

Origami master Sipho Mabona and the art of creating a paper praying mantis

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

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<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1217194/Origami-master-Sipho-Mabona-art-creating-paper-butterfly.html>

These are the incredible folded fauna and intricate insects made from paper that look just like the real thing.

The amazing paper pieces of art - each from a single sheet of paper - are the work of 29-year-old origami expert Sipho Mabona.

He started making paper planes when he was just five-years-old but his passion for paper meant he ran out of designs for the planes by the time he was 15. The artist then turned his eye to other inspirations for his next artwork taking tips from nature and the environment.



At first glance it looks like a praying mantis. However closer examination reveals it to be a work of origami and only the leaf and stem are real



Koi blimey! A large version of the fish prepares to take a dive into the water



Origami expert Siphon Mabona started making paper planes when he was just five years old but his passion for paper meant he ran out of designs for the planes by the time he was 15. He then began to take inspiration from nature as this stunning stag beetle shows

His amazing insects, birds and folded fish are so detailed they are almost capable of fooling the naked eye into thinking they are real.

His incredibly intricate designs sell for more than £1,500 and are exhibited in galleries in Japan, Switzerland, Canada, Spain and France. And he is now set to bring his art to the UK next year.

Each piece can take up to 20 hours to fold and take more than six months to design.

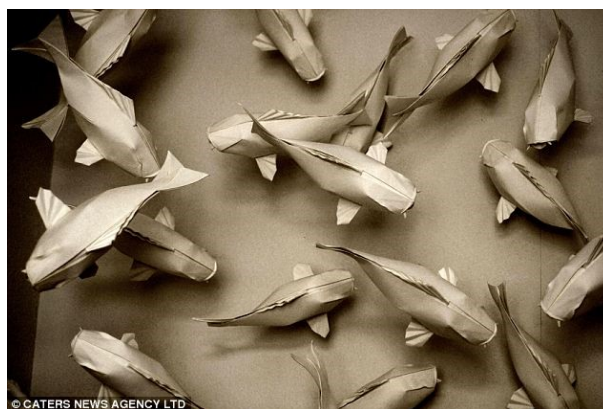
Siphon was the first-ever foreigner to be invited to the Japan Origami Academic Society (JOAS) Convention in 2008 and his work graced the cover of the official magazine.



Clever creations: A grasshopper and, right, a tiger are further examples of Siphon's art

A shoal of koi carp. A single piece of art from him can sell for up to £1,500

He said: 'I started folding paper planes as a child and then went on to do origami ten years ago.'



'The inspiration for me can be anything, from insects like the praying mantis, to fish, birds, the weather and the landscape.

'The time it takes to make each piece differs from figure to figure.

'The quickest would probably be a Koi carp, but even that takes me around one hour to fold.

'On the other hand for things like the praying mantis I took 20 hours of solid folding.

'But designing the models is what takes quite some time usually. That can be anywhere from a day to six months of off and on work.

'I sell my work for prices for a single piece range anywhere from 300 to 2,500 swiss francs, or £1,500.

'All representational models are made from one single uncut square of paper. Some abstract models are folded from one uncut rectangle.'

Sipho, whose mother is Swiss and his father South African, was born and raised in Switzerland.



The Nativity scene and, right, the artist himself Sipho Manbona



Colourful cascade of carp descend across a white backdrop

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