

Luminaria

The Game

**A SHADOW THEATRE GAME ABOUT INJUSTICE AND
POSSIBILITIES FOR CHANGE IN YOUR LIVES!**

4-20 players

Ages 16+

**Game duration: 90 - 135 minutes
(+60-90 min. preparation time)**

WHY SHOULD YOU PLAY LUMINARIA? WHAT IS LUMINARIA ABOUT?

Luminaria is a participatory game that combines shadow theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed. Using paper puppets and a simple light, you collectively create shadows to tell stories about injustice and possibilities for change.

Why combine shadow theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed? Shadow theatre allows you to tell even sensitive stories in a safer and more creative way. Theatre of the Oppressed encourages you not to remain passive observers, but to actively seek ways to change unjust situations. Together, they create a space for imagination, dialogue, and collective exploration of more just possibilities in your lives.

No previous theatre experience is needed. What is important is the willingness to create, share ideas, and explore new solutions.

THIS GAME PACKAGE CONTAINS:

- Game instructions
- 6-minute shadow theatre instruction video
- Examples of stories to be created as shadow theatre plays
- One set of puppets to be printed and cut out
- Secret Cards to be printed and cut out
- Instructions on how to make a simple cardboard shadow theatre

WHAT YOU HAVE TO BRING YOURSELF:

- Single source LED light / smartphone flashlight
- Materials for making your own puppets: paper (equal or heavier than 180gr/m²), scissors, cutter knives, wooden barbeque skewer sticks, tape, markers
- Cloth/flipchart paper and cardboard for the shadow theatre
- (optional) Atmosphere materials (fabric, lace, PET bottle, or any objects casting interesting shadows)
- (optional) Simple sound-making objects or instruments, a music box/phone to play songs.



GAME PREPARATION

SOME DRAMATURGIC/AESTHETIC ADVICE FOR DEVELOPING THE PLAY:

- The performance has a bad/unsatisfactory end that shows what was at stake for the protagonist (=main character).
- There is a clear conflict between the characters and a clear case of injustice.
- The protagonist honestly tries to overcome the injustice they are facing but fails to achieve their aim in the scene, because of the actions/attitudes of the antagonist (=counterpart of the main character/villain).
- Additional shadow theatre objects and sound, such as drumming, clapping, voice, music, or singing enrich your story aesthetically.

Before playing, you will need approx 60-90 min. preparation time to print and cut out the shadow puppets, to build a simple (cardboard) shadow theatre (in the space you are playing in!), and optionally gather additional materials to create atmosphere and scenography. [Watch our instruction video first](#), as it will show you how to make the puppets and build a simple shadow theatre stage.

The game includes flat paper puppets, which you print out on thick paper and cut out. Then attach a wooden stick to them on the designated dotted line.

The puppets represent basic archetypes of characters and roles, which you can use directly or modify to create your own. If you decide to make your own completely new puppets, allow at least one extra hour for preparation (also if you decide so during playing the game for a specific play you are making).

To enhance the shadow theatre atmosphere, you can gather everyday objects like glasses, PET bottles, lace, or fabrics to create interesting shadows.

Print and cut out our set of Secret Cards and shuffle it.

Also print the examples of stories for each group of 2-4 players.

You can decide to do the preparation all together as a group or let some people prepare this before everyone meets.

Make sure that you have one set of puppets and enough material for each group of 2-4 players that is joining.

HOW TO PLAY LUMINARIA

As a whole group, [watch our explanation video](#) first, as it will show you all basic principles of shadow theatre (Learn how to work with puppet, light and shadow). Then you can start creating your own stories and explore the world of Luminaria.

For playing the game, divide your group into at least two sub-groups, each group consisting of 2-4 players. Each group gets a full set of prepared puppets and (optionally) shadow theatre objects and music instruments to create atmosphere.

Each of your groups gets their own place to work separately from the others. Make sure that each group has their own shadow theatre stage (be it cardboard, white wall or cloth/whiteboard paper on a string).

Each group gets the same original task: Think of a situation that you feel is unjust. It can be something that you experienced yourself or someone you know or that you heard about. What are some of the challenges and injustices that you face in your everyday life, in your community or on a systemic/structural level? You will get some examples for stories printed out (available in the Examples of stories package). You can discuss in your group and decide together which story you want to play.

In 20-40 minutes, create a short shadow theatre performance (few minutes long, 3-6 scenes). Make sure you fictionalize any story to avoid that other game participants might identify it as your own or someone they/you know.

Then your groups perform their shadow theatre play to the other group(s). (10-20 minutes depending on group size)

Each group draws a Secret Card from the Secret Cards deck (shuffle it beforehand!) in silent and without showing it to the other group. You make a new version of your story based on the instruction found on your Secret Card. Make sure your workspaces are far enough apart so you do not overhear each other speaking about your Secret Card instruction (15 - 20 minutes).

Each group performs a new version of their story based on instructions in Secret Cards to the other group(s). The other group(s) guess(es) what has been changed: What were the instructions on the Secret Card? (10 - 20 minutes depending on group size)

NOW IT'S TIME FOR YOUR REFLECTIONS:

Within each group, collect at least three insights resulting from the performances about how to overcome injustice and share them with the other group(s). (15 minutes) Here are some questions that you can consider in this phase of the game:

- What kind of injustice did your group choose? Why did you choose it?
- What makes it easy/difficult to respond to injustice?
- What can one person do to challenge injustice?
- What can a group or community do together against injustice?
- What kinds of injustice require changes at the system level?

CLOSING CIRCLE:

As the whole group of players, gather in a circle. Each of you will get the chance to speak once about your experience during the game and how you feel now. Whoever wants to start, starts. Then go clockwise. If it is your turn and you are not ready yet, say "pass". Make sure this person always gets the chance to speak when talking has gone in the circle once. The game foresees every participant talking once, but of course you may reflect further and respond to each other, but then plan more time. The game ends when all groups agree that they are satisfied with the discussion about injustice and the reflection of their feelings regarding the plays. (20 minutes) Here are some questions that might be helpful for you for the closing circle:

- How do you feel now?
- Which performance or moment in the game stayed with you the most? Why?
- Did any story change the way you think about injustice? How?
- Which image, shadow, or sound had the strongest impact on you?
- What surprised you during the activity?
- Was there a moment that made you laugh? Why?
- Was there a moment that made you feel uncomfortable, sad, or hopeful? Why?
- How did using shadows instead of words influence the way you told or understood the story?
- What is one idea or insight you are taking away from this experience?

EXAMPLES OF STORIES

Here are examples of stories for three levels of injustice: personal, community, system. Please print the example stories for each group. If you can, try to link the different levels in one story to make your play more complex!

1. Personal level – The Invisible Effort (school)

A student consistently helps others with homework and group tasks, but when grades or praise are given, their contribution is not mentioned or recognized.

2. Community level – The Shared Space (housing/neighbourhood)

In an apartment building, one group of residents uses shared spaces freely and leaves them dirty, while others are blamed or ignored when they complain.

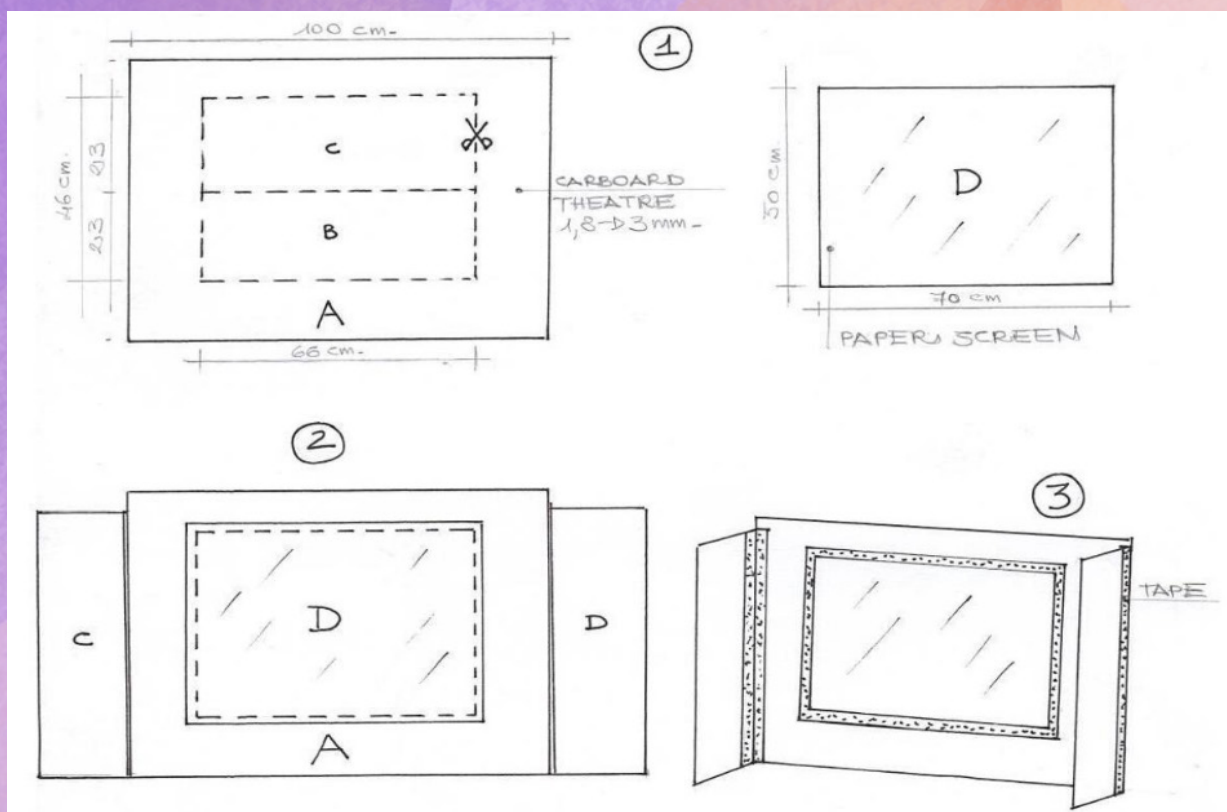
3. System level – The Job Filter (workplace/hiring)

Because of racism, a qualified and experienced job applicant is automatically rejected by an online hiring system or Human Resources department (e.g. due to their name, address, or lack of specific keywords in their CV).



