

ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN

Origami, meaning “folding paper” in Japanese, reflects the essence of creativity: making something out of (basically) nothing. Start with a simple square piece of paper. Apply the art of origami, folding the paper in a creative way to produce an elegant object—a soaring bird, gliding plane, galloping pony, floating boat, or an emerging butterfly.

ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN, created by Santa Fe artists Jennifer and Kevin Box is a monumental outdoor sculpture exhibition. Box takes origami to another level, transforming paper into museum quality metal sculpture through processes he has pioneered in teamwork with foundries, fabrication shops, and his studio staff. The exhibit features Box’s own compositions as well as collaborations with world-renowned origami artists Tim Armijo, Te Jui Fu, Beth Johnson, Michael G. LaFosse and Robert J. Lang. These remarkable artworks feel at home in the wondrous setting of botanical gardens, since paper originates in plant life and origami is made of paper. A personalized audio tour is available on your cell phone so that you may call in and listen to the artists speak about the work.

“Origami presents a simple metaphor: When we begin with a blank page, what we do with it is up to us and the possibilities are endless.” —Kevin Box

About the artists:

Jennifer and Kevin Box created ORIGAMI IN THE GARDEN in 2013. The first exhibition opened at the Santa Fe Botanical Garden in 2014, and the exhibition has been experienced by over 2.5 million visitors in gardens and museums throughout the United States ever since.

Kevin Box graduated from the School of Visual Arts in New York City. In 2004 he was the youngest member elected to the National Sculptors’ Guild and Southwest Art Magazine recognized Kevin as one of the top 21 artists under 31. Over the years he has perfected his unique approach and applied it to complex design collaborations with world-renowned origami masters.

Jennifer Box received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from New York University in Dance Education and Nonprofit Administration. During her years as a dancer in New York City she performed, choreographed, and directed multiple performing arts shows. Today Jennifer translates such experiences to co-direct with Kevin in the production of this traveling fine arts show.

About the Process

Each piece is inspired by paper. Box works with origami artists Te Jui Fu, Beth Johnson, Michael G. LaFosse and Robert J. Lang in creating origami paper models, usually only using one uncut square piece of paper. Using the techniques of lost-wax casting and fabrication, the sculptures in this exhibit glorify the precision of origami in stately museum-quality metals.

Lost Wax Casting

When casting, Kevin Box likes to joke that his cast sculptures are achieved through a ‘simple 35-step, 12-week process. On a good day. If everything goes right.’ It took him seven years of intensive learning and experimentation with lost-wax casting while working at various foundries from Atlanta to Austin to develop a process where the original sculpture medium is paper.

Fabrication

As Kevin Box translated his early paper creations into metal sculpture, he was struck by the geometric quality of the crease marks in the folded sheets of paper. He could see that the clean lines, angles and flat planes could lend itself to fabrication. Cutting and welding sheet metal in replication of his paper sculpture would allow him to scale up to sizes not feasible with casting in bronze.

Outdoor sculptures

Audio tour phone #: (888)-495-7736

To use the audio tour, please enter the phone number above and then the audio tour number associated with the sculpture.

Flying Folds, 2015 by Kevin Box and Robert J. Lang (audio tour #9; by parking lot)

powder coated cast aluminum on stone

Originally folded by renowned origami artist, Robert J. Lang, this form is one of the most complicated cranes ever folded from a single, uncut square of paper. Requiring hundreds of intricate folds, this crane has many true-to-life details that are not typically seen in origami including feathers and toes.

Folding Planes, 2013 by Kevin Box (audio tour #11)

powder coated cast aluminum on steel

A humble piece of paper has an amazing dream: to fly through the air! In this sculpture we witness how that dream becomes reality. At the sculpture's base is an uncut sheet of blank paper. Through seven simple folds, represented from the base upward, the paper transforms into an airplane. Each fold symbolizes a choice or action taken to transform an idea into reality. The first step is to set a goal and then, step by step, a dream takes flight.

