

# FirstCut

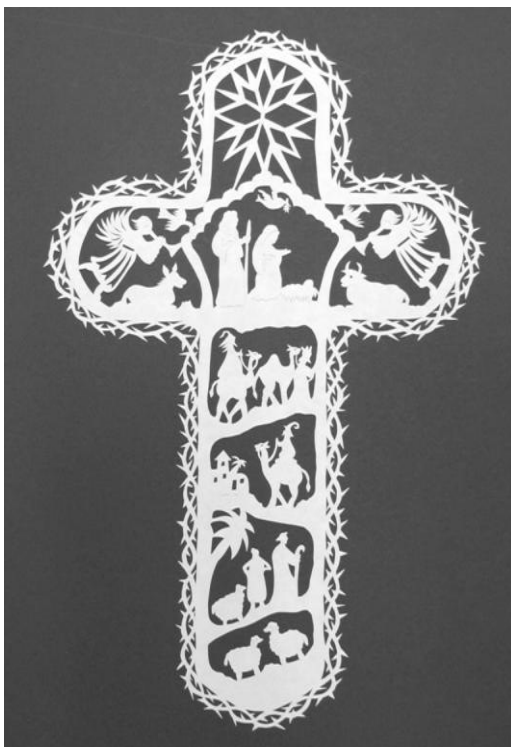
*Communication for Members of The Guild of American Papercutters*

*Volume 25*

*Number 4*

*Autumn 2010*





NATIVITY CROSS © 2010 Joli Miller



HANNUKA CARD © 2010 Zipora Ne'eman

**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 Kile 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 – vacant.

**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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[dddorf@usa.com](mailto:dddorf@usa.com)

# President's Corner

Dear Papercutting Friends,

As the year comes to a close, the Guild has so much to celebrate. Our Museum has gained regional and worldwide attention and acclaim. News articles have appeared in publications from Pittsburgh to Washington DC. A journalist from Japan interviewed Kathy Reed to learn more about the Museum and the history of cut paper in America. And, tours are now stopping at Laurel Arts to see the Guild of American Papercutters National Museum!

I hope you are as proud as I am because it is our members' artistic skill and the art of cut paper that we celebrate in our Museum. Cut paper art has really exploded in popularity over the past few years. I hope you are finding joy in your creative work.

We are saddened to lose 2 friends of papercutting whose work we love. Anne Leslie was my dear friend, neighbor, Board Member and talented silhouette artist. I'll miss her cheerful phone calls and the long drives we shared to go to GAP meetings. The area patrons of her silhouette studio will miss her talent in creating lasting memories of their children's changing faces. I will smile when I think of Anne playing her fiddle as she passed the time waiting for her next subject at area fairs and doing Scottish dancing with husband Francis.

I only briefly met Jorge Rosano when I attended the San Antonio GAP Collection. I didn't take his workshop but spoke with many who did attend who marveled at the creative cut paper pictures he so effortlessly produced.

Our condolences go out to the families of Anne and Jorge.

Peace, love and best wishes during our end of year holidays.

Marie-Helene Grabman

## FIRSTCUT'S Staff Comments

It is encouraging to see the many excellent articles appearing in this issue of FirstCut. Thanks to everyone who contributed regular as well as first-time articles and to those who shared their cuts and answered the call for topical cuts in Member homework.

Please continue to contribute your papercuts, no matter what the topic may be, and share your papercutting experiences with us. It enriches us all when we share!

Pat Stuntz, FirstCut Editor

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### Front Cover:

RECLAIM © 2010 Nikki McClure

### Back Cover:

Top Left: PUMPKIN PLANT © 2010 Christine Smith

Top Right: PUMPKINS GALORE

© 2010 Edie Johnstone, 5 ½ x 5 ½ ”

Bottom: TURKEY AT THE EDGE OF THE FIELD

© 2010 Carolyn Guest

## Member Homework

**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; papercuts on eggs

**Summer:** Parades/fireworks, carnivals, festivals

**Autumn:** Cuts that include words, texture in papercuts, maple sugaring, harvest

## FIRSTCUT Deadlines

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

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

All submissions for publication are sent to Pat Stuntz, 10 Cardinal Drive, Fleetwood, PA 19522 or emailed to [pnstuntz@dejazzd.com](mailto:pnstuntz@dejazzd.com).

## Guild of American Papercutters Board and General Meeting October 23, 2010

President Marie-Helene Grabman called the meeting to order at the Chester County Historical Society, 225 North High Street, West Chester, PA 19380. Present were Patty Kile, Kathy Reed, Pat Stuntz, Connie Minnich, Virginia Raywood and guest, Sharon Schaich, Carolyn Guest and guest, Nancy Rosin, Trudy Kauffman, Sandy Gilpin. A business meeting followed the viewing of the collection of papercuttings and exhibits belonging to the Chester County Historical Society.

**MINUTES** – Previously approved and published in the Summer FirstCut

**TREASURER'S REPORT** – Darcy Walker and Wendy Boyer

Quarterly Total Income July through Sept \$727.48  
Total Expenses \$2633.90  
Net Income (negative) -\$1906.42  
January through September total income \$20,165.33  
Total expenses January through Sept \$ 16,367.03  
Net Income \$3,798.30  
Current total assets as of Sept 30 \$41,345.44  
Same as total liabilities and equity  
The financial report will be filed for auditing purposes.

## OLD BUSINESS

**Membership** – Patty Kile and David Dorfmueller report that the current number of members is 334. Patty Kile is identifying people who have not paid for three months as non members. She is able to break down the membership by region so that members can contact each other for Snippings or other events. In November, 2010, seventy memberships are due. Members are reminded to look at their labels to find their renewal date. Between December and March hundreds of renewals are due. Members are asked to pay on or before renewal date to relieve Patty of sending reminder emails and post cards. A renewal reminder and donation appeal is included in the fall issue of FirstCut. The renewal form or PayPal may be used.

A tri-fold brochure detailing guild information and membership application is available. The brochure can be sent as a hard copy or as a pdf by Pat Stuntz for members wishing a copy for handouts.

More volunteers are needed to establish membership contacts. Please contact Patty Kile or Marie-Helene if you will help.

Patty Kile reported that the Shang Hai China Papercutting Guild would like to get involved with our guild.

**FirstCut** – Pat Stuntz reported that the fall issue of FirstCut will be a black and white issue and will be mailed about the first week of November. The annual renewal and appeal form will be included as a colored insert between the cover and contents page of FirstCut.

**Website** – Marie-Helene Grabman reported that the website has improved but is still experiencing difficulties. WordPress software limits the website capabilities. Marie-Helene is working with Jose Vargas to upgrade and to learn the code so that articles can be posted by our member volunteers.

**Snippings 2010** – Twelve people participated in the August Snippings at the Crossroads Art Center in Richmond, Virginia. Gene Toutsu organized the event and provided lunch for the group. Presentations were made by several participants, followed by a day of cutting and sharing. After expenses were paid, a balance of \$100 was left, and a check was sent to GAP from Gene.

Other regions are urged to consider gathering for fellowship and educational purposes in 2011. Carolyn Guest can provide ideas and sample workshops and Dorothy Buchanan can forward helpful information from the first Snippings event at Sequanota.

**Museum Committee** – Kathy Trexel Reed and committee

Recent articles appearing the Greensburg Tribune Review, Pittsburgh Post Gazette, and The Washington Post have motivated many individual and group visits to GAP's National Museum of Papercutting. This publicity as well as "Cutting Our Own Paths", a July to September juried guild exhibit at the Westmoreland Museum of American Art, has raised awareness and appreciation for the art of papercutting.

Donations by groups will be divided between GAP and Laurel Arts.

The curator and the collections manager at the Westmoreland Museum of American Art have been asked if they could provide service of appraisal or recommend a certified appraiser in western Pennsylvania. This is needed to establish value of our permanent collection for insurance purposes.

GAP and Laurel Arts will be working to develop a relationship with Laurel Highlands Tourism Bureau to become a destination for tour groups coming to the area. Thirty thousand copies of a color tri-fold rack card featuring Laurel Arts on one side and GAP on the other will be distributed by the Laurel Highlands Tourism Bureau. This is made possible through a grant awarded by the Somerset County PA Tourism Grant Program.

Discussion has begun about a possible local art and GAP Museum Shop at Laurel Arts.

The Past and Present Board Members exhibit now in the GAP gallery will end in late November. The third exhibit will feature an international show of papercuttings submitted from out of the country or from members' personal collections. It will open December 3 and will hang until Spring, 2011. Marie-Helene Grabman has ordered framing supplies including a clip frame system that Kathy Reed, Linda Peck and Dorothy Buchanan will use to mount unframed pieces coming from overseas. A locked glass case will showcase small framed cuttings, books, and collectables. Many cultures will be represented.

## NEW BUSINESS

### **Changes at Laurel Arts – Kathy Trexel Reed**

Laurel Arts Executive Director Michael Knecht has resigned and is helping with administrative transitions. The Laurel Arts personnel committee is examining resumes at this time.

### **German Exhibition 2012 – Marie-Helene Grabman**

The German Scherenschnitt Museum in Vreden, Germany has offered to host an exhibition of GAP members' work in 2012, with an exchange of their work for our museum. A committee on behalf of GAP will jury the work. We would ship our work unframed and the German group will frame the work in standard size frames.

