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# Shizu-Okashi (Shizuoka Based Confectionery) as a Social Engine for Local and Global Innovation: A Visual Design Approach

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2009年6月、「しずお菓子」というコンセプトを考案し、それ以降、このプロジェクトを推進している。「しずお菓子」は静岡市と発音は同じでも意味は異なりあくまで菓子である。菓子には和菓子と洋菓子があるが、「しずお菓子」は和菓子を基調としながらも洋菓子も含む。

ただ、「しずお菓子」には単なる菓子としてではなく、地域およびグローバルなイノベーションをもたらす社会的エンジンとしての役割も込めている。家族や地域の絆が弱まり個人が孤立化を深める中で、菓子はもって行き方によっては人々を再結合する触媒になりうる。お茶や他の食材、ゲーム、アート、歴史、自然、地域などと融合させれば、新たな食スタイルが提案でき、ソーシャルビジネスに結びつくかもしれない。

本稿では、こうした問題意識と夢を抱きつつ、ストリートフェスティバル・イン・シズオカ2009への出展や「しずお菓子」の商用登録申請を含めこれまでのプロジェクトへの取り組みを視覚デザインに絞って紹介し、新たなアイデアを提示するとともに今後の地域との連携による取り組みについても言及した。

キーワード：Shizu-Okashi, innovation, confectionery, trademark, visual design

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## Introduction

We have been engaged in the project of "Shizu-Okashi" since June 2009. Although Shizu-Okashi sounds like Shizuoka-shi (Shizuoka-City), it is not Shizuoka-shi itself but the brand of Shizuoka based confectionery I coined.<sup>(1)</sup> While okashi means confectionery, Shizu is part of the city name.

In Japan, there are two types of *okashi*: One is "*yogashi*" or Western-style cakes, pastries and cookies and the other is "*wagashi*" or Japanese sweets often served with green tea or in the tea ceremony.<sup>(2)</sup> Shizu-Okashi is closely related to "*wagashi*" but includes "*yogashi*" as well.

What is more important here is that Shizu-Okashi is not just cakes and cookies to eat or a product of a single confectionery maker for its own sake but is designed to be a "social engine" for local and global innovation. It is intended to provide the citizens, young and old, with the opportunity to get together and revitalize the community where kinship and human ties have been weakened.

We may be able to propose a new confectionery style or produce a social business if we successfully mix Shizu-Okashi with other ingredients, games, art, history, nature, or the community in a completely new manner.

In this paper, we will describe our activities on the Shizu-Okashi project, focusing on visual design, propose new ideas for product development, and refer to what we are going to do next in collaboration with the community.

### Shizu-Okashi in the Street Festival

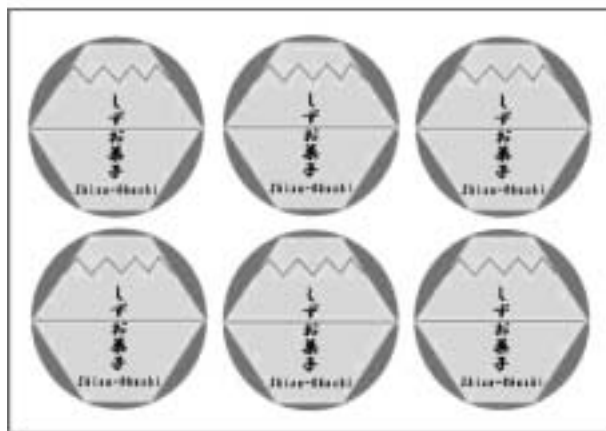
The 10 th Shizuoka Street Festival in Shizuoka, an annual art & music festival, was held in Aoba Symbol Road in front of the main building of the Shizuoka municipal government in November 2009. To promote "Shizu-Okashi," we participated in this event and ran a booth where the students' clay or cloth works of confectionery were displayed.<sup>(3)</sup>

Since Shizuoka-City is well known for Mt. Fuji and was a castle town during the Tokugawa Era (1603-1867), I designed the calligraphic logo of Shizu-Okashi with Mt. Fuji behind on a plain round waffle as follows:



Image Design

If we use six colors, for example, we can make a box of the colorful waffles.



A Box of Shizu-Okashi

The visitors were asked to write "Shizu-Okashi" on a plain round waffle with brush to show their calligraphic works in the booth.



