

	<p>The official newsletter of <b>San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers' Guild</b> Looking for updates and missed information? Check for it at <b>SFBAPG.ORG</b></p> <p><i>SFBAGP is a charter guild of the Puppeteers of America, Inc., a non-profit tax exempt organization</i></p>
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## SF Guild April Fool's Showcase, April 1<sup>st</sup> 7-8:30

It's spring time, join our next guild meeting and celebrate April Fool's Day! This zoom event features a showcase of short videos by our local SFBAPG puppeteers, update from the guild board, and a Meet & Greet where you can share more feedback to the videos or say hi to friends!

When: Friday April 1, 7pm-8:30 (PST)

Where: [Zoom –sign up here\\*](#)

Agenda:

7:00-7:15 Guild Update

7:15-8:15 Showcase

### Guild Board and Officers

**President**

John Arnold,  
[president@sfbapg.org](mailto:president@sfbapg.org)

**Vice President**

Camilla Henneman  
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**Librarian**

Lee Armstrong  
[library@sfbapg.org](mailto:library@sfbapg.org)

8:15- Meet & Greet (schedule is subject to change)

\*To attend this zoom please [signup](#) at to get the zoom link.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050E4BAEAB2AA7FC1-member>

**Lee Armstrong of Images in Motion and Michael and Valerie Nelson of Magical Moonshine Theatre will be MCs, presenting the following fantastic artists.**

**Chase Woolner** will be presenting ***Just Another Glove Story***, a film about reaching out to loved ones and being present in the moment. He created this Valentine short with his classmate from CalArts, Thanh Dang who is a background designer for animation. Friend Trevor Jones (also in animation) performed and composed the music. The puppets were made from hollowed paper mache eggs, and puppeteers wore black gloves to be the arms and legs. The set was shot in Chase's living room. It was filmed, edited, and animated in a single Saturday, then sent to friends and family as an ecard for Valentine's Day 2017. The power of collaboration and putting love out into the world is amazing.

Chase holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Theatre/Puppetry from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts). As a member of SAG-AFTRA, Chase has worked for companies such as; the Muppets, Walt Disney Imagineering and Puppet Heap. In 2020 Chase co-founded Busy Hands Studio with Sophie Meuch for their creative endeavors.



**Benny Buettner & Bebe Conrad of Magic Circus**, <https://www.MagicCircus.com> will present an excerpt from their ***The Incredible Magic Hat Show*** - an award winning virtual and in-person program. A comical traveler who, daydreaming at a train station, launches an imaginary journey around the world and through history. From a variety of cultures and professions, 25 quick-change characters are brought to life. Vignettes with visual jests and situations are

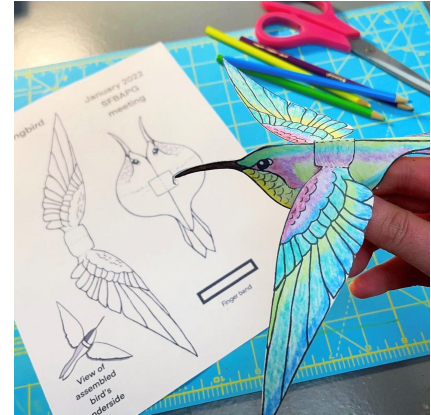
presented using comedy, magic, mime and "chapeaugraphy". Chapeaugraphy is an art form using a donut shaped hat brim that transforms into objects and hats, "chapeaux".

Benny and Bebe are co-founders of Magic Circus productions, with over 20 years professional experience in Europe and America. They perform in Bay Area schools with Young Audiences. Credits include *Dr. Dolittle*, *Nash Bridges*, *The Princess Diaries* & *BiCentennial Man*.

