

100th
ANNIVERSARY
KPP GROUP HOLDINGS

Vol. 60
2024 AUTUMN

TSUNAGU
[繋ぐ]

Looking Back on a Century of Paper KPP Group 100 Years of History

Deepen Special

100th Anniversary of Founding Project: Rilakkuma x SPOGOMI 2024 /
Washi Japanese Paper-Making Workshop

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

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KPP GROUP 100 Years of History

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Rilakkuma x SPOGOMI 2024 and
Washi Japanese Paper-Making Workshop
Held to Celebrate 100th Anniversary of Founding

Create Supplement

A Special Edition Item to Mark Our
100th Anniversary!
A papercraft figure of our ecomo-chan mascot



A Special 100th Anniversary Issue

KPP Group Holdings marks the 100th anniversary of its founding on November 27, 2024. On behalf of the entire KPP Group, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our stakeholders for your continued support.

Our public relations magazine TSUNAGU was launched in April 2007 to serve as an information tool shaped by the KPP Group's corporate message, "Paper Innovation for a Connected Future." We are pleased to be publishing this very special 100th anniversary issue and will continue to disseminate timely information in this newsletter with a focus on paper and conveying the appeal of paper culture.

Drawing on 100 years of success and ready for our next century in business, we are committed to pursuing the utmost potential that paper has to offer as we work to create new businesses.

I thank you, our readers and customers, for your ongoing support.

Madoka Tanabe



Representative Director of the Board
Chairman & Chief Executive Officer
KPP GROUP HOLDINGS Co., Ltd.

KPP GROUP HOLDINGS
100TH ANNIVERSARY

Looking Back on a Century of Paper

PART 3
1974-2024

Social news and issues

1987

·Japanese National Railways (JNR) divided and privatized, establishing seven JR companies

1989

·Emperor Showa passes away, Heisei era begins

1990

·East and West Germany reunified

1991

·Multinational forces launch an attack against Iraq, Gulf War begins

1993

·European Union (EU) inaugurated
·Japan Professional Soccer League (J. League) launched

1994

·Kenzaburo Oe awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature

1995

·Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake

1998

·1998 Winter Olympic Games held in Nagano



Nagano Olympic Games
(Photo: AfloSport)

1974

1990

1995

2000

KPP history

1974

·On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the company's founding, new Tokyo Head Office building built in Akashi, Chuo City, where it still is today



1993

·KPP releases Hana-Omoi, the world's first seal-type product that prolongs the life of cut flowers



1997

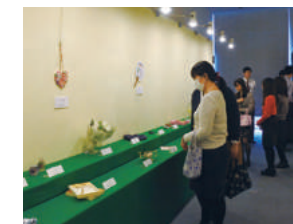
·Singapore Branch becomes a legal entity, DaiEi Singapore established



DaiEi Singapore

·1st KPP Cultural Exhibition

An exhibition held every two years from 1997 to 2019 that exhibits paintings, calligraphy works, and decorative objects created by employees and their families



KPP Cultural Exhibition

1999

·In a pioneering effort for the reorganization of the paper distribution industry, the company merges with Nichia Co., Ltd. to create Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd. (KPP)



2000

·Sales exceed 300 billion yen in the fiscal year ended March 2001

Vol. 1

TSUNAGU launched in order to communicate the appeal of the diverse culture of paper and to deepen the relationship of trust with stakeholders (published twice a year)



Vol. 3

Featuring Kyoko Nakanishi, an artist creates beautiful scroll-like works using expressive Japanese paper dolls based on themes such as playhouses and *The Tale of Genji*.



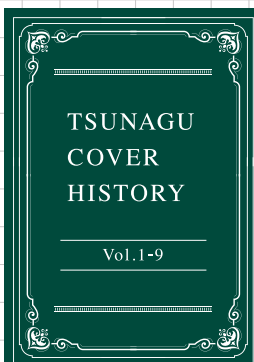
Vol. 6

Introducing Hina Aoyama, a world-renowned artist who creates intricate lace-like paper cutouts with just a pair of scissors



Vol. 8

Featuring Keizo Hayashi, pioneer of Choshi Art, a unique art form in which semi-3D images are created by carving through stacked sheets of paper



Vol.1 (Spring 2007 Issue)



Vol.2 (Autumn 2007 Issue)



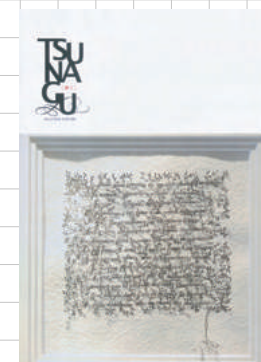
Vol.3 (Spring 2008 Issue)



Vol.4 (Autumn 2008 Issue)



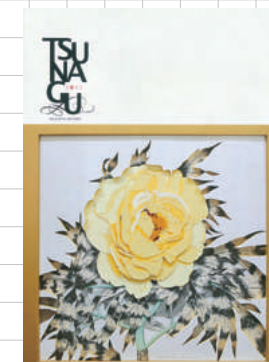
Vol.5 (Spring 2009 Issue)



Vol.6 (Autumn 2009 Issue)



Vol.7 (Spring 2010 Issue)



Vol.8 (Autumn 2010 Issue)



Vol.9 (Spring 2011 Issue)

Social news and issues

- 2001
- Universal Studios Japan (Osaka Prefecture) opens
 - Tokyo DisneySea (Chiba Prefecture) opens
 - Ryoji Noyori awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry

- 2002
- 2002 FIFA World Cup kicks off in Japan and Korea



Korea-Japan World Cup (Photo: JFA / Aflo)

- 2003
- Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi* (“Spirited Away”) wins Academy Award for Best Animated Feature

- 2004
- Teito Rapid Transit Authority privatized, creating Tokyo Metro

- 2005
- 2005 World Exposition, Aichi, Japan held

- 2006
- Japan wins the inaugural World Baseball Classic

- 2007
- Japan Post privatized
 - Tokyo Midtown (Tokyo) opens

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KPP history

KPP Back Story

Gallery Space on the First Floor of the Head Office Continues to Showcase the Appeal of Paper

The gallery space at the first floor entrance of the Head Office is used throughout the year to showcase the appeal of paper. The space has hosted a variety of exhibits over the years, giving visitors an up-close look at KPP Group’s initiatives and groundbreaking paper products. We invite readers to stop by and take a look.



