



November (and a little bit of October) 2013

AUTUMN GUILD MEETING



Join us at Vallejo's Fetterly Playhouse for a very special Guild Meeting-avec-Puppet Slam. Don't miss the fun!

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Autumn Guild Meeting

Saturday, November 9th at Fetterly Theater in Vallejo

This quarter's Guild Meeting is piggybacking on an incredible evening's entertainment, a Puppet Slam open to the public. We'll start with the Guild activities, meeting and potluck, and then the doors will open. You are invited to any or all of these events.

****Important**** The bar will be open! And we need volunteers to help host and pour. Talk to the fiendish Master Minds Of The Cabaret, Mike and Valerie Nelson of Magical Moonshine Puppet Theater, for free lessons in the sacred art of Bottle Manipulation.

3-5 pm: Guild Workshop featuring Mary Nagler. Bring your most unusual or silly puppet for this ridiculous Puppet Party. We're looking for diversity. Mary will bring a few Avenue Q-Muppet-style puppets. We will explore different ways of puppet interaction and performing, using this motley crew of actors and manipulators.



8 pm: Let the Cabaret begin! FORBIDDEN PUPPET CABARET, free to SFBAPG members. A Terrific Treat and Totally Tremendous Time!

VOLUNTEERS are needed all day long, from load-in to load-out. Sign up with Michael and Valerie. Please arrive prepared to pitch in!

5-7 pm: Guild meeting and pot luck. The theater's kitchen is not satisfactory to prepare food in, although some refrigeration is available. There is a very inexpensive Pho (Vietnam-style soup) restaurant behind the theater. It's okay to bring wine, but we will also need juice/water.

Cabaret information and MAP:
magicalmoonshine.org/chaos.htm

The Fetterly Theater is at 3467 Sonoma Blvd, Suite 10, in Vallejo. But map programs won't take you all the way to the theater! Use your GPS or map program to get you most of the way there, then use our handy map (link above) to zero in on the actual location of the Fetterly behind Seafood City (a big Grocery store).

If you get lost, call Michael and Valerie's cell: 707-363-4573.

Y'all come and enjoy now!

NEWS

Reminder: Membership Dues Due

LITTLE KNOWN FACT: Annual dues renew your membership from September to August.

Did your membership expire at the end of August? It's not too late to repent--er, renew. Email membership officer Camilla Henneman at camhenneman@gmail.com for renewal information. If you didn't receive your renewal notice, check with Camilla that your information is correct.

Without your dues, the Guild cannot fund the events, activities, education, and outreach we've come to depend on for preserving, promoting, and propelling puppetry into the future. The many benefits made possible by your modest annual dues include group discounts to shows and events, eligibility for scholarships, access to the Guild Library, a listing in our "Services Offered" roster, immediate access to the membership through our email listserv, and quarterly meetings with valuable workshops, performances, discussion, and fellowship.

Thanks for making this Guild possible!

Tiny Street Stage

Making it small in show business

This was the headline for the photo-rich lead story of the SF Chronicle's recent Datebook section.

Wow! That headline is guaranteed to catch the interest of puppeteers. I'll summarize quickly, but you should check out the article online (link at end of article).

The modular and mobile Street Stage, designed by a team of five for the 2012 Urban Prototyping Festival's Makeathon, is made from pallets and PVC pipe. Described by one team member as "kind of like an IKEA bed," it only takes 15 minutes to set up, can travel by pickup truck, and fits snugly within a parking space--perfect for street festivals and farmers' markets. The article talks about how the stage seems to legitimize street musicians, but the effect would work with many types of performance.

Puppeteers have tinkered with setups of a similar nature for years. This seems like a great choice for marionettists who perform in full sight; the Street Stage would frame them and elevate the puppets, and allow the puppeteer easy access to "stroll the audience." However, the platform might be more ideal with a few inches of extra height for better marionette visibility. It might suit other cabaret-style puppetry. For those without a pickup truck (or without the second person required to load it), the Street Stage might need alteration to bust down into smaller units.

Check out Katherine Schwab's September 24 article at SFGate.com: <http://ow.ly/qEe6Q>
- *Elisheva Hart*

Return of the Road Show

Elisheva Hart

Several years ago, I heard puppeteers speak of working the drive to and from National Puppet Festivals. They would prebook shows en route at libraries, parks, KOA campgrounds, etc., paying expenses thusly. Does anyone still do this? Have you done it? Please share your adventures with us in the newsletter. - *Elisheva Hart*

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Letter from Pamela Corcoran

*President, Board of Trustees,
Puppeteers of America*

Greetings!

Thank you to all who have renewed their Puppeteers of America memberships. And welcome to our new members, many of whom joined us while attending the Puppet rEvolution at Swarthmore this past August. We are so happy to have you with us!

As the new president of the Board of Trustees, I look forward to an exciting year of transitions for Puppeteers of America. It was with great delight we introduced Dr. Cheryl Maloney, our new Executive Director, to the participants at the National Festival this summer.

In the history of science, great discoveries and movements begin with a bang. Those discoveries don't happen in a linear manner, but radiate out, like the movement of water ripples when you drop a pebble in a pond. I feel like Puppeteers of America has just tossed another pebble into the pond. It is a time to dream. It is a time to look forward, to build on our long history and on the talents and skills of those who have brought us this far. Let's work together to imagine ways to provide additional meaningful and useful services for puppeteers. Let's work together to continue to raise

the art of puppetry in the eyes of the public, as so many of you do on a daily basis.

