

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE

# PUPPETRY INTERNATIONAL



UNIMA-USA

*50 YEARS IN THE MAKING*



2017

JANUARY 19-29

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL  
PUPPET THEATER FESTIVAL

[www.ChicagoPuppetFest.org](http://www.ChicagoPuppetFest.org)

# PUPPETRY INTERNATIONAL

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE

Editorial by Andrew Periale ..... 2

## SPECIAL FEATURE: UNIMA-USA TURNS 50

Allelu Kurten *by Andrew Periale* ..... 3

Making a Difference: 22<sup>nd</sup> UNIMA Congress, Tolosa, Spain *by Kristin Haverty* ..... 5

UNIMA-USA Publishing ..... 9

UNIMA-USA Opens Doors and Hearts *by Nancy Staub* ..... 10

Hands Across the Sea *by Monica Leo and Jean Marie Keevins* ..... 12

My Global Family *by Karen Smith* ..... 14

The Road from and to Bali *by Kathy Foley* ..... 16

*Pupazzi* a book review *by Bradford Clark* ..... 18

UNIMA-USA Scholarships *by Irina Niculescu* ..... 19

UNIMA Citations ..... 21

*Puppetry International* is a publication of UNIMA-USA, Inc.



American Center of the  
UNION INTERNATIONALE de la MARIONNETTE  
*Promoting international friendship and understanding through the art of puppetry.*  
c/o Center for Puppetry Arts 1404 Spring Street, NW  
Atlanta, GA 30309 USA 404-873-3089 www.unima-usa.org

*Puppetry International* is funded, in part, by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts



### On the Cover: *Special Citations*

From time to time the Board of UNIMA-USA presents a “special citation” to individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to the organization and to puppetry. In 1987, Jim Henson was presented a special citation by then General Secretary Allelu Kurten. Award design: Brad Williams. For a list of special citation recipients, go to [unima-usa.org](http://unima-usa.org) and look under Citations, Process and Criteria.



# UNIMA-USA TURNS 50

I admit to being a bit of a stick-in-the-mud when it comes to celebrating anniversaries. True, Bonnie (our incomparable designer) and I did take two days off earlier this month in recognition of our thirty years of marriage, and it was a much-needed change of pace. But as a rule I don't pay much attention to birthdays (ours or our pets), municipal centennials, quinceañeras, jubilees or *onomastici*. 50 years of UNIMA-USA, though, is an occasion to celebrate, and not just because it's a half century—the BIG 5 Oh!—but for all that it represents: the mission, the activities, the fellowship and so much more.

In the pages that follow, you can read about UNIMA and UNIMA-USA, but here are a few quick facts: UNIMA is the oldest theater organization in the world. There are about 6,000 members worldwide, and while UNIMA, through the work of its commissions, has done much for the field of puppetry, its most important explicit goal is to promote international friendship and understanding through the art of puppetry. This is a noble cause in a troubled and fractious world, and we are proud to be a part of it and support its work.

You won't find much written here about our current General Secretary, Vincent Anthony, but if our board members are the engine that keeps this train chugging along, then Vince is the tracks. He has been at the helm of this organization for just shy of 25 years—*half its existence!*—and by garnering the support of the Center for Puppetry Arts board of directors, UNIMA-USA has a home and a staff: Lisa Rhodes (controller) and Lyrric Jackson (director of membership services). In addition to his actual job as Executive Director of the amazing Atlanta center, Vince has served on the Executive Council of UNIMA International (including as vice president), enhancing the image of United States puppetry on the world stage. Though he prefers to keep out of the spotlight, his generosity and wise counsel have been essential to the development and growth of this organization.

UNIMA-USA also owes much to Jim, Jane, Cheryl and Heather Henson. All of them have supported the organization and its activities in very substantial ways. Jim in particular was indispensable in starting the formation of our national center, supporting the work of making us a non-profit, guaranteeing the 1980 UNIMA Congress and Festival in Washington, DC, against financial loss and so much more. If it seems that the Henson contribution is under-represented here, it is only because it has been so well covered in both the article by Cheryl Henson in our recent "Puppetry Futures" issue, and in the summer 2016 issue of the *Puppetry Journal*. Our debt to them, though, is huge.

We also do not refer to the work of Donald Devet, who has been for many years our webmaster and electronic media consultant. Some of you will know Donald as one of the founding partners of Grey Seal Puppets, but for many years he has been responsible for UNIMA-USA's web presence, keeping us current in the ever-evolving worlds of the internet and social media. Before beginning in this role—heck, before the internet existed—he also served on our board, including as president.

So many people contribute to making this enterprise a success, and you'll hear from some of them in this issue—board members, consultants, councilors, peer reviewers—while others remain in the shadows, like our proofreader, Terrie Ilaria, and all the folks at Edison Press who have worked for years to help make *Puppetry International* a pleasure to hold in the hand. For them, and for all of you readers, without whom this enterprise would be impossible and pointless, our heartfelt thanks. We look forward to serving you for another 50 years as we continue to improve UNIMA-USA's service to our members and the field of puppetry in print, online and when gathered together.

Now blow out the candles and make a wish!

—Andrew Periale

For more on the history of UNIMA-USA, we are putting a report from *A Propos*, 1980, on the online supplement to *Puppetry International* #40. It is by Mollie Falkenstein, our first General Secretary. With it is a report from Bil Baird, who was elected to UNIMA's Executive Council at that time.

## Allelu Kurten

April 16, 1930 - May 21, 2016



IN 1986, BONNIE AND I WERE HONEYMOONING IN VANCOUVER, BC. ALLELU WAS NEARBY AT A PUPPETEERS OF AMERICA FESTIVAL. WE SCOOPED HER UP AND SPENT THE DAY AT THE EXPO (THE WORLD'S FAIR) WHERE JOHN AND CAROL FARRELL WERE PERFORMING. BONNIE'S PHOTO FROM THAT DAY CAPTURES HER JOYOUS SPIRIT. ALLELU'S HUSBAND JOHN ALWAYS SAID IT WAS HIS FAVORITE PORTRAIT OF HER.

It's hard to know where to begin when remembering a life as rich and varied as Allelu's. She loved singing and making music, was an inveterate and enthusiastic gardener and a self-proclaimed "morning person" who nonetheless stayed up late at puppet festivals.

If you never had the chance to meet Allelu, then you should know that she spent much of her life helping to make the world a friendlier, more peaceful place through the art of puppetry. She was a longtime member of the Puppeteers of America (serving a term as vice president). She created delightful puppet shows, often satirical, in a unique style that blended Art Deco with tennis balls (aided by her husband John, a designer on the theater faculty of Vassar College). But her work of greatest consequence, I think, was her long service to UNIMA (*Union Internationale de la Marionnette*).

Jim Henson was the first Chairman of UNIMA-USA when the organization was first formed in 1966. In advance of the 1980 World Puppetry Festival in Washington, DC (headed by Nancy Staub), Allelu took charge of making UNIMA-USA a non-profit 501c3 organization, with Jim Henson underwriting the legal costs. Allelu volunteered to be its General Secretary, and for the next fifteen years (1978-1992) traveled the world on behalf of the organization. She helped organize scholarship funding so that American puppeteers could study overseas, helped promote American puppet troupes abroad and fostered UNIMA's goal of international friendship and understanding through the art of puppetry.

When Bonnie and I joined UNIMA-USA in the early 1980s, Allelu welcomed us warmly. She supported our bid to take over producing *A Propos*, UNIMA-USA's magazine, and again when we proposed replacing it with *Puppetry International*. Twice a year, we would drive to Allelu and John's to spend a weekend organizing the mailing to members, making up songs, walking through their woods, cooking meals and listening to Allelu's stories of traveling to foreign festivals and visiting her friends all over the world, or we would swap tales of performances that had gone horribly wrong (always hilarious in retrospect).

