



The official newsletter of
San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers' Guild
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Check for it at SFBAPG.ORG

SFBAPG is a charter guild of the Puppeteers of America, Inc., a non-profit, tax exempt organization

July 2005



ABOVE: Puppets from the collection of Alan Cook, now on exhibit at the Museum of Crafts and Folk Arts at Fort Mason. Guild members who attended the June meeting were treated to a personal tour of the exhibit by Cook (see article inside.) Photo courtesy of Tim Guigni

**GUILD ELECTION RESULTS!
SEAT OF PUPPET GOVERNMENT MOVES TO NORTH BAY IN ELECTION SWEEP**

(from new president Tim Guigni)
The election results are in! The new Guild Board Members are as follows. Returning, with an upgrade status Tim Guigni as The President with Elisheva Hart as the scrappy Vice President, the hard-working number-crunching Valerie Nelson as The Treasurer with the enigmatic Emily Guigni as The Secretary. Will they be able to fight crime, leap tall buildings and make the world a better place to live? Yes, with your help the guild will continue to move forward, but

Inside this issue...

- ◆ GUILD ELECTIONS!
- ◆ Next Guild MEETING Aug. 27 (see page 6 for details)
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- ◆ Alan Cook, A Tour of One Man's Life
- ◆ Calendar of events
- ◆ Great Small Works Toy Theatre Festival in NY
- ◆ A History of Radical Puppetry. Part 3

**2005—2006
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(Election results, cont.)

continue to move forward, but please note that it's *with your help*, no one person, no one board can do it without great ideas and a willing committed group of people. So, shake off the ennui, dislodge your doubts, and let's get to it. Wagons ho.

Alan Cook: The Guided Tour of One Man's Life **Tim Giugni**

When I looked at the clock, I realized that for nearly 2 1/2 hours, members of the San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers Guild, visitors from the Conservatory of Puppetry Arts (COPA) and the general public had been mesmerized by a guided tour of the Alan Cook Collection at the Museum of Crafts and Folk Arts in Fort Mason.

The tour was cut into two sections, both hosted by Mr. Cook. The first tour was at the Museum of Crafts and Folk Art, where guild members received a discount at the door thanks in large part to the work that Ms. Mary Decker did to bring Mr. Cook to the Bay Area. Mr. Cook talked at large about the acquisition and history of the puppets in the collection, while making sly observations about historic and present funding for the arts and the trials and tribulations of mounting a puppetry exhibit in a museum. "Many of the best exhibits from the collection are outside of the large cities", said Mr. Cook, " and are brought about through hard-work and the excitement of the art of puppetry". Many large cities seem to have memory gaps as Mr. Cook pointed out, " Who would mount a puppetry exhibit? You did, in 1964. Many of

these museum organizations don't know their own history."

Nor do they fully understand the power of the puppet to create wonder in the young or nostalgia in the young at heart.

"Puppets are significant. They bring children of all ethnic backgrounds together and excite them. The puppets show that their people make puppets." Indeed it shows that there is a long history of puppets, from the first Americans to George Washington to the

ethnic groups of the current day, make and use puppets. That we are part of the vast fast-moving stream of history and not a deviant footnote. That puppets can change lives. "One group of students came through COPA.

Later they wrote about their experience. These children had never done, or wanted to do a report before", said Mr. Cook.

There was then a break as the group moved across the sky bridge to spacious room 205 in Building C, where a light reception was held. After the reception, the lights were dimmed and Mr. Cook launched into a slide presentation of an exhibit at COPA. "The Conservator of Puppetry Arts is growing. What is really needed is a large space where



Alan Cook talks about his extensive puppet collection to guild members in a special tour at the Museum of Crafts and Folk Arts at Fort Mason.

Photos on this page courtesy of Tim Giugni

restoration, exhibition, presentation and video can all happen. What we need is a fabulously wealthy person.", Mr. Cook said with a slight laugh. When asked where COPA's home should be, Mr. Cook responded, "On the West Coast. It would be great if it could be in San Francisco or Los Angeles, one of the five great cities for this art."

