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EDITOR'S NOTE: This is very newsy newsletter, so use the 'view this email in your browser link at the top or use the 'view the rest of this email' link at the bottom to see the whole newsletter! (It now says "End of Newsletter" at the end so you know you saw it all.)



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GUILD ANNUAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Performances, Party and Puppetathlon

The Annual Guild Party is SUNDAY FEB. 22 1- 4 pm

Vallejo Naval & Historical Museum, 734 Marin St., Vallejo

Come to our **Annual Holiday Party**, where there'll be an amazing **Puppet Slam, Puppetathlon** where tabletop puppets (and their puppeteers) show their skill at running a challenging obstacle course. Also refreshments, raffle, Guild library, games and an opportunity to see old friends and meet new ones. **Lots of fun, so bring friends and family to this great holiday celebration!**

Food: Please bring finger food to share (i.e. crackers, bread, chips, cheese, dips, fruit or veggie platter, cookies, etc. The Guild will provide tea, coffee, water, paper plates, utensils, etc. Please BYO beverage if not drinking tea, coffee or water.

signupgenius.com/signupgenius.com

Puppetathlon: It's Ninja Warriors meets the Olympics with puppet athletes! This event is not to be missed, as tabletop puppets (and their puppeteers) traverse a challenging obstacle course with bravery and finesse. Come participate or cheer on your team.

Puppet Slam: There are some excellent acts lined up for this year's event. Brian Narelle (previously of Sesame St., and star of the cult film Dark Star) will accompany the most famous canine poet in the world, Warren Peace...always a crowd pleaser with his dog humor and wisdom. Dalrymple MacAlpin will bring a new, short piece from the marvelous, fairytale worlds he creates. Jim and Jan Bartz plan to share some of their exquisite folk puppet limberjacks, beautifully carved by Jim and presented with live music and singing on traditional folk instruments. Fred Riley and Lisa Zagone promise to present a brand new piece. Uel McGinnis is offering up his brand of humorous puppet improv, and Forbidden Puppet Cabaret hosts, Michael and Valerie will share some puppet fun as well, and other acts are in the works. The general public will be joining guild members for this special showing of puppet talent, so come ready to be a puppeteer ambassador to non-guild members.

Share the [link](#) for the holiday party puppet slam here (help us promote puppetry on your social media accounts, etc.!).

REMEMBER: GUILD MEMBERS ARE FREE. YOU DO NOT NEED PAY FOR TICKETS! USE THE COUPON PASSWORD [SFBAPG](#) OR [sfbapg](#) FOR 100% DISCOUNT OF YOUR TICKET PRICE. Do reserve your free tickets to help us have a count of seats. Thanks!

Puppet Exhibit: Show your Creations! There will be a table for you to share one or two puppets. Please bring a stand(s) and card with puppet name, builder's name, materials used. Thank you!

Volunteers: We need your help! [Here's the link for Volunteer Signup.](#)

Guild Library: Peruse and check out a wide variety of books on puppetry.

Raffle: Lots of great puppet items, with proceeds going to the Guild Scholarship Fund. If you have something you'd like to donate to the raffle, please [contact the Scholarship committee](#). valerienelson@sfbapg.org

This year there are some truly exceptional donations for our silent auction. A big thanks goes out to Tom Jensen who procured a new Taffy puppy puppet from Phil

Huber, and also sent supplies for a classroom puppet project. Thanks also to Wendy Morton who is donating two exquisite Balinese puppets. Other goodies will be auctioned or raffled off to build our scholarship fund. Members of the guild can apply for a scholarship that covers registration to puppet workshops or festivals.

(Below, some of the great items on offer.)



If you haven't renewed your guild membership for 2026, do so now (otherwise you'll have to buy a ticket to the holiday party...it's free for guild members and their guests, but everyone else needed a ticket.)

[Renew your Guild membership here.](#)



Introducing THE PLANETARIUM—Richmond's new all-ages, substance-free performance venue for left-of-center performance arts!

