

KATSUHIKO HIBINO

Vol. 50
2022 SPRING

TSUNAGU [繋ぐ]



Katsuhiko Hibino

Artist / President of the Tokyo University of the Arts

The C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust
Izumi Morita, President
Risako Noguchi, Executive Director

THEME Initiatives for a Sustainable World



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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“Lucky Cat Paper Object”



Katsuhiko Hibino

An artist who garnered attention with his cardboard box-based work in the 1980s, Katsuhiko Hibino has maintained activity in a wide range of fields from advertising to stage design. In recent years he has moved beyond personal art production to develop a body of work highlighting different regions' unique characters through collaborations with participants from the general public. Amid the transformation of the world situation as the COVID-19 pandemic and global instability continues with no end in sight, what does this leader at the forefront of the art world in Japan have to say on an artist's reading of social changes and what he might have in store as his next play. Here, Hibino offers hints for building a brighter future with his words.



PROFILE

Katsuhiko Hibino

Born in the city of Gifu in 1958. Earned a degree at the Graduate School of Fine Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts in 1983. Received Grand Prix awards in the 3rd Japan Graphics Exhibition in 1982 and the 30th Tokyo Art Directors Club Award in 1983. Exhibited at the Biennale of Sydney in 1986 and the Venice Biennale in 1995. Received the Grand Prix in the Mainichi Design Awards in 1999 and the Agency for Cultural Affairs Development of the Arts Division's Art Encouragement Prize in 2015. A professor at Tokyo University of the Arts since 2007 and president of the university as of April 1 this year. Other key positions he has held include Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Gifu, Director of the Contemporary Art Museum, Kumamoto, and chairperson of the Japan Football Association's Social Contribution Committee.

Website (personal): <https://www.hibinospecial.com/>

Website (Tokyo University of the Arts): <https://www.geidai.ac.jp/>

SPECIAL INTERVIEW Part 1

Katsuhiko Hibino

“It is the capacity of art to move people’s hearts and minds, I believe, that enables it to help solve social issues.”

— You have continually pursued a diverse range of genre-traversing creative activities. What sort of differences exist between your various approaches?

I made a start with my artistic activities in the mid-1980s. Values regarding art underwent a shift around then, and there was a call for new approaches reflective of the times. This mood prevailed for instance when Expo '70 was held in Osaka, where, amid the urban infrastructure development that was underway, there was a feeling of energy about creating something new. Novel forms of expression were emerging in different artistic fields — with Ryuichi Sakamoto in music, Hideki Noda in theater, and so on. In art as well, street art — moving out of the museum and taking urban space as a new medium — gained prevalence. In the context of that sort of change in the period, I also expanded my activities, using various media to express my own sensibilities. I might link up with an editor for a magazine, the director of an apparel manufacturer for clothing, or a theatrical director for stage design. In that way, what I took on myself might stay the same, but the storyline of the work would change depending on who I encountered, and how.

— Beyond your personal art production, in recent years you have pursued collaborative art projects with local residents and others, giving the impression that your field of activity is expanding. How has your mindset evolved?

I think one big turning point might have been the collapse of the bubble economy in the early 1980s. Around that time, signs of decline began to appear in the economy, which had always trended upward up until then, accompanied by a string of events that considerably shook my sense of what is important in life, including the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake (Jan. 1995) and the Tokyo subway sarin attack (Mar. 1995). Times like that really highlight the importance of

ties with other people and of interconnection. That made me start to think that art might be just the catalyst that could forge connections between different people, between people and regional communities, and between different regional communities. As an artist, I can go to a certain site and engage with local residents there to create collaborative work unique to that place. I have continued to work to convey the fascinating aspects of different regions, social issues, and so on through art projects.

— One of those would be your Asatte Asagao Project (Day After Tomorrow Morning Glory Project*1).

That is a project-based work I started for the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial in 2003 that involves planting of morning glory seeds gathered by community residents in Niigata Prefecture. Morning glory seeds collected in Niigata are spread throughout Japan together with the feelings and memories of those community members, where they produce the same scene in a range of different places. The morning glory seeds serve as a bridge to facilitate communication between different regional communities and people. This is the 18th year of the project, which has now come to form a vast network connecting 28 regional communities from all over Japan.

—TSUNAGU has introduced a good number of artists who use paper as a material in their work. Paper is just an indispensable material in creative activities, isn't it?

Commercially sold paper often has slight variations in color and texture, so when I find paper I like, I make a point of stocking up on it. An artist tends to cling to certain materials once they develop a preference for them. I'll buy up a good stock just to be safe, since it would be problematic to run out. Then, since in actual practice I end up using every last scrap, my

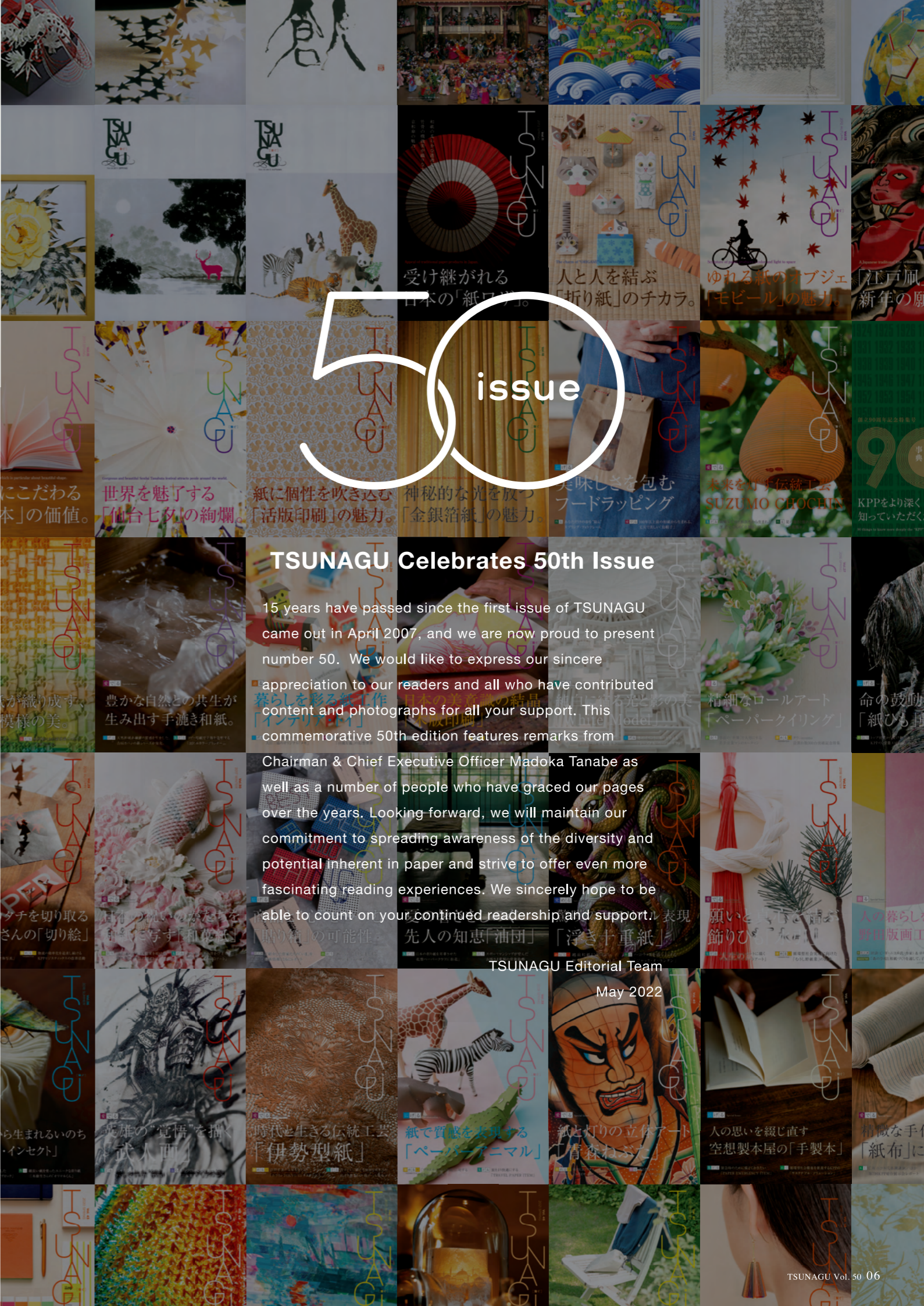
stockpile tends not to get depleted all that quickly after all! (Laughs) Paper can be pretty heavy, so when I moved my studio, it really gave me a workout! (Laughs)

— Is there any certain type of paper that made a lasting impression on you, or that you feel particularly interested in?

