



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

January 2020



YOU'RE INVITED!
65TH ANNIVERSARY GUILD HOLIDAY PARTY
SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 3-7 PM IN SAN RAFAEL

Yes, dear friends...Our puppet guild is 65 years old. That's the age that humans can go on Medicare, but our 65 year old guild is going stronger than ever with a robust, healthy membership and wonderful events throughout the year and throughout the region. Come join us as we ring in 2020 with our Blue Sapphire Anniversary Party on January 26. Much more information below in this newsletter.

See you there!

Making your plans to go to the big 65th guild bash this month? Don't forget to renew your membership which expired December 31 (unless you already renewed) so you can walk down the red carpet as a full fledged guild member!

How to renew? EASY! Go to <http://www.sfbapg.org/membership/join/> and follow the instructions. Thank you so much!

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Two Shows By Famous Puppeteers, Puppet Activities & Prizes at our 65th Anniversary Guild Holiday Celebration--Sun., Jan 26, San Rafael area.

Hear-Ye all Puppet Enthusiasts!

Please mark your calendars for the SFBAPG 65th Anniversary celebration of the Holidays and New Year. You may ask why January. It's because many puppeteers have a very busy December.

WHEN and WHERE is this shindig supposed to occur?!

Sunday, Jan 26th from 3-7:30 pm

Christ Presbyterian Church, 620 Del Ganado Road in beautiful Terra Linda (San Rafael area) California!

INVITE YOUR FRIENDS (AND WIN PRIZES)!

This festive party is perfect for inviting family (including children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and distant cousins) and friends. You don't need to be a member to attend! There will be great entertainment and fun activities for all ages in a gracious setting.

It's also the perfect time to reach out to that teacher, librarian or teen that has shown an interest in this art form. Let's share our puppet enthusiasm.

There will be prizes for...

- the member who invites (and gets the most people to come) to the Party
- the person (member, or not) traveling the furthest distance to the Party
- raffle for librarians and teachers who attend
- free membership for any middle, high school or junior college who attends and would like a year-long online membership
- people who become members at the Party & more!

Prizes will feature a variety of beautiful Folkmanis Puppets and other puppet-related items.

FEATURED PERFORMERS

Magical Moonshine Theatre (MMT) will present "the Gunnywolf". MMT has performed in 18 countries in 8 different languages. MMT is the recipient of 3 UNIMA-USA Certificates of Excellence and other awards including the Golden Apple Award for Best Children's Play at the World Puppet Carnival in Kazakhstan!

"The Gunnywolf" Little Rabbit goes into the forest to pick flowers even after her mother tells her not to. There she meets the Gunnywolf who wants her to sing him to sleep... This musical show is presented with Bohemian style marionettes on a table top stage. Recommended for ages 3-103 and up. MMT will offer a show and tell after their presentation.



Camilla Henneman will present “Anansi Tales.” Camilla is a retired educator and film special effects artist. Her films include: Ghostbusters 2, Fight Club, Gorillas in the Mist, Harry and the Hendersons, Cocoon, George of the Jungle, Childsplay and others.

“**Anansi Tales**” is the premier performance of Camilla Henneman’s story of the African trickster spider, Anansi. The stage is made as a pop-up book, inspired by Monica Leo’s pop up stage workshop at the 2018 National Festival. The puppets are needle-felted rod puppets and Bohemian style marionettes.

A Very Loose Schedule (it’s a party after-all)!

2:00 Setup, decorate a table, setup puppet display, etc.

3:00 **Start of Party** - Meet & greet plus puppet activities

3:30 Show “**The Gunnywolf**” by Magical Moonshine Theater

4:15 Puppeteer Scavenger Hunt

4:30 Short Guild meeting

5ish Potluck supper

6ish Show “**Anansi Tales**” by Camilla Henneman

6:45 Slam-Potpourri/Raffle Winners

7:15ish Cleanup



ADOPT A TABLE & TRIM THE ROOM

Individuals and companies are invited to host and adopt a dining table. Table cloth will be provided. Bring in any decorations to make it a wonderful table to dine at. You can host the 4th of July table, the Halloween table, etc. There will be prizes for participation, but the greatest prize of all is knowing that you’re lending your artistry to make the holiday party festive!

