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THE BALLERINA IMAGE AND THE ANDERSEN'S ART CARVING

Annotation

The author proposes to comprehend the image of the great storyteller from the least known side: as a creative person who had the ability to present his fairy tales not only verbally but also through paper cutting. With all the diversity and expressiveness of people figures, animals, palaces, theatrical scenes, various plot paintings, one cannot but notice, that Andersen's most favourite images were the figures of dancing people, and most often – the ballerina who is standing on a one leg. The aim of this article is to understand Andersen's image of the ballerina in the creative world, using the means of artistic expression of his carved paper paintings.

Key words: *fairy tale, Andersen, paper, ballerina, carving.*

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ОБРАЗ БАЛЕРИНЫ И ИСКУССТВО ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОГО ВЫРЕЗАНИЯ АНДЕРСЕНА

Аннотация

Автор данной статьи предлагает осмыслить образ великого сказочника с наименее известной стороны: как творческой личности, обладавшей умением представлять свои сказки не только вербально, но и через вырезание бумаги. При всем многообразии и выразительности фигур людей, животных, дворцов, театральных сцен, разных сюжетных картин нельзя не заметить, что наиболее излюбленными образами Андерсена были фигурки танцующих людей, а чаще всего – балерины, стоящей на одной ножке. Цель данной статьи – побудить к пониманию образа балерины в творческом мире Андерсена, используя средства художественной выразительности его резных бумажных картин.

Ключевые слова: *сказка, Андерсен, бумага, балерина, вырезание.*

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АНДЕРСЕННИҢ КӨРКЕМ ОЮ ӨНЕРІ МЕН ОНДАҒЫ БАЛЕРИНА БЕЙНЕСІ

Аннотация

Мақаланың авторы Андерсен ертегілерін ауызша ғана емес, көркем ою өнері арқылы да көрсете білген «ұлы тұлға» ретінде қарауды ұсынады. Адамдар, жануарлар, сарайлар, театр көріністері, әртүрлі сюжеттік суреттер, фигуралардың түрлілігі мен мәнерлілігі көп бола тура Андерсеннің ең сүйікті бейнесі бишілер, көбінесе бір аяқта тұрған балериналарды байқамауға болмайды. Мақаланың мақсаты – Андерсен шығармашылығындағы көркем мәнерлік құралдарын пайдалана отырып, оның қағаздағы көркем ою суреттер әлеміндегі балерина бейнесін түсінуге ықпал ету.

Түйінді сөздер: ертегі, Андерсен, қағаз, балерина, кесу.

«He had one really beautiful accomplishment, which was the carving out lovely little figures of sprites and elves, gnomes, fairies and animals of all kinds in paper with an ordinary pair of scissors, which might well have stepped out of the pages of his books», - wrote Sir Henry Dickens.

“... A piece of paper turns into ornate lace in which you can see dancing ballerinas, flying angels, blooming flowers, winding storks and just funny faces. Hans Christian Andersen seemed to create laconic and spectacular images of the heroes of his fairy tales using an unusual technique - artistic cutting out of paper” [1, p.3]. These words were written by an artist Nick Goltz in the preface to Andersen’s autobiography “The Tale of My Life” whose drawings most beautifully complemented the book written by Andersen.

Hans Christian Andersen had a difficult character, he was controversial and undoubtedly brilliant man. But it is not mean that the writer’s childhood was bitter. Despite the poverty the parents lived well and happily surrounded their only son with love. But Andersen had a very difficult relationship with the outside world. The guys in the street were hounding him for the unprepossessing figure, for the squeaky-voice, for the crazy grandfather and for the strange addiction to dolls, to the puppet theater ... Probably because of this the future storyteller was tended to introversion where there is only man and his fantasies plots, heroys...

The Andersen family in the Danish Odense was considered a little bit strange: the grandfather was a carpenter, and it happened he carved out strange figures of fairy-tale creatures from the tree. Being an ordinary shoemaker his father knew the letter. The father introduced the magical worlds of fairy-tales and legends: he read “Fairy Tales 1001 Nights” to his son, made a puppet theater for which the future storyteller made costumes for dolls from rags and played out the whole performances on the toy scene. Father and son performed together the whole evenings by playing the magic performances. It was then the boy began to love the theater

which he would carry out through his life and link to the future.

Little Hans used the paper for the performances. With the time he stopped sewing the doll dresses and never parted with paper crafts. For the world-famous storyteller Hans Christian Andersen, the paper was not only material for the written word but also a means of expressing the creative ideas. Throughout his life the Danish storyteller experienced an incredible dependence on the paper: he wrote, painted on it, cut out various figures and the whole plots from it.

