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From your Editor: Hello Guild, I am trying a new newsletter format this month. This email **is** your newsletter. It has live video links (I hope) and this month has lots of content. If you have comments or opinions on the new format or want to send articles in the future, email Michael at newsletter@sfbapg.org. There's a [version you can print on the guild website](#).

And here's what you'll find as you scroll down:

- **The guild is turning 70 and plans include a puppet festival and a Puppetathlon!**
- **Mary Nagler will be teaching an exceptional indepth workshop on puppet construction (limited to 12!)**
- **The Guild's recent Show and Tell was fantastic-see write up and videos**
- **Meet a new guild member in our new column**
- **Giant Puppets for Climate Change pt. 2**
- **Guild Library News (ways to grow!)**
- **Puppets are Actors On Stage (observations and new show debuting)**
- **Featured shows this month: Driveway Follies, Frankenstein, Song of the North**

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Guild's 70th Birthday 2024 and More

Hi Guild Friends

2024 is our Guild's 70th Anniversary year! We are planning all sorts of exciting events including a Puppetathlon and a Bay Area Puppet Festival this summer.

There are only 12 spaces on Nov 4-5 for the "Build a PuppetAthlete" workshop, gearing up for the 2024 Puppetathlon. Tell your friends and sign up soon! Mary Nagler, a master puppet builder who has worked at major puppet studios on both

coasts is coming from Virginia to teach this workshop. Participants will learn some very valuable puppet construction techniques. The “Build a PuppetAthlete” is being sponsored through generous donations by the Nick Barone Scholarship fund and the SFBAPG. Board member Glynn “Tree” Bartlett has donated the weekend workshop space. For members, there’s no fee except the kit + fleece for covering the puppet. We welcome non-members to join the Guild for a fantastic experience!

Your 70th Anniversary Committee is planning a Puppet Festival for the summer of 2024. This will probably be a two-day event with shows, workshops, a puppet exhibit and more. We are looking at locations and are making a list of possibilities.

Once we have a location, it will be easier to plan what shows and workshops would fit within the possibilities of the space. WOULD YOU LIKE A PUPPET FESTIVAL IN YOUR COMMUNITY? Advantages are numerous, including an easy commute and building a puppet community of like-minded people in your neighborhood. This is what we’re looking for...

Facilities: Bay Area Community Center, College, Church, Library, Museum, Theater, or Unusual Space, etc. which has...

- A theater or large room with good acoustics.
- Classrooms for workshops. If possible, some with good ventilation for gluing, or easily accessed outdoor area.
- Public space for puppet exhibit
- Cafe, dining room or close to a variety of restaurants
- Central location, accessible ideally by public transit

If you have ideas for locations or would like to join the 70th Anniversary Committee, please contact president@sfbapg.org. We welcome your ideas.

Guild Show and Tell (a Fantastic Guild Event)



What a wonderful “Show & Tell” and audience turnout on Sept 17. We had a brilliant “Glitterati” and if you missed it, you can catch this glam puppet rock treat at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHiT07YhhFI>. Hugo Shum and his friend shared their puppets for their outdoor, cul-de-sac Halloween show. Mary Nagler gave a sneak preview of the amazing PuppetAthlete workshop she’ll be bringing

to the Bay Area. Ilene Kennedy showed an excellent puppet restoration piece she'd completed along with other projects. Sean and Patrick Johnson of Swazzle demoed how easy it is to be eaten up by their enormous Audrey II puppets. They have a whole video series of "How To's" on this puppet including <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C33L7PYAJsY&list=PLz2NNeatCzZJbAe59o3N4ZsdE1bs0mbvW&index=12>.

Tree Bartlett showed his exquisitely carved wood puppets and Alicia Retes shared her puppetmaking with natural corn husks, bringing indigenous stories to life. Thank you all for sharing your time and inventiveness with others. And kudos to Marisol Himmel, Uel McGinnis and the Programming Committee for putting this together. Remember, the Programming Committee meets the 1st Tuesday of each month. Would you like to help with programming ideas? Contact programming@sfbapg.org for a zoom link if you'd like to join in this Tuesday, Oct 3 from 6:30-7:30. All are welcome.

