

The logo features a central square with the text 'KOKUYO DESIGN AWARD 2015' in a bold, green, sans-serif font. This central square is surrounded by a decorative border consisting of a larger square with inward-pointing corners, creating a frame of trapezoidal shapes. The entire design is rendered in a vibrant green color.

**KOKUYO
DESIGN
AWARD
2015**

Beautiful Lifestyle

Living with beautifully designed products
can bring us incredible joy,
especially when they are a part of our daily lives,
with products such as furniture and stationery.
Designs which create everyday beauty,
inspire with each sight, and delight with each use.
We want this kind of design in our products;
not only aesthetically pleasing,
but also bringing a bit more beauty
into the lives of those who use them.
These sort of fresh and uplifting designs
will be used and forever cherished.
We therefore look forward to your Beautiful Lifestyle designs.



Grand Prix

Word Block

Vocabulary Cards

This is a flash card deck with a ring that also functions

as a band to hold the cards together in a neat block.

Using a uniform color throughout lets the user

determine the purpose by section or determine a specific

meaning for a color. A person can also use

this as a compact notebook to take down random thoughts

or ideas on the spot. This design becomes a part of beautiful

living both in use and when it's stored away,

suggesting a new type of flash card deck

that people of all ages want to always keep on hand.

Design Unit / alab

Miri Ito Kyoko Takahashi

Kao Muroya Minato Yamanaka

A flash card deck can also be used to capture random thoughts in the moment. I was impressed with the suggestion of using a flash card deck in a number of settings beyond simply memorizing vocabulary. The design features a coherent product name and form, which one could even say conflicts with the original purpose of the product. I think this design reflects a very modern value.

Yasuhiro Suzuki

The final presentation for this design offered an attention to detail without excess, incorporating beautiful visuals and a highly persuasive stereotype. The flash card deck is a product that might be fated to disappear with the advent of the smartphone market. However, this product might have the power to change that fate. I hope to see the process begin immediately to get this design onto retail shelves.

Kinya Tagawa

This design makes me believe that a tool can change one's lifestyle. This flash card deck offers visual proof of one's accomplishment and satisfaction in a compact, beautiful form. It's a feeling that you cannot get from using a smartphone to accomplish the same tasks.

Ryosuke Uehara

This is a fantastic example of how noticing a small problem turns into a wonderful idea. By seeing how the ring of a flash card deck gets in the way during transport, the designer was able to extend the solution into a very highly perfected idea. I was also impressed with how well the mechanism worked to line up and stack the flash card deck so neatly.

Yoshie Watanabe

I was so impressed with how this design suggests much more than its use as a way to remember vocabulary words. The design is one that envision this product used for everyday recipes or for any person to use in a number of different life settings. This design says that the importance of continuing to be a lifelong learner is part of the message of Beautiful Lifestyle. It suggests a wider range of possibilities for the flash card deck as well as the form of a beautiful design.

KOKUYO



Merit Award

Hakanaku, utsukushiku

Calendar

Flowers are beautiful because they wither and fall.

The Japanese people have a unique sense of emotion tied to the transition of the seasons.

I tied these emotions in a subtle way to a calendar.

The numbers on this calendar are sewn

with one long piece of yarn.

Pulling the string below undoes the sewing,

deleting the calendar numbers one by one.

This calendar brings one's attention to

the passing of time as they pull on the string

at the end of the day to mark the day's passing.

University Student / Mio Ueda

This design capitalizes on our urge to pull on the end of a string. While this product might be difficult to machine manufacture, hand production might be exactly what communicates the beauty of transience. This design certainly demonstrates the importance of refining hand-crafted technologies.

Yasuhiro Suzuki

This design combines a fragility with function as a calendar that you want to use every day. Looking at the presentation sheet, I thought this design was a bit too fragile in execution and materials. However, the prototype offered a greater impression of robustness than I expected. As its title suggests, this product might be even better by expressing more fragility in the good sense of the word.

