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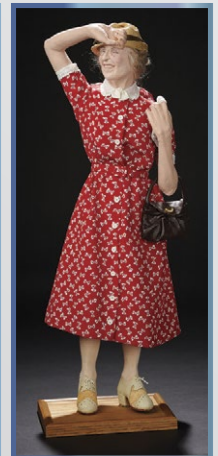
Richard Simmons was not simply a private collector. He was a grand spokesman for the art doll, much as he was a spokesman for health and fitness. An early

patron of NIADA, he was a well-known figure at conventions and an important spokesman.

Over the years his collection grew to feature important works by doll artists including Stephanie Blythe, Annie Wahl, Lisa Lichtenfels, Forest Rogers, Jamie Williamson, Marilyn Radzat, Jodi and Richard Creager, Maria Ahrens, Shelley Thornton and many more.

The pieces that meant most to him, not only for their artistry, but also for personal memories, were always the ones that he kept. According to his family, it was his wish that these works of art now be shared with others. *The Private Art Doll Collection of Richard Simmons*, encompassing more than 250 important pieces, will be presented at an exclusive one-owner auction by Theriault's on Saturday, December 6, 2025. The dolls will be presented in an art-quality commemorative catalog with photographs and descriptions of each of the dolls, along with a certificate indicating that the doll was featured in the Richard Simmons Private Collection. ❀

For details about the dolls in the collection or to order the commemorative catalog call 410-224-3655 or visit www.theriaults.com.




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On the Cover: Harriet is an adorable doll by Sigita Stonienė of Sybil's Tales. She was completed in September 2025. *Photo by Sigita Stonienė.*

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Where Does the Time Go?

The final months of 2025 have arrived, and with the amount of daylight gradually decreasing here in Wisconsin, the days seem to be flying by at an increasing speed. Before we know it, the winter holidays will be here. If you're like me, the calendar will soon be filled with family and community events. Despite busy schedules, this can be a great time to look back on previous projects and find inspiration for the future.

Artists featured in this issue took time to reflect on their own dollmaking journeys and past creations. First, there is Donny Harijanto of DreamHigh Studio. He sculpts resin BJDs, which include fantasy characters like house elves and sprites. His wife, Kwong Linda, designs the dolls' tiny outfits. Maryna Skubenko of Wee Lucky Charms also sculpts BJDs, but her preferred medium is porcelain. Then there is Amy Kate Irwin of Amy Kate Doll Designs; she paints and completes hair rooting for lifelike silicone dolls. Rounding out our artist profiles, we have Sigita Stonienė of Sybil's Tales. Stonienė creates fabric dolls and their accompanying clothes.

An article that focuses on Richard Simmons, the famous health and fitness coach who passed away in 2024, is also included in this issue. Simmons left behind an extensive personal collection of art dolls, which will be auctioned off by Theriault's in December.

For individuals hoping to become more involved in the doll community, I encourage you to join a doll club if you haven't already. They are an excellent way to meet people and form connections. Two such clubs are highlighted in this issue. If you would like to let others know about a group you are already part of, you can complete our Q&A form (dollsmagazine.com/dollclubsurvey) for a chance to see your club featured in an upcoming issue.

Whether you're a collector or an artist, I hope being part of this beautiful community in 2025 has left you with an abundance of positive memories that you'll be able to carry with you into the new year and beyond. May 2026 bring you many more.

We wish you and your loved ones a joyous winter season!

Hannah Kelley
Hannah Kelley, Editor

Vote on this doll's name, and let us know where she's hiding in the issue! Complete the form at dollsmagazine.com/foundit/ — you could win a one-year subscription to **DOLLS**.



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by Ping Lau



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Pixies and Fairies and Sprites ... Oh, My!

DreamHigh Studio
Specializes in
Fantasy BJDs

By Wil Peterson



Recent dolls are
gathered for a
group photo.

When Donny Harijanto's quest for the ideal ball-jointed doll began in 2005, he never dreamed that the journey would have both career- and life-altering repercussions. At the time, he was simply a besotted boyfriend seeking a birthday gift for his beloved, Kwong Linda.

"Linda had studied fashion design and had always loved art and crafts, so a BJD felt perfect," Donny said. "Instead of buying one, I sculpted it myself, learning from online tutorials and sharing progress in BJD forums."

That do-it-yourself approach quickly led to professional sculpting opportunities for multiple doll brands, followed by the successful 2010 launch of the duo's own BJD line: Dream-High Studio. Based in Surabaya, Indonesia, and primarily featuring small-scale, resin BJDs, the studio's focus is on fantasy figures designed to be ethereal, enchanting, and utterly irresistible. From pixies and gnomes to fairies and fairy godmothers, creative output is limited only by the seemingly endless boundaries of the pair's collective imagination.

"Our dolls are mostly tiny, ball-jointed dolls inspired by fantasy and fairy tales," Donny said. "Many people know us for our little house elves, but over the years, we've also created sprites, childlike characters, and other whimsical figures. We like each doll to feel like a small personality, with its own charm and story."

Donny and Linda, who married in 2011, are equal partners with equally important roles. "I handle sculpting and doll design, while Linda brings her fashion-design background into creating the outfits," he said. "Together, this balance allows us to present each release as a complete character, combining sculptural detail with clothing that enhances the personality of the doll."

Their dolls are intentionally on the small side. Some clock in at about 1.6 to 2 inches, while others range from 3.5 to 4 inches. "Our most popular line is about 12 to 14.5 cm (4.7 to 5.7 inches). We've also done a few larger ones in the 25 to 27 cm (9.8 to 10.6 inches) range," Donny said. "Even though they are small, we try to give them as much articulation as possible so collectors can enjoy posing them. Some of them even have jointed fingers, even in the 14 cm (5.5 inches) size, which is quite rare to see. It's something we feel makes them more expressive, and we're happy that collectors notice these little details."

Right from top: This is the first DreamHigh Studio house elf. He is 5.5 inches tall. • House elf Nolan was released in 2018.

Below: Clothing is made to suit the different doll personalities.





Above: Tiny 3.2-inch BJDs are newer releases.

Left: Pictured are some of the earliest DreamHigh Studio products, going back to 2010.

Bottom Left: Leather shoes are hand-made for 1.6-inch dolls.



While Donny and Linda were never traditional doll collectors, both gravitated to art and toys from an early age. “Since childhood, I loved clay, action figures, and customizing my toys when they didn’t quite match my imagination. That early habit of tinkering eventually led me toward sculpting,” Donny said. “I studied art and design at university, but when it comes to sculpting dolls, I still consider myself mostly self-taught. I learned a lot by trying, failing, and trying again, often with the help of online tutorials and books. Every project has been a chance to improve, and I still feel like a student with every new doll I make.”

Meanwhile, Linda’s background in fashion design and hairstyling prepared her for working with miniature muses. “That experience helps her create the tiny outfits and wigs that give our dolls their personality. Working in such a tiny scale is never easy, but she enjoys adding little details that make the characters come alive,” Donny said. “Together, we just do our best — me on the sculpting, Linda on the fashion — and hopefully people can feel the care we put into each piece.”



Above from left: Dolls are being painted. • These new dolls are enjoying each other's company.

Right: A recent addition, this full-set doll is popular with collectors.

The couple's collaborative work gained traction around 2008, when they were approached by several companies to sculpt and clothe dolls. They quickly learned how to navigate the doll industry and its production process. This knowledge provided the impetus to start DreamHigh Studio. "We didn't have a grand plan, just a lot of passion and the willingness to work hard," Donny said. "We prepared by experimenting with materials, asking for advice from the community, and slowly building confidence through small projects. Looking back, it was a simple beginning, but it was the step that made everything possible."

Once decisions on initial doll design, size, and styling were made, then came obstacles and challenges that required ingenuity. "Working from Indonesia added another layer of difficulty. Importing materials that contained liquids or chemicals was complicated, and access to reliable supplies was limited," Donny said. "Because we had no local references or established companies to learn from, we had to invent our own way of working. Most of the tools and equipment we used in production were makeshift gadgets of our own design. It wasn't easy, but being forced to find our own solutions gave us resilience and helped shape a very distinct identity as a studio."

Their efforts were rewarded when three full-set, urethane resin BJDs — Bunko, Tiko, and Jester — dropped in 2010. Each was about 3.9 inches and wore outfits designed by Linda. "They weren't perfect, but they carried our imagination and personality," Donny said. "And for us, they marked the moment when we finally stepped out with our own voice in the BJD world."

Donny's design technique has evolved since that milestone trio debuted. "I often started sculpting with just a rough idea in mind and let the piece guide me," he said. These days, he makes clay or wax sculpts and then utilizes modern technology. "From there, we scan the original sculpt and continue the process digitally. Most



of the engineering and articulation is refined in 3D sculpting, where adjustments are easier and more precise. Linda often joins early, planning outfits and accessories that enhance the character."

Casting is done primarily in-house, although outside services periodically provide assistance. Current edition sizes generally range from 25 to 75 pieces. Smaller sculpts take three to four months to complete, while larger-scale versions can require six months or longer. "We move slowly, because every stage — sculpting, engineering, casting, and finishing — needs careful attention," Donny said. He added that Linda works with a small team of seamstresses.

Since the U.S. is a major market for the studio, recent tariff implementation and shipping changes are relatively new concerns that Donny is addressing. "Instead of passing the extra costs directly to collectors, we adjust our own profit margin to keep things fair," he said. "It's not always easy, but protecting our customers and maintaining trust will always be more important to us than short-term profit."

Going forward, studio priorities include improved engineering for the dolls and an increased emphasis on storytelling. "Our goal is to give meaning to each of our dolls, so they are not just figures but also carry messages in their backstories," Donny said. "We want them to embody emotions — struggles or happiness — that people can relate to, almost like having a small companion who understands you. Something to keep, to hold, and to find comfort in." 🌟

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Holiday Gift Guide



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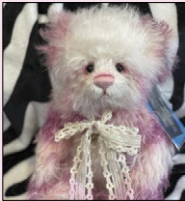


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Mark your calendars: November 22 at 9 AM EST. Follow Anderson Art Dolls on Facebook and Instagram for exclusive sneak peeks leading up to the release!

