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Origami - an Art of Reproduction

I have been folding origami for around six years now, 12 if considering the first origami model I ever folded. In case my collection has grown proportionately. I remember the first time I folded an origami model. I was in 1st grade, sitting on a purple rug in the middle of my class – the joy, the exuberation, to have a piece of art I could hold, something lifelike. Although it was just a crane, I was fascinated and hooked. Origami faded from my life until I reached 9th grade when I rediscovered it on YouTube through a tutorial. Tadashi Mori, an origami designer and YouTuber, rekindled my love for the art. He taught me how it could transcend simple boxes and little birds. I could not feed my hunger quickly enough and I devoured all I could find on the art. My idols were designers. All I dreamed of was attending a lecture of NASA Physicist and Origamist Robert Lang, which I finally did in the summer of 2018. Following that, I developed my art more and more as I became immersed in the community, attending my first convention in 2019 and exhibiting in another the very same year. Over the following years, during the pandemic, I focused my energy in facilitating relationships with designers and fellow folders online. Since coming to the University, I have made use of these connections by hosting a talk with esteemed designer John Montroll, and in the future, I plan to focus my energy in teaching, specifically adolescent instruction.

Origami, in essence, is extremely simple. One could argue of all the variety of folds, whether it is a rabbit, petal, squash, sink, reverse, or even swivel fold, it comes down to four basics. One sheet, no cuts. Two types of lines, red and blue. Two types of folds, mountain and valley. Yet no matter how fundamentally simple it is, the possibilities are limitless, the designs are never-ending, and there is no obstruction to how you create. Designs are explained through two avenues - diagrams and crease patterns, the former being the most common and followed. All diagrammed models, however, also have a crease pattern, as the pattern is the underlying map underneath every model. All the books in my collection are almost exclusively diagram focused, as it is the primary method of folding and instruction.

Origami holds a very prominent place in my life, partly because of the deeply emotional and personal connection I have to it, but because I believe that its merit is in a deep philosophy around the basis of teaching as well as the idea of value in reproduction. Self-taught origami artists are almost nonexistent. The entire premise of origami is based on the idea of instruction - an idea of furthering the art and teaching as far and wide as possible. The concept of teaching and documenting the art is why I put so much value and pride in my collection. I have been collecting origami books for six years now, and the ones I have with me

in my college collection are the ones I value the most. Every book marks not only a symbolic meaning of the art as a whole - its value in teachability, but a personal marker for how my art has progressed. Books such as Lang's *Complete Book Of Origami* are meaningful, being one of the first origami books I received. In contrast, my books by Satoshi Kamiya hold meaning to me as they represent a very physical place in my life. They represent my first physical introduction to the community, as I attended my first convention and personally got them signed by Kamiya himself. My convention books hold a similar value, representing my physical place and memory of the conventions I attended. Other books, such as *One Water One World*, represent a time in my life when I was attempting to be a completionist, setting my goal to fold all the models in the book instead of cherry-picking whichever I thought looked interesting. *A New Generation of Origami* was the first complex origami book gifted to me so whenever I open it, I am reminded of my first attempts at models as well as the physical place of its most belonging. Many of my books also have unfinished models dispersed in the pages, reminding me of the distinct memory of when I started or failed to finish.

Origami books are a very interesting sub-category in the genre of art books as a whole, as their entire purpose is to instruct instead of provide a literary analysis or really any literary approach. Many of the books I have lack any English descriptions, and the language is the common one of the diagram, as invented by Akira Yoshizawa. Its value to me, especially in the digital age when free pdfs are so widespread, is held in the physical memories I associate with my journey. Annotation is not very useful when it comes to reading the books, as there isn't much to note. As a result, my only inflections are the pieces I leave unfinished wherever I last stopped.

Going forward, I would like to expand my collection to more baseline books in the art. The complexity is intriguing and something I admire, but I believe the most significant artists are the ones who make their work accessible. I would like to find original books by designers such as Akira Yoshizawa, John Montroll, and Neal Elias, as they were the original boundary-pushers for the art. As I continue my goal of teaching more broadly, I hope to gather books that I am able to share and make available to other people to help grow their journey in the art.