

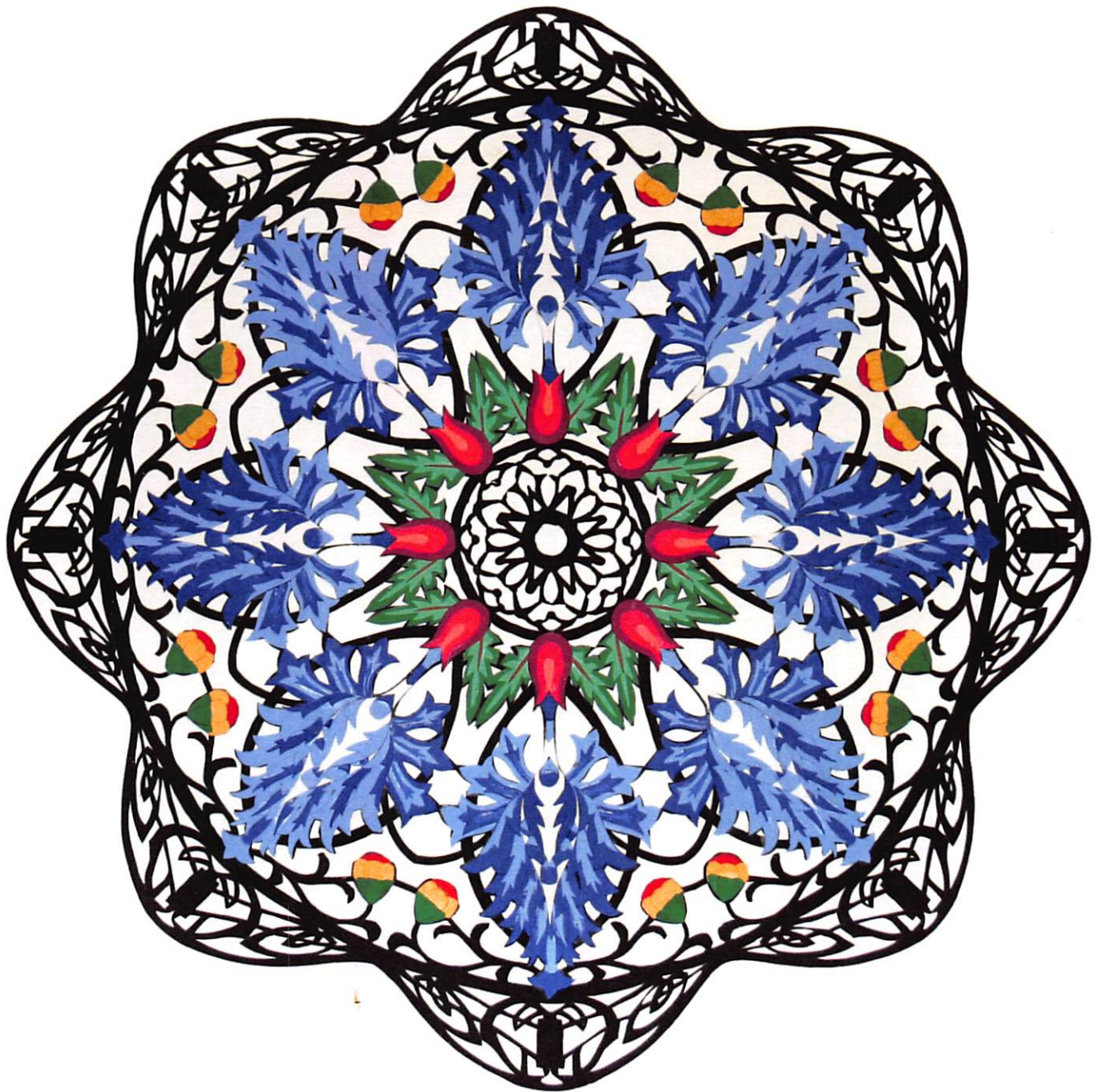
# FIRST CUT

*Communication for Members of The Guild of American Papercutters*

*Volume 25*

*Number 2*

*Spring 2010*





THE SPARROW'S NEST © 2010 Susan Duvall

*This papercut was made for a friend who is founder of an organization for unwed mothers named "The Sparrow's Nest."*

**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 Patty Kile at Guild of American Papercutters, P.O. Box 384, 214 South Harrison Avenue, Somerset, PA 15501 or email Patty at [Patty.Kile@yahoo.com](mailto:Patty.Kile@yahoo.com). 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](http://www.papercutters.org). All payments are made in American dollars.

**Current Executive Committee:** President - Marie-Helene Grabman (2013); Vice-President – Carolyn Guest (2013); Secretary- Joyce Yarbrough (2012); Treasurer - Darcy Walker (2013); Co-VP Membership - Patty Kile (2013); Co-VP Membership and Technical Advisor - David Dorfmueller (2013); VP Museum (2013) and Past President – Kathy Trexel Reed; VP Exhibits – Anne Leslie (2012)

**Current Board of Directors:** Don Cook (2013), Kim Frey (2012), Beatrice Goodpasture (2011), Dorothy Buchanan (2011), Pat Stuntz (2013) (also FirstCut Editor), Joe Bagley (2013), Alice Helen Masek (2012); Sue Throckmorton (2011); Florine Strimel, *Historian Ad Hoc*

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# President's Corner

Dear Papercutting Friends,

As you look at the collage of photos in this FirstCut, taken at GAP's Gala weekend to formally open the National Museum, I hope you notice how happy everyone appears. We truly have so much fun when we get together. When I joined GAP twenty years ago, I lived a long distance away from the Pennsylvania "center" of activity. However, after traveling to Switzerland with a GAP group, then the following year driving 10 hours to attend my first Collection, I soon found these Guild members to be wonderful friends. Pennsylvania is still our official business home and mailing address, but our GAP Board and members span the country and the world! Through the internet, conference calling and now Skype, we are able to stay connected and the Board is able to hold meetings.

But, it is still a real treat when we meet, as we did in Somerset, PA in late March and as we will in 2012 in the Midwest at the next Collection. We welcome YOU to become an active GAP member! Why not organize a Snippings in your area? We can help with publicity, lesson plans and projects. Let me put your interests and talents to use and link you with a GAP Board member or committee. Maybe you would like to help with the Traveling Shows or writing for FirstCut or posting information on the GAP Facebook page. What about helping with the job of mailing out the newsletters (if you live near Reading, PA). Our Museum Committee is looking for more interested members to work with Museum VP Kathy Reed. As they say, many hands make light work...but I assure you, not only will you be inspired artistically by working with other paper artists but you will meet a wonderful group of like-minded folks who will become great friends! And one more note...thank you to the many GAP founding members who donated their work to form the nucleus of our museum's Collection. This was very generous of you!

Very best wishes,

Marie-Helene Grabman, GAP President

## FirstCut Publications Staff

This special issue features significant events in life for groups and individuals: the grand opening of the GAP Museum is a milestone for the guild; weddings mark a major event in the lives of many families.

Also it is always a pleasure to feature papercuts created by youth. This spring we are showing the efforts of GAP member Nancy Barsic's fifth grade students.

Finally, a big 'thank you' goes out to Catherine Winkler Rayroud, Susan Throckmorton, Susan Hahn, Patricia Mortenson, and Alice Helen Masek for contributing such great articles in this issue.

Pat Stuntz, FirstCut Editor

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## Front Cover:

ARTICHOKE WYCINANKI © 2010 Joe Bagley

## Back Cover:

Top left and top right: UNTITLED, by Karol Kloskowski,  
The Cicha Cutter © 2010 Jacek Kloskowski

Top Center: BRIDESMAID'S ROSES  
© Marie-Helene Grabman

Center: TIFFANY SPRING © 2010 Edie Johnstone

Bottom left and right: © 2010 Jenna and © 2010 Kelsey,  
students of Nancy Barsic

## Member Homework

**Summer:** Farming/agriculture, children, water

**Autumn:** Harvest, school memories, greeting cards

**Winter:** Buildings/landscapes with snow, cuts with  
border designs, hearts, stars

**Spring:** Dance, cuts inspired by the Art Deco  
Movement (including Tiffany, William  
Morris, etc.), botanicals

## 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 or pstuntz@yahoo.com.



# Guild Business

## Guild of American Papercutters Board Meeting March 20, 2010

Call to Order by new GAP President Marie-Helene Grabman at Sequanota Center in Jennerstown, Pennsylvania.

Minutes previously approved and published in Fall FirstCut.

### Treasurer's Report

A. Net Income = \$6,363 for January 1-March 9 and includes: Total Income \$7,822, of which membership is \$3,118.74, minus expenses of \$6,363 for postage, FirstCut, supplies, & miscellaneous leaving a balance of \$1,460.00. Grand Opening Reservations of \$2,279 paid in advance are part of this net income; reservations and other expenses will be paid from this income.

Checking Account - \$3,291, Savings Account - \$32,500, Museum CD # 1 + #2 = \$7,745 (The \$32,500 Savings Account is earning .91%)

TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS as of March 9 = \$43,537

B. Total Assets as of Dec. 31, 2009 = \$37,686 Total Assets as of Dec. 31, 2008 = \$32,145

C. Museum Finances will be reconciled and available to board members after recent donations and all expenses are paid. Expenses will include Walker Hanging System Rods and Hooks @ approximately \$900 and Track Lighting @ \$335. Museum donations as of March 10 total \$6,375.

### OLD BUSINESS

A. Membership report by Patty Kile - 343 members with 24 who haven't yet renewed.

Discussion of FirstCut mailing costs here and abroad.

B. **Website update**- David Dorfmueller called in to report on building GAP membership utilizing Constant Contact for e-mail management link to papercutters; and to form potential list of interested papercutters by having a sign-up link on website with membership benefits of Shows, FirstCut, & Collections.

\*\*Pat Stuntz made a motion to put the link on website to collect e-mail list database for potential members... Kathy Reed seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Pat Stuntz reported that the website needs to be more user-friendly and offered to help with changes including GAP Calendar of Events which needs to be on Home Page with information about GAP museum, and upcoming shows. Discussion about some website changes with web designer including changing some of the tabs so that is easier to find things...(Ex. maybe change "Resources" tab to "Member Services"). Discussion of Public versus Private Members side of website, with Pat Stuntz, David Dorfmueller, and Patty Kile developing a 'wish list of website changes' and see what can be done by members and what needs to be done by web designer.

C. **FirstCut** - Pat Stuntz reported the costs for FirstCut printing @ \$1.50 and mailing @ \$1.50 (except for mailing out of country which is slightly higher). A "How to" article about website and Paypal was suggested for FirstCut to guide members in using website (with a condensed version for public on website).

D. **Traveling Exhibit** - Anne Leslie reports the current traveling show has left Arizona and is now in Texas. Kathleen Trenchard, at no cost to GAP, arranged for work to be trucked to San Antonio, where the next exhibit will be April 9-30 at Hi-Wire Gallery, located near River Walk. The work will then go to Houston's prestigious Wade Wilson Gallery. A Call-for-Entries has gone out to augment the number of pieces in the show.

E. **Budget updates/revisions** - The 2010 Budget was based on 400 GAP members, but since we do not have that, we need to see if changes need to be made to our budget. Museum CD#1 (\$5000) was cashed and \$2500 used to fund several museum related expenses; \$2500 was reinvested in a new CD (#3). GAP has had many generous donations from the annual appeal. (Board members need to give update on their current budget expenditure projections).

F. **Snippings 2010** - Kim Frey, Carolyn Guest, Dorothy Buchanan, Marie-Helene Grabman- Two Regional Snipping Events are scheduled: April 30-May 2 at the Sequanota Conference Center and August 7 at Crossroads Art Centre in Richmond, VA. Discussion of printing and rental costs and teacher reimbursement policy.

### NEW BUSINESS

A. **Nominations** of Directors and revisions to GAP By-Laws approved: Kathy Reed moved and Patty Kile seconded motion for all board members to continue another term of office.



