



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

July 2020



A mock-up of the new Puppetry Journal cover, featuring the work of guild members Images in Motion. See Lee Armstrong's article on publicizing your work, in this issue!

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A word from the president

Camilla Henneman here. I am taking on the role of guild president this term. What a different world artists are looking at in 2020. In any other year I would be heading to festivals around the country and meeting up with old friends. While we are cut off from seeing each other in person, people are finding new ways to connect. Puppeteers are nothing, if not resourceful. This is a good time to work on your script or develop a new show. Many are teaching online workshops and having get-togethers through Zoom, or other online platforms. There are opportunities to take classes and learn new skills online sometimes free or at a fraction of the cost you would pay to attend in person. One of the resources we have through Puppeteers of America is a grant called **Direct Relief Fund For Puppet Artists**. <https://www.puppeteers.org/relief/> I have been offering a video workshop and kit for making [wet felted puppets](#) fundraiser. I have been able to send them \$800 so far from the sale of kits and donations. I hope to be able to send another check soon. If you are looking for a way to help, they are a great cause and are in need of donations. If you are in need of help, don't be afraid to ask. We are going to need to rely on each other. If you are concerned that someone is falling through the cracks, reach out and let others know. We have a lot of resources between us. If you know of grants, contests, or other online opportunities, please share them. You can contact me at camhenneman@gmail.com I just watched a live streamed show from Monica Leo and Toby Froud's Lessons Learned today. I will send out links to online events and shows as I learn of them. We have a full schedule of guild activities through the end of the year. We will be keeping you informed through the newsletter and email. Take care of yourself and each other.



July Puppet Challenge: Sharing and Expanding Puppet Art Inspiration



In these days of no in-person meetings, let's expand into new ways of connecting with puppetry. Join in to create and motivate each other's puppet dreams through this July Puppet Challenge!

The theme is **Ocean**. Whether it's under the sea, sailing above, tidepool or shore, the ocean has vast potential to inspire.

Using the Ocean theme you can create and submit any one (or more, or all) of these projects ...

- Design sketch for puppet sea creature(s)
- Puppet script with ocean theme (any length)
- Music or song for a nautical puppet show
- Set design/scenery for puppet show
- Any other puppet/ocean theme idea you'd like to develop & share



This can be an individual project or you can collaborate with like-minded people.



Deadline: Projects must be posted by Friday, July 24 by midnight, PST.

Submission: This can be posted starting July 11 on our FB Event page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/303203834136847>

Instagram: tag @sfbapg, #SFPuppetGuildChallenge, #OceanPuppetChallenge

Email: email to naopuppet@gmail.com and Nao will post on FB & IG. (file 2 MB max.)

Rewards

1. You will have a creative puppet experience!
2. Delight Guild members and friends as they see your submissions on our Guild Instagram and FB event page!
3. Participant's names and a compilation of as many of the ideas as possible will be featured in the August newsletter!
4. One lucky participant (random drawing from all participants' names) will receive an ocean-themed Folkmanis puppet!

We encourage all Guild members to check out the projects by visiting our Instagram and FB Events pages.



If you have questions, please contact our Programming Committee member Nao Kobayashi:
naopuppet@gmail.com

Craft Your Puppet Show for Video with Alex U. Griffin

Aug 15th Zoom Guild Meeting 3:30-5:30 PST

Guild meeting from 3:30-4. Hear the latest Guild news and meet and greet the Guild community and puppet enthusiasts. You are welcome to BYOP (bring your own puppet) & beverages.

Workshop from 4-5 pm. This workshop is designed for puppeteers who are transitioning their live shows to video, for those that would like to create quality puppet videos for media and for all who want to know more about video production. Alex will cover the basics of planning your shoot, using camera angles and framing to make your production more dynamic, and tips and tricks to add to your video skill set.

Q & A and wrap-up from 5-5:30. Ask Alex additional questions and brief wrap up.

Presenter: Alex U Griffin

Alex is a puppeteer and filmmaker currently based in Los Angeles, CA.

As a puppeteer, Alex has performed in a number of films, commercials, digital shorts, and live performances covering a variety of performance styles. Also active in the puppet community, Alex is the Film

Coordinator for Heather Henson's *Handmade Puppet Dreams* film series, Vice President of the Los Angeles Guild of Puppetry, and a Director at Large for the Puppeteers of America. Alex also curates the Reel Puppetry Film Festival for the Puppeteers of America, and produces/curates the LA Guild of Puppetry's popular *48hr Puppet Film Project*.



