

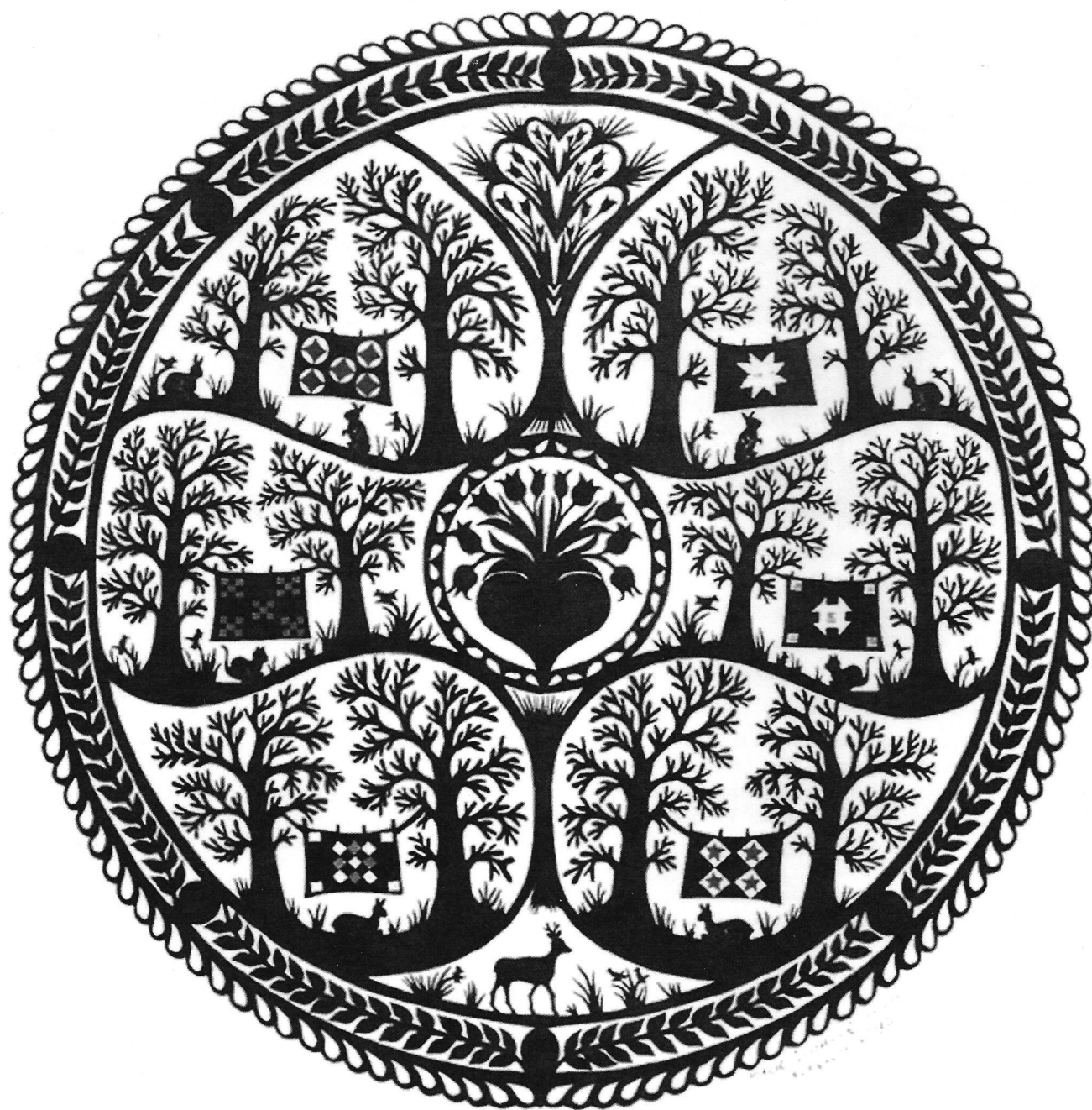
FIRST CUT

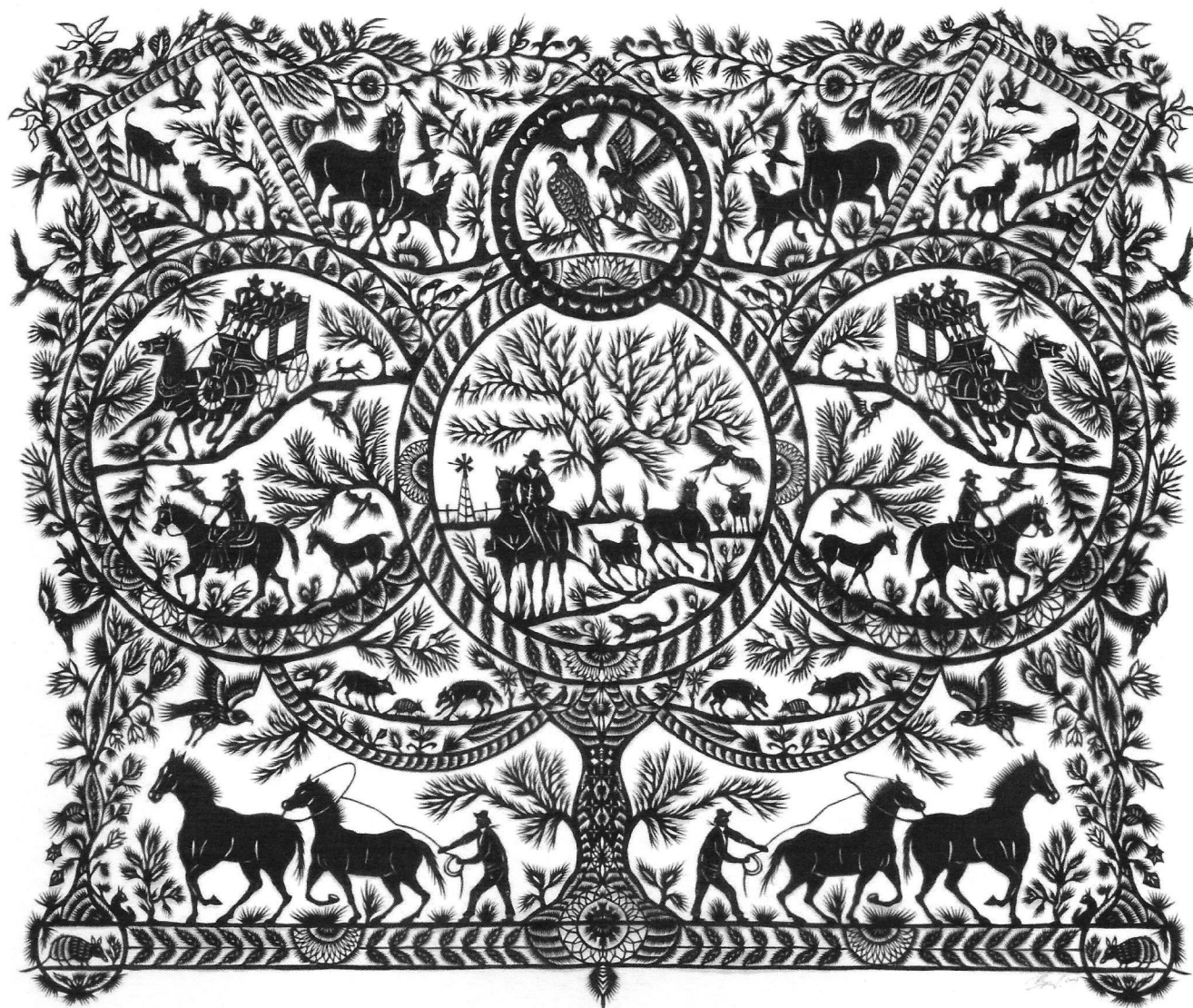
Communication for Members of The Guild of American Papercutters

Volume 23

Number 2

Spring 2008





COME ON © 2008 Catherine Winkler

The **Guild of American Papercutters** is a tax-exempt nonprofit organization dedicated to original papercutting as an art form in all its historical and contemporary styles. The Guild of American Papercutters exercises no artistic or business control over its members other than the encouragement of personal artistic growth and ethical business practices. Membership is welcomed – the Guild has no jury requirements and conducts no contests. For registration, contact Susan Hahn at Guild of American Papercutters, P.O. 384, 214 South Harrison Avenue, Somerset, PA 15530 or email Susan at membership@papercutters.org. Dues for new members which includes the New Members Packet: Individuals \$36US (\$46 international) and Family \$46US (\$56 international). Renewal memberships are \$30US (\$40 international) and Family \$40US (\$50 international). We accept credit card payments for members through the secure online service PayPal indicated on the Guild's website for a small additional charge of \$2: www.papercutters.org. All payments are made in American dollars.

Current Executive Committee: *President-* Kathy Trexel Reed (2010); *Vice-President* – Trudy Kauffman (2010); *Secretary-* Marie-Helene Grabman (2009); *Treasurer* - Darcy Walker (2010); *VP Membership* - Susan Hahn (2010); *VP Exhibits* – Anne Leslie. (2009).

Current Board of Directors: Don Cook (2010), Nancy Cook (2009), David Dorfmueller (2010), Bernie DuPlessis (2009), Carolyn Guest (2009), Beatrice Goodpasture (2011), Barbara Stoop (2011), Pat Stuntz (2010), and Sue Throckmorton (2011). Florine Strimel, *Historian Ad Hoc*

President's Corner

Birthdays are special occasions that call for celebration! Sometimes we join in honoring a friend or family member's special day, and sometimes we ourselves are the recipient of the good wishes and festivities. In May we will celebrate the 20th Anniversary of GAP with these same two focuses at Collection 2008: we will be honoring the extended whole family of GAP which has grown during two decades from a fledgling unit to a healthy institution; and as individuals, we will bask in the pleasures of absorbing new ideas and meeting other people who share our delight in the art form of paper-cutting.

