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TSUNAGU

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広げる Expand
Special Issue:

The beauty of geometric patterns

—“knitting” from a single sheet of paper

先どる Advance
Ms. Natsumi Tomita's three-dimensional art depicting contemporary society with paper

伝える Communicate
Mr. Tomone Uemura's new serial essay “Making Letters Speak”

広げる P01
Expand
"Knitting": The geometric beauty created with human hands and wisdom

辿る P06
Trace
The library book checkout card: Connecting the readers of a book.

伝える P07
Communicate
Mr. Tomone Uemura's new serial essay "Making Letters Speak"

出会う P09
Meet
A collaborative project promoter who multiplies "strengths"

先どる P11
Advance
Collages of newspapers and magazines: "People's art" representing contemporary society

深める P13
Deepen
KPP's latest news catch-up

訪ねる P15
Visit
The Paper Event Calendar enabling a real sense of the allure of paper

作る supplement
Make it
A bag shaped like Mt.Fuji, a symbol of good luck in the first dream of the New Year, for special festive chopsticks



The geometric beauty created with human hands and wisdom ORIGAMI: The Art of "Knitting" Paper

ORIGAMI is the art of repeating the basic folds seen in origami to create beautiful geometric patterns. By repeatedly changing the angles of the folds as if one were knitting, complicated and three-dimensional shapes involving many different polygons are born out of just one sheet of paper. "ORIGAMI" both boosts and embodies fresh inspirations and continues to fascinate the whole world with its meticulous handicraft. In this article, we go deep into the allure of its beauty that is at the pinnacle of Cool Japan.

ORIGAMI artist Tomoko Fuse

Ms. Tomoko Fuse was born in Niigata in 1951. She graduated from the Faculty of Horticulture in Chiba University. After working as a cram school teacher, she moved to a mountainous area in Omachi City, Nagano, together with woodblock artist Taro Toriumi in 1986. She is the pioneer of unit origami (paper-folding) and is also involved in creating industrial products, such as origami lampshades. Her unique works have been highly praised in countries around the world as well and she has held exhibitions in France, Germany and Austria. She is the author of more than 100 books, including translations. In addition, Ms. Fuse is also an essayist on living in a mountainous area. The lower right picture is of her beloved cat Kome-chan.





“When I touch paper, I find an interesting ‘shape.’”

The ultimate fine art created by human hands and wisdom

I visited Omachi City in Nagano Prefecture. Driving through a mountainous prefectural road to the west of which stretches the Northern Japan Alps, I entered a thickly forested, narrow woodland path through which a car could barely drive. As I slowly crawled towards an old residence whose roof was nearly falling off, I was greeted by a smiling woman—Ms. Tomoko Fuse. She is the world’s leading creator of “*unit origami* (paper-folding),” the handicraft of creating designs by combining multiple folded papers. She has enthusiastic fans all over the world and enjoys global popularity. Ms. Fuse is always trying new forms of *origami* that ranges from decorative objects such as *kusudama* (paper ball), gift boxes and ornaments, to helical graphical works created through folded straight lines. In this sense, she is also an untiring pioneer who continues to pursue the endless possibilities of *origami*.

In recent years, Ms. Fuse has been energetically working on the creative style of “*hira-ori* (flat folding).” Her style is markedly different from the common method of three-dimensional origami, encompassing “bellows folding,” alternate repetitions of mountain and valley folds, and “twisted folding,” folding paper by twisting it. In addition to *hira-ori*, the method of flatly folding paper like fabric, she also uses other original methods of her own devising. In this way, she creates delicate and harmonious geometric designs. What is more surprising than anything else is that those works are *all made of single sheets of paper*. Some of Ms. Fuse’s works have three-dimensional structures that appear latticed like real fabric while others take the shapes of plants, such as roses and peonies. The structures of her many works cannot be understood at a single glance. Regarding her creation process, Ms. Fuse says, “I am always stocking up ideas for small parts. As the first step, I think of the whole design to properly connect those parts, calculate the fine structures and draw a sketch of the completed form. Then, I draw lines on all the folding corners with a dull awl—this work is very taxing. It requires my full attention and it takes much time to finish.”

After she finishes drawing all those lines, Ms. Fuse says, the next step is to fold the paper. “I start folding with the larger parts. In case there are various different parts, I choose the larger parts first, and in case all of the parts are similar, I fold from the edge. This process does not take much time and I can finish folding in a week or so.” For a large work, it can take up to about five months to finish all the necessary processes. This includes calculating the overlapping of paper, the line-drawing essential for the

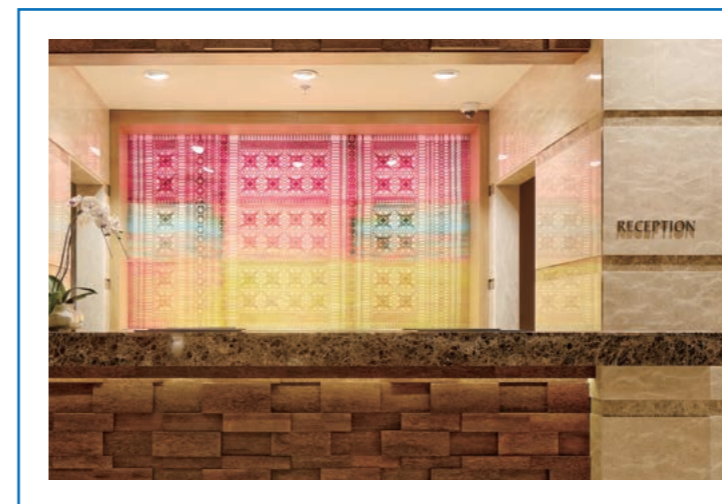
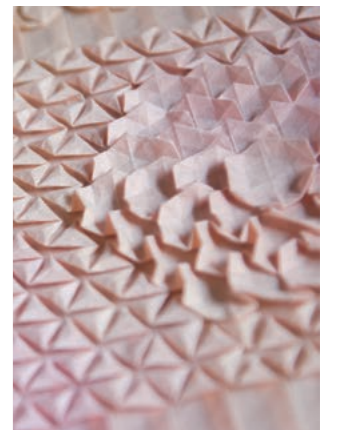
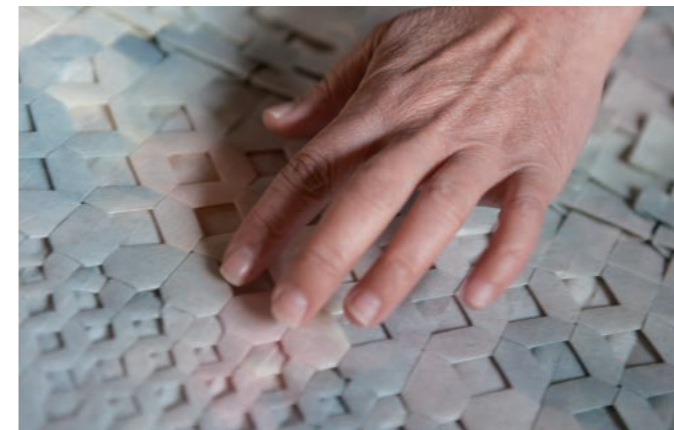
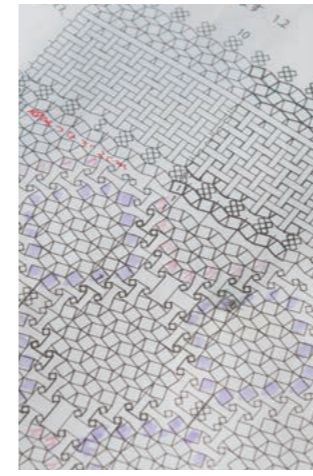
elaborate arrangement of parts to careful and meticulous folding of the paper. Ms. Fuse says, “I create the design by computer, but I do the calculation, line drawing and paper-folding all by hand. My works are low-tech. (Laughs)” Her works are the ultimate fine arts created by human hands and wisdom.

