

ISSUE

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Admire

Special Issue

Paper and Gold: Jewelry Gives Life to Layers of Light

Advance

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—Made with Japanese Bamboo and
Helping to Solve Social Issues

Visit +

Conveying Paper's Appeal with
Paper-Based Artwork
—Fuji Paper Art Museum

TSUNAGU is a public relations magazine published by Kokusai Pulp & Paper 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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**Paper and Gold:
Jewelry with a
Dramatic Shimmer**

Beautiful and well proportioned, these accessories shimmer with a delicate luster and graceful depth that moves with the light. At first glance, these pieces appear to be made of precious metal or some other equally hard material. Take them in hand, though, and they are surprisingly light and soft. As the brand name *ikue* (Japanese for multi-layered) suggests, they are crafted from bundles of layered paper. These bundles are fanned out and the paper edges are gilded using the *sanpokin* bookbinding technique, creating new added value that fuses traditional techniques with a modern sensibility. This “paper jewelry” has gained a following in and outside of Japan, and we explore its appeal with the two designers who have created the brand.

Exquisite paper jewelry from Japan crosses new frontiers in ornamental paper art.

The *ikue* jewelry brand brings the deep sparkle of precious metals and gems to paper, an unconventional material choice for accessories. Some 100 sheets of paper are stacked one on top of the other, fanned out in a full circle, and the edges gilded using the Japanese *sanpokin* bookbinding technique to create delicate color schemes that blend the base color of the paper and gold foil. It is not simply the solid beauty of these pieces, but their unexpected nature — the surprise when a further look reveals the paper and bookbinding technique used to make them — that has attracted fans all over the world, especially among those drawn to delicate aesthetics.

“I wanted to create something with a universal value that would endure,” says Genki Harada of TANT Inc., who founded the *ikue* brand. After graduating from the Department of Product and Textile Design, Product Design Course at Tama Art University, Harada worked as an audio equipment designer at a major audio manufacturer. He then went freelance and got involved in developing home appliances and other products. It was at this point that he decided to take on the challenge of creating innovative products that not only incorporated the latest technologies, but would also reinterpret the value of existing technologies to create new possibilities.

Harada asked Nori Yokoyama, a friend from his university days who had worked as a graphic designer in advertising, video, space design, and many other genres, to partner with him in this endeavor. Together, they started a design office. Yokoyama explains, “We wanted to create something new with our own two hands.”

What inspired the two young designers to create the *ikue* brand was the Tokyo Business Design Award competition. The competition aims to create new business possibilities by matching Tokyo manufacturers with designers who propose new products and businesses based on the materials and technical capabilities of the manufacturers with whom they are paired. Of the competition themes open to the public, Harada and Yokoyama

chose to focus on the traditional bookbinding technique of *sanpokin*, incorporating it into product development and brand-building. *Sanpokin* is used to gild books such as Bibles and diaries and it also helps to prevent discoloration, shrinkage, insect damage, and staining. Harada explains, “We decided to create new value by reconstructing the features of this technique, which has been handed down from generation to generation. Initially, we thought about applying the technique to materials other than paper to make furniture or knick-knacks, but in the end, we decided to focus on accessories using paper as the primary material. Paper is something everyone is so familiar with, and it is usually thrown away after use. This is exactly why we thought we could surprise people and create new value from it. We also chose paper because it can be used both two-dimensionally and three-dimensionally, which takes advantage of our respective strengths, in product design and graphic design.” Their proposed paper jewelry brand, crafted using the *sanpokin* technique, was awarded the Grand Prize in recognition of the jewelry’s beauty and delicacy. It was this competition that provided the opportunity to bring the brand to market.



Sanpokin is the traditional technique of applying gold leaf to the three cut surfaces of a book: the top edge, bottom edge, and fore edge. In addition to offering long-term protection to the edges, gilding also gives a book an expensive look.



Diamond (Color: Gradation)



Cone (Color: Dark 2)



Drop (Color: Blue)



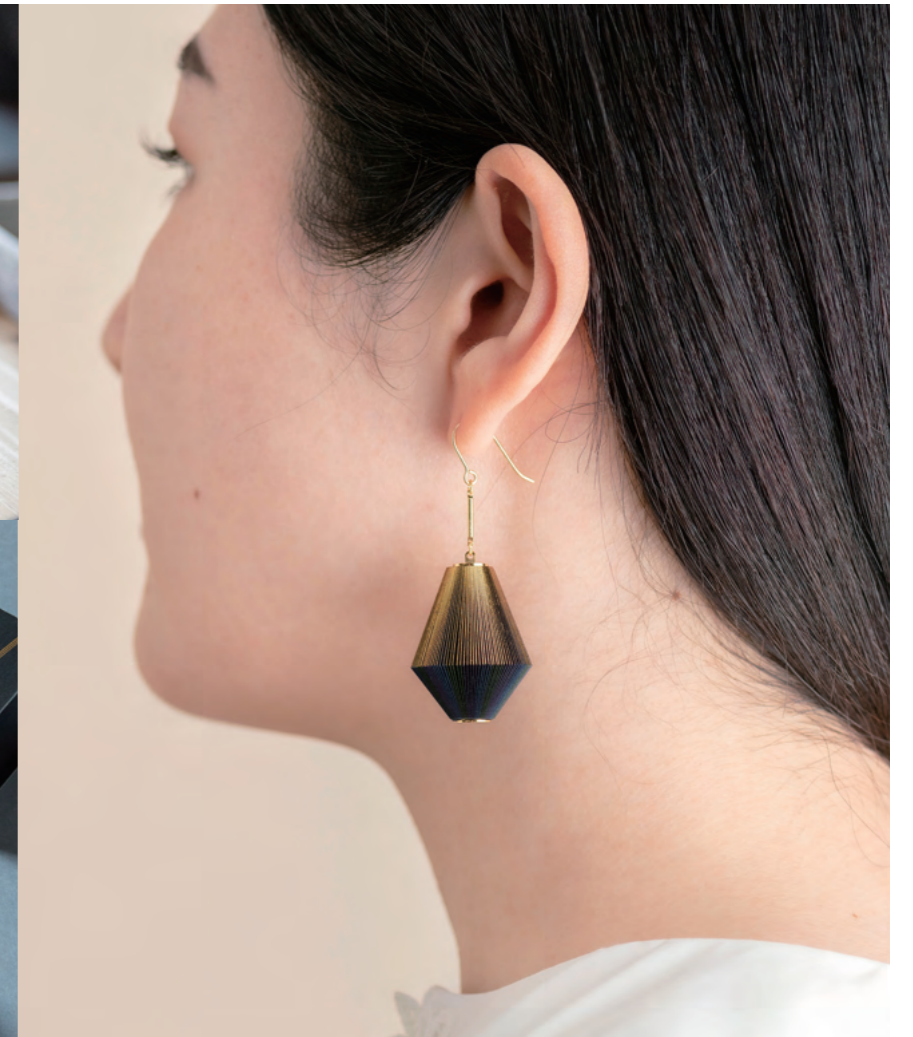
STRAIGHT (Color: WHITE)