2016/KPP Tsukiji YUPO® Market

2003

- Tokyo Head Office completed still serving today



2006

- Merger with Hattori Paper & Board Ltd.

Enhanced distribution functions and strengthened the management base



- KPP China established



Opening ceremony held at Okura Garden Hotel Shanghai, Shanghai, China

- Medium-Term Business Plan GIFT2006 formulated

2007

- Merger with Kashiwai Shigyo Co., Ltd. Strengthened sales capacities and enhanced the revenue base

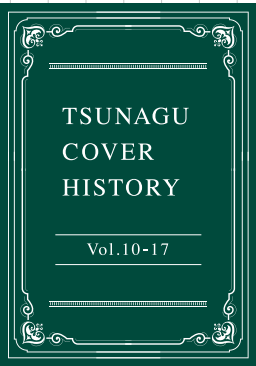
- Record sales of 423 billion yen and ordinary income of 4.5 billion yen achieved in the fiscal year ended March 2008.

- Operations begin at Tokai Recycle Center, a recovered paper collection yard (Tokai City, Aichi Prefecture)



Tokai Recycle Center

- 2011
- Great East Japan Earthquake Special Issue

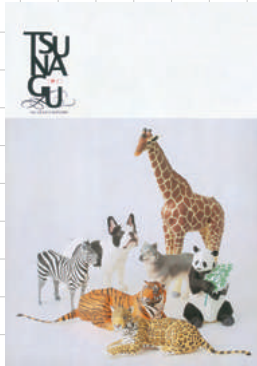


Extra issue (published in May 2011)

Vol. 11

TSUNAGU Revamped

Both composition and design were renewed to enhance the content and convey the appeal of paper and new inspirations. The magazine is now published four times a year and consists of 16 pages, including a new paper craft supplement.



Vol.10 (Autumn 2011 Issue)



Vol.11 (Spring 2012 Issue)



Vol.12 (Summer 2012 Issue)



Vol.13 (Autumn 2012 Issue)

Vol. 13

Featuring mobile artist IroKen, who sells his original works and displays installations in commercial spaces



Vol.14 (Winter 2013 Issue)



Vol.15 (Spring 2013 Issue)

Vol. 17

Featuring a conversation between then-Chairman Yoshio Akamatsu and then-President Madoka Tanabe



Vol.16 (Summer 2013 Issue)



Vol.17 (Autumn 2013 Issue)

Social news and issues

2008

- Collapse of Lehman Brothers, a major US securities firm, triggers a global financial crisis



Financial crisis (Photo: Reuters / Aflo)

2009

- Start of the jury system in Japan
- Michael Jackson passes away at the age of 50

2010

- Asteroid probe Hayabusa returns to Earth
- Tohoku Shinkansen Line opens between Hachinohe and Shin-Aomori, with all lines in service

2011

- Great East Japan Earthquake (Tohoku Area Pacific Offshore Earthquake)
- Kyushu Shinkansen Line opens between Hakata and Shin-Yatsushiro, with all lines in service
- Japan wins first victory at the FIFA Women's World Cup

2012

- Tokyo Skytree (Tokyo) opens
- Shinya Yamanaka awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine
- Shibuya Hikarie (Tokyo) opens

2008

2009

2010

2011

2012

KPP history

2009

- Papermall, a paper-related solutions website, launched



- Then-Chairman Hikaru Suzuki awarded The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette



2011

- KPP Yaesu Building, an eco-friendly highly functional office building in Chuo City, Tokyo, completed



KPP Yaesu Building

2011

- Services start under the "Town ecom" point system for collection of recovered paper



KPP Back Story

"Town ecom" Spreads Across Japan

"Town ecom" is a system for collection and recycling of recovered paper, which was launched in 2011 based on KPP policy to help build a recycling-oriented society by collecting and recycling recovered paper. In February 2016, the number of collection terminals installed nationwide exceeded 300, and there are currently more than 400 terminals installed in 46 prefectures (as of September 2024). Be sure to use a "Town ecom" terminal near you.



2012

- Displays launched of Sendai Tanabata decorations created by Narumiya Kami-shoji Co., Ltd. (in 2024 the display was held at Ginza Shochiku Square)



Display of Sendai Tanabata decorations

2014

- TSUNAGU wins the Bronze Prize in the PR Magazine Category of the 2014 Japan BtoB Advertising Awards



Vol. 19

- 90th anniversary issue
- 90 Things to Deepen Your Knowledge of KPP



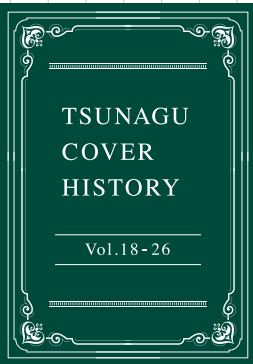
Vol. 22

- English edition of TSUNAGU launched
- "Making Letters Speak" by Tomone Uemura article series begins



Vol. 26

- TSUNAGU visits paper artist Wataru Ito at his studio and showcases his intricate and delicate craftwork, which interweaves light and shadow to create works of pure white



Vol.18 (Winter 2014 Issue)



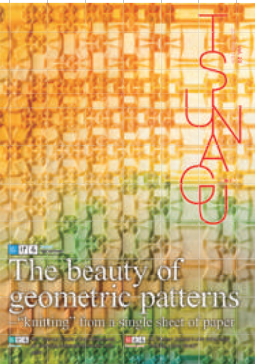
Vol.19 (Spring 2014 Issue)



Vol.20 (Summer 2014 Issue)



Vol.21 (Autumn 2014 Issue)



Vol.22 (Winter 2015 Issue)



Vol.23 (Spring 2015 Issue)



Vol.24 (Summer 2015 Issue)



Vol.25 (Autumn 2015 Issue)



Vol.26 (Winter 2016 Issue)

Social news and issues

2013

- Mount Fuji designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- At the age of 80, adventurer Yuichiro Miura becomes the oldest person to climb Mount Everest



Mount Fuji (Photo: The Mainichi Newspapers Co., Ltd. / Aflo)

2014

- Sekishu Banshi, Homminoshi, and Hosokawashi are inscribed as traditional Japanese techniques for producing handmade paper on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity
- Tomioka Silk Mill (Gunma Prefecture) inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List
- Yuzuru Hanyu wins gold medal in men's figure skating competition at Sochi Olympic Games

2015

- Hokuriku Shinkansen Line opens between Nagano and Kanazawa
- The popular manga series *One Piece* officially recognized by Guinness World Records as the comic series with the most copies published by a single author
- Japan makes history by winning three games at the Rugby World Cup

2013

2014

2015

KPP history

2013

- Merger with Sumisho Paper Co., Ltd.
- DaiEi Korea established



Merger with Sumisho Paper Co., Ltd.

