



Strings, Hands, Shadows: A Modern Puppet History (DIAGram (Detroit Institute of Arts))

John Bell

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Puppetry is arguably the most widespread form of performance. The artistry of puppetry includes aspects of the visual arts, theatre, music, and dance. Puppets can be traced as far back as ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome and are found today in cultures worldwide, across the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia. John Bell shows how puppets have been used to relay myths, poke fun at political figures, comment on cultural events of the period, express moral stories, and entertain adults and children alike.

This richly illustrated book gives a historical overview and looks at the wide variety of this traditional art form. From European and Asian puppets in modern and ancient times to the Puppet Modernism movements, the book explores the important innovators and innovations of puppetry.

Brief biographies of key figures such as Tony Sarg (credited with creating the first over-life-size puppets used for parades), Paul McPharlin (creator of Punch's Circus), and Jim Henson (world-reknowned creator of many puppets, including the Muppets) help describe the evolution of puppetry. Definitions and descriptions of a variety of puppet styles, including shadow puppets, marionettes, hand puppets, rod puppets, and many others, add to the understanding of this fascinating form of art.

With over one hundred color illustrations, this book highlights the "lives" of such characters as Kermit the Frog, Punch and Judy, Jack Pumpkinhead, and the traditional Chinese puppet Te-Yung to reveal the ways that puppets have become an integral part of many cultures. Captivating and fun, this book offers valuable insight into the wonderful world of puppetry.

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