Like the sculptor who creates an art from an ordinary stone, Andersen was equally masterful in managing paper. He imprinted on it his thoughts and ideas with ink and gave free rein to the expression, cutting out of it with the scissors. This is a little-known fact from his biography, which forms part of his creative heritage. The silhouette carving (papirklipp - Danish) seriously fascinated the writer, and he created more than 1500 similar silhouettes from simple to the most complex in different forms and ideas. The most used paper carving samples were taken from the Odense City Museum [2].



Fig.1. Andersen's scissors cut. *Dancing white man on the black background.*

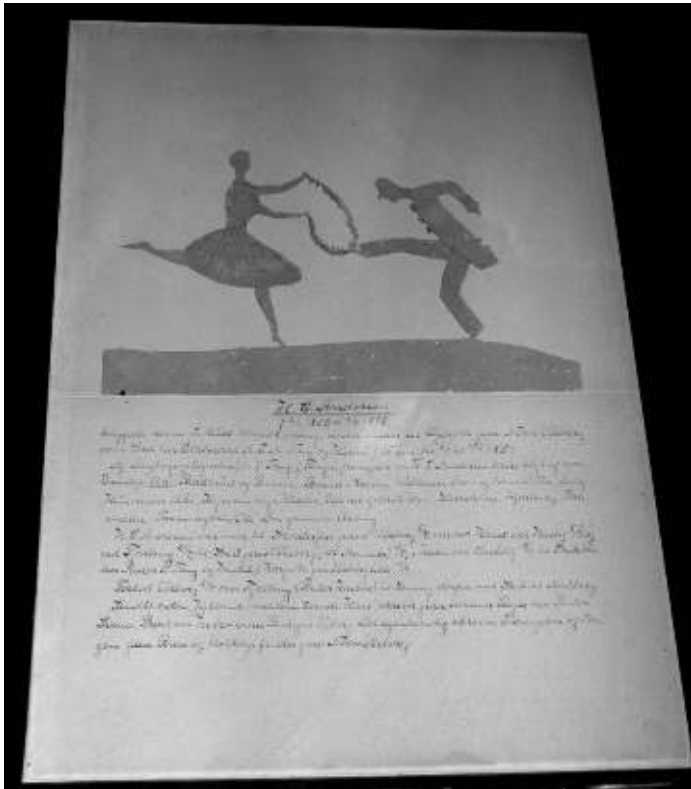


Fig.2. Andersen's scissors cut. *Dancer and man*

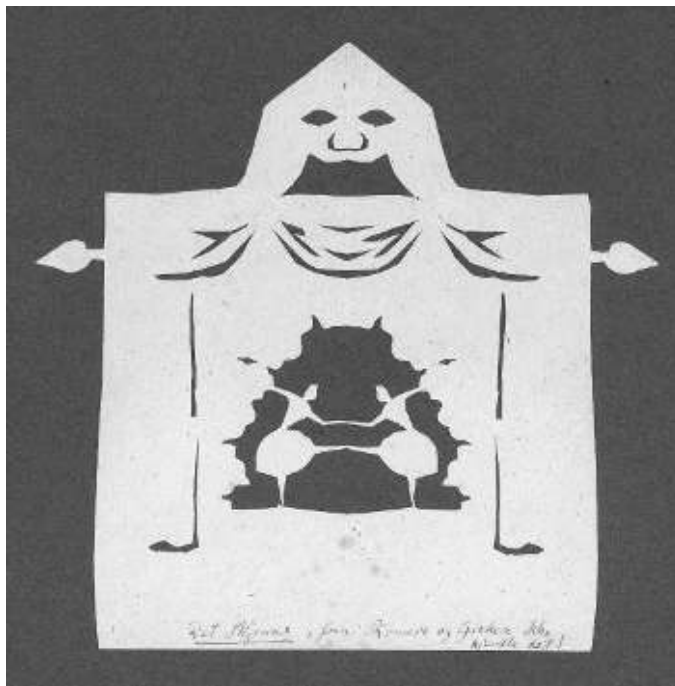


Fig.3. Andersen's scissors cut. *The theatre: stage with two dancers*

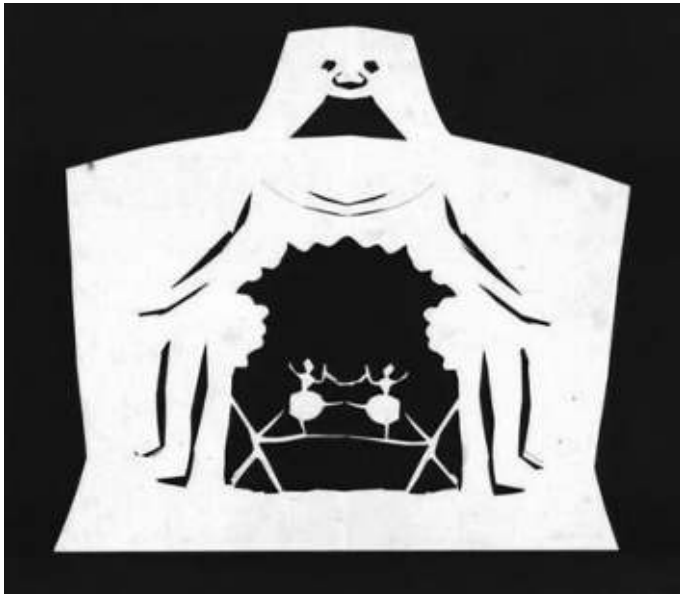


Fig.4. Andersen's scissors cut. *The theatre: stage with two dancers*

