

**BONUS!**  
**KITE CALENDAR**  
**INSIDE**

# KiteLines™

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FALL-WINTER 1996, VOL. 12 NO. 2

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**THE GODS**

**KOREA:**  
**FIGHTER KITE**  
**SURPRISES**

**HONG KONG:**  
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**UNTO ITSELF**

**The GIBSON**  
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**HISTORY THAN**  
**MEETS THE EYE**

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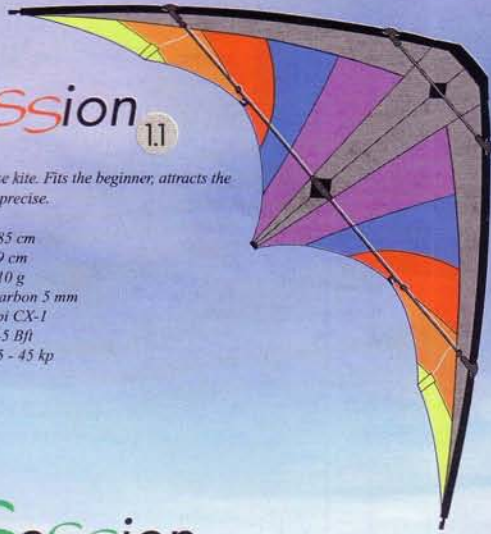
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 Windrange: 1-5 Bft  
 rec Line: 25 - 45 kp



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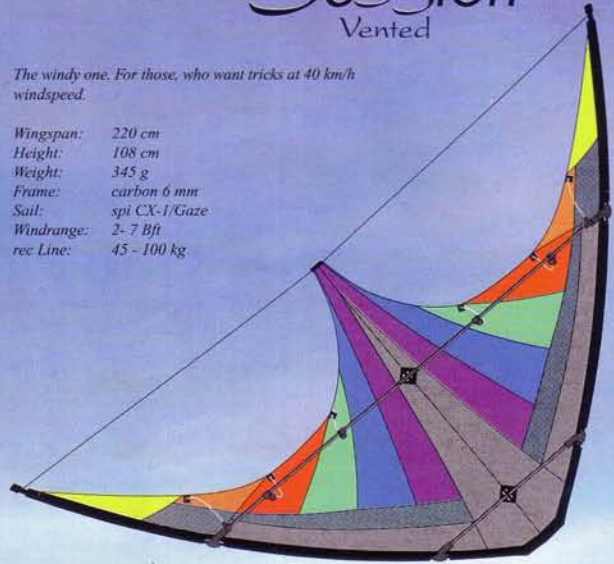
Wingspan: 185 cm  
 Height: 89 cm  
 Weight: 140 g  
 Frame: carbon 4 mm  
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 Windrange: 0,5 - 4 Bft  
 rec Line: 25 kp (5 - 12 m)

VENTEX

## Jan Session Vented

The windy one. For those, who want tricks at 40 km/h windspeed.

Wingspan: 220 cm  
 Height: 108 cm  
 Weight: 345 g  
 Frame: carbon 6 mm  
 Sail: spi CX-1/Gaze  
 Windrange: 2- 7 Bft  
 rec Line: 45 - 100 kg



## Jan Session

created by  
 Daddi Gross - Christoph Folkert

The "state-of-the-art" in ballet and tricks

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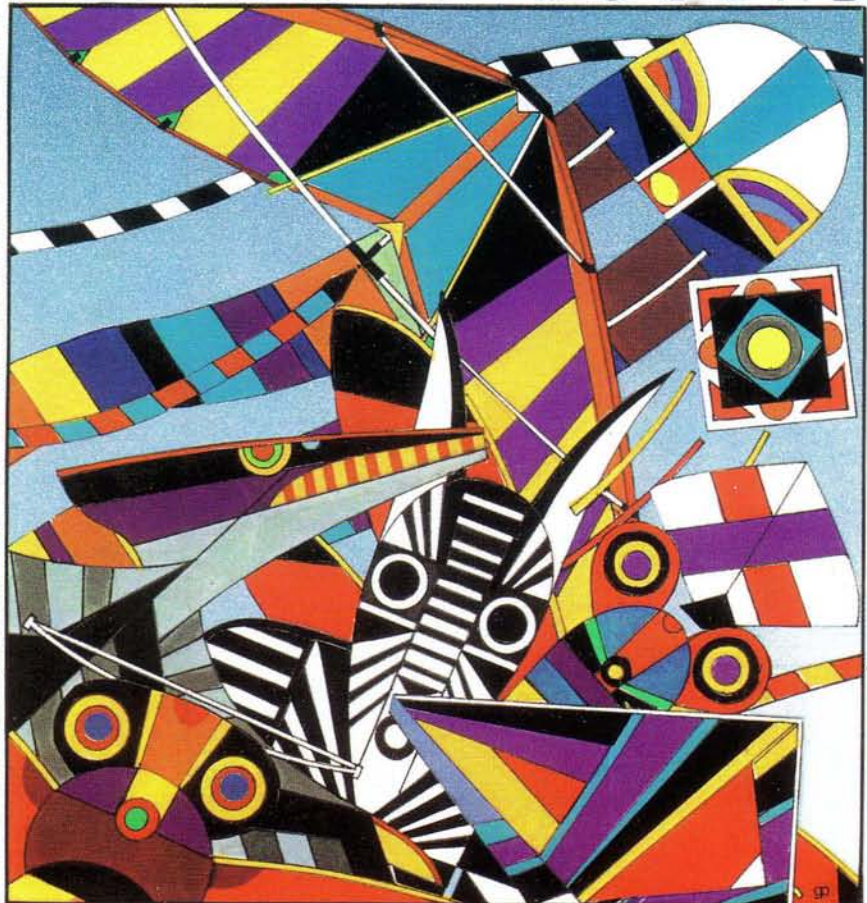
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## Kitelines

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**Associate Editor:** Leonard M. Conover

**Assistant Editor:** Steve McKerrow

**Production Editors:** Sharon B. Fisher, Jan Gilbert Hurst

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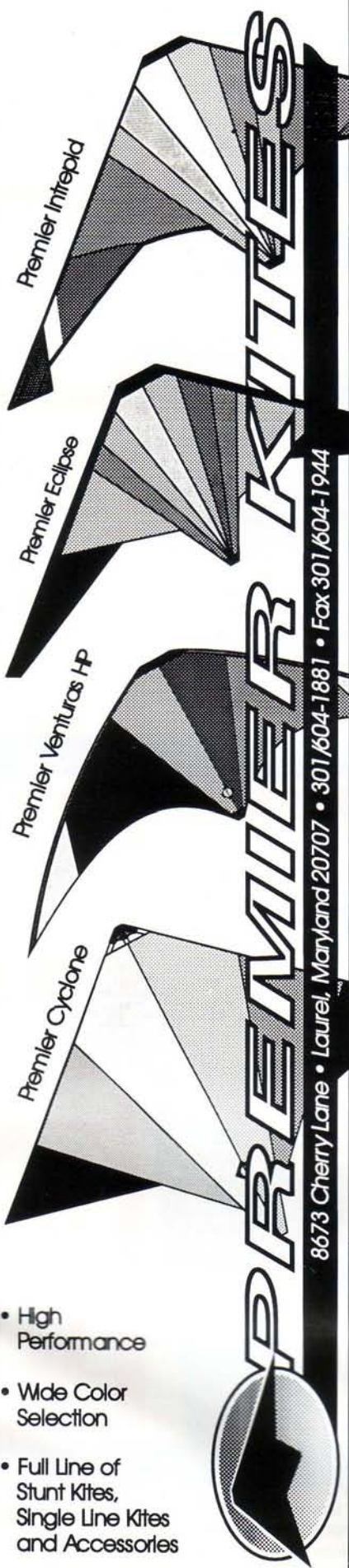
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Some kite rod manufacturers seem to believe that sponsoring Master Class Flyers— individuals or teams— equals quality or performance. AVIA Sport also loves to sponsor. Usually, however, we prefer to help Novice or Intermediate flyers. Unfortunately, this usually does not receive glory or even notice. But our joy over enthusiastic letters and pretty pictures are the greatest payment we receive. And perhaps one or another beginner will rise into the lofty realms where only Masters dwell. Of course, the many victories at all levels—some even five positions deep as won at the AKA nationals in October—does not make us unhappy at all. To all the winners our best compliments and thanks.

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# Kitelines

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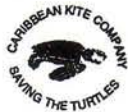
Tanna Haynes of New Tripoli, Pennsylvania shows her "Lady of the Clouds," a 64" nylon, graphite and fiberglass rendition of a 9" paper and bamboo Chinese original. Haynes stiffened the rippled edges with Dacron and spent 300 hours to make this kite, the worthy winner of the 1996 AKA Grand National Championship. (See more about the AKA meeting on page 60).



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**Floor space:** 400 sq ft  
**Hours:** M-F 11-6:30, Sat 10-6  
Sun (seasonal) noon-5  
**Years in business:** 9  
**Years carried Kite Lines:** 9  
**Years profitable:** 4  
**Owner:** David Klein  
**Age:** 42  
**Favorite food:** Italian

**Last book read:** *No Windows, No Doors* by Harlan Ellison

**Last kite book read:** *Stunt Kite Magic!* by David Gomberg.

**Favorite flying spot:** Jones Beach field # 6

**Latest promotional effort:** Donating time to do kitemaking workshops at Greenbelt Park, on Staten Island, New York.

**Most important advice ever received:** Take good care of your

customers and they will take good care of you.

**Nicest sale ever made:** Any child's first kite. The look of delight on their faces gives me the greatest joy.

**Best fringe benefit of the store:** Getting a chance to fly almost any kite I want.

**Favorite issue of Kite Lines:** The Summer/Fall 1995 issue, with the feature on the kites of Steve Brockett. His work is fantastic.

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# A Tough Year



Your editor flying a Gibson Girl box kite at Glenwood Park, Howard County, Maryland.

Nobody will talk about it in public. And there are no hard figures. But it's accepted that the kite industry has fallen on hard times through 1996.

You will hear all kinds of grumbling explanations: weather, economic cycles, excess competition. There are many variables and no one seems to know why the business has gone rotten. It just has.

"You could make an obituary list of kite shops," one merchant said. "They just vanish, leaving a trail of bills. It's the worst year I've seen. As an indicator, key vendors are taking a beating. This one's down, that one's down. Companies are in trouble. Some are regrouping. A few are doing OK. But to see the established companies taking a hit..."


The worst part may be that everyone went into 1996 with optimism. The Kite Trade Association's annual show in January was the best attended ever. But Spring started out very spotty—and "You can never get those months back," as one manufacturer put it.

We don't know what the cause is or how to fight the disease. But readers of *Kite Lines* are too passionate about kites to do nothing. They want to help.

And so, my dearest friends, think about what you can do. I suggest:

1. Go buy a kite. Support your local kite shop.
2. Attend kite festivals. Speak to people you've never met. Help another person fly.
3. Promote kiting in all its forms, its competitions and its casual flies, its masters and its dummies, its highs and its lows. Speak up for all the world to hear! Do I have to tell you how much joy there is in kites? It's obvious! It's obvious! But you may have to make an effort to show that to others. Make the effort. I ask you.

*Valerie*



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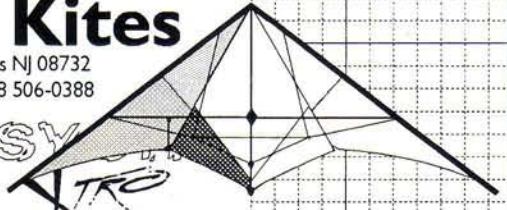
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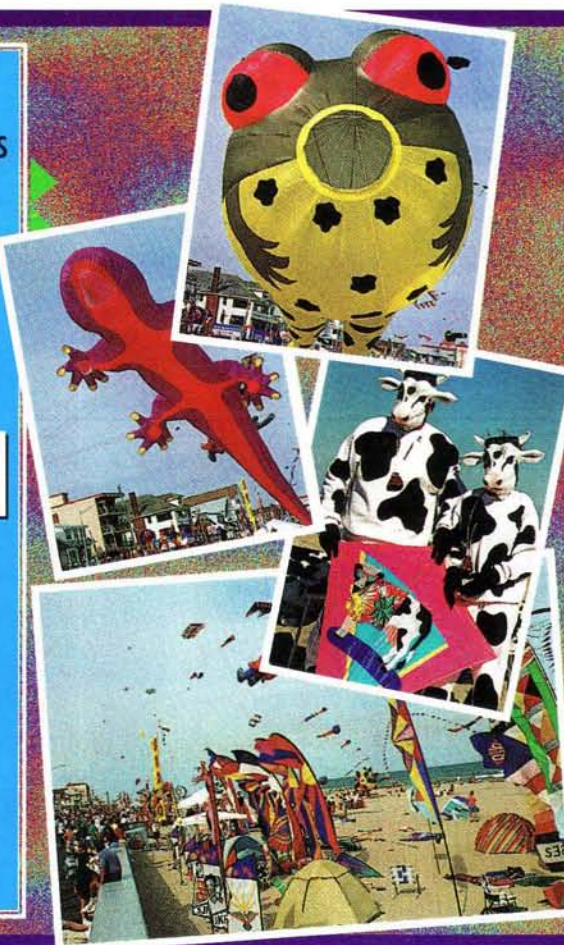


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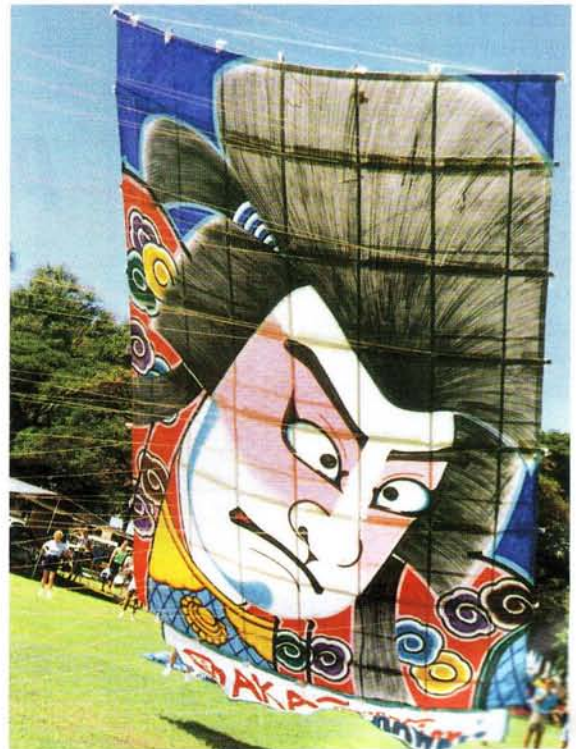


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# Kites for All Ages



## A Lifetime Joy

My elementary school had yearly kite contests and I always worked hard to try to win one of the coveted ribbons—my introduction to a joy that has brightened my life for most of my 27 years.



Bauman's "Sunburst Delta," over San Francisco Bay.

In high school I made my first cloth kites, on my mother's old Singer. She later had it refurbished and presented to me as a college graduation gift.

I was married about four months ago and my wife and I made a Cross Deck kite [*Kite Lines*, Summer-Fall 1993] to fly on our wedding day. Unfortunately it rained (my grandmother always said, "The wet bride is the lucky bride!"), but we packed it with us to Hawaii, where it soared gorgeously on the trade winds.

I'm a Silicon Valley corporate slave by day, but my hardware at home is a sewing machine.

—Hans Bauman

Redwood City, California

## Flying by Moonlight

Lately, in the mountains, we have gone several times to fly modular/transparent kites at night when there is a full moon. We don't use any kind of accessory lights, and sometimes the kite disappears into the dark sky. You can intuitively feel its situation only by the tension of the string and the soft murmur of the wind through the modular

structure, clearly audible in the silence.

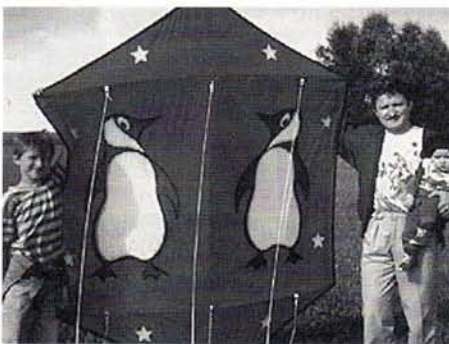
Sometimes the moonlight reflects on the kite's surface, making resplendent glittering effects. For that reason, we named this *eoic* artifact LLUOR/LLUNA (Shine/Moon). [For more information on Joan Montcada's kites, see *Kite Lines*, Summer/Fall, 1994.]

We can best observe the kite when walking with it by the crest line, or by fixing the kite and walking around to find different angles of view. It is some kind of magic to see one moon standing still as a perfect full circle and the other [reflected] one, prismatic and in continuous movement, glittering on the kite's transparent shape.

—Joan and Marta Montcada  
Barcelona, Spain.

## Penguin Happy!

This summer I had the idea to make a rokkaku with appliquéd penguins. I just recalled "The Song About Penguins," a beautiful song that was popular in Russia in the



Leonid Novikov shows off his penguin kite—as well as Alexi and Anastasia.

60s. My daughter, Eugenia, put down the logo on paper. All of my family helped. [Even] my tiny daughter, Anastasia (11 months old), was playing with her doll and "singing" a tune—maybe "The Song About Penguins"!

—Leonid Novikov and family  
Schwarzenbach-Wald, Germany

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## A 30-Pound Flier



Here is a photo of my nephew, Phillip Nguyen, flying a Fire Dart. He is 4 years old, weighs only 30 pounds and is 3-foot-1-inch high.

—Thanh Nguyen  
Rochester, New York

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# How Many Lines? Pick Four, Two or One

By Michael J. Graves, Steve McKerrow, Mel Govig, Valerie Govig, James C. Welsh & Ron Young

## User-Friendly Mosquito

In most parts of the world, the mosquito conjures images of blood-sucking insects that destroy the ambience of warm summer evenings. But fly the Mosquito 4.5, and you gain a new reference. The mid-sized quad-line traction kite by WindTools of Germany is high performance but very user friendly. (Note: The manufacturer is currently seeking a U.S. distributor.)

Constructed of Porcher ripstop with Dyneema sheathed bridling, the Mosquito is a high aspect-ratio soft kite with a semi-elliptical shape. Its power lines are cross bridled, meaning that pulling on a line directly affects the shape of about three-quarters of the kite span rather than the usual half.

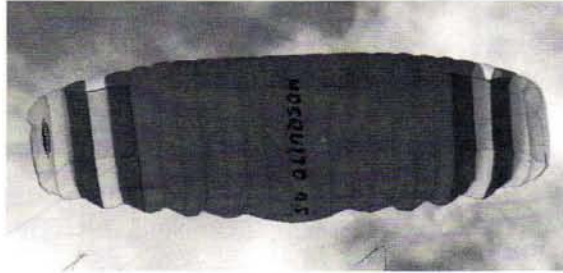
Buyers might want to provide their own handles. We found that those supplied with the kite are too soft, creating an uncomfortable handle rotation in heavy winds. They also initially slipped on the tubing—a bit of hairspray fixed the problem—and we managed to tear one of them.

We also had surprising difficulty figuring out where to attach the bottom brake lines. Although the lower bridle lines had nine knots spread over about 32 inches, the proper attachment turned out to be four inches closer to the kite than the nearest pre-tied knot. Don't manufacturers know how to set up their own kites?

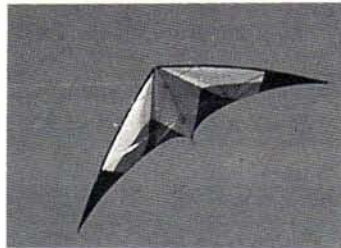
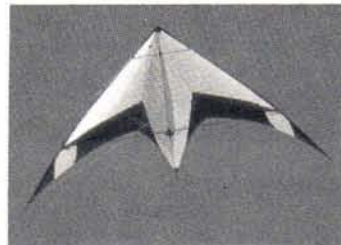
Flying the Mosquito was a breeze, with power and speed comparable to high-end kites of similar size. Most impressive was its smooth acceleration, which generated considerable buggy speed. No other kite we have flown has achieved velocity so seductively.

Turns were best accomplished by medium arm movements, coupled with assertive wrist rotation. The Mosquito rotated around a point near its center, with a turn rate that seemed average.

The kite responded quickly and pre-



Top, the Mosquito is a seductive, speed-producing traction kite; above, the Beautiful Evil hovers as if about to strike; right middle, the Trick Tail's namesake feature produces deliberate maneuvers; right, the Sonic turns inside its wingtip.



dictably in all parts of the wind window throughout its stated wind range, about 4–24 mph. Luffing was not a problem, and its smooth acceleration curve should make the Mosquito a kite less risky to fly in very gusty winds.

This Mosquito brings a smile to the face and draws no blood. Retailing for about \$565, this exceptionally well-built, high-performance kite is certainly worth a close look by traction kites. —J.C.W.

## “Evil” Quad

This is the kite to put up when you want to draw a crowd!

Beautiful Evil, the name of this stunning quad-line from Joel Scholz and Sky Delight Kites, is best understood in that reverse teen slang, where “bad” means “good” and “evil” is extraordinarily so.

Actually, the crouching dragon that stares back at you while flying is more impish than ferocious. But his/her 10-foot wingspan and rather deliberate response to control makes for a swooping flight that suggests the terror a real dragon might invoke—if such

beasts existed outside the “Dragonflight” novels of Anne McCaffrey.

Winner of an AKA first place award in its prototype form, in 1993, the kite retails for an imposing price: \$600, including an introductory video on quad-line flying from Revolution Enterprises and extended handles (from Cosmic Kites of San Diego), which the maker says are necessary for optimum performance.

Sky Delight says the price reflects the costs of making the kite, and that's the other part of the name: Beautiful! The animated appliqué, luminous colors (five combinations), stitching and materials (including six-wrap graphite rods and hot-cut nylon sail) are of the high quality familiar from other Scholz kites. (Sky Delight also offers a smaller quad of similar structure, the Vampire Bat, for a more affordable \$175. It is built upon a standard Revolution II frame.)

For its size and seeming complexity, Beautiful Evil should now assemble easily—although on the test kite we found joining the center and wing spars to the wing longerons to be a chore. Rubber “o” rings holding the spars provided too much tension for easy sliding. But Scholz says he has since replaced the “o” rings with loops of line, holding the spars together less tightly with a simple lark's head knot arrangement. Scholz says the looser fit of the spars may also improve the Evil's flight, permitting subtle adjustment to the wind.

As flown in relatively light winds, with occasional sharper gusts, the kite seemed slow to spin, requiring more dramatic wrist control than common—hence the extended handles. Further, the kite did not want to build up speed in that propeller spin so demonstrative of quad-line kites.

But the Evil easily switched from forward to reverse flight. In fact, flying this kite backward seemed easier than with many quads—perhaps because the leading and trailing edges of the wings almost

mirror each other.

The same scalloped wing design may also be responsible for another habit: a tendency at the outer edges of the wind window to drop forward into a slow dive. When this occurred overhead, it seemed the dragon was about to attack! Several reoccurrences finally taught us the proper anticipation to prevent this or to recover from it. But these traits add up to a kite with personality. Unlike the optically stark graphics of most quads, this one seems amazingly alive up there.

The manufacturer gives a 4–25 mph wind range for the Beautiful Evil, but the low end of that span seems optimistic. This is no light air kite. Yet when the wind ebbs, and the dragon settles obediently down onto its haunches, it seems more than eager to spring upward again!

—S.McK./R.Y

## Tail for Tricks

Described as a kite for advanced tricks in light to moderate winds, the Trick Tail proved to be among the most rewarding kites we have flown in recent years.

Positioned at the high end of a line of dual-line sport kites from Active People, Inc., the kite was originally created by Jams Designs in Switzerland.

Demonstrating a turning radius well inside the wingtip, it spins very quickly because of an unusual sliding bridle, and its namesake tail offers significant tuning of flight performance. These design innovations also mean it takes time for a flier to become accustomed to the Trick Tail's

movements. We'd say it's well-spent time.

The tail begins below the lower spreader, where the spine becomes a solid rod bent back under tension, forming a rear air pocket in the keel. During assembly, the flier can choose to place the spine in front of or behind the lower spreader, dramatically altering the depth of the keel and thus the kite's speed and performance.

Three pairs of standoffs are provided for adjustment. (Only four standoffs are fitted to the kite at one time.) The result is a shock absorbing system that allows the trailing edge to react to gusts or sudden moves without placing undue stress on the frame.









Construction is of generally high caliber. Sail seams are double-turned and double-stitched, with Dacron patches reinforcing stress points. The leading edge sleeves are

made of 3/4-ounce ripstop polyester, and the trailing edge is fitted with an adjustable leech line, as well as a cheater line across the wingtips to minimize tangles in flight.

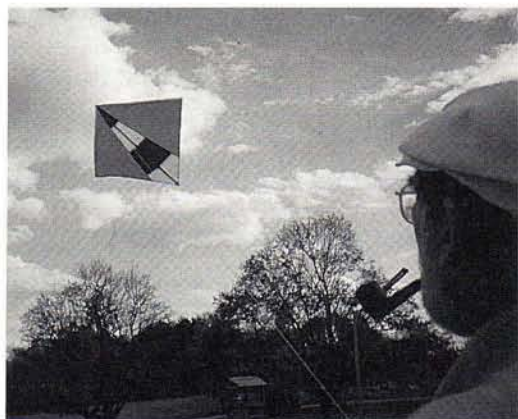
The Trick Tail's four-legged sliding bridle offers another way to tune the kite's flight; the outhaul positions and overall angle of attack are adjustable with a high degree of independence. The extra bridle leg midway along each leading edge supports the relatively light carbon frame in a wider range of winds than otherwise possible.

Our test flights occurred over three months under conditions varying from 2 mph breezes to stiffer 12 mph winds.