Lastly, some members have been asking how to connect with other Guild members. We used to print a membership roster every year and it was easy to look up names, phone #, emails, etc. While we figure out the privacy issues of sharing this info, if you'd like to connect with another Guild members who, for example, use puppetry in the classroom, or are interested in marionettes, or TV puppets, or are puppet builders, etc., please contact a Board member. They can help you find like-minded Guild members. If you met another Guild member at a meeting or zoom and don't have their contact info, email a Board member. They will pass on your message to that other member. Board member emails are on the front page of your newsletter.

Wishing you all a Happy Halloween and hope to see you at "Frankenstein" by Manual Cinema on Sun. Oct 29!

Lee Armstrong,
president@sfbapg.org & library@sfbapg.org

Below, videos from Show and Tell



The Puppetathlon Wants YOU

In 2024 the guild turns 70 and we are CELEBRATING, starting with the amazing, fantastical Puppetathlon in January or February (date TBD). In the Puppetathlon, the best puppet athletes in the world will compete in a hilariously grueling competition, demonstrating the superbness of the Tabletop art form at its finest. Still not sure what we're talking about here? Stop reading for 1 minute and watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjhXI5KgBYE>



AND WHERE, YOU ASK, WILL THESE PUPPETATHLETES COME FROM?

They will be handmade (by you, select guild members) in a two day workshop November 4th and 5th at the Vallejo studio of Tree Bartlett! The workshop will be led by expert puppet builder, Mary Nagler, whom the guild is flying in from the East Coast for the workshop. Mary has an exceptional list of puppet building experiences and knows the tricks of the trade, so those lucky enough to get into this workshop will be learning skills applicable to all kinds of puppet building (the secrets of the masters!)

Mary has built puppets for The Puppet Heap (Muppets) the Rick Lyon Studio, creator of Ave. Q; film, television and live performances. Her credits would take up too much room in the newsletter but you get the idea. Mary is an excellent teacher!

Thanks to generous support from the Nick Barone Scholarship Fund and the Guild coffers, this workshop is being offered for FREE to current guild members.

Participants only need to purchase the materials kit for \$80 and will also have to buy their puppet skin materials (more info when you register.)

It would be helpful if you have some basic puppet building skills, i.e. handy with cutting, gluing, HAND SEWING and ideally machine sewing, but beginners are welcome.

This workshop is limited to 12 seats. 9 slots are for workshop participants that would like to take home their Puppetathlete. These participants will be responsible for the cost of the kit and fleece. Three spaces are for those members who would like to learn great building skills, but are donating their time to build a puppet for the Guild to use for Guild activities like the Puppetathlon. These puppets will remain with the Guild and the Guild will pay for the kit.

Non-Guild members can also register for the workshop for \$350 plus materials fees.

Or we encourage them to join our Guild.

We expect these 12 seats will go FAST! Signups are on a 1st come basis. Mary needs to know how many kits to prepare asap, but no later than OCT 15th. So spread the word, tell your friends and sign up today at

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050E4BAEAB2AA7FC1-44767910-puppetathlon>

And more to come as we follow up with a PUPPETATHLETE TABLETOP WORKSHOP and a PUPPETATHLON OBSTACLE COURSE design & building get-together, as we get ready for our 2024 celebration. Great puppeteering and meetup opportunities for all!

The info below, provided by Mary Nagler is for her workshop registrants, but is also helpful info for any puppeteer who has ever said “Where do I find “Muppet” fleece? It takes ½ yard of fabric to cover/skin a Puppetathlete. I recommend light or bright colors for the stage. Please bring your own matching thread for the fleece.

The preferred covering is Nyla fleece, available from the following suppliers: (This is how you pick the color you want!)

<http://puppetpelts.com>(Nyla, Fuzzelle- sold in ½ yard increments)

<https://www.gastage.com/fabrics/nylafleece-nylon-puppet-fleece> (Sold by the yard)

<https://northeaststage.com/nylafleece-nylon-puppet-fleece/571-1375-oz-nylon-puppet-fleece-nfr-blushy.html>(Scroll down to see the colors, sold by the yard)

<https://monkey-boys-productions.myshopify.com/products/goin-bananas-nylafleece%E2%84%A2>(Sold in ½ yard increments, best price, limited colors)

You can also order white and dye your own unique color!