Anderson Art Dolls
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FILLED WITH LOVE

Amy Kate Irwin Adds Her Personal Touch to Silicone Dolls

By Hannah Kelley

Amy Kate Irwin, a resident of Advance, North Carolina, grew up playing with dolls and crafting some of her own from miscellaneous household items. She fondly recalls that, as a child, her parents would give her a new doll each Christmas, and the weeks leading up to that time were always filled with anticipation. Her early love of dolls carried over into adulthood and she became an avid collector, not yet knowing what life had in store for her.

With a business administration degree, Irwin has held several professional positions, including administrative assistant, legal assistant, medical transcriptionist, and insurance adjuster. While practical in the sense that they helped support her family of four, the jobs were not particularly enjoyable. It took many years, but she eventually came to realize what role she believes God intended for her: lifelike doll artist.

Painting silicone dolls began as a hobby she fit in around her full-time work schedule. “I devoted my evenings and weekends to studying everything I could about painting silicone,” she said. “I watched countless YouTube tutorials, read online guides, and

Above: Laurie Sullivan Roy is the artist who sculpted Vivian Hope. The doll was finished in June 2025 by Amy Kate Irwin.

Right: Phoenix, a sculpt by Bonnie Sieben, has on a blue diaper cover. Amy Kate Irwin painted him and rooted his hair in August 2025.



practiced consistently. I quickly learned that painting silicone is quite different from other mediums — it's more like working with gel, and it's an imperfect material that presents its own set of challenges."

Despite the innate difficulties that come with silicone doll artistry, Irwin remained determined and curious — two characteristics she attributes to her father, who was a business owner and model train enthusiast. With practice, she gained confidence in her abilities and ultimately took the major step of purchasing a blank silicone kit. Since then, it has been full steam ahead.

Irwin began operating her doll business full time in 2019. Today, she works on artist-sculpted silicone castings and can complete a doll in about three weeks. "Now that I've found work I genuinely love," she said, "I fully understand the truth behind the saying, 'Choose a job you love, and you'll never work a day in your life.' Having experienced unfulfilling work in the past has given me an even deeper appreciation for doing something I'm passionate about. Before starting my doll business, I didn't know what it felt like to truly enjoy my work — now I do."

Typically, Irwin begins painting with a clear vision in mind of how a doll will look. She said, "My color palette and painting style are based on that vision. However, there are times when the process becomes more intuitive — where mixing colors and applying paint leads me to create a unique interpretation of the doll as I go."

She finds it rewarding to see how each blank kit comes to life by her hand. "Surprisingly, the part that tends to go the quickest is painting the base layers of flesh tones. These layers build the foundation for the lifelike 'living skin' effect and set the stage for the more detailed work that follows," Irwin said. The time-consuming parts include all of the fine details and shadowing, veining,

Right from top: Cookie, sculpted by Elsie Rodriguez, was finished in August 2024 by Amy Kate Irwin. • This Emi doll, sculpted by Jennifer Sussmann-Price, was completed by Amy Kate Irwin in March 2025. She is wearing a coral crochet diaper cover made by Irwin.





Above: Dior is a sculpt by Bonnie Sieben. Amy Kate Irwin completed her in June 2022.

Inset: Doll artist Amy Kate Irwin.

Below from left: This Emi sculpt by Jennifer Sussmann-Price was painted and rooted by Amy Kate Irwin in March 2025. • In April 2025, Amy Kate Irwin completed the hair rooting for this Neeley doll sculpted by Denae Culbreth and Kathy Romero Biscuiti.



mottling, and blushing. She noted that features like eyebrows are more challenging and require more patience because even minor differences will draw attention.

After the painting comes the hair rooting, and the artist tends to come up with a plan of action before starting this tedious task: "I'll print a photo of the doll's face and sketch out a few different hair patterns in pencil to explore which design in my mind suits the baby best. That said, there are times when I



Above: Amy Kate Irwin finished this Emi doll in September 2024 and dressed her in a lavender romper made by Irwin. The doll was sculpted by Jennifer Sussmann-Price.

start rooting without a final plan and let the direction and flow of the hair come together naturally as I work.” She roots one or two hairs at a time, which adds to the realistic appearance.

Irwin holds photo shoots for her completed dolls, to capture every detail and show prospective buyers what they’ll be receiving. She watermarks all of the photos, which helps collectors verify her identity and her official social media accounts and business website. This has proven invaluable, as there are many scammers in today’s market that can cause collectors to distrust legitimate artists.

Once a new home is found for a doll, it is carefully packaged for travel and is often accompanied by a special gift from Irwin, such as a handmade crochet lovey or outfit. And then, it becomes time for the process to begin all over again.

Some dolls are harder to part with than others, and Irwin occasionally purchases a second blank kit so she can make a version for herself. However, she said, “Knowing that my dolls will be loved, cherished, and bring joy to someone else makes it easier. It brings me real comfort and happiness to imagine them touching someone’s life in a meaningful way.”

In this business, personal connections between artists, as well as collectors, often come with the territory. “Over the past several years, I’ve had the pleasure of working with many incredibly talented sculptors,” Irwin said. “Through these collaborations, I’ve developed strong relationships and genuine friendships, all rooted in our shared passion for creating lifelike art dolls.” Although she hasn’t ruled out the possibility of trying her hand at sculpting in the future, for now, she is perfectly content adding the finishing details to the work of fellow artists.

“Creating lifelike dolls is so much more than a craft to me — it’s a true labor of love. Every doll I create is a result of hours of careful work, creativity, and dedication,” Irwin said, adding, “I’m deeply grateful for the support I’ve received from collectors, fellow artists, and my loved ones, and I feel honored to be part of such a passionate and inspiring community. Whether you’re a long-time collector or just discovering this art form, I hope my work brings you as much joy as it brings me to create it.”

Amy Kate Doll Designs
amykatedolldesigns.com



Above: Amy Kate Irwin completed twins Ethan and Ethana in January 2025. They were sculpted by Jennifer Costello-DelCegno.

Below: Twins Pip (boy) and Lelou (girl) are sculptures by Izzy Zhao that Amy Kate Irwin finished in November 2023.



A Tale Worth Telling

Maryna Skubenko's Dolls Share Personal, Historical, and Cultural Stories

By Stephanie Finnegan

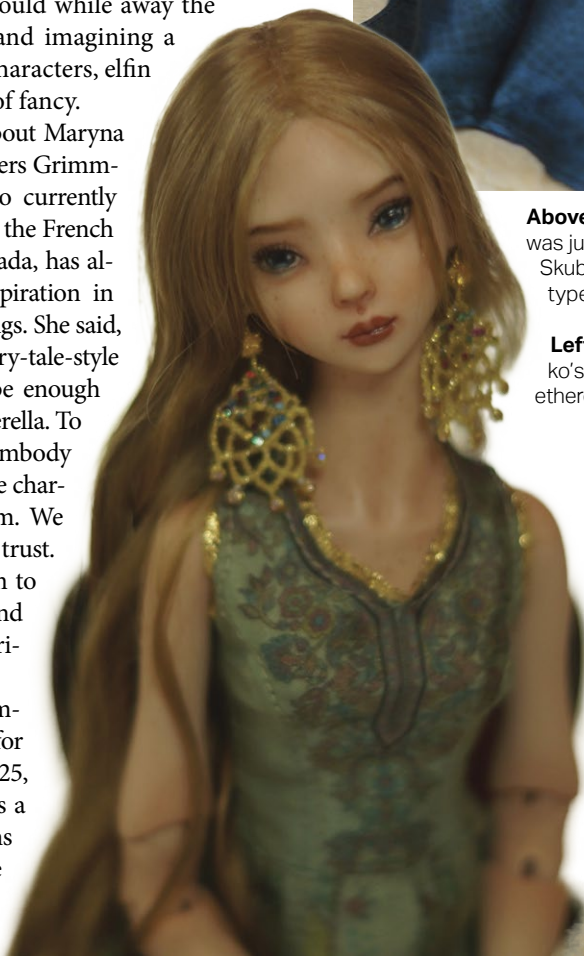
Once upon a time, a girl was born in Ukraine. She was an only child, and she filled her days with make-believe, pursuing her internal fantasies, and learning how to draw and sew. She would while away the hours perfecting her crafts and imagining a world filled with storybook characters, elfin princesses, and other flights of fancy.

It's fitting that an article about Maryna Skubenko begins with a Brothers Grimm-style opening. The artist, who currently resides on the Île d'Orléans, in the French province of Quebec City, Canada, has always found comfort and inspiration in the realm of otherworldly beings. She said, "I am definitely drawn to fairy-tale-style characters. There can never be enough of Alice, Snow White, or Cinderella. To me, it's just a doll's destiny to embody fairy tales. We learn from these characters when we work on them. We learn kindness, patience, and trust. They teach a childlike wisdom to us. I also love to make fairy and angel dolls. They touch my spiritual side."

Skubenko has been immersed in the doll universe for two decades. This year, 2025, marks her 20th anniversary as a conduit for making her visions come true in doll form. She sculpts her ethereal designs under the name Wee Lucky



Above: Made in the winter of 2024, Mona Lisa was just now dressed by the artist. Maryna Skubenko created her from her childlike prototype. Mona Lisa is a little over 12 inches tall.



Left: Miranda is one of Maryna Skubenko's latest figures. The doll combines ethereal beauty with elegant costuming.





