

About Cheryl Capezzuti

Cheryl Capezzuti has been using the discards of American life as sculptural media to explore who we are for almost thirty years. Her sculpture is embedded in our times and has evolved from an engagement with ordinary everyday experiences to a wider, universal context in an increasingly challenging world, all while continually exploring the possibilities of her chosen materials.

Her first tiny work with dryer lint appeared as a figurative sculpture made from a single load of lint when she was a graduate student in 1994. For the second half of the 1990s her interactive sculptural experiment, *The National Lint Project*, invited people from all over the country to share a single load of lint along with a note about their laundry experiences. As a result of this project, over 1,000 lint donors received a hand-held sculpture made from their own lint and Capezzuti amassed a collection of notes from everyday people about the act of doing laundry. A transformative moment for the project happened in 1999 when Capezzuti cleaned the lint trap in the dryer in her grandma's kitchen, shortly after she passed away. The powerful feeling of holding the last fibers shed from the life of someone she loved transformed the project from a humorous experiment related to the banality of everyday life into a reflection on the meaning of love and loss and the role art can play in the possibilities of memory. This exploration continues today as a through line in Capezzuti's practice.

Supported by the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, The Heinz Endowments and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Capezzuti spent four years from 2000-2004 as the Artist-in-Residence at Duds-N-Suds Laundromat in Pittsburgh, where she collected stories and dryer lint from launderers during weekly art happenings in the space. The results of this community-interactive public artwork were showcased twice a year at the *Party in the Laundromat* which included live music, theatrical performances, puppetry and other experimental works, attended by launderers and art-lovers alike. Many collaborative projects grew out of this wildly creative experience over the next decade including a full-length, original musical that premiered at the Byham Theater in Pittsburgh's Cultural District, a solo installation at Gallery 808 in downtown Pittsburgh and a series of giant puppets made out of dryer lint that performed around Pittsburgh for years. During this time Capezzuti also pursued other artistic projects and became well-known for her community-interactive public art works in media other than dryer lint. Most notably, she is a nationally recognized maker of giant puppets used for community-connected celebrations.

In March 2020, prompted by the global pandemic and the abrupt stop to all community-interactive activities, Capezzuti refocused her studio practice on dryer lint and its ability as a medium to speak to the American state of mind in the moment. This new work explores domesticity, the environment, memory and loss. Armed with decades of experience working with unusual detritus, Capezzuti has created more than 100 new works in the last three years. Material research and support from a metal fabricator for the framing structures has allowed her to create large-scale works from an ephemeral material. They appear soft but they are sturdy, archival and made with an environmentally friendly process. Each sculpture is created from a collection of a single household, a neighborhood or a self-defined community. Somewhere within the debris of each sculpture there is a tiny code to scan that links to information about the sculptures and letters written by the everyday people who donated this little bit of themselves. From tiny people to overscale, looming figures, her sculptures speak of the human condition.

CHERYL CAPEZZUTI
1509 Termon Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15212
412-414-0006

cheryl.capezzuti@gmail.com
www.studiocapezzuti.com
www.puppetsforpittsburgh.com
@studio_capezzuti

WORK HISTORY:

1996-present *Sculptor, Puppetmaker & Interactive Public Artist*, Studio Capezzuti, Pittsburgh, PA
2009-present *Visual Arts Faculty, Falk Lab School*, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA
2002-2012 *Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Artist-in-Residence*, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts

EDUCATION

1992	BA	Integrative Arts (Emphasis: Architecture)	Penn State University
1996	M Ed	Art Education (Emphasis: Community Art-Making)	Penn State University

EXHIBITIONS

2025 *Associated Artists of Pittsburgh 111th Annual*, Erie Art Museum, Erie, PA
2025 *Pittsburgh Avante-garde*, group show, Irma Freeman Center for Imagination, Pittsburgh, PA
Upcoming Solo Shows at The Kipp Gallery at Indiana University, Indiana, PA, The Hoyt, New Castle, PA and Borelli-Edwards Galleries, Pittsburgh, PA
2024 *Wing Envy*, Solo Installation, Pittsburgh International Airport
2024 *Hereafter*, Group Show, Society for Contemporary Craft, Pittsburgh, PA
2024 *16th Annual National Juried Art Exhibition*, GoggleWorks, Reading, PA (1st runner-up)
2024 *Little Bits of Us*, Solo Installation, Silver Apple Gallery, Pittsburgh, PA
2024 *Lawrenceville 2024*, Solo installation, The Laundry Club (a working laundromat), Pittsburgh, PA
2024 *Furry Friends*, Three Rivers Arts Festival Juried Exhibition, Pittsburgh, PA
2023 *Featured Artist Exhibition*, Group Show, AAP Gallery, Pittsburgh, PA
2023 *Associated Artists of Pittsburgh New Member Show*, Brew House Gallery, Pittsburgh, PA
2023 *Associated Artists of Pittsburgh Online Featured Artist* (June)
2023 *Taking up Space*, Three Rivers Arts Festival Juried Exhibition, Pittsburgh, PA
2020 *Discarded: A Retrospective*, Solo Show, BE Galleries, Pittsburgh, PA
2020 *Laundromat Pop-up*, Butler St. Coin-Op (a working laundromat), Pittsburgh, PA
2016 *Stix and Stones*, Group Show, Zoller Gallery, University Park, PA
2013 *Details in Everyday Dust*, Trey's Laundromat (a working laundromat), Pittsburgh, PA
2009 *8-hour projects*, Group Show, Allegheny College Galleries, Meadville, PA
2008 *In the Making*, 250 Pittsburgh Artists, FE Gallery, Pittsburgh, PA
2007 *Member Show*, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, Pittsburgh, PA
2006 *In Response to Healing*, Nationally Traveling Juried Group Exhibition, PA, OH and AZ
2007 *Puppets and Masks*, Two Person Show, Gallerie Chiz, Pittsburgh, PA
2005 *Puppets, Masks and Art in Motion*, Group Show, Artist Upstairs, Pittsburgh, PA
2003 *Detours*, FE Gallery, Pittsburgh, PA and ArtSpot at Tube, Atlanta, GA
2003 *A Detour from Detours*, Midtown Laundry, Atlanta, GA
2003 *A Detour from Detours*, Butler Street Coin-Op Laundry, Pittsburgh, PA
2002 *Angels and Other Creatures*, Solo Show, Three Rivers Arts Festival Gallery, Pittsburgh, PA
2002 *Letters of Lint*, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, Pittsburgh, PA
2002 *Orphaned Spaces in the Public Realm*, Group Show, The Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh, PA
2001-2004 *Changing Solo Exhibitions*, Duds 'N Suds Laundromat (a working laundromat), Pittsburgh, PA
1998 *From Foundation to Ornamentation*, Group Show, ARC Gallery, Chicago, IL
1997 *The Doll Show*, Group Show, Garfield Artworks, Pittsburgh, PA
1993 *Discarded*, Solo Show, The Art Alliance, Lemont, PA