I traveled abroad for the first time in my second year at university, and I remember being really impressed by old-looking posters I saw in a city in France at that time. With the limited lifespans we have, people are drawn to materials like gold and marble that never lose their sheen. Paper, though, eventually fades and decays, reflecting the passage of time. I personally feel a strong conviction about finding value in ephemeral beauty. Even more than types of paper offering durability or water resistance, I might tend to be interested in the paper used as packaging for them.

— This continues to be a challenging time for face-to-face communication due to COVID-19. What kind of effect is that having on the world of art?

What lies ahead is something that can't be seen right now, and that creates a sense of haziness and uncertainty. That sensation, though, can be a “seedbed” for art. The desire to clear up feelings like that is only human nature, and that struggle for clarity can give rise to artistic expression. The determination to share those feelings of uncertainty, to convey them, to express them, can metamorphose into the power to create art. The expression of an era always takes shape at the turning point between one period and another. No matter how much digital technologies might evolve and enable high-speed analysis, the basic movements of people's hearts will still stay the same. I feel like this period might give rise to new forms of expression unlike anything that came before.



50 issue

TSUNAGU Celebrates 50th Issue

15 years have passed since the first issue of TSUNAGU came out in April 2007, and we are now proud to present number 50. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to our readers and all who have contributed content and photographs for all your support. This commemorative 50th edition features remarks from Chairman & Chief Executive Officer Madoka Tanabe as well as a number of people who have graced our pages over the years. Looking forward, we will maintain our commitment to spreading awareness of the diversity and potential inherent in paper and strive to offer even more fascinating reading experiences. We sincerely hope to be able to count on your continued readership and support.

TSUNAGU Editorial Team
May 2022

— You just became president of Tokyo University of the Arts this April. How do you think art will involve and contribute to society? What do you see as the social role of art? There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals established to build a better world, and to achieve them, each of us needs to make changes to our day-to-day behaviors. Think about keeping that up for five, ten years, though. You have to understand that sorting out waste helps reduce the amount of microplastics released into the oceans and thereby leads to marine life conservation. We have to truly want to protect the oceans and the life in them, or we won't be able to achieve that goal.

In other words, the vital factor is moving people's hearts and minds. With art, the target is the human heart. Art is the very thing with the capacity to affect people emotionally, to sway them, to effect transformation in their hearts and minds.

Though the 17 SDGs make no mention of "art" or "culture," art — which has the capacity to move people's hearts and minds — is something that runs through each one of them. Art is linked to every social issue, and it has the potential to contribute to their resolution.*2 I am determined to spread awareness of the appeal and potential inherent to art and fulfilling the role with which I am tasked.

— As we finish up, could you share about your future plans? At Tokyo University of the Arts, guided by the conviction that "Art loves people," we have been promoting creative activities under the name of the I LOVE YOU project.*3 This is a project in which artists actively take on social issues and seek to help build an inclusive society, leveraging the power of art. They consider possibilities for offering cultural prescriptions for cognitive impairment, for

example, or giving children with severe disabilities access to art even from their hospital beds. They think of feasible approaches for involving these people in cultural activities and then carry them out, showing acceptance of them as people with unique sets of abilities just the way they are.

Ways of thinking in art that take differences between individual people as interesting facets can help us to build an inclusive multicultural society. At Tokyo University of the Arts, we have collections of work made by artists from a wide range of artistic fields as well as archives and can connect up with students and regional industries through a consortium of Japanese art universities. I hope to continue coordinating with companies that have connections to arts and culture in the future and spreading awareness of information beneficial to society.

*1. Asatte Asagao Project "Day After Tomorrow Morning Glory Project"

A project that began with having local community members plant morning glories at the closed Azamihira Elementary School in the Azamihira district of Tokamachi, Niigata for the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial 2003. The project has now involved 29 communities from throughout Japan as an activity born of communication between people and local communities.

▼ The shuttered Azamihira Elementary School building.



*2. Tokyo University of the Arts "Vision for the SDGs"

In February 2022, Tokyo University of the Arts announced its "Vision for the SDGs" outlining the involvement of art in tackling the SDGs with five key points: "Contributing to the Social Change Prescribed by the SDGs," "Strengthening Social Ties," "Aiming to be a Sustainable University," "Fostering Human Resources to Bridge the Divide between Art and Society," and "Leveraging Creative Perspectives to Yield Innovation."



*3. Tokyo University of the Arts "I LOVE YOU" Project

A project involving the whole university, established to unearth new roles and potentials fitting for art in modern society. The project's diverse range of undertakings serve to forge connections with all kinds of fields from science and medicine to social welfare, bring new value to light, and convey the power of art to bring more meaning and abundance to society. HP: <https://iloveyou.geidai.ac.jp/>



Letters TSUNAGU (“connect”) people’s hearts ♥

This is the 50th issue of TSUNAGU, a high-grade PR magazine containing articles and photos related to KPP’s main business—paper. When I give it to my friends, they are very happy. In this age, when more and more PR magazines are being relegated to the Internet, I believe that now is the time to continue publishing PR magazines, which at first glance seems extravagant or wasteful, but I think is actually what supports corporate growth. A company that shrinks has no future.

Over the course of TSUNAGU’s 50-issue history, I have been writing for the essay series, *Making Letters Speak*, since issue No. 22. It was more than seven years ago when the very socially-connected Jin Sato introduced me to then-President Madoka Tanabe. When I lamented the fact that I, who was no good at gauging the thoughts of others, had quit my salaried job to pursue writing but hadn’t received any writing offers, he said, “Why not write for our PR magazine? The articles need to be related to paper, though,” and I was hired for the project on the spot. That’s how things should be. Believing in the further growth of this company, I have been putting nearly all of my writing fees into buying shares of KPP stock.



Tomone Uemura
Essayist



On the occasion of our 50th issue, we express our sincere appreciation.

TSUNAGU, a public relations magazine, was first issued in April 2007 as a tool for conveying *A Paper Trail for Creating the Future*, the corporate message of the KPP Group, and it has been published quarterly since 2013. We have also been issuing an English version for overseas readers since 2015.

As many companies discontinue their PR magazines or replace them with electronic versions, KPP hopes that by conveying information via the printed word on paper, befitting our original business as a paper distributor, we can allow people in our digital society to free their eyes from screens and enjoy the printed page from time to time, deepening their minds and conveying the appeal of paper culture.