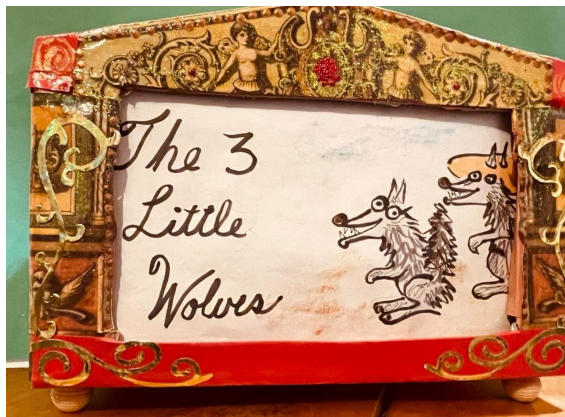
**Moddy Himmel** will be presenting *Little Ed Bitingwood* and *The Hummingbird's Flight*. She runs a homeschool enrichment program where she uses puppets to teach foreign language classes as well as art and science.



*Little Ed Bitingwood* is the story of Little Red Ridinghood told with Dinosaurs. Moddy's Puppet, Alexa, is the president of a dinosaur club that meets virtually once a month. Little Ed Bitingwood was created as a special reward for her Patreon Patrons and Dinosaur Club members.



*The Hummingbird's Flight* is the short story about a hummingbird's contribution in the midst of disaster is based on legend that has been told through the ages and across cultures. Performed by our guild members via Zoom, this story highlights the importance of each doing our part.



**Camilla Hennemen** will be presenting *The 3 Little Wolves*, made as a crankie example for her 3rd grade class. The story for this video was a collaboration between Camilla and her students. The activity involved taking a well-known fairy tale(s) and rewriting it as a play with dialog. We took The 3 Little Pigs and the Magic Fish, tweaked the characters and a few other elements to create the story. The crankie was made from a tissue box and decorated with photocopies of the Victoria and Albert "Toy Theater" facade which is available on the Victoria & Albert website,

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/m/make-your-own-toy-theatre/>

Camilla Henneman is a (mostly) retired teacher and special effects artist whose work can be seen in *Ghostbusters 2*, *Fight Club*, *Gorillas In The Mist*, *Harry & The Hendersons* and other films.

**Art Grueneberger** with *Rock Lobster*. Based around The B52's first hit single *Rock Lobster*, this piece was first performed by 5 puppeteers at a Great Arizona Puppet Theater Slam in 2017. In May of 2020, Art remounted it virtually for Boston's Puppet Showplace's first online Slam in May of 2020. He needed a proof of concept to live-stream with green screening and this was the



project that he chose to test the tech. The ability to layer allowed him to go from 5 puppeteers to one. (see image, page 1)

Art is a director, puppet builder, puppeteer and founder of Puppet Arts Theater, <https://puppetarts.com/>. Puppet Art Theater Co. has eighteen productions that tour across California and beyond. Until 2020, they gave more than 600 live performances for family audiences every year. Due to the pandemic, Puppet Art Theater pivoted from live performances to very successful live-streaming shows. They also develop and tour fantastic educational programs for government agencies, corporations and other organizations that deliver important educational messages to targeted audiences.



**Anne and Doug Zesiger of [Stinky Tales®](#)** will be sharing a video created in association with The Benioff Children's Hospital. With help from hospital staff, Dillard, our rascally dragon, learns how to get over his fears of getting his flu vaccination. Dillard and his puppet friends are regular mistake makers at Bay Area schools and through their [YouTube channel](#). With the sound advice of real children guiding them, the cast of characters usually finds their way to successful resolutions of common childhood problems. We'll also be sharing one

of our music videos created by our in-house musician Anne Zesiger. These original songs carry the same messages as our episodes and become important reminders of our resolutions. It's all a lot of fun and educational too. Who said you can't have fun while learning social emotional skills? Support Stinky Tales® by subscribing to our channel <https://www.youtube.com/c/StinkyTales>.

## Call for Nominations for Guild Board of Directors

Are you looking for another way to be involved with your guild? Like to be active in promoting the art of puppetry in the Bay Area? If so, you should look into serving on the SFBAPG Board. If you have any interest I would like more information, please contact the Chair of the Nominating Committee, Judy Roberto [be\\_artsy@hotmail.com](mailto:be_artsy@hotmail.com), 408 981-7898 before April 15th.

**Eligibility:** Candidates must have been members of the SFBAPG for at least one year prior to the elections and be members in good standing the guild.

**Term limits:** Each Board member shall serve for three years. Each Board member shall be allowed to serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms. Each Board member is asked to take an active role on the board such as President, V.P., Programming, Membership, Publicity & Social Media, Hospitality, etc.