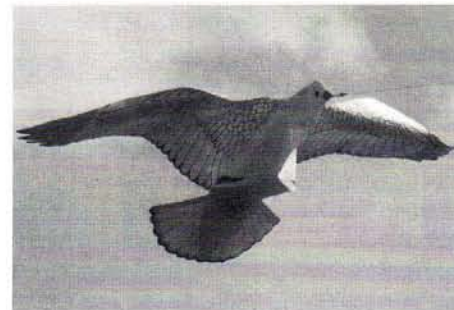
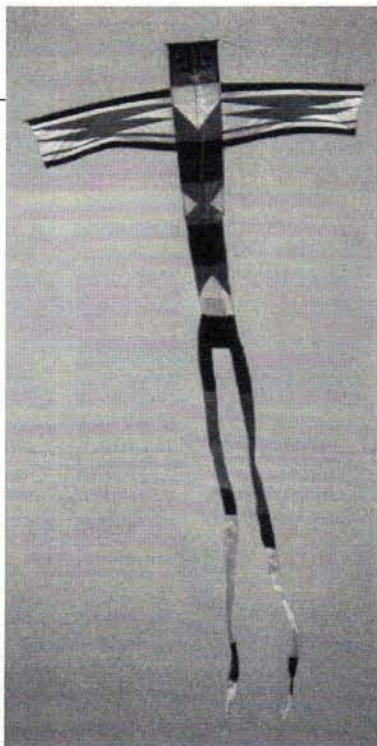
As its name implies, the kite was made for advanced tricks. The sliding bridle causes the kite to accelerate into and decelerate out of tight spins, while the tail structure acts as an

Stunters				DATA CHART	One-Liners			
Mosquito	Beaut. Evil	Trick Tail	Sonic	Name of Kite	Owl	Dove	GA Pro	Mini Spirit
								
WindTools	Sky Delight	ActvPeople	Buena Vista	Manufacturer	SkyDelight	Jackite	Carlisle	Omega
\$565	\$600	\$280	\$199	Retail Price	\$25	\$19.95/29.95	\$35	\$495
RN	RN	RP	RP	Sail Material	RN	Tyvek	RP	RN
n/a	n/a	RN	Dt	Leading Edge Material	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
n/a	CFt	CFr	CFr	Framing Materials	WD/FGSI	FGr	CFr/spruce	CFt-
n/a	MP	M	M	Fittings	MP	n/a.	n/a	CFt/Alum
156 x 48	124 x 39	92 x 47	96 x 37	Dimensions (in.)	48 x 24	42 x 21	26 x 22	91 x 48
n/a	n/a	8.5	10.5	Sail Depth at stand-offs (in.)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
4500	2695	1244	1182	Sail Area (sq.in.)	576	357	286	1404
n/a	16	9 3/8	9 3/8	Weight (oz.)	1.9	1.6	1.0	13.3
n/a	0.89	1.08	1.17	Sail Loading (oz./sq.ft.)	0.475	0.64	0.5	0.928
4-24	4-25	2-16	4-20	Suggested Wind Range	5-20	0-30	2-15	5-25
300/200	150	50-150	80-150	Suggested Line (lbs.)	25	20	8	100
I-SK	SK	B	I	Skill Level Required	N	N	I	N
5	3.5	1-2	<1	Assembly Time (minutes)	1.5	<1	<1	2
E	E	VG	VG	Ease of Launch/Relaunch	VG	G	VG	G
E	E	VG	G	Ease of Landing/Ground Work	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
F	M-F	M-F	M-F	Straight Speed	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
M	S-M	F	M	Speed in Turns	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
E	G	E	VG	Precision/Tracking	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
H	M	M	M	Amount of Pull	L	L	L	M
SI	SI	SI	SI-M	Amount of Noise	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
VG	E	G	G	Visual Appeal/Graphics	VG	E	G	VG
E	E	E	E	Workmanship	E	VG	E	E
E	G	G	VG	Portability	E	G	E	VG
E	VG	VG	VG	Durability	E	VG	E	E

**NOTES:** Retail price (US dollars) is "advertised" or "suggested." Wind range (mph) covers minimum and maximum speeds deemed suitable by our evaluators. Dimensions are in the following order: width x height. Measurements and (usually) drawings are made with the kite standing on the floor facing the viewer. Materials: RN—Ripstop Nylon, RP—Ripstop Polyester, DT—Dacron Tape, WD—Wooden Dowels, B—Bamboo, FG—Fiberglass, GR—Graphite, EP—Epoxy, CF—Carbon Fiber, r—Rods, t—Tubes, MP—Molded Plastic, V—Vinyl. Speed: SL—Slow, M—Medium, F—Fast. Skill levels: N—Novice, I—Intermediate, SK—Skilled. Pull: L—Low, M—Medium, H—High. Noise: SI—Silent, L—Low, M—Medium, H—High. Other ratings: P—Poor, A—Acceptable, G—Good, VG—Very Good, E—Excellent, n/a—not applicable.



Above, the GA Pro features refinements in fighter adjustments; right, the Mini Spirit is still a big kite; far right top, the Owl is an easy flier; far right bottom, the Olympic Dove makes nifty line laundry.



air brake, forcing the kite to move through most maneuvers in deliberate fashion.

The Trick Tail did not respond well to overly aggressive flying styles, but rewarded a smooth hand with a wide range of tricks.

The slightly low location of the lower spreader on the kite made ground play enjoyable even with the light carbon frame. The kite was easily relaunched from almost any position.

The Trick Tail takes some time to get to know well but is great fun to fly. It is that rare combination: easy to handle for the beginner, yet with trick potential to interest the most advanced competitor. —M.J.G.

### Super Sonic

With more radical tricks continually appearing on the competition circuit, several manufacturers have developed high aspect-ratio designs geared toward trickability—such as Buena Vista's Sonic.

We would not suggest this as anyone's first kite, but it's near ideal for any flier whose personal style is energetic in the extreme. The kite challenges fliers to abuse it.

The Sonic assembles quickly, with the only uncommon mechanical element a crossover fitting between the spine and the upper spreader. Given the kite's wide, low shape, this extra fitting and the tapered lower spreaders help maintain stiffness in the frame. Both the leading edges and the stand-offs are flush-finished to minimize the potential for snagging the line and bridles.

Unlike many high aspect-ratio kites, the

Sonic offers a deep sail that improves both tracking and trickability.

We flew our tests in winds ranging from almost none to a howling 20 mph, and found the kite needs 3–4 mph to engage its character. With adequate breeze, the kite's deep profile resulted in a slower speed than expected, although it was still on the quick side. Tracking was very good.

The Sonic turned just inside its wingtip and, with its high-aspect shape, demanded practice before we were comfortable executing spins very near the ground.

Perhaps the Sonic's strongest characteristic was its response to extreme handling. It reacted best to large and abrupt motions by the flier, yet its rigid frame rarely showed any sign of stress—even when we tried to break it deliberately with fierce tip stabs and ground play in high winds!

In the Sonic, Buena Vista has created something unusual, a kite that is both well behaved and capable of aggressive tricks. —M.J.G.

### Easy Flying Owl

Simply put, this Owl is a delight. The wise bird from Sky Delight kites, neither over-engineered nor overconstructed, is a good flier that should please a child (of any age). It's easy to assemble, easy to launch and easy to look at in the sky.

The kite has a trailing edge without a hem, but its scalloped cut should reduce fraying. Except for two 2-mm fiberglass rods that spread the tail and horns, it is very

basic: hardwood dowels and a molded plastic fixture that holds the spars and sets the dihedral.

As with all small kites, it takes a gentle touch to fly well. Our model took off right out of the bag. We noted that sliding the plastic fitting too far aft caused the Owl to fly erratically. Moving it forward a half inch was all the adjustment needed. —M.G.

### Olympic Dove

No kite in history has enjoyed a larger audience than this bird (not even the kite in the movie *Mary Poppins*). Billions (yes, billions) of television viewers around the world saw hundreds of Jackite Doves flown by children in the opening ceremonies of the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta.

*Kite Lines* managed to squeeze announcement of Jackite's Olympic role into our last issue. Now we have a model to critique.

It is disappointing that the kite community has not been very enthusiastic about the Dove and other birds by Jackite. At the AKA convention in October, birds from the Jackite flock flew all week from fiberglass poles along the seawalk, adding greatly to the festive scene.

With attention to the curl of the Tyvek cover, the Dove can be flown on 100 feet or more of line, at angles up to 30 degrees. But it is most effective fluttering from the end of a banner pole. You can also attach it below your favorite kite to make a dramatic piece of line laundry.

The Dove is provided assembled or in kit

form, but many of us prefer to leave the assembly to the excellent craftspeople at Jackite. The kite is packed with due care in keeping the curves all in the right direction to assure easy flight. —M.G.

### Pro Fighter For All

Kevin Shannon's GAF (Good All-Around Fighter) is already an accepted weapon in many kite bags. The new GA Pro is a refinement, addressing suggestions that simple cloth fighters might benefit from tape or a few stitches at the shoulder to prevent the sail from slipping under the spar in higher winds.

The GA Pro is fitted at the shoulder with sleeves that give a snug fitting bow. The finishing touch is a Martin Lawrence-style ribbon tied at the cross point of the spars. It snaps the bow firmly in place when snug, but allows a more relaxed tension for flat transport. (Many fighter enthusiasts prefer to carry their kites in a flat case, and transporting them under reduced tension helps extend their useful life.) The kite can also be disassembled and rolled into a tubular kite bag.

Active and responsive, the GA Pro is a comfortable kite for both experienced and learning fighter kitefliers. The two-point bridle was set up perfectly on our test kite, but is easily adjustable for wind changes or personal preference. —M.G.

### Not So "Mini" Spirit

Like the large Spirit from Omega Kites we reviewed in 1993, the Mini Spirit is clearly marked as the work of Reza Ragheb. But this kite is hardly small, measuring 6 by 8 feet.

We'd say the Mini Spirit figure is the most dramatic in a collection, furnished for the past year, of scaled-down versions of Ragheb's large kites.

Like others in the new series, the kite has a less substantial pull—both on the flying line and the purse strings. It provides all the beauty and flyability of the standards, and is most suitable for small or crowded confines and for fliers who do not have strong arms, nor the wish to use ground stakes.

Perhaps economics spurred the mini series, but the workmanship and graphics of this Spirit are uncompromised. —M.G.

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# Martin Lester's Top Half

Ever since he designed his dangling Legs kite—a runaway hit—Martin Lester was forever being asked, “Where’s the rest of that body?” So the English kitemaker designed this answer, a boyish figure who hangs upside down in flight, waving his arms and fingers like a trapeze artist. Now, Lester generously offers instructions on how you can make the eye-catching kite. —Editor

**C**onstructing a Top Half looks complicated. But it really comprises easily separated sewing jobs: the body—a parafoil kite variant—and the head-and-hair, arms and hands, sewn as separate units and stitched together at the end.

In planning the body parts, you must think twice—as in (usually) sewing mirror halves of each element to join as a unit: two head halves, two hair halves and two halves of two hands.

The arms go together slightly differently, with each including *three* sections—a t-shirt sleeve, an upper arm and a forearm—which are stitched together and sewn into tubes.

The nose also requires a delicate bit of surgery. After the head halves are joined, a small triangular piece of fabric must be sewn around the edge of the nostrils, with a short section of fabric projecting into the interior.

The color selections on our sample, in photo above, give the smiling lad reddish brown hair, a fair skin and a red t-shirt (with fabric of body/parafoil matching the sleeve pieces of the arms). But color choices and facial expressions are limited only by the imagination.

## Materials

Altogether you need approximately 10 yards of 41-in-wide .5-oz ripstop nylon, preferably the soft, lightly-coated grade, as made in Britain (example: Carrington’s balloon quality—N1053 / N1059 and a few others with very slight differences in coating; American balloon quality is too heavy.)

Color breakdowns for different parts of the kite are approximately: 5 yards for t-shirt, shoulders and interior risers (e.g., red); 3 yards for arms, hands and head (e.g., flesh tone);  $\frac{3}{8}$ -yard for hair (e.g., brown);  $\frac{1}{2}$ -yard for t-shirt trim (e.g., blue); and  $\frac{1}{2}$ -yard for keels (e.g., white).



VALERIE GOVIG

## General Directions

Unless otherwise indicated, use  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch seam allowance and  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch hem allowance. (Exceptions: use  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch seam allowance for sewing head and arms to body; and use  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch seam allowance when sewing nose insert.

Note that Carrington or similar cloth has definite right (shiny, coated) and wrong (dull, uncoated) sides. Treat the shiny side as the good or outer side. This means you need to flip pattern pieces or fabric appropriately when cutting right and left sides of the kite. At leading edge, keep grain of fabric perpendicular (not on bias).

## Parts Assembly

### A. Body

1. Hem leading edge of upper and lower panels (back and face of the kite).
2. Hem leading edge of side risers.
3. Hem leading edge and trailing edge of inner risers.
4. Assemble as a parafoil in steps as shown in assembly drawing (opposite page, lower drawings).

### B. Head

5. Cut nose piece.
6. Make eye and mouth appliqués. (Crack-and-peel® is a good cheat.)
7. Stitch appliqués to face.
8. Sew hair to head—overlap by  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch

maximum. (Adhere with double-sided tape before stitching to make it easier.)

9. Sew hair darts.

10. Sew neck to jaw.

11. Sew left and right sides together: from nape of neck to tip of nose; from base of nose to front of neck.

12. Insert nose piece. Sew forward nasal triangle, then base of nasal triangle, then sides of nasal patch, leaving an air space at the sinuses to fill out in flight.

### C. Arms

13. Sew sleeve to upper arm, then upper arm to forearm (x two).

14. Sew into tubes (x two).

### D. Hands

15. Sew finger risers to palms.

16. Sew 2-inch strip to inside of palm.

17. Sew 2-inch strip (make loop) to outside of palm. (This will allow you to attach banners to the hands.)

18. Make one left and one right palm.

19. Sew long strip (44" x 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ ") around outside edge of palms.

20. Sew upper hand to strip.

21. Sew tops of finger risers to upper hands.

22. Sew 2-inch strips to uppers.

23. Sew hand to wrist of arm. (Note: Long seam of arm lines up with thumb on hand.)

## Final Assembly

24. Sew head to body at trailing edge of parafoil, matching the center seam of the hair to the center seam of the back panels. Attach at hair panel only. At front of neck, match the center head seam to the center seam of the front panels and stitch  $\frac{4}{8}$ -inch on each side of the center seam, leaving sides of head open.

25. Sew arm/shoulder to body. (Long seam lines up with inner riser.) Note palms face down and thumbs point toward head.

26. Hem raw edges of body, arms and neck.

## Bridles

27. Cut six 60-inch and one 20-inch low-stretch lines.

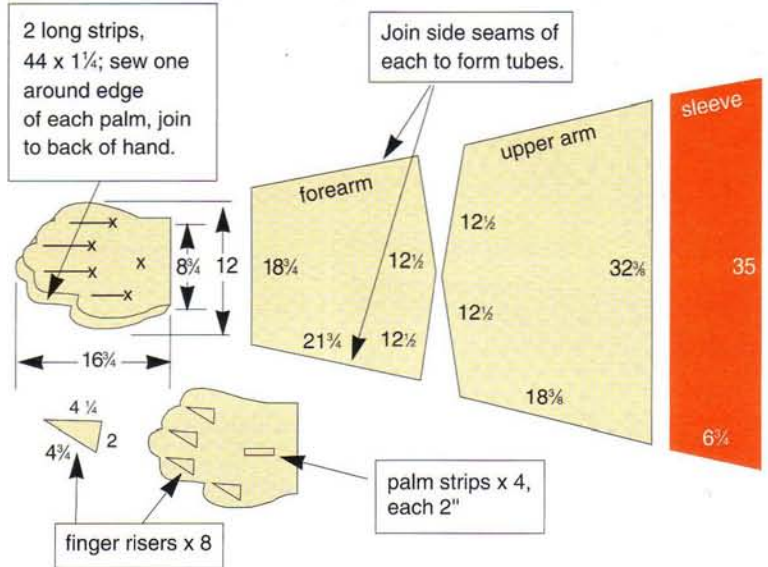
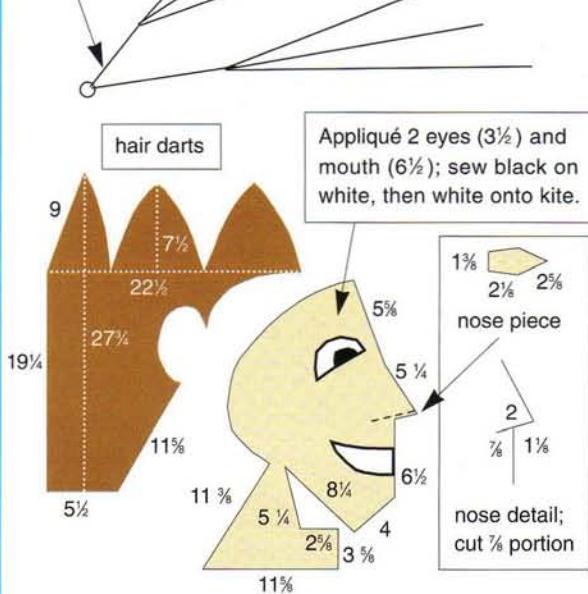
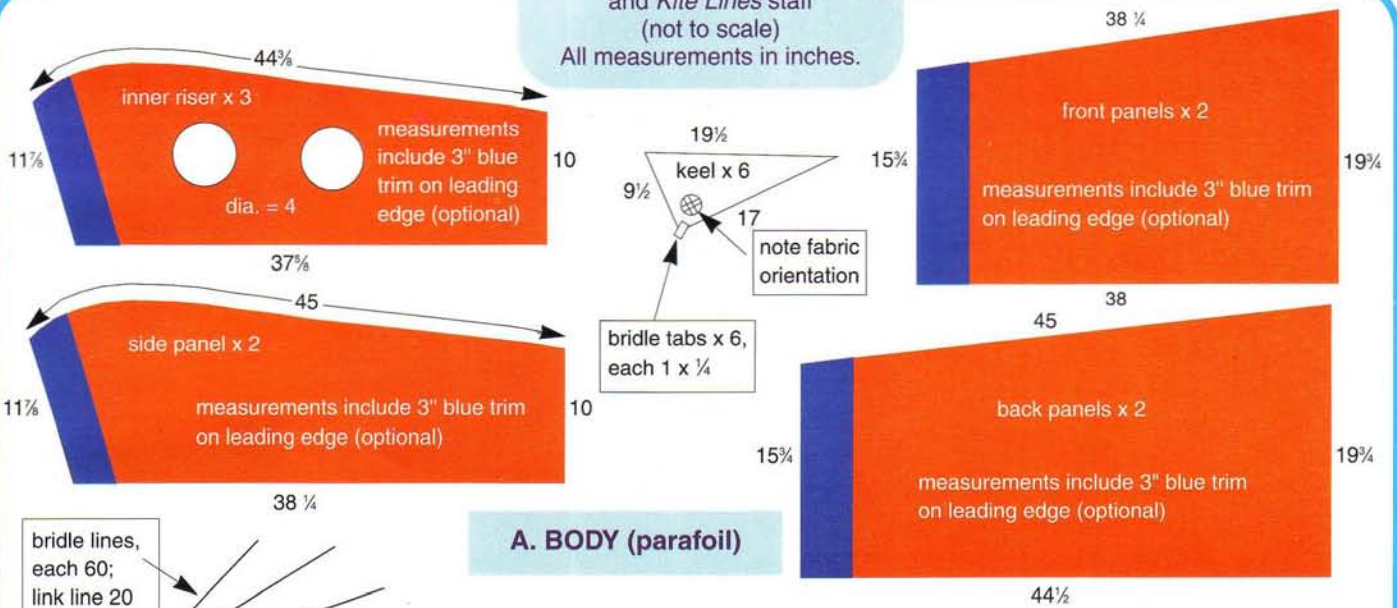
28. Attach 60-inch lines to body risers.

29. Attach 20-inch link line between fore and aft bridle lines, and adjust towing point with a lark's head knot over the bridle ring. ◇

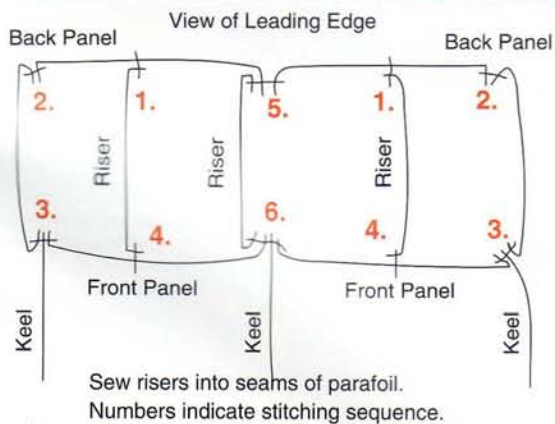


# TOP HALF

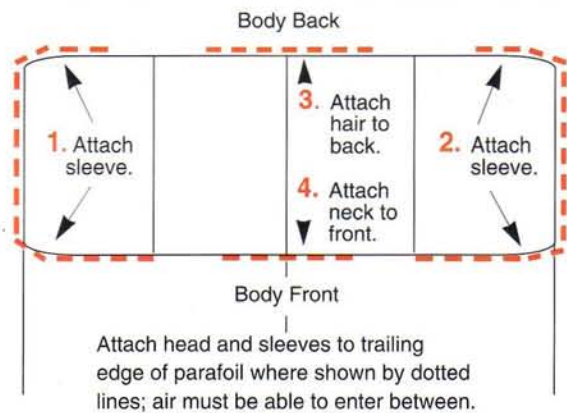
Drawings by Martin Lester  
and Kite Lines staff  
(not to scale)  
All measurements in inches.



## ASSEMBLY SEQUENCE OF RISER SEAMS



## FINAL ASSEMBLY OF HEAD, ARMS & BODY



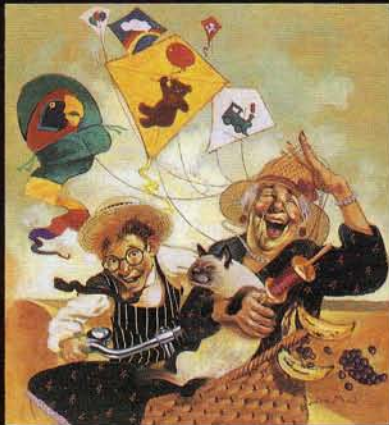
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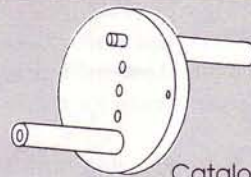
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# Streeter's India: A New Classic

By Valerie Govig, Mel Govig, Steve McKerrow & Anne Sloboda

## Streeter at Last

*A Kite Journey Through India* by Tal Streeter (New York: Weatherhill, 1996), softcover, 182 pages, \$39.95.

After four years of eagerly waiting, kitefliers have their reward: the new book about India by noted artist Tal Streeter. Comments and criticisms are sure to compare it to the author's classic work of 1974 (now out of print), *The Art of the Japanese Kite*. I think that in some ways the new book is better and in some ways worse, but strike those words—it's improper to make such a comparison. The two books come from different places, both geographically and spiritually.

This book has great strengths. One is its elegant physical package, fit for the coffee table. But its content is far above the standard. The photographs, taken in both color and black-and-white by the author, are excellent. The layout, typesetting, paper, printing, binding—all are first-class. Kiteers will feast on the Portfolio of Show Kites in the middle of the book, which presents a revealing variety of kite graphics and (notably) structure. Never again will you think of Indian fighter kites as being all the same.

For that matter, never again will you think of India as being all the same. This book is a real contribution to cultural education and understanding, whether you are a kiteflier or not. It faces the realities of Indian life, the poverty and unrest, yet it produces an essentially positive picture, full of vitality and smiles.

Streeter tells engaging tales in the open and sensitive style that is his trademark. And interwoven with the personal material readers will find a rich store of information about fighter kites: how they are made, collected, fought and even talked about (words used for kites include *patang*, *guddi*, *pattam* and *kathardi*).

Is any book perfect? No—ask any author! Streeter is already grieving over some flaws. I found numerous typographical errors. (Is 17 too many for an important book like this? Do most readers take the jarring from them that I do?) They appear to be caused by computer typesetting (never an excuse). Richard Gareau of Canada will have to laugh or groan that he has been called Robert by mistake several times.

Any serious problems? Yes. One is the



Rashida Yousef cuts decorative kite parts in Lucknow; from *A Kite Journey Through India*.

lack of drawings for kites or kitemaking details, which in some sections could have added valuable material and shortened long passages of prose.

Another is the section on Dinesh Bahadur, the charismatic entrepreneur from India whose business collapse around 1980 caused large losses to several kite manufacturers. Streeter visited Bahadur just before finishing this book. Apparently, he did not talk to other kite people about Bahadur or address business matters at all, because the seven-page profile reads like a glowing press release. Dinesh is indeed brilliant and articulate; and, strangely enough, in this review, where I am striving to set the record straight, I am compelled to admit his narrative about kiteflying in India is perhaps the most fascinating section of the book!

Shortcomings aside, readers who make this *Kite Journey Through India* with Tal Streeter will come home holding keys to awareness of the kite traditions and extravagant energy of India. They will have become part of the making of a new classic in the literature of kites. —V.G.

## Lavish Disappointment

*Cerfs-volants, L'art en ciel (Kites, Art in the Sky)* by Eric Damage (text) and Marc Damage (photographs) (Paris: Éditions Alternatives, 1996), in French, softcover, 126 pages, \$44.95.

This large (7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ "), lavishly illustrated book lacks only a few inches of size and a hard cover to make it full-blown coffee table art. Full-color artist renderings and beautiful photos outweigh the accompanying text by at least three to one.

The body of the book profiles nine (only nine) contemporary Western kitemakers: Tal Streeter, Jackie Matisse, Curt Asker, Pierre Fabre, Steve Brockett, István Bodóczy, Philippe Cottenceau, George Peters and Michel Gressier.

Most of the information appears to have been drawn from interviews with the artists, and this is both the book's greatest strength and its greatest weakness.

The distinct voices of the subjects come through in the text, and one gets a feel for how each individual's work reflects the person creating it. This is the first book I have encountered that treats kitemakers with the same respect as any other group of artists.

