

## Press Release

### Tradition & Perfection: Paper Cuttings from China & Switzerland

March 20, 2026

The University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong, is honoured to present *Tradition & Perfection: Paper Cuttings from China & Switzerland*. Paper cuttings have long fascinated viewers with their expressive storytelling and extraordinary precision. For the first time, Swiss paper cuttings from the Wyss Collection (Unterseen, Bern) are being juxtaposed with Chinese paper cuttings from the collection of the University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong, along with works from the Guangling Paper Cutting Art Museum and the Jieiyuan Paper Cutting Art Center, Pingyao, both located in Shanxi province. The aim of the exhibition is to highlight the diversity and distinctive cultural identities of this fascinating art form. In 2009, Chinese paper cutting was added to UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. To highlight the significance of this craft spanning both cultures, two parallel exhibitions will be held in spring 2026, at the University Museum and Art Gallery and the Kunsthaus Interlaken (22 February–17 May 2026).

The opening of the exhibition was held at UMAG on March 19. Officiating guests included the Deputy Consul General of Switzerland in Hong Kong, Mrs Françoise Killias Zillweger, the collector Mr Christoph Wyss, UMAG Director Dr Florian Knothe and UMAG Exhibition Curator Dr Harald Peter Kraemer.

Swiss paper cuttings are primarily narrative works. From the mid-19th century onwards, they replaced the popular shadow pictures known as silhouettes, with a particular focus on Alpine life. Swiss paper cuttings function as condensed narrative microcosms, each distinguished by striking and subtle variations in their repertoire of figures, forms, and designs. Cut from black paper and arranged largely symmetrically, Swiss paper cuttings feature a wealth of ornamentation and an incredible density of detail that invites viewers to discover and linger. Thanks to the cooperation of the Wyss Collection this exhibition will feature works by pioneers such as Johann Jakob Hauswirth and Louis Saugy; traditional cuttings by David Regez and Christian Schwizgebel; and contemporary constructions from Ueli Hofer, Martha Kneusslin, Nelly Naef, Ernst Oppliger, Bruno Weber, and others.

Chinese paper cuttings differ from Swiss paper cuttings in their use of color and tendency to appear in series. Since red promises good luck, most Chinese paper cuttings are created from red paper and produced in sets. Packaged in small folders, they present variations on a subject or theme—tigers or peacocks, Beijing opera masks, views of pagoda towers, or the scenic beauty of a particular region. Another defining characteristic is their strong symbolism and iconography. For example, a pine tree in combination with a crane can symbolize longevity, representing wishes for health in old age and a lasting marriage. Chinese paper cuttings also tell stories, depicting scenes from well-known tales or presenting instructive narratives.

The exhibition begins with a historical overview of the development of paper cutting in Switzerland and China, then showcases the diversity of works through dialogical and thematic comparisons. We invite you to discover and compare these magnificent works of cultural heritage from Switzerland and China.





### Details of the Exhibition

**Period:** March 20, 2026 (Friday) to June 7, 2026 (Sunday)

#### Opening Hours:

9:30 am–6 pm (Tuesday to Saturday)

1 pm–6 pm (Sunday)

Closed on Mondays, Public and University Holidays

**Venue:** 1/F, T. T. Tsui Building, UMAG, HKU, 90 Bonham Road, Pokfulam, Hong Kong

**Tel/Email:** (852) 3917 5500 (General Enquiry) / [museum@hku.hk](mailto:museum@hku.hk)

**Admission:** Free admission; In light of the HKU Tourist Flow Management Scheme, please enter via the ground floor of the Fung Ping Shan Building

**Website:** <https://umag.hku.hk/exhibition/tradition-perfection-paper-cuttings-from-china-switzerland/>

### Connect with UMAG on Social Media:

**Facebook:** [http://bit.ly/umag\\_facebook](http://bit.ly/umag_facebook)

**Instagram:** @umag\_hku, #UMAG, #PaperCuttings

**YouTube:** [http://bit.ly/umag\\_youtube](http://bit.ly/umag_youtube)

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**rednote:** [香港大學美術博物館 UMAG](#)

### About UMAG

UMAG was founded in 1953 as the Fung Ping Shan Museum. It was originally established as the Fung Ping Shan Library in 1932 in honour of its benefactor. For more information on UMAG, please click [here](#).

### Media Enquiries

Tel: (852) 3917 5504, Email: [musnews@hku.hk](mailto:musnews@hku.hk)

### Captions

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