Candidates need to provide a short bio and photo to the Nominating Committee, prior to April 25th, to be published in the May newsletter.

We look forward to hearing from you! Your Nominating Committee, Judy Roberto, Talib Huff, Glynn Bartlett AKA Tree Bartlett



## 1st Guild “Live” Event in Over 2 Years!

Join us for the *The Joshua Show* in Napa on Sunday, May 8, at 3pm. Joshua Holden has graciously offered to meet with the Guild after the 3 pm show and do a short “backstage” tour. Your programming committee is working on securing a block of tickets so we can sit together, and there may be a discount. It’s Mother’s Day, so what better way for the family to celebrate than to come to this “for all ages” show. Guild members will receive an email soon with more details and a survey/poll which will help us determine how many tickets we might need.

### THE JOSHUA SHOW

Sunday, May 8, 2022 - 1pm & 3pm

Napa Valley College Performing Arts Center

**\$15: General Admission**

**\$12: Ages 12 and under**

**Kids tickets - Buy One, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kids ticket is free.**

Masks Required



NAPA PREMIERE! Hailed as “The Ambassador of Joy” and “A Hipster Mr. Rogers,” puppeteer [Joshua Holden](#) creates heartwarming entertainment using live music, puppetry, physical comedy and tap-dancing to make the world a better, happier place. With a message of celebrating our differences, finding joy in everyday life, and respecting the feelings of others, The Joshua Show aims to spread kindness, love and warmth. *Masks required.*

The Joshua Show received the Puppeteers of America’s National Festival’s “Best Performance” and “Fan Favorite.”

The NY Times said “Mr. Holden has dedicated his shows to lightening the mood of all in the theater, puppets and humans alike. Accompanied by the musician Jeb Colwell, he does this through physical comedy, oddball props, wry commentary and tap-dancing.”

And a parent comment “Saw your show today (at the Center for Puppetry Arts in Atlanta) ...my daughters, ages 9 and 14, and I were in town for a quick spring break getaway. Being an arts-oriented family, we were seeking an arts experience that would stimulate both ages – and mom too! We took a chance on The Joshua Show and we were unexpectedly blown away! Your show gave us giggles and deeper ponderings. THANK YOU and keep The Joshua Show going!”

More details in the May newsletter. You can also book tickets separately from our group at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-joshua-show-tickets-231936176347>.

## Marionette Master, Kevin Menegus Shares His Talents at May Guild Meeting

Don't miss this 1<sup>st</sup> "Live" Guild Meeting in Over 2 Years. This will also be a hybrid Live/Zoom Meeting, if possible.

Tentative Date: May 28<sup>th</sup>,  
afternoon - Central Location, TBA.  
More details in our May Newsletter

Kevin Menegus will be showing marionettes from Fratello Marionettes' newest production of "Jack & the Beanstalk." The discussion will examine the year-long process of creating a new production, from story and script, character design, costume fabrication, and crafting the marionettes and stage. All of the puppets for the production in their current status will be available for Guild members to try and explore for themselves.



Kevin will also be performing several acts from his variety show "The Vaudeville Follies" and show how large-scale marionettes are used in performances. There will also be a discussion about the puppet restoration work Kevin does for museums and private clients all over the globe.

### Fratello Marionettes Bio

The Fratello Marionettes has been entertaining audiences through the art of marionettes since 1989.

The company continues the tradition of classic marionette performances. All the puppets you see in The Fratello Marionettes' repertoire are conceptualized and built by the puppeteers themselves, with painstaking attention to detail. Each marionette takes two to three months to create.

The company also collaborates with local symphony orchestras to produce unforgettable performances blending live classical music with the storytelling art of puppetry.

Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, The Fratello Marionettes has performed in locations around the world.

**Kevin Menegus: Founder, Builder, Performer**

Fratello Marionettes founder Kevin Menegus became intrigued by puppetry after receiving a puppet as a gift, at age six.

Kevin went on to apprentice with some of the leading puppeteers in the country, including Tony Urbano, Bob Baker, Randal Metz and Lewis Mahlmann, learning from them while developing unique building and performing styles of his own.