Unfortunately, although the authors are knowledgeable about their subject, they are kite enthusiasts, not critics nor historians. They frankly call the book an "homage" to the kitemakers and do not attempt to be systematic in their approach.

And don't look for dates in this book. Readers do not get enough chronology to truly appreciate how an individual's approach or style has developed.

The photos appear to have been mostly shot at festivals or during the interviews; there are few pictures of earlier work by the artists. This becomes annoying when the same kite appears repeatedly. Brockett's No Two Feathers shows up four times.

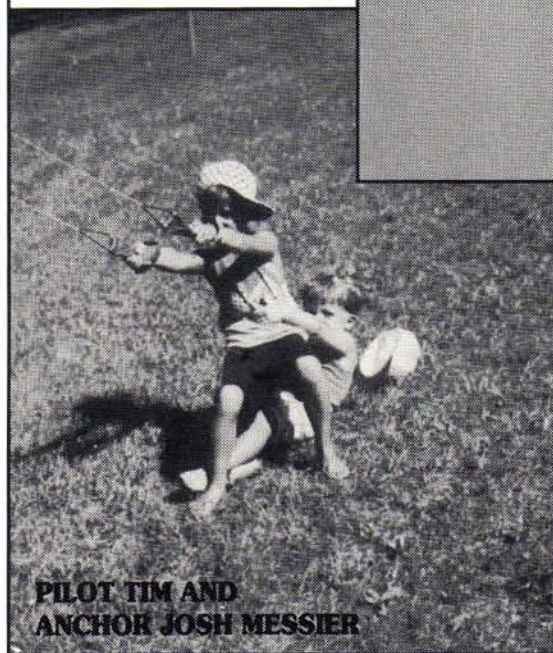
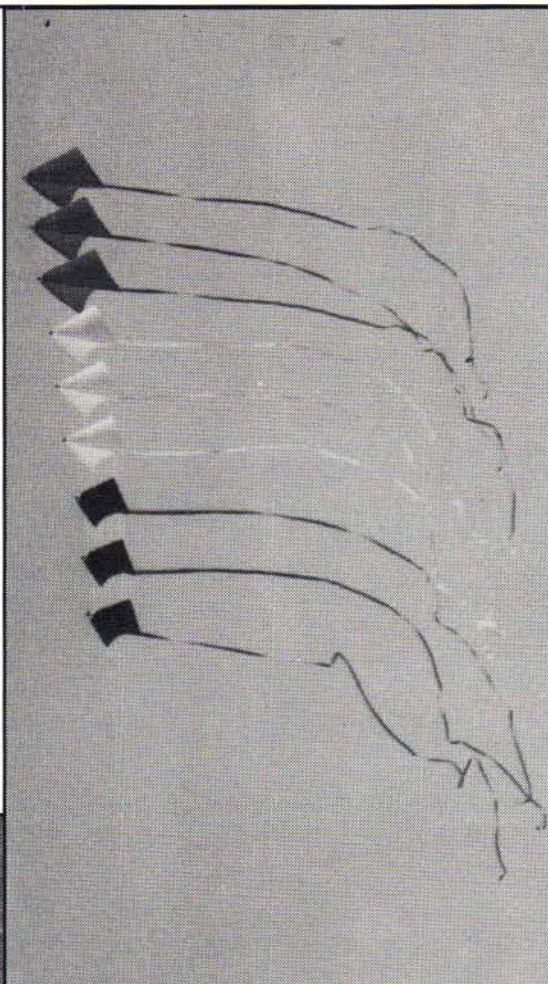
I have to admit I am disappointed in this book. It treats kitemaking as a legitimate contemporary art medium, but makes me realize how badly I would like to see a thoroughly documented history of modern kite artists. —A.S.

## Buzzing Treasures

*Nagoya Koryu Dako (Traditional Nagoya Kites)* by Masaaki Sato (Nagoya, Japan, 1993), in Japanese, hardcover, 64 pages, \$47.95.

We at *Kite Lines* know too little Japanese to appreciate the writing in this book, but the pictures need no translation. The exquisite work of Masaaki Sato (artist name: Kofu) shows him to be perhaps the world's

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foremost maker of *semi* (cicada), *abu* (horse fly) and *hachi* (bee) kites. In fact, Sato's family of kites, all variations around similar forms, includes wasps, other insects and even faces. Each kite is fitted with an *unari* (hummer); many are flecked with gold.

Sato continues a 200-year tradition by making his frames from *susudake*, bamboo culled from old farmhouse roofs. Long exposure to hearth smoke produces a highly valued dark brown tone. Photographs show Sato's precise splitting and shaping of this bamboo, and many drawings help us understand the intricacies.

The book presents the kites (about three dozen, mostly printed in color) with the same spare elegance and symmetry that marks their design. I was also struck by the self-effacing title and cover, in which Sato's name is submerged in honor of Nagoya. The volume echoes this reticence, dressed in dark blue cloth, embossed title and textured endpapers—an object of pure pleasure reflecting its wonderful contents. —V.G.

### Find the Fighter Jewels

*Not an Indian Fighter Kite: a personal evolution of rip-stop fighter kites* by Geoff Crumplin (Yorkshire, England: self-published, 1995), 70 pages, \$14.95.

This modest book, like the 20-or-so kites it describes, has its ups and downs.

On the down side, this is the product of a wandering mind. On the up side, this mind conveys the pure enjoyment of one-line maneuverable kites.

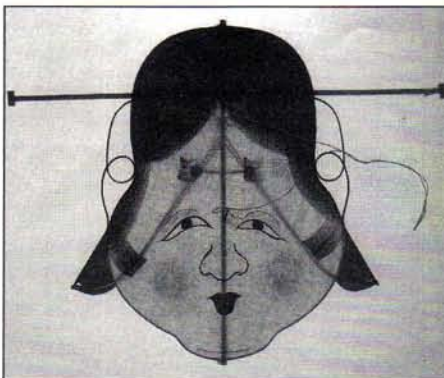
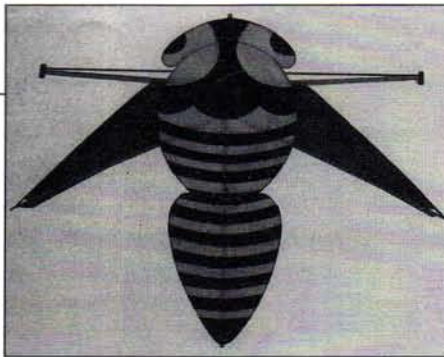
On the down side, the book has had only the most cursory editing. On the up side, it contains buried jewels of wisdom.

On the down side, few beginners could build a kite from these instructions. On the up side, those moderately experienced in kitemaking by sewing machine or adhesives will find the designs interesting and challenging.

Finally, on the up side, there are more ups than downs.

Crumplin sometimes comes to the right conclusion for the wrong reason, but the flying tips and designs work. His advice about bridling is the best I have seen. He not only furnishes dimensions, but includes advice on how to adjust bridles when things go awry.

Crumplin's occasional turn-of-the-cen-



Kites from *Traditional Nagoya Kites* by Masaaki Sato: top, wasp; bottom, traditional Nagoya face image (with bamboo hair curls).

tury English English (a lot of "whilsts") and the use of acronyms (TIDS, for Tension Induced Directional Stability) are distracting, as is his use of the word "pilot" for kiteflier.

Crumplin also seems to base all his advice on experience with flat bowed paper kites from India and Malaysia. I don't believe he had seen true Korean kites up close or in flight when he wrote the book. He also seems not to understand that the flight characteristics of tailed fighters from Brazil, the Caribbean, Greece and Thailand do not really fit his TIDS principle.

But as I always say, I've never met a fighter kite I didn't like. The kites in this book have my very biased stamp of approval. —M.G.

### Quad-Line Help?

*Flying the Rev and How To Do It* by Bill and Kim Taylor (Keizer, Oregon: self-published, 1996), softcover, 118 pages, \$14.95.

Bill and Kim Taylor obviously know how to fly the Revolution quad-line kite widely known by its affectionate nickname. (They produced the book independently of manufacturer Revolution Enterprises of California.) And newcomers to quad-lines certainly could use help finding the curiously subtle skills of making these kites perform. Unfortunately, this well-intentioned guide won't significantly ease the learning curve. Indeed, the authors warn in their introduction that what follows may be overwhelming or confusing and suggest readers not allow the reading to deter the flying experience.

One value in this book, however, lies in

the assurance that mastery over the Rev and other quads is possible. The authors capture well the magic moment when, "you have crossed that line between thinking and not thinking, so to speak, [and] the kite will suddenly seem to do exactly what you tell it to do."

But the book offers mainly frustrations of its own, not the least a plethora of misspellings, nongrammatical usages and language redundancies so rife that getting at the content is difficult.

Readers just setting up a kite will find useful diagrams in Chapter 1. But important parts of this preparation, such as recommended line strengths, line lengths and the proper balance of top and bottom lines, are left to Chapter 6. Bridle details are also neglected.

Chapter 2's explanation and diagrams of the kiter's wind window are an especially clear presentation. And the explanation of four-line theory (in the redundantly titled *Basic Fundamentals*, Chapter 3) properly emphasizes the gentle wrist action required, as distinguished from the push-pull motions of a two-liner. The authors use the term "tap" to describe the short flicking motion.

However, neophytes may have trouble with the terminology describing a quad-line's flight as "forward" and "reverse." This is technically correct, of course, but for beginners, "up" and "down," "top" and "bottom" or even "leading edge" and "tail" might be easier to grasp.

Some fliers might also challenge the assertion that achieving a stable hover "is a very difficult move to master." When I was in the crash-a-minute mode learning to fly the smallest model Rev, the Backtracker (not mentioned in the book's listing of Revolution kites), the hover was the *first* move I was able to accomplish.

Further, my next step was the 360-degree spin to left and right, with a return to the hover position. Here, the authors outline as beginning moves a 90-degree-turn—far more difficult than a 360, I believe—followed by the 180-degree rotation, which I still find hard to achieve with great consistency. A good discussion of the hover and 360-degree spin is postponed to Chapter 5, *Beyond Basic*.

As the book progresses into more com-

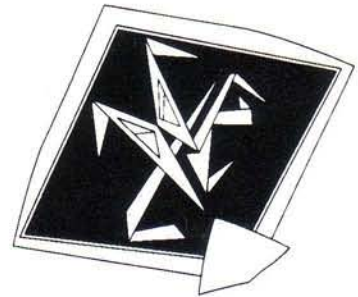


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plicated areas, many of the diagrams are too small and confusing to be of much use, unless you already can accomplish the maneuvers. And verbal descriptions do not always clarify things.

In the end, with or without this book it will take much trial-and-error experience to learn quad-line flying. Of course, that is the best way to learn to fly *any* kite. —S. McK.

### Book News & Forecasts

The list of gestating kite books is growing, and all but one is set for spring delivery...

◆ Longtime Oregon kiter Warren O. (Stormy) Weathers has finished his manuscript and illustrations are in progress on a book of inexpensive, good-flying kites...

◆ Meanwhile in London, England, Sarah Kent has written a kite book and production is underway...

◆ The popular 1992 British book *Kites: A Practical Handbook* by Ron Moulton and Pat Lloyd, will be republished soon—not just reprinted but revised, updated and expanded (more drawings)...

◆ The Drachen Foundation has obtained a publisher for a book/catalog to accompany their projected exhibit of Japanese kites (see page 25). Four authors are contributing: Tsutomu Hiroi, Masaaki Modegi, Scott Skinner and Tal Streeter. The exhibit doesn't open until May 1998, but the book is due out in 1997...

◆ Sales of the kite aerial photography book by Michel Dusariez and Geoffroy de Beaufort of Belgium are said to be good enough to justify a second volume—"very much more important than the first one," say the authors, who have begun working...

This just in: ◆ *Ali nel Vento (Wings on the Wind)* by Vanny Pecchioli, illustrated by Marco Cartocci, is a nice Italian book aimed at youngsters. Its 13 kite designs use paper and natural materials. The book does not include any photographs, but the computer-generated illustrations are super clear and colorful. Except for the name of the "Conyne 2," which we felt was off the mark, this is one of the better books written for kids...

◆ The AKA's Art Committee has printed "The 1997 Great Kite Coloring Calendar"—in black and white for you to color yourself. It's \$7.50 from the AKA store (c/o The Kite Studio, Wescosville, Pennsylvania), and features kites of a dozen makers. We saw examples of pages colored by some of the artists themselves and they looked great, but in black and white the calendar loses something...

◆ Want a big, exotic kite book in Spanish? You've got it: *El Mundo de las Cometas (The World of Kites)* by Dr. Luis Reinaldo Escalante P. of Colombia. This 197-page hardcover is the first volume in an intended larger work and deals with traditional Chinese kites, their history and especially their symbolism. Poems are included, too. The color painting illustrations are very fine. The price is \$15 US, plus shipping (approximately \$10). (Note: this book won't be carried in the Kite Lines Bookstore. Orders may be sent to: Dr. Luis Reinaldo Escalante P., Calle 59, #10-20, Apto. 301, Bogotá, Colombia.)

◆ The Kite Lines Bookstore has had the good fortune of finding a devious way to obtain copies of "The Bible," *The Penguin Book of Kites* by David Pelham. No longer in print in the USA, this great book may, we fear, be endangered even in England. —V.G.

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Ladies  
1. Place: Britta Veltrup  
2. Place: Renate Knabe  
3. Place: Silke Voltmer

Masters  
1. Place: Ron Reimers  
3. Place: Arnold Getsch

Tandem  
1. Place: A. Getsch/A. Schwarz

1. Belgium Buggy Cup, 8/96  
Long Distance Race 1. Place: Ron Reimers  
Masters  
1. Place: Ron Reimers

1. Int. Buggy Camp Römi  
Ladies Cup  
1. Place: Britta Veltrup

Juniors Cup  
1. Place: Arosangelo Renon

Freestyle  
1. Place: Arnold Getsch  
2. Place: Michael Lakowski  
3. Place: Arnold Getsch

Masters  
2. Place: Arnold Getsch

2. Int. Danish Buggy Cup, 10/96  
Master Cup  
1. Place: Arnold Getsch

Tandem Cup  
1. Place: M. Quasten/A. Schwarz  
2. Place: A. Getsch/K. Getsch  
3. Place: A. Schmelke/S. Weidhase

Euro-Cup France, 10/96  
3. Place: Arnold Getsch

to be continued...

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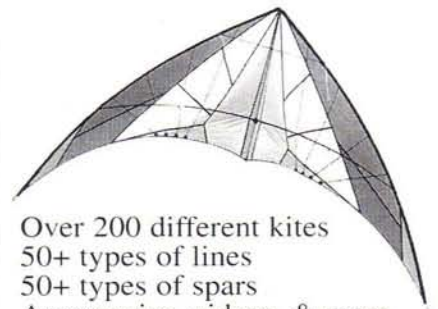
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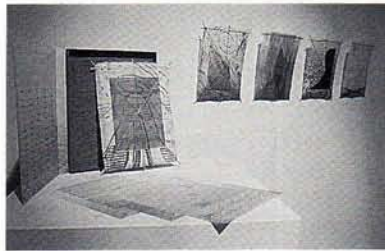
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At the Davis Art Center: far left, Robert Trepanier's fighter kites make faces from the wall. Near left, Anne Kresge's book *Air Born* replaces pages with kites.

# the museumCIRCUIT

"flying" on the walls in Davis, Haifa and Indianapolis

*As objects of art as well as flying fancy, kites increasingly are taking "flight" indoors. Here are reports on recent and forthcoming museum exhibits, based on information supplied by participants:*

## WindWorks

DAVIS ART CENTER GALLERY  
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA  
From: Stuart Allen

The first annual WindWorks exhibit and festival turned heads skyward with a diverse selection of work, from video and film installations to kites. Funded with grants from the Davis Arts Commission and the Drachen Foundation, the May 15 through June 15 show was designed to celebrate artistic collaboration with the wind. And celebrating the exhibit, a kite festival was held in Community Park adjacent to the Art Center on Saturday, May 18.

Kites from a variety of acclaimed American and international builders found lofty homes within the high ceilings and open spaces of the museum.

In the formal gallery, visitors saw kites ranging from a complex mechanical crane by Chen Zhao Ji (China) to video footage and site-specific sculptural installations by noted California sculptors Douglas Hollis and Ned Kahn. Delicate cicada and wasp kites from Masaaki Sato of Japan hung alongside the wonderfully expressive faces of Robert Trepanier's fighter kites.

Hung high overhead, where large windows cast their light, Scott Skinner's elaborate patterns made a cathedral-like effect. Tom McAlister's miniature cellular creations cast intricate shadows onto their pedestals, while J.R. Tolman's tiny wood-block printed sails moved in the slightest current of air. In a darkened corner of the gallery, a film loop projected the slow-motion image of white silk moving in the wind onto a triangular sail of lightweight polyester, a collaboration between Chicago-based filmmaker Bill Conlee and Stuart Allen.

Anne Kresge of New York bridged the gap between printmaking and kite building with her handmade book, *Air Born*, in which delicate rice paper and bamboo kites substituted for pages.

The First Annual WindWorks Kite Festival, though modest by contemporary standards, held moments of true beauty. Tolman ran the kite building activities with military efficiency as his team (comprised largely of Art Center board members) facilitated production of some 240 paper kimono kites in a few short hours.

Perhaps most noteworthy was the pres-

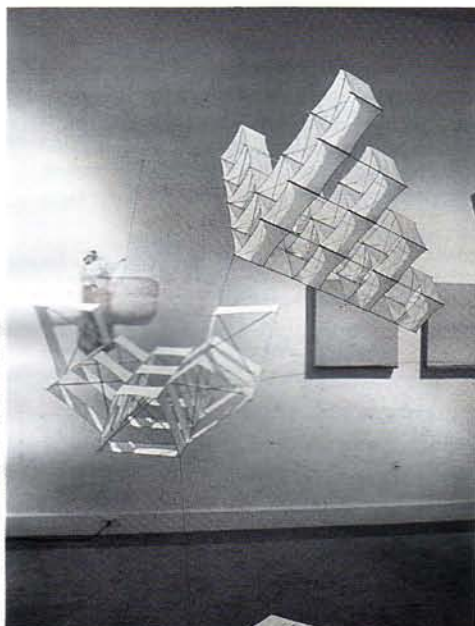
ence of the animated Trepanier, from Canada, who jumped at any opportunity to fly and discuss his remarkable work.

Ron and Sandy Gibian made colorful contributions, Anwar Kahn of Sacramento participated in a memorable fighter battle with Trepanier and the ever generous Skinner hand-delivered a remarkable selection of Chinese and Japanese kites for the show.

From the good response to this year's event, the Davis Center has already planned WindWorks '97 (exhibit, May 15-July 3; festival and workshops, May 16-19). The exhibition will premiere *Kites: Paper Wings Over Japan*, a collection of Japanese kites and prints curated by the Drachen Foundation. Japanese kite chronicler Tal Streeter has also been invited to participate. (*Read on for another event involving Streeter.*) Visitors next year will also have the opportunity to participate with Japanese builders in workshops. Contact the Davis Art Center for more information: 916-756-4100.

*Kites: Paper Wings Over Japan* is also planned for exhibit at the Museum of Flight in Seattle, May 3-December 3, 1998. ➔

Stuart Allen, director of the Davis Art Center, is an artist whose interest in contemporary landscape art, literature and theory led him to an exploration of kites in his own artwork.



Left, tiny box kites by Tom McAlister of Richmond, California hang suspended in the Davis Art Center.

## WindWorks Artists

- Stuart Allen
- Susan Beran
- Ty Billings
- Bill Conlee
- Ron Gibian
- Russell Herrman
- Douglas Hollis
- Ned Kahn
- Ann Kresge
- Tom McAlister
- Michael Moore,
- Michael Oppenheimer
- George Peters
- Peter Richards
- Scott Skinner
- Bobby Stanfield
- Lorna Stevens
- Anne Subercaseaux
- J.R. Tolman
- Robert Trepanier

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY DAVIS ART CENTER

## Kites Mania

TIKOTIN MUSEUM

HAIFA, ISRAEL

From: Yael Bat Adam

This kite exhibition was held from July 18 through October 5 in the Tikotin Museum, which opened in 1995 to present Japanese art and craft in Israel.

Guest kitemaker Mikio Toki opened a door to the beautiful and fascinating world of Japanese kites. About 50 examples filled the intimate space of one big and two small exhibition rooms.

Toki also offered a master class for 10 participants and together they produced rokkaku kites from *washi* (Japanese hand-made paper), bamboo and traditional Japanese paints.

The artist carefully explained his methods. "It takes at least a week to make a kite," he said. "First I paint the black. It takes a while until it's fully dry. Then I paint the gray, wait for it to dry, and continue from the light to the dark colors waiting for them to get dry." Red is painted last.

He uses bamboo only after it has dried for two years. And he explained, "I decide according to the kite which bamboo I'll use. After the sail is fully decorated and dry, I make the structure."

Toki, who was born in 1950, learned kitemaking from the artist Katsuhisa Ota (1902–1989). He said he is the only kite artist in Tokyo today. He has added to the traditional Japanese forms a few new designs, including a painted figure of sumo wrestling champion Yokozuna Takanohana and a

series with Chinese letters.

He flies some of his kites but noted, "They are appreciated as popular craft creations and there are collectors from all over the world who buy and collect them."

He made a special kite for the Tikotin Museum display: a bold red rokkaku, with the word "peace" written on its face in Hebrew, Japanese and Arabic letters.

"It's the first time I'm flying kites just for peace," he noted—although too little wind prevented the kite from flying at the event.

*Yael Bat Adam is an Israeli artist and kitemaker who runs the Flying Gallery, Doar Na Hefer.*

## Calderfest Jubilee

INDIANAPOLIS MUSEUM OF ART,  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

From: Bret Waller and Tal Streeter

Kites found their way into a city-wide celebration of the works of sculptor Alexander Calder (1898–1976), the Philadelphia-born artist best known for constructing large and colorful abstract mobiles.

Some 50 arts organizations staged Calderfest events in connection with a major

exhibit of Calder's work at the Indianapolis Children's Museum (running through the end of 1996). And the Indianapolis Museum of Art's Calderfest Jubilee (September 13–29) commissioned works and appearances by kitemaker and kite author Tal Streeter.

Streeter was among five artists working in wind- or movement-related media given commissions for the Jubilee. He mounted an assemblage of his kites (some of which were made for him by Roberto Guidori) for display in the main hall of the museum.

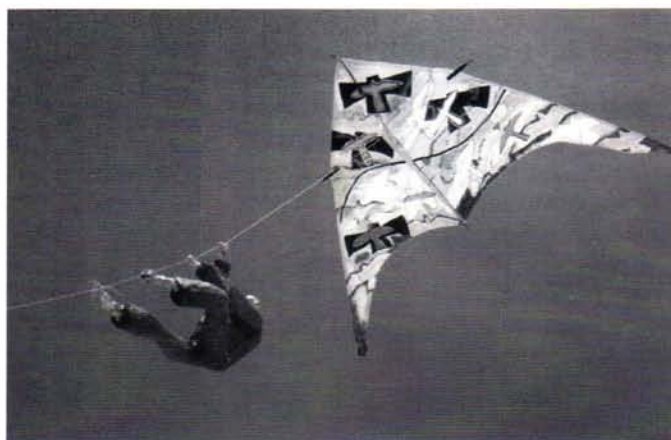
And on September 15, Streeter flew kites on the museum lawn with about 30 students from the Herron School of Art of the University of Indiana, where the kitemaker conducted a workshop two weeks earlier. The flying event featured more of Streeter's kites along with those made by students and teachers, including Sanjo rokkakus and a variety of imaginative forms, such as birds, a chair and a ladder. Most were constructed of paper and wood dowels.

A handful of members of the Hoosier Kite Club also participated in the event, a few of whom flew Chinese kites.

Unfortunately, light winds required long launches and much running to get the kites airborne. But Streeter reports the kite event was an enjoyable experience that was well attended by museum goers.

And he says he was attracted to the Indianapolis event by the spirit of Calder's work, finding both playfulness and flight-related elements in the distinctive, moving mobiles. ◇

*Bret Waller is director of the Indianapolis Museum of Art. Tal Streeter, of Verbank, New York, is a noted kite artist, sculptor and author. His newest book, A Kite Journey Through India, has just been published by Weatherhill, New York.*



Above, Yael Bat Adam's bird-bedecked delta, with a four-meter wing span, flies at Bet Yanai Beach in Israel as a one-meter figure tries to climb aboard. The lifelike line hanger was sculpted by artist Daniel Abekasis.



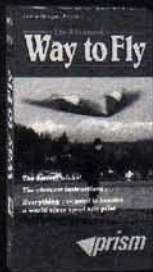
Left, kitemaker Mikio Toki displays his "peace" rokkaku. The letters spell the word in Hebrew, Japanese and Arabic. He also created an original portrait of celebrity sumo wrestler Yokozuna Takanohana, on the kite at right.