It is no exaggeration to say that Ms. Fuse’s work is a superhuman feat. Asked about the origins of her inspirations and designs, she says, “I am not particularly good at mathematics. (Laughs) As I fold the paper and find my way to an answer, changing the angles little by little, I discover an interesting shape. When I calculate later, I sometimes realize that each diagonal line follows a clear rule, such as the square root of 2, the square root of 3 and the square root of 4. I do not create works according to advance calculations. Instead my works are based on the discoveries I make while folding paper, like ‘Oh, this may turn out to be like this.’ Although the process takes an overwhelming amount of time, I find it to be great fun to make new discoveries at the end of all that hard work. That may be the reason why I continue this profession.”

Ms. Fuse’s creative activity continues in a mountainous area with a rich natural environment.

Ms. Fuse’s first encounter with *origami* was when she was a second-grader. At that time, she was hospitalized for two and a half months because of a serious disease and after leaving the hospital, she began attending school again. During her hospitalization, she became fascinated with origami and quickly became an origami enthusiast. Ms. Fuse recalls, “When I was in the hospital, I saw people in the same room making paper balls with paper used for wrapping powdered medicine. So, I tried various types of paper-folding, reading from a book. The red medicine paper struck me as beautiful, although I did not know it was for powerful drugs. I remember wanting that paper very much.”

When Ms. Fuse entered university, she relocated to Tokyo. After graduating from university, she worked as a teacher for a private tutoring school in Asakusa for about ten years, all the while continuing her *origami* creation activities. Ms. Fuse says, “The turning point in my life was a request from the editor-in-chief of *Chikumashobo* to write a book about *origami*. The book explained how to make *origami* and the ideas behind it. The editor gave me strict instructions on my explanations of paper-folding and writing.”



A collaboration of ORIGAMI and an LED panel installed at AXIA South Cikarang in Indonesia

Ms. Fuse’s *hira-ori* works made with colorful washi were displayed at an Indonesian hotel, AXIA South Cikarang. Hotel visitors were glued to the illusionary beauty created by the background LED panel.



“I feel that the image of my completed works depends on the paper I first choose.”

Subsequently, she had an encounter with “*unit origami*” and entered a new phase of creation. At the same time, she decided to move to a house over 100 years old in a mountainous area in Nagano. Ms. Fuse says, “I had long hoped to live in a rich natural environment and I decided on it without a moment’s hesitation. I get a lot of inspiration from natural objects. The house I live in now was already ragged when I first moved in. (Laughs) But I have lived in this house for about 30 years, repairing it while living in it. There are more animals than human beings in this area. (Laughs)” As she says, Ms. Fuse continues to create novel works in a quiet environment surrounded by untouched nature, wild animals and beautiful seasonal plants.

Ms. Fuse’s creation depends on the paper

The most significant factor of her works is paper, as she says, “I feel that the basic concept of my creation depends on the paper I first get. My ideas change depending on the particular type of paper I get, whether it’s special paper for *origami*, *washi* (traditional Japanese paper), cardboard or flame-resistant paper. Different types of paper differ in thickness, strength and transparency. I feel that those differences lead to larger possibilities of works.” Every time she goes to Tokyo, she visits many paper shops, such as machine-made paper shops and *washi* shops, in pursuit of encounters with new types of paper. The larger her work is, the more difficult it is for her to get paper for it. Ms. Fuse says, “For large-sized paper, I often use *OK Golden River* and thin *Mermaid Ripple*. But there are no roll-packaged items on the market. Even if it’s not rolled, if there is anyone who is willing to sell me paper about 30 meters long, I want to meet that person. (Laughs)”

Ms. Fuse’s *ORIGAMI* enjoys a great global reputation

As mentioned above, Ms. Fuse has published two *origami* books with *Chikumashobo*.

The publication of these two books eventually led her to publish over 100 books which include translations for foreign readers. Ms. Fuse says, “I am the very first person to publish a book on *unit origami*.”

I received many messages from creators in other countries.” In addition, she has also received many offers for exhibitions. The Japanese creator has displayed her works at *Bauhaus*, the symbol of German contemporary art, and at the *Le Carrousel du Louvre* in France. Her *ORIGAMI* art has been highly praised in other countries as well. Ms. Fuse says, “People in foreign countries respect Japan’s unique origami culture. My approach to design is free and I guess that this style of freedom may appeal to the hearts and minds of people in other countries.”

Ms. Fuse has closed the chapter on her activities writing *origami* books intended to give everyone an opportunity to casually enjoy paper-folding. In the future, she is planning to create mainly graphical works, including *hira-ori*. Ms. Fuse says, “For the future, I will first prepare for an exhibition to be held in Germany from August to October in 2015 and an exhibition to be held in April 2016 at the *Azumino Municipal Museum of Modern Art* in Azumino City, Nagano, where I live. In addition, I want to try the creation of other items through the application of origami methods.” Ms. Fuse’s unceasing appetite for creation is sure to open up a whole new world in the form of her own original *ORIGAMI*.