To adopt a table, contact Ilene Kennedy at 707 731-3232 or

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0A44ACAE2AA7F49-65th> Also, holiday decorations for the room will be greatly appreciated. Doors open at 3:00, so bring in some decorations at 2:30 (no nails please) to trim the room. At the end you just take your decorations down and take them home.

POTLUCK SUPPER

Please your favorite dish/beverage to share with others. Appetizers, salads, deserts and of course main courses are always appreciated. Microwave and refrigerator available. Dinnerware will be provided.

SLAM/POTPOURRI

Do you have a short, family-friendly puppet piece, up to 5 minutes, that you’d like to perform? We challenge all Crankie workshop participants (Oct. workshop) to bring a vignette! Or perhaps you did a piece somewhere else and would like to polish and perform again? Sign up by contacting Judy Roberto be_artsy@hotmail.com. If you’d like a call back, please include your phone #.

PUPPET DISPLAY

Do you have a puppet that you've made, that you'd like to display? A table will be provided for an informal puppet exhibit, so bring your puppet (on a stand, if needed) and share your puppet(s) with others.

RAFFLE

Puppet items, useful and unique are raffled off, with proceeds going to the Founder's Scholarship Fund. This fund helps members attend workshops and festivals. If you have a raffle item you'd like to donate, please contact Valerie Nelson at magicalmoonshine@gmail.com and put Raffle in the subject line or visit Sign Up Genius, <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0A44ACAE2AA7F49-65th>.

GUILD LIBRARY

The Guild library has hundreds of books covering a variety of topics. Books & DVDs will be available for checkout at the meeting to people that have been members for at least 6 months. Are you looking for books or DVD on a particular topic? Check out the booklist at <http://www.sfbapg.org/resources/>. If you want the Guild Librarian, Lee Armstrong to bring a particular book or topic, email her at sfbapglibrary@gmail.com or call 707 738-5906.

VOLUNTEERS

Please consider lending a hand. You can see what needs to be done and sign up at Sign Up Genius, <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0A44ACAE2AA7F49-65th> or contact Lee Armstrong at images@vom.com or call/text at 707 738-5906.

Directions to the Christ Presbyterian Church at 620 Del Ganado Rd

From 101 North, just past the Civic Center exit, San Rafael or 101 South, just past Lucas Drive exit
Take exit 455, Terra Linda/Freitas Parkway, West, toward Terra Linda
Merge onto Manuel T Freitas Pkwy, 1.2 mile
Turn right at Del Ganado Rd, 203 ft. Lots of Parking.

Sea Creatures Challenge Puppeteer's Skillset

Lee Armstrong, Images In Motion *(editor's note: while it does not relate directly to this article, Lee (and Kamela) were kind enough to send the guild a new year's card which is shared with you to the right!)*

One of our most challenging projects this year combined our busy 3D printing business with fabric sculpture. An aquarium (which cannot be named) decided that creating realistic large scale educational models of sea creatures might best be accomplished

by puppeteers. Their initial search brought up the SF Puppet Guild and from there, to Images in Motion. They needed 7 prototypes of an urchin, turban snail, bat star, brittle star, hermit crab, abalone and sea cucumber, approx. 1 foot in length, then 4 copies of each.