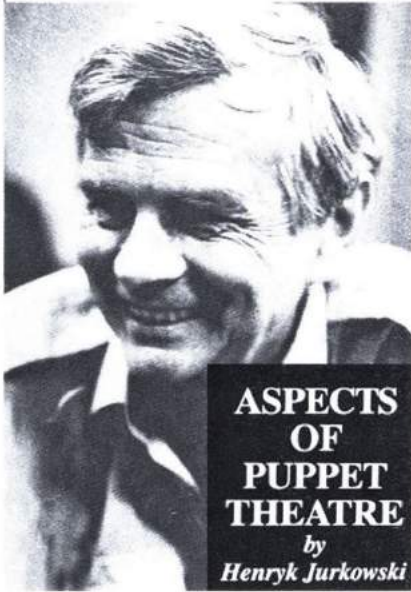
Allelu had a way of taking situations that were toxic and transmuting them into events flooded with light. She replaced the old "critique" sessions that followed some performances at puppet festivals (and the hurt feelings that sometimes ensued) with a "meet the artist" series—post-show discussions where audiences got to meet the puppeteers and hear them speak about their lives and work. She treated us all as the artists we aspire to be.

After passing on the job of General Secretary to the indomitable Vince Anthony, she continued to visit her puppeteer friends all over the world and to attend puppet festivals into the final months of her life.

As much as we miss her, we have to smile when we think of Allelu. UNIMA president Dadi Pudumjee emailed: "I wrote a small obituary for the UNIMA site, it's been a sad day... but she lived a great and happy life, [I] remember her sitting on my little Vespa when she visited Delhi – must have been late 80s – in her dirndl skirt, shocking all the other UNIMA ladies ..."

And Cheryl Henson wrote: "She did so much for UNIMA-USA out of her teeny tiny home office! Remember when people would come from abroad expecting to see a well staffed office, only to find the hardest working, most dedicated individual in international puppetry (at least in UNIMA-USA) at that time!"

–ACP



**HENRYK JURKOWSKI (1927 – 2016)**

The world of puppetry has lost a great friend and scholar. Henryk did so much to advance the cause of puppetry through his work with UNIMA, his writings and his teaching.

Our last issue of *Puppetry International* went to press at the time of his death, and since then, much has already been said about Henryk elsewhere—his warmth, his great sense of humor, his scholarship and encyclopedic knowledge of the art form and its practitioners. Search his name at [unima.org](http://unima.org) and you will find tributes from many countries. A phrase in a posting caught my eye: "A frequent and welcome visitor..." May we all be held in the memory thus.

Here is a link to part of an interview with Henryk that displays his warm and generous spirit as he speaks about his background:

[www.mixcloud.com/discover/dr-henryk-jurkowski/](http://www.mixcloud.com/discover/dr-henryk-jurkowski/)

**UNIMA officially began on May 20, 1929**, at the 5th Convention of Czech Puppeteers. The 1933 Prague Congress was the last before the outbreak of WWII in 1939. Even war was not able to break the bonds between puppeteers, even if their meetings had to be held in secret, sometimes via the most daring of routes. UNIMA shows the power of Solidarity! [www.unima.com](http://www.unima.com)

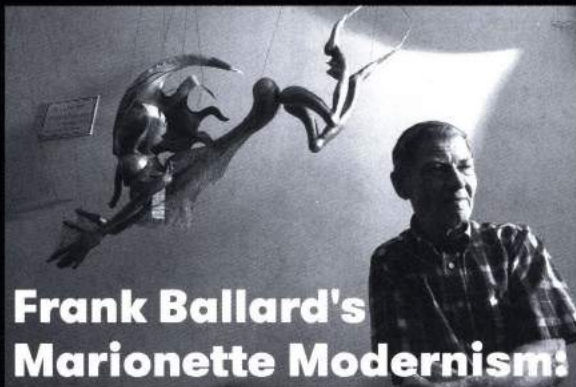


Oct. 22, 2016–  
Feb. 12, 2017

*This Fall*

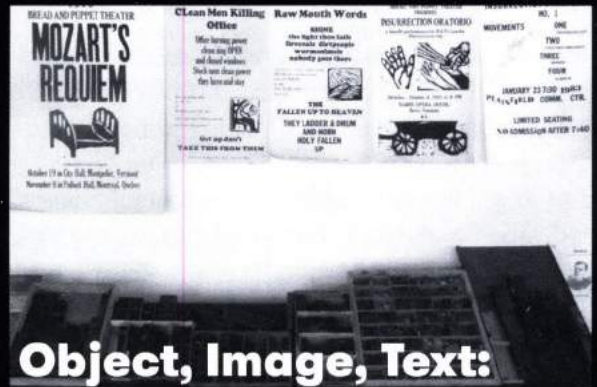
Tuesday–Sunday  
11am–7pm

@ The Ballard Institute & Museum of Puppetry



**Frank Ballard's  
Marionette Modernism:  
Peer Gynt and The Love  
for Three Oranges**

Photograph by Suzy Altman



**Object, Image, Text:  
The Bread & Puppet  
Press**

Photograph by John Bell



1 Royce Circle  
Storrs, CT 06268

860.486.8580  
[bimp.uconn.edu](http://bimp.uconn.edu)

Free admission.  
Donations gratefully accepted.





## MAKING A DIFFERENCE THROUGH ADVOCACY AND ACTION

### *A Councilor's Account of the 22nd UNIMA Congress*

by Kristin Haverty

The *Union Internationale de la Marionnette* (UNIMA) is the oldest international theater organization in the world. It represents an incredibly strong and diverse network of passionate artists, researchers and educators working in 100 countries.<sup>1</sup> Every four years, representatives from the member countries convene for the Congress and World Puppetry Festival.<sup>2</sup> In June 2016, I had the great honor to serve as an UNIMA-USA councilor for the 22nd UNIMA Congress held in Tolosa, Spain. I share the spirit and some key details of the congress with the hope that those who read this publication as voraciously as I do will be inspired to seek out opportunities to serve this incredible organization and its mission: to promote international peace and understanding through the art of puppetry.

The passions and interests of this body are as vast and variegated as our world. A democratic organization, the main task of the congress during this week is to shape the organization's future. Over five days this is achieved through reports from the UNIMA Centers and commissions, election of the Executive Committee and officers, open debate regarding the future of the organization and the formation/continuation of the commissions. The leadership and their selected members are then tasked with carrying out the mission of the organization over the next four years.<sup>3</sup>

**Day 1** dealt with the current state of the union. The outgoing Executive Committee presented the budget, including the reality that funding from the French government, which historically has been the bedrock of UNIMA's financial state, would be considerably less for the foreseeable future. While certainly a cause for concern, puppeteers are resilient, and the Treasurer laid out a groundwork for UNIMA to remain strong. The approval of the budget by the congress satisfied the final duty of the outgoing General Secretary Jacques Trudeau and Executive Committee so that a managing leadership of the congress and ten supplementary councilors were elected. I would be remiss not to make a special mention to the fabulous UNIMA-USA member Kurt Hunter – who was not only elected as a supplementary councilor but, due to his historical prowess with all things budgetary for UNIMA-USA and Puppeteers of America, was also elected to UNIMA's Auditing Commission. This day also saw the induction of Honorary Members, a high distinction of achievement. UNIMA-USA's own Andrew and Bonnie Periale were honored along with an elite group of puppetry's luminaries. UNIMA President Dadi D. Pudumjee concluded his welcome to the congress with the following quotation from Miguel de Cervantes: "When life itself seems lunatic, who knows where madness lies? Perhaps to be too practical is madness. To surrender dreams – this may be madness. Too much sanity may be madness – and maddest

of all: to see life as it is, and not as it should be!?"<sup>4</sup> After a day of realities, the congress was tasked to dream about what could be.

**Day 2** served as an opportunity for national centers and commissions to report on the many activities that took place during the term. For anyone interested, I'm happy to provide the complete dossier presented to the congress. As the councilor tasked with presenting UNIMA-USA's activities in four minutes, I sought to highlight UNIMA-USA's 50th anniversary and its beautiful new website, the opening of the Worlds of Puppetry Museum at the Center for Puppetry Arts, the headquarters of UNIMA-USA, and a tribute to our UNIMAMA Allelu Kurten. Other national center reports highlighted the incredible projects, festivals and initiatives to strengthen puppetry across the globe. One of the most exciting projects, just nearing completion, is the translation and digitization of the *World Encyclopedia of Puppetry Arts*, UNIMA's WEPA, originally published in hardcopy in French. Spearheaded by the previous term's Publication and Communication Commission, and led by UNIMA-USA's own Karen Smith, the online WEPA translated into the three languages of UNIMA – French, English, and Spanish – is an incredible resource for the puppetry community. Another major development of the four-year term is the actualization of a new website for UNIMA. As the world becomes ever more connected through the Internet, a dynamic space to collect and disseminate the work of the international centers becomes ever more urgent. Led by a team out of UNIMA's French headquarters in Charleville-Mézières, the national center representatives are now being trained and tasked with carrying on the work so that the website, a huge financial investment for UNIMA, remains relevant to the ongoing developments in the field.



