



The official newsletter of
San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers' Guild
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Check for it at SFBAPG.ORG

SFBAPG is a charter guild of the Puppeteers of America, Inc., a non-profit, tax exempt organization

April 2010



*Coming at the
May Meeting!*



In this issue:

- Review of the Puppet Early Childhood Course at Contra Costa College

- May Meeting Announcement
- Baby Boomer Barbie Review
- Festival Scholarship Info
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MAY MEETING

May Guild Meeting: Meet the Filmmaker – Steven Ritz-Barr Bay Area First Bay Area Screening of the puppet film QUIXOTE

Saturday, May 22

Time and place: To Be Determined. We are looking for a site and that may dictate whether it is an afternoon or early evening Guild meeting.

Special Guest:

Steven Ritz-Barr - WRITER / ART DIRECTOR / PUPPET MASTER

We will be screening Steven's latest film, QUIXOTE, based on the Cervantes novel. This has been selected by the Beverly Hills Film Festival, and will be seen at UCLA on April 16, where Steven is a visiting Professor in the Animation department.

“Stunning... a brilliant achievement...Cervantes would have loved it.” Howard Mancing, President Cervantes Society of America

QUIXOTE - A working preview of the film can be seen at <http://www.classicsinminiature.com> and beautiful photos at <http://www.classicsinminiature.com/quixote/gallery>.

Well known actor Michael York is the voice of Don Quixote. Other voice actors include, Gino Compagna as Sancho, Iliana Carter as the niece, Lynda Lester as the maid, our own Conrad Bishop as Maesa Pedro the Puppeteer, Brooks Elms as the Master Sheepherder, with Ritz-Barr as the beaten boy, Mike Simpson and Hoku Uchiyama as the 2 Merchants. The puppets were operated by Steven Ritz-Barr, Eugene Seregin, Leo Ritz-Barr (Son), and several other interns from the UCLA film department. All the puppets were designed and fabricated by puppet Master Eugene Seregin.

Meet the Filmmaker: Steven Ritz-Barr

Steven first learned Puppetry Arts from Jean-Loup Temporal in Paris in 1980, while studying at L'Ecole Jacques LeCoq (movement/mime/theatre school). Jim Henson introduced him to film/video work in 1985 in the Puppet Institute in Charleville, France. Later, in Paris, he worked as puppeteer on many video television projects. Back in the USA in 1989, he puppeteered on Batman Returns, Men in Black, Alien Resurrection, Team America, and Muppets Tonight, to name a few. He also performed 2 original puppet shows for young audiences primarily in So. California since 1996—over 900 times. Presently he's focused 100% on his Classics in Miniature series.

Classics in Miniature is a series of stunning half-hour films based on great works of literature— using beautifully designed, one-of-a-kind puppets performing our most beloved heros and characters. We present these timeless classics in the most entertaining and artistically creative way. Distributed to educational market (from age 12 through university) and to the general public, these unique films are for everyone – young and old, cynical and romantic. Steven's first film FAUST, based on Goethe's work, was launched in 2008 to great reviews and a UNIMA USA Citation of Excellence. More information at <http://www.classicsinminiature.com>.

Copies of the “Classics in Miniatures” (both Faust and Quixote) will be available for sale at the meeting for 25% off for Guild Members with cash (\$15).

REVIEWS AND NEWS

PUPPETEERS ENCHANT, INFORM COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS.

by Jean Womack

The San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers took Contra Costa College by storm with a series of presentations, demonstrations and hands-on puppet-making workshops in the Language Arts Building Saturday, March 13, 2010. Numerous budding puppeteers signed up for the half-unit Early Childhood Education course hoping to learn the secrets of the puppeteers so that they could entertain and inform their own progeny and their friends' kids too.

Any teacher knows that there is a certain amount of showmanship in any successful teaching career. Teaching has spawned famous performance artists such as Laurie Anderson who does monologues. My all time favorite community college teacher was Mr. Moxley, who taught government, and talked me into being a tutor. The reason I remember his name is because he constantly referred to himself in the third person. Instead of saying, "I want you to study chapter 3 this week," he would say, "Mr. Moxley wants you to study chapter 3 this week." This was one of those priceless secrets of teaching where you had to be there to find out why that person was so famous on that campus.