Paper was invented in China around 100 CE and made its way to other parts of the world, including Europe, by way of trade along the Silk Road. Paper folding seems to have developed concurrently in Asia and Europe. From Europe came the folded paper design originally thought of as an arrow, which we now call a paper plane.

“The two most important responsibilities I have as an artist are to start something from nothing and to finish it,” says Box. “Through the magic of creativity and decisions, something wonderful emerges.”

Paper Navigators, 2016 by Kevin Box (audio tour #31)

painted fabricated aluminum

Ancient Polynesian explorers voyaged for many days and nights setting out onto an endless expanse of sea under an equally vast and ever-changing sky. No nautical instruments or navigational charts. No way of knowing what they might find. They met the waves and weather and determined which direction to head by “wayfinding,” a means of navigation that relies solely on the senses: watching the movements of stars, seasonal weather changes, the habits of birds and sea animals, and patterns of ocean waves. These techniques were passed down from generation to generation through oral tradition, often memorized and taught in the form of song.

Early Polynesians landed on small island chains including Micronesia, Melanesia, and Hawaii carrying the plants, animals, and seeds they needed to prosper. Among the plants transported and introduced to Hawaii was *wauke*, also known as the paper mulberry tree. Hawaiians continue to use the inner bark of this tree to make *kapa*, or bark cloth, into comfortable, durable garments.

“This paper boat reminds me of the great courage and adventure that took place on such fragile terms within the vastness of the sea,” Box says.

Conversation Peace, 2012 by Kevin Box (audio tour #13)

powder coated cast stainless steel on stone

The game rock-paper-scissors is a fun way to resolve lighthearted conflict—who gets to sit in the front seat or who gets the last piece of cake. But serious conflict requires conversation and communication so the disputing parties might better understand each other. “Conversation requires as much listening to the other as speaking your mind, and compromise is often involved in a balanced solution,” Box says. “As an artist I use sculptural objects to symbolize conflicting forces that have found balance.”

Conversation Peace is also a play on the phrase, “conversation piece,” meaning a piece of art or other interesting object that inspires conversation. In this sculpture, the rock-paper-scissors combination represents this kind of object. It’s a familiar grouping but with a surprising origami twist: The paper has beat the rock and scissors by folding itself into a peace crane and flying just out of reach. Through thoughtful, respectful transformation, peace has won.

Balancing Act, 2014 by Kevin Box and Te Jui Fu (audio tour #18)

Painted cast bronze and powder coated cast stainless steel

To cut or not to cut--this is the question for many paper folders. Origami usually begins with a square piece of paper that can be folded into an endless array of forms. This sculpture demonstrates the exquisite balancing act between the pure form of the origami crane, folded from a single, uncut square of paper, and the elegant precision of the *kirigami* horse, created using only four cuts in the paper.

“Creativity is a process of making choices. The most important ones inspire us to begin and let us know when we are done. Sometimes we take short cuts and sometimes we take the long way. Either way, the choice is up to us.” – Kevin Box

Painted Ponies, 2005-2007 by Kevin Box and Te Jui Fu (audio tour #2)

powder coated cast aluminum

This is the first collaboration between Kevin Box and Chinese origami artist, Te Jui Fu. The ponies display the colorful papers that are often used in origami, as well as another Japanese paper-folding technique called “kirigami,” which means “cutting paper.” Here, scissors are used to make four cuts in the paper square to achieve the details of the pony’s legs and ears more easily. The symbol on the back of the large pony is a collaborative signature. The Chinese character of Te Jui’s last name, Fu, means “teacher,” and the box that encloses the character represents Kevin’s last name.

Botanical Peace, 2014 by Kevin Box (audio tour #7)

hand-painted, fabricated aluminum

This hand-painted origami sculpture of a standing crane celebrates the graphic patterns found on origami paper. On one side of *Botanical Peace* is a flowering habitat in which a caterpillar, chrysalis and butterflies are hiding. On the other side, olives and branches provide songbirds with shelter and food. Box likes the term *mutualism*, which refers to the way that members of different species assist each other in nature, whether they know it or not. Birds benefit from plants by eating fruits and berries. In turn, plants benefit from birds that fly far from the original tree or bush, dispersing seeds for further propagation. And so it goes, in a beautiful, life-sustaining cycle. “Sometimes you have to walk around my work to discover all it has to offer,” Box says. “This piece tells many stories about the harmony I see in the natural world.”

