



# Mizuhiki kogei nyumon: A step-by-step guide to Japanese paper cord weaving

By Haruko Shimizu

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## Mizuhiki kogei nyumon: A step-by-step guide to Japanese paper cord weaving

Haruko Shimizu has spent over 60 years mastering and teaching mizuhiki—the Japanese paper-cord craft. Born in Puyallup, Mrs. Shimizu studied this art in Japan over an extended period before and since World War II. Interned during the war at the Gila Relocation Camp with other Japanese-Americans and in Crystal City, Texas, with her non-citizen husband, she and her children accompanied him to Japan after the war when he chose repatriation. The Shimizu family returned to America in 1959. Through all such ups and downs, Shimizu-sensei continued to develop and create beautiful mizuhiki artworks. Shimizu-sensei began teaching mizuhiki in 1984, shortly before her husband passed on, and now teaches the art in Seattle. She has exhibited and demonstrated mizuhiki at such community events as this Matsuri and the Seattle Buddhist Church's annual O-Bon Festival, and also has held workshops in Oregon, California and Hawaii. Her work goes far beyond the traditional, mainly 2-dimensional mizuhiki to include wall hangings, pictures and 3-dimensional works. In 1996, Shimizu-san was accorded the honorary professional name of Shun Setsu (spring snow) by her long-time teacher in Japan, Noboru Sekijima, who heads the association in Japan for mizuhiki craft. Mizuhiki art can be traced back some 1500 years to when a similar material was used to decorate gifts exchanged between the Japanese and Chinese emperors; but its history may extend back even farther to ancient India. Even today in Japan, formal gifts at New Years or at weddings are often adorned with Mizuhiki cords, signifying the felicitations of the giver. 64 pages. Hardbound.

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