

Propelling

Issue 4



Propelling, a newsletter from Okayama, Japan, spotlights the hidden allure of propellers and aims to steer the world's ships, and their world, one step into the future

Nakashima People Vol. 4

Yoshikazu Kajio

General Manager, Sales and Marketing, Nakashima Propeller

"I may have had the most room for growth."

Yoshikazu Kajio, a key figure who leads Nakashima's global sales, jokes in such a way as he reminisces about the quarter of a century he has spent with Nakashima Propeller.

Ever since the first time he was sent abroad as a salesman, he has risen to challenges, acquiring language skills and sales know-how along the way. Now, he plays a central role in Nakashima's overseas expansion, managing distributors around the world.

As Yoshikazu presses on with new challenges after becoming the head of the newly created Nakashima Propeller Marine Engineering in Shanghai, we asked him about his thoughts on Nakashima Propeller, the Chinese local subsidiary and the world's seas.

Q. What is the secret of your success on the global stage?

Beyond language skills, the real challenge of working

across borders might be not losing sight of your true self while building a capacity to step in and out of your own cultural standards. Having that fortitude and flexibility ready even when you are outside of your comfort zones is important, I believe, for being able to deliver consistent performance and to build sustainable business on a global stage.

Q. What do propellers mean to you?

Our propellers are the result of continuity, innovation and refinement over the past 90 years. They are not merely objects; they have souls. Our cutting-edge technologies and vast data are important requirements for tailor-making propellers for each individual ship. But the delivery of customised propellers requires more—it needs focused energy and delicate input from every staff member involved in all stages, from designing to manufacturing. Our propellers are the result of these visible and invisible elements.

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Yoshikazu Kajio



Soon, I believe the unique quality of Nakashima's propellers will be even more widely known, as technological developments enable better access to data on the propulsive performance of propellers of ships in actual operation, not just in experimental conditions.

Q. What are the challenges of working in China?

Particularly for Japanese and Chinese people, because we share some cultural elements we may get into trouble for assuming we understand one another. For instance, *mentsu* (personal honour) is a word that exists in both Chinese and Japanese, but the Chinese more often value it as much as life. If you fail to recognise differences in values and the actions related to them, you risk ruining relationships.

I think it is important to be able to embrace incomplete knowledge, especially for relationship building in a multicultural environment. Cultural gaps should be neither underestimated nor necessarily eliminated. We can work with them, but with humility and respect to differences. Of course, these multicultural challenges are not limited to China.

Every time I stay in China, I feel the remarkable energy of people, especially the younger generation, chasing the “Chinese dream”. I hope that young people will succeed in finding a direction of development that truly nurtures and unleashes the values unique to China.

Q. What is the significance of launching a base in China at this point in time?

Over the past 40 years, Nakashima has built a good relationship with China in various areas. During this time, the Chinese shipbuilding industry has grown rapidly and

now boasts the largest market share in the world.

At the same time, Nakashima has established a new vision ahead of its 100th anniversary in business, pushing the company's refined, unique technology and innovation to the next level—shifting from offering propellers and related manufactured goods to becoming a specialist company that optimises propulsion performance, to support ships throughout their entire life cycle. I believe we have opened a new base where our services are needed the most. These services include repairing and restoring products, overhauling them with Nakashima quality, as well as offering propulsive solutions, including retrofits and appendages, for each ship. Going forward, our own engineers will be able to deliver these services for more clients, more readily.

Q. Tell us about your vision beyond the launch of the new office.

In Shanghai, we will operate with Japanese staff for the time being and work to train locally hired engineers and management staff. They will acquire Nakashima's technology along with its spirit, and blend them into their own culture and environment.

In fact, I would be pleased to see the Shanghai office become a model case; when Nakashima reaches its 100th year in business, local workers will have successfully made Nakashima's services take root in their respective countries, in turn making Nakashima quality into a global standard.

Beyond that, my dream is for Nakashima's propulsive solutions to lead ships and humans into a state of harmony with the ecosystem, paving the way for them to play a new role in the world of the sea. ■



Nakashima's Aesthetics

Zenichi Nakashima, who moved from Tottori to the Kojima Bay polder in Okayama, trained as an iron founder. In 1926, he struck out on his own and started Nakashima Foundry with his wife, Matsuko. Valuing harmony, he chose to work with copper alloy so he would not compete with his master. This decision in turn led him to work with propellers. Nakashima's first propeller was made in 1928. For 90 years since, "craftsman" skills and spirit handed down from Zenichi are manifested in Nakashima's culture of *monozukuri* and in its propulsive solutions.

INTROSPECTION — JAPANESE INNOVATION

A Future Born from *Hitori*, the Japanese Self

The last Introspection article highlighted the relationship between Japanese people and nature from ancient times, a source of innovation unique to Japan. It noted that this bond is in danger of being lost in modern Japan.

However, there are moments when that sense of self as a part of nature resurfaces. When the Japanese self stands still in eternal moments of each season—such as when the petals of cherry blossoms fall gently onto the ground, the summer sky hanging over the river is adorned with colorful fireworks, the garden is lit by the moonlight through the rift between clouds while insects of the fall sing their tunes of life, or when trees stand silently on a blanket of snow—the ancient sense of self momentarily comes back to life, even for Japanese people living with the values of modern industrial society.

