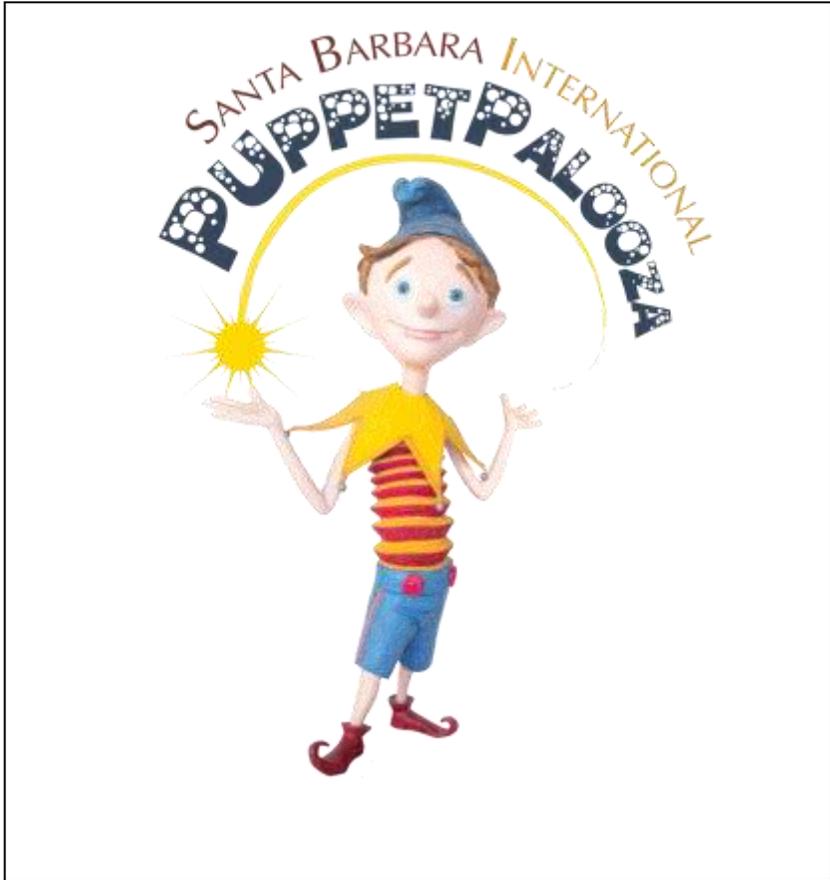




The official newsletter of
San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers' Guild
*Looking for updates and missed information?
Check for it at SFBAPG.ORG*

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

March, 2018



March 1 is the start of the Santa Barbara Regional Festival and Puppet Palooza! A number of guild members plan to attend and hopefully bring back reports, reviews, and workshop puppet info to share! Have fun! <http://puppetpaloozasb.com/>

Guild Board and Officers

Co-Presidents
Glynn (Tree) Bartlett
glynntree@hotmail.com
831-239-9281
Peter Olson
upatrepuppetry@gmail.com

Vice President
Michael Nelson
mail@magicalmoonshine.org
707-363-4573

Membership Officer
John Arnold
arnoldjw@gmail.com

Secretary
Barbara Grillo
bgrillo@contracosta.edu

Treasurer
Valerie Nelson
magicalmoonshine@gmail.com
707-363-4573
Fred C. Riley III
oddsavvy@gmail.com
707-235-6431
Lee Armstrong
images@vom.com
707-996-9474
Elizabeth Leonard
elizabethandesign@gmail.com

Librarian
Lee Armstrong
707-996-9474

Newsletter
Michael Nelson
newsletter@sfbapg.org

Calendar
John Arnold
events@sfbapg.org

Save the Date! Introduction to Performing Hand and Rod (Muppet) style puppetry

Sunday, April 29th afternoon, Walnut Creek area

More information will follow in the April newsletter

"This 90 minute workshop is loads of fun and the perfect introduction to performing hand and rod (Muppet) style puppetry! Using professionally made puppets, participants get to learn, explore and practice the

fundamentals of puppetry for live performance!"