The principal of knowing one's audience was referred to by Robin Stevens, a British puppeteer who gave the grand finale puppet show, a long monologue using puppets as props, with the theme of a gnome looking for his feather. He says he is not used to performing for grownups as he did today. He looks for a response or reaction from an audience of children and when he doesn't get the reaction he expects, he becomes curious. The favorite part of the show for most people is the mother bird searching for food for her hungry chicks, he said. Today's audience of educators included about five elementary kids who responded predictably to the variety of original puppets that Stevens moved about the stage. They sat through the whole thing without any noticeable squirming, only showing mild distaste as Stevens' mother bird asked them to hold her bread so she could get it for her chicks later on.

"Peter and the Wolf," for school children.

Starting off the afternoon was a music education experience to rival that of Leonard Bernstein. To explain how different musical wind instruments represented different characters, Puppeteer Judy Gregory showed numerous puppets and musical instruments to her young admirers. She played the "Peter and the Wolf" themes on 9 different musical instruments. Her energetic puppet performance showed how a flute, piccolo and a bassoon would have lower sounds or pitches, the longer length they are.

Way up in the back of the tiny auditorium-lecture hall the puppet sculptor Conrad Bishop showed his original hand-sculpted puppets and masks that he makes for his theatre company The Independent Eye. He was working on a clay head of a grotesquely squinting man which he said he was going to use as a base for making a paper mache head. These materials are safe for even elementary school students to use, unlike expensive chemical molds used to make car parts. Using non-toxic art materials is part of the current green-conscious art movement. No longer willing to be poisoned by solvents like lacquer thinner and paint thinner, art teachers have turned to safe ways of cleaning up, like using vegetable oil and citrus hand cleaner.

Lee Armstrong demonstrated a lively and animated style of puppetry as she showed the group how to introduced the puppet to the audience. She held the puppet close and stroked its head, then she slowly turned it

to face the audience. The puppet looks left, then center, then right, then center. Then the puppet fixes its eye on the audience. She works with both mouth puppets, which open their mouths to take a breath, yawn, sneeze, cough and speak; and with hand puppets, which have hands which move, but their mouths do not open. Armstrong showed how to make a mouth puppet from a sock.

Elisheva showed puppet making using even less expensive materials—important when working with a class of between 20 and 23 youngsters, or sponsoring a puppet day at Oakland's Fairyland. For example, she showed a spider puppet made from a paper cup with pipe cleaner legs. Scattering some plastic bugs on the table, she brought the spider over to eat the bugs, by lowering it right over the bugs. She showed how to say hello with the puppet, in an exuberant outgoing style for some, but with a more reserved and shy demeanor for children who are basically shy. She demonstrated finger puppets (as in photo above). Elisheva had many more creative ways of making puppets out of construction paper and google eyes.

Dressed in a train engineer's hat and sunglasses, Tia, who sometimes works with Elisheva to do puppetry presentations, enchanted the students with a simple butterfly puppet made from clear plastic, pipe cleaners, and decorated with permanent marker pens. She also showed the sign she displays for her students, which clearly states that permanent markers make permanent marks on clothing that cannot be washed off, so if you want your child to participate in some art activities, they should be dressed in clothing that will not cause tears if it gets a stray mark on it. Walking the dog was especially appealing as she walked a floppy puppy over to a ball of yarn to pick it up with the puppy's Velcro nose.

Instructor Barbara Grillo awarded the attendees with a very nice formal certificate of attendance suitable for framing. With the expert advice these puppeteers gave, how can we go wrong now? Well, I probably shouldn't give away all my secrets, but some puppet shows are too scary for little kids. Better stick with the positive upbeat stuff and don't try any scary fairy tales that will give them nightmares. Anansi the Spider is a favorite of people in Point Richmond, says the R.E. director of the local church. A lot of those German, English, Irish, and other fairy tales from all over the world are too frightening for little kids. Since my grandma's name was Henrietta Grimm, I ought to know.

Editor's note: Ms. Womack also took a number of beautiful photographs at this event. You can view them at her blog: www.jeanswatercolors.blogspot.com



Man, after this, I'm going to need to see some fine puppeteering to calm down!