Many paper artists have appeared in the special feature pages of TSUNAGU. Some of

their work fascinates us as art, while others are practical items that become part of our everyday lives. The creativity and sensitivity of the artists who bring out the full potential of paper in each issue are truly overwhelming.

Tomone Uemura, a regular contributor to our signature essay series, *Making Letters Speak*, is the nephew of Naoki Sanjugo, an author who is known for the “Naoki Prize” created in his memory. He himself produced many popular programs during his tenure at TV Tokyo, and he has been an active writer since leaving the network. The now very familiar appendix series, *Create*, has also been well received.

This month, we commemorate the 50th issue with a special interview with Katsuhiko Hibino, a well-known cardboard artist and President of Tokyo University of the Arts, and a

feature on The Afan Woodland Trust, the legacy of the late C.W. Nicol, who worked to regenerate forests in pursuit of biodiversity.

Thanks to the support of many, TSUNAGU has reached a milestone; we are proud to have reached our 50th issue. KPP intends to go on to publish TSUNAGU’s 90th and 100th issues, and continue contributing to the development of paper culture, so we hope that you will keep supporting us in this quest. We look forward to your continued support.

Madoka Tanabe

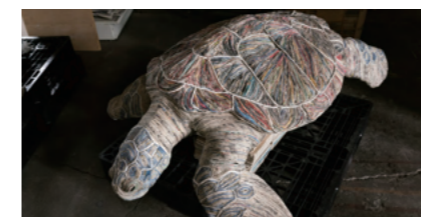
Chairman & Chief Executive Officer
Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd.



Congratulations on the 50th issue of TSUNAGU! I believe that by continuing to pile up this work you are doing something formative and creating connections. Please continue to introduce people to the excellence of paper as a material from the unique TSUNAGU perspective.



Vol. 28 (July 2016)



TOPICS

In 2019, she changed the name from Hitotsuyama Chie to HITOTSUYAMA .STUDIO, as a creative unit.



Please check their website for the latest information.

Website: <https://hitotsuyamastudio.com/>

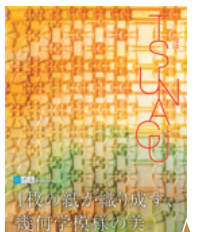
HITOTSUYAMA .STUDIO

Creative Duo



HITOTSUYAMA .STUDIO

Every page of TSUNAGU is packed with people doing profoundly interesting work and new information that inspires me. I feel that the culture of paper is timeless, and I’ll keep looking forward to each and every issue, onward from this milestone 50th issue.



Vol. 22 (January 2015)



TOPICS

April 29 (Fri, holiday) - November 13 (Sun)
Participating in the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial 2022, exhibiting works at Ubusuna House.

Website: <https://www.echigo-tsumari.jp/>

Tomoko Fuse

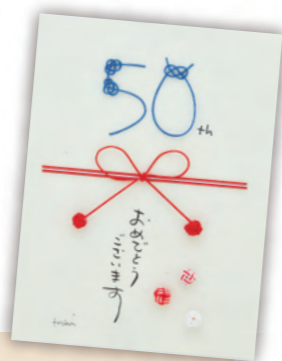
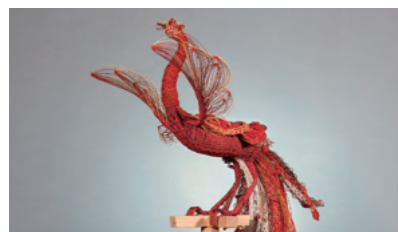
ORIGAMI Artist



Thanks to the fun interview team, I had a really pleasant time. I am also very grateful for the TSUNAGU English Edition, which helped me when I presented my works overseas. I am still impressed by all the articles by various people in each issue, and still learning so many things that are new to me. I am really looking forward to more and more paper-related content in the future.



Vol. 34 (January 2018)



TOPICS

Launched the new brand "kouhaku."
Now teaching *mizuhiki* craft classes in Kumamoto, Tokyo, and Fukuoka.

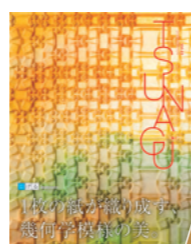
Twitter : @toshiko_uchino
Instagram : @toshiko_uchino
Website : <https://www.toshikouchino.com/>



Toshiko Uchino

Mizuhiki Artist

Congratulations on the 50th issue of TSUNAGU! Through appearing in TSUNAGU, I got the chance to exhibit my work at the entrance of the head office of Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd., and I became friendly with other artists. So, just like the meaning of the Japanese word TSUNAGU ("connect"), I connected with various people and opportunities. Thank you so much! I look forward to more great articles in the future.



Vol. 22 (January 2015)



TOPICS

April 20 (Wed) – May 29 (Sun)
Natsumi Tomita Exhibition "Shangri-La"
Venue: Nakamura Salon Museum of Art

April 22 (Fri) – May 28 (Sat)
Group Exhibition "Douce Lumière"
Venue: UCHIGO and SHIZIMI Gallery



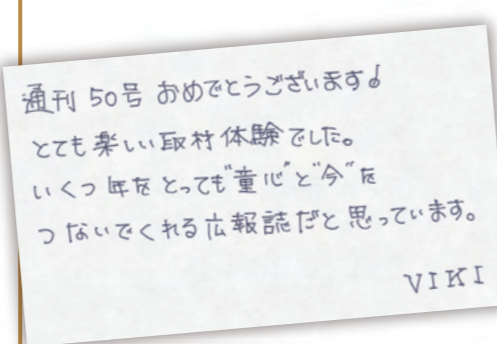
Natsumi Tomita

Artist

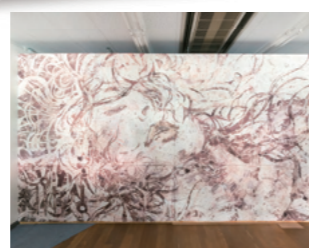
Congratulations on your 50th issue. I am so grateful for the feature article in Vol. 26 on my production anecdotes and my ideas about my work. At the time of the interview, I was in the middle of creating a large-scale piece, and I remember that I was nervous and trembling during the photo shoot. I wish you all the very best in the future.



Vol. 26 (January 2016)



Vol. 34 (January 2018)



TOPICS

April 28 (Thu) – June 27 (Mon)
"Love and Madness Market"
Venue: La Foret Harajuku B0.5F
*Produced the fitting room and exhibited works.



VIKI

Thermal Paper Artist



Various SNS

TOPICS Please check social media for the latest information.

Facebook : Wataru Ito/meganemidori
Twitter : @meganemidori_w
Instagram : @meganemidori
Webshop : <https://paperproject.base.shop>
Website : <https://paper-project.jimdofree.com>



Wataru Ito

Paper Artist

Achieving C.W. Nicol's
Vision of Restoring
Japan's Natural
Environment to Its
Original Beauty



C. W. Nicol

Author and naturalist. Born in 1940 in Wales, UK, Nicol moved to Canada at age 17 to work as a technician for the Fisheries Research Board of Canada, where he was responsible for research on marine mammals in the Arctic. He went on to work on environmental protection around the world, including as a warden at Simien Mountains National Park in Ethiopia. He moved to Kurohime in Nagano Prefecture in 1980, taking Japanese citizenship in 1995. In 2005, he was appointed Honorary Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II. Nicol died of rectal cancer on April 3, 2020. He was 79 years old.



SPECIAL INTERVIEW Part 2

It has been two full years since the passing of C.W. Nicol, a man whose love of Japanese nature surpassed all and who engaged in forest conservation throughout his life. Nicol founded the C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust, whose members carry on his legacy in their continued work to harness the rich forest potential of the Afan woodland in Kurohime, Nagano Prefecture. We spoke with two executives of the Trust about the passion for nature restoration that Nicol left behind, as well as the present and future of the Afan Woodland Trust dedicated to realizing his vision.