- Launch of KPP's official YouTube channel



2014

- ecom LINCLE ICHIHARA Center, a classified documents disposing facility opened (currently closed)
- KPP RISANET network of recovered paper collection businesses expanded and restructured



ecom LINCLE ICHIHARA Center (currently closed)

2015

- KPP becomes an official sponsor of the C.W. Nicol Afan Woodland Trust

Begins supporting forest conservation activities conducted by the trust



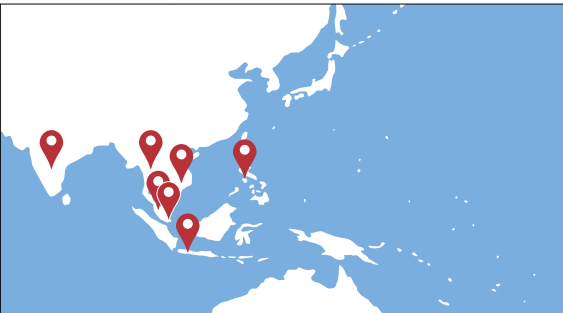
C.W. Nicol and then-President Tanabe



In 2022, KPP begins to restore the devastated forests in the southern area of the Afan Woodland

- KPP ASIA-PACIFIC PRIVATE LIMITED established

Manages ASEAN, India, and Oceania operations out of Singapore



Vol. 27

The feature article celebrates the more than 300 Town ecom terminals installed in stores



This issue's supplement is a paper figurine of ecom's official character "ecom-chan" (a special design for the 100th anniversary of KPP)

Vol. 30

Introducing Tetsuya Nagata, an artist whose "wa-ga-shi" paper works, molded from the wooden patterns for making traditional Japanese confectionery (*wagashi*) using *washi* paper.



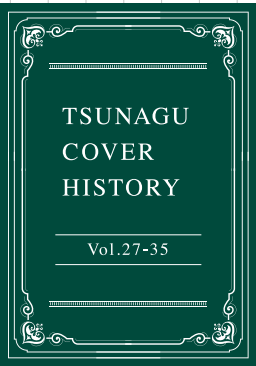
Vol. 31

- The first TSUNAGU Gallery (with works by Tomoko Fuse) is held to celebrate the magazine's 10th anniversary. TSUNAGU Gallery is a project to exhibit works by artists featured in the magazine.
- Launch of a special feature page on the corporate website



Vol. 35

Featuring a conversation between C. W. Nicol and Rogier Uitenboogaart



Vol.27 (Spring 2016 Issue)



Vol.28 (Summer 2016 Issue)



Vol.29 (Autumn 2016 Issue)



Vol.30 (Winter 2017 Issue)



Vol.31 (Spring 2017 Issue)



Vol.32 (Summer 2017 Issue)



Vol.33 (Autumn 2017 Issue)



Vol.34 (Winter 2018 Issue)



Vol.35 (Spring 2018 Issue)

Social news and issues

2016

- Hokkaido Shinkansen Line opens between Shin-Hakodate-Hokuto and Shin-Aomori
- MLB player Ichiro Suzuki sets a major league record for total number of hits in his professional career across Japan and the US
- Kumamoto Earthquake
- Revised Public Office Election Law comes into effect, lowering voting age to 18 years

2017

- Shogi fourth-dan player Sota Fujii remains undefeated since his debut, setting a new record of 29 consecutive wins in official tournaments



Sota Fujii (Photo: The Mainichi Newspapers Co., Ltd. / Aifo)

2018

- Tsukiji Market closes after 83 years of operation (Tokyo)
- Figure skater Yuzuru Hanyu receives the People's Honor Award
- Tennis player Naomi Osaka wins the US Open women's title
- Tasuku Honjo awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine

2016

2017

2018

KPP history

2016

- KPP expands into the biomass business, seeking to become a comprehensive recycling-oriented company

Start of thermal recycling business to sell biomass fuel for power generation



2018

- The first paper mulberry and oriental paper bush planting and hands-on papermaking workshop held at Fukko-no-Mori in Higashi-Matsushima, Miyagi Prefecture, as part of reconstruction assistance efforts after the Great East Japan Earthquake



2018

- KPP listed on the First Section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange (currently the Prime Market)



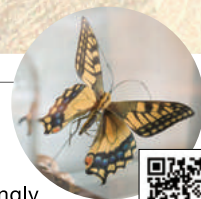
- Green Biz Project starts

A project led by young employees that promotes development and distribution of materials and products that are alternative to plastic



Vol. 36

Showcasing the work of Kazushi Kobayashi who creates fascinatingly beautiful insect art from a piece of paper



Vol. 39

Introducing KPP's activities to address the problems of plastic waste



Vol. 40

Featuring an article that introduces Spicers Limited

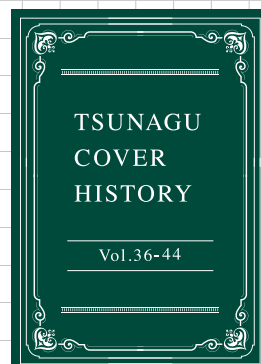


Vol. 42

Start of the series *KPP Sustainable Times*, which introduces KPP's efforts to help build a recycling-oriented society

Vol. 44

- Sending a message for the future in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Obituary for C. W. Nicol
- Article introducing Antalis S.A.



