



The Atlanta Puppet Press

Chartered by the Puppeteer's of America, Inc.

Free to All Members

Winter 2002

What's Inside

Just in time for the next guild activity, 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. I think we've hit a new record for submissions for the *Buzz*. Remember, I can't do it alone, so please send articles to me at home or at ebberman@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!

Evy Berman, editor



Meeting Information

The next Atlanta Puppetry Guild activity will take place on Saturday March 9, 2002 from 6-8 pm. The APG is hosting the Southeastern Regional President's Retreat at the Center for Puppetry Arts.

Potluck Social begins in Harlequin Hall at 6:00. Food sign-up is with Besty Stark. In addition to bringing a dish for the potluck, you can prepare a 5 minute (time limit) act for entertainment/show and tell following dining. Alan Louis is heading up entertainment so sign up with him. Contact information for Betsy and Alan is on page 7.

WHAT: Potluck social and evening of entertainment for our out of town guests.

WHEN: SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 6-8 PM

WHERE: CENTER FOR PUPPETRY ARTS,
HARLEQUIN HALL

QUESTIONS: CALL LEE BRYAN
(404) 315-1363

Remember to sign up to bring a dish for the dinner!

New Name for Atlanta Puppetry Guild Newsletter!!

As you may have noticed, the newsletter for the Atlanta Puppetry Guild is now called "The Atlanta Puppet Press." Three cheers to Evy Berman for coming up with the new name!

Minutes from the Meeting



Our last meeting took place on 11/11/01 at the Center for Puppetry Arts, Harlequin Hall, 2-5pm. There were 5 APG members who watched the 2:00 pm performance of ALADDIN and had backstage tour. Members in attendance for potluck and meeting voted for new officers: Secretary and Treasurer. Tim Koeller was unanimously elected to an unprecedented 3rd term as treasurer. Betsy Stark was elected as the guild's new secretary.

Daryl Hawes said he could arrange another trip to NYC for guild members who would like to see Lion King in 2002. In addition, Daryl reports he could arrange a one-day trip to see the Mr. Rogers exhibit at the Pittsburgh Children's Puppetry Museum. Email Daryl if you are interested in either event at: daryl.hawes@att.net.

Susan Kinney announced the next Museum exhibit. It will celebrate 10 years of Excellence with UNIMA Citation recipients. Also, Susan advised us that the UNIMA-USA Festival for 2002 has limited registration. This Festival is taking the place of our regular regional festival this year.

Marsha saw Lion King on her own and loved the show. She also reports that the Julie Taymor retrospective costume exhibit at the Chicago Field Museum of Natural History was incredible. Other guild members reported on their recent doings.

If any guild members have ideas for a proposed project for National Day of Puppetry in April, bring your ideas to the next guild meeting. Meeting Dates for next year are now being planned with the officers. If you have suggestions or ideas or would like to host a meeting, please notify Lee at lee@puppetguy.com. It was suggested that one meeting will be an APG video night, so start gathering your favorite clips together.

Virginia, Evy, Lee, Daryl and the Starks made a \$100.00 contribution to Broadway Cares, Equity Fights Aids in the name of the APG for the backstage tour they received while in NYC to see Lion King in October.

UNIMA Festival Just Around the Corner

by Lisa Rhodes

The UNIMA - USA festival, June 2002, is filling up: only 95 spaces left. This year, the Center for Puppetry Arts is honored to host the event, which is taking the place of our regular regional festival this year.

So far we have registrants from approximately 30 states and 29 countries. It's amazing to see the range of places these folks are coming from: Japan, Russia, China, Finland, Netherlands, Germany, France, Croatia, Slovenia, Israel, just to name a few. It's going to be fun; I just wish I spoke some more languages!

Puppeteers of America Information

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 You can get a coupon for \$5 first time membership at the next guild event!

