



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

February 2015



This newsletter is full of great material, including images and reviews from our holiday party, an incredible calendar of upcoming guild events and workshops and much, much more. Thanks to all that contributed to this extra large newsletter.

Inside this issue...

- ◆ Next Guild Event Feb. 15
- ◆ Nick Barone Memorial
- ◆ Classes, workshops, scholarship opportunities and more
- ◆ Reviews, books and shows
- ◆ Coming soon, King Lear, and much more!

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A Word from the President

We had a delightful holiday party! If you were there you saw the latest production in Magical Moonshine's repertoire of entertaining shows, and heard about all the exciting workshops and events that the Program Planning Committee has been developing for the coming year. If you weren't there, you can read all about the party in this issue. Thank you to the Christ Presbyterian Church for hosting our gathering once again and to Elisheva for making all the

arrangements.

Board News: You may notice on the sidebar that Greg Hayes is no longer listed as a Board member. Greg resigned from the Board to move to the LA area to accept employment there. We all wish Greg the very best with his new work and life in LA.

The Nominating Committee will soon be active in seeking two new Board members for the election in June. If you are interested in getting more involved with the Guild and helping with all the details that keep this organization running smoothly, then please consider becoming a Board member. You don't need to wait to be contacted by the Nominating Committee (who may not know of your interest); you can contact any Board member and let them know!! (Or if you are curious about what it means to be on the Board, you can also contact a Board member to get details.) Board members are elected for three-year terms.

I'm looking forward to the February workshop on foam carving and making my fish! How about you?

Exciting News from your Program Planning Committee by Mary Nagler

Greetings! The **Program Planning Committee** has been working hard to set up an interesting year full of opportunities to grow in skill and knowledge, fellowship with friends, and be exposed to puppetry through performance. We are hoping one thing will build upon another. Making puppets, to manipulating puppets, to performing with puppets! The "under the sea" adventure, mentioned in our participation at Happy Hollow and Oakland Children's Fairyland, will be a narrated, group participation between anyone who would like to perform and the children with newly made fish puppets! Volunteers will be needed and fun "incentives" are being planned!

Please mark the following dates on your calendar:

Next Event: February 15: Foam sculpting Workshop with Mary Nagler and John Arnold

Location Images in Motion, 720 Ladera Dr. Sonoma, Cost per participant \$75.00 - all materials provided. Class starts at 10:00am -4:00pm Come learn foam sculpting and covering techniques and make a fish for future performance opportunities!

March 28 Meeting: from 2:30 - 5:00pm at the Little Roxie Theatre in San Francisco, located at 3117 26th St. between Valencia and Guerrero. We're accessible from the 22, 14, 49 and 33 bus lines. The Roxie is two blocks west of the 16th Street Bart stop, and, three blocks east of the J-Church line. **Larry Reed**, internationally acclaimed shadow master will give a talk on his art form. Guild meeting will follow Larry's presentation. Come be inspired!

April 18 (Tentative) Event: Finding your Character through Voice and manipulation Workshop, Location and instructors still being confirmed - Lee Armstrong has offered to teach the manipulation portion. Thanks Lee! She is a pro!

May 24 Meeting: Happy Hollow Day of Puppetry! Proposed schedule include s a "Group" under the sea performance, Child friendly Slam, Kid Craft table "Fish building," other puppet performances, an exhibit of puppets! Meeting will be in the early evening (**Elections**) with dinner, or shortly after. Volunteers needed!

June 28 Event: TV workshop At Images in Motion, 720 Ladera Dr. Sonoma, CA taught by Lee Armstrong and Kamela Portugues. This is a practice run for the workshop they will present at the Festival! Fee and time TBD

July - Event: Slam workshop- building a story, how to be succinct, timing and humor, (Taught by a number of guild members) Venue, time and cost still being worked out - stay tuned!

August 10 -16 National Puppet Festival Are you going?

August 29 Meeting: at Oakland Children's Fairyland. Proposed schedule include s a "Group" under the sea performance, Child friendly Slam, Kid Craft table "Fish building," other puppet performances, an exhibit of puppets and walk- arounds! Meeting will be in the early evening (**Elections**) with dinner, or shortly after. Volunteers needed!

Still being planned...

September - Meeting: Shadow workshop (possible sleep over?)!

October - Event: Guild Slam? Showing off all we have learned!

