

The Atlanta Puppetry Guild Newsletter

Chartered by the Puppeteer's of America, Inc.

Free to All Members

Summer 2000

What's Inside

by Evy Berman

Just in time for the next guild meeting, this issue comes to you full of useful information, important news, and really neat stuff!

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Thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition of the newsletter. Remember, I can't do it alone, so please send articles to me at home or at ecberman@bellsouth.net. If you're stuck for an idea, call me, or just let me know what you've been doing lately for the *Buzz*. And feel free to send pictures, too!



Meeting Information

The next meeting will be full of useful information and voting opportunities. Be sure to attend!

➤ Sunday, September 10, 2000; 4-7 pm; at the home of Mary Hook, 2108 Meadowcliff Dr., Atlanta 30345

(404) 315-8855

Directions: From intown, go north on 85. Get off at Clairmont Rd and take a right. Go one block to Briarcliff Rd and take a left. Go through two lights, Fisher and Chrysler. After Chrysler, watch for Abby Lane on your left.

There's a sign for Meadowcliff subdivision. Take a left on Abby. It will fork—Go left! Do not go right! Stay on Abby, do not go right up Marann. Take Meadowcliff, the 1st street that goes left off Abby. House is a brick house on a hill with a white railing around the front porch. Second house on the left.

Next meeting:

➤ Sunday November 12, 2000; 4-7 pm; at the home of Lee Bryan

As usual, all meetings are potluck socials. Thanks to all guild members who have volunteered to host meetings. Please contact Betsy Berns Stark if you are interested in hosting a meeting next year.

Mailing List Needs Updating

If you are a member of the Puppeteers of America, you are entitled to receive the Southeast Regional newsletter, "What's Up?" If you have not been receiving your newsletter, please let editor Reay Kaplan know! reaypuppet@yahoo.com, (770) 414-0665.

Minutes from the Meeting



Our last meeting took place on June 11, 2000 at the home of Reay Kaplan. A total of 12 members attended. After a wonderful potluck social, members shared their latest news. Highlights of what is going

on with current members can be read about in *What's the Buzz* on this page.

Members then discussed changing our guild name from Atlanta-Southeast Puppetry Guild to Atlanta Puppetry Guild. After the pros and cons were weighed, Lee Bryan made an official motion to change the guild name. The motion was seconded by Reay Kaplan. It passed with a unanimous vote, so at 6:08 pm on Sunday, June 11, 2000, the guild name was officially changed to Atlanta Puppetry Guild.

To reflect the new guild name, we now need a new guild logo. All members are invited to design a new logo and submit it for voting. Please see related article on page 6 for more details. The vote will take place at the September 10 meeting.

Finally, Tim Koeller is in charge of our guild roster, and he has been adding e-mail addresses to it. If you have e-mail, please send the address to Tim at tkoeller@worldnet.att.net. And don't forget to pay you dues if you haven't!

Guild Needs new President

As some of you may already know, our president, Susan Kinney, was elected Director of the Southeast Region. Since Susan will be extremely busy fulfilling her new duties, current Atlanta Puppetry Guild vice-president, Betsy Stark, will be taking over as interim president until we can have a new vote at the November guild meeting.

Please let Betsy know if you are interested in running for President. Candidates should realize that, as president, they will need to go to a leadership retreat if at all possible once a year, which is partially funded by the Guild treasury. The president also is expected to preside over the meetings or ask the VP to do so in their absence. An annual report is made to the Puppeteers of America too.

If you have questions about running for office, please contact Susan Kinney or Alice Rhodes.



What's the Buzz?

★ **The Piccadilly Puppets** have been busy this summer with shows in a variety of places including many Fulton County Recreation Centers. They have also just received notification of a grant from Dekalb Council for the Arts to help finance the cost of producing a new show.

★ **Gail McKay** is developing two new shows: "The Royal Family," stories of princesses, kings, and queens, and a multi-cultural show, "Small World Stories" with Chinese, Norwegian, and Native American folk tales.

