



# The Phoenix

The Newsletter of the Garden State Puppetry Guild

Volume 1, Issue 1

Autumn 2008

## Garden State Members Had a Blast at Capital Fireworks Puppet Festival

Paul Fantini, Lois Raff Corwin & Penny Rapicano all contributed to this article.

A few of our guild members attended the Capital Fireworks Puppetry Festival this past summer – July 10-13. All agreed that this festival had some of the highest quality puppet shows ever seen at a festival and a concrete offering of workshops. Here are the highlights...

### The Festival

It was a wonderful setting, held at the University of Maryland, given that Jim Henson and his wife Jane met there and began creating shows together in the late 50's and early 60's. In a wonderfully reminiscent speech by Jane Henson, she recalled that Jim had gotten his degree in Home Economics because the University regarded puppetry as a "craft" and therefore could find no place for it among the various art degrees. Boy! Have we come a long way?

In addition to the main campus, festival goers took a field trip to Echo Park that offered a fully restored and functional carousel from 1912. In between *The Tragical Comedy of Punch and Judy* and The Puppet Company's *The Wizard of Oz*, we all took a spin on the carousel. Across the from the old bumper car pavilion was the current home of The Puppet Company, the renovation of which cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, and included a puppet museum that showcased their many years of work. Their treatment of *The Wizard of Oz*, with original music and script, and all 4 puppeteers in turn-of-the-century costumes, transported us to a simpler time when player pianos would take you for one last spin around the carousel. What a beautiful day!

### The Workshops

Perhaps one of the best reasons to go to a festival is to attend the workshops. This year most of the workshops were at least two sessions (about 4 hours) long. This was a departure from the usual one-and-a-half to two-hour workshop schedule of past festivals. A few of the workshops went into the second and even the third day of the festival. This workshop

schedule encouraged participants to really explore the subject matter. To this end, many of the workshops were hands on, and it was wonderful to really get into the process of learning something new. It was a bonus to be able to spend some quality time and get to know other puppeteers in the workshop as well as the instructors.

### The Performances

While a number of the performances used multiple puppeteers, there was a focus on single puppeteer performances. Together all the performances illustrated the tremendous range of puppet works available. Here are some of our favorites...

The Frogtown Mountain Puppeteers, a sibling trio from Maine, did their riotously funny rendition of the *Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow*.

The musical showcase *The Library Boogie* by Tom Knight featured some wonderful original music and a demonstrated an inventive way to convert a tent into a puppet stage.

Christopher Hudert performed three American folktales as told by "Travelin' Jack" and his background as a professional clown and a lengthy resume was evident.

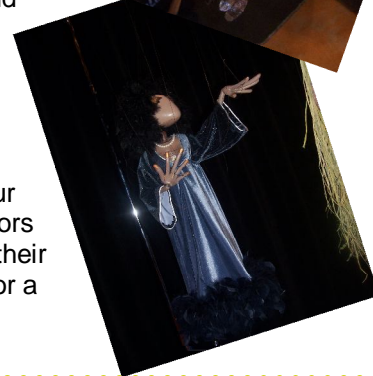
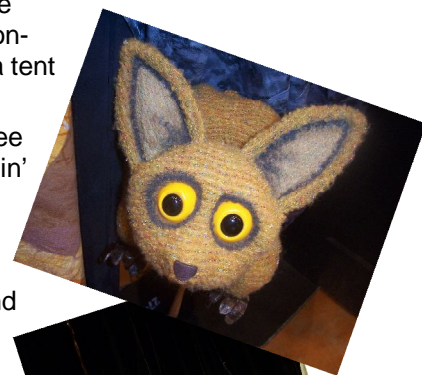
Deborah Costine did a lovely hand puppet show called *Woodland Cinderella*. After the fairytale ball, the prince was looking for "goodness" in the eyes of his future wife.

### At The End...

It was a very full four days and our sincere thanks are sent to Co-Directors Allan Stevens and Kris Higgins and their hard working staffs. Thanks much for a wonderful festival.



From the Capital Fireworks Puppet Festival Exhibit. From top to bottom: Alien by Eric Brooks; Old Moses and the Devil by Christopher Hudert; Bush Baby by Heidi Rugg; The Diva by Fred Thompson.