As a cinematographer and filmmaker, Alex has worked on a number of puppet projects big and small, often working both behind and in front of the camera. Alex recently filmed the all-puppet feature *Yamasong: March of the Hollows* for director Sam Koji Hale and Dark Dunes Productions, now streaming on Amazon Prime Video, and is in pre-production on his own short film *The Man with No Face* for producers Sam Koji Hale and Heather Henson.

You can find more information on his website at www.alexugriffin.com

If you'd like to attend, please RSVP ASAP, but before Friday 08/14 at noon to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0a44acae2aa7f49-craft>. Signup Genius participants will receive a Zoom invitation on Friday 08/14. This is also open to non-Guild members. However, if you'd like to become a Guild member (which gives you great benefits, including a monthly newsletter) join at <http://www.sfbapg.org/membership>.

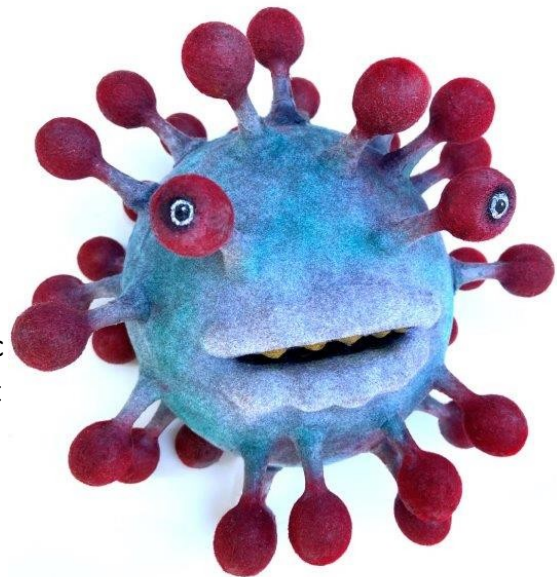
People can also view the program part of the meeting (4-5 pm) via Facebook Live. Details will be posted on <https://www.facebook.com/SanFranBAPG/>

Promo for “Down the Drain” & Your Puppet Ventures

By Lee Armstrong, Images In Motion

Images In Motion has completed “Down the Drain with Covid-19” PSA, where a narcissistic COVID-19 puppet gets its comeuppance. View it in English & Spanish at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOgxLR-Ga2ZUyIsPZj3YWnw> and <https://vimeo.com/421727651>. This PSA was sponsored by the Sonoma County Safety PALS (part of the Sonoma County Fire Chiefs & Prevention Officers Association).

We are all concerned about safety during the pandemic and although there are a lot of handwashing videos out there, we think “Down the Drain” dramatically shows children the importance of soap plus water in a humorous and memorable way. However, if the PSA isn't publicized, will anyone watch it?



Publicity isn't our forte, but we volunteered to help the Safety PALS get the word out. We hope this article has information that is applicable to promoting any puppet venture or company.

First, Kamela Portuges created a Youtube Channel for the PALS, close-captioned the PSA's in English, with subtitles in Spanish and posted it for them on Youtube and Vimeo.

To contact newspapers, magazines, TV and radio, a press release needs to be concise and have a unique angle to catch an editor's eye. We have written press releases before, but did a bit of research and found "How to Write a Press Release" <https://www.ereleases.com/how-to-write-chapter-1/>, helpful. As eRelease states, *"Be patient. Sending a press release is like fishing. Not every editor or reporter will bite. Not every cast will produce a catch."* Sending out press releases one at a time is very time-consuming. It works for local media, but to get it out across the county, most people hire a press release distribution service. We did this with eRelease, and it did get the word out, but was expensive. It probably contributed about 200 views, but no follow up articles. We did it as a test and probably wouldn't do this often.

Next, we googled and found a Media Contact List for the Bay Area, provided by the Pedestrian Safety Project, https://www.sfdph.org/dph/files/trafficsafety/Press_kit_project/contents/Media_Contact_List.pdf. For any name on the media list that we planned to contact, we googled to make sure that person was still the correct contact person. They also posted an extensive booklet on promoting safety issues with other advice, https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/pedcampaign/ped_safety_campaign.pdf.)

We volunteered about three days and here are the results from our first month of promo.

Facebook: FB was easy. We posted the PSA (from the Safety Pals **Youtube Channel**) on our Images In Motion page, www.facebook.com/ImagesinMotionMedia. We also posted on our personal pages. It got 1316 views and 54 shares.

