

# Trends in Japan

## Pop Culture

Discover manga, anime, J-pop, and much more in this section showcasing the latest pop culture phenomena to capture the imagination of Japan's young people.

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## Handicrafts Redefined as Modern Art

Exhibitions themed around sewing and knitting are becoming an "in" thing in the art scene these days in Japan. Each exhibition showcases works that exude the timeless splendor, warmth, and delight of handicrafts, despite being produced in the digital age. Departing from the conventions of ordinary fancywork, these works explore new modes of expression.



A work by Ruriko Murayama at "Stitch by Stitch." Photo courtesy of Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum



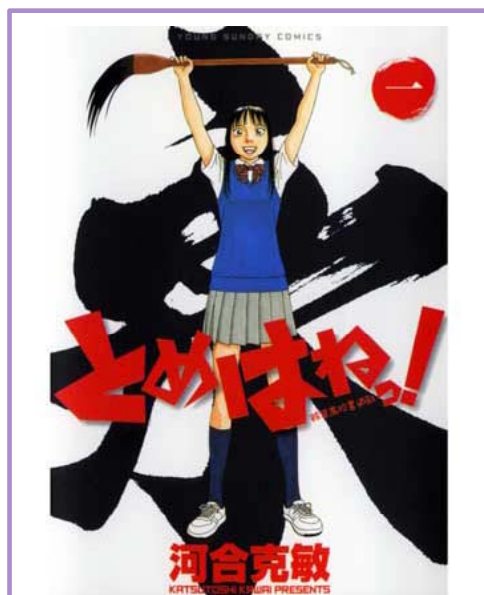
"Thin Membrane / Pictures Come Down," a work by Aiko Tezuka at "Stitch by Stitch." Photo courtesy of Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum



(From front) "Hawk," "Oiran," and "Marunouchi" by Chie Suzuki. Photo by Kenji Otani. Courtesy of Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower Mito

## Comics About Calligraphy and Tea Ceremony Prove Popular

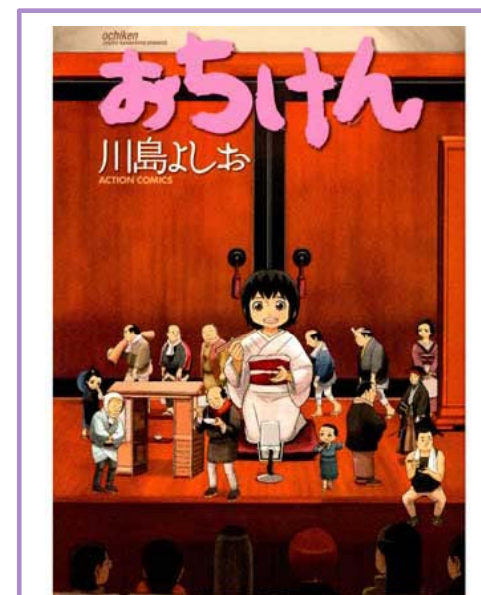
Autumn has long been considered a season for cultural pursuits in Japan. With its cool, pleasant weather, this is the perfect time of year for getting involved in the arts. In the past few years, a series of manga about school students enjoying traditional pastimes such as the tea ceremony and calligraphy as part of their extracurricular activities have become bestsellers, and more young people are becoming interested in traditional pursuits as a result.



"Tomehane!"



"Ocha Nigosu." (C)Nishimori Hiroyuki/Shogakukan Inc.



"Ochiken." (C)Kawashima Yoshio, Futabasha Publishers Ltd.

## The Games That Get Phone Users Moving



Ishidaya in Nikko, Tochigi Prefecture.

An increasing number of mobile phone users are becoming avid players of *ichige* ("location games"), a type of online game that utilizes location data provided through their phones' GPS function. In the games, players receive virtual currency according to where and how far they travel; they can then use the currency to "buy" virtual items and souvenirs. The game is especially popular among company workers in their twenties and thirties as a way to enjoy business trips or the daily commute to work.



Information on the special rice cake confection resembling a meteorite.



A rice cake resembling a meteorite.