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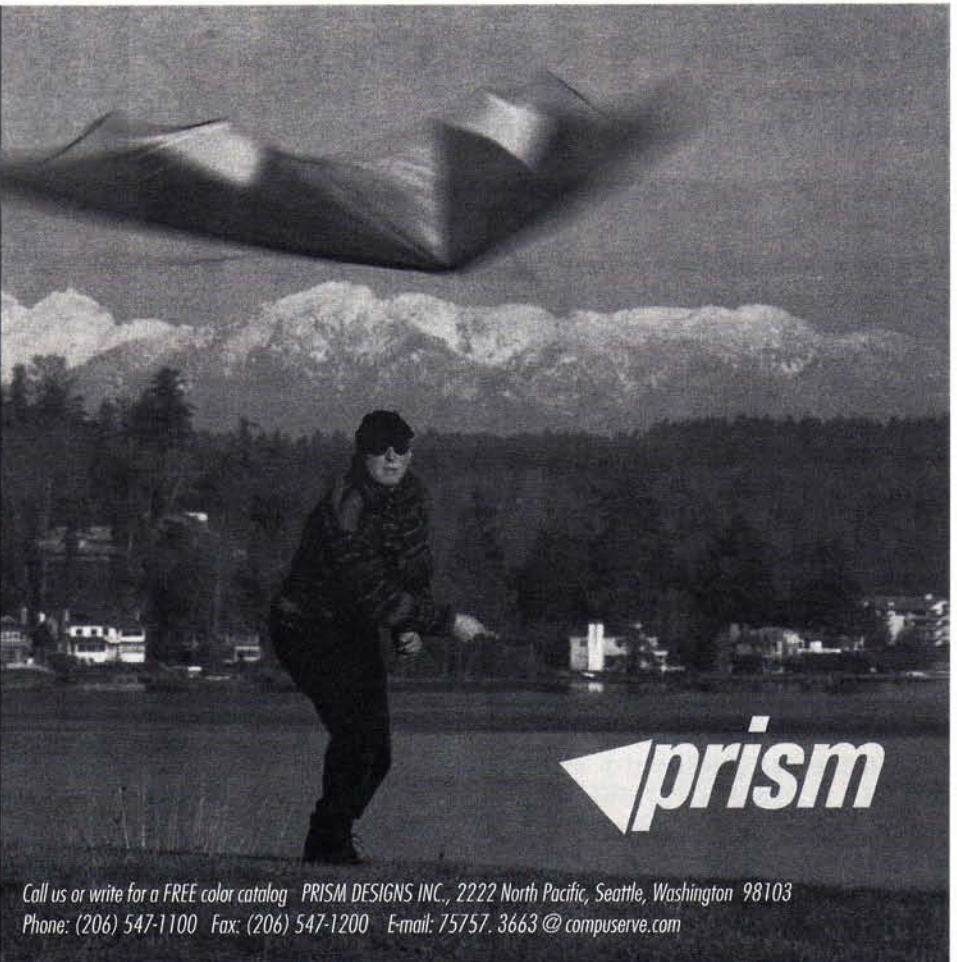
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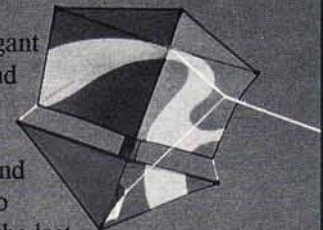
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# GIBSON GIRL RESCUE KITES ...RESCUED FROM DESTRUCTION

**K**iting owes the discovery of some new threads of its history to a soft-spoken enthusiast in Chesapeake, Virginia: Melvin Lambert.

Unknown to kitefliers, 18 Gibson Girl box kites had been stored in a military warehouse in Portsmouth, Virginia. They were classified as a "peculiar item" and coded "DMIL-D" — for destruction, the Defense Department equivalent of death row!

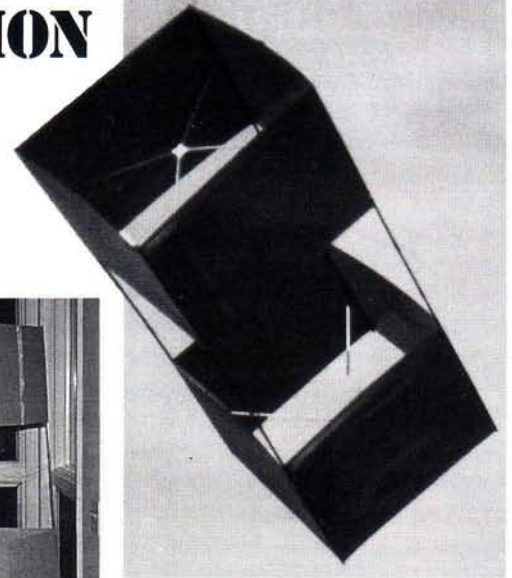
History refresher course: The Gibson Girl was part of the lifeboat survival kit in World War II. The kite greatly improved one's rescue chances, for it lifted not only itself as a highly visible signal, but its line also served as an aerial. An hour-glass-shaped radio transmitter (thus the name "Gibson Girl") fit between the knees and was cranked to put out SOS signals. (For calm days, a balloon with hydrogen generator provided an alternate lift source.)

The kite itself was built with a unique umbrella-like opening system using tubular steel spars to brace the fabric cells. The gold-colored fabric was lightweight but tightly woven cotton. (A model long owned by *Kite Lines* has survived more than 20 years in hardship storage conditions.) Instructions for assembly and use were printed directly on the fabric cells. A matching gold-colored drawstring bag, its contents printed outside, compactly held the complete outfit: kite, line, reel, balloon, hydrogen generator and transmitter.

We are most familiar with models made for the U.S. military (and distributed after the war through surplus stores), but we know that similar outfits were made and used in Britain and other European countries.

Only now have we learned that these kites are still in existence on U.S. ships—and that new and changed models of them were made, perhaps as late as the 1970s. These newer outfits included balloons using helium rather than hydrogen, and kites that lofted an antenna, replacing the line itself as an aerial. Also, several components were replaced with plastic: The covering was international orange plastic instead of gold cotton, the instructions were printed on a plastic sheet instead of the kite's cover, and a capped clear plastic tube rather than a cloth

By Valerie Govig



Left, Melvin Lambert in the *Kite Lines* office holds two grand old lady Gibson Girls, the older cloth version on the left and the flashy plastic model on the right. Above, the plastic Gibson Girl takes off over the field.

bag contained the kite. The same framing system was used but the tubular metal spars were thinner.

## No Time to Lose

We learned of the surviving kites from Lambert on May 13, and government orders were to destroy the "peculiar items" by June 14, 1996. Fortunately, he provided a telephone contact to find out what could be done.

Judith Barrington, at the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office, told me that thousands of worn or outdated items are systematically destroyed by the military all the time. Newer systems of rescue (such as the GPS, or global positioning system) made the old kite outfits obsolete.

How could we save these artifacts?

"Write us a letter," Barrington said. "I'll put a 'DMIL Challenge' on it." But she warned, "It won't necessarily make a difference. It just allows them to consider."

I immediately wrote a superponderous letter attesting to the extreme interest of collectors in Gibson Girl box kite outfits. I tossed around names of kite museums with abandon and protested the destruction of these historically important kites.

On May 22, Mrs. Barrington called to say the kites were being held in a secure

area pending the final decision, which came on August 8. "The DMIL was changed," she said. "The kites will go on auction on September 26 in a separate building." Inspection would be at the storage facility September 23–25.

Once again, there was not much time. I made calls to everyone in the region who I thought might care about these kites, but few could get to a midweek auction, especially one for which inspection was at a separate time and place. Only a handful of kites showed up, *Kite Lines* Associate Editor Leonard Conover among them. Virginians Charles Dunton of Yorktown and Lambert were others.

## The Bidding Begins

Bids ran from \$10 to \$35. Conover dropped out when he learned the kites were not all the same. Some were heavier plastic, some lighter (one was nylon), some were in good condition, some poor. He had inspected only one kite in advance and assumed all were alike. Dunton and Lambert had cataloged the offerings and knew which ones to bid on; they ended up with many of the kites. None were complete outfits, however, for the balloons, generators, radios and reels had been destroyed. Truly avid collectors would be frustrated.

Lambert was certainly the right person in the right place at the right time, and the kite

community can be grateful to him. But Lambert is grateful to his wife, Susan, for it was she who saw the stored kites while driving to her job with the Navy. She recognized them from what she had learned about kites with Melvin.

Her husband had been a kiteflier for about 10 years, starting with a Peter Powell stunter he flew on a fishing trip to Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina. He advanced to big single-line designs. "I liked to stake them down and watch them walking around," he says. "Then I started to get into books and *Kite Lines*, then older kites."

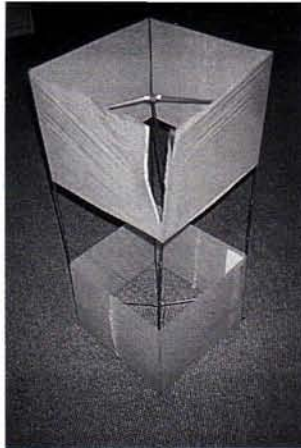
Lambert can talk for hours about his research and the rare specimens he's collected. "The prize of what I have here," he says, "is a Jalbert parasled, 14 feet square, designed for radio control to bring space capsules back to earth. And—are you ready for this?—it has 64 keels. It has a flapper valve that snaps shut to hold air until the next breeze comes along. The bottom sections were connected to a mechanical box so you could steer it..."

One day not long after the auction a package arrived from Lambert at the *Kite Lines* office: one of the plastic Gibson Girls! We studied it and compared it to our older cloth model.

Oddly enough, the plastic version is smaller by 12 inches in girth (three inches on each side) but heavier than the cloth one, by one ounce. Its assembly is more-or-less the same; the umbrella-like spar tensioning system is a near-copy of its elder's. Instead of the kapok pillows in the original for flotation, this kite has strips of plastic foam glued inside the sail next to the spar.

Overall, its appearance seems flimsy and certainly lacking in the character of the World War II veteran, but we surmised that these kites were not intended to last for more than one rescue anyway. Besides, one never feels cheated to have any unusual old kite built to have genuine utility.

We flew it one day for a few minutes, enough to assure ourselves it was a decent flier. (It was.) Then we set it aside in the office. One evening Melvin Lambert came by for a mutual thank-you occasion and we talked a long time about the different ways and places we thought these kites were



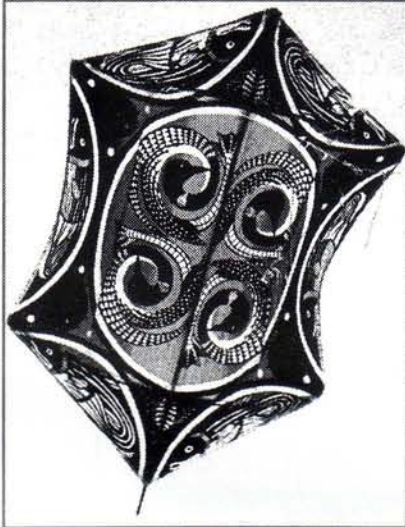
Left, the plastic Gibson Girl after a few days in the *Kite Lines* office.

used. We speculated there could be hundreds more yet to come back to Virginia for other auctions—or there could be very few remaining, perhaps even none.

We left the kite assembled in our hallway. After about a week we were dismayed to see the sail of one corner start to peel away from the spar. Soon, the other sections came off, too. This plastic version of the revered old Gibson Girl was disintegrating before our very eyes!

We have reached a few conclusions from this episode:

1. "Newer" Gibson Girls may or may not be rarities. We cannot determine their value because their number is unknown.
2. All Gibson Girls, new and old, were built for a real purpose, which some probably fulfilled: saving human lives.
3. "Newer" Gibson Girls are apt to be very fragile and challenging to a curator or collector.
4. It's a good thing for the kite community that Melvin and Susan Lambert kept their eyes open last spring. ◇



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# Dieppe: blessed by the gods

Article & Photographs  
by Pierre Fabre

Above, large fish, designed by the author, borrows from Peter Lynn's soft kite techniques.

Right, first place winner Philippe Cottenceau with his fragile mosaic kite.



There are times with and times without. Whatever money and energy are put into the organization of a big kite festival, only sunshine and favorable winds can make the event a success. After a wonderful festival in 1990, a wet 1992, and a stormy 1994, the gods of meteorology blessed Dieppe again in 1996.

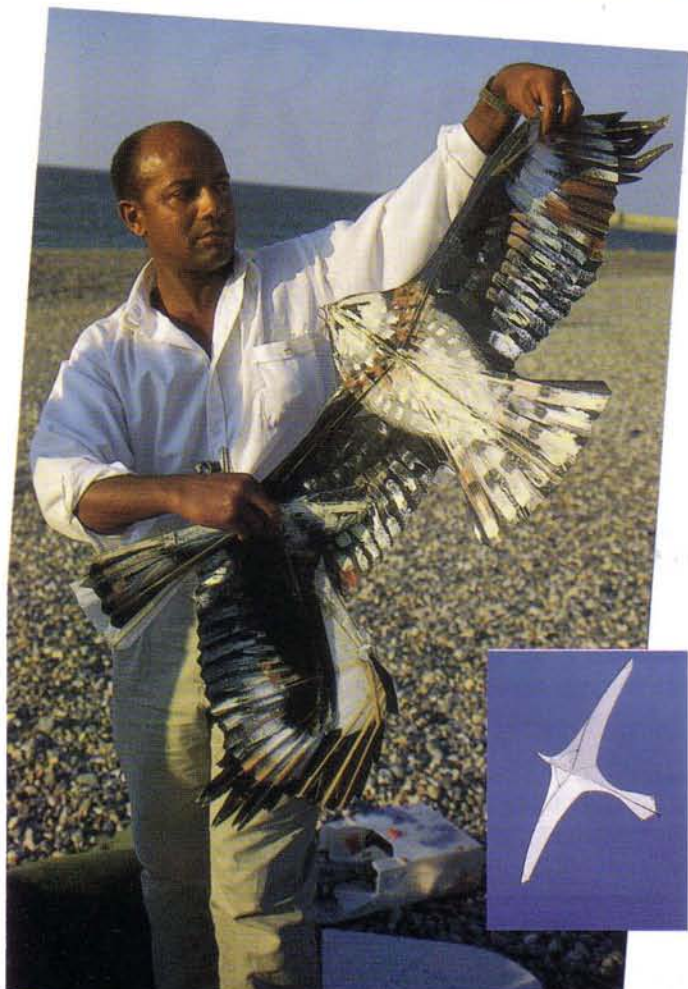
Gods of the European Economic Community also helped, swelling the event's budget to 3.5 million French francs (\$700,000) through a unique subsidy. This enabled

happy director Max Gaillard to invite more kitefliers than ever.

Yet not just the number but the quality and expertise of these kitefliers turned this gathering, with its huge crowd of spectators, into one of the best kite festivals—if not the best—in the Western World.

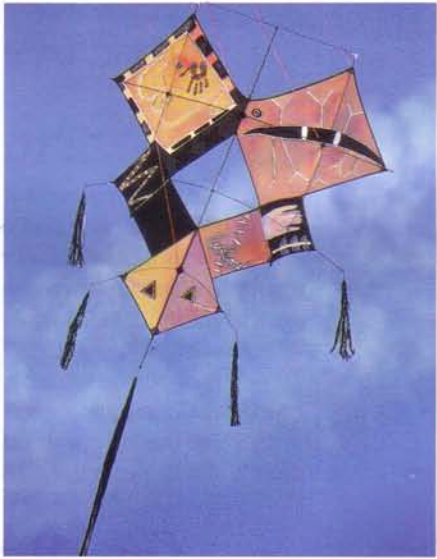
The concentration and variety of innovative designs and creative art kites, as well as splendid traditional kites, were higher in Dieppe than anywhere else. At times, the kite fields that embraced the entire seafont

Dieppe's matchless variety of creative designs is shown in two examples of ring kites, left, developed independently. Directly left is the innovative design of Ton Oostveen and Helmut Schiefer of The Netherlands, which drew spontaneous applause when it was revealed. A brilliant single-line kite that grew from an earlier cylindrical design, it is made of nylon, measures 7½ feet in diameter and two feet deep and is framed only by a thin fiberglass rod inside the leading edge. Wind pressure alone forms the ring, because of the slightly narrower trailing edge. Below left, Michel-Marie Bougard of France finishes assembling his version of a flying circle. Directly below, he displays his uniquely vented kite. Bougard is part of Les Ailes du Désir sport kite team.



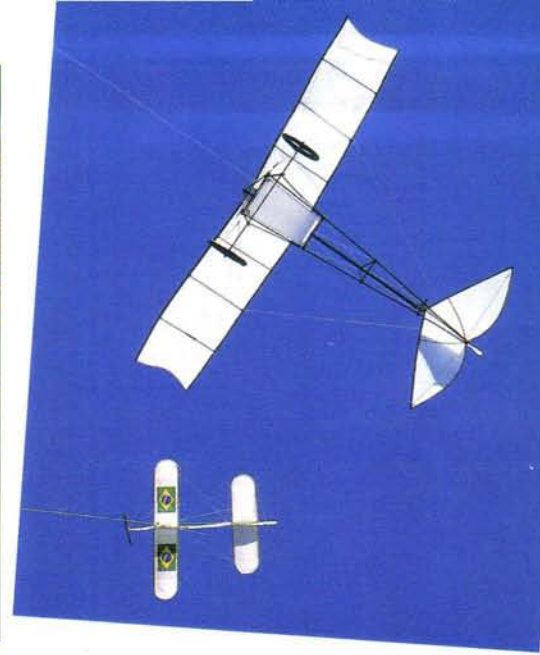
Birds! Philippe Gomard of France loves them. He spreads the wings of his realistic raptor, made of smoked goose feathers glued to the sail of a souvenir kite from Bali. Gomard's birds are simply made but fly well; some even flap their wings. Inset, an elegant single-line bird by Frenchman Ramlal Tiem performs as many maneuvers as a fighter kite.

Above, polar bears by Aimé Barsalou of Canada stand out against a dark cloud. Below, new forms of expression from two established kites: Left, writing, abstract and figurative symbols adorn a kite by Steve Brockett of Wales; right, from the U.S., one of George Peters' divers transforms the sky into an ocean of blue.





Yes, they're kites! Directly right, Eric de Montarnal and Maryse Lasalle of France stand with their planes, showing large size. De Montarnal's originally shaped small airplane kites have become so popular he quit his job to become a full-time kitemaker. Far right, Brazilian monoplane by Max da Fonseca Cardoso of Brazil, rearmost, soars with a larger Eric de Montarnal aircraft, modeled after the famous Bleriot, first heavier-than-air machine to fly the English Channel. Below, Roland Schoonis of Belgium seems bathed in reflection of his lace-like multicellular kite.



could barely offer enough space to prevent kites entangling. (Needless to say, Peter Lynn and his giant inflatables were happy in a reserved arena all by themselves.)

### Welcoming Newcomers

Kitefliers from Cuba, Guatemala and even Peru were originally expected to be new Latin America delegations this year. But because of difficult communications and travel organization, only the Cubans made it to Dieppe. They offered traditional kite enthusiasts a unique opportunity to learn about the island nation's *papalote*.

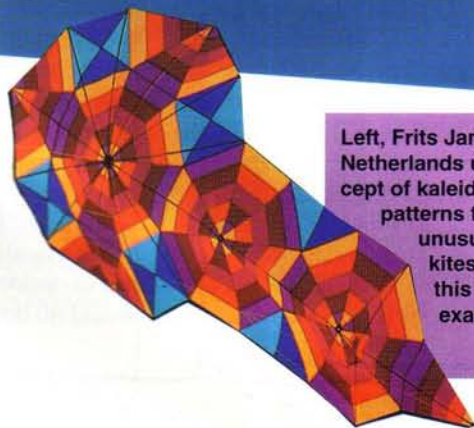
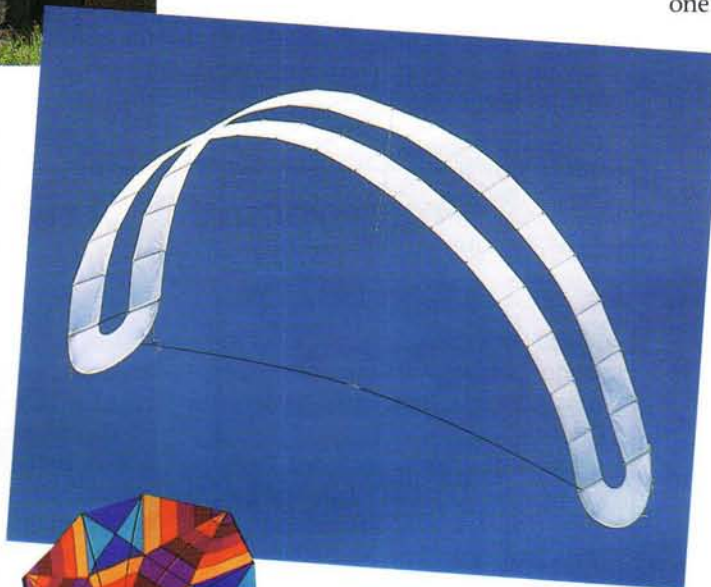
Nepal was another new country with an ancient kite tradition represented this year. A most likeable and light-hearted group from Sweden came as a third new delegation—they showed how humor and intelligence can produce the most clever kites—and Austria was a final new country this year, with three kitefliers from Vienna.

Many other kitefliers had the opportunity to join or form new delegations from countries previously represented.

The Chinese delegation, for example, was formed largely of first time attendees. They included a Mr. Pan, from Weifang, one of the best master craftsmen of dragon centipedes, and representatives from Nantong, who brought some of their



Above, plastic bottles split in half form quad-line kite by Didier Ferment of France. (One of the labels comes from a champagne bottle.) It's just one of dozens of original quad-liners he has designed. Above right, his graceful double arch is also flown with four lines.



Left, Frits Jansma of The Netherlands uses a concept of kaleidoscopic patterns to make unusually shaped kites, as witness this striking example.

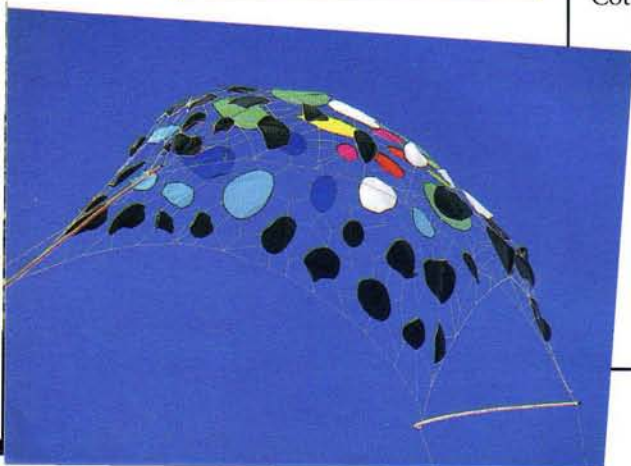
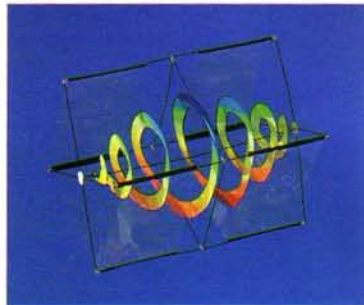
### Countries Represented at Dieppe 1996

A total of 120 kitefliers came to Dieppe from the following 30 countries:

- ★ Australia
- ★ Austria
- ★ Belgium
- ★ Brazil
- ★ Cambodia
- ★ Canada
- ★ China
- ★ Colombia
- ★ Cuba
- ★ England
- ★ France
- ★ Germany
- ★ India
- ★ Indonesia
- ★ Israel
- ★ Italy
- ★ Japan
- ★ Korea
- ★ Malaysia
- ★ Martinique
- ★ Nepal
- ★ Netherlands
- ★ New Zealand
- ★ Singapore
- ★ Spain
- ★ Sweden
- ★ Switzerland
- ★ Thailand
- ★ United States
- ★ Wales



Above, "Probe 7" by Robert Walkenburgh of The Netherlands plays with ideas of dynamic balance and emptiness created by open spaces. Right, "Transmodul'air" kite by twins Sylvain and Nicolas Grez of France features 14 overlapping sails that can be set in at least five patterns. Below, kinetic spiral spins colorfully inside crystal box kite, a creation of Claire and Danilo Gubian of Switzerland. Bottom, the "playsail principle" governs a kite by Marthe and Jean-Marie Simonet of France.



now famous whistling kites. Former delegate Li Ruo Xin from Beijing returned with his fabulous bird kites.

### World Kite Fighting Event

Manjha Club International, the fast growing fighter kite club based in France, organized a contest in which fighters of diverse origins could compete using their native cutting line. An impressive number of fliers from among the club's 250 members in 12 countries attended this world's first.

Flying Indonesian fighter kites, Rene Decalonne of The Netherlands won over fighters from France, Brazil, Korea, India and Japan. Abbas Shahzaday of the Golden Kite Club in India was second.

What is the point of having totally different kites, with varying performance characteristics, fighting each other? Such mixed fighting, similar to battles previously held in Korean international festivals, represents a friendly challenge—and a great party.

Just for show, a fight flight was also organized, with 60 Nagasaki style fighters taking the sky, on cutting line, at one time. About 40 kites also entered the rokkaku challenge, which was won by Tony Cartwright from England.

### An Impressive Competition

Dieppe's kite competition, for creative and artistic qualities, has become a major event in itself. This year's theme, "Transparency and Colors," inspired an unprecedented number of original creations.

Although only half the registered entrants showed up, the jury still had more than 100 remarkable kites to appreciate while deciding upon the five lucky winners. The awards—trips to kite festivals in Malaysia, Japan, Indonesia, Thailand and Italy—went to two fliers in the experienced or professional category and three in the amateur category.

Unlike most kite design competitions held in the United States, inventiveness, originality, elegance and artistic qualities made for 99% of the judgement, while precision in craftsmanship was not really taken into account. As long as the kite is nice, interesting and actually flies, who cares if the stitches are not quite straight?

### Anticipating 1998

Once again Dieppe confirmed its reputation as the leading kite festival in Europe. Although the next event will not benefit from a budget comparable to this year's—the exceptional European funding cannot be repeated—Gaillard and his team still plan to better this, their best festival. New ideas, or even a totally new formula for the event, will no doubt maintain Dieppe as a popular cultural event for the widest audiences and the leading world gathering place of kites.



## "Professionals" & "Amateurs"— & Complaints

Winners in the kite competition were offered their choice of a trip to an international kite festival in one of five countries: Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia or Thailand.

Lucky recipients included Philippe Cotteceau of France, Claire and Danilo Gubian of Switzerland, Frits Jansma of The Netherlands, Ton Oostveen of The Netherlands and Robert Walkenburgh, also from The Netherlands.

A junior competition was also held for kitemakers under 18. Jonathan Huffstvilier won from among seven entrants, for his window kite with long curtains.

Some participants complained the distinction between professional and amateur categories was not clear—a valid criticism to be addressed in the future.

The professional category included full- or part-time kitemakers, kite shop owners, kite workshop leaders and all official guests, even if they are amateurs.

The amateur category included everyone else, including some obviously expert kitefliers, such as Ton Oostveen of The Netherlands, who came at his own expense.

