

Vol. 56
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ISSEY MIYAKE

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Admire
Special Issue

Breathtaking Display of Lights Wrapped in Mino Washi Paper

Advance

Enjoying the Deep, Refined Color and Look of
Washi Paper: Nail Kits from a Washi Specialist in Kyoto

PAPER TOPICS

Global Apparel Brand Issey Miyake
Releases New Collection Made With OJO+

TSUNAGU 2023 Autumn

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.

Admire 01

Breathtaking Display of Lights Wrapped in Mino Washi Paper

Advance 07

Enjoying the Deep, Refined Color and Look of *Washi* Paper: Nail Kits from a *Washi* Specialist in Kyoto

Explore 09

Conventional Low-Impact, Eco-Friendly Face Coverings Further Improved
100% Plant-based Ingredients

OJO+ Column 10

Global Apparel Brand Release
New Collection with OJO+

Communicate 11

Letter Recalls Aspirations of TV Producer Who Remained True to His Beliefs

Deepen 13

Catch up on the Latest News at KPP Group

Visit 15

Focus on Notable Bookstores Creating New Forms of Communication

Create Supplement

Make an Autumn Mini-Wreath with Fallen Leaves

Breathtaking Display of Lights Wrapped in Mino Washi Paper

In October, in the middle of autumn, the historical and picturesque streets of Mino City in Gifu Prefecture are enveloped in the breathtaking glow of countless paper lanterns. The Mino Washi Akari Exhibition, now in its 30th year, is a contest and event celebrating traditional Japanese *washi* paper made in Mino, a city with a 1,300-year history of making this paper by hand. In response to a public call for three-dimensional paper-lantern art made with the Mino Washi paper and illuminated by a light source, submissions are displayed along the city's Edo-style streets, and the winning entries are awarded prizes. Mino Washi ranks as one of the three best *washi* papers in Japan, and the soft light that filters through this high-quality paper embodies both the fresh charm of *washi* and the spirit of the people who live in Mino.



Illuminated exhibition of creative paper-lantern art glow in the dark night, showcasing the fine qualities of Mino Washi

Mino City in Gifu Prefecture is located in a valley about an hour's drive north of Nagoya. The city has a long history of prospering with the Japanese paper industry. The *washi* still made here today, using the traditional handcrafting method and carefully selected materials, is a strong, beautiful Japanese paper renowned for its high quality. Mino Washi has a very long history. Shosoin, the treasure house of Todai-ji Temple in Nara, has in its collection a family registry written on Mino Washi that dates back to 702 AD. Made more than 1,300 years ago, the survival of this sheet of Mino Washi testifies to its outstanding durability and long shelf life. Hon-minoshi, a particular type of Mino Washi made with strictly prescribed raw materials and production methods, was designated an Intangible Cultural Property of Japan in 1969, and the traditional technique used to make it was registered as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2014. The sophisticated texture and delicate functionality of Mino Washi has captivated hearts and minds not only in Japan, but around the world.

The Mino Washi Akari Exhibition is a late autumn tradition held every year in October. The call for submissions of paper-lantern art made of Mino Washi is open to the public throughout Japan, and entries are exhibited in the Udatsu Wall Historical District, a designated Preservation District for Groups of Traditional Buildings. Entries from across Japan are submitted in two categories, the

General Division and the Elementary/Junior High School Division, with winning entries receiving the Grand Prize and other awards. Part 1 of the event consists of the exhibition and screening of the year's entries, while outstanding works from previous years are on display during Part 2. The breathtaking sight of Edo period style streets lit by the gentle glow of lanterns wrapped in Mino Washi is one that fans around the world of this traditional art look forward to seeing for themselves.

"The Mino Washi Akari Exhibition was started to communicate a new kind of *washi* charm," explains Hidetaka Furukawa, director of the Mino Washi Akari Art Gallery. Although *washi* has long been an integral part of Japanese life and an essential element in Japanese culture, changing lifestyles have meant fewer opportunities to encounter *washi* in everyday life. The Mino Washi Akari Art Exhibition began with the wish to give people the opportunity to rethink the merits of *washi* and to rediscover its charms.

"Every year I am amazed at the new and ingenious ways Mino Washi is used in these pieces to highlight its qualities as a material and show off the way light shines through the paper. I hope people will pay attention to the potential for new uses of *washi* as they view the beautiful scenes of light shining through *washi*, which blend so naturally with the old streets of Mino," says Furukawa.