Andersen, by telling fairy tales to the children, often cut out the characters and scenery right in front of the little listeners. How surprised the audience was when a whole fairy-tale world appeared from sheets of paper folded in half! And Andersen always improvised. He had never made sketches for his crafts and always worked with the large scissors which would be more suitable for sheep shearing than for the openwork carving.

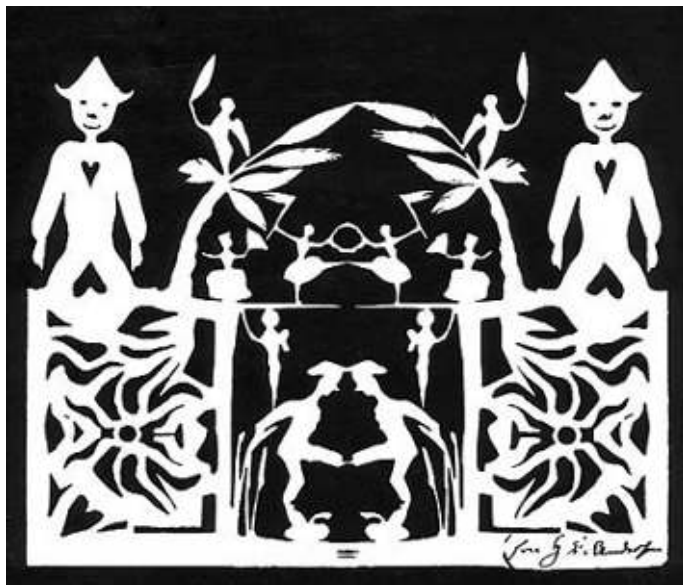


Fig.5. Andersen's scissors cut.

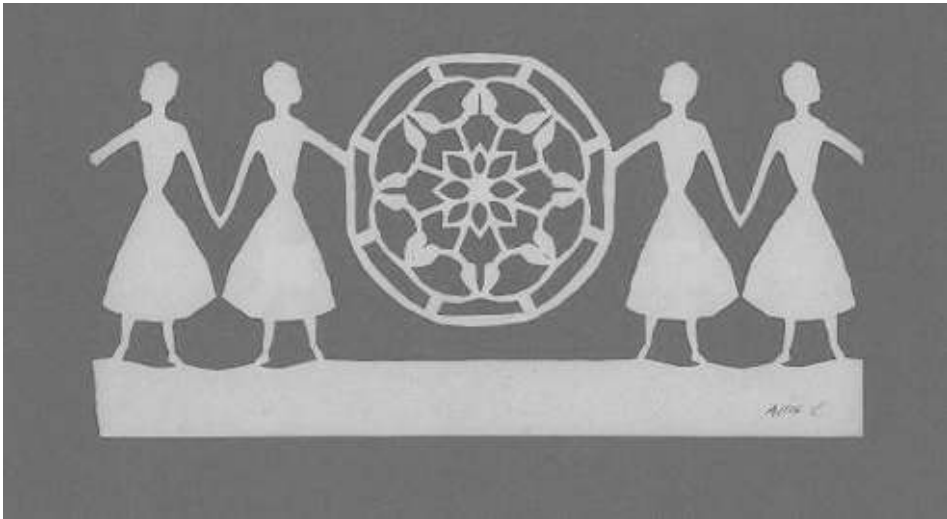


Fig.6. *Andersen's scissors cut. Girls with rosace*

The writer was in the habit cutting out a silhouette for the fairy tale. He usually unfolded the paper for the display only at the end of the storytelling. The tale is told, and the writer immediately gave away paper fantasies created by him to the children. Today, about thousands of such handicrafts are carefully kept in the archives of the Royal Danish Library and in the Andersen Museum in the city of Odense.

