

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. It might be the figure of a person, an animal or an inanimate object.

The term also includes three-dimensional dolls and their costumes that are made exclusively of paper.

Paper dolls were depicting people from all walks of life. There are paper dolls representing historical figures, as well as politicians, film stars and royalty.

This beloved children's toy of the past is nowadays a desirable collector's piece for adults.

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 printed on cardboard or paper, which girls could dress with a wide variety of the most imaginative items of clothing.

These dolls were mainly printed in England, the USA and Germany and were extremely popular. Paper dolls also appeared in Mediterranean countries, such as Italy and Spain, though they never reached the circulation numbers of their Anglo-Saxon archetypes.

Some paper dolls were printed on paper sheets to be cut out by the children and others were already cut out and displayed with costumes in attractive boxes. 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 were available. They were displayed in beautiful boxes and had a complete collection of clothing.

First, the little dolls were cut out. They were usually only printed wearing vests. Then, the printed clothing was cut out. The clothes were attached to the little dolls with paper tabs. In other examples, the clothes were laid around the doll and fixed at the back, or they were pulled onto the doll. In addition, toys, umbrellas or domestic animals were often printed on the cut-out paper sheet. Cutting out and dressing these paper dolls were favourite pastimes of the girls at that time.

The process of printing the paper dolls was quite complex. It required several litho blocks and printing processes before the cut-out sheet was completed. The printers were obviously craftsmen, who took great care in producing the end product, which we can admire today.

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

Paper dolls have existed since there has been paper and creative people to apply images to it. In ancient Japan, a special ceremony dating back to A.D. 900 included a paper figure and a folded paper object resembling a kimono, which was put to sea in a boat. Examples of the first paper dolls have been found in the fashion centres of Vienna, Berlin, London and Paris from as early as the mid-1600s. They were hand-painted figures with costumes created for wealthy adults. They were made by dress designers to show the current fashion.

The first printed paper doll was manufactured in 1810 in London by S. & J. Fuller and was named «Little Fanny».

In America the first paper doll was manufactured in Boston in 1812 by J. Belcher and given 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 and 1840. These dolls portrayed the famous dancers Marie Taglioni and Fanny Elssler as well as the English 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. They printed their paper dolls with engraved wooden blocks. At that time, a set of paper dolls cost 5–10 cents. «Dottie Dimple», «Lotti Love» und «Jenney June» were some of the most popular dolls. These dolls are fairly easy to find today due to their mass production. A small publishing company, Peter G. Thompson, also manufactured paper dolls in the 1880s. Their sheets sold for the price of 8–15 cents. «Lillie Lane» und «Jessie Jingle» were among their most popular series.

Also in the 1880s, the Dennison Manufacturing Company added crêpe paper to their line of paper dolls, starting a new trend that lasted for about forty years. The crêpe paper added a three-dimensional touch to the clothing.

Paper Dolls from Europe

From 1870, the European manufacturers produced beautiful lithographed full-colour paper dolls. They often represented figures from the theatre or royal families, including the German Royal Family, the House of Windsor as well as the actresses Lily Langtry and Lillian Russell.

The best-known publisher of antique paper dolls was Raphael Tuck, who set up production in 1866 in London and soon opened branch offices in New York and Paris. His first paper doll was a baby with a nursing bottle, patented in 1893. Raphael Tuck's German production facilities were destroyed in the bombing at the end of

1940 and all the documents, records, and plates were lost. 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. A trademark style of his company was a paper doll set, complete with numerous costumes and interchangeable headpieces. His series of paper dolls include the «Fairy Tale» and «Prince Charming».

Paper Dolls in the Press

In November 1859, a magazine published for the first time a paper doll in black and white with clothing, which could be coloured in by the children. This publication introduced a trend, which was copied by many other women's magazines.

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 1908 in «Ladies Home Journal». «Lettie Lane» cut-out sheets were well-known all over North America and were printed until July 1915. There were cut-out sheets representing her with friends, family, servants and accompanying stories.

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 March 1913 in «Pictorial Review» and was printed with some interruptions until 1933. Grace Drayton was regarded as one of the best artists in her field. She created as well more than 300 commercial designs for Campbell Soup.

Rose O'Neill coined the word «Kewpish» meaning «cute». «Kewpies» was the name given to her little angels, which were first introduced in stories and then as paper dolls. Appearing from 1912 until the 1920s in «Woman's Home Companion», they are among the most well-known antique paper dolls.

The fashion magazine «The Delineator» featured three-dimensional paper dolls with wraparound clothes from 1912 to 1922. They were accompanied by toys, theatres and stories.

Newspapers also started to produce paper dolls. In 1890, «The Boston Herald» began to print two female paper dolls. Later, clothes were printed which fitted the two figures. Other newspapers printed series of coloured teddy bears and different

figures. During the Great Depression of 1929-1931, when resources were limited, paper dolls personalities in the daily newspapers like «Dick Tracy» and «Jane Arden» became very popular.

Paper Dolls in Advertising

As paper dolls became more and more popular as toys, numerous companies saw the chance to use these figures to promote their products, e.g. Lyon's Coffee, McLaughlin Coffee, Singer sewing machines and also Nestlé products. 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. She began her career with Whitman Publishing. She designed sweet babies, children, families and from 1929-1950, film stars. Some of her best-loved paper dolls are «Baby Patsy», «Judy Garland» and «Peggy and Peter». Some people believe that the modern Barbie doll was inspired by Queen Holden's glamorous paper dolls of the early 1940s. 30 million copies of her paper doll books were sold in the years between 1920 and 1960.

Paper Dolls Today

There are still artists today who design paper dolls including Kathy Lawrence, the daughter of Queen Holden. Her dolls are real little works of art. 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. Paper dolls from 1860 until the present day will be on display. The variety of dolls and costumes is amazing. Paper dolls in crêpe clothing, dolls used in advertising for Lyon's Coffee and Nestlé, dolls from Germany, Italy, Spain and Switzerland, paper dolls from Queen Holden, Raphael Tuck, and Rose O'Neill's «Kewpies», all to be seen in their original state. 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, 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, 19.03.2005

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.

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