Master Peace, 2013-14 by Kevin and Jennifer Box (Box2) (audio tour #10)

powder coated cast stainless steel

Asian legend tells of a thousand paper cranes. It says that if you fold one thousand cranes within a single year, you will be granted a wish. The Japanese call it “Senbazuru.” Many people undertake this paper-folding pilgrimage as a wish for long life and good health. The single, white crane is a symbol of peace, but it is also a symbol of the soul or spirit. Cranes are known to mate for life, so when a thousand cranes are folded and given as a wedding gift, it is in the hopes that the marriage will be a long and happy one. Millions of people throughout the world have folded a thousand cranes as a wish for peace.

Box and his wife, Jennifer, created “Master Peace,” a sculpture of one thousand, cast metal cranes as their wish for peace. Five hundred of those cranes are scattered around the world as individual sculptures, and 500 are gathered here in this twenty-five-foot-tall monument. The artists made sure that all one thousand cranes were represented together, forever in the reflection.

“Rather than a monument to the tragedies of the past, we created a monument of hope for the future.” - Jennifer Box

Who Saw Who? 2011-12 by Kevin Box, Tim Armijo, and Robert J. Lang (audio tour #6)

patinated cast bronze on stone

This is the collaborative work of three different artists. Robert J. Lang folded the raptor, and Tim Armijo folded the mouse, each from a single, uncut square of paper. Box cast them in bronze at different times, finished them both in a silver patina, and set them aside. One day, as Box was working in his studio, he caught a glimpse of the raptor and the mouse and was struck by how they seemed to be eyeing one another as if predator and prey. They both seemed frozen in a moment—the raptor, while scouting for a meal and the mouse while foraging for scraps. But the mouse must keep a lookout for two things; the food it wants to eat and the predator who wants to eat it. The question here remains the same: Who saw who?

Migrating Peace, 2016 by Kevin Box and Robert J. Lang (audio tour #28)

powder coated cast stainless steel

Several species of cranes around the world are migratory. As winter approaches they take flight, traveling thousands of miles to a warmer climate. All cranes fly with the neck straight out and feet straight behind. In the case of the demoiselle crane (*anthropoides virgo*) of central Eurasia, large flocks follow one of the most difficult migratory routes on earth. Reaching altitudes as high as 26,000 feet,

they fly south from northeastern China, over the Himalayan mountains to wintering grounds in northern India, where they are often joined by as many as 20,000 others.

Rising Cranes, 2015 by Kevin Box (audio tour #30)

powder coated cast stainless steel on stone

Tsuru, the Japanese word for crane, is among the oldest origami forms folded from a single, uncut square of paper. Images and references to this iconic design date back to the Edo period in Japan, 1603 to 1868. The crane has become a symbol of peace around the world, and folding cranes continues to be an inspirational experience for many. “To me, the cranes in this sculpture represent many generations helping one another find joy and peace,” Box says. “They are lifting each other up and, in all directions, spreading peace into the world.”

Gathering Peace, 2014 by Kevin Box (audio tour #5)

painted cast stainless steel and patinated cast bronze on stone

The artist and his wife Jennifer love to watch the birds gather at their bird feeders. There’s a sense of harmony and peace in the experience that echoes the symbolism of the origami crane in Asian cultures. In *Gathering Peace*, various sizes of white origami cranes in cast stainless steel are perched on a long olive branch with sprouting leaves, cast in bronze. The olive branch is a Greek symbol of peace and compromise. “I bring these two cultural symbols together to magnify the importance of gathering in peace,” Box says.