The C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust President Izumi Morita (right) and Executive Director Risako Noguchi (left)

“We hope to make Nicol’s dream come true for what the forest could be in 100 years.”

Restoring the abandoned forest began with his personal savings

The vast Afan Woodland stretches across Kurohime in northern Nagano Prefecture. The history of this forest, created by the late author and naturalist C.W. Nicol, dates back to 1986. Japan, at the height of its bubble economy at the time, was facing serious environmental destruction caused by large-scale public works projects and resort development.

Izumi Morita, who helped C.W. Nicol with his activities from the beginning, had this to say: “Japan is home to a wide variety of wildlife and a rich national environment. This environment is one of the elements that make the Japanese people healthy, industrious, and considerate of others. Nicol couldn’t believe that we were choosing to destroy it. At the time, he was very angry about this.” Since his death, Morita has continued to organize a variety of activities in her role as president of the C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust.

Nicol believed that Japanese people would understand the importance of the forest if he set an example through his actions. Beginning with land in Kurohime that he had purchased to build a home, he bought wild woodland nearby and set to work restoring it. Cutting back and thinning the thickly overgrown underbrush brought sunlight to a forest so dark not even birds could fly through it. With the help of Morita and others like Nobuyoshi Matsuki, a local forestry expert well versed in Kurohime’s natural environment, he spent a great deal of time and effort restoring the woodland, step by step.

Nicol sought a way to build a future in which human beings and nature coexist in harmony. His goal was to turn the Afan Woodland into a Noah’s Ark* of sorts for a diverse range of living creatures. His ideal was that the Afan Woodland would attract endangered species that would eventually return back to the wider world.

In the 2000s, having reached the age of 60, Nicol began to think about the future of the Afan Woodland, asking himself what he could do to ensure that the woodland continued to exist even after he was gone. It was then that he consulted Risako Noguchi, with whom he was working at the time.

Noguchi recalls: “I was very surprised when I

heard that Nicol had invested his own savings to expand the woodland. The best way to continue to protect the Afan Woodland assets that he had nurtured was to establish a private foundation, but the practice of using *amakudari* (Japanese senior bureaucrats retiring to high-level positions in the private sector) to set up private foundations was getting bad press at the time. We were told that it would be extremely difficult under the circumstances, but after about a year Nicol and I visited the Nagano Prefectural Office armed with many, many documents and finally established The C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust.”

Using the forest effectively for mental health care and to educate on the environment

Restoring the forest is not the sole focus of the Afan Woodland Trust. Beyond forest restoration, the Trust’s activities include research on the plants and animals living in the woodland, invitations for visits by children who have been abused or have disabilities, and programs designed to help people heal through experiences in nature. In August 2011, immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake, children living in Higashi-Matsushima in Miyagi Prefecture, which was struck by the tsunami, were invited to the Afan Woodland with their families. As the saying goes, “A wounded heart can only be healed by nature,” and these children were given time to rest their bodies and free their minds in lush forest surroundings.

The Afan Woodland Trust subsequently launched its Earthquake Reconstruction Project, working with victims of the earthquake in Higashi-Matsushima to build Miyanomori Elementary School, whose wooden buildings envelop the school children in the warmth and fragrance of wood. The trust also maintains the nearby Fukkou no Mori forest in the mountain foothills to teach lessons in coexisting with nature. These popular activities are close to the heart of the people affected by the earthquake and tsunami, and this “school of the forest,” coexisting harmoniously with its natural environment, is prized by local residents as a symbol of the recovery.

Since 2016, Miyanomori Elementary School

has co-sponsored a hands-on workshop with Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd., in which participants plant the paper mulberry and birch trees from which traditional Japanese *washi* paper is made and try their hand at making their own *washi*. *Washi* artist Rogier Uitenboogaart was invited to teach a special class in which Nicol himself participated as a guest. Author of numerous books, Nicol told the children that paper is a blessing from the forest and spoke of its charms, saying, “It is because there is paper that books were born and rich cultures evolved.”

Morita explains: “In order to restore the forest to a healthy state, it is necessary to cut trees down when there is overcrowding or trees are in poor condition. We are often criticized for cutting trees down while claiming to be protecting nature. Nicol strongly advocated for the importance of thinning forests and utilizing the wood.”

Noguchi adds: “There is nothing quite like planting trees with your own hands, harvesting them, and making paper from the wood. This experience brings an understanding of the connection between our daily lives and the forest that is extremely valuable, and the children are very pleased to take part. We want to make sure that these workshops continue.”

Putting Nicol’s ideas into practice to create the ideal woodland

Even after Nicol’s death in 2020, the Afan Woodland Trust, as heir to his legacy, has continued without pause to carry on his ideas. Morita reports: “When Nicol started work to restore the forest, he hoped the Afan Woodland would return to close to its natural state in 100 years. The Afan Woodland began with 10 hectares and has now expanded to

Risako Noguchi
Executive Director, The C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust



Izumi Morita
President, The C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust

63.5 hectares, which includes national forest leased from the government for the regeneration of man-made forests. Expanding the forest means enlarging the ecosystem. We hope to continue expanding the Trust, as well, so that we can make Nicol’s dream for what the forest could be in 100 years come true.”

Noguchi explains the trust’s vision like this: “Our generation has not experienced the original healthy forests that Nicol experienced in his childhood. Now that he is gone, I feel it is our mission to find ways to bring the Afan Woodland closer to that ideal. He believed in communicating with the forest to know what it

likes and what it doesn’t like. I would like to continue this daily work to restore the woodland, adapting to the way that the forest reacts in response.”

Noguchi also comments on how the Trust is utilizing the bioresources that lay dormant in the Afan Woodland: “We are planning to commercialize the bounty of the forest in the form of beer, gin, aromatics, and other products that allow people to enjoy the flavors of the forest.” About her vision of what is next for the Trust, she explains: “Nicol often said, ‘People say that Japan is a resource-poor country, but this is not true. We are surrounded by so many natural blessings.’ Creating a lush forest creates value, and the economy is enriched. He aimed to create this virtuous cycle. We hope that the Afan Woodland will establish this cycle and pass it on to other communities, as well.”

They are also working on a short animated film based on Nicol’s life and his vision of the forest in 100 years’ time. Morita is inspired: “We cannot film the future, but we can share our vision in animation. What kind of flowers will be blooming and what kind of creatures

will be living in the Afan Woodland 100 years from now? We hope to paint a picture of the forest based on as much biological data as possible and to share this, and his views, with as many people as possible.”

Nicol devoted his life to restoring the Afan Woodland. This beautiful forest continues to regenerate and evolve, and will no doubt continue to teach us a great deal.

* Noah’s Ark: A story from the book of Genesis in the Bible. God was disappointed with the evil deeds of humankind and brought about a great flood. Noah, a righteous person, followed God’s instructions and built a large boat called an “ark.” He brought his family and two of every animal aboard in order to save humankind and all living creatures from extinction.

The C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust

Established in 2002, the Trust takes as its mission “to restore Japan’s nature to its original state and create a society full of smiling children” and “to expand woodlands rich in biodiversity for those living 100 years in the future.” The Trust focuses on creating communities that coexist with local nature through forest protection activities, primarily in the Afan Woodland in Kurohime in Nagano Prefecture.

