

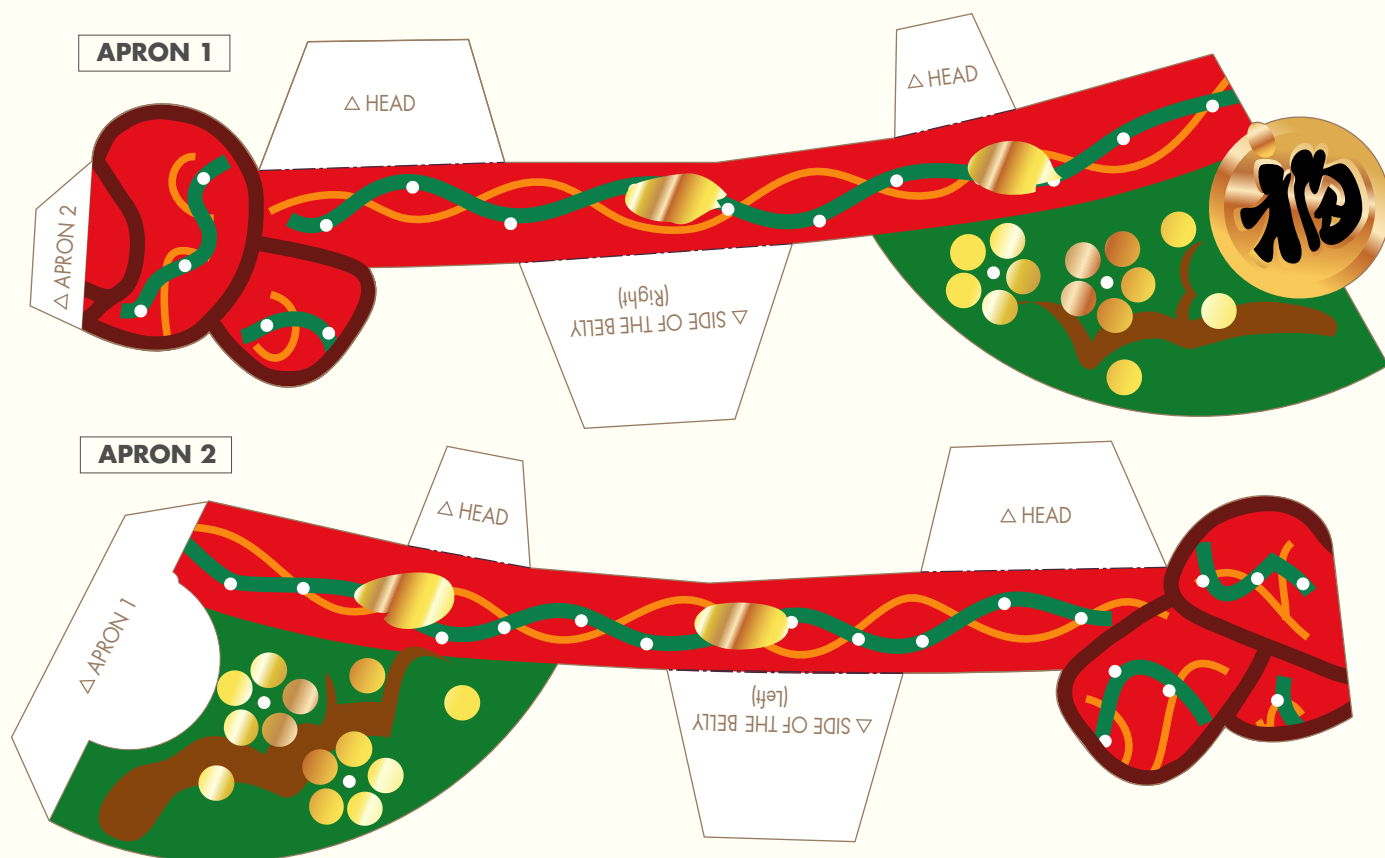


MANEKI NEKO (Lucky cat)

