

[View this email in your browser](#)



**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.)



**The Guild at  
Folkmanis 50th Anniversary Celebration!**

## **Guild Board and Officers**

### **President**

Talib Huff

[president@sfbapg.org](mailto:president@sfbapg.org)

### **CO-Vice Presidents**

CE Choy

[bokchoypuppets@gmail.com](mailto:bokchoypuppets@gmail.com)

### **Secretary**

Lee Armstrong

[secretary@sfbapg.org](mailto:secretary@sfbapg.org)

### **Treasurer**

[treasurer@sfbapg.org](mailto:treasurer@sfbapg.org)

### **Membership**

John Arnold

[membership@sfbapg.org](mailto:membership@sfbapg.org)

### **Programming**

Samuel McGinnis

[programming@sfbapg.org](mailto:programming@sfbapg.org)

Doug Zesiger

[dczesiger@gmail.com](mailto:dczesiger@gmail.com)

Lisa Zagone

David Garden

Heather Gobbée

### **Library**

Lee Armstrong

[library@sfbapg.org](mailto:library@sfbapg.org)

### **Newsletter**

Michael Nelson

[newsletter@sfbapg.org](mailto:newsletter@sfbapg.org)

The celebration on Folkmanis' 50th birthday on April 18th was an action-packed and joyful day. By 10 am puppeteers had flooded the Children's Creativity Museum in downtown S.F. with a multitude of Folkmanis puppets, greeting families as they gathered for Creativity Day. Inside the museum, Guild volunteers were busy helping kids (and many adults) build puppets and try their creations out on a tabletop puppet stage (provided by Gabrielle Greenfield) Prep for puppet building started weeks in advance, as Allison Sieber (Folkmanis' Artistic Director) provided puppet versions of two of the CCM's mascots and Doug & Anne Zesiger precut hundreds of shapes.



At 3 pm, we had a brief Guild meeting. Our guild presented Folkmanis Puppets the **President's Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Puppetry Arts**. This was accepted by Allison and Wendy Morton (noted shadow puppeteer and a retired creative manager at Folkmanis, who had many roles in this company). Folkmanis designers and other friends of Folkmanis attended. It was also delightful to see Kathy Foley (Past President of UNIMA-USA/Professor Emerita of Theatre Arts, UCSC) & Camilla Henneman (USCS Lecturer for the Muppet Magic course) both from Santa Cruz.



A reception gave people a chance to meet new people and catch up with old friends. The Guild provided refreshments (thank you Beth Choy & Walter Wilson) and Folkmanis provided the celebration cupcakes. Then Allison gave a guided tour of the Folkmanis exhibit she had curated. It was designed inside a series of windows leading up the Spiral staircase, which showed fifty years of Folkmanis artistry.

The display began with a video donated by the Guild that showed a wonderful array of puppets from 1970-2026. This video can be viewed at the Folkmanis FB page at <https://www.facebook.com/reel/4399761526969473> and their IG <https://www.instagram.com/p/DXpsGgSAf2q/>. Please spread the word about Folkmanis' 50th Anniversary by leaving comments and sharing to your pages!



The rest of the exhibit was filled with not only an array of puppets, but examples of design engineering, mechanics and more. Don't miss this exhibit (closing in Sept) at the Children's Creativity Museum <https://creativity.org/>.

So many people helped with this event and the thank you list is sure to miss a few, but for everyone that gave of their time to support Folkmanis and this wonderful Anniversary Celebration, THANK YOU!

**For the Folkmanis Celebration:** Wing & Hugo Shum, Uel McGinnis, Jenell Del Cid, Heather Gobbée, Lee Armstrong, Marisol Himmel, Jamie Mullens, Ceci Walken, Walter Wilson, Beth Choy, Doug & Anne Zesiger, Jason Lee, Nik Finch and more.

**For the Folkmanis Video:** Jason Adair, Lee Armstrong, Heather Gobbée, David Garden, Gabrielle Greenberg, Art Grueneberger, Uel McGinnis, Wendy Morton, Nik Finch, Hugo and Wing Shum.

There are so many great photos that we'll share more in the June newsletter

## Your Board Candidates

It's election time for board members. Below are candidates bios. Your ballot for board candidates will be emailed to you soon.