Ms. Tomoko Fuse’s exhibitions

Germany

To be held from August to October in 2015

A joint exhibition with a German artist and a French artist at Schafhof-Europäisches-Künstlerhaus-Oberbayern

Japan

To be held from April to May in 2016

A large-scale exhibition of many of the latest *hira-ori* works at the Azumino Municipal Museum of Modern Art



HELICAL works expressing spiral expansion and contraction



BOX works using origami methods



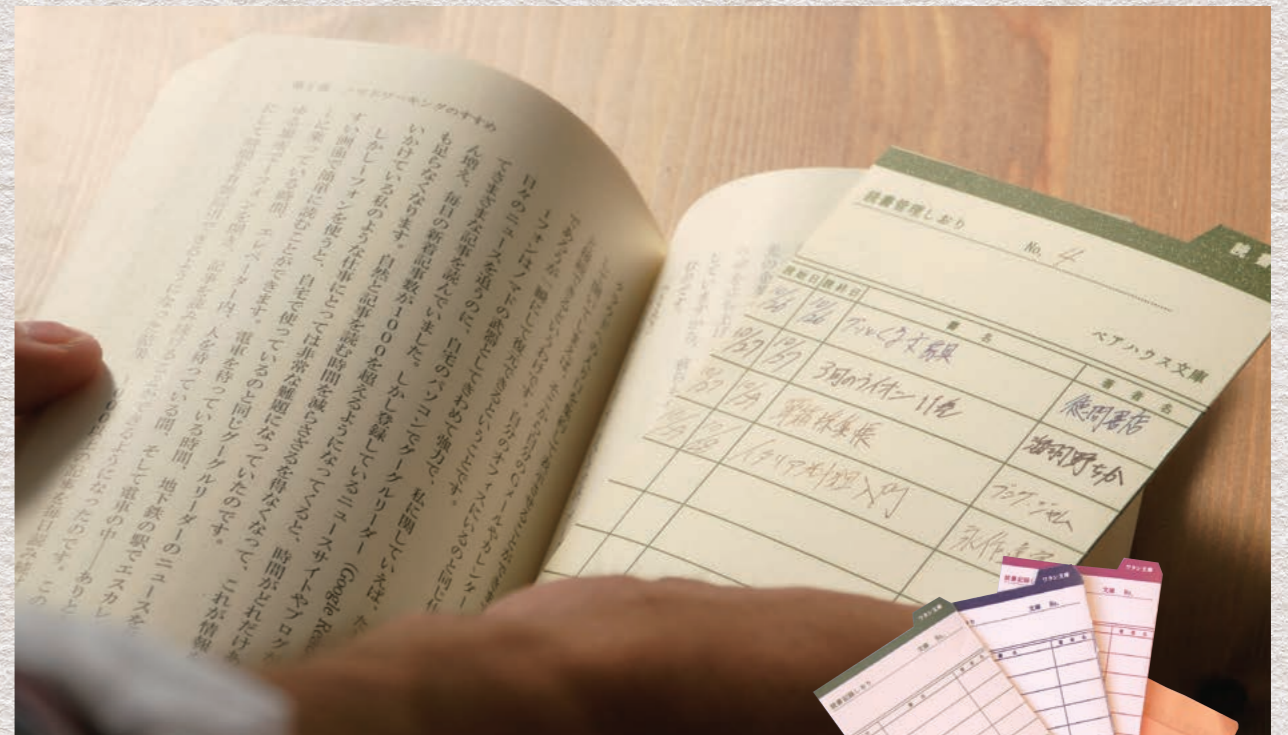
A large stock of trial items



The Origami Lampshade, which has been announced as a product in Europe



※The photo of the *Dokusho Kiroku Shiori Watashi Bunko* bookmark from Beahouse is for presentation purposes only.



Topic of this Edition

Library Book Checkout Card

Library book checkout card connects the readers of a book.

The school library was filled with the smell of old books. I remember taking a seat beside a window from which I could see a large ginkgo tree in the courtyard after school, and skimming through a book I had picked from the shelves, looking as if I was reviewing it.

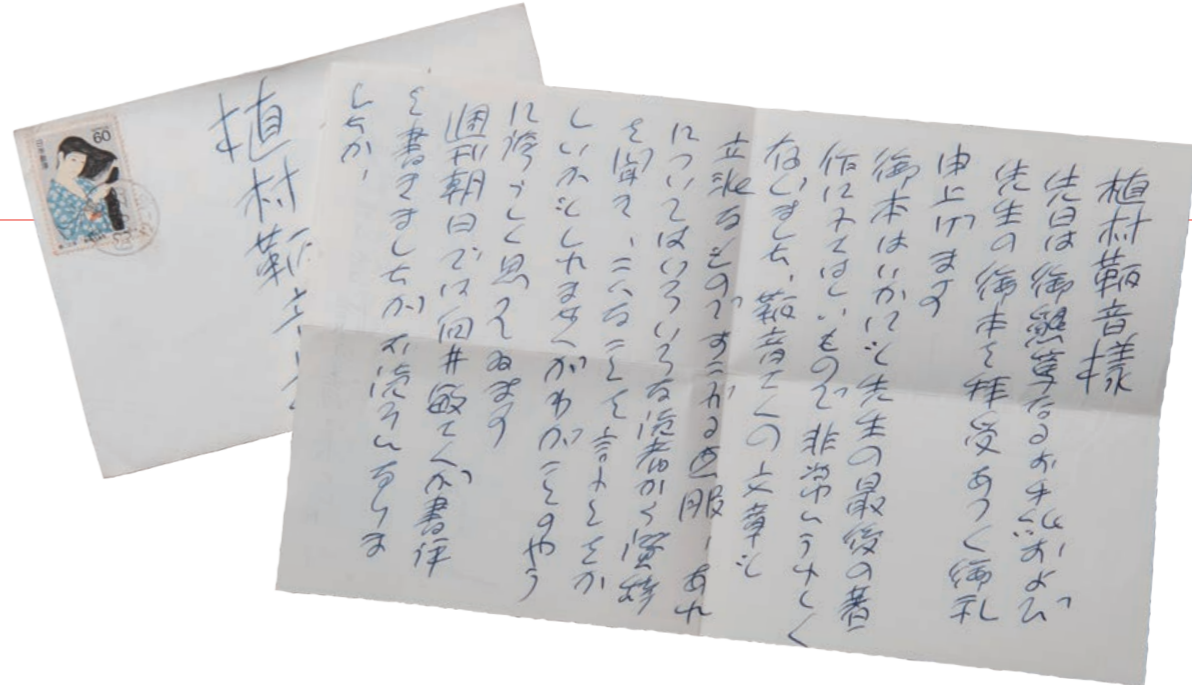
In those days, we found a small paper pocket on the inside of the back cover of each book in the library. The pocket held a card on which names of people who had read the book and the dates when they checked it out were written by hand. When I found the name of someone I knew, I felt somewhat close to them. Even when I saw names I didn’t recognize, such as people who may have already graduated, I felt happy to know we shared the same preferences in books. I felt like this was some form of communication that transcended time.