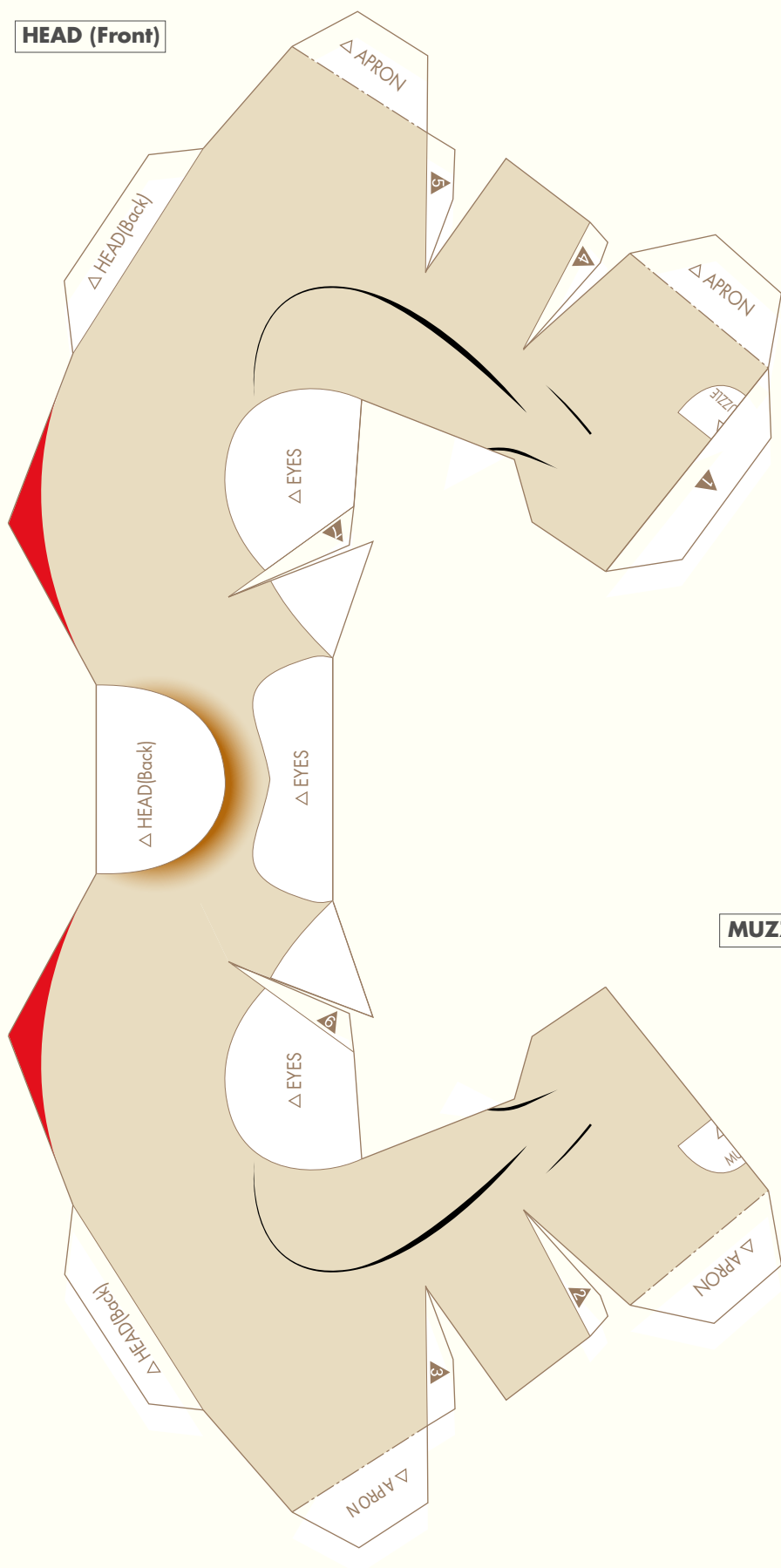
Beckoning for money

Maneki-neko, or “beckoning cat”, is a widely recognizable figure beloved in Japan as a lucky cat that beckons for good fortune. Most people in Japan use similar gestures to motion someone over, by waving their fingers and hands up and down with their palms facing down.

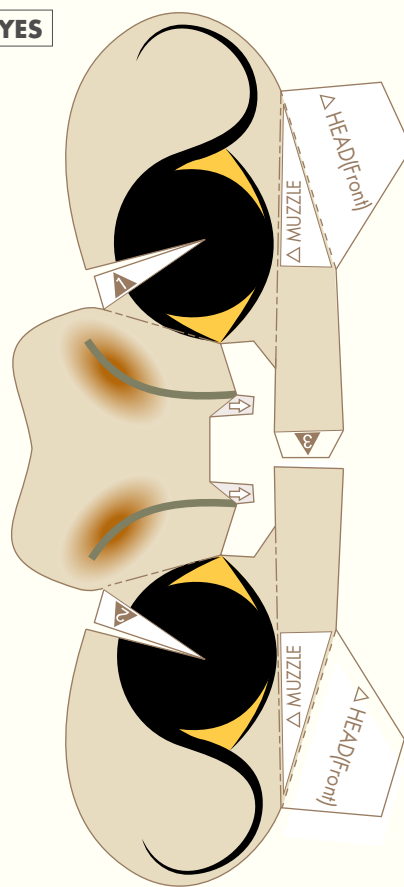
There are various theories about the origin of Maneki-neko, and even today no one is certain which explanation is correct. Maneki-neko is believed to have originated towards the end of the Edo Period (1603-1867) and eventually developed into the decorative ornament it is today. Folklore has it that the raised hand of the Maneki-neko has a special meaning. The raised right hand is believed to attract wealth, and the figurines are indeed often displayed in many households as well as shops. The Maneki-neko also holds in its hand a koban (a gold coin used during Edo Period) inscribed with aspirations of hope such as “Senmanryo” (meaning ten million golden coins) and “Kaiun” (meaning better fortune). In fact, it is only over the past few decades (since around the late 1940’s) that the Maneki-neko has begun to be seen holding a koban ; it is believed that what used to be a gold bell on its collar gradually evolved into the shape of a koban, better reflecting the everyday wishes of the common people.



