



March 2025

It is said that March blows in like a lion (and out like a lamb.)

The stage puppet lion, here, is from Folkmanis, a local, Bay Area company and huge and long time supporter of the guild. At our holiday meeting Folkmanis had a 'try on new designs' booth and gave away a bunch of puppets to lucky guild members who attended. They were also big supporters of our puppet festival last summer.

And they make wonderful puppets!



President's Message

Dear Guild Members,

As February comes to a close, I want to take a moment to reflect on all the wonderful things happening in our guild and share some important updates. It's been a busy and exciting time for us,

and I couldn't be prouder of this amazing community!

First, a heartfelt *thank you* to everyone who stepped up and offered to volunteer. Your willingness to contribute your time and energy is what keeps our guild thriving. Whether you're helping with hospitality, storage, reporting, or any other task, your efforts are deeply appreciated. Together, we're building something truly special.

Let's give a round of applause to everyone who participated in our Virtual Show & Tell at the end of last month! The creativity on display was nothing short of inspiring. From beautifully crafted puppets to innovative work-in-progress designs, it was a joy to see what everyone has been working on. Special thanks to our presenters for sharing their talents and stories—it's moments like these that remind us why we love puppetry.

Share Upcoming Performances or Activities

Do you know of any public puppetry performances, workshops, or activities happening in your area? We'd love to include them in our newsletter! Please send any details to ****newsletter@sfbapg.org****, so we can spread the word and keep everyone informed about what's happening in the wider puppetry world.

Exciting News: Moving Towards Nonprofit Status

We're also excited to share that we're moving forward with plans to become a nonprofit organization. This is a significant step for our guild, and we're eager to explore the new opportunities and resources this status will bring. Keep an eye out for more information in the coming weeks and months as we navigate this process. We're looking forward to sharing updates and involving our members every step of the way.

Keep Creating at Your Own Pace

Finally, I want to encourage each of you to continue exploring the art of puppetry at whatever level feels right for you. Whether you're crafting elaborate marionettes or just starting out with sock puppets, every contribution matters. Puppetry is an art form that thrives on passion and imagination—there's no “right” way to do it. So, keep creating, experimenting, and sharing your work with the world. Remember, every puppet has a story to tell, and we can't wait to see yours come to life!

Thank you all for being part of this incredible community. Let's keep supporting one another as we bring joy and creativity through the magic of puppetry.

Puppetly yours,

Talib Huff

Guild President

P.S. Don't forget—our next meeting is just around the corner! Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more details in the upcoming newsletter!

GUILD MARCH MEETING

**Don't Miss This March Guild Meeting -
Animating Puppets - Eyes, Eyebrows, and More!**

Sun. Mar. 16, 1- 4:30 pm

Marin Theatre Company (MTC) 397 Miller Avenue, Mill Valley, <https://www.marintheatre.org/>

2:00 Guild Social Meet & Greet PLUS Brief SF Bay Area Puppeteers Guild Meeting.

2 Workshops - (you can sign up for either workshop or both)

1-1:45 Pre-Meeting "Intro to Puppetry" with Lee Armstrong

2:30-4:00 "Eye Mechanisms for Puppets" Demo and "hands-on" workshop with Lisa Zagone

Workshop Details

Primary Workshop 2:30 - 4:30 "Eye Mechanisms for Puppets" with Lisa Zagone

This is a combination demo and "hands-on" workshop. The demo explores a variety of mechanisms for adding expressiveness to puppets, such as eyelids, moving eyes, eyebrows, nose ear and whisker wiggles. It will feature mechanisms for moving mouth puppets as well as wooden puppets (rod puppets and marionettes) and suggest examples for retrofitting existing puppets. The hands-on portion will allow participants to make their own mech. All materials provided.

Ages: Adult. Limit 30 participants



Left: Lee Armstrong. Above, Lisa Zagone's work.

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Lisa Zagone, <https://lisazagone.com/puppets>, is a professional theater designer of over 20 years, and a university lecturer in technical theatre for 12 years. Her area of specialty is in set, props and costume design. In addition, she has a Masters in Fine Art, and is enrolled at UConn Puppetry Arts graduate school.

Pre-Meeting Workshop 1-1:45 “Intro to Puppetry” with Lee Armstrong

Invite your friends! Do they ever wonder what the art of puppetry is all about? This 45-minute workshop, led by award-winning puppeteer **Lee Armstrong**, combines a demo with hands-on practice to answer the key question: “What do you do once you have a puppet on your hand?” You’ll explore the basics of bringing puppets to life using hand puppets and moving-mouth “Muppet-style” puppets.

Puppets provided by [Folkmanis Puppets](#), or bring your own.

Ages: 12 and up, & adults. **Limit 30 participants.** **Skill Level:** Perfect for beginners; but all experience levels welcome.