Kevin holds a Bachelor of Music Degree in Percussion Performance from the University of The Pacific Conservatory of Music. This comes in handy for selecting and orchestrating the right music for each marionette performance.

Kevin has performed for audiences around the world, including several major cruise lines.

Two of our talented Guild members will also take a few minutes to share their experiences with marionettes and puppet restoration.



Marisol Himmel (left) attended the Scott Land School's Marionette-building Weekend Workshop with Dave Herzog. She was sponsored by the Marc Dunworth Foundation for the Performing Arts and will update us on this workshop.

Ilene Kennedy is restoring puppets for our Guild and will share a bit of her work and the challenges of dealing with older puppets in need of repair.

## Guild Library Seeks Volunteers

The Guild has a wonderful collection of puppet books which Guild members can borrow. Until Covid, the Guild librarian would bring books to each Guild meeting. Because we haven't had "in person" meetings, this hasn't happened over the past 2 years. The library will return for the May Guild meeting.

The Guild Library is moving towards an on-line catalog which will help Guild members find the books they need. This will be done in 2 phases.



**Phase 1: Sort and organize the library: Done on-location at the Images in Motion studio, Sonoma, where you'll get to see an amazing array of books, from rare and historical to "how to make" educational, professional development and more. This is an opportunity to become more familiar with the collection and provide a much-needed Guild service.**  
**Phase 2: When the books are organized, each book will be entered into the online system. This can be done at your own location on your computer.**

**If you have 4 hours (or more) in the next few months and would like to volunteer for either Phase 1 or 2 (or both) please contact Lee Armstrong, Guild librarian at [sfbapglibrary@gmail.com](mailto:sfbapglibrary@gmail.com) for more information. Thank you.**

## KNOW FOOLIN' by ELISHEVA

Years ago I was friends with a woman who was old....older than my parents! She would occasionally invite me to classical music events. A novelty to my ears.

One mid-March day she told me she wouldn't be here for the next performance as she was taking a month to visit cousins in the Netherlands. They lived on a farm and traditionally held a big party for family and friends on April First! Part of the event included letting their cows out of their barn where they had been locked in ever since Winter Snows began!

That boggled my mind. At least the cows nowadays have electric lights as well as food and shelter.

Since it would be April Fools Day, my friend expected jokes and tricks, food and entertainment too. I was so amazed from learning about the cows I didn't think to ask if there would be any puppets. OOPS!

But there could have been puppets, tradition being what it is. And I once met a Dutch puppeteer at a Conference.

Many calendars of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance had an extra day or so which wouldn't fit into an existing month. Often on these days the status quo of the people in a town, city, etc. would flip for a day or two. For instance the Mayor would trade places with the beggar who would in turn become Mayor-For-The-Day! And he did rule that day. Undoubtedly many foolish tricks were played during this topsy-turvy time.

Shakespeare's play, "King Lear" (1606) has a perfect contemporary (to them) example. The King has a Royal Jester who entertains the King with jokes (bawdy of course), silly riddles, perhaps a hand puppet. And when the King needs it, the Jester will give the King profound advice, although sometimes masked as a puzzle. This example illustrates another role reversal.