I look forward to hearing your ideas! Please contact me at pamela@corcoranpuppets.com

Just a reminder, this is a great time to renew or join, as, for just this year, your membership will be active through December of 2014, giving you a few extra months free membership! We are transitioning to a membership year that begins on January 1 to align with our fiscal year.

How and Why of Puppets for Performance Magic

Who can resist stopping to pet an adorably cute fluffy dog, cat or bunny? Everyone oohs and aahs, asks its name, talks to it or reaches



out to touch it. That's the reaction I get when I demonstrate my favorite Folkmanis Puppet, the Sheepdog. I've even had the young and the elderly convinced that indeed, it's a real dog. Sometimes I don't have the heart to burst their imagination bubble and I play along. Although after nearly three decades, I wonder if indeed, the trick was on me all along and they really knew it was a puppet. Ah, the magic of illusion puppetry.

Illusion puppetry is like walk-around magic, dependent on the suspension of disbelief. When our minds are led to a place where imagination lives, we experience child-like

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joy, awe, awakening and delight. It is the most positive of mind tricks, and one happy place where we should all spend more time. This is what makes puppetry magic.

When learning to animate a puppet, stand in front of a mirror. This will help you gauge your movements

and make corrections until you achieve results you're happy with. Try out different emotions: curiosity works well with most animals as does shyness, eagerness, sleepiness and excitement. Always keep your fingers as deep into the muzzle, nose or mouth of the puppet as possible, giving you ultimate control of expressions. If the puppet is an animal with a tail, you can use your free hand to give it a wag or a swish. This sleight of hand action adds life and believability to your illusion.

Customize your puppet to enhance the walk-around magic. The simplest DIY way is to stuff an old glove and attach it to the outside of the puppet to create the illusion your hand is holding the puppet, and not inside. Complete the illusion with a fake long sleeve.

You can also create your own custom props thus making the illusion your very own and creating a new mind trip for the audience. Cut a hole in the bottom of a cup, bowl, hat, basket, etc. Now your puppet can nestle in



the container and peek over the edge and throw its paws over the rim, inviting observers to interact with it. This is a great trick for wildlife babies such as the Folkmanis baby raccoon, baby black bear, skunk and more. A bear might love to live in a nice cozy honey jar, a raccoon in a garbage can, a skunk in a berry

basket, a monkey in a burlap bag of peanuts. Add some props inside like wads of paper, real peanuts or just confetti to toss out at observers. It's so easy to create a personalized puppetry illusion that will add even more value and fun to your routine. "Ooh, is that a real live skunk?"

Most of the Folkmanis line is suitable for walk-arounds and performance vignettes. There are also finger puppets for pocket magic and a line of stage puppets that are designed for curtain work, but if customized are another great resource for walk-arounds. View the entire line at www.folkmanis.com.

Visit the Folkmanis website for links to puppetry resources, scripts, and ideas: <http://www.folkmanis.com/63/puppetry.htm>

- Elaine Kollias

Ms. Kollias has been playing with puppets at Folkmanis for nearly 30 years and believes that puppets can save the world, if we only let them speak!

Fratello Marionettes

Tuesday . November 5, 6:30 pm
"The Vaudeville Follies"
Pleasant Hill Library @ 1750 Oak Park Blvd

Thursday, November 7, 3:15 pm
"Aladdin"
Esparto Library @ 17065 Yolo Avenue

Tuesday . November 12, 7:00 pm
"The Frog Prince"
Milpitas Library @ 160 North Main St.

Saturday . November 23, 11:00 am
"The North Pole Review"
Milpitas Library @ 160 North Main St.

Magical Moonshine Theater

Saturday, November 9, 8:00 (doors at 7)
"Forbidden Puppet Cabaret celebrates Chaos
Never Dies Day"
Fetterly Playhouse, Vallejo (See Guild Meet-
ing article for directions)

Saturday, November 16, 10:15 am
"Tales of Br'er Rabbit"
Mountain View Library

Storybook Puppet Theatre

Saturdays and Sundays in Nov/Dec.
11:00 am, 2:00 pm, 4:00 pm
"The Shepherdess & The Chimney Sweep"
*Hans Christian Andersen's delightful tale about
love and adventure as experienced by china
dolls. Original songs and script by Foreman
Brown. Production designed by Sheilah Beckett.
Puppets by Lewis Mahlmann.*
Children's Fairyland, Oakland

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Our (Hopefully-Not-Monthly) Apology



Well, that was a bit of a rocky start, wasn't it? I can't thank you enough for your patience and good cheer during the transition of editorship. Now that I've worked the bugs out (mostly!), it should be smooth sailing from here on out (hopefully!).

You might notice this issue is a little rough around the edges...not quite as colorful, not quite as graphic, not quite as meaty. I beg you to bear with me while I adapt. And by all means, do email me to let me know what more you'd like to see in your newsletter, what you think is working or not working, and of course all the usual news and goodies.

Please join me in thanking Talib once again for his hard work and dedication making our Guild Newsletter what it has become. You'll be a tough act to follow, Talib! Cheers - Greg

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SAVE THE DATE:

The Programs Committee has agreed on the following dates and locations for 2013 / 2014 so far:

- Fall Meeting on Saturday, November 9 - San Francisco
- Holiday Party 2014 on Sunday, January 26 - North Bay

Stay tuned for more details about the exciting year to come!



Puppeteers of America

Puppeteers of America, a national non-profit organization founded in 1937, provides information, encourages performances, and builds a community of people who love puppet theatre.

Share the enchantment of puppetry with professional puppeteers, puppet builders, teachers, librarians, therapists, youth leaders, hobbyists and audience members who are enthusiastic about puppetry. To learn how to join, visit:

www.puppeteers.org