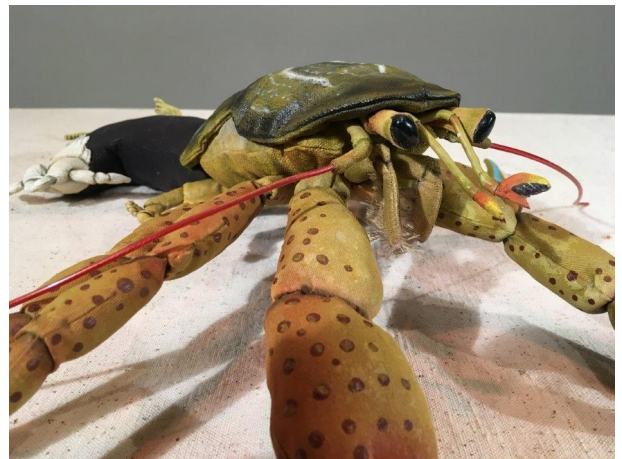
Our team of builders started the project in June. Kamela Portuges-Robbins (Guild member) & Kieron Robbins headed up the 3D print, casting, painting and sculpted details. The large shells were 3d printed on our gypsum printers which do fine detail work, then molded and cast in plastic resin for durability. Kamela used a combination of paint and airbrush to finish the shells. The abalone shells were iridescent beauties. Urchin spines and mouths were sculpted, molded, cast and painted. Brittle stars were 3D modeled, then printed and painstakingly assembled. At a later date we did small replica urchins and printed small spines on our acrylic printer.



Guild member Mary Nagler flew down from Portland to supervise the fabric part of the work.

"It was a major challenge to research the various creatures, determine how to pattern their squishy parts, rendering them both realistic and building them to be durable. One example is the Bat star, whose extendable stomach is a beautiful, delicate, translucent structure that needed to tuck all the way into the body and yet be tough enough to be pulled out and pushed back in hundreds of times by inquisitive children's fingers!"

Mary patterned out the prototypes and was joined by Nao Kobayashi (Guild member) Adie and Jill Valvadis in sewing these aquatic marvels. Thousands of tentacles, antennae and spines later, 35 giant models were completed just in time for the start of the school year. We all celebrated with a tour of the aquarium to admire the beauty of the marine life.



This week, we'll post more photos of these works on our FB page, www.facebook.com/ImagesinMotionMedia.



The team visits the aquarium

Tis the Season to Clear the Way for Our New Year! WOW, 2020....Here are 2 Previously Unwritten & not Submitted Reviews, by Elisheva Hart

FORBIDDEN PUPPET CABARET'S "NIGHT OF THE LIVING PUPPET", Saturday, November 2, 2019, at Bay Area Stage, Vallejo.

PG&E almost put the kibosh on this super amazing event. THE QUESTION-BIG TIME WAS---would there be energy (of the electrical persuasion) available on Saturday night? Mike and Valerie Nelson-producers-and the other entertainers were holding their breaths...if only the winds stopped...Ta ta!.an almost last minute save of our favorite Puppet Cabaret! However, if you didn't know the angst, you couldn't detect it from the performance. Troopers, one and all.

We had fiddle and percussive by Jim and Jan Bartz of the LimberJim Bartz Band for audience seating music, plus their own set later-with spookiness floating in and out with the rhythm of their instruments.

Mike and Val, clad in glamorous tux and slinky gown 'bib puppets', duetted to that oldie, "I Get a Kick Out of You". (By Cole Porter-composed for the 1934 Broadway musical, "Anything Goes.") Their act was presented with very naughty adult quips, which urged the audience to produce much raucous laughter.



Kevin Menegus's "Fratello Marionettes" included a gigantic lemon day-glo spider which strolled across the stage, and a green skinned local lad carrying his own "Wild Thing" head in his outstretched hands -also across the stage!



Warren Peace, the dynamic dog poet (accompanied by his pet human, Brian Narelle) dramatically recited crowd pleasing poetry. During the traditional Q&A part of their program, a very low sultry female voice from the audience cooed, "Who's a good dog?"

In answer, Brian wisely used very subtle manipulation of Warren's head, paws and eyes-we could "see" his pleased doggy rosy-hued embarrassment as our poet drew slightly backwards.