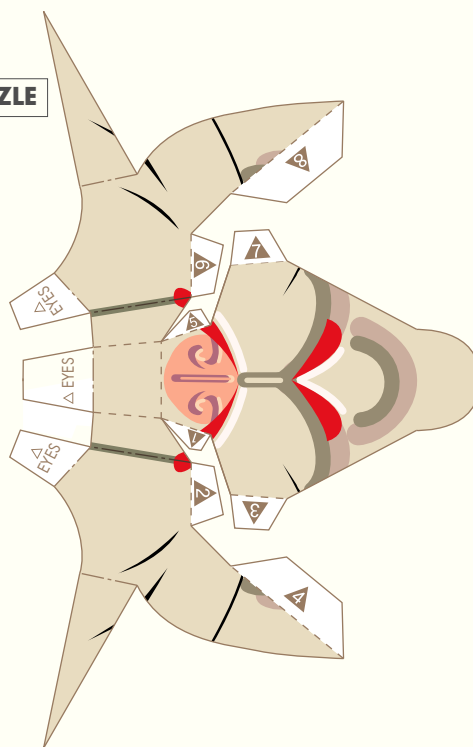
HEAD (Front)

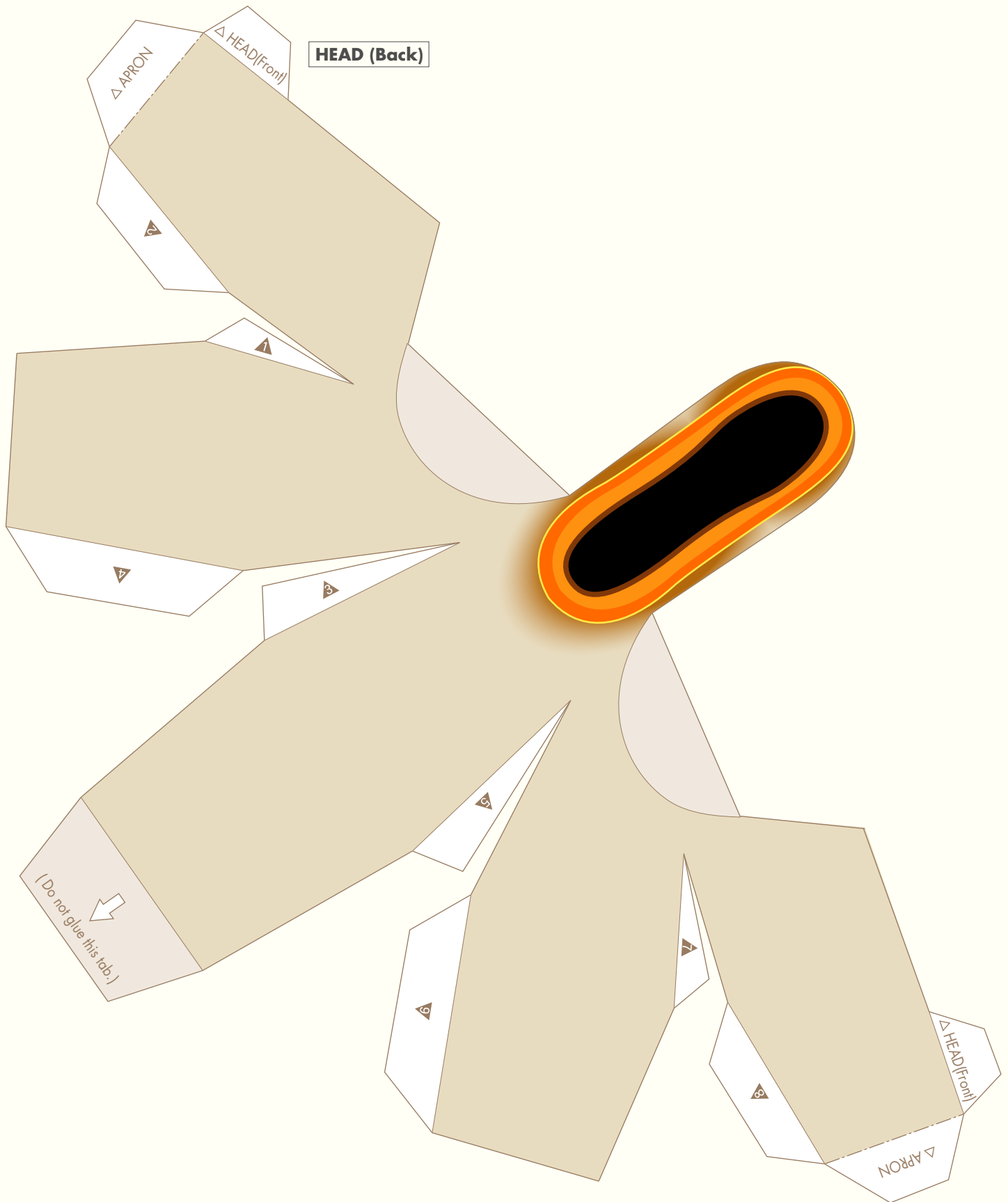


