



Editor's note: If you get to the bottom of this email newsletter and there's a link to VIEW THE REST OF THE EMAIL, click on that to keep reading.

Letter From the President,

Greetings! Summertime is often travel season for puppeteers. Whether it's across the globe or across town, we often find ourselves, "on the road again," as the song goes. Even without scheduled shows this is the season of getting out and about. I'm inviting the Guild to participate in a little fun: make it a goal to start carrying a puppet with you on your travels (that is, if you don't already). Whenever you find time, take a selfie of you and your puppet. If you want to do a short 10 to 30 second video, that would be great, too! Send them to me at president@sfbapg.org with "Puppet Travels" in subject line. I'll put together a video/slide show of the submissions and post it on our website.

Some details:

Do I have to go someplace exotic?

No! You can take a selfie in front of your local grocery store.

Can I interview my puppet?

Certainly! It's a great way to get over nervousness.

Does it need to be part of a show?

No! This can just be a puppet you had in your collection for years and you've never used it. Pull it out and give it some life!

What if somebody else is in the shot?

I can blank out faces of people if needed. If you do interact with someone, make sure you tell them where this will be used and get their permission.

Will this work? I don't know! I've done video editing and slideshows before but never

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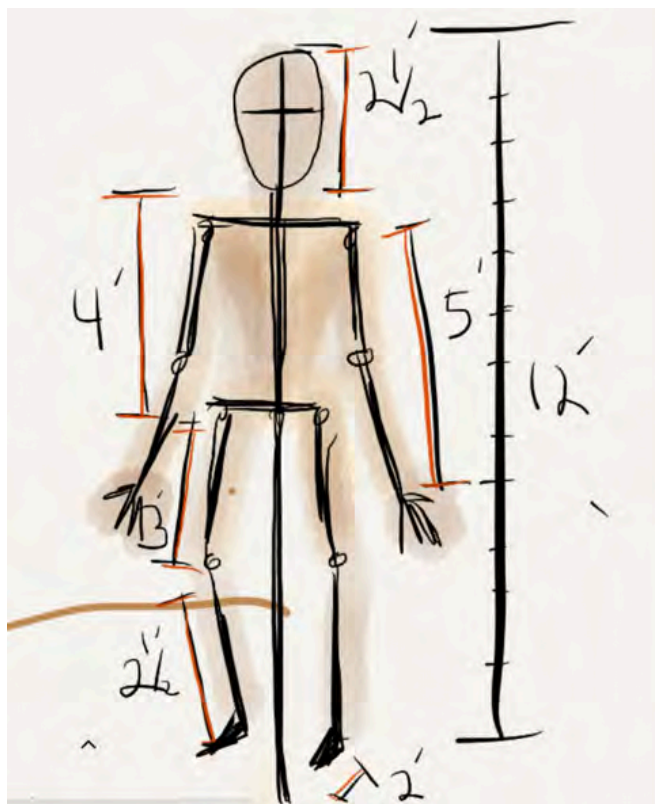
library@sfbapg.org

Newsletter

Michael Nelson

newsletter@sfbapg.org

with a large group of people contributing. It sounds like it could be a hoot. Part of my thought behind this is to get more puppets out into the world and bring a little levity to our daily lives. If you have any other questions or ideas, go ahead and email me at the address above.



Guild meeting in Sacramento!

Processional Puppets, Great and Small

When: Saturday, June 7, 12:30pm to 4:30pm

Where: 3308 Hunter Lane, Carmichael CA 95608

Come join us in the land of 10-minute paper mache drying cycles! Yes, it will be warm outside (high 90's are currently predicted mid-day with low 70's in the evening), but look at the agenda:

- Meet and greet session - a chance to talk to your friends and colleagues and get to know each other better.
- Brief business meeting - find out what's going on in your Guild
- Panel discussion with a Q&A session on the Art and Science of the building and
- wrangling of larger puppets, especially in processions.
- Make and Take - go home with your own simple parade puppet using the materials provided. (If possible, BYOHGG, bring your own hot glue gun). This project is simple enough to be done in a few minutes and could easily be scaled up or used with children.

We hope to see you there. Watch your email boxes for a Sign-up Genius in the next day or so. If you want any suggestions on places to stop along the way or things to do in Sacramento if you want to make a day of it, drop me an email at thuff@sfbapg.org

RSVP here. (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C054EA4AB2BAAFFCC43-57137346-guild#/>)

p.s. This is the first time I've used sign-Up Genius. If you encounter any problems, please let me know.

