



## TARGET CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL PARADE

**CLIENT:** Target

**SERVICES:** Design, Fabrication, Installation



### The Situation

Target has long supported family-friendly national and local community events and for several years has been a presenting sponsor of the National Cherry Blossom Festival, held every spring in Washington, DC. The Cherry Blossom Festival commemorates the 1912 gift of 3,000 cherry trees from the city of Tokyo to the people of Washington, DC.

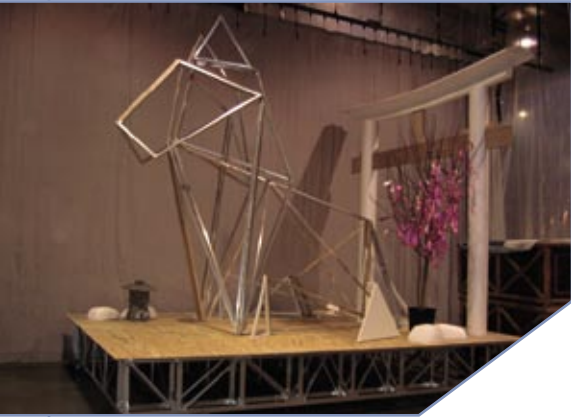
After two weeks of art exhibits, photo safaris, concerts, regattas, fireworks and much more, the Cherry Blossom Festival culminates in a major parade held along the Mall on Constitution Avenue in the heart of Washington. As a presenting sponsor, Target had a choice spot in the parade and wanted to maximize that position with a creative statement worthy of its highly polished brand.

### The Challenge

Target's event marketing team asked VEE to develop ideas for a parade float that would make a strong connection to its brand yet also fit with the Japanese heritage of the Cherry Blossom Festival.

In addition to the overall concept, the float had to be:

- Easily transported from Minneapolis to Washington and stored locally in the Washington area.
- Resilient to the rainy weather typical of Washington in April
- Assembled and ready to join the parade within a tight 3 hour staging window.



## The Solution

VEE's design team pondered float concepts based on a variety of traditional Japanese themes – kabuki, samurai, origami, taiko drumming, wish trees, etc. In considering ways to connect these themes with Target's brand, we came up with the idea of creating a huge origami version of Bullseye, Target's beloved dog mascot.

We presented several renderings to Target, and the Bullseye origami idea was quickly and unanimously chosen as the ideal float concept for Target.

To make sure we perfected the look of true origami, we started with a 12" scale model of the dog, which enabled us to determine the precise angles, section sizes and joints required for the full scale construction.

The float was built with durable, weather resistant, lightweight materials. It was pre-assembled into components in VEE's studios and shipped to Washington, where it was met by a 3 person crew from VEE. At 5:30 AM the day of the parade, our crew arrived onsite and completed the final assembly of the float well before the 10 AM parade kick-off.

As it moved down Constitution Avenue, Target's float was showered with cheers and admiration from a huge crowd, which was delighted by a well-crafted presentation featuring:

- A 12 foot "origami" dog fashioned from aluminum framing and thin, crisp, waterproof fabrics
- A large Torii arch anchoring the back of the float
- A Zen-garden themed platform, complete with rocks and an oversized Japanese lantern
- A faux Japanese wish tree
- An old-world style cart handle that allowed the float to be pulled easily by a 2-man crew
- A corps of kimono clad marchers to accompany the main float, some carrying custom made "bullseye" umbrellas and some walking small, custom made replicas of the central origami dog character.