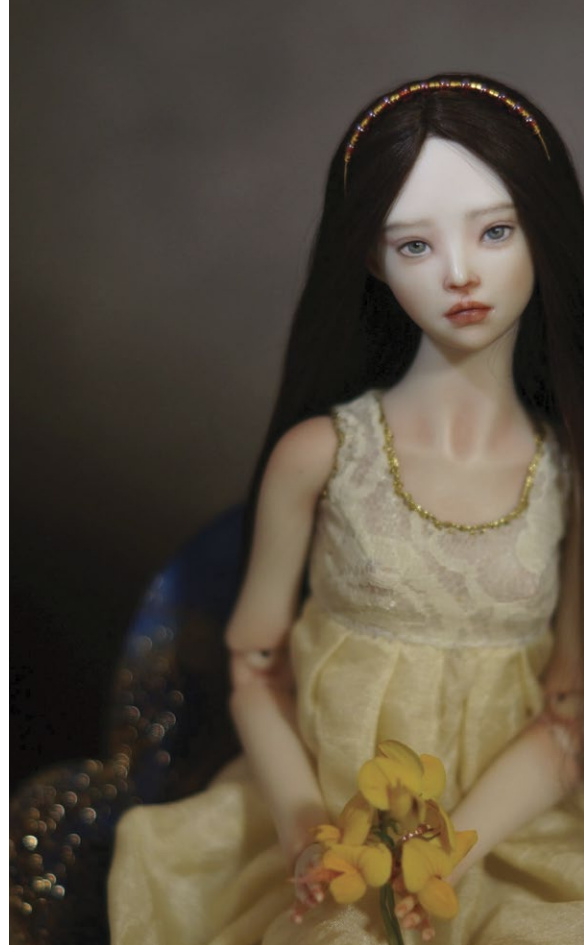
Above: Ruby Lin was created in 2024. The doll was made in a Parisian chocolate porcelain color. Measuring 13 inches, the fashion diva sports a bright red silk wig.

Left: Measuring 13 inches, Lilly is resplendent in her silk gown. She is one of Maryna Skubenko's newest creations, and her wig choice was voted on by the artist's Instagram followers.

Charms. "I see my dolls as miniature mystical beings. I would like to think that they bring luck or at least that I can pass my loving energy through them," the artist shared.

She added, "I have been sculpting the fantasy creations out of polymer clay since 2005, but when I first laid an eye on the Enchanted Doll by Marina Bychkova, I knew I wouldn't be able to get it off my mind. So, it took a year or two of dreaming — doing the research and buying all the necessary equipment and supplies — and in 2009, my very first porcelain doll was born. She was far from perfect, but I felt very encouraged. I fell in love with this art form, and since then, there has been no other material for me to use when creating. Porcelain has nobility and charm. It is perfect for ball-jointed dolls!"

A self-taught doll artist, Skubenko is a natural-born student. She absorbs life lessons and important insights from all of her encounters — whether they are with other like-minded people or the wonders of nature. "There is a subconscious inspiration in nature. Anyone who lives by the water, or the mountains, or the forest, would understand how calming and peacefully energizing nature can be. Taking the time to enjoy it can clear your mind and influence you. I also get inspiration from cultural/historical movies —



Above from left: This is a process photo of Red Riding Hood from 2022, taken while Maryna Skubenko was sewing her dress. "Her face is from a Juliet face mold. We can see the resemblance; yet she has her own character," Skubenko said. • In 2022, Maryna Skubenko made 13-inch Juliet for a friend collector. She said, "When I made a Juliet doll for a dear collector, who is a fan of the character, when I started to look at the images of Juliet for my sculpting inspiration, I studied her facial features until I fell in love with the character. As a result, I was able to put a soul into my Juliet doll. The collector loved her."

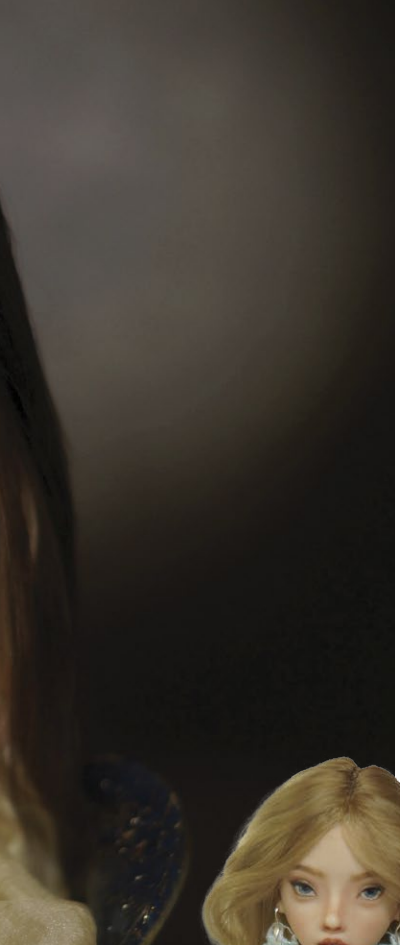
Left: Hailing from 2025, 13-inch Franky is a sun-kissed fairy. The artist said, "This fairy has cute freckles all over her body. She lives in a loving home."

shows like *Marco Polo* or *Memoirs of a Geisha*. I also spend a lot of time on Pinterest. Looking through artistic or cultural images gives me plenty of inspiration and ideas," Skubenko said.

Regarding her relationships with family and friends, she likewise soaked up all the knowledge and mentorship they shared: "My mom had an artistic side, so she helped and encouraged me in drawing and sewing. I came to Canada in 2001 and was lovingly greeted by my husband's family. My mother-in-law was a painter and taught me oil painting. I spent a lot of time painting with her. Everyone in my surroundings had always been supportive of my art."

Studying the art of dollmaking, while tapping into her innate talent and personal experiences, Skubenko has made many new observations. She said, "I have learned that will and consistency are the keys to achieving one's dreams. These are the two ingredients that helped me in learning how to make porcelain dolls and to become an earning artist. Also, patience. I have learned that without patience, I probably would not succeed. Raw porcelain crumbles in your hands as you work with it. I've learned to handle pieces gently, and after years of practice — drawing upon patience, will, and consistency — I now almost never crush my parts in making."

Pursuing her creative goals consumes Skubenko, and she is more than happy to devote her days to nurturing her artistic fires: "When I get new ideas, the creativity burns nonstop. I become quite ambitious. At the moment I think my doll achieved the perfection I wanted, I am concentrating on outfits, and my newer dolls will have a line of beautiful, culturally influenced



Catherine was created in 2024. The doll embodies a modern, stylish girl wearing a sparkly jacket. The artist envisions that the girl is on a romantic moonlit date.



Left: Alice is a recent creation by Maryna Skubenko. The homage to the fairy-tale heroine, in a more adult fashion, measures 13 inches.



clothing. There will be accessories, large earrings, and headpieces. I am also learning how to make miniature flowers in different media.”

Relying upon her versatility and adaptability, the artist tackles all aspects of her dolls. “I always prefer making everything that comes with my doll,” she said. “All the wigs, the wings, the outfits, and decorations — I make them myself. I sometimes have a custom order from a friend who is a jewelry maker for silver shoes and some headpieces. I do use some bought furniture for display and photography purposes.”

She credits her husband, Rene, for coaxing her to improve her camera skills. “We spent lots of time learning photography together. I never edit my doll photos. All the pictures are done with the right camera settings, plus the game of lights and shadow. That takes a few tricks to learn — and I am still learning!”

Skubenko is sincerely touched by the opportunities, the colleagues, and the collectors that fill her life. She feels gratitude toward her family and friends made along her doll journey: “I have always been supported by my family. Sadly, the family got thinly spread over the years. I have my mom, Tatiana, and my husband, Rene, always there to support and cheer me up. I am grateful for the community of doll lovers. It’s not a big community, but it’s the most friendly and kind people. You’ll never get insulted or put down. I guess it is this form of art — it just gathers the best.”

When Skubenko reflects upon her past successes and her future aspirations, she can’t place a finger on what distinguishes her artistic endeavors from those of similar creators. Growing very philosophical, she said, “I believe it’s a combination of innocence and beauty that is typical to most dolls. Over the years, I’ve had some collectors who brought more than five of my dolls home. Why are collectors drawn to one particular artist’s style? I wonder if it’s an invisible thread. It’s an appeal that pulls them. It just can’t be put into words.” ❁

Wee Lucky Charms
weeluckycharms.com

Young at Heart

Dolls From Sybil's
Tales Reflect a
Lighthearted Spirit



By Hannah Kelley, Photos by Sigita Stonienė

Childhood is generally a time of simplicity and innocence, filled with steppingstones on an individual's path to discover and carve out their place in the world. Sigita Stonienė, the dollmaker behind Sybil's Tales, has a way of capturing the essence of what it means to be young and conveying it through her artistry.

Calm surroundings set the stage for Stonienė's work. She said, "A cozy studio, a steaming cup of tea, quiet music, and just the right amount of creative mess help me settle in and focus. These small rituals ground me and allow me to get into the right mindset for my ideas to flow naturally. Once I'm into the flow, I dedicate many hours at once, as I'm the most productive that way."

Before she begins working on a doll, there is usually a spark of inspiration, be it a piece of material or a memory triggered by a recent experience. “Sometimes a melody from the past inspires me to create a doll,” Stonienė said. “This was the case with a little fair-haired boy, Benjamin, who came to life as a composite character inspired by childhood memories of films about street rascals. Other times, I come across a fabric with an interesting pattern or texture, and I immediately know which little girl I’ve created will wear a coat made from it. I observe children’s facial expressions, the way they move, and how they hold a toy or hold their pet on a leash. From all of this, my dolls are born — little children in miniature form.”

In other instances, it’s an imagined situation that propels Stonienė forward creatively. She explained, “Sometimes I have the idea to create a group of playground friends, as I already know what they will do and how I will photograph them — presenting dolls through videos and photos is an important part of my creative process. In these cases, I create several dolls at once, and their outfits are designed to complement each other. Of course, I also create dolls individually, each with her own story, personality, and name.”