Then, just as subtly he peered forwards to check for his adoring audience member. (A less experienced manipulator might have flung Warren to and fro in his joy. This was a good reminder to the puppeteers in the audience that often less is indeed more.)

Shannon O'Hare, who actually LIVED inside Oakland's Children's Fairyland as a child, presented a new act, "Snarky the Owl" (who lives in a paper tree!) and dispenses his owlish wisdom.

Nixon, with the aid of Mike, made a brief spooky visit from the Beyond and "answered" political questions, - as if.... [this were possible.]

-INTERMISSION-

Val did a stint as a mind-reader, wearing a very appropriately long and puffy gown, which reminds me of the Victorian era. She answered questions on the cards-rejecting most of them. So, alas, we never found solutions for Politics, PG&E, Owlsh Wisdom, or exactly Who IS a Good Dog?

Bernie Beauchamp from Reno entered with a marionette beyond imagination. A gigantic Gingerbread person shaped by strings of Christmas Tree lights performing such a varied dance routine that the puppet seemed to never repeat any of its moves!

Bernie ended his Moments of Glory by bringing in another wild dance-full of color and flash-so amazing that I cannot describe it! Sorry. My advice therefore: be sure to get tickets to ALL the Cabarets and see everything for yourselves.

To sober us up and tune us into the potential political pitfalls which come on like a pit full of evil viruses, The Independent Eye (Elizabeth Fuller and Conrad Bishop) performed a still relevant piece which they wrote years ago, "KILL THE JONES". A masterpiece of persuasion which was frightfully scary, as well as hilarious.

Magical Moonshine Theater, Mike and Val, presented their new musical crankie shadow pieces "The Errant Apprentice" and "So Far, So Good". Val did the puppets and sang a little from behind the screen while Mike played and sang lead on both songs. Our December, 2019 issue of SFBAPG NEWSLETTER, top of page 7, has a more expanded description of this presentation which was also performed at the recent Nick Barone Crankie Workshop.



As per the Cabaret Tradition, before the acts and at intermission, the audience had an open invitation to be creative and build an easy puppet. This time around the puppets were simple shadow puppets.

And something new was added! Writing Limericks! These were, if desired, acted out by the puppets during the Puppet Parade Opportunity, which is the Cabaret's traditional closing event. The newly created puppets, many manipulated by newly created puppeteers, cross on stage in front of a real audience!

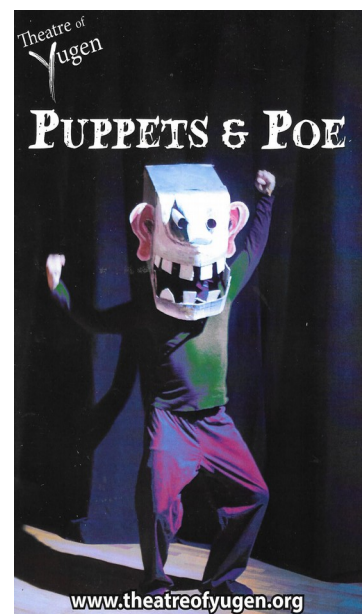
Life doesn't get much better than this!

A final round of applause, exit audience.... Puppeteers, puppets, dog, reporter, and techies pack up for now....Huzzah! Our fortune teller clearly foresees many, many Cabarets in the Future! Stay tuned

REVIEW OF "PUPPETS & POE", PRESENTED BY SAN FRANCISCO'S THEATRE OF YUGEN, OCT. 24, 2019.

Pretend you never read or have seen performances (live, film, stage, etc.) of "Alice in Wonderland" and/or "Alice Through the Looking Glass." Then suddenly as an adult, you do! "Weird, strange, crazy mixed up," you might think or exclaim!