Duet, 2010 by Kevin and Jennifer Box (Box²) (audio tour #14)

painted cast stainless steel on stone

An archetype can be defined as a recurring symbol or motif in literature, art history, or mythology. Many cultures around the world recognize a white bird or dove as a symbol of peace and the human spirit. In Japan, the origami crane is the cultural symbol of peace and harmony. In nature, cranes are known to mate for life, and “Duet” represents this same idea of pure and devoted commitment. These sculptures are signed with the artists’ collaborative signature, Box², a reflection of Jennifer and Kevin’s intention to magnify and enhance each another’s positive traits.

Seed Sower, 2017 by Kevin Box, Michael G. LaFosse (audio tour #35)

Patinated and painted cast bronze on steel

Nature is inspiringly collaborative and interdependent. The oak tree provides shelter and food for the squirrel, and the squirrel buries acorns to eat later or doesn’t retrieve them all, leaving some as seeds to grow into new trees. This two-piece sculpture is the result of collaboration involving three artists.

Origami master and papermaker Michael G. LaFosse created the squirrel design using in his own handmade paper. Through *duogami*, a technique of folding a single uncut square of paper with a different color on each side, Michael produced a dark brown squirrel with a pale colored chest.

“Collaboration is important to me because I like working with people. Creating *Seed Sower* was a great opportunity to magnify the message of collaboration that I see in nature. It reinforces the reality that we must work together with others if we want to plant big ideas into the world.” — Kevin Box

Seed, 2017 by Kevin Box and Beth Johnson (audio tour #36)

patinated cast bronze

This acorn was designed by Beth Johnson, internationally recognized for her innovative and original origami forms. Beth folded the acorn using two sheets of paper and computer-aided design techniques to produce the seed pod's complex curves.

Acorns come from oak trees and provide food for many animals. They have a unique relationship with squirrels because squirrels do not eat all the acorns they collect. Some of them end up buried far away from and end up growing into a tree.

“I see a parallel between the story of a seed and a blank piece of paper. Both begin small and humble. One dreams of becoming a great big tree and the other becomes whatever you can imagine.” —Kevin Box

Sway with Me, 2016 by Kevin and Jennifer Box (Box2) (audio tour #29)

powder coated cast stainless steel and patinated cast bronze

This sculpture is a collaboration between Box and his wife Jennifer. Some say all artwork is a self-portrait or expression of how an artist sees him or herself. In this sculpture, a bird swing made of branches has not one, but two cranes landing gracefully upon it. They seem to like each other as they swing together in harmony. Like the origami crane, the olive branch is a symbol of peace and compromise. The origami cranes were originally made of paper and cast in stainless steel. The swing itself is made from olive branches that have been cast in bronze.

Hero's Horse, 2014 by Kevin Box (audio tour #21)

powder coated fabricated steel

The hero's journey may conjure mythological feats of bravery and superhuman strength to overcome darkness with light. But isn't that what each of us is asked to do—to face and vanquish the darkness and challenges of ordinary life? In the Greek myth of Pegasus, the winged, white horse is sent by the gods to assist the hero in his journey to save the world. After the warrior surmounts impossible odds and accomplishes the task, Pegasus returns to the night sky, transforming into a constellation of stars. Interestingly, when an origami Pegasus is folded from a single uncut square of paper and then unfolded (as in Kevin and Robert's piece, *Pegasus Unfolded, Hero's Horse, Opus #633*), the crease pattern reveals a beautiful star.

“Hero's Horse is a story of hope,” Box says. “It reminds us that when we're faced with impossible odds, help is on the way and good will always win the day.”

Emerging Peace, 2016 by Kevin Box and Michael G. LaFosse (audio tour #32)

painted cast aluminum and patinated cast stainless steel on steel

The lifecycle of a butterfly tells a complex story of transformation. In it we can see how a caterpillar, capable of destroying one plant with an enormous appetite, can change into a beautiful butterfly that helps pollinate many plants that are miles apart. Pollinators such as butterflies are a very important part of nature and the food chain that feeds us.