THIN (Color: Gradation)



ikue Art Flame (Color: White)



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

KPP Sustainable Times



ikue prototypes, from the process of trial and error it took to bring these products to market



Although the die cutting and gilding are done by machine, all metal fittings are attached by hand, a process requiring highly skilled craftsmanship.



Artwork made with scraps created, as Yokoyama says, from "a sense of mission to create art."

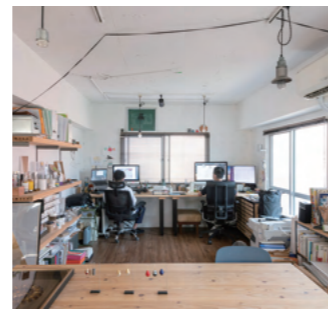
The designers may have won the Grand Prize at the Tokyo Business Design Award competition, but there were still many hurdles to overcome before their paper jewelry could reach the market. "The manufacturer we were paired with in the competition said that setting up production at a reasonable cost would be too difficult, so first we had to choose a different partner company that was willing to take on the manufacturing," says Harada. "Finding a company was difficult, because our products require special paper processing technology. We met with a number of different companies before we were finally introduced to Shinohara Shiko Ltd., which is located in Koto-ku, Tokyo, and is known for its special bookbinding. We asked them to manufacture *ikue* for us. President Shinohara respects designers' ideas and worked with us to find the best way to move forward, and we were able to create a project team that included the gold stamping company Bihaku Watanabe Co., Ltd., located in Arakawa-ku, Tokyo." With the full cooperation of these two companies, both sought after by creators, bookbinders, and editors for their exceptional bookbinding and gold stamping capabilities, Harada and Yokoyama's efforts to commercialize *ikue* really got underway.

The next step was to select the paper from which the *ikue* pieces would be crafted. "The application of glue and gold foil differs so much depending on the brand of paper used, so we spent a great deal of time selecting the paper. We considered YUPO® and wax paper for their water resistance, but we decided to prioritize the paper's ability to produce the colors that we wanted. Also, if the paper is too thick, the delicate beauty of the *sanpokin* gilding is compromised, so we chose the SAGAN and GERADO papers, which are able to produce a gorgeous jewelry-like feel in a wide range of colors," explains Yokoyama. The glue used to adhere the paper to the spindle was equally important. "The thicker the glue, the larger the circumference of the *ikue* piece, and the more sheets of paper needed. So we repeatedly tested different binding methods with Shinohara Shiko. In the end, we decided to go with a glue called PUR, for its ability to achieve uniform folds and excellent durability that holds up well over time," says Harada. Resolving each new issue that came up, including conducting water

resistance testing for fluorine coating agents to compensate for the paper's vulnerability to water, the designers were finally able to bring the brand to market after about two years of work.

Once ready, *ikue* brand products were exhibited at the interior and design trade show, Maison & Objet Paris, in January 2018 and 2019, as well as the Interior Lifestyle show in Tokyo in May 2018. The pieces have attracted attention for their well-proportioned design, gorgeous interplay of light and shadow, and their unique idea of turning paper into jewelry. In 2018, *ikue* won the Bronze Award at the international DFA Design for Asia Awards, earning international praise. "Many people are surprised when they first hold these accessories and discover they are made out of paper. We were also surprised by how many men bought them. Perhaps they are something that men want to give women as a gift. They make a great gift for the paper anniversary* or other wedding anniversaries or as an accent on days when you want to dress up," says Harada. Crafted in paper and gold, *ikue* jewelry opens the door to a new realm of possibilities for ornamental paper items. Combining traditional bookbinding techniques with a contemporary aesthetic, this new "Japanese Modern" sensibility delivers a timeless gorgeous shimmer.

* The first wedding anniversary is known as the paper anniversary.



Top: The art studio; Center: *ikue* brand jewelry displayed at the office entrance. Bottom: Partners Genki Harada (right) and Nori Yokoyama.

TANT Inc.

Founded by product designer Genki Harada and graphic designer Nori Yokoyama, TANT Inc. is a design firm engaged in all aspects of creative work. The company not only creates designs, but also co-creates methods of expression by solving fundamental issues and uncovering potential value to bring to light the appeal of a thing in creative ways.

TANT Inc. <http://tant-inc.co.jp/>
ikue website <https://ikue.work/>
ikue online shop <https://ikue-shop.com/>

In addition to the online shop, *ikue* brand products are also available at interior design stores and museum gift shops around the world. For more information on where these products can be purchased, see the *ikue* brand website.