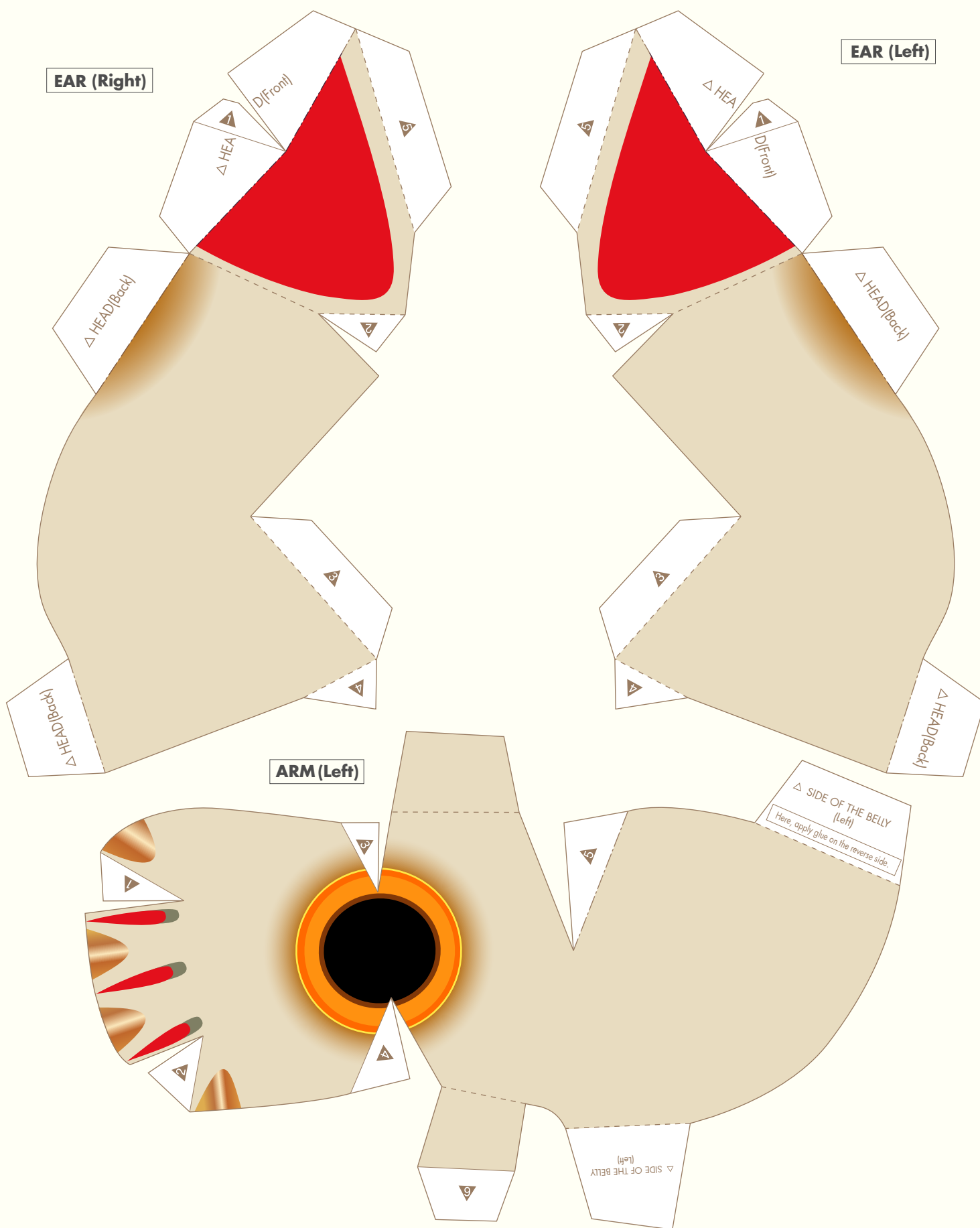
EYES

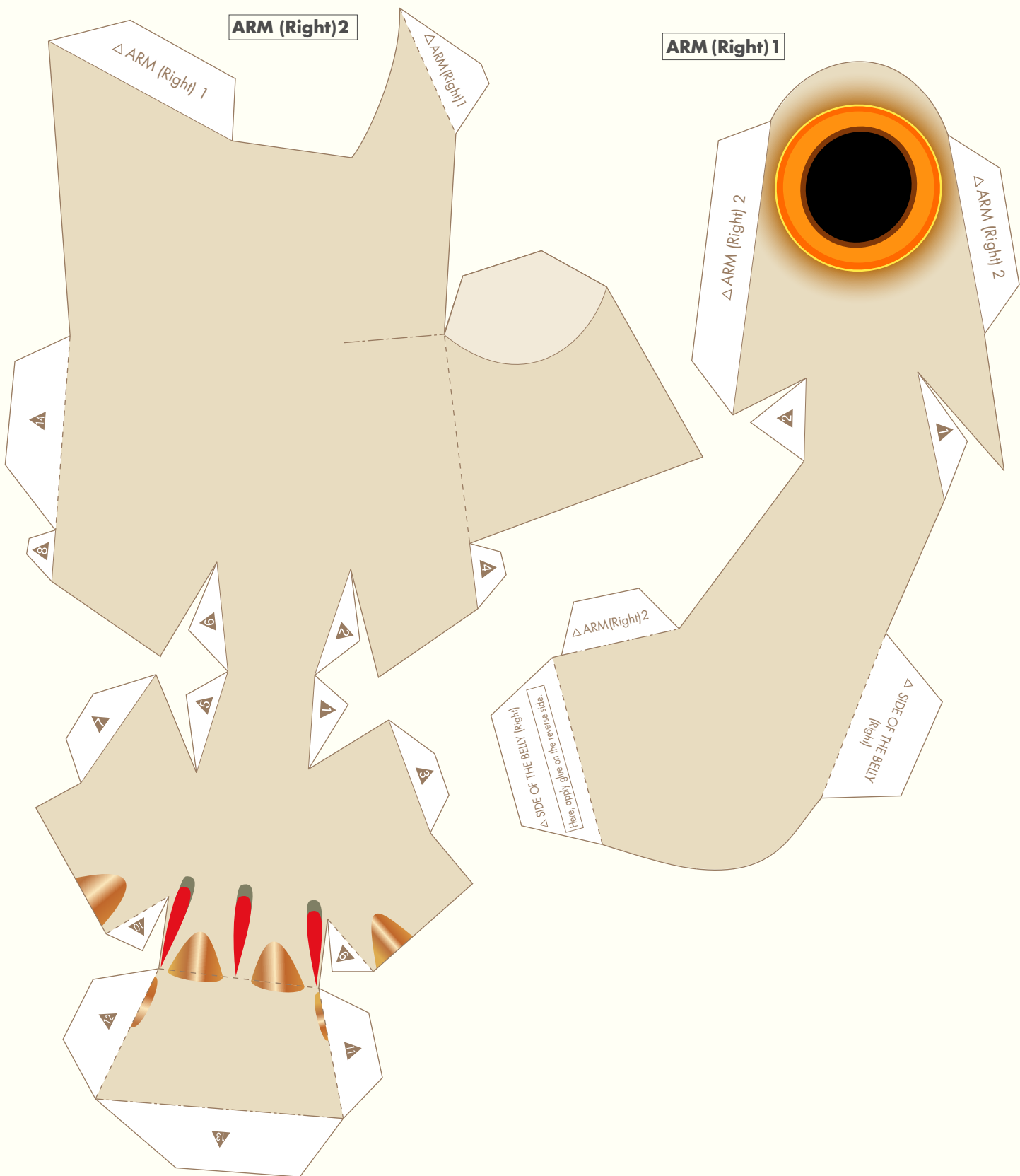