A Call for Entries will be published in the winter 2011 edition of FirstCut. GAP will be responsible for shipping costs (both ways) and the insurance during transport. Nancy Rosin informed us that special art shippers regularly deal with larger items of value.

The German museum will insure the work during the exhibition and pay for the printing of the catalog. Work can be sold, with the museum taking 25%.

GAP member William Oellers is facilitating contact with Herr Gebing and The German Scherenschnitt Museum in Vreden, Germany. Following our show in Germany, a reciprocal show of contemporary and traditional German papercuttings will hang in the GAP museum.

**We need a member to be in charge of this project.**

## **Collection 2012 –Meet Me in Saint Louis! June 28-July 1, 2012**

Joyce Yarbrough, Collection 2012 Coordinator, reported that a check from GAP has been sent to "save the dates" in 2012 for The Mercy Center in Saint Louis. June will be a lovely time to enjoy the grounds outside or work on papercutting indoors at The Mercy Center. St Louis area excursions are being explored...suggestions are welcomed.

Our theme is "Papercutting - Off the Wall". We are looking for unusual workshops and fun projects. We are also looking into a GAP Exhibition in connection with our 2012 Collection in St Louis.

If there are specific workshops, speakers, or ideas that members would like to see at Collection 2012, please contact Joyce Yarbrough at jayart16@sbcglobal.net and we will see how/ if it can work into our plans!

A GAP Collection Volunteer list of specific tasks will soon be available. Much help from GAP members is needed to have a successful Collection in 2012!

## **Board Member Terms**

Marie-Helene will contact board members whose terms expire at the end of 2010 to inquire of their interest in continuing to serve on the board. Meanwhile, a replacement board member is needed due to the recent death of Anne Leslie.

## **Spring Board Meeting Dates**

March and April dates will be explored for the spring meeting at Laurel Arts. Information will be forthcoming in the winter issue 2011 of FirstCut.

## **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Pat Stuntz and seconded by Trudy Kauffman. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Reed and Pat Stuntz  
Acting Secretaries



OAK © 2010 Christine Smith

# *In Memoriam*



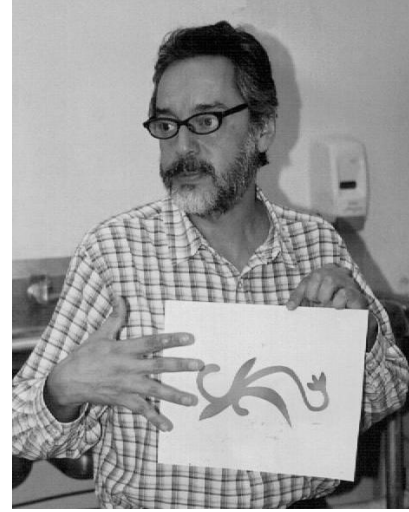
Anne Leslie

We are sorry to inform our GAP family that Anne Leslie passed away recently in Alexandria, VA. Anne served on the GAP Board for many years and devoted much personal time to the Travelling Shows and regional exhibits that featured our members' works.

As the program from Anne's service so appropriately said, "Anne was one of a few American artists who practiced silhouette portraiture. Using only scissors and black paper, she was able to create life-like portraits of a sitting subject within a few minutes. She was a welcome guest at craft shows and shops across the country. If you were fortunate enough to have her create a portrait of yourself or your children, you are holding on to a true piece of original American art and history."

She was the owner of the Paper Paintbrush, a silhouette portrait business, and had been an advocate of finding and encouraging young artists to explore and perpetuate this unique art medium. She is survived by her husband, Francis, and condolences can be sent to him at 6024 Telegraph Rd, Alexandria, VA 22310.

We will truly miss Anne as a wonderful paper artist, active GAP member, and friend.



Jorge Rosano

Jorge Rosano has passed away and his family will miss him. The world has lost an incredible artist.

Jorge based his art on the traditions of the Mexican Natives, some of whom used papercuts as bearers of various kinds of blessings in their homes, like little totems (animal symbols) and representing native gods. But he also did magnificent Baroque 3-dimensional cuttings, both a central picture and an elaborate curlicue frame around it, some architectural, some floral, some of Saints... we saw some on display at Collection 2006 when he was our speaker and guest and gave two workshops so everyone could see and learn about his work. He was gracious and patient and answered hundreds of questions!

Alice Helen Masek and her husband Mike had a wonderful conversation with Jorge one day of the Collection, over a shared table. He was a thoughtful, sensitive man, who by learning our language enough to converse, made a meaningful exchange possible. Alice Helen says she is honored to have known him even this little bit.

The Guild sends our condolences to his family and friends.

By Kathy Trexel Reed

The new GAP museum International Show will feature works from members abroad as well as private collections of international works collected by stateside members.

November will be a busy month for Linda Harrill Peck, Kathy Trexel Reed, and Dorothy Buchanan who will work to change the museum gallery exhibition from the Present and Past Board Members Show to the International Exhibit, scheduled to open Friday December 3, continuing through March 2011. Please see page 10 of the Spring FirstCut, Call for International Entries, to read all details for this new show.

Members living out of the United States are invited to send matted cuttings which will be framed by the three on site volunteers with plexiglass and clip frame systems. Members from the United States are also invited to send framed international pieces from their private collections, framed to gallery standards with wire for hanging, and which should arrive to Kathy Reed by November 27 or earlier. A glass case with lock in the GAP gallery will secure miniature, valuable items, including some books representing international papercuttings.



Works from previous shows that will be retained for the Permanent Collection will be stored in the new archival shelving constructed by Clair Platt, Laurel Arts Maintenance Supervisor, and Robert Reed, Kathy's husband.

Three recent, large feature articles featuring the Guild of American Papercutters National Museum in Somerset, PA, and the recent GAP Show, "Cutting Our Own Paths", at the Westmoreland Museum of American Art in Greensburg, PA have raised much interest in GAP members' works. Since the articles including many color images appeared in the Greensburg Tribune Review and Pittsburgh Post Gazette, numerous visitors from those cities have traveled to Somerset to learn about papercutting. Three more tour groups are scheduled to visit the Board Member's Show during the month of October.

The art form of papercutting, though a new concept to many western Pennsylvania residents, is already establishing The GAP National Museum as an institution, and marking the Philip Dressler Center for the Arts, home of Laurel Arts and GAP's home office, as a desirable destination.

## Attention GAP Paper Artists!

It's not too early to prepare your papercuttings for the **All Members Show at the GAP National Museum**, scheduled for April - November 2011. There will be no size limitations, but artworks should be framed to gallery standards with wire for hanging.

All details for submissions will be included in a Call for Entries form to be published in the winter issue of FirstCut, 2011. All works will be exhibited, and if the number exceeds the exhibit space, it will be hung as two separate shows. Pieces in GAP Museum exhibits are not offered for sale, but an acquisition committee will select some for invitation to join the GAP Permanent Collection.

## Coverlet Inspired Papercuts Sought for Exhibition

Papercuttings, mounted on 8" X 8" mat board, which are inspired by American coverlet motifs, are invited from ALL members, even though you may not have visited the Museum of the American Coverlet during the March Grand Opening weekend. Send these to

Kathy Reed,  
153 Black Bear Run,  
Berlin PA 15530

by January 1, 2011 and they will be placed in archival sleeves and displayed in the GAP glass cases at Laurel Arts.

References: [www.coverletmuseum.org/](http://www.coverletmuseum.org/)  
[www.historic-american.com/WovenCoverlets.html](http://www.historic-american.com/WovenCoverlets.html)

# Letters to Laurel Arts

Board of Directors, Laurel Arts

Dear Laurel Arts Board Members,

I would like to call your attention to the growing interest in the Guild of American Papercutters exhibition on Laurel Arts' second floor. Response to the Guild of American Papercutters Museum is, indeed, as Harvey Frankel once predicted, "making the guild an institution and Laurel Arts a destination." I have pasted a letter from Claire Zufall following her visit to the recent "Small Treasures" exhibit in the downstairs Laurel Arts galleries, and the GAP National Museum upstairs.

One Greensburg study group will visit the Papercutting Museum on Tuesday a.m. A Washington Post journalist will be arrive on Wednesday early afternoon to do a feature article about the GAP Museum; three recent articles which have already appeared in the Greensburg Tribune Review and the Pittsburgh Post Gazette have motivated the Pittsburgh 20th Century Club and the Greensburg Antique Society to also schedule tours of the GAP exhibit on the a.m. and p.m. of October 25. The guild also was invited and exhibited at the Westmoreland Museum of American Art, Greensburg, PA. for the month of September. We have also been filmed by Japanese T.V.

An "International Exhibit" will be featured in the GAP Museum beginning in late November through March 2011; it will include works coming from out of the country, which I and Linda Peck will frame, as well as private collections acquired by GAP members.

Our recent "About Face" open house, with on site caricatures, silhouettes, and charcoal portraits, raised about \$600 (after expenses) towards the Mellon Challenge.