Lee Armstrong is the co-owner of Sonoma-based [Images in Motion](#) which specializes in TV puppetry. A regional Emmy winner, Lee has taught puppetry to thousands of children and adults and has served as Lecturer at UC Santa Cruz for “Jim Henson and the Art of the Muppets.” Her credits include the original *Fraggle Rock*, *Being John Malkovich*, PBS shows, commercials and more.

Reserve your seat now for either, or both workshops at [SFBAPG Puppet Workshops Mar. 16](#)

FYI, these free workshops will be advertised on the MTC website next week, so spaces may go quickly. If you want to come, sign up NOW!

Carpool (if you need a ride or can give a ride, where do you live?) or Questions? Please email programming@sfbapg.org

All SFBAPG meetings are free and open to the public, <https://sfbapg.org/>.

OUR HOSTS FOR THE MEETING, MARIN THEATRE COMPANY, ARE BIG PUPPET SUPPORTERS

Puppets Are Alive & Well At MTC

A recent article from <https://pacificsun.com/marin-theatre-puppets/> looked at the Marin Theatre Company’s puppet series. It’s especially interesting as it features Guild performers and Jackie Katz, MTC’s Education Director, who has been instrumental in MTC hosting our March Guild meeting.

No Strings Attached: Marin Theatre Gets Puppetry

By David Templeton Dec 2, 2024

Last August, when Jackie Katz took on the role of director of education for Marin Theatre, she came to the position with loads of creative ideas. One of them did not take long to put into action. Puppets.

“I love puppets,” Katz confirmed. “I knew I wanted to create something here at Marin Theatre where kids and families got to experience the beauty and excitement of puppetry as an art form.”

Katz, whose official bio refers to her as a “radical educator, human rights activist and social practice artist,” has spent the last several years teaching private and public school classes in San Francisco. She’s also taught college-level theater courses in San Quentin Prison. She is the founder Teatro Almas Libres, a group formed to promote and improve the rights and financial situations of LatinX women, domestic workers, farmworkers and artists in Sonoma County.

Beginning this month, under Katz's guidance, the Marin Theatre education program is launching its new "Saturday Series," a monthly lineup of puppet-focused theatrical events for young people, families and puppet-loving adults.

Read the entire article at <https://pacificsun.com/marin-theatre-puppets/>



SFBAPG Newsletter Scoop: Guild Members Honored with Highest North American Puppetry Award

Later this month UNIMA-USA will announce the winners of the UNIMA-USA Citation of Excellence. Among this year's winners will be guild member companies Fratello Marionettes and Magical Moonshine Theatre.

The winning productions are *Carnival of the Animals* (Fratello Marionettes) and *Puppylocks and the Three Bears* (Magical Moonshine Theatre.)



Winners-Swans from *Carnival of Animals*, and *Puppylocks and the Three Bears*

The UNIMA USA website describes the award as follows:

Since 1975 UNIMA-USA has awarded Citations of Excellence (the "UNI") that recognize and reward the best of the puppetry arts in this country...The Citations are awarded to shows that touch their audiences deeply; that totally engage, enchant and enthrall. In meeting the criteria for excellent puppetry, Citation-worthy shows must also stand as prime examples of excellent theatre.

While it is possible for the secret UNIMA citation reviewers to see stand alone shows, it is much easier for shows at festivals, like the guild's fest in Sonoma last summer, to garner enough votes to win. So, congratulations to the companies for producing winning shows and to the guild for giving them an opportunity to be seen and reviewed.

Call for Nominations for Guild Board of Directors, April 5 deadline

Do you share our common goal of promoting the art of puppetry in the Bay Area? If so, you might be interested in serving on the SFBAPG Board. Please contact the Nominating Committee at nominations@sfbapg.org by April 5th for more information.

Eligibility: Candidates must have been members of the SFBAPG for at least one year prior to the elections.

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 must want to be an active volunteer, taking on such positions 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 20th, to be published in the May newsletter.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Your Nominating Committee

Barbara Grillo

Michael Nelson

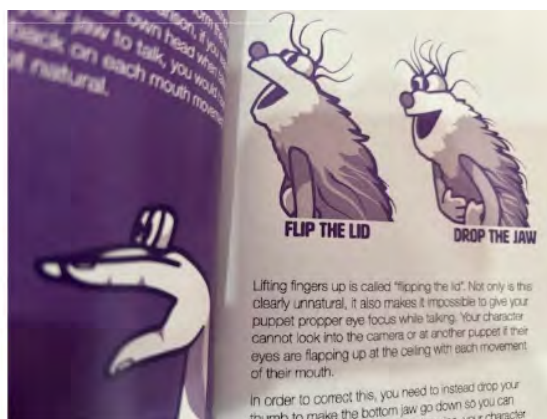
Lee Armstrong

Your Guild Library News

Great news! The Guild library is coming to the March 16 Guild meeting. There will be books available to check out, but you can also request a specific book from the hundreds of books, from the 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. Email library@sfbapg.org.