We are now hosting 2-4 affordable shows every week, ensuring the Bay remains thoroughly on their toes: <https://planetariumrichmond.com/>

Recently our guild's own Risa Lenore showed us how it's done, proving once and for all that our stage is perfectly viable for puppets and the humans who serve them. We're firm believers in the radical concept of paying every performer, so nobody leaves with empty pockets (unless that's part of your act). As this fancypants KQED feature suggests, we're mostly house-broken and incredibly enthused about programming as much surprising material as possible:

<https://www.kqed.org/arts/13985719/the-planetarium-richmond-diy-punk-venue>

If you've got a project that's too eccentric for the polite world and you're tired of performing for your cat, please send your manifestos to kirk@ragtagshows.com. See you in the pit!

PUPPETS BACK AT SF SKETCHFEST

By Jason Lee

Two years ago, SF Sketchfest featured Glorious Ladies of Puppetry (GLOP) in their lineup of comedic talent for audiences to watch and laugh at. This year, the festival had another puppet show, Puppet Up! Uncensored. For one night, The Palace of Fine Arts Theatre was packed for two performances of improv comedy and puppet mayhem!

Created by Brian Henson and Patrick Bristow, Puppet Up is never the same show twice. Patrick, acting as host and director, gives the puppeteers a scenario based on suggestions from the audience. Along with help from musical director Willie Etra, the puppeteers "puppet up," giving two shows in one. The first show is "the puppet show," where the puppets perform an improvised skit projected live on two large screens above the stage. The second show is the full-view experience of watching the puppeteers bring the puppets to life. The ensemble consisted of six puppeteers who have all worked at The Jim Henson Company, three of them also GLOP members. Whereas GLOP is more family-oriented, Puppet Up is strictly for adults only.

It was entertaining to watch all the different games and sketches that were performed and all were hilarious. Some were traditional improv games, like "New Choice/Quick Change," "The Dating Game" or "Hollywood Director's Cut." Some seemed like newly-invented games, like a variety show with three acts based on our suggestions. Some were musical, from an educational song about Chef Boyardee, to a spoof of Cell Block Tango or a James Bond-opening. Some were interactive, like an audience member getting to perform a puppet onstage or a couple watching puppets re-create their meet-cute moment. I loved the puppeteers recreating two classic Jim Henson skits, The Glow-Worm and Business Business, from his variety show days. In the finale, puppeteers performed "naked," using their hands to make faces, in the same vein as the Helping Hands from Labyrinth, and sang the closing theme. Photography and recording were prohibited during the show, but it was permitted at the end when the performers took a bow, which you can see at the end of the article.

VIP Experience ticket holders were treated to an exclusive screening of three short pieces.

Two short pieces were a Nintendo commercial used to promote Star Fox Zero and Tall Poppy,

a short film using tabletop puppetry for the Australian company CGU Insurance. Following the screening was an intimate Q&A with Brian Henson. Shari Weiser, the in-suit performer for Hoggle (Brian did the voice and performed the face) from Labyrinth, and her husband were the audience. At the end of the night, each guest received a Hot Dog Puppet autographed by Brian.

From L to R, BELOW: Patrick Bristow, Brian Henson, Raymond Carr, Grant Baciocco, Colleen Smith, Donna Kimball, Ted Michaels, Peggy Etra



PUPPET HAPPENINGS (thanks to Jason Lee for these notices)

February

Wed Feb 18-Sat Feb 21

"The Sex Lives of Puppets"

Location: The Studio, 327 Lasuen St, Stanford, CA 94305

Blind Summit, a puppet theatre company from the UK, is coming to Stanford University to present "The Sex Lives of Puppets," a theater piece about sex exploration based on real-life conversations with real-life people. The event is intended for audiences age 18+. Opening night performance includes a talkback after the show.

Ticket Price: General Admission - \$75.60, discount for SU students and employees

<https://live.stanford.edu/events/25-26season/studio/the-sex-lives-of-puppets/>

Sat Feb 21, 11am-12:30pm

Build Your Own Shadow Puppets with Karina Zhou

Location: The International Library of Youth Writing, 849 Valencia St, San Francisco, CA 94110

Join author and illustrator Karina Zhou for a reading of Eddy's Shadow Puppets, a special workshop on building your own shadow puppet and a book signing. Books will be available for purchase.

Ticket Price: FREE

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/build-your-own-shadow-puppets-with-karina-zhou-tickets-1980033794380>

Sat Feb 21

Puppet Making with the Pros!

