

# Mermaids

ECL 305: Literature and the Environment

Spring 2025. Professor Pressman

Day 14: Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid* (1837)





October 29

Arts & Letters

Department of English and Comparative Literature

## Q&A + OPEN HOUSE

Join ECL faculty & learn strategies for grad student success. Get your questions answered! Room AL-266.

**12:00-1:00 PM**

Meet + mix with ECL faculty, students, and organizations. Learn about 2026 courses. Get free candy! A&L Floor 2.

**1:00-2:00 PM**

Interested in tabling? Contact [rporath@sdsu.edu](mailto:rporath@sdsu.edu).

# ADMIN

**Halloween costumes (and blog about it) for extra credit?**

# ADMIN

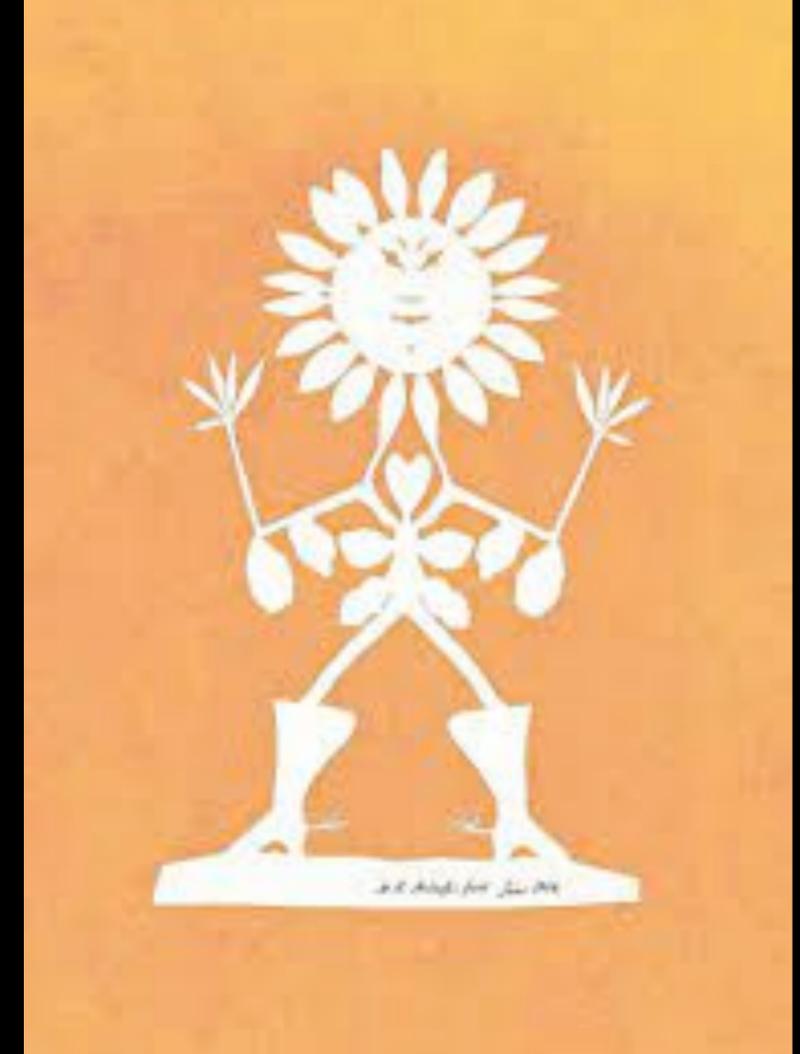
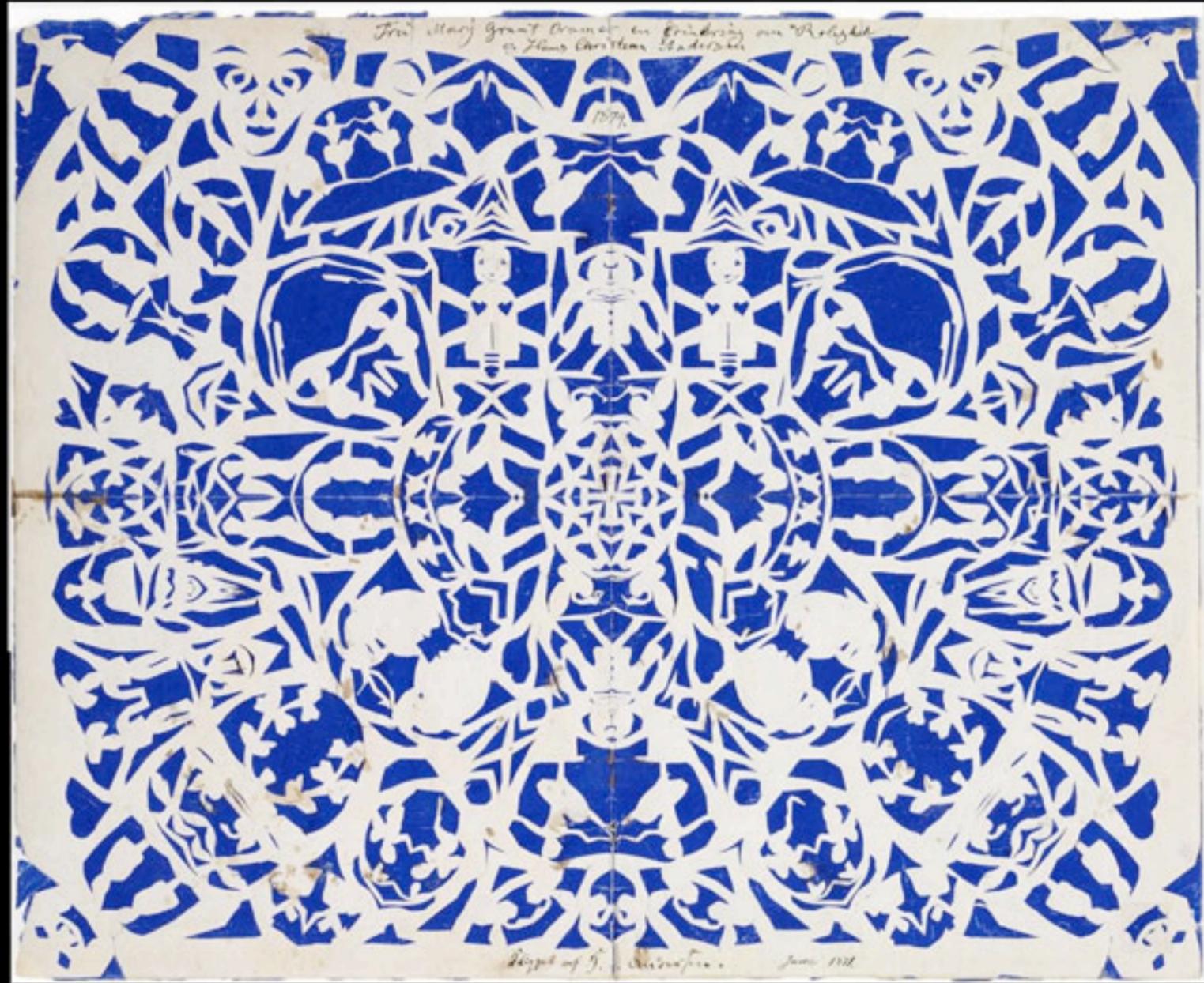
## **Grading Rubric for Classroom Participation**