TOPIC, TOLOSA'S FABULOUS PUPPETRY CENTER.

**Day 3** looked toward the future. The election of the Executive Committee and discussion of the current statutes began the day. Each national center may propose candidates for this leadership, and from the nominees eighteen individuals were ultimately

chosen to lead over the next four years. Among the group were UNIMA-USA councilors Manuel Morán (also UNIMA-USA's current President) and Karen Smith, an honor that recognizes their excellent work for the organization. The election of the site for the next UNIMA Congress and World Puppetry Festival also took place. With strong presentations by UNIMA-South Korea and UNIMA-Indonesia, the hosting honor ultimately went to Indonesia. Mark your calendars: UNIMA 2020 will take place in the Gianyar regency of Bali.

**Day 4** began an open discussion on what members felt were the current priorities of the organization. Highlights included the motion by British UNIMA to strengthen ties with UNESCO and to actively support puppeteers persecuted for exercising their right to free speech. This was particularly resonant in Spain, where two puppeteers had recently been arrested in Madrid after a Don Cristobal performance for "glorifying terrorism" – purportedly referring to the Basque separatist group ETA and *al Qaeda*. For anyone familiar with this traditional character and his politically incorrect cousins across the world, the arrest of these puppeteers was a shocking conclusion to a puppet show. We had the opportunity during the festival events to meet the young puppeteers Alfonso Lázaro de la Torre and Raul García Pérez (now out of prison but still embroiled in the judicial process). They spoke passionately about their experience and the importance of free speech without the threat of persecution. The debate that followed the proposal in the congress session was a fascinating lesson on world politics and the mission of UNIMA. The realities "on the ground" are not always those reported in the press. Acting without knowing the full story may come with unintended consequences. By supporting free speech no matter the context, is the organization sanctioning violent action in the eyes of the nations and the citizenry that support it? By not speaking out, are we sanctioning the persecution of puppeteers exercising free speech? How does UNIMA, a non-political organization, navigate these murky waters? A

UNIMA CONGRESS VOTING



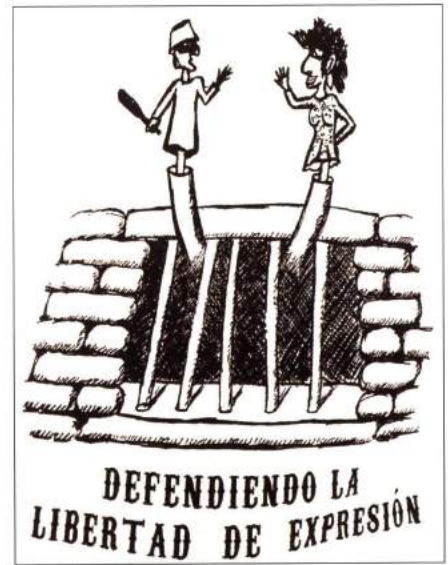


proposal to create a commission devoted to these questions was met with overwhelming approval. Another proposal of note came from the newly established UNIMA-Singapore representative who sought greater representation and engagement in UNIMA among young and new members. Finally, the election results were announced. Spain's Idoya Otegui – host for the congress and head of the beautiful TOPIC Center in Tolosa – was elected General Secretary, India's Dadi Pudumjee remained uncontested in his post as President, and UNIMA-USA's Manuel Morán and Karen Smith were elected the committee's Vice Presidents. France's Lucile Bodson also graciously accepted the unanimous vote to remain for a second term as UNIMA's Treasurer. With the new leadership in place and a passionate debate on the future fresh in our minds, the day concluded.

If the four previous days of the congress seemed dizzying, Day 5 trumped them all. The new leadership took their place on the stage and began to propose their vision for the next four years by laying out a plan for the commissions. The commissions, each led by an Executive Committee member, are essential to the goals of the congress as debated and discussed during the previous four days. The activities of the commissions shape UNIMA's presence in the world. The commissions also receive funding from UNIMA to carry out their activities. While most remained as established with a mandate to continue their work, certain proposals to adjust or eliminate certain commissions met with passionate debate. Final votes by the congress led to moving the tasks of the previous term's Strategic Planning Commission under the auspices of the Executive Committee, the creation of a new commission for the Middle East and North Africa, the creation of a Youth Commission, a contentious movement of the Women's Commission under a new Social Justice Commission and the joining of the Commission for Latin America and the North America Commission to create a new Three Americas Commission. The final votes were cast, the presidents of each commission established, and the congress adjourned.

**On the final night of the festival,** a party took place in Donostia/San Sebastián. Tributes were made to the many people who had worked tirelessly to make the 22nd UNIMA Congress and World Puppetry Festival a reality, and then the DJ started his set. It was a lovely thing to watch people who had debated so passionately during the congress dance the night away as one. I thought about my first day in San Sebastián when a small group passed arm in arm as I strolled down the waterfront of that picturesque city. Those are puppeteers, I remarked, and indeed in the following days I had the pleasure to meet them and learn about their work. These personal connections – made through casual conversations on the bus ride to Tolosa, walking to the next performance, or sharing a meal – are the bedrock of cultural diplomacy. So much may divide us, but this art form, in all its various incarnations, unites us. As we begin to see the interconnections in our world more clearly, peace and understanding do seem possible.

I look forward to the next four years as I serve UNIMA and its mission, and I invite everyone reading this to check out the website, find out more about the organization and get involved. And always read the newsletter – you never know what opportunities await!



T-SHIRT PROTESTING THE ARREST OF SPANISH PUPPETEERS  
DESIGN BY ALEX APARICIO



LATE-NIGHT PUPPETRY PHOTO: MORROW



IRREELS

# PUPPETRY INTERNATIONAL



REPRESENTING UNIMA-USA! MANUEL MORÁN,  
THE AUTHOR, KAREN SMITH, KURT HUNTER

Many thanks to my fellow councilors Dmitri Carter, Kurt Hunter, Manuel Morán and Karen Smith. It was a pleasure to serve with you. Thanks also to Vince Anthony and Lynn Jeffries for offering their sage wisdom as I prepared for the congress and to UNIMA and Cheryl Henson for the generous financial support to offset councilor travel expenses. To Andrew and Bonnie Periale – thank you for your many years of service to UNIMA and congratulations! To Nancy Lohman Staub, you are always and forever an inspiration to me. Finally, a tribute to Allelu Kurten, THE UNIMAMA. It is my hope to continue her legacy as a strong UNIMA-USA member who made a difference to the organization and the world of puppetry through advocacy and action.

PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Kristin Haverty is a puppeteer, stop-motion silhouette animator and musician. She has toured with Tears of Joy Theatre and studied with Dan Hurlin at Sarah Lawrence College and I Wayan Nartha in Bali, Indonesia. She currently serves as Associate Producer at the Center for Puppetry Arts.