Furukawa serves as director of the Mino Washi Akari Art Gallery, a museum that

displays recreated scenes from the Mino Washi Akari Art Exhibition. Previous years' prize-winning works, from the first exhibition in 1994 to the 29th exhibition held last year, are on regular rotation, allowing visitors to enjoy their wonderful beauty all year long. In addition to General Division works crafted using sophisticated art techniques, the uninhibited and imaginative handmade lanterns submitted by elementary and junior high school students are also a highlight of the exhibition.

Furukawa says, "The girl who entered *The Sheep That Ate the Rainbow*, which won the Grand Prize in the Elementary/Junior High School Division at the 15th exhibition, was in the fourth grade at the time. She has already graduated from university and is now working as an elementary school teacher. Her students came to the museum recently, saying, 'We came to see our teacher's art.' I was so pleased to see Mino's traditional *washi* culture being passed down from generation to generation, and it struck me again how this event forges connections among the local community."

Many people in Mino, from children to adults, also participate in the event as volunteers. Perhaps the subtle feeling of comfort that the glow of Mino Washi paper-lantern art gives everyone who sees it comes from the spirit of the people of Mino, whose lives are so connected to this handmade paper.

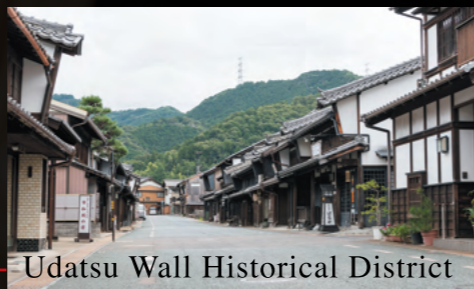


Hidetaka Furukawa
Director, Mino Washi Akari Art Gallery
Director, Former Imai Residence and Mino-Washi Museum



The Mino Washi Akari Art Gallery building is a modern wooden structure built in 1941, originally to house the Mino Washi Industry Hall, and it is a designated Tangible Cultural Property in Japan. Mino Washi lantern art is for sale at the first-floor store, and the second floor is dedicated to the exhibition of award-winning works from previous years.

The name of the Udatsu Wall Historical District refers to the *udatsu* side wall protruding from the second floors of the houses, which serve as a firebreak. Only wealthy families had the means to build these walls, which gave rise to the aphorisms, "build an *udatsu*" (meaning, "get ahead, or rise in status") or "not build an *udatsu*" (meaning, "unable to get ahead").



Udatsu Wall Historical District



The Sheep That Ate the Rainbow, Grand Prize winner in the Elementary/Junior High School Division at the 15th exhibition. The previous Emperor and Empress of Japan complimented this work for its colorful *washi* paper when they visited the museum.

Mino Washi Akari Art Gallery

Address : 1901-3 Motozumi-cho, Mino City, Gifu Prefecture
 Business hours : April – September, 9:00 – 16:30
 October – March, 9:00 – 16:00
 *Last admission 15 minutes before closing
 Holidays : Tuesdays (following day if national holiday),
 New Year holidays (December 29 – January 3),
 Day after national holiday
 Admission : Adult (high school student and older)
 200 yen
 Tel : +81-575-33-3772



INTERVIEW

As a craftsperson who knows how good Mino Washi is, I want to continue creating compelling works of art.

Hideka Kano is the owner of Rantanya, a store in the Udatsu Wall Historical District, and a craftsperson who creates and sells paper lanterns made from Mino Washi. She is also an artist who creates original works and is the only person to twice win the Grand Prize in the General Division at the Mino Washi Akari Art Exhibition. With their bold, strong presence, her works showcase the charms of Mino Washi to their fullest, captivating the hearts of many exhibition-goers. She sat down with us before the 30th Mino Washi Akari Art Exhibition to share her thoughts as a local craftsperson who works every day with Mino Washi.

My family has crafted *chochin* paper lanterns for three generations, starting with my grandfather, and we have run the only *chochin* store in Mino City. After graduating from university, I worked at the Mino-Washi Museum as an instructor for visitors taking part in the handmade washi workshop. I then went to work for a regular company, but I decided when I was 30 to take over

the family business. I inherited my grandfather's wooden *chochin* patterns and the tools that my father made himself, and after learning the craft from my father, I opened my own store.

I work with different types of *washi* every day, so if it is handmade Mino Washi, I can often tell who made it. Handmade *washi* reveals the individuality of the craftsperson, so there are subtle differences in texture and color, as well as in the sound the paper makes when unfolded. I may never plumb the true depths of Mino Washi craft, but I do want to continue learning to make *chochin* lanterns that make the most of Mino Washi's charms.

Other than when I was working at the company, I have made an entry for every Mino Washi Akari Art Exhibition since the first. Compared to when it first started, many more submissions now come from other parts of Japan, and more people from the art world are submitting work to the exhibition now. Even so, the local craftspeople still have a sense of mission,

and we hope to keep the part of the exhibition that showcases the appeal of Mino Washi alive.