Vimeo: This was primarily for TV, as the quality is good and stations can download directly in various formats. This PSA version was exactly 2 minutes and received 108 views.

SFBAPG: We sent out a Yahoo announcement and asked Guild members if they'd view and share our PSA. We received at least **100 views** from the Guild. Six puppeteers emailed to say they had viewed and shared, including Gale from Hawaii who sent it to all the Rotary Clubs. I posted our press release in the



Yahoo announcement, but if anyone wants it as a sample and doesn't have it, just email images@vom.com.

TV Stations: We contacted KRCB, KQED (They don't accept submissions) KRON, KPIX, KTVU, KGO & KNTV. It takes time to get a reply, and sometimes they'll just air a PSA without letting you know, as they can simply download it if they like it. However, we did get a great response from Darren LaShelle, President & CEO, Northern California Public Media
"Yes, we will air on KRCB TV North Bay and KPJK TV South Bay. We'll also share on our social media. When other PSAs are ready, send along. Thanks so much."

Newspapers: Press releases were sent to Sonoma Index Tribune, Press Democrat, North Bay Business Journal, The Bohemian, S.F. Chronicle & Marin IJ. Waiting for replies.

Magazines: We haven't contacted any magazines yet, but Michael Nelson sent in a short paragraph on the PSA and a photo of the puppet to the Puppetry Journal and that lead to us being selected for the front cover and feature article for the next Puppetry Journal. Thank you, Michael!

Word of mouth

Fire Dept.: PALS will distribute the PSA to fire departments, but we gave an Arizona fire educator friend the press release with links and she sent it out to her fire contacts in Arizona.

Schools: PALS will send out to their school contacts, but a school nurse in Sonoma said she thought the PSA was great and included the Covid-19 PSA link in information to the Sonoma Schools & the school nurses' association in Sonoma County.

Publicity is a lot of work, but if you do publicize, you will reach a larger audience. I'd like to thank the Guild for their participation and help in promo this PSA. I hope this article may give people some ideas about self-promotion. We encourage everyone to let the world know what you are creating!

[Musings from Elisheva](#)

My last memory of leaving Petaluma's Library before it closed down is of a preschool age African-American boy, skipping along the sidewalk with his Mom as they also exited....he was singing, "Elmo's Song!"

I was correcting a paper, next to a closed, black-cased laptop, and accidentally got a few drops of the white on the loaned-from-work lid of the laptop. In my frantic haste forgetting I still held the brush-



ta ta!- a 3 inch, highly visible sticky white pathway atop the lid! Instinctively I grabbed a bottle of clear hand sanitizer from the counter and sloshed it on. To my surprise, it worked! I did not do a repeat experiment with dried white out! Emergencies happen, maybe this technique will help you too some day.



WHAT DOES COOKIE MONSTER USE TO PAY HIS BILLS? (Cookie Dough of course.)

I soon read most of the books in the community room's bookcase where I live. The library is closed! How to cope? A-hah! I emailed 3 friends with like minded reading tastes-which I learned when visiting their homes. All 3 members of the church where we have our **January Holiday Party**. (Oh, so that's the puppetry connection!)

One tip left-actually something Lee Armstrong told me recently- the easiest way to store boxes which are not needed right now but will be later, is to flatten them and reassemble once needed.



Weekend of Puppetry at Fairyland

The elves at Fairyland are working hard to have a modified celebration and Weekend of Puppetry at Fairyland Oakland, so stay tuned as this may happen. An update will be in the August newsletter for the **Annual Puppet Faire at Fairyland, Oakland, Sept. 5-6**. Two days of puppet shows, a puppet exhibit and lots of fun to celebrate Fairyland's 70th birthday (opened 09/02/1950) and the Guild's 65th!

PROGRAMMING HELP WANTED!

- Would you like to suggest a program for a Guild meeting?
- Do you have a show or skill that would be of interest to our membership?
- Would you like to have a Guild meeting in your community and could provide your home, your local library, church, community center or...?
- Would you like to be on the Programming Committee?

If so, please contact Lee Armstrong, images@vom.com or Judy Roberto be_artsy@hotmail.com or anyone on the Programming Committee (Nao Kobayashi, LaVera Wilson & Gabriel Galdamez) or Guild Board.

To send articles for future newsletters, send to newsletter@sfbapg.org