



January 2018



Puppets are regular celebrants at First Night Celebrations all over the world, such as this New Year's rabbit from the U.K. Hopefully some of you "rocked" your puppets on New Year's Eve, and whether you did or did not, be sure to bring a puppet to the Guild Holiday Event on January 20th in Benicia (more in the this newsletter and more to come!) See you there and Happy New Year!

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2017 FINALE GREETINGS FROM YOUR CO-PRESIDENTS!!

We hope that, looking back over the past 12 months, each of us finds moments and occasions to savor, ones for which we feel grateful and, yes, delighted. For many of us, some of those very rich moments of delight and wonder occurred within the wide world of puppetry, a world that continues to bring joy, awe, and inspiration to fellow humans of all ages all over this beautiful planet. May each and all of us continue to weave and discover and warm ourselves in many such moments in the year ahead!

We close by sharing a quote from poet Mary Oliver

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LIVING A LIFE

- 1) Pay attention.
- 2) Be astonished.
- 3) Tell about it.

Here's to astonishment, wonder, and community in the year ahead! Happy New Year!!

Peter and Tree

The year of 2017 in retrospect was a busy and exciting year for the San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers Guild. We have much to be thankful for as we leave this year behind and move into the next. As I've looked at and reflected on our list of events, I must admit, it's impressive. We've had an active and fun year as a puppeteers guild. I want to gratefully acknowledge Lee Armstrong our Programming Committee coordinator and librarian who created this list. Thank you Lee!

So without much ado here is our guild year of 2017:

January Holiday Party/Meeting: Potluck, Fellowship and annual Founder's Raffle, Gift exchange, Puppet Debut Runway and performance by Up a Tree Puppetry.
February Event: One Stone, featuring the work of our own Michael and Valerie Nelson! The Magic Flute at SSU, discussion, look at puppets, dinner & farewell to Mary Nagler.
March Event: Hand of God Performance Attended together and separately.
June: Giant/Parade Puppet building demo with Tree - Vallejo
July: National Puppet Festival- Minneapolis
August: Puppet Slam – Vallejo & Puppet Fair & Fairyland Meeting – Oakland
Oct 7 Dinosaur Show Event: Puppets from Australia in Napa (Michael Nelson)
Oct 20 & 21 Alice in Wonderland Event: Firehouse Arts Center, Pleasanton
Oct 22 Meeting: Black light/ Choreography workshop with Gabriel Galdamez in Daly City.
Nov 4 Event: Nick Barone Memorial Workshop - Wendy Morton (Scholarship recipient) sharing what she learned in the Richard Bradshaw class at the National Puppetry Conference at the O'Neill. Co-Chairs Camilla Henneman & Judy Roberto.
Nov 16 Event: Ronnie Burkett performance and talk back for our guild.

This guild wouldn't have accomplished this impressive list without the tireless contributions of time and energy from all of our board and committee members that help make this happen not to mention all of the guild members who have volunteered for various important duties like set up, and clean up and other volunteer roles at our events and workshops. Thanks for making it all come together and making it an enjoyable experience for everyone. Finally and most importantly thanks to all of our membership for showing up and being a part of this wonderful, creative, craziness and coming together over our shared passion for puppetry.

I'd like to give a special shout out of thanks to John Arnold for all the work he does to help grow our membership as well as all the fabulous additions and improvements he has made this year to our guild website

as our webmaster. I am quite proud of our professional looking online presence thanks to his willingness to take on this task.

While I'm touching on our online guild connection, I would like to also point out that our San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers Guild Facebook page is now public so guild members can now share the fabulousness of our guild with family, friends and colleagues all over the world through Facebook.

I would also like to thank Peter Olson our other Co-President, for partnering up with me, Glynn (Tree) Bartlett and offering his talents and contributions and sharing the responsibilities of being co-Presidents to the guild. Thanks to Michael Nelson for putting together our Newsletter and also serving as Vice President. Also for imparting his wisdom and experience to us newbie co-presidents.