---

### **Marisol (Moddy) Himmel**



I'm an educational puppeteer, puppet builder, and ventriloquist who believes that play is how humans connect, learn, and do our best thinking. My work as a homeschool enrichment program director involves storytelling, performing, teaching, and building imaginative worlds with others. I love creating spaces where people feel invited to participate, laugh, and see things from a fresh perspective. Behind the scenes, I'm someone who enjoys bringing order to creative chaos.

I have experience organizing programs, promoting events, and engaging communities through social media and word-of-mouth. I tend to think both creatively and practically. Dreaming up ideas is my favorite part, but I'm just as happy rolling up my sleeves to make sure those ideas actually happen.

As a Board member, I'd bring curiosity, collaboration, and a genuine enthusiasm for the work. I'm especially interested in helping to update or create systems that can help the guild continue to grow.

### **Allison Sieber**



Hey there! I'm an art director, designer, and East Bay local since 2010. I moved out to California from my home state of Ohio in the early 2000s to work in the bicycle industry, then got a second undergrad in Art Direction and spent the next seven years at ad agencies in SF making broadcast commercials, social media campaigns and live brand experiences.

For the last two years, I've been an Art Director at Folkmanis Puppets, where I have the opportunity to revel in decades of cool craftsmanship and history while learning the puppetry side of the toy industry and the entertainment world.

I thrive on working behind the scenes with a team of likeminded art weirdos and I'd like to bring that same enthusiasm to the SFBAPG, where I'm excited to help the guild bring together talented folks and create connections and opportunities for performance and learning!

---

### **Hugo Shum**



Hugo Shum is a young puppeteer based in the San Francisco Bay Area. He specializes in moving mouth/hand puppets, though he has also worked with rod and tabletop puppets. His work spans original productions, theatrical performances, parades, and professional video shoots. Hugo has built and performed puppets for the stage, designed and carried large-scale puppets in parades, working across theatrical productions and walkaround events.

He has also performed for the camera in professional video shoots, adapting puppets and performance for film environments. He has trained with and learned from professional puppeteers, including artists affiliated with the Jim Henson Company. Hugo is always seeking new opportunities to learn, improve his craft, and collaborate with others.

Over the past 3 years Hugo has become a very active guild member who has helped and attended numerous events, taught a workshop, and performed and showed off his work. Hugo also has an extensive understanding of video editing and currently is helping run the social media accounts.

---

## **Member News**

**Prestigious Henson Grant for Puppet Art Theater!**

Art Grueneberger & his Puppet Art Theater <https://puppetarts.com/> have received the important Jim Henson grant in the Family category for his Tommy and the Time machine.




The Jim Henson Foundation supports excellence in contemporary American puppet theater. Since 1982 The Jim Henson Foundation has awarded over 1200 grants for the development and presentation of new works of live contemporary American puppet theater.


Art will be developing “Tommy and the Time Machine” with the grant funds. Join Tommy Mouse and his trusty Robodog as they accidentally trigger a wild time-hopping adventure through history! From knights to cavemen to sneaky outlaws, their hilarious missteps reveal how even tiny actions create giant ripple effects. Sacramento’s Puppet Art Theater is noted for their engaging shows with excellent repartee between the puppets and their audience. It will be exciting to see this new addition to their cavalcade of shows. Kudos to the team at Puppet Art Theater!

---

**Help Mary Nagler Fulfill a Dream!**

 **Support Mary's Puppetry Adventure in Icela...**

**Organized by Mary Nagler**



**81%** **\$3,260 raised**

**Donate now!**

Mary Nagler has been a SFBAPG member since 1991. She was very active on our Guild Board as the Programming Coordinator for many years. She performed, gave puppetry workshops and mentored many aspiring puppeteers. She left the Bay Area to earn her Masters degree at UCONN, worked with Puppet Kitchen, then off to Portland and now in Virginia, always supporting the art of puppetry. She returned a

few years ago to our guild to give a workshop on tabletop puppetry, where participants made sturdy and well moving puppets which have been used in our annual Holiday parties and for SLAM events ever since.

If you are interested in helping Mary fulfill her dream of completing her studies with Bernd Ogrodnik, internationally known puppeteer and master carver, she is sharing more info at...

