

Issue	Date	Title	Length	Category	Detail	Web	Place	Region
2010/2011 No.1	April '10	Kakunodate – Sakura and Samurai	3' 40"	Nature/Tourism	Kakunodate is a small town in the northwest of Japan, famous for its magnificent cherry trees and samurai era architecture. After Kakunodate castle was built in 1620, a whole district grew around it containing the fine mansions of the samurai who served its lord. The wife of an early lord brought cherry seeds from Kyoto to plant, and 400 ancient weeping cherry trees still ornament the samurai residential district. These, and the 2-k-ilometers of <i>somei yoshino</i> cherries lining the riverbank, now attract over a million visitors each spring.	2011/04/05	Kakunodate/Aomori	Tohoku
		Designed for Universal Use	3' 57"	Life/Design/Techonology	Universal Design is a design philosophy that aims to create products and environments that are easy and safe to use by everyone, especially the young, the elderly and people with disabilities. Japanese designers, who must cope with the world's most rapidly aging population, bring a special perspective and experience to this worldwide movement. Throughout Japan, household items, interiors, public facilities and even entire towns are now being redesigned to make them safe and easier to use by the entire population.	2011/04/05		
		A Tradition of Fine Blades	3' 54"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Japanese cuisine is famous for subtle tastes and visual appeal, and these depend greatly on the <i>hocho</i> - the Japanese kitchen knife. Samurai swords are world-renowned, and many <i>hocho</i> are forged using the same traditional materials and methods. They are solid, with a superb cutting edge - qualities essential for preparing <i>sushi</i> or <i>sashimi</i> to retain the natural flavor and texture, and to cut delicate food into precise shapes. <i>Hocho</i> come in a vast number of different types and sizes, each designed for a different function and food type.	2011/04/05		
		Edo Period Puppet Theatre	4' 06"	Theatre/Culture/Tradition	In 1635, the shogunate government licensed just five theaters to operate in Edo, the capital city. Some, like the Kabuki, remain famous to this day. Also surviving, but far less well known, is the puppet theater called Edo Ito Ayatsuri Ningyo. These marionettes are constructed and operated in a unique way that allows them to express human emotions far more realistically than any other puppets. Modern and even foreign plays have been added to the classical repertoire, but the traditional techniques are still carefully preserved.	2011/04/05		
2010/2011 No.2	May '10	Wasabi	3' 53"	Food/Culture/Tradition	As indicated by its scientific name - <i>Wasabia japonica</i> - wasabi originates in Japan. Not just anywhere in Japan - this sensitive plant requires constant pure water in mountainous environments that stay cool and mild all year round. This hot spicy root first became popular in Japanese cuisine 200 years ago, along with the habit of eating raw fish as sushi. As well as adding a pungent, spicy taste, wasabi is an anti-bacterial that protects against food poisoning. The world knows grated wasabi root from sushi, but the stems and leaves are also used in many Japanese dishes to add a uniquely hot and aromatic flavor.	2011/04/05		
		Rebun – Island of Flowers	4' 23"	Nature/Tourism	The small island of Rebun split off from the mainland of Hokkaido after the last ice age. Isolation protected its unique environment and allowed the local plants to flourish undisturbed by invasive species. A northerly location and frequent sea mists keep temperatures low even in midsummer, and as a result, this low-lying island is home to many alpine flowers normally only found above 2000m. Take the hiking trail in summer from Cape Sukoton in the north to Momoiwa in the south, and you can enjoy up to 300 species of alpine plants, many of them found nowhere else in the world.	2011/04/05	Rebun Island	Hokkaido
		Japan's Advanced Vending Machines	3' 46"	Liffe/Science/Techonology	There are probably more vending machines on the streets of Japan than anywhere else, selling an ever wider range of items. New technology keeps adding more convenience, such as machines serving both hot and cold drinks, varied to match seasonal needs. Choose your type of coffee, cup size, cream and sugar amounts - and watch your cup being brewed on an eye-level monitor. Internal elevators improve accessibility by delivering purchases at a convenient height. And because these machines are everywhere, they make a useful place to provide emergency medical or survival equipment.	2011/04/05		

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		Tenugui – The Handy Cloth	3' 25"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Used for centuries as an all-purpose hand cloth, the <i>tenugui</i> is a 90 by 35cm strip of unhemmed cotton, usually printed in a colorful pattern. In the 17th century, in a fashion started by kabuki actors, people began also wearing tenugui as a stylish head covering, inspiring the vast range of patterns and motifs we can buy today. At any shrine festival or traditional event, you can see people wearing these head cloths just the way they did in the 17th century. The versatile <i>tenugui</i> is still in common use in roles as varied as dishcloths, dust covers, wall hangings, tablecloths and tourist souvenirs.	2011/04/05		
2010/2011 No.3	June '10	Cyber Power Suits	4' 30"	Liffe/Science/Techonology	Japanese anime and manga often show robot heroes helping and rescuing humans. Advances in technology are making this dream a reality, with robot nursing assistants able to lift the heaviest bedridden person and cuddly robot animals that provide interactive therapy. Most impressive of all is the robot suit HAL. When sensors on the wearer's skin pick up nerve signals to muscles, HAL's motors provide the power to move or assist the intended limb. A full HAL suit provides extra lifting power for care givers, while partial suits can make effective training aids to help recover function in specific limbs.	2011/04/05		
		Kumiko Latticework	3' 44"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Kumiko latticework is a craft tradition that became established in the 17th century, when craftsmen were brought together from all over Japan to decorate the shogun's great mausoleum at the Toshogu Shrine in Nikko. Ideas and techniques shared during this project formed the basis for the distinctive look that the craft would develop in later centuries - complex geometric patterns, often imitating nature, created from lattices of thin wooden sections. These are sawn or planed to an incredible precision of 1/100mm, so that they will fit finely together without any nails or glue.	2011/04/05		
		The Essential Bean	4' 26"	Food/Culture/Tradition	Rich in protein, soybeans have been an important source of nutrition for the Japanese since ancient times. Grown in many colors, shapes and sizes, these beans are used in an wide variety of products, the most famous being tofu, a highly nutritious food introduced to Japan from China at the start of the 8th century. The Japanese went on to develop their own distinctive styles of tofu, and now use it as the base for many dishes. Soybeans can be eaten fresh or cooked, processed into soy sauce, flour or miso, or even fermented in straw to produce sticky, flavorful natto, prized for its many health benefits.	2011/04/05		
		Pillars of Flame	3' 43"	Festival/Culture/Tradition	Toyohashi City in Aichi holds a unique festival each July. The 400-year old Gion Festival centers around a firework display, but instead of the usual rockets these are long sections of specially cut bamboo trunk, wound with straw rope for extra strength, and packed with gunpowder material. The young men of the city hold these bamboo cylinders barehanded as they shoot pillars of fire into the sky. Flames can be 10m high, raining fiery sparks on the holders, and hundreds of fireworks are set off during the three hour festival. Traditionally a rite of passage from young adults, it's still a stirring test of courage.	2011/04/05	Toyohashi/Aichi	Chubu
2010/2011 No.4	July'10	The Dinosaurs of Katsuyama	3' 42"	Nature/Science/Techonology	Almost 80 percent of all dinosaur fossils discovered in Japan have been found in the area around Katsuyama City, in Fukui Prefecture, a highly scenic area that shows the remains of volcanic activity and ancient geological upheavals. Dinosaur fossils unique to Fukui are displayed in the Fukui Prefectural Dinosaur Museum along with many other exhibits, ranging from over 40 impressive reconstructed dinosaur skeletons to the exactly preserved remains of a Camarasaurus - a specimen of world-class importance. The museum also has a huge animated robot Tyrannosaurus Rex. Another local attraction is the nearby park, where visitors can search for fossils in the rocks.	2011/04/05	Katsuyama/Takamatsu	Shikoku
		Tokyo's New Green Heart	5' 00"	Liffe/Science/Techonology	At the center of Tokyo, the three adjoining districts of Otemachi, Marunouchi and Yurakucho form the cultural and economic heart of Japan and are now the site of a major initiative in sustainable urban redevelopment. The redevelopment project has included measures such as centralized area heating and cooling systems to save energy and reduce carbon dioxide emissions, routes designed to control air temperatures by guiding cooling winds through the area, and street surfaces that retain water. This ongoing experiment is creating a green city where economic activity can thrive in harmony with a healthy environment.	2011/04/05	Tokyo	Kanto

