



Holden Puppets

Having practiced the art of puppetry since 1979, Charlie Holden and Laura Opshinsky are proud to be the Pittsburgh area's oldest professional puppet company. Below are just a few of the places we have performed:

- Pittsburgh Children's Museum
- Pittsburgh Center for the Arts
- Carnegie Museum
- Andy Warhol Museum
- Pittsburgh's First Night
- Three Rivers Arts Festival
- International Children's Festival
- The Society for Arts and Craft
- Three Rivers Regatta
- Benedum Theatre
- Hickory Apple Festival
- Westmoreland Arts and Heritage Festival
- Rostered artists with Pennsylvania Council of the Arts
- Pittsburgh Public Schools Learning Center (a 16-week residency)
- Hundreds of elementary schools and private homes.

We offer a complete line of professional services related to the art of puppetry:

- Educational and entertaining Puppet Shows for All Occasions, from full-stage school assemblies to in-home birthday parties
- Giant strolling puppets: “Bubbles”, our 8-foot tall bubble-breathing dragon; a mysterious UFO that “hovers” 12 feet off the ground, and more!
- Puppet-making and performance workshops and residencies tailored to your needs and interests
- Custom-made puppets and stages.

Our Shows

Punch and Judy in The Punchaphonium

This is by far our most hilarious production to date! Punch fancies himself a great musician; the only problem is he's tone deaf! You'll laugh till you cry as Punch “blows away” one critic after another. Quite possibly the funniest puppet show you will ever see! (Great for all ages)

Circus Minimus

Hurry, hurry, hurry!!! The Circus Minimus is coming to town! The most amazing miniature menagerie that has ever amused the masses. This show has it all: an acrobat, juggler, trapeze artist, unicycle rider, dancing horses, weight-lifter, and many more! This is marionette artistry at its finest. It's pure entertainment, the perfect program for any event. (30 minutes, all ages)

Baba Yaga I

This lively and raucous hand and rod puppet show is based on the Russian folk tale about Baba Yaga. She is a witch who isn't all that bad, but not quite nice either. The fun begins when a little girl names Marusia stumbles upon Baba Yaga's enchanted broom and is instructed in its use by the witch's own overweight cat, Jellyroll. (All ages)

Baba Yaga II

Baba Yaga is back! This time it's Noshalotsky the Wizard who is after her magic. Noshalotsky (who smells a lot like garlic and peanut butter) disguises himself as some familiar characters (one is purple, one wears a sweater, one is BIG and yellow, and one is blue and on the right track. (All ages)

Rodney the Magic Rabbit

It's a puppet show! No, it's a magic puppet show! Wait, it's both! Join Charlie Holden and hand puppet Rodney the Rabbit as they perform dazzling magic tricks and illusions guaranteed to leave the young and no-so-young wondering "How did they do that?" You'll have to decide for yourself! (30 minutes, all ages, recommended for small audiences)

Haunts, Hoots, and Howls

See vampires, ghosts, goblins, and all of your favorite Halloween characters in this sillier-than-scary creature feature. (30 minutes, all ages)

Elves Fantoccini (The Lawrence Elk Show)

It's a holiday revue complete with ice skaters, dancing elves, a polar bear and the one, the only Elfis! The charming Lawrence Elk hosts this show. (30 minutes, all ages)

Tales of Hotei

Come, sit, look, and listen as Holden Puppets brings to life colorful characters from ancient Japan. Inspired by our 1988 trip to the world wide Puppetry Festival in Japan, the Holden Puppeteers offer a rare look at a vanishing culture. Marionettes, hand puppets, and shadow puppets are used to tell the stories of eccentric monks, samurai warriors, wood spirits, and fire breathing dragons. But that's not all! Along with these well-known forms of puppetry, we also present the delightfully unique Japanese traditions of Karuma ningyo and Ashi-odori puppets. (30 minutes, 3 – adults)

Arthur and Merlin

Armored knights on horseback, two-headed giants, dragons, wizards, and the boy who would be king. Its medieval madness as Holden Puppets present the story of Arthur & Merlin in their largest show to date. Most of the cast of 25 rod puppets are one-quarter life sized, but, just for fun, there's also a 4-inch high "Punch & Judy", 8-foot tall giants, and a dragon named Gundersnatch! Perfect for large or small, young or not-so-young audiences. (30 minutes, 3 – adults)

Gastone's World Neighborhood

This show uses different types of puppets (marionettes, hand, rod and shadow puppets) to present topics that are important to the enhancement of World Brotherhood and understanding. Gentle lessons in the form of short puppet plays illustrate the positive attitudes toward the concepts of: gender equality, conflict resolution, acceptance of others even though they are different, and sharing and teamwork/cooperation. This is an excellent overview to the art of puppetry. (30 minutes, age, 3 – adults)

Bearly Spring

Spring has sprung, but what's wrong with Buddy? Buddy Bear has just awakened from winter's hibernation, but he's having trouble figuring out what he should be. He seeks advice from his friends: Buck Beaver, Punky Porcupine, Skipper Squirrel, and Turk Turtle. Buddy finally learns an important lesson for everyone with a little help from Olivia Owl and Krumholz the Tree. (30 minutes, age 3 – 12)

Eddie Richards Litterland Adventures

Three-quarters life size marionettes, found objects, and junk puppets are used to cover contemporary issues of vandalism, littering, and recycling. (30 minutes, all ages)

Millennium Marionettes

What do a break-dancing egg, an opera singer made of tin cans, and a clown that drives his own car have in common? They are all part of Holden Puppets' "retro-contempo" puppet show *Millennium Marionettes*! We've taken some of our favorite puppet acts from the past twenty years and teamed them up with some brand-new performers for an exciting and colorful presentation. The older puppets are all crafted in the traditional ways while the newer characters are made entirely out of junk and found objects. This highly original and unique show is marionette artistry at it's finest! Performance is thirty minutes long and can be followed by a question and answer/demonstration session.

Giant Strolling Puppets

Our larger-than-life characters (8 to 15 feet tall) will be a big hit at your event: Uncle Sam, Alyce America, Iyadola - West African Sun Goddess, "Bubbles", the bubble-breathing dragon, Jack-0-Lantern, Punch and Judy, and Alien Flying Saucer.

For more information, contact us at:

Holden Puppets, R.D.1, Box 408, Hunker, PA 15639

724-925-2128 (Phone)

724-925-2608 (Fax)

puppetmaster@holdenpuppets.com