Facing Page: Martina (left) and Ema, November 2024.

Right: Babette and Carol, November 2023.

Middle: Ema, November 2024.

Below from left: Emmy Lou, August 2023. • Harriet, September 2025.





Above from left: Misty (left) and Skye, September 2023. • Mister Porridge, 2022. • Sigita Stonienė in her studio.

Right: Matilda, January 2023.

Below: Ulla, February 2023.



Born and currently residing in Klaipėda, Lithuania, Stonienė has been interested in the arts for most of her life. “From a very young age, I loved to draw, which likely influenced my choice to become a fashion designer,” she said. “I have always been fascinated by the history of costumes and how they have evolved from the past to the present.”

When her two children were young, Stonienė’s focus on fashion broadened to include designing clothes and dolls for them. “I wouldn’t say I am completely self-taught, because I have a degree in fashion design. At the same time, I went through a long journey of trial and error, learning from both mistakes and successes, until I was able to create dolls as they are today,” she said.

Now a grandmother to two granddaughters and a grandson, the dollmaker has newfound motivation to continue her work. “I created the brand Sybil’s Tales when my first granddaughter was born; the anticipation of her arrival inspired me deeply,” she said. “Over time, I became immersed in the world of doll collectors. My dolls are not merely toys, each one is a miniature child, carefully crafted to embody personality and spirit.”

Stonienė’s initial dolls were close to 22 inches tall, but she has since settled on a size of approximately 18 inches. She said, “In the beginning, I created fairly simple dolls, but I felt they lacked expression. I needed to approach things differently, which meant experimenting, making mistakes, feeling disappointed, and continuously searching for ways to create what I truly envisioned. Over time, I developed my own technique to ensure a doll moves as I want and has a lively, expressive face. Focusing on proper proportions, scale, pose, and treating the doll’s figure as a whole also helps me achieve the desired result.”

Perfecting the overall look and feel of each doll is important to Stonienė, and if a doll doesn’t meet her expectations, she reworks the design until it does. This can be a time-consuming process, but it is worth it.

When it comes to the finer details, the dollmaker said, “The most enjoyable and magical moment is when I paint a doll’s eyes



Above: Juniper, September 2025.



Right: Page, September 2025.

Far Right: Benjamin, February 2023.



and catch her gaze. At that point, I know exactly what suits her, and creating the rest becomes very easy.”

Continuing to put her fashion background to good use, she designs and sews outfits that help her dolls’ personalities shine. “When creating clothes for my dolls, I use natural materials,” she said. “I especially love Lithuanian linen, which feels wonderful to the touch, drapes beautifully, and comes in gorgeous earthy tones. I also favor cotton lace and batiste for their delicate texture and elegance. For my dolls’ shoes, I use natural leather or thick wool felt, which gives them durability and a handcrafted feel.”

Once complete, the dolls model for the camera. Stonienė said, “Thanks to the way they are made, my dolls move beautifully, and their photos become a pure expression of my visual language.”

The artist added, “It may sound banal, but while I am creating a doll — sculpting her face, sewing the body, covering it with fabric, painting the eyes, styling the hair, dressing her, observing her through the camera lens, and then carefully packing her into a box so she can safely travel to her new home — she becomes my favorite. In those moments, I pour all my creativity and the warmth of my hands into her.”

Her efforts have not gone unnoticed, and through the years, collectors have provided an abundance of positive feedback in the form of letters and photos. Due to popular demand, Stonienė has plans to expand her offerings in the future: “I am often asked to create tutorials or outfit patterns. Until now, I have enjoyed focusing on dollmaking for myself, but I feel that I have now gathered enough knowledge to share it with others.”

For those who come across her creations, Stonienė said, “I hope that when people look at my dolls or bring one into their home, they can rediscover the childhood from which we all come. I want to help them form a personal connection with their inner child, to find peace, comfort, and the ability to dream and play freely, without rules.” ☺

Below: Sigita Stonienė’s Singer sewing machine awaits a new project.



Sybil's Tales
sybilstales.com

Russian Wedding Couple
is by Stephanie Blythe. It
is 10 inches tall.





THE ART OF COLLECTING

A Look at Richard Simmons' Private Collection

By Florence Theriault

He made it look easy. There was possibility. There was imaginative reach. And there was always joy. These statements certainly apply to Richard Simmons' work in the health and fitness world, which made him world-famous during the 1980s and 1990s. But they are also spot-on descriptions of his extraordinary private collection of fine artist dolls and imaginative art.

Simmons was always a collector. In his 1999 memoir, *Still Hungry After All These Years: My Story*, he wrote about this and mused that likely he had inherited the collecting gene from his father, who collected cookbooks for many years. Simmons' first collection was art glass, and his 1980s California home was filled with delicate art glass sculptures. Until January 1994, that is, when he said the Northridge earthquake "in just half a minute turned every piece of glass that I had into glitter! From glass to glitter!" Seeking to console him, a friend sent Simmons a doll — but not just any doll. It was a one-of-a-kind art doll depicting a court jester, created by noted artist Gail Lackey.

The doll was the perfect symbol for Simmons, who often whimsically referred to himself as a court jester. But it was an omen, too. Seeking out the artist who had created this magical figure, Simmons became fast friends with Lackey, who created

Above from left: The 10-inch-tall Dancing with Rabbits figure is by Stephanie Blythe. • This portrait doll of Barbra Streisand is 28 inches tall. It was created by Lisa Lichtenfels.

Maria Ahrens sculpted this 9-inch portrait doll.





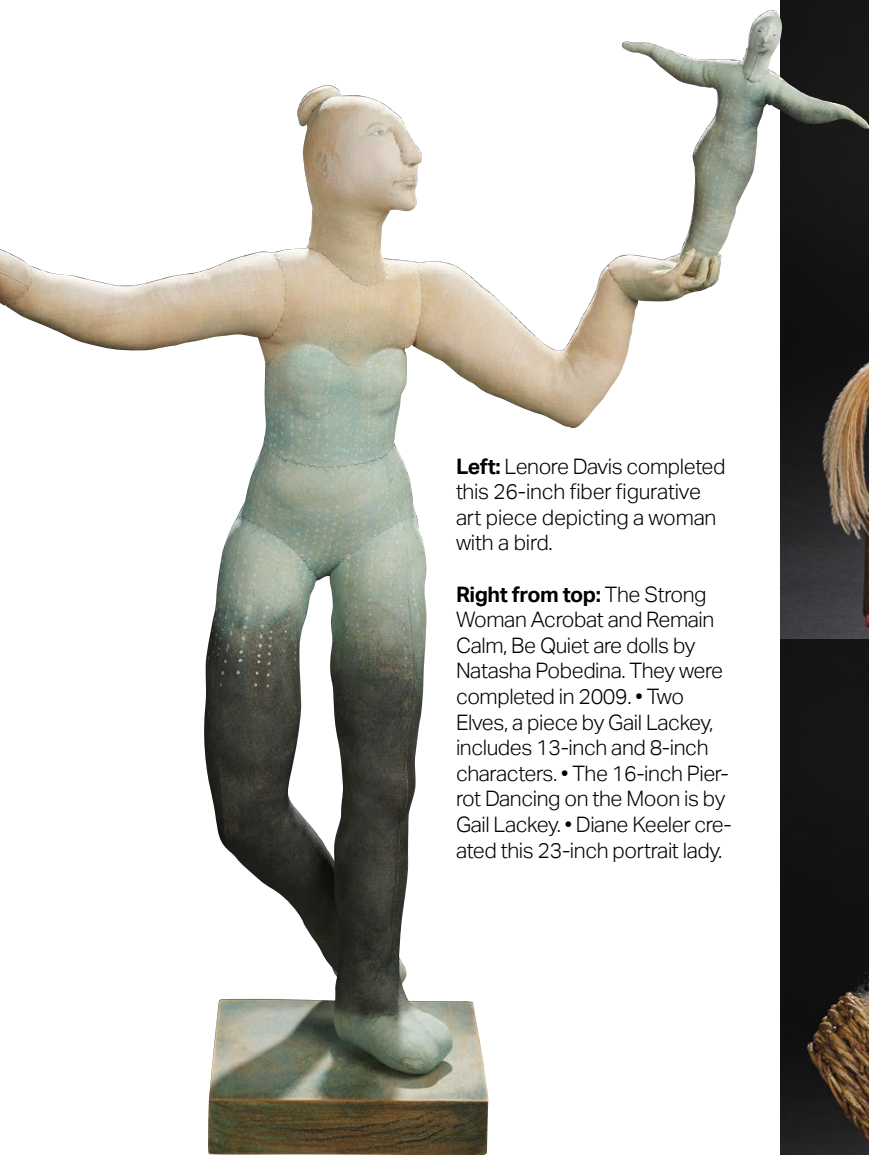
Above from left: Annie Wahl carefully crafted *The Frog Man* (12 inches tall), *A Friendly Conversation* (17 inches tall), and *Sisters* (11 inches tall).

Far Left: Forest Rogers made *Woman with Sculpted Wings*. The figure is 26 inches tall, including the wings.

Left: *Queen*, by Georgian artist Tamara Kvesitadze, is 23 inches tall.

other one-of-a-kind art dolls for his collection over the next decade. Additional dollmakers then came into his life. There was Stephanie Blythe, Annie Wahl, Lisa Lichtenfels, Forest Rogers, Jamie Williamson, Marilyn Radzat, Jodi and Richard Creager, Maria Ahrens, Shelley Thornton, and many more. Over the years, his impassioned quest to raise the doll form to a new status — an acceptance in the greater art world as figurative art — became evident.