Dorothy Buchanan moved and Kathy Reed seconded motion to approve Alice Helen Masek and Joe Bagley as new board members. Alice Helen Masek will replace Joyce Yarbrough as an "at large Board Member", term ending 2012. Joyce Yarbrough assumes the position of Secretary (replacing Marie-Helene Grabman) on the Executive Committee, term ending 2012. Joe Bagley will begin a 3 year term as new board member.

Alice Helen will help Membership with "Outreach & Re-Connecting" and condense and write some FirstCut articles for the Website.

In our By-Laws, Article 9 - Officer, Section 9.1 "The officers of GAP include President, Secretary, Treasurer, VP of Dues, and VP of Exhibits (terms 3 years). The Outgoing President shall remain an officer for one year..." Kathy Reed moved and Pat Stuntz seconded a motion to change the wording of the By-Laws from VP of Dues to VP Membership. (Patty Kile with David Dorfmueller share the position; David is also GAP Technical Advisor)

Pat Stuntz moved and Carolyn Guest seconded an amendment to By-Laws establishing a new position of Vice President of Museum with a 3 year term (to be held by Kathy Reed). Joyce Yarbrough has agreed to serve as Secretary.

**B. Museum Committee Update** - Kathy Reed reported Memorandum of Understanding with Laurel Arts and Guild of American Papercutters is in the works with Pro Bono attorney Doug Bell. Technical Assistance Grant of \$5000 from PA Historic Museum Commission (allows for evaluations of our needs by Museum expert...may need matching funds...which we already have from donations). More members are needed on Museum committee for publicity of events, schedule of exhibitions, programs at Museum, and letters requesting donations for museum...and deaccession of art work.

The *Greenburg Tribune Review* newspaper interviewed Marie-Helene at the Museum Opening. Kathy Trexel Reed and Laurel Arts Director Michael Knecht were interviewed earlier, (giving contact info for Sukey Harris, Marie-Helene Grabman, and Sharon Schaich), Plans are for a Greenburg Tribune Review Magazine Feature on GAP Museum the first weekend in April. Patty Kile sent news releases to *Lancaster County News*, and the *Lebanon Daily News* and *Johnstown Tribune Democrat* also had articles about GAP Museum opening. The chair lift, which was donated was not up to code for Museum and a new one would cost \$14,000 -with more grant money or donations, that can become a reality. There is a Powerpoint CD projected on lower level showing GAP exhibit to those unable to go upstairs.

Exhibition Booklets for Grand Opening Exhibition of Founding GAP Members cost \$500 to print 100 copies, name tags, etc.

**C. Collection 2012** - in the Midwest - "Paper - Out of the Frame and Off the Wall". A committee is being formed.

**D. 2010 Board Meeting Schedule** - next meeting 10:30am July 24 at Nancy Rosin's home in New Jersey, where we will be treated to her vast collection of papercuttings & valentines! Following a bag lunch will be a presentation by Nancy.

**E. Presentation of GAP Harris Award** by President Marie-Helene Grabman to Pat Stuntz (papercutting by Angela Mohr).

Meeting Adjourned.

Anne Leslie, David Dorfmueller and Kim Frey called in via conference call. Darcy Walker e-mailed Treasurer's report.

Sunday afternoon we connected with Sue Throckmorton in Poland via Skype at the Museum Grand Opening! Those attending board meeting and GAP Museum Grand Opening: Marie-Helene Grabman, Carolyn Guest, Patty Kile, Pat Stuntz, Joyce Yarbrough, Dorothy Buchanan, Kathy Trexel Reed & Bob Reed, Dorene & John Rhoads, Sukey and Richard Harris, Sharon & Ed Schaich, Sandy Gilpin, Trudy Kauffman, Alice Helen Masek, Hae Yong Kwon & YooMi Yoon, Linda Peck, Gudi Wittgen Gilbert and Susanne Palassolo, Faye & Bernie DuPlessis, and Lynn Askew.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Yarbrough, Secretary



HAPPY SPRING © 2010 Dianne Peterson

## GAP Board Welcomes Two New Members

After graduation from Pacific School of Religion with her Master of Arts Degree in Spirituality in 1995, **Alice Helen Masek** started her ministry of Prayerful Papercutting Workshops based on the group cutting of large-scale images for use to enhance worship services. She had seen large papercuttings done by another artist and started doing them in her own church. She thought she would be doing workshops on her Master's thesis, but God began opening doors for her to do Prayerful Papercutting instead.

She has worked with churches as far north as Kotzebue, Alaska (north of the Arctic Circle) and across America. Jewish groups, social justice groups, and women in recovery from addictions have enjoyed the healing and fellowship of the cutting process. Alice has been a member of GAP since the year 2000, and is now glad to serve on the GAP board.

Because of connections made over GAP Collection 2004, she was invited to the 2nd International Festival of the Art of Papercutting in Huhhot, Inner Mongolia (a province of China) which she attended in 2006. In July 2009 she brought her family back to China, including a day of cutting in the studio home of GAP member Fan Pu in Nanjing.

As her papercutting ministry winds down (affected by the economy) Alice enjoys more weekends with her ski patrol husband Mike, three grown children and two granddaughters, and hopes to get back to some writing projects. She hopes to see many GAP friends at Collection 2012!



▲ Alice Helen Masek and GAP President Marie-Helene Grabman by a Matisse papercutting at the Smithsonian in Washington DC.

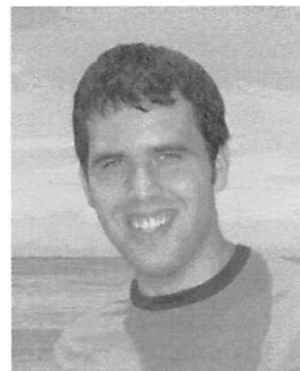
**Joe Bagley**, 25, is a full-time papercut artist. He works from his home studio in Boston, sells his work almost entirely online, and ship pieces world-wide.

In Joe's words he tells us: "I began papercutting when I was 10 at a summer program that had papercutting as part of their arts program- mostly doing sharks, space ships, etc. from a pattern book. My mother, who ran a daycare from our home, coincidentally had Chris Rich's *Book of Papercutting*, and at age 10, I taught myself the fundamentals of papercutting by photocopying the designs from the book, enlarging them, and cutting them. In college, where I studied Archaeology, I started papercutting new designs based on ancient art, and discovered a passion for papercutting- especially architecture. This quickly developed into a unique style of papercutting that emphasizes a very detailed textured cut-work.

In the fall of '08, I lost my archaeology job due to the recession and I decided to take a chance and do art full time, taking advantage of all the resources available for free or cheap to people online. I've never worked so hard in my life, but surprisingly, my work has become popular, and I am now selling about 5-10 original pieces a week, and just doubled my prices, resulting in even more demand. My work can be seen at my website, [www.papercutsbyjoe.com](http://www.papercutsbyjoe.com), and is available for purchase at [www.papercutsbyjoe.etsy.com](http://www.papercutsbyjoe.etsy.com)

I now have work in almost every state in the US (missing 4) and 15 countries. I have four gallery shows and two outdoor shows lined up for 2010. I did a lecture tour in the Boston area on the Art and History of papercutting last year as well as worked with the Boys and Girls Club having kids age 8-10 create original scherenschnitte and wycinanki designs that were sold at auction to raise money for the B&G club.

I am truly surprised and honored to be considered for the board, and I very much hope I can bring a unique perspective to this fantastic guild and do what I can to support and encourage the growth and popularity of this great art form!



▲ Joe Bagley

## And the Harris Award goes to.....

By Marie-Helene Grabman

Have you heard of the GAP Harris Award? You can think of it as our Lifetime Achievement Award, given to GAP members who have made an outstanding contribution to the Guild. This award was first presented at Collection 2000 by Richard and Sukey Harris to Paul Beal, for his years of work in establishing our Guild. This honor is now usually awarded during our Collections (suspended this year due to the economy). The first Harris Award was designed and cut by Sukey, and now, various GAP members volunteer to create papercuts for the honoree.

This year's Harris Award was presented at our last Board meeting at Sequanota Camp /Conference center prior to our National Museum grand opening. The recipient was Pat Stuntz, our editor, writer and publisher extraordinaire of FirstCut!

A beautiful papercut was made for Pat by Angela Mohr, former FirstCut editor and past recipient of a Harris Award. Please join me in thanking Pat for her years of producing our Guild's most impressive publication which is so important in keeping our international GAP family connected. THANK YOU PAT!!!

If you would like to recommend someone to receive the next Harris award, I will begin to receive nominations next year, for presentation during the 2012 Collection.



*Ed. Note: It was a total surprise to receive the Harris award. So many worthy people contribute to GAP, it makes the award all the more special. Thank you, Angela! Photo by Joyce Yarbrough*

## Charter Member Exhibit Booklet Available

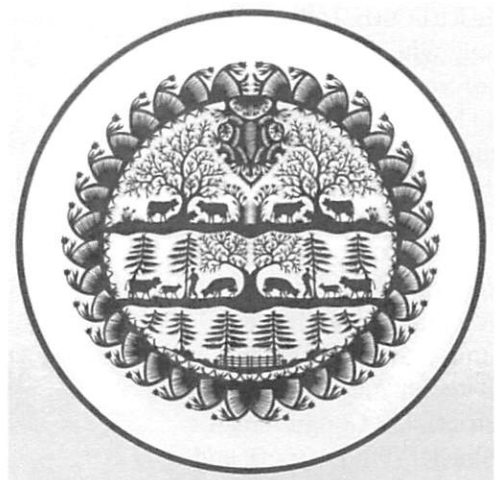
The Charter Member Exhibit booklet for the historic first GAP National Museum show will be available (as long as copies last) to members @ \$5.00 + 6% PA state tax and postage for mailing. (\$5.30 + postage)

This booklet contains color images and statements for each of the 26 papercuttings by many GAP founding members, as well as five pages of guild history and current Board of Directors information.

Interested members should contact Kathy Trexel Reed to place their request. Payment to include postage can follow receipt of the booklet.



RUNNING HORSES OF JETTENBACH © 2010 Paul D. Beal  
From the Charter Members Exhibition



SWISS STYLE PASTORAL SCENE © 2010 Arlene France  
From the Charter Members Exhibition



# GAP National Papercutting Museum Opens

By Kathy Trexel Reed

The Grand Opening of the Guild of American Papercutters National Museum at the Philip Dressler Center for the Arts, Somerset, PA on March 20, was an upbeat occasion. Music by the Berlin Brass and the sounds of guild members and friends of Laurel Arts filled the house with an air of excitement for this official day of acknowledgment for the new museum.

After a welcome by Laurel Arts President, Sharon Clapper, Hank Parke, member of the Laurel Arts Board and Somerset Borough Council, read official proclamations beginning with one presented by the Somerset Borough Council:

"WHEREAS, the 20th day of March, 2010, will mark the grand opening of the Guild of American Papercutters National Museum in Somerset, Pennsylvania, and...

WHEREAS, the establishment of its National Museum is in partnership with Laurel Arts at the home of the Philip Dressler Center for the Arts in Somerset, and...  
WHEREAS, this American Museum is devoted to the art form of papercutting, which is an ancient art, dating from the 5th Century in China, spreading for centuries and adapting culturally throughout the world, and...

WHEREAS, recognizing the Museum's value as an art attraction and as an educational destination for Somerset County residents and tourists, we hereby extend our sincerest wishes for success.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Ruby W. Miller, along with the Mayor and members of Somerset Borough Council do hereby welcome you by proclaiming March 20, 2010, to be "The Guild of American Papercutters" day in the Borough of Somerset."

Congratulatory letters were also received and shared from Pennsylvania Governor Edward Rendel, State Senator Richard Kasunic (32nd District), US Congressman William Shuster (9th District), and State Representative Carl Walker Metzgar (69th District).

