

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS ST. PETE

Above the Fold: New Expressions in Origami

On view June 22-Sept. 22, 2019

Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg

ARTIST BIOS

Erik Demaine and Martin Demaine (Canada/USA) A father-son art-science team; the Demaines fold, pleat, and twist paper into powerful sculptural forms that illustrate the intriguing and profound connections between mathematics and origami. They use mathematical calculations to create unconventional works that challenge the direction of paper folding. For years, the Demaines have been exploring the potential of curved folding, in which paper is folded along a curved, rather than a straight line. The Demaines have folded a series of their signature, abstract “Curved-Crease Sculptures” using modular techniques to increase sculptural size. They also created combined glass-and-paper folded forms, large works that incorporate text, and mobius hypars (curved-crease foldings) interlocked through space, thus blending art, science and literature.

Vincent Floderer (France) An artist who specializes in crumpling, a technique that includes dampening and stretching origami paper to create organic and multi-layered forms, Floderer will create a dynamic, large-scale installation called *Unidentified Flying Origami* (2002-2014). It will be a universe of floating, rotating organic models that move via air flow. The models show the creative process Floderer uses to develop his crumpling techniques. Each model derives from classical, modular, box-pleated origami forms that he transforms into otherworldly creations. The installation adapts to each venue’s gallery space, changing aesthetically with each presentation.

Miri Golan (Israel) A peace activist, educator, and origami artist, Golan has created a series of book sculptures, based on her conceptual piece in the traveling exhibition, *Folding Paper, Two Books*, in which origami figures emerge from the pages of two sacred texts, the Torah and the Koran, and reach out to each other. Golan hopes to use her installations as a catalyst to unite people of different religious and cultural backgrounds. She has founded an organization called Folding Together, a group that encourages Israeli and Palestinian children and adults to fold paper forms as a team, turning the creation of origami into a collaborative expression of hope for a more peaceful world. Golan’s work represents the possibility for origami to be not only a means of artistic expression, but also a platform for positive social change.

Yuko Nishimura (Japan) A young talent, Nishimura is already an award-winning origami artist. With a background in architecture and design, Nishimura contributes several framed, wall-hung tessellations in which light and shadow interplay on the folded surface of the paper to dramatic effect. Nishimura comments, “Japanese people unconsciously experience the action of folding on a daily basis, and therefore encounter various folded forms. I think there must be a special meaning for Japanese people through this everyday practice, folding...In order to link the past with future generations regarding the form of folding, I do not limit myself to the category of origami but consider the pursuit of any possibility of folding paper.”

Dr. Robert J. Lang (USA) A former NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory laser physicist and professional origami artist, author, and lecturer, Dr. Lang will create a large, modular mathematical piece exploring the concept of infinity. In modular origami, multiple sheets of paper are folded into individual units—or modules—and combined to form larger, more complex geometric structures. Works are held together by the friction and tension created by inserting flaps from one module into pockets of another. Titled *Pentasia* (2014), the surface of Dr. Lang’s work is composed of equilateral triangles and theoretically extends to infinity without ever repeating itself.

Paul Jackson (UK/Israel) A folder who specializes in abstract origami sculptures and takes a highly philosophical approach to the process of folding – and unfolding, Jackson designs a series of large, folded photographs featuring the artist’s own hands folding paper. The piece, *Untitled* (2014), is suspended from the ceiling, with images appearing on the front and back of the sculpture. On one side the image will appear smooth, and on the opposite it will be fragmented or abstracted, offering new perspectives on how we view ourselves.

Richard Sweeney (UK) A multi-media artist, rather than an origami artist per se, Sweeney combines handcrafted, three-dimensional models with computer-aided design and CNC (computer numerical control) techniques in the creation of his works. He has created a large-scale pleated paper installation called *Air* (2014) that spirals downwards from the ceiling in a form that blends poetry with precision.

Jiangmei Wu (China/USA) Currently an Assistant Professor in design at Indiana University Bloomington, she also works as an artist and designer and is interested in how folding can be expressed mathematically, physically, and aesthetically, how it can be done with different material and techniques, and how these aspects work together with the conceptual space in which they occur. In her folded works like *Ruga Swan* (2014) (*ruga* is the Latin for “a fold, crease or wrinkle”), the folded forms have rigid properties and at the same time are flexible; they are deployable and can be collapsed again into smaller compressed forms. This installation, created from

two folded sections joined together, unites her fascination with interior skin, natural forms and the effects of light and shadow.

Above the Fold is curated by Meher McArthur and tour organized by International Arts & Artists, Washington, D.C.

Meher McArthur is an independent Asian art curator, author and educator. She was a curator for many years at Pacific Asia Museum in Pasadena, CA and now curates and consults for several southern California museums and galleries. She has published several books on Asian art and culture and writes regularly about contemporary Asian and Asian American artists for the website *KCET Artbound* as well as *Fabrik* and *Artillery* magazines.

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