We wish you could all be here, but as sometimes happens, some members of the "family" will be unable to be making the journey to participate in the fun. Our newsletter *FirstCut* will undoubtedly be brimming with follow-up articles that share the workshop experiences, social exchanges, and ambiance of the exhibits and side trips.

We expect that this convention will further cultivate the unity and purpose that have motivated the organization all these twenty years. And we hope that whether you are far away, or right in the middle of the action in Lancaster County, PA, you will enjoy knowing that The Guild of American Papercutters is going forward because we believe there's a GAP future as exciting as the multicultural traditions that have been the seeds for this organization, and because we trust that each of us can help nurture that promise.

GAP President, Kathy Trexel Reed

FIRSTCUT'S Staff Comments

As we move ahead in 2008, we must not forget to thank those, like Angela Mohr, Sandy Gilpin, Michael Marcus, and Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt who have given of their special talents to the Guild and helped make it the organization it is today. I look forward to Angela's continued contributions in writing articles for *FirstCut* as well as her comments and suggestions for making it the well-respected publication it was during her tenure.

Pat Stuntz, FirstCut Staff Member

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Front Cover: QUILT CELEBRATION

© 2008 Marie-Helene Grabman

Back Cover:

UNTITLED © 2008 Roma Starczewska

Member Homework

Summer: Silhouettes of summer activities, birthdays, clowns, butterflies

Autumn: Pumpkins, squash, harvest, cuts portraying humor, alphabet letters

Winter: Papercut illustrations of a favorite quote, snow sports

Spring: Birds, mythical creatures

FIRSTCUT Deadlines

Summer – June 15; **Autumn** - September 15;

Winter – December 15; **Spring** – March 15

All submissions for publication are sent to
Pat Stuntz, 10 Cardinal Drive, Fleetwood, PA 19522 or emailed to pnstuntz@dejazzd.com.

NOTE: We publish deadlines for the entire year to give members adequate time to plan for submissions.

Guild Business

The Guild of American Papercutters Board Meeting was called to order on March 8, 2008 by President Kathy Trexel Reed at Judi's Art Gallery and Custom Framing, 2159 Market Street, Camp Hill PA, the studio of GAP member Judi Das.

Board Members Attending: Kathy Trexel Reed, Bernie DuPlessis, Trudy Kauffman, Sandra Gilpin, Florine Strimel, Pat Stuntz, Don and Nancy Cook and Marie-Helene Grabman

Board Members via cell phone: David Dorfmueller, Darcy Walker, Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt, and Anne Leslie
Also with us: Sharon and Ed Schaich, Marcia Egan, Faye DuPlessis, and Judi Das.

Minutes of the last Board Meeting 10/20/2007 - previously approved and published.

Addendum to the Minutes - Motions, votes and business transacted via the internet since the last Board meeting:

The Community Foundation of the Alleghenies has awarded \$2000 to fund the partnership between Laurel Arts and the Guild of American Papercutters. This funding will help to equip the centralized office, and can be used to purchase assorted display cases, filing cabinet, shelving unit, archival supplies and hp scanner. This money will be deposited into the LA operating fund in late December. The GAP board will be consulted about expenditures. The final report of the application of the grant money is due by September 1, 2008.

On November 2, 2007, a motion was made by Don Cook, seconded by Bernie DuPlessis, and Sandra Gilpin, to pro-rate the membership dues for those who join mid-year. Those who join in the 1st quarter - \$36; 2nd quarter - \$27; 3rd quarter - \$18; 4th quarter - \$9.

Motion passed.

It was suggested that the minutes of the Board be posted on the GAP website as well as published in FirstCut. No vote was taken but there were no objections to this.

On January 19, 2008, a motion was made and seconded by Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt and Bernie DuPlessis to reimburse Pat Stuntz for the costs of a computer class and software at the community college (Costs: \$285) to publish FirstCut.

A vote was also taken to purchase, with money obtained from our grant from the Community Foundation of the Alleghenies, a scanner, professional display cases, shelving units, filing cabinets and archival materials for storing items.

Motions passed.

Motion to accept the Addendum: Sandra Gilpin; 2nd Bernie DuPlessis. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Darcy Walker emailed her report. Income this Quarter: \$21,761.45 (This figure includes all Collection money received to date.)

Expenses this Quarter: \$4,722.73 (NOTE: Most Collection expenses not yet paid; the funds will be due to venues and vendors in May at Collection.)

Detailed report attached to secretary's minutes.

Motion to accept the report: Sandra Gilpin; 2nd Bernie DuPlessis. Motion passed.

Membership: Susan Hahn and David Dorfmueller have been updating the membership records. David reported, via cell phone, that as of February 25, there are 323 members in the US and 23 international members for a total of 346 GAP members. David has supplied labels to Pat for FirstCut. Andrew Meserole has successfully linked the PayPal option for payment of dues on the website to the bank account.

Board Replacements: Four new Board Members were voted in at this meeting. They are Carolyn Guest, who will serve a 1 year term, ending March 2009, replacing Angela Mohr who has resigned; Susan Throckmorton, Barbara Stoop and Beatrice Goodpasture, who will all serve full 3 year terms, ending March 2011. They replace Sandra Gilpin, Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt and Michael Marcus (who resigned in 2006).

A motion to accept this slate of Directors was made by Trudy Kauffman, 2nd Pat Stuntz; Motion passed.

Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt and Kerch McConlogue have been researching our By-Laws to clarify the Board positions. More work and discussion is needed. Our By-Laws state that Board changes need to be made in the first quarter of each year, and they recommend all the Board members have their term end dates listed in FirstCut. The appointment of an Advisory Committee, made up of charter and former Board Members, was tabled for future discussion.

OLD BUSINESS:

Collection 2008: Sharon Schaich and Sandra Gilpin gave an update on plans for Collection. There are 90 people registered (65 GAP members) for Collection, with a few more expected.

There will be 55 pieces of art in the "Plain and Fancy" exhibit.

A brochure that gives information on GAP - history and contact information - needs to be developed for both the exhibit at the Landis Valley Farm Museum and for

members' own use. Pat Stuntz volunteered to develop the brochure.

We will have a number of foreign visitors at Collection. A group of Chinese artists and professor are trying to get visas to attend. They asked the Guild for assistance with getting visas. The Guild does not feel we are in a position to do this. They also wanted the Guild to develop a book with them. The small Collection Committee does not have anyone with the time or resources for a project like this at this time. Copyright laws present difficulty.

The Collection 2008 attendees will be asked about their preferences for future Collections and solicit a volunteer committee. 3 years between Collections was suggested.

Publications: Pat Stuntz reported that she has found a new printing company near her home and she will be doing the layout of FirstCut herself, which will reduce costs. She is having difficulty getting members to submit pictures of their work. The publication dates will change. New dates are: Winter-February 1; Spring-May 1; Summer-August 1; Fall-November 1. We will continue to use first class postage, offsetting this increased expense with the layout savings. Pat plans to use a colored dues renewal insert in the Fall issue of FirstCut. There will be no more than 20-25 excess issues of each FirstCut edition printed, some for the archives and the rest to distribute. She is also developing a new generic Hold Harmless agreement that will be posted on the website for all future traveling shows and exhibitions. David Dorfmueller is investigating the publishing of past and future FirstCut editions on the GAP website. He will work with Andrew Meserole to upload the .pdf files as well as develop a password security system. A price of \$5 per copy was suggested.

Permanent Collection: Kathy Trexel Reed distributed a draft of a Collection Policy and requested a committee be formed to revise the draft of a Memorandum of Understanding between GAP and LA and also revise the draft of a Collection Policy for a Museum permanent collection. Pat Stuntz and Marie-Helene Grabman will work with Kathy.

Kathy suggested we have an annual end-of-year appeal for an Endowment Fund. This year's appeal should highlight the progress on the Museum. A GAP member has offered to give us her collection of European paper cuttings to begin the creation of a permanent collection. Our Museum Certificate of Deposit will be coming due in May. It will be moved to a Somerset banking institution.

A "Cutting for a Cause" article by Angela Mohr was printed in the Fall FirstCut. This project would be our outreach project to raise donations for the Hand

Rehabilitation Foundation. Our accountant advises us this is allowable. The project will be discussed in the Open Forum at Collection.

The Guild was asked to donate \$250 to help defray the costs of the Landis Valley Farm Museum's curated and extensive antique papercutting exhibit during Collection and through December at the museum.

A motion was made by Bernie DuPlessis to contribute the \$250 to the Landis Valley Associates, and to accept financial gifts to GAP from our members to replenish these checking account funds. 2nd Pat Stuntz. Motion passed.

Kathy Trexel Reed, Wendy Boyer (bookkeeper) and John Farkosh (pro bono CPA), are preparing and filing our 501c3 forms (IRS form 8734; PA Form 5110; IRS Tax Form 990; BCO-10, BCO-23; and "eTIDES" quarterly) and Wendy and John are placing all Guild financial records from 2006-7 on CD's. Former CPA firm, ELKO associates, is investigating a possible IRS tax penalty we were notified about due to prior computation errors.

NEW BUSINESS:

A possible new GAP publication, The Joy of Papercutting, will be discussed in a Round Table discussion at Collection. Sue Throckmorton, Debbie Baird and Kathy Reed are working on this project. Reimbursement Vouchers were distributed. Board members need to copy and submit the form with receipts.

Future GAP Board Meeting dates were finalized: July 19 Pat Stuntz will host; October 18 Don and Nancy Cook will host.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Sandra Gilpin; 2nd Darcy Walker. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie-Helene Grabman



CAT © 2008 Florinda Strimel

GAP Welcomes Four New Board Members

Carolyn Guest grew up cutting paper for fun and cutting paper for pattern making. In 1976, she was selected to represent Vermont as a delegate to Poland for the International 4-H Youth Exchange. Just before returning home, her host father gave her a few wycinanki (paper cut) note cards. Carolyn's interest was sparked, an interest that led her back to Poland six times, to many new friends, and many opportunities to share some of the rich Polish heritage here in the United States.