And for those interested in giant puppets....



The Vallejo Giant Puppet Project is seeking volunteers to join us for a day of giant parade puppets, July 4 (10am) in Vallejo. We always have a blast with a short-ish parade in the Bay Area city with the best weather, followed by a lunch at Michael and Valerie Nelson's house. The crew consist of guild members and community volunteers. Most of the puppets are somewhat self supporting and there are some limited roles for children as well. If you are interested in joining us, email Michael and Valerie at mnelson@sfbapg.org.



Step into the world of tabletop puppetry with acclaimed puppeteer, Fred C. Riley III in an immersive and dynamic workshop designed for performers of all levels.

WHEN: July 19-20, 2025, 10-3pm

WHERE: [Marin Theater Company](#), [397 Miller Ave](#), [Mill Valley, CA](#)

COST: \$200 for non-Guild members or \$175 for current Guild members, courtesy of the Nick Barone Scholarship Fund. (Select the “Are you a Guild Member button” & the discounted cost will appear on the next screen.)

If you haven’t renewed yet, this is a great time to do it.

If you are a Guild member and additional financial aid is needed, please apply for limited scholarships by emailing the Nick Barone Scholarship Fund, through Lisa at Odd Savvy here: emtricity@protonmail.com.

Register at [Master the Art of Tabletop Puppetry ve 2-Day Workshop – SFBAPG – San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers Guild](#)

This class offers a unique opportunity to learn the foundational techniques that bring puppets to life through the artistry of gravity, focus, and breath.

Whether you’re a curious beginner or a seasoned puppeteer looking to refine your skills, this workshop will cover:

- The Basics of Tabletop Puppetry: Understand how gravity informs natural movement, how focus tells a story, and how breath brings subtle realism to performance.
- Solo and Ensemble Techniques: Learn how to animate a single figure with one, two, or even three puppeteers in harmony.
- Hands-On Training: Participants will gain practical experience manipulating tabletop puppets under Fred’s expert guidance.

Fred C. Riley III is founder and artistic director of Odd Savvy <https://oddsavvy.com/>. He brings years of performance, directing, and puppetry expertise to this exciting class. Fred has worked with Jon Ludwig, Ping Chong, Janie Geiser, Yeng Feng, Josef Krofta, and Larry Reed, to name a few of the iconic directors that he has learned from over many years in puppet theater. He has performed marionettes from 9 foot to 7 inches tall. He has performed rod, moving mouth, Czech black, tabletop, mask, and every combination thereof. He has performed shadow with press screen, overhead, and 30 foot wide cinematic. He has directed and written for the Center for Puppetry Arts and many others. He choreographed for Ping Chong and Company. He has taught movement and puppet theory. He voiced many puppets and has done voice over work for many companies. He has recorded and done sound design. His passion for collaborative storytelling and precision movement makes this a must-attend event for artists, educators, and theater enthusiasts alike.

“This is a great opportunity for new puppeteers, but also an exciting workshop for pro puppeteers. Come “play” with the art of puppetry. I just registered, as I think this will fill up quickly and I don’t want to miss it.” – Lee Armstrong, TV puppeteer

Spaces are limited—reserve your spot today and bring your puppets to life like never before!

The 8th Annual Summer Puppetry Festival at the Menlo Park Libraries celebrates puppetry in its many forms, with a series of puppet shows and related events featuring beloved performers from throughout the Bay Area and beyond. June info below and July, Aug program will be in the next newsletters or go to <https://menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/Library-and-Community-Services/Events/Events-for-adults/20250609-Puppetry-Festival-Authors> for full schedule.

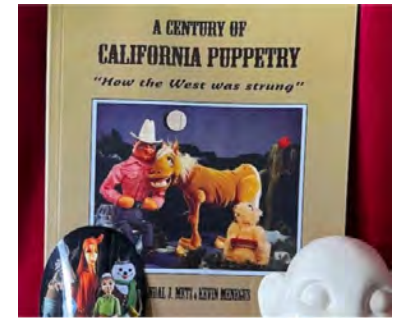
They kick off their Summer Puppetry Festival with a look at California's history of puppets! Meet the authors of [A Century of California Puppetry: How the West was Strung](#), a book sharing the fascinating history of puppetry and puppeteers in California since the late 1800's.