Alan Cook was brought at no cost to the guild through the generous donations of Mary Decker, Lettie Schubert and Tim Giugni. Both of the tours were video taped and extensively photographed, however this will give you only a taste of the beauty and intricacy of the display. The Museum of Craft and Folk Art is in Building A at Fort Mason. The exhibit "Puppets From Around the World" runs until August 28th.

Visit the Conservatory of Puppetry Arts online at: <http://www.copa-puppets.org/>
Visit the Museum of Craft and Folk Art at: <http://www.mocfa.org/>



Puppet from Alan's collection



Puppets from Alan's collection.



WHERE ARE THEY NOW DEPT:

Long time guild members will recognize the smiling face of former SFBAPG member Howie Leifer posing above at the Great Small Works Toy Theatre Festival Museum in New York. Howie was a San Franciscan and guild member for many years before moving to the Big Apple about 6 years ago, taking the Haight Street Puppet Theater with him. He is posing above next to his toy theatre circus, an interactive exhibit that featured a number of ingenious circus acts that were operated by museum goers using the various controls at the lower part of the stage. Howie also performed (a different show) as part of the week-long festival's line up. Howie's circus was one of the very few hands-on exhibits, and he lamented the fact that museum goers seem to have trouble following the simple which-way-do-you-turn-it directions that he provided.

Thanks SFBAPG (from Pam Wade, Puppet Pals)

I haven't done a puppet show in 2 years. Something lead me to donate a puppet show to a silent auction in my neighborhood, so I followed up on the thought and turned in the paper work. Finally, after I thought nobody even bid on it, I got a call from a woman who wanted to invite all the neighborhood kids over for a treat on a Sunday afternoon. Well, I gathered everything together, and volunteered to do a show at an "old folks home" where I work part time, for a practice. At that point I found I was missing a few things, like part of my stage curtains, an extension cord, one of my boxes that make a set

up shelf, and the ending to more than one of the stories. The audience was gracious and complimentary, I knew they would be. The biggest compliment was that Ed didn't get up and leave (maybe he couldn't?). I rigged up a substitute for the box, found out who had borrowed the curtains and got them back and the boss told me to put my time down on my time card to be paid for my time to do the show, including set up and take down. The show went great (all the missing lines and endings came back to me!) One of the neighbors was so

excited she hired me to do two performances at the school where she works and where her grandson goes, who had to miss the neighborhood performance. Anyway, I think I got the biggest blessing. I still love doing puppet shows and it reminded me just how much I loved those 10 years of full time puppetry and for all the support I got from the members of this guild and Puppeteers of America.
Pam Wade
Puppet Pals

A Notice from our PSW Regional Director, Diana Big Mountain:

I will be stepping down, as of Sept 1, 2005 due to my relocating to Canada and the position of Pacific Southwest

Regional Director will be open to any candidate who wishes to take on this position.

I wish every one of the SFBAPG members a wonderful, safe and fun summer and thank all of you for supporting the guild and Puppeteers of America. And a great big hug and thank you to Mary Decker who has helped me understand what an Regional Director is, does and needs to do as well as her role by keeping all informed about everything.

[Diana Big Mountain](#)
PSW REGIONAL DIRECTOR
PSWPuppets@aol.com
puppetpatchkids@aol.com
702-379-2685

CALENDAR LISTINGS!

What if you did a puppet show and nobody came?

If your puppet event is not listed here, you are missing out. It is easy to have your performances listed.

Send info to
mail@magicalmoonshine.org

August Guild Event: (mark your calendars now!)

Saturday, August 20th at Children's Fairyland in Oakland, California. The San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers Guild will be at Children's Fairyland from 10 am to 5 pm with an exhibit of puppets, Puppet Craft from 12 to 3 pm and shows from Herbert Lang and Il Teatro Calamari. Please contact Tim Giugni if you are interested in assisting in this day long event.

tim@teatrocalamari.com

Since this month we have only a few performers listing lots of shows, your editor is varying the usual Calendar listing format, listing the performer and all of their dates, followed by the next performer and all of their dates.

