

To have and to fold...

By **Miles Erwin**

HE FOLDED his first paper plane at five years old. Fifteen years later, he ran out of designs, so started to invent his own.

Now Sipho Mabona is sharing these incredibly intricate insects and creased creatures, bringing his original origami to feature in a British exhibition early next year.

The 29-year-old turned his eye to nature and the environment for his most recent works, after winning dozens of design awards for his installations and abstract light fittings.

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

His designs sell for more than



Creasing up: Sipho Mabona is proud of his talent

Pictures: Caters

£1,500 and are exhibited in galleries in Japan, Switzerland, Canada, Spain and France.

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

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

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

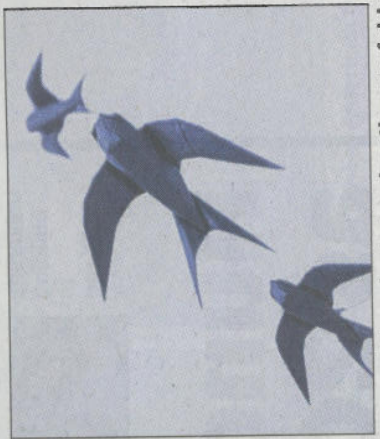
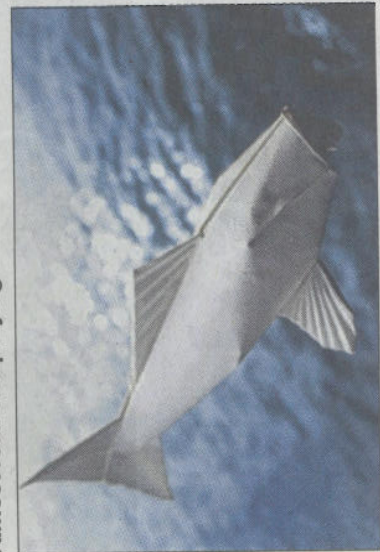
Each of the models is made from a single piece of square paper.

Swiss-born Mabona was the first foreigner to be invited to the Japan Origami Academic Society.

'The inspiration for me can be anything,' he said.



Almost real: The praying mantis is known to bite the head off her mate after making love. This one might give you a nasty paper cut



Real life or paper? All Mabona's models, including birds and the giant stag beetle, are folded from a single sheet of paper