Address | Oi, Shinanomachi, Kamiminouchi-gun, Nagano Prefecture
Website | <https://afan.or.jp/> (in Japanese)

New Support for The C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust Forest Creation Launched

KPP, an official sponsor since 2015, has introduced a new type of support for The C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust. We are now sponsoring forest maintenance activities in the southern area of the Afan Woodland to help create new forest value and contribute to a sustainable world.



Inquiries on this topic

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Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd.

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1. Studying the current state of the forest — biosurveys

Before embarking on maintenance activities, a biosurvey is conducted to determine the current condition of the forest. To determine the ecology of the wildlife, the survey assesses such factors as whether the vegetation lacks diversity and whether rare species are present.



2. Maintaining the forest — developing maintenance policy

Once the current conditions of the forest are understood, a maintenance policy is drawn up to detail how the forest is to be taken care of. If endangered species are present, the policy details how to create the environment needed to protect these species, while envisioning the forest in 100 years’ time.



3. Monitoring — adaptive management

Areas under maintenance are surveyed in the same way, as well. Areas are maintained and assessed repeatedly, incorporating how forest wildlife respond to changes to determine how maintenance activities are affecting them.



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

KPP Sustainable Times

The recirculation and recycling of finite resources and energy has become an urgent concern in contemporary society. At KPP, we are determined to increase our corporate value by ensuring that our business operations help to build a sustainable society. This effort is grounded in our management mission to realize a recycling-oriented society.

news 01 New capital and business alliance with AmicaTerra Co., Ltd., a company that sells raw materials for and manufactures non-plastics

The KPP Group has made an investment in AmicaTerra Co., Ltd., a company that manufactures plant-derived non-plastic products and sells the raw materials for them. The company is engaged in the wholesaling, manufacturing, and sales of modo-cell® non-plastic products made using cellulose residue,* thinned wood, and other discarded plants as raw materials, guided by the mission, "Be kind to the earth." The decision to invest in AmicaTerra was made because the company's biodegradable products and manufacturing technology can help reduce the environmental impact of marine plastic pollution, which has become more serious in recent years. Through this investment, the two companies will deepen their partnership and promote the use of AmicaTerra's products and other initiatives to build a sustainable, recycling-oriented society.

What is the plant-derived sustainable material called modo-cell®?

The raw materials for modo-cell® are plant fiber (cellulose), starch, plant-derived natural resin, and water. It puts no burden on the natural environment because it utilizes previously discarded natural resources such as bamboo from abandoned bamboo groves, rice straw, and corncobs, wasting nothing, and is biodegradable on land or at sea after use. In addition, since cellulose residue from the product manufacturing process and locally generated agricultural waste can be used as raw materials, raw material depletion is not a concern. modo-cell® is also expected to become an alternative material for containers made from petroleum-derived resources.



Products using modo-cell®, which requires no specialized molding equipment. It has both thermosetting and thermoplastic properties, making it suitable for all existing plastic molding methods.

Features of modo-cell®

- (1) Having plants as the main raw material means that plant residues* that until now have been discarded can be used as raw materials.
- (2) Having plants as the main raw material also means it is completely biodegradable on land or at sea.
- (3) No proprietary molds are required for molding, so products can be manufactured with ordinary plastic molding machines.
- (4) It is useful for the disposal of abandoned bamboo groves and agricultural waste.
- (5) The characteristics of the raw plant materials can be reflected in its products.

*Residue: Impurities or strained lees remaining after removing the desired component(s) from a liquid or solid that serves as raw material.



AmicaTerra Co., Ltd.

Address 307 Asahi Bldg., 1-12-8 Tomioka, Koto-ku, Tokyo
Representative Koji Masuda, Chairman and Representative Director
 Koga Yukari, President and Representative Director
Business Description Development, manufacture and sale of modo-cell®, a plant-derived, biodegradable plastic substitute material
Founded November 7, 2016
Website <https://amica-terra.com/>



news 02 Introducing the sustainability catalog *Environs*

As sustainability becomes increasingly important, the entire KPP Group is working to develop products and services that contribute to reducing environmental impact. Spicers Limited,* a member of the KPP Group, has recently released *Environs*, a catalog that features a full collection of products that contribute to reducing environmental impact.

Environs introduces sustainable paper-based products, polypropylene products, and non-vinyl chloride products, but is also packed with a variety of content, including the Spicers Sustainability Statement, sustainability goals and practices, and tips to consider when designing sustainable products.

Spicers values meeting the needs of today's market without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Going forward, the company will continue to create innovative and sustainable solutions for leading brands in the Oceania region.

Environs is launching in June 2022. It is scheduled to be introduced at the PacPrint Trade Show in Melbourne, Australia.

*A leading paper distributor in the Oceania region that provides solutions for high-end printed material, packaging, and signage.



MESSAGES



Wayne Hood
 Manager
 Sign & Display
 Portfolio Segments,
 Spicers Limited

Spicers' growth strategy is to respond to customers' demands for consideration of the environment. We have witnessed our clients' entire processes, from product manufacturing to raw material disposal. We have forged partnerships with our suppliers and customers to protect the planet, and are confident of these collaborations.



Ken Booth
 General Manager
 Supply Chain &
 Product Segments,
 Spicers Limited

Responsible procurement is an important part of our sustainability approach. We follow comprehensive and due diligence procedures to ensure that our suppliers are sourcing raw materials from legal and properly managed forests and renewable resources. We are committed to providing Australian-made, carbon-neutral, recycled products whenever possible.



Cyndi Setia
 Manager
 Marketing &
 Design Segments,
 Spicers Limited

Environs is a tool and resource for designers, specifiers and converters. It offers sustainable options that consider materials, production processes, use and disposal.

Sustainable choices offered by Spicers



Fibre-based

Spicers' fibre-based products include market-leading materials such as coated and uncoated items, in addition to unique products that stand out from the rest.



Polypropylene

Spicers' rigid polypropylene products offer versatile materials suited for a variety of applications in recycling programs.

NON-PVC

Non-PVC products address growing interest and demand in the marketplace by offering more environmentally friendly solutions.

Top: Corflute, a recyclable polypropylene product suitable for indoor and outdoor use.

Bottom: Re-board, an FSC-certified rigid paper core board with a unique engineered fluted core. It provides superior strength and rigidity, and is extremely lightweight and easy to transport, assemble, and dismantle.

For product inquiries, contact:

**Corporate Communications Office
 Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd.**

TEL: +81-3-3542-4169

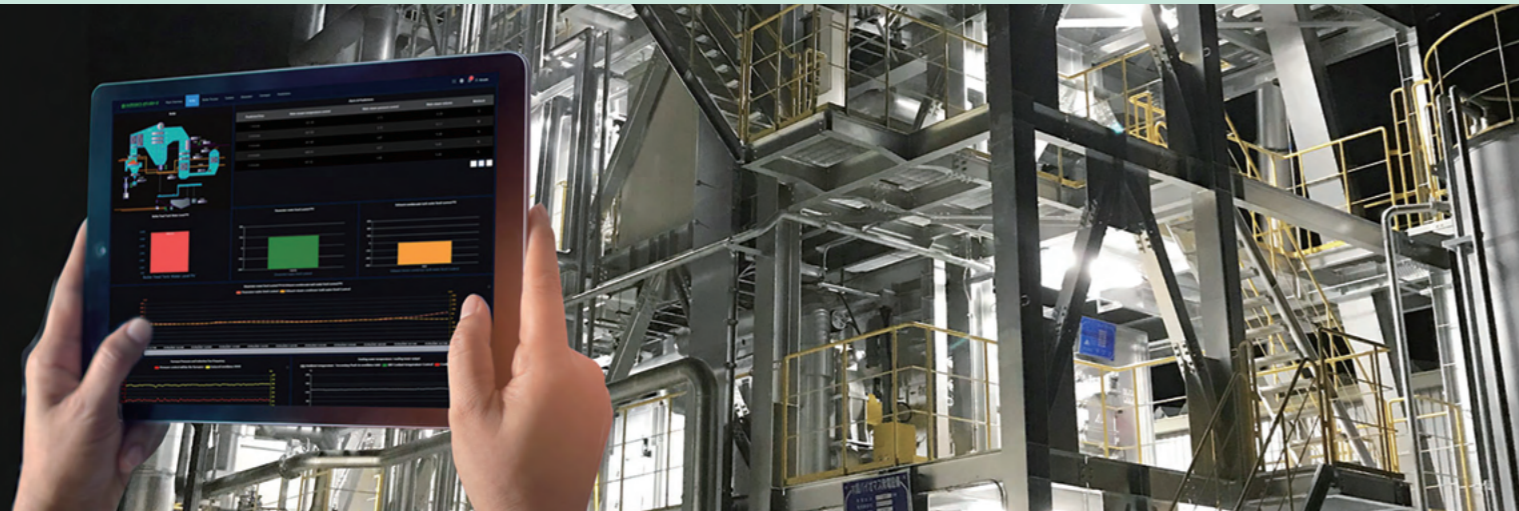
E-MAIL: kpp_cc@kpp-gr.com

Use the QR code on the right to view details of the sustainability catalog *Environs*.



Explore

KPP's sustainable solutions to promote a recycling-oriented society



news 03 New Company Established to Provide Optimal Solutions for Biomass Power Generation Business

KPP has established a subsidiary to focus primarily on BMecomo development and sales. This biomass power plant operation system, which utilizes the latest cutting-edge technology, was introduced in Issue 44 (September 2020).

We have established BMecomo CO., LTD. in a joint venture with Envision Enterprise Solutions, an IT vendor headquartered in India. With this subsidiary, we will further expand our biomass power generation business, increase efficiency, and accelerate the decision-making process. Envision has developed a variety of their own IoT solutions, and this collaboration on BMecomo is designed to develop and market IoT solutions for Japan's industrial sector, which is facing future challenges arising from aging workforce and deteriorating facilities.

In addition, as the biomass power generation market is confronted with continuing changes in the external environment, such as efforts to build a decarbonized world and circular economy, our BMecomo subsidiary will further grow and develop our fuel sales business, including a scheme to use corporate waste wood as energy, as well as our BMecomo business. In this way, we aim to solve issues that society faces, while also increasing our group's corporate value.

What is BMecomo?

BMecomo is a service that helps maximize the profits of daily operating biomass power generation plants. This is done by collecting and analyzing a wide array of data obtained from biomass power plants and utilizing the latest technology to provide a comprehensive picture of plant operations. Our BMecomo service provides advanced IoT management to help solve a variety of issues, such as maintaining combustion efficiency and maximum power generation, allowing younger operators to learn from the expertise of skilled veterans, achieving long-term sustainable business management, and dealing with regularly occurring equipment issues. In addition, we believe that this information-sharing platform will prove useful in informing decision-making at power plants and improving corporate and business value by connecting power plant workers and managers with stakeholders. With BMecomo, our aim is to create a new, wholly unprecedented biomass power generation business.

2018	Development of BMecomo as part of the KPP Group's totally recycling-oriented business model launched
October 2019	Demonstrations of BMecomo operations at Biomass Power Technologies Inc. (KPP-funded biomass power plant) began
November 2021	BMecomo services introduced at Mie Enewood Ltd. (headquartered in Matsusaka City, Mie Prefecture). See Issue 45 for more detail.
March 2022	BMecomo CO., LTD. established



BMecomo CO., LTD.

Location: 6-24 Akashi-cho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo
TEL: +81-3-3542-9924 (Hours: M-F 9:00-17:00)

Scan QR code to check out BMecomo website! ▶

https://bmecomo.com/about_en.html

Video about services here



Next Issue

In our next issue, we introduce companies using our BMecomo services and detail the sensor solutions that are part of the platform functionality.

Deepen

Catch Up on the Latest News at KPP

New Business Solutions Website for Sustainable Growth Strategies

Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd. has launched a new business solution website, SHIFT ON, that provides optimal plans for clients' diverse management issues. These plans incorporate the wide range of products and global network that only a trading company that specializes in paper can offer, as well as our knowledge and expertise in sustainable growth strategies for specific communities and the global environment.

In working together with our clients, we apply our nearly 100 years of experience as a materials trading company to envision the ideal future based on each client's specific philosophy and goals. Then, we provide the materials and systems necessary to help them reach that future.

SHIFT ON works in three business domains —SHIFT ON green, SHIFT ON packaging, and SHIFT ON promotion — to contribute to the sustainable development of our clients' businesses. These optimal solutions address the challenges they face by leveraging the expertise we have gained over many years in selecting the right materials and creating recycling systems, as well as our knowledge of the latest materials, understanding of industrial trends, and globally expanding network.



SHIFT ON

<https://shifton.kpp-gr.com/>



Inquiries regarding SHIFT ON website
Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd. Marketing Office
TEL : +81-3-3542-6851
MAIL : kpp_marketing@kpp-gr.com

SHIFT ON Mission

We contribute to our clients' businesses by proposing new solutions to management issues that arise as the relationship between society and companies changes in terms of ESG, SDGs, materiality, and purpose.

Environmental/Functional Solutions

We propose solutions from a range of materials that includes paper, biomass plastic, and biodegradable plastic. With each proposal we aim to best serve our clients' purposes and provide solutions that cover the entire product lifecycle from processing to post-consumer recycling.

Inquiries regarding environmental and functional materials

TEL: +81-3-3542-4170

MAIL: kpp_green_solution@kpp-gr.com

Total Solutions for Promotional Products

We offer a diverse media lineup that includes paper, film, and synthetic paper. We help clients with the entire promotional product process from the selection of optimal materials through printing, processing, assembly, and delivery.

