



The official newsletter of
San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers' Guild
*Looking for updates and missed information?
Check for it at SFBAPG.ORG*

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

March 2015



You can currently find this artwork at the Crocker Museum in Sacramento. See Pam Wade's article on page 8.

**2014-2015 Board of Directors
and Officers**

President

Olivia Huff

ohuff@dcn.org

916-484-0606

Vice President

Elisheva Hart

ishvahart@yahoo.com

707-978-8309

Treasurer

Mary Nagler

mary.nagler@gmail.com

707 303 0093

Membership Officer

Camilla Henneman

camhenneman@gmail.com

831-359-9761

Secretary

Judy Roberto

judy.roberto@sanjoseca.gov

Lex Rudd

lex@alexisrudd.com

626-224-8578

Librarian

Lee Armstrong

images@vom.com

707-996-9474

Newsletter

Michael Nelson

mail@magicalmoonshine.org

Inside this issue...

- ◆ Next Guild Meeting March 28
- ◆ Nick Barone Memorial
- ◆ Scholarships, Elections, Member updates, Foam Workshop Review,
- ◆ Greek Shadow Show Review, and More!



President's Report, Olivia Huff

Hello SFBPAG members,

Spring is in the air (most of the time)! And with it has come the enthusiasm for going forward with our new expanded schedule of events, workshops and meetings. The Board has been a twitter (well, really emailing) with discussions of how to inspire, appreciate and support our members in their puppetry work and solicit new members to join this wonderful world of puppetry through our guild.

Near the top of the list are ideas of how to generate funding for our scholarships--the ongoing fund (currently re-named, in the interim, "The Founders" Scholarship in honor of Lettie Schubert, Mike Oznowicz, and Lewis Mahlmann) and the proposed Nick Barone scholarship. A few of the ideas that we have had to support these endeavors (in addition to the raffle):

1. a portion of the Guild workshop fees go to the designated scholarship fund
2. have an on-line store and temporary physical store at meetings for T-shirts and other puppet-related items
3. request donations with the annual membership renewal

What other ideas might you, the members, have? The Scholarship Committee will be discussing this issue more fully in the coming weeks. Please pass your ideas on to the Scholarship Committee--Valerie Nelson, Talib Huff or me--or contact any Board member.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Larry Reed event on March 28!

Guild News

The Scholarship Committee awaits your application. We ask for you to apply two months before the event you want to attend. If you want to attend the National Puppetry Conference in Waterford, CT, you must apply to them by March 6. (www.theoneill.org) The conference runs from June 6-14. If you are accepted you can apply to our guild for help with the registration. Our deadline for a scholarship will be April 6 for this conference. If you are planning to attend the Puppeteers of America National Festival, it will be at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, CT, from August 10-16. This festival does not need an application, just registration. www.nationalpuppetryfestival2015.com. Our guild scholarship deadline for this will be June 10. You can find the form on our website. Look under membership benefits, fill it out and send it on to me. Valerie Nelson, 921 Carolina St, Vallejo, ca 94590

Elections coming! We will be electing 3 new board members this summer. The board keeps the guild running. If you are interested in serving on the guild board of directors, or know of someone you think would be an asset to the board, please get in touch with the nomination committee. The nomination committee members are: Camilla Henneman, Jesse Vail, and Randal Metz. You can email inquiries and suggestions to me at camhenneman@gmail.com I will forward them to the other committee members.

March Guild Meeting, March 28 1:30-4:30, The Roxie Theater, 3117 16th St., San Francisco (at Valencia St in the Mission)

"My Life With Shadows" - a film screening and a talk by Larry Reed

The presentation will begin with a screening of ON WAYANG (2011, 30 min), which chronicles Larry Reed's journey into the "shadow world" from his fateful encounter with the Balinese Shadow Theatre to the creation of his original cinema-scale modern shadow theatre. Larry will expand upon the themes, philosophies and techniques described in the movie and answer questions from the audience.

Larry Reed is the founder and Artistic Director of Shadow Light Productions (SF). He has pioneered contemporary shadow theater by integrating traditional shadow theater techniques with American theater and film styles. Reed is one of the few Americans trained in Wayang Kulit, Balinese shadow theatre, and has collaborated with artists from

diverse backgrounds and traditions to create original shadow plays in a cinematic scale. His works include: IN XANADU, AMBROSIA OF IMMORTALITY, COYOTE'S JOURNEY, 7 VISIONS, MONKEY KING AT SPIDER CAVE, GHOSTS OF THE RIVER and PORO OYNA: THE MYTH OF THE AYNU.