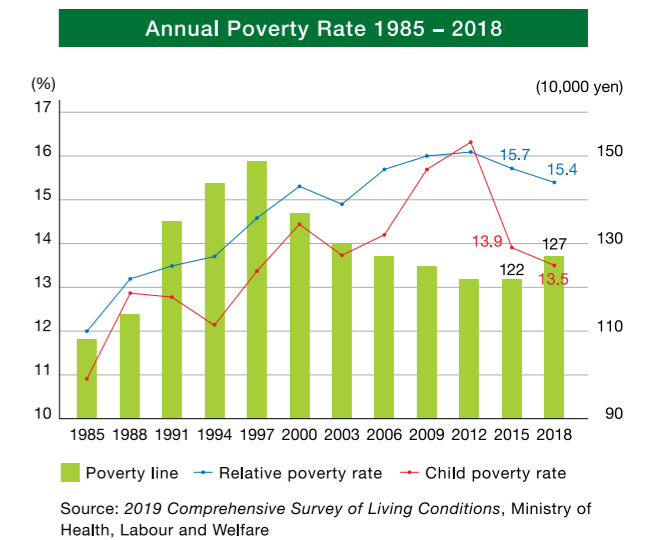
Providing Food Aid Through Second Harvest Japan

Food loss is a growing problem in Japan, with huge amounts of food discarded for a variety of reasons. At the same time, there are people in Japan who cannot afford to eat well due to poverty. According to the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions conducted by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the relative poverty rate* in Japan is 15.4% (2018). (See table at right.) This translates to about one in six people in Japan living in relative poverty.

KPP maintains emergency food supplies, storing rice, bread, and canned foods in case of disaster or other emergency. We decided to donate preserved foods that were nearing their expiration dates to people in need through Second Harvest Japan, which is a Tokyo Metropolitan Government Authorized Specified Nonprofit Corporation. The first donation was made on August 20. These food products will be distributed to welfare facilities and organizations such as orphanages and mother-child support facilities, as well as to individuals in need.

We will continue to make food donations to help address issues associated with poverty.

* Percentage of the population whose circumstances are poorer than that of the majority of the society to which they belong



What Is Second Harvest Japan?

Second Harvest Japan is a Tokyo Metropolitan Government Authorized Specified Nonprofit Corporation that collects food from companies and individuals that, though still edible, is destined to be discarded, and delivers this food to those in need. The organization began its work in 2000, serving food and delivering relief supplies when disasters such as the Great East Japan Earthquake and the Kumamoto Earthquake strike.

Second Harvest Japan <https://2hj.org/english/>



Awarded EcoVadis SAS Sustainability Assessment Bronze Medal

KPP received a bronze sustainability recognition from EcoVadis SAS, which conducts comprehensive corporate social responsibility (CSR) assessment services. EcoVadis SAS provides a platform for evaluating ESG-related initiatives, with the aim of improving corporate environmental and social practices. The organization evaluates corporate policies, measures, and performance in the four areas of environment, labor and human rights, ethics, and sustainable materials procurement. EcoVadis SAS has assessed

more than 75,000 organizations and companies in 160 countries, and 200 industries.

Ranking bronze in our latest evaluation, we will continue to respond to the ESG-related expectations of society and work to further enhance corporate value.

EcoVadis SAS website <https://ecovadis.com/>

Takegami Bamboo Paper —Made with 100% Japanese Bamboo and Helping to Solve Social Issues

Bamboo is closely linked to the culture of everyday life in Japan, from daily necessities and handicrafts like baskets and *zaru* strainers to traditional *kadomatsu* New Year's decorations and edible bamboo shoots. As bamboo products have come to be replaced by plastic goods and cheap foreign products in recent years, however, production output has drastically decreased. The resulting increase in bamboo groves abandoned without proper management has led to the encroachment of fast-growing bamboo on forests and rural *satoyama* settlements, causing problems such as threatening forests' multifunctional roles and biodiversity. As abandoned bamboo groves turn into a considerable social issue, one product is attracting a lot of attention as an approach for effective use of bamboo: Takegami bamboo paper, manufactured and sold by Chuetsu Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd.

Highly regarded for its eco-conscious merits, Takegami has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the "8th Eco Products Award: Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Award." The MEETS TAKEGAMI brand, launched to spread awareness of the paper's appeal beyond the point that it is made from 100% Japanese bamboo, has also grabbed the spotlight in the paper industry as a product that can help solve a social issue. It has been recognized with the Special Award in the Japan Times-hosted Sustainable Japan Award 2021, Satoyama Category. We spoke with Osamu Nishimura, manager of the Marketing and Sales Planning Department at Chuetsu Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd., to learn about the company's efforts to contribute to *satoyama* resource utilization and local circular economies.

—What prompted development of Takegami?

There are many bamboo groves in Kagoshima prefecture, where our Sendai Plant is located; their surface area accounts for about 10% of the national total. There are also a lot of farms growing bamboo shoots, and one of our staff members in charge of collecting raw resources had been contacted about problems they were having with the disposal of bamboo stalks felled in the course of managing the bamboo. They took it upon themselves as a personal project to figure out a solution to the issue within the scope of their work and from that was born the idea of turning the bamboo from a nuisance into a raw material for making paper. At first the paper was nameless, but I gave it the name Takegami, focusing on the story behind it.

—What kind of difficulties did you experience while developing Takegami into a product?

Only relatively light loads of bamboo can be transported, since the stalks are hollow in the middle, meaning that the production output cannot match lumber from trees. Also, the stiffness of bamboo shortens the lifespan of the cutting blades used to turn it into chips. Devising ways of resolving issues like these, such as improving hauling methods and switching to more durable blades, we worked with the involved parties to move forward with an efficient workflow.

—What was your criteria for selecting bamboo?

While we primarily collect tortoise-shell bamboo, we also accept some Japanese timber bamboo. We reject decayed or withered stalks, and we have certain length and diameter grade requirements. In the same way as with lumber to be made into pulp, we accept only bamboo that meets these criteria.

—What kind of special characteristics does Takegami have?

Bamboo is characterized by long, thin fibers. Wood from conifers, with its long



Felled bamboo stalks are collected and sent to the chip mill. Bamboo chips processed here are pulped in a digestion kettle called a batch boiler, and then go through the paper-making process to become Takegami paper.

Chuetsu Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd.

Comprehensive pulp and paper manufacturer established in 1947. In addition to the manufacture of newsprint, printing paper, packaging paper, specialty paper, and paper pulp, the company engages in a broad range of business projects to leverage paper to resolve social issues and build a sustainable society. In recent years, these include the development of Takegami paper made with 100% Japanese bamboo, as well as wood biomass power generation chiefly fueled by unused woody materials, and a new high-performance material called cellulose nanofiber.