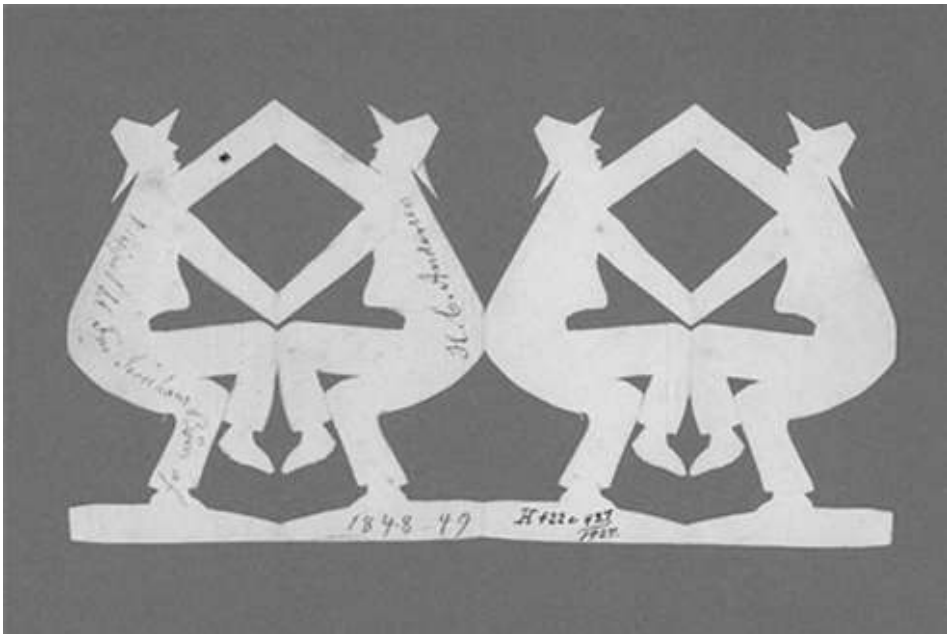


Fig.7. *Andersen's scissors cut.*



Fig.8. Andersen's scissors cut.

Few of his readers know about this talent of Andersen. Andersen learned the masterful handling of scissors from his father, a shoemaker, but the ability to accurately “cut out” a paper silhouette with minimal means was given probably from his grandfather who sawed out various wooden statuette.

Some of his paper images resemble wooden toys. Here are some samples of his “carved” fantasy which give the ideas of his works and the plots.

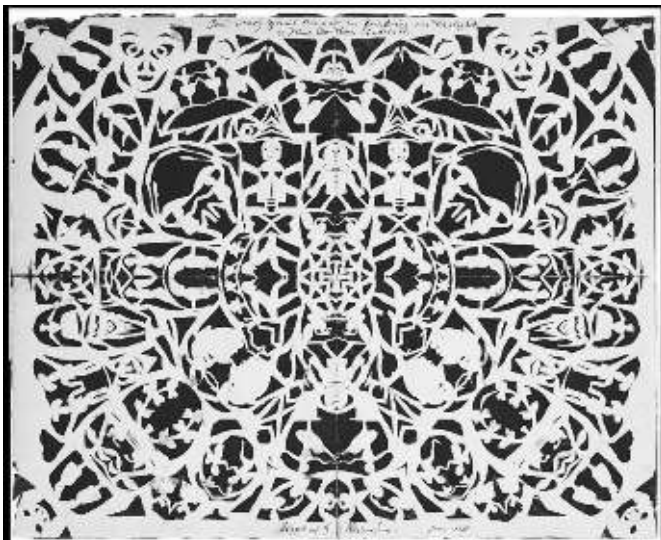


Fig.9. Andersen's scissors cut.