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		Ishiakari Stone Lanterns	4' 06"	Craft/Tradition/Design	The fine quality <i>granite</i> known as <i>Aji-ishi</i> has been mined in the area around Takamatsu City in Kagawa prefecture for about 1,000 years. When <i>Aji-ishi</i> is polished it takes on a beautiful glaze, revealing a surface covered with a unique pattern of dark and light spots. As hard as quartz and difficult to work, it can however be carved with fine details without fear of chipping or breaking. The many properties of <i>Aji-ishi</i> have made it popular with modern interior designers. Each summer, Takamatsu's traditional stonemasons compete to create the best design of stone lantern, crafted from <i>Aji-ishi</i> . Known as <i>Ishiakari</i> , about 200 of these lanterns light up the night along a 1-km stretch of city street	2011/04/05	Takamatsu/Kagawa	Kanto
2010/2011 No.5		Onigiri – rice to go	3' 23"	Food/Culture/Tradition	Rice is the staple food of the Japanese, and it's prepared in many ways, including the easily portable style known as <i>onigiri</i> . The Japonica variety of rice grown in Japan becomes sticky and soft when cooked, making it ideal for shaping by hand into <i>onigiri</i> . Long-lasting and delicious, <i>onigiri</i> comes in many flavors and is very popular for eating at lunch or carrying on picnics.	2011/04/05		
		When lacquer meets deerskins	3'55"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Inden is a world-renowned type of luxury leather ware developed in Yamanashi Prefecture in the 17th century. It is mostly used to make items like bags and wallets. There are three <i>Inden</i> techniques: <i>Urushi-tsuke</i> , <i>Sarasa</i> and <i>Fusube</i> . In the <i>Urushi-tsuke</i> technique, lacquered designs are applied to dyed deerskin. Its special feature is the way the lacquer pattern stands out in relief. <i>Sarasa</i> is a technique for applying multiple colors and complex patterns. The <i>Fusube</i> technique creates patterns by smoking. The deerskin is stretched over a special rotating drum, and the designs are created by winding string around it. Recently, beautiful new designs are being created by combining these techniques and other methods.	2011/04/05		
		Electric vehicles hit the street	3' 40"	Life/Techonology/Science	Initiatives aimed at environmental issues are progressing in many countries, and among these, several kinds of eco-car have been developed. Now, Japan's major automakers are launching a constant stream of electric-powered vehicles. Technology developed by Japanese enterprises such as better batteries is making a major contribution. This video introduces the electric cars and scooters now being widely adopted in Japan, and which are seen as the next generation of transportation.	2011/04/05		
		Owara Kaza no Bon Festival	4' 05"	Festival/Culture/Tradition	The Owara Kaze no Bon Festival is a folk music and dance event that takes place every year from September 1st to 3rd in Yatsuo-machi, Toyama City, Toyama Prefecture. It is said to have begun 300 years ago. The male dancers wear <i>happi</i> coats, while the females wear <i>yukata</i> with black sashes and braided straw hats. Since this is a festival to pray for good harvests, the dances represent farming activities. The attraction of this festival is the sight of the slow, elegant dance as it passes through the streets of this old town, accompanied by the Owara Bushi folk music which is characterized by the distinctive tones of the <i>kokyū</i> , a traditional bowed instrument.	2011/04/05	Yatsuo/Toyama	Chubu
2010/2011 No.6		Lakes of Many Colours	3' 44"	Nature/Tourism	The area of Urabandai, on the northern side of Mt. Bandai in Fukushima Prefecture, has over 300 lakes and ponds. By late October, the forests covering the lakesides and mountain slopes begin to change color in a beautiful, many-hued spectacle. The most unique sight is the group of lakes called Goshiki-numa, each lake having its own distinctive color. These mysterious lakes are even more magnificent in autumn, when they reflect the red and gold leaves.	2011/04/05	Goshikinuma/Fukushim a	Tohoku
		Safe Water from Every Tap	3' 47"	Liffe/Science/Techonology	In virtually every home throughout Japan, you can safely drink the water straight from the tap. The water supply technology that ensures this is globally among the best, and the Tokyo water system is renowned for having by far the world's lowest rate of leakage from its pipes. Japan's water supply is made so efficient by a combination of highly advanced water treatment, superior leakage detection techniques and a highly effective management system.	2011/04/05		

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		Tsumami Kanzashi Hair Ornaments	3'07"	Culture/Craft/Design	Kanzashi are ornaments used by Japanese women to fasten their hair when wearing kimono. First becoming widely popular in the late 17th century, the designs and techniques for making them have since undergone centuries of refinement. The most complex and colorful type, known as <i>tsumami kanzashi</i> , uses tiny folded squares of very thin silk to create flowers and other natural designs portraying Japanese seasonal themes. This beautiful and highly developed craft continues to flourish today.	2011/04/05		
		Karatsu Kunchi Festival	3'57"	Festival/Culture/Tradition	Karatsu Kunchi is the autumn festival of Karatsu Shrine, held annually from November 2nd to 4th in Karatsu City, Saga Prefecture. At the center of the festival are 14 large gorgeously lacquered and decorated floats. Works of great artistic value, these floats were all hand-crafted between 1819 and 1876. The festival, a thanksgiving for both harvests and business success, features processions snaking through the streets with teams of townspeople heroically hauling their 2-ton floats, sometimes at considerable speed.	2011/04/05	Karatsu/Saga	Kyushu
2010/2011 No.7		Wajima-nuri lacquerware	4' 22"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Of all traditional Japanese lacquerware, that made in Wajima City, Ishikawa, is famous for its special combination of fine decoration with the strength to endure many years of use. Over 20 different processes go into the making of a single piece, each handled by its own specialist artisan. Unique techniques for reinforcement and for delicate golf leaf and powder ornamentation are the hallmarks of a lacquer tradition much loved both for its beauty and its practicality.	2011/04/05	Wajima/Ishikawa	Chubu
		Lighting up the night in Arashiyama	3' 26"	Nature/Tourism	One of Kyoto's best-known tourist spots, this area of picturesque scenery, ancient shrines and temples is transformed each December by nighttime illuminations. The beauty of Togetsukyo Bridge and the bamboo forest walk become even more magical, lit by electricity generated hydraulically from the river and from solar panels. Streets lined with <i>andon</i> lanterns also feature ikebana flower displays, while illuminated temple buildings and gardens shine magnificently among the surrounding darkness. It's a time of year when the nights of this scenic area are just as entrancing as the days.	2011/04/05	Kyoto	Kinki
		Fine marquetry from Hakone	3'52"	Craft/Tradition/Design	The Hakone Yosegi-zaiku marquetry craft tradition, featuring complex geometrical patterns formed using the natural colors of different types of wood, began about 200 years ago in Hakone, a forested area containing many tree species. Several types of wood are cut and glued into a solid block so that a pattern runs all the way through it. Thin veneers shaved off this block are used to decorate products ranging from jewelry cases to chests and trays. Hakone Yosegi-zaiku ware is also famous for intricate secret puzzle boxes.	2011/04/05	Hakone/Kanagawa	Kanto
		A cascade of chrysanthemums	3'23"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Autumn is chrysanthemum season in Japan, and flower shows are held all over the country, where you can see an enormous variety of displays, from plants with giant blossoms over 20 cm across to huge cascades with up to 2,000 blossoms all growing on the same stem. The Japanese have been refining their chrysanthemum growing skills for almost 200 years, and today techniques like night time greenhouse lighting can control flower growth so that hundreds or even thousands of flowers will bloom at exactly the same time.	2011/04/05		
2010/2011 No.8		Japan's high-speed rail system	5'22"	Liffe/Science/Techonology	Japan's high-speed rail network began in 1964 with the launch of the Shinkansen Bullet Train, at the time the world's fastest. The network now has over 2,000 km of track and links all the nation's regions. The trains too have continued to evolve, becoming faster, more comfortable and quieter. The latest in this evolution is the Hayabusa, a new design that debuted on the Tohoku Shinkansen route in March, 2011, with a maximum operating speed of 320 km/h.	2011/04/05		

