

## Making Mino Washi: The Screening Process

The washi papermaking process is similar across Japan. In Mino, subtle differences increase the durability of the paper. Washi paper is made with a screening technique called *nagashizuki*. A mixture of plant fibers, water, and a viscous dispersant is scooped onto a deckle (frame) mounted with a fine bamboo screen.

### *Aligning the paper fibers*

Three basic actions define *nagashizuki*. First, the papermaker dips the deckle in the slurry and scoops just enough pulp mixture to cover the surface of the screen, then quickly tips off the excess. This quick scoop-and-tip action, called *keshomizu*, lays a thin layer of fibers in one direction to form a smooth paper surface.

### *Intertwining the fibers*

In the next steps known as *tateyuri* and *yokoyuri*, the papermaker scoops a larger quantity of the pulp mixture and rocks the frame back and forth to coat the entire screen cause the long *kozo* fibers to intertwine in several directions. This action is repeated several times until the paper reaches the desired thickness. In most washi-producing regions, this is a back-and-forth action, towards and away from the body. Mino papermakers also rock the mixture from side to side, creating more tear-resistant paper

### *The final touch*

The final action is *haraimizu*. Like *keshomizu*, this is a quick scoop and toss of the pulp mixture, to align the fibers in a single direction and form the outer surface of the paper. As each sheet is screened it is carefully stacked. The stack is pressed overnight to remove excess water before the sheets are separated and dried on boards in the sun.