Michael Knecht, Executive Director of Laurel Arts, and Kathy Trexel Reed, Museum Vice President, each held one end of the red ribbon, while GAP President Marie Helene Grabman and GAP Vice President Carolyn Guest cut the ribbon with sheep shears (a traditional blade for many Polish papercutters.) A brass plaque was presented, naming the GAP gallery room as the Kathy Trexel Reed Gallery. It will hang at the doorway into the exhibit area.

Visitors toured the second floor guild archive area, enjoyed refreshments in an adjacent gallery room, and were able on the first floor to view a slide projection of all the 26 papercuttings currently part of the first exhibit by GAP Charter Members.

During the afternoon, a Skype telecamera call connected our GAP members visually with GAP Board member Sue Throckmorton who lives in Poland. This was followed by a planning meeting held in the GAP office/ archive area to discuss plans for future exhibits in the GAP National Museum. Preparations are underway for the next show to honor Past and Present GAP Board Members, which will begin in April, 2010.

The Inn at Georgian Place was the site of a special Saturday evening banquet, with forty GAP and Laurel Arts friends attending, after which GAP attendees returned for another night's lodging to the Sequanota Conference Center, Jennerstown, PA. After breakfast the next morning, the group traveled east via the Lincoln Highway, Route 30, to visit the Museum of the American Coverlet in Bedford, PA. where a tour led by Laslo Zonger invited photographing and sketching from the coverlet designs as inspiration for small eight inch papercuttings to be eventually displayed in GAP's glass cases.

The fellowship of the weekend activities, the music, and the official festivities for the establishment of the GAP National Museum, marked this occasion as a significant event for the Guild of American Papercutters and its mission to preserve, promote, and share the art form of papercutting.



*Kathy Trexel Reed displays the plaque naming the Reed Gallery in her honor.  
Photo by Trudy Kauffman*

## Member Reminders

### Dates at a Glance

Summer GAP Meeting  
Saturday, July 24, 2010  
11:00 AM

Bring a bag lunch. Dessert and drinks will be served.

At the home of Nancy Rosin  
1059 Dogwood Trail  
Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417  
201-337-5834

Please RSVP to Pat Stuntz by Saturday, July 17.  
610-987-0828  
pnstuntz@dejazzd.com

#### Directions from the Tappan Zee Bridge:

After crossing the Tappan Zee Bridge from Tarrytown, New York:

\*287 West/ I 87 North (New York State Thruway North) for approx. 12 miles to exit 15, to 287 South.

\*Merge onto I-287 S via EXIT 15 toward NEW JERSEY (Crossing into NEW JERSEY)

\*Merge onto NJ-208 S via EXIT 59 toward FRANKLIN LAKES

\*Take the HIGH MOUNTAIN RD exit toward COLONIAL RD/FRANKLIN LAKES

\*RIGHT onto HIGH MOUNTAIN ROAD 0.1 miles

\*Turn LEFT onto COLONIAL RD/CR-117. 1.3 miles

\*Turn LEFT onto DOGWOOD TRAIL.

\*1059 DOGWOOD TRAIL is the first house on the LEFT, a Tudor with circular drive. Number is on a tree at the far drive, and also over the garage.

Total is 24 miles

#### Directions from Philadelphia, PA and south:

Use the New Jersey Turnpike to 16 West to Route 3 West to Route 17 North, to Route 4 WEST in Paramus to ROUTE 208 WEST for approx. 8 miles. Exit at Colonial Road, Franklin Lakes. Turn right on to Colonial Road for 1.3 miles, left on to Dogwood Trail as above.

#### REGIONAL SNIPPINGS 2010 in Western Pennsylvania

April 30-May 2, 2010  
Camp Sequanota Conference Center,  
Somerset County, Jennerstown, PA.

#### REGIONAL SNIPPINGS 2010 in Richmond, Virginia August 7, 2010

## A Virginia Snippings 2010 Event

An all-day papercutting event held at the  
Crossroads Art Center in Richmond, VA

Saturday, August 7, 2010

10am-5pm

Cutting activities, Lunch, All-Day Sharing  
– \$25

Limited space – Early registration encouraged!

Contact Gene Toutsy for more details and reserve  
your space:

804-795-5331 or [gtoutsy@comcast.net](mailto:gtoutsy@comcast.net)

## Paper Angels

We would like to thank the following members  
for their generous donations to GAP:



© Trudy Kauffman 2009

Joe Bagley  
Anne Carlson  
Helene Fox Clayton  
Linda Emmerson  
Gudi Wittgen Gilbert  
Robin Goodfellow  
Gill Hague  
Gertie Hendler  
Michael Marcus  
Susan Mertz  
Connie Minnich  
Russ Morgan  
Ruth Ann Palmer  
Kathy Trexel Reed  
John & Dorene Rhoads  
Ingrid Schenck  
David and Nancy Shelly

# GAP Museum Grand Opening

## March 20, 2010





# *GAP Museum Grand Opening*

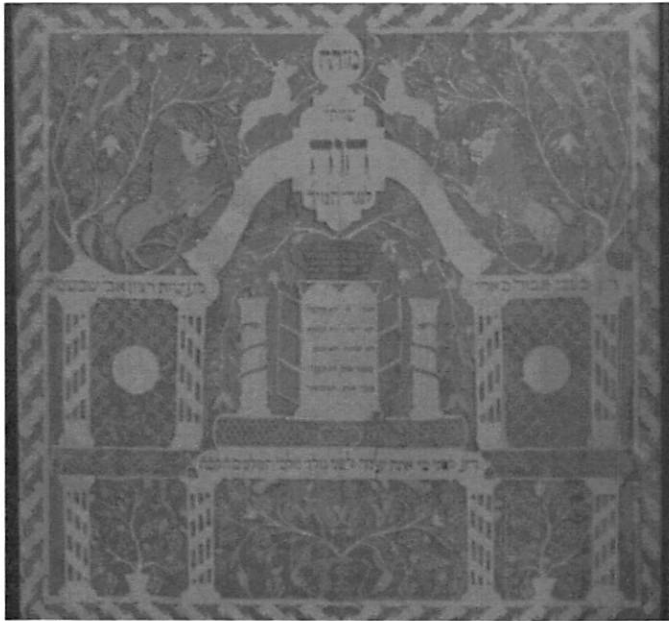
## *March 20, 2010*



*Photos by Trudy Kauffman and Loretta Coleman*

## Member Commentary

*Ed. Note: In the winter 2010 issue of FirstCut, Mindy Shapiro sent an inquiry regarding an antique mizrah found in her synagogue. Below is a reproduction of the mizrah and additional commentary.*



### Additional information from Mindy Shapiro describing the mizrah:

Top line: Mizrach (east)

Next: *I note that G-d is always before me*

Next line: *Run like a doe and be brave as a lion to do the will of your Parent in Heaven*

In the middle in two columns are the Ten Commandments

Below the Ten Commandments: *Know before whom you stand: Before the King of All Kings, the Blessed One Be he*

I can't tell but I think the third commandment (lo Tisah; do not use the Lords name in vain) may be incorrectly spelled. I would have to look at the actual papercut to be sure. Other ones appear correct.

### From Catherine Winkler-Rayroud:

I am amazed by the quality of the cutting. I have never seen a Mizrah in reality but only in books, so this is really very exciting that you got to see this piece. I love the border (I have never seen a border like that either, as it seems to be a more modern version of the Endless Knot seen in many Jewish and Swiss cuttings),

and the quality of the cutting tells me that the person who did it was familiar with the technique. It is also pretty well preserved. It is interesting too to see the animal symbols, lion, peacock and gazelle (three only, normally there are four) lost in a variation of the tree of life (the tree of life is one of the most ancient symbols and the Jewish people believe in the tree of life and the tree of knowledge which are often found in papercuttings) emerging from interesting urns or pots. (Regarding) the addition of color which is still visible: Jewish papercutting artists often added watercolor to their papercuttings afterward. The columns supporting the arch in the middle symbolize the gate to heaven and protect the double tablets of law rounded at the top with five commandments on each side (tablets could be seen in cuttings from the 17th century onwards, despite objections from Rabbis who discouraged their representation).

I really think you have an original Mizrah (there are a lot of copies around) as the way the cutting is damaged in certain areas would tell me that this is an old piece (maybe going back to 19th century or early 20th). Can the rabbi tell you what is written on it? Jewish cuttings were often made as certificates for death, Birth etc. and they were rarely signed by the artists who made them. Also when you re-framed it, did you find some information on the back?

I wonder too if it was made in the US or Europe (this is an Ashkenazi cutting technique from Central Europe, as the Sephardic cuttings did not have animal symbols in them). The Jewish papercutting history is fascinating due to the constant changes in European borders, the wars and the Holocaust. A lot of cuttings were damaged during the Second World War as the Germans wanted to destroy all sense of identity of the Jewish people as well as their art. Furthermore, when printing and die-cut techniques became available to the public, the demand for original papercuttings was not so popular anymore as less expensive ones could be produced industrially.

Mindy, this is a little treasure you have there and what I would do is send a photo to a Jewish Museum (I don't know if there is one in your area, but I think there is one in New York) and see what they have to say. I am sure a papercutting expert would be very excited to see that piece and they certainly have ways to date them.

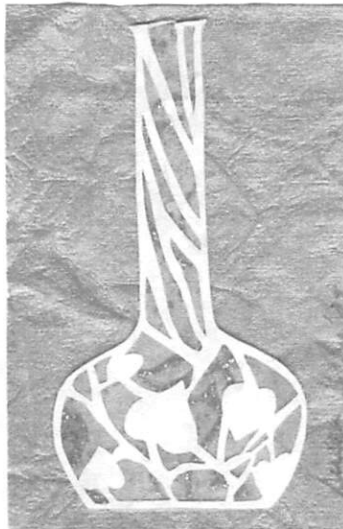
Thank you so much for sharing this with us and please keep us posted with what you find about it.

# ARTIST TRADING CARDS

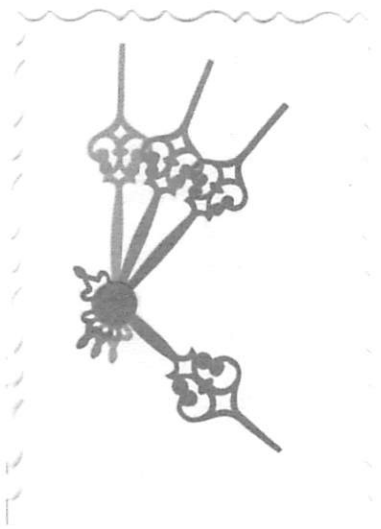
Moderated by GAP member Susan Hahn, artist trading cards are an enjoyable way to exchange small cuttings based on specific or open themes. The diminutive cards generally measure about 2 ¾ x 3 ¾ inches and are a creative way to share papercuttings. Those wishing to join in the trades are encouraged to contact Susan Hahn at [behssh@olypen.com](mailto:behssh@olypen.com). Below is a selection of cards from 2009 on various themes.