Kinya Tagawa

The consistency between concept and design, as well as the mechanism of pulling a string to mark the days on a calendar add up to an outstanding idea. I think there is room for improvement in how the paper is integrated into the design, the font used for the numbers, and other graphic design elements.

Ryosuke Uehara

The degree of perfection was outstanding for this almost poetic design. While it may be a daunting product to actually produce, it is a sophisticated calendar that evokes the Japanese sense of beauty in the ephemeral.

Yoshie Watanabe

This presentation—from a well-done hand-made prototype to an actual demonstration of pulling on the string — was one that stimulated creativity. Sewing together paper with yarn, and then counting off the days by pulling the string is very novel—both creatively and emotionally.

KOKUYO



Merit Award

Embossed Notebook

Notebooks

**In my mind, I associated Beautiful Lifestyle
with the small things we see, feel,
and think about every day.**

**Embossing the ruled lines in this notebook helps us
feel nature in the changing light.**

This achromatic world fosters our creativity.

The minimalistic materials focuses

our attention on the value of resources.

**Our idea of an Embossed Notebook is a simple,
beautiful notebook that is made solely with paper.**

It's a notebook made of light and shadows.

Designer / Takashi Kubo

At first glance, this is a simple, completely white notebook. However, this design expresses a strong case for something that is completely different from a regular notebook. I think this could be the beginning of a new interaction between people and notebooks.

Yasuhiro Suzuki

I think this design is the result of subtracting the extraneous to reveal a minimalistic beauty. The prototype feels handmade and lacking in polish due to its very minimalism. I look forward to seeing an unexpected level of detail and perfection as this design is readied to become a real-world product.

Kinya Tagawa

I think this perspective is fantastic. The design name “emboss” is actually a manufacturing process, so I would like the designer to come up with a name that stimulates the creativity of the user, emphasizing the new value that this notebook brings.

Ryosuke Uehara

I think this Embossed Notebook design has a special significance as an extension of Japan's popular Campus Note notebooks series. I can see this product becoming a must-have high-end item for consumers familiar with the Campus Note notebooks.

Yoshie Watanabe

I was bit worried about the raised sections within the notebook after embossing, but I was relieved after seeing the prototype. The quality that embossing brings to the design raises one's desire to follow or even write on top of the embossed lines. This notebook design isn't just about convenience; it brings a new value to the notebook itself.

KOKUYO



Merit Award

Bubble Ruler

Rulers

Nature is beautiful. The organic shape of a bubble is such a thing of beauty. Each is unique, individual, and beautiful.

We took the ruler, which is mostly made of artificial straight lines, and incorporated an organic element in the bubbles.

We added bubbles in the acrylic at one-centimeter intervals, which lets you use this as a ruler to measure whatever you want by lining up the bubbles. This design offers a natural beauty that the user can add into their everyday routine.

Designer, Architect / Kei Tsukada

I was impressed with how this design achieved beauty in recreating nature close to us. It was also interesting to see the designer's choice to product the bubble effect in the design without resorting to gluing two layers of material together.

Yasuhiro Suzuki

This is a beautiful concept that incorporates bubbles from nature into a household tool. While the prototype was certainly highly finished, there is some room to consider manufacturing methods and optimal size further.

Kinya Tagawa

While this design doesn't seem that it would be effective in its role as a ruler, it has a strong appeal as a beautiful desk decoration. It has the effect of providing some small relief in a world today where we are so busy with all of our tasks and responsibilities.

Ryosuke Uehara

The model used in the presentation was smaller than the general type of rule that I was expecting. At first look, it had a mysterious presence that I didn't associate with a ruler.

Yoshie Watanabe

Using loosely defined bubbles as the design to replace the gradations in a straight ruler leaves the bare minimum of functionality to the tool. This is a product that I hope people use understanding and enjoying this handicap. It looks like a piece of art that one keeps around their workspace, bringing a small bit of visual beauty.