Confectionery Calligraphy

While it is written in Japanese vertically, Shizu-Okashi is written in English horizontally, so that non-Japanese visitors may understand what is written:



Shizu-Okashi both in English and in Japanese

The visitors could eat the calligraphic waffles if ink were edible. On the back of the waffles, the visitors could also write messages for their friends, family, or lovers.

In a Chinese restaurant, a fortune cookie is served after lunch or dinner, so that the customer may enjoy reading the fortune slip. Fortune Shizu-Okashi cookies would be fun as well.

It may also arouse the customers' interest to make "Shizu-Okashi " rice crackers with short Japanese poems such as *haiku*, *senryu*, or *tanka* on the back.

### Trademark Registration

Since it is confusing if confectionery makers use the name of Shizu-Okashi one after another, I filed the following logo and symbol mark to the Patent Office in Tokyo for trademark registration in February 2010.



Logo and Symbol Mark

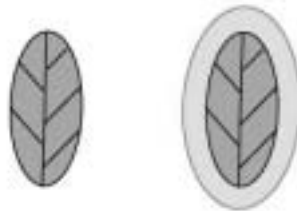
Beside the Japanese logo, the English logo was added, because it is a must for global communication.

### Product Design

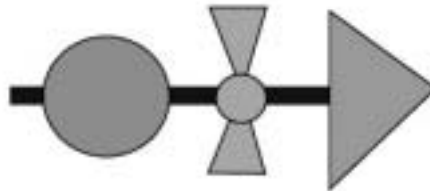
Some of the confectionery works displayed in the street festival looked like an orange, a green tea leaf, or Japanese hotchpotch (*oden*). In general, okashi is too sweet because of much sugar, but *our oden okashi* would be sugar-free and contain nutritious ingredients such as a kelp, horseradish, or root.



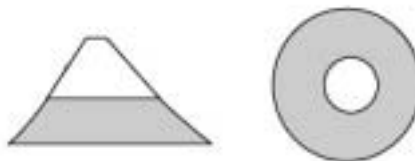
Orange Okashi



Ocha Leaf Okashi



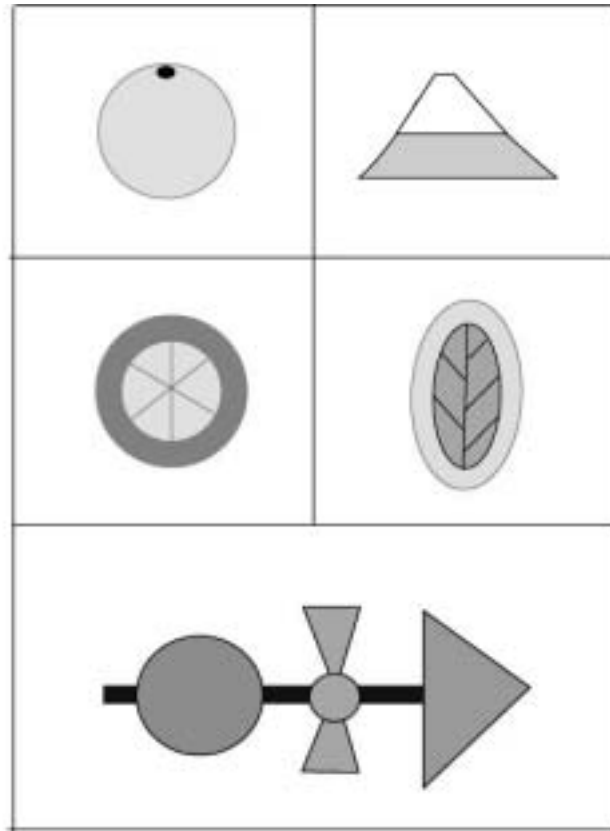
Japanese Hotchpotch (Oden) Okashi



Mt. Fuji Okashi

### Shizu-Okashi Variations

Some of the confectioneries are, however, already for sale at shores. A box of Shizu-Okashi might attract attention of the citizens and tourists, as there is no such a souvenir at present.