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		Matsue - the water city	4'09"	Nature/Tourism	Matsue City in Shimane Prefecture grew up around the castle built in 1611, and it still retains much of the look of that old period. Rivers and waterways crisscross the city, giving it much of its beauty, and a riverboat tour is by far the best way to enjoy the sights of old Matsue. Boats operate all year round, with old-style charcoal heaters to ward off the winter chill. Another popular boat tour is on Lake Shinji, to the west of the city, to watch the spectacular sunsets.	2011/04/05	Matsue/Shimane	Chugoku
		Sppedy and safe - Japan's egg technology	3'04"	Food/Culture/Tradition	In Japan, highly advanced, computerized technology carries eggs from hen to shop. At the processing plant, eggs are first cleaned and externally sterilized with boiling ozonated water. Then come a series of computer controlled inspections for surface dirt, shell cracks and internal defects. Computerized conveyor belt systems clean, check and package about 120,000 eggs per hour with such high levels of hygiene that it's always safe to eat Japanese eggs uncooked.	2011/04/05		
		Artful gift wrapping	3'32"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Origata is a traditional art of folding Japanese washi paper to wrap gifts and make decorations for ceremonial events. The essence of this art is to show respect and consideration for the recipient of the gift, so the paper is always folded for easy opening and arranged to indicate what its contents are. Many levels of meaning can be expressed through this artistic folding of white sheets of paper, and origata is a tradition that's alive and well in Japan today.	2011/04/05		
		Azuki- the versatile little red bean	3'32"	Food/Culture/Tradition	Small red <i>azuki</i> beans are often eaten in Japan on auspicious occasions. They are mixed with sticky rice to form <i>sekihan</i> , eaten in <i>miso</i> soup, and boiled with sugar to make <i>anko</i> bean paste. As the base material of <i>wagashi</i> Japanese confectionery, <i>anko</i> adds protein and fiber to an enormous range of beautiful looking, healthy sweets. This little red bean is found at the heart of many uniquely Japanese dishes and confectioneries.	2011/04/05		
2010/2011 No.9	March '11	Izu – Paradise of Flowers	4'02"	Nature/Tourism	The entrance to the Izu Peninsula is an easy one hour train ride from Tokyo. Tourists flock here for Izu's year-round mild climate, magnificent coastline and famous hot springs. The most popular destinations are the spots where many flowers bloom simultaneously in February – you can see plum, camellia, cherry, daffodil and rape blossoms. Plum and cherry blossoms flower earlier here than anywhere else in Japan, and early spring on the Izu coast is a picturesque sight.	2011/04/05	Izu/Shizuoka	Chubu
		Snow and Hemp in Ojiya	3'49"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Ojiya chijimi is a woven fabric that has been produced in Ojima, in Niigata Prefecture, for about 350 years. In this snowy area, weavers discovered that they could bleach their fabric to a distinctive hue by laying it out on the winter snow. They use a local variety of hemp called <i>choma</i> which is very absorbent and dries quickly. In combination with a special crimping technique to produce linen crepe, this makes a comfortable fabric that's ideal for summer kimonos. Hand woven on unique looms, these fabrics also feature very beautiful patterns.	2011/04/05	Ojima/Niigata	Tohoku
		Leave it All to the Movers	3'58"	Liffe/Science/Techonology	Japan's home moving companies provide a service that's unrivaled for reliability and comprehensiveness. You don't need to make any preparations at all – from packing to unpacking, the movers will handle it all. Special packing materials protect fragile items like crockery, and prevent creases in clothing. Everything is unpacked at your new home and placed precisely where you're used to having it – you simply resume life with no interruption. This service is so complete that they even clean your home before they leave.	2011/04/05		

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2009/2010 No.1	May '09	The Cherry Blossoms of Yoshino	4' 22"	Nature/Tourism	The mountainous area of Yoshino is possibly Japan's most famous spot for viewing cherry blossoms. In was in this culturally ancient region that the mountain ascetic practices of the <i>shugendo</i> sect first developed, and Yoshino's slopes are covered with cherry trees (30,000 of them) that were planted as offerings by pilgrims. Over the centuries the local people cared for these cherry forests, ensuring their scenic beauty survives today in all its glory.		Yoshino/Nara	Kinki
		Titanium Tiles for Temple Roofs	3' 46"	Liffe/Science/Techonology	Roofs in Japan were traditionally covered with heavy ceramic tiles. These gave excellent protection against fire and storms, but their weight was a drawback in this earthquake-prone country. The long search for a lightweight replacement finally resulted in titanium tiles, which are both stronger and 26 times lighter. First used, for safety and esthetic reasons, to retile famous temple roofs, they are now being adopted nationwide.			
		How Old Firms Survive	3' 31"	Industry/Techonology	Japan has a very large number of old family firms still prospering a century or more after their founding. The secret to the success and survival of these firms through both good times and bad appears to be an attitude that combines respect for traditional skills and techniques with an open-minded readiness to react to changing conditions by adopting new methods and businesses.			
		Old Crafts in Modern Art	3' 39"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Unique local industries developed throughout Japan based on locally created craft techniques and raw materials. Skills and techniques refined over the centuries gave Japan one of the world's most distinctive craft traditions. Today, the inheritors of such traditional skills are increasingly using them in the service of fine art, employing old craft materials like bamboo, lacquer and clay to create freshly expressive works.			
2009/2010 No.2	June '09	Hiking the Shinetsu Trail	4' 29"	Nature/Tourism	This newly completed hiking trail runs for 80 km through the Sekida mountains, an easily accessible range of 1,000 m peaks covered with old forests of Japanese <i>buna</i> beech trees. These woods, filled with springs, lakes and ponds, are unique for being almost entirely free from other tree species, and also for the way they have been shaped and polished by the region's heavy winter snowfall. The Shinetsu Trail is open year-round, and is a wonderfully convenient way to explore the delights of nature in Japan.		Shinetsu Trail/Nagano/Niigata	Chubu
		When Mending Becomes an Art	3' 24"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Mottainai is a traditional Japanese custom of never wasting anything that can be repaired instead. <i>Kintsugi</i> originated 400 years ago as a method for mending broken pottery with a lacquer resin glue, repeatedly polishing many layers of lacquer for a seamless join. Artisans decorated their repairs by adding gold dust to the lacquer, and <i>kintsugi</i> gradually developed into an art form in which the repair actually added beauty and value. Old ceramics mended in this way can be extremely valuable, and the art itself is becoming popular again.			
		A Better Way to Peaceful Sleep	3' 21"	Liffe/Tradition/Techonology	Japan, like many parts of the world, suffers from biting insects during the hot, humid summer nights. Insecticides or air conditioning are not ideal for health or for the environment, so people are rediscovering the benefits of the traditional mosquito net for insect-free sleep. The Japanese <i>kaya</i> mosquito net is a uniquely spacious, box-like design, but the weave used for its netting impeded the flow of air, making it warm inside. Modern weaving techniques have now solved this, and the <i>kaya</i> is regaining popularity as a natural, healthy way to ensure a good night's sleep.			

