



## The Story of Rose O'Neill: An Autobiography

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To most of us, Rose O'Neill is best known as the creator of the Kewpie doll, perhaps the most widely known character in American culture until Mickey Mouse. Prior to O'Neill's success as a doll designer, however, she already had earned a reputation as one of the best-known female commercial illustrators. Her numerous illustrations appeared in America's leading periodicals, including *Life*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *Cosmopolitan*. While highly successful in the commercial world, Rose O'Neill was also known among intellectuals and artists for her contributions to the fine arts and humanities. In the early 1920s, her more serious works of art were exhibited in galleries in Paris and New York City. In addition, she published a book of poetry and four novels.

Yet, who was Rose Cecil O'Neill? Over the course of the twentieth century, Rose O'Neill has captured the attention of journalists, collectors, fans, and scholars who have disagreed over whether she was a sentimentalist or a cultural critic. Although biographers of Rose O'Neill have drawn heavily on portions of her previously unpublished autobiography, O'Neill's own voice--richly revealed in her well-written manuscript--has remained largely unheard until now.

In these memoirs, O'Neill reveals herself as a woman who preferred art, activism, and adventure to motherhood and marriage. Featuring photographs from the O'Neill family collection, *The Story of Rose O'Neill* fully reveals the ways in which she pushed at the boundaries of her generation's definitions of gender in an effort to create new liberating forms.

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