Southeast Regional Puppetry Festival is Underway

by Lisa Sturz, Festival Director

We are very excited about hosting the Southeast Regional Puppetry Festival in Asheville in 2004. Mark your calendars for July 29 - August 1, 2004. Asheville is nestled among the Blue Ridge and the Great Smokies of Western North Carolina and is known by many for its mild climate and cool summer night breezes. Summer in Asheville is synonymous with music and art festivals, white water rafting, and endless biking and hiking trails. It is home to some of the finest artisans in the country with galleries featuring glass, jewelry, woodwork, weaving, ceramics, quilts, handmade papers and folk art. Local attractions include the Biltmore Estate, the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Appalachian Trail, the Drove Park Inn, Carl Sander's home, the Thomas Wolf Memorial, and the Grove Park Arcade. Asheville features a historical downtown area with outstanding architecture, sculptures, and an urban trail.

For the festival, we have secured a group rate on rooms and meeting space at the fabulous Renaissance Hotel in downtown Asheville with views of the mountains from every room. This first class hotel has 21,000 square feet of meeting space to house our workshops, store, and exhibit needs. Guest services include an outdoor swimming pool, laundry facilities, safety deposit boxes, internet access, fitness center, and restaurant. The hotel is 25 minutes from Asheville's regional airport and 5 minutes from the Greyhound station. There is free parking at the hotel.

There are several theatres within walking distance from the hotel. Our primary venue will be the 500 seat Diana Wortham Theatre at Pack Place which has state of the art technical capabilities and staff. We will also be taking advantage of smaller venues including the historic African Cultural Center, the Bebe Theatre, the Forum, and the Asheville Community Theatre. We are in the process of coordinating special exhibit spaces with the Asheville Art Museum, the Asheville Area Arts Alliance, the International Link, the African Cultural Center and the Downtown Merchant's Association.

We are still looking for many of you to fill important staff positions. Please let us know if there is a position you would like to volunteer for. FESTIVAL DIRECTORS: **Lisa Sturz**, (828) 628-9576, redherring@brwm.org. and **Susan VanderWeghe**, (828) 862-8122, vanpuppet@citcom.net.

POSITIONS TO FILL: Puppetry Store / Promotions / Audio-Visual Director / Children's Activities Coordinator / Transportation Captain / House Manager / Teen coordinator / Photographer / Program / Update / Hospitality / Volunteer Coordinator / Banquet chair / Festival Exhibit.

What's the Buzz?

★ **Virginia Petersen** had a few orders for her folk art rag dolls, and is busy sewing. She will attend the Vent festival in Las Vegas this April, it will be her first. March 2nd is CPR Saturday sponsored by the Red Cross. Virginia has been an instructor for 23 years and will be at the Marietta station

★ **Bob Abdou** is very busy with a full tour schedule. He may run into Virginia at the Ventriloquists convention, where he will be performing. In September you won't be seeing Bob in Atlanta for a while because he is moving to Philly and getting married on Sept 21!

★ **Lee Bryan** is in negotiations with Piccolo Spoleto (Charleston, SC) to perform this summer. His show, "Traveler's Tales" (which features multi-cultural folktales embracing character education themes) will be featured at nine different library branches over a week-long engagement in South Carolina.

★ **Carol Daniel** recently got back from a week of shows at the puppetry center in West Palm Beach. She is also producing a new show on Pocahontas for the Cobb County Youth Museum. This is the third show she has produced for them. They use the shows for three years.

★ **Gail McKay** has been performing with Kids on the Block, Disability Awareness through VSA Arts of GA. The puppets are mouth/rod puppets, and include Rinaldo, a blind boy, and Mark, a boy with CP.

★ **Tim Koeller** has been traveling around New Zealand and is bringing back pictures of puppets he encountered on his trip.

★ **Curious Moon Puppet Theatre** (Reay Kaplan & Evy Berman) are busy booking their summer season. Reay is performing in "Rainforest Adventures" at the Center for Puppetry Arts. This spring they will perform their new show "What's the Story?" for the entire elementary school system of Glynn County, GA, followed by a brief engagement in Orlando, FL.

★ **Alice Rhodes** went to Pasadena for the P of A Board meeting, Feb. 14 to 18. Also, she will be performing her show, "The Little Small Red Hen and the Fox" at the Center for Puppetry Arts from August 20 through September 15. This will be the first time in many years that Alice will be working with another puppeteer, Bob Berrett.

Notices

★ Tom McLaughlin is working on the second edition of SILICONE ART. He is putting out a call for photographs of puppets using silicone rubber in their construction or for their molds. Tom created the silicone skins for Babe 1 for the Hensons. You will find some information on him at www.mclaughinfoam.com and at www.replicants.org. Contact Tom McLaughlin at tommclaughlin75@hotmail.com.