Kathy Reed

Carrie Pike, Greensburg, PA

visited with a Study Group from Greensburg on Oct. 12, 2010

*"I like the warmth of the facility. The displays fill me with happiness and make me wish I could do these things. This was a worthwhile trip!"*

Martha Schaffer, Berkley, California

visited the GAP National Museum on Oct. 12, 2010

*"It's been a lovely experience, breathtaking and inspiring. It's a different way to look at the world."*

Dear Board of Directors,

My sister recently visited Somerset in August for our annual summer vacation time together. On one of our days we decided to visit the Westmoreland Museum in Greensburg and the Frick Museum and Frick Home in Pittsburgh. Before leaving town I suggested we visit Laurel Arts to start our day. I explained to her that our Laurel Arts was now the designated site of the national museum for the Guild of American Papercutters. Also, I was interested in viewing the "Small Treasures" exhibit since my neighbor and friend, Fran Bulow, had some of her work displayed. We were very impressed with the current exhibit and especially with the papercutting artwork upstairs. We had our visual art "baseline" for the day and pushed on to Greensburg. At the Westmoreland Museum we viewed the exhibit "Cutting our own Paths" and admired the contemporary quilts on display and the area devoted to papercutting artwork. Never having been to this museum, the building is quite impressive in size and architecture, and they have many lovely permanent art pieces.

Again we pushed on to Pittsburgh and visited the beautiful Frick Art Museum and Frick Home. The buildings, grounds, and artwork were especially nice and we toured the Frick Family Home.

We had a wonderful day together. We discussed what we had seen during our day on the drive back to Somerset. We both agreed that what we had viewed at Laurel Arts in the beginning of our day was just as inspiring and impressive as what we had seen in Greensburg and Pittsburgh. Certainly those facilities are larger and grander but in the end the essence of the appeal of art is always in the eye of the beholder. Laurel Arts has a charming building. The exhibit of "Small Treasures" was well designed and sharply presented. But best of all was the impression we experienced in examining the papercutting artwork upstairs. The representations were wonderful and demonstrated incredible artistic skill. Laurel Arts provides for the American Papercutters Guild a delightful venue that will attract many visitors who will be very pleased with what they see. I felt very proud and delighted that my local Arts Center was truly a "small treasure".

Congratulations to the Board and staff at Laurel Arts for providing a "home" for the American Papercutters Guild and for making our facility a first class art center and a "must see" stop for area residents and visitors.

Claire Zufall, Member



# Member Reminders

## Dates at a Glance

### GAP Museum Exhibits

International Members Exhibit  
December 2010-March 2011

General Membership Exhibit  
April 2011-November 2011

### Spring GAP Meeting Laurel Arts, Somerset, PA

April 2, 2011

### Gateway to the Midwest GAP Collection 2012! “Meet Me in Saint Louis” June 28 – July 1, 2012

### GAP Papercut Exhibition 2012 The German Scherenschnitt Museum Vreden, Germany

Date and Information to be announced  
in the Winter 2011 issue of FirstCut

### Paper Engineering: Fold, Pull, Pop & Turn

Smithsonian Libraries Exhibition Gallery  
National Museum of American History  
Washington, DC  
Through September 1, 2011

More information at:  
<http://smithsonianlibraries.si.edu/foldpullpopturn/>

## Paper Arts Exhibition Kirié: Paper Japonism

November 1 - December 3, 2010  
Hours: Monday-Friday 11:00 – 5:00  
Leonard Pearlstein Gallery  
Nesbitt Hall Drexel University  
3215 Market St.  
Philadelphia, PA

Free and open to the public.  
215.895.2548 or [gallery@drexel.edu](mailto:gallery@drexel.edu)

Japanese paper artist Kubo Shu will exhibit his traditional Japanese medium “Kami” (paper) through the masterful and creative image making technique of “Kirié” (paper cutting) during a month-long exhibition at the Leonard Pearlstein Gallery. Mr. Kubo’s work includes an impressive number of cut paper reliefs using traditional Japanese rice paper mixed with non-traditional materials. Kubo’s visit coincides with the 150th anniversary of the first Japanese delegation visit to the United States and the exhibit will celebrate “Bunkanohi,” Culture Day in Japan. The Japan Foundation has provided support for the visit of Shu and his workshop and lecture activities. The 150th anniversary is being celebrated across the country in the cities where this delegation visited, including Philadelphia. Kubo’s unique and creative approach to image-making deals with materials, construction, and angles and light. Participants and students will experience paper in innovative ways and will discover how to incorporate these techniques into their own design processes. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.drexel.edu/westphal/about/facilities/pearlstein/upcoming/>



GROTESKE FIGUREN © 2010 Ursula Kirchner

# Paper Engineering: Fold, Pull, Pop & Turn

By Steve Woodbury

Smithsonian Libraries Exhibition Gallery  
National Museum of American History  
Washington, DC  
Through September 1, 2011

More information at:  
<http://smithsonianlibraries.si.edu/foldpullpopturn/>

Many papercutters are intrigued by pop-up books. If you will be in Washington DC in the next year, you have an opportunity to see more than fifty examples, covering the past five hundred years, in this exhibition by the Smithsonian Libraries. If you can't get to Washington, the Smithsonian Libraries' website has photos and videos which you can enjoy from wherever you are.

My childhood in the '50's included the Jolly Jump-Ups books; in the context of the spectacular pop-up books available today, these seem pretty simplistic. But as the exhibition shows, even a century ago there was a wide diversity of movable books for children (and adults!) including pop-ups, pull-tabs, liftable flaps, tunnel books, and dissolving views.

As a papercutter, I am especially attracted to carousel books, which can be fully opened into a circle (front cover to back cover) revealing a series of three-dimensional scenes. A recent example, included in the exhibition, is Jan Pienkowski's *The First Noel: A Christmas Carousel* (2004) entirely in white paper. The exhibit also includes a carousel book of *Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves*, by illustrator and stage designer Mario Zampini, published in Milan in 1950.

In addition to the books themselves, the exhibit includes a video showing how the different books move. There is also a video interview with book artist Chuck Fischer and paper engineer Bruce Foster explaining how they collaborated to create the pop-up book *Angels*. You can also see much of this on the exhibition website.

The 24 page exhibition brochure (which you can download as a pdf from the website) includes lists of print resources and online resources where you can learn more about pop-up and moveable books.



▲ Above left and right:  
*The First Noel: A Christmas Carousel*, Jan Pienkowski,  
Candlewick Press, Cambridge, MA, 2004



▲ *ABC3D*, Marion Bataille, Roaring Brook Press, NY, 2008



▲ *Dancing Skeletons Tunnel Book*, Tunnel Vision Books,  
Chicago, 2006

All photos by Steve Woodbury.  
Used with permission.

# Member Commentary

**From Claire Archer** (via Kathy Reed):

*Thoughts on the Charter Members' Exhibit:*

To have the focus on a collection of such breathtaking art - a permanent nucleus - of unbelievable diversity is certainly due! I think that the artworks can stand beside any technique and challenge with artistic (I'll say it again!) - take-your-breath-awayness!! And it's true that each artist has a recognizable style-a signature, so to speak. See and believe!

Again, thank you so much.

**From Faye DuPlessis:**

I would like to pass along to GAP members these addresses for suppliers which I have found helpful.

First : C Grey (she won't tell me what "C" stands for but that's what she goes by) at [www.paperarts.com](http://www.paperarts.com) is a great help. I was looking for a particular look for a background color for some of the color collages I have been doing. She seemed to know exactly what I was looking for when I talked to her on the phone, made some suggestions & sent some samples for a small fee.

Next I'd like to recommend MTS Frames, 65 Walman Ave., Clifton, NJ 07011, Tel. 800 242 7173. I find the catalog easier to work with than the website & a real live person at the end of the phone line a real help. The best thing about MTS is that if you order three frames just alike, you get the "ready-made" price which is quite a bargain. They will send 3" long samples of molding free!

**From Jerise Fogel:**

I LOVE the new FirstCut, by the way! I was really excited to see the "Friendship through Papercutting" piece, and that amazing "Trauschein" by Sukey, and the Spanish Cross Mantilla by Peggy Gleason--I especially appreciate the international emphasis. But I think my favorite has to be the little Chickadee piece by Kay-Marie Buchanan, so simple, but adorable & such a great design! And that amazing "Let me dream..." cut by Ursula Hamann is truly amazing & inspiring. Oh my gosh, I can't cover everything, but there are so many beautiful things. It's my favorite journal to get in the mail!

**From Michael Velliquette:**

I'm pleased to share images of a recent cut paper piece that was commissioned for a new public library in Madison, WI. The work was made possible through grants from both the Madison Arts Commission and the Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission. For those of you local, the work will soon go on permanent view at the

Goodman South Madison Branch Public Library  
222 South Park Street  
Madison, WI 53713

Multiple detail shots of the work can be found at the link below:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/11042934@N02/sets/72157625235536>



► HOME TREE © 2010 Michael Velliquette  
Acrylic, paper, glue  
60" x 30"

# Book Review

By Pat Stuntz

## Ursula Kirchner **Scherenschnitt**

Kunst und Illustration

With a forward by Otto Kirchner  
and text by Claudia Gross-Roath

ISBN 978-3-931656-27-0

Publisher Information:

Verlag Jörg Mitzkat

Holzminden, 2007

[www.mitzkat.de](http://www.mitzkat.de)

Druck: Lönnecker, Stadtoldendorf



Ursula Kirchner's book **Scherenschnitt**, is a beautifully arranged book that features a variety of her papercuts in chronological order. In her first show about forty cut outs of fancy flowers were shown. These fanciful flowers are shown at the beginning of the book. Ursula's second show was inspired by absurd poems of Christian Morgenstern. Pages 102 to 107 in the book depict words added together such as "the peacock ox, the goose lard flower and the whofox". In the German language this produces images which can be very funny.



SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARVES.

© 2010 Ursula Kirchner 19.8 cm x 28.8 cm

*Snow White is carried by the dwarfs after being poisoned by her stepmother. It is a dance of despair, which leads to nowhere.*

Among other topics, Ursula's papercuts show themes from the Bible, mythology, and fairy tales. On pages 32 to page 43 illustrations of "the big flood" by Ovid can be found. In 1986 Ursula exhibited a number of papercuts of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Pages 53 – 59 show her interpretations of this fairy tale.

Ursula started experimenting with colors using everything she could find including flyers, newspaper, and photographs. She also made colored drawings and cut them out. Ursula's colored cuts can be found at the end of the book. Like her black and white cuts, Ursula delves into a variety of themes in color.



HERE I AM LYING ON A SPRING HILL

© 2010 Ursula Kirchner 20.8 cm x 15.4 cm

*From a poem by Eduard Mörike, (1804 – 1875) an outstanding German Poet, who lived in Stuttgart, Germany.*

# Meet Lewis and Clark

(and GAP Members at Collection 2012!)

By Pat Stuntz

St. Louis, MO promises to be an exciting venue for GAP's 2012 Collection "Meet Me in St Louis". There is much to see and do, not the least of which are points of interest relating to the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Around the St Louis and St Charles area, visitors can stop by the Lewis & Clark Museum/Boathouse where you can see a replica of the boat Lewis & Clark used, and visit the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804–1806) was the first overland expedition undertaken by the United States to the Pacific coast and back. The expedition team was headed by the United States Army soldiers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson commissioned the Corps of Discovery as a scientific and military expedition to explore the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase. The expedition's goal was stated by Jefferson in a letter dated June 20, 1803, to Lewis: "to explore the Missouri River and such principal stream of it as by its course and communication with the waters of the Pacific Ocean, whether the Columbia, Oregon, Colorado or any other river that may offer the most

direct and practicable water communication across this continent for the purpose of commerce". In addition, the expedition was to learn more about the Northwest's natural resources, inhabitants and possibilities for settlement; as well as evaluating the potential interference of British and French Canadian hunters and trappers who were already well established in the area.

It took two and one half years, but Lewis and Clark succeeded in their goal of reaching the Pacific Ocean, and in the process they learned much about the geography of the region, as well as meeting with Native Americans... both friendly and not. Lewis meticulously kept a journal with sketches of the different animals and plants they saw along the way.



▲ SEAMAN LEWIS © 2004, 2010 Joyce Yarbrough

*Joyce's silhouettes were the only ones in the 2004 Lewis & Clark Exhibition, but were included because they were of that time period, and would have been appropriate portraits in 1804...no cameras invented yet!*



▲ CAPTAIN CLARK © 2004, 2010 Joyce Yarbrough

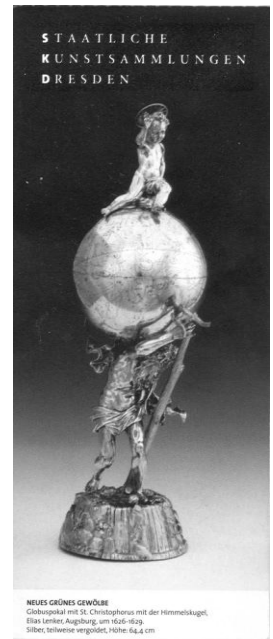
# Golden Silhouettes of Masterpieces Herald 450 Years of Art

By Ruth Grabner

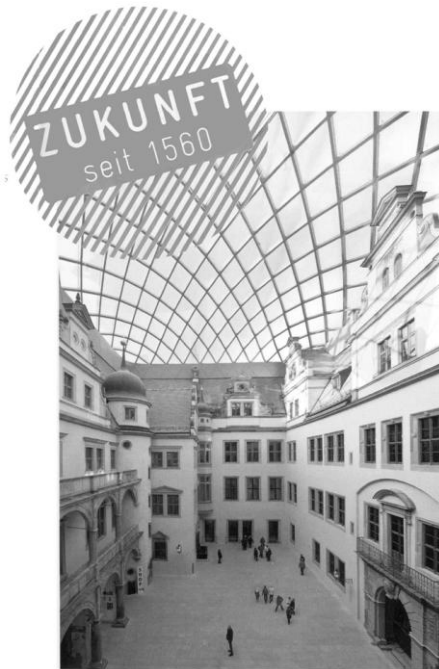
In making another journey to visit my relatives in what was the Eastern Zone of Germany, it is gratifying to report that a great deal of restoration has taken place in the many palaces and castles for exhibitions of all sorts.

In Lichtenwalde Palace where a wedding takes place every forty five minutes amidst splendid settings and statuary, we were unable to return to the silhouette display due to the bridal activity on the marble stairway. Instead, we were directed to another gallery on the vast grounds where a Kunst Werk von Students exhibit featured intricate wood carving, weaving, poster and costume design. As a former high school art teacher I wholly marveled at what students are capable of doing, when motivated.

Dresden's historic Grünes Gewölbe Museum, also a former palace which was apparently not leveled to the ground during the World War II bombing, is holding a "State of the Art Since 1560" exhibit to mark the Jubilee Year.



▲ Handouts from the "State of the Art Since 1560" exhibit



▲ Photo of palace courtyard

Prince Elector August (1526-1586) was instrumental in founding the collection. The exquisite quality of the objects, their selection and compilation fostered an understanding of the universe, including ideas on creation. August the Strong (1670-1733) shaped the courtly collection and he succeeded in acquiring an abundance of works which were renowned throughout Europe.

To my vast delight, immense white banners with golden silhouettes of exquisite masterpieces heralded this great event! Borders of golden silhouettes of statues, crowns, urns, swords, and clocks were attached to corridors leading from one gallery to the next. We touched them to see if they were papercuts.

Unfortunately, cameras were not allowed and therefore no photographs are included of the exhibit. Some of the silhouettes shown here reflect the beauty of the exhibit.



▲ Samples cut by Ruth Grabner

# Wise Old Owls

By Pat Stuntz



SNOWY OWL © 2010 Florinda Strimel

**Owls** are scientifically designated as birds of prey, with about 130 different types in their class. Most owls are solitary and nocturnal with some exceptions such as the Northern Hawk Owl. Owls primarily hunt small mammals, insects, and other birds though a few species specialize in hunting fish. They are found in all regions of the earth except Antarctica and in a great variety of habitats, from thick forests to open prairies. They fly with extremely little audible turbulence due to special feather structure and have particularly acute hearing. The smallest owl in the world is the Least Pygmy Owl at 4.5" tall, and the largest owl in the world is generally accepted to be the Eurasian Eagle Owl at 28" tall. A large, round head and huge, forward-facing eyes are features that make an owl instantly recognizable. They also have a sharp, downward-facing beak and soft, cryptically colored plumage. Males and females are generally similar in appearance, although the female is often up to 25% larger.

Throughout history and across many cultures, people have regarded owls with fascination and awe. Few other creatures have so many different and contradictory beliefs about them. Owls have been both feared and venerated, despised and admired, considered wise and foolish, and associated with witchcraft and

medicine, the weather, birth and death. Speculation about owls began in earliest folklore, too long ago to date, but passed down by word of mouth over generations.

In early Indian folklore, owls represent wisdom and helpfulness, and have powers of prophecy. This theme recurs in Aesop's fables and in Greek myths and beliefs. By the Middle Ages in Europe, the owl had become the associate of witches and the inhabitant of dark, lonely and profane places, a foolish but feared specter. An owl's appearance at night, when people are helpless and cannot see well, linked them to the unknown. Its eerie call filled people with foreboding and apprehension: a death was imminent or some evil was at hand. During the eighteenth century the zoological aspects of owls were detailed through close observation, reducing the mystery surrounding these birds. With superstitions dying out in the twentieth century - in the West at least - the owl has returned to its position as a symbol of wisdom.

## *References:*

<http://www.owlpages.com>  
[42explore.com/owls.htm](http://42explore.com/owls.htm)  
[www.owls.org/](http://www.owls.org/)





