



## Indian Puppets

The early puppet shows in India dealt mostly with histories of great kings, princes and heroes and also political satire in rural areas. Religious portrayals in puppetry developed in South India with shadow puppet performances of stories from Ramayana and Mahabharata. Even today, especially in Kerala, shadow puppet is a temple ritual performed every year during a temple festival for a specified duration. With the progress and development of civilization, the mysticism connected with traditional puppetry slowly started to fade which was replaced with an element of entertainment. Slowly, this art form emerged from the precincts of the temple and villages to reach out to the outside world performing on various social and contemporary themes in Indian towns and cities.

Indian Puppets are looked upon as divine manifestations by the puppeteers and the puppet makers alike. Puppets are Dolls when they are made, puppets are Dolls when they are adorned as good or bad characters, but when they actually come to life on stage they are the characters. They are real, they depict life and they are meaningful.

In India all the forms of puppets and puppetry are practiced. The craftsmen make the beautiful colourful Dolls and they often adorn the homes of the urban elite. The presence of puppets in homes brings one near to the earth, the traditional values and divinity.

In Rajasthan one can get the best deals of the string puppets. Shadow puppets are more common in Maharashtra and further down south in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

These are beautiful examples of Rajasthani puppets.