Venue Change! Due to the mounting excitement regarding this presentation the Little Roxie Theater has let us shift into the **BIG ROXIE THEATER!** We went from 51 seats to over 200 so **BRING YOUR FRIENDS!** Guild members and guests are free! Need a ride? Post requests on SFBAPG Facebook page OR request at sfbapg@yahoo.com OR call people from your membership roster. Don't miss this chance to see one of our local treasures! Here is the schedule!

- 1:30 Doors open
- 2:00 Larry Reed presents!
- 3:40 Guild meeting
- Early supper possibilities will be announced

"I was completely mesmerized when first exposed to Larry Reed's work at the 1993 National Puppeteers of America Festival, " said Mary Nagler, "I had never seen anything like it and his shadows opened a whole new world for me!" The Roxie Theatre is located at 3117 **16th St.**, between Valencia and Guerrero. It is accessible from the 22, 14, 49 and 33 bus lines. The Roxie Theater is two blocks west of the 16th Street BART stop, and three blocks east of the J-Church line.

Public parking is available at the [16TH & HOFF GARAGE](#), on Hoff Street between Mission and Valencia off 16th. <http://www.sfmta.com/getting-around/parking/parking-garages/16th-hoff-garage>

When I checked parking rates, it was \$3.50 hr, but this varies slightly. Parking prices are incrementally raised or lowered in SF park pilot areas based on demand. <http://sfpark.org/>.

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March Guild Meeting: Larry Reed is one of the few Americans trained in Wayang Kulit, Balinese shadow theatre, and has collaborated with artists from diverse backgrounds and traditions to create original shadow plays in a cinematic scale.

Nick Barone Memorial--

Come join us to say goodbye, and celebrate the life of our dear friend, the brilliant artist & puppeteer, Nick Barone. There will be a memorial service at the San Leandro Library, on March 21 at 2 pm. The library is at 300 Estudillo Avenue, San Leandro. The service will be in the theater. Nick's puppets will be on display. The service will start promptly at 2:00 pm. Come early to see the exhibit of Nick's work. If you have any questions, you can call: Camilla Henneman 831-427-3732 or email at camhenneman@gmail.com



The Power of Puppets in Performance

Lee Armstrong will be teaching an Olli@UCBerkeley course this Spring term. This workshop includes opportunities to view rare footage by master puppeteers as well as "hands on" puppet construction and performance for stage into the TV. You can learn more about this course and other exciting workshops and lectures at the Olli Open House at Freight & Salvage in Berkeley on Tuesday, March 10 from 10 to 12. This event will also be videotaped and will be posted afterwards at www.oli@berkeley.edu.

Lee Armstrong is co-owner of Images in Motion, a company that specializes in TV puppetry. Lee's credits include everything from "Fraggle Rock" and "Being John Malkovich" to producing videos for educational and corporate clients. She will be teaching at Olli@SFState this summer and UC Santa Cruz this fall.



Foam Carving Workshop Huge Success

Mary Nagler

A good time was had by the 13 people participating in the recent Foam Carving Workshop, held Feb.15 at Images in Motion, Sonoma. John Arnold and Mary Nagler, inspired by a taking a recent online foam carving workshop presented by Stan Winston's school and led by B. J. Guyer, taught the participants to slice, snip, and sand blocks and balls of foam into living breathing puppets. The process takes time, but everyone got off to a good start, understanding the techniques to draw their creations out. The room got very quiet as everyone dug into the foam. Then the room buzzed as everyone whipped out their Dremels and cranked up the belt sander to practice their sanding skills. The foam flew! Fish forms began to swim into sight!

A simple mouth mechanic was assembled to imbed in their fish puppets, which hopefully will be completed and used in upcoming Guild offering at the meetings in Oakland Children's Fairyland and Happy Hollow. Heads were carved from Nerf balls, so keep a look out for more characters to emerge. If you would like to know all they learned, then ask: Talib Huff, Lynette Pinto, Elizabeth Leonard, Jennifer Kruss, Sharon Clay, Art Gruenberger, Lex Rudd, Artie Poore, Brian Hitchcock, Maggie Hitchcock, Patrick Algermissen, Katie Christman and Nicole Graveley. Well done everyone! More workshops are on the planning table. Do you have something you would like to know more about? Let the People on the program planning committee know. See you at the March meeting.



