

Jeff McGee
Artist Statement
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From my background in animation and comic books to my current love of sculpting metal forms based on natural history, animals have fascinated me and remain a constant in my creative exploration. They provide me with the wide range of sources required to create infinitely varied amalgamated structures. I can modify the given form--stretch or squeeze, add or remove. I can give an animal a personality that it does not have in nature. I can use an animal and its form to represent an idea, an emotion, a specific person, or even to metaphorically describe friends, enemies, or relatives.

Employing my knowledge of natural history and the fossil record, my creative process involves either a construction of elements from different creatures, or a reconfiguring of a specific species anatomy. My early explorations creating compound animals out of hammer-formed sheet metal naturally led me to fabricate objects that implied movement. Over time I became more interested in tangible rather than illusory movement and began to develop my art's potential along those lines. I recognized that puppets possessed all of the elements I was searching for in my work: live movement, narrative, and a three-dimensional form in space. They provided an established genre that supports the formulation of a kinetic narrative.

Fabricating that narrative is the driving force behind all that I do, but the story I'm telling is often vague, open to interpretation. The duality inherent in my creations is intended to provide the foundation for a self-perpetuating, cyclical account that changes disposition for each pair of eyes that experience it. By encouraging my audience to formulate their own conclusions about what they see, I strive to promote collaboration between myself and the viewer.

I am a maker because when I make, I write the rulebook. My approach to the creative process: observe, respond, adapt, and engage.