November - Meeting: What would you like to see? Do?

December - Merry Christmas!

Would you like to be a Mentor?

We are looking into starting a Mentoring Program. Would you like to have a mentor? Would you like to be a mentor? We had a Forum of several members, at the November meeting talking on aspects of building a puppet business. Was that great?! We would like to have more members share in this way. Do you have something regarding puppetry you would like to share with the group? How to handle hecklers? Read any good puppetry books lately? Would you like to see a particular performer at a meeting? Would you like to perform at a meeting? Run a workshop? Know of a great performance coming up? Please let us know!

Please Contact: Mary Nagler

mary.nagler@gmail.com or call 707 303 0093 and give us your ideas!



Thanks to Laura Duldner and Ray Jonez for the great photos of our guild holiday party! See many more on the Guild Facebook Page.

March Guild Meeting March 28 2:00 - 5PM

Little Roxie Theater, 3125 16th St., San Francisco (at Valencia St in the Mission)

“My Life With Shadows” - a film screening and a talk by Larry Reed
The presentation will begin with a screening of ON WAYANG (2011, 30 min), which chronicles Larry Reed’s journey into the “shadow world” from his fateful encounter with the Balinese Shadow Theatre to the creation of his original cinema-scale modern shadow theatre. Larry will expand upon the themes, philosophies and techniques described in the movie and answer questions from the audience.

Larry Reed is the founder and Artistic Director of ShadowLight Productions (SF).

He has pioneered contemporary shadow theater by integrating traditional shadow theater techniques with American theater and film styles.

Reed is one of the few Americans trained in Wayang Kulit, Balinese shadow theatre, and has collaborated with artists from diverse backgrounds and traditions to create original shadow plays in a cinematic scale. His works include: IN XANADU, AMBROSIA OF IMMORTALITY, COYOTE’S JOURNEY, 7 VISIONS, MONKEY KING AT SPIDER CAVE, GHOSTS OF THE RIVER and PORO OYNA: THE MYTH OF THE AYNU.



March Guild Meeting: Larry Reed is one of the few Americans trained in Wayang Kulit, Balinese shadow theatre, and has collaborated with artists from diverse backgrounds and traditions to create original shadow plays in a cinematic scale.

The Little Roxie is a 50 seat theater. The meeting is free to Guild members and their guests, however please reserve your seats by emailing Lee Armstrong, sfbapglibrary@gmail.com with # of seats needed, or call 707 996-9474.

There will be more info in the March newsletter regarding parking, restaurants for after Guild meeting get-togethers, etc.

Table Decorating at the Guild's Annual Holiday Party

Elisheva Hart

Several years ago, Valerie Nelson initiated table decorating by guild members at the Holiday Party. It has become part of our tradition along with quality entertainment, the scholarship raffle, display of puppets, gift exchange, and of course yummy food! This year colorful Certificates of Participation were created and handed out to our talented decorators: Lynnette Pinto, Molly Christman, Mary Nagler, Elizabeth Leonard, Valerie Nelson, Tom Crystle and Beth Marie Deenihan.

"I'm going to frame mine!" enthused Mary Nagler. It's not too early to set your intentions to participate next year! No advanced registration required. Just show up with cool stuff and DO IT!

"The Three Pigs", performed by Magical Moonshine Theater at SFBAPG 2015 Holiday Party.

Reviewed by Elisheva Hart

Mike and Valerie Nelson have brilliantly birthed a gentle, funny, and upbeat re-creation of a familiar "nursery tale" in their latest show. While viewing their performance I felt as special as if being cradled in my favorite relative's arms: giggling and singing along with the other kids-of- all- ages, and relaxing to the praise Mama Pig gave to each of her kids- including me-in a smooth as liquid chocolate voice.

The piggies were adorable, lively, innocent, and worthy of being our very Best Friends FOREVER! With Mike playing a very special uke-one which had belonged to former Guild member Howie Leifer of "Haight Street Puppet Theater"-and singing along with Val (us too), life was very special indeed. Another friend, who had an exceptionally horrible, bad day, said their show really uplifted her, and she was so grateful!