As an artisan, it gives me great pleasure when people from all over the country can see my work. I hope this event will help people rediscover the appeal of *washi*, and I'm also pleased when people enjoy learning the history of Mino, a place where *washi* culture developed.



Hideka Kano
Chochin craftsperson, Rantanya shop owner



In addition to large *chochin* lanterns made with genuine Mino Washi, the shop also sells smaller items like lampshades to add a relaxing touch to interiors and miniature lanterns featuring cute animal motifs, for people looking for sweeter designs. Visitors can also watch lantern-making demonstrations at the shop.



Porcupinefish, General Division Grand Prize winner at 29th exhibition (2022)



Heaping Bowlful, General Division Grand Prize winner at 17th exhibition (2010)



Rantanya

Address : Kajiya-cho 1968, Mino City, Gifu Prefecture
Closed : Wednesdays
Tel : +81-575-35-1409



Check out the shop website here!



Interactive museum introduces Mino Washi traditions and future

Mino-Washi Museum

The Mino-Washi Museum gives visitors the opportunity to learn about Mino Washi history and techniques and to experience firsthand the charms of this handmade paper. Easy-to-understand video exhibits introduce Mino Washi paper-making process and tools. Displays include a replica of the *saihai* (a baton carried by samurai commanders in feudal Japan) said to have been used by Tokugawa Ieyasu in the Battle of Sekigahara (pictured at upper right) and interiors that incorporate Japanese *washi* in both Japanese and Western living spaces. Visitors can also try their hand at making their own original *washi* paper in the Paper-Making Workshop (for a fee), using the same tools as *washi* craftspeople, 100% paper mulberry, and the traditional *nagashi-suki* *washi*-making technique. With a restaurant offering an original menu of dishes made from local Gifu Prefecture ingredients (reservations required) and a store featuring Japanese paper goods and stationery, the museum generously shares the many varied charms of Mino Washi.

Carrying on the 1,300-year history of Mino Washi tradition, the Mino-Washi Museum conveys the rich beauty of this paper and its potential for the future. We invite you to create your own *washi* and immerse yourself in a firsthand sensory experience using tools handcrafted and finished by artisans who are proud of their traditional skills.

Seiji Kawashima
Mino-Washi Museum



Mino-Washi Museum

Address: 1851-3 Warabi, Mino City, Gifu Prefecture / Tel: +81-575-34-8111
URL: www.city.mino.gifu.jp/minogami/



The Udatsu Wall Historical District is home to the Kosaka Sake Brewery, a brewery of sake since the Edo period, as well as many stylish cafes located in renovated *kominka* traditional Japanese residences. Mino offers beautiful views not only at night when the paper-lantern art is lit, but throughout the daytime hours, as well. Another highlight is the Mino Festival, which takes place in April and features a *mikoshi* portable shrine decorated with flowers made of *washi* dyed the color of cherry blossoms carried through the city streets. Mino City is a must-visit on any trip to Japan.

Ayumi Sakaguchi
Business Promotion Section Chief
Mino City Tourism Association

30th Mino Washi Akari Art Exhibition

Dates : Part 1 October 8 (Sun.) – 21 (Sat.)
* Exhibit of current year entries
Part 2 October 22 (Sun.) – November 30 (Thu.)
* Exhibit of past years' prize winners
Paper-lantern art is lit 17:00 – 21:00.

Location : Udatsu Wall Historical District / venues throughout Mino City
Inquiries : Mino City Tourism Association
Mino Washi Akari Art Contest and Exhibition Organizing Committee

Tel : +81-575-35-3660

Admission : Free of charge

URL : <https://www.akariart.jp/>



Enjoying the Deep, Refined Color and Look of Washi Paper: Nail Kits from a Washi Specialist in Kyoto

Delicate textures of paper handcrafted by artisans. Subtly nuanced dyed designs evoking the look of paint spreading into water. Kamikko Nails channels these unique, characteristic charms of *washi*, adapting the paper for use as nail accessories with a selection of creative, original at-home nail kits. Haruka Tsuchiyama of Kyoto Rakushikan helped develop the product as the concept originator. We interviewed her about the appealing features of this product, which was developed in the aspiration to create more opportunities for people to incorporate *washi* into daily life.

Please tell us about the Kamikko Nails product lineup.