Author Talk: A Century of California Puppetry

Monday, June 9, 6-7 p.m. Menlo Park Library, 800 Alma St.

Meet the authors of a book about California's fascinating history of puppetry and puppeteers. Guild members Randal J. Metz and Kevin Menegus, each well-established puppetry artists themselves, dove into California's century-plus of puppetry—from rustic performances during the Gold Rush, to large touring companies playing in vaudeville houses, to small troupes during and after the Depression, to television, theme parks, and beyond.

Randal J. Metz is the founder of [the Puppet Company](#), performing shows throughout California. He is also the longtime Director of The Storybook Puppet Theater at Children's Fairyland in Oakland, the oldest continuously-running puppet theater in the United States. Randal's other books include [Children's Fairyland](#) (Images of America series) and [Enchanted Strings: Bob Baker Marionette Theater](#).



Kevin Menegus is founder, builder, and performer of [Fratello Marionettes](#), entertaining audiences and continuing the tradition of classic marionette performances since 1989, using traditional music, intricate costumes, and dramatic staging. In addition to performing throughout the west coast and overseas, Kevin does puppet restoration work Kevin does for museums and private clients all over the globe.

Other June Events at the Festival



Tuesday, June 24, 6-7:30 p.m. Menlo Park Library, 800 Alma St.

<https://menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/Library-and-Community-Services/Events/Events-for-adults/20250624-Puppetry-Festival-Big-Bird>

Documentary: I Am Big Bird is an affectionate portrait of Carroll Spinney, the beloved puppeteer responsible for making worldwide icons out of Sesame Street's Big Bird and Oscar the Grouch for over 45 years.

June Performance

The Sorcerer's Apprentice (The Puppet Company)



Sunday, June 29 11-11:45 a.m.

Belle Haven Library, 100 Terminal Ave., Menlo Park

<https://menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/Library-and-Community-Services/Events/Events-for-adults/20250629-Puppetry-Festival-Sorcerer>

A six-foot wizard, an enchanted broom, an impish imp and a magical cat make for a mesmerizingly different version of the sorcerer's tale! Randal Metz of The Puppet Company joins us to bring this story to life through hand, rod, and body puppets.

Puppets at Mill Valley Music Festival

Briana Yarbrough

This year's Mill Valley Music Festival, held on May 10th and 11th, was brought to new heights with appearances from Woander's giant puppets. Known for being a family-friendly, live music celebration, Woander's puppet creatures, including Drak the woandering mystic, Sienna Sky the pixie, Captain Jentree the Unicorn, and Agnor the dragon were met with delight from children and adults alike.

SFBAPG members not only acted in puppeteer roles — they helped bring the magic of puppetry and alchemy of wonder to kids who joined the crew to create their own mini versions of egret and flying fish puppets, and magic wands. Check out some photos below of the day and stay tuned for future community events!





Teen members Hugo Shum and Dahlia Yarbrough were grateful for the chance to volunteer on Sunday, assisting with walk around puppetry, and helping out at the craft table.

Napa Valley Puppetry Festival

Looking for Performers/Puppeteers

We're still searching for a few more performers, walk-about, demos, giant puppets and creatives for our second annual puppetry festival on July 25th & 26th in St. Helena. Napa Valley Puppetry Festival, NVPF.com



We are a non-profit and would love to have a great turn out from the puppetry community.

You can email me at dgarden1@sbcglobal.net

Thanks, David Garden, or give me a call: 707-337-0199



Shadowlight's performances of Arjuna's Meditation

Review: Briana Yarbrough

Witnessing a live wayang performance by **Larry Reed** is nothing short of a masterclass in shadow storytelling. Shadowlight's May performances of Arjuna's Meditation were a journey into the sacred roots of Balinese puppetry—and a reminder of the medium's power as ritual, myth, and transformation. We were able to attend the performance at **Bindlestiff Studio** on the 9th in San Francisco, supported by UC Berkeley's Department of Southeast Asian Studies. It was our first experience seeing an Indonesian shadow puppetry performance, and we're so glad to have had a chance to be in the audience that evening.

