

Linda Stephen Origami Landscapes

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Linda Stephen Artist Statement

I have lived and traveled around the world - from Osaka to London, Chicago to Oslo. There is beauty of place, and of spirit, all around us, though these are often overlooked. In my art, I aim to celebrate both the festive and the quiet moments in our everyday lives.

Origami is the Japanese art of folding paper into representational shapes. My *origami* collage constructions represent a new and unique approach to this ancient tradition.

I use a wide range of handcrafted papers, primarily those of Japanese origin, as my medium. Colors, patterns and textures found in the papers themselves, as well as those created through the folding process, are key design elements in my art. Hundreds of artisanal *washi* papers form my palette – from tissue-thin, transparent *chigiri-e* hand-dyed rice papers to wrinkled *momigami* papers to the vibrant silkscreened *yuzen* fabric papers.

For the background, I create a watercolor look through layering papers. I do not paint any of the papers, so my color choices are limited, not unlike the circumstances of life. After choosing key papers, I invent 3D *origami* paper sculptures that add shadow, give dimension and bring my work to life. This is an intricate process – both the folding of individual pieces and carefully gluing each piece in place, one layer at a time. Large, detailed works take three months to complete. Although I may incorporate 1,000+ paper sculptures in dozens of patterns and colors, every item that is added must enhance the composition.

To me, *origami* is a metaphor for the potential that lies within each person, each neighborhood, each city, and each country in our world. One flat piece of paper, a seemingly simple material, through a multifaceted progression of paper-folds, can be transformed into almost anything. It can even be deconstructed – *unfolded* – in order to begin again. It is my hope that my art inspires viewers to appreciate the beauty in the details around them and to celebrate the world and their part in it!

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