Guild foam workshop participants and their creations. Photos by Lee Armstrong.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW THE METAMORPHOSIS OF KARAGHIOZIS, a Greek Shadow Play.

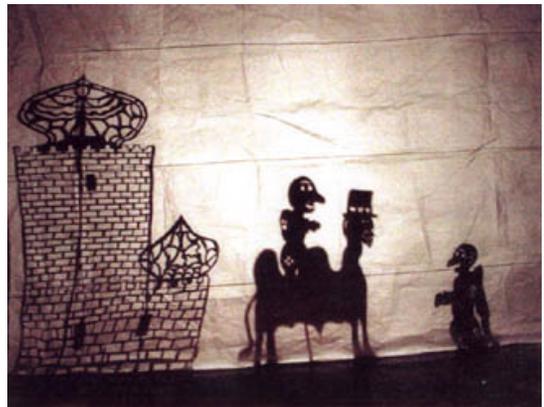
Elisheva Hart

This hilarious one-man traditional Greek Shadow Play was recently presented in Sonoma by shadow artist Leonidas Kassapides of San Francisco. Born in Greece, his introduction to this national folk theater was at age 3 when, on the full moons, his Grandfather would take him to see the shadow shows. He came to the USA for collage, studied theater, and never forgot his roots. Karaghiozis is both the name of the central character and the name of this kind of puppet theater. Like Punch and Judy is in England.

Leonidas uses a 24 feet long shadow screen which filled the stage from side to side at the Sonoma Community Center and rose over halfway to the top of the proscenium. Traditional screens in Greece are smaller, depending upon if used in a theater or a café. The puppets are held directly onto the screen, pulling them off-screen towards the puppeteer when the shadows need to be larger. And their light source is a string of light bulbs across the top and bottom of the screen. This way the multiple light sources defuse the shadows of the puppet rods. The enormity of Leonidas's setup and his use of modern technology (see below) reflects his history of performing in several of the ShadowLight Theater's productions with Larry Reed—who will be presenting our next Guild meeting on March 28th in San Francisco.

Since the use of fire as a light source is not possible at the Sonoma Community Center, Leonidas used a 500 watt halogen light bulb. During performance Leonidas uses a modern approach where he is located away from the screen with the puppets not touching it at all. He is in front of the powerful light which is about 20 feet from the screen. To enlarge the shadows he also pulls the puppet back towards the light.

He uses a Balinese style control of a vertical stick attached to the puppet's body from head to toe, projecting downward as a handle. Traditionally the Greeks use a rod parallel to the ground with a 90 degree hinge on the puppet that can allow the puppet to turn both directions on stage. Except for the screen size, the light source, the controls, and that these profile puppets are made of rigid black plastic (instead of leather or cardboard), this was a traditional show, thankfully performed in English. The puppets are 1-3 feet high, just like in Greece.



You can find these images and more information at
<http://www.kassapides.com/shad.html>

A lively mix of Greek music greeted the audience on February 15th as we entered Andrews Hall, the auditorium in the Sonoma Community Center where many puppet events and an exhibit by Alan Cook have been held in the past, arranged by the Nelsons. What a surprise we had! This Center is celebrating its 100th Anniversary in July of 2016 and Andrews Hall has therefore undergone its own metamorphosis. Instead of looking like a shabby gymnasium, the auditorium has fabulous handsome new comfortable seats on the main floor and also in the balcony.

QUESTION: What does Karaghiozis, the hero of Greece's traditional shadow theater, have in common with: Punch, Commedia del Arte, Shakespeare's Rustics; and tricksters such as Raven and Coyote; and buffoons like The Three Stooges? SLAPSTICK AND SATIRE whether the plots are multifaceted or barebones.

Leonidas' one-man Karaghiozis performances (he has several including 'Karaghiozis the Doctor', 'K. the Lawyer', 'K. and the 7 Monsters', and 'K.'s Wedding') are done live, a necessity since he banters to and fro with the audience and improvises at will. And the audience loved this approach. Both kids and adults! Sort of being inside a reality show where we can influence the going-ons Especially since it is unproductive for viewers to yell at a TV set.... and frustrating. And of course yelling at actors on stage is really bad form. Definitely NOT SO at Karaghiozis Theater!