★ **Susan Kinney** has been elected the new Southeast Regional Guild President. Congratulations, Susan!!

★ **Walter Stark** is building a giant lion for the Theatrical Outfit production of "The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe." The production will take place in September.

★ **Reay Kaplan** will be performing in two upcoming shows at the Center for Puppetry Arts, "The Velveteen Rabbit" and "Rumpelstiltskin." Reay, along with puppet partner **Evy Berman**, is pleased to announce the new website for **Curious Moon Puppet Theatre** at www.curiousmoon.com.

★ **Evy Berman** will be training in New York in September for the new Atlanta chapter of The Big Apple Circus Clown Care Unit. This is an arm of the circus that sends specially trained performers into children's hospitals.

Puppeteers of America Information

Region Elects new Director

Our very own Susan Kinney has been elected as the new Southeast Region Director, filling the spot vacated by former president Peter Effaldana. The vote took place at the Southeast regional puppetry festival in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

Susan will not continue as Atlanta Puppetry Guild President, and vice-president Betsy Berns Stark will act as interim president until a new vote is held at the November meeting.

Join the P of A!

If you are a member of the Atlanta Puppetry Guild, but not of the Puppeteers of America, Inc. (the national guild which charters our local guild), then you don't know what you're missing! To find out about the many benefits of membership, go to www.puppeteers.org. You can even get a membership form online, or you can contact:

The Puppeteers of America, Inc.,
Joyce & Chuck Berty,
PO BOX 29417, Parma, OH, 44129-0417
PofAjoin@aol.com PH: 888 568-6235

Board of Trustees Election Questioned

Some of you may have heard that there has been some question as to the validity of the recent PofA Board of Trustees Election, as some of the ballots were not received in the mail. The following is from a letter by PofA president Steve Abrams. Complete details on the election will be available in the next edition of "Playboard:"

(...)

The leadership of Puppeteers of America has devoted an enormous amount of time and thought to this particular election question. Phone calls and emails have included discussions with well respected, neutral members who are not officers and not immediately involved in the election.

(...)

It would be a serious breach of democratic rights for a board to throw out the results of an election. If the results of this election can be set aside, for whatever reason, then any board could set aside the results of any election.

(...)

To invalidate an election, and hold a new one, would also seriously impair the day to day functions of The Puppeteers of America, Inc.

The experience of this election has made it clear that our Code of Regulations and our Procedures about elections should be reexamined. A committee is being formed to recommend changes. Proposed changes will be voted on by the membership.

Southeast Regional Puppetry Festival a Hit!

From all reports, the Southeast Regional Puppetry Festival, which was held in Fort Lauderdale, FL from June 22-25, was a huge success. Local PofA members Lee Bryan and Akbar Imhotep both performed shows which were very well received. Member Reay Kaplan reports that an overhead shadow puppet workshop given by Lisa Sturz was one of the best she's ever attended. And Susan Kinney and Reay Kaplan put together a fabulous exhibit on world puppetry, which will be exhibited at the Museum of Fine Arts in Fort Lauderdale through mid September. For more reactions on the festival, articles, and pictures check out the next southeast regional newsletter, which will be in your mailbox soon.

How Puppetry Found Me

by Lee Bryan

Editor's note: Following is an essay by our own Lee Bryan, That Puppet Guy. Lee's journal submission was so full of valuable insight and information, that I decided to make him this edition's guest author. - eb

I guess puppetry sort of discovered me since I never planned on being a puppeteer. Sure, I checked out all the puppet books in elementary school and experimented with making puppets and lip-syncing to records in my bedroom, but then, didn't even kid? Later, I got a puppet ministry started at my church and soon graduated high school.

I moved to Richmond, VA to live with relatives and worked for a short time with the now defunct Children's Theatre of Richmond. They had this huge marionette production they would mount every year with gorgeous marionettes that were manipulated from 12 ft scaffolding. It was an exciting time in my life and I wanted very much to perform, but the manipulation was reserved for some pretty seasoned performers.