You can also cover your puppet in a good quality blanket fleece, that you’d find at Joanne’s or most fabric stores, but “Muppet” fleece hides the seam lines beautifully.



Sign up for Mary’s Workshop now! Space limited.

Dollar Store Puppet Challenge!

From Ilene Kennedy

The guild has a tradition of issuing a Guild Challenge and seeing who excels (I know, you all do!) Here is the latest Challenge from Ilene. Watch your emails for more

details on how to submit your final project. We'll want to see photos and if you write your new puppet into a videoed skit, all the better!

Build a puppet using materials purchased at the Dollar Store. Spend up to \$15 and have fun roaming the aisles looking for supplies, "Hey, I can use that for a puppet!?"

(It's not necessary to buy something for this challenge that you already have at home.)

Behind the Curtain (Meet the Guild)

Alicia M. Retes - Interpretive Artisan & Story-telling Musician

This is the beginning of an ongoing series of profiles on Guild members, old and new.



One of our newest Guild members, Alicia Retes attended our Sept. Zoom "Show & Tell". She shared her work in storytelling, introducing her cornhusk dolls that she uses to tell stories of the foods that indigenous peoples have given to the world. She mentioned that she was looking for ideas of making a cornstalk grown in front of an audience. Mary Nagler (Whorls of Wonder) and Sean and Patrick Johnson (Swazzle) both shared ideas centered around an expanding pole and the magic trick of the "growing" newspaper stalk. Swazzle illustrated their point by "growing" the arm of their Audrey II puppet.

For over 20 years Alicia has been presenting entertaining and educational programs of natural history and indigenous cultural narratives. Alicia—part Mayo and Yaqui—is a multifaceted interpretive artisan, naturalist, and story-telling musician. Originally from San Diego, her travels have taken her up and down the West Coast, Hawaii, and Australia. As the former Education Director at the Museum of the American Indian in Novato, she shares her knowledge about the Coast Miwok people and sings original trilingual songs in English, Spanish, and Coast Miwok.

Alicia is interested in bringing her stories to a larger stage. She'd like to learn more puppetry and how to build larger scale puppets/costumes. She'd like to exchange ideas and enjoys the camaraderie of working with others. You can catch a glimpse of Alicia as the featured storyteller for the Auburn Storytelling Festival 2020 at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C4E57L2jEk>. If you'd like to connect with Alicia and/or see more of her work, check out her website <http://www.aliciarettes.com/>.

If you'd like to share your story, contact Lee Armstrong, Guild Librarian library@sfbapg.org

Giant Puppets for ClimateJustice - Part 2

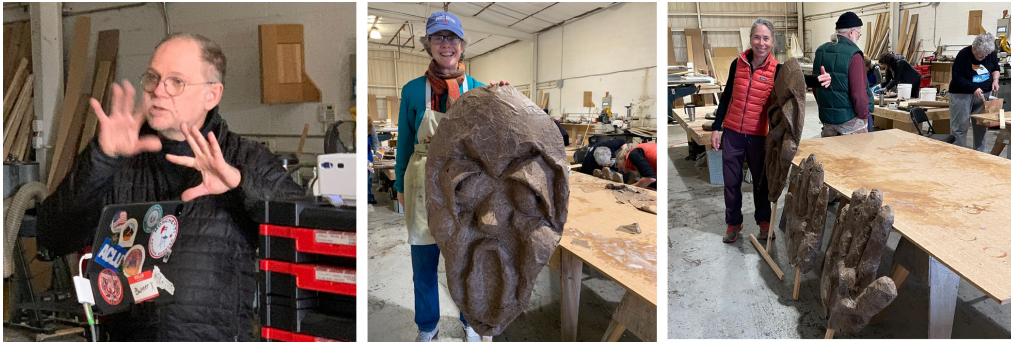
By Tree

This is the second part of the tale of building Giant Puppets for ClimateJustice.

