

TIBOR DE NAGY

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The Nagy Marionette Company

A 75th Anniversary Exhibition

December 13, 2025 to January 24, 2026



Few things in this world transcend race, class, gender, ideology, and the ravages of war and history to unite people in their common humanity. Even fewer happen to be fabulous and fantastic to boot. But there's one truth that stands out above all others: Everybody Loves Puppets.

One person who was legendarily taken by them was John Bernard Myers. In his memoir, the co-founder of Tibor de Nagy gallery described being driven as a child by three passions: poetry, painting, and puppets. "You are the puller of strings and the master of fanciful destinies" he wrote of his early productions of *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Peter and the Wolf*, "You cannot be touched up there, high on your bridge above the stage, the lights shining down upon who you really are... You will never know a greater liberty."

Myers met Tibor Nagy sometime in the late 1940s at the standing room section at the New York City Ballet. Shortly afterward they drummed up a scheme to make money and secure the latter's American residency. Thus, The Nagy Marionette Company was born. 75 years after the troupe gave up theater to become an art gallery, here it is for one more command performance.

Myers' fascination with puppets was shared by much of the 20th century avant-garde, who saw in their disjointed limbs the embodiment of a wide range of ideas and possibilities. The Nagy

Marionette Company's aim was to conjure "the marvelous" by opening a brief rip in the fabric of reality through an act of sustained play. With their beautiful backdrops, transporting music, and unrivaled commitment to character-acting, the group appeared before audiences of children across the city, turning make-believe bewitchingly real.

The Nagy Marionette Company's original puppets were lost or destroyed many years ago, and so on the eve of the gallery's 75th anniversary, we've decided to make new ones. This exhibition includes many of the gallery's represented artists alongside old friends, new partners, and a trove of archival material. Our aim is to channel the spirit of the troupe's original productions by finding as many ways possible to bring puppetry to life.

We're honored to put on a show for you.

Artists included: Sam Anderson, Ken Aptekar, Richard Baker, Joe Brainard, Stephen Bron, Jim Butler, Mimi Gross, Mimi Gross/Red Grooms, Hildur Ásgeirsdóttir Jónsson, Medrie MacPhee, Sarah McEneaney, Shari Mendelson, Bryan Rogers, Tabboo!, Olivia Van Kuiken, Susan Jane Walp, Matthew Weinstein, Trevor Winkfield.