

からくり新聞

KARAKURI NEWS #49
December 2015

Karakuri Puzzle Festival 2015

Workshop for adults, Part 2, was the last event of Karakuri Puzzle Festival 2015, and the festival was successful. We will report about the workshop. (We reported about the other events of Karakuri Puzzle Festival in the last Karakuri News.)

Date: 26th Sep. 10:00–12:00
Place: HaRuNe Odawara Harune hiroba

"Hukiage Karakuri Box"→



This workshop was a part of the events of the Karakuri Puzzle Party in Hakone also. Participants made the work kit, "Hukiage Karakuri Box". This kit was designed for this event and the motif of it was the traditional trick box of Hakone. When you move the mechanism of this box, the cigarette appears and stands. (We didn't use a real cigarette but a wooden stick in the workshop.) Hiroshi Iwahara lectured at the workshop. Participants needed to be careful when making the kit, because if they used too much bond or assembled the parts incorrectly, they would not have been able to open the box. So, every participant was careful in making it.



This year, the party was held at a public place, not in a hotel.

The 5th annual Karakuri Puzzle Party in Hakone

Date: 26th 27th Sep. 2015
Place: HaRuNe Odawara Harune Hiroba, and Odawara Hakone area

The 5th annual KPH was held at a public space for the first time. HaRuNe Odawara is the underground shopping area of Odawara Station. There were many people who came to shop, so we were happy that they were also interested in our event.

We will report about KPH5 in the next Karakuri News!



Information of the 5th annual KPH

Report of Ninomiya 's solo exhibition 「The 10th Exhibition of KIRAKU」

Date: 8th-15th Nov. 2015

Place: Ninomiya's shop "KIRAKU" in Hakone, Yumoto

Ninomiya's solo exhibition was held at his shop "KIRAKU" in Hakone, Yumoto in the deep autumn of November. It is along the historical Tokai-Do street. A short brown curtain hung at the entrance of the shop. It looked very beautiful and charming, when I saw the entrance from the street.



↗ Entrance: There were beautiful yellow asters. It was very suitable with the building.



← Left: The view 「KIRAKU」 from the opposite side. The left part is the studio, and the right side is the house.

← Light: This is his handmade poster and the flower to welcome the visitors.

When I entered the exhibition room, I felt his passion for this exhibition.

There were many works. They were grouped and exhibited in separate places. Kumiki (Burr) works, Secret Boxes, Karakuri Boxes, Karakuri chest, Letter Boxes, and the Five-storied Pagoda (Burr), more than 90 works were exhibited. Posters of all his exhibitions and certificates were put up on a wall. And his tools for making his works were also displayed. We could feel his deep love of making these works through them.

Growing up, Ninomiya hated his father's work, "Hakone Zaiku" traditional wooden work of Hakone. He said that when he came back home from school, he saw his mother helping in his father's work and he was expected to help also. He didn't want to help, but he had to do it every day. So after graduating from junior high school, he left home and got a job at a turnery. It was in Hiratsuka, about 30 km from Hakone, so he lived in the dormitory of the turnery.

In 1945, after the 2nd World War, Hakone Zaiku became popular with Americans, so times were good for Hakone craftsmen. Ninomiya's father continued making wooden craft work during World War 2, and after the War, demand for his work dramatically increased. It was at that time that Ninomiya began helping his father and he learned the secret to making Hakone Zaiku. When Ninomiya was 16 years old, he entered the woodwork school in Odawara, and learned the techniques for making various wood works. After graduating from the school, he began making Hakone Zaiku with his father at his workshop and also in his house. Ninomiya said that there was an apprentice system for training craftsmen at that time. So, as his father was his mentor, he said to him, "You are my son, but I won't treat you with any special favors!" He was a very strict father.

Ninomiya had a few bad years, so he started supplementing his income through a side business and he had thought about changing his job. But, when the Hakone Zaiku design contest began in 1971, he entered his work and won! This contest was held every year, and his work continually won, year after year! Because of this, his confidence in making his own works grew, so he decided to continue making Hakone Zaiku.



↑ In the exhibition room.



↑ These are the certificates and the posters for his exhibition.



↑ This poster is for the 1st annual Exhibition! Ninomiya wrote it by hand.



↑ He used these tools to make his works.



↑ KUMIKI(Burr) corner



↑ Karakuri Box corner



↑ Secret Box corner



↑ Karakuri chest, Five-story pagoda, letter boxes, etc.



←This is the 3rd contest winner work.
The top plate is made from four parts alternating the woodgrains.
This keeps the shape for a long time.
It has been over 40 years since it was made, but it is still very beautiful!