HOOPLA THE CLOWN PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

((Mary Nagler-see last month's newsletter for the notice on Mary's acceptance at the U Conn puppet training program) :

June 27-July 10, Teaching Circus Arts at the Amazing Grace Circus Camp, in Nyack , NY!

Santa Barbara County Fair!, July 13-17, Santa Maria, CA

(2 puppet shows, 3 walkarounds Daily, and some games!)

July 18- July 24, Teaching Circus Arts at the Amazing Grace Circus Camp, in Nyack NY!

Stanislaus County Fair!, July 29-Aug.7, Turlock, CA.

(no puppet shows, Games and walkarounds)

*Gravenstein Apple Fair! * This is a GREAT Fair and I encourage everyone to come to it because it is a real down home Fair! One of My all time Favorites! I am there from 11-4 . Both days performing Puppet shows and doing a few walkarounds!

On August 20th, from 3:00 pm- 6:00 pm @ Santa Rosa Christian Church, 1315 Pacific Ave. Santa Rosa Ca, Mary's Church friends,

Clownglomeration Clown Club, and any Puppeteers from the guild who would like to come by (after the Fairyland Event), there will be a Going Away /Fundraising Party! Held in the Multi purpose Room and in the patio, it should be allot of FUN!

Friends of HOOPLA, (and MARY) are holding an afternoon of : Games, Facepainting and animal balloons, (made by some of my Clown Friends), several puppet shows by Hoopla the Clown and the Hildegrini Puppets! (Last chance to see them for awhile!)

and any other puppeteers, who would like to help! Call me @ (707) 526 9520, or (707) 235 7730, if you would like to help.

This is a chance to say Good-bye before I leave for Connecticut and start my Masters program in Puppetry ARTS (!) at the University there. It is a fundraiser also to help offset the cost of the cross country move and the out of State tuition. Tuition is 3Xs higher for out of State students, then for the Local yokels. Next year it will drop down as I will be a citizen of Connecticut by then, so I just have to get there and through the first year! Whew!

The fundraiser will also include a Bar B Que! So after you are done at Fairyland, head on up to Santa Rosa, for Dinner! Sorry it ended up on the same day as Fairyland , but it was the only day in my busy summer I had to spare! I will be leaving for Connecticut on the next day! School starts August 29! Hope to see you at the party!

Note from your President.:

Guild support would be appreciated for this event, please contact Lee Armstrong. Ms. Nagler has been accepted to the puppetry program University of Connecticut.

The Alameda County 4-H puppeteers will be performing at the Alameda County Fair on July 2nd and July 3rd at the Kids Park Stage.

The Fair's theme is "Come Out and Play". It is located in Pleasanton, and is the best county fair in the state.

Nick Barone Puppets: Schedule:

Tuesday, July 5 - 7:30 pm

"Puss In Boots"

San Carlos Library, 610 Elm Street, San Carlos, CA

Wednesday, July 6 - 11:00 am

"Puss In Boots"

Guerneville Regional Library, 14107 Armstrong Woods Road, Guerneville, CA

Wednesday, July 6 - 2:00 pm

"Puss In Boots"

Healdsburg Regional Library, Piper & Center Streets, Healdsburg, CA

Thursday, July 7 - 3:00 pm

"Puss In Boots"

Milpitas Library

40 North Milpitas Blvd. Milpitas, CA

Wednesday, July 20 - 2:30 pm

"Tales from the Enchanted Forest"

Saratoga Library, 13650 Saratoga Ave., Saratoga, CA

Tuesday, July 26 - 7:00 pm

"T-Rex Thunderlizard's Wild West Review"