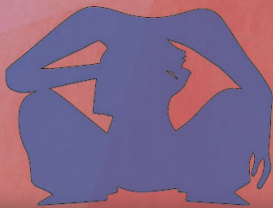
HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN CARDBOARD SHADOW THEATRE

You can create your shadow theatre stage following this guide. A quick alternative is to hang flipchart paper or white cloth on a string using clothespins.





Make a new version of your performance 10 years later.



Make a new version of your performance in which each character only thinks of themselves. What would happen?



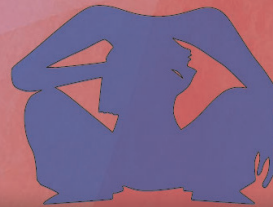
Make a new version of your performance as if the main injustice would be solved from the perspective of your protagonist (main character facing the injustice).



Make a new version of your performance where one of the characters does something that nobody would ever expect.



Make a new version of your performance as if each of your characters would get one super power character trait.



Make a new version of your performance where the main character is very brave.



Make a new version of your performance as if the main injustice disappeared.



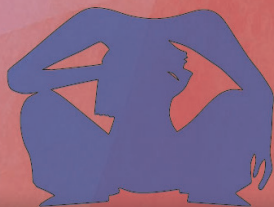
Make a new version of your performance where all the characters first have to ask for permission before they do an action.



Make a new version of your performance as if the protagonist could live in a reality that they desire.



Make a new version of your performance where the protagonist is very old and telling grand grand children about this time of the life and how they got out of it.



Make a new version of your performance as if the main injustice does not disappear, but all figures behave in accord with basic needs of the main protagonist.



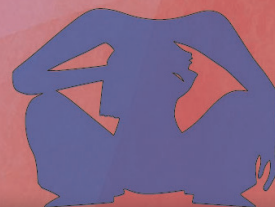
Make a new version of your performance where a famous character from a movie or book that you know helps the protagonist.



Make a new version of your performance reversing e.g. the gender of all characters (choose the one category most relevant to the injustice in your story).



Make a new version of your performance where all characters are inspired by a strength of their soul animal.



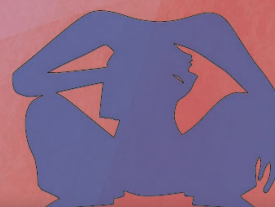
Set the story in another culture or another century and show how the main injustice is dealt with then and there. It can be positive or negative, you decide!



Make a new version of your performance where the person committing the injustice experiences injustice themselves.



Make a new version of your performance integrating the emotion of shame throughout the story: what if everybody would be very explicit about what they are ashamed of?

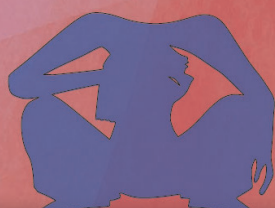


Make a new version of your performance that adds irony, sarcasm and satire: Your performance is making fun of the injustice by exaggerating it comically.





Make a new version of your performance in which it concludes with a paradoxical end.



Make a new version of your performance integrating the emotion of fear throughout the story: what if everybody would be very explicit about what they are scared of?



Make a new version of your performance in which it becomes a musical with a lot of drama and a happy end!



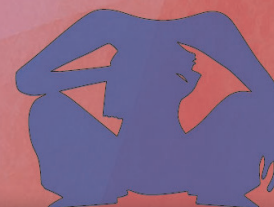
Make a new version of your performance in which you reduce your story to the most important elements and omit everything that is unnecessary to understand the injustice that the main character is facing.



Choose one emotion as a group: All characters behave according to it (e.g. all are in love, all are sad, all are joyful etc.).



Make a new version of your performance in which your story becomes a crime novel with an additional investigator!



Make a new version of your performance in which it becomes a horror story.



Make a new version of your performance without any words. You still have to convey its meaning through the shadows. (Music is allowed!)



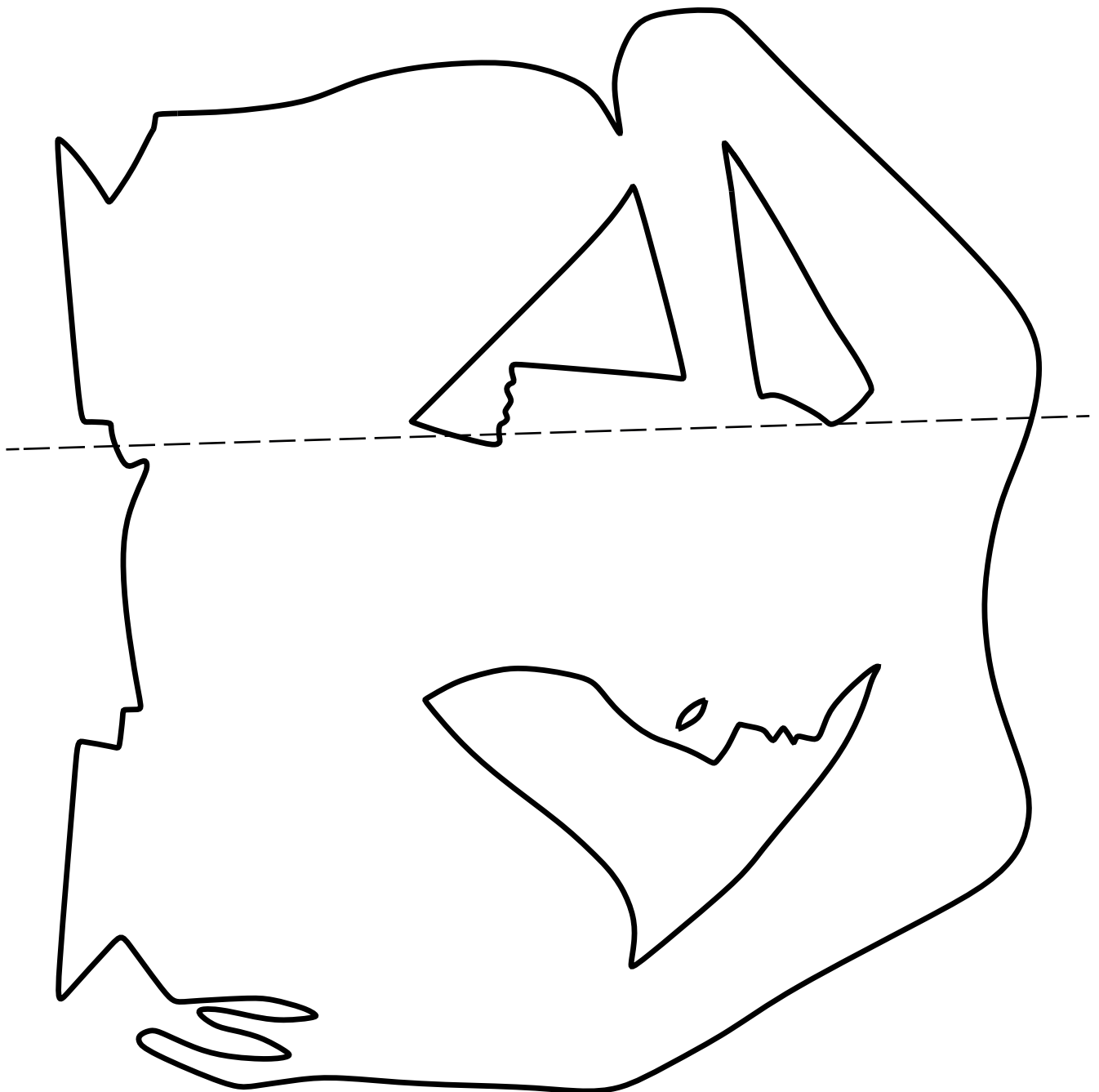
Make a new version of your performance in Slow Motion: In the moments that you find especially important, slow down the action.