Location: Episcopal Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 2325 Union St, San Francisco, CA 94123

Michael Schupbach is teaching two puppet building workshops. The morning workshop starts at 10am and the afternoon workshop starts at 2pm; both workshops are 2.5 hours long. The workshop is in-person, beginner-friendly, and for adults and teens with approval from parent/guardian. He hosts the workshop every month; you can check his website (www.sillysidehustles.com) for future dates!

Ticket Price: \$60.54, 2 for 1 discount \$82.64

10am: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/puppet-making-with-the-pros-tickets-1980235798580>

2pm: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/puppet-making-with-the-pros-tickets-1980235853745>

Mon Feb 23, 7-8:30pm

Learn Puppeteering with the Pros!

Location: Episcopal Church of St. Mary the Virgin, 2325 Union St, San Francisco, CA 94123

Michael Schupbach is hosting a puppetry performance workshop where he will teach you skills and techniques, such as eye focus and lip sync. Beginners and pros are welcome! Puppets will be provided or you can bring your own. The workshop is intended for adults; those who are under 18 and are interested, you must contact him before booking. He hosts the workshop every month; you can check his website (www.sillysidehustles.com) for future dates!

Ticket Price: \$21.05, 2 for 1 discount \$24

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/learn-puppeteering-with-the-pros-tickets-1980239500653>

Thu Feb 26, 5-7:30pm

Puppets & Bubbles

Location: Asian Art Museum, 200 Larkin St, San Francisco, CA 94102

To honor the Year of the Horse, Asian Art Museum is hosting an event sponsored by Iron Horse Vineyards to celebrate the Lunar New Year. The night includes a meet and mingle with artists and members, a presentation on the puppets in the museum's collection with a curator and a workshop on making a horse puppet taught by Risa Culbertson. If you are an Asian Art Museum member, tickets are free (and for your guests) and you can reserve a spot through the link below.

<https://calendar.asianart.org/event/artist-member-night-puppet-making-part-i/>

If you are an Iron Horse Vineyards member, you can purchase a ticket for \$50 through this different link below. If you are not a member of either Asian Art Museum or Iron Horse Vineyards, you can still purchase a ticket for \$60 through the same link:

<https://www.exploretock.com/ironhorsevineyards/event/592959/san-francisco-puppets-bubbles>

March

Sat Mar 7, 2-3pm

Peter & the Wolf by Fratello Marionettes

Location: Arcade Branch Library, 2443 Marconi Ave, Sacramento, CA 95821

Fri Mar 13

Puppetry Workshop & Live Performance by Happy Accident

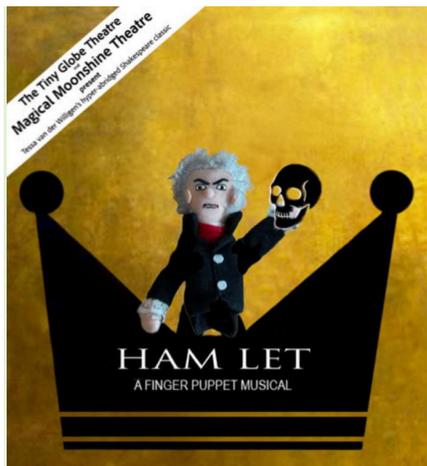
Location: Museum of Northern California Art, 900 Esplanade, Chico, CA 95926

From 2-5pm, Happy Accident will be teaching a workshop on puppetry exploration and object performance.

Following the workshop, from 7-9pm, Happy Accident will be performing a live puppetry show, Everything Is Nothing. The show is aimed towards adults, but children can attend with parent/guardian.

Ticket Price: Workshop Ticket \$35, Performance Ticket \$25, Combo Ticket \$50

<https://monca.org/blogs/events/puppetry-workshop-live-performance>



Hamlet at the White Barn

Hamlet, the finger puppet musical by Tiny Globe Theatre and Magical Moonshine Theatre will be presented at the White Barn (home of the annual Napa Puppetry Festival) on Sunday, March 21, 2026 at 4pm. Info and tickets (\$10) at <https://www.thewhitebarn.org/#!/Event-ticket/p/809209017>

In the Schools, Shadow Puppets, Activism and Democracy

In Willow Arts Magnet Elementary in Napa, all curriculum is taught through the framework of the arts. Each grade level has an inspirational piece of art work for each trimester and works with arts partners to create an original work of art for each tri. Magical Moonshine's Michael and Valerie Nelson are currently working with third graders on an original creation using the Parthenon as the inspirational work of art. It is a musical on activism (climate change) and takes place with actors and shadow puppets at the Parthenon in Greece. Tourists, activists, and world climate summit participants at the Parthenon share stories of activism (and sometimes clash!) while shadow puppets illustrate parts of the story.