→ These are the lists of names attended for each of his exhibitions.
It is such a valuable record of his craftsman history.



Now, I will introduce a few works.

Beautiful Secret Boxes.

The black work on the right is the 4-step Secret Box, and the red work on the left is the 7-step Secret Box. Please notice the Yosegi pattern. It is very unique and avant-garde! This pattern is made from traditional pattern "Asanoha (flax-leaf)". When Ninomiya cut the original block of "Asanoha" to put on an angle, he discovered this new pattern. It was an accident and he like this pattern, he said. When I opened the boxes, I could see very beautiful Yosegi in each one. These Secret Boxes were received in a special box together.



← Ninomiya said that it was by accident that he made this Yosegi pattern. But how interesting a pattern it is! The box behind the two Secret Boxes is the special box they were placed in.

The next work is one of the main works of Ninomiya, "Karakuri Chest". This was made in about the year 2000, for a special order from a customer. He made the same two chests, one was for the customer and the other was for himself. The chest also has a base cabinet. We can open all drawers, except one. Ninomiya made it to keep small parts and to also enjoy Karakuri.

The hint to opening the trick drawer is the ledge of the side part. When we move the ledge, we can open the drawer. Can you open it? And then, there is a secret box in this chest. The way to open it is a secret. If you are ready for a challenge, then you might be able to find the secret box and open it!



←The brown base cabinet was sized perfectly to store phonographic records because the customer was an avid record collector.



Here is the 'locked' drawer.

One of the reasons why Ninomiya's work is so popular is because of his beautiful, flawless finishing of the products. His secret boxes are so flawless that it's impossible to see where to begin to open them. He said that it is his preference to finish the work beautifully. And when we touch and hold his work for the first time, it feels soft and fits our hands comfortably. That is why he has a strong preference for giving the work a beautiful finish.



↑ He wore a loop tie which he made.



Many visitors in the exhibition room.

"Miss International" visited Hakone!

Miss International 2015 was held in Japan, and the "Miss" members visited Hakone October 26th, 2015. They visited Hakone Karakuri Museum, and the other Hakone sightseeing spots. Kamei and Iwahara welcomed them and lectured at the Karakuri Museum.

At first they enjoyed the Karakuri Door at the entrance of the museum. They could not open it so Kamei explained a little about it. After they entered the Museum, Iwahara gave a lecture about how to open the Karakuri Boxes. They enjoyed Karakuri and the beautiful landscape of Hakone.

That evening, a welcome party was held at Yumoto Fujiya Hotel in Hakone. The mayor of Hakone, Odawara, and many participants welcomed the ladies of Miss International during the party. Kamei and Iwahara also participated in it. Kamei said that all the ladies looked so beautiful!



Taking photographs in front of Hakone Check Point.



↑ Play corner at Hakone Karakuri Museum. Everyone had fun!

←Kamei gave a lecture on the Karakuri Door. He looks smaller than miss...

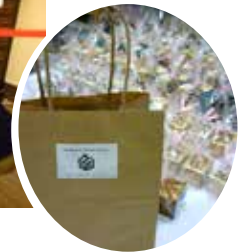
They got interviewed by a TV program.→



The director of Karakuri Museum demonstrated the thinning of Yosegi, and took a photograph.



↑ They tried the Karakuri Sofa.



These are the small presents ↑ for Miss International from Karakuri.



←They were dressed up for the welcome party. All the women were very beautiful!

The report of Christmas present shipping!

Karakuri club members look forward to getting their Christmas present every year.
Were you able to receive it?
Could you open it?

We made a long long table in the factory for shipping only for this day. and we packed each Christmas present on the table.

As we packed, we imagined the faces of you all, as you enjoyed each Christmas present.

We will send the solutions in the middle of January.
Please enjoy the Karakuri Boxes!



Before



After

↑ A long long table!



We packed each Christmas present on the table.

They picked up by the staff of post office. We can trust the shipping company to handle the packages.

←This is very important!
We can trust the shipping company to handle the packages.

Odawara Underground shopping area HARUNE Odawara TAKUMI-KAN Exhibition Information

We hold exhibitions at TAKUMI-KAN every month.

- ◆ The schedule of TAKUMI-KAN 2016 ◆
- ★ Introduction of Karakuri Club
4th -10th January
- ★ Karakuri Puzzle Idea Contest Special Exhibition
1st - 15th February
- ★ Hiroshi Iwahara Solo Exhibition
8th - 14th March



Exhibition at Dec. 2015 ↑
"Karakuri Boxes and X' smas"

We will hold many exhibitions and events at TAKUMI-KAN.

Thank you for all of your support.
Please continue to enjoy Karakuri!

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year !