PUMPKIN TRAIL © 2010 Christine Smith



OWL © 2010 Edie Johnstone

*This little owl was cut from security envelope paper.*



MECHANICAL OWL © 2010 Susan Hahn

*Susan used small scrapbooking brads on the owl's wings.*

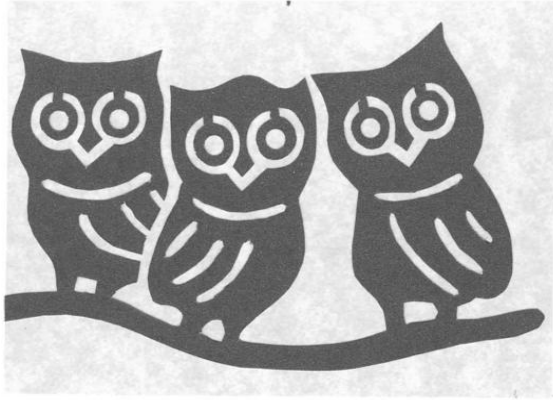


UNTITLED © 2010 Polly Winkler Mitchell

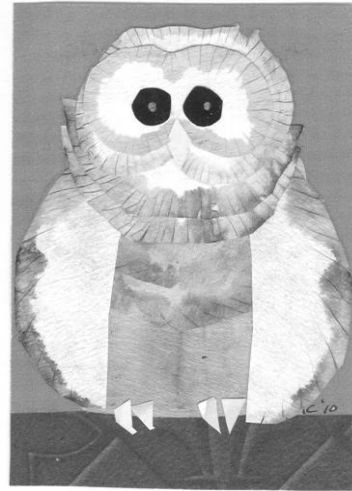


# ARTIST TRADING CARDS

## Observing Owls



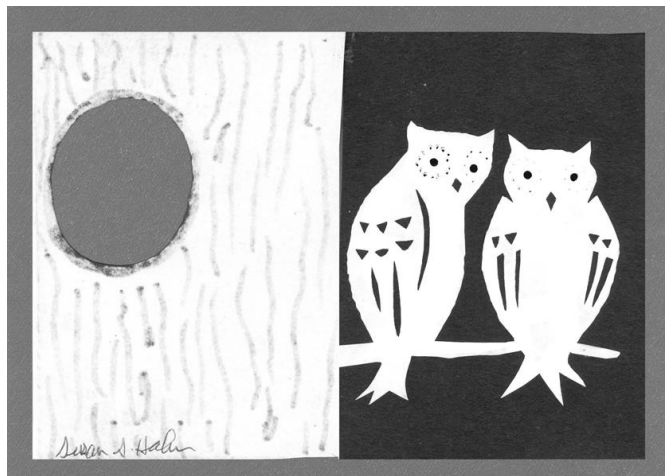
FAMILY PORTRAIT © 2010 Mary Lou Sulecki



UNTITLED © 2010 Melissa Clark



MECHANICAL OWL Trading Card  
© 2010 Susan Hahn

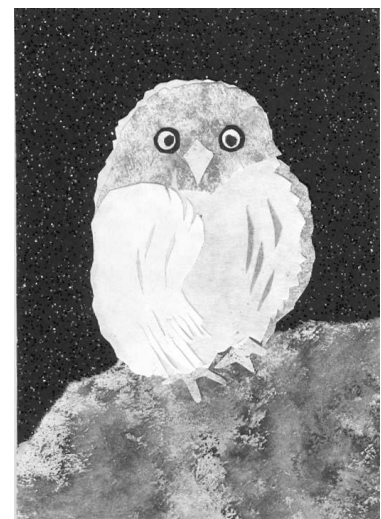


MECHANICAL OWL Trading Card when opened  
© 2010 Susan Hahn  
*Pin pricking detail delineates the circle around the eyes.*



OWL © 2010 Joan Sulecki  
*Inspired by a pin Joan had as a child*

Those wishing to join  
in the trades are  
encouraged to contact  
Susan Hahn at  
[behssh@olypen.com](mailto:behssh@olypen.com).



RESCUED RAPTOR  
© 2010 Pat Stuntz

# Greetings!

## A Celebration of Special Events in Paper

By Pat Stuntz

A greeting card is described as an illustrated, usually folded card featuring an expression of friendship or other sentiment. But paper artists know better. In addition to two-dimensional styles, handmade and hand-designed cards created from cut paper can twist, slide, and expand in all sorts of directions.

The custom of sending greeting cards can be traced back to the ancient Chinese, who exchanged messages of good will to celebrate the New Year, and to the early Egyptians, who conveyed their greetings on papyrus scrolls. By the early 15th century, handmade paper greeting cards were being exchanged in Europe. The Germans are known to have printed New Year's greetings from woodcuts as early as 1400, and handmade paper Valentines were being exchanged in various parts of Europe in the early to mid-15th century, with the oldest Valentine in existence being in the British Museum.

By the 1850s, the greeting card had been transformed from a relatively expensive, handmade and hand-delivered gift to a popular and affordable means of personal communication, due largely to advances in printing, mechanization, and a reduction in postal rates with the introduction of the postage stamp in 1840. This was followed by new trends like Christmas cards, the first of which appeared in published form in London in 1843 when Sir Henry Cole hired artist John Calcott Horsley to design a holiday card that he could send to his friends and acquaintances. Forty-seven years later in 1890, a talented 24-year-old artist by the name of Beatrix Potter used her rabbit named Bounce as a model to achieve her first commercial success – however, not as the legendary children's author that she would become later in life but rather as a creator of greeting cards.

GAP members Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt and Archie Granot have each designed beautiful cards that have special meaning in their cultures. Sr. Clarice created a tri-fold Christmas card, while Archie designed a Judaic card to express his greeting. Sr. Clarice's card is printed using dark blue ink on a white background. Archie's card front is a rich golden color.



▲ Top, Front of Christmas Card; Above, Opened Christmas Card  
© 2010 Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt, SDS



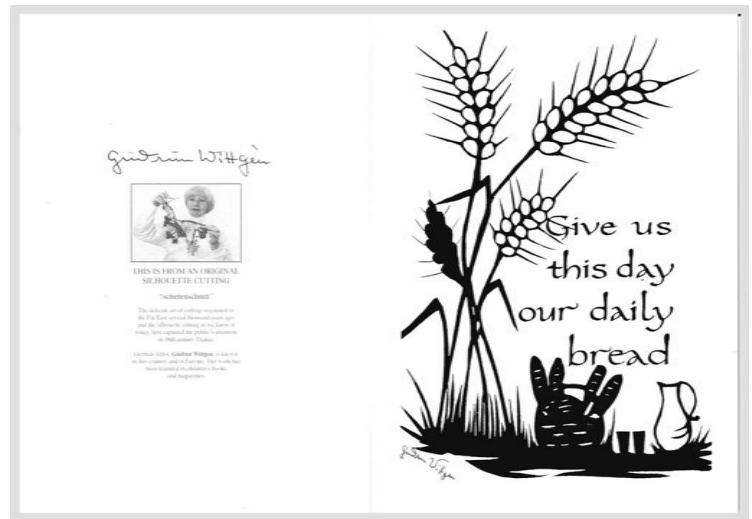
archie granot

Chag Same'ach - A Festive Blessing  
© Archie Granot, Jerusalem, Israel.  
Tel: 02-866-190 Fax: 02-861-404  
Printed at the Old City Press. Tel: 02-514-710 Fax: 02-521-029

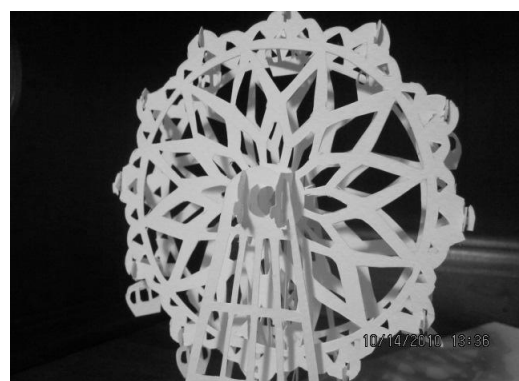
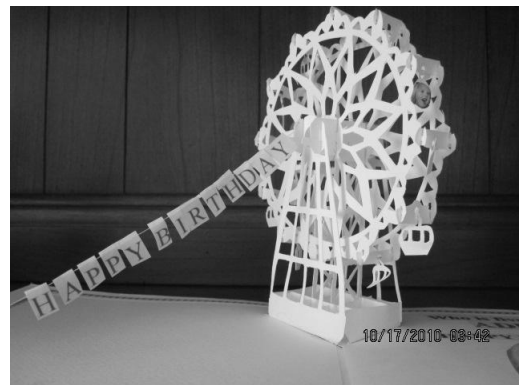
CHAG SAME'ACH – A Festive Blessing Card © 2010 Archie Granot ▲

Gudi Wittgen Gilbert designed a card with a theme that may be adapted to a variety of holidays or events. On her card, text and papercut combine to form the design on the front of the blank notecard. On the card back, below her photograph, Gudi includes a description of scherenschnitte along with information about herself

Perhaps one of the most exuberant events to celebrate is a child's birthday. GAP member Bill Offutt created a pop-up card for the fifth birthday of his granddaughter, Addy. Below are the photographs that show how Bill integrated computer imaging technology with paper engineering to create a delightful birthday card.



GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD © 2010 Gudi Wittgen Gilbert



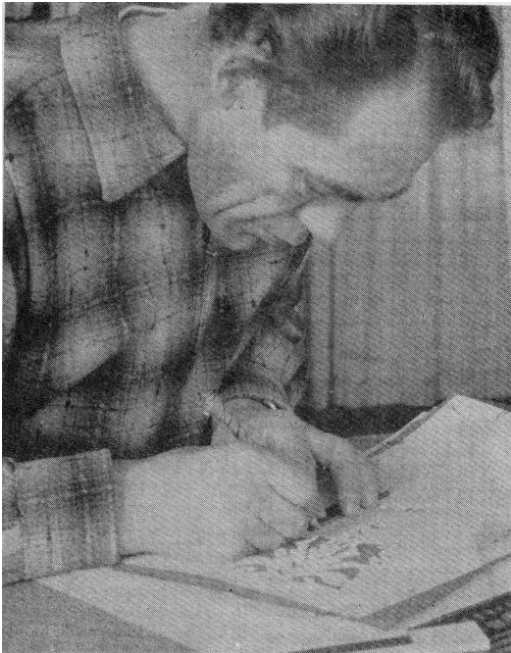
*The photos left and above show the sequence of events in the unfolding of Bill Offutt's pop-up birthday card for his granddaughter, Addy, 5. Bill used a template created by Julia D Palmer who shared the original template that he redesigned for his card.*

Today, we have cards that come in all price ranges-including e-cards and cards with sound, but the best card is still the one made by a creative artist for a fortunate recipient.

