

Felicia Cooper

Puppeteer, Educator, Community Artist

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Residencies and Performances

Bell Museum, St Paul, MN — *Artist in Residence*

Fall 2022
TBD

Northern Spark Festival, The Official Bureau of Lost Things, St Paul, MN — *Lead Artist*

Fall 2022
Led a 9-person collaboration to create a large-scale interactive installation involving a ten-foot-tall Rube Goldberg Machine and 30-foot tall shadow puppet projection for an all-night festival with over 4,000 visitors.

Barebones 2021 Extravaganza, El Grito de Los Ancestros, Minneapolis, MN — *Puppeteer*

Summer and Fall 2021

Created several large-scale parade puppets through community gathering, culminating in a large-scale festival procession and ceremony through Powderhorn Park.

Winterthur Museum, Winterthur DE — *Maker Creator Fellow*

Summer 2021

Using Winterthur's extensive archives, I researched, designed, fabricated and performed a toy theater show based on the work of female illustrators at the turn of the century. In turn, I gave a talk on the ephemeral relationship of the amateur women artist of the early 20th century.

How to Know a Whale, University of Connecticut — *Director, Designer, Producer*

Spring 2021

Created in completion of an MFA degree in Puppetry Arts, this is a one-woman tourable show for children using object performance and shadow puppetry. It is designed to be performed in outdoor community spaces, and is scheduled to be performed in Minneapolis parks and community gardens this summer.

Redwing Blackbird Theater, Rosendale, NY — *Artist in Residence*

Summer, 2020

During an online residency in cohort with other artists, I explored movement and body as landscape in a shadow puppet and movement piece based on 15th century timepieces and the work of William Benjamin.

New Hazlett Theater, Pittsburgh, PA — *Community Supported Artist*

Fall, 2018

Supported by the Heinz Small Arts Endowment, I created a full-length children's puppet show called *Porto Domi* in collaboration with Action Housing's residents about the concept of home.

folkLAB, Pittsburgh, PA — *Inaugural Resident Artist*

Summer, 2018

Using repurposed materials, this was *The Ironweed Tales*, an evening-length performance using tabletop puppetry to illustrate the history of the Appalachian women who fought mountaintop removal

Artist Statement

Deeply rooted in community and equity, my work seeks to honor our shared imagination and curiosity through accessible object performance, movement, and puppetry. This art form invites us to come together to create the worlds we hope to inhabit. I am inspired by our collective need for understanding and joy. My work often uses found objects, cardboard, and fiddly technical assemblages to illustrate complex subjects and honor the inanimate.

Accolades and Grants

Connecticut Sea Grant, 2021

Frank Ballard Memorial Scholarship, 2020

Marks Family Endowment Grant, 2020

Connecticut Arts Council Artists Respond Grant, 2020

Heinz Small Arts Endowments, 2018

Institute of Museum and Library Services Grant

(MAKEshop outreach projects with the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh) 2016-2018

Project Stream Grant, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, 2016, 2018

SLAM PERFORMANCES

Heart of the Beast Mask and Puppet Theater, 2021

Black Cherry Virtual Slam, May 2020
Coney Island Puppets Come Home, July 2020

UConn Puppet Slam, 2018-2021
Pittsburgh Puppet Slam, 2016-2018

Boom! Jam! Puppet Slam!, 2020

in West Virginia.

Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, Pittsburgh, PA — Resident Teaching Artist

Fall, Spring, Summer 2018

Through the Center's Artists in Schools and Communities program, supported by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, I taught illustration to young men convicted as adults at the Allegheny County Jail. I then taught puppetry and sculpture at a summer program with Pittsburgh Public Schools for students new to the country.

Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA — Artist in Residence

Summer, 2015, Summer, 2017, Spring 2020 (Virtually), Fall 2021 (Virtually)

This museum has been a ground for development of both pedagogy and performance since 2015, including regular summer show series, free community fabrication workshops, and facilitation of community storytelling projects.

Education, Artist Talks, and Festivals

Objecto, Toronto, Canada — festival performance

November 2021

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT — MFA

August 2018–May 2021

Arts in Activism at the UConn Women's Center — Panelist

February 2021

Acheson Walsh Studios, New York City — fabrication apprenticeship

June 2019–August 2019

Reimagining Intimacy for the Post Modern, University of Greenwich, London,

UK — *guest performer*

December 2020

National Puppetry Conference, Eugene O'Neill Theater Center —participant

Summer 2017, 2018, 2020

Bread and Puppet Theater, Glover, CT — apprenticeship

Summer 2015, 2019

SKILLS

Directing, Community Engagement,
Education and Reality Pedagogy,
Producing, Highlander Circle Facilitation,
Oral History, , Fabrication

REFERENCES

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