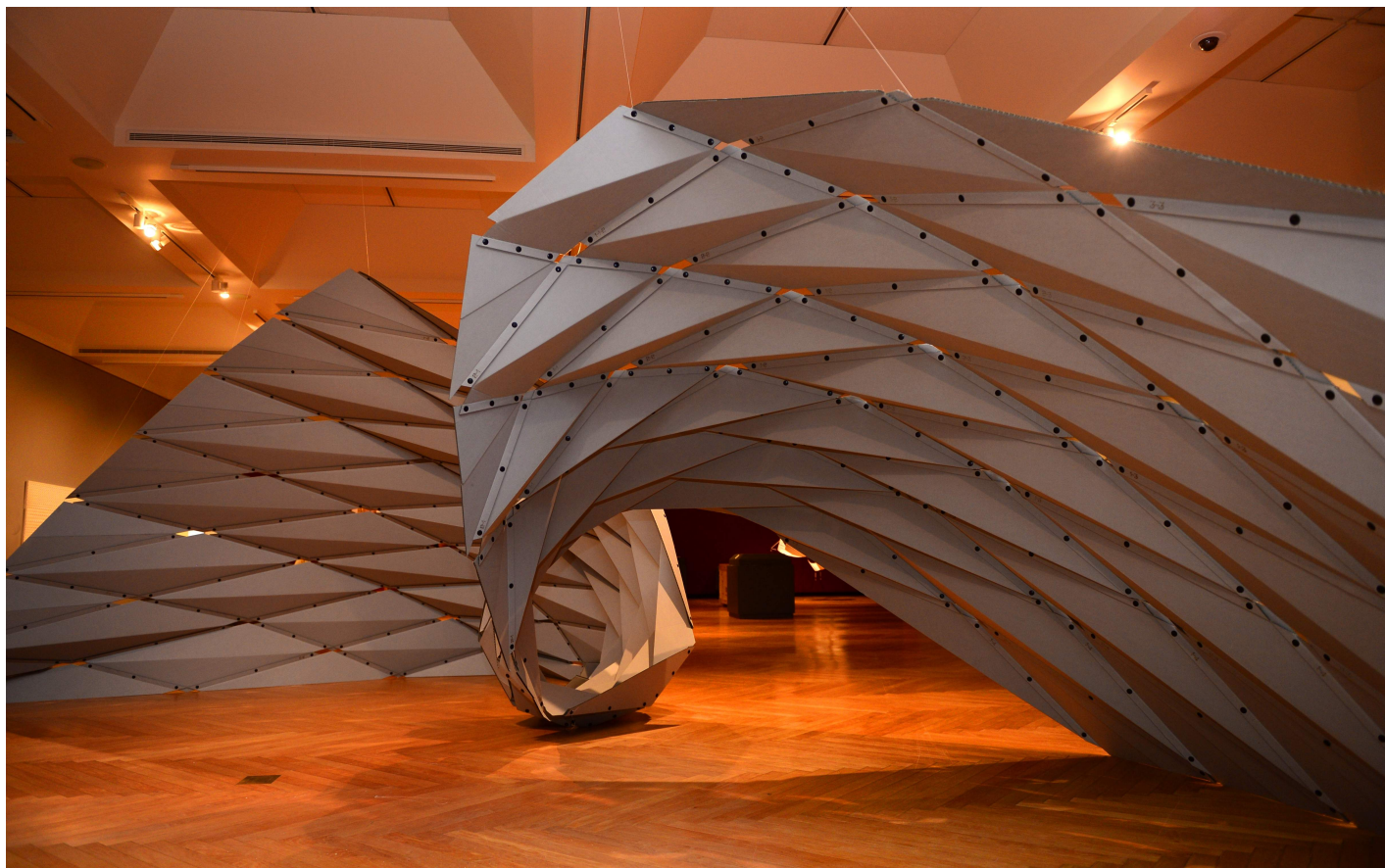


## “Above the Fold” origami exhibit shows the power of paper



KENNY KEMP | Gazette-Mail photos

This large origami piece is part of the “Above the Fold: New Expressions in Origami” exhibit opening Friday at the Clay Center.



The Clay Center's Denise Deegan looks at an origami piece in its display location.



The Clay Center's Denise Deegan carries an Origami piece to its display location.



KENN KEMP | Gazette-Mail Origami fish on the wall at the Clay Center are a part of the "Above the Fold," an exhibit showcasing the artistic possibilities of origami. It opens Friday.

### **Related Facts**

## WANT TO GO?

“Above The Fold: New Expressions in Origami”

WHEN: Sep. 4 through Nov. 29

WHERE: Clay Center

TICKETS: Adults \$7.50. Seniors, students, children and educators \$6,

INFO:304-561-3570 or [www.theclaycenter.org](http://www.theclaycenter.org)

The Clay Center’s new exhibit, “Above the Fold: New Expressions in Origami,” is the first traveling exhibit to bring origami installations from around the world to U.S. audiences.

The exhibit, which opens Friday at Charleston’s arts and science center, features huge paper sculptures from international artists.

“We really liked this exhibit. It features work by scientist/artists, people who’ve applied origami to things we use, “ said Clay Center curator Arif Khan.

Among them is mathematician and physicist Robert Lang, who will come to the Clay Center in October to host an origami workshop.

Lang has a master’s degree in electrical engineering and a Ph.D. in applied physics. He’s worked with NASA’s jet propulsion laboratory and JDSU, a company that designs and manufactures products for optical communications networks, including lasers and equipment that uses lasers.

The 58-year-old became fascinated with origami as a child and even before he embarked on a career in science was creating and folding elaborate designs — the usual collection of animals, but also odder pieces resembling then-President Jimmy Carter and Darth Vader.

Later, Lang began using mathematical tools to create more and more elaborate constructions. He also applied his knowledge of origami to industrial design.

“Robert Lang used origami for airbag design and even for work on a space telescope,” Khan said. “It’s art with science, which seemed like a good fit for the Clay Center, since we’re an arts and science center.”

However, Lang is just one of the artists featured. The exhibits also includes works by M.I.T. Computer Science professor and MacArthur fellow Erik Demaine with his artist father, Martin Demaine; Japanese origami artists Yuko Nishimura and Jingmei Wu, and the artist and founder of the Israeli Origami Center.

Khan said while the exhibit isn’t really a traditional look at Japanese paper folding, it’s also not about

practical applications.

“There are a lot of abstract and geometric forms,” Khan said. “There are things in the collection that you’ll look at and say, ‘I can’t believe that’s just paper.’”

Aside from the wow factor of the three dimensional designs, Khan said it’s not just shape and form.

“There’s some interesting use of color,” he said. “There’s just a lot to see.”

“Above the Fold” presents original commentaries on diverse aspects of modern life and art. So, there aren’t a lot of traditional origami subjects, not a lot of cleverly composed animal figures; no flock of cranes flying overhead.

“There’s a wall of koi fish,” Khan said. “But the exhibit explores other ideas besides animals. There are a set of geometric sails and we have something that came in a 20-foot-long crate.”

Each exhibit, he said, comes with its own set of challenges in staging.

Khan laughed and said, “It’s a detailed installation. I wouldn’t say it’s particularly heavy, but we’re going to be spending a lot of time on scaffolds and ladders.”

## **Documentary film screenings**

In addition to the regular exhibit, the Clay Center will screen the Peabody award–winning documentary “Between the Folds,” about 10 artists and scientists who forge unconventional lives as modern-day paper folders.

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