A Box of Shizu-Okashi Variations

### Sunpu Castle Confectionery

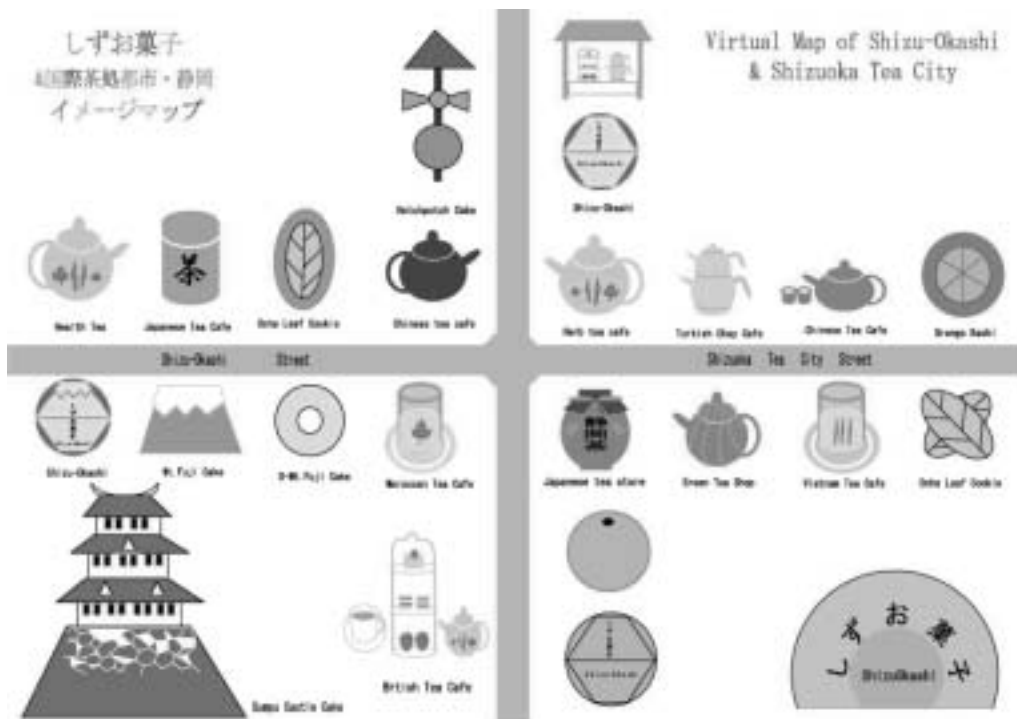
In the street festival, we also displayed the miniature monuments and buildings of Shizuoka-City made with clay or paper. Himeji-City, Hyogo Prefecture, takes pride in having Himeji Castle as a world cultural and historical heritage and holds an annual confectionery competition to create the castle with candies and cakes. Although it is difficult to restore Sunpu Castle, which was destroyed by fire in 1635, we could make it with Shizu-Okashi at least. If people saw the confectionery castle, they might wish to see the real one. If the real castle were restored, Shizuoka-City could attract much more tourists from abroad.



Sunpu Castle Confectionery

### Virtual Map of Shizu-Okashi & Shizuoka Tea City

I created the concept of "Shizuoka Tea City" in 2006 to help promote Shizuoka-City as a global tea city<sup>(4)</sup> and made its virtual map with a student of mine.<sup>(5)</sup> As Japanese *wagashi* is often served with green tea, tea and confectionery are on good terms with each other. For global communication, we combined Shizuoka Tea City with Shizu-Okashi in the virtual map as follows:



## What is next?

The students were excited about making Shizu-Okashi by hand with clay or cloth and pleased to find that their works were shown in the street festival. A contest to make real Shizu-Okashi might encourage people to get interested in our project and get more involved with the community.

Halloween as an event promotes communications between children and stores in the community, as the children visit stores to get candies for free. It may be wonderful if the children visit the elderly in the community for Shizu-Okashi or they get together at a Shizu-Okashi tea shop.

Ideas must be materialized, however. It is necessary to show real Shizu-Okashi which citizens and tourists want to buy as a dessert or a souvenir. For this purpose, we will set up a study group of Shizu-Okashi in the nearest future in collaboration with a confectionery manufacturer, people in the mass media, and citizens in the community. Though it may be small at first, the group is expected to produce the first Shizu-Okashi confectionery and develop the concept of Shizu-Okashi into a social engine for local and global innovation.

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