



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

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

From your President



It's a Volunteer Community!

I always think of our Puppet Guild as a rather extraordinary volunteer community. No one is paid and yet many people spend numerous hours helping this Guild, through planning events and meetings, writing articles for the newsletter, publishing newsletters, restoring puppets, building giant puppets for parades, answering phone calls from people interested in puppets, maintaining our membership list... There's a sharing of a common interest and a belief that puppets are, in some way, special in our lives.

In the '80s, I moved to the Bay Area from Toronto, where I'd been a TV puppeteer and a member of the Ontario Puppet Guild. The first thing I did was to join the S.F. Puppet Guild. It was because of my connection to puppeteers in this Guild, that I found mentors, friends, and collaborators. I got my first job through our Guild network. I've always been grateful and think the Guild is an important link for puppeteers, especially ones in search of their tribe.

Every year three board members who have served one 3-year term can continue for a 2nd term (if ratified by the membership) before going off the board. Vacant spots are filled by newly elected Guild members. John Arnold is continuing for a 2nd term and Samuel McGinnis (Uel) and I joined the Board. At the first meeting of the new board, they decide on duties for the year. A couple of days ago, we had this meeting and I'm honored to be your new President this year. It

President

Lee Armstrong

Co-V. Presidents

Ilene Kennedy
 & Glynn "Tree" Bartlett

Membership

CE Choy & John Arnold

Programming

Marisol Himmel

Treasurer

Valerie Nelson

Secretary

Valerie Nelson

Webmaster

John Arnold

Social Media

Marisol Himmel

Hospitality

Uel (Samuel McGinnis)

Judy Roberto

Newsletter

Michael Nelson

newsletter@sfbapg.org

Librarian

Lee Armstrong

happens for me, at a particularly good time, as I've retired from teaching "Muppets" at UCSC and feel I have some extra time to devote to this role.

I'd like to thank John Arnold, your Past-President, who will be joining C.E. Choy with Membership and is also our Webmaster. As a professional tech person at a big tech company, he has been invaluable, sharing his expertise with the Guild. He's always the go to-person for computer and social media questions, is wise, patient and a very fun puppet builder/puppeteer.

Camilla Henneman has departed the Board after her 3-year term. During this time, she was President, Vice President, and a member of the Programming Committee. Coming from a background of major films which used puppets and creatures, Camilla has shared a wealth of experience with the Guild. Thank you, Camilla. But this isn't goodbye. Now she's an active member, busy planning an exciting puppet workshop, so read future newsletters for her announcement.

Welcome to Uel (short for Samuel). He has a background in hospitality, so now we have a Head of Hospitality for our meetings. He'll be sure to greet you.

I encourage you to be part of this volunteer community. What are your interests?

- Would you like to help develop programming?
- Report/review puppet events and write articles that interest you for the Guild newsletter?
- Help publicize the Guild in your community, through social media, etc.?
- Create puppet events in your community?
- Start a youth group as part of the Guild?
- Mentor a new puppeteer or find a mentor?

Tell us what you'd like to do to foster the art of puppetry in the Bay Area. Involvement is rewarding! Contact me or any board member. We'd be happy to hear from you.

In closing, don't miss the Guild Event on Sun., July 16, with two of our greatest volunteers. As performers in 15 different countries, Michael & Valerie Nelson of Magical Moonshine Theater, are the winners of the Golden Apple of Kazakhstan and as the The Times of India reports are "Enchanting..." They will be performing in Sonoma, my hometown. I'll be at the show, then we'll have a picnic and meet-and-greet at 1 pm in the park, behind the Town Hall. Bring a puppet if you can for our meet-and-greet and if you'd like to spread a little cheer to the families in the park. If you didn't pack lunch, there's sandwiches, pizza by the slice, etc. just steps away. More info in this newsletter. Questions? Email me at library@sfbapg.org. Hope to meet you there!

All the best, Lee Armstrong

Election Results

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce that John Arnold, Samuel McGinnis & Lee Armstrong have been elected to the SFBAPG Board. Camilla Henneman has completed her 3-year term and she is departing the Board. We want to thank her for sharing her time and talents with us. As a very active puppeteer and Guild member, we know she's continuing to support puppetry in the Bay Area.