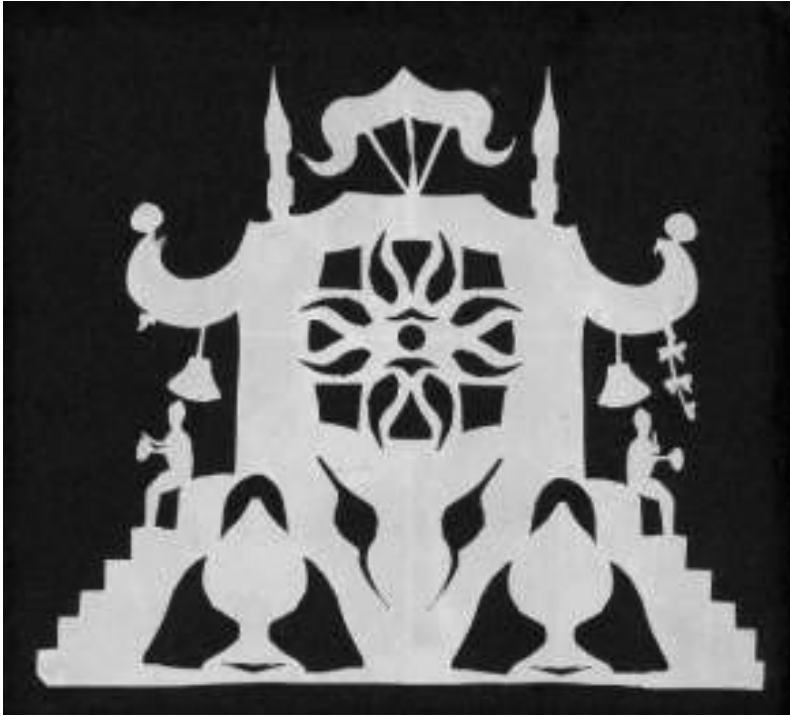


Fig.10. *Andersen's scissors cut.*



Fig.11. *Andersen's scissors cut.*



Fig.12. *Andersen's scissors cut. Scene of dancer, flowers, and faces*

“Whenever Hans Christian Andersen had opportunities to tell fairy tales to the children, he would just take the scissors out of his pocket and made a cut paper illustration and start telling the story. Andersen taught himself to make drawings and collages by creating the puppets and their stages. Men in a circle with holding hearts and hands is an example he created for his performances. He was inspired to design them when looking at his cut out illustration” [3].

Contemporaries of the storyteller recall that most of Hans Christian Andersen’s cut-outs are based on the things he imagined but not on the ones he saw. From time to time he used his skills with the scissors like a camera to capture a scene he wanted to remember after. It is known that in 1833 he met the Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen who later became his good friend. One day Andersen was invited to see how the French artist Horace Vernet paints a portrait of Thorvaldsen. At one moment in this session Andersen pulled out his travel scissors and a piece of paper and cut out a similar silhouette.



Fig.13. *Andersen's scissors cut. Untitled*

In 1874, Andersen made his last large clipping as a gift to Mrs. Melchior. The Melchiors, a wealthy Danish merchant family, were good friends with Hans Andersen. Andersen often stayed to live and work in their country Villa. The grim nature of the images is not typical for the Andersen's clippings. But scissors cutting reflect the poor health of the artist and his understanding of approaching death. In the central part there is a cross, the image of it is rarely seen in the clippings although Andersen was a religious man.



Fig.14. Andersen's scissors cut. Scene of dancer, flowers, and faces

Authors of the Seminar "Cutting Through - Designs and Illustrations in Cut Paper" wrote: "Hans Christian Andersen cut this illustration to raise money for the soldiers who fought in the Prussia War" [3]. Perhaps Andersen valued his paper scissors talent as highly as the gift of a storyteller.

