

## BIO Karen Konnerth

Karen Konnerth is a puppeteer committed to sharing and nurturing imagination across cultures and age groups, world-wide. Inspired by the diverse heritage of New Orleans, her home of over thirty years, as well as by international folklore, she writes shows, often connected to academic curriculum, designs and builds puppets in a wide variety of techniques, and performs with live voice, presenting either solo, or with accompanying musician.

Dedicated to educational advancement and support for children, families, and teachers, Karen also provides puppetry arts in education workshops and residencies specifically designed to engage students in meaningful learning and to challenge, and inspire creative thinking on current issues affecting our education and world communities. Karen is a specialist in the integration of the arts across the curriculum, creating formats in active learning successful in motivating enthusiasm in students towards comprehension and retention of curriculum information. Karen presents arts residencies in schools regionally and nationally, and has presented teacher workshops at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

Working under the name of a Greek muse, mother of Orpheus, and term for the raucous summoning instrument to circus or steamboat, Calliope Puppets may be seen performing anywhere from a dusty Mexican plaza, to a school auditorium, to a formal theater. Stricken with a hopeless case of wanderlust, Karen's puppets lead her to share in the wonderful world-wide community of puppeteers. (She learned, and continues to improve, her Spanish simply in order to perform while immersed in cultures south of the border.) These international experiences allow Karen to return with deeper cultural understanding, to share with her audiences and students at home. In 2008 alone, Calliope Puppets participated in festivals and conferences in Perú, Argentina, México, and Puerto Rico, and Karen received her third U.S. Embassy Cultural Envoy Grant, this time to provide a plenary address at the 6<sup>th</sup> Asia Teachers of English as a Second Language International Conference in Bali, Indonesia, as well as to present Puppetry in Education teacher workshops in Brunei and Indonesia as a U. S. State Department English Language Specialist.

Karen recently published Puppets Links Video Workshop (DVD and manual) Choices in Conflict Resolution: Understanding Win/Lose, Lose/Lose, and Win/Win.