



The official newsletter of
San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers' Guild
*Looking for updates and missed information?
Check for it at SFBAPG.ORG*

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

May 2017



The May Day parade put on in Minneapolis by Heart of the Beast Theatre is a wonderful celebration of giant puppets and community come together. SFBAPG's next meeting will include a workshop on large puppet construction by Glynn Bartlett on Sunday, June 4, starting at 12:30 in Vallejo. Details on page 2. For those who want to join in a giant puppet event, Michael and Valerie Nelson lead the Vallejo Giant Puppet Project which culminates in the 4th of July parade in Vallejo each summer. Interested? Michael & Valerie can be reached at magicalmoonshine@gmail.com or 707-363-4573.

Inside this Issue

- Next meeting June 4
- Guild ballot and elections
- Upcoming events
- New Muppet
- Puppets and disabilities
- Guild member update, Mrs. Bandersnoot and more.

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CANCELLED: THE DAY OF PUPPETRY AT SAN JOSE'S HAPPY HOLLOW THIS MAY

Regretfully, Happy Hollow Park and Zoo has had to cancel this year's puppetry guild meeting, due to flood related challenges. They look forward to next year's Day of Puppetry at Happy Hollow. To right, Happy Hollow meerkats wait out the flood in temporary quarters. ("Hey, how do you open this toilet?")



June 4 Guild Meeting, Workshop, Performance in Vallejo

Guild member "Tree" Glynn Bartlett will host the guild at his lovely Vallejo home, garden workshop, and location of Glynn's future puppet theatre for a workshop on large puppet construction, as learned while Tree was in South Africa working with Handspring Puppet Company (creators of War Horse.) The June 4 workshop will start at 12:30 pm and includes the workshop followed by a short performance (rumored to be a tiny production of *Mutiny on the Bounty* by Michael and Valerie Nelson.) The evening will culminate with a pot luck dinner and social time. A short guild meeting will include guild elections. (If you can't make it to the meeting to vote in person, a ballot is included at the end of this newsletter.) Glynn's very fun home and magical garden is located at 526 Ohio St. in Vallejo.

Potluck: Bring food to share.

Directions: **From Berkeley** direction, take Hwy 80 East and take the Sonoma Blvd./Hwy 29 exit (1st exit North of the Carquinez Bridge). Go 2.6 miles on Sonoma Blvd to Ohio and take a left and go to 526. **From Fairfield** direction: Take Hwy 80 West to Vallejo. Take the Tennessee St. Exit and go West to Sonoma Blvd. Go Left on Sonoma Blvd and then Right on Ohio. Proceed to 526 Ohio. **From Marin/Sonoma**, Take Hwy 37 East. Take the Wilson Ave. exit and at the end of the ramp go Left (South) on Wilson which become Mare Island Causeway. Turn Left on Tennessee St. at the light. Go right on Sacramento St. and the Left on Ohio to 526 Ohio.



Images, above: Left: War Horse puppet from Handspring Puppets (where Glynn went to learn about giant puppet building) Right: Tiny sailing ship from the Nelson's *Mutiny on the Bounty* toy Theatre show.

Nominations for Guild Board of Directors

The Nominating Committee is presenting three candidates (bios below) for the three Board of Director positions. The two new candidates are Peter Olson and Glynn Bartlett (Tree). The third candidate, Michael Nelson, is running for a second term.

The Board of Director positions require a three year commitment. Candidates must have been a member for at least one year.

Voting information: Each Guild member can choose up to 3 candidates for the 3 positions. There is also a place to add a write-in candidate, but this person must give their consent to being a candidate, and fulfill the two, above mentioned criteria. The results will be published in the July newsletter.

Please find your ballot and more information at the end of this newsletter.

We thank these candidates for their willingness to support the art of puppetry in the Bay Area!

Submitted by the Nominating Committee
Camilla Henneman
Lee Armstrong
Jesse Vail

A NEW MUPPET IS 'BORN'

by Elisheva Hart (photo shows autistic Julia Muppet with puppeteer Stacey Gordon whose son also is autistic.)

Sesame Street debuts its first new Muppet character since the arrival of Abby Cadabby in 2006! This news flashed into my ears from NPR as I switched on my radio on April 10th, 2017. She, a recurring character, is named Julia and has autism. Another character [Big Bird] wants to interact with her but Julia doesn't answer because, as the adult human character informs Big Bird, "She's focusing on her painting." [Typical autistic behavior].