Take that feeling and double it, head down that Rabbit Hole into the Dark Side, and it might come close to what I felt at this performance. Although the advance promotion claims that "Puppets and Poe" includes references, and hints to Edgar Allan Poe's "Telltale Heart", "The Bells", "Annabelle Lee", and more, I'm not sure I knowingly experienced them..... EXCEPT-----



---- "The Raven" (published in 1845, bringing Poe worldwide fame) was the only reference to his work I could for sure identify through either sight or text. The Raven actor entered walking on his knees, draped with a dark, drab, ashy colored shawl, and wearing a mask with a huge hinged yellow beak which was manipulated with "perfect" lip- err - beak sync. Many puppeteers would be envious of the skill.

[Q. Did Poe, an American, have any influence on Lewis Carroll, the British author of "Alice in Wonderland", which was published in 1855-a mere 10 years after "The Raven"?



[Not vice versa because Poe was in his grave by the time "Alice..." was published.] They did indeed somewhat overlap in their lifetimes-Poe, 1809-1849 and Carroll, 1832-1898.

Much of Poe's work is extremely macabre. Carroll's work, on the other hand, can be strange, with more than a hint of macabre-lite. However The Red Queen was vicious, the Dutchess' Baby was beaten when he sneezes, the Dormouse

stuffed head down into the tea pot.....We'll never know for sure.]

The statements below are from "Recipe For The Macabre" part of promo emails, and from "Director's Note" written by Shannon R. Davis, in the "Puppets and Poe" Program. We have (listed below) some backstory info about the production. These statements undoubtedly echo their Mission Statement. [Q. How many of us Guilders have developed one? and have we set Intentions (on a mini-scale) for each play we develop, demonstrations of puppets, and classes we teach?]

> Why Poe? " Because he uses familiar/universal experiences especially love and death, which = this revue [performance], inspired by Poe."

>Why puppets? "The juxtaposition of 'created body' versus 'physical body' illuminates delicate nuances in Poe's work...blah blah blah, but really "why the hell not?"...

>Who are the performers? "Circus folk, dancers, musicians, actors, poets, and writers = a unique mix..[oops, no puppeteers??]...Theatre of Yugen's signature physicality, [is] further emphasized by Bread and Puppets-style full body puppetry."

>Post-consumer material. "It is our earth responsibility to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Not only do we recycle Poe's words, we recycled his ideas, and made them new again-and added our own. We dug through dumpsters to find cardboard.....We scoured all of the local thrift stores and scrap shops to find about 98% of what you'll see here today. The other 2 % is hot glue, duct tape, and caramel macciato and hot glue...."

Theatre of Yugen is consummately professional in their work. I took no photos. No opportunity. No one to ask permission of. All performers and personal kept in basic characters every moment before, during and after the audience materialized..until we were no more an audience, and passed into the dark of night.

In the beginning, we audience just sat on raked seats staring down at strangely dressed people and other unknown characters who drifted or scurried in and out of the playing area. A HUGE book was brought in and placed center stage on a broken music stand: " DON'T TOUCH THE BOOK" was shrieked at all players coming and going. Then pointing at the audience, "Don't let HIM touch the book"-then exits. More strange box-head beings enter...one licks the top of the book with a huge tongue. The book is "The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe" of course.

The staging area is quite wide and deep. And mostly bare, with a few varying props and set pieces appearing and disappearing as needed. The only 2 permanent fixtures are similar in design and appearance. They are each located at the back corners of the stage. They are similar in height and width to free standing hand puppet stages. Uniquely, these



stages remind me of ancient pueblos composed of brightly painted box houses stacked on top of each other-sort of Victorian or of Queen Anne vintage. We have to wait and see if they are stages for hand puppets! Or not!! [Since most of the skits were done by people wearing masks or boxes made into masks, I will review the one using more recognizable puppets, mostly made of, among other thingsSOCKS!]

Yes, the 2 "pueblos" were indeed puppet theaters, and became the back side of a city courtyard. A hand puppet king- with feathers and a crown (sitting center stage)- was judging complaints from other puppets. There was a commercial kid's fuzzy alligator, and socks decorated with button eyes and scarves, etc.