Considering that *washi* itself is a naturally derived material, we offer a selection of five nature-related themes: Moon, Clouds, Mountains, Forest, and Rain. For Moon, Clouds, and Mountains, we use *tengujo*¹ paper made with different methods of dyeing for each, and for Forest, we use *rakusui* paper.² Rain, the fifth, features a special combination of both *tengujo* and *rakusui* paper to offer the enjoyment of both textural qualities. All of these are made with *washi* paper, where mixtures of subtly varying shades of color can be found in the same sheet. I hope users will enjoy picking out the style that best suits their outfit or mood on a particular day.

What led you to develop this into a product?

It all started seven years ago when I posted some images of nails decorated with *washi* on my personal social media page. After taking a break for a while, I started posting on social media again, exploring new ways of using *washi*. Then, with the company's backing, I began to think about product development. First, to see how the general public might respond, we gave crowdfunding a try last November (2022) and began taking advance orders. We ended up securing funding considerably beyond the original target and did the general product launch in April this year. While nail decoration is what attracts people's attention first, I have also learned that quite a lot of people have an interest in *washi*. I hope Kamikko Nails will serve to demonstrate new ways of using *washi* and the potential it has.

1. *Tengujo* paper: An ultrathin type of *washi* made of fine-quality *kozo* (paper mulberry) fiber.
2. *Rakusui* paper: A type of *washi* made by spraying the paper with water when the pulp has been spread out to dry to create water drop patterns in it.



Serving on the staff of the Kyoto Rakushikan *washi* specialty shop, Haruka Tsuchiyama handles a wide variety of *washi* on a daily basis and continuously works to convey its appealing aspects to customers.



Kyoto Rakushikan

Long-established shop with a 111-year history specializing in wholesale and retail sales of *washi* paper and related products. Operated by Uemurakami Co., Ltd. Along with around 5,000 types of *washi* from throughout Japan, the shop carries a richly varied selection of *washi*-related small items, miscellaneous goods, and original products. Located inside the Museum of Kyoto.

What were the particularly demanding parts of the product development phase?

We were very picky about the specifications and design of the packaging, to make sure the beautiful dyeing of the *washi* would be visible. Beyond that, it was selecting which types of *washi* would work best for each of the product themes, out of the thousands we carry in the shop, and deciding which colors to use. That took a lot of time and careful consideration, with co-workers' assistance.

Could you explain how people should use the product?

First, apply a top coat of adhesive over a commercially available base coat or base color. Then, after affixing the *washi*, trim away its protruding portions. This can be accomplished by applying a water-soaked brush to the portions to be trimmed and tearing them off, a method called *mizukiri* ("water cut"). Next, if you smooth out the fibers of the remaining *washi* and apply a good, solid top coat, you can expect to achieve beautiful nail design. Just affixing *washi* lets you create lovely gradations without applying multiple coats of different colors of nail polish. Also, it should make it possible for you to incorporate unique textures and hues into your nail decoration. Another advantage Kamikko Nails offer is the way they allow casual enjoyment of nail art without the need for any special technology or technique, since it just involves using *washi* as a nail accessory. We also offer a starter set to make it easier for beginners to jump in. It includes a water brush pen convenient for the *mizukiri* trimming, a top coat, and a base coat in white, the color we recommend. Be sure to try one out!

Who are the most frequent purchasers of Kamikko Nails?

While at first, the main target was consumers in their 20s and 30s, we are also getting purchases from customers in their 40s and up. I get the impression that the characteristic warmth of *washi*'s feel and the elegant, subdued hues have given Kamikko Nails broad acceptance among women of all ages.

Finally, do you have a message for customers?

Along with its history as a traditional craft, *washi* continues to evolve with the times, as well. I hope many more people can familiarize themselves with the appealing charms of this special paper. I hope you will enjoy incorporating it into daily life!

EDGE of PAPER



Rain

Includes a selection of *washi* types featuring different textures and dyeing methods. Enjoy subtly contrasting densities and color tones themed on bluish hues.



Forest

Features *rakusui* paper, characterized by lace-like, perforated designs highlighting the paper's fibrous texture. Easy to incorporate into designs with dispersed fibers.



Mountains

Design evoking the scenery of mountain landscapes changing with the turning seasons, from left to right. Rotate the irregular striped patterns to suit your personal preference.



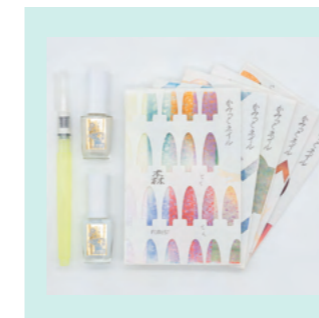
Clouds

Featuring ultrathin *tengujo* paper with a mixture of soft hues in granular patterns. Coloration with a tranquil elegance that can be paired with autumn fashion, as well.



Moon

A wide range of colors to enjoy, using beautiful gradations produced by chance with a process of hand-folding and dyeing *washi* paper.