This story presents a comforting metaphor at a time when humanity's appetite threatens the limited resources of our planet. Scientists have discovered a mystery within the cellular structure of a caterpillar. As the caterpillar eats, 'imaginal cells' begin to emerge. These cells are so different that the immune system of the caterpillar attacks and destroys them. But as these cells persist, increase and

multiply, they eventually overwhelm the immune system and cause the caterpillar to lose its appetite. The caterpillar hangs upside down and forms a pupa, or protective shell that protects it while it transforms. During this pupa phase, the imaginal cells reorganize the entire economy of the caterpillar to start doing something completely different. They transform from an earth-bound creature of consumption into an airborne butterfly that pollinates flowers near and far.

“The story of humanity and the lifecycle of a caterpillar have many things in common. We are going through similar cycles of consumption, growth and transformation. The plant which the caterpillar consumes is like our planet. The caterpillar’s appetite is a lot like our own and our fate is tied to our ability to transform our unsustainable capacity for consumption into balanced patterns of prosperity.” —Kevin Box

InsideOut

All the pieces in this exhibit were originally folded from a single piece of paper. Hidden within every folded origami object is a “crease pattern”—a document of history accounting for most of the choices or creases made in creating an origami object. A single piece of paper is altered simply by creasing the paper up into mountain folds or down into valley folds. Each fold leaves a permanent crease in the paper that can only be revealed by deconstructing or unfolding the object. Some origami artists draw or diagram crease patterns to plan a design, or record and keep track of their steps. A simple language of solid and dotted lines defines the difference between mountain and valley folds. Many artists cannot bring themselves to unfold a piece of complex origami after all the time and effort spent on its creation. For this exhibit, a selection of models has been folded and unfolded to reveal the complex patterns hidden beneath the surface of the origami.

“Origami crease patterns serve many purposes. To the designer, they form a structural representation of the artwork. To a folder, they can provide signposts on the way to a fold. To the everyday viewer, they provide an alternate way of looking at the folded subject. In a crease pattern, you can see everything that is hidden in the folded work.” —Robert J. Lang

PAPER MODELS

Light Boat 2017

Traditional Japanese design folded by Kevin Box
One uncut rectangle of paper

Hero’s Horse, Pegasus, opus 633 2017

Concept by Kevin Box and Robert J. Lang
Original origami design folded by Robert J. Lang
One uncut square of kozo paper

Flying Crane, opus 563, 2016 by Robert J. Lang
one uncut square of Korean hanji paper

Butterfly for Jennifer and Kevin Box 2017

Original origami design folded by Michael G. LaFosse

Paper handmade by Richard L. Alexander

One uncut square of nono-duo back-coated Origamido© paper

CAST WALL HANGINGS:

Butterfly Unfolded, Metamorphosis Mandala by Kevin Box and Michael G. LaFosse 2015

painted cast aluminum

audio tour #26

This piece began as an origami butterfly that had been intricately folded by Michael G. LaFosse. Unfolding origami designs reveals the complicated patterns that exist hidden beneath the surface. Origami artists refer to these folds as “crease patterns.”

Crane Unfolded, Phoenix Rising, opus 563, 2014 Kevin Box and Robert J. Lang (audio tour #20)

painted cast aluminum

This wall hanging sculpture reveals the intricate crease pattern found beneath the surface of one of the most complicated origami cranes ever folded from a single uncut piece of paper.

Light Boat Plans by Kevin Box

painted cast aluminum

audio tour #27

Most origami models begin with a square, but this unfolded version of a paper boat shows the rectangle origins of this classic design. Box often unfolds the paper models using the crease patterns to plan out the shapes for welding together fabricated monumental sculptures inspired by origami.

Pegasus Unfolded, Hero's Horse, opus 633 by Kevin Box and Robert J. Lang

painted cast aluminum

audio tour #22

Ancient legends tell of a winged, white horse sent from above to help the hero in his journey to save the world. Upon completing the task, the mythical winged horse returned to the sky, unfolded into the stars, and became the constellation Pegasus. This wall hanging depicts the star of the *Pegasus Unfolded*.