Inquiries regarding solutions for promotional products

TEL: +81-3-3542-9911

MAIL: kpp_promotion_solution@kpp-gr.com

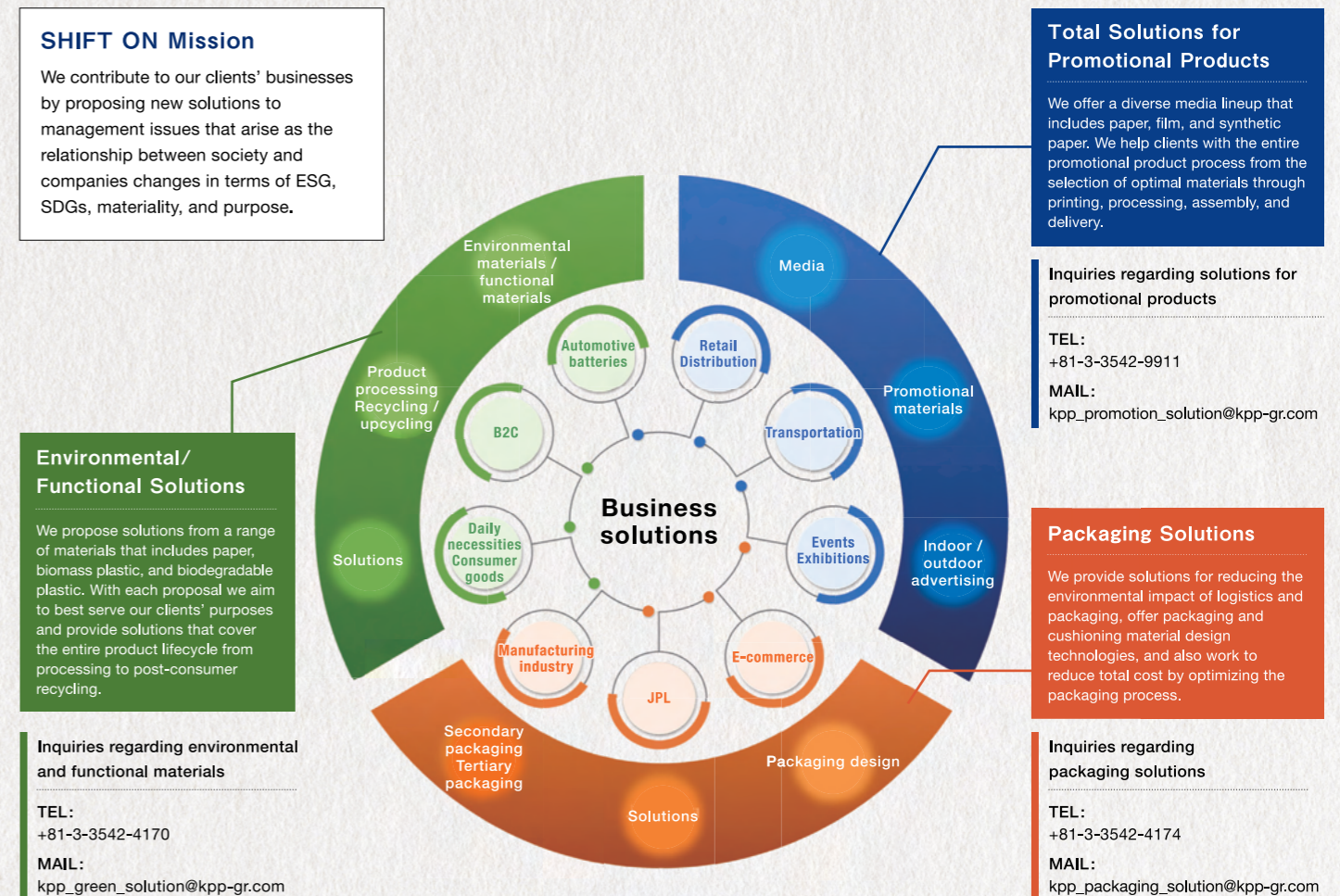
Packaging Solutions

We provide solutions for reducing the environmental impact of logistics and packaging, offer packaging and cushioning material design technologies, and also work to reduce total cost by optimizing the packaging process.

Inquiries regarding packaging solutions

TEL: +81-3-3542-4174

MAIL: kpp_packaging_solution@kpp-gr.com



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. 28: Hitoshi Maeda

Formerly President of Kirin Beverage Company, Limited, Hitoshi Maeda is known for the development of brands such as Kirin Heartland, Ichiban Shibori, and Tanrei. I first met him when I was in charge of sales operations at TV TOKYO Corporation, perhaps some 27 years ago, around 1995, at an autumn event to show personnel in charge of publicity at our main advertisers around Kyoto. Ten years younger than me, at the time Hitoshi Maeda was Chief of Marketing for Kirin, and managed to win me over with his intelligence and nice smile. The liking was perhaps mutual, because we immediately became friends. Privately, we even went on trips together to Kansai, Kamikochi, Niigata, and other destinations. I was an absolute amateur in all sales-related matters, so I learned a lot from Mr. Maeda. After a year or so, I was relieved of my sales duties and reassigned to a group company that specialized in program production, but even after that I maintained my friendship with Mr. Maeda until his death, more than 25 years later. When I was assigned to another group company, Mr. Yasuhiro Sato, the then-President of Kirin, organized a party at, if I remember correctly, Blue Note in Aoyama, or some similar venue, to celebrate my transfer, but it was Mr. Maeda who arranged for everything.

Mr. Itsuma Wakasugi, the then Sales Bureau Director in charge of Kirin at DENTSU INC., once quipped about Mr. Maeda's friendship with me: "That's because he likes creative work more than sales." His observation was perhaps spot-on. I had acquired my skills through work in the field, planning and producing programs, so while I was inept in the type of ingratiating behavior associated with sales, I had some solid opinions on the creative aspects of work and never hesitated to express them freely. Perhaps Mr. Maeda liked this about me. Right after I transferred from my position in sales to a TV program production company, he suggested that I should try making a program about the theories of Peter Drucker, a management professor and sociologist who was quite popular at the time. Eventually, the program became a reality, produced by TV TOKYO Production, Inc. and sponsored by Kirin. Looking back, this proposal was perhaps Mr. Maeda's way to celebrate my transfer and encourage me in the new position. My career in the program production company concluded after several years, and my next goal became the literary profession, but I continued to seek Mr. Maeda's opinion every time I needed an advice. He always listened to me attentively and with kindness. I celebrated the publishing of my first and second book with somewhat boastfully lavish parties, and Mr. Maeda not only attended both events but also provided beverages produced by his company.

We went together golfing more times than I could count. In the early days of our friendship, he was an easy mark, but as he rose through the corporate ranks, his skills improved, and in later years I was the one who turned into an easy mark. Mr. Maeda approached everything in a logical manner, so I suppose he studied a lot and worked very hard to improve his game.

Later in life, we socialized mainly through two types of events held once every two or three months at Gakushikaikan: Tomone-kai and Fufu-no-kai. Tomone-kai was a gathering of professionals from different industries, while Fufu-no-kai (literally "Couples' Meeting") was a dinner attended by five married couples. As a person who cannot stand being alone and always needs company, I was the one who came up with the idea of these events, and Mr. Maeda was kind enough to attend both. He gave Tomone-kai its name. As for Fufu-no-kai, in addition to Mr. Maeda and his wife and me and my wife, it was attended by three other couples, which included a lawyer, a company executive, and the head chef of Gakushikaikan and their spouses, or a total of ten people. It was quite a delightful event. The wives used it as an opportunity to speak honestly and complain to their heart's content and thus blow off the tension of daily frustrations, driving us, the husbands, into a corner. It was a cheerful occasion with lots of laughs.

I wanted Mr. Maeda to read my writings, so I presented him with almost all of the few works that I published. Each time, he responded with a letter describing his impressions. "Thank you for presenting me with *Kikotsu no Hito*. I think the non-fiction genre is perfect for you. The book is overflowing with the warmth and sharp observation skills regarding human behavior that you nurtured through your experience in planning and producing TV programs. I read it in one breath." This is an account of his impressions of the critical biography *Kikotsu no Hito Shiroyama Saburo* ("Saburo Shiroyama: A Man of Determination").

"Thank you for sending me *Chichi ni Tsuite*. It made me once again realize how amazing writers are. Your ability to write is amazing, but what I find even more fascinating is the process of contemplation of ideas about the actual content of your writing. Full mobilization of induction and deduction, right? For you, this process can also serve as mental training, and keep you sharp and actively-engaged throughout your life. Keep up the good work!"

Chichi ni Tsuite ("About my Father") was a work that I published in a serialized format in a small monthly economic magazine over the course of one year, and this is an excerpt from a postcard in which Mr. Maeda shared his impressions of my writing. Although I am sure his letters contain some lip service, they are filled with kindness more than anything else. I can hardly describe how much reassurance and encouragement these warm letters provided to a faint-hearted and diffident person like me.