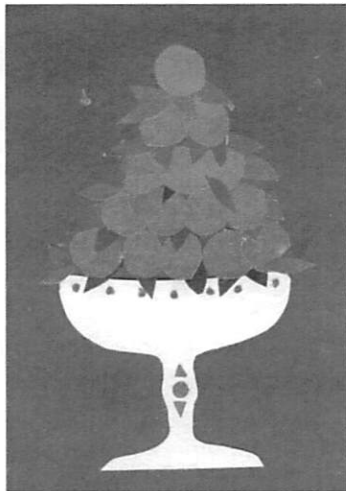
'Hats' - November 2009 trade, by Ursula Kirchner, Germany



'Tiffany Vase' - August 2009 trade, by Susan S. Hahn



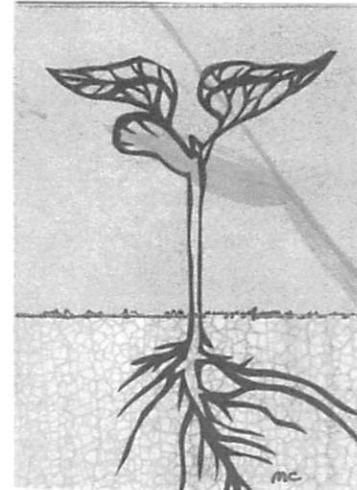
'Time Flies' - March 2009 trade, by Joan Sulecki



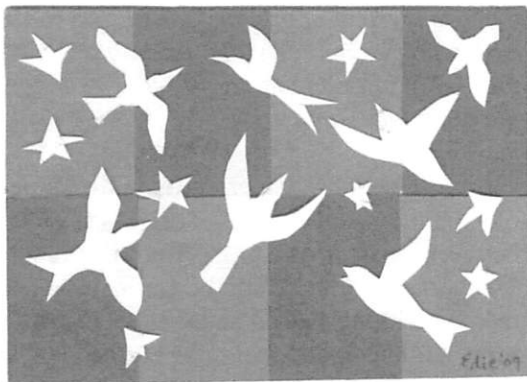
'Colonial Apple Pyramid' - December 2009 trade, by Pat Stuntz



'Damson Plums' - January 2010 trade, by Edie Johnstone



'Bean Sprouts' - January 2010 trade, by Melissa Clark



'Mad About Matisse' - August 2009, by Edie Johnstone



'At the Seashore' - July 2009, by Florinda Strimel



## Seventh Swiss Paper-cutting Exhibition Bellerive Museum in Zurich Switzerland - 2009-2010

By Catherine Winkler Rayroud

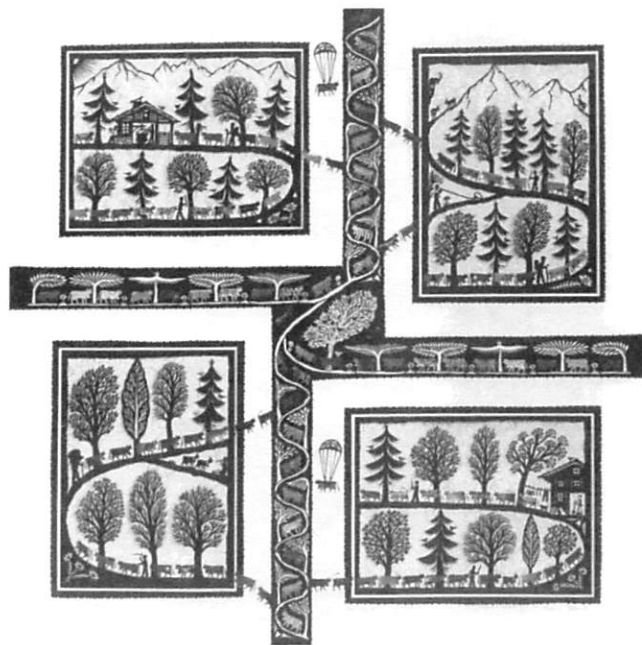
As usual the Swiss Juried Paper-cutting exhibition, which takes place every three years, is a great success. It offers a window on the Swiss paper-cutting scene that is boiling with enthusiasm and energy and a constant sense of renewal. This year 104 artists presented 427 paper-cuttings to be juried. 66 artists with 104 cuttings were accepted. I was delighted to have my paper-cutting the "Dream Catcher" accepted in the exhibition and also pleased to know that Lucrezia Bieler, another Swiss Artist living in Florida, also had her work in the show. We are both GAP members. The jury was very impressed with the quality and richness of the work presented and chose pieces that reflected an interesting diversity, technical challenges and a personal vision.



THE DREAM CATCHER © 2010 Catherine Winkler Rayroud

The show is taking place at the renowned Bellerive Museum in Zurich ([www.museum-bellerive.ch](http://www.museum-bellerive.ch)). Located in an elegant mansion almost adjacent to the lake of Zurich, the museum is a thriving center dedicated to the promotion of art and applied arts. It came therefore as no surprise that the museum was an ideal place to host the paper-cutting exhibition, considering that paper-cutting has definitely emerged from its Folk roots and is finding more and more acceptance as Contemporary Art. International art collectors also seem to realize this trend and paper-cuttings are highly sought after for private collections. 41 pieces have already been sold since the opening of the show in November 2009.

There seems to be no limit to the use of paper, which can be folded, cut, sculpted, mounted and has become another medium, like clay, wood or metal. This show is the evidence that once and for all paper-cutting is an art on the move which deserves all our attention.



POYA DÉJANTÉE © 2010 Catherine Schmidt

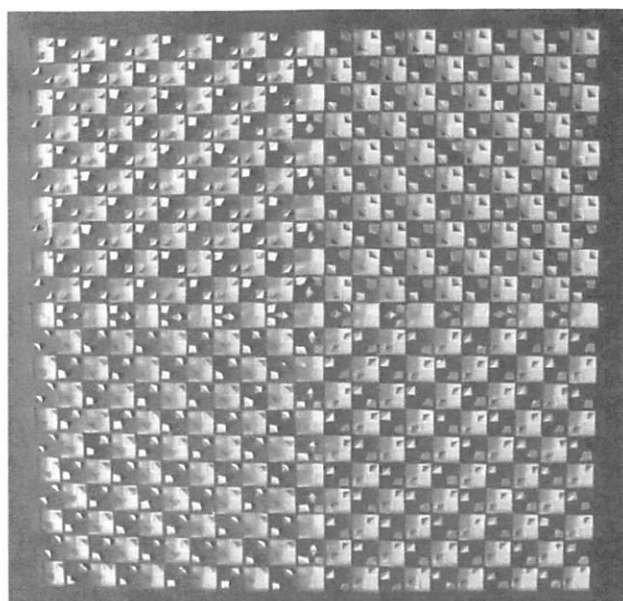
As Felicitas Oehler, the president of the Swiss Paper-cutting Association wrote in the foreword of the exhibition catalogue: *"Paper-cutting tradition in Switzerland is evolving in different directions. Although many artists are still faithful to the traditional paper-cutting technique, some of them are experimenting with a new vision. They seem to distance themselves from the old symmetrical approach of a cutting made in one piece with a border and they don't hesitate to innovate and play with different materials and expressions, pushing the boundaries in unexpected and surprising directions"*.

The oldest paper-cutter in the show is 85 years old and the youngest is 35. All ages are found in between. Sixteen artists are from the French side of Switzerland and 50 from the German side. There are 6 members living abroad and 7 who exhibit for the first time. An interesting fact to be noticed is that amongst the 66 artists, 50 are women and 16 are men.



BEAUTY AND BEAST © 2010 Lucrezia Bieler

Paper-cutting has moved on from a Folk Art to become an art endowed with a new function which enables the artist to express his feelings, his humor and even convey a message or a story. For some of the artists it even becomes a political tool with a satirical touch, others use the paper for its 3D quality by adding color and relief, which gives it a completely new optical dimension. Many paper-cutters in Switzerland are now full time artists and live from their art. People who used to look at paper-cutting with a curl of the lip, seem to have understood that the art is here to stay and will keep evolving as new generations pick up a piece of paper and a pair of scissors.



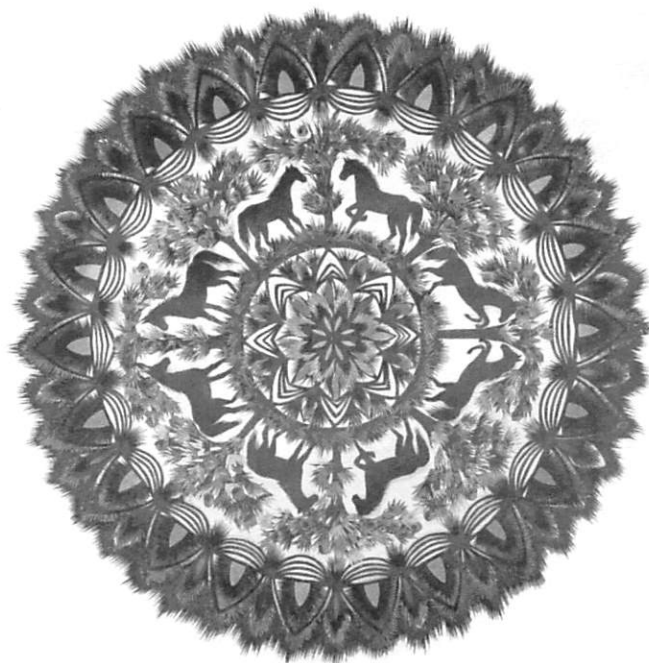
3D 14 © 2010 Ines Badertscher

We just need to look around to realize that there is a definite awareness for paper-cutting that goes well beyond the Swiss borders and for the first time the Bellerive museum decided to invite 29 artists from Europe, America and Asia to exhibit together with the Swiss paper-cutters and offer their own perception of this amazing art. Some of these artists have been recognized on the International art scene and they have long left behind history and traditions, to simply use paper in very unpredictable manners as a way to express their deep emotions. This part of the show is again a clear message that paper has no limits. It travels unrelentingly and has survived the passing of time with elegance, from its origin in China where it was invented around the first century.

The show is impressive and although very different from the 6<sup>th</sup> Paper-cutting exhibition which took place in Prangin, on Lake Geneva in 2006 - 2007, and which offered an emphasis on the history of paper-cuttings, the 7<sup>th</sup> Paper-cutting exhibition will definitely surprise the visitor with its contemporary approach, not to mention its diversity and quality and will leave long-lasting impressions in the minds of the viewers. We can only look forward to witnessing the evolution of this ever changing and special art form.

[www.catherinewinkler.com](http://www.catherinewinkler.com)

Website of the Swiss Paper-cutting Association:  
[www.scherenschnitt.ch](http://www.scherenschnitt.ch)



HAUTSTIERMANDALA © 2010 Elisabeth Bottesi-Firscher

# Papercuts and Promises

## Paper Art at Weddings

By Pat Stuntz

It has often been said that love transcends everything, that it knows no barriers. One quintessential form of expression of love is the marriage ceremony. Marriage is a bringing together of two people, of two families, two groups of friends. It is one of the most solemn pledges we make in our lifetimes. Traditionally the wedding pledge is made in front of family and friends who take special pains to stand up and witness that pledge. The wedding pledge is to be true and faithful and loving to another human being.

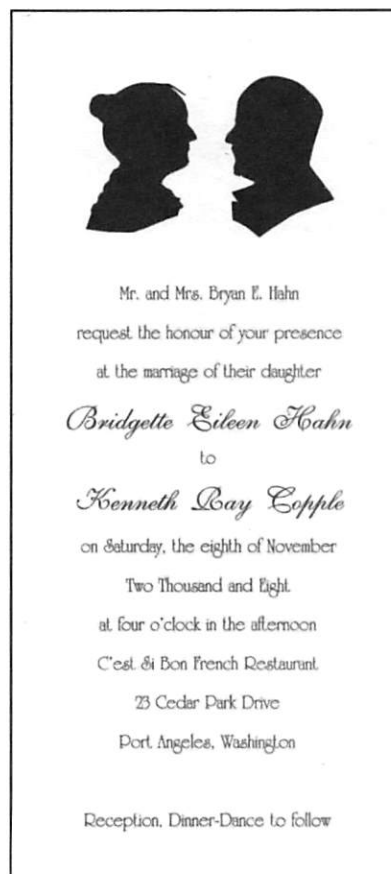


TWO HEARTS AS ONE © 2010 Kathy Trexel Reed  
10" x 10"

*Marriage is a bringing together of two people, two families,  
two groups of friends.*

Modern weddings require a great deal of advance planning. This means setting the date as well as reserving the site of the ceremony and the reception venue months in advance. Once the date has been set, the invitations must go out.