The 2023-24 board is...

President – Lee Armstrong,

Co-V. Presidents – Ilene Kennedy & Glynn “Tree” Bartlett
Membership – CE Choy & John Arnold
Programming – Marisol Himmel
Treasurer – Valerie Nelson
Secretary – Valerie Nelson
Webmaster – John Arnold
Social Media- Marisol Himmel
Hospitality – Uel (Samuel McGinnis) 3rd.eyed.lion@gmail.com
Judy Roberto
Newsletter – Michael Nelson
Librarian – Lee Armstrong

Guild Event July 16, Sonoma

Come up to beautiful Sonoma for a guild event on July 16! Magical Moonshine will be presenting "Coyote Sings" at the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art at 11:30 am (551 Broadway Sonoma, CA 95476.) There will be several make and take puppet projects offered at the museum. Following that the guild will gather at the downtown Sonoma Plaza (1 the Plaza, Sonoma, 95476.)

The puppet show will be included in museum admission, but they ask you to register ahead of time. Museum admission ranges from free to \$10. <https://svma.org/event/makein/> (Enjoy the decades old picture of Michael and Valerie on their website)

You can show up at the plaza around one to meet and greet. Bring a lunch, or find one at any of a multitude of choices nearby. Bring a puppet and have fun!

Save The Date: Sat., Aug 26 Our Puppet Guild at Puppet Fair at Fairyland.

Puppet Fair is a mini puppet festival presented by Fairyland, Oakland, with shows starting mid-morning through to 4:30. Puppet performances are by notable puppeteers including...

- The Bob Baker Marionettes of LA with “Variety Show”
- Fratello Marionettes (Kevin Menegus) with “The Frog Prince”
- The Puppet Company (Randal Metz) with “The Three Dinosaurs Gruff”
- Fairyland’s StoryBook Theater with “It Could Always Be Worse”.

Your Guild has been participating in Puppet Fair since 1956! The Guild will be there and hope you’ll volunteer to help with a craft table, a Guild information table, puppet exhibit and “puppet walkaround greeters.” Signups will be in the August newsletter and each active volunteer gets free admission. There will also be a Guild Member Get-together to meet other Bay Area

puppeteers and keep you up to date on puppet happenings in the Bay area on beyond. More info on shows will be in the August newsletter. More info on Fairyland at www.fairyland.org.

Dolores is Born! – The Building of A Giant Lamentor Puppet

This is part two of three articles dealing with the creation of giant puppets for actions and protests.

By Tree

Photos by Claire Schoen

A New Giant puppet was born! Her name is Dolores. She is part of the Lamentors, a climate justice street theater performance group. They are a part of Extinction Rebellion. Extinction Rebellion (XR) is an international group of activists that focus on climate and social justice issues and the Lamentors are a subgroup of XR folk. They dress in sackcloth with white muslin headscarves and dabbed white makeup, symbolizing ash on faces and hands. The Lamentors sole mission is to hold the grief we all share regarding the impacts of climate change. Lamentors stand in silent witness with downcast eyes and lowered outward facing palms at various climate actions here in the Bay Area and Sacramento.



Giant puppets have become a staple, so to speak, of activist and protest movements. Their sheer size gives them attention grabbing focus and a larger than life presence that can become a visual exclamation point to the issue being brought to the fore. Dolores is one more such puppet that came into being.