I found out that Mr. Maeda had fallen ill sometime in 2019. He stopped coming both to the Tomone-kai and the Fufu-no-kai, and of course we did not play golf together anymore. He was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Yet, Mr. Maeda did not lose his presence of mind, never complained, and remained the calm and composed Mr. Maeda whom I knew so well. I avoided bothering him with invitations that would have been too strenuous. Instead, we communicated only via occasional emails.

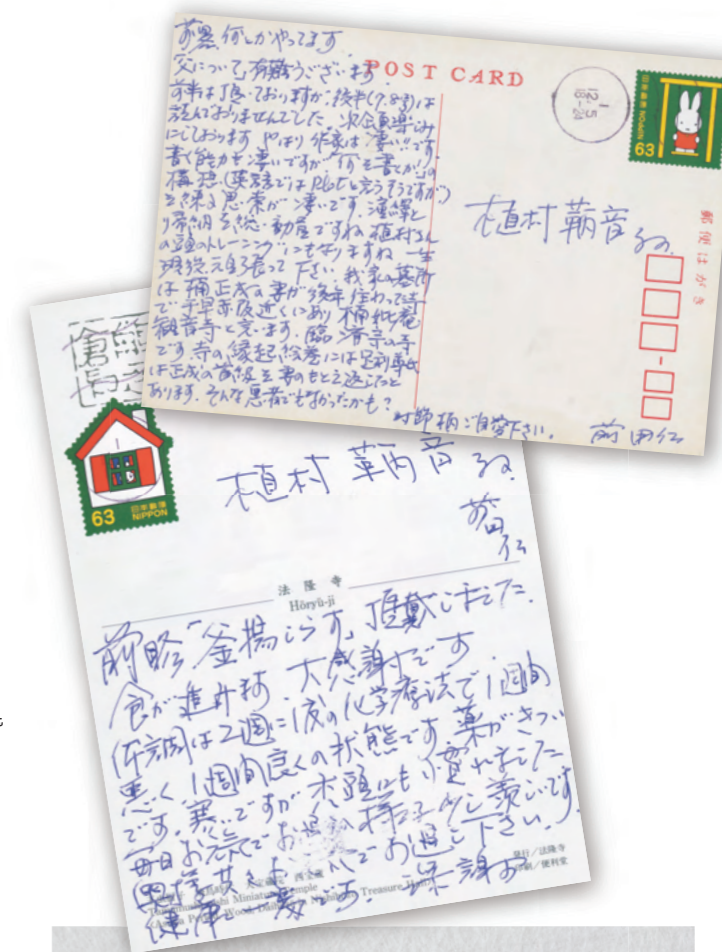
"I go to chemotherapy once every two weeks, so one week I feel sick, and the next week I am well. The medications are quite strong. I even got used to being bald, although it is cold. I trust this email finds you well, and I must admit I envy you a little. I wish a healthy life to you and your wife. There is nothing more important than health. Thank you for everything."

I tacitly understood Mr. Maeda's resolution to accept the inevitable.

He passed away in June 2020. Going through my email history, I was reminded of a message he sent me a month before his death, on May 18. "Thank you for your email. The tumor markers have declined for the first time thanks to a new medication, but I now have pleural effusion and am currently hospitalized and on a drip because of intestinal obstruction. Things are not going so smoothly, and there is a battle in my body between the cancer and the medication. I will do my best. Thank you."

Come to think of it, Mr. Maeda kept his will to live until early spring of that year. I received an email message with a photo attachment from him on February 3. In it, Mr. Maeda expressed the joy of celebrating his 70th birthday surrounded by his family two days earlier. "I turned 70 on February 1. Last summer I had given up. The aftereffects of the medication were quite severe, so we postponed until the very last moment the decision whether to

take the overnight trip to Hakone-Yumoto organized by my children to celebrate my 70th birthday, but eventually I was well enough to go. There were 12 of us, including all my children and grandchildren. It was a cheerful and joyous party. On the way back, I took up the challenge of climbing the stairs at Azumayama Park in Ninomiya together with my wife and eldest daughter. With their help, I managed to climb 300 steps." The photo was of Mr. Maeda, facing the camera with a satisfied expression, and his wife, Yasuko, huddled against him, with a bright yellow field of canola flowers filling the background. The photo was most likely taken by his daughter. Every time I look at this photo of the two of them together, my heart is filled with grief.



Hitoshi Maeda

Former CEO and President of Kirin Beverage Company, Limited
Former Chairman of the Japan Soft Drink Association
1950 – 2020



Hitoshi Maeda was born in 1950 in Yamanashi Prefecture and grew up in Osaka. After graduating from the School of Economics, Kwansai Gakuin University, he joined Kirin Brewery Company, Limited, in 1973. In 1980, Maeda was appointed to a position in charge of marketing at the Sales Division and Marketing Division in the Tokyo Head Office of the company, where he worked on the product planning and development of beer and wine brands. Maeda created a number of widely popular products, such as Kirin Ichiban Shibori, Kirin Tanrei Nama, and Hyoketsu. Later, he was entrusted with important positions at group companies, and eventually was appointed CEO and President of Kirin Beverage Company, Limited, in 2009, and Chairman of the Japan Soft Drink Association in 2010. He passed away in 2020 at the age of 70.



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.



Antenna Books & Cafe

cocoshiba

5-5-13 Shiba, Kawaguchi City,

Saitama Prefecture

Tel: +81-48-499-1719

Business hours: 11:00 - 20:00

Closed on Mondays

*Subject to change when holding events.

Be sure to check the calendar on the website before making a visit.

<https://cocoshiba.com/>



A community book cafe that connects people in the community

A roughly 5-minute walk from Warabi Station on the Keihin Tohoku Line. "Antenna Books & Cafe *cocoshiba*," located in the Shiba Ginza shopping district in Kawaguchi City, Saitama Prefecture, opened in 2018 as a book cafe with roots in the community. Miho Ogura, one of the co-owners, says, "Customers come up with ideas for what they want to do or what they are good at." Just as she says, the calendar on the website is full of events of all kinds. These include a multitude of events, ranging from book-related events such as talks by authors on books sold at the store and "Blue Sky Book Readings," to exhibitions of flower paintings, craftwork sales, rakugo comic storytelling performances and gender-themed chat sessions.

In addition, events unique to the multicultural area that is Kawaguchi are regularly held. These include a Japanese language class for

Kurds, who live in large numbers in the Kawaguchi area, and a handicraft class teaching traditional lace knitting technique known as Oya. The *cocoshiba* meeting held every Wednesday is a regular meeting of the three people who run the store, and is open to the general public. Says Ogura, "We wanted a variety of people, including the event organizers and the attendees, to get a say in how the store is run. It is important that everyone, including us, can enjoy interacting with one another; for example, we provide the venue, and in exchange, people help out at the cafe."

The new books on the shelves of *cocoshiba* are mainly specialty books on literature, society, history, philosophy, and religion. Ogura is also the owner of a small publishing company, and each book in this lineup is selected from her perspective as a book

creator to pique the viewer's interest by its title alone. "Many customers buy books they feel are difficult or unaccustomed to reading, to give it a try," says Ogura. "If doing so gives them a chance to experience a new world, that makes me happy,"

In April of this year, *cocoshiba* opened a new shared space called *Space To Plan* in the same shopping area, which can be used for hobby classes, workshops, and product sales. Together with *cocoshiba*, the two venues will continue to provide a place for social interaction. "I think that once one becomes an adult, it gets quite difficult to make true friends. I hope we can help create opportunities for people who don't know each other at all to meet and become friends," says Ogura. So, *cocoshiba* is a place where people can make the kinds of mutual connections that are disappearing in the big city.



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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