

First Cut

COMMUNICATION FROM MEMBERS OF THE GUILD OF AMERICAN PAPERCUTTERS

MARCH 2018

ISSUE VI

Collection 2018:

THE PORTLAND COLLECTION

July 22nd- 26th!

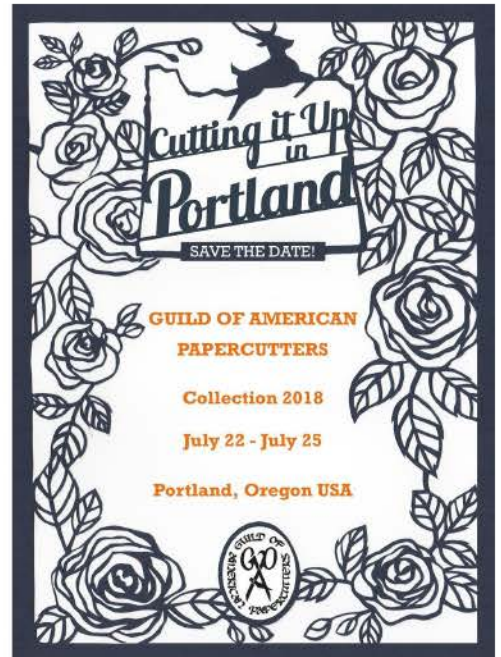
Join the Guild of American Papercutters at Reed College, in beautiful Portland, Oregon for a COLLECTION- a celebration of papercutting and community.

Whether you are a professional papercutter, a beginner, or simply an enthusiast, Collection is a wonderful opportunity to learn, get inspired, and explore the world of papercutting through classes, demonstrations, exhibits, and discussions with others.

This year's workshops will include making 3D designs and snowflakes, fashioning your own personal crankies (*an illustrated scroll, wound on two spools, that tells a story*), creating multi-layered papercuts, using Zentangle for inspired papercuts, discussions on how to sell and exhibit your work, and much more including celebrating the GAP 30th anniversary!

To register go to:

<https://gapapercutterscoll.wixsite.com/gapcollection2018>



For questions call Mindy 267-977-3602

Collection 2018:

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The GAP Collection Committee is looking for a few more teachers. We are looking for you to offer something innovative and outside the box. We love to learn from one another - what talent are you hiding that you want to share? What technique do you use that is out of the ordinary? Please contact Marie-Helene at scissorcutter@yahoo.com to volunteer. All teachers have their registration waived. You are still responsible for room, board and transportation.



We're Curious

ABOUT "WHAT'S COOKING?"

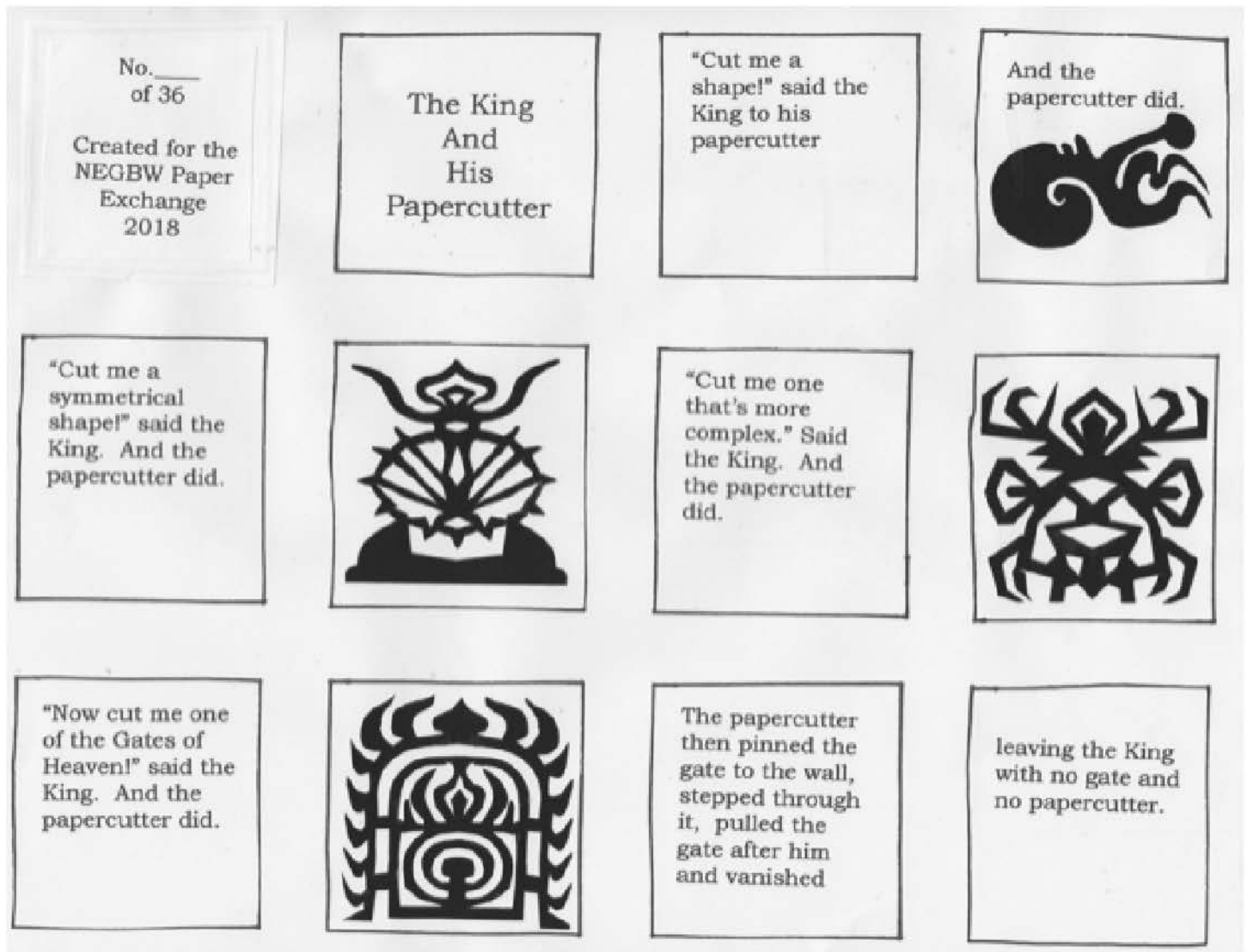
...in your studio, your imagination, your kitchen"? Remember to submit your cut paper art by June 1 with the entry form from GAP website (under events, click exhibitions, then GAP Nat'l Museum, finally, print from small blue-Application Form).