After a series of dead-end jobs, I found myself (on my parents' advice) considering the US Army. I had been in JROTC in High School, at my father's insistence, and I found it relatively easy.

I signed up for a quick two-year tour and immediately continued my musical theatre education by performing at the local Little Theatre which was located on every post. I learned musical theater pretty much on-the-job since I had little formal training. I found an immediate passion for live theater and began taking acting and voice lessons. I got out of the US Army in 1987 in Columbus, GA and worked for a short time with the Springer Opera House and Columbus College Theatre.

But, the lure of the bright lights in the big city proved to be too much and after auditioning for Six Flags Over Georgia in 1988, I soon found myself strapping on a big smile while performing five shows a day, five days per week. And if that wasn't enough, I stayed on for 2 more seasons! Three years total-and I think I might have been the oldest performer in the history of Six Flags because I was 27 at the time and was singing and dancing with teenagers.

Finally, after an especially frustrating round of auditions and too many waiting table jobs to mention, I read about auditions for the Center's production of Gulliver's Travels. They were looking for an actor to play the lead with puppets cast as the little people. I auditioned and though I was not cast, I was offered an internship position for their next production of Just So Stories. And to think I almost turned them down! Peter Hart was in charge of the internship program at the time, and he and Bill Yates convinced me that this was a golden opportunity for the right person. Indeed it was. After that, I was

Peter's production assistant on a brand new production of Charlotte's Web, which was an invaluable education.

While I'm by no means a great puppeteer, I do enjoy performing, and I know what makes children laugh. So far the formula works, and I hope my love of puppetry shows in my work. Though I never planned on being a puppeteer, now I'm not sure what else I could do. It seems that everything I've ever learned comes to play in being a puppeteer. All the movement, acting and voice lessons, not to mention the countless puppet, theatre and magic trick books all had a part in helping me become a puppeteer. Even the US Army? The self-discipline and communication skills I learned in the military have helped me build a very lucrative one-person business. Of course, there have been pearls of wisdom by some very knowledgeable people along the way, some of which I'd like to share:

Peter Hart, one of the original resident puppeteers at the Center for Puppetry Arts - "Make the action fit the phrase." Peter not only taught me beginning hand puppet and marionette manipulation but also led me on an exciting journey of self-discovery in his direction of my jury project, "Mr. Punch." It was an ambitious undertaking on both of our parts, but we survived, and I landed my first gig at the Center in the old museum's Stairwell Theatre. Peter accomplished all of this in addition to keeping a weekly in-house performance schedule. No wonder he could often be found still at the center from the night before.

Kurt Daws, Drama Teacher, Kennesaw College - "Never explain/never excuse." It's really very simple. Don't try to make lame explanations/excuses for a poor performance. It comes down to rehearsal. Either the performance was good or the performance was bad and the time spent in rehearsal will always show. So do the homework, keep rehearsing, hire yourself a good director and work, work, work!

Nancy Gerber, founder of Steppingstones, from class THE BUSINESS OF ART - THE ART OF BUSINESS at Atlanta College of Art - "Under promise/over deliver." Little things like a special puppet party favor for the birthday child. You didn't discuss it in your contract or with the Mother of the child but imagine their surprise when you make their child feel that much more special on their day! Even corporate types Even corporate types can be surprised; I made special puppet bags for Chik-fil-A and Bonanza corporations. Once again, a little extra something that helps them remember you.