Perhaps "Expert" and "Novice" categories would be better. But someone still has to decide who fits where, and there would no doubt be complaints. —P.F.

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# WHY DO KITES FLY?

Starting over after 100 years of "speculation and nonsense"

By John Loy

In 1996 Aeolus Press published *The Tao of Kiteflying: The Dynamics of Tethered Flight*, by Harm van Veen. Here is another exploration of the principles of kite flight.

**BY THE YEAR 2000**, we should acquire a sound understanding of why kites fly—or don't. It's about time. We've had 100 years to think about it, but the outcome thus far has mostly been an imposing pile of speculation and nonsense. Let's start over.

## What does the airstream look like?

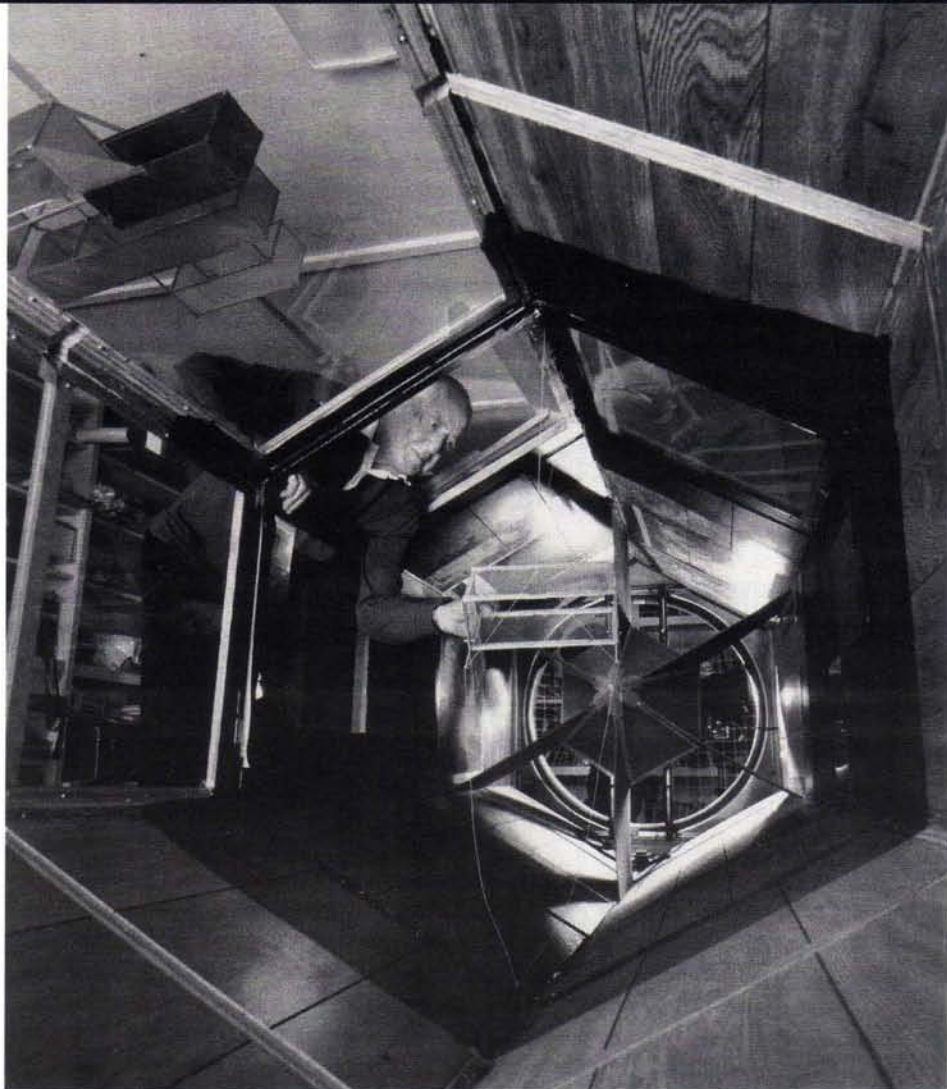
Good question. Air is transparent, so we can't see what the airstream is doing up there where the kite is flying. Hundreds of tests with visible smoke filaments and photographs in a wind tunnel show clearly the nature of the airflow for many different formats of sails and kites. (My article on box kites in *Kiting*, January 1988, shows two illustrations of airflow around box cells. My article on sleds in *Kite Lines*, Summer 1989, illustrated the flow on this kind of sail.)

Fig. 1 is a rough sketch of a side view of the streamlines on a kite sail along the center. Actually, flow is three-dimensional because some of the airstream flows around the sides of the kite, adding to the turbulence on the lee surface. Pressure on the windward surface is normally at a peak just aft of the leading edge. The airstream bends in getting around this obstacle, the kite.

## Where is the center of balance?

The center of balance of wind force on a kite (commonly known as center of pressure, or CP), is forward of the center of area. This is clear from Fig. 1 (and from experience). In a brisk wind, the weight of a kite becomes a minor vector, acting from the center of gravity of the construction. We can think of the towing point as being essentially congruent with the CP.

Now, a remarkably useful phenomenon occurs with the CP, which enables single-line kites to fly right: The CP moves, in what I call migration of the CP. The shallower the attitude of the sail, the more forward the CP lies, and vice versa. (Many kitefliers say "angle of



John Loy displays the hexagonal wind tunnel he built at his home in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, to study the aerodynamic forces involved in flying different kite forms.

attack" instead of "attitude," but, because they are tethered, kites don't attack the wind. Rather, they obstruct the wind, which therefore could be said to attack the kites.)

Readers who have forgotten their 8th grade geometry may not immediately grasp Fig. 2. The graph must be understood if the relationship between kite behavior and towing point is to be comprehended. Think of comparative areas, not linear dimensions. The criterion for determining the towing point for essentially all single-line kites is the area forward of the towing point compared to the total area of the sail. For convenience

and clarity, I symbolize the forward portion as  $A_{tp}$  and the total area as  $A$ . Naturally, different forms of sails will exhibit different quantitative relationships of attitude, or angle of attack, versus  $A_{tp}/A$ , but the principle is universal. If a bridle is used, assume that the reaction to the wind force is perpendicular to the kite surface. With luck we may eliminate the nonsense on bridling that still appears occasionally in the literature.

As one example, suppose you are constructing a sled and want it to fly at 30 degrees, a good angle for this kind of kite in scruffy wind. Read 30 degrees on the attitude

scale of Fig.2. Follow the line across to the curve for sleds, then down to the horizontal, or  $A_{tp}/A$  scale. It tells you to cut the laterals for a towing point such that 0.32 of the area of the sail is forward of the towing point. The towing point ( $tp$ ) for sleds is fixed by the tips of the laterals and an imaginary line between them. No problem.

The point here is that there is reasonable latitude for where you set the  $tp$ . You probably already know this. The reason is that the center of pressure (CP) moves to accommodate. A properly constructed single-line kite is on autopilot. The attitude, center of pressure, and towing point are interdependent. In my opinion, the ability of a single-line kite to fly reliably in a scruffy wind is a remarkable phenomenon. It does so because of the inherent autopilot, the cooperative migration of the CP.

Box kites conform to the general principles. However, a towing point is not so easy to estimate because they normally have two or more sails (or cells). The trial-and-error method in the field is necessary.

### What is pitch control?

That is in essence what I have just discussed, and it is critical. Yet through a legacy of centuries it has been attained through trial-and-error experience. Within reach of where I am sitting, a shelf contains more than 20 books on kites. Not one recognizes nor even hints at pitch control or the reasons for it. How can that be? In my case, I wasn't smart enough to figure it out correctly until undertaking scientific test methods. Evidently, I am not alone.

### What about center of gravity?

Many years ago one of the dumb things I did was acquire a mindset on getting the center of gravity well aft of the towing point. In fact, this technique can often stabilize inherently unstable forms. I made a lot of those.

There are at least three disadvantages:

1. The kite is more difficult to launch in light wind because it droops.

2. The attitude will be steeper than desirable for achieving maximum height on a given length of flying line.

3. If the wind velocity increases so that the weight and location of the  $cg$  are not significant, the kite may misbehave. Wind force varies precisely as  $V^2$ . A kite that lofts, say, at 4 mph will encounter six times as much wind force

in a wind of 10 mph. The weight and its lever arm (distance between  $tp$  and  $cg$ ) become an insignificant vector.

A yaw is the bane of kitedom. If the  $cg$  is too close to the  $tp$ , a kite is more vulnerable to yaw because if it is drooping a

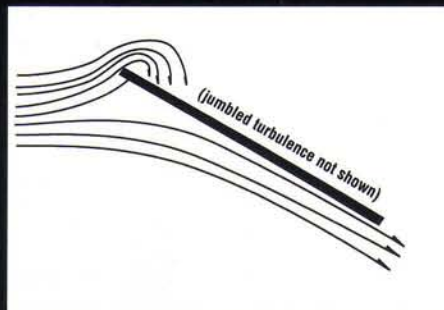


Fig. 1. A two-dimensional profile illustrates the flow of the airstream only partially because the flow is three-dimensional. Some of the airstream spills over the sides. Flow on the windward side is more turbulent than the streamlines imply.

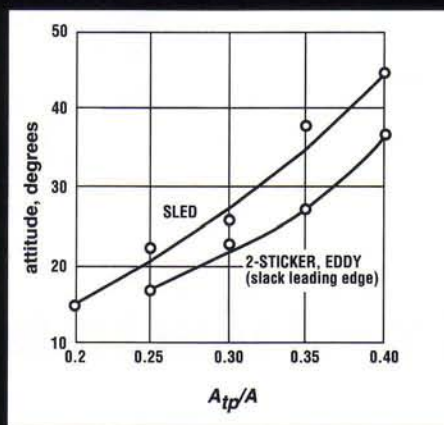


Fig. 2. Attitude vs. towing point. The criterion for setting towing point is to compare area forward of towing point to total area of sail. Relationships shown here are typical.

bit in relatively low wind, and the wind is irregular, the CP may have migrated aft of the towing point momentarily. If the latter, the kite may instantly yaw 180 degrees and spin, loop or dive. This can even happen to a delta, one of the best of all kites.

I cannot be more quantitative because the problem is a matter of your particular kite and wind conditions. A quite different source of yaw, which I presume most kitefliers understand, is a wind so strong that the spine bends slightly concave, toward the wind. This tends to be instantly fatal. The CP has moved well aft of the  $tp$ .

### Are you a Doubting Thomas?

Healthy skepticism is good for us. Any reasonably experienced kiteflier can easily prove the propositions I have set forth. For instance, moor the flying line of a delta, walk off to one side (preferably with binoculars), and study the position of the longerons and the vertical angle between longerons and spine. In a wind above, say, 7 mph you likely can perceive a pitching motion of the spine.

Walk well to the rear and examine the trailing edge, including the areas immediately inboard of the longerons. You likely will see some luffing (fluttering) of the trailing edge. Obviously, therefore, the airstream is essentially parallel to the surface of the sail at the stern. The net lift is zero. (If it were significant the kite would nose over and dive.) There must be quite a gradient from relatively high pressure at the nose to zero at the stern.

Similarly, moor a flying sled and examine from the side the pitching oscillations. In smooth wind, oscillations may not be more than plus or minus 2.0 degrees on either side of the towing point, but will be rapid because a sled doesn't have much inertia.

I reemphasize that it would be next to impossible to find a satisfactory towing point if the center of pressure were fixed and not in cooperative movement. (Editor's note: Some kites can be bridled to fly well with a CP travel that is very small or even somewhat destabilizing.)

### What is the last word?

If you happen to be in a group discussion of kites and someone is prattling about the "Bernoulli theorem," "Reynold's number," "chaos," and such, your correct response is: "baloney." Brilliant minds conceived those concepts, but in contexts vastly different from that of kites.

I have avoided using terms that might sound snobbish to first-time, inexperienced kites, but the appropriate term for describing kite behavior is "dynamic equilibrium." Use it with confidence. ◇

*JOHN LOY is a retired executive of Phillips Petroleum Co. He was well known in kiting in Japan during his 16 years in Asia. In search of sound knowledge on the aerodynamics of kites, he constructed a wind tunnel in which he has tested many different kite forms.*

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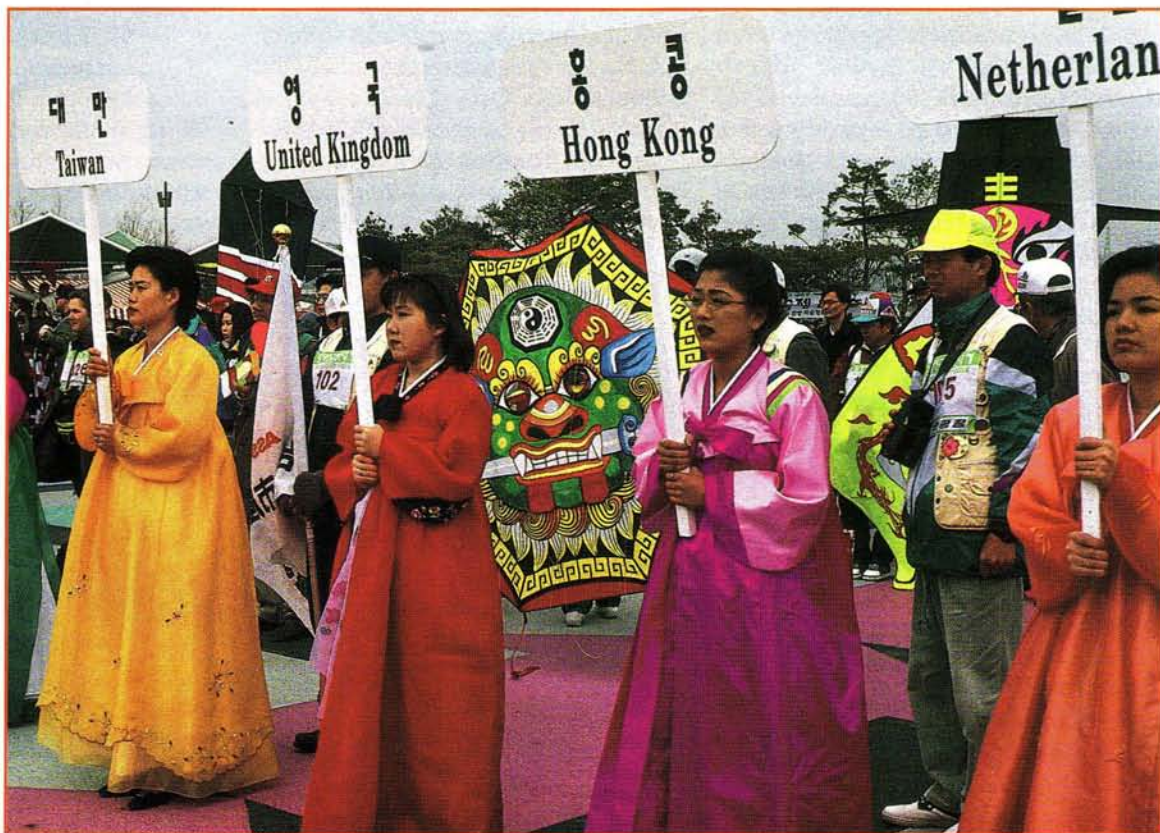
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Women in traditional Korean costumes lead off the opening ceremony parade, carrying signs showing the countries participating. The six-sided dragon face kite in the center, carried by members of the Taipei Kite Association, has eyes that spin in the wind. The parade begins on a bridge spanning the Kapchon River.



# The Korea International Kite Festival

Article by Steve McKerrow / Photographs by Debbie Rosen McKerrow

*"Hello!" "Hello!"  
"How are you?" "Hello!"*

Listen to the sounds of the '96 Korea International Kite Festival!

The English-lesson words came tentatively, shyly, sometimes boldly from dozens, scores, no, hundreds of school children in neat uniforms, for whom the Saturday morning opening of the event was apparently a classroom assignment. They flooded the Kapchon Riverside festival site in Expo Science Park in Taejon, an industrial/resort city nestled in flat land ringed by low mountains, about 150 miles south of Seoul.

Western guests at the March 16–17 festival felt like rock stars, signing autographs, posing for pictures and conducting interviews for school papers (and the professional Korean media), all amid the swirl of opening ceremonies featuring traditional Korean dance and music. Temperatures in the 40s and skies that foretold rain did nothing to diminish the pomp of the official ceremonies and the festival spirit of Taejon citizens.

Organizers assigned foreign guests a personal guide/translator from the Korean National Tourism Organization (KNTO)—a "caddy," as described by festival chairman Sung-il Lee. He attributed many organizing details to advice from Pierre Fabre of France (who brought several kites, including his Nuclear Mackerel) and Masaaki Modegi, president of the Japan Kite Association (who missed the festival due to illness). In the end, the festival drew about 130 registered participants—just about equalling the 35 KNTO staff members and 100 eager young volunteers who ran the show.

"This is great. I've never been to a festival where I had a personal assistant," said enthused kitemaker Ton Geers of The Netherlands, who struggled in Sunday's moderate winds to launch his big rectangular kite evocative of art deco painting.

American stunt kites Chris Moore and George Deikman, of Kansas City, Missouri, were barely allowed elbow room as they flew a crisp routine Saturday in the Expo Park plaza, spinning their deltas over a neck-craning crowd of hundreds.

Shortly afterward, curious kids pressing close on the free flying field accidentally stepped on the spine of my Japanese Bee fighter kite (by America's Stan Swanson) as I knelt to adjust the bridle. I moved to a table under a canvas awning to splint the spar, but they crowded around in such numbers I literally could not free my hands to work.

"Hello! Hello! How are you? Hello!"

So the broken kite went into a bag, a Sensei fighter (by America's Gary Smith) came out and I waded back through the crowd to find clear air. For 15 minutes the kite flew like an organic extension of a clump of happy children—and I received the compliment of a kiteflying lifetime, as a passing member of the Japan Kite Association eyed the dancing fighter and gave me a thumbs-up sign and a smile.

## *Land of the Morning Calm*

Previously held in Seoul, the Korea Kite Festival relocated this year to Taejon, site of the 1993 Taejon Expo World Technology Fair and now maintained as a Disneyesque amusement park.

Lee listed this festival with the 1986 Asian Games, the 1988 Olympic Summer Games in Seoul, the Taejon Expo and the bid to host the World Cup soccer tournament in 2002 as principal events in the nation's strong efforts to attract more foreign visitors to Korea. (The soccer tourney was subsequently awarded jointly to Korea and Japan.) Invited kite guests represented 16 countries this year, compared to five countries in 1994.

Earlier in the week, officials at KNTA headquarters in Seoul showed us a promotional video aimed at Western tourists, promising that "Korea is waiting for you with a welcoming smile and a warm heart." Our week in Seoul and Taejon certainly raised no argument with that sentiment. We wished we had more time to spend in a country whose name means "high and clear" and which is often called "Land of the Morning Calm."

Enthusiasm, appreciation and participation were the watchwords at the kite festival. Local visitors showed appreciation for the spectacular kites of the visitors, which included among many others: New Zealander Peter Lynn's giant Trilobite and Octopus, German Jürgen Ebbinghaus' stunting frog, Italian Silvio Maccherozzi's multicelled star, Australian Michael Alvares' bright boxes and American Carl Crowell's undulating arch of small diamond kites.

But *everyone* seemed to be flying kites.

"Kite flying has been a part of Korean life since the days of the Three Kingdoms (57 BC–AD 668). It has been passed down from generation to generation as a game embodying the Korean spirit. It has also been used over the years as a tool during wartime and as a traditional means of 'flying away' bad luck," wrote Taejon Mayor Sun-Keel Hong in the festival program.

The festival was timed to the first full moon of the lunar year, a traditional kite-flying period. And the free event offered giveaway kites to visitors: a traditional Asian square (about 12 inches a side) made of Tyvek-like paper bearing the festival's logo, flown with wing streamers and a long plastic tail. After patiently standing in long lines to receive their kites, parents and kids squatted everywhere, affixing spars and streamers

with tape, then punching holes to tie on a two-legged bridle. How many visitors to an American kite festival would have the patience for such an involved assembly?

But the kites flew splendidly, taking a high angle and easily weathering the sudden gusts of Saturday afternoon, whistling down



**A father picks out a kite for his little girl, from one of a half-dozen vendors who sold traditional and modern kites in the "Kite Village" pavilion set up at the Expo park.**



**A Korean team flier prepares for a duel with his six-pronged reel.**

river ahead of a storm front. (Steady rain would finally arrive at about 4 pm but, thankfully, wear itself out overnight. Sunday was cloudy and cool, but with clean, moderate winds.)

A half dozen local vendors sold kites in the pavilion designated as a Kite Village. Included were many traditional center-holed, paper Korean fighters, some elaborately painted and others bearing the striking red-and-blue yin/yang symbol that adorns the Korean flag. The cost ranged from 4,000 won (about \$5) to 15,000 won (\$18). The distinctive wooden reels of Korea, spooled with a fine and colorful linen line, sold from 10,000 won (\$12) to 20,000 won (\$26). Also selling briskly were plastic deltas, Mylar Koreans and an entry-level plastic two-line delta stunter.

Many visitors brought their own kites too, and the result was a sky perpetually filled with kites—both on the designated flying fields along the river and in the expansive parking lots of the Expo park. For example, in one lot, an elderly man sent up a train of at least 40 small diamond kites and followed them with a half dozen life-size human figures, painted on tattered paper and carefully unfolded from the back of a minivan.



**The fighter team from Hong Kong—a flier squats to manipulate his twin-handled reel on his thighs, rolling it up and back to achieve astonishing maneuverability. Behind him another flier shows another way they hold the reel.**

### Getting There is Part of It

My wife Debbie and I were on our first trip to an international kite festival. The event for us began on Friday, in a three-hour transit from the KNTA offices in downtown Seoul to Taejon. We boarded a bus crammed with happy members of the Japan Kite Association, who had landed that afternoon at K'imp'o Airport where, incidentally, the international arrivals baggage area is decorated on one wall with traditional Korean fighter kites.

With a mix of sign language and broken English, one gentleman asked if we—the only Westerners on the bus—were also kite-fliers involved in the festival. Our acknowledgement drew claps and handshakes. A man seated across the aisle tugged at my arm and asked if Debbie and I were married (as translated by his seatmate).

I said yes, and he—Koseki Akira, who headed the Japan delegation—ceremonially presented Debbie a gift: a miniature Korean fighter he had made, with a heart-shaped hole in the center. Of thin paper with a single bamboo spar down the centerline, the kite measured just 3½ by 4½ inches, not counting twin tails of transparent plastic. Debbie would symbolically cement the international gesture by flying the gift two



weeks later in Washington, D.C. at the 30th Annual Smithsonian Kite Festival.

Incidentally, bus rides on freeways in Korea are not that different than in the United States: bumper-to-bumper traffic leaving the city and, 90 minutes into the trip, a pit stop at a rest area beside the limited-access roadway. The differences: On the New Jersey Turnpike the toilets are not ceramic orifices flush with the floor, and you can't get boiled noodles and crunchy rice cakes from sidewalk vendors, nor barley tea (along with Coke or Pepsi) in the coin-operated drink machines.

Also seated near us on the bus, attired neatly in a suit and tie but wearing a baseball cap adorned with kite pins, was the legendary figure of Korean kiteflying, Yoo Sang Roe, the 93-year-old chairman of the Korean Folk Kite Preservation Association. I had the unexpected honor of serving with him on the judging panel for the Creative Kite Competition, and left Taejon with a pair of treasured fighter kites bearing his signature (which I

But politics had no place on the flying fields, where the energetic Taipei Kite Association, from Taiwan's capital city, flew a variety of impressive kites.

We also learned from our Korean guide that Korea and Japan were at that time still competing sharply for the 2002 World Cup soccer tournament. Further, a visit to the Korean National Museum in Seoul revealed the depth of the long animosity between those two nations.

But in Taejon, Koreans and Japanese engaged in conflict only in the sky with kites. What's more, also participating in the kite fighting tournament was a well-orga-

bearing the hopeful words "World Without War" and adorned with fresh flowers.

Korean fliers on both days sent up an impressive train of figure kites that included a half-dozen in the shape of vegetables, followed by the structure of a hut, with two seated people apparently dining. From it flew a banner of Korean script reading: "The body and the Earth are one."

Kyung-Ha Lee, executive vice president of the KNTO, provided the translation. He explained the banner emphasized the wholesome benefits of people eating their native foods—such as Koreans eating Korean products. Was this perhaps a subtle retort to the invasion of McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Popeyes and Baskin-Robbins outlets we saw all over Seoul and Taejon?

Lee also explained the multiple dishes of the traditional Korean meal that highlighted Saturday night's banquet, sponsored by the mayor of Taejon. Served in an array of small bowls, the meal included the spicy kimchee (pickled cabbage) and other high-



Left, a local family assembles the free paper diamond kite. This wasn't so easy a job—it required much taping of spars and attaching of tail, wing streamers and bridle. But they all flew well.



The giant Octopus of New Zealander Peter Lynn had a difficult festival. First it crashed into the Kapchon River, and here it's pictured back in the air, lifted from the water. In the background is the Taejon skyline where buildings are decorated with murals. The next day the tentacled beast came down on top of a beautiful train of long-tailed kites.

also would fly at the Smithsonian festival in Washington). His vigor and delight in the kite-filled skies was infectious.

### No Politics but Veggies

The modern, Western-style Riviera Hotel in the Yusong Resort area of Taejon—famous for its natural healing hot springs—served as festival headquarters. On cable television we watched Chinese naval maneuvers off the shores of Taiwan, and in the English-language *Korea Times* read more news of the threat of war between the Communist mainland and the off-shore Republic of China.



A study in contrast: A local boy carries his small, simple plastic kite past Silvio Maccherozzi's complex multicellular construction.

nized Chinese team from Hong Kong, the British protectorate soon to return to Chinese control.

The only remotely political messages found on the flying fields were these:

Extroverted kitemaker Prinya Sukchid of Thailand—he calls himself "Superman," dressing the part in red and blue tights complete with cape—tried to keep aloft a large kite in the shape of a military tank,

ly seasoned vegetable dishes, jellyfish, assorted raw fish, the tangy broiled beef dish bulgogi, stewed beef ribs, stewed eel, rice, beef soup and fresh fruit.