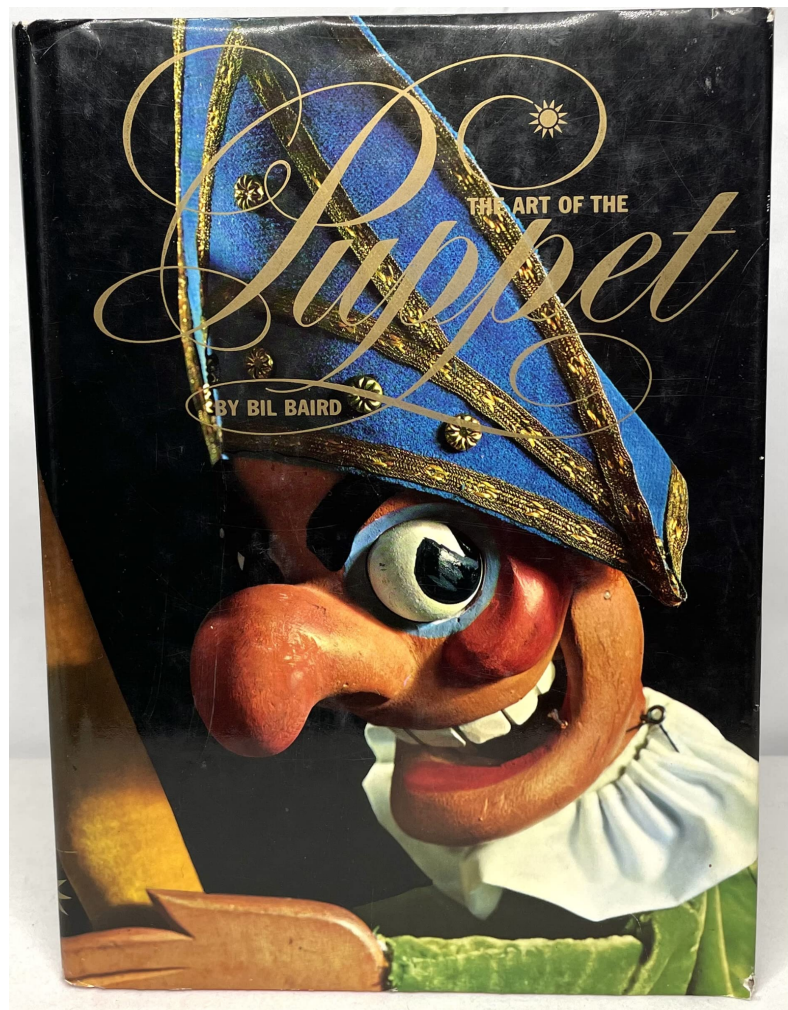
Faced with questions about the roll of puppetry in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, and the influence of Commedia dell'arte-performed stylistically by humans-I turned to Bill Baird's amazing book "The Art of the Puppet" first printed in 1965.

It is chock full of beautiful colored photos and well organized informative information such as: "In Shakespeare's days presumably the performers were hand puppets from the descriptions we have of what went on in the show---fighting, throwing things, hitting the [real] man outside of the booth on his head---are logical hand-puppet activities. "Somehow a puppet's indecent outrages are more acceptable than a human beings." By 1573, Italian puppetry had invaded England and also traveled up and down the country, just as many of the English puppeteers did.

These puppeteers were described as "...standing in front of his puppet stage and conversing with the puppets, may have been a leftover from times when an interpreter stood in front of a foreign setup providing "subtitles." Puppeteers from any country were not viewed in England as "proper performers" and therefore ignored as theater.

When Cromwell and his Puritans achieved the Commonwealth in 1642 the theaters were locked tight all over England. But the puppets kept on performing because they were not seen as important enough to ban. For 18 years the only theater in England was the puppet theater.

:"In Italy puppetry had thrived, developing approximately at the same time and in the same direction as the *commedia dell'arte*.....It was evolving a comic tradition of farce, burlesque, improvisation, and, most important, of Character.. 'With the passage of time, the first clowns had become individuals and each had acquired a certain cluster of exaggerated characteristics that governed his actions completely. Yet within these limits there was great flexibility and diversity. All told, the *Commedia* was a perfect theatrical style for both media."





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One of the Commedia dell'arte performers is named HARLEQUIN and in MAY'S SFBAPG NEWSLETTER will be the 2nd part of KNOW FOOLIN' which is named NO FOOLIN' and is my review of Mary Nagler's hand puppet show, "HARLEQUIN and the Gift of Many Colors!" which is from the book by the same title, by Remy Charlip. <This is NOT an April Fool's gag>.

## Images in Motion Update

*Editor's note: Check the March newsletter for more info on this project*

The sea creatures for Monterey Bay Aquarium's Education Program are moving into the molding, casting and painting stages. Here are some "work-in-progress" photos of the Hermit Crab and the Starfish, both cast in a flexible rubber. Our May newsletter update will feature the two puppets that Nao Kobayashi is fabricating for METV in Chicago.

Lee Armstrong & Kieron Robbins  
Images in Motion Media Inc.  
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707 738-5906  
(Lee's cell)