## Upcoming Meetings



**Sunday, September 21, 2008**  
2-4pm @ The Baird  
5 Mead Street  
South Orange, NJ

Sandra Hasselman will be presenting a demonstration using cardboard for shadow puppets. She will be making the same presentation at an upcoming conference with the Art Educators of New Jersey. It will be a great time to ask Sandy some questions about how puppets play a role in today's classrooms and the work she does with this form of puppetry. Also, Paul Fantini will share what he learned from a recent Lexan® shadow puppet workshop that he attended at the recent regional festival. Elections for officers will be held this meeting. Please see "From the President's Playboard" on this page for more information about how you can become involved. Refreshments will be served.

**Sunday, November 16, 2008**  
2-4pm @ The Baird  
5 Mead Street  
South Orange, NJ  
Details to be announced.

## From the President's Playboard

Dear members,

The recent regional puppet festival this summer confirmed something I have long believed: *I have learned so much about puppetry from all of YOU.* Even through some of our trials and tribulations, I think we all gain from helping each other and sharing knowledge. There are not so many puppeteers in the world that we have access to, so we must cherish each other's experience and help one another to achieve great things for our art form. Together we can move forward with our respective visions for our individual work, and we will see those visions fulfilled if we move together.

Having said that, as a new season is upon us, we hope to enlarge our membership through interesting meeting programs and another creative National Day of Puppetry. We hope to have accessible meeting topics and events that will increase the interest and participation of our current membership. Our first meeting of the year will be held September 21, Sunday, from 2-4pm at The Baird in South Orange (Look for details in this issue).

**"Together we can move forward with our respective visions for our individual work, and we will see those visions fulfilled if we move together."**

For our first gathering, we will share with each other methods to create shadow puppets. A few of us will impart what we learned about making Lexan® shadow puppets from a workshop offered at the recent festival. Other members who are skilled in shadows will also share their experience. Please contact me if you have a presentation on shadows to bring to the meeting so that I may allot enough time for you. If there is great enthusiasm for this kind of puppetry, we can easily make it the subject of two meetings.

The agenda for the first meeting will also include elections for this current year. Please come to the meeting prepared to discuss your ideas and/or volunteer for an office. We will be electing a new President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Chairman. Some of the officers from last year have volunteered to run for next year. Paul Fantini will be editor of our newsletter for this coming year. This does not mean that you shouldn't come in with your enthusiasm and run for office! All ideas for changes and additions to our format from last year are most welcome. We will also discuss in what direction we want to take the guild. What is most meaningful to us all?

Let us renew our dedication this year to learning from each other. Thanks for all your support from our previous year.

Peace and Puppets Forever,

Lois Corwin, *President*

The Phoenix newsletter is produced and distributed in the interest of the members of the Garden State Puppetry Guild, a charter organization of Puppeteers of America. Submissions may be edited for length and content. Articles and images for consideration should be sent to the Editor by November 7 for the winter issue (covering December-February). Please send all submissions via email (below) or mail to The Phoenix, C/O Paul Fantini, 1219 Plane Street, Union, NJ 07083.

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## Looky! Looky! What's Going On!

### **Rumpelstiltskin**

Every Saturday at 2pm; \$9.00  
Paper Moon Puppet Theater  
at the First Avenue Playhouse (Atlantic  
Highlands)

<http://www.firstavenueplayhouse.com/pmpt/index.htm>  
(732) 291-7552



### **Johnny and the Sprites with Choo-Choo Soul**

Sun., Oct. 19 at 1:30 & 4:30pm; \$25  
John Tartaglia  
at the Community Theater  
(Morristown)

<http://morristown.com/communitytheatre/MayoCenter/performingarts.html>

Look for more information about **Penny Pretzel Playhouse's** upcoming 2008-2009 season in the next issue of The Phoenix or visit them at: <http://www.geocities.com/pennypretzelplayhouse/>  
Call (973) 378-7754 for more information.

## Spotlight on Sandra Hasselman... (continued)

inspired by artists Basil Twist, Julie Taymour, and Ronnie Burkett and has become a fan of the Broadway hit *Avenue Q*. Though in a completely different vein, also high on her list is *The Puppetmaster of Lodz* by Gilles Segal; a one-man show about a Holocaust survivor that interacts with his fantasy world of puppets.

Sandy was born in Brooklyn. As an army brat she moved every 22 months and spent over 10 years in Europe. She currently resides in Berkeley Heights, NJ.