Convenient Starter Set for Beginners

In addition to the five Kamikko Nails sets, a starter set is also available. It includes two types of nail polish combined with a serum that is gentle on the nails, plus a water brush pen made by a traditional brush maker in Nara.



Demonstration video



Kyoto Rakushikan: A Shop Specializing in Washi and Related Products from All Over Japan

Located on the first floor of the Kyoto Museum, which is devoted to introducing visitors to the history and culture of Kyoto, this shop offers a full selection of charming *washi* varieties and related products. In addition to around 5,000 types of the paper from around Japan, they also stock an abundant range of original items not found elsewhere, including small notepads themed on all 54 chapters of *The Tale of Genji*, related postcards, and decorative folding fan-shaped paper made with the *Ocho tsugigami* paper-layering technique, a Heian-period traditional craft.



Kyoto Rakushikan

京都 楽紙館

Address : 1F The Kyoto Museum, Sanjo Takakura, Chuo-ku, Kyoto City
Tel : +81-75-251-0078
Business hours : 11:00 – 17:00
Closed : Monday and Tuesday
URL : <https://www.rakushikan-store.com>



Explore

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

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

KPP Sustainable Times

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

Further improvement of conventional low-impact, eco-friendly face coverings, with 100% plant-based ingredients

Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co. (KPP), a KPP Group company, has developed paper face coverings for use in clothing stores. Face coverings are worn to keep makeup and hair from sticking to clothing when it is being tried on in the store. Until now, most face coverings have been made from synthetic fibers such as polypropylene, but when asked by apparel brands looking to reduce their environmental impact, KPP offered a solution based on the company's unique expertise in paper materials. KPP commercialized a 100% pulp face covering that is both strong and thin with excellent breathability.

Since this product is made from 100% pulp, used face coverings can be disposed of as recyclable paper waste. We will continue to promote the product as a sustainable alternative to traditional nonwoven face coverings, targeting major retailers and apparel brands that are proactive about being environmentally friendly, as we also engage in PR activities to encourage more people to use this product.



The front of the face covering (top of photo) provides more breathability than the back (bottom of photo).



INFORMATION

SHIFT ON, a paper solutions website operated by KPP, also showcases this product.



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



Product inquiries:

Marketing Office,
Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd.

Tel : +81-3-3542-6851

Mail : kpp_marketing@kpp-gr.com



OJO+ Featured in New Collection by ISSEY MIYAKE



A-POC ABLE ISSEY MIYAKE [TYPE-VI]

Stand collar coat 165,000 yen
Pants 63,800 yen
Bucket hat 24,200 yen

*All prices include tax

ONLINE STORE
isseymiyake.com



Available at the following stores:

A-POC ABLE ISSEY MIYAKE / AOYAMA
A-POC ABLE ISSEY MIYAKE / KYOTO
ISSEY MIYAKE GINZA / 442
ISSEY MIYAKE MARUNOUCHI
ISSEY MIYAKE SEMBA



The paper yarn OJO+ has been adopted as a material in items of the "TYPE-VI Sohei Nishino project," a collaboration between A-POC ABLE ISSEY MIYAKE and photographer Sohei Nishino. These items are high-quality jacquard woven reproductions of Mr. Nishino's artwork, which is inspired by his personal experiences with walking and traveling.

While jacquard woven garments have a solid texture and luxurious appearance due to the direct weave of the design patterns, most are heavier and less breathable than regular printed fabrics because of their thickness. However, by using

OJO+ as the weft yarn, "A-POC ABLE TYPE-VI" has been made so light that it is hard to believe it is a jacquard weave. The fabric has excellent absorbency that allows it to quickly wick moisture from the inside of the garment and release it to the outside for a more comfortable fit.

Reversible stand collar coats are currently on display at the first floor entrance of the KPP Group Holdings Head Office building. Visitors are welcome to explore the exhibits and experience firsthand their lush texture and surprising lightness and durability.

INFORMATION

TSUNAGU GALLERY x OJO+ Exhibition

Venue : KPP Group Holdings Head Office
1F Entrance
(6-24 Akashi-cho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo)
Entrance : free
Hours : 9:00 - 17:00 (weekdays only)
Inquiries : Corporate Communications Office,
KPP GROUP HOLDINGS CO., LTD.
Tel : +81-3-3542-4169



© ISSEY MIYAKE INC.
Photographer Sohei Nishino creates works based on memories from his travel experiences.