Thanks to Valerie Nelson, our Treasurer for all the hard work of keeping track of our finances. Thanks to Barbara Grillo, our Secretary. Once again, thank you John Arnold, Membership Officer, Webmaster and Calendar for your contributions as previously mentioned. Fred Riley III and Elizabeth Leonard for your contributions to the board and Lee Armstrong our Librarian and Programming Committee coordinator. I have a feeling I'm leaving out thanks for some folks such as former board members who have served us as well as folks on other guild committees. Please know I am grateful for all your contributions to the puppeteers guild.

Personally I am looking forward to 2018. There will be much more Guild fabulousness ahead. In the near future I am looking forward to celebrating and hanging out with all of you who are able to attend our Guild Holiday Party on Saturday, January 20, 2018! Mark your calendars. Location: The Veterans Memorial Hall of Benicia, 1150 1st. Street, Benicia, CA 94510. Hope to see y'all there.

Best wishes to all for a very Happy New Year!

-Tree

Holiday Party in January 20th

Come celebrate with your puppet tribe on January 20, at the Benicia Veterans Memorial Hall, 1150 First St, Benicia, from 4:30 to 9. This is a DIY party in so many ways!

BRING YOUR NEWLY MADE PUPPET And strut your stuff in the second annual puppet runway show and tell. Bring a description for the emcee to read or they will make it up on the spot!

BRING A DISH Our potlucks are fabulous because everyone brings awesome food.

BRING A DONATION We have a raffle of wonderful things puppetry that benefits the Founders Scholarship. This pays for the registrations at puppet workshops and festivals for lucky applicants. If you let me

know that you plan to bring a raffle item, I will stop worrying that there won't be any raffle items (Valerie Nelson, magicalmoonshine@gmail.com)

BRING CASH! So you can buy raffle tickets!

BRING A TABLE DECOR Decorate a table for whichever holiday you like.

Plan on the tables being round, or rectangular (hey, we're flexible!) Your table will be oohed and ahed over.

BRING A SHORT PUPPET PIECE (But call me first. Valerie Nelson 707 342-0248)

We are looking for 2 or 3 short (under 10 minutes) family friendly pieces.)

BRING A PRESENT If you wish to join a present exchange, bring something inexpensive (around \$10 or less) and



puppetry, wrapped up.

BRING YOUR HELPFULNESS! Help set up, help clean up, come early, stay late! Many hands, short work.

BRING YOUR JOY! We need each other more than ever. Pass the hugs.

I am very pleased that Animal Cracker Conspiracy will perform a short act at our Holiday party. Details will follow soon....Below is a photo of Animal Cracker Conspiracy's toy theatre offering...a fishy tale, indeed!

Wendy Morton on attending the Richard Bradshaw Workshop

I was privileged to attend the National Puppetry Conference of 2016 with the support of a SFBAPG scholarship. I selected this conference to have the unique opportunity of taking a workshop from Richard Bradshaw, the celebrated Australian master shadow puppeteer. He is known for his witty narrations and puppets with clever mechanisms. This charming, world-renowned but self-effacing performer was joking around with us on the first day and ready to share his clever puppet characters and their mechanical tricks. Richard had the assistance of Jim Napolitano (Nappy) who is also an accomplished, captivating performer. Richard's wife, Margaret, a theater historian was also there and came every day to witness the characters coming to life.

After getting some background of Richard's career, he challenged us to make a puppet with movement. The variety of styles and ideas was fascinating. We had a clown, a space explorer, a Yeti on rollerskates, and an archer that could actually shoot an arrow. At the end of the week at O'Neill, participants do a group performance. So how do you do a solo show with 18 people? We each showcased our puppet that we had been working on as Richard introduced every character with his dry humor, then we traded off puppets and narration for a demonstration of shadow puppet history, and finally a traditional Australian song with a large cast of animal characters that we paraded past the screen, synchronized to the music so all of us could get our puppets on and off at the right moment. The conference music director, Melissa Dunphy was fortuitously also Australian and knew the song and so we were accompanied with live music.



