



Welcome to your December 2023 newsletter, the last newsletter you will get this year. To continue to receive newsletters in 2024 don't forget to renew.
Read on and enjoy!

And now, an important message from Membership.

Its almost the end of the year, and time to renew!

We value you as a member so get ready to renew or, better yet, renew today. Our membership year goes from Jan 1st to Dec 31st of the year, and early renewal is open for 2024. Your dues help us to have meetings, guest artists, maintain the website, and help spread the art of puppetry.

To renew, go to the website, and click Join (<https://sfbapg.org/join>)

Not sure if you have renewed? Questions? Ideas for a better membership experience? Email Membership@sfbapg.org

Look for an email with your last renewal date, coming this month.

Thank you to those that have already renewed. We look forward to celebrating 70 years with you in 2024!

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Hi Guild Friends

Traditionally, the Guild has its Holiday Party after Christmas because, for performing puppeteers, this is one of the busiest months of the year. It is a great time, though, to catch puppet performances in your local library. Check out their schedule. Nothing listed? Mention to your librarian that it would be great to have a live puppet show in your town!

Our Guild's mission is to encourage the art of puppetry in the Bay Area. Let's be proactive.

Renew your membership this December.

Would you like to share your interest in puppetry with a friend that might be intrigued by this unique art form?

Please consider giving friends a Guild membership this year.

Personally, I've asked a few friends if they'd like a gift membership. It's great to see them at workshops and other Guild events!

If you hear of puppet shows in the Bay Area, or puppet opportunities, or want to show off your puppet creations, share your expertise, have a great puppet photo, or anything else puppet-related...

Send your info for the Guild newsletter at least 2 days before the end of the month, to Michael Nelson at newsletter@sfbapg.org.

Thank you in advance for being Puppet Proactive!

In 2024, it will be 70 years since our Guild Founders formed a little puppet interest group in the Bay Area. We are planning a special 70th Anniversary Bay Area Puppetry Festival. We welcome your involvement. The 70th Anniversary Planning Committee will next meet in late Dec or early January. If you'd like to be in on the ground floor of planning this fun event, contact me at president@sfbapg.org for a Zoom link.

You are also welcome to join our very active Zoom Guild Programming Meeting, the 1st Tuesday of each month, where ideas for Guild events percolate into programs. The next one is Jan. 2, usually at 6:30. Contact Marisol Himmel at programming@sfbpg.org for a Zoom link and time.

Wishing everyone a joyful holiday! Lee Armstrong, SFBAPG President

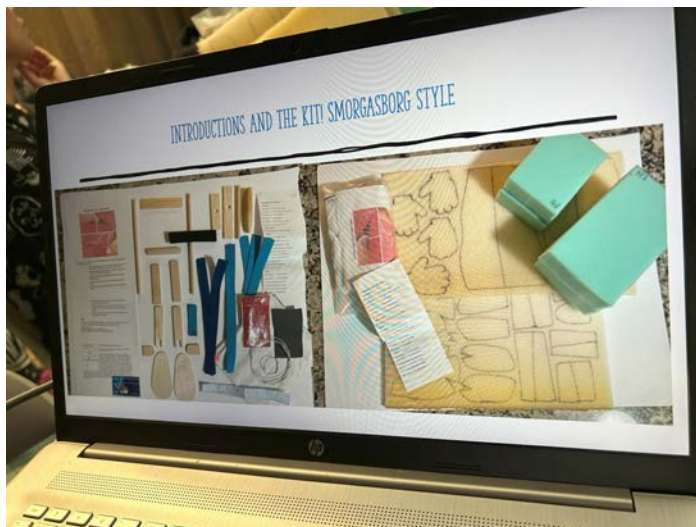


What's the Guild been up to?

Have you attended any of the **Guild Show and Tells**? They have been on Zoom and have been great. Find out what fascinating projects your fellow puppeteers are up to. Watch for links to join the next one!

If you missed the Guild weekend long **Mary Nagler workshop**, you missed a great one.

Mary Nagler led a workshop teaching us how to build a beautiful table top puppet. While we all have a ways to get to the finish line, we learned valuable skills and techniques. We can't wait to show them off! Check out a few snapshots, below.





Puppets in the Classroom

by Marisol from Moddy Puppets

The benefits of having puppets in the classroom are well documented and, in my experience, innumerable. In my homeschool enrichment program I use different puppets for the different subjects I teach. I find that they are an engaging, entertaining and memorable way to model behavior (both good AND bad, and to show the consequences of bad behavior) as well as emotional regulation. They are a wonderful tool for introducing new vocabulary, practicing a new language or improving one the kids already know. A puppet is an effective way to have my students pay attention and listen to directions and instructions being given for a project, as it aids in increasing their concentration.

Having a puppet classmate also helps my students improve their communication, particularly when practicing difficult conversations or rehearsing uncomfortable scenarios like standing up to a bully. So many benefits! And that's not even mentioning all that happens when the kids are the ones with the puppet on their hands!

The furry monster in the photos is Baby Chester, whom I have in the classroom to help with science concepts. The fact that Chester is a baby makes it easy to explain why he "takes naps" during my lesson. Chester then "wakes up" having missed it all, and the kids have to explain to Chester what we just talked about. This helps me gauge their understanding and recall.