A= attend class regularly, prepared to participate, and participate actively (generously and generatively) in class discussion

B= attend class regularly, prepared to participate

C=attend class regularly

# Andersen's paper cut art



# Edvard Eriksen statue (1913)



# September 2022



## Entanglements

**BY MARK C. MARINO, DIANA LEONG & JESSICA PRESSMAN**

*Entanglements: an exploration of the digital literary work of FISHNETSTOCKINGS* is a Scalar book, a web-based open source multimedia publication, that explores the critical methodologies and perspectives entangled in "FISHNETSTOCKINGS" by Joellyn Rock and her crew of collaborators. Consisting of multimedia projections of text, image, and dance that resonate the compelling call of sirens, the work intends to immerse, submerge, and seduce readers/viewers/users. Centering mermaid imagery and narrative, the resulting experiential performance is a modern feminist reconsideration and embodiment of ancient mythos that encourages critical attention and appreciation.

Published in *The Digital Review* (issue 2, September 2022)



ENTANGLEMENTS: AN EXPLORATION OF THE DIGITAL LITERARY WORK FISHNETSTOCKINGS BY DIANA LEONG, MARK C. MARINO, AND JESSICA...



# Entanglements: an exploration of the digital literary work FISHNETSTOCKINGS

by Diana Leong, Mark C. Marino, and Jessica Pressman

Begin with "Introduction"

Background: dl mermaid screenshot

<https://scalar.usc.edu/works/diving-into-fishnet-stockings/index>

# Discussion

- Where do you want to go?

# From your blogs- sacrifice for.....

- GAVIN: In Andersen's *The Little Mermaid*, the sea witch's caution shows how the journey of the mermaid is all about **sacrifice and the price that comes with longing to be part of another world**...life requires sacrifices of our past and present to inherent what we desire most for our future. .. Last, **this story is not just about receiving what we want most, but it is about learning how to deal with the decisions we make.**
- ASHLEY: The little mermaid wants to enter the human world to be with her prince, **but more than that, she would give up everything for one human day "to have the hope of sharing in the joys of the heavenly world."** Andersen escalates the message we learn from Undine by reiterating the ascent to heaven: "a soul... that rises up through the clear pure air to the bright stars above! Like as we rise out of the water to look at the haunts of men, so do they rise to the unknown and favoured regions" (118).

# From your blogs

- MELISSA: In Hans Christian Anderson's fairy tale *The Little Mermaid* there are multiple references of pain below and above the water. **This story is clearly meant to be shared with children and like most fairy tales there is a concurrent of morality and coming of age allegory**, in when and how pain is felt for this young mermaid....With the pair both having royal obligations, not listening to their the parent/family is more than a private rebellion it is a political rebellion with larger implications for their court and country. **One must be obedient to the greater good.** Making the lesson of the tale about how one will only experience pain when betraying your familial obligation, is not only a way to prove parents know best but to covertly imply it is against nature to do so.