KOKUYO

FINALIST

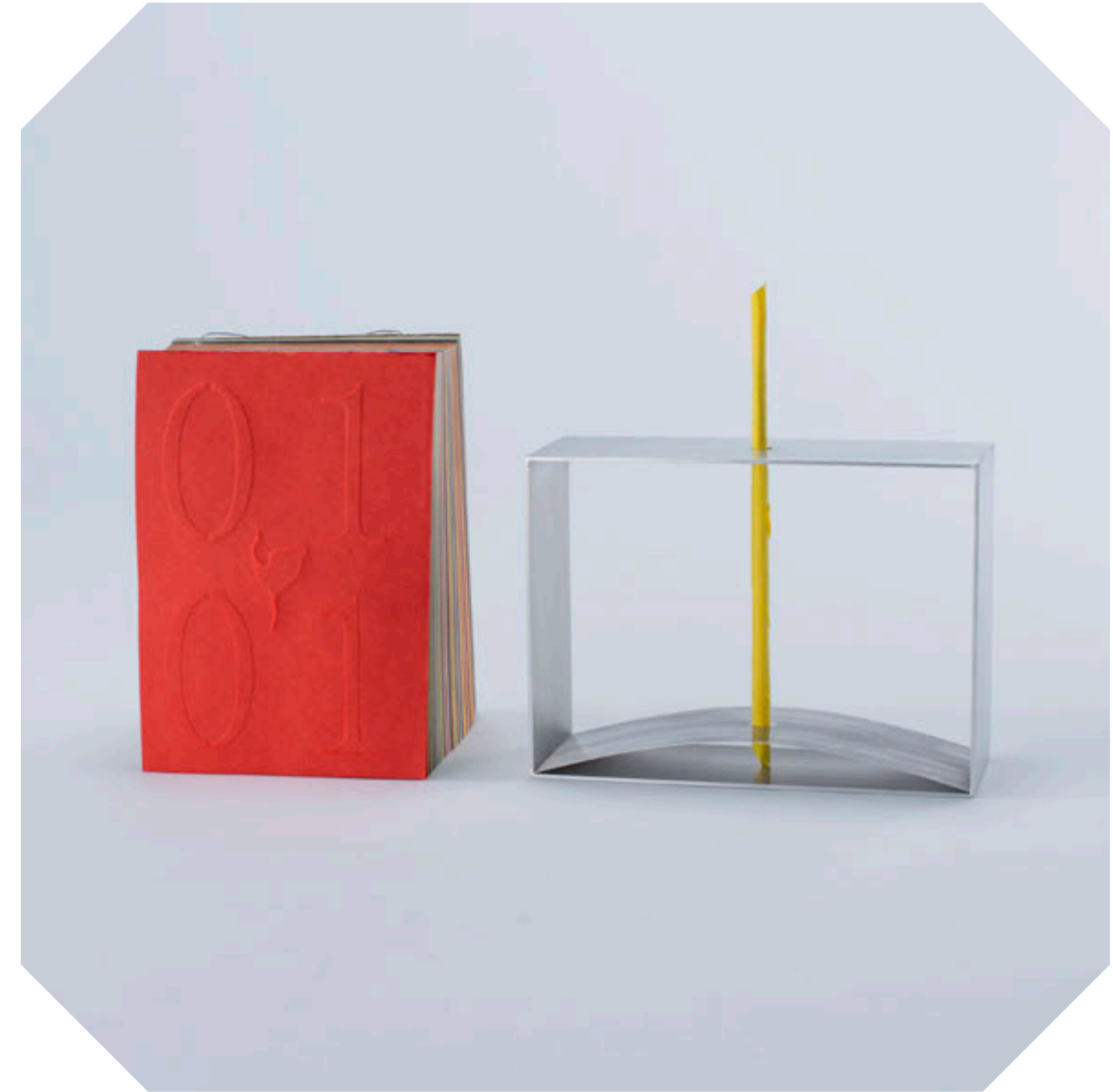


Nomutame no noto

Notebooks

University Students

Ryota Akiyama Mitsue Oshima



72 climates incense

Tear-Off Calendar

Design Studio / TORECHI

Toshiki Omatsu Reina Yamamoto Chika Namiki



Hitotema pen
Multi-Function Ballpoint Pen
University Student
Hironori Nakayama



Information Veil Tape
Correction Tape
Designer / HAFT DESIGN
Daisuke Akiyama Kentaro Komatsubara



