather rough around the edges, but in the process of shaping something undefined and watching it slowly take form, I felt a flow of time that connected me not to others, but to myself.

Tomoka Kato



I have always loved the motif of a little bear cub. Now, he welcomes me when I get home.



BUNKITSU Roppongi

Roppongi Denki Building 1F
6-1-20 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo

TEL: +81-3-6438-9120

Open: 9:00am - 9:00pm (Last order for drinks: 8:30pm)

Admission: All-Day Plan 2,750 yen (Weekdays) /

3,630 yen (Sat., Sun., Holidays)

* The Following Plans are for weekdays only:

Morning Plan (9:00am - 12:00pm) 1,100 yen

Night Plan (6:00pm - 9:00pm) 1,320 yen

*All prices include tax

Closed: Irregularly scheduled

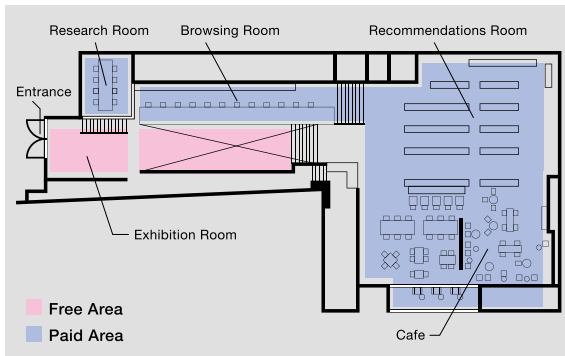
<https://roppongi.bunkitsu.jp/>



Exhibition Room (Free Area)



Browsing Room (Paid Area)



A Long-stay Bookstore Inviting You to Savor the Culture of Reading

The Roppongi district of Tokyo is a hub for culture and art that never ceases to inspire the senses. BUNKITSU Roppongi lies steps from the Roppongi subway station. "Our purpose in starting up was to experiment with a new form of bookstore," says store manager Wataru Fukai. BUNKITSU is operated by Hiraku, a business brand under Nippon Shuppan Hanbai Inc., the largest publishing distributor in Japan. Hiraku engages in business model development and various production enterprises. BUNKITSU Roppongi opened in 2018 as the first location. It is a new style of bookstore that not only offers roughly 30,000 browsable, buyable books, carefully selected by book directors, but also has a browsing room and workspaces for deep immersion,

and a cafe with an ample food menu. The store regularly hosts various themed exhibitions in its open entrance, disseminating highly sophisticated forms of culture going beyond books.

One of BUNKITSU's unique traits is its admission system. While there is a free area for browsing, most customers pay a fee to enjoy their time in the paid sections. "Because our customers pay to use the space, they become more motivated to discover better books. For us as a bookstore, changing our profit structure allows us to offer new added value, for example, by being able to stock the carefully curated titles rarely seen in other bookstores" explains Fukai.

BUNKITSU is not just a place for buying books or reading; you can use it freely, as

a workspace to sharpen your intellect and sensibilities, or even as a place to relax with friends and family on weekends. It is a long-stay bookstore that you can enjoy for a good amount of time, one that is packed with new possibilities for bookshops.



BUNKITSU's new flagship store, BUNKITSU TOKYO, opened this September at NEWoMan TAKANAWA. Visit the website for details.



We have adopted a bookbinding method free of staples, paste and heat, taking into consideration recycling and the risk of injuries.

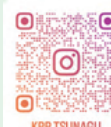


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