This year began my big leap and adventure into building and using puppets for Climate and Social Justice work. I am discovering there are a number of activist groups working together under this larger umbrella of activism. Puppets are, I believe, potent visual elements. They have the ability to embody physically, the narrative and character of the story or message being conveyed. It's one of the many powers of the puppet that those of us who call ourselves puppeteers are perhaps more keenly aware of. I had no idea that at the time when I joined up with an activist group called Third Act!, that I would be eventually jumping into activist work with puppets. But here I am, almost a year later doing it with and enabling others to do this work with puppets.

Through Third Act!, I became connected with three other groups of climate activists in the Sacramento area. They heard about me through a family friend also involved in this work and wanted me to come to Sacramento to do a workshop and teach them how to build their own giant puppets. This workshop ended up being pulled together very quickly since the newly formed Third Act! Folks had planned their first big national march against the four big banks who are helping to fund fossil fuel industries. The big day of action was planned for March 21, 2023. So the two

weekends prior to that date became the big busy days of the giant puppet building workshop.



Above: Glynn (Tree) Bartlett explains the process of building giant puppets at the Sacramento Giant Puppet Workshop

Originally designed to be a single day build, it became apparent that we needed to do another weekend day in order for folks to be able to complete the creation and build of their puppets. It was quite an endeavor that was empowering for the participants and made me feel like I had added some potent, powerful, puppet energy to the cause.

Each of the four activist groups consisted of around three participants each. Two groups made their versions of Mother Earth puppets. One group did a scream puppet and another created a Greta Thunberg puppet. All of them debuted in front of the Big Banks and outside the Capitol building in Sacramento on March 23.

Giant puppets are wonderful to have as part of Climate activism because they offer the creators the opportunity to have a cast of recognizable puppet characters that can show up time and time again at actions and marches and become Avatars for the movement. They become visual memes on social media and grab noticeable attention of folks of all ages to the issues at hand.

Since their first creation, these four puppets have continued to be used, most recently at a planned action in Sacramento that took place in Old Sacramento. It consisted of a rally on the waterfront and march across the Tower Bridge and back for the final wrap up of the action. I, along with a group of around 15 activists from Sacramento, created a five plus minute puppet show with the four puppets originally created at the workshop. The story had a clothes line that stretched and was held between the two Mother Earth Puppets. A narrator (me) told a story of Greta and Scream having a conversation between the two of them about the dire consequences of climate change caused by the burning of fossil fuels.



Above: Painted Laundry banners hung out to dry.

All the while between them, five pieces of “dirty laundry” (banners)issues caused by the burning of fossil fuels, were hung on the clothesline by an Extractor character from Extinction Rebellion. Then along came the clean laundry lady who ripped down the “ dirty laundry” and put up five “clean green laundry solutions” (banners) in their place. And in the end as most fairytales go, “they lived happily ever after”. It was impactful and fun for all ages, ending with a positive message.

I have to say this has been some of the most meaningful, impactful, puppet work I’ve done so far. What is most gratifying for me, is knowing that I was able to help empower folks to unleash their personal creativity. To realize that they had the ability to make an amazing giant puppet of their own that will be available to have a visual impact for Climate Justice in the many days of action yet to come. So here’s to THE POWER OF THE PUPPET!



Guild Library News

The Guild Library List is online & Stan Winston Subscription Series is available! The Guild Library is a treasure trove of hundreds of books on puppetry. History of puppets, construction, stages, puppets in education, etc. It's now easy to see what books are available by going to <https://sfbapg.org/library-online/>. Or if at www.sfbapg.org select Resources, then Library.

Library borrowers need to have been members for at least 6 months. You can peruse the catalogue then request books by emailing Lee Armstrong at library@sfbapg.org. They will be brought to the next "in person" event. If you have a library book to return, please return it at the next "in person" meeting or mail it back ASAP to Lee at 720 Ladera Dr., Sonoma, CA 95476.

Lee will be at Manual Cinema's performance of "Frankenstein" a shadow/multimedia play at UC Davis Oct 29 (see article). You may want to check out some of our shadow puppet books like "Play With Light & Shadow" by Herta Schonewolf. If you are going to "Frankenstein" and would like to borrow, or return a book, please contact her at library@sfbapg.org and you can connect after the show.