Ukhusen

Sticky notes

University Student
Hayato Hirakawa



Garland Rubber Band

Rubber Band

Design Studio / SOZEN Design Studio.

Junjie Zhang Tiepeng Li Mengke Xu

Yaxuan Cheng Jianghao Luo Jinhao Huang Hui Yang



SAMURAI Co., Ltd. Representative
Art Director, Creative Director

Kashiwa Sato

Mr. Sato founded SAMURAI after working at Hakuholdo. He is recognized for his talent of finding and communicating the core essence of subjects as a brand architect, as reflected in his design for symbols and signs at the National Art Center Tokyo, his work as creative director for brand strategies at Uniqlo and Rakuten Group, his branding projects for Seven Eleven Japan and Imabari Towel, and his guidance and overall direction for design at the Cup Noodle Museum. His vision and creative abilities continue to evolve, as shown in his design of the NTT Docomo N702iD cell phone, his communication strategy for the Honda N series, and creative direction of the Fuji Kindergarten, winner of the OECD Exemplary Educational Facilities award. Mr. Sato has won various awards recognizing his contributions to design, including the Tokyo ADC Grand Prix and Mainichi Design Award. Visiting professor at Tama Art University, Sato is also author of Kashiwa Sato's Ultimate Method for Reaching the Essentials (more than 200,000 copies sold) and Reaching the Solution: Kashiwa Sato's Creative Thinking Techniques (both books published by Nikkei Publishing), as well as Shochan to Chikyukun (Poplar Publishing).



Artist

Yasuhiro Suzuki

Born in Shizuoka Prefecture in 1979, Suzuki graduated from Tokyo Zokei University in 2001. That same year, he was awarded the annual NHK Digital Stadium Digista Award for his work Perspective of the Globe Jungle (a video work incorporating a rotating globe), featured in NHK's Digital Stadium program, IN 2002. Suzuki won the Philip Morris Art Award for his inter-reflection (2001). He has exhibited Blinking Leaves (2003), Zipper Boat (2010), and other works, as well as participating in design exhibits such as SENSEWARE, directed by Kenya Hara. He is co-author of the book Digital Public Art in Haneda Airport (Bijutsu Shuppansha), as well as a book of collected works called Blinking and Flapping (Seigensha Art Publishing). Today, Suzuki serves as a full-time lecturer at the Musashino Art University Department of Scenography, Display, and Fashion Design, as well as visiting researcher at the Research Center for Advanced Science and Technology. Winner of the 2014 Mainichi Design Prize in 2015.



takram design engineering Representative
Design Engineer

Kinya Tagawa

A design engineer well-versed in a wide variety of media, including hardware, software, and interactive. His major projects include the user interface design for the Toyota Motor Corporation NS4, prototyping for the Japanese government RESAS system (Big Data Analysis and Visualization System for Japanese economics), and art direction for Mimicries on NHK's Educational Channel. His tagtype Japanese character input device was selected for the permanent collection of the New York Museum of Modern Art. Mr. Tagawa graduated from the Department of Mechano-Informatics, University of Tokyo, after which he completed the Industrial Design Engineering course at the Royal College of Art (UK). He was previously with Leading Edge Visual Design, and he currently serves as a visiting professor at the Royal College of Art.