[Fundraiser by Mary Nagler : Support Mary's Puppetry Adventure in Iceland](#)

---

## Review(?)

Did I see a great show? Funny you should ask. My show *Carnival of Psychos* at The Great Star Theater two Saturdays ago on April 18, was truly a mad house massive proportions. Operatic vocals, shadow puppetry, circus and stunt performances and a live band of carnies shook the old opera theater. Was there standing room only? No. But it was my biggest show ever and the most bombastic. The theater artistic director said, "That was truly a singular and unique performance. I particularly loved the music and silhouettes."

I wrote a recap on my website you can reference here:

<https://www.samsonyhiss.com/blog/2026/4/23/sanfrancisco-absolute-madness>



## Events

On May 22nd come see Fred C. Riley III, Ian Erickson and Lisa Zagone perform *Odd Savvy's "HOLD"* as part of "Cosmic Debris".



“Cosmic Debris” is a variety show put on monthly at the Planetarium in Richmond.

HOLD is a movement puppet performance with shadow, and tabletop puppets accompanied by live music. A meditation on grief, the show is pretty heavy for a night of comedians and music, but I think you are gonna dig the stew they’ve cooked up at the new all ages space.

\$15 for 3 acts! And there may be more up Odd Savvy’s sleeve! What a deal! Hope to see you there!

The Planetarium 5327 Jacuzzi Street, Richmond CA

---

Today	<	>	May 2026	Month		
SUN 26 11:30am SFFILM 5pm Eureka Pup	MON 27 Learn Puppette	TUE 28 Mother Goose L The Frog Prince	WED 29 6:30pm Family F	THU 30	FRI 31 11:30am Story Ti 8pm SFFILM - Y	SAT 1 2
3 1pm Story Time 2pm SF Internat 3:15pm SFFILM-	4	5	6	7	8 SF International Arts Festival - 1 The Vaudeville 2pm Join Bearit	9
10 SF International The Vaudeville 2-3:30pm SF Inter	11	12 7pm SFBAGP: Pi	13	14 4pm The Vaude	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22 9pm Puppet Par	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30 8:30pm Shadow
31 Jun 1	2	3 8pm Terry Fator	4	5	6 The Vaudeville	

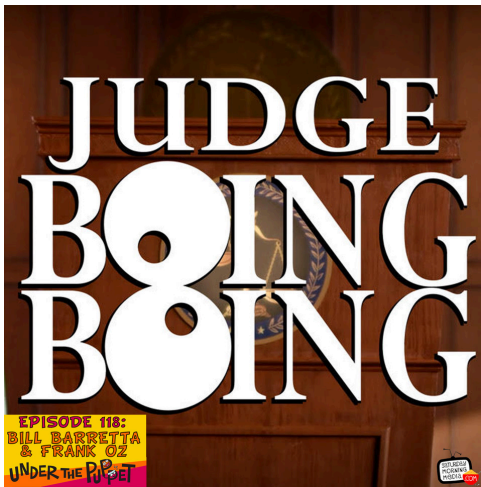
Don't forget, your guild calendar

is filled with great events not mentioned in this newsletter.

[Click here for puppet events](#)

---

## Puppet News



Two new Under The Puppet episodes for you to enjoy!

Our April 2026 episode, featured none other than Frank Oz and Bill Barretta talking about their new puppet web series Judge Boing Boing. Settle in for almost an hour of discussion on how this project came to be, from inception to post production. It's a great walk through on how these two creative minds work.

Video link to the Frank & Bill episode - <https://youtu.be/9ro5DIuwUGI>

And for May 2026, we take a look at the development of another web series with guest Jim LoGiudice. Jim LoGiudice began his career making props and models for films such as The Abyss, Con Air, The Rocketeer and Armageddon. He made the move to puppetry through his church and started developing the characters and a show that would become Far Outpost which performs weekly at Granite Creek Church in Claremont, California. I talk to Jim LoGiudice about the development of Far Outpost, the building of the puppets on the show, their crazy special effects and more on this episode of Under The Puppet.

Both of these episodes are available wherever you get your podcasts or at [underthepuppet.com](http://underthepuppet.com)

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

Send your articles, photos, reviews, classifieds, updates, tips, etc., to [newsletter@sfbapg.org](mailto:newsletter@sfbapg.org) before the last day of each month.