Vol.36 (Summer 2018 Issue)



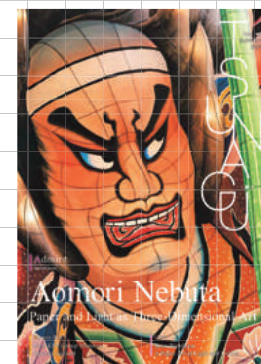
Vol.37 (Autumn 2018 Issue)



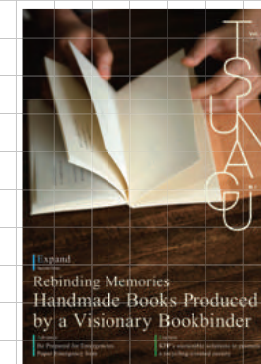
Vol.38 (Winter 2019 Issue)



Vol.39 (Spring 2019 Issue)



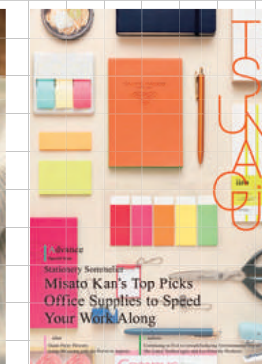
Vol.40 (Summer 2019 Issue)



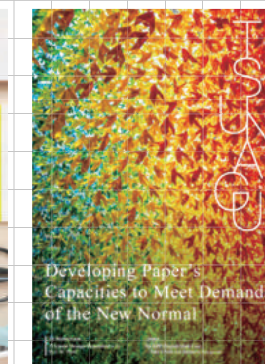
Vol.41 (Autumn 2019 Issue)



Vol.42 (Winter 2020 Issue)



Vol.43 (Spring 2020 Issue)



Vol.44 (Autumn 2020 Issue)

Social news and issues

2019

- Crown Prince Naruhito accedes to the Imperial Throne, marking the beginning of the new Reiwa era
- New National Stadium is completed
- Golf player Hinako Shibuno wins the Women's British Open



The new era name "Reiwa"
(Photo: AP / Afla)

2020

- COVID-19 pandemic begins
- Pursuant to the Law for Promotion of Sorted Collection and Recycling of Containers and Packaging, charging for plastic bags becomes mandatory

2021

- Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games kick off after being postponed for one year. The Games, held without spectators, bring Japan a record of 58 medals
- Shohei Ohtani active as a two-way player in the MLB, winning an American League MVP Award

KPP history

2019

- President Madoka Tanabe (current Chairman & CEO) awarded The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon



- KPP acquires major Australian paper firm Spicers Limited as a subsidiary



2020

- KPP acquires Antalis S.A., Europe's number-one paper company, making it a subsidiary



2021

- KPP achieves 500 billion yen in sales
- DaiEi Papers Taiwan Co., Ltd. established

2022

- SHIFTON business solutions site launched to support sustainable growth strategies



2022

- Official accounts launched on Twitter (now "X") and Instagram

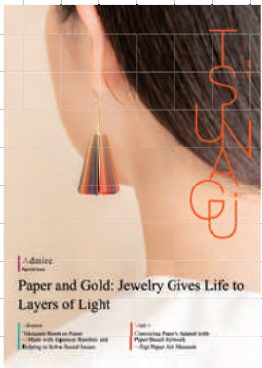


Vol. 46

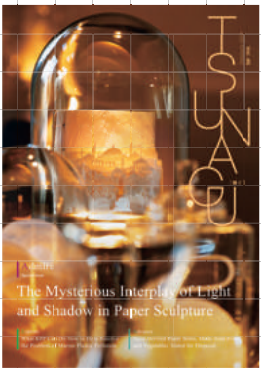
TSUNAGU visits the atelier of up-and-coming *kiri-e* artist Ayumi Shibata, whose work has been featured in retrospectives of high-end brands and is attracting worldwide attention, and interviews her about the ideas behind her artwork

Vol. 47

Featuring the newly formulated KPP corporate message



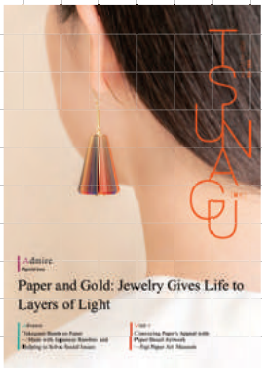
Vol.45 (Winter 2021 Issue)



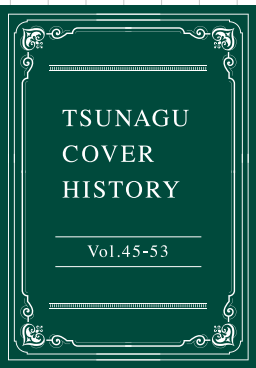
Vol.46 (Spring 2021 Issue)



Vol.47 (Summer 2021 Issue)



Vol.48 (Autumn 2021 Issue)



Vol.45-53



Vol. 50

Featuring special interviews with Katsuhiko Hibino, artist and President of the Tokyo University of the Arts, and other prominent figures, to commemorate the 50th issue



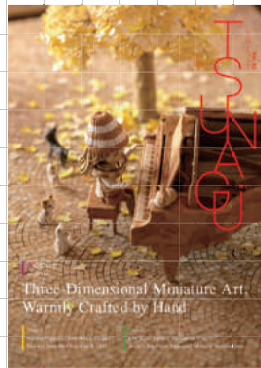
Vol.49 (Winter 2022 Issue)



Vol.50 (Spring 2022 Issue)



Vol.51 (Summer 2022 Issue)



Vol.52 (Autumn 2022 Issue)



Vol. 53

Featuring a special dialogue between Yuko Arimori, Olympic Women's Marathon Medalist, and Madoka Tanabe, KPP Chairman & CEO



Vol.53 (Winter 2023 Issue)

Social news and issues

2022

- Russian army invades Ukraine
- Queen Elizabeth II of England passes away
- 2022 Winter Olympic Games held in Beijing
Japan wins 18 medals, breaking medal record



Beijing Olympic Games (Photo: Reuters / Aflo)

2023

- 5th World Baseball Classic
Japan takes the title for the first time in 14 years
- King Charles III of England coronated



Coronation of King Charles of England (Photo: Pool photo / Reuters / Aflo)

2024

- Noto Peninsula Earthquake
- New 10,000 yen, 5,000 yen, and 1,000 yen bills issued

2022

2023

2024

KPP history

2022

- KPP makes a transition to a holding company system, changing its name to KPP Group Holdings Co., Ltd., and making KPP a global company with **157 locations in 147 cities in 45 countries and regions around the world, and 5,354 employees (at the time)**



- KPP acquires Oji Fiber Co., Ltd., making it a subsidiary

- Revision of the KPP Group Way, the KPP Group’s philosophy framework
- Sales reach 600 billion yen



- BMecomo Co., Ltd. established

The company conducts development and marketing of systems that support the operation, facility, and business management of biomass power plants.