The art doll collection of Simmons encapsulates that quest perfectly. Interviews with artists through the years relate the details of his one-of-a-kind commissions to create a specific image or mood. Intrigued by Blythe's figure *The Kiss*, for example, he commissioned a one-of-a-kind variation of that piece, depicting a Russian wedding couple. One-of-a-kind dolls portraying celebrity figures abound in his exquisite collection, perhaps highlighted by the renowned portrait doll of Barbra Streisand. Created for him by Lichtenfels, the doll was



Left: Lenore Davis completed this 26-inch fiber figurative art piece depicting a woman with a bird.

Right from top: The Strong Woman Acrobat and Remain Calm, Be Quiet are dolls by Natasha Pobedina. They were completed in 2009. • Two Elves, a piece by Gail Lackey, includes 13-inch and 8-inch characters. • The 16-inch Pierrot Dancing on the Moon is by Gail Lackey. • Diane Keeler created this 23-inch portrait lady.

unveiled in Chicago at the International Doll Art Show in 1995 and later even made a guest appearance with Simmons on the *Late Show with David Letterman*.

While each of the art dolls in the collection is one of a kind, or one of an extremely limited edition, the collection is all-embracing in its themes and style. Classic beauties stand alongside caricatures; youth is juxtaposed with the elderly; fantasy abounds, as does realistic portraiture; and the tiniest miniature works pose proudly next to grand figures. There are church ladies, historical figures, dolls notable for exceptional costuming, and others with little costuming. Fittingly, in his home, Simmons displayed each doll separately, much like a museum might do, allowing special qualities to stand out and paying homage to the artist's vision.

Simmons was not simply a private collector, however. He was a grand spokesman for the art doll, much as he was a spokesman for health and fitness. An early patron of NIADA (the National Institute of American Doll Artists), he was a well-known figure at conventions and an important spokesman. During the 1990s, he appeared at many of the popular conferences and charity events promoting contemporary doll art. Additionally, he welcomed artists to his California home, encouraging and inspiring their work.





Above from left: Uwe Haukenfrers and Jürgen Peper sculpted the 16-inch doll *We Enjoy Heaven's Delights*. • *Teapot Lady* is 18 inches tall and is by artist Scott Grey.

Left: Jodi and Richard Creager are the artists behind these 15-inch art dolls.

In the book *Contemporary American Doll Artists and Their Dolls* by Kathryn Witt, Simmons is quoted as saying, "When you surround your environment with art, you think clearly, you're less stressed, and more peaceful. I appreciate the discipline, the integrity and the talent of each individual artist."

Throughout his collecting years, Simmons was known for his generosity, not only in his support of artists but also in sharing many of his acquired pieces with others. Yet, the special pieces that meant the most to him, for their artistry and personal memories, were always the ones he kept.

According to his family, it was Simmons' wish that these works of art be shared with others. The Art Doll Collection of Richard Simmons, encompassing more than 250 important pieces, will be presented at an exclusive one-owner auction by Theriault's on Saturday, Dec. 6, 2025. The dolls will be presented individually in an art-quality commemorative catalog with photographs and descriptions. They will come with a certificate indicating they were featured in the Richard Simmons Private Collection. More details about the dolls in the collection can be found at theriaults.com. 📖

Collector Corner



Rayne is a 16-inch fashion doll by Robert Tonner. Sally Young said, "Here, Rayne is modeling a wonderful 1940s-era ice-skating outfit that was offered by the Virtual Doll Convention. It certainly completes her vintage Sonja Henie-style skating look!"



This 2006 Manhattan Holiday Gene Marshall doll by Integrity Toys is wearing the Spotted in the Park outfit by Ashton-Drake Galleries and shoes from Facets Boutique by Marcia Friend. CarolAnn DiNapoli said Gene and her poodle are on a walk in New York City's Central Park.



Lindsay Moniz made the dress worn by her Abby portrait doll by Kaye Wiggs.



The fall semester is underway, and Barbara Haring said, "The teacher is making a valiant attempt to get everyone in their seats. Ann Estelle Sophie is reluctant to sit down at her desk until she shows everyone her pretty new dress. Les Cheries Chloe is waiting patiently at her desk for class to begin while the teacher is being introduced to a new student, Lissy (Madame Alexander), by her friend Betsy McCall. Meanwhile, high-energy Jane (Tonner) is busy checking out her new learning materials, reluctant to take her seat until she absolutely must. The teacher is Miss Emma, who I rescued from a resale shop a long time ago. She was the start of my doll collection. All their outfits were created by me."



"This little Llorens baby boy from Spain is preparing his warm clothes for the coming winter and trying his blanket collection, too," Dr. Neeti Vyas said.



Susanna Bordin Faggian's toy collection features a mixture of dolls, dating from the 19th century all the way up to the modern day. They are housed at the Villa Sesso Bordignon (villasessobordignon.it). Faggian said, "Entering this Venetian villa is like opening a treasure chest of memories: visitors aren't greeted by antique furniture or paintings, but by hundreds of toys that tell the story of two centuries of childhood." There are displays of toy prams from the 1970s, dolls from the early 20th century, and more! One doll from the collection is Sheila. She was produced by Furga during the 1960s, and with her original dress and accessories, she is prepared for the unpredictable seasonal weather.



Vicki Monthei said, "Mari just remembered she left her shawl at home ... again!" The 7.5-inch tan RealFee BJD from Fairyland has on a fine cotton and lace dress made by one of Monthei's friends.



Diane Haley photographed her dolls getting into the festive spirit. In the back are two Miss Revlon dolls and a Shirley Temple doll. A doll by Brenda Mize stands in front of them in a white dress.



Cathy Kwasneski's modern Ginny doll is on display for the fall season.



Wendy Ehrhorn said the Little Darling on the left was painted by Geri Uribe and is wearing a dress by Nelly Valentino, who painted the Little Darling on the right. The baby doll was finished by Lee-Anne Carpenter.



Carol Reilly said, "Two of my favorite doll artists are highlighted in Tonner's Cherished Jac doll. Her face-up is by Jewelianne and the gown is by Red Silk Thread. A great doll doesn't need to do anything but be gorgeous!"



Kathleen Gauger's 12-inch Anne Fitzpatrick doll by Robert Tonner pays a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Snowman on a chilly winter day. "She brought warm hats and scarves because even snow people like to stay warm," Gauger said, adding, "Anne is wearing an outfit borrowed from 10-inch Ann Estelle and was happy to see how well it fit her, but she promised to return it after her snowy walk!"



"My vintage Patti Playpals and friends are modeling their genuine vintage coats and hats from the '50s and '60s. They will be toasty warm when the snowflakes begin to fall," Lynn Burns said.

Shows of Note

Blythecon

Aug. 1-3, Detroit, Michigan

By Jane Easterly

Photographs by Jane Easterly

The Motor City Blythe Group hosted the 2025 Blythecon event in Detroit the first weekend of August. Over 300 guests traveled from all over the world to celebrate Blythe dolls and shop the 42 vendors. In addition to the main event on Sunday at the Detroit Masonic Temple, attendees enjoyed a Friday dinner at the iconic Detroit restaurant The Whitney, assembled for a casual Saturday meetup at Cass Park, and sampled a taste of Detroit at American Coney Island.

Vendor Melissa Caughey said, “The perfect words are often hard to find when our hearts experience immense joy. Joy of friendships, memories, places and spaces, conversations and moments that seem to be around every corner. This event was absolutely joyous. Everything was amazing.”

Sunday included shopping, workshops, contests, and socializing. Each attendee was given the opportunity to choose one workshop to attend for free. The five workshops were Motor City Kewpie Doll with Ayin of Splattergirl; Resin Eye Chips with Elizabeth of DollyPop!; Boom Box Bag with Barb of Ardent Curse; Polymer Clay Mushroom with Melissa of My Cassie Ray; and Soft Art Doll with Suza of Tootsie Andtheboy.



Above: The winning photo of Blythe living her best summer city life was by Lisa Esping.

Below from left: LebenBella is a dolly fashion atelier run by two friends who wish everyone fun and joy. • Jair Retureta's entry won the Blythe and Her Posse photo contest.

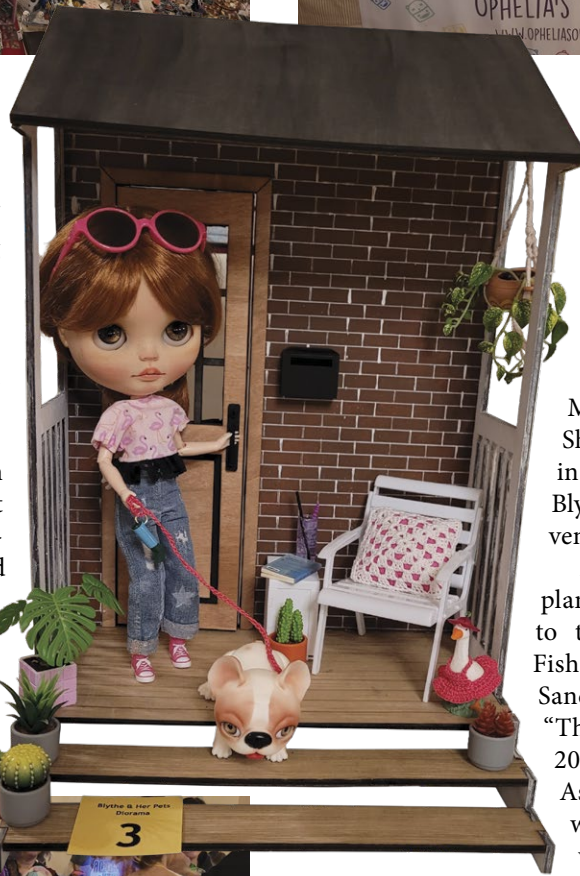




Attendees each received a goody bag filled with accessories, outfits, key chains, buttons, stickers, and raffle tickets to enter to win a host of amazing donated treasures, including one-of-a-kind dolls. The bag itself was an adorable tote showcasing Blythe art and the convention name.