The religious scholar Tetsuo Yamaori describes the self that is unique to Japan as *hitori* (single person), asserting that the natural environment that forms the Japanese archipelago—both unpredictable and violent, as well as enriching and

restoring—has fostered the Japanese view of self as part of one vast organic body of nature. This world view is reflected in Japanese polytheism and a keen acceptance of impermanence. *Hitori*, he explains, inherently differs from the concept of *ko* (individual), the Western self, an autonomous human being. The two concepts of self are derived from very different views about humans and the world, and the underpinning relationship between self and nature.

Therefore, while the Western self might be credited with vast creative capacity and the drive to manage nature, *hitori*, the Japanese self, brings forth innovations that can unleash the bounties of nature to enrich humans and nature as inseparable beings. Imagine what new form of civilisation could emerge if the wisdoms of *hitori* from Japan and *ko* from the West merged?

Having left land for the first time in a long while, from my sailboat I observed the shore of Japan in the distance and contemplated a future born from *hitori* joined by its counterpart across the sea. ■

NAKASHIMA PROPELLER

We Go Beyond

Headquartered in Japan's Setouchi region, the centre of the country's shipbuilding industry, Nakashima Propeller is a manufacturer of marine propulsion equipment boasting a leading share in marine propellers.

Having started as a foundry for fishing boat propellers, the company has continued to pursue innovation in the capability of propellers to deliver security, safety and comfort. It will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2026.

A ship's optimal state is found when it is viewed from the propeller, the centre of propulsive functions. With this fresh perspective, Nakashima Propeller seeks to offer a full range of services catering to each ship's entire life cycle while achieving fuel efficiency to reduce the burden on the environment. Nakashima Propeller works to contribute to the world, beyond the realm of its industry.

■ OUR STRENGTHS

JAPANESE QUALITY

Nakashima Propeller offers refined in-house capabilities in design and manufacturing. Using a high-performance computer with a 5000 core large-scale processor, Nakashima's craftsmen create a blueprint based on data accumulated from a world-class production history of 1 million propellers. Moreover, with its unique manufacturing skills that integrate cutting-edge technology and experienced craftsmanship, Nakashima is fully equipped to delicately reflect design in manufacturing and deliver reliable Japanese-quality products.

CUSTOMISED PRODUCTION

The propeller is at the centre of optimising propulsion performance—and a hundred different vessels will have a hundred different propellers. Rather than pursuing efficiency as a manufacturer, Nakashima takes pride in its commitment to build-to-order production, designing and manufacturing optimal propellers for each unique ship under an integrated production system.

CUTTING-EDGE USE OF SMART TECHNOLOGY

Nakashima's smart technology is able to define the shape of the high-efficiency propeller's complex three-dimensional, curved surface. By increasing the surface area of machining with adjustments such as modification of the trailing edge, a process requiring special craftsmanship is simplified and speedy production without dispersion is achieved.

SERVICE ANY TIME, ANY PLACE

Nakashima Propeller promptly responds to propeller damage by sending repair engineers from its worldwide network to your site. Nakashima takes into account various conditions such as the ship's fuel efficiency, course and degradation due to ageing to propose solutions such as edge modification, fuel-saving polishing and retrofit, providing detailed support throughout the ship's entire life cycle.

■ OUR SERVICES

Nakashima Propeller designs and manufactures marine propellers (FPP and CPP), thrusters, energy-saving devices for the stern and CFRP propellers.

We also offer a full range of after-sales service, including repair of damaged propellers, edge modification, fuel-saving polishing, support of propulsion equipment for ships in operation and optimisation of propulsion performance for fuel efficiency.

*We provide propellers for ULCS, VLCC, VLOC, VLGC, LNG/LPG-carriers, PCC, cruise ships, working boats, coastal vessels, research vessels and coast guard vessels

*Our services satisfy requirements for all major classification certificates (including ice-class)



"World-recognised Japanese quality cannot be described solely in terms of mechanical precision or reproducibility. Lacquerware used at the dinner table, Japanese knives that are indispensable to create Japanese delicacies—only with the deep commitment and thorough experience of the people who make them can the full potential of such products be unleashed. Our propellers embody the same spirit of Japanese quality."

—H. Kubo, general manager, innovation section, Nakashima Propeller

■ EVENTS

INAMARINE (Jakarta, Indonesia), 23 - 25 August 2017
METS TRADE (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), 14 - 16 November 2017
INTERNATIONAL WORKBOAT SHOW (New Orleans, USA),
29 November - 1 December 2017
MARINTEC CHINA (Shanghai, China), 5 - 8 December 2017

NAKASHIMA PROPELLER CO., LTD.

688-1, Joto-Kitagata, Higashi-ku, Okayama, 709-0625, JAPAN
+81 86 279 5111

npcwebmaster@nakashima.co.jp

Japan • Singapore • Vietnam • Philippines • China
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