The radio commentator concludes his brief announcement by saying that his own children were appropriately young when Muppets in wheel chairs were first introduced on Sesame Street. They watched intently. After the program they told their Dad that the Muppets' wheelchairs were not cool-like his was!

"THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING IS IN THE EATING" [...which means that something has to be experienced in order to prove how good it is.]

The comment about the children's dad illustrates 2 of the reasons for including Muppets-or people-with disabilities in performance, books, schools, and so forth: relevance and exposure. Which can lead to acceptance, inclusion, integration, self identification and other great values such as the realization that "everyone is different" and "that's OK."



Sesame Street's web sites inform us that 1 in 68 children in the USA today are diagnosed somewhere on the autism spectrum. This is why they created the character of Julia. For more than 5 years they consulted with 250 organizations and experts, with extraordinary responses from the autism community. Therefore among other traits, Julia hates dirty hands and loud noise and uses calming deep breaths to steady herself. She is the only Muppet to appear on "60 Minutes!"

You Go Girl!

"Look What I CAN Do!"

a MORE PROOF-OF-THE-PUDDING" article by Elisheva.

The phone rang. "I need your help, my friend", cajoled Ruthmarie Arguello-Sheehan, a professional storyteller, Fellow Guilder and my frequent performing partner (back in the day.)

"I've written a puppet play, "Look What I CAN Do!" and want you to build the puppets and perform the show with me. I'll be out front as usual, as the introducer and storyteller." (Ruthmarie had a severe auto accident several years before this, affecting her spine. She had rehabilitated herself but never again could hold her hands up in front or over head for more than a few minutes at a time.) This was mid-1970s. Mainstreaming children with disabilities and special needs into regular classrooms-along side of other children-was now a federal mandate for public education.

Ruthmarie continued. "My 30 something friend, Steve, has Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and uses a wheel chair. Despite not knowing children very well, he has gotten a grant here in Santa Cruz County to visit upper age elementary school classrooms to "break the ice" about disabilities. Theoretically the children who are already enrolled in school would then be able to ask questions of him and also be prepared for their mainstreamed classmates.

"Trouble is, the kids will not talk to Steve. Or look at him! Our culture has taught them, "DON'T STARE AT THAT POOR PERSON/ AT THAT FREAK/ NO! DO NOT ASK QUESTIONS/ OR POINT! (this one is valid beyond toddler age) YOU'LL JUST MAKE HER SELFCONSCIOUS!"

Understandably a very discouraged Steve thus subcontracted Ruthmarie and me to perform the "Look What I CAN Do" hand puppet show as the opening act at each school he visited. We were to warm up the audience before the main act, which was children chatting with him in his wheelchair began.

So we did it. The puppet star was "Wheeler", a school boy with a wheel chair. And each of the other puppets also had a disability! One was deaf; another had vision problems; their teacher had a broken arm from trying to skate board (a temporary disability); and one student had a hidden disability....extreme hay fever + asthma.

Even the surrounding neighborhood helped-this was the era of jackhammering sidewalks at street corners to build ramps-good for everyone with mobility problems plus people with baby strollers, shopping carts, rolling suitcases, etc. A real public service available for many, many needs. We called attention to this in the script, especially in areas where we could hear this outdoor renovation from the school.

We performed in classrooms-instead of larger assembly halls-for the best and most intimate communication. This scripted play was performed live [not taped]-a must in this important setting. Then the puppets could "go with the flow" of the audience members' reactions, giving us cues in regards to timing, interests, and other children-created-signals incoming on our Puppeteer Radar.

The results were amazing! Our puppet show introduced the concept of people with disabilities and that they were ok to look and smile at, and say "Hi" to! Having been given this permission, now every one of the after-show's Q & A session with Steve were sprightly and often ran over into recess or lunch! The kids were so curious.

Want to know what 2 questions were immediately asked of Steve? "Can you drive a car?" and "How do you go to the bathroom?" Also the kids, just having grown out of being "little guys", could relate to Steve's woes because-while using his wheelchair-his eyes were at 'belt buckle and rear end level.' Kids giggled their acknowledgement of this view.

The US Congress enacted, in 1975, the Education for all Handicapped Children Act (EHA). Before this legislation passed, public schools educated only 1 out of 5 children with disabilities. Many of the other children were placed in state institutions for the deaf, and ones for those with mental retardation. Some of the developmentally disabled seniors I currently work with suffered this route as children.