2022

- Corporate website relaunched
- “Paper Innovation for a Connected Future” TV/radio commercial goes on air



2024

- KPP Agri Solutions Inc. established
- KPP 100th Anniversary Website launched



<https://100th.kpp-gr.com/>

2024 November KPP Group 100th Anniversary



Vol. 54

Featuring Gilding Washi, which brings the traditional French decorative technique of gilding to Ozu Washi paper passed down through the generations in Uchiko Town, Ehime Prefecture



Vol. 56

OJO+ Column series featuring case studies on the use of paper yarn launched



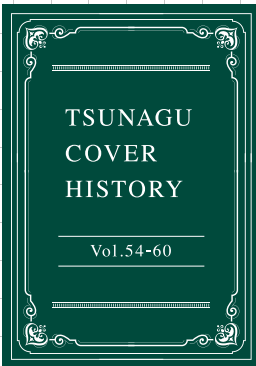
Vol. 58

KPP Group 100th anniversary special commemorative series launched

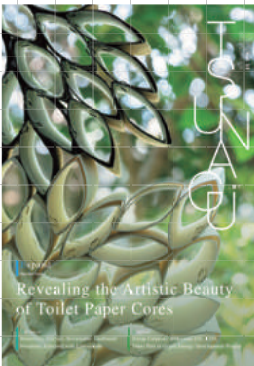


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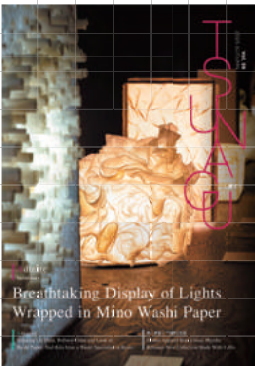
Introducing paper artist Takashi Ohta, who realistically presents scenes of everyday life by selectively using papers of different textures



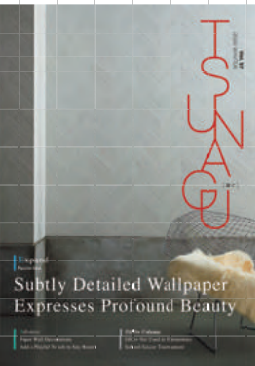
Vol.54 (Spring 2023 Issue)



Vol.55 (Summer 2023 Issue)



Vol.56 (Autumn 2023 Issue)



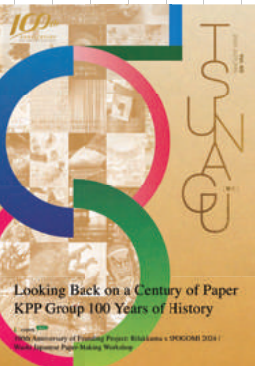
Vol.57 (Winter 2024 Issue)



Vol.58 (Spring 2024 Issue)



Vol.59 (Summer 2024 Issue)



Vol.60 (Autumn 2024 Issue)

The electronic version of TSUNAGU is available on the KPP Group Holdings corporate website. Back issues are also available to order by mail (except for some out-of-stock issues). Take this opportunity to visit the URL.

TSUNAGU Backnumber ▶

<https://www.kpp-gr.com/en/tsunagu.html>



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. 38: Ryunosuke Akutagawa

My father, a teacher, specialized in East Asian history but also had a strong interest in literature. His bookshelves were full of the collected works of great Japanese authors, including Rohan Koda, Ogai Mori, Soseki Natsume and Ryunosuke Akutagawa.

One day, during my gap year when I was studying to retake my university entrance exams after failing to pass them first time, I drew a copy of *The Complete Works of Ryunosuke Akutagawa* from my father’s bookshelf and began to pore over its contents.

The Complete Works of Ryunosuke Akutagawa was a very large set of books indeed, comprising eight volumes in total. Akutagawa himself died in July 1927, and the publication of the *Works* began in November of the same year. The paper on which the books were printed was made from British-manufactured cotton, while the cover was made from navy-blue hand-woven cloth. This series was published by Iwanami Shoten, and the title lettering was written by Hiroshi Akutagawa (the author’s eldest son), while the design was created by Ryuichi Oana.

My father passed away in May 1987. Among the possessions he bequeathed was a letter written by Akutagawa to his friend, the artist Ryuichi Oana, on February 20, 1921; this letter, mounted on backing and arranged in the form of a hanging scroll, came to me after my father’s passing.

It is the time when clearness returns to the nighttime breeze
Ichiyutei, do not catch a cold
I leave the capital city
At the train window, there is a man who think of you, Enchu
A nighttime departure, one day late
Accompanying my steps is Uno Koemon
Neither man much of a drinker
Nothing but snacking some mandarin oranges

From Yarai-no-hana Anju
To Ryuichi Oana

In 2024, 97 years after his death, there are few people in Japan who have never heard of Ryunosuke Akutagawa. Akutagawa was a novelist who was active primarily in the Taisho Period, which lasted from 1912 to 1926. He took his life with a drug overdose when he was 35 years old. His writing is still popular today, with his best-known works including *Hana* (“The Nose”), *Rashomon* and *Haguruma* (“Spinning Gears”).