## Endnotes

- 1 This number represents both countries which host UNIMA centers and those with UNIMA representatives.
- 2 UNIMA's World Puppetry Festival in Donostia/San Sebastián coincided with the meeting of the Congress. From Saturday, May 28 through Saturday, June 4, 2016, festival performances activated the public spaces along the waterfront boulevard, below towering Baroque cathedrals, within Belle Époque theaters and even the local firehouse. The 2016 festival program consisted of Street Performances, Indoor Performances, a Symposium, Exhibits and late night presentations hosted by puppeteers from the distinct regions of Spain. As an UNIMA-USA councilor, I also had the great opportunity to spend my days in congress meetings at TOPIC, the immaculately designed puppet center in Tolosa, about forty minutes by bus from San Sebastián.
- 3 While the full Congress convenes every four years, Councilors meet every two years and Executive Committee members meet every year at a different host location.
- 4 From *Don Quixote*

*For Haverty's account of the Festival that accompanied the 22<sup>nd</sup> Congress, see her article in the 2016 summer issue of The Puppetry Journal, the publication of Puppeteers of America.*

## UNIMA Members of Honor from the U.S.



VINCE ANTHONY, BIL BAIRD,  
FRANK BALLARD, REMO BUFANO,  
ALAN COOK, MOLLIE FALKENSTEIN,



JIM HENSON, ALLELU KURTEN,  
GEORGE LATSHAW,  
MARJORIE BATCHELDER MCPHARLIN,  
PAUL MCPHARLIN, VIVIAN MICHAEL,



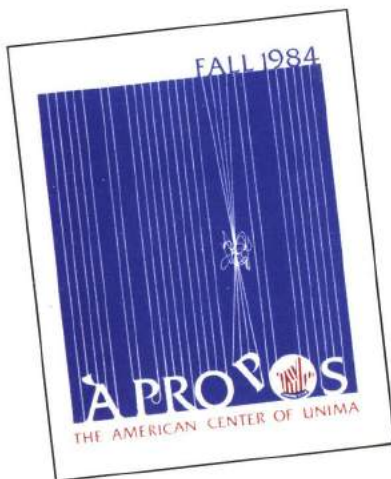
BONNIE & ANDREW PERIALE,  
ROMAIN PROCTOR,  
RUFUS & MARGO ROSE, TONY SARG,  
PETER SCHUMANN, NANCY STAUB

## UNIMA-USA Publishing: *A Passion for Improvement*

*A Propos* began as a newsletter, in order to bring information about the organization to its members. As it grew, it was put into a small magazine format with a cover designed by Paul Vincent Davis.

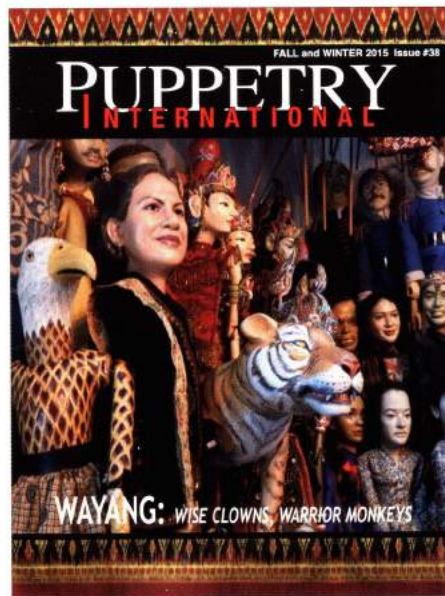
In the Fall of 1985, production of *A Propos* was passed to Andrew and Bonnie Periale. Bonnie's design for a cover was chosen featuring a photo that reflected that issue's content.

At the first Puppetry Futurism conference in 1990, organized by Jim Henson, Nancy Staub and current General Secretary Vincent Anthony,



the Periales proposed a new, larger format that would be appropriate for bringing the world of puppetry beyond the organization's membership. By 1994, they began producing *Puppetry International*.

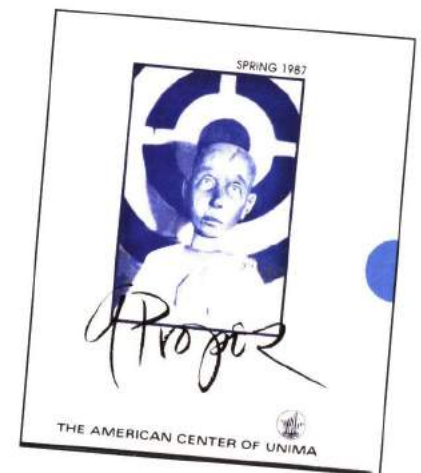
Since then, there have been a series of improvements. Early on, the editors decided to center each issue around a theme in order to increase



photographic and video material available. We have added more color to the magazine in order to more truly represent puppetry from around the globe. We have started to publish back issues online, translated into other languages (beginning with French and Spanish). We are on the verge of making the magazine available in digital format for academic institutions both as a way of facilitating research, and so that professors can assign articles to their theater classes.

the magazine's value as a reference. There've established a peer review committee in order to publish academic writing, and a web presence that allows the publication of longer articles, additional photographic and video material. We have started to publish back issues online, translated into other languages (beginning with French and Spanish), and we are on the verge of making the magazine available in digital format.

We are constantly looking for ways to make the magazine more useful to a wide range of readers.



These improvements have been made possible through the generous support and encouragement of the Hensons, the Center for Puppetry Arts, our webmaster Donald Devet, the National Endowment for the Arts and the many individuals who have served as editors, designers, advisors, reviewers, proofreaders, board members and authors.

We've added a web presence that allows us to publish longer articles than can be accommodated in the print edition, and to make additional

We are constantly looking for ways to make the magazine more useful to a wide range of readers, a process reflected in the evolution of the cover from its earliest days. These improvements have been made possible through the generous support and encouragement of the Hensons, the Center for Puppetry Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts and the work of many individuals who have served as editors, designers, advisors, reviewers, proofreaders, board members and authors.

# UNIMA-USA OPENS DOORS AND HEARTS



DEZSŐ SZUKÁGTUM, NANCY LOHMAN STAUB, SERGEI OBRATZOV, JACQUES FÉLIX- NEWLY ELECTED GENERAL SECRETARY, HENRYK JURKOWSKI, MARGARETA NICULESCU PHOTO: NIKLAUS STAUSS

by Nancy L. Staub

UNIMA-USA opens doors for its members to the international community of puppeteers, many of whom become close friends. Publications, festivals and meetings bring people together to share their love of puppetry and to open their hearts to the message of peace and understanding through the art form. It certainly did that for me.

As a student at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London in the 1950s, I attended a performance of *An Unusual Concert* by the Moscow State Central Puppet Theatre. This opened my eyes to the incredible potential of puppetry. I did not imagine in my wildest dreams that I would ever meet the director, Sergei Obratzov, let alone call myself his friend. Thanks to UNIMA-USA sponsoring an UNIMA Council meeting in 1971 in Nashville at the 32nd Puppeteers of America National Festival, I met Sergei for the first time. Sitting next to my youngest daughter, Nana, he characteristically turned his kind attention to her. I summoned up the courage to ask if he was going to perform. He answered that he had brought his puppets, but no one had asked. When I passed that on to Festival Director Tom Nankervis, he quickly arranged a spot for Sergei's memorable solo show with his wife accompanying him at the piano. Their warmth and humor reached us all, most of whom had never had direct contact with Russian artists.

That festival presented performances by other members of the international council including Albrecht Roser from West Germany. UNIMA-USA later arranged a tour of America to share Albrecht's charming *Gustaf and his Ensemble*, assisted by Ingrid Höfer. Experiencing their artistry helped open new horizons for puppetry in America. They befriended many of us who later visited them in their Stuttgart studio. They came back to America many times as performers, teachers, and friends.

Thanks to UNIMA-USA, I met Jim Henson, who was its first President, and Mollie Falkenstein, its first General Secretary. I joined with them in the early years by, at latest, 1958 as I shared their desire to raise awareness of puppetry as a significant international art form. I served on the board including one term as Vice-president. When Jim suggested the American Center host the 1980 UNIMA Congress in the USA, I volunteered to help Mollie present the invitation at the 1976 Congress in Moscow. The indomitable Bernice Silver arranged a marvelous tour. We had really good seats at choice performances because she told the communist registrars we were "workers," in order to get us special treatment. While in Moscow, I spent a lot of time with Bil Baird, as he was a council member and strong supporter for a congress in America. Many of the Americans on Bernice's tour became life-long friends.

I agreed to organize the 13<sup>th</sup> UNIMA International Congress in Washington, DC in 1980 for UNIMA-USA in cooperation with Puppeteers of America. Jim Henson took on the fiscal responsibility. Hosting the DC Congress served as leverage to attract first-class puppet companies from around the world. Jim and I felt strongly that politics should not enter choice of performances. We invited the Moscow Central State Puppet Theatre in spite of tensions at the time. For funding reasons, Sergei could only bring his solo show. When interviewed for the PBS Special *Here Come the Puppets*, he advocated for peace in the world. Over a million Americans enjoyed exposure to outstanding puppetry thanks to the accompanying festival performances, tours, and exhibitions as well as the PBS television special. The National Endowment for the Arts began listing puppetry as an art form in funding guidelines.