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. 34: Kiyoshi Fujii

In a previous issue of this column, I wrote about TV director and producer Katsumi Ohyama. At that time, I referred to a rather heated exchange between Mr. Ohyama and Kiyoshi Fujii over the content of a roundtable discussion series titled “Toward the Future of Broadcasting” in *Gekkan Minpo* (“Commercial Broadcasting Monthly”), published by the Japan Commercial Broadcasters Association (JBA). At the roundtable discussion, Mr. Fujii stated that people from Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS) dominated the commercial television industry and that he wanted to take revenge for their criticism of a certain television program. In response, Mr. Ohyama argued that the roundtable should not be influenced by such a biased opinion, and Mr. Fujii’s regular participation was suspended. Had it not been for this incident, Mr. Fujii would have been one of the most worthy commentators on Japanese television, and he would have spoken eloquently on the subject of television programming.

It was Seiichi Iketani, the managing director of East, who introduced me to Mr. Fujii after he left NHK, some 35 years ago. I remember that we met at a Chinese restaurant called “DAINI’s Table” in Aoyama, Tokyo. Mr. Fujii told me that he and Mr. Iketani were going to start a new program production company and that he needed my cooperation. When I asked him about his career, he told me that he had jumped from the world of magazine editing straight into the production field at NHK, where he had worked on *Shinsekai Kiko* (“New World Travelogue”) and had been the head of NHK’s *NHK Tokushu* program. He was nicknamed “Mr. N Toku.” One of his signature works was *Eiheiji Temple*. There must have been a reason why he left NHK, but I forgot to ask him. Or maybe I did ask him and his answer has just slipped my mind.

He had strong personal views about programming and expressed them very passionately at our first meeting, saying that broadcasting should be a journal, or a discovery and creation of something new, even if it was just a small thing. I shared many of his views, so I sought out partners to collaborate with him and introduced him to advertisers.

The production company that Mr. Fujii founded was called NEXUS INC. and the most popular program it developed was *Kaiun! Nandemo Kanteidan* (“Good Luck! The Anything Appraisal Team”), which is still running 30 years later. The first project I worked on with Mr. Fujii, however, was a TV program adaptation of the long-running column *My Resume* in *The Nikkei* newspaper. There was a request from the newspaper to use Nikkei Visual Images, Inc., a Nikkei partner company, as the producer for the TV program, and I acted as an intermediary between the two production companies.

Nikkei Visual Images, Inc. had not yet developed a full-fledged, experienced video production staff. Mr. Fujii’s knowledge and expertise must have greatly stimulated and nurtured the young people who aspired to become filmmakers.

After two years, NEXUS split into four production companies. This is not unusual for a group of creators with strong personalities. Mr. Fujii, in particular, had a wealth of experience and was unwavering in his beliefs, so there must have been many creators who found it difficult to work under him. The company that Mr. Fujii founded after separating from NEXUS was called Creative NEXUS Co., Ltd.

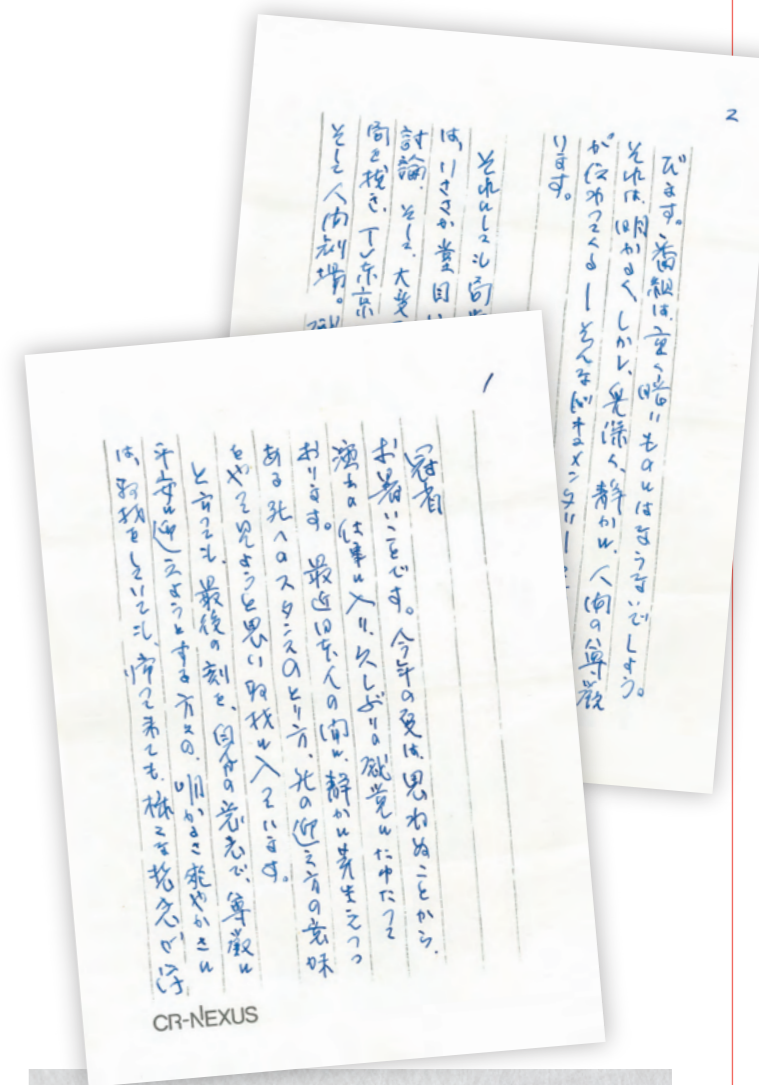
One of the programs I worked on at that time was *Documentary Ningen Gekijo* (“Documentary Human Theater”). I inherited the program’s declining ratings from my predecessor and decided that the most urgent task was to regain the trust of viewers rather than trying to increase ratings. I pledged to take responsibility for the resulting ratings and challenged both the internal and external production staff to “create a quality program that adults would appreciate.” Although the documentary category was considered a difficult one to get ratings for, I dared to program it for broadcasting on Tuesdays at 9 p.m., right in the middle of prime time. This was a bold move for a small station.