In thinking of Adam Kreutinger, an amazing puppet builder, puppeteer and teacher, and of all the resources he created and shared with other puppeteers, the Guild library has a copy of his *Puppetry*

101: *Creating film & TV Style Puppetry*. Ilene Kennedy has this book now, but if you'd like to be next on the list, email library@sfbapg.org.



Another gem is *Foam Patterning & Construction* by Mary McClung. This book has a wealth of info on foam construction, not only for puppeteers, but giant costume builders and mask makers. Filled with photos and drawings, this is a valuable resource book.



Library borrowers need to be members for 6 months (or you can deposit a check for the value of the book, to be returned when the book is brought back). You can peruse the catalogue then request books by emailing Lee Armstrong at library@sfbapg.org no later than 03/14. **If you have a library book to return**, please return it at the March 16 meeting or mail it back ASAP to Lee at 720 Ladera Dr., Sonoma, CA 95476.

Letters to the Editor

In an earlier SFBAPG newsletter you predicted Trump puppets would be the most photographed figures of the year, and you may be right.

Below I'm pasting part of today's *San Francisco Chronicle* that includes a photograph of my Trump puppet with a sign that says

"Fire Me Too!" It was taken outside San Francisco City Hall during a protest against Elon Musk's firing so many government workers without cause. The rally also celebrated President's Day by calling for "No Kings" in Washington. Please use part or all in newsletter if you can.

Incidentally, the *Chron's* caption is not quite accurate; I'm holding a puppet and the puppet is wearing the sign.

Take care, Joel Schechter



Puppet Master Workshop Offered in Marin

Join Woander as we host Donovan Zimmerman, Artistic Director of Paperhand Puppet for a master workshop in the art of puppetry. For 25 years, Paperhand Puppet Project has been creating multi-scaled multi-disciplined puppet productions featuring: Giant puppets, masks, stilts, painted cardboard, shadows and illuminated puppets. The puppets are used in parades, marches, roving events and much more. Donovan has passionately dedicated his life to this engaging, interactive and inspiring artform.

In this workshop, we will be learning these techniques as we create puppets related to the world of The Wylding Woods to be used in Woander's community events and future shows.

Adult participants will contribute to creating the large scale puppets as well as make a puppet or mask of their own.

For child participants, we will spend time making puppets and masks as well as playing theatre games and learning about puppetry.

On Friday, we will take our newly created puppets to the local farmer's market for a showing.

O'Hanlon Center for the Arts

616 Throckmorton Ave

Mill Valley, CA 94941

April 7 - 11th

9am - 4pm

(lunch break at noon)

Limited partial scholarships are available. Please email [info\(at\)woanderworld.com](mailto:info@woanderworld.com) with a bit about your interest and need.

You Are Our Eyes and Ears

Member Lisa Zagone shared the following:

May 8 and 10, Tide and Foam will be performing in the San Francisco International Arts festival. They are a theater company with Conor Lifson, that use interesting combinations of object theater and puppetry as well as physical theater etc. Seems like it might be worth checking out? The blurb about the show is on this website: https://www.sfiac.org/2025_duane_forrest_tide_and_foam

Second Annual Napa Valley Puppetry Festival Looking for Puppeteers

Hey Puppeteers,

Our second annual Napa Valley Puppetry Festival will be held on July 25th & 26th at The White Barn in St. Helena

We are looking for local performers for indoor & outdoor shows.

We are also looking for artists to participate in our Giant Puppet Parade.

If you have any interest, feel free to email me at:

dgarden1@sbcglobal.net

Thanks,

David Garden Jr.

Director, The White Barn

Request for Puppet Talk

Hello. I'm looking to host a talk on the history of puppets sometime in April - I work in an assisted living and memory care - I would be able to pay a

Small fee to the speaker - in general I want to invoke memories for our residents and promote the art for our greater online community

We are located in Fremont - maybe someone local would make it easier to travel here.

Jessica

If you are interested in responding to Jessica's request, please send an email to president@sfbapg.org.



Under The Puppet presents its biggest episode yet!

An hour long conversation with The Puppeteers of Pee Wee's Playhouse, recorded live at The Bob Baker Marionette Theater on February 2, 2025 in partnership with the Los Angeles Guild of Puppetry. Featuring Wayne White, Ric Heitzman, George McGrath, Alison Mork and Kevin Carlson, who give us a peek behind the Playhouse walls and what it was like to work on this iconic show.

The show is available March 1, 2025 wherever you listen to podcasts. Just search for Under The Puppet or you can listen anytime after March 1, 2025 at UnderThePuppet.com