It was a fascinating week of feverish puppet building and being surrounded by like-minded enthusiasts.

Jim Napolitano, Richard Bradshaw, Jenny Hann, Milissa Orzolek to Left

Kangaroo with linked jaw -by Richard Bradshaw, Right





The man tips his hat, the woman tips her wig. -by Richard Bradshaw (to Left)

"Mooning" puppet -by Richard Bradshaw, below Right



Rehearsal



Images In Motion Reflections on 2017

Images in Motion did not wait until Jan 1st to make a new year resolution. In October, when it looked like our Sonoma shooting studio was going up in flames, we decided that if it survived, we'd get busy and shoot some of our own puppet ideas. For years we've been busy working on client projects. We're going to carve out time for our own videos.

To this end, Kamela Portuges is restoring our spokeschickens, Zee and Fiona, to their former glory. They have gotten new schram skins and she is working on the airbrushing and radio control eyeblinks. The chicken set is a combination of a greenscreened chicken coop, with areas for live video. The studio is now setup so puppeteers can see the greenscreen mix on their monitor, allowing Zee and Fiona to interact with live chickens. It was great fun going on location, shooting poultry in various coops in the Sonoma area.



The chickens will be introducing a variety of stories for family audiences. Stay tuned for updates!

Looking back over the year, we have done an amazing amount of molding, casting & 3D printing (none of which we can show) for an unnamed animation company. We also 3D printed full color props for Swazzle for Little Big Awesome (a series on Amazon). IIM 3D printed a robot character from a book written and illustrated by local author, Matt Gasser. Our plastic printer was used for a puppet for Cirque de Boheme. Kamela Portuges modeled the puppet head and hands in Zbrush and 3D printed with our Lulzbot large extruder-head. The mechanical internal parts, eyes and eye blink mechanism were printed and embellished with metal parts for wear and tear. All controls for the facial features are inside the head allowing a single puppeteer to easily bring "Hope" to life.



In the Spring, we did a video shoot with our friends at Folkmanis, and edited the footage to show their impressive lineup of 2017 puppets. Bruce the Troll left us this summer to model clothing for a French fashion company.



For “Up On Top of Things” a children’s TV pitch, Kamela create animations to bring a child’s artwork to life.

Last year, Kamela illustrated a children’s book “Christmas at Jim’s Place” for JK Entertainment. This year we worked with the authors to develop the book into an animated screenplay.

This Fall, Lee Armstrong taught “Jim Henson and the Art of the Muppets” to 270 students at UCSC. At the end of the course, students did a creative project: making puppets, building puppet videos or live performances. It is always amazing to see the variety and creativity of the student projects.



We look forward to 2018 and the start of our puppet series. We wish everyone a joyful new year, filled with great puppet adventures!



Larry Schmidt informs us of a chance to perform at an international festival:

The puppet company in Mandalay, Myanmar is putting together a puppet festival for March. There's a specific call for any American puppeteers who are interested and able to perform at the festival. There is a volunteer opportunity. Ma Ma Naing, director has sent me the following information: Hi Mr Larry, The festival date is from 17th to 19th of March. So that, 16.3.2018 - Arrival in Yangon airport - Welcoming dinner party in the evening at 6:00pm. 17.3.18 - Workshop at the hotel in 2 rooms at the same time from 9:00 to 4:30 pm - Then to go see the theatre 18.3.28 - Panel Discussion or Talk of 6 countries from 9:00 to 11:00 at the theatre. - Rehearsal from 11:30 to 2:30 5:00 - 5:30 - Opening Ceremony & O Speech 5:40 - 6: 40 - Australia 6:50 - 7:50 - India 8:00 - 9:00 - USA

Something like that. I will send you the Invitation Letter if you give me the exact email address of the participants.