A decision was made. And contested. It did not please everyone including the puppet looky loos in the "courtyard and the puppets dangling out of the "pueblos" windows. They all began expressing their opinions and quarreling loudly * The program for this event listed 6 performers.* What a wealth of actors for this scene, which was immaculately directed and rehearsed. It was totally controlled chaos and fun to watch the entrances and exits of several puppets at once. Very Punch and Judy-esque.

Indeed the whole evening had a "Well, Toto, we're not in Kansas any more" feeling-even during the Intermission. Then we were practically herded outside since there was no room to hang out in the lobby, and the staging needed re-adjusting. Some of the actors watched over us as the night was suitably dark and Harrison Street eerily empty SUDDENLY--A woman (related to the theater... or not?) was loudly shouting at the doorway of a closed business across the street. She then noisily worked her way down the slight hill towards us...and disappeared out of view. I asked someone what language she was using."Spanish," was the answer. It did not sound like Spanish to my ears!!

SUDDENLY a heavy set middle aged man in a wheelchair zoomed by us on the sidewalk-at top speed - down the hill and out of sight around the corner--! We all held our breaths, worrying he must topple ass over teakettle. He didn't. In retrospect I feel these 2 were also part of the entertainment.

I would have liked seeing the whole performance again, but only after doing a little research about the literature used. At least on line, or-the (gulp) vanished Cliff Notes · Or Real Books! Attending on a Thursday night, we found there was a curtain time RUSH price of \$8-to fill empty seats-instead of \$20, but we live in the North Bay, too far away to be whimsical about tickets!

From Guild Member Nao, an update:

I have been bulding finger puppets this winter, and thought it might be fun to share images with guild. It's a tiny mixed media finger puppet (yes, still puppetable) on your finger.

wishing happy holidays and a new year!

Nao

www.naopuppet.com

www.NunoZoo.com



From Kennedy Puppets, an Update:

Kennedy Puppets has been busy. We made 352 puppets for two groups. One group got 297 puppets and then the second group got 55. These puppets are gifts for children who didn't have anything for Christmas or who wouldn't have received anything if I hadn't given them a new puppet friend. From what I've been told the puppets were very huge hit with all the kids and the parents! It made me feel really good to know that I'm making 352 children's day happy and that they have a new friend to be with now. Besides making the 352 puppets. I also collected 30 puppets that added to my puppets to go to the children. I want to tell the people who donated the puppets thank you so very much. They were a very big help and the children love them. Also



for anybody who wants to donate, I'm starting for next next year now and I could really use the puppets so please feel free to donate to me to help with my cause. Your donation will really help a lot . You can make a child happy and give them a chance to become a puppeteer as well. They can put on shows for their families and, who knows, possibly us someday...

Student Puppet Exhibit at UCSC



I just finished teaching Jim Henson and the Art of the Muppets this fall quarter at UCSC. I had 300 students explore Jim's work and his contributions to national and world puppetry. Most of the 300 students that take the course are science majors who had grown up on *Sesame Street*, the Muppet movies and the cult classics, *The Dark Crystal* and *Labyrinth*. This year I was able to add a comparison of the original *Dark Crystal* to the new *Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance*, co-produced by The Jim Henson Company and Netflix.

Although this is a large lecture class, each student completes a creative project, either a short puppet video, or performance, or building a puppet. About 200 students made puppets this year. Except for a few puppet building demos in lecture, the students do their own research on puppet construction, design their puppet and build with at least 50% recycle materials. I'm always amazed by the diversity and creativity of the students.

Send articles to newsletter@sfbapg.org and find lots of holiday show calendar listings at <http://www.sfbapg.org/events/calendar/> Also, don't forget that ongoing shows like Children's Fairyland, Happy Hollow and others may not be listed on our calendar.

DO YOU WANT TO HELP OUT YOUR PUPPET GUILD? We are currently looking for a calendar person. The volunteer job would be to help put events on our guild's Google calendar. If you can help, please email Michael Nelson at newsletter@sfbapg.org.