GRANTS/AWARDS/FELLOWSHIPS

Goggleworks Art Center	1 st runner-up, 16th Annual National Juried Art Exhibition
Jane Henson Foundation	Awards in 2021, 2022 and 2023
Awesome Pittsburgh	July 2018 Recipient of this monthly award
Pennsylvania Council on the Arts	Fourteen PA Partners in the Arts Awards and Thirty + Arts-in-Education
ONENorthside	Three Project Grants
The Sprout Fund	Three Seed Award and one SIX Award for social innovation & public art
The Pittsburgh Foundation	Two Individual Artist Awards
The Heinz Endowments	PCA Community Artist Fellowship and one Small Arts Initiative Grant

COMMUNITY INTERACTIVE PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

2016-present	<i>Giant Puppet Dance Club</i> , an on-going community-powered dance experience, Pittsburgh, PA
2013-present	<i>Puppets to Go</i> at the Braddock Carnegie Free Library, a lending library of giant puppets
2004-present	<i>Guest Artist</i> , CitiParks Roving Art Cart, activating arts experiences in parks around the city
1994-present	<i>The National Lint Project</i> , an on-going project that features sculptures made from donated dryer lint and hundreds of collected letters about doing laundry.
2023	<i>Play in peace</i> , Creative Director commissioned by the Office of Public art to create a Pittsburgh scenario for <i>Amal Walks Across America</i> , Pittsburgh, PA
2019	<i>Pittsburgh International Airport Artist-in-Residence</i> , Pittsburgh, PA
2013	<i>Everyday Art Assignments</i> , An interactive, challenge-based experience, Pittsburgh, PA
2001-2004	<i>Lint in the Laundromat</i> , a series of weekly happenings at a working laundromat, Pittsburgh

SELECTED GIANT PUPPET PARADES

2024	<i>Puppet Pop-up and Parade</i> , Lincoln Center Open House, Manhattan, NYC
2024	<i>Community Workshop and Parade</i> , Puppeteers of America regional festival, Ithaca, NY
2023	<i>Puppeteers of America Parade</i> , National Festival, College Park, MD
1998-present	<i>First Night Pittsburgh Parade</i> , Artist-in-Charge and Master Puppetmaker, Pittsburgh, PA
2016	<i>History of Pittsburgh in Puppets</i> for the Bicentennial Parade, City of Pittsburgh, PA
2004-2010	<i>North Side Celebration in the Park</i> , Pittsburgh Women's History Parade, Pittsburgh, PA

SELECTED PUPPET PERFORMANCES (Created with Kellee Van Aken unless noted)

2024	<i>Pittsburgh Park Stories</i> , commissioned by the City of Pittsburgh for the Roving Art Cart
2023	<i>Finding your Voice</i> , commissioned by the City of Pittsburgh for the Roving Art Cart
2022	<i>Giving Tales</i> , commissioned by the City of Pittsburgh for the Roving Art Cart
2019	<i>Aesop's Fables</i> , commissioned by the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
2018	<i>Puppet Pieces</i> , a showcase of 10 years for small works, Glitter Box, Pittsburgh, PA
2017	<i>Song from a Lost Civilization</i> , Potpourri at the National Puppetry Festival, Minneapolis, MN
2016	<i>Dining in Space</i> , Puppet Homecoming Potpourri, NY Arrangement #1
2014	<i>Random Teleology</i> , Margo Lovelace Puppet Festival
2013	<i>Who Needs Neighbors</i> , pageant in Point State Park at Three Rivers Arts Festival
2008-2011	<i>Stuff</i> , A Fuzzy Boundary Production, performed repeatedly for years
2005	<i>Coming Up</i> , created for Phipps Conservatory, Fuzzy Boundary Productions
2004	<i>Night Flight</i> , Pittsburgh International Children's Festival, Fuzzy Boundary Productions
2003	<i>Colorfast</i> , presented as part of The Pittsburgh International Children's 2004-2005 season
2001	<i>Lint Guys Dance</i> , created with Staycee Walters for The Black Sheep Puppet Festival
2000	<i>Beneath the Light</i> , created with Laurie Tarter as part of City Theatre's 4x5 Festival
2000	<i>Mismatched Pair</i> , premiered at Black Sheep Puppet Festival and toured PA

Capezzuti is represented by Borelli-Edwards Galleries in Pittsburgh and has work in many small collections.