I found the Executive Committee (EC) meetings to be frustrating. I did not like waiting for interpretation and depending on it. At least as a New Orleanian, I had some fluency in French. After an interpreter finished with one of my speeches, my multi-lingual friend Henryk Jurkowski laughed and stated that she had just conveyed the opposite of what I had said. Allelu Kurten loved it all, so I left the EC to her. With her usual enthusiasm, she took a crash course in French and became very popular with her warmth and supportive attitude. She served several terms on the international EC while General Secretary of UNIMA-USA. Allelu had the patience and perseverance necessary to achieve changes and spread good will wherever she went.

I served several times as a member of the international UNIMA Council, first as part of the American delegation and several terms as a member at large, acting as an ombudsman for the membership. Since, after one term, I refused nominations to the EC and even for its presidency, I was available to act as president of the council that reviews the work of the EC, makes suggestions and elects the next EC, which I did in 1984 in Dresden and Slovenia in 1992. Running those meetings is diplomatically demanding. When presiding, you don't have the opportunity to express your own opinions. I did move to change the East German proposal to condemn such horrors of war as devastated Dresden and Hiroshima to be worded without specific reference to British and American aggression. I reminded the council members that Dresden was near a Nazi concentration camp, and the proposal passed against war in general. Rolf Maser, who was the director of the puppet theatre collection of the State Art Collections of Dresden. Rolf and I remained friends, exchanging catalogs and museum news.

At an UNIMA Council meeting in the nineties, some members wanted to bar the Iranian Delegation from participating. Some people expressed surprise that an American

would socialize with them and support their participation. Relieved to be accepted, they invited me to a festival in Iran. As I could not attend, I introduced them to our gracious President (1992-2000), Sirppa Sivori-Asp, and she happily accepted. Delegate Behrooz Gharibpour later presented me with a traditional Mobarak marionette for my collection, and we continue to correspond.

I prefer specific goals and projects. I participated in several publication and research commissions. I helped plan the *World Encyclopedia of Puppetry Arts* as one of the original editors at the invitation of Editor-in-Chief Henryk Jurkowski of Poland. It was a special privilege to collaborate with such "a gentleman and a scholar" who was instrumental in gaining puppetry recognition as a significant art form. I loved to tell him Polish jokes, which he countered by inventing some about Americans. I was pleased to cooperate with Henryk one last time at the UNIMA Heritage Meeting led by Jacques Trudeau in Canada. Longtime friend Nina Malikova, editor for many years of *Loutka*, the famous puppetry journal of the Czech Republic, participated as well.

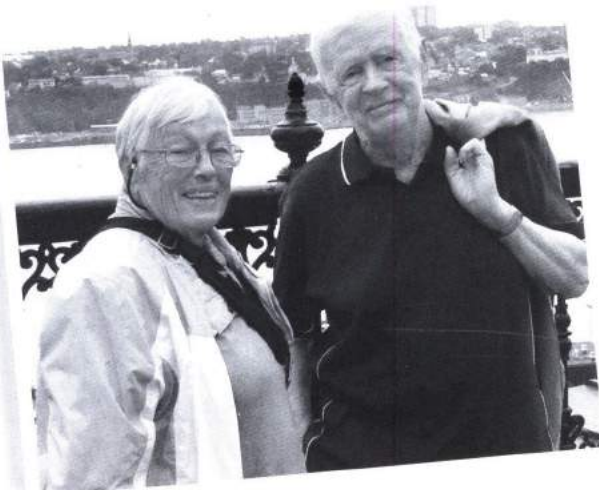
The indomitable Rumanian, Margareta Niculescu, found the funds to publish the beautiful French version of WEPA, *L'Encyclopédie mondiale des Arts de la Marionnette* (EMAM). I enjoyed visiting her in Bucharest and later in Charleville-Mézières, France, where she directed *L'Institut Internationale de la Marionnette* (IIM) for UNIMA. She served as UNIMA President as well as several terms on the EC. I made a special connection to her, feeling like a sister as we worked on several projects together.

Michael Meschke of Sweden invited me to join the 3<sup>rd</sup> World commission along with Taiji Kawajiri of Japan. I proposed that there should be regional commissions to better serve the growing non-European membership, absorbing the goals of helping puppeteers in underdeveloped countries. Michael and I became friends at the Moscow Congress when his production of *The Life and Death of the Bandit Murieta*, by Pablo Neruda, was misunderstood as anti-American by some of the delegates from the USA. Actually, it had an anti-authoritarian theme. Because it was set in Chile, it could pass Soviet censorship. I went backstage to express my admiration, and we bonded immediately. Some American council members demanded an official apology at the council meeting, but this was denied on the grounds that UNIMA is tolerant of all points of view.

I have a poignant memory of attending an elaborate official award ceremony for Sergei Obraztsov in Moscow in the 1980s. His daughter hosted a small party afterwards in her apartment. We were toasting each other, downing shots of notoriously strong Georgian vodka. Sergei suddenly burst into tears and stated, "I cannot imagine my government responsible for your death!"

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 14)

THE AUTHOR WITH HENRYK JURKOWSKI



# HANDS ACROSS THE SEA

by Monica Leo

On a golden October day in 1993, we picked up our new “partner puppeteers,” Olaf Bernstengel and Detlef Kaminsky (along with their wives, Sonja and Ilona) at the Cedar Rapids airport, recognizing them immediately because they looked so chic and European! They were from Dresden, and, with the exception of West Germany, it was their first trip out of the East Bloc since the wall had come down four years earlier. In the ensuing month, we toured them all over Iowa and to Minneapolis and St. Louis. Rural Iowa was not what they had imagined when they thought of the USA!

Our partnership was born when I was elected to the UNIMA-USA Board. Allelu Kurten, our “UNIMaMa,” was General Secretary, and she asked each new Board member to find a special project to initiate and work on. She suggested, since I was bilingual (German-English), had contacts in Germany, and had performed in the DDR (East Germany) before the wall came down, that I should work on crafting an informal overseas exchange relationship that could act as a pilot project. I wrote a letter to Rolf Mäser, the head of what had been UNIMA-DDR, and asking whether he knew of any small troupes who might be interested in an exchange. He passed the letter on to Olaf, a puppeteer and puppet historian. Olaf and his partner Detlef decided to take us up on our offer.

Worried about legalities, I had had an extensive conversation with our senator’s office. It turned out we couldn’t call it a “cultural exchange” (that name was reserved for much larger organizations), so we called it a “partnership.” We financed it by asking each place they performed to contribute to their expenses (the same amount we charged for one of our shows). As long as we didn’t give them any more than travel and per diem expenses, we were in the clear and didn’t have to get work permits, and Olaf, Sonja, Detlef, and Ilona had

an “exotic” (for them) free tour through the rural Midwest. Our mission in planning their tour was to introduce them to as many different styles of American puppetry as we could, and to give them a flavor of the rural Midwest. In Minneapolis, they met Sandy Spieler and her cohorts at In the Heart of the Beast and watched a rehearsal. In St. Louis, they were hosted by the Guild, performed in the Kramer Marionette Theater, and watched Bob and Dug do their marionette variety show, a glitzy descendant of the shows toured by Saxon marionette theaters in the 19th century. In Iowa City, they saw us do “Hansel and Goosel” for hordes of elementary school kids. In Jesup, Iowa, they brought their puppets to a one-room Amish schoolhouse and showed them to kids who had never seen a puppet show. These kids then serenaded them in German (or what passes for German in 5th generation immigrant communities). They were impressed at the way small town schools serve as all-day community centers. They loved our libraries, our empty country roads, and our four-way stops with people waving each other to go first. Seeing our home through their eyes gave us a new appreciation of things we take for granted.

A year later, we toured East Germany with “Tails From Africa” and experienced the tail-end of a culture that was rapidly westernizing. We performed at small town “Culture Houses” where the grandmas and grandpas sat in the back, drinking beer and smoking cigarettes, while the little ones sat in the front and watched the show. We met the last family still touring a 19th century marionette show in a caravan through Saxony. We talked to people who were delighted that, for the first time ever, they were seeing stories that weren’t Eurocentric. We ate mushrooms gathered for us by the children of a puppeteer who had a small puppet theater that specialized in the famous “Hohenstein Kasperle,” and then we performed in the charming theater. We performed in an ice-cold medieval castle to classes of kids who had walked over from their school. We met puppeteers who were trying desperately to field the market economy after spending their lives working for state supported theaters. We ate wild boar hunted by Rolf Mäser and prepared for us by his wife.