Chuetsu Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd. website
<http://www.chuetsu-pulp.co.jp/>

fibers, is generally used for tough industrial papers, while wood from broadleaf trees, with its short fibers, is used for printing paper with more finely detailed texture. Bamboo fibers fall somewhere in between, bringing together traits of both. Our Takegami 100 brand of paper is characterized by a soft texture and appearance. It comes in two colors: Natural, which features exceptional smoothness and a crisp texture with a sense of presence, even for being quite thin, and White, which shows a little bit of variation in its tone when held up to the light.

—What is the concept behind MEETS TAKEGAMI?

The name expresses the meaning of giving people more chances to interact with our brand and get to know Takegami paper. The Takegami 100 Notebooks I planned and marketed ten years ago were sold at locations including Ginza Itoya and art museums. While they were highly appraised, with that alone it was possible to achieve only limited objectives. My primary goal was not just to sell product but to spread awareness of the existence of our Takegami paper, which was developed in connection with a regional social issue, and the efforts we have been making in relation to that. Also, this MEETS TAKEGAMI project was something we launched with the hope that people sympathetic to our efforts might be inspired to take new action for the common good. In order to introduce Takegami to more and more people, we are shifting toward paper stationery like the notebooks which enjoyed a favorable reception and products that can be used in events and workshops that many people can participate in, like origami paper and strips of *tanzaku* paper to write poems on.

—The design by minna seems to have been a hit.

Having had the chance to engage in long discussions with the *minna* design team, I took the opportunity to collaborate with them. They have been trustworthy partners who not only prepare designs but also sort out what it is that I am trying to achieve and put their heads together with mine to think it through with me. Finalization of the designs I leave to them, but with concept creation and product planning, we contribute ideas and proceed with our work activities jointly.

—What would be the final message you would like to convey to our readers?

Takegami is a type of paper that is highly unique, and it is also the product of some really wonderful efforts. I would be very happy if everyone reading this has a chance to pick up some of our Takegami paper and enjoy it, to turn their attention to the story behind how it came to be developed, and to take actions that will contribute to society in a good way themselves.



ORIGAMI SATOYAMA / PANDA

SATOYAMA features living creatures and bamboo shoots from rural *satoyama* environments, while PANDA focuses on panda bears and bamboo shoots. (15 sheets per set: 5 types x 3)



MEMO TOWER Kit

Set of memo sheets printed with six types of round cards packaged in a bamboo-shaped cylindrical case. (Sheets: 60 / Case size: Ø75mm x 100mm)
*Available in two colors: White & Natural



Letter Set

Stationery and envelope set featuring a cut bamboo design (Set of 6; Size: 220mm x 90mm)
*Available in two colors: White & Natural



TAKEGAMI 100 NOTEBOOK (PANDA)

High-quality notebook. Recipient of a Social Products Award. (A5 size / 30 sheets)
*Available in two colors: White & Natural



B5 NOTE BOOK

B5 size notebook with a bamboo-inspired 1-mm grid pattern. Looks like a bamboo tube when rolled up. (B5 size / 80 sheets) *Available in two colors: White & Natural



TANZAKU

Five colors of *tanzaku* sheets decorated with bamboo designs. (30 sheets: 5 colors x 3 patterns x 2 sheets each)

Takegami Sample Books Delivered Free of Charge

Books with samples of Takegami papers developed by Chuetsu Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd. are distributed free of charge. If interested, please order one from the online PAPER MALL shop, which offers the paper for sale for orders as small as a single sheet.

* Limit of one sample book per person, as shipping is free.

PAPER MALL
www.kpps.jp/papermall

PAPER MALL Search



RECOMMEND SPOT

Fuji Paper Art Museum



Left: Kitayama Yoshio Exhibition (5/2-7/16, 2018) Upper center: Sasaki Masao Exhibition (4/1-6/14, 2020, 7/1-8/30, 2020)
Lower center: Honbori Yuji Exhibition (7/1-9/16, 2019) Upper right: Terauchi Yoko Exhibition (1/7-3/14, 2021) Lower right: Watanabe Eiji Exhibition (11/1, 2018-2/17, 2019)

Conveying Paper's Appeal and New Potential with Paper-Based Artwork

Papermaking industries have a long history of development in the city of Fuji in Shizuoka Prefecture. The location offers the convenience of good-quality, abundant water resources from springs at the base of Mount Fuji, a mild climate, and a strategic distribution location for the transport of timber resources. Home to the Fuji Paper Art Museum, Fuji is literally a "city of paper," and it boasts a leading share of domestic Japanese sanitary paper production.

Opening in November 2016, the 50th anniversary of municipal incorporation of Fuji City, the Museum, which highlights the diversity of paper, attracts around 10,000 visitors annually. With a focus on exhibitions of fine art made with paper, it hosts a range of programs to promote contact with new paper-associated charms, including talks by exhibiting artists and specialists, workshops allowing any and all to experience the pleasure of creative production, and more.

The Museum, established jointly inside the Rose Theatre, a facility maintained by the city to promote arts and culture among residents, serves to foster awareness of the culture of paper, a key local industry. Special exhibitions have been held featuring artwork using paper products from companies based in the city as well.

The city of Fuji has also played host to the Art Festival of Paper since 2009, soliciting artwork showcasing paper's special characteristics from throughout Japan. Since 2019, special exhibitions featuring winning entries have been held at the Museum. While no submissions were accepted last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a special exhibition was held featuring paper art by 13 local artists and one group. Be sure to stop by, if you have a chance, to take a closer look at this year's winning pieces.

MESSAGE

Our museum is devoted to developing a range of artistic and cultural activities on the theme "Tsunageru / Tsunagaru" ("Connecting / Being Connected") with the hope of turning the whole city of Fuji into a museum. Visitors to our exhibitions have left comments such as that seeing paper, a familiar material from their daily lives, made into artwork in various forms gave them a sense of paper's appeal and new potential. An upcoming exhibition we are planning will feature artwork made not from finished forms of paper like *washi* and Western paper, but from paper's raw materials. Our hope is that we might give visitors chances to experience a sense of the city of Fuji through a wide range of artwork made possible by this "city of paper" and its atmosphere of rich culture and art.