One creative wedding themed papercut application can be seen, above right, in the Hahn-Copple wedding invitation. Designed by GAP member Susan Hahn, the invitation features silhouettes above the decorative typography.



HAHN-COPPLE WEDDING INVITATION  
© 2009 Susan Hahn

Susan shared the process by which she designed and applied the silhouettes to the printed invitation:

*"When our daughter picked a Victorian theme for her wedding, I immediately thought of cutting their silhouettes for the invitations. We shopped for a style that had space at the top and then ordered them with specific instructions as to how many lines to leave blank at the upper part of the invitation. Then I took photos of the back-lit sides of their faces with my digital camera and transferred the photos to my computer. Using one of my photo editing programs, I printed out numerous copies of the grayscale and darkened photos (about 1" in height) and began cutting. Then I hand painted them all black, and when dry, hand bronzed them with acrylic paint. I adhered the finished pieces carefully to each invitation (about 37 in all) and, voila, each invitation became a truly unique and treasured memento!"*





WEDDING INVITATION © 2010 Mindy Schapiro

▲ The wedding invitation, above, by Mindy Schapiro, also includes papercuts combined with decorative typography.

The ceremonies and traditions of the wedding ceremony may differ from place to place, but they all share the importance of culture and symbolism in the lives of the participants. Although the exact origins of many of these early wedding traditions are not always clear, popular acceptance has allowed them to flourish today. The *bridal bouquet* was originally made of such strong herbs as thyme and garlic, which may have been meant to frighten away evil spirits. In ancient times, it was believed that a bride was especially lucky on her wedding day. The bride's *tossing of her bouquet* grew from her desire to offer a good luck souvenir to her family and friends. According to another wedding tradition, the people of the village gave *gifts* of pottery, livestock, and garden plants to the newlyweds because the bride and groom had no money to acquire these items until they had children, after which a dowry was exchanged. The *wedding cake* may date back to the Roman Empire. During that time period, wedding cakes were baked of wheat or barley. At the reception, they were traditionally broken over the head of the new bride by the groom as a symbol of her fertility. Guests would then scramble for pieces of the cake, and take them home for good luck. It later became a tradition to place many small cakes on top of each other as high as possible. The newlyweds would then try to exchange a kiss over the top of the tower of cakes without knocking them down. During the reign of King Charles II of England, the baker added icing, and the modern style of wedding cake was born.

Other traditions abound that originated in earlier times. For placement of the ring, prior to the 5th century, the ring finger was actually the index finger. Later, it was believed that the third finger contained the "vein of love" that led directly to the heart and brides began to wear their wedding rings there. According to some historians, the first recorded marriage rings date back to the days when early man tied plaited circlets around the Bride's wrists and ankles to keep her spirit from running away. Approximately 3,000 BC, Egyptians originated the phrase "without beginning, without end" in describing the significance of the wedding ring. These rings were made of woven hemp which constantly wore out and needed replacement. Although the Romans originally used iron, gold is now used as a symbol of all that is pure. Diamonds were first used by Italians, who believed that it was created from the flames of love. In some European cultures, the wedding ring is worn on the right hand. In other cultures, an engagement ring is worn on the left hand, and the wedding ring is worn on the right hand.



UNTITLED, 2010 Kathryn Flocken

For many couples, their place of worship is often the site of the exchange of the marriage vows.

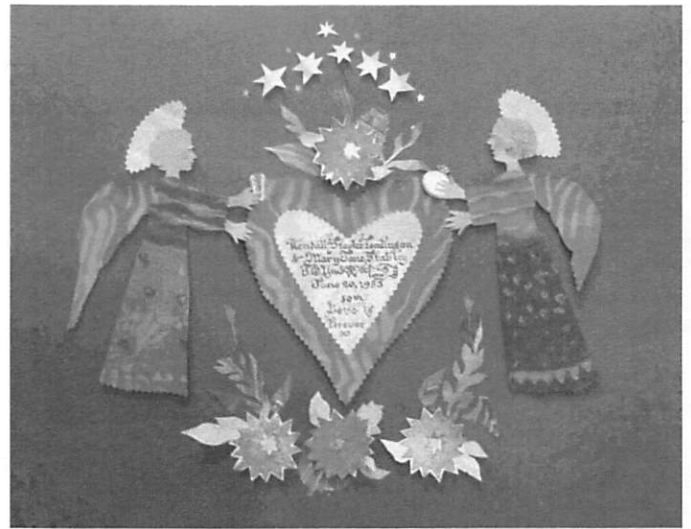
In almost all cultures the marriage ceremony ends with the bride and groom exchanging a kiss. The papercut, below, by Nancy Barsic, depicts a dramatic composition that includes the bridal bouquet, as it topples to the floor.



KISS © 2010 Nancy Barsic

Many other wedding traditions take place in various cultures around the world. At some African-American wedding ceremonies, newlyweds "jump over a broom" to symbolize the beginning of a new life. In a Chinese wedding, the bride may wear a red wedding dress, symbolizing love and joy. In many Orthodox Christian ceremonies, the rings are blessed by the priest, who takes them in hand, and makes the sign of the cross over the bride and groom's head. It is a Jewish tradition for a bride to present her groom with a tallit to wear for his Aufruf, the reading of the Torah prior to their ceremony. The groom's family often give candlesticks to the bride that can be used during the actual wedding ceremony. A Spanish groom sometimes gives his bride thirteen coins in memory of Christ and the twelve apostles. The bride carries them in a small bag during the wedding ceremony as a symbol that the groom promises to support and care for her.

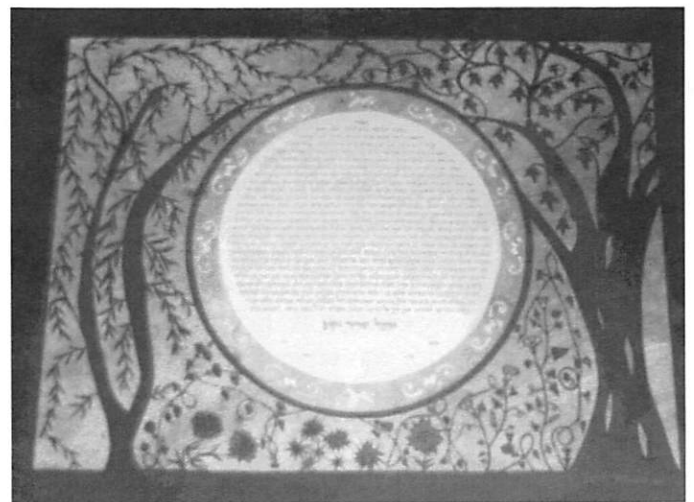
Some cultures include formal wedding certificates as part of their wedding traditions. One type of wedding certificate is in the Pennsylvania German style. Sukey Harris has created a papercut, which can be seen, above right in this genre. Pictured above right, traditional themes of angels, flowers, and calligraphy personify the Pennsylvania German style.



© 2010 Sukey Harris

*This wedding certificate was created from paste papers.*

Another type of wedding certificate is the ketubah. The ketubah is a form of a wedding contract signed at a Jewish wedding. An example of a ketubah, by Mindy Shapiro, can be seen below.



KETUBAH © 2010 Mindy Shapiro

These are but a few of the many wedding traditions observed by cultures around the world. Although there are differences that make each ceremony unique, the underlying common bond is the uniting of two people who promise to love and care for each other.



UNTITLED © 2010 Susan Lazarchak

# 'Favor-ed' Papercuts

By Susan Hahn

When making the favors for our daughter's wedding, I decided (of course!) to incorporate paper cuts into the design. I found a wonderful template for a squared cone box design from a craft activity book, then used them on a variety of printed Victorian-style scrapbook paper. Then I miniaturized various small cuttings to fit. I chose subjects such as cats, squirrels, heart-in-hand motifs, flowers, birds, butterflies, etc. Most of the cuttings were less than two inches in diameter.

After cutting more than 100 of these designs, I then assembled the cones one by one, gluing the seams together with a glue gun and selecting a cutting for the front of each cone. I further embellished them by adding antique-style buttons, miniature satin flowers, faux wedding rings, ribbons, faux gem stones, etc, arranging them attractively around the cutting. No two cones were alike, and each one was like a little work of art. It was tedious, time consuming, but fun and very gratifying, especially when hearing all the complements from our wedding guests.

We filled the favors with dinner mints and placed one on each guest's plate at the wedding. Not one guest left theirs behind when our wonderful event was over. After their November wedding, I was still in 'inspiration mode,' so with the upcoming Christmas holidays, I went back to my studio and fashioned more cones using a variety of Christmas papers. I embellished them with more paper cuttings and embellishments and strung a satin ribbon thru the top of each one. I hung them on a small white Christmas tree and displayed it in our sunroom. I called it the 'Wedding Tree' and our daughter and new son-in-law loved it!

It was a happy reminder of their first married Christmas together.

The measurements that Susan Hahn used for her favors are below:

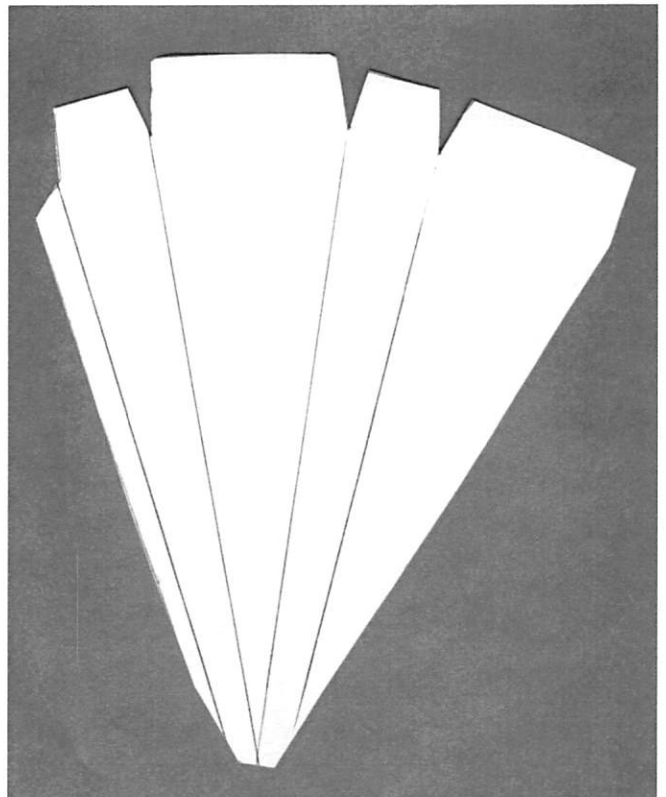
*Template size for wedding favor - approx. 8 ½ " long x 7 ¼ " top width.*

*Size when folded and completed - approx. 8 ½ " long x 2 ¼ " front width x 1" side width*

*Template can be enlarged or reduced in size.*



▲ Four examples of the completed Victorian favors created and photographed by Susan Hahn



▲ Template for the cone

# Coffee Filter Watercolor Roses

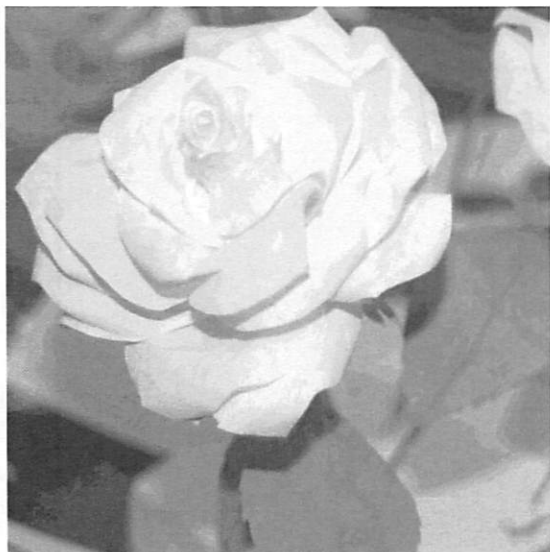
By Marie-Helene Grabman

My daughter, Charlotte, is getting married on June 12th. Being a paper cutter too (3rd generation in our family), she said, "Mom, why don't you make me a bride's paper bouquet of flowers?" After my initial reaction of "oh no", I thought...I can do that! I had just seen the Mary Delaney exhibit of her "Paper Mosaics" at the Yale British Museum of art and she was 70 years old when she began to cut her paper flowers.