But long before our German tour, though, I had the feeling this partnership would be something special. After a full month of sunny Iowa weather with gold, orange, and red trees, the weather turned cold and rainy the day we took our guests to the airport. We considered the endless sun that smiled on our tour to be a good omen, and it was! After twenty-three years, we’re still good friends, we still travel back and forth across the pond to perform in each other’s countries, and, as a bonus, we feel empowered to include other foreign puppeteers in our lives.



“TAILS FROM AFRICA” IN A GERMAN CASTLE



## Hands Across the Sea Update

by Jean Marie Keevins  
Chair, Hands Across the Sea Committee

Today, the Hands Across the Sea Committee is made up of UNIMA members from across the United States. We maintain a growing list of artists who are happy to host foreign puppeteers who are visiting or touring in their area. This could mean anything from housing them, to making sure that they are well fed, to hosting a party so that local puppeteers get to meet these artists, to simply making sure that they have a connection to a local puppeteer when far away from home.

In addition, the Hands Across the Sea Committee works to connect U. S. artists who are going overseas with a puppeteer living over there.

Last year, I was in Canada as a guest of the marvelous Casteliers Festival, and I had the pleasure of seeing the work of Israeli puppeteer Yael Rasooly

and spending some time with her. When Yael visited NYC just a few months later, she didn't need housing, but she did desire to meet some more NYC-based puppeteers. We gathered a small group at Mona's to listen to Yael sing and root her on. New friendships were built through puppetry. Success.

When it comes to meeting and hosting international artists, I take particular inspiration from the wonderful Allelu Kurten and Carol Sterling as well as other very generous UNIMA-USA members. I hope that this committee can become reinvigorated over the coming year to ensure that UNIMA-USA serves as a bridge to new friendships in puppetry.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

In spite of political and religious differences, I have friends all over the world due to UNIMA-USA. Technology keeps us in touch. I cannot travel easily any more but still reap the harvest of UNIMA and UNIMA-USA through email, websites and publications. For those of you who cannot travel, I hope you will support UNIMA-USA in its goal of peace and understanding through puppetry. You can take advantage of the contacts and information it offers even if you stay at home! Open your doors and your hearts to other puppeteers.



WITH DADI PUDUMJEE, CHENGDU, CHINA

Nancy Lohman Staub has attended puppet festivals, theatres and museums all over the world and has published many articles about them. She currently serves on the UNIMA Social Justice Commission and as Chair of the Center for Puppetry Arts Museum

Consultants' Committee. She considers the Global Collection at the Center in Atlanta to be her legacy in the art form.



WITH NINA MALIKOVA

## UNIMA Friends: My Global Family

by Karen Smith



UNIMA is about people...and, incidentally, puppets. It is about sharing and exchanges between people, which includes the opportunity to visit or stay in the homes of our puppetry fellows across the globe. This, I believe, is at the heart and soul of UNIMA: its cultivation of friendship and exchanges amongst its members. Today, there are approximately 6,000 UNIMA members worldwide from around 100 countries. Not bad, eh?!

I have had the great fortune to meet and get to know quite a few of these wonderful people, and their puppets, through the various UNIMA events I have attended over the years. Some of them I met at events that were not directly part of UNIMA activities, such as our very dear friend and mentor, Nancy Staub, whom I first met in 1999 at the "Pekan Wayang" or Wayang Week in Jakarta, Indonesia. Three years later, Nancy bought me my first membership to UNIMA-USA so I could attend the 2002 UNIMA



Council meetings and puppet festival at the Center for Puppetry Arts, in Atlanta. Earlier that year, Nancy had visited my husband and me in India for a month, where she attended the 1<sup>st</sup> New Delhi Puppetry Festival, hosted by India International Centre, an event in which I played a small part. Also performing with her UCSC students at the “Pekan Wayang” was Kathy Foley, whom I had first met in the late 1970s in Honolulu, where she was completing her PhD on *wayang golek*, and where I was working as a research assistant on Asian literature. More than a quarter of a century later, it was Kathy who urged me to run for a seat on the UNIMA-USA board, partly because of our common interest in Asian theatre, which she thought would add to the mix of skills and experiences at our national center.

I suppose my real immersion into the world of puppetry, and by extension, into UNIMA, began in August 1982, newly arrived in India for my first of two five-year stints in the country, when I had the temerity to ask if I could join the New Delhi-based company, Sutradhar Puppet Theatre (later renamed the Shri Ram Centre Puppet Repertory). This was the first modern puppet theatre company, based in India’s capital. The director of this company was Dadi D. Pudumjee [currently the president of UNIMA]. Working with Sutradhar was a great learning experience. What India and Indians taught me was to “give it a go”: I was given a puppet – the rear end of a cow – on the first day; I wasn’t judged lacking until I proved I was lacking, and even then that was OK. I loved this freedom to learn.

I was born in Australia, and lived on that continent until my mid-twenties. Since then, I have lived in several Asian countries for good lengths of time (India, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Indonesia) and in North and Central America (United States and Costa Rica) and on an island in the Pacific (the US state of Hawaii). California has been my permanent home since 2005 and my official address

since 1982, and puppetry has played a role in binding together these varied experiences across the globe.

During those first five years living in India (1982-1987; again, 2000-2005), I was also a member of the puppet troupe Jan Madhyam – this one dedicated to education and social puppetry – founded and directed by puppeteer Ranjana Pandey (some years later, a councilor for UNIMA-India and its President). In 1986, along with Delhi Wallahs Dadi, Ranjana, Meher Contractor (“Meherbehn”) from Ahmedabad, Suresh Dutta of Calcutta, and other Indian puppeteers, I joined the newly created UNIMA-India. It was Meher Contractor\* who, along with Michael Meschke of Sweden, founded UNIMA-India in 1986. I had the great honor of knowing Meherbehn, presenting with her and Ranjana at a puppetry workshop for Delhi schoolteachers.

Dadi likes to remind me that it is because of him that I am where I am: sitting at a computer since July 2010, working away on UNIMA’s *magnum opus*, the so-called WEPA (in English, *World Encyclopedia of Puppetry Arts*). Groans aside, it was certainly because of him that I am a member of this peculiar tribe addicted to dolls and objects and bits of wire and magic and...

I suppose that is what UNIMA is really about, creating a family.

Karen Smith is a past president of UNIMA-USA (and UNIMA-India!) and is currently overseeing the translation of the *World Encyclopedia of Puppetry Arts*. She was recently elected one of the two vice presidents of UNIMA International.

\* Meher Contractor is considered India’s mother of educational puppetry. She was influenced by Marjorie Batchelder McPharlin, whom she met in 1958 at the 6th UNIMA Congress and 1st International Festival of Puppet Theatres held in Bucharest, Romania.



**UNIMA-USA was founded by Jim Henson in 1966.** Prior to and since the creation of UNIMA-USA, the United States was and continues to be prominent in the organization. Members from the USA who have served on the Executive Committee (called the Presidium before

1972) include: Romain Proctor, 1957-1961 (Vice President 1960-1961); Gil Oden, 1960-1961; Marjorie Batchelder McPharlin, 1961-1966 (Vice President 1962-1966); Bil Baird, 1966-1972; Daniel Lords, 1969-1972; Mollie Falkenstein, 1972-1980 (Vice President 1976-1980); Nancy Staub, 1980-1984 (Vice President 1980-1984); Allelu Kurten, 1984-1996; Vincent Anthony, 1996-2004 (Vice President 2000-2004); Bart Roccoberton, 2004-2008; Manuel Moran, (Vice President 2008-); Karen Smith, (2010-).



# THE ROAD FROM AND TO BALI:

## *UNIMA Festivals Past and to Come* [abridged]

by Kathy Foley

“The Muppets are only the tip of the iceberg.” wrote *Washington Post*’s Michael Kernan quoting 1980 UNIMA Festival Director Nancy Lohman Staub who said puppetry came from shamans, “who could imbue objects with spirit...— the idea that rocks and trees can have souls. It’s as basic as that” (Kernan 1980).