PUPPETS DRAWINGS

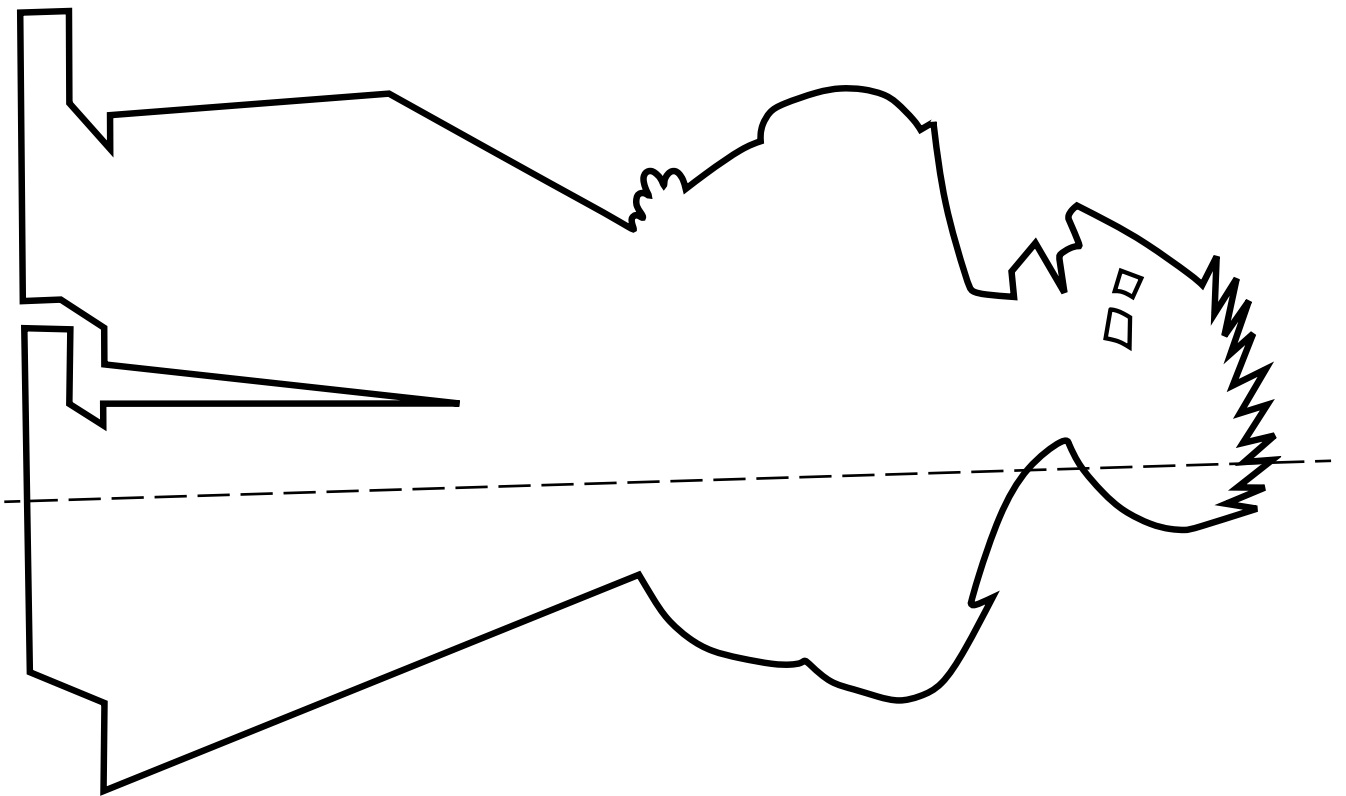
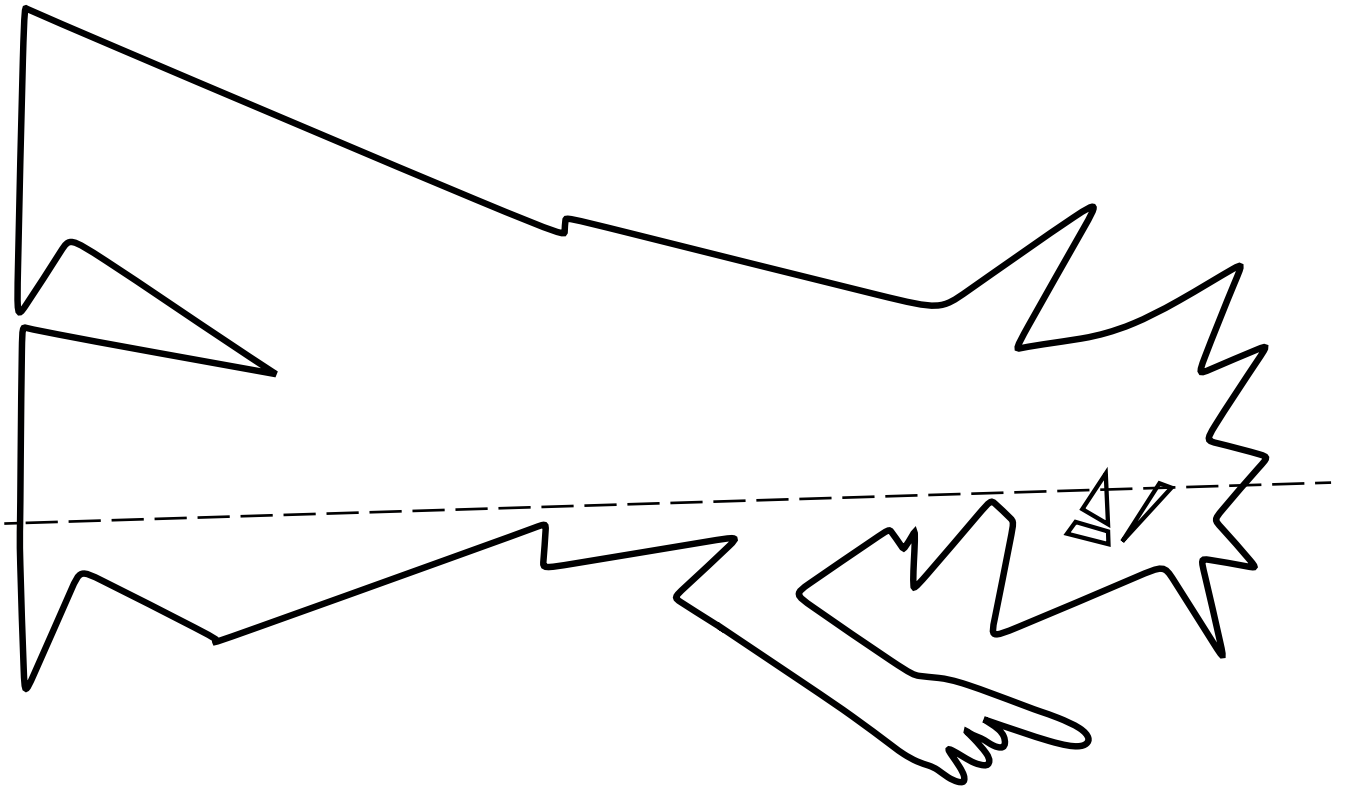


**PRINT PUPPTES ON A PRINTING CARDBOARD PAPER,
MINIMUM 180 GRAMS, BETTER 300 GRAMS**

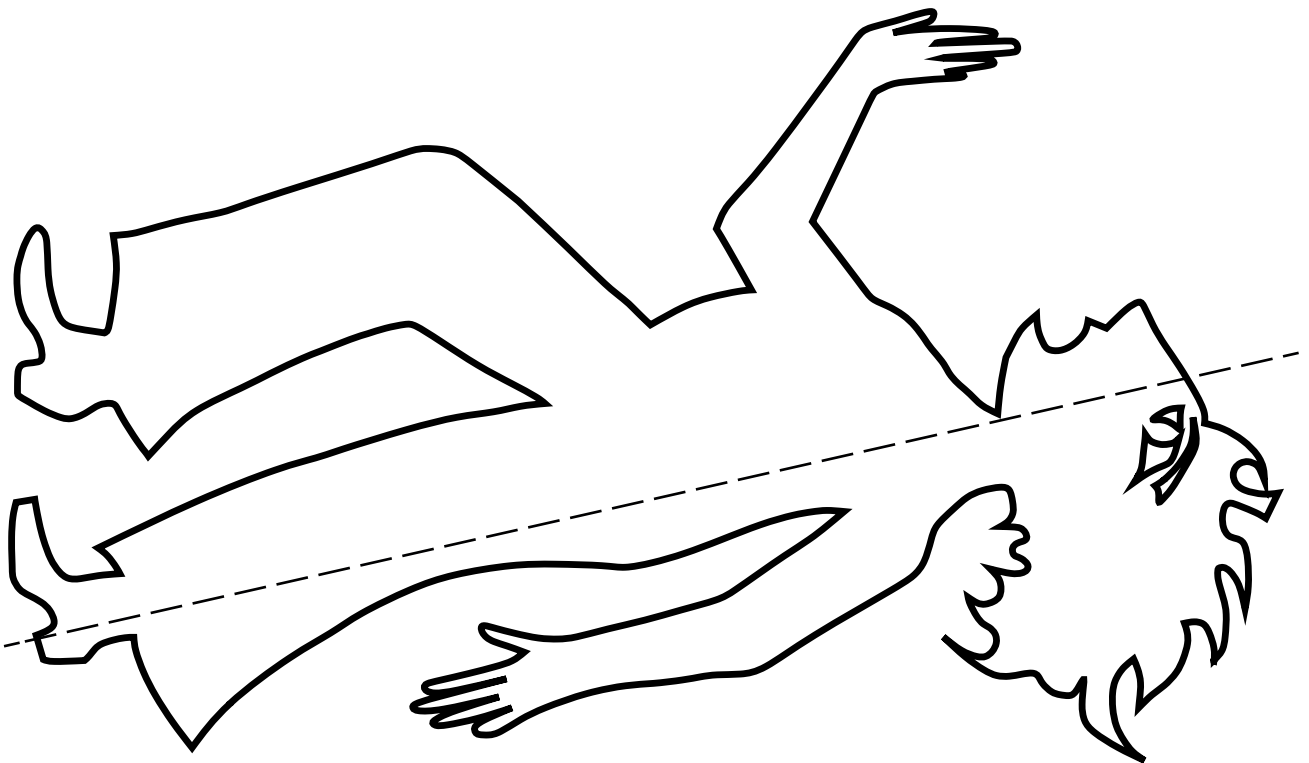
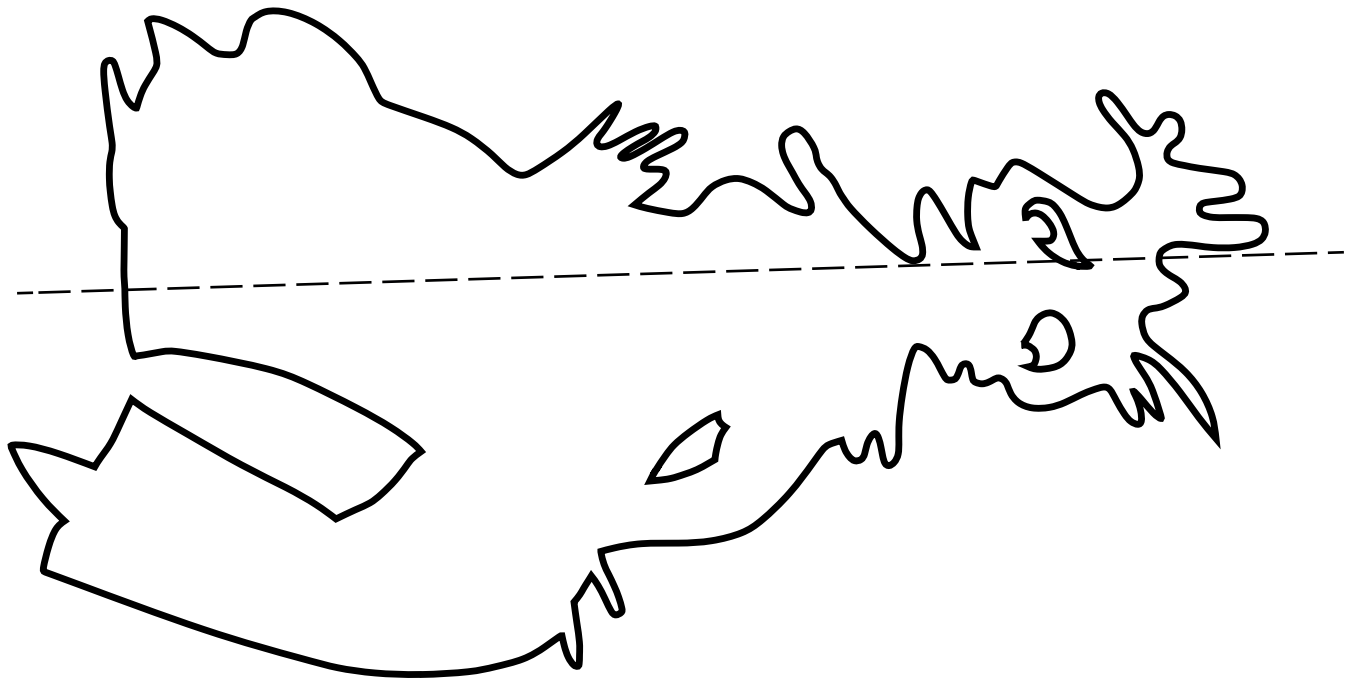