Dolores was created by a group of co-creators, David Solnit, Claire Schoen, Jane Flint, Gemma Solnit and me, Tree. Jane

Flint did the sculpt of the head for Dolores. She used one of the methods devised and used for giant puppet making by Peter Schumann's Bread and Puppet Theater Company. This method

uses clay, similar to potters clay, to form the features of the head for the giant puppet. Once the face has been sculpted in clay, it is covered in plastic wrap to protect the original sculpt as well as to



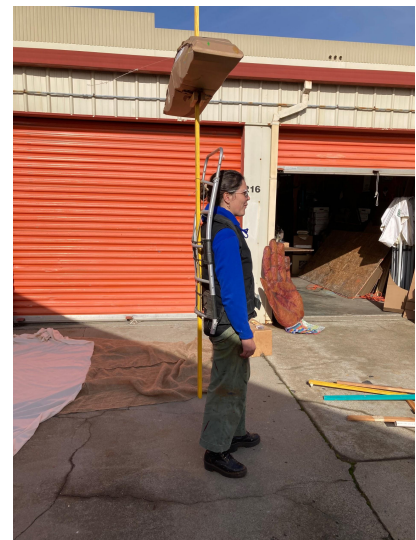
make it easier to remove the paper-mache sculpt after the layering is completed and dry. A traditional method of paper-mache, using paper strips and paste along with alternating layers of brown paper bags and red rosin construction paper were used to help keep track of the number of layers applied. A paste made of cooked corn starch became the glue that coated the layered paper formed over the clay face.



After the face was completed and dry, Corrugated cardboard was used to shape and fashion the back of the head. The hands were created using two layers of corrugated cardboard for the palm and back of the hand and shaped into fingers and thumb with some internal wire helping create added structure and maintain the curvature of the fingers. All of this was wrapped and held together with masking tape and then covered with paper-mache using the same method used to create Dolores's face.

David Solnit masterminded the body construction of Dolores. Her shoulders are made of shaped corrugated cardboard, stapled and taped together then attached to an aluminum backpack frame. Her arms are made of bamboo segments, wrapped at the joints with tape, using bicycle inner tubes to connect and keep them flexible. Once the puppet was assembled, She was covered in a traditional Lamentors sackcloth costume created by Claire Schoen. Tree did the paint treatment to Dolores's face using Nova Color Acrylic paints.

Tree used some iridescent paint colors to add depth. Also, the addition of the iridescent paint adds an attention getting luster that gives natural light something extra to play with.



Dolores made her debut appearance with the Lamentors on April 21, 2023 at the Oakland Museum of California. This is a weekly free community event hosted and promoted by the Oakland Museum. That Friday was a Climate Justice Festival. She made quite a positive impression with families at the event, especially with the children. Puppets in general had quite a presence at the festival. A large white heron took flight around the crowd and a group of fish puppets swam through a kelp forest. There was also a

puppet making booth for the children hosted by 1000 Grandmother's. This particular festival was a fitting setting for Dolores's debut.

Diary Of A Mad Puppetry Teacher Part Deux

Camilla Henneman

If you are a puppeteer working with children as a guest teacher, you already have the biggest plus on your side as far as classroom management. You are the person who brings the fun! Still, you need to be prepared for those times when things are not going according to plan. Flexibility is essential. You don't know what has happened in the class before you get there. If they have a substitute, the class is going to act differently than they are with their regular teacher. I am a credentialed teacher with 20 years plus teaching experience (mostly with kindergarten through 6th grade.) Teaching in public schools is a great way to expand your income, but it can feel a bit like dancing in a minefield. Still if you make yourself familiar with the rules and have some routines in place you will be able to handle anything that comes up. You have some tricks up your sleeve. You're going to need them.

Covid made a big impact on public education. Things that were routine in the past may have changed a lot. More classes are being taught by substitutes and the students frequently face doubled up classes when subs are unavailable. That has a big impact on student behavior. Find out as much as you can about the classes before you get started. Also ask what the Covid procedures are for the school and for each class.

Before you go into the classroom, contact the teachers. Find out if you have any "special day classes" which are classes with differently abled students. I find it invaluable to spend some time with the special day class teachers. They will fill you in on particulars about what works with their individual students. I send out a questionnaire to teachers to find out information about their class and their expectations.

Student Names and Name Tags

Before you meet the students, ask the teacher/s for a list of the student's first names. Arrange for the students to wear name tags. It really helps with forming a bond with them when you can call them by name. I also give the teachers a short questionnaire about their expectations and specifics about the class. Ask the principal or the school representative.

