

SONY®

Cx-News

Sony Semiconductor News

VOL.29





Under Cover

The Soul of Summer

Colorful balloons floating in water: these are “yo-yos”-partly filled with water, they can be bounced from their rubber band loop with a motion much like the basic yo-yo move beyond which most of us never advance. But, more than toys, these humble, simple forms are a distillation of all that is wonderful about summer matsuri, festivals, in Japan.

The summer festival. Floats, drums and flutes, candy, hawkers selling masks, stuffed animals, candy apples, cell phone straps-a constantly changing array of the colorful and the ephemeral, in price ranges affordable by children. The games of skill and chance are games for children: the goldfish catch, for example, in which you can keep all the goldfish you catch with the fragile paper-covered scoop.

The yo-yo catch works on the same principle, but the object of the avid child’s quest (to his mother’s relief) is not swiftly swimming goldfish but bobbing yo-yo balloons. The hook is a w-shaped wire with a paper string, designed to dissolve almost instantly in the water. But the skilful yo-yo artist who avoids soaking the paper while aiming the prongs of her hook at the rubber bands on the yo-yos can bring home quite a catch.

Not everyone manages that-but no matter. Every child who tries the yo-yo catch takes home at least one yo-yo, its satisfying heft and popping sound crystallizing memories of hot nights, festival lights, and summer fun.