Vince Anthony, Center for Puppetry Arts - "Invest in reliable transportation." Since being where you are supposed to be at the appointed time is a large part of being a touring performer, get some good wheels. It's the cost of doing business, and he advised me to get a good trade-in

(continued on page 6)

Magdeburg Germany UNIMA Festival

by Susan Kinney

Rather than my usual suggestions from the Center for Puppetry Arts library, I would like to offer this review of my favorite show from this year's UNIMA festival:

Der Standhafte Zinnsoldat - Puppentheater AM Heining Theater— Sudthuringisches Staatstheater - Germany

As you seat yourself on the metal bleachers with 79 other members of the audience you wonder why the entire stage is covered with a white parachute material. There are bumps and lumps underneath and as the last of the crowd is seating a white suited (tailcoat) storyteller gingerly steps through the material toward the front of the stage. You get the impression that he is walking on clouds. His opening monologue is in German but it is understandable when he introduces himself as Hans Christian Anderson and recites parts of Hamlet (but for what reason I couldn't tell). After several minutes he looks tired. He takes off his hat and lies down on one of the "lumps" for a rest. As his head lowers a fan is started which blows and billows the white material all around the sleeping Anderson. The scene of sleeping on clouds is only disturbed when the billowing mass fills to above the table height and "Hans" awakes, startled and is soon "swallowed up" by the "clouds" which continue to grow like a giant "jiffy-pop" pan. When the whole stage is filled with this giant white dome a flap is unzipped and "Hans" comes out, looks surprised, jabbars away in German and motions for one of the audience members to come look inside. Together, they motion excitedly for the audience to follow them into the "tent." Inside are several rows of cushions and a row of benches against the back wall. When the group is seated "Hans" begins his tale.

There is a podium in the middle of the tent on which there is a giant book. As he opens it, light is coming from a hole in the middle of the book which illuminates the ceiling. He then pulls paper cut-outs of soldiers and wagons from the book, causing giant shadows to march around the ceiling of the domed room. Each time he opened a page a new scene was available by folding up precut buildings and rooms. When the shadow ballerina appeared a LIVE ballerina snuck in through a hole in the wall and danced on toes before our very eyes. When the soldier floated, steadfast, in the doomed paper boat, the ceiling began to lower and you felt the claustrophobia as the red eyes of the rat peered at you from the inside the tunnel. A huge bubble, laced with blue and red veins, popped up from the book and caused us to feel as though the giant fish that just swam toward us had swallowed us whole! (A third person projected shadows and films from the outside of the tent, creating a complete environment.) The end was the biggest surprise, but I don't want to give away all the secrets in case you get to experience this one first hand someday. And I hope you do!

The Literary Puppet

by Reay Kaplan

Reprinted with permission from The Central Florida Puppet Guild Journal, June/July 1999



I would like to suggest a few sources that offer an amazing amount of enlightenment to the world of the puppet arts. These three publications can be obtained through membership to the Puppeteers of America and UNIMA-USA, two organizations that I highly recommend and list registration for as well.

THE PUPPETRY JOURNAL is the main publication of the Puppeteers of America. Its four issues each year include show reviews, festival information, classifieds, calendars of upcoming events, even a mail order Puppetry Store. Any PofA member is welcome and encouraged to contribute, adding to the Journal's eclectic, yet home-grown feel. In addition to its constantly interesting and entertaining articles, The Puppetry Journal is one of the best ways to stay on top of the latest events in puppetry today.

APROPOS is the primary publication of UNIMA-USA, the United States branch of the Union Internationale de la Marionnette, or The International Union of Puppetry. Apropos' articles and reviews by leading puppet professionals reflect the international trends of the puppet arts in an attempt to bring the world of puppetry closer together.

PUPPETRY INTERNATIONAL focuses on subjects that pertain to puppeteers and their audiences, as well as other theater practitioners that are interested in the use of puppetry beyond the traditional limitations. With so much multi-media within the theatrical realm, audiences and theatre professionals are gaining an increased appreciation for the expanding boundaries of puppetry, mask, film, video as well as the mixture of these elements. Puppetry International delivers just that.

To receive **THE PUPPETRY JOURNAL**, you must join the National P of A. For information on joining, please see page 3.