The method for checking out books in the past was the Newark method. In recent years, library operations have been increasingly computerized and reworked to protect the privacy of people who check out books. As a result of these changes, loan cards and personal cards were discontinued and replaced with smartcards, dramatically simplifying the cumbersome

administrative process. However, I would like to see us pass down to the next generation the human warmth felt by finding the book you want, entering your name, the checkout date, and the expected return date on the card, and then handing it to the library worker or librarian.

This checkout card has come back as a new stationery item that retains the original feel of those days in the past. Sold by a company called Beahouse, the *Dokusho Kiroku Shiori Watashi Bunko* (which literally means “My Library: Bookmark with Reading Records”) is a bookmark people can use to jot down the titles of books they read, the authors’ names, the dates when they started and finished reading, and their short comments. I have heard this product has been well received not only for its nostalgic look, but because it enables users to remember how they felt after reading a book, allowing them to trace back their account of the book. Like a real checkout card, it can be put in the book pocket that comes with the bookmark and is glued on the inside of the cover. This product is sure to pique the interest of avid bookworms.

Dokusho Kiroku Shiori Watashi Bunko
Sold by Beahouse at <http://www.bea-house.com>
Available in sets of three bookmark cards (navy, green, and pink). Comes with a book pocket and glue produced by ITOI Co., Ltd., a library supplies manufacturer, for use as a dedicated envelope.



Making Letters Speak Tomone UEMURA

Part 1: Saiichi MARUYA
A Magnificent End Befitting the Life of an Intellectual

Saiichi Maruya was a student of my father at Niigata High School under the prewar educational system. My father moved from Matsuyama High School to Niigata in 1941, the year the Pacific War broke out. Mr. Maruya entered high school in 1944, the year before the war ended. He referred to my father in several of his essays. I suppose he respected my father and sympathized with him for his strongly defiant attitude and critical stance against the militarism. I once heard that a view of the world rooted in the intellect was highly regarded in the high school education before the end of World War II. As a man who read voraciously and had a good memory, Mr. Maruya may have discovered something in common with my father. I saw him in person twice, once in January and once in February,

1980. Both occasions were connected to the celebration of my father's 77th birthday. On each occasion, he gave a congratulatory speech as a student who had been taught by my father.

My father passed away in May 1987. The idea of asking Mr. Maruya to head the funeral committee came to my mind, and it was with great fear and reluctance that I made the phone call. However, he readily accepted my request. That is how my personal relationship with him began.

Around ten years ago, I finished my career as an office worker at the age of 65 and set out to become a professional writer. This move was to some extent connected to a letter Mr. Maruya had sent me in which he praised the commentary I wrote after my father's death that was added to the posthumous publication titled *Ajia no Teio-tachi (Asia's Emperors)*. "I am very happy that the book served as fitting conclusion to your father's life work. The words you wrote were really great and impressed me a lot. I heard many different readers speak highly of your commentary. This may sound a bit strange, but I felt as if those comments had been directed at me, and they made me feel proud."

This appreciation encouraged me to become a writer after I retired from my career as an office worker. My maiden work was *Naoki Sanjugo Den (The Life of Sanjugo Naoki)*, which is a critical biography of my uncle Sanjugo Naoki. Mr. Maruya made a speech in my honor at the gathering to commemorate the publication of this work. That was September 2, 2005. Just after the publication, he sent

me a postcard, writing, "The fourth printing is a marvelous achievement. Congratulations for that. If your father was alive, he would surely be jealous of you."

The small prize I won for my first work gave me some confidence, inspiring me to start writing a critical biography of my father, who dedicated 61 years of his life solely to teaching. The finished work was titled *Rekishi no Kyoshi Uemura Seiji (Seiji Uemura: A History Teacher)*.

I decided to have my draft first read by Mr. Maruya. I asked Ms. Hisako Kobayashi, a staff member of Mr. Maruya's at Chuokoron-Shinsha, Inc., to deliver the draft to him. In the spring of 2007, I visited him at his condominium in the district commonly known as Sammazaka in Meguro in Tokyo. As soon as he saw me, he said, "Tomone, the book was good. I am surprised by the progress you have made since you published your first book." Upon hearing his remarks, my anxiety instantly turned to relief. Shortly thereafter we went to the lobby of a nearby hotel, and there he gave me his detailed comments. The draft that had been passed on to him came back to me filled with notes in red ink. When I asked him to write a brief message for the wraparound band, he kindly answered that he would be happy to write a message or even a book review, whichever I would prefer. His book review appeared in the Mainichi Shimbun newspaper the day my work was released.

Mr. Maruya called me at home in the evening of the day on which he gave me his feedback about my draft. He said, "Tomone, in addition to

the book review, I would very much like to write about your father. I already have the text worked out in my mind." I asked the editor to leave a blank space on the back cover for his additional comments. Left unsigned, the remarks he made served as a cordial presentation of his teacher Seiji Uemura.

It is widely known that Mr. Maruya magnificently saw out the end his life in a manner befitting an intellectual. Before he reached the end, he finished all of his remaining work, set aside the assets to be inherited by his wife, sent some keepsakes to his friends, and wrote a letter of farewell. I didn't receive any mementos, but he did send me a letter saying "Thank you for everything over the years. May you have peace", before his passing, as well as a collection of poems entitled *Hachijuhakku* (literally translates to *Eighty-Eight Poems*) after he died. The collection of poems came with a message from his bereaved son, Mr. Ryo Nemuro. It read, "In his last words, my late father told me to send this collection to someone he had been close friends with." This thoughtful gesture was quite typical of Mr. Maruya.

Saiichi MARUYA,
1925-2012
Novelist



Born in Tsuruoka in Yamagata Prefecture, he worked as a novelist, literary critic, translator, and essayist. His major publications include *Sasamakura (Pillows of Grass)*, *Toshi no Nokori (The Rest of the Year)*, *Tatta Hitori no Hanran (Singular Rebellion)*, *Uragoe de Utae Kimigayo (Sing it in Falsetto: "Kimigayo")* and *Onnazakari (A Mature Woman)*. He won the Akutagawa Prize in 1968 for *Toshi no Nokori* as well as many other prizes in literature. He was also honored as a Person of Cultural Merit in 2006 and with the Order of Culture in 2011. He served as a member of the Akutagawa Prize Selection Committee. Unlike pessimistic "I" novels typically seen in the Japanese literature, his works became extremely popular for their witty and intellectual touch. He was also well known for consistently using the historical Japanese *kana* orthography.