Derek Lux is puppeteer, singer, actor and award winning puppet builder. He's designed and built puppets for television, music videos, short films, and theater. He created the curriculum and taught courses on Professional Puppet Building at Puppet School in Los Angeles. Derek received the Los Angeles Stage Alliance 2013 Ovation Honor Award for his work in *Shrek The Musical*. In 2016, he played the title role in a reimagined workshop of *Sweeney Todd* at the famous *O'Neill Theatre Center* in Connecticut as part of the National Puppetry Conference. Derek performs Professor Wonderman in its Gratitude videos for Class Dojo, an educational app that is used by over 8 million teachers across the country. As a full time working actor, Derek currently can be seen onstage in the principle cast of *Steve Silver's Beach Blanket Babylon*, the longest running musical revue in history. For DLUX Puppets' *Alice in Wonderland*, Derek built the puppets, wrote, directed and performs in the show.

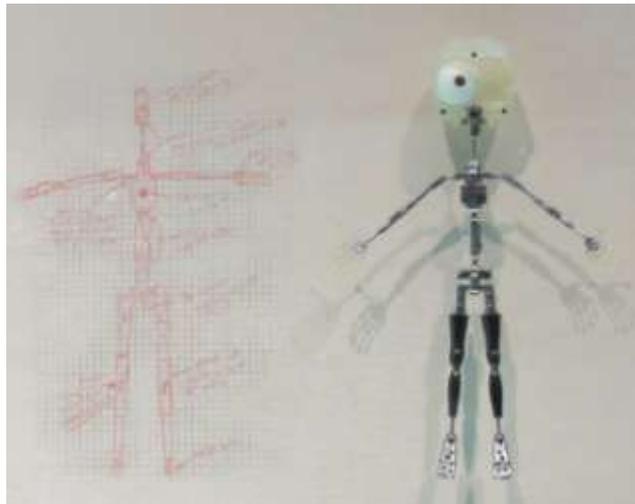


LAIKA Exhibit - Portland Art Museum,

submitted by Mary Nagler

Recently, my son Ephriam and I made a visit to the Portland Art Museum. The museum is hosting a large and elaborate exhibition of the art works of the stop motion animation company LAIKA. They are known for their films: *Coroline*, *Para Norman*, *Box Trolls* and most recent: *Kubo*, and the *Two Strings*. The exhibit featured designs, stop motion puppets, costumes and props as well as whole scenes and the largest stop motion figure there is; the skeletal monster from *Kubo* and the two strings. The artistry of the items was breathtaking, and if you have not seen these ground breaking films, I highly recommend you do. Here is a visual taste...

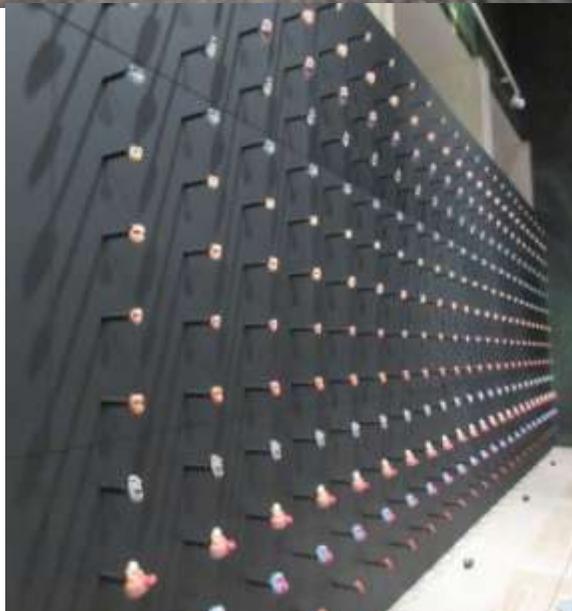
(1) The Giant skeletal monster and his workings can be seen at the end of the Kubo DVD – Very interesting!(2) The “skeleton” of a stop motion figure (3) The grand ball room scene from Box Trolls, and (4) a detail of that scene! (5) Carolines’ house (6) the troll hunters from Box Trolls



I found it fascinating how they make things like facial expression, happen by switching out parts! When one of the characters from Box Trolls has an allergic reaction, his face sells thus. There are many more “Steps “between these samples, which make for seamless movement. Very cool!

