

Puppetmongers



Photo from WP Puppet Theatre's *Bakster & Bird* by Hannah Burne

FRESH IDEAS 2021

Thank you for joining us at the first-ever virtual
Fresh Ideas in Puppetry Day!

Puppetmongers Theatre is honoured to present this annual mini-conference showcasing artists taking new and ground-breaking directions in puppetry.

Sunday, June 13, 2021

We acknowledge that Puppetmongers Theatre is located on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit. We recognize our settler privilege, and ask that we resolve outstanding land claims, and health and education issues as soon as possible.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Afternoon Presentations - 2pm ET

2:00pm - Welcome

2:05pm - David Lane & students from the MCLA Theatre Program

Pandemic Pivot – A Midsummer Night's Dream Shadow Play

2:30pm - Michael Rigler

Travelling puppet shows in a digital landscape... or, why I play with puppets and computers

3:00pm - Kathy McLellan & John Nolan, Rag & Bone Puppet Theatre

Hat Trick – From Stage to Screen

3:30pm - Robin Polfuss

How to Make Short Puppet Films With No Money or Friends. (During a Pandemic.)

4:00pm - Wendy Passmore, WP Puppet Theatre

Bakster & Bird: In the midst of production

Evening Cabaret - 7pm ET

Featuring performances by:

Kris Fleerackers, Falada Puppet Works

Grayson Morris

Elise Timm-Bottos

Juanita Dawn

Sherron Burns

Tara Manuel, Shadowy Souls

AFTERNOON PRESENTERS



David Lane & students from the MCLA Theatre Program

Massachusetts, USA

Pandemic Pivot – A Midsummer Night's Dream Shadow Play

Inspired by the work of famed German animator Lotte Reiniger, we set out to present a silver-screen shadow play based on Shakespeare's classic text. Mechanicals would become silent clowns, and Athens a toy theatre into which our lovers disappear into a shadowy dream world. We'll share the challenges we faced when forced to pivot from working together in the theatre, to a fully online format.

The Theatre Program at MCLA develops innovative theatre artists prepared for careers in theatre and graduate study. In the intimate, culturally rich setting of the Berkshires, students hone their craft through intensive studio training and hands-on experience, within the context of their broader liberal arts education.

Presenters: MCLA faculty members David Lane (director) and Michaela Petrovich (character designer) & students Abby Daggett (performer), Keiley Norsworthy (scenic designer), Neo Valentin (performer)

Michael Rigler

Corner Brook, Newfoundland

*Travelling puppet shows in a digital landscape... or,
why I play with puppets and computers*

How I use digital tools in original puppetry and theatre productions to reach chronically under-serviced rural schools and communities in Newfoundland and Labrador and beyond.

Michael Rigler is an award-winning visual artist, performer and filmmaker who incorporates digital animation and stagecraft technology in original productions which can reach even the most remote audiences.





Kathy McLellan & John Nolan, Rag & Bone Puppet Theatre

Ottawa, ON

Hat Trick – From Stage to Screen

How "Hat Trick", originally planned as a live show with six collaborators, was reworked for video and recorded in our basement with a single, fixed camera and remote participants.

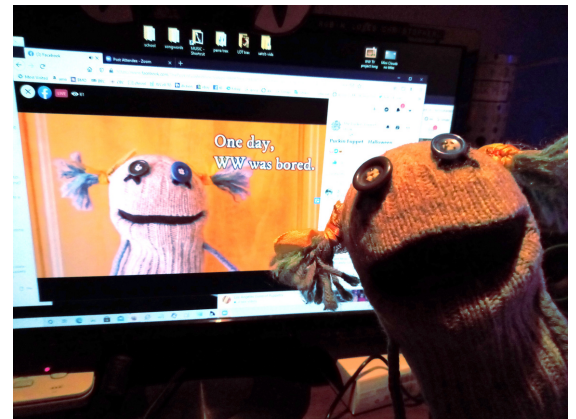
Rag & Bone Puppet Theatre has toured across Canada since 1978 with over 20 different shows, a self-presented family series in Ottawa, and awards from ACTRA, UNIMA, and others.

Robin Polfuss

Scarborough, ON

How to Make Short Puppet Films When You Have No Money and No Friends and Maybe it Happens to be During a Pandemic.