Ruthmarie Arguello-Sheehan passed away last year after a long productive life as storyteller, puppeteer, and advocate for people who have disabilities.



Photo from internet: Puppets have a strong history of helping introduce the concept of disabilities to children.

Do You Have A Guild “Evolution” T-shirt? A message from its designer:

Hi Lee, Michael, and Valerie,

I wanted to message you regarding the Evolution of Puppetry Tshirt! I have launched a Booster campaign selling the design to raise money to purchase sound equipment for my new company called Good Hearted Entertainment, so can tour my literacy based puppet show called WORD PLAY.

Link to fb page: <https://www.facebook.com/Good-Hearted-Entertainment-1148755855142785/>

Since we had such a helpful and friendly exchange sharing this design last year, I hoped you could share the link with your guild for anyone who is interested in purchasing a shirt. I'm also offering women's designs, Tank tops, Hoodies and new colors - Heather red, and purple!

Only 8 more days to order yours! Link:

<https://www.booster.com/evolutionofpuppetry> (Editor's note: this is not the actual guild version of the T-shirt but has the evolution design without guild name/info.)

Thanks! Honey Goodenough

Hand to God Guild Event being organized

Sacramento's B Street Theatre is producing “Hand to God” in June and July. This is the same show some of you saw at the Berkley Rep Theatre last month. B Street

**HAND
TO
GOD**
→ A NEW AMERICAN PLAY



Theatre offers group discounts for groups of 10 or more.

Here's what Lee Armstrong wrote about "Hand to God" previously.

It's a dark comedy which received five [Tony Award](#) nominations, including Best New Play. However, check out <http://www.playbill.com/video/highlights-from-hand-to-god-off-broadway-com-224750>, as this humor will not appeal to everyone.

"Be not deceived: The devil is lurking at the Christian Puppet Ministry in Cypress, Texas. And his name is...Tyrone. He may look like an innocent sock puppet, but when he infiltrates the angst-ridden church youth group and takes possession of Jason's arm, well, all hell breaks loose. Spectacularly foul-mouthed and wickedly scandalous, Tyrone shocks the congregation with his outrageous insinuations, exposing their deepest secrets—and teaching us all about love, grief, and what it means to be human. This fast-paced irreverent comedy is "darkly delightful," New York Times.

*If you are interested in attending as a group (perhaps going out for dinner afterwards), please let me know by **May 15!** B Street Theatre is a small, intimate theatre which sells out quickly. Our guild performance will be Sunday, June 25 at 2pm. Tickets will be \$23 each if we have enough to get the group rate for the Sunday matinee. Other performances are:*

Tuesdays 6:30pm

Wednesdays 2pm and 6:30pm

Thursdays, Friday 8 pm

Saturdays 5pm and 9pm

Sundays 2pm

*The run is from June 10-July 23. Single tickets can be purchased on-line: <https://bstreettheatre.org/buy-tickets/current-upcoming-shows/> **Please send your request to be included in the group** to me (Olivia Huff) at ohuff@dcn.org or call [916-484-0606](tel:916-484-0606). You will need to pay me directly if we get enough people.*

Member Update from Kennedy Puppets

Kennedy Puppets has an upcoming puppet show for up to 1000 people at Loma Vista Farm in Vallejo, California, on 5/20/2017 from 11-3pm. Come on by and say hi. We would love to see you.

Below are some of the puppets that we made for children at Easter.



Celebrating Lou Harrison Centennial

A Concert Reading with Shadows

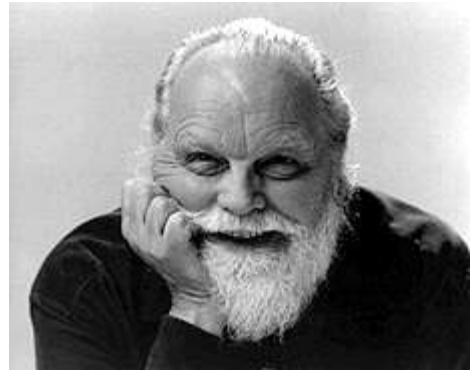
~ CINNA: THE CLEMENCY OF AUGUSTUS ~

by Pierre Corneille

with "Cinna" or "Suite for Tack Piano"