Number one, the kids need to know that you are on their side. If you show anger or frustration, you lose their trust. Humor should be your most frequently used tool.

Helpful tools for getting the class's attention.

What works for kindergarten might not work for 5th grade.

Classroom management strategies for getting the attention of K-1

- If the students are noisy, start singing a song like B.I.N.G.O. They will join in. If you need them silent, have them whisper the last verse. Voila! They are with you, start into your

lesson.

- Start playing Simon says.
- Pick out a student who is paying attention and loudly praise them for what a good job they are doing. Then look around the room and praise other students. Do this a few times until they are all paying attention.
- Say, "If you can hear my voice, put your hands on your head" "If you can hear my voice, clap twice" Continue giving random commands until everyone is following. You will have them then and can start the lesson. This works for older students also.

Classroom management strategies for getting the attention of 2-3

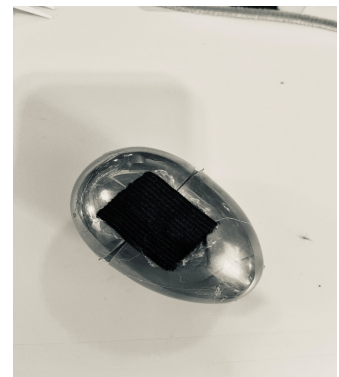
- Clap a rhythm. The students will clap back. Alter the rhythm until everyone is clapping with you.
- Hum "Shave and a haircut" They will respond with the "2 bits" (Roger Rabbit was right)
- If some students are particularly loud, go stand by them and stay there until the noisy ones get the message.
- Start playing Simon says.
- Once they start paying attention, put up 5 fingers and say, "Quiet in 5-4-3-2-1-0". This works for all grades once they start getting quiet. That gives them a few moments to calm themselves and get ready to be quiet. This works with all grade levels.

Classroom management strategies for getting the attention of 4-6

- Use sign language or actual written signs. If they insist on talking, you don't talk.
- Write instructions on the board.
- Once they start paying attention, put up 5 fingers and say, "Quiet in 5-4-3-2-1-0". This works for all grades once they start getting quiet. That gives them a few moments to calm themselves and get ready to be quiet. This works with all grade levels.

EggFolk Puppets

I wanted to find puppet construction projects that could be done quickly for use with green screen. One of the projects I came up with



was a variation on puppet projects I had seen made with plastic Easter Eggs. They are wonderful open mouth puppets.



The plastic eggs have two holes at the top and the bottom of the egg. I put pipe cleaners through the holes and made a loop for fingers to hold. I also put pipe cleaners through the bottom holes to use as legs. I hot glued on pipe cleaners for the arms. To flesh them out and make clothes, we wound pipe cleaners around pencils to make coils and slid the coils onto the pipe cleaners. We used beads for the hands and feet. We then glued on eyes and hair. I gave the students felt and other odds and ends which students used for clothes, hats, animal features. For the green screen performance, we filmed them against a green backdrop using green pipe cleaners as rods (be careful not to use green in the puppets, or it will disappear when you use the green screen app).

Glue a piece of elastic across the joint between top and bottom. There are 2 holes at both ends of the egg. Cut a pipe cleaner



into thirds. Fold the 1/3 pieces in half and thread them through the holes, twisting on the inside of the egg. For the legs, fold a pipe cleaner in half and push it through the holes in the bottom piece. Take 2 pipe cleaners and wind them around a pencil.

Thread the coils onto the pipe cleaners to flesh out and make pants. Use more pipe cleaners, felt and feathers to make features. Cut a round of thin foam or felt for the inside of the mouth. If you are using it for green screen, use green pipe cleaners for the rods.



Our Amazing Puppet World

By Ilene Kennedy

John W. Cooper was an African-American ventriloquist. Born in Brooklyn New York in 1873, he lost both of his parents at a very young age. He received his education at Professor Dorsey's Institute in Brooklyn.