At the far end of one side of the screen is the silhouette of the small ramshackle shack of Karaghiozis and his son, Kolitiris (a miniature of his father.) As far away as possible from the shack, on the other end of the screen, is the Palace of The Pasha and his daughter, Fatima. No other scenery is used although one character climbed on top of the shack during the performance. No props were used in this story although occasionally a chair or other prop might be used in a different one. The shapes of the puppets, their names, behavior, and the scenery are very recognizable to the Greek audiences, no matter what variations the puppeteer does when designing the troupe. The play is set during the Ottoman Empire and includes the usual cast of well known characters. Each has a distinctive voice-both in pitch and regional/class accents. Each is immediately recognizable by shape, personality, and relationship to Karaghiozis.

The standard template for the beginning of Karaghiozis Theater starts with the hero entering and introducing himself. He is very recognizable with his large bald head, stubbled chin, and his unique moveable arm which is incredibly long and jointed in many places. This enables him to gesture at every one and to snake it up over his head to bop friend and foe alike. His other arm and hand are stationary and project forward from his chest.

Then one at a time each of the other characters enters, encounters Karaghiozis-with much anticipated individual reactions usually ending in a scuffle-and exits. This is the traditional opening and a real boon to us who are not familiar with the shows. Or language. It also helps us tune our ears to the different accents. Some of the dialogue went: " Why are you being so violent?" (to Karaghiozis). K:"In today's society..." "Yah, but you've got to remember, Karaghiozis, you're just made out of paper!" K. "Paper doesn't have feelings." Later K. tells another character who is singing, "Your voice has to be higher." Other puppet climbs on top of K.'s shed and says, "How's that?"

After the introductions the story line appeared. A monster was flying this way, transforming everyone. The monster has a head like a dragon and body/tail like a scorpion. It would grab a character, fly up and out of the screen, drop the transformed puppet-consisting of an animal body and the character's "real" head-back into the stage. For instance, Nionios, a dandy who wears a top hat and tails, is transformed into a camel. The Pasha, a provincial governor, and Fatima, his college age daughter, exit their Palace. She worries about the monster. He reassures her: "We are of the 1%. The monster won't bother us." Immediately enter monster to carry off these puppets. She is changed into a cat. Papa into a rat. She lunges at him and both exit, rapidly! Baba Yiorgos, K.'s

Uncle, a tall shepherd from the mountains is transformed into a bull bison. Hatziavatis, K's honest sidekick, is transformed into a goat: "I can eat blue grass!" K., who has been changed into a donkey says, "No, it's a music type." Karaghiozis tries a magic word to restore them to their original forms. It doesn't work. He then appeals to the audience to help him out. SUCCESS! CHEERS AND APPLAUSE! THE END! The audience exits after verifying P.T. Barnum's saying, "Leave them asking for more." Leonidas, agrees and indicates he and Karaghiozis would like to return to Sonoma with more stories, on a regular monthly schedule. I agree, it is great fun and a wonderful chance to learn about this Greek style of shadow puppetry.

What are your upcoming projects?

Independent Eye to open King Lear

This month, our KING LEAR previews at our Sebastopol studio, March 21-22 and 28-29 - Saturdays at 8 pm, Sundays at 2 pm. Admission is free (we'll pass the Hat at the end), but reservations are necessary:

<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/1295136> .

And tickets are now on sale for our premiere in San Francisco April 10-26. It's \$25 general, \$20 for students or seniors, and the URL for that

is <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/1238008> .

We've also set up an \$18 group price for SFBAPG members coming any time - enter the discount code SFBAPG111 (all caps).

This thing has been over a year in the making, and right now is the heavy crunch. Our first puppet staging of Shakespeare was a 3-actor/36-puppet MACBETH, which we toured off and on for 15 years. I still remember the opening in a little college basement theatre, steam pipes overhead, with many of the puppets still hairless. This time around, they've all got hair, but our own heads still feel unfinished. It's 100 minutes, no intermission, skiing very steep slopes. Puppets don't have that much trouble learning their lines, though they still have blank-outs, but it's harder for them to remember when they make entrances: "No, Cornwall, you're not in this scene! Get out! You're dead!"