This show had several running gags, which provided continuity in the script, anticipation in the audience, and opportunities to quote dialogue. Most of these gags grew out of Mama's instructions to her children to watch out for danger as they went out into the world to build their own homes. Like a good educator, she broke it into description like two ears...two eyes...etc...and...a bushy tail. Like most young ones the message received wasn't exactly like the message given. Each piggy in turn went out warned against "The Big Bad", and their mistakes had us-old and young-bouncing with laughter and superiority as we knew what Mama was saying, for sure, for sure. Meanwhile the same information, with a twist, was given to the wolf cub by his Mama.

Obtaining the building materials for each new home gave opportunities for children from the audience to become involved in the show. Mike "interviewed" each child with real interest in their individuality before handing over the straw and sticks. The 3rd piggy framed in the new home and then each child Velcro a flat cutout brick onto the framework. There were enough bricks so that each child in the audience had at least one turn.

The first piggy got straw of course. But this straw house morphed into a bouncy house, a slidy house, and a lounge pad



for piggy and, surprise!, the wolf cub. Neither recognized the other's species and they were happily playing together when a squirrel scampered into the set. It had two ears, eyes, etc and a bushy tail! When it began to steal the red apples Mama pig brought as a house warming gift, both piglet and wolf cub realized it was "Big Bad"! Of course this misconception repeated itself at each new home.

The puppets are made from brightly striped knitted "rescued" sweaters and have joints which give just the right amount of expressive movement (after much practice I'm sure), even allowing the wolf cub to alternate swinging his legs as he climbs up a ladder to the roof of the brick house.

During Q and A, after the show, the Nelsons were asked how they wrote the show. Mike explained that before writing each new show he and Valerie always discuss what the show means to them. Their interpretation of "Three Little Pigs" is that it is not about wolves eating pigs, but about making appropriate choices.

This wonderful show reminds me that we adults often can make friends with our own personal "Big Bads" and invite them in to tea and become friends. Also the play has been a soothing salve to my soul after so recently watching "Selma" and other films depicting the atrocities around MLK Jr. and the civil rights era. Thanks for reminding us that our young ones can show us the way.

Reviews by Elisheva Hart

"Can You Guess My Name? Traditional Tales Around the World" by Judy Sierra

If you like your folktales in traditional form here's a book for you. It is a collection of 15 folktales (each in 3 different versions) from all over the world, including stories that resemble "The 3 Pigs", "The Bremen Town Musicians", and "Rumpelstiltskin." Here are the categories: I'll blow your house in; Just the right friends; Can you guess my name?; I married a frog; The scary house in the big woods. (There will be a quiz....)

You could blend the various versions of one tale together. Or use the book in classrooms for studying comparative literature and/or how a story shows cultural ideas, etc. It is found at the library under J 398.2. Judy Sierra has published many, many books of stories and folklore. AND guess what! Judy was a member of our Guild for several years, a few decades ago.

"Why Frog and Snake Never Play Together" is a Nigerian story which is found in the Coretta Scott King award winning book "Beat the Story-Drum, Pum-Pum", retold and illustrated by Ashley Bryan. This story is reminiscent of Magical Moonshine Theater's version of "Three Little Pigs", with a different ending. It is "sandwiched" in between their version and the versions in Judy Sierra's book.

Young Snake-son and young Frog-son delight in playing in the mud together and look forward to doing it daily. However when Snake-son hops back home and Frog-son slithers into his home, the jig is up. Frog-son is forbidden to play with his buddy and learns of the danger to himself. Snake-son, having been instructed about the food chain, keeps coming over to play but cannot obtain admittance to his friend's home. For the rest of their lives, both languish on the opposite sides of the water, wishing they had not listened to their families' instructions and thinking how wonderful it would have been if they had just stayed friends.

New Book Review: "Ashley Bryan's Puppets: Making Something From Everything!" by Ashley Bryan, published 2014, library code - J811 Bryan. Highly recommended for teachers and "just" puppeteers who love found objects!

Ashley Bryan, storyteller and recipient of the Coretta Scott King-Virginia Hamilton Lifetime Achievement Award (plus countless other awards and recognitions), created his first puppet, a spunky, well made papier-mâché marionette named Petunia when he was 11, with his sister Ernestine, age 9, in the 1930s. Petunia graces the back book jacket flap and is the only "realistic" puppet in the book! All of his 30+ puppet creations are fabulous beings made of flotsam, beach glass, old sleeves, and other found objects. These are sustainable performing artworks, perfect for a multicultural component (or not) in any classroom. Each puppet has its professionally photographed full page portrait and is linked to a chant-poem which tells of its making and personality, based on African folklore. (Aha, a literary/writing suggestion!) The puppets seem to all be hand puppets but could quite easily be a simple rod puppet or marionette.