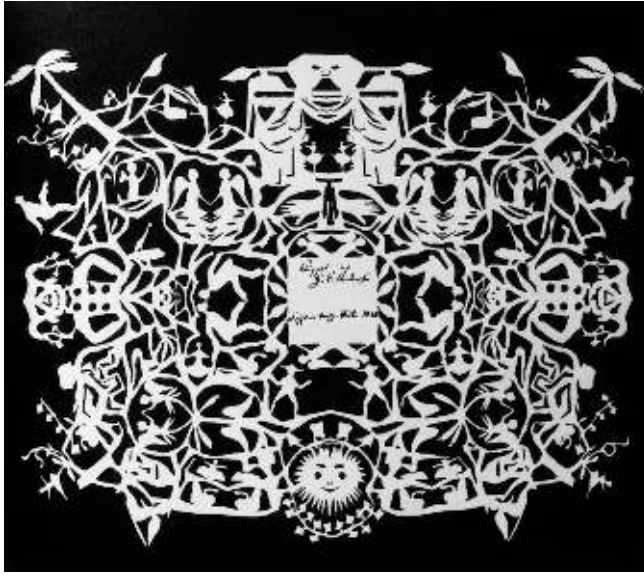


Fig.15. *Andersen's scissors cut.*



Fig.16. *Andersen's pattern of ballerinas*

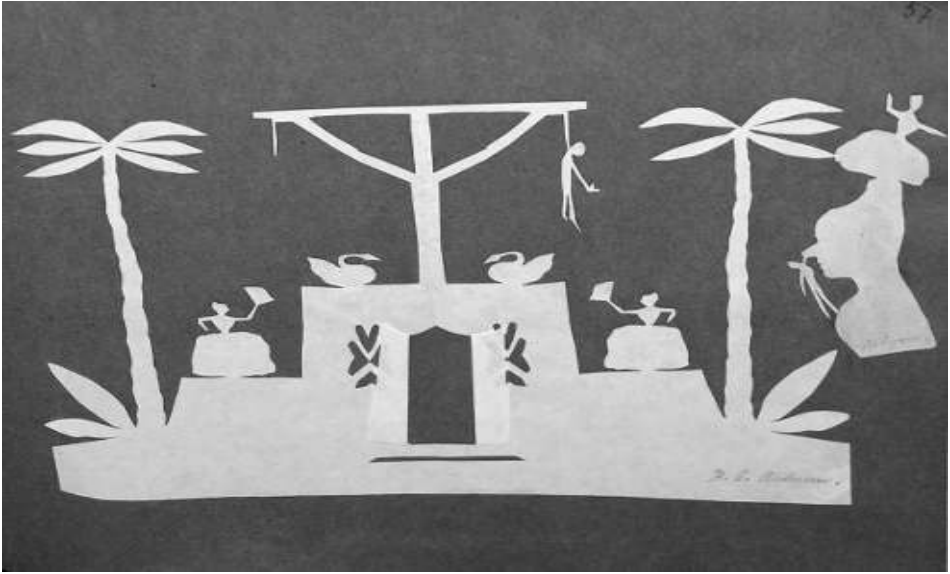


Fig.17. Andersen's scissors cut.



Fig.18. Dancing ballerina



Fig.19. Dancing ballerina in oxidized paper

The reader can note that one of the most beloved images of Andersen in his carved paper art is the ballerina in his carved paper art is the ballerina.

We can see a silhouette of ballerina in a separate carved paper version and in composite unity where she is at the top.



Fig.20. Andersen's scissors cut. *The tree with an angel ballerina and dancing girl in the nest on top*