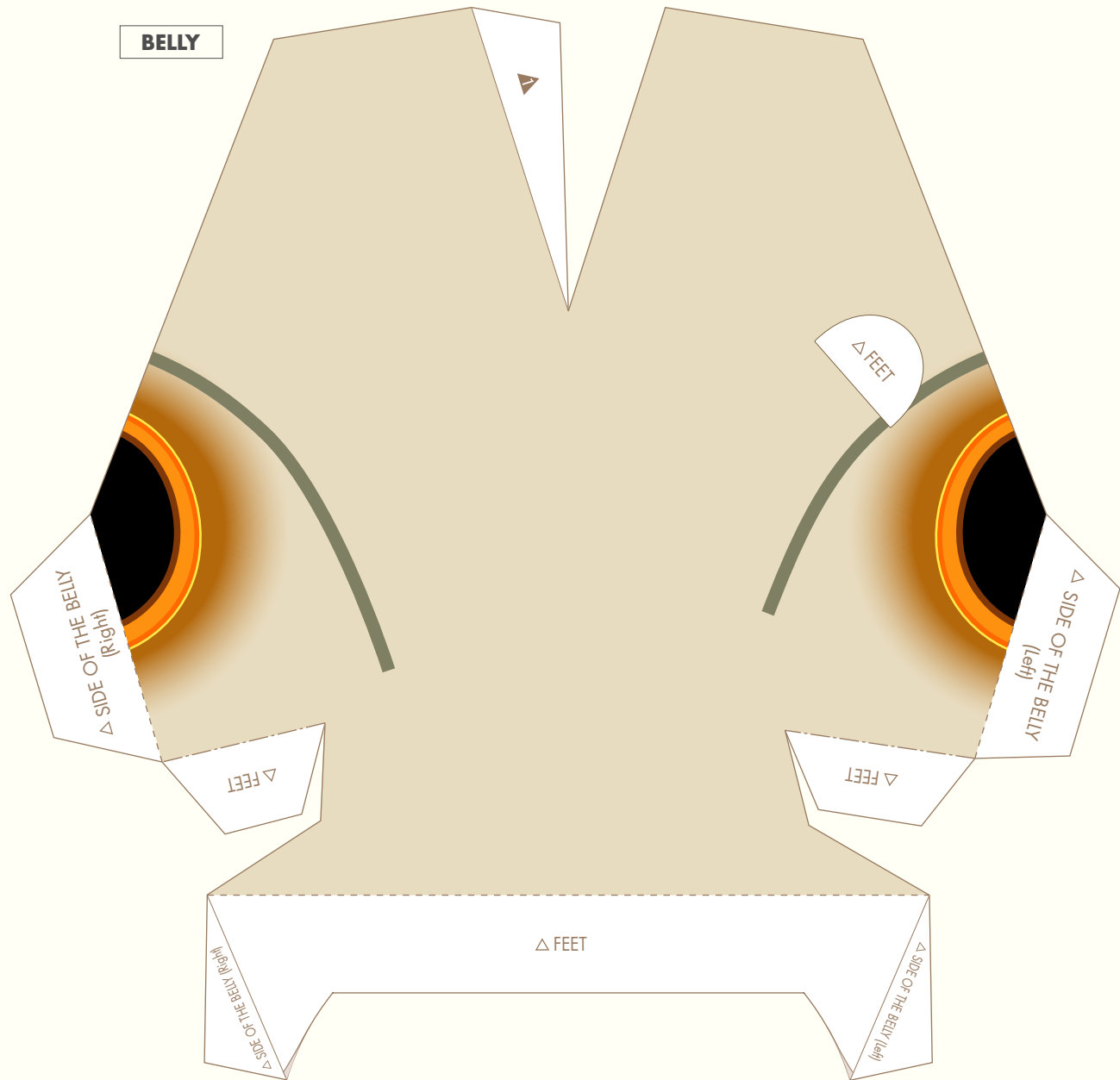
MUZZLE

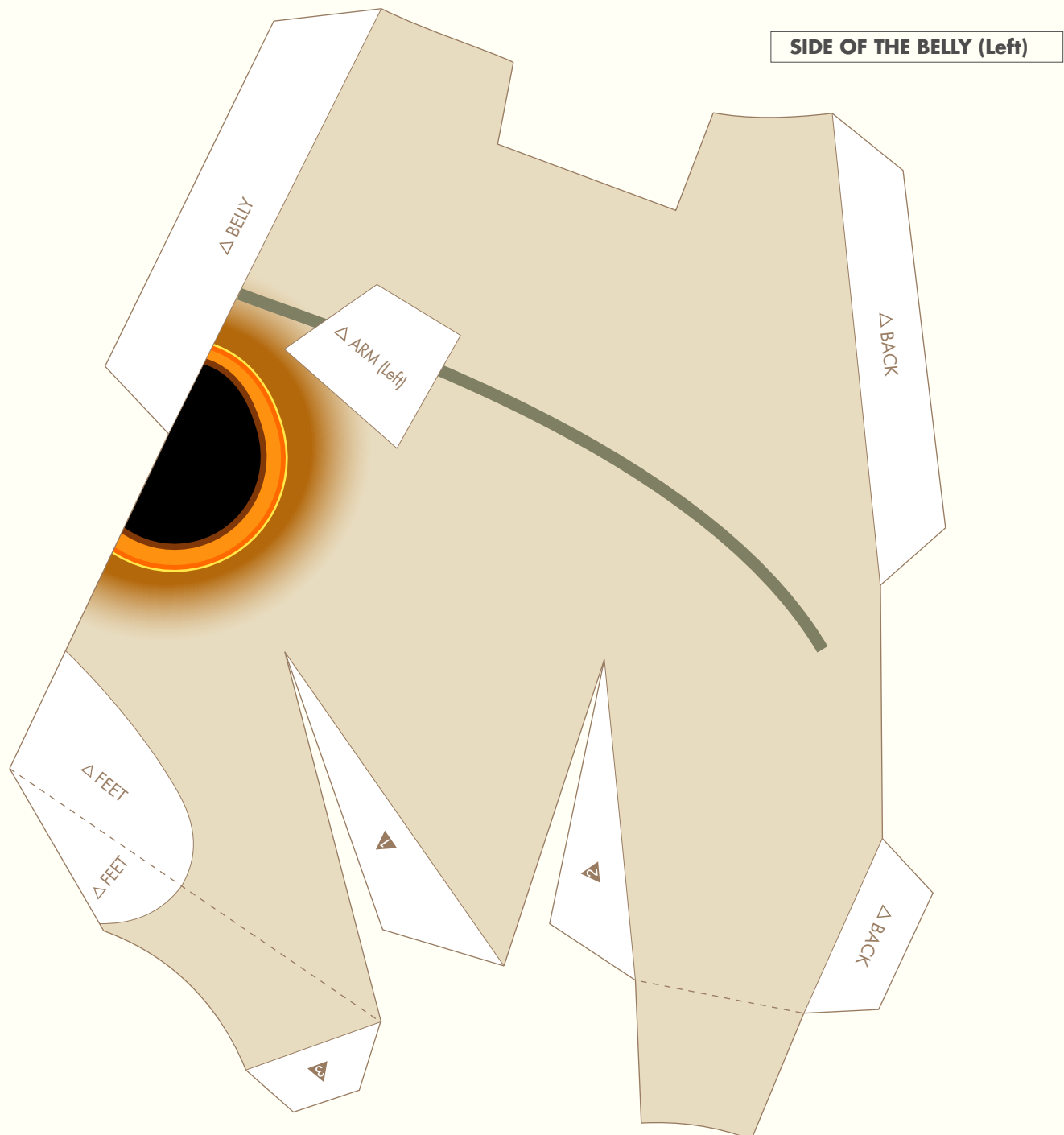