At that time, I occasionally received long letters from Mr. Fujii. These letters were always sincere accounts of his opinions on the content of TV programs. Among them, there are two letters that mention *Saigo no Toki* (“The Final Hours”). Mr. Fujii himself took the initiative to direct it for the *Documentary Ningen Gekijo*. The film was a simple depiction of the life of an elderly woman with cancer leading up to her death, but it was well received by critics, garnering high ratings and winning numerous awards.

“(Omitted) This summer, I was unexpectedly assigned to work on a production. It has been some time since I have done this, and I am still reeling from the sensation. I have been conducting interviews with the idea of exploring what it means to take a stance on death and welcome it, a concept that has been quietly emerging among Japanese people in recent years. However, the cheerfulness and vitality of people embracing their final hours with dignity and peace, of their own free will, brings up a variety of thoughts when I return home from my interviews. The program will not be heavy and dark. I believe it will be a lighthearted, yet profound and gentle documentary that conveys the dignity of human life. (Omitted) In order to maintain the framework of this type of programs, I think it is important to have a core of creators who have something to offer. The other thing that is extremely important is that the people in charge of the station always maintain a solid quality of interest. (Omitted)”

When I watch TV programs these days, I really think that producers

should talk about the programs they have created. Mr. Fujii was 83 years old when he passed away in 2012, and I still remember his eldest daughter’s words at the memorial service: “Even at home, I never heard him talk about anything but his work.”



Kiyoshi Fujii

TV Producer
Production company manager
1929 – 2012



Born in Tokyo on July 2, 1929. Graduated from Keio University. Joined NHK in 1959. As director of documentary programs, he created a number of well-known programs such as *NHK Tokushu* and *NHK Special*. After retiring from NHK in 1985, he founded Creative NEXUS Co., Ltd. in 1988. He passed away in 2012 at the age of 83.



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.

▶ KPP held an exhibition of Sendai Tanabata decorations

The Sendai Tanabata Matsuri, a traditional festival that dates back over 400 years to the time of the feudal lord Date Masamune, is one of the Tohoku region's three great festivals. During the festival, which is held every year from August 6 to 8, glorious Tanabata decorations blanket the entire city, creating a thrilling spectacle. The seven types of decorations attached to 3,000 bamboo stems are made entirely of *washi* (Japanese paper). Different types of *washi*, including Kyoto Yuzen Washi, Echizen Washi, and Edo Chiyogami, are cleverly combined to create this gorgeous "Festival of Paper," which draws more than 2 million visitors each year.

Since its inception, KPP group company Narumiya Kami-shoji Co., Ltd. has been involved in the production of Sendai Tanabata decorations via its paper wholesaling business. KPP holds exhibition events at various locations to convey the charm of Sendai Tanabata and to showcase the diverse appeal and inherent expressive potential of paper. In this article, we report on events from each venue.



01 Ginza Shochiku Square

The exhibit of Sendai Tanabata decorations at Museum Tower Kyobashi (June 6 – July 14) introduced in the previous issue was also displayed in the 1st floor entrance hall of Ginza Shochiku Square from July 22 to August 6.

Ginza Shochiku Square is a large-scale building complex with an impressively stylish glass-walled exterior. It is conveniently located just a minute walk from Higashi-ginza Station on the Tokyo Metro Hibiya Line. The Tanabata decorations were set up in a huge atrium space with a large staircase, where many people could sit and enjoy the charming scenery in a relaxed atmosphere.