And the detail schedule also.

19.3.18 - Sight Seeing in Yangon. - Farewell Dinner & giving presents - \$USD 200 to each puppet- ters

20.3.18 - Departure The groups can keep staying on their own arrangements.

We need to know as soon as possible who and how many. According to the budget, it is limited up to 4.

'GROOVY ALICE IN WONDERLAND' a shadow show created for the *1987* 20th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUMMER OF LOVE' a Resurfaced Memory, by Elisheva Hart

Living in San Francisco during 1987 and partnered with a Genuine Hippy, David Whitaker, we decided that Spring to create an Homage to the*20th* Anniversary of Summer of Love. My Dragonfly Puppet Theatre would do a shadow show of "Alice in Wonderland" -groovy style. The initial setting was the Golden Gate Park with Alice seeking to "Run Away from the 'Circus' (read Haight Street) to Join Home.

The designs and postures of the characters, etc. were based on the art of Peter Max. Alice, a black silhouette, wore beautifully flowing bell bottoms and amazing long floaty hair. We used a large cotton screen, based on the style used in Java.

During the Tea Party scene, we used a polarized light, giving a twitchy effect as the two-tone colors shifted back and forth, reflecting the hyper mood of the Mad Hatter.

I dubbed a cassette-full of appropriate-to-the-script music from the 1967 scene, with thanks to a friend and his huge record collection. We brilliantly used only samples of the music which were relevant to the mood and action, instead of the whole songs, which would have dragged the story down.

For instance, Alice drank a "DrinkMe" bottle and grew too large; arm busting out the window and leg up the chimney of the White Rabbit's house. Meanwhile the neighbors-small animals such as a lizard named Bill-began to pelt the house with stones, accompanied by Bob Dylan's "Well, they'll stone you when you're trying to be so good...Everybody must get stoned." ["Rainy Day Woman", #12 & 35, opening track of "Blonde on Blonde", 1966].



Another fun 'tune' -background for Alice entering the Red Queen's Royal Garden- was "Tiptoe Throu' the Tulips With Me" featuring Tiny Tim singing the lyrics in his squeaky falsetto and strumming his ukulele [from album "God Bless Tiny Tim", 1968].

David and I did a portion-in-progress at a Guild meeting held in the San Francisco Main Library, which is now The Asian Art Museum. To open the show he sat in front and to the side of the shadow screen in a large flared

peacock-style wicker chair made in India. He was playing his guitar-probably "California Dreamin' " by The Mamas and The Papas [1966] which lured him to San Francisco from upstate New York. I operated a table top puppet of Alice in her traditional blue frock and apron, with real, tiny black Mary Jane shoes. She and David bantered together for several minutes, then she exited and he came back stage to help manipulate the shadows.

We subsequently performed several places that summer. Our VERY BEST AUDIENCE, to our delight, was at the San Francisco Branch Library which serves the Haight-Ashbury region. They were extremely mellow, and applauded everything, humming along of course.

In retrospect, since this story is SO well known, I would eliminate ALL the dialogue except the famous quotes which everyone knows: "Down the Rabbit Hole"; "No Room" (tea party); "I'm Late" (White Rabbit); "Whooo are Youuu?" (Caterpillar); "Eat Me/Drink Me" (bottles and tea cakes); "OFF WITH HER/HIS/THEIR HEAD/S" (Red Queen) etc. A mega-sample of the text, just like I had done with the music. Quick pantomimes of the characters and their music would be used with the sayings, and, of course, the Cheshire Cat's Famous GRIN.

FINAL ARTICLE RE SUMMER OF LOVE 50th ANNIVERSARY: "ANIMATED PSYCHEDELIC POSTER ART" by Elisheva

Victor Moscoso, one of the "Big Five" poster artists of San Francisco's 1967 era, stumbled into a technique which is adaptable to shadow shows, and rear projected backdrops, etc. for other styles of puppets. He first noticed this moving effect-caused by a randomly blinking string of Christmas lights-which was hanging near one of his multi-colored posters. Movement was being created within the poster!