Do you want to attend a puppet festival this summer, but not sure your budget will allow it? Maybe the SFBAPG can help. Scholarship application forms are now available for adult and youth members of the SFBAPG. Contact Mary Decker and ask for an application form: marydeck57@sbcbglobal.net or 650-361-1310.

Applications must be received by April 20. The Scholarship Committee will select scholarship recipients on or before April 30.

The amount of each scholarship is yet to be determined and will be based on the number of recipients.

Check out these cool festivals!! July 30 - August 1 in Seattle, Washington: <http://www.puppet-o-rama.org> July 6 - July 11 in Trenton, Missouri: <http://www.puppetfestival.org>

GUILD DISCOUNT ON SICILIAN MARIONETTE SHOW!

Guild price \$25.00 (\$5.00 off regular price) if we order as a group in advance. If you want to go, contact Michael Nelson at [sfbapg\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:sfbapg(at)gmail.com) asap. This looks like it should be a great opportunity. Google Mimmo Cuticchio and check out his work!

Associazione Figli d'Arte Cuticchio: Sicilian Puppet Theatre Friday, April 16, 2010 8 p.m. Showcase Theater, San Rafael Direct from Palermo, Italy, Mimmo Cuticchio and his company bring their Teatro dei Pupi, or puppet theatre, to Marin County. Full of magic and enchantment, the tales they come to tell us will be re-enacted with Sicilian pupi — marvelous 3-foot high wooden puppets — celebrating the rich and ancient traditions of this island culture. Their Marin show will stage Orlando's Madness and Astolfo On The Moon. Stories about Orlando, an obscure 8th-century French knight in the service of the Emperor Charlemagne, have long held a central place in the European cultural imagination, and they form the basis of the greatest poem of the Italian Renaissance, Ludovico



Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* (Mad Orlando). Cuticchio's puppet theatre draws on this extraordinary tradition, featuring characters both human and mythological. Puppet theater was among the most popular art forms in Sicily from the early 19th century until World War II, when dozens of traveling puppeteers (known as pupari) played to full houses throughout the island. Mimmo Cuticchio and his collaborators keep the tradition alive today by performing at their jewel-box of a theater in Palermo, organizing puppet festivals throughout Sicily and touring the world, from Paris and Berlin to Tokyo and Hanoi. (In Italian) Pre-performance welcome by Michael Wyatt, Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies, Stanford University. Generous support for bringing the Associazione Figli d'Arte Cuticchio to California has been provided by Stanford University, Museo Italo Americano, and Italian Cultural Institute of San Francisco. More information: <http://www.figlidartecuticchio.com> .

BABY BOOMER BARBIE

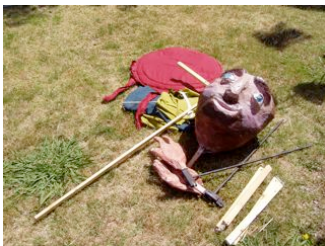
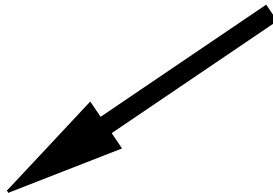
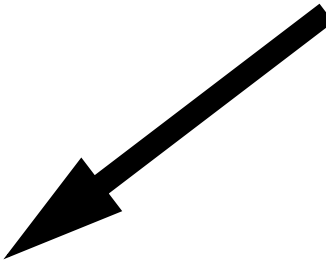
a review of Little Blue Moon Theatre's "The Barbie Diaries"