Organizers arranged a whole bunch of contest opportunities for attendees. These included three photo contests, two diorama contests, four fashion contests, and a contest for the best vendor table. Some of the winners included Jair Retureta for the Blythe and Her Posse photo contest; Lisa Esping for the Summer in the City photo

Below: PAMDolls creates beautiful custom dolls with skillful carving, playful themes, and joyful colors.



Above from left: The event space at the Detroit Masonic Temple was beautiful and spacious. • Vendor Ophelia's Offals offered clothing, hats, custom dolls, and needle felted friends.

Left: Colleen Elliott's diorama took first place in the Blythe and Her Pets contest.

to contest; Colleen Elliott for her Blythe and Her Pets diorama, and Melinda Nelson's recreation of the ShowBiz Pizza Place for the Summer in the City diorama. The Night Circus Blythe Company took first place in the vendor booth contest.

Blythecon Detroit was originally planned for 2021 but was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. James Fisher, one of the organizers along with Sandra Coe and Kelly Campbell, said, "The realization of Blythecon Detroit 2025 was a long-awaited milestone. As a team, we take immense pride in what we've accomplished. Our goal was to showcase the vibrant city of Detroit, rich in history, art, and innovation, and offer attendees a weekend of engaging experiences. We aimed to bring together collectors, foster new friendships, and celebrate the artistry of numerous talented creators. We believe we achieved our vision. The unwavering support from the Blythe community, our loved ones, and the global Blythe community's generosity were instrumental in our success. The exceptional prizes and goody bags were a testament to the community's talent and kindness. The outcome was truly remarkable."

Check out @blythecondetroit on Instagram to see more photos of Blythe dolls having fun in Detroit. Retureta summed up the event perfectly: "My yearly dose of love and magic in a Renaissance historic gem — Detroit rules — AMAZING." The next U.S. Blythecon will take place in Philadelphia in 2026. Visit wonderlandofplay.com to stay informed. 🌟

Twin Cities Doll Study Club

An Opportunity for
Doll Enthusiasts To
Gather and Learn

DOLLS: What is the name of your club, and where is it based?

Sandy Brown (club member): We are the Twin Cities Doll Study Club. We meet in homes around the Twin Cities area (St. Paul and Minneapolis) in Minnesota.

DOLLS: When was the club founded, and what inspired its creation?

Brown: The club was founded nearly 40 years ago. We chartered with UFDC as the Twin Cities Antique Doll Study Club. Several years ago, we officially changed our name (we dropped the word “antique”) to reflect the changes in the doll community and to be more inclusive!

DOLLS: What is the club's current mission or main purpose?

Brown: We provide doll education within our group and to the community, as well as make the world a better place through dolls.

DOLLS: Does the club focus on specific types or styles of dolls?

Brown: We are a very inclusive club!



Above: The Twin Cities Doll Study Club visited the Museum of Russian Art in Minneapolis to see its A Thousand Nesting Dolls exhibit. Back row: Sandy Brown, Iris Schroeder, Rose Jost, Sondra Wenz, and Karen Wubbels. Front row: Terri Strickland, Leah Barnacle, Christine Faust, and Ginny Fitzgerald.

Below from left: Sandy Brown gives a presentation on international dolls and preserving their individual histories. • Miss Okayama is a Japanese Friendship Doll.





DOLLS: What has been the club's most significant challenge?

Brown: The most difficult issue is to continually recruit younger members. When a club has a legacy spanning several decades, there will be some turnover.

DOLLS: Approximately how many members are in the club today?

Brown: We have 15 members, which includes associate members and two members who join us mostly through Zoom.

DOLLS: What events does the club host or attend together?

Brown: We put on a free doll giveaway for World Doll Day (the second Saturday in June) at the Oakdale Library in Washington County, Minnesota. In 2024, we gave away 75 dolls and stuffed animals. We also present two educational programs about dolls to the public at the Oakdale Library each year. We go to our local doll shows together, too.

DOLLS: Does the club hold regular meetings?

Brown: We hold monthly meetings on the third Sunday of each month. Usually, we meet in members' homes. Sometimes, we go to museums and then we conduct the meetings in a more public space.

First, we conduct our business meeting, which may include plans for a fundraiser, a vote on how we will donate money to UFDC, or how our club will be active in the community, in addition to planning our future programming and participation in upcoming doll events. This is followed by a doll presentation, usually by a club member but sometimes by a guest speaker. Next, we have a sharing time, where each member gets a turn to share their latest acquisitions or dolls that fit the theme. Last, we enjoy a dessert and lots of catching up with each other. Most of our meetings are accessible through Zoom.

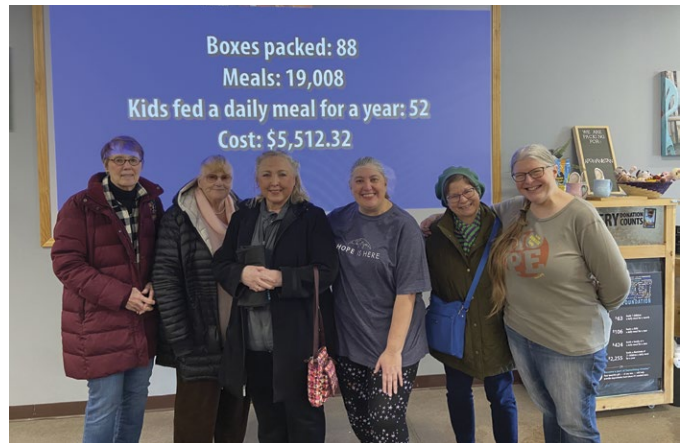
DOLLS: What is the process for becoming a member?

Brown: Once one of our members meets a doll enthusiast, they may invite them to a doll club meeting. After two doll club meetings, if they are still interested, our club will vote on their membership. It should be noted that our club is pet-friendly, so it is important that new members don't have allergies to dogs or cats. Otherwise, they will be uncomfortable in our homes. It is all about finding the right fit for each doll enthusiast.



Above from left: Dolls are organized before the doll giveaway. • The club gives away dolls at the Oakdale Library. From left: Jana Williams, Fae Larson from the Fashion Doll Friends Club, and Sandy Brown.

Below: Club members Ginny Fitzgerald, Iris Schroeder, Karen Wubbels, Sandy Brown, Christine Faust, and Sue Figueroa spent an afternoon packing meals. • On March 2, 2024, many members of the Twin Cities Doll Study Club and other doll clubs traveled to Fargo, North Dakota, to see the Japanese Friendship Doll Miss Okayama and to hear Alan Scott Pate speak about the significance and history of this doll.



DOLLS: How can others learn more about your club?

Brown: I am a contact person for the Twin Cities Doll Study Club. I can be reached at sandapi@aol.com or 651-402-6856. ☺

Best Friends Forever BJD Club

A Shared Passion Brings Collectors Together

DOLLS: What is the name of your club, and where is it based?

Jennifer Kohn Murtha (club founder and president): Our club is called the Best Friends Forever BJD Club and is based in Maryland (United Federation of Doll Clubs Region 11).

DOLLS: When was the club founded, and what inspired its creation?

Murtha: It was founded in 2016 and chartered by UFDC in 2017. It was inspired by my love of BJDs (ball-jointed dolls) and the fact that I knew a lot of young people who were similarly interested. We got together, one of the kids picked the name, and here we are.

Right: Elfdoll Ryung wears an original outfit made by Michele Hardy.



Left: Smart Doll Kitsu is posed for a photograph by Rich Carrasco. • Liz Castensen holds her Volks vinyl doll at a club meetup.

DOLLS: What is the club's current mission or main purpose?

Murtha: Our club is the only one in UFDC devoted solely to BJDs. We educate by reaching out to everyone who's interested in these dolls and have done seminars, programs, workshops, and special exhibits with UFDC and in our region.

DOLLS: Does the club focus on specific types or styles of dolls?

Murtha: We focus on Asian and Western BJDs. These are resin dolls that are strung, are customizable, have removable eyes and wigs, and started in Japan in about 1998, made by Volks of Japan.

DOLLS: What has been the club's most significant challenge?

Murtha: We always met at a wonderful retirement community — for free! But when COVID-19 came, there went our meeting place. Zoom was available to us through one of our members, so we were the first club in UFDC to use it. We now have full members from all over the U.S. and have been visited by Kaye Wiggs, Emperis BJDs, Butterflies n Things, and more.

DOLLS: Approximately how many members are in the club today?

Murtha: There are about 75, but we'll be at 100 by year's end.

DOLLS: What events does the club host or attend together?

Murtha: Many of our members attended the UFDC convention in July in Norfolk, Virginia. We also did a special exhibit of these dolls at the Miller Branch of the Ellicott City Library in September, one of the most artistic libraries in the world.



Above: Club members enjoy a meal with their dolls at the popular Timbuktu Restaurant.

Left: Nevaeh Mary, photographed and owned by Robin Hochtein, was made by Kaye Wiggs for the club's fifth birthday. • Tessie, the club's 2020 mascot, is a Soom Mecha Angel Saiph doll with a custom face-up.

DOLLS: Does the club hold regular meetings?

Murtha: We meet on the third Sunday of the month, at 12:30 p.m. Eastern time. Like every other UFDC club, we have social hour, but it's on Zoom. Then we have our business meeting, a program, sales and more socializing, and say goodbye until next month. We meet 10 months of the year.

DOLLS: What is the process for becoming a member?

Murtha: We ask that prospective Besties fill out a membership application, either online or by snail mail. They must attend three meetings, at which point we vote on them.

DOLLS: How can others learn more about your club?