An example would be blue light blinking on and then off, making the blue parts of the poster disappear under blue light, then reappear once the blue light winked off again. Studying this effect he developed posters which, on purpose, had intentional color schemes to match the colors of the lights. I had the pleasure to see some of his original posters being animated with various lights at the de Young Art Museum's exhibit in San Francisco this last summer.

The one reproduced here, with the men sprouting 3 colors/positions of wings is my favorite and seems adaptable to puppetry, either as puppets or scenery and backgrounds. The lights used in sequence are red, yellow and blue. This is a Steve Miller Band promotion for Capital Records, issued in 1969, and printed on a color offset lithograph, deliberately creating an "animated" poster. Hint: using theatrical gel (colored plastic sheets used for covering light sources such as spotlights in the theater) will give strong, bold colors for the transparent parts of a shadow puppet. And experiment with what you have, be inventive.

Victor Moscoso studied under a famous art professor, Josef Albers, at Yale University, before migrating to San Francisco. Josef was an instructor in the Bauhaus style of art before emigrating from Germany to the US, and very influential to the development of modern art. In 1963 his experiments in the classroom at Yale were compiled into a fascinating book, "Interaction of Color". At first glance the text of this book seems like poetry! Josef's theme is that *'color, rather than form, is [the] primary pictorial language'* and this was the basis of the students' studies.

Here's an example of the text from "Interaction of Color" which might speak to puppeteers:

"To use a theatrical parallel:
A set of 4 colors is to be considered-singly as 'actors,'
together as 'cast'. They are to be presented in 4 different
arrangements-as 'performances.' "

page 44, "Interaction of Color", 50th Anniversary Edition

Josef Albers did not like the first edition of his book because the editors chose the color plates, not him. So, in 2013 "Interaction of Color" was published in a paper back, 50th Anniversary Edition for \$18.00 (less on line.) About 2/3rds are color plates and the commentaries about the assignments. Also available in libraries.

Our last Hippy-Dippy craft project is, of course, POSTERS! Not the making of, but the reading of ones created in 1967, and a groovy new paper supply available today.

In researching posters of that era, I discovered how to actually read some of them, if in a book. (Famously there was at least one advertised event where nobody came. The over decorated lettering was totally undecipherable.) Hold the book in front of your face, the bottom of the page/poster hovering somewhere between chin and nose. Then slowly tilt the top of the book outwards, focusing on the paper SURROUNDING each letter, NOT on the letter itself. Use soft-focused eyes to do this. I was able to read a big % of the posters this way.



CARD STOCK is now available in a multitude of colors! The brand sold at Michael's has collections labeled Blue Ombre and Feathered Greens, etc. as well as a huge collection of many different colors, called Essentials. Packages of trendy Brights! are also available. The themed collections have 50 sheets and are priced at \$4.99 = 10 cents per. And periodically they are on sale at \$2.00 per package! These are the standard 8 1/2 X 11 inches. They can be printed on, just like standard typing paper.

However I was at Kinkos, and the copy machine was out of paper in drawer 1 (vertically positioned) so I slipped a card stock into drawer 2 (horizontally positioned.) Oops, being card stock, the bendy way was vertical and therefore it jammed the machine! It is A-OK in drawer 1. Some colors are also sized at 12 X12 inches and available by the piece.

Last August, at the Children's Fairyland Puppet Festival, Lee Armstrong was using this colored card stock for the base of the simple puppets

at the Make-it-and-Take-it Booth, staffed by SFBAPG members. And, being a puppeteer-thrifty- she had a whole bag of colored card scraps trimmed from the puppets. Many were used by the children to decorate their creations. Tia and I each scored a big baggie of colorful scraps to use at our jobs.

For Calendar listings please go to <http://www.sfbapg.org/events/calendar/>

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