by Elisheva Hart

{author's note: Barbie brain-like after the show I immediately lost my original set of notes....so if I have to fake it, just a little, who will tell?? Could they have dissolved in one of my pink bathtub pink bubble baths? E.} On February 6th, 2010, at the sumptuous Sala Salon in Napa-a befitting venue for style conscious Barbie, complete with Sonoma wines, cheese and cookies- "The Barbie Diaries" sang their last song. Told their last secret. Revealed their Final Fashion Tips and How to Achieve S_xual Conquests. {This IS a family newsletter. E.} Yes, for sure for sure, Barbie is not only a fashion doll but a Very Active One. At 51 Barbie has hit the skids, crashing in a crowded \$1.00 bargain bin in a thrift shop. It's an old familiar story-age discrimination-despite the many "girlie" careers on her resume and the number of casting couches in her past. Alas, her movie career peaked some time ago when she appeared as Tour Guide Barbie in Toy Story 2. She's literally down to only a tacky tee shirt, or was it only a tacky pair of panties? Her many lovers of all ilks have deserted her, beginning with Ken. She learned of his defection by reading about it in the pages of Wall Street Journal* for pity sakes! As usual, Ken didn't have the b_lls to express his feelings directly. GI Joe, Bob the Builder---all the men---gone gone gone. And the women! An equally long list. Then the fuzzy stuffed animals---deserted by them even

though she gave them her all and groomed them with her tiny pink hair brush. And even Gumby has deserted her-sure her was, like Ken, lacking certain parts, but O Baby, was he ever flexible as he belted out verse after verse of "Twist and Shout!" Assisted by Mike the Manipulator and Val the Voice, Barbie bared her all to the delight of the audience in a memorable intimate performance. {Like the paper performers in the other Little Blue Moon Theatre's productions, her figure is not very tall and the audience needs to number 20 members or so. E.} Her past is beyond the combined wildest dreams and scenarios of all former Barbie owners. {Factoid: the average girlchild has 7 Barbies. E.}. There wasn't a wet eye in the audience as Barbie, having failed to seduce the next door buff male doll, and Mike waltzed off into the imaginary Sunrise, as Val sang "So in Love", by Cole Porter, ending the startling revelations of "The Barbie Diaries". Odd note: "The Barbie Diaries"-in this incarnation-were first performed last year when she was a mere 50 years old, at an Altered Barbie Convention in San Francisco. Amazingly only 9 people were in the audience, including 5 on The Little Blue Moon Theatre's mailing list. Mike asked mournfully why such a small attendance? Especially from the convention goers themselves. After much consultation of my Magic 8 Ball, I came to the conclusion that people who alter Barbie dolls are not at all interested in anyone else's fantasy of Barbie except THEIR OWN. Some stellar, scary examples are Pit Bull Owner Barbie (with genuine mauled appendages), Tats and Piercings Barbie, Trailer Trash Barbie (one of the original altered Barbie concepts)....you get the story, Morning Glory. *A girl has to keep on top of her assets, ya know!

How to Make a Parade Puppet in Six Easy Steps!



FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Lessee, how do I make a note about Board Elections interesting to read? Could write it as a dialogue of the Three Little Pigs or the cranky old King looking for volunteers to slay the Dragon, but man, in late afternoon I can't be creative. So here's just the facts, ma'am:

May, we choosin' the kingpins. Need three tough cookies to fill some big empty shoes. Gotta hung with the gang for at least a year, gotta be able to read, and you gotta have guts. The hitch is three years. Lotta work, lotta laughs. Illegal aliens welcome.

Well, I warned you. Seriously: In the past couple of years, we've made tremendous progress, and we want to keep moving. Major things on the agenda: ongoing programming for the meetings; increased membership and promotion; exploring other member services; possibility of "puppet slams"; possibility of a festival; and anything else that comes surging into someone's consciousness. It's a great bunch of people to work with; there is work involved, we meet about four times a year, but we're respectful of people's time capabilities. If interested, contact me and I'll pass it along to the nominating committee.

And...

This summer there are Puppeteers of America Regional Festivals in Wilmington, NC, July 15-18; Seattle, WA, July 30-Aug.1; Springfield, OH, July 29-Aug. 1; and St. Charles, MO, Aug. 20-22. Their websites can be accessed through <http://www.puppeteers.org/festivals.html>. Also the Puppetfest Midwest, July 6-11, in Trenton, MO, not a P of A sponsored event but focused on more intensive workshops.

If you're considering attending any of these, SFBAPG has scholarships available. A scholarship won't pay all expenses by a long shot, but it'll help out. Recipients are asked to do something afterward in service of the Guild, e.g. writing a report on the festival for the newsletter, making a presentation on something derived, etc. We'll be putting out more detailed information on eligibility and application on the email list, but keep alert for it. There's also assistance available through the Pacific Southwest

Region of P of A if you're a member - email me for info.