Both **PUPPETRY INTERNATIONAL** and **APROPOS** can be obtained by joining UNIMA-USA. To join, contact:
Vincent Anthony, General Secretary, UNIMA-USA
1404 Spring Street NW
Atlanta, GA 30309-2820
(404) 873-3089

Atlanta Puppetry Guild New Logo Contest

In honor of our new name, members are invited to design a new guild logo. To submit a logo, please send it to Susan Kinney at 4290 Lehaven Circle, Tucker GA 30084 before the September 10 guild meeting, or bring your logo design with you to the meeting and give it to Susan. Susan will take all of the submissions, remove all names from them, and guild members present at the next guild meeting will be able to vote. Names are being removed so that the voting will be "blind." The new guild logo will be decided at the September 10 meeting, so please attend and please get your submissions in on time.

All designs should contain our guild name, be able to be reduced to small sizes, and should reflect a positive image. If you have any questions, please contact Susan at (770) 934-3947.

Guest Author, continued from page 4:

every four years like he did with Vagabond.

Alice Rhodes, Alice Rhodes Puppet Theatre - "Invest in a good piece of publicity." Unfortunately, presenters will judge you on your publicity so invest in a nice piece of publicity that shows you in your best possible light.

Anonymous - "Do what you do best, then hire the rest." Pretty much self-explanatory. Starting out I did everything myself. I learned a lot and made a lot of mistakes.

Lee Bryan - "Get it all in writing," and "Communicate!" Contracts are crucial especially when dealing with friends. Just be sure to get all the details down so you'll know exactly what is expected of you and the presenter will know exactly what to expect. Keep the lines of communication open and don't leave your contacts with any questions. Return phone calls and e-mails within 24 hours - the same day if possible.

From the Kitchen of...

...Susan Kinney

Here is the recipe for the salad I brought to the last guild meeting...

Crunchie Romaine Toss

- 1 (3-ounce) package ramen soup mix
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter
- 1 cup chopped walnuts (or pecans or almonds or pinenuts)
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 honey
- 1/3 cup white wine vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 pound fresh broccoli, coarsely chopped
- 1 head romaine lettuce, torn into pieces
- 4 green onions, chopped

- * Remove flavor packet from soup mix, and reserve for another use. Break noodles into 1/2 inch pieces.
- * Melt butter in a pan in a 350 degree oven. Add noodles and walnuts; bake, stirring occasionally, 10 minutes or until lightly browned.
- * Whisk together olive oil and next 4 ingredients in a large bowl. Add walnut mixture, broccoli, lettuce, and green onions, tossing to coat.

Enjoy!

Puppets on the Net: International Sites, part three in a series

by **Chuck Robinson**

Here we are with the third edition in our series of lists of web sites with information about puppets. I thought we'd try for a more international flavor this time, so here we go with "around the world of puppetry in 15 minutes." As you know there's a lot of ground to cover, so as always, I encourage you to look around for more, but here's a start:

China, <http://www.chinavista.com/experience/muou/muou.html>
A wide variety of puppet styles are used in China, read about them here.

Great Britain, <http://www.punchandjudy.com/>
A tradition that started in Italy and worked it's way to Great Britain. You can't ask for more international than that.

India, <http://www.kamat.com/kalranga/art/puppets.htm>
Folk art, and leather shadow puppets. This site has them both.

Indonesia, <http://www.balibeyond.com/gamelan/wayangbali.html>
Balinese shadow puppetry is filled with mystique. After visiting this site, go rent "The Year of Living Dangerously."

Turkey, <http://welcome.to/karagoz>
The Turkish have a very different sense of color from most of the traditions in shadow puppetry, enjoy these distinctive puppets.

Japan, <http://www.cjn.or.jp/karakuri/index.html>
When puppeteers think of Japan, they often think of Bunraku. Surprise! Check out the Karakuri, Japanese automata.

In case you want to save your typing finger, all of these links can be found at:
<http://www.puppet.org/potn3.html> (thanks to the Center for Puppetry Arts <http://www.puppet.org/> for the space).

Happy Surfing!

Chuck Robinson is the official Webmaster at the Center for Puppetry Arts. He can frequently be found surfing the web.

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puppetstark@home.com

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Got a problem? Need information? Got suggestions?