Since then, she has exhibited her work at galleries, libraries, and cafes in the US. Carolyn continues to teach workshops and classes for all ages and to promote the art of papercutting. Carolyn has been a member of the Guild of American Papercutters since 1992.

Carolyn incorporates her rural Vermont heritage and traditional Polish folk motifs into her cuttings. All cuttings are crafted with 13½" sheep shears and by sketching or cutting her designs freehand. She has chosen to continue with this traditional tool in tribute to the women who for many years did not have a choice of scissors. It has been her challenge to see what can be cut with them.

Susan Throckmorton is an American citizen who has been living in Poland since 1988. When Susan first came to Poland, she became interested in Polish folk art, especially wycinanki. Susan decided to take early retirement from her teaching job in 1998 so that she could spend more time writing books and plays for children, but, instead, after making a papercutting as a gift for some friends who were leaving Poland, her life took another direction, and she has been passionately cutting paper ever since.

Although Susan's first work was done in the style of traditional Polish style papercuttings, which she still does, her work has broadened to include many themes and methods. For example, she taught herself to make Jewish papercuttings in the Eastern European style. Her favorite themes are cats, birds, and other animals as well as trees and flowers and subjects like Noah's Ark, the four seasons, folk tales, etc.

Susan has belonged to the Guild of American Papercutters since 1997 and likes to write articles

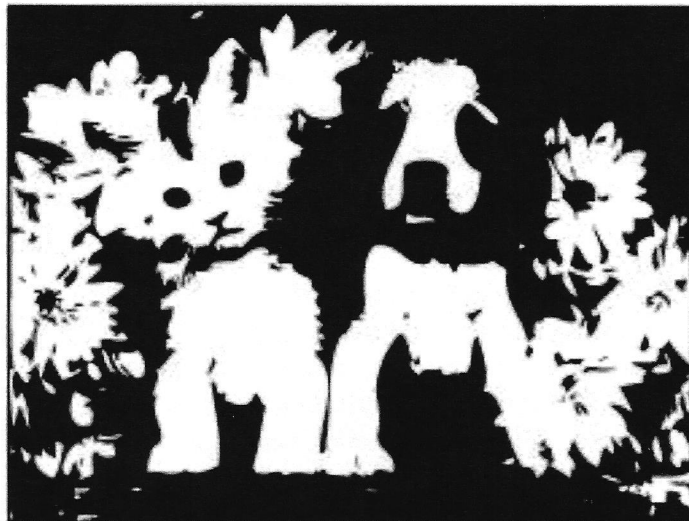
about Polish wycinanki for FirstCut. Her goal is to still write books for children but now she also wants to illustrate them with her papercuttings.

Barbara Stoop attended West Virginia University, has masters degrees from Harvard Divinity School and from the Presbyterian School of Christian Education. She has been an ordained Presbyterian minister for the past 27 years, and currently serves a church in Greenville, South Carolina. Barbara learned paper cutting from Elsbietta Kaleta at a conference center at Ghost Ranch, New Mexico. She has been cutting paper since 1994, and especially likes the Polish style and colors of wycinanki, and loves the theme of the tree of life. She learned to cut using curved scissors and has moved to cutting with a MagEyes magnifying lens, and this in combination with good scissors has made her work a lot more fun and precise. After taking a class on making paste paper, Barbara has begun painting most of the colored paper that she uses. She cooks a paste out of corn starch, mixes in various colors of acrylic paint, and paint on damp paper. The combination of paste and paint is able to produce hand painted papers with subtle textures and colors. Barbara lives close to Ashville, and to the Biltmore House, and has had the pleasure of helping to hang our annual Christmas exhibit there for the past several years.

For the past sixteen years **Beatriz Goodpasture** has created and cut designs for fiestas, weddings, and all kinds of ceremonial gatherings. She is considered a Master Papercutter of *papel picado* (Mexican tissue paper cuttings.) She is also trained in Polish paper art, Jewish papercutting, Ukrainian and Scandinavian Easter designs, German and Swiss Scherenschnitte, traditional Valentine papercuts, silhouettes, USA patriotic and quilt designs, and traditional Asian patterns.

Bea has provided papercutting instruction to resource specialists, district teachers, parents, and students (all levels.) Participants receive historical information and the proper use of tools while they snip their designs. It is her goal to provide cultural experiences through the art of cut paper. Bea hopes to play a role in preserving papercutting traditions. She also hopes to create a vehicle for personal expression and understanding of cultural diversity with scissors and knives.

Signs of Spring



KITTY AND PUP © 2008 Florinda Strimel



Britta

UNTITLED © 2008 Britta Kling



SWEETHEART ROSES © 2008 Peg Gleason

Member Reminders

Collection 2008

Lancaster Bible College, Lancaster, PA
May 21-25, 2008 (Memorial Day Weekend)

(99 participants registered; countries represented
outside US—Canada, Israel, England, Poland,
Holland)

Exhibitions

"Plain and Fancy: Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Guild of American Papercutters"

April 5-May 18, 2008

Lancaster Museum of Art, 135 North Lime Street
Lancaster, PA 17602

This exhibit will then move to the campus of the
Lancaster Bible College during Collection 2008.

"The Cutting Art"

May 3 through the end of the year, 2008

The Landis Valley Museum

2451 Kissel Hill Rd., Lancaster, PA

There will be a reception on Friday evening, May 2.
Museum hours are 9-5 Mon - Sat and 12-5 Sunday.

The exhibit will consist of works from
private and museum collections,
international and American paper artists,
contemporary and antique pieces.

The Bait Box and Shoe Box Exhibits

are temporarily housed at Laurel Arts,
Somerset, PA, home of GAP's centralized national
office. GAP and LA will be developing a
Memorandum of Understanding to possibly establish
a Papercutting Museum together
at Laurel Arts in the future.

Spring Quarter GAP Meeting

Lancaster Bible College, Lancaster, PA
May 21-25, 2008 (Memorial Day Weekend)

Summer Quarter GAP Meeting

Saturday, July 19, 2008

Pat Stuntz will host.

10 Cardinal Drive, Fleetwood, PA

(See directions at right.)

Fall Quarter GAP Meeting

October 18, 2008

Don and Nancy Cook will host.

Trappe, MD.

Traveling Shows

Look for a **Call For Entries**

for two new exhibition opportunities.

GAP will mount a joint exhibition with the Del Ray
Artisans, Alexandria, VA in November and
December. The Del Ray Artisans Gallery has been
voted the #1 place to view art by readers of
The Alexandria Times.

Also this Fall, we have been invited for the fourth
year to display our work at the
Biltmore Estate, Asheville, NC.

More information will be in the Summer FirstCut.

New Hold Harmless Agreement Form for all Guild Sponsored Shows

We now have a new Hold Harmless Form that may be
used for the various shows and exhibits.

For each show, two forms are needed:

1. The entry form
2. The Hold Harmless Form

Since each show might have a different contact person,
the new Hold Harmless Form directs you to send **both**
forms to the contact person mentioned on the Entry
Form.

When entering the Guild's exhibits, you can now access
the Hold Harmless form on the GAP website:
www.papercutters.org.

Directions to the Summer Meeting

From Reading, PA take Route 12 E toward
Pricetown. Cross routes 73 and 662. After crossing
662, continue about 1.5 miles and turn right onto
Orchard Road. Go to a four way stop sign. Turn left
onto Crestview Drive (entering the Forest Ridge
Development). Take the first right turn on Highland
Drive, then make a right turn onto Cardinal Drive,
which is a private road.*

***Do not use MapQuest** to locate Cardinal Drive. It
will send you to the wrong address.

Please RSVP if you plan to attend.
(610-987-0828)

Pat will provide drinks and dessert.
Bring scissors!

New Features in FirstCut

Everyone is aware of Debbie Baird's article "Transitions" in which she issues challenges to develop creativity. We have three GAP members- Peg Gleason, Phyllis Davidson, and Sue Neff- who responded with creative interpretations to the second challenge to develop a cut using selections from Debbie's "seed design elements". Check out these cuttings on page 21.

Another new column is "Ideas and Inspirations", in which Catherine Winkler and Susan Throckmorton share their common interest in Native American culture. (See page 24.) For the summer issue, Susan Hahn will share her cutting of a particular architectural structure. If you have a cutting of a structure that inspires you, send your cutting, along with a photo and a paragraph telling what the structure is and why it inspired you to create the cut and we will feature it in this article.

GAP Scissors Cases Still Available

Scissors, X-acto-knife, cell phone, or eyeglasses can fit into this khaki colored three-pocket case with either red or black embroidered GAP logo—seamstress choice.

Each pocket measures 6" x 3 1/2 ".
Opened case (6" x 11") reveals a top fold-over flap and Velcro closure tabs.

PRICE; \$12.72 (includes the PA sales tax) if case will be picked up at Collection 2008, \$15.90 (includes state sales tax required for PA residents) if case must be mailed to customer in PA, \$15.00 mailed to all non-PA residents.

Please make checks payable to "Guild of American Papercutters" and send to:

**Kathy Trexel Reed
153 Black Bear Run
Berlin, PA 15530-8018**

Volunteers Needed- You or Someone You Know?

Volunteers are still needed for the following positions in the Guild of American Papercutters. To express interest in any of these positions, or ask questions, please contact Don Cook at 410-476-5068 or email dcook@chesapeake.net.

VP Administration & Development

A new position due to our new tax-exempt status, this volunteer would be responsible for managing the contacts with the IRS, the state of Pennsylvania, and others as required including preparing the required forms and documents (often in conjunction with the Treasurer) as well as seeking funding through grants or other sources as appropriate.

We will have the periodic reports and/or forms spelled out with timing, format, where they go and a copy of the most recent (first) version. It's just that somebody has to keep an eye on this, see that they get done, and be prepared to call our attorney if necessary. The grant writing part will require some research (primarily on the internet) and some grant writing practice.