★ The Roswell Cultural Arts Center is hosting a full summer season of puppet shows, and several APG members are on the lineup. The season starts (June 17-22) with "What's the Story, folktales from around the world" by **Curious Moon Puppet Theatre**. This is Curious Moon's first two-person puppet show. The show was directed by Lorna Howley and features puppets created by Katie George, a rotating set designed by Mercedes Schaum-Alley and built by David Kleist, and music by composer John deHaas.

Next up is "The Yellow Dwarf" by the **Carter family Marionettes** of Seattle, WA. The Carters will be in town for the UNIMA-USA festival and will perform in Roswell from June 24-29.

From July 1-6, **Gail McKay** of Creative Communications will perform her new show "Mouse Tales." This is Gail's first fully original piece. Gregg Wallace directed the show and will be performing in it as well.

Finally, from July 8-13 **Lee Bryan**, That Puppet Guy, will perform "Aesop's Fantastic Fables," also directed by Gregg Wallace. Lee will also finish up the season performing from July 15-20 with "The Zany Zoo," featuring the all new Amanda the Panda.

For more information, contact the Roswell Cultural Arts Center at (770) 594-6232.

In Praise of Eugene O'Neill Puppetry Conference

by Gail McKay

Last summer I made one of the best decisions of my professional life: to attend the 2001 Eugene O'Neill Puppetry Conference. It was the single most worthwhile experience I have had in my quest for developing and growing in my knowledge of this art form. Let me elaborate, lest you scoff.

A week of the most intense work I am sure to ever experience awaited me when I arrived a day early to get acclimated. "Go to the beach now, because you won't have time later," was the prophetic advice I received, and they were SO right. Several times during the subsequent week, I looked up and noticed that yes, indeed, we were in a lovely location with an ocean view! But this was soon forgotten, again, in the focus of the work!

Each participant selected one of three groups with whom to work, based on a presentation by the Guest Artist. Each selection was quite different in format, and the one I chose was perfect for me at this time. I worked with John Farrell, of Figures of Speech Theatre in Maine. This work was to be the main focus of each day, with morning and afternoon sessions spent developing the piece, minimal time in the studio building puppets and props, then the remainder of the time rehearsing and refining, with changes being made throughout the entire process. Ours was a very collaborative effort, with plenty of input and ideas being developed by the group along the way . . . a wonderful opportunity for those of us who work alone most of the time. Our work had a very spiritual flavor, the theme being transformations and cycles, and the line between puppet and puppeteer.

Then, each participant who chose to bring an individual piece was given a mentor and other puppeteers to work with, and signed up to work on someone else's project, too. So, you were working on a minimum of three projects for the week, which were taken from just the idea to finished performance quality (albeit a work-in-progress) in the few days allotted. Needless to say, it was a week of feverish work, elevated anxieties, and creative exhilaration. Participants ranged in experience from college students to accomplished professional puppeteers. Many participants were helpful to each other, and most seemed genuinely interested in seeing everyone succeed. Three professional composers were on hand, and if your piece needed music, one was assigned to you.

By the end of the week, three major performances, six Emerging Artists' performances, (these were participants who had been invited back to further develop their own piece), and twenty participants' projects were performed for two nights for a community audience. The amount and quality of the work was incredulous!

What did I gain from this experience? I learned so much about myself as a person and an artist, as well as about the creative process itself. I grew in confidence as well as skills. Now that I am home, and have processed the experience, I have actually changed my whole approach to my own work, really putting more effort into letting the puppets carry the message in action rather than a verbal script. I am continuing to learn how to get to the essence of the idea. My confidence in being able to produce a story from my own experience grew; I was bursting with so many ideas that I wrote furiously on the plane ride home, and still feel inspired and excited, especially after trying out some of the ideas, and getting INCREDIBLE response from the audience!

So, if I haven't convinced you to go to Eugene O'Neill for your own inspirational experience, then I will just stop talking! No wonder many folks go back each year for a fix; it was well-worth the emotional ride!

