



OCTOBER 28, 2014

Spook-tacular Halloween Origami: Five Questions for Artist Hiroshi Hayakawa

This guy has a way with paper. With a snip here and a fold there, Hiroshi Hayakawa brings paper creatures to three-dimensional life in his new book, "Paper Monsters and Curious Creatures: 30 Projects to Copy, Cut, and Fold." We asked him about his paper crafts and the difference between origami and kirigami (yes, there is a difference).



By Alexandra Churchill of Martha Stewart Living
Assistant Digital Editor



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Make the Paper Ghost

What first sparked your interest in paper crafts? And how did that lead to your specific style of paper animals?

I loved making origami when I was small. My parents bought me many origami how-to books, and I spent hours making paper animals, insects, dinosaurs, etc. I came to the U 

to attend an **art** college in 1991.

When I was a student, I worked part-time at the school library. The head librarian back then was a **Chinese** lady called Ms. Yu. When she found out about my interest in **paper** craft, she asked me to make a paper animal from the Chinese zodiac so that she could decorate the tables at her New Year's **dinner party** she held annually. That's how it all started. Gradually, the collection of **animals** grew and expanded beyond the ones in the zodiac. I experimented with combining origami and kirigami techniques. I knew there were other paper craft artists who were doing something similar to mine. But I really did not see any who designed their projects with as much details as I gave to my projects. I can say my style is unique for that reason.

You mentioned in the book introduction that the technique involves "origami" and "kirigami." Can you explain the difference and how the two come together?

"Origami" means **folding** paper, and "kirigami" means cutting paper. Traditionally speaking, origami tends to be more three-dimensional and involves a very small amount of cutting, if any. The paper crane is a good example of that. Kirigami tends to be more two-dimensional. Common examples of kirigami products are **snowflakes** and **Christmas trees** you can create by first folding a sheet of paper in a certain way, cutting into it with a pair of scissors, and unfolding it. Making an origami project could be very time-consuming, not to mention designing it.

My projects are a kind of hybrid of origami and kirigami. This makes my projects faster to design and easier to make. The **folding** part is quite simple and easy to do, but because of the amount of cutting involved, my designs still can retain so much detail. Those are the merits of combining the two techniques.






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Make the Paper Dracula

What was the inspiration behind your new book? This theme, particularly?

The idea of this particular book was first brought to me by my publisher, Lark Crafts. I really loved the idea of designing monsters and all those creatures, so I said “yes” to the in a heartbeat. Many of us share experiences of watching monster movies and reading 

science fiction stories growing up. I thought this was a kind of book that could appeal to all ages. No matter how old we are, we all have some child hidden inside us who could get excited about those creatures. I had so much fun writing this book.

Do you have a favorite paper craft from the book?

I have three favorites. They are Ghost, Space Aliens, and Mummy. They all have so much personality.

Any pro tips for those who try paper crafts?

Just like any other crafts, paper craft requires you to be patient. It teaches you not to rush or you'd mess it up. Relax and follow all the steps, one at a time -- then you will have a successful product at the end. Also, it is important to use the right kind of paper for your project. If your paper doesn't have the right color, texture, or thickness, your project might not look good. When the character of the paper truly supports the design of your project, it will really open up your eyes to new possibilities. You'd be amazed to see what a simple piece of paper could do.

You can check out more of Hiroshi's paper characters (and his [book](#)) over at his personal website: hiroshi-hayakawa.com.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR ALEXANDRA CHURCHILL

Alexandra is a New Hampshire native who brings her country sensibilities into everyday living. She has a soft spot for tiny terrariums, rose water recipes, and antique bottles. Above all, she loves discovering new ways to create a crafty life. [Read More](#)

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