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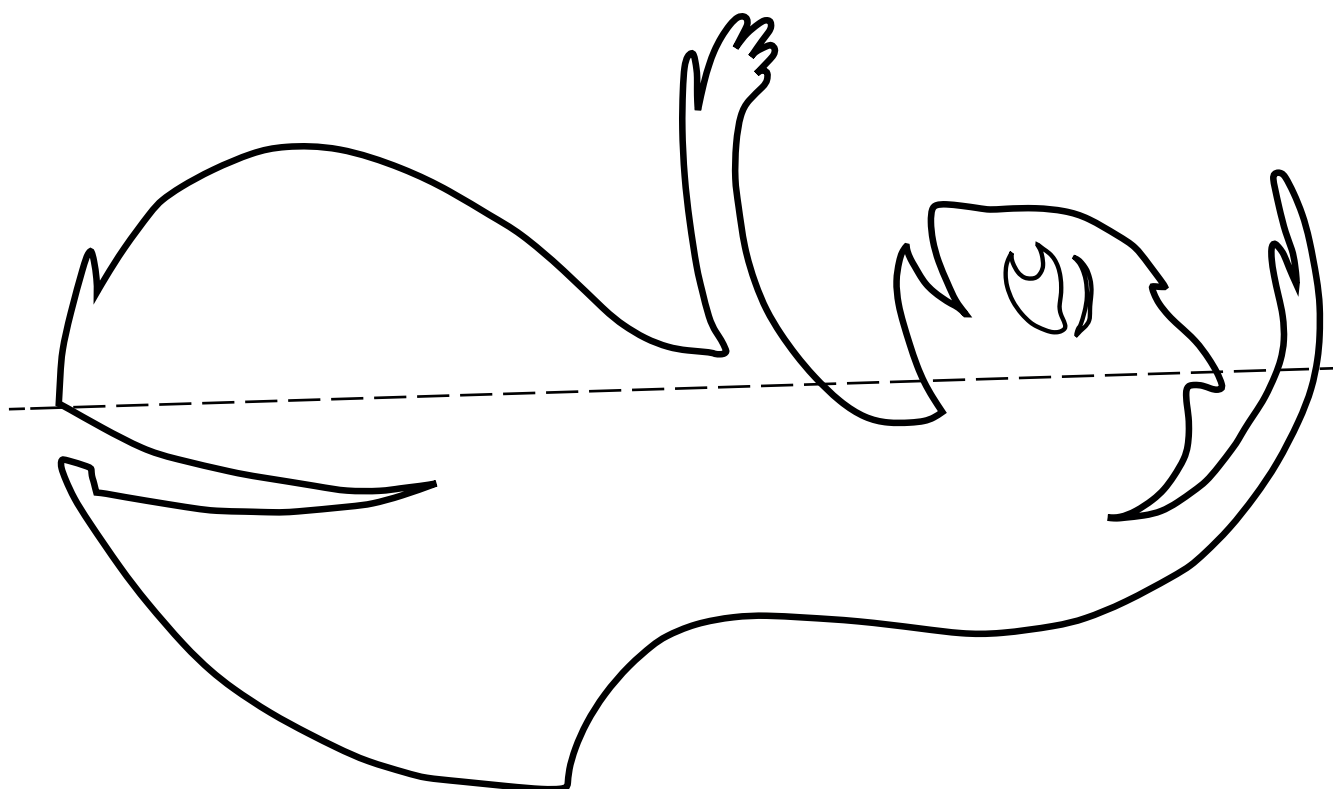
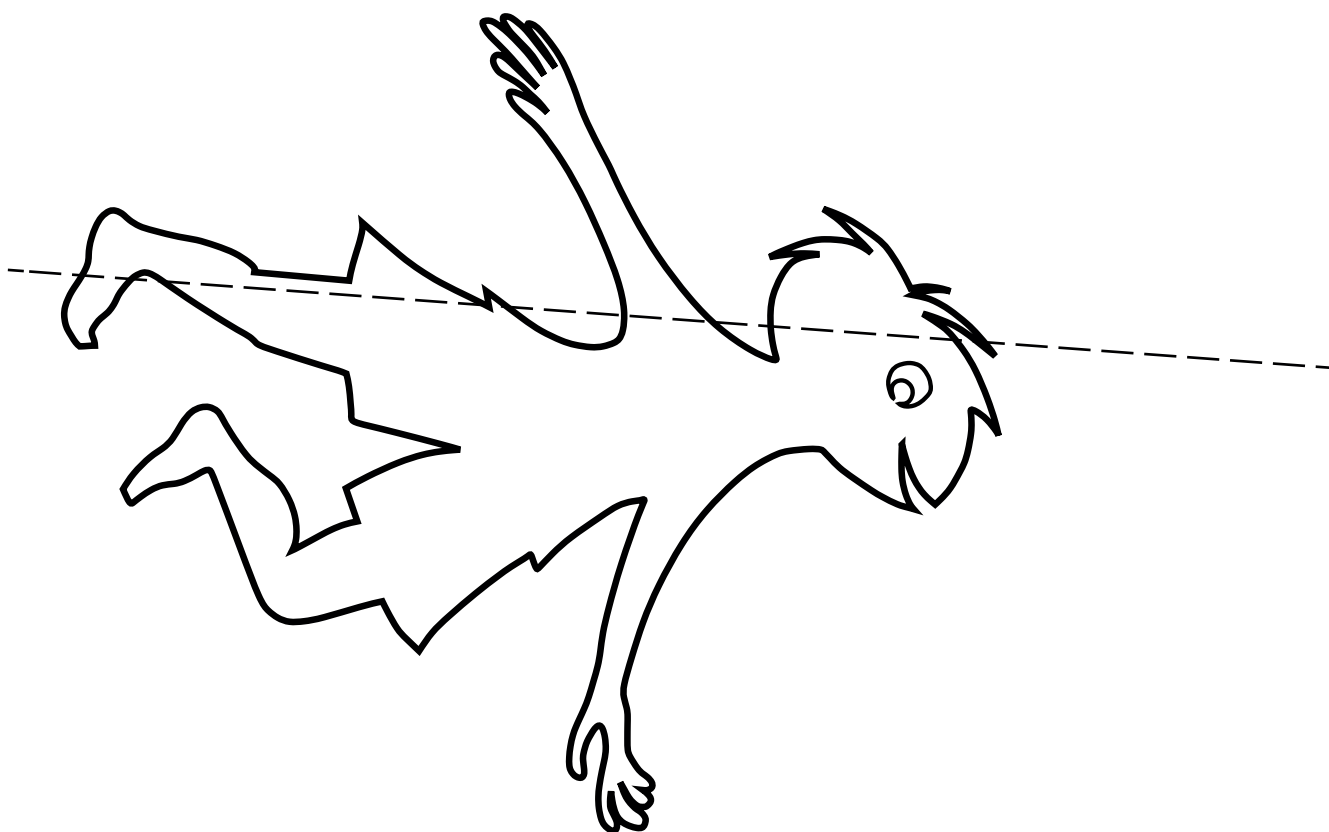