The last picture is a “Wall of faces” that show the steps of each little character’s expression. I hope the exhibit travels so you can see it in person too! Here is the link to get a better look! (Ed. Note: And don’t forget the photos on the next page, sent by Mary!)

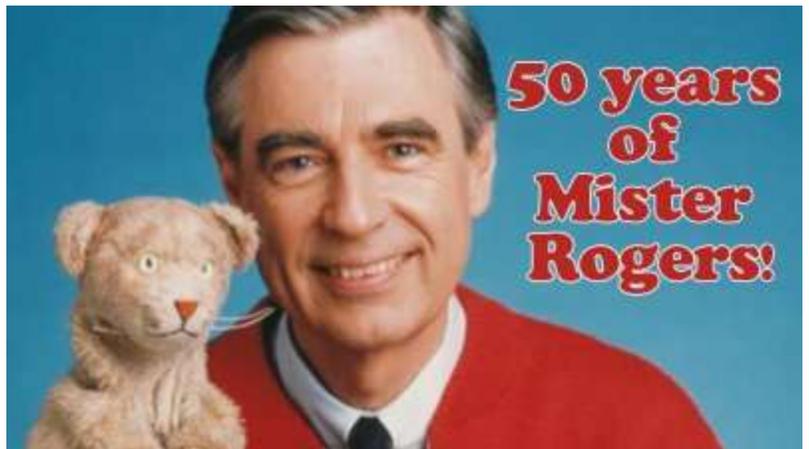
<https://portlandartmuseum.org/exhibitions/animating-life/>



Mr. Roger's Neighborhood 50th Anniversary

FEBRUARY 19, 1968 to FEBRUARY 19, 2018 = the 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST NATIONAL BROADCAST OF "MR. ROGERS NEIGHBORHOOD" on Public TV! The last broadcast of this half hour children's TV show was in 2001. Mr. Fred Rogers died at the age of 74 in 2003.

Fred grew up as a shy only child, telling stories to himself, NOT with imaginary friends, but YES with his puppets. Many years later his TV show daily included trips on the Trolley to "The Neighborhood of Make Believe" which was ruled by King Friday XIII [13th] and populated



by other hand puppets such as many, many animals and Lady Elaine Fairchild. Fred believed that all these inhabitants were facets of his own personality. He was the only puppeteer and also composed and sang his own songs.

The program opened with mild mannered Mr. Rogers taking off his jacket, donning a cardigan sweater and putting on tennis shoes. He wanted to feel comfortable and wanted the children viewers to also feel comfortable. Indeed many of his viewers actually put on their sweaters and tennies, when he did. Fred talked "directly out of the TV" into each child's face. His philosophy was to encourage them a lot, "you are special" and educate them a little.

In the wake of the assassination of JFK, Fred had Daniel Stripe-a tiger puppet-ask Mr. Rogers, "What is assassination?" He wanted his young audience members reassured that they would be safe. Fred's mother gave him a piece of advice when he was a child,-which resonates today to us big kids, -re when everything is going wrong,- "Look for the helpers. There are always helpers."

During the run of the show, Moms really loved it because it came on at a time for her to have quiet in the house as she prepared dinner. Even the rowdiest of kids would take a breather and watch his show. Sadly, some Dads worried that Fred's cardigan, tennies and gentle voice would sissify their sons!