The first UNIMA festival I attended (June 5-18, 1980), showed UNIMA binding together puppeteers from around the globe. I came to Western puppetry through a “back door.” I studied Indonesian *wayang golek* and had not been part of America’s puppetry community. *Wayang*, though, had little in common with my previous idea of puppetry in the 1970s as being an art for child audiences. Like Larry Reed and Julie Taymor (both performed at the 1980 festival and had started *wayang* studies before me), I was just returning from Indonesia and trying to figure how I might “fit” the American puppetry scene. The festival was for me a survey course in contemporary puppetry worldwide, with material ranging from the radical to the traditional. Festivals have three major components. 1) Performances and exhibits open to the public as well as registered puppeteers. 2) Conferences gather writers, scholars, and critics in smaller meetings. 3) Congress sessions are held for officers, and one experiences the political currents and the concerns of the varied representatives (i.e. first world-third world splits, calls for gender equity, concerns for intangible cultural heritage, etc.). The politics of the great world are reflected in the small world of puppetry.

In Washington, the shows went from fundamentals to the extravagant: Peter Waschinsky of East Germany showed absolute simplicity by rolling on his back and using his crossed legs as a “stage” while his hands worked. He contrasted dramatically with the large Eastern European state-supported groups like Theatre Drak, which mounted its elaborate *Sleeping Beauty*.

Staub’s (2014) account of the event shows us that this festival began on a wing and a prayer, merely backed by Jim Henson’s word that he would pay deficits. His star power worked, and the Executive Committee of UNIMA approved America for this festival that eventually drew 1400 registrants from forty-eight nations with thirty-four performing groups from twenty countries. Public performances happened at the Kennedy Center and many other sites. Exhibitions, scholarly panels, and related activities proliferated.

The event introduced me to the work of Figuretheater Triangel, which presented an evocative interlude of a marionette that revolts—pulling against the strings of his controller. The figure succeeded in releasing himself, and the hand of the puppeteer went slack as if dead. The figure then put his cross-shaped control beneath his arm and limped offstage. This death of the “God”-puppet master and the cross-bearing journey of each individual (earthbound, responsible for his own fate, and stumbling toward his own private Golgotha) created a sense of wonder. Shows ranged from such simple but profound solo pieces to an elaborate version of *Sleeping Beauty* from Czechoslovakia.

“SUBALI-SUGRIWA: BATTLE OF THE MONKEY KINGS”

BALINESE *WAYANG LISTRIK*:

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII, MANOA ASIAN THEATRE PRODUCTION 2015-16

[www.wayanglistrikihawaii.wordpress.com/about-the-story/](http://www.wayanglistrikihawaii.wordpress.com/about-the-story/)

# PUPPETRY INTERNATIONAL

At that festival, I was able to see refractions of Indonesian-inflected work in Taymor's *Way of Snow*, which she had developed while in Indonesia. *Way of Snow* contrasted the interludes of life in communal Java with the cold imagery of an Inuit shaman scene and New York skyscrapers. Taymor did the concept of fusion theatre, which had emerged in the 1970s, proud.

In the UNIMA festival, many of the best American and European companies or artists were on display, but the traditional or neo-traditional work of Pandam Guritno in Javanese *wayang kulit*, Manteo Sicilian marionettes, Rajasthani marionettes, Indian story-scrolls and Karnataka shadows were also included. The Muppets performed and Shari Lewis opened the event. The richness of our discipline was everywhere evident. Alan Cook mounted the exhibit, *Puppets: Art & Entertainment*, which highlighted the history of American puppetry, and many of the Smithsonian museums displayed aspects of their puppet/mask collection. UNIMA had its scholarly conference, while in the Smithsonian, Frank Proschan mounted a separate conference (that I attended). *World Traditions in Puppetry and Performing Arts* was the theme of his conference – a forum where I presented one of my first scholarly papers as a newly minted PhD. The Washington festival was a wonderful way that American puppeteers were opened to world puppetry in both its traditional and radical manifestations. And we scholars realized that substantive scholarship could accompany the shows. Part of the way the art could attain wider recognition and respect was by combining exhibits, scholarship, education of theatre critics/the press, and great artistry in performance.

The next UNIMA congress and festival will be in Bali in 2020. For me, and perhaps even for Nancy Staub, this brings things full circle. When I was in Indonesia in the 1970s, *dalang* had never heard of UNIMA. But in the late 1990s – at

a Wayang Festival where I performed and gave a paper – Nancy Staub was telling the Indonesian Dalang Association about UNIMA, and Vincent Anthony was faxing bylaws to serve as a model, should the Indonesians wish to establish their own national center. In part as a result of these efforts, Indonesia's SENAWANGI chose to join in the wider world of puppetry that UNIMA represents. I hope Nancy will be in Bali in 2020 to see what she helped start. I am sure that the world of *wayang* that I, Taymor, Reed and others have hoped to weave into the wider consciousness of puppetry will be continuing. This organization, born and reformed in the wake of European wars, helped put Europe back together after the strife. Jim Henson and Nancy Staub helped model U.S. participation. UNIMA allows us to cross political divides, united in our love of the figure that we bring to life and yet gives our lives meaning. The Road to Bali is open; I hope you will choose to go.

Kathy Foley is a professor of theater arts at UC Santa Cruz, the editor of *Asian Theater Journal* and has been a *dalang* (*wayang golek* and *wayang orang*) for more than twenty years.

## References

- Staub, Nancy Lohman. 2014. "Once in a Lifetime – The 1980 World Puppetry Festival" [1980 World Puppetry Festival June 8 – 15] [www.puppeteers.org/puppetry-journal/once-in-a-lifetime-the-1980-world-puppetry-festival-by-nancy-staub-full-article/](http://www.puppeteers.org/puppetry-journal/once-in-a-lifetime-the-1980-world-puppetry-festival-by-nancy-staub-full-article/)
- Kernan, Michael, "Small World." Washington Post 8 June 1980. [www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1980/06/08/small-world/e94d4c69-7113-4336-b0c5-69aa3946259d/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1980/06/08/small-world/e94d4c69-7113-4336-b0c5-69aa3946259d/)



*Pupazzi: Glove Puppets and Marionettes in the Castello dei Burattini*

John McCormick and Paolo Parmiggiani, General Editors

Parma: Comune di Parma and Grafiche Step Editrice, 2015. 208pp.

ISBN 978 88 7898 111 9

*Pupazzi: Glove Puppets and Marionettes in the Castello dei Burattini*, a beautifully illustrated museum catalog, contains a collection of essays on various topics related to the Italian puppet theatre and the figures in the Castello dei Burattini Museo Giordano Ferrari in Parma, Italy. Separate editions of the book have been published: one in Italian, and one in English. An amazing amount of information is contained within its pages, and it complements John McCormick's earlier volume, *The Italian Puppet Theater: a History*, the most extensive book to appear in English on the subject. It also goes well with Melloni and Parmiggiani's *I Ferrari Di Parma* (Parma: Monte Università Parma, 2009), which specifically focuses on the Ferrari family's tradition of puppet performance. (When it comes to Italian, I am woefully illiterate, but I can say that there is very little overlap in image selection).

Essays by multiple contributors examine topics related to the evolution of terminology (an important consideration for the researcher, since terms vary in different regions and can be either specific or generic in their usage), scripts, and marionette construction in northern Italy from the 18th through the 20th century. Parmiggiani and Marta Siri provide a chapter that focuses on the creation and development of the Castello dei Burattini collection. First-person narratives also document the experiences of a performer-in-residence (Patrizio Dall'Argine, who found great inspiration from the historic figures) and the memories of the immediate family of collection founder Giordano Ferrari, who died in 1987 at the age of 82.

Giordano Ferrari was the son of a famous performer, Italo Ferrari (1877-1961), and a performer himself. His father had a great interest in the history of his profession and gathered scripts and memorabilia from various companies in order to preserve it, but it was Giordano who greatly expanded the scope and scale of the collection that now bears his name. And as this is a story of a family of professional puppeteers as well as that of a collection, the highly personal nature of some of the image choices, including family photographs,

is especially resonant. Maura Ferrari's chapter includes an especially touching photograph of a vintage Singer sewing machine that she and her mother, Ebe Avanzani, used for creating puppet costumes.