# A Polish Maverick

By Sue Throckmorton

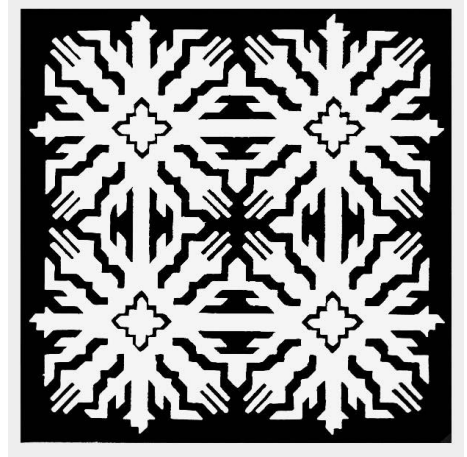
I love to poke around in used book shops, and here in Poland I'm especially on the lookout for anything about papercutting. One day I spied a paperback book published in 1979 called *Wycinanki*.<sup>\*</sup> It was a catalogue of a retrospective exhibition of poems and papercutting works by Mieczyslaw Miszewski who had died earlier. I expected the usual one-color *leluje*, or trees of life, so popular in the Kurpie area north of the capital Warsaw or the multi-colored, multi-layered papercuttings of the town of Lowicz and its vicinity, an area south west of Warsaw. That's why I was so surprised and eager to buy the book, when I discovered that this papercutter was a Polish maverick!



Mieczyslaw Miszewski (1912-1973)

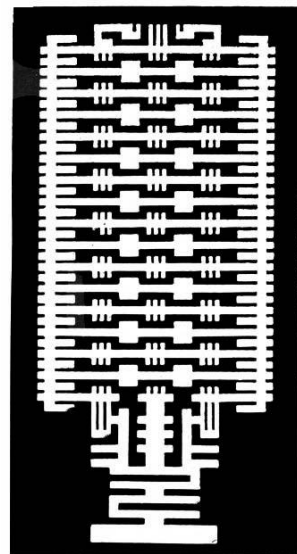
Getting my friend to help me translate the book, I discovered that Mieczyslaw Miszewski was born in 1912 in the mountain town of Zakopane, Poland, and although he spent his youth in the lowlands in what is now the Ukraine, he was always fascinated by the folk art of the *gorale* or highlanders. He was a World War II veteran and worked afterwards as a pharmacist in the town of Trzebnica in southwest Poland, but also between the years 1956 and 1964, he wrote many

poems. He published 300 of them and became a member of the Polish Literary Union. He also worked as an artist in wood and metal and began to cut *wycinanki* from paper.



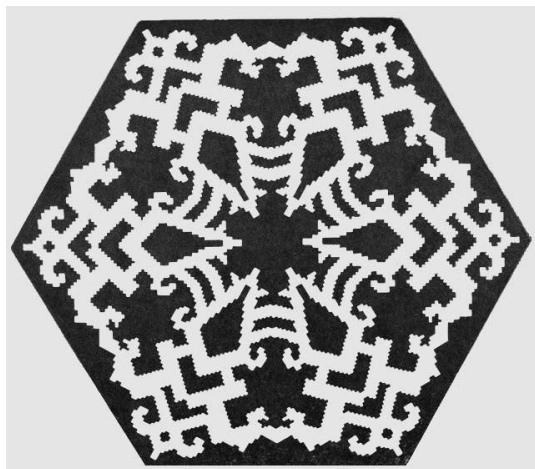
▲ Kwiaty

If you're familiar with Polish papercutting, you can see why I call him a "Polish Maverick." He just doesn't fit into any category; in concept and technique his *wycinanki* are unique. They are neither ornamental nor illustrative; Miszewski called his cycles of *wycinanki* "crystals," "stars," "gothics," "chains," "spaces," etc. To me some of them look like parts of machines.



▲ Puchar 1

The process for designing them was very long and complicated. First he drew his ideas in sketchbooks with many variations. Then he decided what other elements would unite harmoniously with his main motif. When the design was finished, he copied it onto paper squared in millimeters, under which he placed paper which was usually white, but also black, blue or sometimes shades of red and which had different thicknesses and textures. He used a scalpel or a short knife with a leather handle to cut out the design. He cut out millimeter after millimeter with great precision.



▲ Logika

The last stage was to choose the background which was white, navy blue or bordeaux cardboard or even gray linen. Sometimes he arranged two wycinanki next to each other on the same background; more often he placed two of the same wycinanki, but of different colors, on top of each other with one slightly to the side of the other. His biggest were 1 meter (a little over a yard) square, the smallest about 20 cm (about 8 ") square.



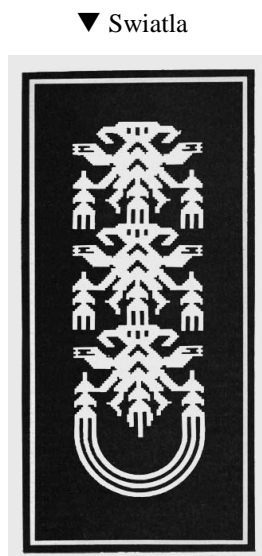
◀ Pien

Analysts of his work say that there is some similarity between his technique and those used in ornamenting highland churches. His first papercuttings had a rosette shape, somewhat akin to the art nouveau style; after 1950, all were in a highland style. A multi-talented artist and writer with many future plans, he died suddenly in 1973. I'm sorry that he has been pushed behind the great quantity of, and sometimes monotonously similar, mainstream Polish papercutting. It's refreshing to see the work of someone who cut a different path---a Polish "maverick!"

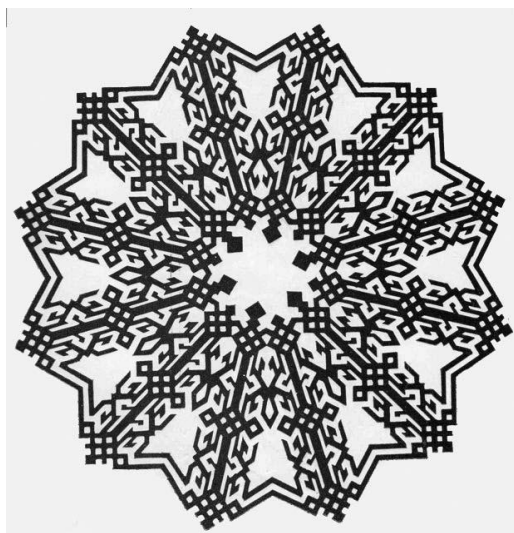
\*Kos, Jerzy Bogdan, ed. Mieczyslaw Miszewski: WYCINANKI. Trzebnica: Biblioteka Miejskiej i Gminnej w Trzebnicy, 1979.



▲ Meandry



▼ Swiatla



► Rozeta

# Papercutter Profile

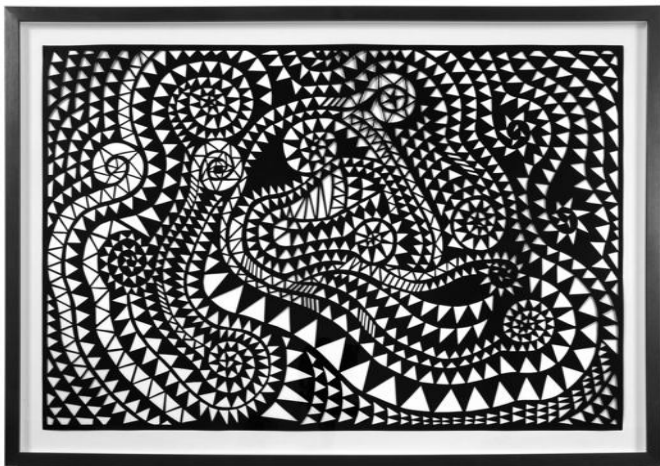
## Alan Sidman

Like all of you, I love papercutting. About twenty years ago, when I was a mere 52 years old, my wife and I saw by chance several historic papercuts in a museum in Manhattan. “You could do that,” she said. I had always loved drawing abstract designs for pleasure, and I had made some simple cutouts for family birthday cards, but I was suddenly inspired to start seriously cutting paper.

Working on my papercuts is an everyday joy. I love a blank sheet of paper, which some people might consider ‘empty’, but to me it is ‘full’ of potential.

More often than not, I begin by ruling a narrow border. I might have a set plan, or I might create the piece on impulse as I go along. I like to think that my papercutting is not ‘adding on’ but ‘subtracting’. Whereas writers add words, painters add color, composers add musical notes, and architects add lines, I deliberately remove, lighten, and reduce the paper cut by cut. What begins as one sheet of paper remains so to the end, no matter how porous, but with well intentioned slits, windows, and spaces in order to create design and dimension. When held up tenderly by the fingertips, it is a wiggly, vulnerable, seemingly weakened product that nonetheless holds itself together securely enough to become a new work of art.