My search for inspiration and ideas took me to many places. I visited a wonderful store in our town called The Paper Source. They sell paper flower kits and even have classes. I asked friends for their ideas and was sent several project patterns. The idea that finally caught my eye was the program Martha Stewart had several years ago on making roses using coffee filters and watercolor paint.

(<http://www.marthastewart.com/article/paper-roses>) Although her website patterns needed some refinement... about a month of practice, lots of trial and error and many flowers later, I was finally satisfied that the roses looked nice.

My basement flower shop is in full bloom! I am having so much fun that I am also making the bridesmaid bouquets as well as the boutonnieres for the groom and groomsmen! Hopefully I'll soon get back to my scissor cuttings...my next show is in 1 week! Stay tuned for a post-wedding recap of all the papercutting touches we are having in Charlotte's wedding in the Fall FirstCut!



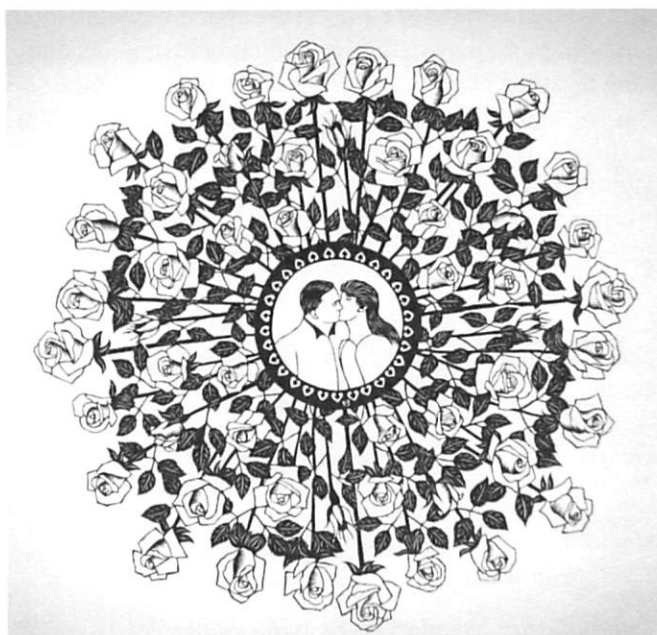
PAPER ROSE created and photographed  
by Marie-Helene Grabman



▲ KRANTZ WILSON 2010 Kathryn Flocken



▲ VICTORY WEDDING 2010 Carolyn Guest  
This papercutting was personalized for a couple who are  
Harley-Davidson fans.



▲ A KISS IN THE GARDEN © 2010 Bill Oellers



# Ideas & Inspirations

By Kathy Trexel Reed

A couple years ago a young woman approached while I was demonstrating at our Somerset County Historical Center's festival called Mt. Crafts Days. She watched for a while and then asked if I would consider cutting a silhouette of herself and her fiancé' because she would like to use it as a "bride and groom wedding topper" on her wedding day. I was pleased, but also curious, and asked how she would keep it from getting cake icing all over it. She laughed and explained that she would have an outdoor country wedding, and would be married at her family farm. She said that she did not plan to have a wedding cake at all, but would instead have a tier of homemade pies, with the silhouette on the top pie.

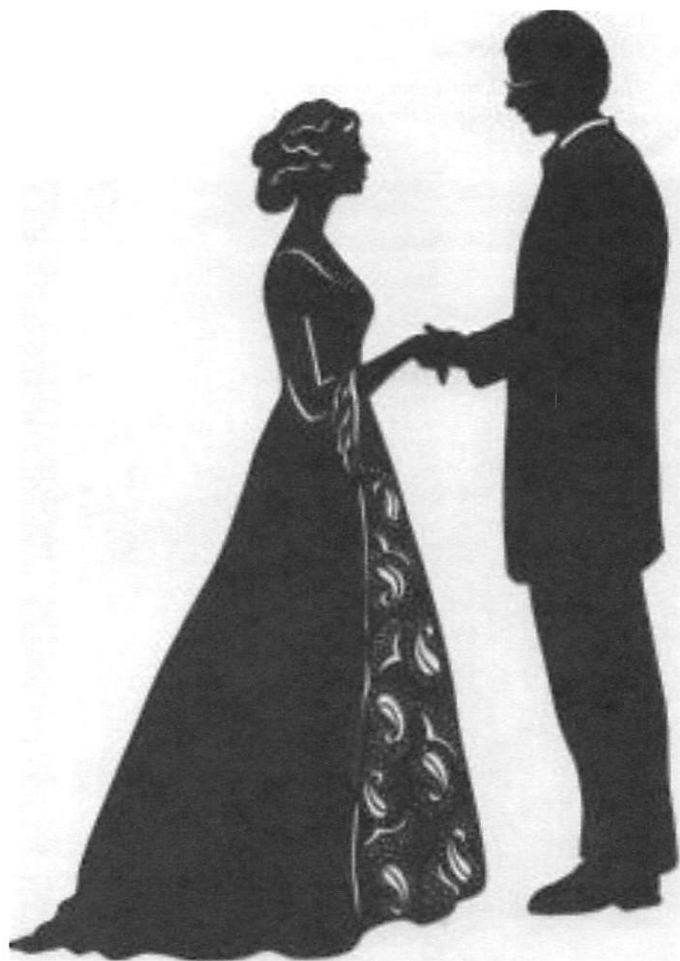
We exchanged contact information and she soon made an appointment to come to my studio with her fiancé. She brought the pattern for her wedding gown that her mother was sewing for her and samples of the fabric for the front panel which had a lacy paisley design. I made some pencil sketches of the profiles of the two young people before they left. After some trial and error attempts, I finished this cutting and sent it to them. They responded with a friendly thank you note and included photos of themselves as a newly married couple, and of the table holding a tier of several pies. The papercutting was framed and sitting on the top pie.

I smile every time I think about it.



The bridal couple wrote Kathy the following note:

Dear Kathy,  
This is a picture of our pies and the caketopper you made for us. I copied the one you made and cut it out to use. Yours is framed on our wall. Thank you for making such a beautiful cutting of us.



UNTITLED © 2010 Kathy Trexel Reed

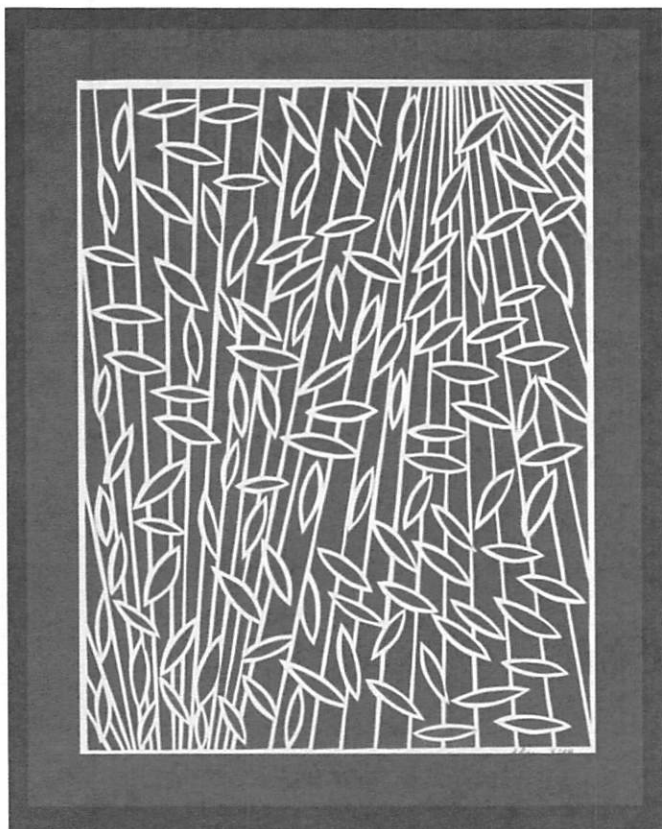


PLANTINGS © 2010 Edie Johnstone  
4 ¼ x 6 ¾ inches

*The original has red behind the tulips, yellow behind the daffodils, green behind the leaves.*



PARROT FLOWERS © 2010 Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt, SDS



UNTITLED © 2010 Alan Sidman



THINK OF ME © 2010 Carolyn Guest

# The Cicha Cutter

by Sue Throckmorton via Poland

In the Autumn 2009 issue of *First Cut* I wrote about how the wonderful carvings in and on the houses of the Tatra mountains in southern Poland had inspired me to make several papercuttings.

I talked especially about a house known as “Cicha” which fellow GAP member Monika Krajewska had visited on a winter holiday with her husband. Karol Kloskowski, the grandfather of the present owner, was the artist responsible for the beautiful decorations at “Cicha.” What we both later found out and according to a recent magazine article about him and the house\*, was that Karol was not only a great carver but a prize-winning lacemaker, a painter, a gardener, and a papercutter.



▲ The house known as “Cicha”

Growing up in a small village, Karol displayed early artistic talents. At the age of 8, he picked up a large pair of tailoring scissors and began to cut five pointed flowers from newspapers which he pasted on the farmhouse wall. Soon after his mother gave him white paper to cut, and when a girl came to him with colored paper and asked him to make a papercutting for her wedding, the whole village began talking about his talent. As a result the village lord of the manor gave him a stipend to the School of Wood Industry in Zakopane where he chose to study decorative arts and figure carving. Later he studied at the Academies of Fine Arts in Vienna and Cracow.

Returning to Zakopane he married one of three sisters who owned a wooden villa pension which he soon began to enlarge and to decorate everything in the local *goral* or highlander style., even the stable where he carved the words of *goral* songs! In 1925 he won a prize for lace making in Paris where he was in competition with many famous Belgian lacemakers.

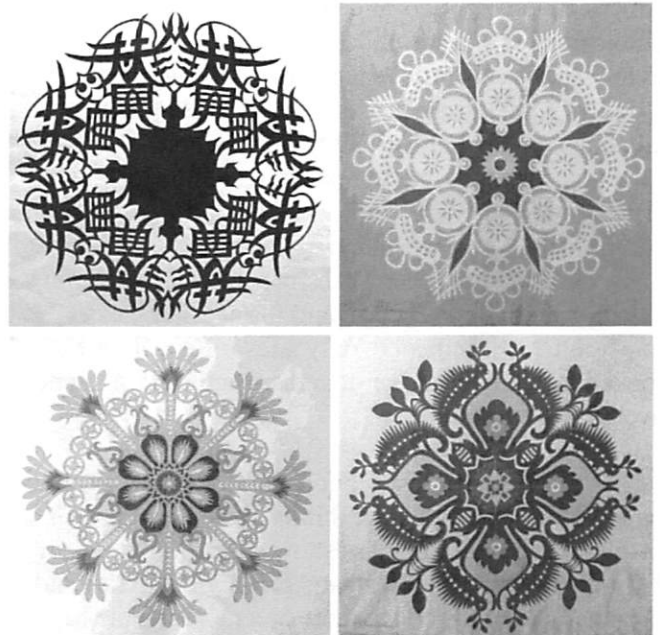
He had a huge garden where he planted flowers from all over Poland. He also painted his flowers as well as portraits of the neighboring children and gorals. His grandson remembers carrying his grandfather’s easel into the mountains where he painted landscapes.

Karol was well-known and liked in the town, and soon “Cicha” became a magnet for artistic endeavor. Full of life, the villa resounded with theater plays, storytelling, recitations, and musical entertainments. The host himself played big cymbals then and at the weekly Sunday Mass.