Yuji Urushibata Director, Fuji Paper Art Museum

Fuji Paper Art Museum

Sponsor: Fuji City
Supervisor: General Incorporated Association Fuji Geijutsu Mura
Location: Fuji City Culture Hall Rose Theatre 1F, 1750 Tadeharacho, Fuji City, Shizuoka Prefecture
Hours: 10:00-18:00
Admission: Free
Closed: Days when the Fuji City Culture Hall Rose Theatre is closed
Contact: Tel. +81-545-32-6581
Website: <https://fuji-paperart.jp/>
*Subject to change due to pandemic-related considerations. For details, please visit the website.



Exhibition

Exhibitions of Paper Art from a Wide Range of Genres

Themed exhibitions are held on a quarterly basis in the exhibition space, which is walled in glass on three sides to let in natural light. Eighteen exhibitions have been held to date, starting with the Hibino Katsuhiko Exhibition in November 2016. A wide range of works showcasing the special characteristics inherent to paper are shown, with a focus on fine art, such as three-dimensional sculptures and installations. Two themed exhibitions have also been held in collaboration with local Fuji companies. Trials were attempted to present new ways of viewing paper and new potential in the material by exhibiting pieces of art made with the paper tubes used in toilet paper rolls. In the interaction space, works of paper art by artists with close connections to the city of Fuji are presented, as well as products made by local paper making companies. Video screenings are also held in the space, showing interviews with artists, introducing their artmaking processes, and so on. Visitors can enjoy a diverse range of programs here to experience paper-related charm in new forms.



Upper right: The Beauty of Paper: *Dan* ("Resolution") (6/14-8/27, 2017)
Lower right: Hirose Mamoru Exhibition (2/23-5/28, 2017)
Upper left: Hibino Katsuhiko Exhibition (11/1, 2016-1/30, 2017)
Lower left: The Beauty of Paper: *Spiral* (9/23-10/27, 2019)

Exhibitions Held to Date

Hibino Katsuhiko Exhibition / Hirose Mamoru Exhibition / The Beauty of Paper: *Dan* ("Resolution") / Tomoda Taeko Exhibition / Akiyama Nobushige Exhibition / Kitayama Yoshio Exhibition / Fujiwara Shiho Exhibition / Watanabe Eiji Exhibition / Shimura Yoko Exhibition / Honbori Yuji Exhibition / The Beauty of Paper: *Spiral* / 11th Art Festival of Paper: Takagi Kenichi Exhibition / Sasaki Masao Exhibition / 4th Anniversary Panel Exhibition / 12th Art Festival of Paper Special Exhibition / Terauchi Yoko Exhibition / Kishino Hitomi Exhibition / *Ugoite-iru Hito* (Moving People) Musashino Art University Department of Sculpture "Fundamentals of Sculpture" Class Artwork Exhibition

Event

Programs to Satisfy Intellectual Curiosity

The museum holds a variety of events to deepen visitors' knowledge of the characteristics inherent to paper, what makes it appealing, and so on. These include artist talks in which exhibiting artists give commentary on their work themselves, dance performances in collaborations with art pieces, specialists' lectures and dialogues, and more. Some programs have also been held in locations outside the museum as well, including bus tours to visit cultural facilities.



Lecture held by Shizuoka University guest professor Masahiko Hirano on art management

Workshop

Enjoy Crafting Things with Paper

Workshops are also held in connection with exhibitions, giving visitors chances to enjoy craftwork with paper. The popular programs allow participants to receive advice directly from the artists. Past workshops have featured musical instruments made with paper tubes and bags made with newsprint.



Workshop to make photo frames from cardboard

13th Art Festival of Paper: Shibuta Kaoru Exhibition

Dates: Running now through Dec. 12 (Sun) Hours: 10:00-18:00 Closed: Oct. 18 (Mon), Nov. 15 (Mon), Nov. 16 (Tue)
Admission: Free Contact: Tel. +81-545-32-6581

Grand Prix Winner Selected out of Submissions from Throughout Japan

The Fuji Paper Art Museum holds the Art Festival of Paper, soliciting entries of paper-based artwork from throughout Japan to showcase the special characteristics inherent to paper and explore new potential in the material. In the 13th festival held in 2021, Kaoru Shibuta's piece "Rock Fuji" was awarded the Grand Prix, recognizing its use of local *washi* Suruga Yuno Gami paper. Visitors can enjoy up-close views of the artwork, which incorporates the history and culture of paper in Fuji city, as well as its climate and natural features.



Pictured is Kenichi Takagi's Grand Prix-winning piece from the 11th Art Festival of Paper

Public Exhibition

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. 26: Kazuki Kasuya

Kazuki Kasuya served as the Chief Editor of the Chuo Koron publishing house for many years, from 1967 to 1976. Later, he helmed publications such as *ASTEION* and *Tokyojin*. He passed away in 2014, at the age of 84. Kasuya gained recognition as a great judge of talent who helped launch the careers of writers including Masataka Kosaka, Nanami Shiono, Masakazu Yamazaki, and Shizuka Shirakawa. He also established a conservative, pragmatic trend in Japan's postwar literary criticism circles.

I got acquainted with Kasuya in the later years of his life, but due to my dotage, no matter how hard I try, I cannot, for the life of me, clearly remember who introduced me to him. I had deep ties with Chuo Koron. The publishing company Chuokoron-sha issued the works my father authored in his late years, and after he passed away, the company issued in paperback many of his hard-cover books that had been published by other companies. This deepened my relationship with editors and proofreaders, and eventually Chuokoron-sha even published my own

works. I, however, have no recollection of being introduced to Kasuya by any of the people with whom I worked at the company.

However, this is not my only connection with Chuo Koron. My father was a high school teacher under the old system of education, and through his work I was on friendly terms with Kenjo Tsunabuchi and Yutaka Tonegawa, both editors at the publishing company, but I have no recollection of either of them making introductions either. Later I found out that Saiichi Maruya, a student of my father and a true guardian of my writing career, was close to Kasuya, but that happened after I had met him, so clearly Maruya could not have introduced me to him, either.

Once, I received a very kind letter from Kasuya regarding my (at that point) only novel.