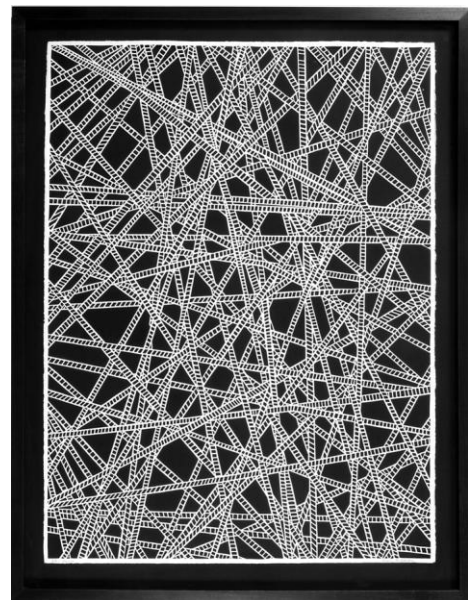
All along, I cut on one side but actually visualize and intend its opposite side for viewing at completion. I use no stencils but rather draw original abstract designs in pencil, directly on the paper. Sometimes I stick to my design; sometimes it morphs into a new one. At other times, I use no drawing at all. The painstaking work-side will never be seen again. It is forgotten, buried. Now the front will be signed, dated, and matted – always white papercut on black or black papercut on white. Finally, it is framed and hung to be seen and enjoyed.



Location and good lighting are so important to me. I cut in my living room by the large front windows, with an Ott-Lite TrueColor floor lamp. I clear off the top of my desk there and use it for papercutting, with the largest self-healing pad I can find. I have no particular favorite type of paper, but I stick exclusively to black or white, alternating as I choose. I use only an X-ACTO knife, #11 stainless steel blade, purchased in bulk of 100.

What helps me to achieve my papercuts? My loving wife and family encourage and support all my art. Nothing ever dries up my love of cutting paper, and I find myself transported by the activity. Through teaching in a Brooklyn middle school for thirty-one years, I learned to work patiently toward a goal. I have never tried to imitate anyone else’s art. I don’t duplicate any of my own designs, repeat myself, or rush to completion. Nor do I think that I’ve reached any pinnacle. I simply do what comes naturally to me.

My recent inclusion in the Westmoreland Museum of American Art Exhibit “Cutting Our Own Paths” was a high point in my art and my life. I am so grateful to the Guild of American Papercutters for working with such a fine museum to have made this opportunity possible.



*I also want to thank FirstCut for allowing me to share my Papercutter Profile with all the GAP members. I am including two samples of my work: The vertical piece, (22 ½ x 29 ½, in white papercut on black mat) was done with a drawn plan; the horizontal (30 x 20 in. black papercut on white mat) was created spontaneously.*



# Cutting York Minster

By Richard Goodall

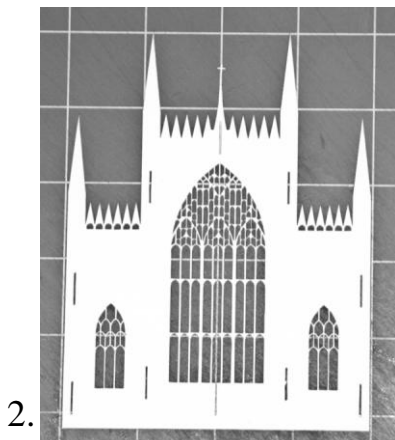
**York**, in northern England, is my favorite city in “my” part of the world. I was raised about 40 miles from there, and I delight in re-visiting at every opportunity. York Minster, the cathedral second only in importance to Canterbury, is my favorite building in the city. So it was inevitable that I would find a way to cut a model of this famous, ancient building.

The starting material for all my architectural models is as many photographs of the subject as possible. In 2009, I spent half a day taking a large number of digital photographs of the Minster, from lots of different viewpoints, some of them in fine detail. I use a 28-300mm zoom lens on my camera specifically for this process of gathering fine details. From the internet, I was able to find a scale floor plan of the cathedral, and a few pictures taken from great distances, showing the building as a whole.

Using all this information, I was able to make detailed scale drawings of the building and its windows, using a CAD package on my computer. The CAD system is a great help on a project like this. The building contains over 90 multi-pane windows. However, there are groups of identical windows. Once the first one of a group has been drawn, the computer can instantly place copies of it wherever you require in the drawing. Individual pieces are then designed, printed out onto white cardstock, and cut using a sharp X-Acto blade.

*Pictures 1, 2, and 3 show typical pieces with the hooks and slots which form the basis of this technique.*

*Picture 4 shows a view of the completed basic structure, which contains about 75 parts, and is about 18 inches long.*



The construction technique I chose for this model is developed from one which I learned from Sheung Yee Shing, a paper engineering/pop-up expert in Montreal (see his website at [www.yeesjob.com](http://www.yeesjob.com)). The basic structure is assembled by interlocking the pieces, which hold together without glue using hooks and slots. Pictures 1, 2, and 3 on page 22 show typical pieces, with the hooks and slots which form the basis of this technique. Picture 4 shows a view of the completed basic structure, which contains about 75 parts, and is about 18 inches long.

However, I wanted to give more of the impression of the depth of the architecture in the model. The ancient walls of the Minster are very thick, but the stone of the intricate windows is much thinner, which means that the windows are recessed into the walls. I have therefore added a second layer of card, glued onto the basic structure, but separated from the basic structure by 1mm polystyrene strips. On the towers, I added even more layers, to give the impression of the buttress-like structures. Pictures 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 show details of the finished model.



5.



6.



7.

*To give depth, Richard added a second layer of card, glued onto the basic structure, but separated from the basic structure by 1mm polystyrene strips.*

*More layers were added to the towers, to give the impression of the buttress-like structures*



8.

*Pictures 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 show details of the finished model.*





9.

The whole model is mounted onto a wooden base, into which are set 56 LEDs. In the dark, the effect is impressive!  
(Pictures 10, 11 )



10.

I have sent photographs of the model to the engineering department of the Minster, and they have expressed interest in seeing it. On my next trip to England, this Fall, I will be carrying a very special piece of hand luggage!



11.

*Picture 11 shows Richard Goodall's York Minster with its dramatic LED lighting.*

# Progressive Papercuts

By Edie Johnstone

*Ed. Note: The ATC trade group was asked to share ways that the small cuttings might serve as a motivator to develop an idea into a larger papercut, perhaps with more detail or a larger design concept. Below, Edie Johnstone explains how she combines some of the ideas she creates in ATC format to design a larger cutting.*

In the fall, black, bare tree branches against the remaining reds and yellows behind them have always intrigued me. I've often used these bare branch designs in papercutting because I like the way the branches get smaller, closer together and create interesting negative spaces.

I also like to use children, small animals and birds for papercutting. They fit together with trees, I think. Children love to climb trees, use them for swings and houses. Birds are naturals in trees and rabbits scamper around them.

ATCs are wonderful for small designs and combining the ATC ideas into a larger design lead me to several designs using trees, children, and animals. My most recent papercutting doing this is "Children and a Tree".



LADDER TO THE APPLES © 2010 Edie Johnstone



SWINGING ON A TREE © 2010 Edie Johnstone



OH LOOK, HE'S UP A TREE © 2010 Edie Johnstone



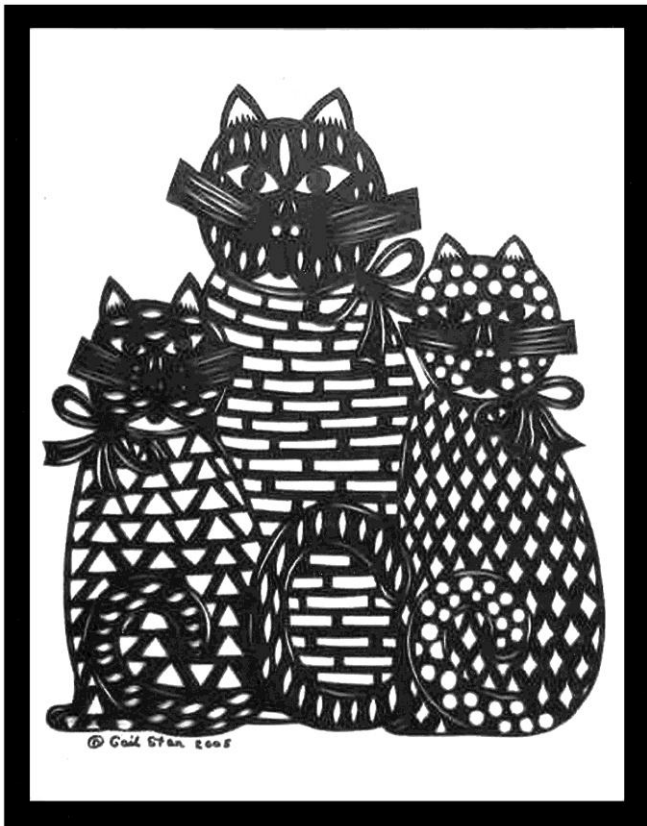
Children and a Tree © 2010 Edie Johnstone



DIE SCHLIMME GRET © 2010 Ursula Kirchner



BIRDS © 2010 Gene Touts



THREE CATS © 2010 Gail Stan



HOME PLACE © 2010 Carolyn Guest

# Cuttings from the **Past**

## Charles Dana Gibson, from Papercutter to Illustrator

By Susan Hahn

We are all familiar with the iconic 'Gibson Girl' illustrations, made famous by artist, Charles Dana Gibson in 1890, but perhaps you didn't know that he began his artistic attempts with paper cutting. He was born September 7th, 1867 in Roxbury, Massachusetts, a descendant of sturdy, hard-working New Englanders. His father was a Civil War Veteran who had dabbled as an amateur artist, and his mother was a kind, observant woman who loved and encouraged their five children.