Participating artists will be responsible for costs of shipping to and from the show, and works not larger than 20" in any direction are eligible for the Gallery Shop if not sold already. Commission 70% artist; 30% shared by GAP and Laurel Arts.

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The King And His Papercutter:

A BOOK BY STU COPANS



Guild member, Stu Copans, created this book (*Pictured above, unassembled*) as part of a print exchange organized by the New England Guild of Book Workers.

Stu recently curated a his fifth annual show titled "Prayers For Peace." The show was, fittingly, hung in The West Village Meeting House, in Brattleboro, Vermont. To read the review "Prayers for Peace" in varied mediums by Arlene Distler, please visit <http://www.reformer.com/stories/prayers-for-peace-in-varied-mediums,523428>

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Featured Member:

PAN FU

Pan Fu has exhibited her work all around the world including, China, Austria, Germany, and more. In addition to being a GAP member, she is a member of the Chinese Craft and Folk Artist Association, and the Asian Christian Art Association. Clearly she keeps busy!

While her training is primarily in traditional Chinese folk art, her own style more closely mirrors that of stained glass, a style she did not adopt until 2005. A devout Christian, the dozens of images she shared with me are all of biblical scenes, many of which were cut specifically for holidays. Her friends are lucky to receive her Christmas cards which depict traditional imagery such as the Virgin Mary, the Nativity, and



angels, but in a distinctive fan shape, no doubt borrowed from her traditional jiǎnzhǐ cutting background. Pan Fu cuts thick lines into black paper which help to further highlight the burst of color in the flowing robes and head coverings she designs. Her focus on narrative is clear. No image depicts a lone figure. Pan Fu's drive for story telling is evident not only in her papercuts, but in the way she tells me her story. After asking her some questions from which I hoped to write this piece, I received an 11 page document

detailing her childhood, how she came to discover papercutting, how she found her faith, and how her art and faith have become seemingly inseparable.

Pan Fu's sister was a young teen when she joined a local papercutting club. There, she was taught by the great master, Rui Jinfu. Pan Fu never joined the club herself, but after watching her sister practice at home, she felt compelled to try it herself. Pan Fu, who at the time earned poor marks in her own art classes, didn't think her cuts were worth showing to anyone, so she cut templates of Rui Jinfu's work in secret.

Pan Fu was sent to Xinjiang "to support the construction of the border areas" in 1965.

When she left, she took a set of cutting tools her

father had made, but in the 14 years she lived in Xinjiang she rarely found the time or the templates to cut. What she did create were images of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao. It is worth noting that then, as...



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Featured Member: PAN FU ...CONTINUED

...now, she was drawn to cutting figures who have and continue to challenge the way we think about society. Because “everyone said [the cuts] were a good resemblance, [she] never got in trouble.” What followed was a very trying period of job changes, including one which forced her and her two daughters to move far from her husband. The only benefit of this was that she lived with her parents which afforded her more time to study. That period was known as “The Spring of Sciences,” so her decision to write a letter to her husband declaring that she wanted to cut paper may have come as a bit of a shock. Fortuitously a street vendor happened by who had books with elaborate papercut patterns. Pan Fu was offended by the low price of the books and felt it showed how little people valued the art form. It may be that moment that cemented her determination to help make people see papercuts for the fine art we Guild member’s see them as.

Pan Fu asked for advice from a young papercutter she knew who helped her meet more experienced artists in the industry. Once again, she was hesitant to show her work to anyone, but found their feedback, including their criticisms, to be fair. She was beginning to see the path ahead of her.



Pan Fu was able to ‘inherit’ her father’s job working for a devout Christian, and found herself being pushed more and more towards the faith. She was asked to create a series of biblical images, but encountered a surprising problem. Bibles, especially illustrated Bibles, were in short supply in China during the 80s. Eventually, her father was able to borrow a book that contained the source imagery she needed. Her next challenge would be finding a source for good paper. When her father passed away in 1987 she became determined not only to cut, but to focus her art on religious subjects. “Above all I wanted to show the magnitude and boundlessness of God against the minuteness and narrowness of men.” It was then that she began regularly attending church. It was also the time when she began experiencing commercial success. Some of her images were selected for use as postcards by a company in the Netherlands. Her bookmarks were used as decorations in for printed media. Two of her images went on to be used as book covers.

Never satisfied, Pan Fu has worked tirelessly to refine her style from technique, to materials, to colors, to levels of traditional and modern influence. What will Pan Fu do next? “I am just a vessel in His hands, a knife or a pair of scissors.”

As always, be sure to let us know what you thought by emailing me, Rosa Leff, at rosaleff@gmail.com. Happy cutting!