Alameda County Library Albany Branch, 1247 Marin Avenue, Albany, CA

Wednesday, July 27 - 1:00 pm

"T-Rex Thunderlizard's Wild West Review"

Schaberg Branch Library, 2140 Euclid Ave., Redwood City, CA

Wednesday, July 27 - 4:00 pm

"T-Rex Thunderlizard's Wild West Review"

Fair Oaks Branch Library, 2510 Middlefield Road, Redwood City, CA

Wednesday, July 27 - 7:00 pm

"T-Rex Thunderlizard's Wild West Review"

Redwood City Main Library, 1044 Middlefield Road, Redwood City, CA

Thursday, July 28 - 4:00 pm

"T-Rex Thunderlizard's Wild West Review"

Vacaville Town Square Library, 1 Town Square Place, Vacaville, CA

Thursday, August 4 - 10:00 am

"Tales from the Enchanted Forest"
Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library, 451
Jersey Street, San Francisco, CA

Thursday, August 11 - 10:15 am
"T-Rex Thunderlizard's Wild West
Review"
Westlake Branch Library, 275
Southgate Ave., Daly City, CA

Saturday, August 13 - 11:00 am
"Puss In Boots"
Fairfax Branch Library, 2097 Sir
Francis Drake Blvd., Fairfax, CA

Saturday, August 13 - 2:30 pm
"Puss In Boots"
South Novato Branch Library, 6
Hamilton Landing, Suite 140A, Novato,
CA

Sunday, August 21 - 1:30 pm
"Tales from the Enchanted Forest"
Children's Fairyland's 49th Annual
Puppet Fair
Children's Fairyland, 699 Bellevue
Ave., Oakland, CA

Toy Theatre Festival in New York

By Michael Nelson

Valerie and I were fortunate to get to attend the first ½ of the week long Great Small Works Toy Theatre Festival in New York in June. The festival was held in a warehouse that has been converted to a theatre (St. Anne's Warehouse) located in DUMBO (Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass.) The Great Small Works people are to be complimented mightily on an incredible conversion of the space from what appeared to me to be a utilitarian warehouse space to a 3 theatre complex with a museum, a café serving beverages (including wine and beer) and food, a spacious lobby area complete with sofas, rugs

and chandeliers brought in just for the occasion, and many other wonderful and comfortable touches...all greatly welcomed, especially since the weather was quite hot and humid (we heard the heat spell broke right after we left) and the space had no air conditioning. Toy or Paper Theatre is not known for its large size, so audience size had to be controlled so all could see. The festival staff solved this dilemma in the following way. Each ticket bought you entrance to an evening of shows that started in one of the two smaller theatre spaces (about 60 seats each). The audience would split into two groups, each seeing a different show in one of the two smaller spaces. Then all would gather together for a performance in the big space (180 seats) where the show was performed live while being projected on a large video screen behind the show. Then the audience would split again and see which ever show they had not seen when the group split the first time. So by the end of the evening you would have seen (at least) three shows in three different venues. It seemed to work pretty well, although at the Toy Theatre Symposium (offered free to the public) there was lively discussion about the video projection and whether that compromised the live performance (I would say that about

3/4s of those expressing opinions felt that the video was detrimental to the show, and ¼ was in favor of it. Certainly in the larger venue, the shows were too small to be adequately seen from the back without the video. That is the venue in which our "Japanese Ghost Story" (Little Blue Moon Theatre) was presented and we had mixed feelings about the result. In addition to the museum (over 100 theatres exhibited) and the performances and symposium, there was also a toy theatre workshop where participants ranging from children of 5 or 6 to adults created their own theatres. The children all seemed to have the assistance of at least one adult, and many of the adults were definitely of the artist temperament as some of the theatres created showed a high degree of artistry and originality. It was a most wonderful process to observe, and at the end of the workshop, most participants gave some kind of performance with their creation. The festival shows changed every two days and , while most performances were for adults, there were also children's shows scheduled.

History of Radical Puppetry, Part 3

(Part 2 appeared in the June newsletter and can be found archived on the guild website.)