VP Programs Chairman

This volunteer plans the papercutting programs presented at our quarterly meetings. Programs are planned in conjunction with a Board meeting so after the business is concluded, there is a program for the general membership: a visiting papercutter presents his/her art, a tour is given of a papercutting exhibit, papers or framing techniques are explored. Sometimes the program is arranged around the location of the meeting, and sometimes the meeting location is arranged around the program.



TASTE OF GRASS ©2006 Edie Johnstone

Member Commentary

From Marie-Helene Grabman:

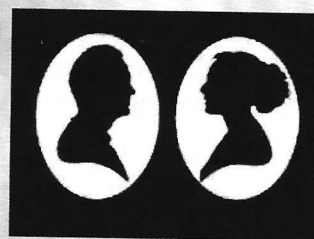
Kara Walker has an installation of some work in Washington, DC. Kara won the Lecelia Artist award in 2004. All the work of the winning artists is currently on exhibition at the Smithsonian American Art Museum (also known as the Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture). Kara has a long wall with one of her series of cuttings displayed her typical subject of slaves in the antebellum South, but less "graphic" than that now in NYC. It will be at the Smithsonian until June 22. This exhibition is right next to the Folk Art section. If you have never seen the expanded Folk Art Collection of the museum, it is wonderful. And, this museum is "connected" to the recently reopened National Portrait Gallery.

From Ursula Kirchner:

I have read First Cut and find it interesting. However, I just don't agree with what some people think about patterns. I have been working with grown-ups and children. I like the freedom (or liberty) of the scissors. You can use any paper you like and you can work in any place you prefer. I have my scissors always in my purse. I can use leaflets, paper from magazines (This is what Hauswirth did.) Or lately I like to use newspapers. I use anything I find. I make drawings with china-ink or colored inks. I make Inkspot and fold the paper. Then I see what comes out of that. I take my pen and add all sorts of things, like faces and flowers and animals or abstract things. Lately I cut with a design or without. People love to do that. They cut with the scissors I give them. They add or take away. It is amazing. And they learn papercutting, just by doing it. I find the knife interesting; however, it doesn't allow so many possibilities. I just don't see why there should be a difference between German and American papercutters. Either they are artists or they are not. Suzi Zimmerer and Keith Kleespies are wonderful artists and so is Alice Helen Masek. They have ideas. That's the main point. Technique must be self-evident or obvious.

When I begin to teach people, I tell people to fold a piece of paper and cut their neighbor. They are surprised but they do it, and they are surprised how good this image is. I ask them to do it in a way that the nose looks in the direction of the fold. Then I tell them to open the remnants of the paper. It is a sort of figure. I show them, by cutting eyes in it. And then I tell them to make a little dwarf with big arms and fingers!! And small feet, and a huge hat. Everybody has something different and it is funny. I give them a bigger paper, and tell them to cut a giant. A giant has a small head and a huge body and legs etc. A dwarf has a big head, and a small body. They are told to cut a number of dwarfs or giants or mix them. Most of them find out, what is essential. I don't agree that European art is different from American art. An artist is an artist. And I think there is no difference whatever.

WANTED



A FEW GOOD
PAPERCUTTERS
WITH A SENSE OF HUMOR

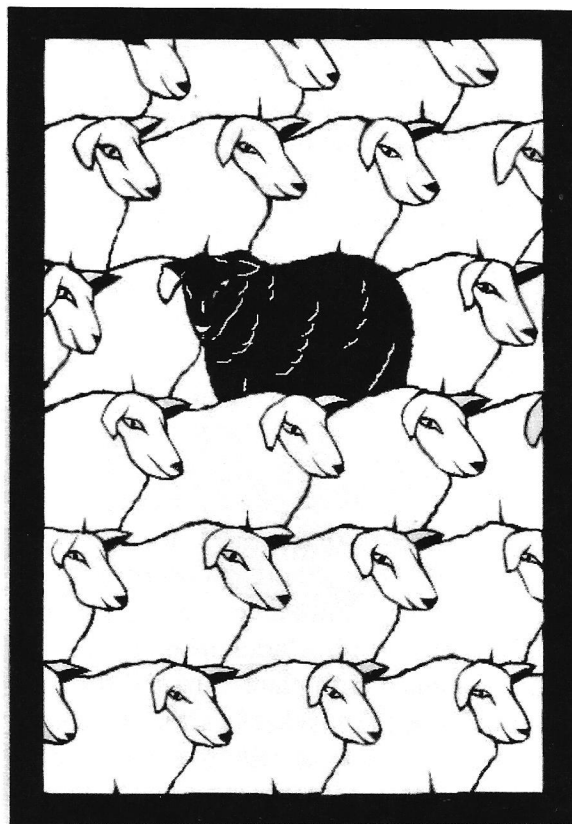
TO SUBMIT FUNNY, EXAGGERATED,
OR LAUGHABLE CUTTINGS
FOR THE AUTUMN ISSUE
OF FIRSTCUT.

From Susan Throckmorton:

I thought it would be fun to try something funny in paper--- an illustration of a funny situation or event, a humorous saying, a funny take-off on something more serious, a pun or another play on words, etc. If we could only get a lot of people to participate and try to devote all or almost of an issue to "Fun with Paper" or "Fooling Around with Paper," or some such idea, it would be different and fun. For example, I'm sending you a copy of one I might send. It's called, "There's One in Every Crowd!" I sold it to a psychiatrist who said he was going to hang it in his office.

Ed Note: Check out the "Member Homework" for the fall issue!

THERE'S ONE IN EVERY CROWD
© 2008 Susan Throckmorton



Paper Angels

A big "thank you" goes out to our newest "Paper Angels" who have sent donations since the beginning of January, 2008:

Barbara Barrett
Nancy Cook
Jupi Das
Evelyn Devonshire
Wanda Dick
Bernard and
Fay DuPlessis
Linda Emmerson
Susan Fulcher
Linda Heiser
Delores Houchin
Sheryl Jaeger

Ursula Kirchner
Carvel Markley
Alice Helen Masek
Randal McGee
Jan Neale
Kathy Reed
Irene Reichert
Ingrid Schenck
Tilly Schouten
Joan Thompson
Beth Wunder



Detail from an untitled papercutting
©2008 Trudy Kauffman

Allelujah! Leluje!

by Susan Throckmorton

On Easter each year in the churches throughout Poland these words ring out, “Alejuje, Chrystus zmartwystal!” (“Alleluia, Christ is risen!”) It’s no wonder then that many years ago a popular type of papercutting put up to decorate the newly whitewashed walls of village cottages at that time of year was called a leluje. Shaped like a church monstrance, some say, or a tree of life, others think, this papercutting is still as popular as it was many years ago, although for different reasons.

The leluje comes from an area in Poland north of Warsaw known as Kurpie. (Fig. 1) Regardless of its origin, as a potted lily or a tree, most of us will recognize its classic form: a vertical, symmetrical shape of one color with a large open or closed crown, ornamented with plant, bird and sometimes other animal motifs and a kind of “trunk” leading down to a smaller base, usually with twin birds, most often roosters, on either side. Although the leluje is deceptively simple-looking, the papercutters were inventive and made countless numbers of individual variations. (Fig. 2)



Figure 2

The leluje today is the most recognizable form of papercutting from Kurpie to most of us, but perhaps few are aware that the area is rich in many other types of papercuttings. In fact, probably the first Polish papercuttings originated in Kurpie in the form of white curtains, borders protecting broken mirrors and ribbons decorating holy pictures. (See my article “Firanki: Poland’s First Papercuttings”, *First Cut*, Winter, 2006, pp. 22-27.) Some ethnographers believe these originated from the toothed white paper sold by Jews in the 19th century to decorate shelves and windows. The later production of shiny colored paper led to the development of papercutting in other forms.

MAP OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

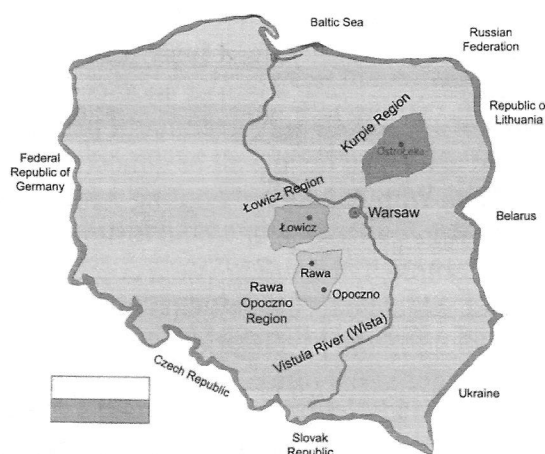


Figure 1

Within the Kurpie area, we can actually distinguish two sub-regions by their own customs and traditions. Known as the “Green Forest” and “White Forest,” they have preserved their ancient cultures in music, dance and art, including papercutting. It is in the Green Forest area that we find the leluje.