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		New Technology for Disaster Sports	4' 22"	Sports/Science/Techonology	A vital factor in the current worldwide advance of disabled sports is the development of specialized technology to allow athletes with disabilities to take part in competitive sports. Athletic wheelchairs and prosthetic equipment must be specially designed for each sport and also customized to meet the greatly differing requirements of each user. We introduce a Japanese company that has revolutionized sports wheelchair design with a new frame-building technique, and a sports trainer/equipment developer who refines his designs through daily feedback from the athletes he coaches.			
2009/2010 No.3	August '09	Ajisai – Hydrangeas in Hakone	3' 41"	Nature/Tourism	The hydrangea is a flower native to Japan, where it is called <i>ajisai</i> . This delicately colored flower blooms everywhere during the rainy season, but one of the finest places to see it in all its many varieties is the beautiful mountain and hot spring resort of Hakone, one hour from Tokyo by train. The tracks of Hakone's nine-kilometer long switchback railway are lined with over 10,000 blossoms, the varieties changing as the train climbs higher up the mountain, and special sections are even illuminated at night.		Hakone/Kanagawa	Kanto
		Lettuce From a Factory	3' 24"	Liffe/Science/Techonology	Agriculture today faces problems from abnormal weather to chemical overuse that cause concern about the safety and reliable supply of our daily vegetables. One promising solution is the "plant factory," where food is grown indoors in a computer-controlled environment. Vertical stacked growing beds produce far greater amounts of crops than regular farms of the same area, while pest-free sealed environments simplify organic cultivation. New technologies are making factory-grown cultivation safer, more nutritious and more efficient than conventional farming.			
		Mizuhiki – The Art of Tying Paper Cords	3' 18"	Craft/Tradition/Design	A custom that's long been part of daily life in Japan is to present gifts or offerings in an envelope decorated with a complex knot of colored cords. The 1,000-year old custom of <i>mizuhiki</i> symbolizes the wish that the ties binding giver to receiver will never break. Today, in addition to the traditional use, people also use <i>mizuhiki</i> to tie many other things, such as birthday cards, companies are developing new products using <i>mizuhiki</i> cords and artists are adapting the old materials and techniques to create art objects.			
		New Life for Old Facilities	3' 36"	Liffe/culture/Techonology	In recent years, local communities all over Japan have been discovering the cultural and social benefits to be obtained by converting old facilities, buildings and infrastructure to serve new purposes rather than simply demolishing them after their service life is over. We see an old power station that has been converted to a flourishing art museum, a discontinued railway that is now a popular cycle trail, and a primary school reborn as a toy museum.			
2009/2010 No.4	September '09	Dancing the Summer Nights Away	3' 51"	Festival/Culture/Tradition/Tourism	Gujo Hachiman is a well-preserved old castle town in the mountains of Gifu; a town of rivers, springs and waterways. It is most famous for its 400-year old dance festival, the Gujo Odori. For 32 nights each summer, the town's old streets are packed with people dancing and singing the traditional songs, and for several of these nights, the dancing goes on till dawn. A feature of this festival is that the dancing is open to anyone – visitors are encouraged to join in, and the dances themselves are quite easy to imitate.		Gujyohachiman/Gifu	Chubu
		Mottainai – Even Tiny Scrapes Can Be Reused	3' 45"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Mottainai is a traditional Japanese custom of never wasting anything that can be reused, and Kaga Yubinuki are a good example. The old region of Kaga (part of today's Ishikawa) was famous for kimonos and textile dying. In the Kaga Yuzen style of kimono, many colors of thread are used for each piece, creating large amounts of cast off short lengths of silk thread. The old seamstresses recycled the threads to make thimbles (yubinuki), and over the centuries these silk thimbles evolved into delicately patterned little pieces of folk art.		kaga/Ishikawa	Chubu

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		Cruising Down the Shimanto River	4' 22"	Nature/Tourism	The Shimanto River, on Shikoku, is one of Japan's clearest and most beautiful rivers. And for centuries, Japanese tourists have been coming here to enjoy the scenery from yakatabune river boats. These wooden boats have a large cabin in which passengers sit on tatami mats to enjoy a meal of freshly caught river fish and prawns while watching the deeply forested banks pass by. Among the sights you see as you eat are fishermen casting their nets in the traditional way to catch the next meal.		Shimanto River/Shikoku	Shikoku
		Umbrellas To Slip in a Pocket	3' 10"	Liffe/culture/Techonology	An umbrella is essential in Japan, a land of frequent, unpredictable showers, so it's only natural that Japanese umbrella makers have long been pioneers in designing folding umbrellas that you can carry at all times, just in case. New technology is now allowing folding umbrellas to be made flatter, smaller and lighter – indeed, there are now umbrellas weighing just 192 g, that fold as small as a mobile phone. But designers are not yet satisfied – they hope to reduce this convenient item to the size of a fountain pen.			
2009/2010 No.5	October '09	Funadansu Sea Chjests	3' 40"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Being an island nation where it was always easier to transport goods by water, Japan has a long and proud seafaring tradition. Back in the days of sail, no other country developed such sophisticated techniques for making beautiful, sturdy sea chests to protect valuables and documents. With secret compartments and cunning locks, precisely designed to be watertight and floatable, beautifully decorated old funadansu are sought-after collectors items and there is still a demand for new chests, hand-made using traditional techniques.		Mikunicho/Fukui	Chubu
		Sweet Accessories	3'24"	Fashion/Design	Right at this moment, there's a new trend sweeping the streets of Japan. Like women everywhere, Japanese women delight in sweet desserts and in fashion accessories, and now they've found a way to combine these two passions. On rings, pendants, cell phone straps, bracelets – the trend today is to wear tiny accessories that are perfect replicas of your favorite sweets. Top brands are even sold in stores resembling upscale confectionary boutiques.			
		Yamaga Lantern Festival	3' 52"	Festival/Culture/Tradition	In one of Japan's oldest and best-known fire festivals, a parade of blazing pine torches commemorates a legendary imperial visit to Yamaga. This venerable Kyushu merchant town has a unique 500-year old tradition of making lanterns out of washi craft paper, and the highlight of the festival is the sight of 1,000 dancers circling in the slow Sen-nin Toro Odori, illuminated by the gentle flickering glow of the paper lanterns they wear on their heads. The procession ends with the offering of the lanterns at ancient Omiya Shrine.		Yamaga/Kagoshima	Kyushu
		Wagakki- Ancient Japanese Musical Instruments	4' 18"	Music/Culture/Tradition	When the Japanese adopted the ancient Chinese court music tradition called gagaku, they also imported a complete orchestra of musical instruments. These were the ancestors of instruments still played today, such as the 13-stringed koto harp, the shakuhachi bamboo flute and the three-stringed shamisen lute. Over many centuries, Japanese musicians not only modified the instruments, they also evolved a unique variation on the pentatonic scale used everywhere else, giving this music a sound only heard in Japan.			
2009/2010 No.6	December '09	Unfolding the story of the Kyo-sensu fan	4' 23"	Craft/Tradition/Design	The first folding fans were made in Kyoto (the kyo in kyo-sensu) about 1,200 years ago, much later spreading to China and then, via the Silk Road, to Europe. The Japanese, living in a country with long hot summers, quickly adopted this new design that allowed fans to be carried so conveniently when not in use. Over the centuries, craftsmen created a tradition of beauty in the making of their bamboo frames and hand-painted washi paper that lives on today in Japan, both in everyday life and in high culture.	2011/04/05	Kyoto	Kinki