# Discussion questions

- What does recognizing it as a queer allegory do or change?

# Discussion questions

- How and why is this text part of a class on Literature and the Environment?

# Discussion questions

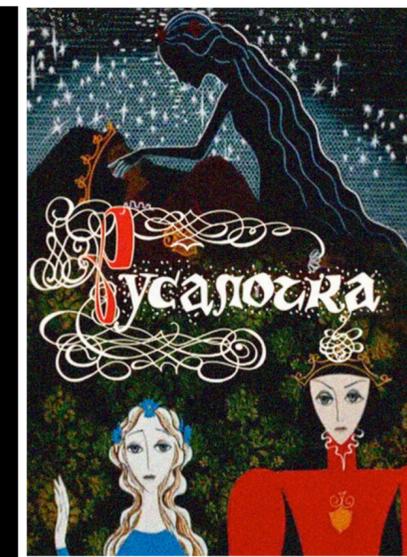
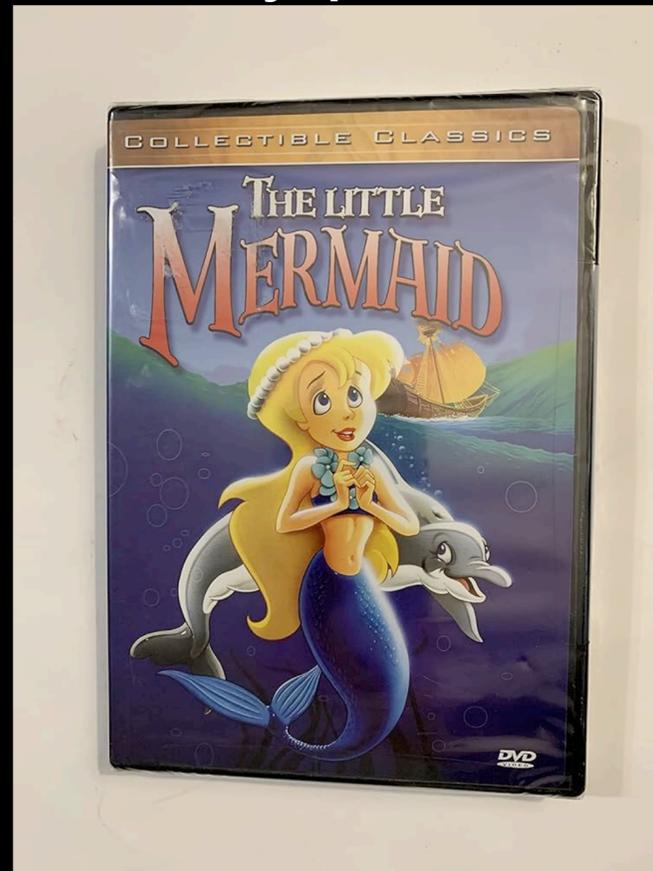
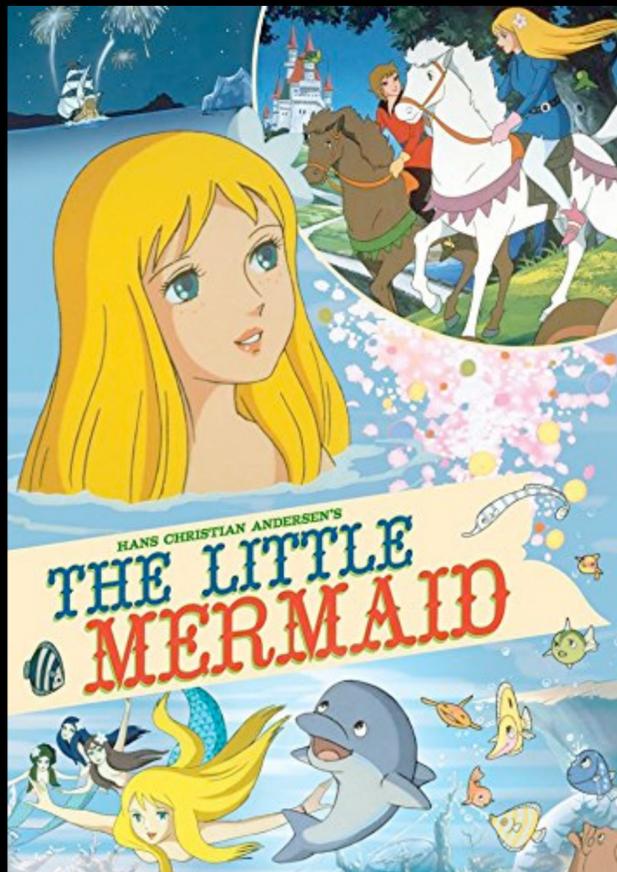
- How is this a story about ableness and disability? And why does that matter?

# Discussion questions

- What does recognizing it as a story of outsiders, boundary-crossers, immigrants do?

# Discussion questions

- Why do you think this story has been so compelling for adaptations over the following century plus?



**Take aways?**