Some of the *tanzaku* (paper strips) written at Kyobashi Tsukiji Elementary School (see Article 02) were also displayed.

DATA Dates: July 22 (Sat) – August 6 (Sun)
Venue: Ginza Shochiku Square
(1-13-1 Tsukiji, Chuo-ku, Tokyo)

Project corner introduces KPP's recycling-oriented business model

At the exhibition event at Ginza Shochiku Square, along with the Sendai Tanabata exhibits, we set up a project corner introducing KPP's recycling-oriented business model. It introduced initiatives designed to resolve social challenges such as abandoned bamboo forests, environmental issues, and recycling. Visitors were able to actually touch artificial turf made from paper yarn OJO+ handled by Oji Fiber Co., Ltd., as well as apparel items and tableware made from the non-plastic material *modo-cell*®, which is made from raw materials such as leftover bamboo and sugar cane cuttings.



02 Kyobashi Chokai Kindergarten / Kyobashi Tsukiji Elementary School

KPP held an exhibition event at Kyobashi Chokai Kindergarten / Kyobashi Tsukiji Elementary School, near the KPP Head Office. The event was planned as part of learning activities for children. In addition to Tanabata decorations, there was a panel explaining the origin of the seven different decorations, and *tanzaku* (paper strips) on which children wrote their wishes were attached to the bamboo. The older students also wrote their hopes and prayers for East Japan's recovery on *tanzaku* that were also displayed at the Sendai 3/11 Memorial Community Center (in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture), a facility for learning about the Great East Japan Earthquake.

DATA Dates: June 27 (Tues) – July 20 (Thurs)
Venue: Kyobashi Chokai Kindergarten / Kyobashi Tsukiji Elementary School
(2-13-1 Tsukiji, Chuo-ku, Tokyo)



03 G7 Science and Technology Ministers' Meeting in Sendai

The G7 Science and Technology Ministers' Meeting in Sendai was held at Akiu Onsen from Friday, May 12 to Sunday, May 14, 2023. The main theme of the Meeting was "Realization of an Open and Evolutional Research Ecosystem Based on Trust." At the venue, a booth was set up for visitors to experience the production of mini-Tanabata decorations called "Roman-chiku" (a play on the English word "romantic" using "roman-" and "chiku," which means bamboo in Japanese) manufactured and sold by Narumiya Kami-shoji Co., Ltd.. The goals were to introduce Japanese tradition and culture, and to ensure that the representatives from the various G7 countries enjoyed the charm of Sendai Tanabata. Roman-chiku are small traditional craft items made by Tanabata craftsmen using actual materials, and they are also available at Narumiya Kami-shoji's online store.



DATA Dates: May 12 (Fri) – May 14 (Sun)
Venue: Akiu Onsen, Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture

For general inquiries regarding exhibits, contact:
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Archiship Library & Cafe

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Kanagawa Prefecture
Tel: +81-45-326-6611 (Archiship Studio Inc.)
Business hours: 13:00 – 18:00 (Tue. – Fri.)
12:00 – 18:00 (Sat., Sun., Holidays)
Closed: Monday
<https://libraryandcafe.wordpress.com/>



A platform for creating community ties opened by an architecture office on a street corner

Specialty bars, cafes, and galleries line the streets of Yoshida-machi in Yokohama City's Naka Ward, near JR Kannai Station. The Archiship Library & Cafe is located in a corner of a shared building, distinguished by its red exterior. The interior can be seen from the outside through the glass façade, and it features a large desk and ceiling-high bookshelves that are filled with architecture-themed books, magazines, and art collections organized by genre. The owner, Yoshihiko Iida, is an architect who has worked on a wide range of projects, from homes to educational facilities. Here, he makes the imported books and rare collections he has collected over the years available to the public.

Iida opened the store in April 2012 and

says the decision to do so was influenced by the Great East Japan Earthquake, which occurred the previous year. "A hospital I designed in Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture was damaged by the tsunami," says Iida. "As I looked for ways to help with the recovery, I once again realized the importance of working together with local communities. In order to create new opportunities to work with community members, I decided to open a book cafe in this building, where I could use the first floor as a book cafe and the second floor as my office."

The store offers a wide range of events, including lectures on architecture, talk shows by film directors, reading circles, and plays.

Regardless of their interest in

architecture or art, people who want to bring a book and enjoy a good read, or just those who want to take a coffee break, can use the space freely. This book cafe opened by an architectural office in the city is now a platform for encountering new values based on architecture and art.



Yoshihiko Iida with Yurie Takahashi, who works in his architectural office.



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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