One of the most beautiful papercuttings from the Green Forest is the kolo (circle), also called a gwiozda or “star,” although it has lost its resemblance to a star today. One color, it is round and filled with openwork of geometrical and floral motifs. Cut from multi-folded paper, it can have anywhere from 6 to 64 repeats (Fig. 3)

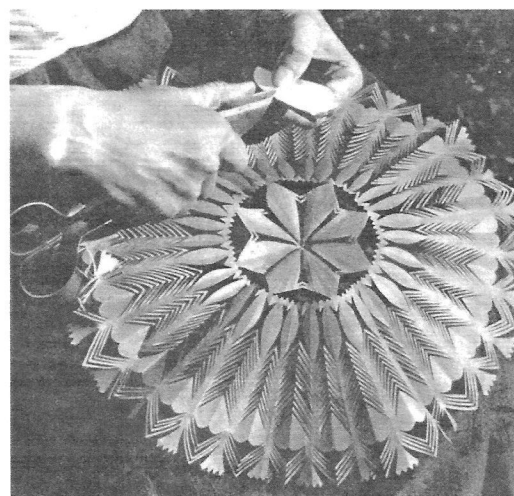


Figure 3

Besides these, we can also find singles or pairs of koguty and ptaki (roosters and birds), ornamented with pieces of colored paper (Fig. 4);



Figure 4

pawie (peacocks), again decorated with colored paper and with open tails of a few single feathers (Fig. 5); konie (horses), many-colored asymmetric silhouettes of horses and their riders. (Fig. 6); symmetrical or asymmetrical scenes in many colors of country life and papercuttings related to such holidays as Christmas and Easter which are more recent additions. (Fig. 7a and 7b)

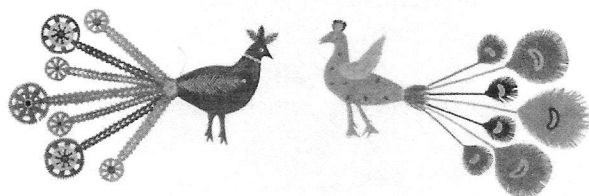


Figure 5

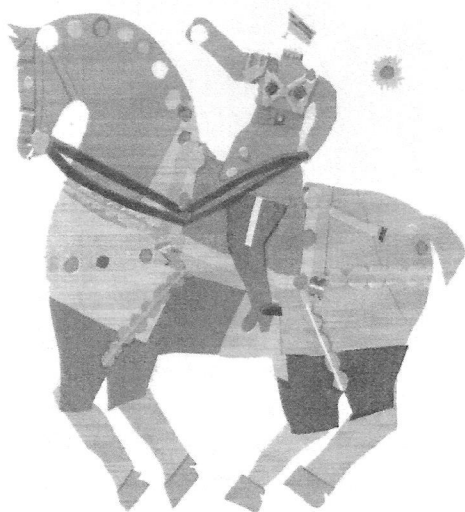


Figure 6

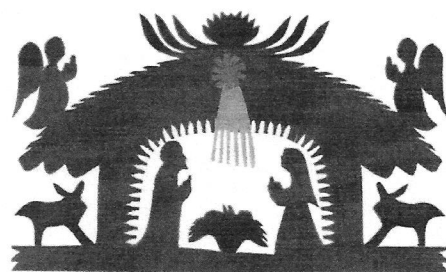


Figure 7a



Figure 7b

Papercuttings from the White Forest are less well documented. There are only a few examples preserved in museums today. After WWII there was a revival in papercutting, in general, by the new Communist government. Efforts were made to retrieve and organize collections of papercuttings, encouragement given to artists in many ways and, in particular, in Kurpie, competitions were arranged in the traditional ornamentation of house interiors. There was a lack of development in the White Forest area, however, and forms developed later were not much different from the 1940's and 50's. Gradually, interest died out, and with it, papercuttings from this area. What scant research has revealed, however, is that several forms did exist, and some of them were significantly different from those in the Green Forest area. Two, in particular, stand out: the *zielko* and *wstega*.

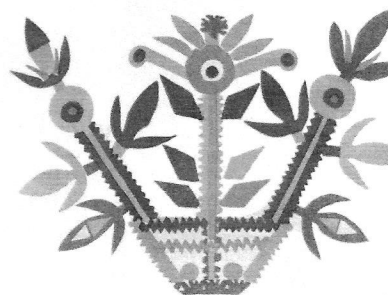


Figure 8

The *zielko* (herb) was the most original style. Related to a potted flower, its base often had a trapezoidal shape (i.e., like a pot), a circle or a rectangle. From the base were three branches extending upward and ending in flowers, roosters or even human silhouettes. They were ornamented with layers of colored paper, usually imitating the three colors in the local costumes, red, green and yellow, and sometimes had added bits of silver paper. (Fig. 8) An even more classical form was made of one color and folded along only one axis. It is believed that this might have been the prototype of the first *leluje*. (Fig. 9)



Figure 9

The *wstega* (ribbon), relating to the ribbons hanging down a bride's back from her headpiece, was composed of two multicolored "ribbons" descending from a full *gwiozda* (star) and divided into sections with openwork between rosettes. Again the colors were often the same as those on local costumes and fabrics. (Fig. 10)



Figure 10

Besides these papercutting forms, was the *kola* or *gwiozda*, usually cut out of one color filled with openwork in abstract patterns (no animals or flowers) radiating from the center and glued on a contrasting color of the same size. (Fig. 11) There were also single, symmetrical silhouettes of women and profiles of single or paired roosters or small birds with bits of colored paper glued on to imitate feathers as well as figural compositions with profiles of people, horses with carts, riders, plowmen, etc., However, there are no examples of the latter today as they were all destroyed at the beginning of WWII.



Figure 11

All of the papercuttings from Kurpie were arranged and glued to the wall singly or in the form of a frieze, usually with the birds flying above as they do in nature. The *gwiazdy* were also glued to the ceiling beams where they contrasted nicely with the unpainted wood. (Fig. 12)



Figure 12

After 1930, the custom of decorating the interiors of houses with papercuttings largely disappeared. As mentioned before, the postwar Communist government, eager to promote the folk traditions of its proletariat, were responsible for a renaissance of folk art, including papercutting. (Seemy article "Tradition Versus Social Realism, First Cut, Spring, 2006, pp. 17-22.)

After 1950 with government encouragement, cooperatives were established with whole families engaged in papercutting. The “rules” of papercutting forms and techniques were well established by that time. Papercutters were supplied with paper and required to make the largest number possible from each piece to give to the local government to sell. So regimented was the production that the size of a *leluje*, for example, was regulated to 25 cm X 11 cm. Nevertheless, there were a few stylistic “innovations.” At the beginning of the 1950’s the *las* (forest) was developed which was a symmetrical composition with three levels representing a stylized forest with trees, animals and birds. This has already become a classic form. (Fig. 13)



Figure 13

In the 60’s and 70’s at the height of the Communist government push to use papercutting as propaganda, *leluje* and other forms were styled to support the Communist Party’s principles, but this was only a temporary aberration. In the 1980’s silhouettes of the Pope, the Madonna and child, dancing couples and other themes were incorporated into the center of the *gwiazda* form. (Fig. 14) In general, however, the forms of papercutting from Kurpie have largely remained the same; only the function has changed.



Figure 14

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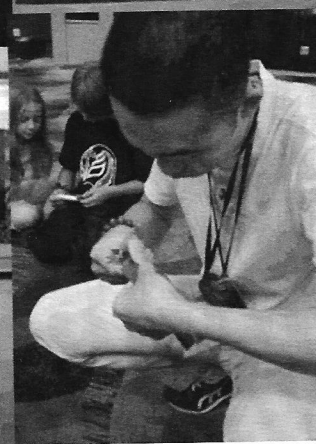
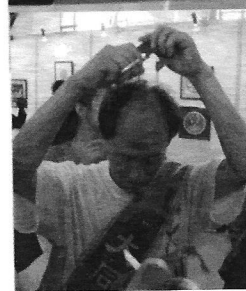
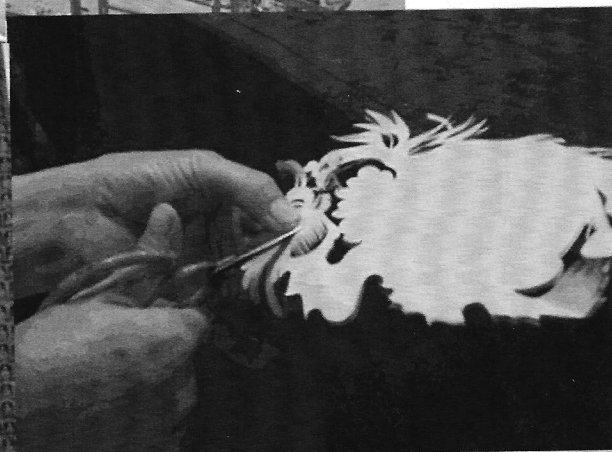
Citations

- Fig. 1 Map of the Republic of Poland, in Nowacka-Jannotta, p. 14
- Fig. 2 *Leluje*, 1949-1979, in Blachowski, *Etnografia*, p. 129
- Fig. 3 *Leluje Kurpiowska*, in Telakowska, p.113
- Fig. 4 *Ptak and Kogut* from the author’s collection
- Fig. 5 *Pawie* by M. Jeziorowska, in Pokropek, p. V
- Fig. 6 *Konie*, Anon., in Grabowski, *Wycinanka Kurpiowska*, Table 21
- Fig. 7 *Szopka and Jajko* from the author’s collection
- Fig. 8 *Zielko*, Anon., in Grabowski, *Wycinanka Kurpiowska*, Table 20
- Fig. 9 *Zielko*, Anon., 1977, in Samsel, ill. 10
- Fig. 10 *Wstega*, by Aleksandra Liwska, 1982, in Samsel, ill. 9
- Fig. 11 *Kola*, by Aleksandra Liwska, 1982, in Samsel, ill. 11
- Fig. 12 *Room of Czeslawa Konopka*, 1949, in Blachowski, *Etnografia*, p. 128
- Fig. 13 *Las*, by Stanislaw Bakulowa, 1969, in Szeska, p. 189
- Fig. 14 *Kolka z wizerunkiem papieza Jana Pawla II*, by A Nowak, 2004, in Pokropek, p. 22

Third International Papercutting Festival



Datong, China
August 22-25, 2007





Photographs courtesy of Susan Throckmorton

All in the Family

Compiled by Pat Stuntz

Family influences in the arts have been around for centuries. Mozart's father was an accomplished musician who was employed at the court of the Archbishop of Salzburg and led the court orchestra there. Moving to modern times, realist painter Andrew Wyeth is the father of artist Jamie Wyeth and son of illustrator N.C. Wyeth. GAP members are no exception: family influences definitely abound in the papercutting arts.