A Word on Letters

There are several ways for learning who a specific person really is. One quick and easy way is to play golf or mahjong with them. You can get an idea of who a person is after spending a few hours with them. However, I believe that letters provide us with a wonderful means for learning about someone. Letters consist of characters. In English, these symbols are commonly referred to as letters or characters for writing. The word "letter" also signifies a written message, while the word "character" can refer to an individual's personality or personal qualities.

In recent years it has become much more common to use computers and the Internet, and as a result fewer and fewer people write letters in their traditional form. However, beautifully written characters and beautiful sentences move readers. Handwritten letters are a more appropriate means than e-mail for conveying your gratitude to someone who did you a favor or confessing your love to someone of whom you are fond. Letters provide us with a good opportunity to train our minds as writers and foster our sensitivity as readers. At least that's the way I see it.

Brief Biography of the Author
Tomone UEMURA
Essayist

Tomone UEMURA was born in Matsuyama in Ehime Prefecture, Japan. His uncle was the novelist Sanjugo NAOKI, and his father was Seiji UEMURA, a historian of the Oriental world. After graduating from the Department of History, the Faculty of Letters, Arts and Sciences (day school) at Waseda University in 1962, he worked for Toei Co., Ltd. and TV Tokyo Corporation, where he was appointed managing director in 1994. He later became president and representative director of PROTX in 1999. He now serves as an advisor to the DAC Group and as the director of STEP (general incorporated association). He won the Ozaki Hotsuki Memorial Popular Literature Research Award in 2005 for his work titled *Naoki Sanjugo Den* and the Nihon Essayist Club Award in 2007 for *Rekishi no Kyoshi Uemura Seiji*. His major publications include *Natsu no Misaki (Cape in the Summer)* and *Kikotsu no Hito Shiroyama Saburo (Saburo Shiroyama: A Man of Determination)*.

Breaking into new business fields with the added strength of the business partner

Ken Fujisawa

Assistant Section Manager
Purchasing Section 1
Purchasing & Logistic Dept.,
Nagoya Branch,
Kokusai Pulp&Paper Co., Ltd.

10 Questions that Reveal the Real Mr. Fujisawa

- Q1** Favorite soccer team?
Shonan Bellmare in the J. League
FC Barcelona in La Liga (Spain)
- Q2** Recommended vacation spot?
Barcelona, Spain
- Q3** Favorite music artist?
The Southern All Stars
- Q4** Favorite TV drama series?
The Aibo series (on the ANN network)
- Q5** Favorite magazines?
Nikkei Trendy and Number
- Q6** Best recent purchase?
A True Sleeper mattress
- Q7** Indispensable item for presentations?
The iPad Air
- Q8** Favorite scenic spot?
Enoshima Island as seen from National Route 134
- Q9** Eating and drinking establishment most often visited?
Shin (a horumonyaki restaurant in Chikusa-ku, Nagoya)
- Q10** Defining trait of the Nagoya Branch?
Abundance of personnel with unique personalities

Two paper items indispensable to Mr. Fujisawa's efforts

A Paper sample from Kaga Paperboard Manufacturing Co., Ltd.
A product sample from Kaga Paperboard Manufacturing Co., Ltd., on which he focuses his sales promotion efforts. He never forgets to take this item with him when he goes out of the office.

Sports-related publications
Non-fiction publications that depict how professional sports companies overcame tough times when they were on the brink of collapse. He claims these books provide him with management philosophy insight that can be applied to other business sectors.

Photos/Left: Tanahashi Hiroshi wa Naze Shin Nihon Puroresu o Kaerukoto-ga Dekitanaka (The Secret behind Hiroshi Tanahashi's Successful Transformation of New Japan Pro Wrestling) from Asukashinsha Publishing, Right: Tate no Bigaku (Philosophy of an Aggressive Offense) from Shonan Bellmare,

Key Word 1



Instantly applicable product knowledge

Fujisawa joined KPP in 2005 after working as a sales representative in a number of different paper-related areas, including printing, distribution, and manufacturing. While currently he mainly handles purchases from paper companies, he also works together with other sales representatives to promote the sales of products from Kaga Paperboard Manufacturing Co., Ltd. and from Yupo Corporation. "The Yupo representatives and I organize product briefing sessions for meeting with customers on a monthly basis," he says. "Each session attracts a large number of participants, during which we emphasize the appeal and high quality of the products and propose a wide variety of applications. As a distributor, the important thing to do on these occasions is to try to offer customers information which is useful for giving presentations to their clients through the presentations you give." He does not focus on short-term business deals, but adopts a long-term approach to giving detailed proposals. This may be his own personal asset, reinforced by his familiarity with the distribution process and his far-sighted perspective. "It feels good after a presentation to hear customers say they really understand what the product is all about," he adds. His persistent efforts are steadily winning over customers and producing some tangible results.

Key Word 2



Capacity to imagine

"I like to use my imagination," says Fujisawa. In addition to purchasing and expanding the sales of existing goods, he also works hard to develop new items to offer and cultivate new suppliers. "I often adopt a forward-looking approach with the customers in mind, imagining what we could make if we combined the strengths of Company A's product with those of Company B's. I also think from the perspective of the user, and try to come up with products that would benefit customers." The underlying basis for this mindset is Fujisawa's extensive human network that transcends business sectors. "Nagoya is a large city, but it's pretty common to discover unexpected connections among the people you know," he says. "I feel these connections help to sustain product exchange with customers, and in turn continuously broaden human networks and prospective customer bases."



"The key to winning the trust of customers is making them want to talk to you again," Fujisawa says.

Key Word 3



Collaboration projects that originate in Nagoya

Fujisawa enjoys watching soccer matches. He supports Shonan Bellmare in the J. League, the team based where he is from in the Shonan district of Kanagawa Prefecture. The team now plays in Division 2 (J2), but is set to be promoted to Division 1 (J1) in the next season. He sometimes goes to stadiums in other parts of the country to support his team on their away matches. He is also passionate about the Spanish team FC Barcelona. Fujisawa claims that watching Barcelona's weekend matches on TV refreshes him. "My next goal is to undertake a collaborative project that originates in Nagoya but integrates the strengths of different companies nationwide," he says. "To achieve the goal, I need to build a good track record on my own that helps to create more people who share the same ideas." His untiring efforts are sure to become a set of guidelines for new business models.



This day he wore the official FC Barcelona tie he purchased when he saw a match in Spain.