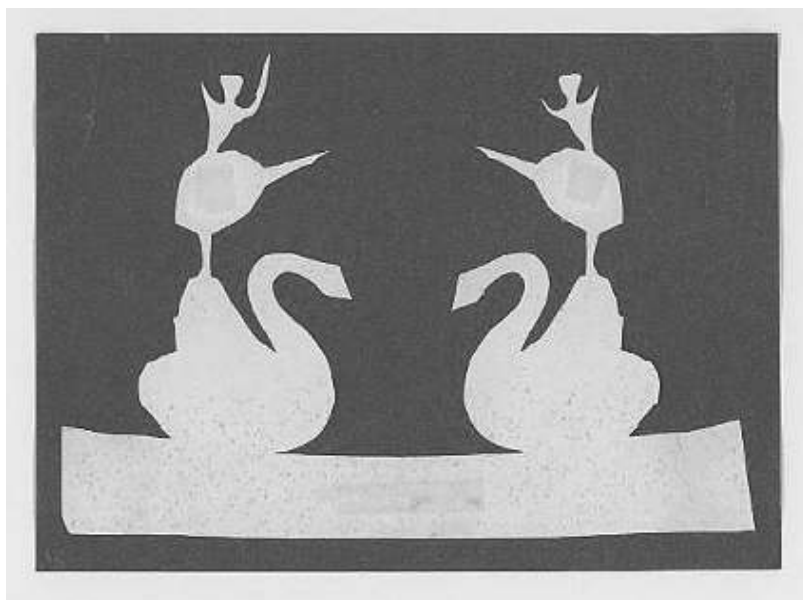


Fig.21. Andersen's scissors cut. *The motife of swans with the dancers.*

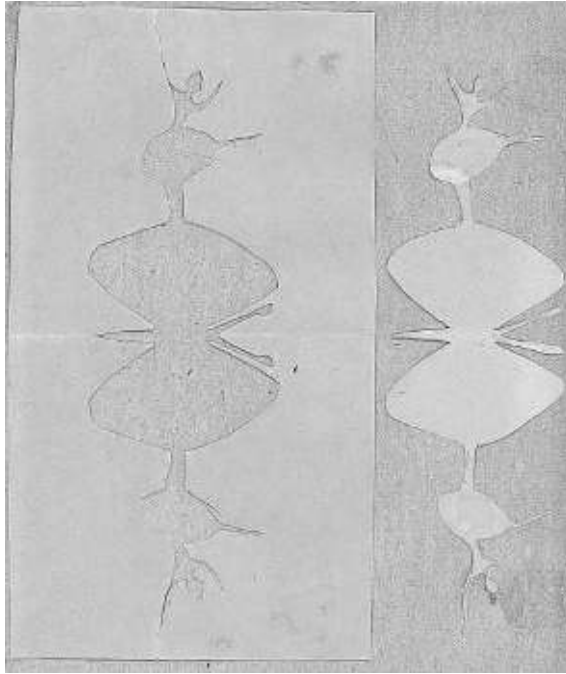


Fig.22. Andersen's scissors cut. Butterfly with a ballerina on the wing



Fig.23. Andersen's scissors cut. Two women by a palm tree with a ballerina on top of it.