Atlanta Puppetry Guild Schedule of Events

2002

Saturday March 9: 6-8 pm, APG hosts the Southeastern Regional President's Retreat at the Center for Puppetry Arts. Potluck Social begins in Harlequin Hall at 6:00. Food sign-up is with Besty Stark. Prepare your 5 minute (time limit) act for entertainment/show and tell following dining - Alan Louis is heading up entertainment so sign up with him.

Sunday May 5: 5-7 pm, Celebrate Cinco de Mayo at Bob Abdou's. View his incredible collection of collectibles and bring a dish to share.

Sunday August 11: 4-7 pm, Presenting the first annual, all request... VIDEO/POTLUCK SOCIAL in the clubroom at the home of Daryl Hawes. Bring a video and dish to share. Also available, changing rooms, pool, and billiards!

Saturday October 26: Join APG members at the Center for Puppetry Arts as we witness their zaniest production yet, SPOOKY HORROR PUPPET SHOW back by popular demand. Don't miss it. Sign up with Lee Bryan for advance ticket sales.

Big Apple Circus is in Town!!

from the BAC official website



This 24th production of the BIG APPLE CIRCUS pays tribute to the glorious American Fifties — when Buddy Holly rock-n-rolled, cowboys sang on TV, service-station attendants were eager to help, and Hollywood dreamt in Technicolor® with Gene Kelly and Cyd Charisse. And Grandma was already Grandma...

Yes! Grandma (Barry Lubin), America's favorite senior citizen, is back after a three-year hiatus, during which she took a vacation — surfing in the Bahamas, knitting and making cookies...

Produced by Paul Binder and conceived by Michael Christensen and Canadian director Michel Barette — who will direct the show — Big Top Doo-Wop will be adorned with magical music by Canadian composer Brigitte Laroche, colorful costumes by Rumanian-born designer Mirena Rada, superb scenery by Dan Kuchar, and witty choreography by Lisa LeAnn Dalton, and polished off with spectacular lighting by Louis Morisset and 'stereophonic sound' by Thomas Wright.

An exciting line-up of international circus stars will help us rediscover the excitement, unflappable optimism and, above all, great fun of the Fifties, from the U.S., Australia, Russia, Sweden, Chile, Quebec, Canada, and Denmark.

February 16– March 3, 2002

Stone Mountain Park, Highway 78 East. Tickets are now available through Ticketmaster, (404) 249-6400

Big Top Doo Wop helps to fund The **Big Apple Circus Clown Care Unit® (CCU)** program, which brings laughter and joy to the bedsides of acutely and chronically ill children year-round. There are currently **Big Apple Circus Clown Care Unit®** programs operating in cities nationwide, including Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Miami, New Haven, New York, Seattle and Washington, D.C. And, in case you didn't know, APG member Evy Berman is part of the Atlanta team.

Three Feelbad Films Featuring Puppets

by Eddy Von Mueller

MEET THE FEEBLES 1989 - before there was **LORD OF THE RINGS** there was **MEET THE FEEBLES!** New Zealand's Finest Filmmaker Peter Jackson cut his teeth on this violent, vulgar and very funny send-up of **THE MUPPET SHOW** featuring a cast of incompetent entertainers (puppets all) behaving in ways that would make Danny Bonnaducci blush! No one should miss the riveting cow bondage sequence!

DOUBLE SUICIDE (A.K.A. **SHINJU TEN NO AMLJIMA**) 1969 - Masahiro Shinoda directs this fascinating and edgy adaptation of a 19th century bunraku puppet play about a hapless geisha and her doomed lover. Artfully staged with Japanese puppets and puppeteers frequently interacting with the actors, the film is a classic in Japan and underscores the high regard in which the art puppetry is regarded there.

FAUST (1994) Jan Svankmajor, the demented Dean of Eastern European animation and a former member of Jri Trnka's radical Wood Theater puppet troupe in Prague, Czechoslovakia is the visionary behind this disturbing version of Goethe's classic soul-selling saga. Puppets are an obsession for Jan, many of whose short works are now out on DVD, including the best riff ever on Britain's beloved paeon to alcoholism, child neglect, and spousal abuse, **PUNCH & JUDY!**

Eddy Von Mueller is a PhD candidate and instructor at Emory's School of Liberal Arts.

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Got a problem? Need information? Got suggestions? Drop us a line.