KIGI Representative
Art Director, Creative Director

Ryosuke Uehara

Born in Hokkaido in 1972, Ryosuke Uehara founded KIGI Co., Ltd. together with Yoshie Watanabe in 2012. Involved in art direction for corporations, brands, and retail outlets, as well as product design for D-BROS and others. In 2014, Uehara began working together with various artisans in the Lake Biwa area to launch KIKOF, a brand focused on ceramics, furniture, and textile products. Uehara opened OUR FAVOURITE SHOP (original products) in Shirokane, Tokyo in summer 2015. In addition to client work, Uehara expresses his more creative side through personal exhibits and galleries running across a breadth of genres, while at the same time continuing to pursue new concepts in graphic design. Winner of the Tokyo ADC Members' Award for the Developing Forest T.O.D.A. (cultural facility in Nasu) logo and graphic design. Winner of the Tokyo TDC Award. Winner of the 11th Yusaku Kamekura Design Award and the Tokyo TDC Award for fashion brand Theatre Products graphic tools. Winner of the One Show Design and ADC Gold Prize for a work composed of 7,000 stickers. Winner of the NY ADC award. Winner of the ADC Grand Prix 2015 for his work in KIKOF. Major exhibits include the KIGI Exhibit (Ginza Graphics Gallery, 2012), the Next/KIGI Exhibit (Hillside Forum, 2013), the "One-Off Design" Exhibit (PASS THE BATON GALLERY), and the KIGI Exhibit in Fukuoka (2015, Mitsubishi-Jisho Artium and seven satellite event halls).



KIGI
Art Director, Designer

Yoshie Watanabe

Born in Yamaguchi in 1961, Watanabe founded KIGI Co., Ltd. together with Ryosuke Uehara in 2012. Watanabe brings her unique worldview to graphic design, textiles, and product design (D-BROS and others). Launched KIKOF and designs apparel for CACUMA. Developed the children's book app MERRY BOOK ROUND, releasing three self-illustrated stories in January 2014. Currently exhibiting works titled ""In Search of B"" on the Shiseido BENEFIQUE website. Opened OUR FAVOURITE SHOP (original products) in summer 2015. Winner of the NY ADC Gold Prize for BROOCH (picture book of original illustrations with story by Yayako Uchida). Winner of the One Show Design Gold Prize and other awards. Watanabe has sold more than 100,000 copies of her books, influencing the design and publishing markets in Japan and around the world. Other published works (through Little more) include JOURNEY (poems by Hiroshi Osada, jewelry by Etsuko Sonobe), UN DEUX (text by Naomi Takayama), and KIGI (collected works). Winner of the NY ADC Grand Prix 2015 for KIKOF. Major exhibits include the KIGI Exhibit (Ginza Graphics Gallery, 2012), the Next/KIGI Exhibit (Hillside Forum, 2013), the "One-Off Design" Exhibit (PASS THE BATON GALLERY), and the KIGI Exhibit in Fukuoka (2015, Mitsubishi-Jisho Artium and seven satellite event halls).



KOKUYO Co., Ltd.
Representative Director of the Board, Chairman

Akihiro Kuroda

Born in 1949, Akihiro Kuroda graduated from the Keio University Faculty of Economics in 1972, after which he joined KOKUYO Co., Ltd. After working in corporate sales for office furniture, materials procurement, human resources, and other positions, he was named KOKUYO director in 1977. Mr. Kuroda variously served as managing director, senior director, vice president, and president of KOKUYO, being named chairman in March 2015. Mr. Kuroda serves as president of the Japan Paper Manufacturing Industry Association and vice chair of the Japan Office Institutional Furniture Association, among other industry leadership roles.

Comments

This year, the KOKUYO DESIGN AWARD theme was Beautiful Lifestyle, taking a wider look at the concept of the customer's working and learning, which represents the core business domains of KOKUYO. As our lifestyles change and we lose the clear distinction between uptime and downtime in our lives, we wanted to find designs that were more in line with the viewpoint of our customers' lifestyles, as well as call for designs that offer more emotional value related to beauty than we have in the past. As a result, we received 1,659 design submissions from 41 countries including Japan. Of those entries, those that demonstrated refinement to the finest detail with stories that evoked consumer lifestyles were selected as winners. This year, an entry from China selected as one of the finalists, perhaps signaling an even greater global breakout for the KOKUYO DESIGN AWARD in the future. Our decisions for future KOKUYO DESIGN AWARD themes will reflect ideas and discussions of what the world needs at the time, serving as a significant platform for as many people as possible. Thank you for your support.