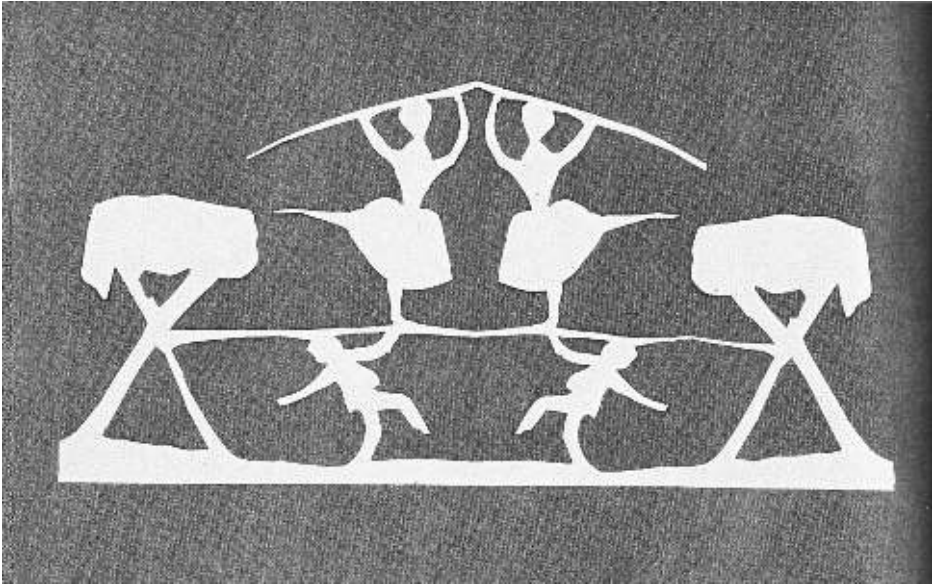


Fig.24. Andersen's scissors cut. *Rope Dancers.*

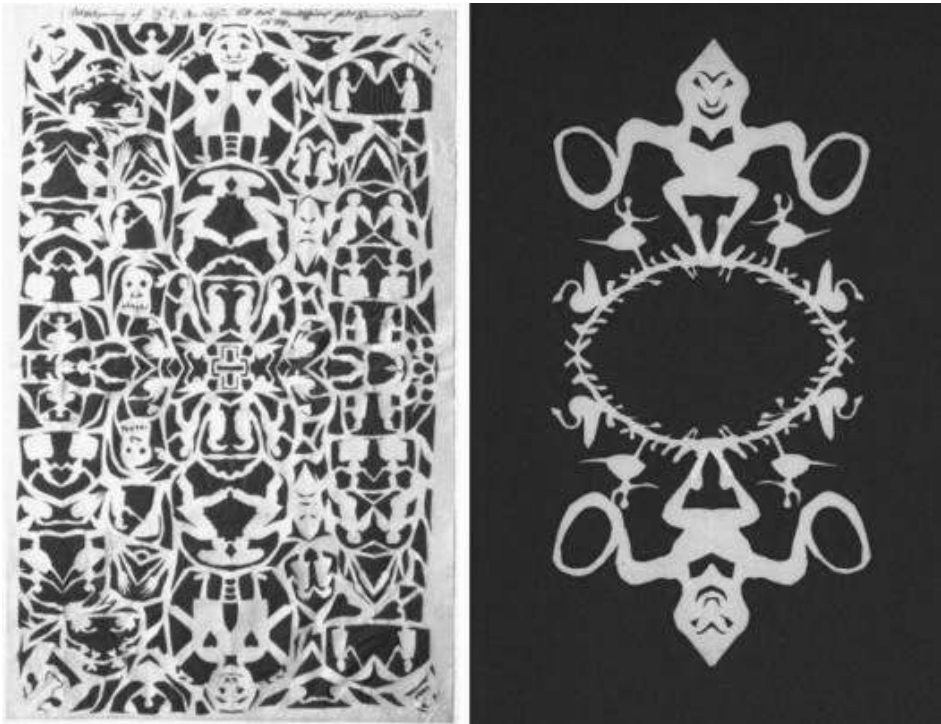


Fig.25. Andersen's scissors cut

So the ballerina is a figure that appears in many of the paper cuts as well as to be employed in his fairy tales and stories. It is easy to see that a ballerina by balancing on one leg becomes a symbol of beauty and grace in paper silhouettes of Andersen that ables to resist another hostile world.

Ballerina is the fragility and refinement of being.

The ballerina embodies the writer's most cherished dreams.

The ballerina becomes a sign of victory and love.

A ballerina pose with one rising leg resembles the scissors. But of course, the most interesting interpretations of this chosen position of a ballerina on one leg can be found in the fairy tale "Brave tin soldier".

Sometimes in the Andersen's paper silhouettes we can discern hidden meanings, linguistic riddles, rebuses and encrypted symbols: for him cutting out was not only a pleasure but also a gymnastics for the mind. Please, look at the following pictures.



Fig.26. *Andersen's scissors cut.*



Fig.27. *Andersen's scissors cut. Clown with tray buildings on it.*

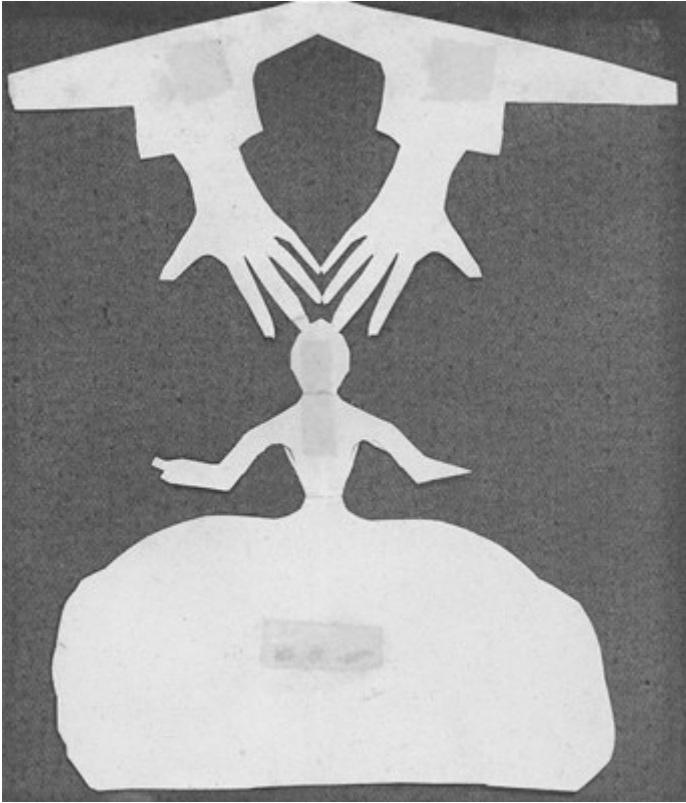


Fig.28. Andersen's scissors cut. *Hands from above with ballerina underneath*



Fig.29. Andersen's scissors cut

Look at the paper cut № 29. We could say that a paper cut represents how Hans Christian Andersen imaged a fairy tale tree: a tree that carries fairy tale figures instead of leaves. We can recognize an elf and a ballerina. The fact that the fairy tale has the shape of a tree can tell us that Hans Christian Andersen thought of it as something organic as if the cutting artist grew on a fairy tree.

Hans Christian Andersen talent didn't go unnoticed by the European monarchs. King Maximilian II of Bavaria was such a fan that he invited Andersen to his castle in 1854. The Danish visitor noted in his diary that he "bound a bouquet for the queen and cut out a paper with swans to place around it" (Diary of Hans Christian Andersen, June 20, 1854). In 1872, King Christian IX of Denmark purchased paper cut bookmarks the artist had donated for a benefit bazaar.

And now these amazing carved pictures are collected in the Museum of Odense where Andersen was born. And we look with wonder and awe at these carved tales that the great writer left to the world.

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