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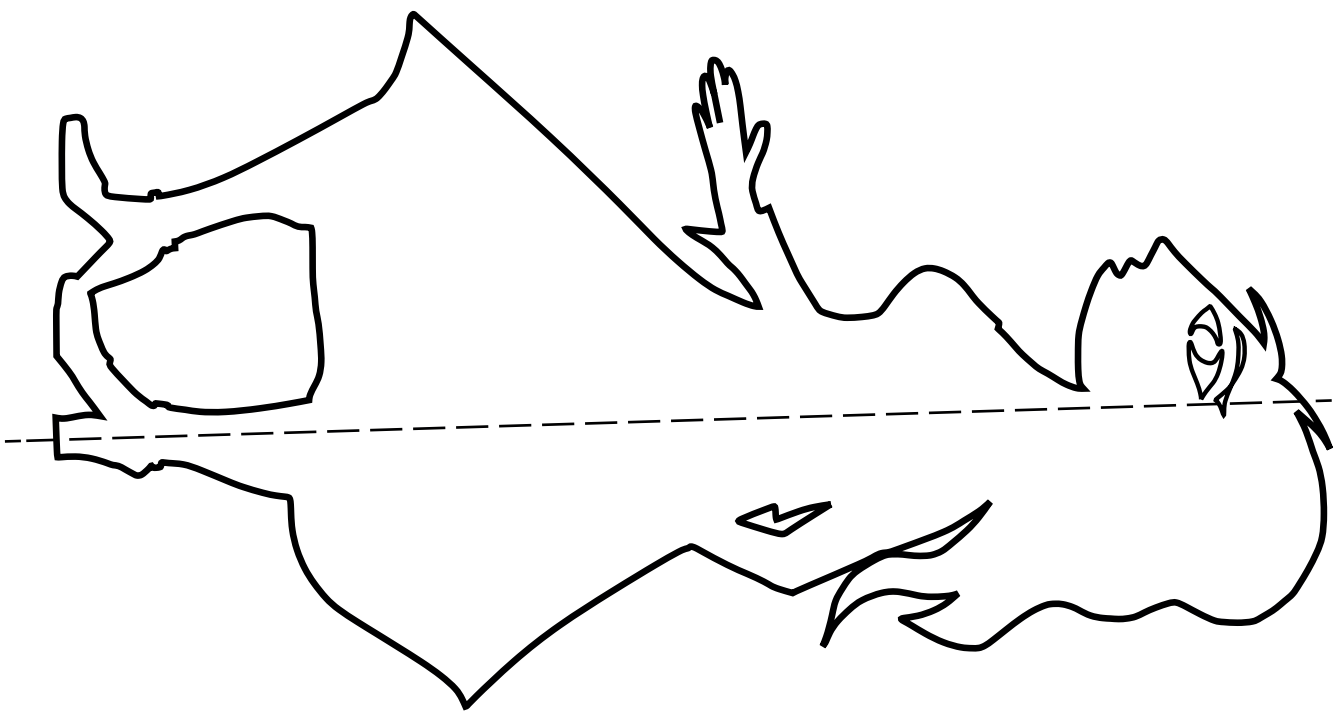
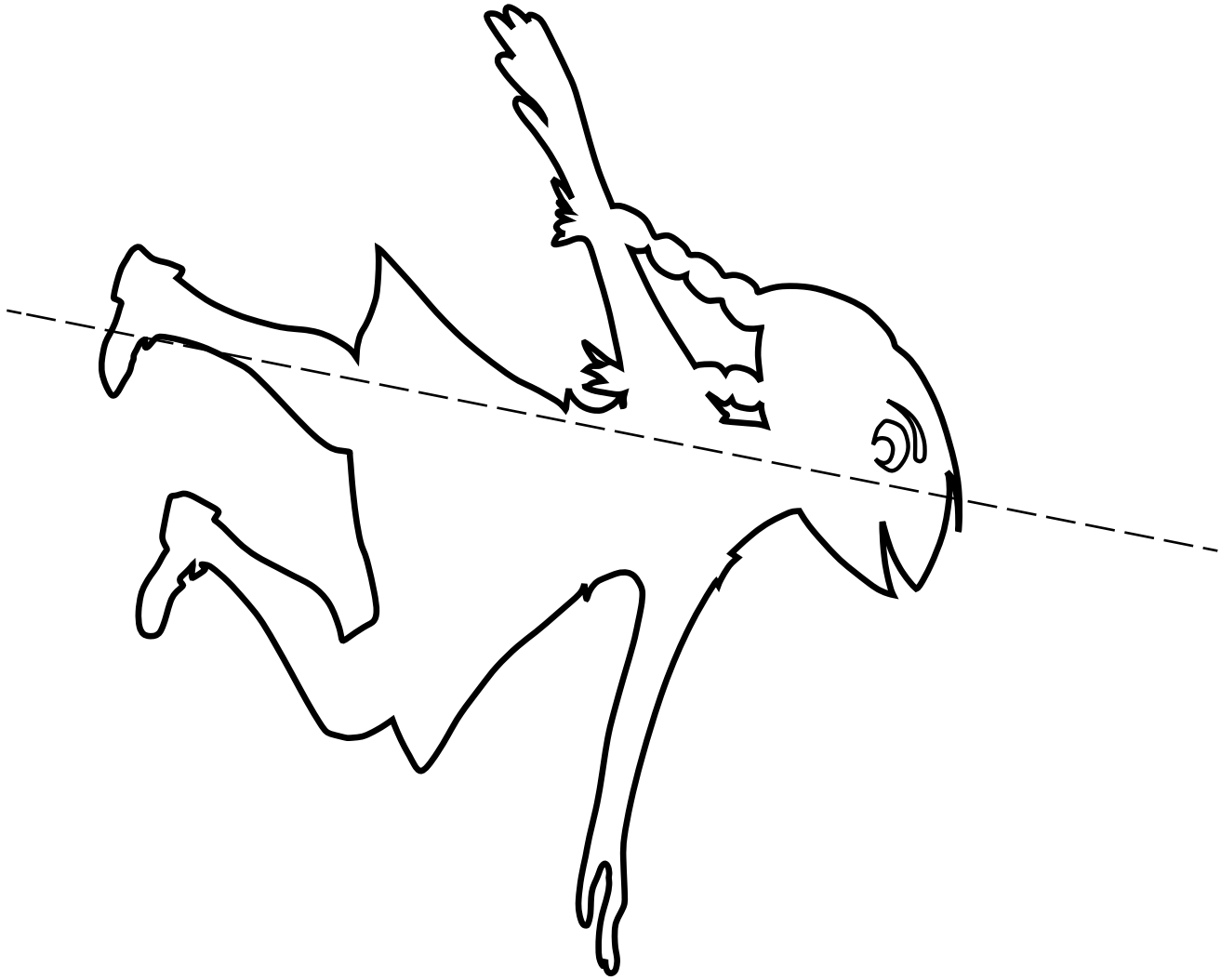
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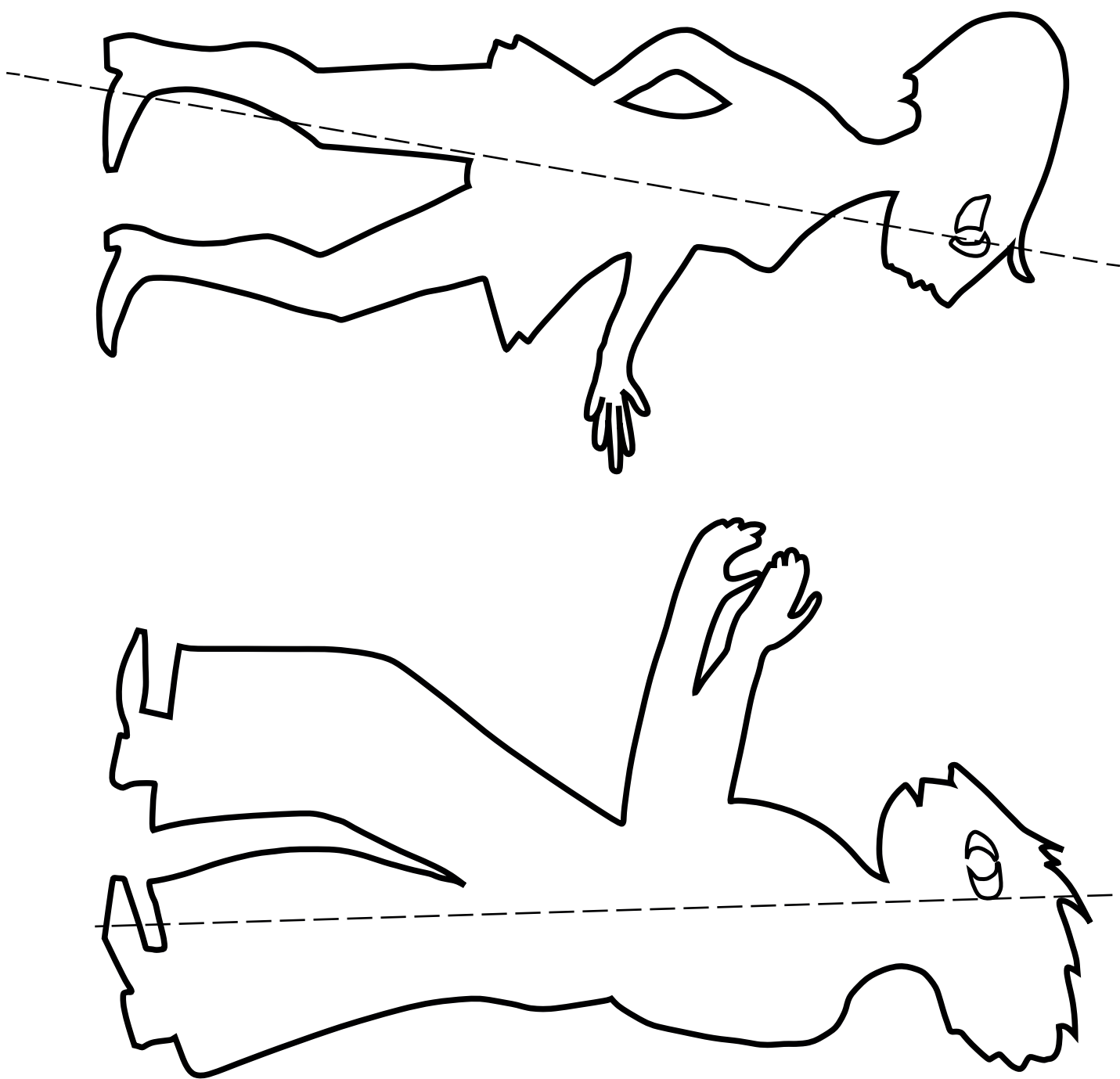
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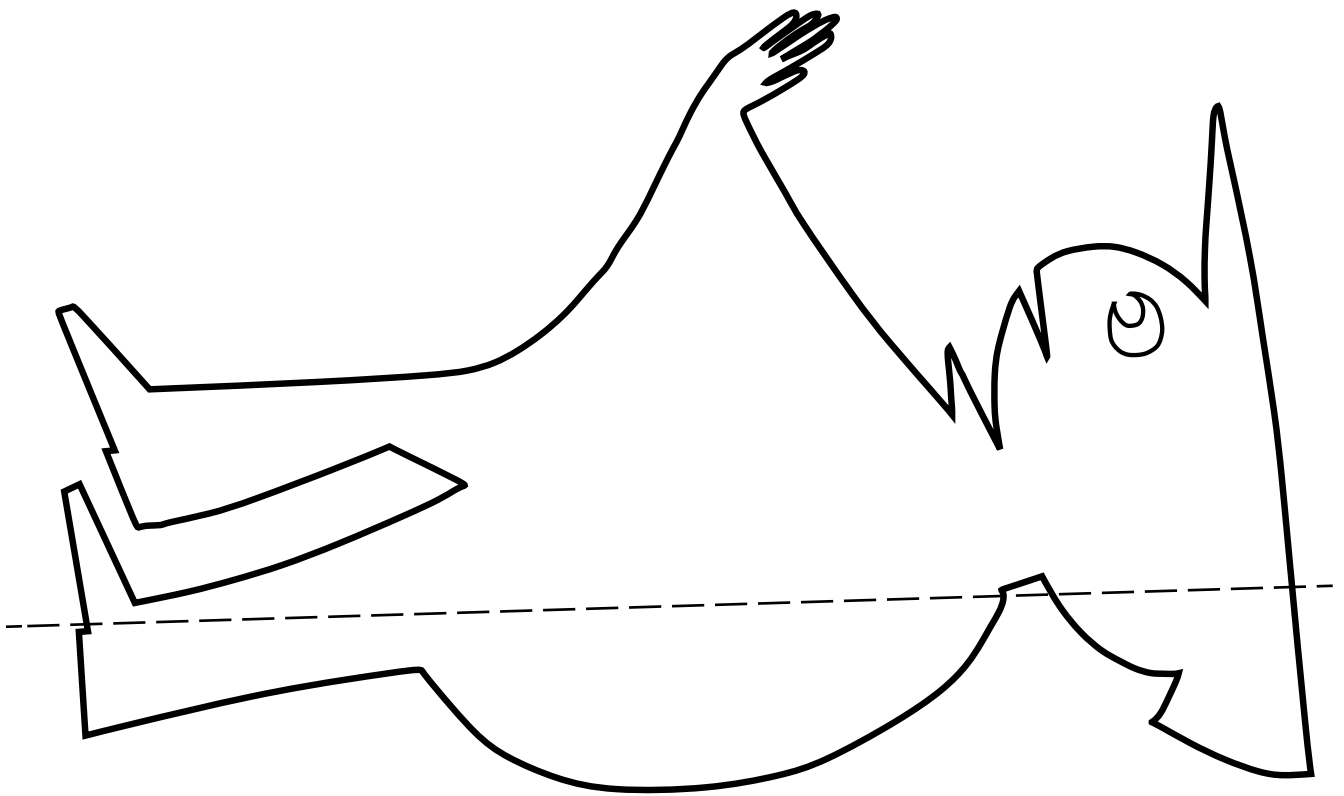
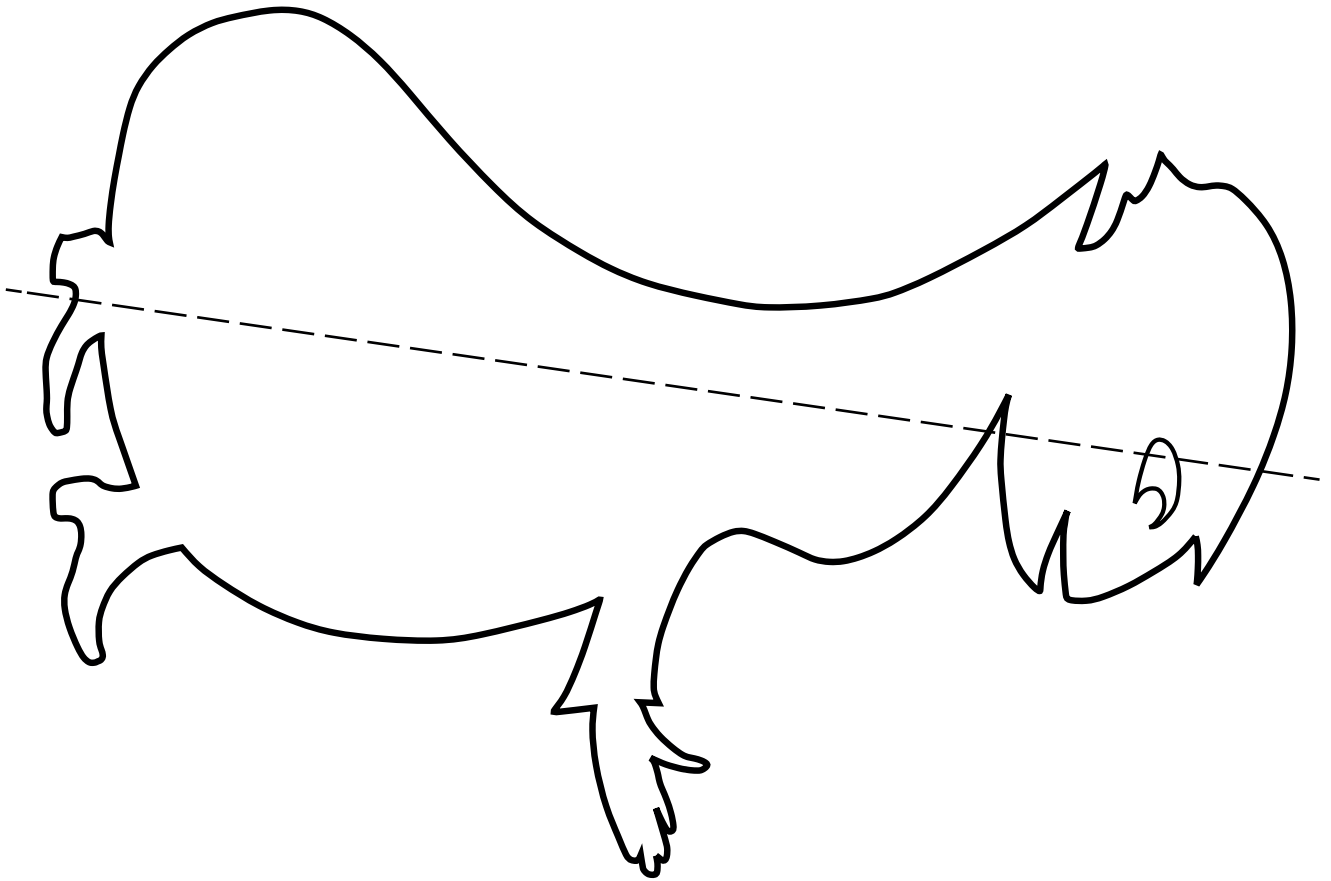