Murtha: I was one of the first five women to sell cars in Maryland. I'm not shy about reaching out for the sale. We have a membership chair who rocks a spreadsheet, and we also have a Facebook page, which has more than double our club members. Some have actually joined. I also put our activities on my own Facebook page, which has been very successful. I put fliers and such on Maryland meetup groups and more. 🍷

Doll Scene



Ewan McCrae by William Ooi

Ewan McCrae is a striking 17-inch OOAK male doll from Emperis Dolls. He has auburn curls, a fair complexion, a piercing gaze, and freckles across his body and face. Sculpted in Celestique Fine Resin, he has been crafted with special anatomical detailing, including natural body hair. He comes with a hard cap wig made with premium Saran hair. The fashion shown here (Heather Harvest) is styled for promotional purposes only. (emperisdolls.com, info@emperisdolls.com)



Ghost of Lily Ann by Kathy Bergen

Cotton fabric, polyester stuffing, paper clay, Super Sculpey, acrylic paint, varnish, yarn, glue, ribbon, lace, and embroidery floss were used to make this original 21-inch doll. She is articulated and can sit or be hung on the wall. (etsy.com/shop/katscanvas, kbergen1@gmail.com)



Grandmother Moon by Linda Rous (Left)

"Grandmother Moon is ancient and powerful, ruling the tides of Mother Earth and woman," said Rous. The OOAK doll is 26 inches tall and was created using doe leather, wood, yarn, glass beads, jute, polymer clay, and paint. (odaca.org/lindarous-odaca-artist, lindarous@aol.com)



Mata Hari by Iryna Ivakhnenko

This 18-inch custom doll, inspired by the historical performer known by the same name, was created using the Cornelia BJD mold. Ivakhnenko said, "I depicted Mata Hari in one of her iconic outfits with luxurious Indonesian and heavy Art Nouveau influences, with round bra cups and a massive headpiece. A pure silk sari is used for the skirt with a spacious train. Bracelets are lined with fake suede to prevent rubbing against the skin. I chose my mold Cornelia as the most suitable for the task." (wgrass.org, info@wgrass.org)



Aliette by Kathleen Hill

Made of porcelain, this original sculpt is 23 inches tall. The doll has pale green soft glass eyes, applied upper lashes, and a two-tone synthetic mohair wig. She is wearing an Edwardian-era tea gown in shades of black and fuchsia with green accents. The outfit includes silk pantaloons, a lined skirt in silk charmeuse with an embroidered silk gore, a camisole, bishop sleeves, a peignoir, a lace collar, jewelry, shoes, and hair accessories. (kathleenhillstudio.com, brynhk@gmail.com, Photo by Kathleen Hill)



Custom My Twinn Dolls by Rachel Bernhard

Dolls have been customized with face-ups, new eyes and wigs, and fantasy outfits to look like characters in a fairy-tale story of Bernhard's own creation. The artist said, "My fantasy world-building centers on the city of Aildor, and this adventuring party is setting out to fight a pack of dire wolves. Aildor has had several chapters with previous fairytale characters. The characters are all named and individually dressed in appropriate fantasy attire." (facebook.com/FGM2D)



Tgan by Renata Baillie (Left)

This 20-inch full-body silicone baby doll is part of a limited edition of five and was poured as one piece in a custom soft-blend silicone. The sculpting, casting, and finishing work was done by Baillie.

Bountiful Baby's Realborn Evelyn Asleep by Alana Woods (Below)

Woods reborned this 19-inch doll using Golden's air-dry paints, a matte varnish, and dark brown mohair. ([instagram.com/pumpkins_corner_nursery](https://www.instagram.com/pumpkins_corner_nursery), alanamwoods13@gmail.com)

Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim by Elizabeth Cooper

New in 2025, these OOAK dolls were created using polymer clay, fabric, wire, and paint. They stand 14 inches tall. (cooperdolls.com, ecooper@cooperdolls.com, 585-798-3171)



Countess Pumphayla by Georgia Ossipov

Polymer clay, fabric, acrylic paint, glass eyes, and glass beads were used to create this adorable 3-inch pumpkin art doll. The head, arms, and legs are movable. (amiablecurios.com)



Doll Scene



Ellowyne Wilde as Mary Lennox by Robert Tonner (Left)

Vinyl doll Ellowyne Wilde has been styled as Mary Lennox. A limited edition of 200, she was created for the 2025 Dollology Doll Club of Washington, D.C.'s annual May Day Luncheon. Robert Tonner and Kim McIntyre were the speakers on the theme, which was *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett. Mary Lennox comes with her garden bird and the key to unlock the garden door. She has rooted hair. This is the third storybook doll in the collection. (happily.com, info@happily.com, 267-230-3167)



Belsnickle by Nancy Malay (Right)

A limited edition of one, this doll is 12 inches tall and made of Sculpey clay. Malay said, "Belsnickle was created to look like a piece from the past." (nancymalay.com)



Sienna by Sabirah Muhammad (Left)

Sienna, 36 inches, was completed in September 2025. Cotton fabric, wool yarn, nylon ribbons, and leather (for her ankle boots) were used. (delightedbydolls.com, jessicawalkerheirlooms@gmail.com)



"Shades of Pale No. 2 – Contentment" Spirit Doll by Diane Ursch (Above)

This OOAK doll is 21 inches tall. Many materials went into its composition, including wire, paper, and a fabric mache armature. The doll has a polymer clay face, stone clay hands, and yarn hair wrapped in an Indian sari cloth. Artist-painted papers; decoupaged images; skeleton leaves washed with walnut inks; stone and air-dry clay birds, hearts, leaves, and a cross; Native American arrowheads; and other natural materials are adornments. (HouseofChloeDollArts.com, dianeursch@yahoo.com)



Medusa by Patricia Cozzo

Medusa is a OOAK doll that was completed in August 2025. She is 8.5 inches tall and was made with polymer clay, wood, silk, metal filigree, and wool. (patriziaeguido.wixsite.com/patriziacozzo-dolls, patriziaeguido@mac.com)



Zelena by Sherry Eisenbarth

Four-inch Zelena is a OOAK doll made of FIMO clay that has been handsculpted over a wire armature for added strength. Her clothes are made of leather and other materials, while her wings are made of a straw-like material and wire. There is a 1.5-inch spring on top of her head, and bits of wire and metal and plastic gadgets adorn her clothes, shoes, and wings. She is seated atop a steampunk-style train. (sherryscreativelook@gmail.com)



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Curious Collector

By A. Glenn Mandeville

1930s Madame Alexander Sonja Henie

Q While cleaning out her mother's house, a very close friend of mine found a doll she thought I would like, knowing that I am a doll collector.

You can imagine my surprise when she gave me this Madame Alexander 14-inch Sonja Henie composition doll absolutely perfect in the box. She even had her wrist tag! I manage a lawn service, and I told her I would trade her company services for the doll.

I know you are famous for your backstories, and I wondered if you had one concerning this famous ice-skating doll?

A All I can say is that you'd better warm up that lawn mower! Seriously, there is a very interesting story behind this doll.

Sonja Henie, during the heyday of the 1930s, was one of the biggest stars in Hollywood. She was featured as a champion ice-skater and mixed with glamorous starlets in some of the biggest production numbers ever produced. If you would like to see her skate to perfection, her movies are occasionally rerun on Turner Classic Movies.

The dolls were produced from 1938-1942 and were sculpted by the renowned Bernard Lipfert. This was one of the very few times Madame actually had a special mold made for a single celebrity. Also, this style was a huge seller for the company and was issued in a trunk set with a wardrobe. The doll was available in a 14-inch size with a mohair wig and an 18-inch size with a human-hair wig.

Sonja Henie was so popular that as late as 1951, the doll was reissued in hard plastic and vinyl. It is extremely difficult to find today. Many companies issued competing ice-skating dolls, which are often confused with the authentic version.

Now for the fun backstory. Allegedly, the original contract and the use of the special mold was just for dolls bearing Henie's name. However, the same mold was used for a bride doll that was just tagged "Bride." I have seen this doll in person, so I know it exists. Contracts were not enforced as strictly in the 1930s as they are today.

It is increasingly difficult to find these celebrity composition dolls mint in the box. I would value your doll at a minimum of \$500, so it seems like you will be doing a lot of lawn work in the future. Thanks for sharing this incredible doll!





2000 Madame Alexander Victorian Girl

Q At a small local auction, I was the winning bidder on a box lot of dolls. As often happens at this auction, box lots tend to go cheap.

The one doll that I was after was this 8-inch hard-plastic Madame Alexander doll that is very elaborately dressed with an amazing hairstyle. The arm tag says it is a replica of a 1954 doll. What can you tell me about this gorgeous doll?

A First off, let me remind our readers that sometimes these small local auctions can be extremely rewarding.

The 2000 Victorian Girl was part of an anniversary celebration by the Alexander Company. The company issued some gorgeous dolls based on previous accomplishments. The 1954 doll line was quite popular at the time and still is today with collectors. The price for a mint original doll can be as high as several thousand dollars!

Your doll mint in the correct box is what we call a "sleeper," meaning a top-quality doll like this generally is underpriced due to a lack of knowledge by the seller. I feel you really lucked out with this particular style of doll, which shows the often-overlooked quality of later dolls from the Alexander Company. ☺

Send queries about vintage and modern dolls, with photos, to aglenmandeville@aol.com or by mail to Curious Collector, c/o DOLLS, P.O. Box 5000, Iola, WI 54945-5000.