"Thank you for presenting me with your novel *Natsu no Misaki* ("Cape of Summer") the other day. I have read a portion of it carefully every day, and yesterday I finished it. Previously, I had the pleasure of reading with absorbed interest *Naoki Sanjugo-den* ("The Life Story of Sanjugo Naoki"), but unlike it, *Natsu no Misaki* is a love story with an entirely different atmosphere. It made me reflect upon various things. The issues faced by the elderly in a post-retirement, aging society have become social issues. Your book meticulously explores this world, in which I believe I can find myself casted, and depicts in a straightforward manner some magnificent and diverse cityscapes. I, too, love the verse, "Going to the end of the ocean to capture the setting sun," and although I was convinced that Kazuo Dan was nothing but an epigone of Ango Sakaguchi, this poem changed my opinion of him. Your novel can also serve as a travel guide for Tokyo and foreign countries, and the depictions of the changing seasons, beginning with the cherry blossoms, are truly splendid. I was overwhelmed by your delicate yet rich prose, and found the outcome, at which you arrive after exploring so thoroughly the nature of love, utterly convincing."

I have already forgotten the detailed circumstances, but I can't say that we were that close. Perhaps I sent Kasuya my first novel and asked for his impression as a veteran in the literary world. It appears to me that I was

somewhat audacious. Nearly 20 years ago, I had retired from my career as an office worker and had begun my second life with an aspiration to join the literary profession, a dream of mine since my early years. My uncle was an award-winning novelist. His younger brother, my father, always told me that I was his spitting image, in terms of both looks and personality. That was the only reason for my aspiration. My first literary work was *Naoki Sanjugo-den* ("The Life Story of Sanjugo Naoki"), a critical biography of my uncle, and my second work was *Rekisho no Kyoshi Uemura Seiji* ("Seiji Uemura, Teacher of History"), a critical biography of my father. These two works happened to receive small literary awards, which perhaps boosted my self-importance.

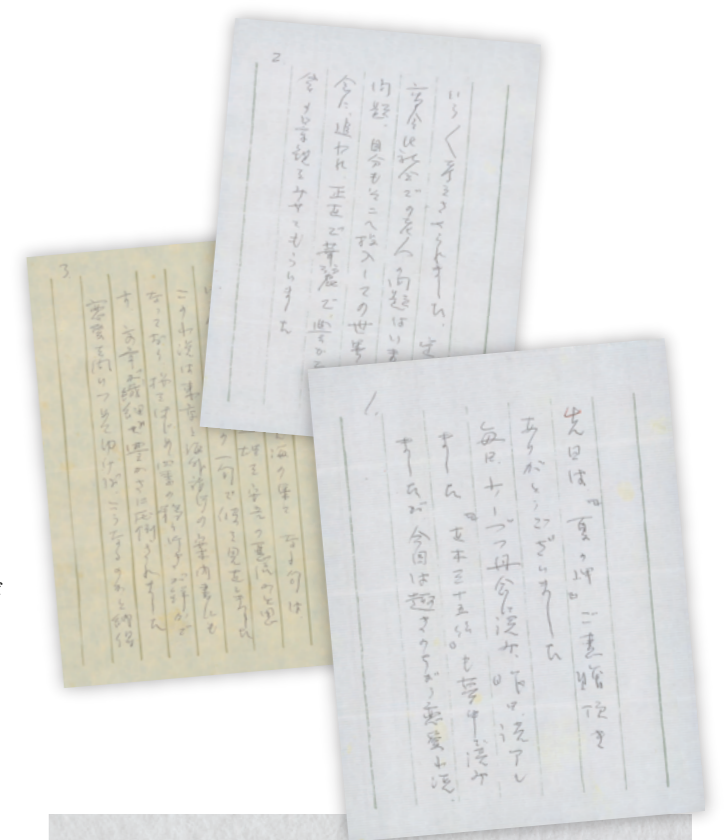
With my third work, I decided to take up the challenging tasks of writing a novel. The protagonist of this novel, which is written in the first person, is an elderly, newly-retired office worker, married, and with children to boot, who flirts with a young woman freshly out of college at a beach in Yamagata and falls in love with her. Written in the form of a diary, the novel follows the protagonist's journey from Tokyo all the way to Portugal. Needless to say, the book is nothing special.

The destination of the protagonist's journey is Santa Cruz and Cabo da Roca or Cape Roca, the westernmost point of continental Europe. Japanese poet and novelist Kazuo Dan lived in this seaside town with his young lover, and the two main characters of my novel meet at the stone monument inscribed with one of Dan's poems, "Going to the end of the ocean to capture the setting sun." In my novel, I depicted several sunsets as I tried to convey in a more impressive manner the lingering vibe of the days spent by the elderly protagonist. Kasuya picked up on the use of Kazuo Dan's poem and kindly affirmed my cumbersome writing. This is an indispensable quality in a true editor or producer. Without it, any judge of talent would have difficulties finding good talent to judge. This is how the letter continues.

"On the other hand, however, your competence as a writer and the lack of any breakdowns are actually a sort of impediment, and it cannot be denied that the presence of both the protagonist and Chiyako gradually gets weaker. Perhaps the novel should start from a place of greater desperation. And what about the presence of Yoshiko (the protagonist's wife)? I wonder if it was enough? In any way, your novel is like an extremely-well drawn miniature. In the future, it will be important to keep your outstanding writing skills in check and adopt the more subdued approach of Sanjugo Naoki. Your book brought me pleasure. Thank you."

The postmark on the letter was dated April 6, 2009. I had published the novel in February of the same year, which means that the letter from Kasuya arrived shortly after the book came out. From his letter, I can see well that, as an editor and a writer himself, he was trying to spare the feelings of an aspiring author. I believe that the point he actually wanted to convey in the second half of his letter is that novels should depict, in a stronger and more convincing manner, psychological conflict. One of my senior co-workers during my time at TV TOKYO, whom I respect as a prose master, expressed virtually the same opinion. My initial intention, however, had been to write a love novel that lacked psychological conflict.