In the images below you can see the Parthenon shadow screen that Michael and Valerie created for the kids. It's mounted on choir risers turned backwards, so the kids can work the puppets from the top step of the risers. The entire pediment is a shadow screen and a backstage view shows how scenery and puppets can be presented from behind.

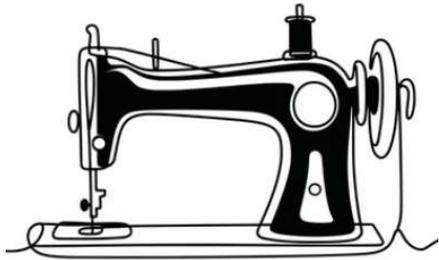
The shadow screen itself is made out of a shower curtain (works great for shadow screens) and a white, lightweight canvas painters' drop cloth serves for the non-shadow screen parts of the Parthenon. (During performances, the structure of the risers between the columns is masked by black cloth.)

The production will premier in early March at Willow Elementary for the Willow community.



This month on Under The Puppet, we wrap up our ninth season with an inspiring interview with puppeteer and creator Geneviève Flati! Geneviève Flati is a puppeteer, producer, and one of the most driven creative individuals I know. Her passion has led to work as Puppet Director, Puppet Captain, and Puppeteer on several nationwide tours, including a role as puppeteer and puppet director for *The Maybe Man Arena Tour* by pop band AJR.

She's performed with the Jim Henson Company's *Puppet Up! Uncensored*, worked on *Earth to Ned*, and was the Jim Henson Company's youngest female puppet captain on the *Fraggle Rock: Back to the Rock Live Tour*. From commercials to web series to live shows, Geneviève has done it all—and I talk to her about it on this episode of *Under the Puppet*. Available wherever you get your podcasts.



Hi fellow guild members. I wanted to share with you **a service I found for repairing sewing machines**. As more and more services have closed down over the years, I'm sure we have all panicked over how we are going to repair machines that have always been reliable on our many projects.

I have two very dependable Singer sewing machines from the 70s. Completely made of metal, with simple parts and no computer to complicate my sewing. In fact, one of them was my Grandmother's that I learned to sew on when I was 10. One at home, and one at Fairyland. I used to have them repaired and cleaned at a sewing machine shop in Hayward. Unfortunately, Covid and rents closed this establishment. But I was happy to find out that their sewing machine technician had opened his own side business. And so for the last few years, whenever the machines have needed cleaning and such, I've called upon Carlos Corea.

Carlos opened up Carlos Sewing Machine Repairs in the Bay Area. He has filled an important void in my puppet life. For the past several years, he has traveled the Bay Area repairing modern and older sewing machines for many businesses. He's great, because he will come to you, evaluate your problem, and if needed take the machine home for repairs before returning it back to you once more. I've used his services many times. He's dependable, reasonable and prompt. There aren't many of these handymen left. If you would like to contact Carlos, his number is: (510) 205-4299. Just tell him that The Puppet Company referred you. Hope this helps. Randal Metz

Job call for puppeteer/ theater director in Healdsburg.

I'm looking for someone who works with elementary school kids who can help direct and produce a performance in April at our local town theater. We're wide open in terms of what the production can be, especially since our time is limited. This would be for an after school program. I thought that puppets (shadow puppets included) would be a great way to tell a story for this project!

Summary:

Looking for kids theater and puppet directors!

Who: West Side Elementary, Healdsburg.

What: Help create and direct a production with West Side School, Healdsburg. We are open to all imaginative ideas for what form the project can be.

When: After school, from now until April.

Where: Healdsburg, with performances in April at the Raven Theater.

How: using district funds for theater, with parent and enrichment teacher support.

Contact: Jessica Martin, arts program director for West Side Elementary.

Jmartin@westsideusd.org

End of Newsletter. A big thanks to all our newsletter contributors.

Send your articles, photos, reviews, classifieds, updates, tips, etc., to newsletter@sfbapg.org before the last day of each month.



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