During his time of his education he developed into a budding entertainer and took a real special interest in ventriloquism. He learned his craft from an unidentified man whom he met at the



Sheeps Head Bay Race Track. He was also a singer and joined the "Southern Jubilee Lee Singers", While touring he worked on developing his ventriloquism act, writing and performing his own material. One of his famous Acts he created was "Fun In the Barbershop" Cooper portrayed six different puppet characters each with his own voice performed by Cooper himself.

In 1902 when he was 29 he had his first break in ventriloquism while traveling with the Richards and Pringles minstrels . During that year he was recognized by Daily Nonpareil, a leading entertainer magazine, as the best ventriloquist of that era. Cooper went on to create another act with a black ventriloquist puppet named Sam Jackson. Cooper and Sam traveled all over the United States during the next two decades. By the start of world war I he began performing at veterans hospitals, service clubs and military camps.

Over his lifetime Cooper was a member of the Negro Actors Guild Knights of Magic, the Colored Vaudeville Benevolent Association, and the International Brotherhood of Ventriloquists, Cooper continued to perform and to create new acts for another 25 years. He also taught his craft to Sherry Lewis and other young ventriloquists who carried on his legacy. Cooper retired in 1960 at the age of 87 after the death of his wife Juliana St Bernard. John w Cooper died 6 years later in New York in 1966.

Hong Kong Puppetry Studios

By: Hugo Shum

Recently I've been traveling around Asia, and when I was in Hong Kong I was honored to be able to visit two Puppetry studios. Here I have compiled the photos I took, a little bit about the place from their respective websites, and a little thing I thought was cool about the place.

Fantasy Puppet Theatre

"Established in 2005, Fantasy Puppet is one of a handful puppet theatre companies in Hong Kong which works with a wide range of techniques to produce original puppet shows for children, youngsters and their parents."(Fantasypuppettheatre.com).



I liked how they had a lot of their stuff on display. It looked as if they were showing all of their stuff, and they were proud. They also allowed

me to try a bunch of their puppets. Which was very interesting and inspiring.

The Hong Kong Puppet Art Center

“The Hong Kong Puppet Art Center was founded in 2001; on the basis of inheriting the tradition, it has formed its own unique artistic style through innovative practice; it pays special attention to the manipulation skills of puppets and shadow puppetry, and the performance is delicate and vivid, especially for combining the four traditions of manipulation Puppet shadow play skills are highly respected.”(hkpsac.org/hkpsach/)(Note: this part has been translated from Chinese to English).



While I was there I was shown a cool demo reel. I liked how in their performances they used more modern things. For example they had a drone that flew around and dropped something. Or in a scene a drone was used as a helicopter. Something that breaks the mold from the traditional style.

Learn More About Them!

Fantasy Puppet Theatre

- Fantasypuppettheatre.com
- [Facebook](#)
- [Youtube](#)
- [Instagram](#)

The Hong Kong Puppet Art Center

- hkpsac.org/hkpsach/
- [A Video of Him Doing His Thing](#)

New episode of Under The Puppet arrives July 1st.

My guest is longtime Jim Henson Company Puppeteer Michael Oosterom who played Cornelius on the Disney+ show Earth To Ned. He was also a regular player on No You Shut Up and performs regularly with Henson Alternative's Puppet Up Uncensored! I chat with Michael about all this and more on a brand new episode available at underthepuppet.com or wherever you get your podcasts.



Bits and Pieces

Michael and Valerie Nelson and the Vallejo Giant Puppet Project will be marching with guild members and community members in the Vallejo 4th of July parade, starting at 10am in Vallejo. Come cheer us on!



Past Magical Moonshine Theatre puppeteer (turned robot engineer), Benjie Holson, created a dragon puppet for his son's 7th birthday. The dragon had moving wings and mouth and a very mobile neck, and shot fire (silly string) out of its mouth at party guests at the Dungeons and Dragons themed event.



Right and Left, **Shannon O'Hare of Obtainium Works (Vallejo)** creates a Cheshire Cat puppet for a ballet version of Alice in Wonderland.



The head and body parts are carved out of foam and the puppet "disassembles" on stage when the character is supposed to slowly disappear.

Send future newsletter items to newsletter@sfbapg.org by the second to last day of the month.