Jo Tanei, former curator at the Tabata Memorial Museum of Writers and Artists, explained the meaning of the letter to me. “‘Ichiyutei’ is actually the pen-name that Ryuichi Oana used for writing haiku, and ‘Enchu’ was another pen-name he used. ‘Uno Koemon,’ similarly, signifies the writer Koji Uno, while ‘Yarai-no-hana Anju’ signifies Akutagawa himself. Roughly speaking, the letter means ‘The nighttime breeze is cold. Oana, make sure you don’t catch a cold. While I gaze at the view outside the window of this train as it pulls out of the city, I am thinking about you. I boarded this night-train a day late. The person accompanying me is Koji Uno. Neither of us is much of a drinker, just sitting there without sake cups or bottles of sake, just quietly snacking on mandarins. It appears that Akutagawa and Uno headed towards Osaka together, where they seem to have called in at the Osaka Mainichi Shimbun office, a newspaper company.

During the visit, the company asked Akutagawa if he would like to go to China as an overseas reporter, a proposal he accepted. The prospect of a tour of China would have been appealing to Akutagawa, who was well-versed in the Chinese classics. In March of the following year, he took a ship from the city of Moji (in present-day Kita-Kyushu) and headed toward Shanghai. He spent four months in China, but it appears that his tour was not altogether a good trip. He contracted pleurisy in China and was hospitalized; the illness ushered in a period of serious ill health for Akutagawa. As his health problems continued to drag on even after his return to Japan, Akutagawa suffered from nervous breakdown. “This tour of China, which damaged Akutagawa’s mental and physical health, was a turning point in his life,” says Mr. Tanei.

Both Japan and the wider world had entered an era of tumultuous change by this

time. This period saw the assassination of Prime Minister Takashi Hara in late 1921, the creation of the Soviet Union in 1922, the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923, and the formation of the Japan Proletarian Writers Federation in 1925. It is easy to see how the trends of the age might have caused burgeoning anxiety in the easy-influenced Akutagawa. What he calls “vague anxiety” begins to appear in his work at this time. Then, his life comes to an end.

I was already aware of Akutagawa’s friendships with Kan Kikuchi, Kyo Tsuneto, Masao Kume and others to an extent, but knew almost nothing about the deep relationship between him and Ryuichi Oana, the person the letter was addressed to. According to the reference materials that Mr. Tanei had sent me, Oana was an artist in the Western art tradition. Born in Nagasaki Prefecture, he was two years younger than Akutagawa. Akutagawa’s acquaintance with Oana appears to have begun in 1919 when Akutagawa came across an illustration of a rooster created by Oana that was included in *Kaiko*, a haiku journal, and showed interest in the image. Oana then worked on the covers of several of Akutagawa’s books, starting with Akutagawa’s publication of *Yarai no Hana* in 1921, two years after this initial encounter. Then, in 1922, a picture created by Oana using Akutagawa as a model, “Hakui,” was exhibited in the Nikaten Exhibition, where it attracted much attention.

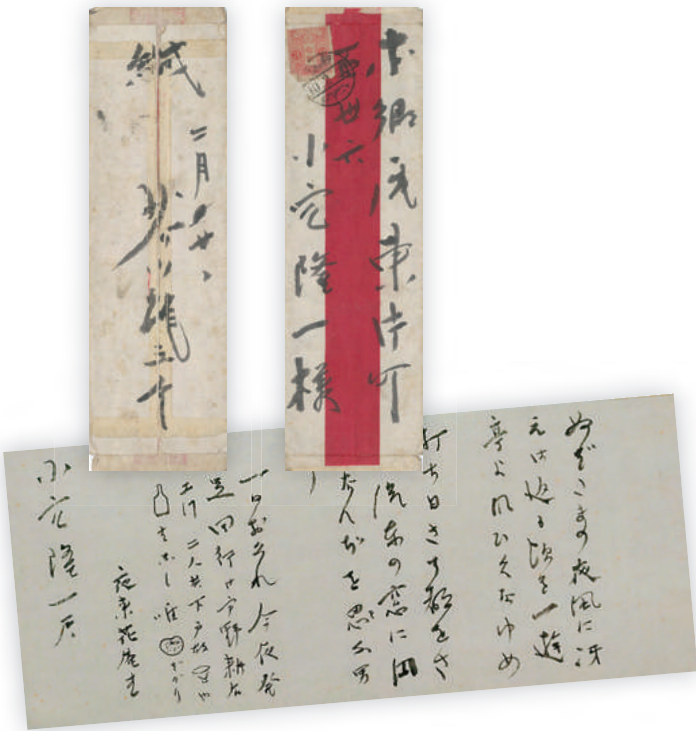
It seems that Akutagawa was deeply interested in Oana. In Akutagawa’s autobiographical novel, *Aru Aho no Issho* (“The Life of a Fool”), he writes that his encounter with Oana was “one of the most notable incidents in my life. [Text omitted] Within this artist, I discovered poems unknown to anyone before.” When Oana underwent amputation of his left foot at the ankle due to gangrene, Akutagawa served as a witness to the surgery. Akutagawa also named his second son “Takashi,” which is an alternative way to pronounce the “Ryu” that is the first Japanese *kanji* character of “Ryuichi.” Akutagawa had told Oana of his decision to commit suicide before he ended his life in 1927. In the will that Akutagawa wrote addressed to his sons, he instructed them to “think of Oana as your father.” He seems to have idolized Oana to a highly unusual extent.

Being now over 85, I have been wondering for the past 30 years what to do with the scrolls that my father left to me. Recently, however, a possible solution has become apparent. I have every confidence in my father’s ability to interpret the times that he lived in; his ability to predict the outcomes of the Pacific War stands as the main proof of this. However, my father, before he died, had also suggested that out of all the things he left, the books were likely to rise in value after 10 years, saying that it would be fine to sell them only once this period had passed. I adhered to his beliefs faithfully, yet my father’s words have proven incorrect in this respect. With the advance of digitalization, old books have actually fallen in value, and the same is true of old scrolls. Indeed, it seems that few new homes built these days have the kind of walls that a scroll could be hung upon.