Composed by Lou Harrison, performed by Linda Burman-Hall

Shadows by Larry Reed & ShadowLight Productions



PERFORMING IN SANTA CRUZ & SAN FRANCISCO

Sunday, May 14 at 7:00 PM

Night Muse Evening Concert by New Music Works

Peace United Church of Christ

900 High Street Santa Cruz, CA 95060

TICKETS: \$23 General, \$20 Students/Seniors

www.newmusicworks.org (advance ticket discounts online)



Thursday, May 18 at 8pm

MicroFest North

Center for New Music

55 Taylor Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

TICKETS: \$25 General, \$18 Members

<http://centerfornewmusic.com/calendar/microfest-north-a-concert-with-shadows/>

A Collaboration with Gamelan Sekar Jaya ~ In Visible Light ~

Balinese artists Dewa Berata and Emiko Saraswati Susilo work together with Larry Reed to lead 35 performers in a collaboration that is culturally specific yet globally resonant—a work that seeks a path to heal the wounds of a fractured humanity.

Friday, June 2 at 8:00 PM

&

Saturday, June 3 at 2:00 PM



Presented by The San Francisco International Arts Festival

Fort Mason Center for the Arts

Cowell Theater

2 Marina Blvd, San Francisco, CA 94123

TICKETS: \$25 General, \$4 off cover price for Students/Seniors

www.sfiaf.org/gamelan_sekar_jaya



Dear Mrs. Bandersnoot,

I am a hand puppet who had the leading role in a show performed by my Builder in the 1980's. My maker calls me Buster, but I had the role of the Prince in Sleeping Beauty. I have also played a number of other roles and had different costumes to accommodate my "artistic range."

For the last fifteen years or so however, I have been kept in a suitcase along with a number of other cast members and, well, it is very quiet and boring. I have been going through an existential crisis, with too much time on my little felt hands. Who AM I? Why do I exist? IS this all there is to life as a puppet? Why has my Maker forsaken me? Please HELP!

Waiting in the Dark

Dear Waiting in the Dark,

Every Maker hopes that their creation will get the opportunity to perform and have a life of their own. You have not been forsaken. Your maker has just probably gone on to

another project as Makers do. That you are in a suitcase suggests that you are being kept for some future purpose: another performance, a retrospective display of your Maker's career, or possibly for a future time when your Maker will get you out to perform for the Maker's grandchildren; a high honor indeed.

You did not mention what condition you find yourself in or what you are made of. This can affect your future work. Perhaps your Maker is just trying to find time to give you a refreshing Refurb. Be patient. Who knows? Someday you might find yourself in the Smithsonian as a representative of your Maker's work! (My personal dream!) Relax in the suitcase among friends and don't worry. Even if you find yourself out on eBay eventually, some eager collector will see your worth and value you.

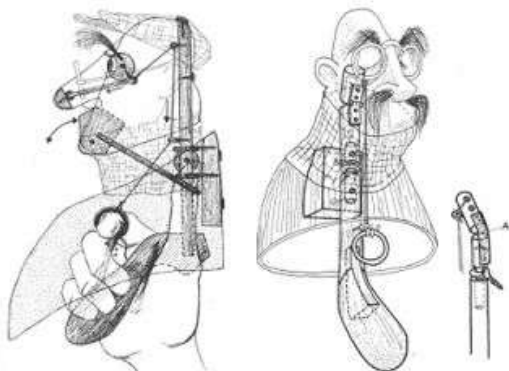
Remember, always, that you are and forever will be a wonderful work of Art.

Best wishes, Mrs. Bandersnoot

To submit a question to Mrs. Bandersnoot, please email Mary Nagler mary.nagler@gmail.com. (Mrs. Bandersnoot lives with Mary and she will relay the message!) Or, give Mary a call (707) 303 0093

Next Forbidden Puppet Cabaret theme: Summer of Love (still going after 50 years!)

Do you have a short, adult oriented puppet act (maybe with a tie in to Summer of Love or maybe not?) Unconfirmed date possibility is June 24 in Vallejo. Want to keep informed? Contact Michael and Valerie at magicalmoonshine@gmail.com.



Wanted: Guild members to build puppet mechanisms for a hands-on mech exhibit for the guild.

Are you handy with building? Want to explore and share some new puppet movement ideas and learn a bit while doing so? We are looking to create a library of naked puppet mechanisms that can be brought to guild meetings to share ideas. Contact Michael at magicalmoonshine@gmail.com if you would like to join in the fun and build a few mechs. We can supply plans, drawings, etc., or you might have your own.