Two key persons who work with Fujisawa

Two years have passed since I joined the company. I am currently part of the Purchasing Section 1 of the Purchasing & Logistic Dept., where I check the inventories of manufacturers and make arrangements for deliveries based on the orders the sales representatives bring in. The unique thing about the Nagoya Branch is that staff members are really close. The head of the branch and the nearly 70 staff members all work on the same floor. This enables us to share information immediately, resulting in quick operations and helping to build a healthy team spirit. The branch office has a space where functional paper and other related products are on display. Please feel free to check it out when you have a chance.

Colleague



Tomohiro Watanabe



A permanent space where visitors can actually handle product samples and hold business discussions

I work with Mr. Fujisawa and the other sales representatives at the Nagoya Branch to organize briefings on Yupo's products, build up a customer base, and develop new product applications. Currently nearly 60% of our sales in the Chubu district are connected to the sales efforts of KPP's Nagoya Branch. Mr. Fujisawa uses his human network and enthusiasm to encourage us by showing how to create business opportunities and win orders. Working together with KPP's Nagoya Branch, we will continue our efforts to develop new businesses that help expand the sales of our products.

Supplier



Mr. Mitsuharu Kawamata
Nagoya Sales Office,
West Japan Branch Office
Yupo Corporation



The YUPO Static® for sticking objects on walls and other surfaces. It relies on the power of static electricity instead of glue, tape, or pushpins.

Ms. Natsumi Tomita's works featuring people realistically embodies the sentiment of "now."

Politicians fighting in the Diet, idols popular among young people, salaried workers snoozing on the train and high school girls—Ms. Natsumi Tomita's works feature people with facial expressions, gestures, clothes and belongings all made from newspaper and magazine clippings that symbolize their personalities. Her exquisite people series, which has a touch of satire, has attracted a great deal of attention from contemporary art circles as works of art with a cutting representation of reality in contemporary society.

Q: Please tell me, why you chose your current creative style?

Ms. Tomita: My creative activities originated with my experiences with paper crafts in my childhood. In my elementary school days, I made paper by using the fiber of boiled pumpkins and enjoyed making pumpkin lamps. When I was a senior in high school, I chose natural creatures as my subjects and began to create works using urban scrap metals, the exact opposite of the natural motif. For my people series, when I thought of creating works featuring people, I started focusing on newspapers and magazines filled with the words people use. Newspapers and magazines are typical reflections of the "now" of the times, such as social affairs, fashion and idols popular among young people. By using that media of "now," I want to create images of characters who symbolize "now."

Q: How do you go about creating relief works?

Ms. Tomita: First, I draw an enlarged image of a rough sketch on corrugated cardboard and craft a whole rough image placing paper clay on the cardboard paper. Next, I smooth down the surface with sandpaper, and then, I clip out newspaper and magazine articles that are the right color and paste them on the body parts of characters according to their shape.

Q: How long do you take to finish one work?

Ms. Tomita: It all depends on the work. For example, in the case of works featuring young idols, the first thing I do is to buy a large number of idol magazines. It takes a lot of time to clip many faces and words out of those magazines and classify them. Including the drying process, it takes me about two weeks to finish one.



Ms. Tomita working on a piece. She has a large stock of newspapers, magazines and scrap metals in her studio.

Natsumi Tomita



Natsumi Tomita was born in Tokyo in 1986. She graduated from the Oil Painting Course of the Department of Painting at Tama Art University. While she was in university, Ms. Tomita started to create works featuring people using newspapers and magazines as well as for materials and also works featuring animals using scrap metal. After graduating from the art university as a top student, she held her first exhibition in 2007. Subsequently, she held exhibitions in the major cities of Japan, such as Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya, and abroad as well, such as in Hong Kong and Singapore, where she collected scrap materials in local areas to create her works. Her exhibitions have been widely praised. Ms. Tomita is currently one of the young artists receiving the most attention. Website: <http://tomitanatumikan.wix.com/tommy>

Q: How do you find your themes?

Ms. Tomita: I build images from the things that catch my attention in my everyday life, such as lines of people in the street and singing and dancing idols on television shows. Particularly interesting are groups of people who do not know each other. I find it very curious how a line of people is essentially a group of strangers forming a beautiful liner shape, or how on trains, many strangers are smashed close to each other in a small space, yet they peek into their mobile phones and revel in their own worlds. I take up such ordinary things as the themes of my art.

Q: Please tell me about your many works using scrap metals.

Ms. Tomita: I have created many works featuring animals, such as a bat made of a broken umbrella (*komori-gasa* in Japanese) and a tortoise made from a chair with casters whose shell people can ride and move around on. My basic policy for creation is to resurrect abandoned things as creatures.

Q: You hold workshops as well as exhibitions.

Can you tell me a little bit about them?

Ms. Tomita: I organize workshops using scrap plastic mainly for children. Participants bring things they have at home or usually use in their daily lives and experience creative activities that highlights the forms and colors of those things. Paying closer attention to what they use in their daily lives and throw away as waste can reveal beautiful colors and interesting forms, and I am always delighted when the participants realize this.

Q: Please tell me about your artistic plans for the future.

Ms. Tomita: In terms of paper crafts, I will continue creating true-to-life works featuring people with a focus on the theme of depicting the "now" of the times. I want to add new works every year, expressing the way "now" changes by displaying a collection of works in a chronological line.

The Heisei ukiyoe series Kurosawa Iichiro

This series of newspaper-made works are reliefs of contemporary characters reminiscent of *ukiyo*e, woodblock prints of the demimonde in the Edo period (1603-1867).



I am sorry to have kept you waiting for so long

A life-sized work created by using words and pictures suitable for each character



Chicken fight: The Diet in disarray

A satirical depiction of the Diet (Japanese parliament) in disarray likened to a chicken fight



A newspaper article about the confrontation between the ruling and opposition parties was used for the shirt and a clipping of a newspaper picture of a politician's face was used for the skin.



A Marunouchi Line train at 8 in the morning

This work features salaried workers commuting to work by train. This is an excellent example of Ms. Tomita's keen insight into human archetypes.

Saito Taro and Takei Ayame

This work features an old man who is a literary enthusiast and a high school girl. A clipping of a picture of a person's face was used for the skin.



