



Uma Sanasaryan is a Los Angeles–based interdisciplinary artist working under the moniker Soup Commie. Her creative practice moves between the studio and the altar: ritual statues, experimental films, ensouled dolls, zines, immersive storytelling, and food as ceremony. Born in the Soviet Union and raised in Los Angeles, Uma brings a unique diasporic perspective to her work, weaving animism, '90s sitcoms, and personal history into themes that explore California's spiritual landscape and the act of drawing presence into matter.

For 18 years, Uma sculpted the Kali statue for the annual Kali Puja at the Vedanta Society of Southern California — the same Hollywood spiritual community that once drew Christopher Isherwood and Aldous Huxley. She documented this experience in her award-winning 2021 film [Imagemaker](#). Uma's imagemaking practice was also featured in [a short documentary](#) by Eric Swenson. Her devotional practice with Kali spans more than three decades and grounds everything she makes. When the late minister of the Vedanta Society, Swami Swahananda, called her the Imagemaker, Uma took the title to heart, immersing herself in the study of sacred art, statue animation, and worship across traditions and cultures. Though her years sculpting for the Vedanta Society ended in 2025, she remains the Imagemaker in all aspects of her creative and spiritual life.

Her completed seven-part alchemical working, Soup Esoterica, wove Soviet soups, planetary tinctures, and sculpted soup lids into a single ritual cycle, culminating in an experimental film, [I See You, I Love You, I Feed You](#) — a finalist at the International Esoteric Film Festival and winner of the Jodorowsky Award at the Hermetic International Film Festival. Uma also hosts monthly Community Soup & Story Nights at The Pop Hop Books Co-op in Highland Park and teaches workshops on doll ensoulment and ritual craft.

She is currently writing *The Hollywood Kali*, a book grounded in the study of the Vedanta Society archives that traces sacred image-making from 18th-century Bengal to the Kali's unlikely encounter with Western modernity, cinema, and Los Angeles. Her zine [Thus Spake The Hollywood Kali](#), a companion to this ongoing Kali work, is available online and in select bookstores. Uma is also an Emmy Award-winning editor with over 20 years of producing and editing experience in documentary and unscripted film and television.