Cheers-
Conrad Bishop

2009-2010 SFBAPG

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CALENDAR

Nick Barone Puppets
<http://puppetbuilder.com/>

Saturday, April 3, 2010 - 9:30 am, 11:30 am &
12:30 p.m.

"The Princess Mermaid"
Elizabeth Gamble Garden's Easter Celebration
Gamble Garden Carriage House, 1431 Waverley,
Palo Alto, CA

Saturday, April 10, 2010 - 11:15 am

"The Princess Mermaid"
Berryessa Branch Library
3355 Noble Ave., San Jose, CA

Storybook Puppet Theatre
Children's Fairyland, Oakland

April 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, 24-25

11 am, 2 p.m., 4 p.m.
Perez and Mondinga. It's fiesta time in Mexico. Mondinga, the cockroach, wants to marry and share her hacienda with someone special. Rooster, Pig and evil Cat all want to marry her, yet none is right. Finally she meets Perez the gentle mouse and marries him. This is the silly story of their meeting, marriage and mishaps, just in time for Cinco De Mayo! Ole! Scenery & Puppets by Lewis Mahlmann

Shadow Circus Vaudeville Theatre

April 16th & 17th at the Climate Theater
285 Ninth Street, San Francisco
Doors (at) 8:00 p.m. \$15

San Francisco's only puppet hosted variety show, returns to the Climate Theater for two nights only; Friday and Saturday April 16th & 17th. We've got special guests Zoe Boekbinder (of Vermillion Lies),

Bellydancer Jill Parker, contortionist Aviator and balloon artist Daniel Devices.

Tickets and further information are available at www.shadowcircus.com

For tickets and additional information, please go to <http://www.shadowcircus.com>

Magical Moonshine Theatre

"Armadillo's Rancho"
A bilingual folktale from Argentina
Wednesday, April 14

4:00 p.m.
San Lorenzo Library, 395 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo

Sunday, April 18

2:00 p.m.
Castro Valley Library, 3600 Norbridge Ave, Castro Valley

Thursday, April 22

5:30 p.m.
S. Novato Library

Friday, April 30

7:00 p.m.
Pleasanton Library, 400 Old Bernal Road, Pleasanton

Sun, May 2, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Union City Library, 34007 Alvarado-Niles Rd, Union City CA

The Carnival Mask

Moonshine Theatre leads the audience in a participatory bilingual performance of "The Carnival Mask"

May 1
St Paul's Church, 1825 Church lane, San Pablo, 94806

April 2010

Special tear-out calendar! See Calendar listings for details on events.
Due to space limitations, not all times or show titles are listed here.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Perez and Mondinga 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Perez and Mondinga ■ 3:00 PM Nick Barrone The Princess Mermaid
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Perez and Mondinga 						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Perez and Mondinga ■ 3:00 PM Nick Barrone The Princess Mermaid
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Perez and Mondinga 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 3:00 PM Magical Moonshine Armadillo's Rancho 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 3:00 PM Shadow Circus Vaudville Theater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Perez and Mondinga ■ 3:00 PM Shadow Circus Vaudville Theater
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Perez and Mondinga ■ 3:00 PM Magical Moonshine Armadillo's Rancho 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 3:00 PM Magical Moonshine Armadillo's Rancho 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Perez and Mondinga
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Perez and Mondinga 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 3:00 PM Magical Moonshine Armadillo's Rancho 		

SFBAPG
San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers Guild
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LEARN MUPPET-STYLE PUPPETRY

Emmy Award-winning puppeteer, Michael Earl (formerly Mr. Snuffleupagus on Sesame Street), will be teaching a Muppet-style puppetry workshop in the Bay Area on Saturday April 3rd, 2010 from 10AM-5 p.m.. Over the past 22 years, Mr. Earl has taught and/or mentored the who's who of TV and film puppet performers. Now it's your turn! You will expand your acting and improv skills by learning a proven technique in this all day on-camera class. Behind-the-scenes Muppet stories and secrets, career tips, and much more! The fee is \$275 for this intensive yet fun all day workshop. Space is limited to 8. To learn more or to reserve your spot, please visit www.teachingtour.com.