Reed, a pioneer in cross-cultural puppetry and founder of **ShadowLight Productions**, served in the traditional role of the dalang—voicing every character and manipulating dozens of hand-carved, symbolic leather puppets—while seamlessly integrating contemporary references. Reed was joined by two assistants — SFBAPG member Fred Riley III and I Made Moja —and a live gamelan orchestra, which included musicians Sarah Willner, Paul Miller, Carla Fabrizio, and Lisa Gold.

The show opened with the sacred Tree of Life dancing across the screen, and unfolded into a mythic battle, with Arjuna, a warrior in meditation, lured into action to defeat Nikwatakawaca, King of a nation of fierce rakasas (giant ogres). Trickster figures brought levity and timely satire as the story unfolded, with moments echoing modern dilemmas through playful jabs. The performance brought themes about illusion, identity, and choice, with a Matrix reference thrown in for good measure.

What stood out most for us was how alive the shadows felt. At the beginning of the show, Reed explained to the audience that the puppets appear and stand sentinel for a while before the Shadow Master brings them to life. Reed explained before the show how, in the Balinese tradition, puppets are described as being in a "pregnant" state—full of potential and ready to give birth to a story right before the performance begins.

Reed's ability to hold the ceremonial integrity of the Indonesian art form while inviting laughter, reflection, and real-time spontaneity is aspirational. This wasn't just a show—it was a sacred offering. A beautiful reminder that puppetry, at its best, doesn't just entertain—it transforms.

Member News: Ilene Kennedy

These are puppets I have made in the last couple of years, all designed by me. I loved making my version of Miss Piggy.



Member News: Dalrymple MacAlpin

I am pleased as Punch and Judy to announce the debut of:

Rumpelstilzchen's Fairy Gold, A Mystical Puppet Rock Opera

If stories come from the world of imagination, what would happen if there weren't any stories left...?

October 23rd -26th, 2025

At The Nevada Theatre, 401 Broad st. Nevada City, California.

SAVE THE DATE!! Tickets on sale soon.

The show is being produced by the supremely talented: [SWAZZLE Inc.](#) and involves several brand new characters, which myself, along with our brilliant

creative team are currently working on.

Here's one now!

Below is a character sketch of: **Goldie T**—She is a giant (7 x 11 foot) singing book who turns her own pages and is growing out of the tree of knowledge at the heart of the faerie kingdom. (*Replete with hilarious book worms of course.*)



OPEN AUDITIONS

Are you, or one of your friends:

- *A Puppeteer and a musician with singing experience?**
- *A Cellist or Upright Bass player?**
- *A Percussionist?**
- *A Lead male actor with singing experience?**
- *A Stage Manager?**

We are searching for players who are thrilled at the prospect of creating something uniquely magical on the stage and are able to tour.

Please send in an audition video/resume by June 15th.

to: Dalrymplemacalpin@gmail.com

How Did This All Get Started?

15 years ago I was camping deep in the woods next to the Yuba river when I heard the voice of Rumpelstilzchen singing a strange and wondrous song at about 3 am. This experience ignited a passionate quest to retell Rumpel's story

the way I feel twas meant to be told. My life has never been the same since.

I can't wait to share more about *Rumpelstilzchen's Fairy Gold* as the show progresses towards its debut in October.



Guild Library Book Review

Ilene Cleveland-Kennedy, Vice President

My review of: You cannot Spoof a Snoof! By Adam Kreutinger

You cannot Spoof a Snoof is a funny cute book about Snoofs and how goofy and smart they are. The book is colorful, funny, and written to give you a laugh or a smile at every turn of the page. The Snoofs just want to be friends with a kid. So see for yourself if they make friends with a kid or two.

The book gives you a fantastic Bonus! You get to make your very own Snoof with the free pattern included! In my opinion it's a super cute book and a great addition to your library and pattern collection.

And if the book is checked out, the free pattern is at <https://www.scribd.com/document/438825914/snoof-pattern-you-cannot-spoof-a-snoof-by-adam-kreutinger-pdf-pdf>.

Snoof and other Guild library books will be available for checkout at the June 7th Guild meeting in Sacramento. 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 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. Then contact the Guild Librarian, Lee Armstrong at library@sfbapg.org. If you have a borrowed book, please return it at the June 7th Guild meeting. If you can't make the meeting, please mail it to Lee at 720 Ladera Dr., Sonoma, CA 95476.

Send future newsletter items to newsletter@sfbapg.org