Lauren Darrouzet is a junior at North Texas University who also happens to be the granddaughter of Faye and Bernie DuPlessis. Lauren is an art major who had a unique sophomore design project. The assignment was to make paper shoes, all paper, with at least a one inch platform sole which would support her weight. Lauren's shoes have about a three inch platform. The shoes were a project done in her 3-D design course. The assignment parameters were very specific. The students could use only white Bristol board and glue. They had to create shoes that would both fit their feet and describe their personality, without representing a typical shoe design. Lauren chose a phoenix and a tree for the designs as they have a lot of meaning for her. One shoe shows a gnarled, twisted tree trunk and the other shoe features a bird's nest with the phoenix perched on top.



UNTITLED © 2008 Lauren Darrouzet

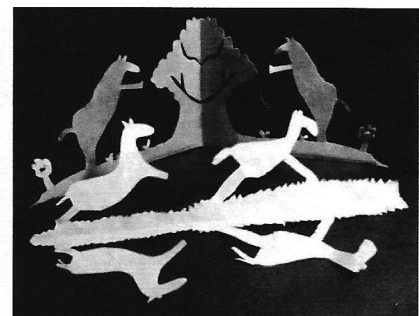
Bernie and Faye have a large blended family of seven children and seventeen grandchildren. Several, from both sides of the family, are artistically talented and several of these have tried their hands at cutting paper.

Faye says she can't take credit for their talent but she hopes she has given them an exposure to the variety of art forms.



MERMAIDS © 2008 Faye DuPlessis

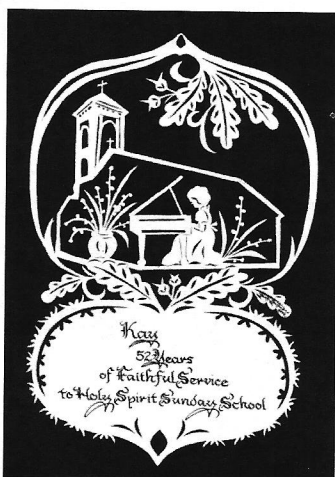
Trudy Kauffman has two granddaughters who show promise as papercutters. Granddaughter Allison cut a pink rabbit at the age of five. Granddaughter Samantha, who is now seven, began cutting at the age of two. As a teacher, Trudy is well aware of the importance of exposing children to design concepts that will help them develop their cutting skills. Trudy notes that Samantha understands the concept of the fold in papercutting and can draw half of an image to create her symmetrical cuts. Although Samantha has used her grandmother's designs, Trudy has encouraged her to go a step further and develop her own designs and to go taller. Samantha took the cutting process a step further recently and created a paper sculpture of a castle, which was totally her own idea. (See *Samantha's castle* on page 25.)



Cuttings by Samantha, Age 7



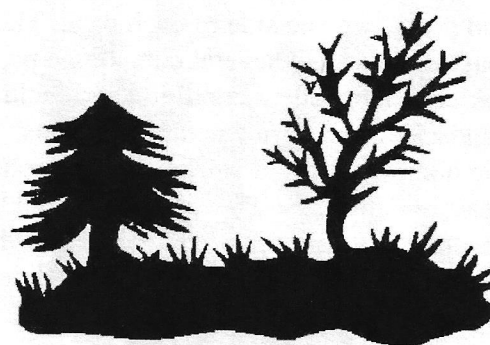
Cutting by Allison, age 5



UNTITLED © 2008 Trudy Kauffman

For Marie-Helene Grabman, her artistic influences traveled in both directions in her family. Her maternal grandmother was the one who introduced Marie-Helene to scissor cutting. As Marie-Helene says, "She lived very near us when I was growing up and I often was at her home on weekends and during the summer. As she put me to bed at night, she would tell me folk tales and nursery rhymes and do paper cuttings to illustrate what she was telling me. I thought all grandmothers could do this! I was totally fascinated...and often would recut over and over the cuttings she had done the next day. She used her embroidery scissors and old ledger papers. I remember finding some operating room scissors in the medical bag of my grandfather on my father's side of the family. My first cuttings were done using these. I still have these scissors and use them occasionally. So...both sides of my family contributed to my future career as a scissor cutter but it was my grandmother who was my inspiration..."

Marie-Helene's daughter Charlotte also cuts. Charlotte, who is a first year 8th grade English/Language Arts teacher at Sangaree Middle School near Charleston, South Carolina, says that many of her themes for papercutting come from poetry and some of the inspiration for pictures comes from Marie-Helene's work and also the horse pictures of Suzi Zimmerer. Charlotte cuts with scissors (hand-me-downs from Marie-Helene... who says she finally gave her a new pair!) and mainly uses black silhouette paper. Charlotte has experimented with some collage, as in the tree cut for which she won an award about 5 years ago. Charlotte says, "Of course, my main influence has been my mother, who taught me to turn the paper, not the scissors!" She said she feels being a papercutter has made her a better creative writer.



UNTITLED © 2008 Charlotte Grabman



Detail from QUILT CELEBRATION

© 2008 Marie-Helene Grabman

See the complete papercut on the front cover.

It is clear that early exposure to the papercutting arts has had a profound influence on many cutters, whether they are beginners or professionals.

CUTTINGS FROM THE PAST

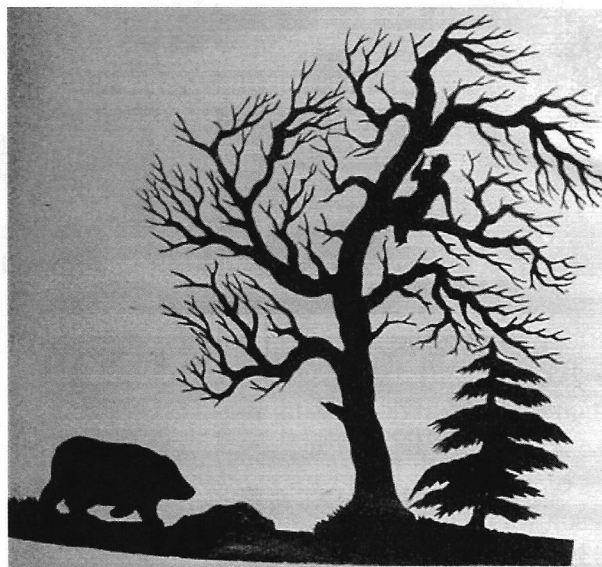
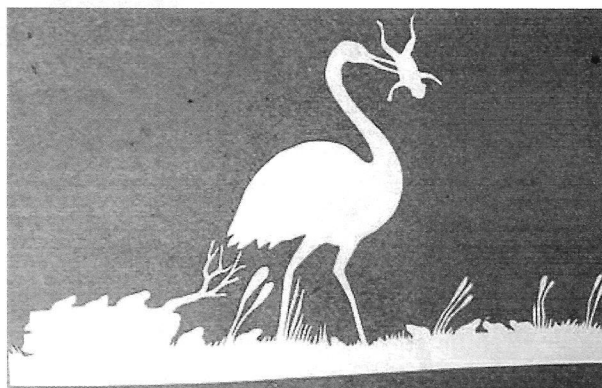
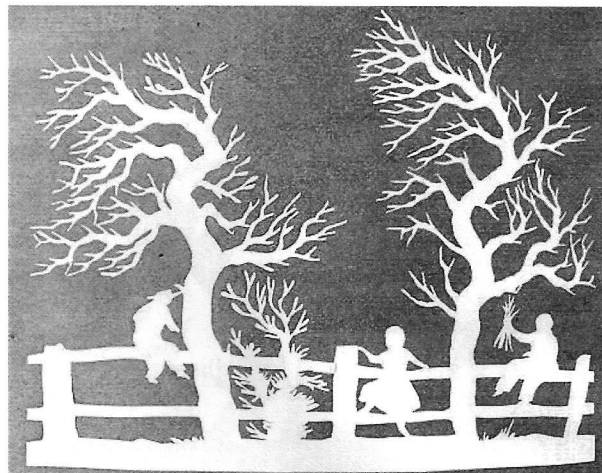
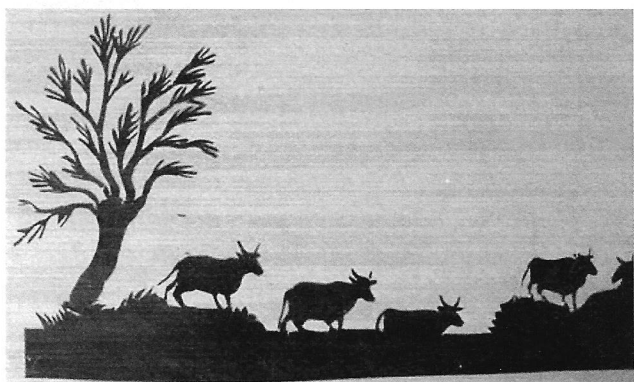
by Susan Hahn

I've often imagined how wonderful it would be to discover an antique treasure like the one I am presenting to you here.

This marvelous find comes from Brimfield, Maine, but the former owner believes it was originally from a home in Connecticut. It is an extremely rare, soft-bound rag paper booklet, circa 1830 with the title, 'Cut With Scissors, without drawing,' written inside a heavily detailed 'flourish' design. It is identified in the front inside cover as belonging to Mrs. J. M. Underwood with what looks like her signature. There are 18 original hand cut paper designs in the book, cut from coated stock paper and pasted on one side of each page. There are 12 pages in all, with several cuts to one page. The booklet is in excellent condition and includes floral, landscape, and various animal designs, including horses, cranes or storks, cows, elephants, and at least one monkey! The size of the booklet is approximately 6 3/4 inches by 6 1/8 inches, which gives a good indication as to how small and detailed these actual cuttings are!

This booklet recently sold at auction in September 2007 for over \$200.00. The buyer and seller, both of whom have given me their kind permission to feature this item in FirstCut, wish to remain anonymous.

(Note: A 'Google' search for 'J M Underwood' produced no conclusive results.)