A career in TV began for Fred Rogers in 1953 as he watched (in Pittsburg) the existing children's TV shows, which mostly were clowns demeaning people by throwing pies at them. He decided he could do much better than this so got a \$75 per week job at the TV station. There were only a handful of employees and nobody else really wanted to do kiddy shows. So Fred and a secretary took on this task, which also involved them buying props, etc. out of their salaries-zero budget for Children's Corner!

The concept of the show involved Fred playing the organ, singing, and showing films. He then scouted out free films to show the kids. Just before the debut of the 1954 show Mrs. Daniels, a director, gave Fred a little tiger hand puppet, who was immediately named Daniel Stripes after his donor.

The first celluloid film broke on the air. He hadn't realized how fragile they were. Fred grabbed Daniel Stripes, thrusting him through the backdrop towards the TV camera amazingly right through the center of the clock which was painted on the backdrop. And Daniel improvised, "A clock! It's 2 o'clock! Today Columbus sailed the blue, in 1492!" SAVED BY A PUPPET! Thus began Fred Rogers-and his puppet friends'-careers on Children's TV.

THE MOVIE "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" [one of Fred's favorite sayings to his audience along with "You are special"] will have its world premiere at the 2018 Sundance Festival. AND this movie will hit movie theaters on June 8th, presented by Focus Features.

Reported by Elisheva, with a lot of help from NPR's rebroadcast on February 19, 2018 of Fresh Air's Terry Gross in conversation with Mr. Rogers in 1984. Her voice became softer and softer as they talked, ultimately matching his. Amazing to hear, and sweet.

Recycled Puppets, the Betsy Brown Way

HOW TO GATHER RECYCLED ITEMS NEEDED FOR CREATING PUPPETS WITH YOUR GROUP. A TIP FROM BETSY BROWN, passed on to you by Elisheva, who probably learned it at a P of A Regional Puppet Fest.

Giving out a list for children (and grownups) of needed items for their puppet project isn't the most effective way to go. A piece of paper is easy to overlook, go through the laundry, being eaten by the cat, etc. Try this! Have a large grocery bag with handles for each person ("10 cents please"). Betsy didn't specify having them decorate their bag. In my experience I find this to be a good memory jog and something which attracts interest to the collecting assignment in the students' homes.

Fasten to each bag the LIST of RECYCLED STUFF which their families might have at home, such as toilet paper rolls, left over yarn, etc. Emphasize not everyone will have all the items. There is no need to run to the store to buy anything. It's ok to bring extra to share with others who don't have one/some of the items. These extras could be put in a "pool" for others to help themselves.

Orphan socks are often used as the base for puppets. In my experience a lot of people don't save single socks -BUT- there usually are one or two parents who will be thrilled to release their enormous stash for this fun project of creating puppets.

The value of the bag seems to be a focus for collecting "stuff" and definitely gets a much better response than just a list! Don't forget to give a deadline for returning the filled bags, probably a few days hence or whatever works into your class schedule.

Betsy Brown lived and taught in the LA area, passing away in 2001. She was a wonderful woman, very warm and gently encouraged each student to do their best. SFBAPG member Judy Roberto took many classes and workshops from Betsy, who became Judy's mentor....and Judy does remember Betsy passing on this tip to her!



REVIEW OF RE-RELEASE OF "DARK CRYSTAL", A JIM HENSON FILM,

screened 2 days in February in large screen movie theaters.
by Elisheva who had not seen it before!

35 years ago (1982) "Dark Crystal" debuted. It was Jim Henson's first movie casting only puppets as performers, no humans. Jim Henson and Frank Oz were co-directors. Since both men were also performers and wearing the puppets made it difficult to see, the "other" guy could be there to direct sans his puppet. The concept of the film is credited to Brian Froud.

Originally there was no dialogue in the movie, until a re-do after the first screening. The audience did not like the movie...because they couldn't understand the plot without scripted dialogue! and narration! This utterly amazed the directors, having been certain the action itself made everything plain as the new born day-NOT! So now there is clarity through speech.