I chanced upon the solution when I came across a small article in a newspaper. The article described a plan to build a memorial museum centering on Akutagawa several years hence, in the area where Akutagawa lived with his family in Kita City, Tokyo. After reading this article, I telephoned the Tabata Memorial Museum of Writers and Artists, which currently serves as the main memorial to Akutagawa, to ask if there was any demand for hanging scrolls connected with Akutagawa. This was back in the early spring of 2021; my acquaintance with the Tabata Memorial Museum began from this time. The hanging scroll of Akutagawa appealed to Mr. Tanei at once, and soon afterwards I received a request to allow this to be exhibited in the Tabata Memorial Museum. There was also talk of the museum buying the scroll, but as there was too large a gap between the price that the museum was prepared to pay compared to what my relatives said my father had paid for it, I decided against this. Mr. Tanei accompanied the museum director, and a family-like friendship developed. The scroll is on display at the museum for four

months starting in October, and discussions about purchase and sale have made progress as both sides have made concessions.

As I have had more opportunities to meet with the museum director and Mr. Tanei, I have tried to figure out what my father’s true feelings were about the possessions he left. During the last years of his life before he passed away, my father gave away many valuable documents to institutions or people that seemed to have a connection with them. Inherited items should surely be bequeathed to places that are best suited for them; that was my interpretation of my father’s feelings. And I believe that the most suitable place for a hanging scroll connected with Akutagawa would be the Akutagawa Memorial Museum, once its construction is completed. If this scroll can bring pleasure to those who see it displayed in the museum, that is surely most in tune with the true wishes of both Akutagawa himself and my father.



Collection of Tabata Memorial Museum of Writers and Artists



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.

Ryunosuke Akutagawa

Novelist
1892–1927



Ryunosuke Akutagawa was born in Kyobashi-ku, Tokyo, in 1892. He graduated from Tokyo Imperial University (present-day Tokyo University). He began his writing career while still a student, making his literary debut when his short story, *Hana* (“The Nose”), winning praise from Soseki Natsume. After graduating, he continued to be active as a writer while working as a contracted instructor at a naval engineering school. He produced numerous short stories which took their themes from traditional anecdotes and classical literature, including *Imogayu* (“Yam Gruel”), *Jigokuhen* (“Hell Screen”) and *Hokyonin no Shi* (“The Death of a Disciple”). He also forged new frontiers in the domain of the historical novel. From 1925 onwards, Akutagawa began to suffer from prolonged ill health; amid “vague anxiety” he committed suicide with a drug overdose at the age of just 35.



“Rilakkuma × SPOGOMI 2024 Osaka Competition” Held as Part of the KPP Group 100th Anniversary Project



On September 8, 2024 (Sunday), the first “Rilakkuma × SPOGOMI 2024 Competition” was held by KPP Group Holdings in the area of Ogimachi Park in Kita-ku, Osaka City, Osaka Prefecture. SPOGOMI is a sport invented by Kenichi Mamitsuka, Representative Director of the Social Sports Initiative, under the slogan “Picking Up Trash Is a Sport!” It adds the fun of sports to the trash pickups traditionally done by companies and other organizations, transforming conventional community service activities into competitions.

Held as part of the KPP Group’s 100th anniversary project in the six cities where the head office and branch offices of Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd. are located, the event features a collaboration with the nationally known character Rilakkuma. Participants seemed to enjoy picking up trash in this fun new way, which turned trash gathering into a sport. A total of 103 people from 26 teams participated, and the final tally was a total of 57.05 kg of trash collected.

Rules

Teams composed of several people compete for points based on the amount and type of trash they pick up in a designated area within a set time limit. Children and adults of all ages can participate.

Conditions for participation

- No more than five members per team
- Children (recommended age 5+) and adults can participate
- Teams consisting solely of members 12 years of age or younger must be accompanied by a parent/guardian (or at least one person 18 years of age or older)

INFORMATION

Rilakkuma x SPOGOMI 2024 Competition Schedule

*The 1st through 3rd competitions have been completed.

4th Competition in Hokkaido

Date: Oct 27 (Sun), 9:30 - 12:20
Meeting place: Maruyama Park

5th Competition in Fukuoka

Date: Nov 10 (Sun), 9:30 - 12:20
Meeting place: Nakahie Park

6th Competition in Tokyo

Date: Nov 23 (Sat), 9:30 - 12:20
Meeting place: Tsukijigawa Park

Register to participate and
see event details here

Rilakkuma x SPOGOMI special website
<https://green-maker.org/host/rilakkuma>



Antalis Inherits Traditions of European Paper Brands— Launches Products Worldwide as Original Brands

Antalis, a KPP Group company, has inherited venerable paper brands born in Europe and nurtured by history and tradition, and has launched them as original brands in Europe and around the world. Here is a selection of the new brands that are available in Japan.

* All of the following brands are FSC-certified.

Conqueror

Produced to exacting standards since 1888, Conqueror is recognized as the superior choice for brand identity. The unique touch and appearance have become the international standard for quality. Primarily used for corporate communications such as letterheads, envelopes, business cards and invitation cards, Conqueror is a luxury paper crafted for exceptional quality brands. The distinctive touch and appearance of its 3 finishes and 6 shades of white and cream have become the international standard for quality as well as its renowned watermark.

Characteristics of each texture

LAI

Traditional ribbed texture originally created to guide handwriting, remains a timeless favorite for stationery and print

WOVE

Solid texture with a smooth, soft and warm touch

CX22

Ultra-smooth and lustrous, low-friction surface produces a high-definition print result



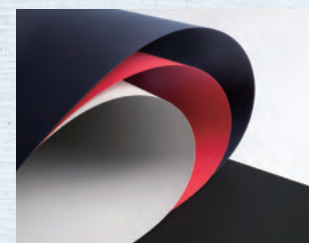
Curious Collection

A creative paper brand that stimulates the curiosity (hence the brand name) of designers exploring new possibilities and applications. The diverse range of finishes, textures, and color variations expands the possibilities of design.



Curious Metallics

Double-sided pearlescent paper with a metallic sheen. With its deep, lustrous colors and pleasant tactile feel, it is highly effective for printing and adds a luxurious touch to a wide range of applications, including packaging, paper products, book covers, and invitations.



Curious Skin

Enjoy the unique tactile experience of supple and smooth skin-like texture. A surprisingly silky paper with a matte finish, Curious Skin is nevertheless resistant to fingerprint smudges, scuffs and scratches. Its texture and vibrant colors add a stunning effect to packaging and printed matter.