In any case, throughout this letter I can sense Kasuya's consideration not to hurt my feelings as an aspiring writer, for which I am extremely grateful. Shortly after receiving the letter, I actually had dinner with him at a soba noodle restaurant in Ikebukuro. The invitation was mine, and Kasuya chose the restaurant. He lived in Zoshigaya, so perhaps Ikebukuro was comfortably close to his home. The food and drinks were all delicious. As far as I can recall, the conversation went very much along the same lines as his letter. Kasuya passed away five years later, in 2014. Despite his kind considerations, I felt somewhat awkward, and after our meeting I'm afraid I kept a certain distance. Had I sincerely asked for his advice, perhaps my life as a writer would have developed differently. I think about this from time to time.



Kazuki Kasuya

Editor and critic
1930–2014

Photo: Yomiuri Shimibun / Aflo



Born February 4, 1930, in Tokyo. After graduating from the Faculty of Law, University of Tokyo, he joined Chuokoron-sha. For 23 years, Kasuya worked as editor of *Chuo Koron*, *Fujin Koron*, *Shiso no Kagaku*, and other publications. During that period, he gained recognition as a great judge of talent who launched the career of writers including Yonosuke Nagai, Masataka Kosaka, Nobutoshi Hagihara, Masakazu Yamazaki, Nanami Shiono, Kaoru Shoji, Hideo Takahashi, and Shizuka Shirakawa. After leaving the company in 1978, he launched magazines such as *Gaiko Forum* and *Tokyojin* in 1986, and established the publishing company Toshi Shuppan Co., Ltd., in 1987, making the profession of editor his life's mission. His works include *Hatachi ni Shite Kokoro Kuchitari* ("My Heart was Broken at the Age of 20"), *Sengo Shicho* ("Post-War Tendencies"), etc. He passed away at the age of 84.



Brief Biography of the 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.

New Branch Company Established in Shenzhen, China

KEISHIN PAPERS TRADE (SHANGHAI) CO., LTD. (“Keishin Papers” below), which handles business in China for KPP, worked to develop a locally-rooted paper distribution business beginning last October. With five locations in Shanghai, Wuxi, Hangzhou, Beijing, and Jinan established to date, the company has succeeded in expanding the business. While its existing locations in East and North China had served as bases for developing business activities, its approach to the South China market, one of China’s three major economic zones, had not been as vigorous. With the establishment of the new Shenzhen Branch Company in Shenzhen, Keishin Papers is now enlarging the scope of its business to include the South China region. This new development means that the company now has a framework in place covering the entire coastal region that drives the economy of China, from North China to South China.

Guangdong, with the largest market in the South China region, consistently maintained the top provincial GDP in China, the world’s largest market for paper/paperboard, from 2010 through 2019, accounting for a little over 11% of the national total. Achieving the first GDP in China to surpass the 10-trillion-yuan mark (approx. 170 trillion yen) in 2019, the

province has continued to show strong economic growth. With the establishment of the Shenzhen Branch Company, Keishin Papers aims to accelerate its business expansion in China, as well as to achieve further development as a key player among KPP Group companies involved in our business outside Japan.

Shenzhen Branch Company

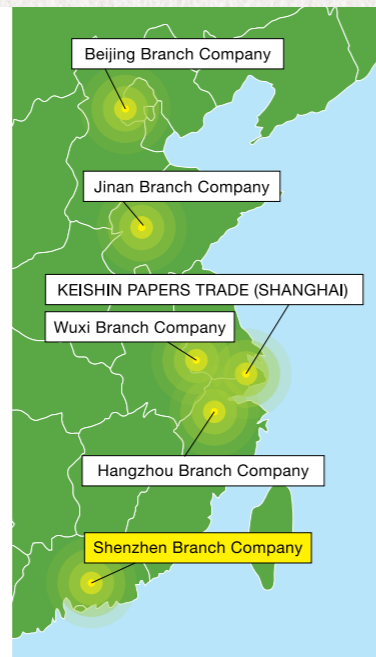
Address Room 09, 11F, Jingting Building, Dongzhou Community, Guangming Street, Guangming District, Shenzhen

KEISHIN PAPERS TRADE (SHANGHAI) CO., LTD.

Established 2010
Address Room 2801, New Town Center, 83 LouShanGuan Road, Changning District, Shanghai, 200336 People’s Republic of China
Representative Jun Gu Representative and Chairman of the Board
Business Processing and sales of paper, etc.

KPP Locations in China

- Beijing** Established November 2020. Handles various types of China-produced paper made by major manufacturers. Takes Beijing and its surrounding area as its chief market. Primarily targets the high-end market, e.g., publishing houses and magazine companies.
- Jinan** Established September 2020. Primarily sells white cardstock and white paperboard. End users include major pharmaceutical companies’ chartula printing plants. A strong point is its ability to offer small-hot split delivery services. Major paper manufacturers are its chief suppliers.
- Shanghai** Established September 2020 (and became a subsidiary in May 2021). Primarily handles China-produced coated paper, white cardstock, printing paper, PPC, etc., largely intended for the Shanghai market. Has a distribution center and processing center. Developing sales based on dominant domestic and foreign suppliers.
- Wuxi** Established September 2020. Primarily sells products made by major paper manufacturers. Expanded its sales network in Jiangsu and built its own distribution and delivery system. Offers services including warehousing, cutting, and delivery.
- Hangzhou** Established October 2020. Primarily sells printing paper for publishing and packaging paper (including for food products) to publishing houses and paper product processing plants. Major paper manufacturers are its chief suppliers.



The office building housing the Shenzhen Branch Company

Kyoto Sales Dept. Relocated

As mentioned at right, the Kyoto Sales Dept. has relocated its office to KPP’s Kansai Branch. Please note that the address, telephone number, and fax number for the Kyoto Sales Dept. have changed accordingly.

We hope to enjoy your continued support in the future.