The Stan Winston School of Character Arts is again available through the Guild Library. If you aren't familiar with this site, it's the world's premier online destination for learning the art and technology of character creation from Hollywood's leading artists and technical wizards. It has a puppet section with notable builders and performers. To get familiar with the puppet tutorials available, go to <https://www.stanwinstonschool.com/>. Then click on the search feature (magnifying glass on the upper right) and type in "puppets." However, you can also visit videos on creature fabrication, stop motion armatures, wiggling, making eyeballs and all sorts of interesting crafts!

Right now, this subscription is available to check out. Each Guild member can usually request a 2 week check out unless there's a wait list. If so, checkouts are 1 week, but you can always check out multiple times in a year. Contact Lee at library@sfbapg.org, and she will provide you with the password. If the subscription is checked out, you'll go on the waitlist for the next available check out. Don't delay, contact Lee today! If you'd like to get started immediately with these amazing tutorials and the Guild subscription is already checked out, you can sign up at <https://www.stanwinstonschool.com/> for a free 7-day trial.

100s of courses available. Check out Pathways, <https://www.stanwinstonschool.com/pathways>, with groups of courses: Basic Design, Basic Painting, Puppetry, Molding and Casting, Mechanical and Animatronics, Filmmaking, Fabrication Basics, etc. These courses open new doors and possibilities!



Above, you may want to learn more about shadow puppets from the guild library.

Puppets are Actors on Stage

So, I have determined that writing a play for puppets is just the same amount of work as writing a play for people. I had thought otherwise and took on the task with vigor. The responsibility was huge for I took a classic story of Don Quixote and fine-tuned it to family entertainment.

Though Don Quixote is a classic story, it was challenging to put in puppet language. The average reading time of Don Quixote is 17 hours and 52 minutes. This puppet play is less than an hour. Visuals were implemented to help the story along that is based on a novel.


Visuals? I should mention that we utilize three screens in the theater. We use the screens to thrust a story forward. We use film, and images on the screens. This could be viewed as mixed media. In reality, mixed media is common in regional theaters.

I also thought that rehearsals would be minimal since the puppeteers don't need to memorize lines. Yet, they must memorize moments and places on the stage for the puppets. This is called 'blocking.' I had to block puppets! This makes me laugh that I had to write out where the puppets must be for the lines. It's just like a play.

The puppets for Don Quixote are extremely well handcrafted and a joy to watch on stage. They were made in the Czech Republic with artistry I have never seen before. HMTC is looking forward to audience reaction to something very special for Hanford audience.

Pre-tickets at our website www.HanfordMTC.com

Shows October 8 and 15, at 1pm and 5pm



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Don Quixote
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Saavedra

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by Silvia Gonzalez S.

*"Finally, from so little sleeping and
so much reading, his brain dried up and
he went completely out of his mind."*

October 8 & 15
1pm & 5pm

Upcoming Shows and Events

Driveway Follies in Oakland California

by Fred Riley III

Driveway Follies in Oakland California has been delighting fans since 2008. The brainchild and labor of love for Larry Schmidt, he dreamt up and collected master crafts people to help him build this masterpiece of puppet theater. For the first decade of the show, it was all personally financed by Larry, but a nonprofit stepped in to help a year before his passing in January of 2019. At that time the board asked me if we could continue the tradition. I am now the artistic director of Driveway Follies and I take the role very seriously. I do all I can to make the show something that Larry would be proud of. The show celebrates the season with a variety of musical acts and funny interludes with our host "Aunt Grandma" (a witch) and "Jittiers" (a bat). Each year we rotate acts and try to refurbish and bring back some of the older beloved pieces. This year we have some new puppeteers, so we scaled back a bit, but it is still a strong show that I think Larry would be proud of. I am also trying to weave back in some of the strange and wonderful idiosyncratic banter that takes it out of the realm of straight musical revue. It does get crowded, but the show repeats many times through the night. So be patient and enjoy the wait for the best spot with your fellow puppet and Halloween enthusiasts. **We will pull the stage out on October 7th at 10am. If you'd like to come lend a hand, we could really use it.** (Email me at the address below for the location). We will start erecting the stage that day. In that process, we will be pulling out a lot of puppets. If you have any interest in marionettes, I'd love to show you some of them and discuss their workings and construction in the afternoon. Hope to see you there or at the show. Happy Halloween everyone!! Driveway Follies October 30-31st Sunset-10pm (ish) Fred C Riley III, oddsavvy@gmail.com