Curious Matter

This paper has a unique fine-grained texture with a long-lasting tactile feel derived from granular particles of potato starch. Used in luxury packaging, covers, business cards, etc., it creates a distinct sense of wonder and awe at first touch.



Curious Translucent

Luxurious translucent paper. In addition to creating sketches and drawings, it is perfect for photo albums, catalogs, brochures, mailers, covers, dividers, etc.

INFORMATION

Curious N Series Exhibition

CURIOUS Exhibition WAVING FLAG

Duration: Oct 11 (Fri) – Nov 29 (Fri), 2024

Open: 9:00 - 17:00 *Closed on Sat, Sun and holidays
Free admission

Venue: Heiwa Paper PAPERVOICE Tokyo
(1-22-11, Shinkawa, Chuo-ku, Tokyo)



PAPER MALL

The Conqueror brand products LAID N and WOVE N and the Curious brand products Metal N, Skin N and Matter N are also available for purchase at the PAPER MALL.



▲Conqueror



▲Curious



Washi-Making Workshops Held at Three Venues in Chuo City, Tokyo, Using KPP-Cultivated Materials

As part of the project to commemorate the 100th anniversary of our founding, since June 2023 the KPP Group has been cultivating paper mulberry and oriental paper bush — the raw materials for making *washi* — in the sunken garden adjacent to the Head Office's cafeteria (see Vol. 57 for a record of their growth). We harvested the grown paper mulberry and oriental paper bush last December, and this summer we held workshops on making *washi* using them as raw materials.

We held these workshops to express our gratitude to the Group's internal and external stakeholders and to promote awareness of the timeless appeal of *washi*. The workshops were well attended, especially by children, and proved to be a great success. In this issue, we present scenes from each of the three workshops held at the KPP Head Office and two nearby facilities.



Workshop 01

Kyobashi Tsukiji Elementary School
(2-13-1 Tsukiji, Chuo-city, Tokyo)
July 10 (Wed) and 11 (Thu)

On July 10 (Wednesday) and 11 (Thursday), we held a hands-on *washi* paper making class for about 80 students in three third-grade classes at Chuo Municipal Kyobashi Tsukiji Elementary School, which is located 850 meters from our Head Office (Chuo City, Tokyo). The class was taught by Mr. Rogier Uitenboogaart, a handmade *washi* paper artist originally from the Netherlands who lives in Kochi Prefecture. He explained in an easy-to-understand manner the steps in the process of making *washi* from paper mulberry and oriental paper bush, the raw materials for traditional Japanese paper. As the students followed the steps one by one, they touched the viscous sap of the Aibika plant, which is essential for making *washi*, and were surprised by its texture. After working together to complete their work, each student presented an original piece of *washi* with a plant of their choice embedded in it. The class was a memorable and valuable experience for the students.



Workshop 02

Ginza Shochiku Square (1-13-1 Tsukiji, Chuo-ku, Tokyo)
July 20 (Sat)

On July 20 (Saturday), we held a *washi*-making workshop for elementary school students living in Chuo City. The workshop took place in the first-floor hall of Ginza Shochiku Square, a large building complex that houses offices, apartments, restaurants, and a library. The event was open to the public and there was a large turnout of elementary school students and their parents, as it was during the summer vacation period.

The workshop included demonstrations of various steps in the process of making *washi*, such as beating the fibers, in which clumps of white bark fibers are placed on pounding blocks and beaten with wooden stick to loosen the fibers, making them finer and more pliable. The children, who experienced for the first time the process of *washi*-making, showed great interest.

At Ginza Shochiku Square, we also exhibited Sendai Tanabata decorations made by the KPP Group company Narumiya Kami-shoji Co., Ltd. from Miyagi Prefecture, as well as bamboo decorations made of *washi*, giving visitors an opportunity to experience firsthand the charm of *washi*.



Workshop 03

KPP Tokyo Head Office
(6-24 Akashi-cho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo)
July 21 (Sun)

On July 21 (Sunday), we held a *washi* Japanese paper-making workshop for employees and their families at the KPP Head Office cafeteria. Participants first visited the sunken garden adjacent to the cafeteria. While exploring the actual paper mulberry and oriental paper bush growing in the garden, they received explanations and deepened their understanding of the raw materials used to make *washi*. For many of the participants, this was their first experience making *washi*, and not only the children but also the adults struggled with the unfamiliar process, but worked meticulously and finally were able to complete their own original *washi*. They seemed focused, yet having fun as they held the finished sheets up to the light and checked the translucency of the paper as a material for making lampshades.

Staff members involved in planning and organizing the workshop also made their first attempts at creating paper works. Through this hands-on experience, they were able to improve their familiarity with paper.



Editorial postscript

In producing this 100th anniversary issue, it took us longer than usual to decide on the composition of the magazine. Everyone brought their own ideas as we worked out what it meant for the magazine to celebrate KPP's 100th anniversary and how to express it. In the end, we decided to create a timeline that would show at a glance how TSUNAGU has conveyed the continuous history of KPP and modern society. The decision was made just a month (!) before publication.

Until now, we have approached the publication of TSUNAGU believing that each issue is not an isolated

event, but part of a larger thread with a common mission to develop and transmit paper culture. Although this concept may seem a bit formal when put into words, the TSUNAGU cover gallery starting on page 3 is born out of our desire to trace this timeline with our readers. Cover themes include traditional crafts such as *katagami* (Japanese stencil making) and *fusuma* (sliding door) paper, kites, paper toys and clothes, *kiri-e* (paper cutouts), and so on. We have chosen to write a story that we hope will bring as many people as possible aboard the ship of curiosity that is inspired by paper.

We have processed the paper to give it a different texture, so we hope that you will enjoy the tactile sensation.

Some of you who have TSUNAGU in your hands have been reading it for the past few months, and some of you have been with us for more than 15 years. The entire editorial team has produced this issue to celebrate every day that you and the KPP Group have been together. Thank you for always taking the time to read this magazine. We look forward to spending more time with you in the future.

(Tomoka Kato)



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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