After dinner, the kite auction conducted by a young man identified as Korea's leading standup comic was upstaged by Michael Alvares and Peter Lynn singing a duet of "Waltzing Matilda" and a demonstration by Mr. Sukchid—now arrayed in a spiffy white

uniform of traditional Thai formal wear—showing off his double-jointed knuckles.

### Hong Kong Style on Show

Never call a Hong Kong fighting kite an Indian fighter.

"It is a Chinese kite," said an indignant member of the Hong Kong team, when I asked if the small, tissue-paper kite he was preparing to fly in Sunday morning's tournament was shaped on the Indian model. Closer inspection revealed the fragile-seeming Chinese kites, barely a foot wide, are perhaps slightly squatter than the familiar Indian and also feature a more rounded and stubbier tail, almost in the shape of an upside down heart.

But you'd never mistake a Chinese kite-flier's reel and technique for the Indian model. I'd never seen nor read of this fighting style.

The Hong Kong fliers use a wide reel (8–10" or so) and palm its long handles back and forth on their thighs to release or retrieve line.

A mystery explained! Upon arriving at the dueling area, in a puddled parking lot set safely aside from other fliers, we had noticed a number of fliers wearing the oddest blue jeans we'd ever seen. Strips of rubber padding, like automobile tire treads, were glued on the thighs.

"Is that to protect them from the cutting line?" asked Debbie, although it seemed an unlikely place for glass-coated string to pose a threat.

Then we saw a flier launch his kite. He held the madly spinning diamond up to catch the air, then allowed the line to unwind as he stood holding the reel in both hands. He periodically stopped the rotation momentarily, and the solid green kite would dart upward before being allowed to take more line, again spinning rapidly. Once it reached altitude, the flier squatted on his heels and laid the reel across his thighs—and sent the kite diving and darting with surprisingly subtle rolling movements. (The Hong Kong style is explored in depth in Pierre Fabre's article elsewhere in this issue.)

### Revelations in Kite Dueling

The Hong Kong technique was just one revelation among many in the Taejon kite dueling competition. A longtime fan-from-afar, I had never actually witnessed a real fight with cutting line, and the tournament surprised me in almost every particular. Such as:

- **The distinctive variety of the kites.**

In addition to the Hong Kong diamond that only looked like an Indian fighter, the tournament included the traditional center-hole rectangles of the Koreans (*Kite Lines*, Spring 1993) and an entirely new kite to me, flown by the Japanese team and called a "tahara," according to kite-fighting chronicler Fabre.



Two Japanese kitefliers prepare their "tahara" fighters. Note the corner-to-corner cross sticks, a bowed spar at the top and the bamboo hummer atop the upper spar. The taharas fly long edge uppermost, as opposed to the Korean fighters' vertical orientation.

Half-again larger than the Korean, the tahara is also of rectangular shape and similarly sparred: two bamboo sticks cross the kite diagonally, and a flexible top spar is bowed slightly by a string across the back. A center spar, not bowed, crosses the bamboo spine, but there is no hole in the center. The kite flies in the opposite orientation from the Korean—that is, with the long side uppermost. The upper spars are topped by a bamboo hummer, and in a sharp climb or dive, the kites give off an intimidating, high-pitched whistle.

(We saw a fair number of Chinese kites triumph in individual duels, but never saw a Japanese win, although we did not see the whole tournament. The larger kites seemed a little less nimble and particularly vulnerable to a climb-from-below attack.)

- **The techniques of flying.** I was astonished that the same purpose—maneuvering a kite in combat—can be achieved in such different ways.

The Hong Kong kites and the Koreans depend on reels, rarely laying hands on string. The Korean reel, with four, six or even eight spindles arrayed around a long-handled core, takes up and releases surprising lengths of line in deft hands. The Koreans also enhance the rotation effect by a pumping motion, sometimes drawing the reel from above eye level to the knees in a quick jab that will send a kite climbing or traversing like a bullet.

The Japanese fliers, however, use no reels at all. Instead, the flier controls the line with both hands, uncoiling it from a woven (or sometimes plastic) basket near his feet. (Several of the Japanese wore thick tape around the index fingers of their right hands, to prevent friction cuts where the line crosses rapidly.) A squatting helper often tends the line that piles at a flier's feet.

We also learned that the Korean fighters coat their line with a paste that includes diamond dust rather than ground glass.



A luminous art deco-like kite by Ton Geers of The Netherlands pictures a reclining woman and the caption, "She screamed/She was falling down." Spectators in background sit on a concrete embankment to take in the foreigners' creations.

- **The altitude.** Duels take place surprisingly high in the sky, with the kite shapes difficult to make out and the tactics even harder to discern. More than once I was certain a line cross had been achieved when it became obvious both kites were still clear of each other.

- **The rules.** Keun-Soo Kim, a deputy director of the KNTD and the man in charge of the kite fighting, explained the usual format:

Standing about 10 yards apart, two fighters launch their kites until achieving roughly the same altitude. The duel

begins upon a whistle from an official.

The time limit for each duel is five minutes, but Mr. Kim noted, "usually, it is over in two minutes." In fact, we rarely saw a fight last even that long, and a few were concluded in 10 decisive seconds.

The tournament followed an elimination structure, with one-on-one duels taking place simultaneously in five locations. A match between Korean and Hong Kong fliers might be followed by a Hong Kong/Japan duel, and so on. The combatants were matched through a system we never quite sorted out. It seemed to require a period of vociferous discussion, in which members of each national team clustered around a chart board to punch fingers at the pairings written there. But Kim managed to maintain both his aplomb and authority.

### *Creative Kite Competition*

Demonstration flying by guests and enthusiastic participation by the locals certainly dominated the festival, but a Creative Kite Competition took place over both days, and the invitation to be a judge offered an interesting insight into kite evaluation.

We were given sheets of registered participants, listed by numbers that matched cloth vests the fliers wore on the field. In each category (two for Koreans only and one for international fliers) we judged kites by three standards: originality (worth a maximum of 20 points), size and creativity (up to 50) and buoyancy and stability (up to 30).

Dressed in bright red down vests—thankfully very warm!—and wearing blue festival baseball caps, we spread across the field to eyeball the kites at designated times on both afternoons. My guide, Jae-Sok Park, KNTD manager of overseas marketing for Europe and the Americas, had quite a workout as he ran back and forth to check the numbers of competitors whose kites I was watching.

Three magnificent hawk-like birds flown in train by Japan's Rikuro Kubo took the top prize in the foreign category, but fliers of both modern and traditional forms won places on the award podium at Sunday's closing ceremonies.

### *Kites Fly in Any Language*

During Saturday's mass ascension, I stood beside a Korean boy of 10 or 11. He flew a black plastic shark of delta design beside my six-foot nylon delta (by Maryland's Kite Loft chain) and we chattered back and forth, he in Korean and I in English.

The words we didn't understand—but the kites spoke, and we communicated perfectly. ◇



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# Four Lines & Two Lines, Indoors & Out

By Steve McKerrow

## Cold Fingers & Long Hours

The following accomplishment was submitted in hopes of being declared a record. Because no such record exists, we prefer to salute it as an unusual achievement. —Editor

Can a box kite be made to perform as a stunt kite? Dick Curran of Edgewood, Washington determined to find out. On Aug. 23, at the Washington State International Kite Festival in Long Beach, he flew a "wine rack" cellular kite on quad lines for 8½ hours. He employed a kite with eight-inch-deep panels, made by himself and his wife, Georgan, of half-ounce ripstop and tapered graphite spars cut from fishing pole blanks.

Curran explains his box reverses the usual quad-line control system: Pulling the bottom lines makes the kite climb while the top lines make it descend; and pulling right or left lines makes the kite go the opposite direction.

Despite freezing fingers from unseasonably cold temperatures and blustery winds, Curran, 62, says he could have continued the flight—but the kite could not. A tear in a seam opened four hours into the flight and gradually enlarged, until additional seams began to give way and a batten broke out of a pocket, finally bringing the kite down.

"We did have some problems," Curran writes in his account submitted to *Kite Lines*.

Four hours into the flight, for example, another stunt flier's lines brought the kite to the ground. Mistakenly believing interference was forgiven in other record attempts, he was flying again in about two minutes.

"In the next four hours the kite hit the sand twice: once when I lowered it to a stationary position just above the sand, for a photograph, and a drop of wind let it fall, and again when I dropped one of the handles," he notes.

He took no breaks, however, and recounts, "I had to jog in place to keep warm, and swing my arms to force blood to my hands...which were losing their grip."

Curran says flying such a cellular box on quad lines requires much more movement of the handles, up to a foot, whereas conventional quad-liners respond to mere inches of handle motion.

The kite can be made to move left, right, up and down, permitting passes across a wide wind window, with squares



Dick Curran flies his "wine rack" kite on quad lines extended from four-foot handles, which he cuts from a "nine-bark" bush; the limbs characteristically include a "kick," or forward thrust angle.

and figure eights possible. However, Curran did not loop or spin the kite. He points out his unusually long handles are an important control element. He settled upon the four-foot length after earlier using hand-cut models of two and three feet.

"The four-foot handle provides enough line movement with just wrist angular motion that I do not have to have exaggerated arm travel," he explains.

Curran says he began experimenting with quad-line control because his boxes would fly right or left into other fliers' lines.

His remedy? "Make the four leg bridles longer, i.e. to your hands, pull the line separately and see what happens."

## 2 Lines, 5 + Hours, Indoors

An Englishman is claiming a record indoor duration flight for a two-line kite.

On November 5, Rick Wallington, of Moordown, Bournemouth, Dorset, kept his kite aloft for 5 hours 42 minutes 59 seconds. (He flew a standard Black Hole Star Sister delta stunter, a 46½-inch-span kite by Eolo-Gayla Industries.)

The previous record, of 3 hours 0 minutes 0 seconds, was set in March this year by Greg Eynon, also in England, at the Way on High Indoor Kite Festival in Kington, Herefordshire. ◇

## Is it a record yet?

Few could doubt it is the behemoth of kites—but no, at press time New Zealander Peter Lynn's gargantuan Megabite had not been officially declared world's largest by the *Guinness Book of Records*.

A matter of mere application, explains Jenny Cook, of Peter Lynn Kites Ltd.

Although enlarged since its undulating debut at Epcot Center in Florida in September, 1995—and having flown since at other festivals, including in Indonesia and New Zealand—the kite has not been formally submitted for review by the record-keepers.

Says Cook, "Our thinking is that it can be used as a promotional draw card" by a festival that wishes to set up the official recognition procedures. Negotiations to do so are underway, but no details were shared.

The world record thus remains as set by the Dutch team in 1981, of 553 sq m (5,952 sq ft). Cook says the Megabite now measures 630 sq m.

A *Kite Lines* calculation of its size as flown at Epcot Center last year (body portion only, not flapping parts and tail) came up with something less than the Dutch record, although well over 400 sq m.

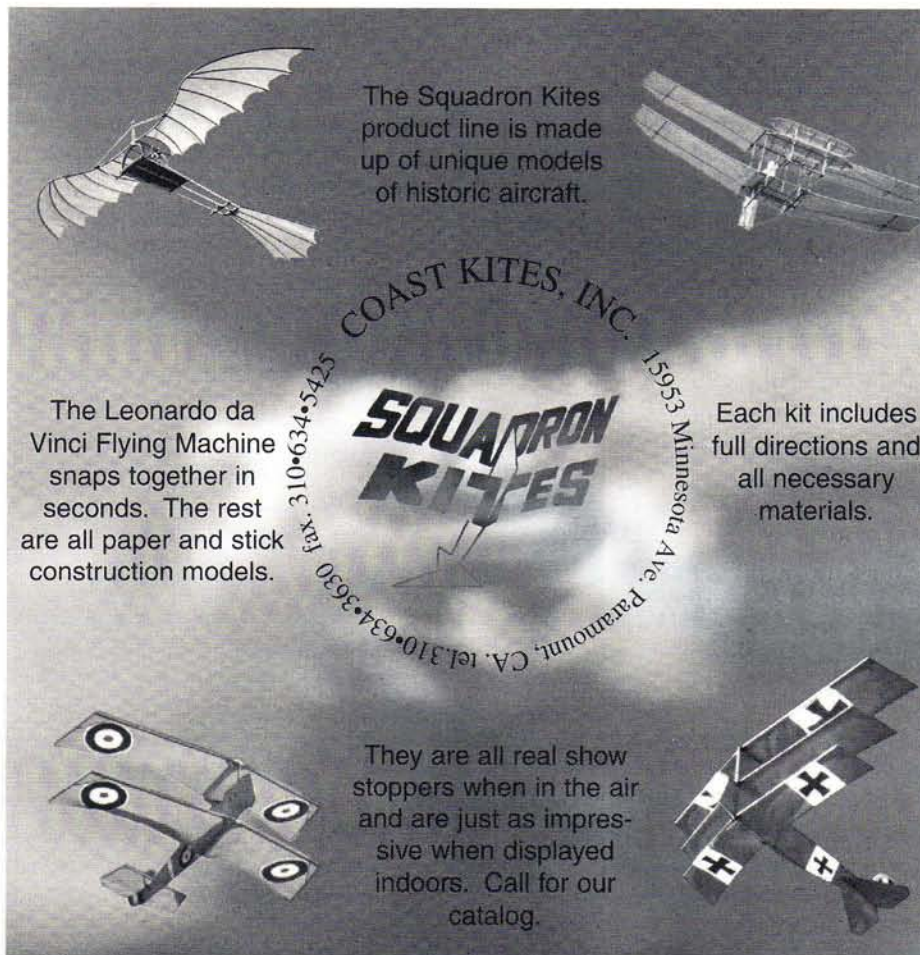
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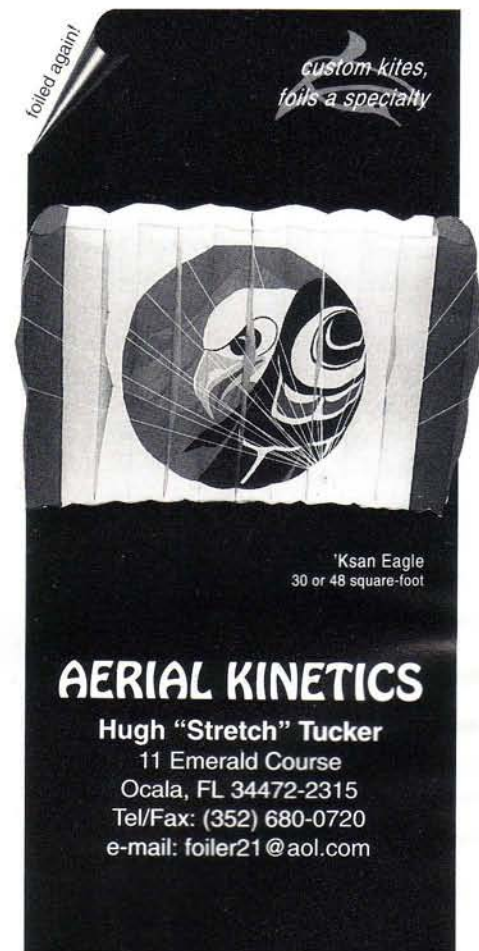
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# Speeding Lines:

## A Weekend in Hong Kong

Article and Photographs by Pierre Fabre



"A wonder for the eyes..." That's how Tony Wolfenden, an Australian designer and kitemaker, described Hong Kong to me before my departure. And indeed, I found one of the most amazing cities in Asia—as well as a thriving, distinctive form of kite fighting.

### City of the World

Had I not met Wah King and Alfred Lee, members of the Hong Kong Kite Fighting Association, a few months earlier at the Indonesian Kite Festival in Jakarta, I would not have suspected kiteflying is a current pastime in Hong Kong. But the technique they demonstrated against Indonesian fighters persuaded me I had to see it on their home territory—a resolve I realized with a weekend stopover visit in late 1995.

Hong Kong is a mixture of Chinese and Western cultures, a world capital of business, that is still expanding through reclamation of shrinking Victoria Harbor. Since Hong Kong was officially declared a British colony by Queen Victoria in 1843, population has increased to 6 million inhabitants (98% Chinese) and the city boasts a gross per capita income higher than Japan's. The territory actually consists of three parts: Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories (*see map, next page*).

High-rise buildings, electric power lines, traffic and highways have all pushed kites away from town. In addition, the location of Kai Tak International Airport in the heart of Kowloon forces restriction of kites to more remote places.

Lee found a guest house for me in Causeway Bay, a busy shopping area on Hong Kong Island. The streets were packed

the late Saturday evening of my arrival, and I dove into the crowd, filling my eyes and mind with double-decker tramways, neon lights and thousands of happy faces.

## The Kite Forest

On Sunday, as Lee drove us across the Harbor to Kowloon, he estimated there are about 200 experts in kite fighting in Hong Kong. They come together whenever they have free time, including every weekend, on holidays and during lunch breaks. Although only one kiteflying field, Tai Au Mun, is officially recognized by the government, other places are well-known kiting spots.

We first visited Nai Chung, a beachside flying site offering a splendid view of the Tolo Channel. But what struck me first as we drove into the parking area was the adjacent hillside. Hundreds of lost kites decorated the trees, as if they were large fruit!

Dozens of families and other fliers tried in a light wind to launch their kites, including plastic deltas, Chinese decorative silk kites and paper fighters fitted with newspaper tails for easier handling.

Most experienced fliers stood near their cars along a parking lot. Each was equipped with the special gear needed for flying fighters in the Hong Kong style: a sophisticated reel, black sunglasses and wrist and ankle protection to avoid getting cut by the lines. The most unusual part of this outfit was the kiteflier's jeans, worn over regular trousers. A strip of thick black rubber was glued on each thigh.

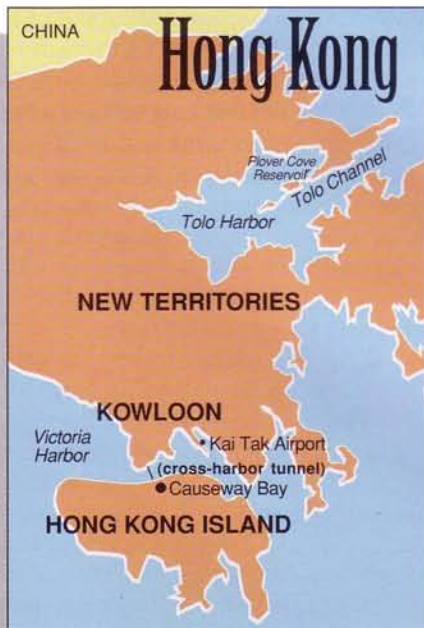
Three hawkers on the field were selling kites, as well as colored abrasive line and reels. The oldest and most famous, Tam Pak, is the only one who still produces some



Right, every detail has significance in this customized kiteflier's gear. Leather ankle protections help prevent cuts if his feet get entangled in the cutting line left all over the flying ground.



On weekends, plastic single-line kites and aggressive fighters manage to get along on the same crowded field.



Above, at Nai Chung kitefighters literally fly from their cars' trunks.

Left, in the kite forest of Nai Chung, hundreds of lost kites spread a dangerous web of cutting line over the nearby trees.

Opposite, printed Indonesian fighters fitted with paper tails are favored by beginners.





From top clockwise: Nobody seems to care about all the kite trash left at the magnificent Tai Au Mun site.

The top-pro gear: lavish leather-coated jeans and extra narrow spool.

Car batteries power the electric motors that wind thousands of feet of cutting line on the spools. An array of Hong Kong style spools is shown.

Tam, 75, began making kites in 1950 and learned from his master, Ngan Che. His fine homemade Malay fighter sells for five times the cost of a regular fighter imported from China.



of the kites he sells. All the fighter kites sold in Hong Kong are imported from China and Indonesia, with the exception of Tam's elegant Malay fighter. Of wider wingspan, this style of kite used to be favored because it provided more tension on the line during fights. But the newest Hong Kong style makes line speed more crucial than line tension, and competitive fliers now prefer smaller and more maneuverable kites.

A drive of almost an hour along a winding, scenic road brought us to Tai Au Mun Park, the best known and only recognized kite field in Hong Kong, upon the deforested top of a hill overlooking the sea.

In late afternoon, dozens of kites were still in the air. I was surprised to see how fighter kites and regular single-line kites got along in this fairly small area. Fighters were sent hundreds of yards away, their lines coming out of the reels almost horizontally. Some would dive toward the ocean and become dancing dots of color against the gray mountains, while silhouettes of airliners rose from Hong Kong's distant airport.

## The Hong Kong Style

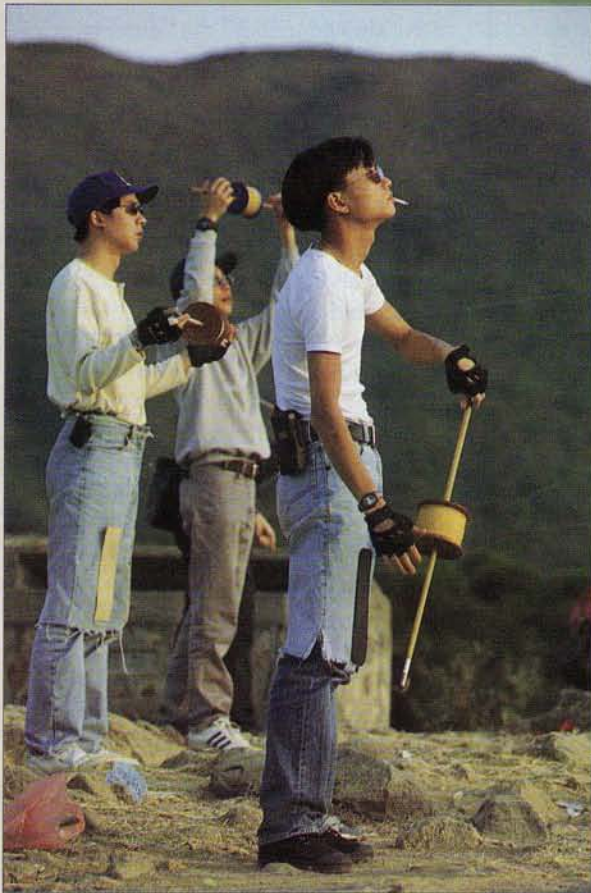
Kite fighter Anthony Yeung continued my introduction to the Hong Kong style. Anthony ranked eighth in the individual category of the 1995 competition organized by the kite fighters' association, and said his yearly consumption is around 4,000 kites! He affords his hobby by buying blank fighters in bulk, costing about 50 HK cents each.

Held between September and November, the 1995 tournament drew 80 entrants in the "individual" category and 13 groups of six participants for the team fights.

Most kitefliers don't even know each other by their full names. Well-known nicknames include "Sai Ma" (small twin), and his brother "Dai Ma" (big twin). A man named Wai, the 1995 champion, is better known as "Teak Lik Wai" (Steel Power Wai).

I believe the kind of kite they fly was brought to southern China only after it appeared elsewhere, in India, Thailand, Indonesia or Malaysia. If it had started in China, why would it have remained unknown in the other provinces?

The shape is close to the famous Indian fighter: a lozenge with two bamboo sticks, featuring a bowed and supple cross-spar. Yet it shows several differences: No reinforcing line frames the edges of its paper sail and only the leading edge is hemmed. All kites are about the same size (12"-12½") and have a very small, rounded fin tail, which is not reinforced with small bam-



From the top clockwise: Kite fighting in the Hong Kong style probably requires too much physical strength for young children or old men. It seems the sport is quite popular among trendy young people.

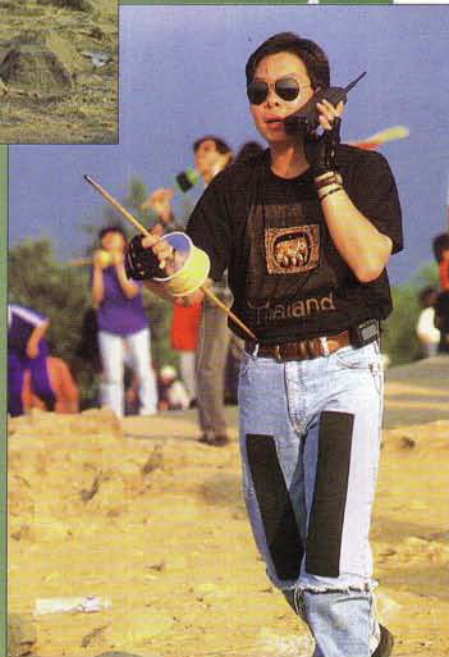
Tai Au Mun Park is the only designated kite-flying site in Hong Kong. On weekends, kiting and barbecue parties seem to get along pretty well.

Cellular phones and/or pagers seem to be just as essential as sunglasses to most kitefliers. Maybe they want to persuade themselves they are still at work.

Compared to the Indian or Indonesian standards, bridling is surprisingly short in Hong Kong: 4½ inches for the upper leg and about 6 inches for the lower, which is attached only 4 inches below the spar.



Experts split and snap a small piece of bamboo from the bottom of the spine and use it to punch holes and push the bridling thread through the sail.



boo sticks as on its Indian counterpart. The paper fighters are extremely light, but strong enough to withstand the extreme speed at which they are reeled in during fights. Very short bridling marks a final difference compared to other similar fighters.

The standard kiteflier's equipment reflects Hong Kong's international trading status. The kites are made in China from paper made in Norway, and the ball-bearing reels, although made in Hong Kong, are wound with cutting line from Indonesia.

The reel consists of a long rod which has a fairly narrow spool set in the middle. Originally made of teak, the most expensive reels favored by experts are now more commonly made of a solid nylon spool turned on a lathe, fitted on a 2½-foot rod of woven fiberglass. A set of eight tiny ball bearings is screwed into each end, to accelerate free spinning of the reel, especially useful when winding in fallen line after a lost fight. To provide better friction, V-shaped grooves are cut with a saw along the section of the fiberglass rod which rolls over the rubber thigh pads. The spool can hold up to 5,000 meters of glass-covered cotton thread.