HEDWIG GOLLER

by Alice Helen Masek

After a ride on the Stuttgart S-Bahn train, we walk through a neighborhood of modern apartment buildings and homes and enter through the gate of a picket-fenced yard. As I walk up the path through the winter-stilled garden with my husband Mike and Ursula and Otto Kirchner, I do not know what to expect of this home of Hedwig Goller, who has just celebrated her 86th birthday. Hedwig greets us at her door with a grin of upturned rosy cheeks like cherub wings. Her eyes twinkle as we gaze with amazement at her exhibit of papercuts and paintings up each turn of the staircase to her door. Inside, as we hang our coats, we see her art everywhere we turn, not a collage on every inch of surface (as it well could be) but a selection tastefully displayed, an adornment of her home and display of her art.

At first she chatters at all of us in excited German, but then turns to polite English to invite us to tea (or coffee) with cookies and breads from her own kitchen. I am in awe. We sit to talk about art, her work, Ursula's, mine. Sharing photos, speaking of the cuttings on display in the room, and her joy about the 50 people who had gathered to celebrate her birthday that Sunday, we are grateful for the privilege of a personal audience where we can have more time with her. This is a woman from whom the passing of years have taken nothing and to whom time has added depth, sensitivity, compassion.

Hedwig shows us works based on poems by famous German poets, on fairy tales, on botanical themes. Scissorcuts from black silhouette paper dominate, but are joined by cuttings from paper painted in advance, and by compositions layered from many colors of paper. My favorite has figures of women flying with the tatters of their speed behind them, full of life and movement. Some cuttings are remembrances of the suffering of the war, during which she lost her husband. Whether political, lyrical, literary, whimsical or simply beautiful, her cuttings are the distillation of a long life lived with joy. May there be many more.



BLUME © 1999 Hedwig Goller



PÄONIE © 1992 Hedwig Goller



PRINZ KATZ © 1997 Hedwig Goller

Note: All Hedwig Goller cuts are from the book Hedwig Goller Scherenschnitte, courtesy of Ursula Kirchner.

TRANSITIONS, NUMBER 3

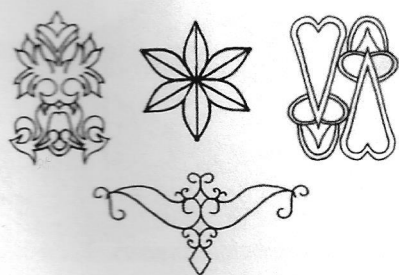
by Debbie Baird

Dear Papercutters,

I hope this letter finds you with a drawer full of paper, sharp blades, ample lighting, and nimble hands. I bought myself a treat the other day and I wanted to share it with you. I had just walked into Hobby Lobby and there on a display rack by the cash registers was a product called "Thergonomic Hand-Aids" (Therapeutic Ergonomic Support Gloves). If your hands bother you after cutting, this might be something that can help. They cost \$12 for a pair, and they are ambidextrous and can be worn on either the right hand or the left hand. They have the fingers cut out and they cover the palm of the hand and the wrist, partially. The package says "they provide you with comfort and relief from pain and stiffness of: arthritis, tendinitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, and repetitive motion activities." A handy product to know about!!

You have been doing a great job stepping up to the challenges. Initials and monograms are intriguing. I am sure all of you can remember experimenting with your handwriting when you were younger. Did you ever write your name over and over again, trying to improve it each time? Did you ever "doodle" with your initials, or those of the young man/woman who sat across the aisle from you in school? For that reason, I want to continue our design experiences using our initials.

I have been cutting lots of hearts and animals. I am getting ready for Valentine's Day and a show in conjunction with a local humane society. So think coy cats and divine dogs!!



UNTITLED © 2008 Phyllis Davidson

This is Phyllis Davidson's cut incorporating the four design elements shown to the left of the cutting. ►

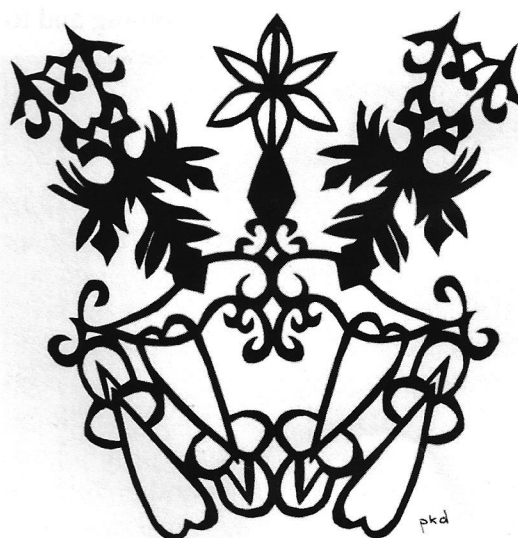
SPRING QUARTER CHALLENGE #1

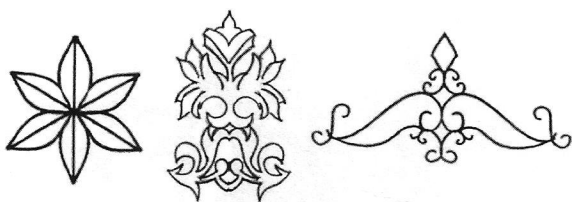
- A. Create a pattern utilizing your favorite flower and embed your initials in it somehow.
- B. Take the previous pattern and expand it to include some garden implements or patio furniture.

SPRING QUARTER CHALLENGE #2

The purpose of this challenge is for you to design something *without any symmetry using organic shapes*. When I use the term "organic," I am thinking broadly. I mean basically any shape that is found in nature: leaves, roots, blossoms, berries, vines, seeds, animals, rocks, clouds, tree silhouettes, water, human body, etc. Our artwork can become too predictable if we always cut symmetrical pieces. These pieces will be a little "edgy" and hold your interest.

If you are still working on pieces using the "seed ideas" from Transitions #2, that is great. I am waiting for the schnippets to settle from my card-cutting flurry. Send in your designs whenever you get finished and just label which challenge they go with. Thanks for your interest and participating. You never know which challenge might spark something in you and by sharing it; you might ignite something in someone else!! Just keep a fire extinguisher handy. . .





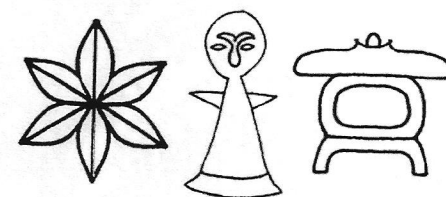
ELEGANT PUNCH BOWL © 2008 Peg Gleason

This is Peg Gleason's cut incorporating the three design elements above.



UNTITLED © 2008 Sue Neff

This is Sue Neff's cut incorporating the three design elements to the right.



Meeting the *Transitions* Design Challenge

Papercutter Profile

Polly Winkler-Mitchell

A visit to the Henri Matisse exhibit around 1970 opened my eyes to papercutting. The display was done by an aged man - bedridden, following an accident. The women with whom I travelled from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale to the St. Louis Art Museum generally found the display pleasing. I was puzzled and wondered what was so exciting about it. I resolved to do some scissor art that could tell stories and bring smiles. It was only two months later that the word "scherenschnitte" was introduced to me. Now, some thirty eight years later, I am still cutting with gusto.

One of my favorite cutting design themes is three or more intertwined hearts. I draw the hearts before I cut them, but the details in the cutting are done freehand.

My husband and I are historians and frequently display my art and his historically interesting bentwood boxes at festivals and reenactments. We have worked as artists at Dollywood, Silver Dollar City, and have taught on cruise ships. We have a home studio and gallery and enjoy participating in area art shows.

In addition to the scherenschnitte cuttings, I love color and regularly do color cuttings in many styles. I frequently use my hand made papers in order to achieve colors and textures that are needed.

My regret is that Southern Illinois is so far from the East and assembly of scissor artists.

Ed. Note: Many of Polly's papercuttings featured on these pages are from calendars she has produced.