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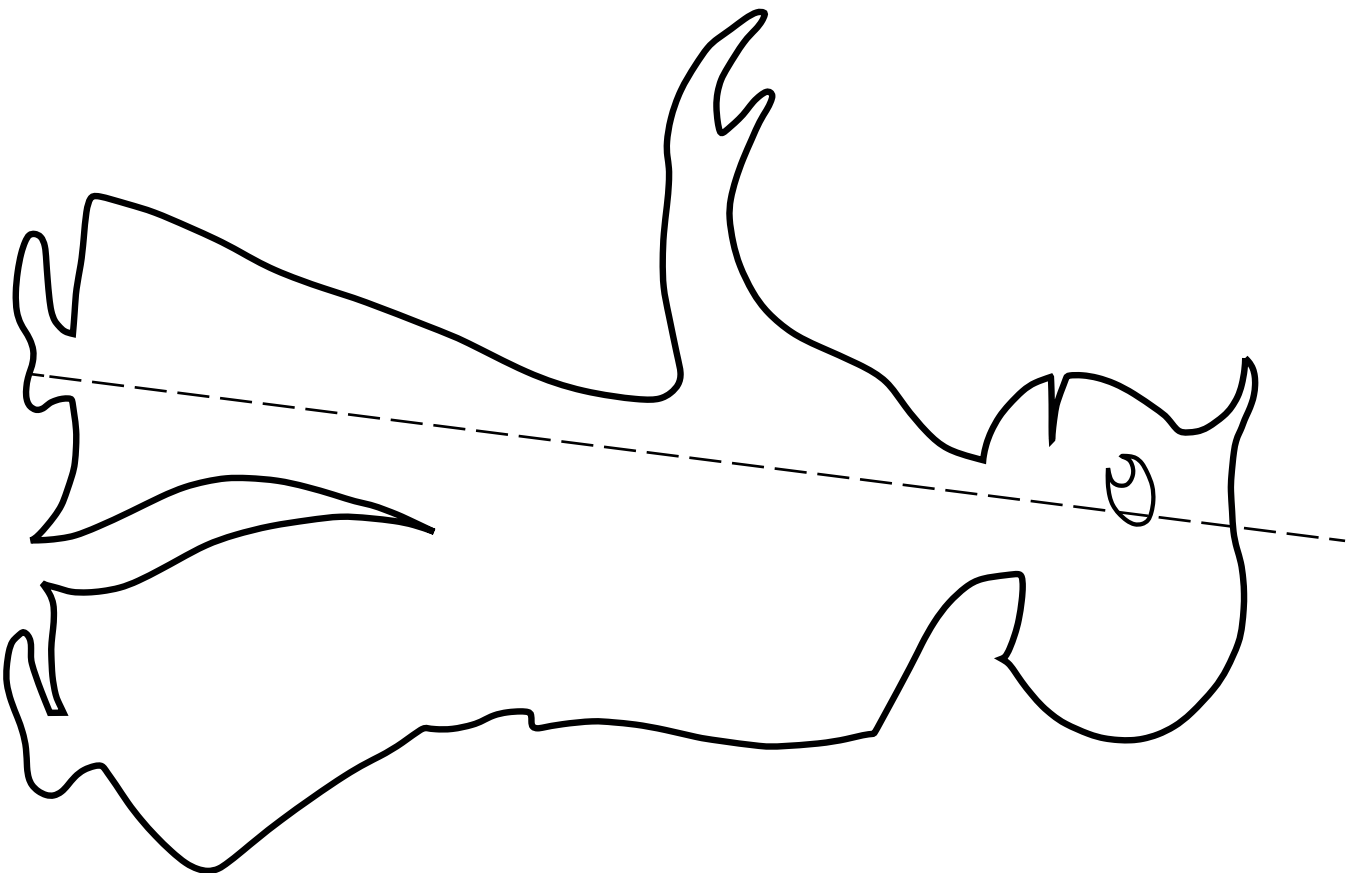
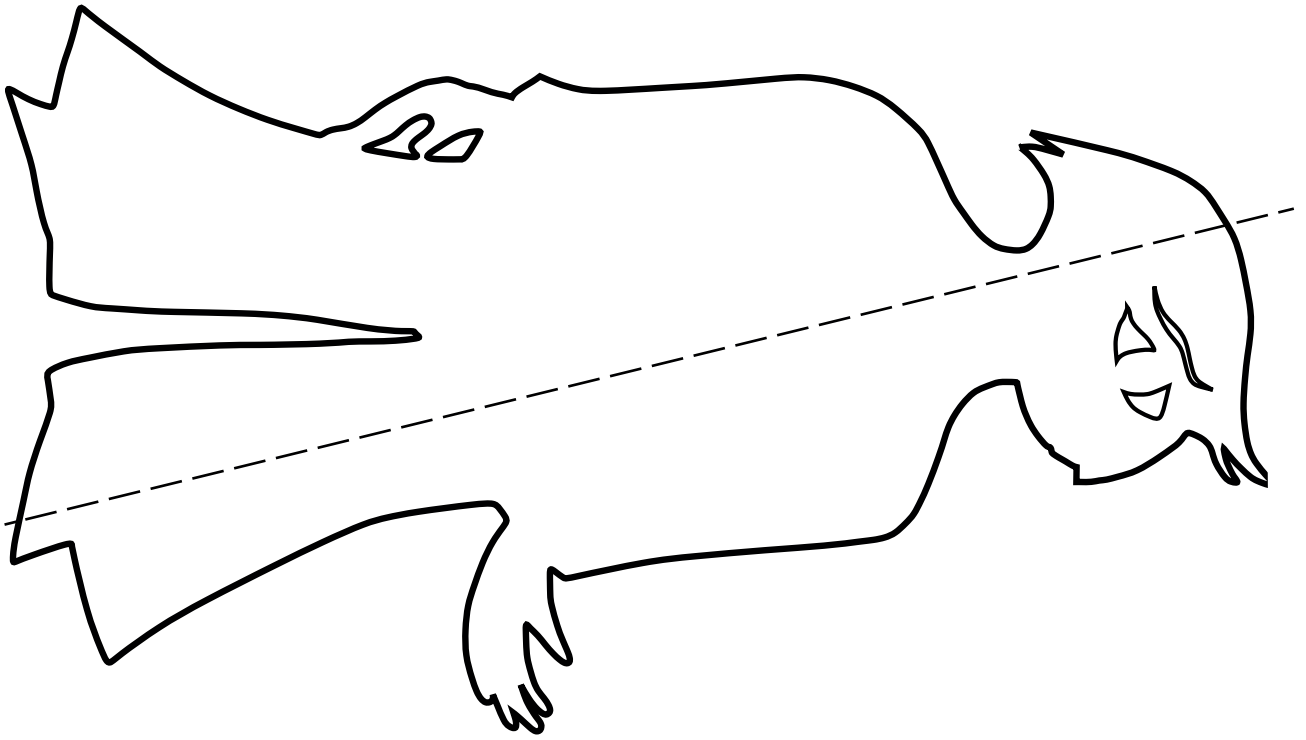
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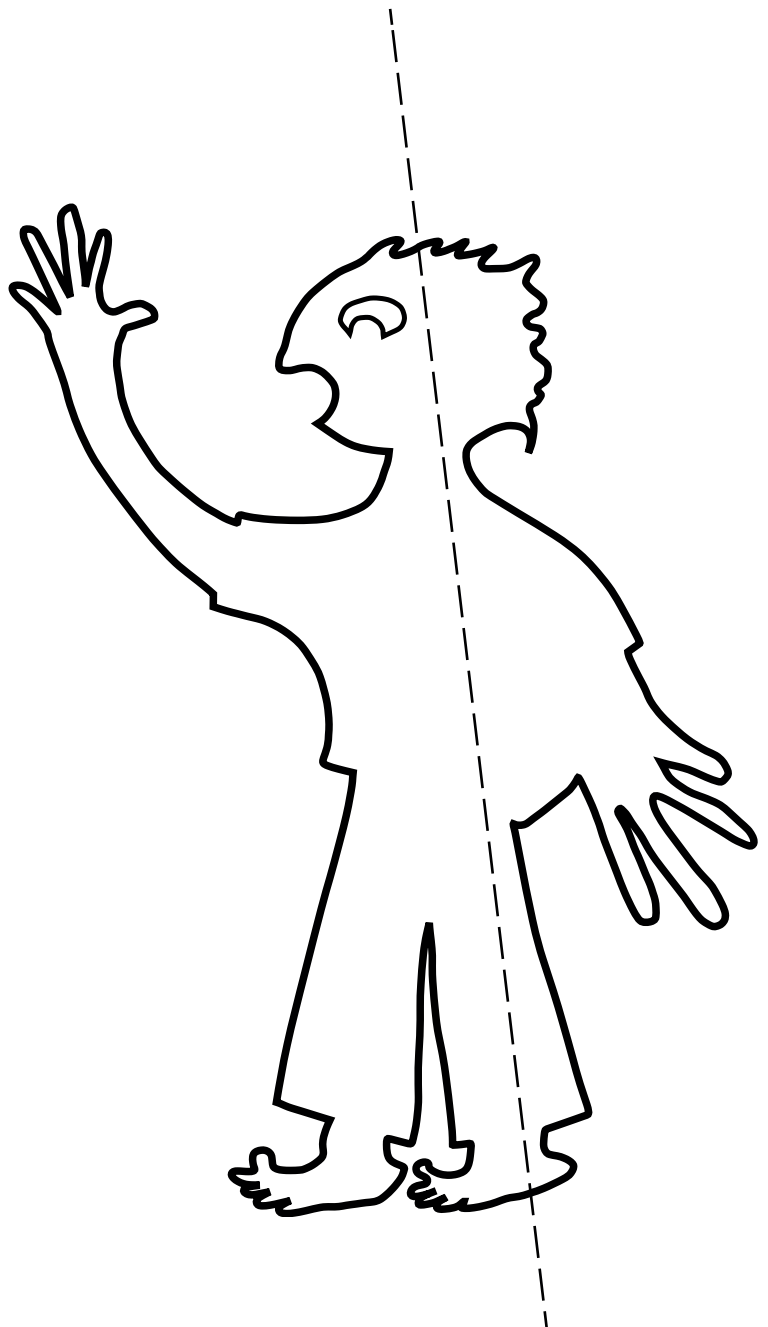