Baby Chester is a class favorite and regularly receives fan art which is on display in my classroom as well as on the "Baby Chester Fan Club" page on my website where you can also find coloring pages and free printable paper puppet patterns: <https://moddypuppets.com/baby-chesters-fan-page>



Mad Puppet Teacher Goes To College, part one

Camilla Henneman

This fall finds me back in the classroom. I am teaching a university course at UCSC. Muppet Magic was first introduced at UCSC by Kathy Foley in the 1990s. Kathy explained to me that Jim Henson's death had a powerful impact on many of the students who had grown up with Sesame Street and the Muppets. In response she developed the college course, Muppet Magic. The class was a huge success, and it became a regular part of the UCSC theater arts curriculum. When I returned to the University to get my masters and teaching credential, I took the course from Kathy. When Kathy retired, she passed the class onto Lee Armstrong and Kamela Portuges. Kamela's passing and Lee's health were major factors in Lee's decision to not renew her contract to teach the class this year. Last spring, Lee invited me to take over the course. The years that Kathy and Lee spent developing and documenting the course gave me a wonderful archive of material.

Boy, have things changed since I was first a student at UCSC in 1976. Technology has taken over. I felt like I needed to take a college level course to learn the technology required to teach the class and to navigate the university system. Left to my own devices, I prefer working with nothing more technologically complex than a stick tied to a stone, but I was lucky to have some great teaching assistants to help navigate the tech waters.

Another thing that has changed is the demographics of the student body. Many of the students in the current class are international students who did not grow up on Sesame Street and never watched The Muppets. This was their first encounter with the vast cultural phenomenon, The Muppets.

Two weeks before the course was to start, (of course) I came down with Covid. I knew that I could teach the course on Zoom if I had to, but that meant even more tech challenges. I got through the Covid, but my access to most things I needed in the university system was blocked because of the strict cyber security the university uses. Somehow, things worked out, with a lot of help from my friends and a few tech savvy TAs.

Fortunately, I got over the Covid in time just in time to do my first lecture. So I am embarking on the adventure of starting a new career again. I figure if Mick Jagger can be touring at 81, I can start a new career at 70.

I plan to do a follow up of this article after the final projects are in, but these are some of my take aways from the class so far:

You can do the same project with kindergarteners and college students but college students can use a glue gun.

Kindergartners need lots of playtime. University students need play time too. But when you tell kindergartners to put their toys away and get ready to pay attention, they put their toys away and sit criss-cross-applesauce on the carpet. University students go to the top of the theater and try to hide their phones and laptops.

It has been a challenge, but it has also been a blast. I need to get this article to the editor, so I will stop here. More to follow (and photos below.)



Above, Lee Armstrong as guest lecturer.



December 9 Puppet Event in Capitola

From the Puppetry Institute of Santa Cruz

Hi Puppetistas!

We're hosting a puppet event Dec 9th in Capitola and would love to have guild members come down with their puppets and be a part of it. These are usually monthly events but the holiday one is always a lot of fun. Here's a FB link to the event: <https://fb.me/e/gSTPk9eBL> and will include a blurb and some pics from last years event. Would really love to see ya there!

Here's the blurb:

The Puppetry Institute is celebrating going into our 7th year in the Santa Cruz community with a special Holiday edition of "Imaginarium!" Come get in the holiday spirit of things by joining us in showing off the diversity and craftsmanship in what we do with our imaginations... Puppet Storytime* Holiday Puppet Crafts. Support your local Artists by finding that one of a kind gift inside The Dragon Academy. And of course lots and lots of Mythical Creatures puppets from Dr Mecurio! Imaginarium is a Free Family Friendly Event, December 9 from 1-4pm, in the Courtyard at the Capitola Mall. 1855 41st ave Capitola 95010.



Help a fellow puppeteer? The below message to your editor (me) is from guild member Mary Nagler.

Hi Michael, I am calling this to your attention since this happens a lot, where puppet artists don't get proper credit, and I thought our SFBPG community might join with me to address this with NPR. Marina is a new friend from the National Capital Puppetry Guild and active in our Eco puppetry committee. Her work is amazing and deserves proper credit.

Here is her new project website: <https://www.soilspiritforest.com/>

Cheers, Mary Nagler

(And from Marina) Dear puppet community,

I write to ask for your help to get my work and artistry properly publicly acknowledged and recognized. NPR recently highlighted my puppetry work in medical education... but did not credit me!

I disappeared from the NYC puppetry community for some years, because of the immense effort it took to make this work happen. Now, my work is being celebrated in the book Artists Remaking Medicine, where a whole chapter is dedicated to the art of puppetry animation and its incredible power to train future doctors and healers. Dr. Rana Awdish and I interviewed almost 30 students whom I trained through puppetry ---- their words are incredible, and a testament to the deep and lasting impact of this work.

Could you please tag @NPR and leave a brief comment to urge them to properly credit my name and website in their reporting?

thank you so much. I hope to see you at, and work together on, a puppet show soon

Marina

Send your future puppet news to newsletter@sfbapg.org



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