Polly Winkler-Mitchell

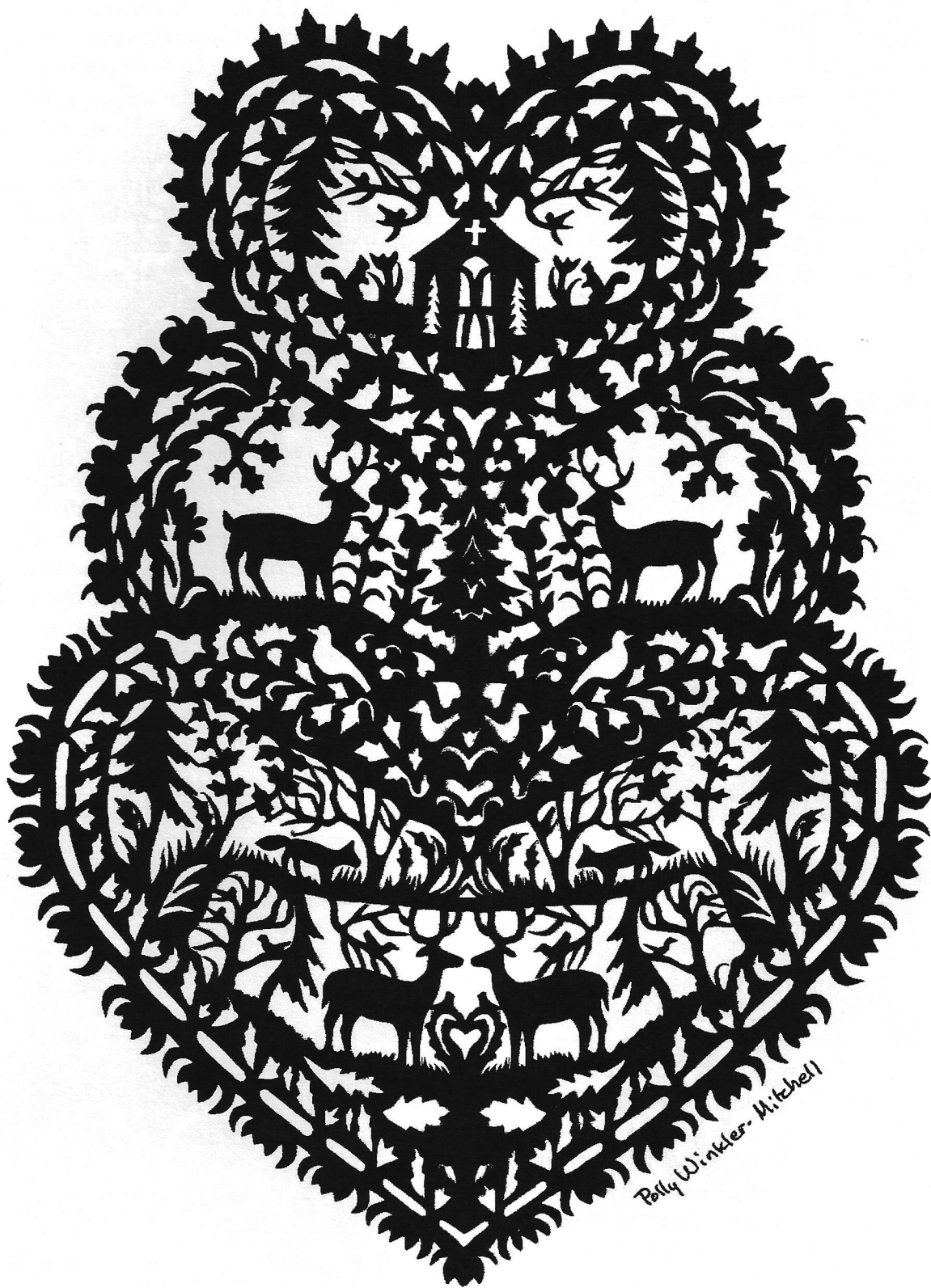
UNTITLED © 2008 Polly Winkler-Mitchell



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Ideas and Inspirations

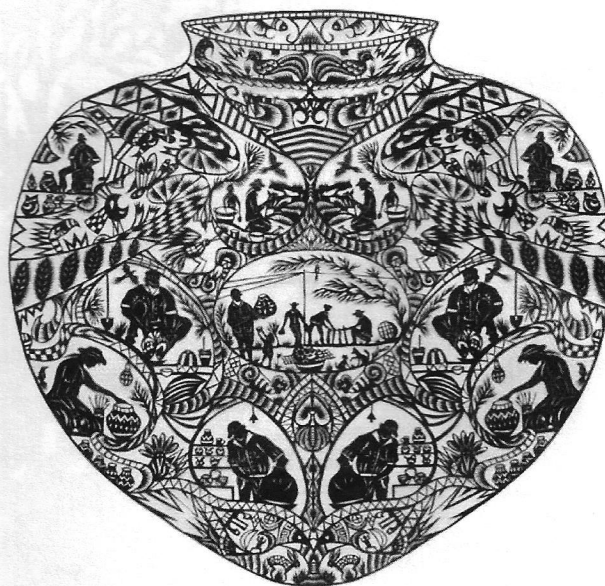
Have you ever wondered where other GAP members get their ideas for cuttings? What constitutes that special moment or place that captures the imagination? GAP members Susan Throckmorton and Catherine Winkler are both very prolific cutters with a wide array of topics who live a world apart, but both have found inspiration in Native American culture and have created works that are evocative interpretations of that culture.



THE VENDOR © 2007 Susan Throckmorton

Susan Throckmorton says her cutting was based on a photo she took of a market seller in Oaxaca, Mexico, when she spent a month down there one winter a few years back. "I was partially inspired when I actually made it by Diego Rivera's paintings, especially those of his with women selling calla lilies. I mixed the lilies with other fruits and flowers and also tried to get in her shy daughter. I found some hand-made amate paper which is made from tree bark in a shop (early Mexican cuttings were cut from this) and used two types---the natural brown and bleached white for the background."

For Catherine, her inspiration has been the pottery of Maria Martinez, who was a Pueblo Indian born around 1887 in a village called San Ildefonso Pueblo, about 20 miles Northwest of Santa Fe and who died in 1980. Catherine says, "She (Maria) learned her pottery skills from one of her aunts and then got involved with the revival of the whole black pueblo pottery. When I was in the School for Applied Arts in Switzerland studying ceramics, we studied her work during a history class. What is so interesting about her work, is that she used to collect the clay available around her village and once the clay was ready to be used, she would make her pots (without a wheel). She would place a slab of clay in a sort of smooth plate and, by turning the plate and using the coil technique, she would produce these most amazing well balanced, thin ceramic pieces. When you look at them you really think they were made on the wheel. The firing process was also very interesting, especially as she managed to recreate the firing conditions that produced the shiny/mat aspect of her reduced pottery. I saw some her work at the Denver Museum of Art as well as a video about her life. I was amazed by her work and the woman herself. This is how I got the inspiration for my papercutting piece *For Maria*".

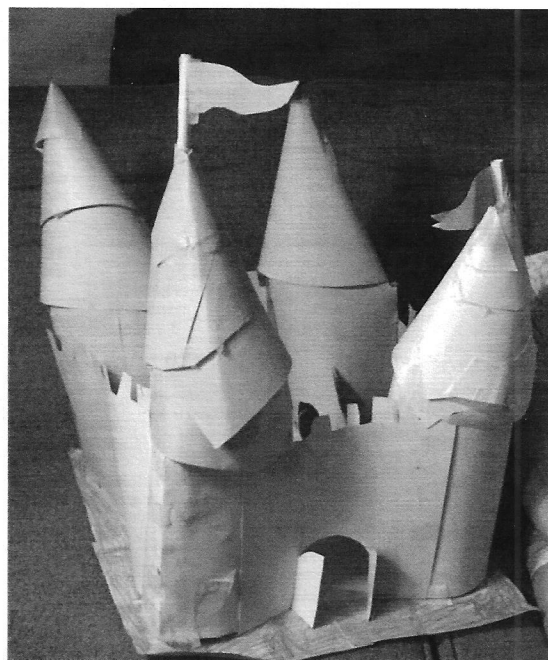


FOR MARIA © 2008 Catherine Winkler
15x15 inches, cut with small nail scissors in one piece

More Cuts...



GEMÜSEKORB © Hedwig Goller



UNTITLED CASTLE by Samantha,
Trudy Kauffman's granddaughter



CHIHUAHUA © 2008 Florinda Strimel



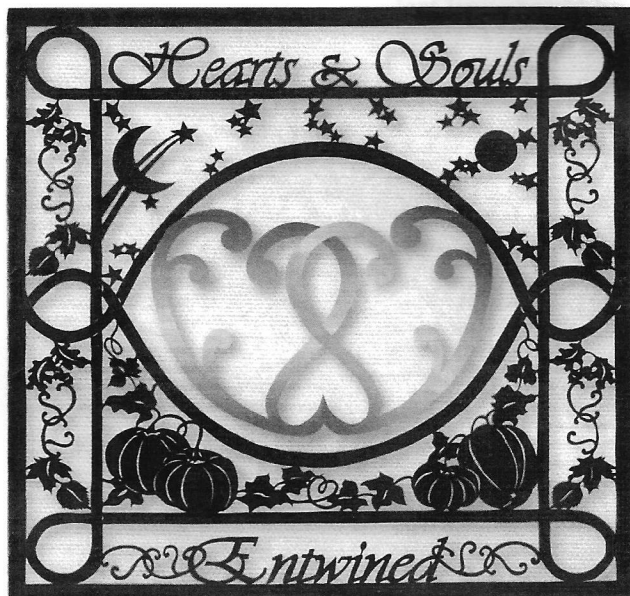
FRAME OF GRASS © 2006 Edie Johnstone

MUSICAL PRODUCTIONS

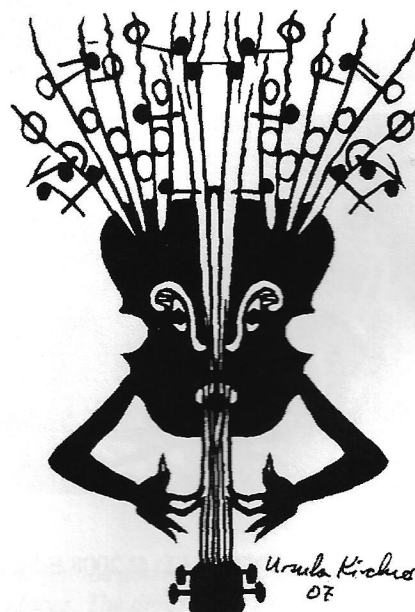
Hearts & Souls Entwined

by Marcia Egan

Over a year ago, I was contacted by a local musician/singer/songwriter/friend, Eileen Kozloff. She was working on her latest CD and asked me to design the artwork for it. The title song, "Hearts & Souls Entwined" had been written for and performed at her son's wedding and the components of the design are significant parts of the song. We met and made changes several times before we were both happy with the final design. The original cutting was done from black paper. The graphic designer added the color and background and Eileen and I were both pleased with the finished cover. You can see it in color at her website—
www.eileenkozloff.com



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Gudi Wittgen's cut is a commissioned work for the Academy, a high school related to Hillsdale College in Michigan. A performance of "The Sound of Music" took place in April of this year. Gudi's papercut was used for posters, advertisement, and programs.

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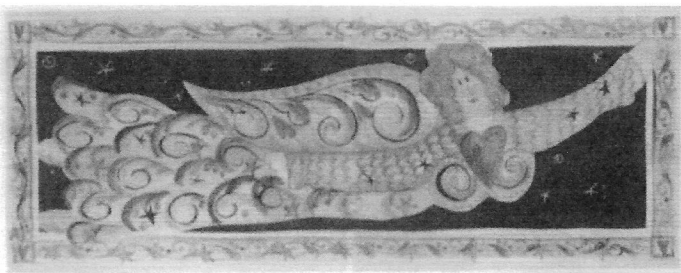
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