Some say that because fliers don't hold the line in hand they have lost the feeling of the kite—lost contact with its soul—and reduced kite fighting to a mechanical action. Nevertheless, a unique technique has clearly emerged here, as original as those in India, Thailand, Korea, Brazil, Cuba or Japan.

I was told a few experts make large single-line kites for themselves, but I didn't meet any. Lee told me they gather occasionally on the drive along Plover Cove Reservoir, New Territories. Stunt kites are rare in Hong Kong—lack of space, hilly landscapes and curly winds work against them—but, I was told some foreigners had been seen flying some.

Small plastic deltas provide the most common kite for beginners. On the kite fields I also saw a few classic Chinese silk or paper kites (butterfly, goldfish, etc.). These can be bought in the sports departments of some big Chinese stores. In one store I saw a 100-foot Chinese dragon for sale, hanging just above the tennis gear.

## Final Impressions

I was struck most strongly by how kiteflying manages to thrive in Hong Kong, despite the shortage of locations. It provides average citizens living in crowded high-rises an escape from the noise and pollution that is so much a part of their daily lives. No doubt the popularity of kiteflying won't be affected when the British colony reverts to China. ◇

IT WORKS FOR ME

## Hook & Bait

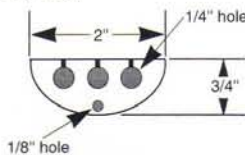
### 1 Another Hook-Up for Your Sky Laundry

From Dave Watson, Rochester, New York:

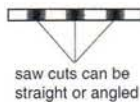
Attaching spinners, drogues and other sorts of sky laundry can be time consuming. I've created a small and lightweight line hanger that works well for me. It can be made from almost any type of material: wood, plexi-glass, fiberglass, particle board or metal. I attach a swivel or string loop through a 1/8" hole to connect to the laundry (see diagram).

Passing the flying line between the saw cuts in each of the three holes will secure it. The pull of the kite will create tension on the hanger to prevent it from coming loose. Make sure the saw cuts into the 1/4" holes are wide enough for the flying line to pass through. This is the perfect solution for your sky laundry blues!

Front View



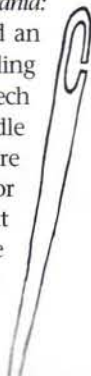
Top View



### 2 Bait That Line

From Todd Little, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania:

When building kites I often need an extra large needle for inserting bridling into difficult places or restringing leech line. I use a baiting needle, a needle with a partially open eye. They are much easier to thread, especially for thicker line. You can find them at fishing supply stores. (If you're squeamish, don't ask what they're really used for.)



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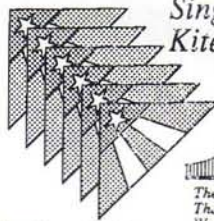
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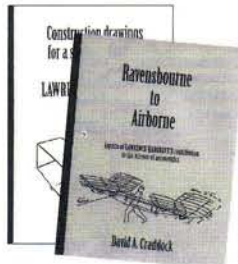
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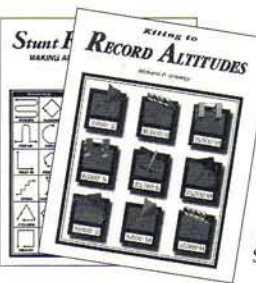


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Richard P. Synergy's self-published books convey lots of information and enthusiasm: **Kiting to Record Altitudes** tells everything that can go wrong with altitude efforts. Softcover, 72 pp., \$15.95  
**Stunt Kite Basics** covers safety, social aspects, equipment and maneuvers (32 in all). Emphasizes success in competitions. Softcover, 142 pp., \$15.95

Very popular video + book (not shown): **Kite Crazy** (the book) by Carol Thomas. Plans for fighters, dual- and quad-liners. Reliable text, black/white drawings. Softcover, 176 pp., \$25.95  
**Kite Crazy** (the video) by SOMA Film & Video. Famous kites teach how to make and fly 1-, 2- and 4-line kites. Clear instructions and lovely footage, VHS format, 102 min., \$34.95  
Special book/video package \$57.95



**Fishing for Angels: The Magic of Kites** by David Evans. A very pretty, colorful book. Great kite lore and flying tips (just avoid the kite plans). Softcover, 63 pp., \$12.95

**Go Fly a Kite: The Kite Builder's Manual** by John Bostel (not shown). Plans for 12 novel kites; pleasing drawings, but lacking dimensions and using old-fashioned techniques. Softcover, 80 pp., \$12.95

## From CHINA . . .

**Chinese Artistic Kites** by Ha Kuiming and Ha Yiqi. The celebrated kites of the Ha family of Beijing. History, structure, decoration, flight. Over 80 kites in rich color. Good English translation. Limited supplies. Softcover, 160 pp., \$16.95



## From DENMARK . . .

**NOW reprinted!** **Drager der Flyver (Kites to Fly)** by Dr. Hvirvelvind, in Danish. Considered a classic, this 1986 book was out of print for several years, but is back by popular demand. Plans for about 10 kites (including a raincoat kite), plus variations of each; materials, accessories, flying, resources. Charming cartoon drawings, many lovely full-color photos. A fresh book full of character. Limited supplies. Softcover, 80 pp., \$29.95



## From ENGLAND . . .

**A Beginner's Guide to Flying Indian Fighter Kites** by Shirley Turpin. A well-compressed compendium of good advice, gleaned from Stafford Wallace. Simple but adequate black/white drawings. Softcover, 18 pp., \$4.95



## ENGLAND continued . . .



**Not an Indian Fighter Kite: a personal evolution of rip-stop fighter kites** by Geoff Crumplin. Although imperfectly organized and edited, this book still contains jewels: about 20 kite plans and building tips that work. Softcover, 70 pp., \$14.95

Mark Cottrell's books (not shown) are homely and self-published—but they are also honest, entertaining and useful:  
**Kite Aerial Photography**. Three kite plans and comparison of trade-offs in rigs, with source lists. Softcover, 44 pp., \$10.95  
**Swept Wing Stunt Kites**. Design elements analyzed; 4 plans. Softcover, 43 pp., \$11.95  
**The Kite Store Book of Kites**. 10 original Cottrell kite plans 5.25" disk for computer design. Softcover, 48 pp., \$13.95



**Box Kites Making and Flying** by Dr. Bill Cochran. Plans for 17 types: Hargrave, Conyne, tetrahedral plus three Cody styles. A little history and aerodynamics; building methods out of date. Color photos, attractive layout. Hardcover, 96 pp., \$34.95

**Kite Cookery** by Don Dunford (not shown). Plans for four kites, building methods; how to design. Includes Dunford's idiosyncratic aerodynamics ("the wind is like...giant sausages"). Softcover, 47 pp., \$5.95

## The Kite Lines Bookstore . . . Continued

### ENGLAND continued. . .



**AVAILABLE AGAIN!** (while they last) *The Penguin Book of Kites* by David Pelham. Called "The Bible," first published in 1976 and still recommended for all kitefliers. Plans for more than 100 kites plus solid, well-written and -researched aerodynamics and history. Color in half the book. Index; bibliography. Softcover, 228 pp., \$28.95



*Kites: A Practical Handbook* by Ron Moulton and Pat Lloyd. Solid information in slight disorder. Excellent drawings of 25-plus kites, including the Hewitt Flexkite, Chapman Navy Dove, Pearson Roller and Benson Scorch 2. Fine chapters on sport kites and parachuting teddy bears. Outdated appendixes. Color sections. Softcover, 255 pp., \$27.95

### From FRANCE . . .



**NEW!** *Cerfs-volants, L'art en ciel* (Kites, Art in the Sky) by Eric Domage and Marc Domage, in French. Almost a coffee table book in size and color, this volume treats kitemaking as a legitimate art form. Profiles of Streeter, Matisse, Asker, Fabre, Brockett, Bodóczy, Cotteceau, Peters and Gressier, with reflective interviews of each. Softcover, 126 pages. \$49.95

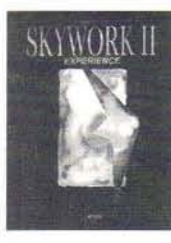
### FRANCE continued. . .

**NEW!** *Photographie Aérienne Avec Cerf-Volant: (Kite Aerial Photography: How Is It Done?)* by Christian Becot, in French. Some tested, practical methods of kite aerial photography are described and compared. Includes drawings of systems and details (no kite plans) and bibliography. Limited supplies. Softcover, 52 pp., \$16.95



### From GERMANY. . .

*Skywork II Experience* by Christine Schertel, in German. New volume following original *Skywork Experience*. Plans for 12 original, tested designs: nine stunters and three cellular kites, including a Hargrave, Cody and the "Revolver." Attractive paintings instead of photographs. Softcover, 52 pp., \$19.95



*Leistungsstarke Lenkdrachen zum Nachbauen (High Performance Stunt Kites to Make)* by Peter Rieleit, in German. Plans for 12 original dual-liners (six deltas, three foils and three figure kites). A stimulating, motivating, creative work. Includes fine charts plus tips on materials, sewing, knots and flying. Softcover, 96 pp., plus a full-size fold-out airfoil pattern, \$24.95



### GERMANY continued. . .



Books by Werner Backes, in German, compact and reliable, have good ideas, instructions, color photographs and drawings: *Drachen aus aller Welt (Kites from Everywhere)*. A 40-kite international sampler, including the Cloud Seeker, Cody, tetrahedral, rhombus and multicell boxes, parafoil, Roloplan and rokkaku. Also plans for trains, reels, aerial photography. Softcover, 128 pp., \$19.95 *Neue drachen zum Nachbauen (New Kites to Replicate)*. Plans for 20 kites (including a diamond stunter) from available materials (good for workshops) plus techniques and accessories. Softcover, 128 pp., \$7.95 *Drachen bauen (Kitemaking)*. Well-rounded volume of 35 kite plans plus tips and accessories. Softcover, 128 pp., \$18.95



*... und sie fliegen heute noch*—Geschichte und Geschichten um den Drachen (and They Still Fly Today—History and Tales about Kites) collected by Hans Snoek, in German. Poems, songs, tales, drawings, photos, plans from early days of Western kiting. Hardcover, 156 pp., \$34.95 *Band II (Vol. II)*, in German. Another fascinating scrapbook of kite lore. Hardcover, 156 pp., \$34.95 Both books as package, \$66.95

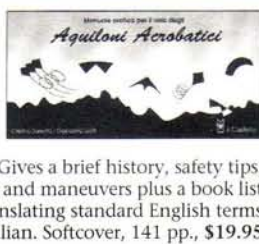
### GERMANY continued. . .

*Drachen mit Geschichte (Kites with History)* by Walter Diem and Werner Schmidt, in German. Extensively researched, faithfully reproduced models from our rich kiting history. Brogden, Gomes, Grund, Hargrave, Kuznetsov, Lamson, Lecornu, Sauls, others. Detailed plan drawings and wonderful historic photos. Hardcover, 160 pp., \$29.95



### From ITALY. . .

*Aquiloni Acrobatici (Acrobatic Kites)* by Cristina Sanvito and Giancarlo Galli, in Italian. The first Italian stunt kite book, a practical manual covering the basics and more. Graphics and drawings are neat and clear. Gives a brief history, safety tips, basic-to-advanced techniques and maneuvers plus a book list and a valuable *glossario* translating standard English terms into Italian. Softcover, 141 pp., \$19.95



*Ali nel Vento (Wings on the Wind)* by Vanny Pecchioli, in Italian. A charming basic kite book for kids, adults working with kids or newcomers to kitemaking. Plans for 13 paper and wood stick kites have clear, accurate and colorful illustrations. Softcover, 48 pp., \$19.95



### ITALY continued. . .



*Aquiloni (Kites)* by Guido Accascina, in Italian. A reliable mini encyclopedia, packed with kites in "family" groupings. Includes theory, techniques, sources, history and excellent plan drawings for 29 kites. Good printing including some color. Latest edition in standard pocketbook format. Softcover, 256 pp., \$16.95

### From JAPAN . . .



*Tezuri Omoshiro Dako Nyumon (A Primer of Interesting Handmade Kites)* by Eiji Ohashi, in Japanese. Both traditional Asian and modern designs are among these 29 easy-to-make figure and box kites by one of Japan's most inventive designers. Includes Ohashi's famous arch train. Some color photographs; fine dimensioned drawings with full details. Softcover, 100 pp., \$29.95

### From The NETHERLANDS . . .



Two stunt kite books by Servaas van der Horst and Nop Velthuisen, in English, cover all aspects of the sport in up-to-date high-tech style. Well organized and printed, the books contain excellent drawings and photos, including some in color: *Stunt Kites to Make and Fly*. The first book includes clear plans for 10 stunters, plus team flying techniques. Softcover, 96 pp., \$21.95 *Stunt Kites II: New Designs, Buggies and Boats*. Plans for 8 kites plus advice on designing your own. Good chapter on aerobatics. Emphasizes "power" kites; offers plans for a buggy boat and a buggy. Softcover, 96 pp., \$22.95 Companion diskette 2.0 for IBM-compatibles, prints out templates of the plans in *Stunt Kites II*; also simulates stunt maneuvers for visualizing your routines, \$19.95

### From SWITZERLAND . . .

*Drachenreise (Kite Journey)* by Ruedi Epple-Gass, in German. Interesting black-and-white book. Countries visited and researched include Turkey, Vietnam, Dominican Republic, spots in the South Pacific, Latin America and Europe. Political overtones—kiting's only gloomy book. A few drawings of biodegradable ethnic kites, plus poems and flying tips. Softcover, 125 pp., \$42.95



*Drachen: Spiele mit dem Wind (Kites: Playing with the Wind)* by Rainer Neuner, in German. Very attractive introductory book with many color photos. Plans for eight kites (including several genki variants) and five wind toys, geared to light winds. Appendixes. Hardcover, 131 pp., \$39.95



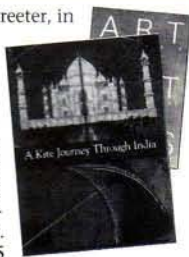
# The Kite Lines Bookstore . . . Continued

## From The UNITED STATES . . .

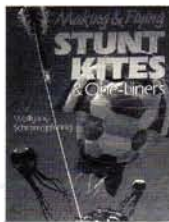
**NEW!** *A Kite Journey Through India* by Tal Streeter, in English. Finally, the long awaited successor to Streeter's *The Art of the Japanese Kite*.

He mixes engaging stories of India with excellent photos in color and black-and-white, showing surprising varieties of kites.

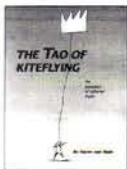
Softcover, 182 pages, \$39.95  
*Art That Flies* by Tal Streeter and Pamela Houk. An attractive anthology of kites and ideas from a 1990 Dayton (Ohio) Art Institute exhibit. No plans. *Limited supplies*. Softcover, 139 pp., \$15.95



**NOW in softcover!**  
*Making & Flying Stunt Kites & One-Liners* by Wolfgang Schimmelpennig, in English. Wide-ranging and up-to-date. Superb color drawings in color for six stunters and three single-liners. Some translation oddities. New softcover, 80 pp., \$12.95



Books by Margaret Greger are clear and trustworthy, ideal for beginner or expert: *Kites for Everyone*. Well-selected plans shown in straightforward style. Second edition. Softcover, 136 pp., \$12.95  
*More Kites for Everyone*. Some old, some new. Plans for 17 kites, from simple to complex. Softcover, 59 pp., \$9.95



*The Tao of Kiteflying: The Dynamics of Tethered Flight*, by Harm van Veen, in English. Tough questions tackled by one of Holland's most respected

kites. Clear writing and diagrams explain stability, scaling, the subtlety of the fighter kite and how to make two simple kites. Charming cartoons. Softcover, 56 pp., \$12.95

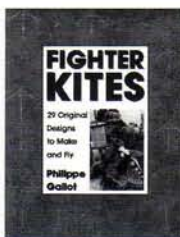


*Kiteworks* by Maxwell Eden. Revised edition. Hefty book with 50 kite plans (such as Yakko Stakk, Kaleidakite, Tri-D Box, Pterosaur) with detailed drawings based on material provided by respected designers. Sewing, aerodynamics, accessories and (un)related stories. Kite paintings, a few photos. Appendixes and index. Softcover, 287 pp., \$19.95

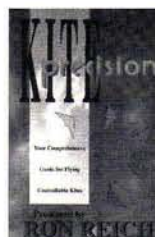


Books by Jim Rowlands have a few color photos, much black-and-white text and line drawings:  
*Soft Kites and Windssocks*. Same as British *Kites and Windssocks*. The best and most popular Rowlands work. Plans for 11 kites, including the whale, the soldier and caterpillar, plus five windssocks, five drogues and two bags. Softcover, 104 pp., \$14.95  
*The Big Book of Kites*. Same as British *Making and Flying Modern Kites*. Plans and techniques for 36 kites on the simple side. Softcover, 127 pp., \$14.95  
*One-Hour Kites*. Same as British *Kites to Make and Fly*. Plans for 25 kites including Facet, stunters. Softcover, 95 pp., \$14.95

*Fighter Kites* by Philippe Gallot, in English. Plans for 29 kites, tips on flying, tools, materials, games, accessories. Clear illustrations, adequate instructions. Watch out for metric conversions. Softcover, 96 pp., \$12.95



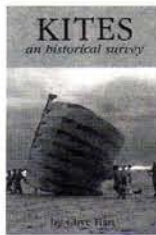
*Kite Precision* by Ron Reich. A celebrated stunt flier teaches you the Revolution, the Flexifoil, the basics of team flying and choreography. Friendly tone and touches of humor. Self-published, with lots of low-grade photographs. Softcover, 182 pp., \$14.95



Books by David Gomberg are "homemade," lacking photos, but useful:  
**NEW!** *Sport Kite Magic!* Gomberg's best book yet is clearly written, covering the newer "tricks" and indoor flying. Softcover, 126 pp., \$13.95  
*Stunt Kites!* Thorough coverage of the basics plus advice from 20 top fliers. No plans. Softcover, 88 pp., \$11.95  
*The Fighter Kite Book!* Good information plus plans for a basic fighter and rules for contests. Beware drawings of bridles. Softcover 74 pp., \$8.95



Kite books by Wayne Hosking are uneven in style: *Kites*. Lavishly printed, colorful kites. Good research on Asian kites. Makers unidentified. Softcover, 120 pp., \$15.95  
*Kites to Touch the Sky*. A homemade black/white book of 32 plans for basic plastic kites. No photos. Softcover, 96 pp., \$9.95



*Kites: An Historical Survey* by Clive Hart. Revised, second edition (1982). An invaluable reference work, includes many black-and-white illustrations and photographs. Has the most extensive kite bibliography in print. No plans. Softcover, 210 pp., \$15.95



**NEW!** Drachen Foundation exhibit catalogs by Benjamin Ruhe and Ali Fujino. Kiting personalities well described and attractively packaged.  
*World on a String*, 13 kites. Softcover, 31 pp., \$5.00  
*1991 Kite Pin Invitational*, 24 kites shown with their representative kites and pins. Softcover, 53 pp., \$5.00  
 Both books as package, \$9.00

**NEW!** *Flying the Rev and How To Do It* by Bill and Kim Taylor. Published independently of the maker of Revolution kites, this homemade book offers advice and reassurance to beginning fliers of quad-line kites. Many black-and-white drawings accompany enthusiastic if not always clear text. Softcover, 118 pp., \$9.95



*Make Your Own Kite (new kites)* by John W. Jordan. Plans for nine original kites using unusual materials, such as plastic foam, plastic plates and computer cards. Clear and amusing reading from a genuine enthusiast. Black-and-white photos. *Softcover edition out of print. Limited supply of hardcover edition*, 90 pp., \$14.95



*The Usborne Book of Kites* by Susan Mayes. Cute, practical collection is designed for kids. Six easy kites, with clear, fully illustrated step-by-step instructions. Good introduction to materials, wind and flying. Many tips, aided by animated color drawings. Softcover, 32 pp., \$5.95



*Super Kites III* by Neil Thorburn. Many designs for delta-sled-box inventions. Tested, creative techniques use available materials (mostly plastic bags and wooden dowels) and include "kite gear." Some color photos brighten this "completely handmade" book. Softcover, 123 pp., \$8.95

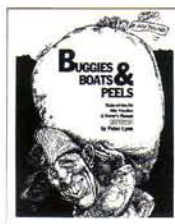


*Ski the Beach* by Stan Rogers. All you need to know about sand skiing with kites. The only book on this topic. Safety concerns are explained

throughout. Loads of charts. Scads of black-and-white photos. Homemade layout and drawings. Softcover, 100 pp., \$13.95



*25 Kites that Fly* by Leslie Hunt. Reprint of 1929 original. Plans for good old-fashioned kites (shield, elephant, yacht, etc.) in paper and wood + a clinometer. Hunt was a kitemaker for the U.S. Weather Bureau. Historical data and photographs. Softcover, 110 pp., \$3.95



*Buggies, Boats & Peels: State of the Art Kite Traction* by Peter Lynn. How to get started in kite bugging and kite-sailing. History, theory, how to "reach" (travel upwind), how and when to turn, racing tactics, kite selection, buggy maintenance. Boat traction treated with similar thoroughness. Full data on the Peter Lynn Peel. Second edition, softcover, 12 pages, \$6.95



*The Compleat Rokkaku Kite Chronicles & Training Manual*. Kite fighting in groups, for fun and entertainment! Everything about the rokkaku challenges since their start in 1983. Includes reprinted historic material from *Kite Lines*, plus three detailed plans for making the rokkaku (by Mel Govig and Lincoln Chang) using modern materials and techniques. Appendix with resources. Softcover, 20 pages, \$6.95

# ARE YOU MISSING SOMETHING?

BACK ISSUES of Kite Lines!

- Copies: **\$4.50 each** + \$1.00 each shipping
- 4 or more copies: **\$4.50 each, free shipping**

**NOTE: Endangered Issues (in italics): \$10.00 each, free shipping**

**NOW: Extinct Issues available in bound photocopies to order, \$20.00 each, free shipping**

- For a list of the major contents of each and every issue of Kite Lines, send self-addressed stamped envelope to Kite Lines, PO Box 466, Randallstown, MD 21133-0466, USA.

**B**ACK ISSUES of *Kite Lines* offer a wealth of information and ideas: plans, tips, techniques (for both single- and multiline fliers), personalities, world records, festivals, reviews—an essential living history of today's kiting, saturated with inspiring stories and designs.

No wonder back issues of *Kite Lines* are avidly collected by so many enthusiasts. You can start now with the 17 issues available while supplies last in original paper form...

• **SUMMER 1989 (Vol. 7, No. 3)**

India's kite frenzy by George Peters and Philip Morrison; Bali by Simon Freidin; major stunt kite survey; the kite capitals of the world; Sotich's Flying Wedge; Ohashi's Arch Train.

• **WINTER 1989-90 (Vol. 7, No. 4)**

China by Tal Streeter and Skye Morrison; Sloboda on Dyeing Ripstop; Bill Green, inventor of the Delta; Modifying a Parachute; Stunting a Flow Form; Nishibayashi's Bat.

• **SUMMER 1990 (Vol. 8, No. 1)**

Festivals in New Zealand, Berlin, Washington (England) and Australia; Parachute Stunter plans; Peter Lynn's Future Tech; Bobby Stanfield Climbs the Stone Mountain.

• **WINTER 1990-91 (Vol. 8, No. 2)**

*European Spectacular: Dieppe, Montpellier, Bristol, Berlin; Stunt Kite Survey; D'Alto on Whitehead (1901); Largest Eddy record; butterfly plans; power flight on suspended wire.*

• **SPRING 1991 (Vol. 8, No. 3)**

Whistling Kites of Nantong, China by Tal Streeter; Gomborg's Kite Pin Confessions; Quick & Easy Angle Estimating; Wind Shot stunter plans; record for Longest Kite.

• **SUMMER-FALL 1991 (Vol. 8, No. 4)**

Pierre Fabre in Japan; Kinnaird's Rokkaku Strategies; Bill Kocher's Obtuse Tetra; Huntington Beach Scandal; Wildwood at its Best; Jalbert obituary; Sky Gallery; Peter Malinski.

• **WINTER 1991-92 (Vol. 9, No. 1)**

Gubbio (Italy) is GaGa; The Sprint stunter contest in Italy; Richard Synergy in Poland; Tucker's Painless Parafoil plans; Sloboda on Painting Ripstop; SG: Roberto Guidori.

• **SPRING-SUMMER 1992 (Vol. 9, No. 2)**

André Cassagnes, father of French kiting; Worldclass Thailand; Natural Fibers Festival; Bill Tyrell flies high at Christmas Island; Stunter Survey; Heart kite; SG: George Peters.

• **FALL 1992 (Vol. 9, No. 3)**

Castiglione (Italy) + Le Touquet, Barcelona,

Ostia; the Arch Ribbon—historic notes, tips; Kites Over Niagara Falls; Handling Tangles; lanuzzi's Featherlight; SG: Kim Petersen.

• **WINTER 1992-93 (Vol. 9, No. 4)**

*Kite Power* by Nop Velthuisen, with traction chronology; *Fighter Kite Survey*; *Dieppe*; *Hamamatsu* by George Peters; the *GX-3*; *spray-painting nylon*; SG: the Gibians.

• **SPRING 1993 (Vol. 10, No. 1)**

Soul-Lifting Kites of Guatemala; Javanese Festival; Ed Alden's Family of Fighter Kites; celeb rokkakus; travel tips; Rameaux aeriels; quad-line Propeller; Jørgen Møller Hansen.

• **SUMMER-FALL 1993 (Vol. 10, No. 2)**

Adrenaline tour of India; István Bodóczy's asymmetry; Crowell's Cross Deck; Sac City, Iowa festival classic; kites at the Pyramids; power on ice; SG: Tony Wolfenden.

• **WINTER 1993 (Vol. 10, No. 3)**

North Sea events (Terschelling, Fanø, Scheveningen); Kite Camp Caravan; Rendez-Vous Mondial, Canada; AKA at Seaside; Sheragy's butterflies; SG: Wolfgang Schimmelpfennig.

