



The Hedgehog Welfare Society

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To protect the well-being of pet hedgehogs through rescue, research and education of the people who care for them.

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Cynthia Ferguson and the Art of Scherenschnitte

Cut paper design is an art form practiced in many countries but its origins can be traced back to China where paper was invented. Chinese artists cut designs which were used for screens, window coverings, and even embroidery patterns. Distinct styles of paper cutting developed among the folk arts of Jewish, Polish, Dutch, Chinese, Mexican, Japanese, German and Swiss cultures. The German word for this form is Scherenschnitte (pronounced Sharon-sh-net). The word actually means "scissor cuts." Traditionally used to decorate marriage and birth certificates, it is also used to create silhouettes and valentines.

The creator of the beautiful cut paper hedgehog shown here is Cynthia Ferguson who has been a graphic designer for several years and has been working with cut paper designs since 2006. She encountered her first examples of Scherenschnitte at the Mozart birthplace museum in Salzburg, Germany. She bought two pieces with the idea of cutting her own designs at some point in the future. Later, during the same trip, she arrived at her grandmother's home in the small town of Hermutshausen in southern Germany where she found a small antique paper cut

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Scherenschnitte Tools

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tacked to the sitting room wall. It was much more intricate than the pieces she had just purchased at the museum gift shop!

Since then she has developed into an excellent Scherenschnitte artist. Folklore and fairytales are often sources of inspiration for her work. One of the largest pieces she has created features a scene from the Hans Christian Andersen fairytale, The Snow Queen. It is ten feet wide and three feet tall. But perhaps her most ambitious and unusual project was a series of eight large paper cuts portraying historical events involving the Tower of London. One paper cut was a menagerie scene documenting the animals that were in the Tower's zoo from the 1400s to the 1800s. Another was a scene depicting the beheading of Anne Boleyn! Cynthia spent a month in England creating the series which was displayed in the Tower's Children's Education Room in 2009.

Cynthia's work is featured in a new book by Taylor Hagerty called Paper Cuts: 35 Inventive Projects (Lark Books, ISBN 978-1-60059-512-7). You can also see examples of her creations on her web sites cindyferguson.com and cindymindypindy.etsy.com, as well as on her blog cindymindypindy.blogspot.com. A short Facebook video of Cindy presenting a paper cut demonstration is available at <http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=538193409255>.

Cynthia Ferguson has a degree in design from Brigham Young University. She currently lives in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Sources consulted:

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Landers, Jeri. "Scherenschnitte." 2000. Web. 22 May 2010. <<http://www.hopalonggreetings.com/>>.

ARTISTS WANTED



Would you like to help illustrate the Newsletter? We are always looking For drawings, photographs and art Work to include here.

Send your submissions in JPEG Format to:
newsletter@hedgehogwelfare.org