The plot revolves around a lost shard of the gigantic Dark Crystal. It needs to be returned to the crystal before the imminent line up of the planet's 3 suns, causing The Great Conjunction. This happened only every 1000 years. And would it be the end of the world?--- or the beginning?



It falls to Jen and Kira (2 elfish looking Gelfings) to save their world. There are 2 other dominant species, the Skeksis (sort of gaudily overdressed vultures) and the Mystics (gentle desert dwellers with 4 arms each.)

I chuckled to see the colored portions of the Gelfings' hair, gentle blue and green streaks, just like today. My favorite lines were: Jen speaking "...and everywhere I go, I learn the shapes of kindness." (And just after Jen and Kira had fallen off a towering cliff-she unveiled her wings, rescuing them both) Kira said, "Of course you don't have wings, you're a BOY!"

In the words of Lisa Henson, daughter of Jim, "... the film was vivid storytelling and hand made in every frame."

This would have been a great double feature if paired with " Making of The Dark Crystal". Actually I did see "Making of..." when it was first released decades ago.

Guess what! Our very own SFBAPG Library has a copy in our library so here's the code for it. AV-020 Making of Dark Crystal VHS muppets Contact sfbapglibrary@gmail.com and make arrangements with Lee to send it to you or to bring it to our March Guild meeting for you.

Correction

Here at the Guild Newsletter editorial office we strive to present you with correct and factual information (OK, actually we just make most of it up.) It has come to our attention that in the last newsletter's 2nd Annual Puppet Runway article it was erroneously reported that Lynette Pinto won a contest with her elephant puppet. It turns out there wasn't a Contest but rather a Challenge, and she did not win, as there were no winners, although we bet that if there had been a contest she would have won! Don't you think?

And speaking of newsletter errors, your editor (who shall remain nameless) goofed and only ran a portion of John Arnold's Shrek Jr. article. Well, that just isn't good enough, so here, with apologies and without further ado is the whole and entire article, uncut and unedited!

Shrek Jr. Brings Puppets and Youth to the Stage.



The

last weekend in January (26-28, Pittsburg Community Theatre (PCT)

www.pittsburgcommunitytheatre.org) wrapped their youth production of **Shrek Jr., The Musical**. This

musical is a shortened version of the full Broadway show, with a cast of 31, ages ranging from nine to nineteen, and filled with costumes, props, and puppets.

“This show was my vision, nothing would be different. It was absolutely perfect and puppets were a huge part of that. I saw Brianna in the audience after a show and the little kid she was talking to was talking to Gingy and she kept the voice going and everything. It was magical.” said Lena Timrott, director.

When Lena started on the production she set out with a vision, she wanted a Dragon, a Gingerbread puppet “Gingy” and a growing nose, which John Arnold found with help or built.

“Working with the kids was super fun and it was exciting to see them take direction and run with it. With the dragon in particular watching those kids grow and learn how to work the puppet was incredible.” she added. “I got to watch the show from house on closing and go to see them move like a unit; it was great.”



Puppets included a large Red Dragon on loan from Sonoma State University, and built for "She Kills Monsters," and designed in collaboration by Mary Nagler and Michelle Dokos. The puppet was manned by four members of the cast, performing backup behind the Dragon actor.

Lorelei Arnold said, “It was an

awesome experience, working with the others to bring this giant dragon puppet to life.”

For Gingy, I (John) wanted a puppet that could move the mouth not only to talk, but smile and frown, and show the happy Gingerbread man and angry cookie. I also wanted one puppet that had his legs broken on the cookie sheet, and repaired later as in the play and movie. It was great finding references from the movie, to bring these things together, and show the kids how to work them. The best was teaching them how to think of the puppets as an extension of their own bodies and movements, or to move the emotion they projected to the puppet in their hands. While all the puppeteers had dance and vocal experience, only a few had limited puppeteering experience. But, by the time of the show they were experts.