We've had a steady string of technical glitches - crashed hard disk, cranky camcorder, and our lighting control program deciding the cues are so good it wants to run some of them twice in a row - but all the bolts in the set (and in ourselves) seem to be holding. Elizabeth's music score, I think, is a marvel: it's entirely voice-produced through a Helicon vocal processor, and it's amazing what sounds emerge from a short blonde. The performance is a struggle against human limitations, but we go to the gym every day, and while much of life is on hold, we still don't regret tackling this thing. It's the carnival ride you never dared to go on, and finally there comes the day. . .

You can view a short trailer at <http://youtu.be/5qUa9QaXYdQ> .

-Conrad Bishop



Photos by Steven Jacobson, Vallejo.

Crocker Art Museum Puppet Connections, Performances

Pam Wade

I made a point to enjoy the Crocker Art Museum's newest special exhibit **TOULOUSE-LAUTREC PARIS 1880-1910 LA VIE MODERNE**. It runs through April 26, 2015. I was delightfully surprised to see a water color on paper of Jules Champfleury as puppeteer 1875 by Emile Durandeu. (with 5 marionettes under his command--Ed. Note: see image, page 1 of this newsletter). Next was a color lithograph of Polchenelle 1874 by Edouard Manet. Then a series of Shadow Puppets, fairly large pieces some of single figures, some multiple figures. At first I thought they were made of metal, but probably not, possibly leather? Some color and cut out designs. The exhibit also include a theater room, complete with stage, costumes, boa's, top hats, a round shadow screen and some beautiful silhouettes shadow puppets on a skewer including the Eiffel tower and a Paris street scene. Lots and children and adults were trying their hand at moving the puppets across the screen. I didn't hear any stories. The exhibit featured a dynamic performance by The Shadow Puppet Workshop, a professional puppetry studio from Berkeley (four performances earlier in the month) and a tour of the exhibit for the children and adults in attendance. Check it out for yourself at crockerartmuseum.org. I don't think anyone will be disappointed if you make the trip to Sacramento to enjoy this exhibit first hand. Check the website for dates and times of other live performances.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (Don't forget our March Guild Meeting!)

More Calendar listings can be found on the Calendar page of the guild website: sfbapg.org

Oakland Fairyland- Puppet shows are presented year-round, three times a day (11 a.m., 2 p.m., and 4 p.m.) at the Storybook Puppet Theater. We can't wait to see you there.

Mrs. Witherspoon's Busy Day, Feb 13 - April 12

Mrs. Witherspoon is a kindly lady who likes to live alone in her comfortable cave home. So why do her neighbors think she's a witch? When she tricks someone into believing that she has given him a bravery potion, get ready for some dragon action! See what happens in this funny, original tale by Lettie Connell Schubert of Oakland's Vagabond Puppets. Scenery and puppets by Lewis Mahlmann. Puppet design and script by Lettie Schubert.

Puppet Ruckus April 11, Vallejo-Call for performers!

Magical, absurd and beautiful puppets will unite Saturday, April 11 from noon to 1 p.m. to bring you a live, family-friendly puppetry variety show like you've probably never seen before. The event will feature several amateur as well as professional performers like Bay Area legend Mary Nagler, as well as live music from Sacramento's own Dani Joy.

Are you a puppeteer looking for a place to play? The Puppet Ruckus is an ideal venue for first-timers through f-timers and is accepting entries until April 1 for PG-rated puppetry acts 15 minutes or less in length. Box Office profits are divided equally among all the acts. Past performances have included dance, magic, ventriloquism, folk tales, songs and more. Contact Elizabeth Leonard at eo@ElizabethanDesign.com for more information. Saturday, April 11, Noon - 1pm (doors open at 11:30am)

Current SFBAPG Member Super Secret Discount Admission: \$7, General Admission: \$12, Kids age 4-10: \$4, Kids 4 and under are free
Mira Black Box Theatre, 51 Daniels Avenue, Vallejo, CA, Free parking
Visit us at: [Facebook.com/puppetruckus](https://www.facebook.com/puppetruckus)



Dragon made by Randal Metz and scenery and puppets by Lewis Mahlmann, designed by Lettie Schubert at Fairyland currently.