Kyoto Sales Dept. Kansai Branch Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd

Address 1-8-6 Azuchimachi, Chuo-ku, Osaka-shi, Osaka, Japan 541-0052
TEL +81-6-6271-2295 (Direct line to Kyoto Sales Dept.)
FAX +81-6-6267-1070
Relocated Aug. 23, 2021 (Mon)

PAPER TOPICS

“Kore de Eat!!” – A Paper Mouthguard to Reduce the Risk of Droplet Transmission when Eating and Drinking

As the COVID-19 pandemic refuses to let up, eateries are being expected to maintain strong preventative measures against the virus’ spread. Many have basic precautions in place: sanitary measures such as disinfecting and washing hands, encouraging avoidance of the “three Cs” (closed spaces, crowds, and close contact), installing acrylic panels, and so on. Still, although customers wear masks when they come in the door, when the food arrives, the masks get taken off and placed in pockets or handbags. They may know they should put the masks back on when conversing, but in actual practice many do not go to the trouble to actually follow through.

“Kore de Eat!!” is a paper mouthguard that was designed with just this issue in mind. Its three-dimensional construction with a flap that can be raised and lowered simplifies the task of mask wearing and removal. Made with antibacterial paper, or paper with antibacterial finishing, it is designed with sanitation in mind, and the way it avoids direct contact with the skin and nose keeps it from feeling confining as well. Moreover, with its light weight and recyclability, this is a creative product that showcases paper’s unique benefits.

As “Kore de Eat!!” is made of paper, printing can be applied to its surface, enabling the display of original designs on the mouthguards so that they can be used as novel advertising purposes-oriented items as well. Kawagoe Kamiten Co., Ltd., a long-established paper wholesaler with a head office in Miyazaki prefecture’s city of Miyazaki, has handled development and sales of the product. For purchases, stop by the company or visit their online shop. Certain major commercial facilities in Miyazaki prefecture have also begun carrying the item.



Watch a video on
“Kore de Eat!!” assembly
www.youtube.com/watch?v=FgHxNqf7vw8



INTERVIEW

Satoshi Kawagoe

President
Kawagoe Kamiten Co., Ltd.

—What prompted you to develop this item?

Starting around March last year, a string of business trips and meetings got postponed or canceled because of COVID-19, and that gave me some extra time. I thought I should take the opportunity to make an attempt at something new and decided to work on a new paper-based product, which would connect to our core business and generate no plastic waste.

—What sort of things did you experience difficulty with?

The first prototype was even bigger than what you see now, and it was not suited to mass production, as it used things like glue and tape. Making repeated attempts at test pieces, referencing a range of different paper crafts, we eventually arrived at the present construction, which is made entirely of paper, except for the elastic band that fits around the ears.

—What aspect were you most particular about?

The all-paper construction. Paper has a comfortable feel, and it offers a range of other benefits as well, such as being light, cheap, and easily recyclable. In selecting the paper to use, we tried out a variety of different types of paper and made a choice based on strength and flexibility. We then applied an antibacterial finish to it.

—In what sort of situations do you envision the mouthguards being used?

In addition to individuals, of course, I also anticipate scenarios like beverage manufacturers printing advertisements on them and distributing them to eateries, as they are designed so that original designs can be printed on them. At the same time, I also imagine them being used during practical training at educational institutions like culinary schools. When tasting foods during food preparation, the flap can be slid up and down with a single hand, offering convenience and sanitation.

—Looking forward, what kind of hopes do you have?

While “Kore de Eat!!” is of course not able to completely prevent infection on its own, I hope its use will give people more opportunities to dine together safely. The name “Kore de Eat!!” means “Eat with This,” using the English word “eat,” which also sounds like “*ii to*” in the local Miyazaki dialect spoken where our company is based, suggesting a double meaning in Japanese of something like “This will work.” My aim is to establish the business model in Miyazaki and expand it throughout Japan in the future.

Inquiries

Kawagoe Kamiten Co., Ltd.

1-1-4 Asahi, Miyazaki-shi, Miyazaki, Japan
TEL: +81-985-22-7105 FAX: +81-985-27-8515

Kawagoe Kamiten website: www.kawagoep.co.jp/
Kawagoe Kamiten Online Shop: kawagoep7105.base.shop/



Bookcafe days

1F Royal Palace Shibuya, 15-10
Uguisudani-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo

TEL: +81-3-3461-1554

Open: 11:00 to 19:00

Open days: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

*From Thursday through Saturday, the café operates a shared kitchen and serves the menu of the restaurant Paper Moon.
*Business hours are subject to change as part of the measures to prevent spread of COVID-19. For the latest information, look for Bookcafe days' on Facebook and Instagram.

<http://bookcatedays.com/>



A book café for grown-ups: a chance to rediscover the appeal of picture books

Amidst the overall decline of sales in the publishing industry, picture books and children's books are the category that is enjoying a steady growth in sales. Although plunging birthrates mean fewer children, in the conditions of a global pandemic, more and more people seem to be enjoying picture books and children's literature in general as a tool for communication with their children.

"Picture books are by no means just for children. Even grown-ups can enjoy them. I'd like to invite you to experience how profound they can be," says Chifumi Kojima, the manager of Bookcafe days, a book café where visitors can delight in browsing through picture books and other children's literature while enjoying a variety of seasonal homemade dishes. Glowing with the warm ambience of wood, the walls of this cozy café are lined with an outstanding selection of books, including the collection Kojima has

curated over the years, as well as books donated by ordinary customers and picture book authors. "Most of our customers are adults. In addition to walk-ins, there are many customers who come from all over Japan after seeing our website or social media posts."

Driven by a desire to help children in need all over the world, Kojima donates part of the proceeds of the café to support children through the Nonprofit Organization Kokkyo naki Kodomotachi (Children without Borders). "A portion of the money customers pay for food and beverages or to purchase books, as well as the donations they make, is donated to support the self-reliance of children around the world. We also hold music events and exhibitions of original drawings, which provide customers with opportunities to effortlessly participate in charitable activities while enjoying some quality time." Kojima's

ideas for future activities include a project for creating handmade picture books from children's drawings and working with stores in the area to set up "picture book shelves" in order to create an environment where children can easily access picture books. "All children love picture books, so adults have the important responsibility to put such books in their hands." Many of the regular customers of Bookcafe days subscribe to Kojima's ideas.

A bare minimum of powerful unforgettable words, beautiful drawings that stimulate the imagination, enthralling deep plots, unique perspectives on the world... picture books have a specific allure that comes into focus only after we grow up. As we go through our stressful everyday lives in the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic, an encounter with a delightful picture book might bring some much needed solace.



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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