“Working with the Gingly puppet was an amazing experience! The puppet looked just like the actual Gingly and I loved the experience of bringing it to life!” Brianna Peacock

Asking Lena Timrott for her impression of the effort of coaching the kids and directing her vision, “My impression of the effort as a whole? I really believe that it takes a village. Everyone on the production team had a special skill and it took all of us to make it happen. I am so incredibly proud of this production and the team I got to work with.”

Regional Puppetry & Creative Ministry Festival in May!

May 11-12

WestGate Church South Hills

[6601 Camden Ave](#)

[San Jose, CA 95120](#)

Join us for an exciting Friday night and Saturday training event and festival featuring workshops, performances, competitions, and resources. Whether you're a beginner or veteran, you'll be taught, challenged and equipped to use exciting and creative ways to share the Gospel. Topics will include puppetry, creative ministries, leadership, and more!



[Register early to save!](http://www.creativemin.com/product/ca1/spring) (www.creativemin.com/product/ca1/spring)



CLASSIFIEDS

Hi Puppet Guild

Our Non-profit organization Lullalee will host a children's Literacy Fair! We will be serving approximately 300-400 kids at an event for the Salvation Army in San Francisco on Monday June 25th from 1-4pm.

Is anyone willing to work with not for profits and events for a discounted or pro bono services? If so, please contact Lee Ann Butler-Owens

at leeann@lullalee.org

If not no worries... thank you,
Lee Ann

Dear Mrs. Bandersnoot,

Even though you have moved away, do you realize what a beating Mother Nature has given our Bay Area these last 2 years, big time: fire, flood, drought, earthquake, etc? Finally I got smart and began packing a "go-bag" for my car and house, just in case of evacuation/disaster.

While doing this, I realized I have no disaster "tool box" (to be trendy!) for my Puppet show bookings. Years ago I knew a shadow puppeteer who brought ginormous black plastic bags and masking tape in case the intended room could not be darkened, plus a phone card (for phone booths) in case of getting lost. Do you have any suggestions and tips for the modern puppeteer to bring, besides duct tape?

Thanks, Eternal Gratitude

Dear Eternal,

Good question. Yes, we watched from afar the things you described sadly happening to my home state, and my heart and Mary's went out to all effected. Of course, in case of a disaster your own safety and the safety of loved ones, neighbors, and beloved pets would be the first priority. Though I would hope that in the need to evacuate Mary's first priority would be to grab me, but I know I can be replicated, even if my pattern is lost, as long as I have my puppeteer. So, the best thing to take under such conditions is you Eternal, and your positive creative puppet powers. You can make a show with ginormous plastic bags and duct tape! Whatever you carry in your heart can make a show with whatever you have in the trunk of your car. You, are the magic in the mayhem! Power to the Puppet!

After a disaster people need to be distracted from what they lost, reminded of some of the joys of life, made to laugh and encouraged to take the first steps back toward normalcy. After bad flooding in Sebastopol, many years ago, Mary and some of her clown friends visited a shelter to entertain the kiddies who, weeks after, were climbing the walls! It just so happened there was a little girl there, whose mommy was trying desperately to make sure the little girl had a party on her birthday! Imagine her surprise when a gaggle of clowns came rolling in with a puppet show and balloons! The little girl commented it had been the "Best birthday I ever had!" Joy happened, disaster forgotten (for a moment) so a little normal happy memory could be made.

Mary lost her first (Paper Mache) Punch and Judy puppets to a flood. But she dried out the heads and has started to refurbish them, and make new costumes. They may always smell a little bit like the river, but with some new paint they will still be smiling.

Hugs to you all, Yours, Mrs. Bandersnoot

To submit a question to Mrs. Bandersnoot, email Mary Nagler mary.nagler@gmail.com. (Mrs. Bandersnoot lives with her and Mary will relay the message!) Or, give Mary a call (707) 303 0093 **No question too silly**. Silly is good!