It’s not surprising that such a man could produce beautiful papercuttings. Pasted on the walls and furniture of the villa and also collected in a large scrapbook, they are most often round and display charming elements of the insects, flowers, and birds he saw around himself every day.

His grandson, Jacek Kloskowski, himself a painter, has assembled a CD of some of his papercuttings for Monika Krajewska, and has given us his gracious permission to share some of them with you. Unfortunately, they are all in color, often in unusual combinations, so will not appear at their best.

*\*Baranska, Renata. “Co Mowi Cicha.” Weranda Country. Winter. 2007-8:18-25.*



▲ A sample of four cuttings by Karol Kloskowski  
© 2010 Jacek Kloskowski. Two are featured on the back cover.

# Papercutter Profile

## Susan Duvall

To say it was “Love at First Sight” is an understatement. I was captivated and totally in awe at my first encounter with Schrenschnitte. It all occurred in 2001 at a festival in Wilmington, Delaware that I attended with my daughter and her family. As I walked from exhibit to exhibit I was drawn into a new world that still today has me totally fascinated. At each exhibit booth, I talked with and questioned each artist and left this event with excitement and intrigue – returning to Texas with a new passion and a desire to learn this beautiful art form.

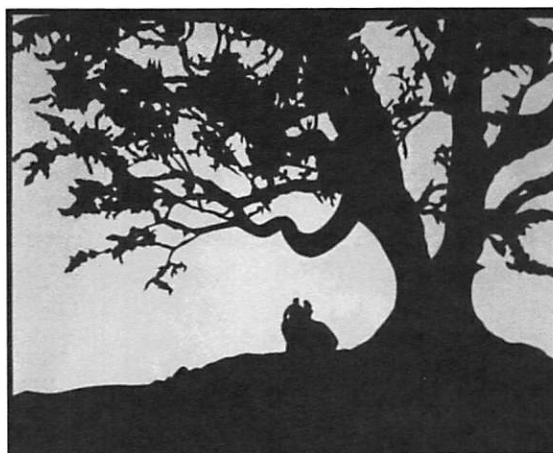
Upon returning home, I immediately hit every bookstore, library and website that offered any information and direction on where to begin. My collection began slowly, but it wasn’t long before I had bought my first knife, scissors and paper and began to teach myself the very basics. I was hooked, to say the least. Soon all my friends, family members and neighbors were receiving bits and pieces of my new found love. It was very primitive, but with each day I could see improvement and with each day I loved it more. With very limited artistic abilities, I relied on patterns and objects for simple inspiration. To cut and then give it away brought me the most joy. I am sure everyone wondered when receiving a gift--would it be another papercutting?

Before long, I was introduced to The Guild of American Papercutters and was captivated by the publication of “First Cut.” The work and talent that goes in to creating this little magazine is amazing. How wonderful that all the artists are able to share their creations. I can hardly wait to open the package each time it is delivered and to read about all the talented artists and to see their work. Their stories and photos are so inspiring. As I expanded my networking, I began to make contact with other Texas papercutters and soon we began meeting in Ft. Worth and formed The Texas Papercutters. There were only a few of us, but we looked forward to our get-togethers and discussing new avenues to explore.

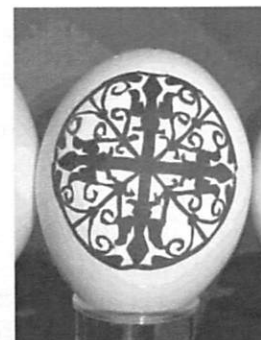
We began slowly but expanded the word about papercutting through our exhibits in area libraries. We displayed our work in glass show cases in libraries in Farmers Branch, Rockwall and Greenville, Texas and our goal was to introduce more and more people to Papercutting. Eventually our group learned about Collection 2006 in San Antonio, Texas and we made plans to attend. This was my first event, but I was in

awe of so many talented people from all over the world. I feel as if I made a few new friends and more inspired than ever. I found this to be true as well of Collection 2008 in Lancaster, Pa. All of the workshops and events were truly educating and informative.

My love of papercutting is totally a hobby, but one that brings such joy and relaxation that I can hardly believe it. If I am uptight in the least, all I have to do is pick up my knife and scissors and it is not long before I am off in another world and totally relaxed. From time to time, I have had to put my work aside for numerous hand and finger surgeries from severe osteoarthritis. Now my fingers are all fused, and I am still able to cut and feel it is good therapy. I feel like my hands have been healed because I put them to work for my passion--“hands to work, hearts to God.” This journey, through numerous surgeries and therapy, has been a spiritual, physical and creative trip. It is easy sometimes to take our hands for granted, but they are our lifeline to expressing what is in our hearts through our papercutting. The act of cutting, of creating, and of giving-- is the gift---the gift that I am so thankful for, and grateful.



UNTITLED © 2010 Susan Duvall



UNTITLED decorated Easter eggs © 2010 Susan Duvall



# Papercutter Profile

## Nancy Barsic

Scissors have always fascinated me. When I was 4, struggling to cut paper with dull children's scissors, my father took a pair of small, sharp sewing scissors and ground both tips down for safety. He gave me a large 2" wide roll of brown "lick 'n stick" paper and I spent hours cutting and pasting. My big sister taught me how to draw and cut out paper dolls and clothes. It was no surprise when I became an elementary art teacher and I love it.



DAVID AND MARIE-EVE © 2010 Nancy Barsic

When my friend and GAP member, Marie Cook, announced that she wanted to pass on her silhouette cutting skills 12 years ago, I jumped at the chance. Several of us met at her house, she demonstrated, we cut her, each other and ourselves in her bathroom's double mirrors. I began cutting head silhouettes at school carnivals and post prom parties, and discovered that hours of cutting are a joy! I found myself looking at people from the side, with my "scissor fingers itching," wanting to capture that profile.

After cutting silhouettes at wedding receptions, my technique expanded to whole figures of the bride & groom. Cutting on site transforms the process into performance art. When my own children married, it required working from photos, because I was too busy being mother-of-the-bride or groom. This delayed approach to silhouette art allowed time for me to try different styles and techniques.

In 2004 I won a trip to Japan, through the Japan Fulbright Scholarship. This required me to write a proposal of what I wanted to learn and how the experiences would be shared with others. My stated goal was to meet Japanese paper cutting artists, learn from them and explain to others that the art of cutting is

"to make bridges of paper so that it holds together in one piece, just like people need to build bridges to hold together in one peace." Japanese first graders showed me how to do Kirigami (folding and cutting), sixth graders demonstrated very intricate paper cuttings with X-acto knives and an old woman showed me how she used delicate punches.

The Fulbright experience in Japan expanded my perspective on paper cutting with many new and interesting ideas to offer colleagues and students. Silhouette cutting enables us to see the amazing variety among people as well as the similarities, and to look carefully at our surroundings to more fully appreciate the beauty around us.

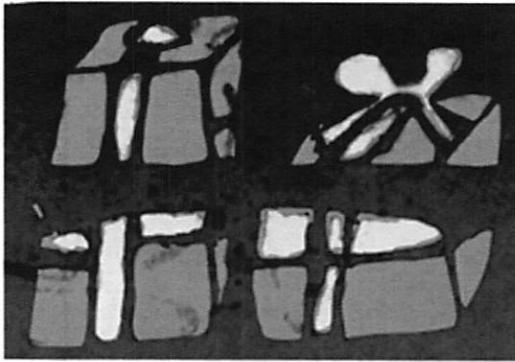
A rewarding experience is teaching my youngest students how to use scissors, how to hold them, how to cut curves, etc. and to help fifth and sixth graders learn to cut recognizable silhouettes of each other. They have achieved remarkable cuttings and enjoy the creative process of cutting other subjects and ideas. Adults are also open to learning as paper cutting lessons are shared with art teachers through the Art Educators of Iowa and locally through our Area Education Agency.



MARY AND SCOTT'S PIRATE WEDDING  
© 2010 Nancy Barsic

# Student Snippings

## From Nancy Barsic's Fifth Grade Art Classes



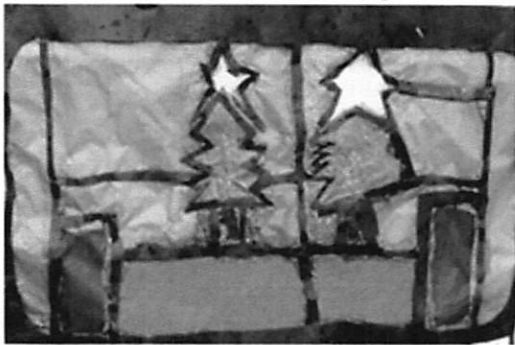
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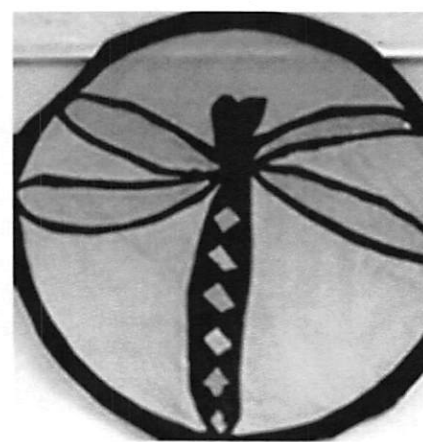
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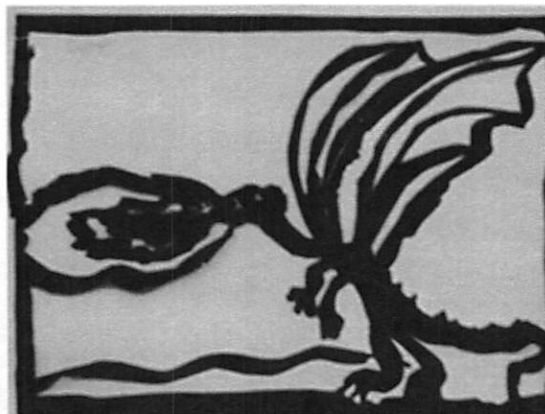
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All of these papercuttings are done by 5th grade students. The Orchard Hill cuttings were mounted on colored computer paper. At Cedar Heights we used tissue paper for a stained glass effect.

Nancy Barsic



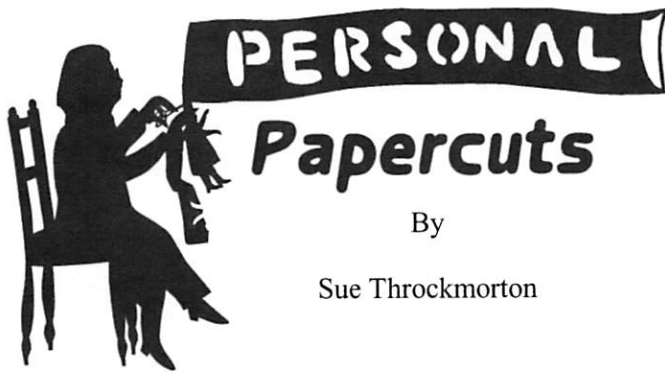
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By

Sue Throckmorton

## SHADES OF THE PAST

In the summer of 2007, Marie-Helene Grabman, Joyce Yarbrough and I traveled together to China for the Third International Festival of Papercutting Arts. We traveled in China before and after the festival, and throughout our trip I was impressed with how Joyce was able to "communicate" through her silhouette cutting. Joyce says she has lots of stories to share about her silhouette cutting from her many years of experience. Here are four of them:

*"One of my early experiences cutting silhouettes helped me learn how to describe 'cutting a silhouette'.*

*While waiting in line for a silhouette of her little girl, one mother told her child that I was going to 'cut her face'. You never heard such crying and screaming! Finally we convinced the child that I was going to cut a 'picture' of her face that looked like her shadow, and she was OK with that!*

*One time I was set up in a busy shopping mall cutting silhouettes when I was approached by this man in a pink shirt. He asked if I had ever cut a silhouette of an Apache Indian in full headdress. 'No' I replied, but I was willing to try. Boy was I surprised when he later appeared in his native American finery, and 'Apache Will' became one of my most challenging subjects!*



▲ Joyce Yarbrough at Datong Festival Forum at Yanbei Hotel

*I tell people that not only do I use surgical scissors, but I do referrals for plastic surgeons! After cutting silhouettes of a man, his wife and small son, the man was involved in a serious accident and broke his nose. I later learned from the couple that the surgeon used the silhouette I had cut of Jerry as a guide for rebuilding his nose!*

*Once I was cutting silhouettes at a store in Dallas, Texas, and had cut silhouettes of the eight children of a couple. The wife was very pregnant with the ninth child. Late in the day the last day of my stay, the couple appeared again for their own silhouettes. She had delivered the baby earlier that day and was so afraid I might not return because I was having problems with my hand, that she came back that day to have the silhouette done of herself and her husband!"*

Incidentally, at that festival in China, there was one silhouette cutter I saw who held the paper over his head as he cut out the silhouette of one of the participants. I'm not sure Joyce or any of us could top that!