Issue	Date	Title	Length	Category	Detail	Web	Place	Region
		Highly Polished skills	3' 08"	Industry/Techonology	Polishing is a key metal working technique, and the old metal-ware center of Tsubame City in Niigata is renowned throughout Japan for the quality and high level of its polishing work. Even simple jobs like restoring the shine to old pots and pans require refined manual skills as well as fine control over polishing machines, but there are also high-tech manufacturing tasks – such as finishing the leading edges of aircraft wings – where the trained hands of a traditional Tsubame craftsman achieve precision greater than any machine.	2011/04/05	Tubame/Niigata	Chubu
		Matsuri-zushi-festival sushi	3'40"	Food/Culture/Tradition	Sushi is world famous, but the kind of sushi known overseas is just one of many that are eaten inside Japan. Matsuri-zushi is a term describing sushi eaten at festivals and celebrations, and even this comes in many varieties, made using different local ingredients and methods. We look at two famous regional styles – Okayama's extravagant bara-zushi, and Chiba's futomaki-zushi, featuring intricate designs that combine several layers of seaweed-wrapped rolls.	2011/04/05	Okayama/Chiba	Chugoku/Kanto
		Iriomote's Shichi Festival	3'42"	Festival/Culture/Tradition	Iriomote is a subtropical, mangrove-covered island at Japan's southernmost tip, known for its rare wildlife, beautiful scenery and distinctive local culture. The Shichi Festival, unique to a small western part of Iriomote, is a harvest festival with a history going back several centuries. It features a masked man representing Miriku, god of happiness, who leads the villagers in a parade to the seashore where they dance as boats are rowed out to greet blessings sent from over the sea by the harvest god.	2011/04/05	Iriomote/Okinawa	Okinawa
2009/2010 No.7	January '10	The Miniature Appeal of Netsuke	3' 51"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Most Japanese have a small ornament hanging from their cellphone strap. This modern trend is in fact an old tradition, originating in 17th century <i>netsuke</i> - tiny toggles used to secure pouches or boxes to kimono sashes. At first these were functional objects, necessary to carry items on a pocketless kimono, but custom designs became fashionable and antique <i>netsuke</i> are highly valued for their artistic beauty. Modern netsuke designers continue to find new uses for this old idea.	2011/04/05		
		Nature's Beauty at Lake Akan	3' 51"	Nature/Tourism	Lake Akan, in eastern Hokkaido, is a beautiful lake set among mountains and primeval forest that has become a popular year-round leisure destination. One unusual pastime is to sit in tents to fish through holes in the ice when the lake freezes in winter. This also the home of unusual green spheres of algae called marimo. Formed by the rare conditions in the lake, marimo found here are larger than anywhere else in the world. A festival at the lakeside town features songs and dances in praise of nature by the local Ainu people.	2011/04/05	Kushiro/Hokkaido	Hokkaido
		Keeping Frozen Cells Alive-CAS	3'30"	Liffe/Science/Techonology	CAS stands for Cells Alive System, a revolutionary freezing technology that's now practically available. CAS freezes without destroying cellular structure - CAS frozen flowers will even begin blooming again after defrosting. This makes a huge difference to the taste, color and texture of frozen food products. Conventional flash freezing breaks down cells, so much taste is lost in liquid runoff after defrosting. Chefs are welcoming this technology, especially for marine products to be served raw far from the sites where they are frozen.	2011/04/05		
		Wazuma-Japanese Traditional Magic	3'43"	Theatre/Culture/Tradition	Japanese stage magic is possibly one of the oldest in the world, originating as far back as the 8th century and with manuals of techniques surviving from 300 years ago. Old woodblock prints show <i>wazuma</i> magicians performing the same tricks you can see on stage today – illusions using traditional Japanese items such as <i>washi</i> paper, folding fans and of course, gorgeous kimonos. Most spectacular is the <i>mizugei</i> , where performers dexterously manipulate spouting columns of water.	2011/04/05		

Issue	Date	Title	Length	Category	Detail	Web	Place	Region
2009/2010 No.8	February '10	Nambu-tekki Cast Ironware	3' 51"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Morioka is located near rich deposits of iron ore, and has been famous for its specialist ironware industry since the mid 17th century. The city became known for <i>nambu-tekki</i> – a style of cast iron kettles and tea pots that combine delicate beauty and robust solidity. The good looks and practicality of this ironware method led to its adoption for a range of practical cooking utensils, and the modern version of this old craft method is also widely popular for ornamentation and interior design.	2011/04/05	Morioka/Iwate	Tohoku
		Winter Train to Tsugaru	4' 40"	Tourism/Nature	The Tsugaru region in the far north of Japan's main island is a remote area with its own unique culture and history, including the Tsugaru-jamisen, a type of <i>shamisen</i> played in a vigorously distinctive style. Tsugaru's winters are icy cold but also extremely beautiful, and a fine way to travel through this snow-covered landscape is by the special winter season train run by the Tsugaru Railway. Antique carriages featuring old-fashioned pot-belly stoves will carry you snugly on a route that links Tsugaru's major sights.	2011/04/05	Tsugaru/Aomori	Tohoku
		Jomon Art - Ancient yet modern	4'05"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Some of the oldest pottery vessels in the world have been found in Japan, dating to what is called the Jomon Period, from around 16,500 to 3,000 years ago. "Jomon" means straw rope pattern – the method used to decorate these pots. As they turned from a nomadic to a semi-sedentary life, the Jomon people began producing increasingly sophisticated pottery, including human and animal figures. Jomon art has a striking and timeless beauty that continues to inspire modern Japanese artists.	2011/04/05		
		Kendo - A Sport for Mind and Body	3'37"	Sports	The popular sport of Kendo originated in sword training methods developed about 300 years ago. The samurai invented ways to safely hone their sword skills by sparring with special bamboo sticks. In today's sport, competitors wearing protective clothing try to strike specified areas of their opponent's head and body to score points. Kendo's rigorous, training of physical techniques and the calm quickness of mind needed for combat remain an excellent way to develop a strong spirit in a strong mind.	2011/04/05		
2009/2010 No.9	March '10	Mount Fuji in Winter	3' 59"	Nature/Tourism	Mount Fuji, Japan's tallest and most famous mountain, towers above a scenic region of lakes and highlands that is just 1 1/2 hours drive from Tokyo. In summer, people come from all over to scale this beautiful peak, but the scenery around its base attracts visitors all year round. Winter attractions include views of the snow covered summit reflected in the lakes, horseback trekking through snow-covered woods, illuminated ice caves and spectacular lakeside fireworks events.	2011/04/05		
		Yusan-bako Picnic Boxes	2' 50"	Craft/Tradition/Design	The <i>yusan bako</i> picnic box is a traditional handicraft product from Tokushima, where, from the 17th century until recently, there was a unique local custom for all the local children to go on a Spring picnic outing where no adults were allowed. Parents showed trust in their children's independence by sending them off alone on this picnic, proudly carrying food prepared by their mothers in these finely decorated 3-tiered picnic boxes. The special picnic no longer exists, but <i>yusan bako</i> are still a popular Tokushima souvenir.	2011/04/05	Toshikuma/Shikoku	Shikoku
		New Ways to Use Cardboard	4'08"	Liffe/Science/Techonology	Light, easy to work and surprisingly strong, cardboard is one of the most common kinds of packaging material. Computer design has now taken the simple cardboard container to a new level, making it possible to produce both the box and the shaped protective liners to secure the contents out of a single cut and folded sheet of cardboard. Today's designers are also being inspired by the strength and easy workability of this material to create a surprisingly diverse range of products, from furniture to toys and playground equipment.	2011/04/05		