By K. Ruby

K Ruby is a visual and performing artist with 25 years experience in the arts as a performer, director, designer, consultant, builder, costumer and teacher. Ruby is one of the original members and current artistic director of Wise Fool Community Arts, a



This charming set by Sally Fisher, NY, from the toy theatre museum exhibit cost the artist over \$30.00, cold cash!

Calendar Listings, On-going events:

NEW EXHIBITION MUSEUM OF CRAFT & FOLK ART, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Puppets from Around the World, Wednesday, May 4 to Sunday, July 24, 2005 --*Puppets from Around the World* features a selection of more than 50 puppets representing puppetry traditions of North America, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe. Drawn mainly from the vast collection of Alan G. Cook, legendary collector and puppeteer. Museum of Craft & Folk Art - Fort Mason Center, Landmark Building A, San Francisco, CA 94123 - 1382 Entrance at Buchanan Street and Marina Boulevard - Tuesday - Sunday, 11am to 5pm; Saturday 10am to 5pm, \$4 for adults, \$3 for seniors, free for youth 18 and under. *Free the first Wednesday of each month and Saturdays 10am to 12pm*

Information: 24-hour recorded message, 415/775-0991

NEW EXHIBITION, ASIAN ART MUSEUM, 200 Larkin Street in San Francisco: "**Shadows, Masks, and Music: Aspects of the Performing Arts in Asia**," April 23, 2005 through January 22, 2006--"The Museum's sampling of artworks and objects related to drama, dance and music. Instruments, masks and shadow puppets highlight both the entertaining and the transformative aspects of performing arts in Asia." Tue. through Sun. - 10:00 am - 5 pm -Thur. evenings until 9:00 pm. \$10 adults; \$7 Seniors; \$6 youths 12-17 and college; free: members, under 12 and SFUSD students.

Upcoming Guild Meetings

July: No meeting. National Festival (see bottom of page).

August: The next Guild Meeting is on August 27th and will contain a work in progress performance and "possibly a workshop" by Mr. Giugni. He is, at the moment, fickle.

Location: Fort Mason.

September Theme is "Works in Progress". If you have a 7 to 10 minute piece to present to the guild please contact Tim Guigni. Include: what it is from (upcoming show, a doodle, an idea that has been swirling in your mind or ?), what type of puppetry, length, size of piece and any technical requirements that you might have. Send all of this information to me by July 20th. There are three slots available on a first come, first served basis.

giant puppet theatre recognized for its dedication to community, celebration and social change. Since 1997 Ruby has been integral to the production of the annual PuppetLOVE!, Festival of Radical Puppetry. This text, and an accompanying slide show were developed in part for this event. If you are interested in hiring Ruby to present the lecture and slide show live, please contact her at wisefool@lmi.net.

WWI – WWII

In 1916 Dada was invented in Zurich in response to the horror and absurdity of the modern warfare of WWI. Dada spread to France and Germany where in 1919 Dadaist George Grotz along with Oskar Kokoska and John Heartfield held satirical marionette performances in their basement. They were shut down for disrespect of the political authorities. That same year Walter Gropius founded Bauhaus School of design. From 1919 until Hitler's rise to power in 1933 artists in the Bauhaus drama department experimented with puppetry and performance, bringing their paintings and sculptures to life in a sort of precursor to performance art.

Among the best known of those artists are Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Xanti Schawinsky and Oskar Schlemmer. Hitler of course, quickly suppressed the experimental art of the Bauhaus.

Two notable women puppeteers of this time were Sophie Taeber Arp wife of Hans Arp (both Zurich Dadaists) and Alexandra Exter, a highly skilled Russian painter who worked among the Fauves in Paris. She returned to Russia in 1917 and began experimenting with marionettes. The influence of Cubism is apparent in her work. Alexander Calder also began work on his puppet circus in Paris in the late 1920s. It was slowly assembled 1926-1930 and performed throughout the 1930s. Workers Theatre in Europe 1917-33.