Comments

I have come to realize that winning designs embodying the concept of Beautiful Lifestyle offer a certain margin that changes the actual purpose of the product given a different point of view and devising. Maybe we could call this a beauty-creation device that access the memories and emotions of the user in their day-to-day life in a way beyond that normally defined by such a product. The tools and articles used in the tea ceremony have their own individual functions. At the same time, they beckon to others by signaling the seasons, acting as a way to embody the Japanese philosophy of ichigo ichie (value each meeting as if it will never happen again). Perhaps what both host and guest pursue through the ceremony is a state of being that comes from a special moment. This has been an opportunity for me to consider form and function of stationary and furniture in much greater depth, see how consumers engage in products in a sense of beauty in everyday life.

Comments

Design for a Beautiful Lifestyle must first consider what beauty actually is. However, beauty is subjective, fading and changing with new generations and the passing of time. I think good design begins with a strong desire to share with others an idea that difficult define by set rules. The belief in one's vision of what Beautiful Lifestyle is, or should be, sublimates the act of design itself. Many of the winning designers this year communicated this philosophy very boldly through their work. I look forward to seeing actual products come from these clearly passionate designs, helping many people live a more beautiful lifestyle.

Comments

The theme Beautiful Lifestyle demanded that both designers and judges take another look at their own lifestyles. Compared to concepts such as fun or cute, the idea of beautiful demands a deeper philosophical approach. The idea reflecting this theme envisions lifestyle settings under the surface of the design, offering a design quality and prototypes that embodied that vision. I believe this design was selected as the Grand Prix winner because it put all of the elements together at such a high level. I hope to see this as a product in the real world soon, and I also look forward to seeing what improvements are in store for the Merit Award winners as they begin the process to become products that represent Beautiful Lifestyle.

Comments

I think one could say that the theme of Beautiful Lifestyle is in response to our yearning for a beautiful lifestyle in its true meaning in a world where everyone is so tired of moving so quickly all the time. Several of the winning designs have the sense of bringing us back to a more analog way of life, but I also think that more than that, these designs have a calculated scheme for the user to expand their creativity. The Word Block in particular is an outstanding piece that fully elicits the best of both the analog and user creativity. The KOKUYO DESIGN AWARD was very interesting in its system of judging, focus and promotion, and other factors. It's not merely a competition; it holds a special meaning as a platform for contributing to society, for raising company morale, and for supporting design. It is a wonderful activity that demonstrates the strengths of KOKUYO as a company and culture. I am already looking forward to seeing the Grand Prix winner in stores, and I am excited to see what surprises await in next year's awards.

Comments

I think the design submissions this year fell between two interpretations of the theme Beautiful Lifestyle. One interpretation was to analyze a small doubt or inconvenience from everyday life, producing an outstanding design with the potential for becoming a real-world product. The other interpretation was to capture an emotion to create a beautiful, poetic design for an idea that might be difficult to turn into an actual product. This year's winning designs represented both of these interpretations. All of the designs selected as Grand Prix and Merit Award winners make me happy when I imagine using them personally. I plan to use them when they become actual retail products. This was my first time serving as a judge for this competition. For me, it was another chance to see how the KOKUYO DESIGN AWARD is effective in shining a light on so much talent. I was also impress with KOKUYO as a company that is both earnest and forward-looking.

The image features a large, stylized green outline of a square with clipped corners, resembling a cube or a 3D effect. The word "KOKUYO" is centered within this frame in a bold, green, sans-serif font.

KOKUYO