

The Shadowgraphers



Shadowgraphy—the art of performing a story using hand shadow images—had steadily declined in popularity for more than a century until the Amazing McGillicuddy Sisters came along. Possessing unusually prehensile extremities, the five young women single-handedly (ha) revived interest in the craft worldwide. Unlike earlier shadowgraphers, who used silhouettes of animals, birds, and famous people to tell their generally simple tales, the McGillicuddies conjured dozens or even hundreds of characters, both animate and inanimate, in wide-ranging performances that might span a whole weekend. Here, for example, they assume their positions for the “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times ...” opening of Dickens’ “A Tale of Two Cities.”