Issue	Date	Title	Length	Category	Detail	Web	Place	Region
		Kariwano's Giant Tug -of- War	4'33"	Festival/Culture/Tradition	For 500 years, Kariwano in Akita has held a famous festival that pits the town's two neighborhoods against each other in a spectacular tug of war where chanting teams haul on a massive straw rope that's 72 cm thick, weighs 20 tons, and stretches a full 120 m when laid out. The O-Tsunahiki festival is a religious ritual that begins with special rites at the town's Shinto shrine, and tradition has it that a win by the young men of the upper part of town means better prices for rice, while a win for the lower part means a fine harvest.	2011/04/05		

Issue	Date	Title	Length	Category	Detail	Web	Place	Region
2008/2009 No.1	May '08	Mixing Up a Super Fuel	3' 39"	Life/Science/Technology	Ever since the oil crisis of the 1970s, scientists and industry worldwide have been searching for ways to use oil more efficiently. A major goal has been to make fuel from an emulsion of oil and water, but all attempts at the practical solution failed since the mixture would always slowly separate into the original two fluids. Now a Japanese scientist has solved this problem, using nanotechnology to create super emulsion fuel, a stable mixture that provides all the power of regular diesel but with greater fuel efficiency, less polluting emissions and fewer greenhouse gases. This is another case of Japan's government, industry and scientific institutions collaborating on a successful project to benefit the global environment.		Yoshino/Nara	Kinki
		Hokkaido Horse-trekking	3' 14"	Nature/Tourism	The northern island of Hokkaido covers over 20% of Japan's land mass, and contains some of its most beautiful and unspoiled scenery. It's also the home of an ancient breed of Japanese horse called the <i>dosanko</i> . A strong animal able to carry great loads and very stable on hillside trails due to its short legs, the Dosanko played a significant historical role in the development of Hokkaido's agriculture. After having become somewhat rare in recent times, the dosanko is now seeing a revival due to the popularity of horse-trekking tours. This docile, stable mount can be ridden easily even by complete novices, and is the perfect way to explore the magnificently varied landscape of Hokkaido.			
		Fresh Ideas for Mobile Living	3' 38"	Life/Science/Technology/design	Mobile phones are an evolving worldwide phenomenon. In Japan, where 8 out of 10 people own a mobile phone, the pace of change is especially rapid. New technologies and ideas are continually emerging for using this device to make daily life more convenient. Parents keep track of their children using GPS phones, while the trains are full of people emailing, sending text messages or browsing the Internet on their phones. Mobile phones can be used as electronic wallets for e-money, accepted by many stores, public transport and even vending machines in Japan. They are even spurring new cultural developments - people don't just read comics and view movies on their phones, novelists are now first publishing their work on-line. And the excellence of Japanese phone design is winning phones a place in museum collections.			
		New Future for Smallest Room	3' 06"	Life/Science/Technology	Japan adopted the flush toilet just 40 years ago, but in that short time it has become the world leader in the industry, refining this essential facility both with high-tech functions and with ecological innovations. The latest Japanese toilets automatically open their lids as you approach and close as you leave, and have advanced washing and drying functions controlled by a wall panel. Today's home designs use less water and don't need paper, but outdoor modes are being specifically designed with the environment in mind. These bio-toilets require no water and produce no sewage - everything is recycled using various methods to process the human waste into water and clean fertilizer products. Researches are now trying to also make them independent of power supplies and even more self-sustaining.			
2008/2009 No.2	June '08	Untouched for 8,000 years Shirakami-Sanchi Forest	3' 50"	Nature/Tourism	Shirakami-Sanchi is the world's largest primeval beech forest, a unique ecosystem that has survived unchanged for over 8,000 years thanks to its remote location and harsh climate. This virgin forest, covering 1,300 square kilometers in northern Japan, was the nation's first Natural World Heritage Site to be listed. The core forest, a genetic treasure house of rare plant and animal species, is strictly protected but there are nature trails and other facilities for visitors to enjoy in the outer woods.		Shinetsu Trail/Nagano/Niigata	Chubu

Issue	Date	Title	Length	Category	Detail	Web	Place	Region
		High-Rise Work Fashion	3' 27"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Japan's steeplejacks and scaffolding workers were always an elite group. Their skill in working at dangerous heights meant that they become the first firefighting groups, centuries ago when Japan's wooden cities often caught fire. Proud of their skills and popular heroes for their courage, these workers competed in fashion too, striving to see who could display the most colorful garments. This was the origin of the distinctive workwear we still see today on Japan's building sites, a living tradition that continues to evolve and which has recently inspired designers in the world of high fashion.			
		Fine Mist Cools City Heat	3' 38"	Life/Science/Technology	Global Warming continues to raise temperatures worldwide, and large cities contribute to this trend through the urban heat island effect. Increased use of air conditioning is raising temperatures on the streets, and Japanese cities are experimenting with ways to counter this. One new system uses advanced technology to make spray nozzles so small that the fine mist they emit immediately evaporates, leaving no moisture behind. The effect of the evaporating mist is to significantly cool the air beneath it. These mist systems are also being used in high-tech industry to cut dust and static electricity.			
		Minamata An Eco-Aware community	3' 45"	Life/Science/Technology	The small southern Japanese fishing port of Minamata was the site of one of the world's worst cases of industrial pollution, giving its name to the terrible mercury poisoning syndrome called Minamata Disease. This tragedy was in the early 1950s, during Japan's rush to industrialize. Fifty years later, although problems still remain, Minamata has transformed itself into one of Japan's most environmentally conscious towns, successfully improving its local coastal environment. Minamata residents attribute their successes to the lessons learned during many years of cleaning up after the catastrophe, looking after its suffering victims, and becoming aware of the importance of living in harmony with their environment.			
2008/2009 No.3	August '08	Tokyo's Subtropical Islands	4' 15"	Nature/Tourism	Although the Ogasawara Islands lie 1,000km south of Tokyo, they are officially part of the metropolis because the only way to get there is a 25.5hr ferry trip from Tokyo. Geologically isolated from the mainland since their creation, the islands are known as the Galapagos of the East for their rich variety of unique plants and animals. Many visitors make the long trip to Ogasawara not just for its fine whale and dolphin watching, but also to enjoy the islands' warm and welcoming culture.		Hakone/Kanagawa	Kanto
		Toys for all Ages	3' 37"	Life/Technology/design	The Tokyo toy Show is Japan's largest and most diverse toy fair, and the huge crowds that attend this 4-day event include many overseas buyers, here to check the latest trends and innovations by Japan's toy manufacturers. It's not just advanced technology that has made Japan a leading influence on worldwide trends in toys and games. New concepts developed here, such as games that involve parents with their children as they learn useful skills, are finding an enthusiastic reception abroad.			
		Japanese Cuisine-Sincerity is the Key	3'33"	Food/Culture/Tradition	A look behind the scenes at a good Japanese restaurant gives us a glimpse into the working day of its itamae, or chefs, and the central organizing role played by the proprietress, the okami. These chefs not only spend years becoming highly skilled at creating dishes that look like works of art, they daily visit fish piers and markets learning to select the finest materials. This okami minutely manages her kitchen, as well as providing hospitality for their guests. But in the end, it is the sincere and wholehearted devotion to their craft of all involved that is the key to Japan's quality cuisine.			