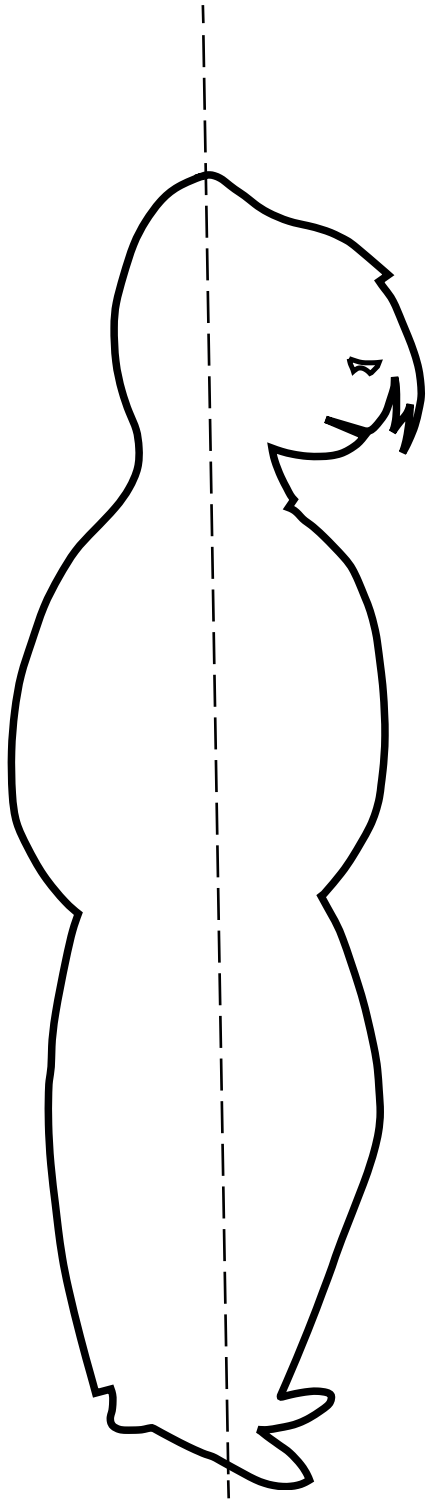
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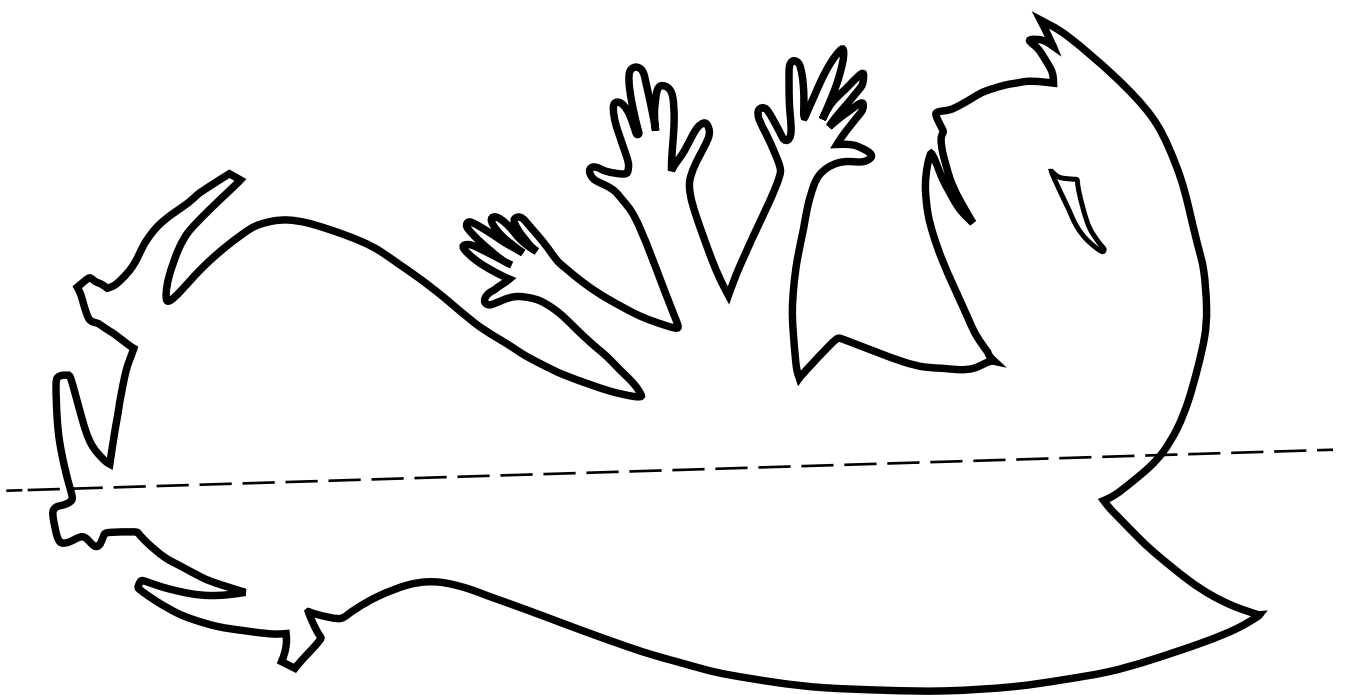
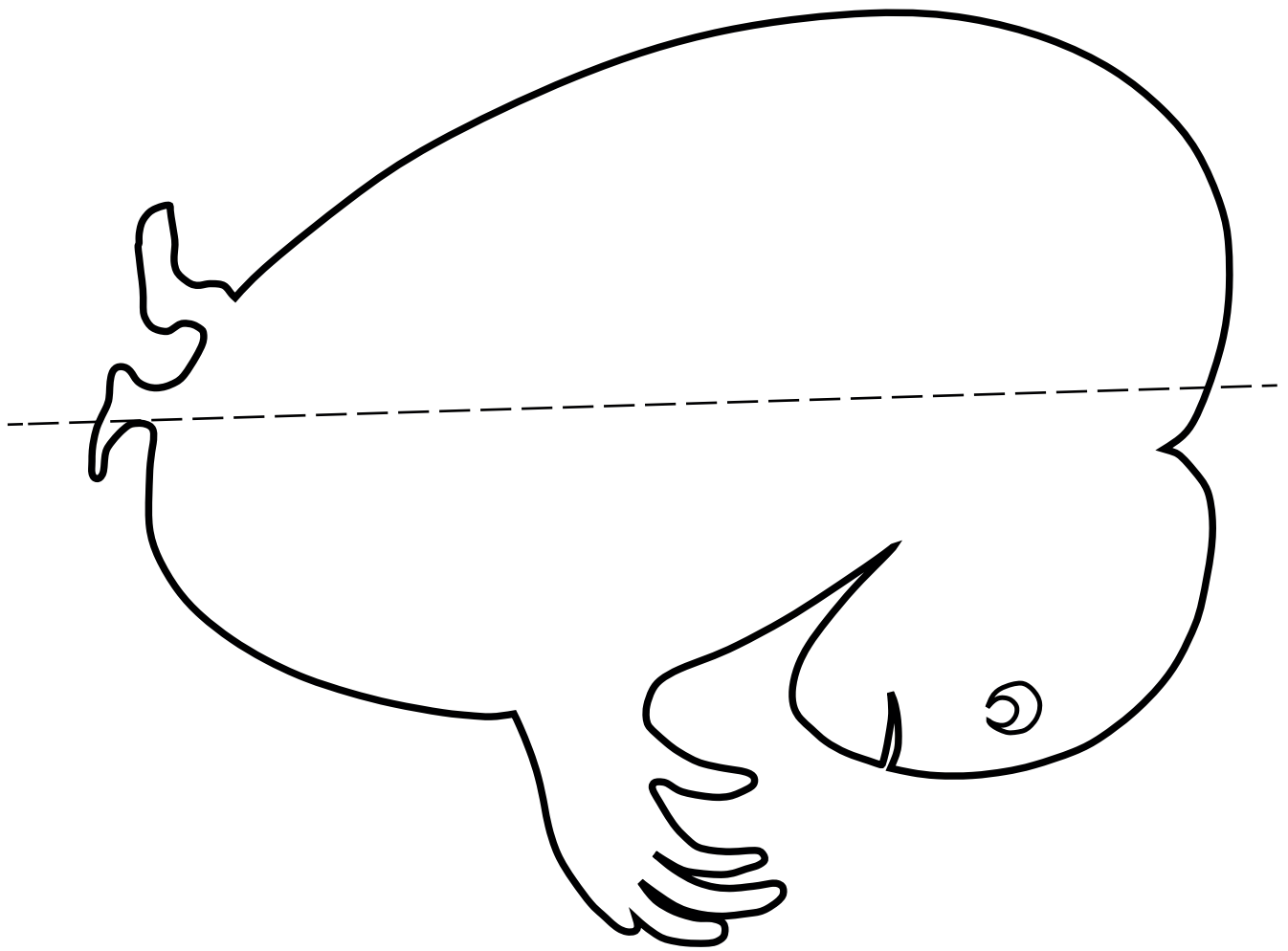