Quarantined with a bunch of puppets? Make movies! Robin will tell how she converted a sewing room into a movie studio & share shoestring budget tips for solo movie makers.



Robin is a storyteller, puppet builder and puppeteer at live festivals & events, and has begun making short films for Slams & Youtube. She teaches puppet building & performing workshops.



Wendy Passmore, WP Puppet Theatre

Calgary, AB

Bakster & Bird: In the midst of production

Phrase of the year - 'adaptive capability' - so Wendy & collaborators are adapting a planned live puppet production to a multi- medium, artistically explorative, interactive digital project. Exciting!

WP Puppet Theatre uses the power of puppetry to impact positive social change. A NFP charity, touring Western Canada/internationally since 1991, with live & online learning experiences and original performances.

CABARET PERFORMERS



Kris Fleerackers, Falada Puppet Works

Gibsons, BC, on the territory of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) people

The Idol (Work in Progress)

Live action puppet short film based on a classical story. Pygmalion, a love goddess devotee disenchanted with human women, falls in love with a sculpture of his own making...

Kris Fleerackers is a Flemish Canadian puppetry artist with experience in television production, theatre, and education. Likes to find new uses for old things; famous for making simple things complicated.

Grayson Morris

Los Angeles, USA

The Box

It's vulnerable to share yourself with someone because some parts of yourself are difficult to witness. As we expose our truest selves, we can find some value in the darkest places.
With music by Gabe Saucedo.



Grayson Morris is a puppeteer, comedian, and multi-disciplinary performer based in Los Angeles. Her work explores themes of goodness and horror, and dreams for a better world.



Elise Timm-Bottos

Nelson, BC

Too Much Time

Too Much Time explores celebration and isolation in quarantine as an older man recollects important and tragic moments in his life. It won Top Ten in Bristol's 48-hr puppetry challenge. Music by Lucas DiTecco.

Elise Timm-Bottos is a multidisciplinary artist, puppeteer and slam poet. She has traveled extensively since 2013 performing puppetry shows and doing workshops in Montreal, Toronto, Sicily, New York and Iceland.

Juanita Dawn
Calgary, AB
Kitty Monster



Kitty Monster is a playful exploration of the imagination of children. There is a fine line between the imagined and reality so one must be careful about the stories one tells to their little sister.

Performers: Juanita Dawn and Emily Rozitis

Juanita Dawn is a puppet maker and puppeteer. She has been working in this quirky art form for the past 12 years. As well as making her own original work she has taken on commissions from many theater companies across Canada. Emily Rozitis is a teacher, artist and published writer. She made her puppeteering debut in *A Whale of a Tail* and was brought back by popular demand for *Kitty Monster*.



Sherron Burns
North Battleford, SK
Sky Woman

A creation story, drawn from ancient stories both imagined and real; a Dream Time brought to earth with rock, wood, fur and bone.

Performers: Sherron Burns & Juanita Dawn

Sherron Burns and Juanita Dawn are artists and puppeteers who believe play opens us to the magic in the world. They met at the Banff Puppet Intensive 10 years ago.

Tara Manuel, Shadowy Souls
Corner Brook, Newfoundland
The Lady of the Falls



A puppetry play for all ages about memory, friendship, living a sustainable life, and the interconnectedness of all things.

Director Michael Waller; **Puppet Creation** Michael Regler & Tara Manuel.

Spearheaded by Tara Manuel aka Shadowy Souls (Playwright, Producer, lead performer), with a team of western NL artists, this piece was created during Tara's residency at the Corner Brook Arts & Culture Centre.

Puppetmongers

Ann Powell & David Powell

Puppetmongers Co-Artistic Directors & Fresh Ideas curators/hosts

Victoria Laberge

Marketing Coordinator

Henry Mak & Eric Chan

Tech & Zoom Magicians

Linda Rogers & Jenna Harris

Consultants

Kimberley Howe

Bookkeeping

Puppetmongers are members of UNIMA Canada, the Toronto Theatre Alliance for the performing Arts, and the Ontario Puppetry Association

Puppetmongers Theatre is a registered Charity - No. 10434 7042 RR0001

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