As a child, Charles had always been interested in art and during a brief illness at the age of eight, he became interested in papercutting while watching his father cutting silhouettes for the boy's amusement. He was instantly intrigued and began to cut his own.



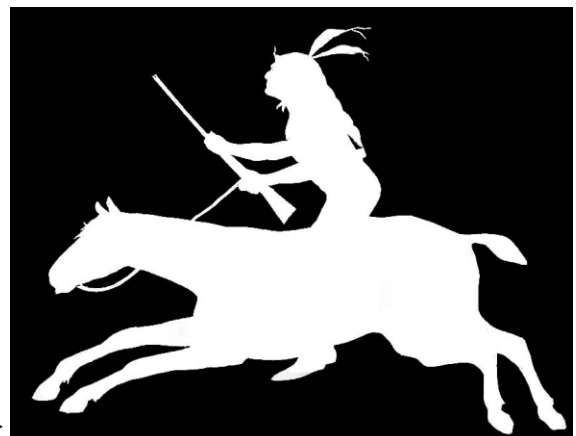
▲ *Charles Dana Gibson as a child.*

Little Charles began to wear a pair of scissors around his neck (the tips being rounded off for safety) and cut out shapes of all kinds everywhere he went. He started with animal shapes, beginning with a monkey, then received more inspiration after attending the circus. And after a visit to the Natural History Museum in Boston, he was overwhelmed with ideas. Charles also gathered ideas from stories he heard, and from observing nature itself.



▲ *Charles Dana Gibson*

When he cut, he held his scissors stationary and moved the paper into the blades. His hands were too small to hold the larger scissors, so while his thumb was thrust into the large loop of the handle, his fingers closed over the entire handle on the other side of the scissors. Charles also added a touch of whimsy to his cuttings as he progressed. He never cut from any hand-drawn design, but only from the images in his own imagination. He would cut a design over and over again until he had it 'right,' crumpling up and discarding all the others. His family began to save his finished cuttings, and when he was about 12 years old, they held an exhibition of his work where many were sold. When he received praise and accolades about how good his work was, he only commented, 'Anyone can do it, who will try. It's the easiest thing in the world.'



Cutting by Charles Dana Gibson. ►

Charles was a rather quiet, stay-at-home child, but as he grew older, he began to play sports and have friends, and his papercutting began to be neglected. By the time he was fourteen years old, he laid down his shears, and took up his drawing pencil. Among the last of his silhouettes was of a little girl digging in the sand and that of a boy with the cockatoo on his arm. (See illustrations below).



▲ Among the last of his silhouettes was of a little girl digging in the sand and that of a boy with the cockatoo on his arm.

Through family connections, he was apprenticed in 1881 to sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens. But after a year in his studio, Charles decided that sculpting was not his main interest. So at the age of sixteen, he entered the New York Art League as a student. But lack of finances at age eighteen, influenced him to end his schooling and begin his career as an illustrator at a brand new magazine called *Life*. Here he would work for over 30 years, supplying weekly illustrations for the magazine that soon became a household name. Charles also sold illustrations to *Tid-Bits* (which was later re-named *Time*), *Scribner's*, *Century*, and *Harper's*.



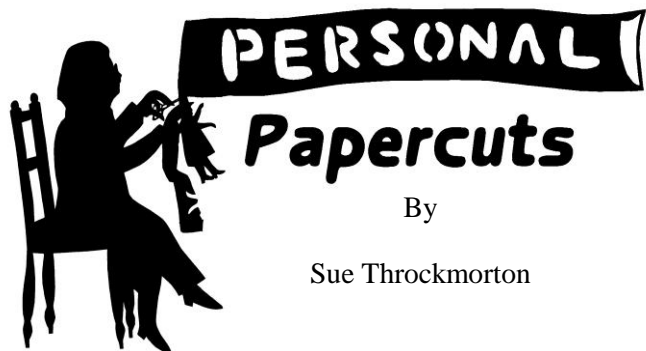
▲ Cutting by Charles Dana Gibson.

In 1890, he began drawing the Gibson Girl illustrations, with his wife as the model. He longed to quit however, and just paint as other illustrators had done, but he couldn't give up his loyalty to *Life*. By 1904, he was sought out by *Collier's* and *Conde-Nast*, and finally negotiated a shared contract fetching him \$100,000.00 for 100 illustrations over a four-year period! And by 1905, he was making \$75,000.00 a year. He enjoyed his greatest popularity between 1900 and 1910 and was still very productive well into the next decade. After World War I, however, styles began to change. The public became more interested in flappers, jazz music, fast cars and gin. The 'Gibson Girl' fell out of fashion. *Life* magazine was also floundering, but in 1920, Charles, along with a syndicate of other writers and illustrators, purchased it, with Charles becoming its Editor-in-Chief. After more slumping sales and rising competition from other publications, Charles finally sold *Life* in 1932 and retired to Maine, where, finally, at the age of 65, he began to paint to critical acclaim. But by the time of his death in 1944, a string of 1890's-themed movies had been made in Hollywood, and his 'Gibson Girl' illustrations were somewhat revived. Charles Dana Gibson had certainly come a long and successful way from his artistic start with scissors and paper.



A "Gibson Girl"

Note from Susan Hahn: "I actually used this design when I was publishing my poetry journal, *The Open Bone* back in the late 1990's. I used her features on my 'Editor's notes' page as me."



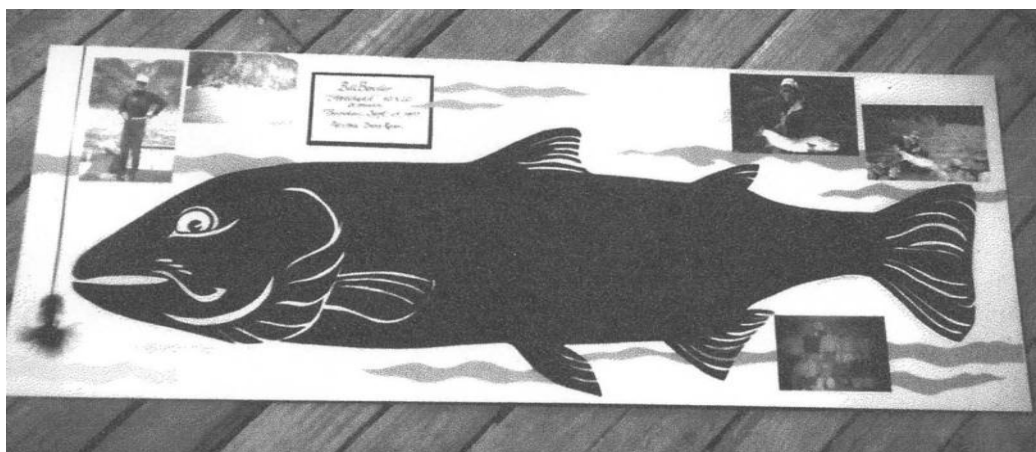
## A “FISHY” TALE

Here’s a ‘whopper’ of a story from Judith Myers.

Some years ago I received a commission to do a papercut of a fish, a very large fish, a trophy fish, life-sized! A group of men from my town went on a fishing trip to Canada. One of them caught a Steelhead Trout of 69 pounds and 40 inches long from nose to tail. Now this area was designated as a "catch and release" area so this monumental fish had to be unhooked and put back in the river alive and unharmed, but perhaps a bit wiser, leaving the fisherman with only a few 4 by 6 inch photographs to record the event.

I had previously done a papercut for one of the men in the group so he asked me to do a life-sized papercut of this gigantic fish, a replica of it that could be mounted and hung on a wall while the real fish swam free in the Canadian river. So, using a sheet of my gigantic silhouette paper, measuring 26" by 30", but wait!... I just now measured the paper to make sure, only 30 inches, so how did I get a 40 inch fish out of that? Diagonally? No, the diagonal is only 36 inches. I must have pieced on the tail! Well anyway, I cut the fish with a little research on what a steelhead actually looked like, mounted it along with some blue wavy shapes to give it some water to swim in, the small photos taken on the spot, and the lure on which it was caught. A trophy for Bill Benzler, the very skilled fisherman, to hang on his wall!

Do you have other “whoppers” to tell about your papercutting experiences? It could be something you witnessed, something you experienced; a funny story, a sad story, an inspirational story. If so, and if you want this column to continue, please send your anecdote and any illustrative pictures to Sue Throckmorton at [throck@it.com.pl](mailto:throck@it.com.pl).



STEELHEAD TROUT © 2010 Judith Meyers



From left to right: MAPLE, MAPLE DREAM, PODS © 2010 Christine Smith



JOYFUL THANKS 2010 © Sr. Clarice Steinfeldt, SDS

*"Joyful Thanks" is the front of a congratulatory card for 60 years of service in the ministry.*



KETUBAH 2010 © Archie Granot

*"Ketubah" is the front of a card showing a ketubah Archie designed for his wife, Susan.*

All submissions should be sent to

Pat Stuntz, 10 Cardinal Drive, Fleetwood, PA 19522

Email: [pnstuntz@dejazzd.com](mailto:pnstuntz@dejazzd.com) or [pstuntz@yahoo.com](mailto:pstuntz@yahoo.com)

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**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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