Ms. Natsumi Tomita's next exhibition

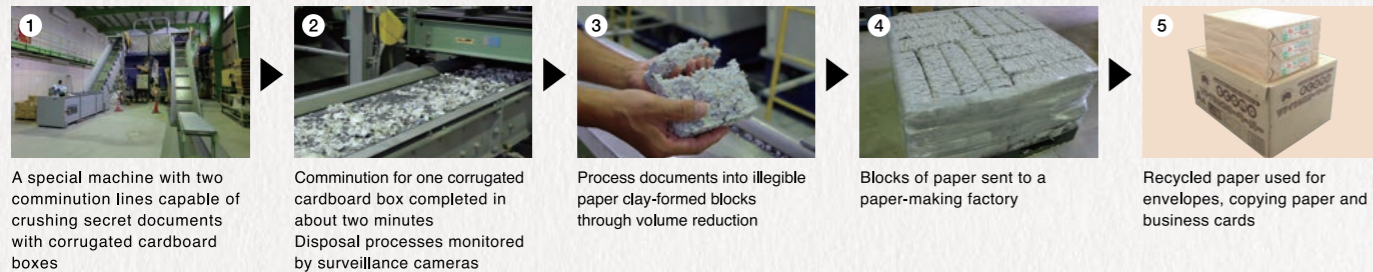
Ms. Tomita's next exhibition will open soon. You can enjoy works linking young idols symbolizing contemporary society to the world of *ukiyo*e, which were like the bromide photographs of the Edo period.
Period: From March 2 (Monday) to 20 (Friday).
*Closed on Sundays and holidays
Venue: Galerie Tokyo Humanité
B2F Showa Building, 2-8-18, Kyobashi, Chuo-ku, Tokyo, 104-0031, Japan

The Secret Documents Treatment Facility “ecommo LINCLE Ichihara Center” Opened

Last year, on October 1, Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd. launched its secret documents treatment facility “ecommo LINCLE Ichihara Center” in Ichihara City, Chiba prefecture. Handling secret documents is one of the closely watched major social issues, as shown by the significant media coverage of personal information leak incidents. With the management philosophy of realizing a recycling-oriented society, we have been implementing the eco-model “Office ecommo” for the safe collection and recycling of waste from corporation’s secret documents and for remaking them into paper products in line with the needs of companies that will introduce recycled products. The establishment of the ecommo LINCLE Ichihara Center enabled waste processing via the comminution and volume reduction method at our own facility. This facility can crush and solidify collected secret documents together with corrugated cardboard boxes. Using this method, we can secure the confidentiality of disposed documents and can also change them into recyclable materials. We also introduced a traceability system, surveillance cameras and electronic lock doors. In addition, we were authorized as an ISMS-certified organization. We are planning to expand our treatment capabilities for the future as a company with the facilities to erase secret documents using a totally novel method. We will continue to expand our environmental business in response to requests from various clients.



DATA
The ecommo LINCLE Ichihara Center
111 Anesaki-kaigan, Ichihara, Chiba, 299-0107, Japan
[Comminution and volume reduction capabilities: 250 tons per month]



We received an award from the Kyobashi Fire Station in recognition of our lending an AED at the Head Office

On December 4, we received an award from the Kyobashi Fire Station in recognition of our lending an automated external defibrillator (AED) installed on the first floor of our Head Office to save a person’s life. One of our employees happened to find a person in urgent need of the AED just around the Head Office and offered to lend it to the person. In 2008, the Head Office introduced an AED so that it can be put to use in emergencies to save the lives of our customers, employees and passers-by and also holds regular lectures on how to use an AED in an emergency. In addition, the other domestic branches have also introduced an AED.



Welfare Section Manager Miyamoto, who received a certificate of merit as a representative of Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd.

The Kita Nihon Branch Founded for Organizational Enhancement

On October 1, we integrated the Sendai and Sapporo Branches into the Kita Nihon Branch. Based on this new corporate structure, we aim to realize greater operational efficiency and expand our business.

Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd. Kita Nihon Branch

Sentokaikan Building 2-2-10 Chuo, Aoba-ku, Sendai, Miyagi, 980-0021, Japan
TEL: 81-22-266-2027, FAX: 81-22-267-5273
(The TEL and FAX numbers remain unchanged from the former Sendai Branch.)

The Sendai Sales Department (former Sendai Branch)

The Sendai Sales Department was founded within the above-mentioned Kita Nihon Branch.
*The address and telephone number remain unchanged.

The Sapporo Sales Department (former Sapporo Branch)

Regent Building 2-1-5 Kita-nijo-nishi, Chuo-ku, Sapporo, Hokkaido, 060-0002, Japan
TEL: 81-11-241-2291, FAX: 81-11-251-5726
*The address and telephone number remain unchanged.

The Year-Long Exhibition “KPP-Preferred Projects!” at the entrance of the first floor of the Head Office

We started holding year-long exhibitions called “KPP-Preferred Projects!” at the entrance of the first floor of the Head Office in 2012. We featured Projects 6 through 10 in 2014 and publicized our social contribution activities and new business projects. Below, we will introduce several projects we implemented this year.

Project 6 We sponsored a sports event!

We became a special sponsor of the Tohoku Free Blades, a team in Asia League Ice Hockey 2013-2014. We introduced three ice hockey games and our Used Clothes Collection Campaign at a Christmas game hosted by the league by exhibiting panels, videos and original uniforms. [From February 28 to April 11]

Project 7 PAPER MALL Renewal

Our online store PAPER MALL carries about 1,000 items, including general paper, special paper, paper samples and paper products. We renewed the website in April 2014. For our website for business users, we introduced a more efficient system for information management and payment procedures by ID and password. For our website for general consumer users, we developed a by-purpose search function that enables users to search information by usage, product characteristic and type. The exhibition explained the focal points of the website renewal and also introduced San-X Net Shop, whose management we support. [From April 14 to June 19]

Project 8 Tanabata Decorations in Sendai

We exhibited Tanabata decorations that we had started as part of our social contribution activities in 2012. We displayed a total of six Tanabata decorations, including a decoration with the commemorative logo mark designed for the 90th anniversary of our corporate foundation, at the entrance to the first floor of the Head Office and introduced their creation processes with movies. In addition, our employees and customers wrote their wishes on strips of paper and attached them to bamboo shoots. [From June 23 to August 8]

Project 9 KPP Cafe Project

We introduced our coffee packing business launched through the Business Creation Division. We publicized the division’s business aim to deal with all B-to-C business streams ranging from the procurement of coffee beans to the sending of gift products on the basis of package sales. On September 19, we held a coffee tasting and distribution party named “Taste for Now: KPP Cafe Studio” and attracted many participants.

Project 10 KPP’s History and Future

We introduced our corporate history from our foundation in 1924 to the present as an exhibition in sync with this magazine, TSUNAGU, using panels and movies. We also displayed a special fabric made from Manchurian elm on which our corporate name is inscribed. This fabric was what employees used to wear on their clothes when they lifted heavy papers on their shoulders in the early Showa period.