Another buried treasure in radical theater history is the a huge movement of agit-prop and workers theatre that started in revolutionary Russia and spread through Europe, most notably to Germany and England, between the two World Wars. The Communist party

PUPPET FEST 2005, July 24 – 30, 2005, St. Paul, Minnesota--If you haven't checked the website for the Puppeteers of America's 2005 national festival for a while, it's time to have a look at www.PuppetFest2005.org to see the latest exciting plans that are brewing.

immediately recognized the popular appeal of theatre and pageantry and its usefulness as propaganda. They utilized theatre as living newspapers, as well as engaging clowns, circus artists and puppeteers in spreading the word and propagandizing the people. The Russian collective of revolutionary theatres, The Blue Blouse reached over 80,000 workers in their first two weeks of their existence alone.

Among other things the collective of workers theatres described itself as a "flexible, vivid, juicy, hard-hitting and mobile theatre performing under any condition" They held theatrical trials, small performances in teahouses and mass spectacles in which "thousands would perform for tens of thousands." The Blue Blouse used clowning, acrobatics, dance, mask puppetry and other devices from the popular arts. In Germany similar movements were formed starting in the late teens and early 20s. After a Blue Blouse tour to Germany in the late 20s the movement burgeoned spawning dozens of groups with names like The Red Star, Red Rockets, Riveters, Red Megaphone and Red Blouses. The author of the book Theatre as a Weapon notes that much of the information we have about these groups and their props was gleaned from police reports.

Russian Street Art

Under socialism Lenin had said, art would no longer serve the elite, "the upper 10,000 suffering from boredom and obesity," but the tens of millions of laboring people, "the flower of the country, its strength and future." The design of mass festivals was not just a phenomenon but also an intentional and orchestrated design of the communist party, who were well aware of the power of visual metaphor. Early festivals were dominated by avant-garde artists, the futurists. But in the 20's and 30s

"fine artists" were dissuaded and themes were simplified and made representational, carried out by the workers and unions themselves. Throughout the years before World War II MayDay and the Anniversary of the Revolution were events filled with elaborate and highly evocative street art, giant statuary, puppets of the evil imperialists designed to denigrate the bourgeois and celebrate the workers.

Indicative of the contradictions inherent to the Russian Revolutionary Spirit, is the evolution of the party's relationship to the puppet character Petroushka. Petroushka was an underdog and popular hero, a working class trickster in conflict w authority, much like Punch—a perfect revolutionary. The Red Petroushka Collective started in 1927 and dozens of other sprang up in the following years. But of course Petroushka eternal problems with authority soon led the soviet state to suppress the anarchic and rebellious Petroushka in favor of a more benign version of the character, suitable only for children—a parallel to the watering down of puppetry in the west for purposes of education and advertising.
(To be continued)

Have a puppet related item to sell or give away? Advertise it here!

GUILD CLASSIFIEDS

Puppeteers of America Festival Workshop Manuals (lots of tips, ideas and how-tos from past festivals) \$5.00 each plus postage.

We have the following manuals:

- 1997 national in Toledo
- 1995 national at Bryn Mawr
- 2001 national at Tampa
- 2002 regional at Asilomar

Michael or Valerie at 707-257-8007 or mail@magicalmoonshine.org

BOOKS ON TAPE EXCHANGE?

Touring puppeteers: Does anyone want to trade books on tape (great for those long drives)? Contact Michael Nelson at the above contact info. If there is interest, perhaps we can organize some kind of trade system or library.

Do you have a work in progress, completed work, workshop, lecture or know of a puppetry event that is happening in and around the Bay Area? Is there a location that could house a Guild Event or Meeting? Is there a mysterious 'other' or 'not listed here's presentation that you would like to deliver to the guild? If so, please contact Tim Giugni, *your* president and discuss the hows and whens you could present. tim@teatrocalamari.com or 707.963.8259