Issue	Date	Title	Length	Category	Detail	Web	Place	Region
		Building to Blend with Nature	3'59"	Life/Technology/design	Kengo Kuma is now a world-famed architect, with a company active in projects around the globe. We see how his style evolved into a current philosophy that focuses on using softer, gentler building materials designed to make his creations merge seamlessly with their surroundings and blend into the local environment. Kuma has taken the use of soft, natural materials such as wood, paper and earth to such an extent that with some of his recent designs it is becoming difficult to tell where the building ends and the scenery begins.			
2008/2009 No.4	September '08	Manga Goes Worldwide	3' 31"	Life/Pop culture	The worldwide spread of Japan's manga sub-culture was on view again this year at the second International Manga Awards, where prizes were presented to artists from many different countries for the best manga work produced outside Japan. Many who came for the Awards went on to the International Manga Summit in Kyoto, which focused on ways to use this rapidly internationalizing art form for the benefit of society in every nation, just as it has long been used in Japan.			
		World's Biggest Firework	4' 03"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Summer fireworks displays has long been a Japanese custom, and Japanese fireworks are among the world's most spectacular. Among the more than one thousand fireworks displays held here every year, there is one that features the world's biggest firework. The tiny town of Katakai (pop.6,000) has had a fireworks industry for over 400 years. They used a combination of traditional and innovative techniques to produce the 420 kg, 120 cm shell that now draws crowds of 200,000 to their annual display.			
		Japanese Denim-High Fashion and Eco-Friendly	3'31"	Fashion/Design	Japanese denim, currently the favorite material for high-fashion jeans worldwide, was the theme of the Japan Blue Exhibition, part of this year's Japan Fashion Week in Tokyo. The world's fashion houses choose Japanese-made denim for a number of reasons: the excellent appearance produced by Japan's local indigo dye and traditional dyeing techniques, the leading ideas of contemporary Japanese jeans designers, and the pioneering efforts of Japanese jeans and denim companies to make the manufacturing process more eco-friendly.			
		Deco Art – It's Everywhere!	3'58"	Life/Pop culture	A new fashion trend is spreading from Japan to the world. It originated when nail artists discovered their clients wanted the same kind of decorations applied to cellphones and other personal objects. Driven by user demand, stores sprang up offering custom-decorated phones and the parts and tools for people to do their own decoration. This trend was quickly taken up by the world of street fashion, and a sub-culture known as "deco-art" now supports the desire of young Japanese to express their individuality by personalizing each product they ear.			
2008/2009 No.5	October '08	Walking the Old Tokaido Highway	4' 42"	Nature/Tourism	The Tokaido was the main highway of old Japan, linking Tokyo (then called Edo) in the east to the old capital of Kyoto in the west, and it played a vital role in the development of modern Japan's commerce, industry and culture. The Tokaido was also where Japanese tourism began, as travellers walking this 500-kilometer highway started to make detours to view famous shrines and temples, to admire the scenery and to sample famous regional delicacies. Today, hikers still enjoy walking the Tokaido, parts of which remain almost unchanged since 400 years ago.		Mikunicho/Fukui	Chubu
		Compact House for Spacious Living	3' 58"	Life/Technology/design	In 1952, architect Makoto Masuzawa started a boom in Japan for what he called the "minimum house" – very compact homes with an efficient open-plan interior that made them seem very spacious for their size. His ideas are now being revived by a group of young architects and designers calling themselves the 9-Tsubo House Project. Their popular and highly versatile designs are smaller than normal houses, allowing more of each site to be used for garden. Open interiors and large windows and doors that merge interior and exterior achieve a feeling of great spaciousness.			

Issue	Date	Title	Length	Category	Detail	Web	Place	Region
		Learning about Life from Food	3'17"	Food/Culture/Tradition	In the Japanese school system, food and nutrition education courses, where children learn about good diet and how to choose and make healthy food, are regarded as an important foundation for all education – intellectual, moral and physical. Many outside groups take part in these classes, from local school authorities to food manufacturers, as well as expert volunteers such as celebrity chef Kiyomi Mikuni who contribute their specialist knowledge of cooking, eating and food safety to teach young children valuable and basic lessons about life.		Yamaga/Kagoshima	Kyushu
		Fun Ways to Get Fit	3'46"	Life/Technology/design	Japanese toy and game manufacturers have made huge advances in home entertainment technology, and now they are starting to apply this knowledge for health, fitness and healing. Families enjoy exercising together in front of the TV, thanks to interactive sports games using advanced motion sensors and monitors. Walkers and runners listen to voice instructions providing expert guidance through their headphones, with music scientifically optimized for greatest aerobic benefit. And playing with lifelike robot pets is having a rejuvenating effect on the brains of many senior citizens.			
2008/2009 No.6	November '08	The Healing Powers of the Jellyfish	4' 03"	Life/Science/Technology	Jellyfish have always been common in the seas around Japan, but just recently the Japanese have begun looking at these graceful, translucent creatures in a new light. The old image was of a stinging animal one tried to avoid when swimming, but the unexpected success of one aquarium's jellyfish displays has made people realize the soothing, healing effect of watching jellyfish swim. For example, customers at a bar in central Tokyo find that watching its large tank full of exotic jellyfish is an ideal way to unwind and relax after a stressful day at work.			
		Ready to Eat, Instantly, Anywhere	3' 56"	Life/Science/Technology	Over 100 billion instant noodle meals are now eaten worldwide each year – a huge change in our eating habits that began 50 years ago with a new technology invented in a Japanese garden shed. Flash-frying in oil to quickly dry noodles created a tasty product that was easy to cook and had a long shelf life. Today, we can choose from a vast variety of instant meals, not just noodles. They are eaten at home, at the office, and even by astronauts in space. And they have proved especially valuable as emergency food supplies for disaster zones.		Kushiro/Hokkaido	Hokkaido
		Bamboo's Deep Roots in Japanese Life	4'00"	Craft/Tradition/Design	The bamboo has been an ever-present, well-loved part of Japanese daily life and culture for centuries. You see it in house exteriors and interiors, children still play with traditional bamboo toys like stilts and tops, and it's widely eaten in season. Traditional arts like the tea ceremony feature fine accessories and utensils crafted from bamboo. It is modern too – the first electric light bulbs used Japanese bamboo filaments, and innovative new bamboo products continue to be developed, ranging from silky textiles to bamboo charcoal soaps and anti-allergy products.			
		Traditional Crafts, Modern Design – That's Kanazawa	3'50"	Craft/Tradition/Design	In its golden age from the 17th to the 19th century, Kanazawa was one of Japan's greatest centers of culture and commerce. The old city retains much of its samurai era atmosphere, and its many highly-sophisticated traditional arts and crafts such as Kaga Yuzen dyeing, Kutani ceramics and fine gold leaf work continue to prosper. Today, the city is encouraging these local craft industries to apply their traditional artistic skills to modern designs, aiming to make beautiful hand-made objects, from fashion to jewellery and tableware, once again part of people's daily lives.			

