

# A Passion for Papercuts!



The tradition of papercutting has been traced back to the Han dynasty (China) in 4th century AD.

As knowledge of paper making spread around the world so too did the art of papercutting. There are examples of papercutting art in Indian, Jewish, Mexican, Swedish and Slavic traditions.

The Holburne collection has examples of incredibly intricate paper cut images made by Mary West (later Glover) in 1709.

(left) Diana and Actaeon  
Mary West  
Cut paper on silk, 1709  
1993.5.4

Papercut art usually involves making a cut-out from a single piece of paper. Japanese papercutting is called Kirie or Kirigami (meaning cut paper).

**Nahoko Kojima** is a contemporary Japanese artist who created *Honey Bee* a 3-D hanging papercut sculpture. This was cut from a single piece of gold washi paper and created especially for the Holburne Museum in 2015.



Bear in a Landscape, Mary West, 1709



Honey Bee, Nahoko Kojima, 2015

## it's all about contrast!

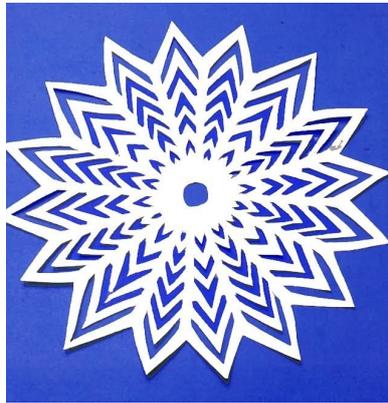
Like silhouettes, papercuts show the outline of the subject. The image depends on this outline and the details that are cut away to reveal the darker or contrasting colour behind. This is why even the smallest detail is so important!



# Papercut inspiration board!



A huge papercut installation made by The Gardener's Lodge Art Group in 2016.



Some of these papercuts were made by people in The Gardener's Lodge Art Group at the Holburne Museum in 2020. (right) Papercut by Andrew Peacock, 2016

### You will need...

- ◆ A pen or pencil
- ◆ White or black paper
- ◆ Scissors or a sharp cutting knife
- ◆ Cutting board or flat cardboard to cut on
- ◆ Glue stick
- ◆ An empty, clean jam jar
- ◆ A little tea light or candle

### ACTIVITY

Have a go at papercutting!

You could ...

**Make a papercut jam-jar lantern OR**

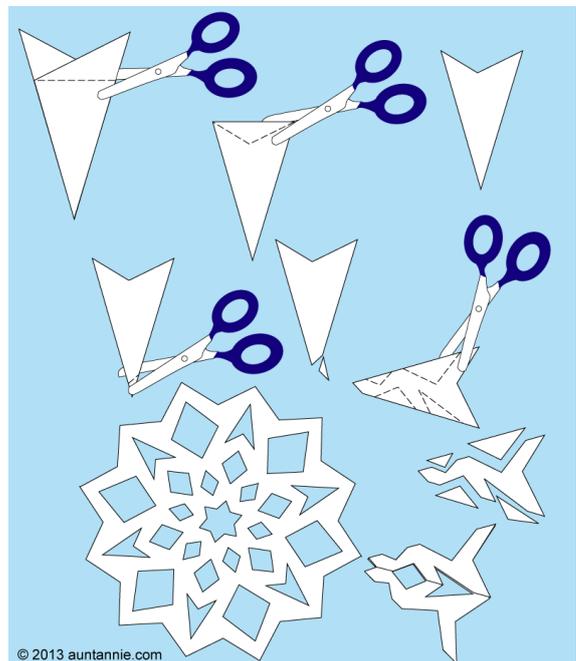
**A window papercut OR**

**A snowflake decoration**

If you use a knife remember to keep the hand that is holding the paper ABOVE where you are cutting.



### Snowflakes



© 2013 auntannie.com



© UK, The Things We'll Make!

### Lanterns

- Find an empty jam jar
- Make sure your paper will wrap around it and cut to fit the jar height
- Draw the outline/ pattern/ shapes you want to cut out onto the paper (this is where the light will shine through) **Keep it simple!**
- Carefully cut out the shapes with a cutting knife
- If you only have scissors you can cut a pattern or scene round the top of your paper *or* cut out individual shapes

(see inspiration board for other ideas)

Now glue the papercut onto the jam jar

**WARNING—never leave a papercut lantern with a candle unattended!**

Please share an image of what you've made ... We love to see your creations!



Email an image to [e.blythe@holburne.org](mailto:e.blythe@holburne.org)

We'll be featuring a selection on Instagram.

Follow [changing\\_lives\\_through\\_art](https://www.instagram.com/changing_lives_through_art) to see what everyone's been making!