• **SPRING-SUMMER 1994 (Vol. 10, No. 4)**

*Kite Sailing*; *South America: Colombia & Brazil*; *buggy events + Scoot Buggy & Wheels of Doom plans*; *Kevin Shannon delta*; *Australia's Bondi Beach festival*; SG: Reza Ragheb.

• **FALL 1994 (Vol. 11, No. 1)**

*Shirone's great museum*; *Korean fighters and who's who*; *Art & Ideas of Joan Montcada*; *the Thailand International*; *aerial photographer George Lawrence*; SG: Jimmy Sampson.

• **WINTER-SPRING 1995 (Vol. 11, No. 2)**

*Dieppe*; *Hargrave commemoration*; *Stockholm event*; *spar study*; *new buggies*; *Streeter on Hiroshima*; *Shannon's cicada fighter*; *Alex Mason*; *Roger Maddy*; SG: Scott Skinner.

• **SUMMER-FALL 1995 (Vol. 11, No. 3)**

*Great Festivals: New Zealand, Curaçao, Israel, Italy, Canada*; *kite artist Steve Brockett*; *The Smithsonian*; *Playsail & Windbow* by George Peters; *What Is a Kite?*; SG: Pierre Fabre.

• **WINTER-SPRING 1996 (Vol. 11, No. 4)**

*Kites of Nepal*; *Mallorca Roundtable*; *Skiting the Greenland Ice Cap*; *Kite Patents* by Ed Grauel; *Düsseldorf*, *Peter Rieleit*; *Stan Rogers*; *Gomborg on Fanø*; SG: Tom McAlister.

• **SUMMER 1996 (Vol. 12, No. 1)**

*Kite Fishing Indonesian style*; *Festival at Berck-sur-Mer*; *St. Elmo's Fire*; *Norway's Isengran Dragefestival*; *special report on power kites*; *Is Pin Collecting Dead?*

## Great extra kite stuff!



superb video of fighter kites!

**THE KNIGHTS OF THE MANJHA**  
\$36.95 plus \$3.00 shipping

The impassioned kiteflying of Asia has been spreading through the West. And the Manjha Club International has produced this colorful professional film showing the fantastic skills of India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea and Malaysia as practiced in Europe. Great variety of action, good explanations of techniques, exciting interviews with leading fliers. Mostly French with English subtitles. A delightful 26-minutes on VHS videotape cassette.

### Scott Hampton's INTERNATIONAL KITE POSTER

**\$20.00 plus \$5.00 shipping in a strong tube**

Hampton's best-yet poster shows 62 of the world's most colorful and inventive kites, mostly as seen in 1992 and 1993 at Long

Beach, Washington. Printed on heavy, high-quality paper 22" x 16" in size, this poster comes with a map so you can identify every kitemaker. Exclusively by mail in the U.S. from *Kite Lines*. Framable, great to display—a super gift.

### New & Grand! THE KITE LINES 20TH ANNIVERSARY PIN!

Identifies you with the chronicle of kiting's contemporary history. Handsome 1 3/8" cloisonne pin in striking gold and black only. Very limited edition.

Each **\$7.00**; 2 for **\$13.00** + shipping \$1.00 per order



### Now you can have it ALL—on MICROFILM!



#### KITE LINES

**\$3.00 each postpaid**

**\$85 entire set postpaid**

Here it is, the entire, coveted collection, all 45 back issues of *Kite Lines* published over the past 19 years, available in a neat, compact library on microfiche. When copies sell out, a microfiche version is offered immediately, so new enthusiasts can take a crash course in kiting with this treasure chest of valuable information!



#### KITE TALES

**\$2.50 each postpaid**

**\$85 entire set postpaid**

The complete set of *Kite Tales* (the original AKA journal) on microfiche, all 40 issues from Oct. 1964 to Nov. 1976. Kite plans, news and historic material—a must for researchers or libraries.



# LeRoy Hoover, William E. Kocher



LeRoy Hoover shows a kite made for the Union 76 oil company at a kite class he was giving.



AL HARGIUS

On February 13, 1996, the kite community lost an early leader and active kiteflier when LeRoy Hoover died in his native Chicago, Illinois. He was 83.

Hoover was one of five founders of the Chicagoland Sky Liners kite club in 1982 and its first president. With his wife, Anita, he was "the real spark plug of the club in the early years," recalls Charles Sotich. LeRoy and Anita started the tradition of kite classes in the Chicago area.

Hoover had been retired from the R.R. Donnelley printing company when he became interested in kites. From then on he gave kites nearly all his time. He was a subscriber to *Kite Lines* from its beginning and

a member of the AKA at its organizing. To follow their kiting interests, the couple traveled to many places, including Australia, China, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand and South America.

By coincidence, both he and Anita fell and fractured their pelvises during the holidays in 1995. Anita was knocked down by a dog and LeRoy fell on the ice a week later. They ended up in the same hospital room. Anita is nearly recovered now, but was bedridden when LeRoy died and could not inform LeRoy's many kite friends. —Valerie Govig

Maryland and its surrounding region lost one of its most well-liked kites on December 10, 1996, with the death of Bill Kocher from cancer at the age of 71.

Bill had been involved with model airplanes before kites and he shared skills and creative thinking between his avocations. He was helpful with local clubs and would regularly attend main events as well as many casual flies and workshops. He gave many kite talks at schools and youth groups. He liked to fly at Baltimore's harbor, especially his bird and seagull kites, which were often



MEL GOVIG

Bill Kocher shows off a bubble machine of his own design.

mistaken for the real thing. People wanted to buy his kites, so he set up the Bird Kite Company and carried kites in a quiver over his shoulder whenever he went flying. He had been a professional photographer before retiring and would often take pictures of kite scenes, especially group photos at ocean shore events. Bill contributed to *Kite Lines* and was especially admired for his obtuse tetrahedral kite (Summer-Fall 1991). He was a particularly good flier of fighter kites.

In recent months he fought cancer quietly, never losing his characteristic bouncing step and big smile. Without saying a sad word, he brought several kites and his photo files to the *Kite Lines* office.

Bill is survived by his wife Eleanor and two daughters. He will be long-remembered in and around Maryland. —Valerie Govig

**Celebrating** 20 Years of *Kite Lines*! In March of 1997, your magazine will be 20 years old. We believe we have been publishing longer than any kite journal in history. We thank every reader and flier for taking part in the legacy. But certainly a special thanks is due to our Lifetime Subscribers, who have contributed so importantly to our sustenance. We list their names with pride and gratitude.

## Be a Lifetime Subscriber

Many loyal readers of *Kite Lines* have begged us to reopen the special subscription status of **Lifetime Subscriber**.

After publishing the magazine for 19+ years to an unusually high standard while facing increasing expenses, we think that now is the time to share the burden—and with it share some joy.

We are making new plans for *Kite Lines* that will allow us to hold onto our quality while saving money. As anyone who's ever done a budget knows, the choices can be difficult and the transition even more so. To ease us into a better pattern, we are opening the **Lifetime Subscriber** category to our readers for a limited time.

And as a way of acknowledging your vital importance to *Kite Lines*, we will print your illustrious name and home town in these pages (unless you prefer to remain anonymous). You can support *Kite Lines* at any of several levels:

□ **Angels:** \$3,000 or more/lifetime. Angels get a set of *Kite Lines* back issues (as complete as we have), a kite made and signed by Mel Govig, one copy of every *Aeolus Press* publication or product (including a contributors' pin) and receive their *Kite Lines* in a lovely Tyvek envelope by air mail for the rest of their life or ours (whichever comes first). And we publish your name in every issue of *Kite Lines*.

□ **Big Lifters:** \$1,000/lifetime. Big Lifters get a kite made and signed by Mel Govig, one copy of every *Aeolus Press* publi-

cation or product (including a contributor's pin) and receive their *Kite Lines* in a lovely Tyvek envelope by air mail for the rest of their life or ours (whichever comes first). And we publish your name in every issue of *Kite Lines*.

□ **Strong Pullers:** \$300/year. Strong Pullers get a contributor's pin and receive their *Kite Lines* in a lovely Tyvek envelope by air mail for one year, as well as a copy of whatever we publish or produce in that year. And we publish your name in every issue of *Kite Lines* for a year.

□ **Steady Fliers:** \$100/year. Steady Fliers get a contributor's pin and receive their *Kite Lines* in a lovely Tyvek envelope by air mail for one year. And we publish your name in every issue of *Kite Lines* for that year.

□ **String Bearers:** \$50/year. String Bearers get a contributor's pin and receive their *Kite Lines* in a lovely Tyvek envelope by air mail for one year. And we publish your name in one issue of *Kite Lines* as an example to the potentially generous.

**Donations of any size** are welcome. You may use your VISA or MasterCard. Use our regular "All-in-One Order Form" and fill in the subscription category you have chosen.

ALL contributions will be thanked with a personal letter. You may, of course, support us anonymously at any level if you prefer that we not publish your name.

### **Kite Lines 1996-97 LIFETIME SUBSCRIBERS**

#### **BIG LIFTERS: Anonymous**

#### **Anonymous Singapore**

- Hans Bauman / Redwood City, CA
- William R. Bigge / Germantown, MD
- Jon & Karen Burkhardt / Potomac, MD
- Richard & Marti Dermer / Stillwater, OK
- Robert T. Eskridge / Coconut Grove, FL
- Richard F. Kinnaird, Jr. / Bethesda, MD
- Robert S. & Jewell Price /  
Burtonsville, MD
- Thomas F.P. Ryan / North Olmsted, OH
- Scott R. Skinner / Monument, CO
- Tal Streeter / Verbank, NY

#### **STEADY FLIERS:**

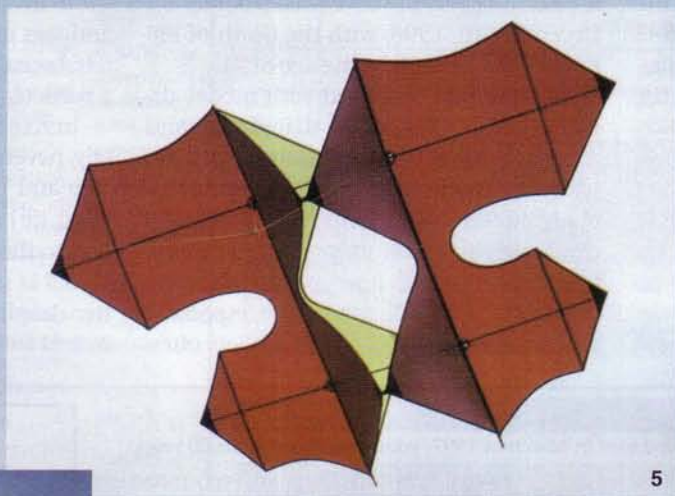
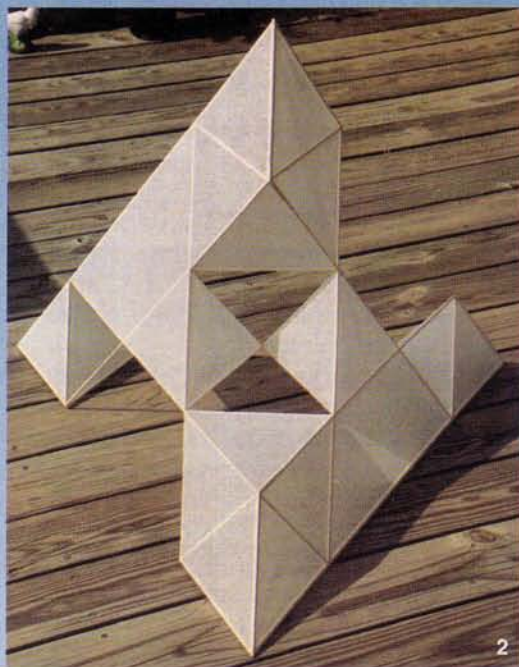
- Winslow Colwell / Mill Valley, CA
- (Mr.) Joan Montcada &  
Marta Montcada / Barcelona, Spain

#### **STRING BEARERS:**

- Charles B. (Chuck) Anderson /  
University Place, WA
- Robert J. Horton, Jr. / Lake Havasu, AZ

# SKYGALLERY

Oscar Bailey



**Kites by Oscar Bailey:**

1. Spirit of Chanute: 48"x48"x12", Silkspan, spruce and bamboo
2. Tetra Outline: 36"x36"x36", Silkspan and spruce
- 3./4. Mother and Father (from Family): each approx. 18"x20"x11", dip-dyed Silkspan and balsa
5. Peter Lynn Cody: 96"x126", nylon and epoxy
6. Double Hornbeam Delta: 39"x120", nylon and graphite

**Kitemaker:** Oscar Bailey, 71, Burnsville, North Carolina

**Occupation:** Retired professor

**Education:** Master of Fine Arts

**Kiteflying experience:** Started making kites in elementary school (1937–38) out of paper and sticks. Started fabric kites in 1974, during a visit to Bob and Hazel Ingraham—they gave us some nylon.

**Inspiration:** *Kite Tales* and *Kite Lines*.

**Average time spent on kites:** Two hours to two years.

**Awards and honors:** A compliment from a person whose work I admire is particularly appreciated.

**Favorite flying spot:** Several spots have better wind—but I like our North Carolina hilltop.

**Intent in kitemaking:** A large part of my kite building is a desire to see unusual and unlikely shapes in the sky.

**Comments:** My ideal: friendly kiteflying, a number of kite people, a large field, wind, no competition, no judges, no awards—just lots of kites in the sky.

**Collaborations by Oscar & Sarah Bailey:**

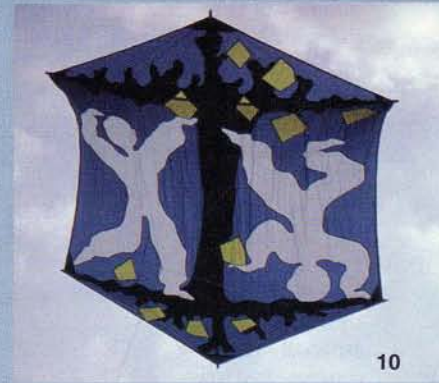
7. Album rokkaku: 90"x72", appliquéd nylon and graphite
8. North Carolina roller, 50"x 48", appliquéd nylon and graphite



7



9



10



8



12

**Kitemaker:** Sarah Bailey, 75, Burnsville, North Carolina

**Occupation:** Retired first grade teacher

**Education:** Master of Science in Education

**Kiteflying experience:** I began making kites in 1975. I've always liked faces looking back at me. Many times pre-Columbian, Coptic and Mola designs are starting points.

**Average time spent on kites:** About the same as on gardening.

**Awards and honors:** I welcome approval and support from others, but seeing my own work in the sky is enough—well, almost. Oscar and I collaborated on the Jacksonville Skyline Kite (1991 AKA convention) and it won the People's Choice Award.

**Intent in kitemaking:** I want something of a personal expression to put in the sky with other kites—to carry on an "aerial conversation."

Maybe my kite can say more about me than "ground talk" can.

**Comments:** Kiteflying is a real "leveler." PhDs can fly with dropouts.

Who can tell them apart? Who needs to?

**Photographer:** Oscar Bailey

**Kites by Sarah Bailey:**

- 9. Sun Serpents: 66"x54", nylon appliqué
- 10. Tricks: 66"x54", nylon appliqué
- 11. Old Yeller Eyes: 66"x54", nylon appliqué
- 12. Charlie's Face: 70"x40", nylon

SKYGALLERY features outstanding kites by one maker in each issue. You are invited to submit photographs of your finest kites. Write for details: *Kite Lines*, P.O. Box 466, Randallstown, MD 21133-0466, USA. Fax: 410-922-4262.

# News, Rumors & Miscellany

**B**EACH, BIKERS, BLADERS, palm trees, a dizzy atmosphere—all the classic California elements sparked this year's American Kitefliers Association convocation in Santa Monica (October 2-6).

Wind? Enough for most kites. Temps? Seventy degrees. Organization? Smooth—especially the new computerized score-keeping for the kitemakers' competition, skillfully programmed by Karen Burkhardt of Potomac, Maryland.

One complaint was heard, especially from people carrying cameras: The fog every day puffed over the beach like an airbrush, dimming the rays of the sun

and the colors of the kites.

"This is Steve Edeiken's beach," pointed out local kite-flier Roger Hyde, referring to the admired 30-year-old kite designer who died in a fall from a large kite in Long Beach, Washington in 1983.



VALERIE GOVIG

**Martin Lester of England fits right into the Santa Monica scene, as he rolls along the beach walkway flying his custom Legs kite. See the inline skates on both kiter and kite?**

"He tested his Rainbow stunt kites here," Hyde noted. "Steve lived in one of the houses on this beach, on Pico Boulevard, where the street ends. That was the rendezvous point for Ty Wong, Bill Everett, the whole group, revolving around Gloria Lugo's shop [Let's Fly a Kite, now gone]."



## FROG WENT A'FLYIN...

Frogs, big frogs, bigger frogs—they're the obsession of Cheryl and Larry Gleckner of Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania.

Their latest: an 80-foot-long windsock with a 16-foot-diameter head, from which pop out six-foot-wide eyes. It took its maiden flight in September at Sunfest, in Ocean City, Maryland, tethered to the flying line of a big Flow Form parafoil.

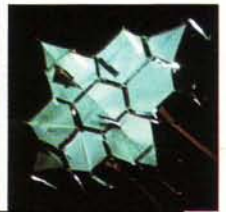
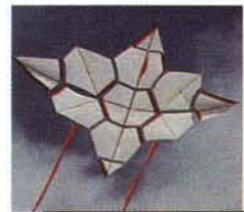
A goggle-eyed crowd made it all worthwhile—the "all" meaning two months of work.

"There were things down here that were magical, synergistic."

It was the third largest convention ever, with 470 registrants, and included more fighter kiteflying than at any previous U.S. convention.

Twenty fliers of single-line maneuverables performed for up to 50 spectators. And well-known Stafford Wallace of England demonstrated his skills and spread a message of peaceful tangles.

It all added up to a vibrant convention that seemed so right in the place where Steve Edeiken flew his Rainbows.



## GLOW IN VERDUN

The 4th Annual Rendez-Vous Mondial du Cerf-Volant, June 6-9 in Verdun, Quebec, Canada, was favored with good weather and a broad range of unusual kites.

A multi-pointed kite by Gil Marcus of The Netherlands, above left in daylight and right at night, shimmered over the St. Lawrence River during the festival's dramatic trademark, the searchlight night fly.

MICHAEL J. GRAVES

## ABBONDANZA IN ITALY

*Coloriamo i Cieli* (Let's Color the Skies) at Castiglione del Lago, Italy, drew kites from 8 countries—as well as fliers representing 61 kite clubs in Italy alone!—to the shores of beautiful Lake Trasimeno in April this year. Besides enjoying kites outdoors, visitors viewed an exhibit of works by Germany's late Peter Malinsky, in the contrasting ambience of Castiglione's historic *Palazzo Duca della Corgna*, circa 1560.



**Above, Jan Houtermans of Vienna, Austria shows his Facet kite with 21 spinners. Kite name: Drahdwaberl (a hyperactive, dizzy person). Below, a flying pig by Vitorio and Ettore Callegaro of Chioggia, Italy.**



MARY GRAMKOWSKI

Warm hospitality, excellent organization, scenic site, great food—the word for this festival is *abbondanza*. The next biennial event will occur in 1998.

Want to go to Italy in 1997? Choose from two festivals or visit both—the "2 Seas Festival" events have been collaboratively scheduled consecutively.

- The 17th annual Cervia Volante International Kite Festival, in Cervia, April 24-May 1.

- The 6th annual Where the Wind Blows International Kite Festival, at Ostia, the beach at Rome, May 2-4.

Info: Cervia Volante, Via Pinarella, 66, 48015 Cervia (RA), Italy. Tel/fax +39-544-72329.

## HOLY CARCASS, BATMAN!

Visitors to Java, Indonesia have often reported how youngsters there use hooks dangled from fighter kites to snare the island's large bats, known as "flying foxes." (See *Kite Lines*, Winter 1990).

Dr. Chris Tidemann, senior wildlife lecturer at The Australian National University in Canberra, informs us he has been told by someone who spent time in the Solomon Islands that dried flying fox bodies are used to *make* kites there.

"I have tentatively put two and two together and guessed that in some places bat kites might be used to catch more bats," he writes.

Can it be true? Carcass kites sound unlikely, given the weight-to-area ratio involved. But we're keeping open ears and minds on it.

**I**T'S A KITE WORLD AT the Disney empire! First

came the 1995 World Festival of Kites at Epcot Center in Florida (whose second edition is tentatively scheduled for January, 1998).

Now we learn that Disney Seas, a marine-oriented theme park scheduled to open in Tokyo in four years, will include a permanent nightly kite extravaganza.

Bruce Flora, who masterminded the Epcot event, is consulting and promises a spectacular sky show, to run nightly over water and built around the theme of sea creatures.

What's it like working for the huge Disney organization?

Imagine, says Flora, having to respond to this recent engineer's inquiry: "How do you want the lagoon to be built?"

## Best New Kite Quotes...

"You can't exist with only one kite."  
—Craig Wilson, Madison, Wisconsin

"Real men use straight stitch. Only."  
—Andrew Beattie, Hampshire, England

It will smoothly and precisely flight in light wind, but you would have to pay maximum attention at your first tight loop:

it will come out straight and fast, spinning itself around its out-haul bridle

WINGLETS is able to spin around its centre and then immediately step up into a stall position

You can execute your tricks either on the ground or up in the air

Guido Accascina, through its WINGLETS, has introduced a new concept both in kite manufacturing and kite design.

Some of the WINGLETS responses are completely unexpected, sure leading all kiteflyers to creative flying.

At the first sharp turn it was very easy to understand the reason for the winglets: the kite turns sharply and in a very particular way,

and it seems to be making a somersault around its winglet.

Carlo Maria Gelsi  
KITETIME INT.  
Winter 1996

It practically turns on a dime !  
If my other kites could talk they would say: "What about us, why don't you fly us anymore?"

John Ferrara, MA, USA

Internet:  
[http://www.infcom.it/av\\_media/alivola/](http://www.infcom.it/av_media/alivola/)

alivola kites winglets

AUGUST 96

DRACHEN MAGAZIN.

Paul Kappel,

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## winglets

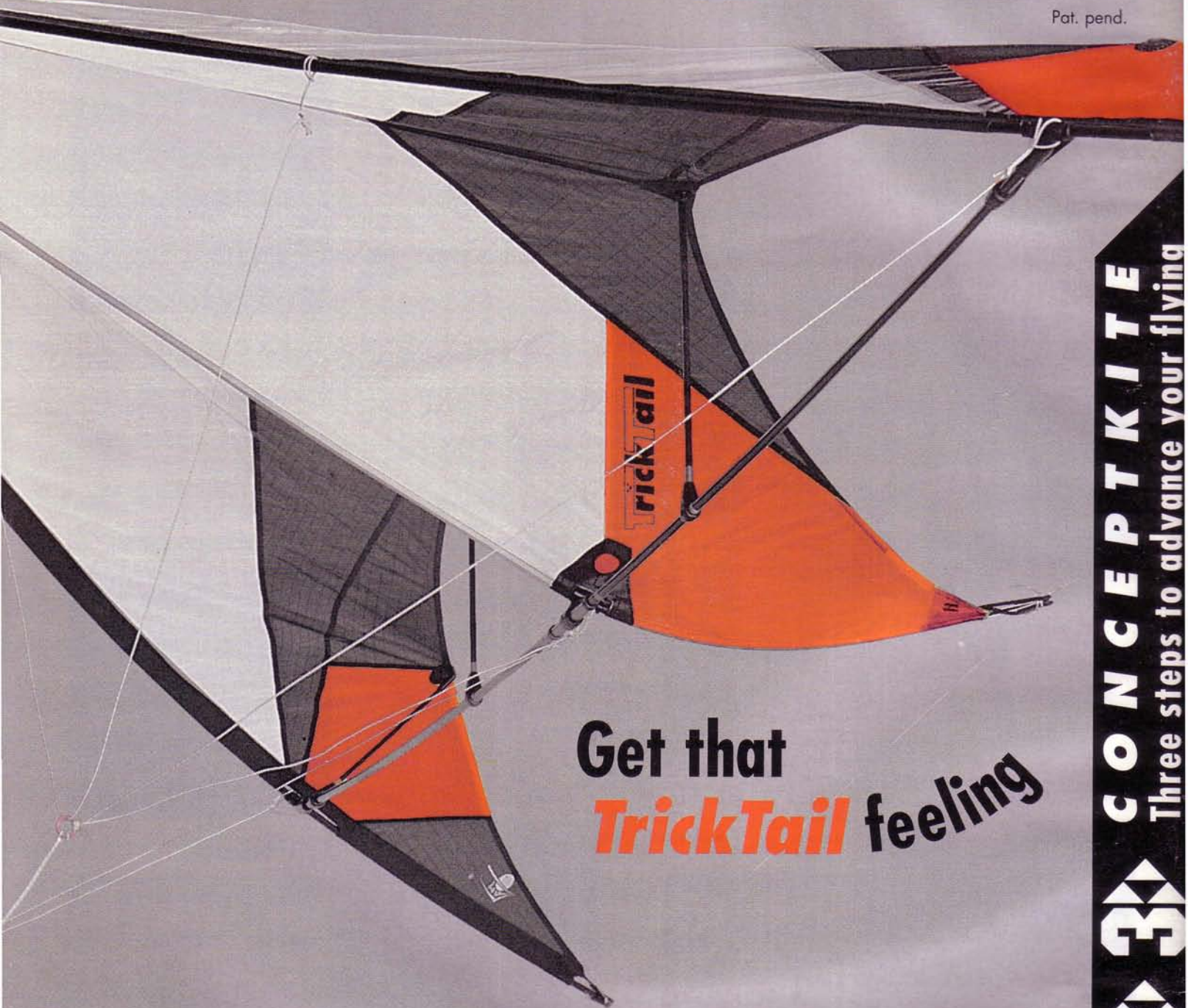
Dimensions: 86 x 46 in.  
Weight: 8.03 oz.  
Wind: light to medium  
Lines: 40-200 lbs. Spectra  
Spars: elicoidal carbonium  
Price: 160\$ - 240.000 Lire  
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**1**