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2008/2009 No.7	January '09	Night Festival in Chichibu	4' 20"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Huge wooden floats, fantastically decorated and hauled by chanting groups, are a feature of many Japanese festivals. One of the most spectacular is the Chichibu Night Festival, held in early December in a hilly town north of Tokyo. Taking all year to prepare and weighing up to 20 tons, the floats are pulled to the sound of drums through streets filled with festival crowds. The floats begin from Chichibu's 2,000-year-old shrine and are strenuously hauled through the sharp corners and steep inclines of the town to end at a park under a huge firework display.		Morioka/Iwate	Tohoku
		Monkiri Asobi – The Art of Papercutting	3' 59"	Tourism/Nature	Monkiri asobi is a style of papercutting in which symmetrical patterns are cut with scissors in paper folded in four. Unfolded, the paper reveals the full design. This pastime, now popular again after almost disappearing, originated over 150 years ago from a technique developed by craftsmen to save time when preparing the patterns for painting <i>mon</i> , or family crests. Later used for many other decorative purposes, <i>mon</i> were created in a vast range of artistic designs that tell us much about the interests, lifestyle and world view of people centuries ago		Tsugaru/Aomori	Tohoku
		Miyadaiku – Guardians of a Traditional of Building in Wood	3'43"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Japan is filled with magnificent wooden structures – temples, shrines, pagodas – some over 1,000 years old, and many still in excellent condition. The craftsmen who built these enduring buildings are known as <i>miyadaiku</i> , and even today master carpenters continue to use and pass on the ancient skills, ensuring a future for this tradition. <i>Miyadaiku</i> apprentices learn their craft the old way, by directly imitating their master, and specialize in building and restoring Japan's shrines and temples with their intricate, superbly finished woodwork and gracefully curving roofs.			
		Sushi from Tokyo Bay Again	4'11"	Sports	Centuries ago, under the shoguns, the people of Tokyo (then called Edo) referred to the abundant seafood they enjoyed from Tokyo Bay as <i>Edomae</i> . This vast bay, fed by many rivers and lined with fertile tidelands, was a plentiful source of the finest fish and shellfish that were used for <i>Edomae zushi</i> , the origin of the sushi that is now enjoyed worldwide. The bay's whole ecosystem came under threat from pollution and reclamation during the economic boom of the 60s and 70s, but environmental programs have now cleaned the waters and once again Tokyo can eat sushi from its bay.			
2008/2009 No.8	February '09	Tiny satellite Carries a Big Dream	4' 14"	Nature/Tourism	A scientific satellite launched on Jan. 23, 2009 was unusual in a number of ways. This tiny 50cm cube was the independent project of a group of small factories in Higashi-Osaka. <i>Machi-koba</i> is the term for small urban factories working under contract to major corporations, and these have been responsible for many of Japan's technological advances. Instead of simply supplying parts for other companies' products, this group wanted to design their own project and complete it using their own technology. The result is now in orbit, helping research into lightning storms.			
		A Stroll Through Old Kawagoe	4' 03"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Kawagoe is a popular tourist spot not just because of its easy access, an hour's train ride from Tokyo, but also because this small town offers a unique opportunity to stroll through streets that have survived intact from different periods of Japan's long history. There are rows of old shops and houses from as far back as 350 years ago when Kawagoe was a prosperous trading center, western-style buildings from the modernizing 19th century, and a whole street of old-fashioned confectionery stores still making candy the way they did in the 1930s.		Toshikuma/Shikoku	Shikoku

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		Carry Your Own Chopsticks	4'11"	Life/Science/Technology	When eating at home, it's a Japanese custom for each family member to use their own chopsticks, rice bowl and other utensils, the familiar feel of these personal items adding to their enjoyment of the meal. That's one reason for the recent boom in carrying personal chopsticks to eat out at work or in restaurants, a boom encouraged by stores selling a wide range of chopsticks and cases in fashionable designs. The other reason is the cultural sense of <i>mottainai</i> – an aversion to waste that now makes people reluctant to use disposable restaurant chopsticks.			
		Tsukemono - The Pleasure of Japanese Pickles	3'32"	Festival/Culture/Tradition	No Japanese meal is complete without a dish of pickles, or <i>tsukemono</i> . Pickled with salt, vinegar, rice bran, even soy sauce - <i>tsukemono</i> come in a bewildering choice of varieties, colors and tastes – any combination of ingredients you can think of is bound to be pickled somewhere in Japan as a treasured regional delicacy. Originating as a way to preserve vegetables for winter eating, <i>tsukemono</i> retain their enormous popularity today for their health benefits and for the refreshing taste contrast they bring to a meal.			
2008/2009 No.9	March '09	Donabe - Most Versatile of Cooking Pots	3' 41"	Festival/Culture/Tradition	The <i>donabe</i> , a type of earthenware pot used for cooking at the table, is one of the oldest and best loved Japanese kitchen utensils. Traditionally made from a special clay, a <i>donabe</i> retains heat even after the flame is turned off, cooking its contents gently and thoroughly. This versatile pot can be used for many different kinds of cooking, and Japanese families love to use it to prepare food at the table, serving themselves straight from the pot.			
		Bonsai - Nature's Beauty in Miniature	3' 42"	Craft/Tradition/Design	Bonsai artists aim to create miniature but completely convincing natural landscapes, pruning their tiny trees and training them with wire to grow into the desired shapes in a process that can take hundreds of years. It's a hobby with a huge following, and there is even an entire village of bonsai nurseries close to Tokyo. These living works of art, long popular among older Japanese, are now finding new fans in the younger generation.		Toshikuma/Shikoku	Shikoku
		Iwami Kagura - Ancient Ritual to Modern Folk Art	4'49"	Life/Science/Technology	Kagura is an old tradition of dance and music that traces its roots to the most ancient of Japan's creation myths about the Sun Goddess <i>Amaterasu</i> . Historically performed at shrines by Shinto priests, in the 19 th century it was taken up by the public and transformed into the vigorous folk art we can see today. Of all the types of <i>kagura</i> , the Shimane regional style known as <i>Iwami kagura</i> is the most lively, gorgeous and dramatically entertaining.			
		Green Revolution Transforms City Rooftops	3'43"	Festival/Culture/Tradition	Japan's cities are controlling rising temperatures due to the urban "heat island" effect by planting greenery on building rooftops and walls. Rooftop gardens are dramatically cooler than concrete, and can now be added to most buildings thanks to new types of light, nutrient rich soil and special lightweight surfaces. Rooftop gardens are now a popular place to relax, and soon people will also be growing vegetables and rice on top of city buildings.			