▲ Joyce Yarbrough cutting Apple's silhouette



▲ Joyce Yarbrough cutting on the train trip to Taijwan



# Cuttings from the Past

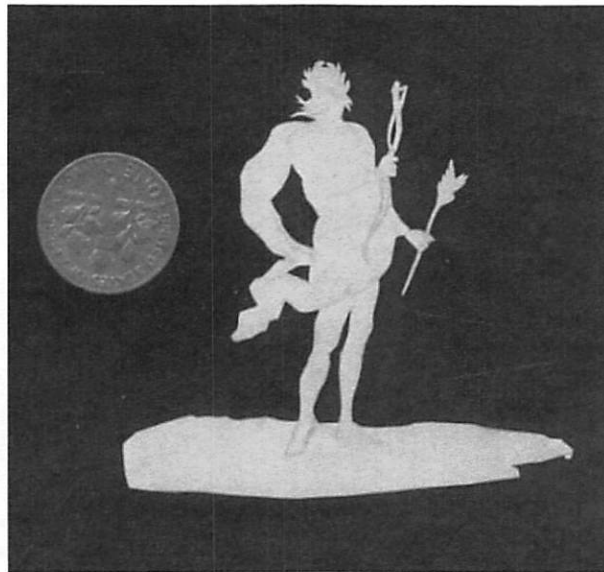
By Susan S. Hahn

These tiny cuttings are the products of anonymous artists. Some of them, as you can see, are a bit crude and primitive, but charming, nonetheless! With the exception of the tree cutting, all of them were purchased from the estate of an ephemera dealer in Massachusetts. This dealer was a collector of items that originated from all over the world. They were found in a group of very early scraps circa 1820's to 1830s and appear to be contemporary to that time period, as they were cut from laid paper commonly used at that time. The little tree was purchased from another dealer at an ephemera show, with absolutely no information on its history and came into the possession of Sheryl Jaeger and Ralph Gallo, ephemera and antiques dealers and collectors.

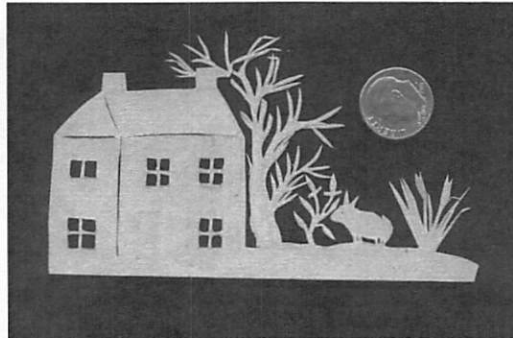
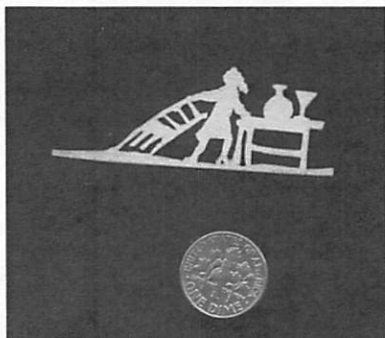
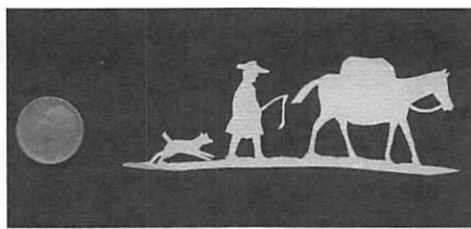
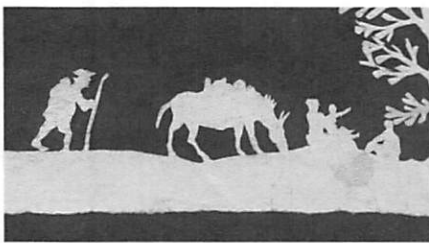
You can see from the 'dime' scale in the photos below, just how small these cuttings are! Some pencil lines can still be seen on several of them, and at least one is stained. The tree cutting is a bit ragged and crudely cut with some staining from what appears to be adhesive. An interesting collection, to say the least.

(A heartfelt 'thank you' to Sheryl and Ralph for their kind permission to use the information and photos of these tiny treasures. Sheryl is also a member of the Guild and graciously shares these kinds of collectibles with me for use in FirstCut.

Eclectibles  
www.collectibles.com)



Apollo Scherenschnitte, 1870



Top left, clockwise: Detail of scissor cutting of farm; scherenschnitte with mule 1870; old papercut of tree 1870-1890; house and rabbit scherenschnitte; small antique papercut, undated



# Garden of Lent and Jesus the Gardener

By Alice Helen Masek

The cuttings to the right are of one of the two "Garden of Lent" panels on two Sundays, one in the middle of Lent, with the grape vine putting out its tendrils of prayer, several leaves on the bulbs, and early crocus and cherry blossoms, the second on Easter Sunday, with all in full bloom, the grapes ripe for the wine, the animals out of hibernation roaming in the scene, and the Easter sunrise! This particular "Paper Stained Glass" style cutting is revealed by the removal of the black (front) paper each week, to allow it to "grow". Looking at it closely, you can see the edges of the cloaking pieces, but from a distance, they are not visible. Banners are supported on two drop lines, to make it doable to lower them each week to reveal more of the growth.



JESUS the GARDENER is the culminating image of a progressive banner set of the Garden of Lent, two panels which "grow" each Sunday of Lent to full bloom at Easter, with meaningful links to cultivation of the growth of a "Seed of Faith" inside ourselves. This Jesus, 9 feet tall, appears in the book of John, chapter 20, verses 1-18, when Mary Magdalene goes to the Garden tomb to tend the body of Jesus, and finds he is not there. She sees a man she thinks is the gardener, and only recognizes Jesus when he says her name. "Do not cling to me" I show as His hand extended with his palm towards her, and then he invites her (hand palm upward) to go tell the others he is alive. You can see the marks of the nails in his hands. In this cutting, Jesus has both masculine and feminine qualities, as I believe Jesus the Christ reflects the fullness of God in his resurrected body. Without the earlier Garden of Lent exercise, this Jesus can still be scripturally meaningful. However with the whole "Garden of Lent" study leading up to Him, I find it touching, after weeks of thinking of myself prayerfully tending the growth of my inner seeds, to realize that Jesus has been my companion in the task all along.



JESUS THE GARDENER © 2010 Alice Helen Masek

# The ART of Critique

By Patricia Mortenson

This paper cutting was almost done when I asked a friend, who is a fantastic acrylic artist, for a critique. It was her opinion that the bottom part of the cutting was very "busy" and the top was very plain and so the eye was drawn to the bottom and the top was neglected. She advised me to "busy" up the top part, and suggested that I add a chair and add slim cuttings to the places where she could see the (undefined) underlying drawing; for example the Amish hat and the arms. I was very disappointed by the result and emailed my chagrin to Kathy Reed. She responded with these words of encouragement:

*Long ago (1979) I made this entry in my journal after experiences similar to yours:*

*"There was a time when I did not trust myself - my own sense of timing- I'd feel the rightness or the wrongness of the moment strongly enough, but was too easily convinced by some persuasive soul to jump in, to disregard my own internal clock of right time passed or not yet at hand. And so, I'd blunder in, directed not by myself, but by another's senses. My timing off, I'd see the error of my move; Too soon for what might be, too late to reconstruct the dream. I've learned since then that my own senses serve me best; They're gifts designed for me alone, to gather meaning, to guide action and to share."*

My second attempt at this cutting incorporated a few proportional changes but is basically a re-work of the original.

But to be clear, I don't mean to criticize critique. I belong to a critique group at the local artist's association (all media represented) and find it very helpful. However, in this case I asked only one person instead of the group. Perhaps that's where I went wrong. I don't want to diminish the value of critique. In fact, in the day of digital cameras and email, we could start an on-line critique group among ourselves for partially finished works that run into technical questions.

*(Ed. Note: When Patricia sent the text on the critique process, I responded with the comment that, "I thought the re-work was good because you stuck to your guns, as they say, and didn't change the basic concept, but the angled figure and the added motion in the arm draws the eye right back to the top of the design, after focusing on the quilt."*



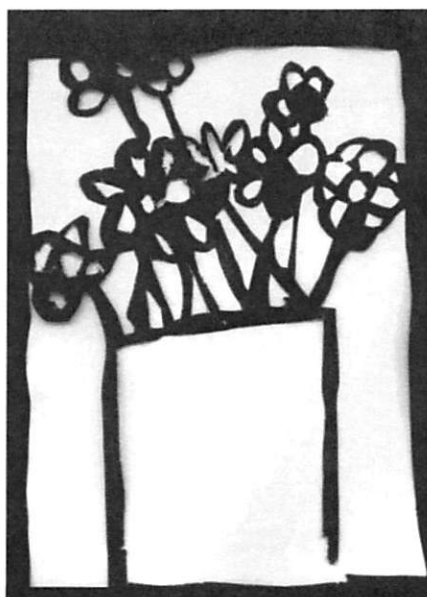
▲ UNTITLED © 2010 Patricia Mortenson  
*The first version, prior to a critique.*



UNTITLED © 2010 Patricia Mortenson ►  
*The second version, with design modifications, retains the original overall design concept.*



UNTITLED © 2010 Allison, Grade 5  
Nancy Barsic's Art Class



UNTITLED © 2010 Silas, Grade 5  
Nancy Barsic's Art Class



UNTITLED © 2010 Michelle, Grade 5  
Nancy Barsic's Art Class

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All submissions should be sent to  
Pat Stuntz, 10 Cardinal Drive, Fleetwood, PA 19522  
Email: [pnstuntz@dejazzd.com](mailto:pnstuntz@dejazzd.com)

**To submit artwork:** Clear black/white photocopies of an original papercut may be mailed to the above address. Digital images may be postal mailed via CD or emailed.

Label each item with identifying information (name, address, title of work, dimensions, date cut, tools and materials used).

**To submit articles:** Send articles in Microsoft Word format via email or on a CD. If that option is unavailable, articles may be mailed as a typed manuscript. To submit a Papercutter Profile, send a one page typed essay about the member including information about how papercutting became an interest, tools and techniques used, any personal papercutting advice or tips for other members, and examples of the member's work. (Follow artwork submission requirements.)

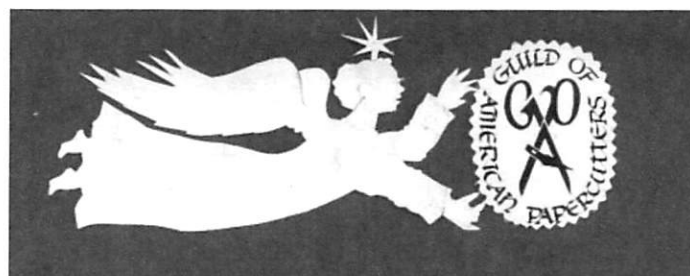
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