

TOPSY-TURVY DOLL CHALLENGE RESULTS!

# ART DOLL

*quarterly*™

**JACK  
JOHNSTON:**  
PUTTING  
YOUR DOLL  
*Together*

pg. 60

**MARY JANE  
BUTLER'S**  
*Range  
Walkers*

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**NIADA  
CONFERENCE  
RECAP**

pg. 20

Doll  
Artist Profile:  
**KARIN  
OTTO-BURFICT**

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My Journey  
to  
Joining a  
Doll  
Organization

by Lillian Alberti



Miss Havisham

Like any art doll artist, becoming a member of the Original Doll Artist Council of America, or ODACA, was a long-time goal of mine and, over the years, my friends had encouraged me to apply. In July, I attended the ODACA Day convention held in New Orleans where, I am happy to say, I was inducted as a member! As excited as I was about this accomplishment, it was a lengthy process for me.

I first applied for membership a few years ago and was thrilled when I passed the first stage. In this stage, you're asked to send photographs of your dolls in disc form. The CD must contain five clear, full-frame JPEG images. Once received, they are uploaded and reviewed by members of the standards committee giving them an idea of the type of dolls you create, your level of creativity, and your artistic ability in the medium of your choice. The committee then decides whether your submitted work proves promising. If yes, it's then evaluated by a points system. A certain percentage is allocated for each of several categories: anatomy, originality, construction, craftsmanship, presentation, etc. The total score must reach or exceed the standards acceptance ideal figure. If a passing score is achieved, you're asked to proceed to phase two.

Years ago, at the time of my first application, phase two required me to submit seven additional dolls for review and critique by the committee. This was daunting for me, as I had a limited body of work and had to create the additional dolls in order to complete my application process — no small undertaking! You'll be glad to hear that if you apply today, you're only required to make one doll, photo-document your entire process from start to finish, and present them on a CD disc "portfolio." I found →



*Life Within*



*Cynno*

this a fun opportunity to use the "tools" from my Microsoft Office program. Here, I have included a few edited pages of my portfolio just to give you an idea of one way to present yours. If you're going to try this format, make sure to add sequential steps and descriptive comments.

If the committee feels your work has potential but has not yet reached the caliber demanded by ODACA, you'll be provided with your score totals and the committee's critical evaluation of your submitted work. The comments are quite frank, but fair, and, for me, provided valuable suggestions on how to hone my skills and improve my chances for future membership.

If you pass the second stage, you're invited to attend the ODACA day convention; this is the third and final stage of the application process. This convention is traditionally held in conjunction with the UFDC (United Federation of Doll Clubs) and conducted each year in different cities across the United States. You're required to bring the doll you constructed for your application as well as three other dolls for a final review and a face-to-face interview with the members of the standards committee. They'll get to see your work in person, and offer a final evaluation. At the end of this interview, if they're all in agreement, you'll be welcomed as a member!

In the two years following my first application, I reapplied again and, needless to say, I did not pass the second stage. Although the committee was very complimentary of my work and believed I had potential, some felt my work needed fine-tuning; the skin surfaces were too rough and they suggested I experiment with different paperclays and rework my armature construction. Because of these factors, my work still lacked the required points.



*Dragon*



*Forming the face*



*Painting detail*



I decided to forget the membership idea for a while. I did, however, take up the committee's suggestions and began experimenting with new paperclays, fine-tuning my armature, and playing with my dolls' scale. These simple changes inspired me to push my imagination even further, and, in doing so, my dolls began to evolve quite dramatically. I loved the smaller scale; I began creating delicate, expressive hands and enormous feet. All this led to costuming with richer, textured fabrics and playing with more elaborate print. I was thrilled with my new pieces!

Last year, while teaching a doll-making workshop in Ohio, I met ODACA artist member Christine Shively-Benjamin. After seeing my work at the convention, Christine was most encouraging and suggested that I reapply. Little did I know that she was ODACA's sitting president at the time! Initially, I thought, "No way!" But having already invested so much time in this endeavor, I just couldn't let it fall by the wayside now — I gave it one last try!

For me, it was a long road to ODACA membership, but the whole process was a valuable experience. I also found that the constructive criticism I received from the committee helped me not only achieve my goal but pushed me to become a better art doll artist! ♦

*Lillian Alberti is an art doll artist, ODACA artist, and workshop instructor living in New York's Hudson Valley area. You can see more of her work at a-lil-whimsy.com. See her workshops in progress and watch her dolls evolve on her blog at cottagehill.wordpress.com.*