Frankenstein by Manual Cinema

Sunday, October 29, 2023 2:00pm

Mondavi Center, Jackson Hall, 523 Mrak Hall Dr, Davis, CA 95616, UC Davis

“An ingenious merger of live music and captivating visuals... No matter where you look, you’ll find beauty and intrigue.” Chicago Sun-Times

Love, loss and creation merge in unexpected ways as Manual Cinema presents its thrilling version of the classic Gothic tale Frankenstein.

The Chicago-based performance collective imaginatively combines shadow puppetry, cinematic techniques, sound effects and live music in haunting shows like nothing else you’ve ever seen. Here the classic tale of Frankenstein is stitched together with the biography of the original novel’s author, Mary Shelley, to create an unexpected story about the beauty and horror of creation. The real-life and fictional narratives of Shelley, Victor Frankenstein and Frankenstein’s monster expose how family, community and education shape personhood—or destroy it by their absence. Following each performance of Manual Cinema’s Frankenstein, ticket holders will be welcomed to “Puppet Time,” a behind-the-scenes experience that will highlight the innovative artistry of Manual Cinema’s puppets and props.

Recommended for ages 8 and up. There are loud sounds, flashing lights and haze.

For video & photos: <https://www.mondaviarts.org/whats-on/frankenstein/#watch-listen>

Tickets are going fast. Get yours and if you’d like to get-together for a quick meet and greet after the show, look for the SFBAPG sign & Lee Armstrong (president@sfbapg.org) in the theater lobby.



SONG OF THE NORTH performances in San Francisco

Dear friends and fellow puppeteers,

This is Hamid Rahmanian (creator of Feathers of Fire). After three years in production, I am bringing my new puppet production, SONG OF THE NORTH, to San Francisco.

This 83-minute show contains 483 puppets, 208 animated backgrounds, and nine actors. The show narrates one of the most beautiful epic love story ever written from the Persian book of Kings; Shahnameh.

We premiered this show in France and then at the Harvey stage at BAM in New York, traveling since 2022. **We are returning to Fort Mason on October 20-22nd with only four performances.**

Last time, in 2016, you honored me with your presence for Feathers of Fire. Now, I would like to ask you to spread the word among your fellow puppetry and puppet

enthusiasts in the Bay Area to come and see one of the most complex puppet shows created in America.

Below, in the attachment, I am sharing a few clips and graphics. It would be great support for us, who are independent puppet company, to share the news among the community.

You can see more on <https://www.kingorama.com/song-of-the-north>

Best wishes,

Hamid Rahmanian



Analyzing Fairytales Workshop with John Boe and Ruth Stotter

Participants share a fairytale, group discussion, followed by John Boe and Ruth Stotter providing commentary. A booklet is mailed prior to the meeting with explanations of interpretive terminology. This is the 16th seminar in this series. Both

returning participants and newcomers welcome. You may choose a fairytale of your choice or request suggestions.

\$90. Lunch included. Limited to 8 participants. Saturday, October 7, 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM.

To enroll send payment to:

Ruth Stotter
2244 Vistazo Street East
Tiburon, CA 94920

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John Boe taught at UC Davis for thirty years, including courses in storytelling, fairy tales, and children's literature. He has published books, essays, articles, poems, and stories, taught classes in analyzing fairytales, and frequently performed as a storyteller.

Ruth Stotter was the Director of the Certificate in Storytelling program at Dominican College. She received the Oracle Lifetime achievement award from the National Storytelling Network and has performed and taught storytelling on five continents.

All workshops take place in Tiburon (home of Ruth Stotter).

For questions or further information: Ruth Stotter — r.stotter@icloud.com

John Boe — jdboe@icloud.com



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