What this beautiful book does NOT include are any instructions on how to build these unique puppets or how to perform them. Study the photos for clues. Different approaches are needed for each puppet. The book could be used as "just" a literary addition to your classroom or studio, but I'm guessing it will lead to hands-on creations. Most of us have these bits and pieces floating in and out of our lives, here is an inspirational way to use them.

I was at the library, turned around and LO! What a Beautiful Book! I quickly called our local Petaluma indie bookstore, Copperfield's, and immediately picked up one of the 2 copies they had just received.

What are you working on? Independent Eye

Conrad Bishop & Elizabeth Fuller (The Independent Eye) have been working in puppetry since 1969, though only on the fringes of the puppetry community. "We use puppets when the story demands it, when that strange experience of dead things coming to life adds force to the human behavior that's depicted," Bishop says. Sometimes that results in short comic sketches that find their way into puppet slams; sometimes, in staging of classics: *Macbeth*, *Frankenstein*, *The Tempest*, and now *King Lear*.

Lear has been in preparation for the past year. Bishop and Fuller (as barefaced Lear and Fool) play the whole play, along with twenty puppets and Fuller's music score. One challenge is the sheer memorization of the full text; another is the dissociative identity disorder of playing and voicing characters in conflict with yourself (though ventriloquists do this readily); another is the Fool passing puppets to Lear while running sound, lights, and music from an on-stage laptop; and ultimately, the challenge is giving voice and shape to the greatest of Shakespeare's dramatic visions.



Photo from Independent Eye



Photo from Independent Eye

Four showings will preview at the Eye's Sebastopol studio on March 21-22 and 28-29, then three weekends in San Francisco at North Beach's Emerald Tablet Gallery, April 10-26. Info at <http://www.independenteye.org>. Following that, the

intent is to tour, with an East Coast tour now being booked. "We really hope to tour this piece until we croak," Fuller says, "and I hope that's still a while, though I'll be 75 in February."

Member Benefit; the Guild Offers Scholarships

Do you want to attend a puppet festival or workshop but aren't sure if you can afford it? Maybe the guild can help! Have you been a member of San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers Guild for at least two years?

Are you interested in attending a workshop or festival that is related to or can advance your work in puppetry? Well then, you would probably be interested in hearing about the SFBAPG scholarship guidelines! With just a quick visit to <http://www.sfbapg.org/membership/benefits/scholarship-guidelines/> you can soon be on your way to receiving financial support to further your study of puppetry. There you will find all of the information and forms you need to apply. The application process is simple and the Scholarship Committee is anxiously awaiting yours. So, decide where you would like to go, fill out your forms and send them in. Oh, and the 'almost' part? We only ask that you share your experience with the Guild through a newsletter article or presentation. We look forward to hearing from you soon! From The Scholarship Committee

Nick Barone - A California Original (1967 - 2014)

By Randal Metz

The families of the San Francisco Bay Area have suffered a great loss. Bay Area puppeteer Nick Barone passed away on Dec 18, after a two year battle with lung cancer. Nick was truly a renaissance puppeteer. He was skilled at many forms of theater, music, composition and puppetry. Nick built his first puppet when he was 5 years old. And once bitten by the bug, he began writing short stories and making home movies featuring his hand-made puppets. His early career and training took place back east where he lived with his family in New Jersey. While still a teenager, he immersed himself in as many art forms as he could find. And as a teenager he became known for his strong sense of scenic design and his painting skills.

Nick eventually moved to Hollywood, California, and he began painting sets for the television industry. He was also skilled at window dressing and working as an artist for displays at Industrial advertising shows. But his biggest love was puppetry. He eventually settled in San Diego and became a prominent member of the San Diego Guild of Puppetry. He was a featured performer at The Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater in Balboa Park. For almost 10 years he worked alongside various puppeteers developing his craft and sharing his own self-taught skills, particularly in creating foam moving mouth puppets. He became the Moving Mouth Puppetry Consultant for the Puppeteers of America. Nick also has served terms as President of the San Diego and San Francisco Puppetry Guilds.

