

*Tanabatasai
Doukon iyou no
Take no sono
Tsunagaru inochi
Tomoni kotohogu*



Kikuchi's Celebration of Tanabata Festival <Bamboo: the Symbol of Ties>

Seeing Tanabata decorations hanging from bamboo poles,
I remember the distinct growth of bamboo.
Numerous bamboo stems grow
from a single parent stem in the soil.
It is amazing to know
all bamboo lives in the grove are tied together.

Each bamboo seems to have grown up as a separate piece. However, all bamboo stems
are connected to a rhizome, a parent bamboo, lying under the ground in the grove.

Our lives are from our parents, and our parents' lives are from our grandparents, and...
Thus our lives are connected to our ancient ancestors.

Modern human beings on Earth derive from a number of ancient people. We may say
that we have common ancestry.

We are riding on Spaceship Earth. People of all races and nationalities live together.
For the celebration of Tanabata Festival, Kikuchi presents colorful ornaments to hang
from bamboo; the symbol of ties.



1. Streamers (Fukinagashi)

Streamers symbolize weaving threads, and represent wishes for the improvement of weaving skills and artistry. For streamers, we use five individual colors – blue, red, yellow, white, and black. Those colors set off the beauty of each tubular streamer. This makes us recognize that people can also be happy by respecting others' different qualities.



2. Paper strips (Tanzaku)

People write their wishes on paper strips, usually in India ink. Traditionally, people rubbed down India ink cake on an ink stone, using some drops of night dew left on the leaves of karatori (taro potatoes), early in the morning of the day before Tanabata. Through this process, they wished for better handwriting skills and the improvement in the study of poetry. A long time ago, people didn't write their wishes but waka (poems) on the leaves of kaji (paper mulberry).



3. Origami cranes (orizuru)

People fold paper cranes wishing for their long lives. Originally, people folded and hung the same number of cranes as the years the eldest of the family had lived.



4. Net (Toami)

This decoration symbolizes good fishing and harvest. People also wish to catch good luck in the net for the coming year.



5. Trash bag (Kuzukago)

This decoration symbolizes cleanliness and the importance of saving. People put into it some waste paper left over from making other decorations.



6. Purse (Kinchaku)

This decoration symbolizes thrift and saving. People hang it wishing for prosperity.



7. Paper kimono (Kamigoromo)

This decoration symbolizes good sewing skills and artistry. People hang paper kimono from top of Tanabata bamboo.

This paper replica used to be released to a river for ritual purification, wishing for children's heal.



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Kikuchi's Tanabata