GUILD ELECTIONS FOR SFBAPG BOARD OFFICIAL BALLOT INSTRUCTIONS (note, below the ballot are candidate statements)

Election of 2017 board members for the San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers Guild. Lee Armstrong is the election teller. You may send Lee EITHER a hardcopy ballot or an email ballot. Please email your ballot by June 1 or mail your ballot by May 25th. Email to images@vom.com, or send to Lee Armstrong at 720 Ladera Drive, Sonoma, CA 95476 .

How to vote via hardcopy:

- (1) Each single adult or youth member is entitled to vote for up to three candidates. Mark the ballot below or create a facsimile.
- (2) Each family or couple membership is entitled to send in 2 ballots. Copy the ballot below or create a facsimile and mark TWO ballots.
- (3) Put the ballot(s) in an envelope addressed to Lee Armstrong, Lee Armstrong at 720 Ladera Drive, Sonoma, CA 95476
- (4) Put YOUR NAME on the envelope -- in the return address.
- (5) Postmark the envelope on or before May 25.

How to vote via email:

- (1) In the subject line, type YOUR NAME and "SFBAPG Ballot" (i.e. "Kermit the Frog -- SFBAPG Ballot").
- (2) In the body of your email, type the names of the candidates you want to vote for.
- (3) Send your email images@vom.com on or before June 1.

[] Glynn "Tree" Bartlett [] Peter Olson [] Michael Nelson [] (write in candidate)_____

For write-in candidate, make sure you have their permission before volunteering them for this position.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS-

Glynn Bartlett

My name is Glynn Bartlett. Some of my friends and many in the puppet guild know me as Tree. I am running for the board of the San Francisco Bay Area Puppet Guild. I have a passion for puppetry. I've loved puppets ever since I was a kid. I am fascinated with the idea that these otherwise inanimate objects in the hands of a skilled puppeteer can transport and transform an audience to another realm. A realm where magic, wonder, and a world of imagined possibilities can coexist for both children and adults. I believe puppetry taps into that place in the heart where the inner child exists in all of us no matter how old we are. I think that is where the true power of the puppet exist. I am on a journey to see where puppets can take me and my community. To learn together, play together and create a better world together through this marvelous art form. This is the reason I joined the guild in the first place, to be able to hang out with a bunch of folks who love puppets as much as I do. I hope to take this passion to the guild as a board member.



I currently work at UC Berkeley in the Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies Department. I have worked in the world of professional theater primarily as a scenic artist most of my life post college. In college I studied to be a scenic designer and have done a bit of scenic design professionally but have primarily painted scenery for other theaters and designers. Currently I get to work with the amazing students at UC Berkeley helping to educate and create theater as the staff scenic artist. I truly love creating theater but my first love was and remains puppetry. It's the art form that originally propelled me towards theater. Still to this day, my interest in puppetry has persisted yet I find all of my theater experience now informs and has had benefit and value, influencing my current work as a puppet creator.

Michael Nelson

Candidate Statement: I have been in the guild a pretty long time. I have learned a lot and gained a lot from guild membership. One of the best ways to benefit from guild membership is to be involved as a volunteer, committee member, or board member. The board members and their contact info are all listed at the beginning of this newsletter. Contact any one of them and join in the fun. Write stuff for the newsletter! Share what you know and are doing or learning at guild meetings and by being a workshop leader! Watch our calendar and attend puppet shows, then write about them for the rest of the membership...share what you see and learn! You, the members, are the heart of the guild. Your love of puppetry spreads beyond our members and to the greater community, keeping this very old art form alive and vibrant!



Peter Olson

Hi. This is Peter Olson, of Oakland. As a graduating senior I told my high school newspaper that I aspired to becoming a puppeteer. Instead, I studied dance, organic agriculture and movements for social justice. But



through it all, I kept putting eyes on things and letting them talk, whether in the kitchen, with a gaggle of kids, or at a demonstration. Six years ago I got more formal and co-founded "Up A Tree Puppetry" with my partner Ilan Vitemberg. I enjoy building all sorts of stuff, including sets and puppets, creating music, jumping around, playing, working, growing food, and helping others to have fun and to participate in creation and beauty. I also work as a dance movement therapist in the area of mental health.

For more calendar listings, check out the guild calendar at <http://www.sfbapg.org/events/>

If you have calendar events to be listed, please send them to events@sfbapg.org and send your newsletter items to newsletter@sfbapg.org