In 1996, he met his wife Rose Sage at a Regional convention, and resettled in the San Francisco Bay Area where she resided. At this point he focused on his own business of Nick Barone's Puppets and began making a name for himself as one of the premier puppeteers in the Bay Area. He built puppets for film, television and live theater. One of his many challenging experiences was building an entire set of puppets for the Marin Theater Company's production of Gilles Segal's "The Puppetmaster of Lodz," for which he received critical acclaim. He has also received a Regional



Emmy for his work on Roger Mara's, Snapdragon DVD Production of "The Mousecracker."

Nick was very well known for his engaging workshops that he shared with local puppeteers. He became one of the featured artist-lecturers at Peter and Debbie Allen's yearly Puppetfest Midwest in Missouri. Nick was all about sharing a positive and making our puppet world a better place to be by sharing ideas, and forming lasting friendships with puppeteers, that in turn allowed us all to be able to call on each other for support and encouragement. His shows were original and funny. Besides designing his own mechanisms for puppets, he composed all of the original music and songs for his productions. He also manipulated his computer to record all of the voices, which he performed himself, changing the pitch and rhythms to create his characters.

On a personal note, I will miss my friend and colleague dearly. Even though he was one of my peers, I also consider him a young mentor to my own craft. He was always available to bounce ideas off of. And Nick had a wonderful way of taking your own idea, and making it better, without changing it to incorporate his way of doing things. But I think, what I will miss most of all, is the absence of the show he was creating for me to present at the Storybook Puppet Theater. A zany takeoff of "The Little Red Hen", it was to feature his dynamic style of moving mouth puppets that was sure to amaze and amuse the families that came to visit Children's Fairyland.

Nick's influence and style will shine brightly in the works of those who had the chance to share time with this talented man. He will be missed.....and remembered!

Puppetry Class Offered

Power of the Puppet in Performance: Instructor Lee Armstrong, Wednesdays, April 1-May 6, 2-4PM

Osher Lifelong Learning Center, OLLI@UC Berkeley

This theater/art based class will explore the power of the puppet, its diversity in world culture and its performance potential. It will include lecture, demonstration, video clips, discussion and "hands-on" puppetry. The class will view rare footage and discuss the works of master puppeteers. Build a hand puppet or a moving mouth (Muppet-style) puppet, create the puppet character and bring it to life. Delve into story creation. Compare stage and TV puppetry through demos and "hands-on" experience. Put it all together in a final project in order to appreciate the puppet in performance.

Lee Armstrong, TV puppeteer, started on Jim Henson's "Fraggle Rock." Lee co-owns Images In Motion, which brings ideas to life, from TV puppetry to 3D printing. Projects have included everything from "Being John Malkovich" to Baby Einstein. She has received two Regional Emmys as producer/puppeteer and numerous other awards.

More info at <https://olli.berkeley.edu/programs/courses> or Lee at images@vom.com.

2015 San Francisco Bay Area Creative Ministry Festival

Join us on April 17-18, 2015 for the Bay Area Festival! These Friday night and all day Saturday events feature workshops, performances, competitions, demonstrations, excitement, and a spiritual challenge. While the emphasis is mostly on puppetry, attendees may also choose from beginning and advanced workshops for a variety of arts including illusion, human video, dowel rods, hand mime, leadership, children's ministry, and more. The Festival will be held at Central Assembly Church in the East Bay. Plan now to attend,

visit <http://www.creativemin.com/product/ca1/spring!>

Gabriel Galdamez, Director of Create, Minister, Teach! P: [415-430-8292](tel:415-430-8292) www.CMTministries.org

Shadow Play: The Metamorphosis of Karaghiozis at Andrews Hall, Sonoma

Community Center, 276 East Napa Street, Sonoma, CA 95476 (707) 938-4626

Sunday February 15, 3pm, \$10 / \$5 Kids 12 and under

Shadow artist Leonidas Kassapides will present an unforgettable shadow play. The Metamorphosis of Karaghiozis is an adventure full of action, comedy and spectacular scenery set during the Ottoman Empire. The story follows Karaghiozis as he encounters a monster that turns humans into strange creatures. Join our hilarious hero as he cleverly solves conflict, with a dash of political satire for parents, this Presidents Day weekend.

~ Participant Registration begins January 2015 ~



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nationalpuppetryfestival2015.com

join us on facebook for updates, volunteer opportunities and more:
Puppeteers of America 2015 National Festival at UConn



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