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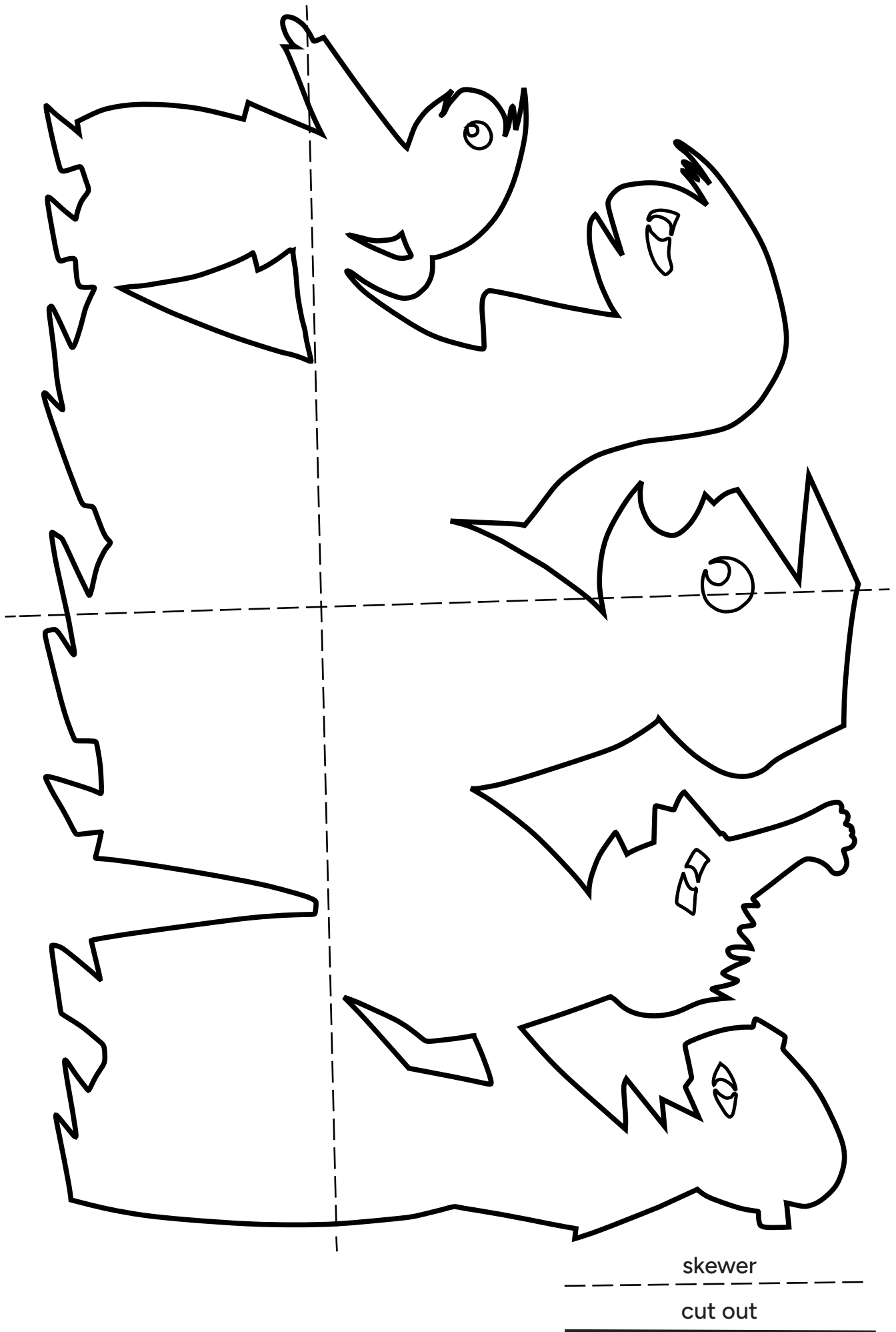
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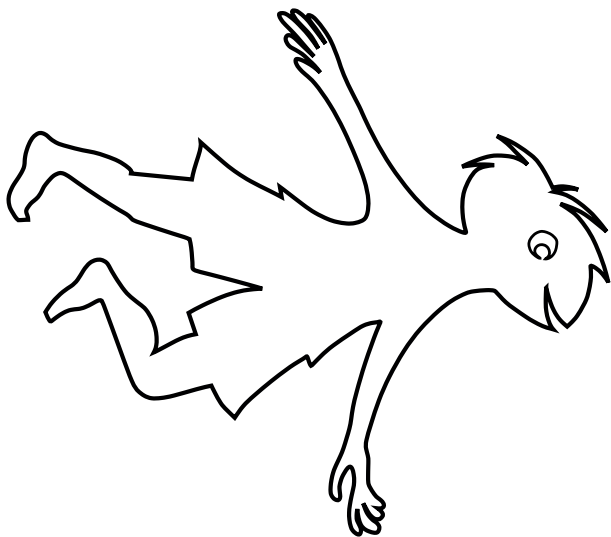
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cut out

**YOU CAN EITHER CUT OUT THE ENTIRE GROUP
OR ONLY THE CHARACTERS YOU NEED.**



DRAW YOUR OWN PUPPETS



PROJECT PARTNERS:

Centrum divadla utlačovaných



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LUMINARIA THE GAME

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