

## Artist's Statement

Puppets and dolls and animals and fantastic creatures of all kinds are some of my favorite things. I'm more interested in the objects themselves than in any specific narrative. I make whatever magical figures I can conjure up and leave them to suggest their own stories. I don't restrict myself to any one medium or method – I enjoy making paintings and drawings as well as dolls, puppets and other sculptures. In the past several years I have experimented with all sorts of materials, including leather, fabric, clay, wood, papier maché, reed, beeswax, found objects and more. My works range in scale from a few inches to many feet, depending on the space available to me. I'm never happier than when I can give myself a new problem to solve.

Some of the artists and things that influence and amuse me:

Ray Johnson	The Hindu Pantheon
H. C. Westerman	Handmade toys
Annette Messenger	Inuit carving
Christian Boltanski	Persian miniatures
Talking animals	Tarot
Masks and costumes	Sympathetic magic
Puppets of all kinds	Devils and demons and monsters
Carnival celebrations all over the world	Myths, fairy tales, legends and stories

Mary Fortuna, 2015