Featuring Yupo® Products

“The Magical White Paper” Yupo® was created by a groundbreaking manufacturing process. Yupo® is currently closely associated with various situations of daily life as a result of the improvements that have been made since its birth and its roles and functions are numerous. We mainly exhibited and introduced end products made of the synthetic paper Yupo® to publicize this paper. [From October 6 to December 19]

Editorial Postscript

Happy new year! The Tomioka Silk Mill and a group of silk-related historical heritages were designated as World Heritage Sites last year and *Washi*, the craftsmanship of Japanese hand-made paper, was officially designated as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It is a great delight that Japanese traditional culture has been reviewed and globally evaluated in recent years.

The feature of this latest issue is fabric paper. Many works were crafted so delicately and meticulously that they could almost be mistaken for real textile. I was left amazed, wondering how they were crafted. I sincerely hope that such wonderful craftsmanship will be passed on from generation to generation. Lastly, I will continue striving to create a magazine that our readers will enjoy reading for a long time. I wish you all the best. (J.S)

We have decided to publish an English version of TSUNAGU starting with this issue. The word TSUNAGU (“connect” in English) shows our intention of connecting KPP with our readers through this magazine. I sincerely hope that we will be able to realize a deeper understanding of KPP from as many people as possible through the English publication of this magazine and also hope that we will be able to promote the allure of paper. (M.T)

From February 5(Thurs.) to 7(Sat.)

EXHIBITION

The 10th KPP Cultural Exhibition

We hold a biyearly event to promote our employees' cultural activities. At this event, we exhibit more than 100 works created by our employees, such as paintings, calligraphy, photographs and handicrafts.

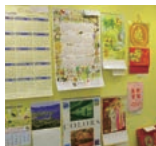


From February 12(Thurs.) to 13(Fri.)

EXHIBITION

The 2015 Purchasing & Logistics Div. Exhibition

With the title "Paper and Living," the exhibition is intended to highlight the close relationship between paper and daily life. Along with this concept, we will display the survey results of nationwide calendar exhibitions and our made-to order calendars.



DATA

- Venue: Conference room on the 2nd floor at the Head Office of Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd. (6-24 Akashi-cho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo, Japan)
- Free of charge
- Contact: CSR & Public Relations Section, Corporate Planning Dept., Corporate Planning Div., Kokusai Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd.
- TEL: 81-3-3542-4169 ■ HP: www.kppc.co.jp

Until March 1(Sun.)

EXHIBITION

Paper-traveling through Japan: The Kanto and Koshin region

This exhibition presents a comprehensive introduction of Japan's paper-making industry that developed in many local areas in line with their geographical and natural conditions, along with the industry's history and current situation and distinctive local features, products and handicrafts. The first project focuses on the Kanto and Koshin region.

Free invitation cards for the first 25 pairs of 50 applicants

For those who want to apply, please send a postcard or an email including the following information to the address at the lower right corner of this page: (1) zip code; (2) address; (3) name; (4) telephone number; (5) company; and (6) opinion on this magazine.



Stencil printing A Map of Paper-Making Factory in Contemporary Japan: East (by Okamura Kichiemon, 1959)



Chinese-origin Edo karakami-gata thick paper (pattern book) (1848)

DATA

- Venue: The Paper Museum (1-1-3, Oji, Kita-ku, Tokyo, Japan)
- Admission fee: 300 yen for adults and 100 yen for elementary, junior high school and high school students
- Contact: The Paper Museum
- TEL: 81-3-3916-2320
- HP: www.papermuseum.jp

From January 4(Sun.) to 23(Fri.)

EXHIBITION

Colored paper and contemporary calligraphy: Focusing on Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum collections

DATA

This exhibition highlights decorated writing paper with rough sketches for calligraphy. A collaboration of beauty between contemporary calligraphy and writing paper, it is worth seeing.

- Venue: Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum Gallery B (8-36 Ueno-Koen Taito-ku, Tokyo, Japan)
- Free of charge
- Contact: Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum
- TEL: 81-3-3823-6921
- HP: www.tobikan.jp

From January 18(Sun.)

WORKSHOP

Inter Tsurumi world culture series vol. 23 Workshop on Chinese papercutting "window flower"

DATA

Traditional Chinese residences, or "Yaodong," can often be seen in the Loess Plateau. This workshop gives you the chance to experience the crafting of small, beautiful papercutting "window flowers," which are used to decorate windows around the time of the Chinese New Year (known as the Spring Festival).

- Venue: The rehearsal room on the 3rd floor of the Tsurumi Arts Center Salvia Hall, Sea Crane, (1-31-2, Chuo, Tsurumi, Tsurumi-ku, Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan)
- Participation fee: 1,000 yen (Open to the first 20 applicants)
- Contact: Tsurumi Arts Center Salvia Hall
- TEL: 81-45-511-5711 ■ HP: salvia-hall.jp

On January 24(Sat.)

WORKSHOP

You too can help! A workshop on conserving materials damaged by water-related disasters: photographs and paper materials

DATA

This workshop will be held as part of the 20th Anniversary of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake Exhibition. The workshop provides an opportunity to experience easy emergency treatment for drenched photographs and documents damaged by tsunami and wind- and water-related disasters.

- Venue: Atelier 2 in the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art (1-1-1 Wakihama Kaigandori, Chuō-ku, Kobe, Hyogo, Japan)
- Participation fee: free (Open to the first 35 visitors on the day of workshop)
- Contact: Tsurumi Arts Center Salvia Hall
- TEL: 81-78-262-0901
- HP: www.artm.pref.hyogo.jp

From January 28(Wed.) to 30(Fri.)

EXHIBITION

Converttech JAPAN 2015

DATA

This is a comprehensive event encompassing materials, devices and technologies related to the essential processing technologies involved in the three major elements "painting, pasting and cutting." This event provides an opportunity to access the latest technology supporting the foundations for manufacturing and crafting.

- Venue: East Exhibition Hall and Conference Tower in the Tokyo Big Sight (3-11-1 Ariake, Koto-ku, Tokyo, Japan)
- Admission fee: free (advance registration via the website is required)
- Contact: ICS Convention Design, Inc.
- TEL: 81-3-3219-3568
- HP: www.converttechjapan.com

*Please check the websites of the above-mentioned organizations for information about open days and hours.

*The events and exhibitions may be subject to change for some reasons. Before visiting, please confirm in advance if each event and exhibition is open according to schedule by website or telephone.



We have adopted a bookbinding method free of wire, paste and heat with consideration to recycling and the risk of injuries.



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