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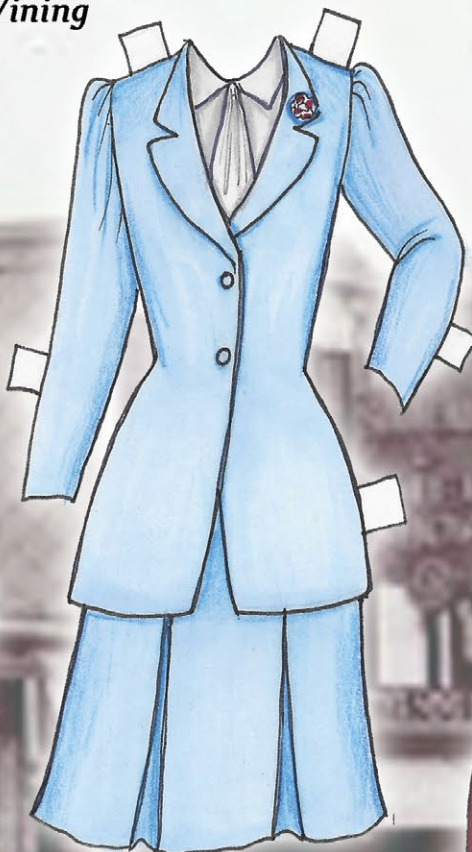
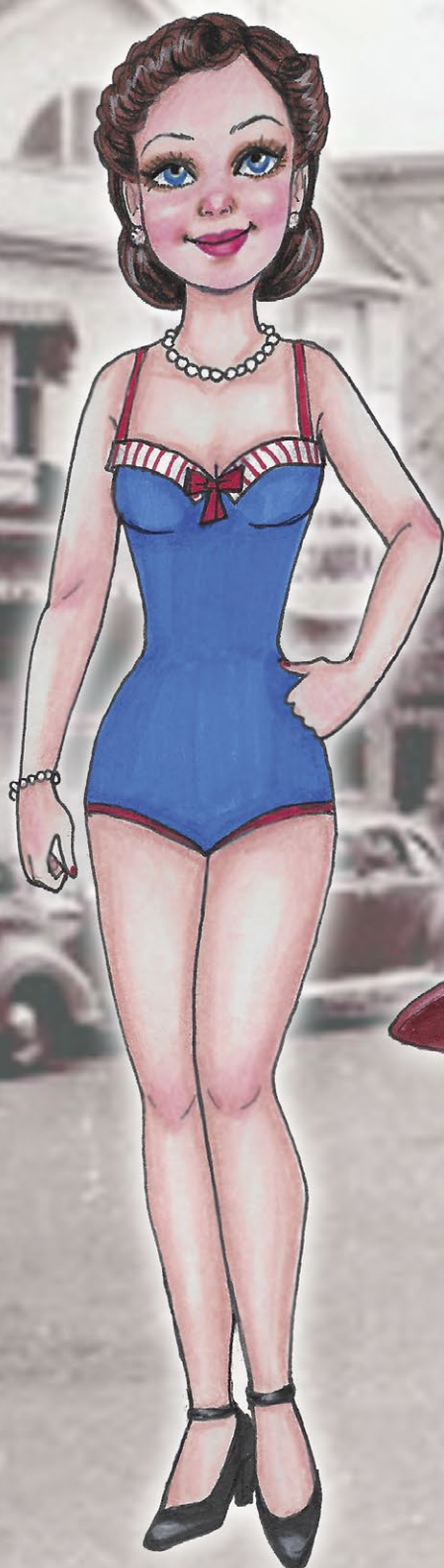
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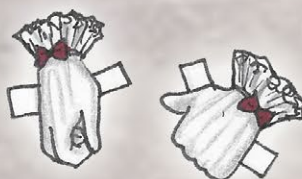
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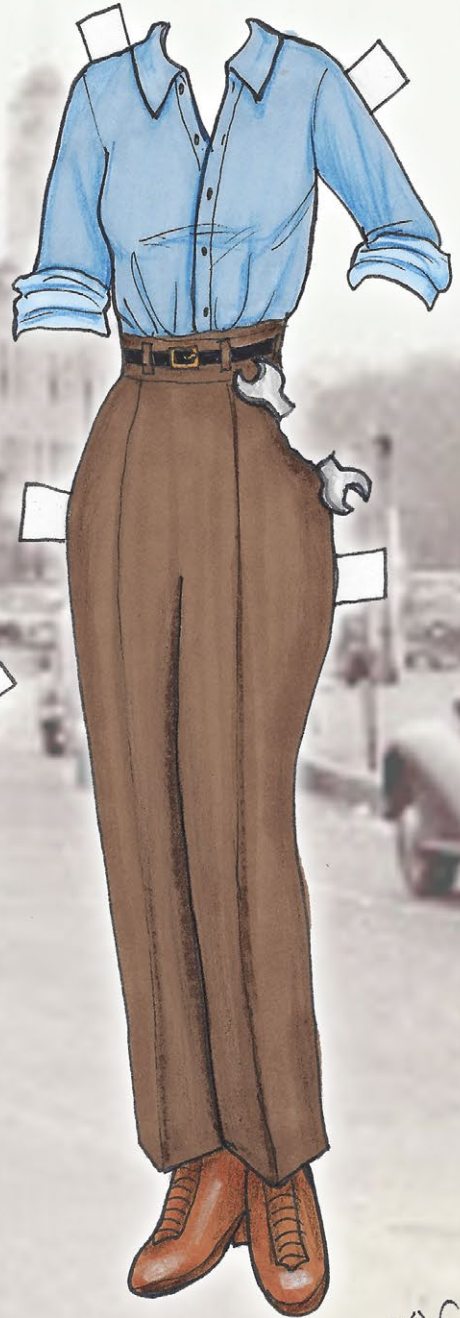
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Event Calendar

Florida

Dec. 6: Land O' Lakes Doll Club Doll Show and Sale. Central Baptist Christian School/Church, 402 E. Windhorst Road, Brandon. Contact: Land O' Lakes Doll Club, glentampa09@aol.com, 813-727-3733.

Feb. 7, 2026: Annual Doll and Teddy Bear Show. Morrison Methodist Church, 1009 W. Main St., Bldg. #5, Leesburg. Contact: Richard Ziller, rjziller@hotmail.com, 703-627-7763.

Missouri

June 27, 2026: Doll Friends ~ Doll, Bear & Toy Show & Sale. VFW, 1347 S. Morley St., Moberly. Contact: Janice Wassmuth, janie_annie@hotmail.com, 660-676-6304.

North Carolina

Nov. 15: Doll Auction Toys and Collectibles. Webb Chapel United Methodist Church, 4478 NC Hwy. 55 W., Kinston. Contact: Nancy Farley and Van Davis, nancy@auctionsbynancy.com, vodavis59@gmail.com, 919-618-9918.

Texas

Nov. 15: Keller Through the Looking Glass Doll and Collectibles Show. Holiday Inn Alliance, 11120 Moriah Drive, Fort Worth. Contact: Debbie Summers, [facebook.com/events/holiday-inn-fort-worth-alliance/keller-doll-show-sale-through-the-looking-glass-2025/1115721186906821/](https://www.facebook.com/events/holiday-inn-fort-worth-alliance/keller-doll-show-sale-through-the-looking-glass-2025/1115721186906821/), dsumm1@verizon.net, 817-888-2166.

Before leaving for a show, it's always a good idea to check the show's website or email the organizer in case of last-minute changes or cancellations.

To list your event here and in our online calendar, go to dollsmagazine.com/events and click the link near the top of the page. Each listing will run until the event date passes. Contact Jill Maggio at jillm@jpmediallc.com for more details.



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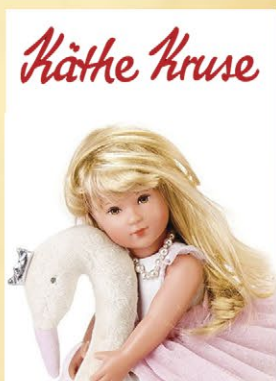
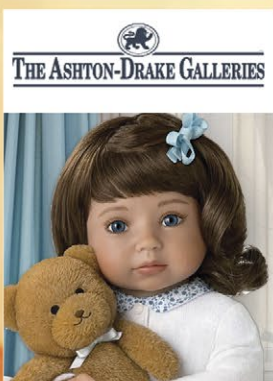
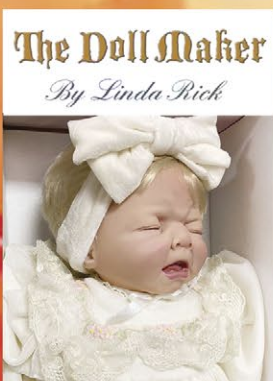
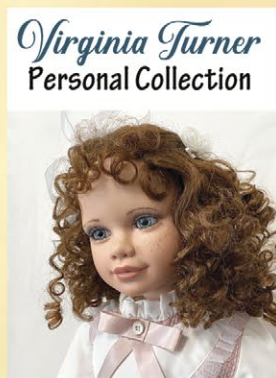
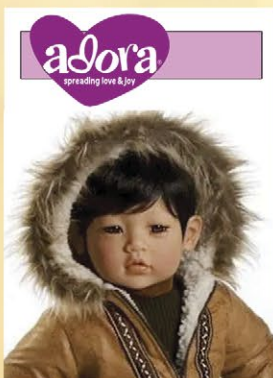
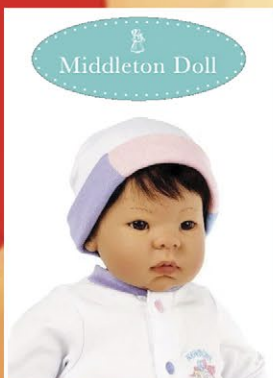
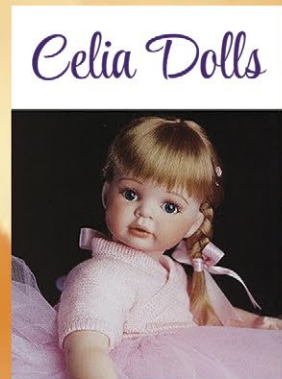
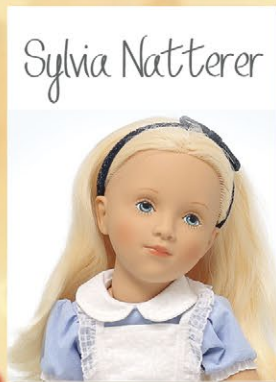
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