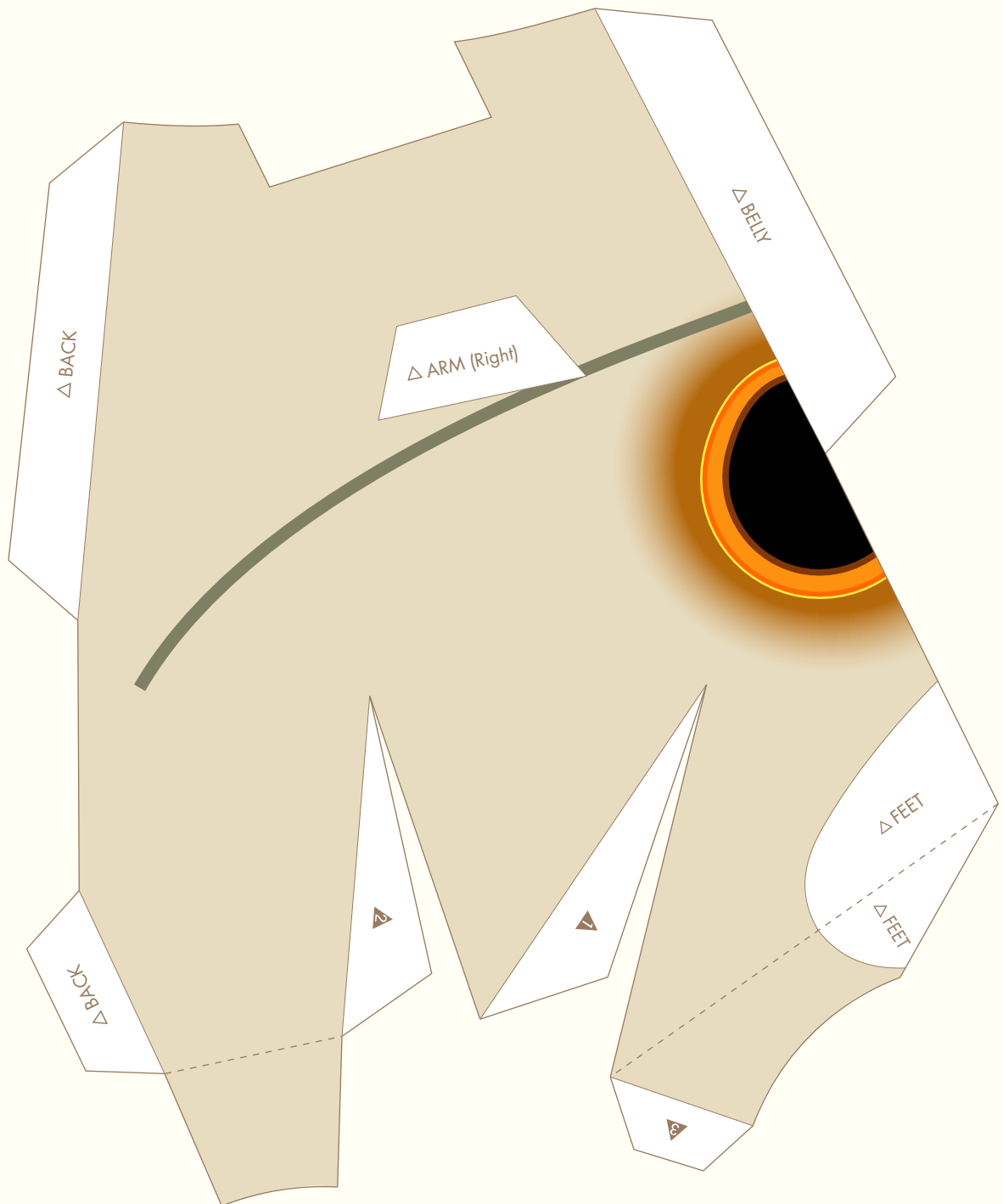




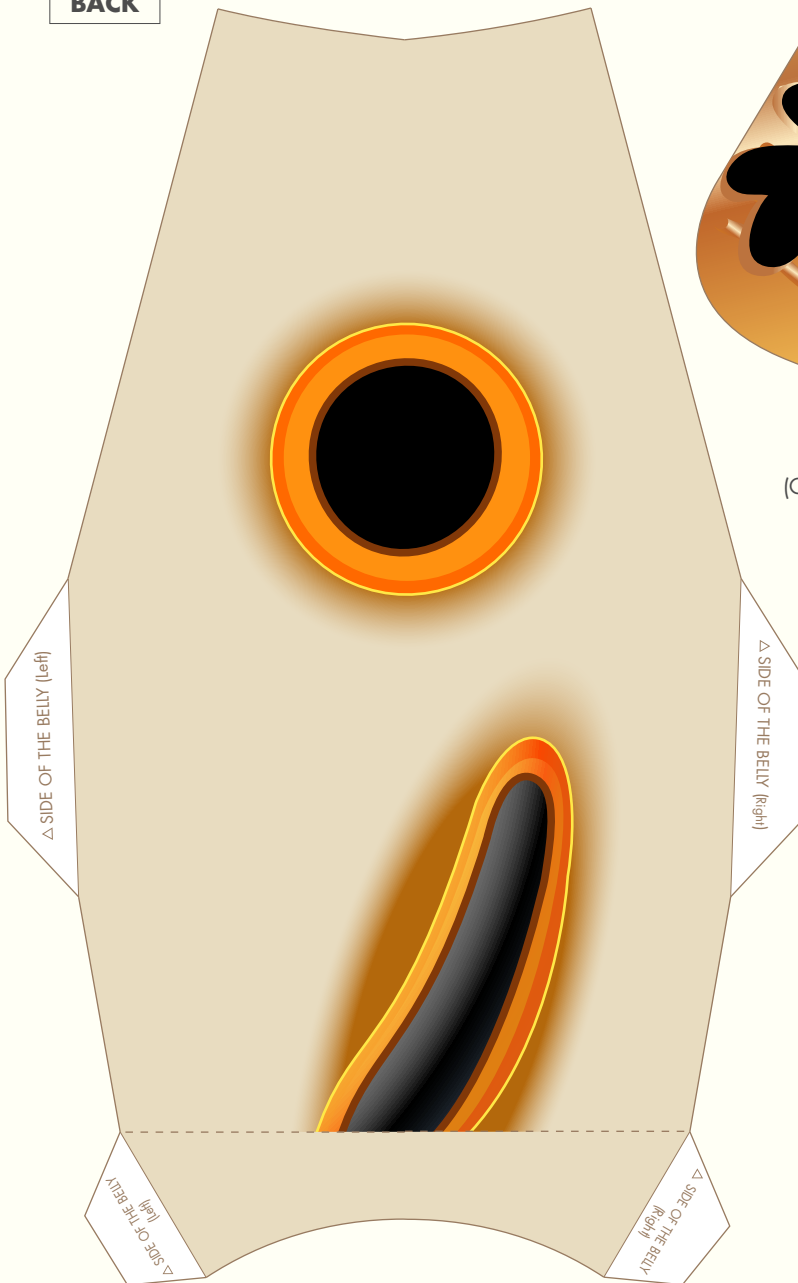




SIDE OF THE BELLY (Right)



BACK



KOBAN

SHOFUKU KOBAN
(FORTUNE COIN)



KAIJUN KOBAN
(GOOD LUCK COIN)



PLAIN KOBAN
(PLAIN COIN)



If you want to make a wish,
write it here and glue it onto the cat!

