

7. Three-Stringed Musical Instrument

東京三味線



Products by Sangenshi Kikuoka

Q: What made you decide to pursue this craft?

When I was a university student, I visited the shamisen workshop where I now work while filming a project. I was drawn to the way they preserved tradition while continuing to take on new challenges, and I felt I could also make use of my experience in video production and foreign languages. That is why I chose this path.

Q: What have you learned from mistakes in the production process?

Even now, the skin can sometimes tear while being stretched. Some things can only be learned by stretching it to its limit, so I see such failures as necessary in the pursuit of better sound and refinement of my technique.

Q: How do you adjust your technique for different seasons and weather conditions?

The tension of the skin changes with temperature and humidity. I assess the condition of the skin and make fine adjustments to the tension I apply.

Q: When would you recommend giving one as a gift?

An authentic shamisen also makes an excellent gift for someone from overseas. It can be played, of course, but also enjoyed as a decorative object. I would be delighted if people chose one as a gift that conveys Japanese culture.

Q: What should people pay particular attention to in three-stringed musical instrument?

The balance between beauty and the sound required of a musical instrument. I hope visitors can appreciate the depth of shamisen making, in which each instrument is tailored to the desired sound and to the individual player.

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