

The Doll's House Museum in Basel will be presenting:

«Paper Beauties»

A Special Exhibition about Paper Dolls and their Costumes

From 23rd October 2005 until 17th April 2006 the Doll's House Museum in Basel will be showing original paper dolls and their costumes from 1860 to the present day.

What are paper dolls?

Paper dolls are two-dimensional figures drawn or printed on paper for which accompanying paper clothing has been made as well. The term also includes three-dimensional dolls and their costumes. They depict historical figures, as well as politicians, film stars and royalty.

Not only «flatware»!

Antique paper dolls are sought-after collector's items. The rather unflattering technical term for these dolls is «flatware». Despite this, they are beautiful creations, which girls could dress with a wide variety of the most imaginative items of clothing. In France, these paper dolls were made popular by the girls' magazines «La Gazette de la Poupée» and «La Poupée Modèle». In Germany, good-quality printed cardboard dolls with clothing were available.

In the eighteenth century, the target purchasers for the hand-painted paper dolls were wealthy adults. In the nineteenth century, the hand-painted figures became children's toys.

Paper Doll Milestones

Examples of the first hand-painted paper dolls have been found in Vienna, Berlin, London and Paris from as early as the mid-1600s. They were made by dress designers to show current fashions.

The first printed paper doll was manufactured in 1810 in London by S. & J. Fuller and was named «Little Fanny». In the USA, the first paper doll was printed in Boston in 1812 with the title «The History and Adventures of Little Henry». In the 1820s, manufactured paper doll sets in cardboard boxes were very popular in Europe. The first celebrity paper dolls appeared in 1830 including «Queen Victoria».

Mass Production in the USA before 1900

McLoughlin Brothers, founded in 1828, became the largest manufacturer of paper dolls in the United States. «Dottie Dimple», «Lotti Love» und «Jenney June» were some of the most popular dolls. In 1880, the Dennison Manufacturing Company added crêpe paper to their line of paper dolls, which added a three-dimensional touch to the clothing.

Paper Dolls from Europe

From 1870, the European manufacturers produced lithographed full-colour paper dolls, which often represented figures from the theatre or royal families, including the German Royal Family as well as the House of Windsor.

The best-known publisher of antique paper dolls was Raphael Tuck, who patented his first paper doll, a baby with a nursing bottle, in 1893 in London. Tuck's dolls are easy to identify as the trademark and series name and number are to be found on the back of each figure.

Paper Dolls in the Press

In 1859, a magazine published for the first time a paper doll in black and white with clothes, which could be coloured in. From 1900 onwards, there was a real boom in paper dolls in women's revues. The popular «Lettie Lane», designed by Sheila Young, was first introduced in October 1908 in «Ladies Home Journal». Sheila Young also designed «Polly Pratt with her Friends» (1919–1921) which appeared in «Good Housekeeping».

Grace Drayton's amazingly popular «Dolly Dingle» appeared for the first time in 1913 in «Pictorial Review» and was printed until 1933.

Rose O'Neill coined the word «Kewpish» meaning «cute». «Kewpies» was the name given to her little angels, which appeared as paper dolls from 1912 until the 1920s in «Woman's Home Companion». The fashion magazine «The Delineator» featured three-dimensional paper dolls with wraparound clothes from 1912 to 1922.

Newspapers also started to produce paper dolls. In 1890, «The Boston Herald» began to print paper dolls. Other newspapers printed series of coloured teddy bears and different figures. During the Great Depression of 1929-1931, when resources were limited, paper dolls in the daily newspapers like «Dick Tracy» and «Jane Arden» became very popular.

Numerous companies used these figures to promote their products, e.g. Lyon's Coffee, McLaughlin Coffee, Singer sewing machines and also Nestlé. Printed at that time in enormous series, these dolls can often be found today.

The Golden Age of Paper Dolls

The period between 1930 and 1950 may be claimed to be «The Golden Age of Paper Dolls» and without any doubt Queen Holden's paper dolls were the best-known of that time: sweet babies, children, families and film stars. Some of her best-loved paper dolls are «Baby Patsy», «Judy Garland» and «Peggy and Peter». 30 million copies of her paper doll books were sold in the years up to 1960. There are still artists today who design paper dolls including Kathy Lawrence, the daughter of Queen Holden. Nowadays, buyers can purchase paper dolls directly from the artists and there are conventions, where collectors and sellers meet.

Paper Dolls in the Doll's House Museum in Basel

This special exhibition has been made possible thanks to a gracious loan of items by **Guido Odin**, a well-known paper doll collector and artist himself. The variety of paper dolls on display, originating from 1860 until the present day, is amazing. There are figures in crêpe clothing, dolls used in advertising for Lyon's Coffee and Nestlé, creations from Germany, Italy, Spain and Switzerland, paper dolls from Queen Holden, Raphael Tuck, and Rose O'Neill's «Kewpies». The exhibition includes the

original cut-out sheets and dolls which are extremely sensitive to light. They are protected by the Museum's showcases which are illuminated with cold light.

All visitors, both young and old, can be photographed as full-sized paper dolls and can take their photo home as a souvenir. In addition, on set afternoons the children can make their own paper doll or a jumping jack under expert supervision.

Workshops for children take place on the following afternoons starting at 13:30:

Saturday, 12.11.2005/Sunday, 13.11.2005
Saturday, 26.11.2005/Sunday, 27.11.2005
Saturday, 10.12.2005/Sunday, 11.12.2005
Saturday, 17.12.2005/Sunday, 18.12.2005
Saturday, 07.01.2006/Sunday, 08.01.2006
Saturday, 21.01.2006/Sunday, 22.01.2006
Saturday, 18.02.2006/Sunday, 19.02.2006
Saturday, 18.03.2006/Sunday, 19.03.2006

Opening Hours

Museum, Shop and Café: Daily from 10 am. to 6 pm.

Entry

CHF 7.–/CHF 5.–

Children up to 16 years are admitted free of charge, only if accompanied by an adult.
There is no additional entrance fee for this special exhibition.
The whole building is accessible to wheelchairs.

Doll's House Museum Basel

Steinenvorstadt 1
4051 Basel

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| Telephone | +41 (0)61 225 95 95 |
| Fax | +41 (0)61 225 95 96 |
| Internet | www.puppenhausmuseum.ch |