

Ueno Tenjin Festival: Kajimachi

Shirushi: Tsuki Hoko

Danjiri: Nitō

The *shirushi* float of Kajimachi, an oversized pole arm with a blade in the shape of a crescent moon, is called Tsuki Hoko, meaning “moon spear.” Its complementary *danjiri* float originally depicted this weapon and was once also called Tsuki Hoko. Later, the *danjiri* design was altered, and its name was changed to Nitō to avoid confusion.

Atop the floral roof of the Nitō *danjiri* is a *genshō*, an architectural feature representing an eye. This *genshō* is decorated with crescent moons in reference to the Tsuki Hoko *shirushi*. The top curtain bears illustrations of falcons and a phoenix in a paulownia tree. Dating to 1886, the middle curtain depicts the Eight Drunken Hermits, a popular (originally Chinese) theme in Japanese art during the Meiji era (1868–1912). The images on the lower side curtains represent a famous drinking poem by Chinese poet Tao Yuanming (365–427):

Pick chrysanthemums beyond the fence in the east
Gaze with a quiet heart at the mountain in the south

The curtains depict a field of chrysanthemums behind a small fence made of brushwood. The front curtain shows an embroidered white elephant with boys dressed in traditional Chinese clothing, and the back curtain displays an embroidered dragon and tiger.

One of the Nitō *danjiri*'s banners was made in China during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). The original is now on display at the Danjiri Museum, but a replica adorns the float during the festival. An image of a dragon among the clouds is embroidered with peacock feather thread in the banner's base fabric, creating a dazzling opalescent effect.