### **The Velveteen Rabbit**

Sat., Nov. 15, at 2:00pm  
Sun., Nov. 16, 2pm; \$20-\$22  
Enchantment Theatre  
at the New Jersey Performing Arts  
Center (Newark)  
[www.njpac.org](http://www.njpac.org)

### **Workshop on Shadow Puppets**

Presented by GSPG member  
Sandra Hasselman at the Art Educa-  
tors of New Jersey Conference; Octo-  
ber 6-8  
<http://www.aenj.org>

### **Big Mouths in the Classroom Workshop**

Presented by GSPG member Sandra  
Hasselmann at the New Jersey Educa-  
tion Association Convention (Atlantic  
City); November 6-7  
<http://www.njea.org>

### **National Day of Puppetry**

Mark your calendars! GSPG will be  
recognizing NDOP on April 18, 2009.  
Look for more information in the next  
issue of The Phoenix.

## In Remembrance



### **Carol D. Clark/Kaufmann**

December 22, 1932 – January 8, 2008

Ms. Carol D. Clark/Kaufmann was born December 22, 1932 and responded to God's calling on January 8, 2008. She raised four wonderful children and enjoyed five grandchildren as well. She always had a puppet on one hand and a camera in the other.

Born in Tuxedo, NY, Carol was raised in Ridgewood, NJ, lived in Bloomfield, NJ for 24 years and moved to Manchester 20 years ago. She was a fantastic and amazing, self-employed puppeteer well known as The Puppet Lady from Carol Clark's Puppinettes. She was also an award winning photographer.

She is survived by sons William C. Kaufmann (Schenectady, NY), Paul E. Kaufmann (Bernardsville, NJ), and Kenneth C. Kaufmann (Vernon, NJ); and daughter Kathryn D. Bergner (Vernon, NJ). Carol has been laid to rest at Cemetery of the Highlands, 634 Route 32, Highland Mills, NY 10930.



A gang of puppets as produced by Arthur L. Johnson puppetry students.



## Garden State Puppetry Guild

C/O Paul Fantini  
1219 Plane Street  
Union, NJ 07083

### Not A Member? Join Today!

Chartered by the Puppeteers of America, a national not-for-profit organization founded in 1937, the Garden State Puppetry Guild builds a community of people who love puppet theatre. Among our members you will find professional puppeteers, puppet builders, teachers, librarians, therapists, youth leaders, hobbyists and audience members who are enthusiastic about puppetry. During a season of events and meetings, the GSPG offers the opportunity to attend workshops and seminars, attend complimentary performances, and perform works-in-progress or completed works.

The Garden State Puppetry Guild welcomes members of all different levels of interest and abilities and encourages you to attend the next meeting. Look for details inside.

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### Member Spotlight on Sandra Hasselman...

First and foremost Sandra Hasselman is a teacher, so you might not find her performances at the usual venues. She did present a shadow puppet vignette (*The Little Old Lady That Swallowed a Fly*) at the recent GSPG's National Day of Puppetry. She looks forward to being an active member this year and hopes the GSPG will foster greater community connections as we move forward.



Above, Sandra's students perform at the Union County Teen Arts Festival. At right, Big Hairy Troll made from foam, fur, and hot glue.

Presently she is designing a "Bob Ross" big mouth puppet for the New Jersey Education Association's convention and a shadow puppet show for both the Garden State Puppetry Guild September meeting and the Art Educators of New Jersey conference.

With a Masters in Liberal Science, Sandra is a teacher at Arthur L. Johnson HS in Clark, NJ for Advanced Placement Art History, Open Studio, and Foundations and Puppetry. As the puppetry teacher she

leads a puppet club consisting of 9-12 students from the puppetry classes. They will be performing at the annual Holiday Town Party in Clark, the annual Guidance Holiday party for children, 8<sup>th</sup> grade orientation, and Youth Art Month. They will also be very proud participants in the Union County Teen Arts Festival.



Without a doubt, she is most proud of the work the puppet club performs. In her opinion, because of the No Child Left Behind Act, the arts tend to be given the short end of the stick. Providing students a quality education through enrichment and creativity is truly her passion and calling.

She most enjoys experimental puppetry that can inspire students to be creative in their productions. "Mixed media allows anything to become a puppet." She is in-

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