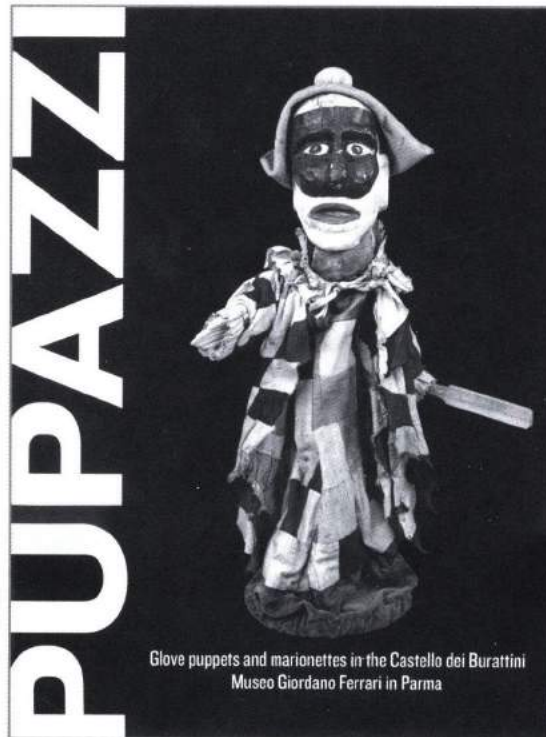
The visual aspects of the book are dazzling. Historic photographs and ephemera drawn from the museum's archives accompany beautiful, full-colored images of the puppets, and it's a delight to see so many figures possess such clear attributions. (While the vast majority of catalog images reflect different aspects of Italy's puppet heritage, several examples are included from other countries.) The accompanying text serves as an excellent introduction to the individual characters (some familiar from the *Commedia Dell'Arte*) and their varied regional roots.

In Dr. McCormick's section on the development of marionettes, x-rays even depict the internal hardware of selected figures. One of the most fascinating trick puppets is Giuseppe Concordia's marionette from *The Luminous Gnomes*, also shown in a performance photograph (c1930). An inset image shows its front "mask" removed to reveal a metal can containing a small window; it held a candle that glowed through the puppet's eyes and mouth!

The words of Italo Ferrari best sum up the importance of this collection: "...I was supported by the thought of leaving behind a page of history of puppet theatre, a glorious page of customs and society over

the centuries, and above all to prevent memories of all the colleagues and family groups from disappearing." *Pupazzi* reflects the museum's intentions through its inspiring presentation of archival and object-oriented research. In the best tradition of museum catalogs, the book makes a major contribution to the area of puppetry scholarship while providing a rich visual overview of collection highlights. *Pupazzi* strikes a good balance between topics that will primarily interest the scholar and those that provide a more general (but not superficial) understanding of the heritage of Italian puppetry.

—review by Bradford Clark,  
Bowling Green State University





PUPPET BY JANAKI RANPURA  
PHOTO: BRUCE SILCOX

The scholarship program of the UNIMA-USA Center has offered scholarships to American puppeteers to study abroad since 1982 with foreign artists, pedagogues, working together with student artists from all over the world is a major experience in the life of an artist. UNIMA has been engaged in the professional development, and has inspired and supported master workshops and has organized international conferences on training in the arts of puppetry which brings together artists, pedagogues, and theoreticians to share their training philosophies, experience, and their questioning. The organization aims to respond to the puppeteers' needs, and the interest for professional training has been growing continuously.

The aesthetic and techniques of puppet theatre have been changing radically over the years, while we are looking for new forms of communication. Since the 1970s, puppet theatre has experienced several profound changes.

## UNIMA SCHOLARSHIPS

**The status of the puppeteer transformed:** They are viewed as stage artists who master a diversity of performing skills such as acting, dance, music, a variety of traditional puppetry techniques and the ability to invent new puppet forms, techniques, and technologies.

**The traditional puppet booth opened its walls creating new performing spaces:** The puppet and the puppeteer find themselves next to each other, the space poetics change, the relation between the puppet and the puppeteer develops.

**Crossing borders:** The intertwining of puppetry with other performing arts provoked the creation of new dramaturgies.

**A new approach to matter and materials was born:** The dramatic potential increased.

**The public diversified.**

The new approaches to puppetry required new skills and gave birth to a diversity of professional training structures and programs teaching the arts of puppetry, from higher education (university training) to independent theatre schools, workshop programs, master classes, and training inside theatre companies. Each of them makes a particular theatre vision resonate, a certain conception of "the puppet," of "puppet theatre," and a certain philosophy of education.

Every artist is marked by a specific type of training. The request coming from puppeteers to continue their learning and diversify their skills is ever bigger.

Thanks to continuous donations from UNIMA-USA members and from puppetry lovers, UNIMA-USA has been able to offer an annual scholarship, which marks one artist's route every year. The benefit is enormous both professionally and on the human level. International workshops create the opportunity to meet puppetry masters from other cultures, work side by side with artists from all over the world, share their experience, their success and failures, their questioning, and finally, create friendships between artists.

Irina Niculescu is a theatre director, Vice President of UNIMA-USA and on the UNIMA commission for professional training.

## A few UNIMA-USA Scholarship Recipients Look Back:

Having the opportunity to create and tour my first full-length puppet-actor hybrid show to Edinburgh Fringe Festival went beyond my wildest dreams... I am eternally grateful to UNIMA for its Foreign Assistance Scholarship, which helped enormously with the expenses of attending this program.

–**Marsian Delellis**

An UNIMA scholarship for travel helped me go to Prague to study Czech marionette making with Mirek Trejtnar. My next show, *Ububu*, starred hand-carved wooden puppets. I'm now working in digital fabrication techniques, and I come to it with unique insight into traditional craft. Thanks, UNIMA!

–**Janaki Ranpura**

My experience in the 1990 Charleville-Mézières with Philippe Genty was extremely valuable. His techniques have informed my work on so many levels! –**Rolande Duprey**

I was extremely fortunate to spend six weeks in Charleville studying first with Larry Reed and performing part of the Mahabharata. I fell in love with shadow puppetry, and this experience strengthened my connection with what live music adds to a performance. ... Then I studied with André Tahon. We were able to create our own pieces as we worked on performing one of André's dance pieces. ... Both stages had me learning and working along with puppeteers from all over the world! ... I returned to the O'Neill Theatre, where I was working on my MFA in puppetry, a stronger and more confident puppeteer with an even deeper love of puppetry than I could have ever imagined. –**Bobbi Nidz**

In Fall of 1986 I applied to study puppetry with Jim Henson in Charleville-Mézières for the summer of '87... At that time I had been a puppeteer for 8 years and the opportunity to learn from a master such as Jim (as well as Cheryl and Brian Henson and Richard Termine, who all assisted Jim in the teaching) was a life and career-changing event. ... since then, my wife Valerie and I have performed in 18 countries and ... have puppeteer friends all around the world. Meeting and working with and staying in puppeteers' homes around the world is a fantastic unifier. It is UNIMA made personal, as we find our brothers and sisters across the globe, and that, too, all started at the Charleville workshop. –**Michael Nelson**

I came away with a real taste of the European avant-garde theatre of puppets, of expression outside my small experience in the US (except for Bread and Puppet). We were taught by Joan Baixas of Spain ... in an abandoned, crumbling factory warehouse where we created a giant tunnel of sheet plastic as the puppet world. I was also introduced to the work of the great Polish designer Josef Svoboda, and between them my ideas of setting and space perception in theater were forever changed. –**Will Cabell**

Summer 1997 [Leszek Madzik, Josef Svoboda (La Poétique De L'Espace) Scenography workshop. Martine Viard, and Claire Heggen (Concerto A Due) Voice and Movement.] ... Receiving a scholarship from UNIMA came at such a pivotal point in my life. I'd recently taken a new path so that I could focus on puppetry, and these honors were just the sort of validation and concentrated learning that I needed. ... The journey continues. I am forever grateful for such a life-changing start.

–**Cathy McCullough**

In the Spring of 2003, I attended Master Puppeteer Albrecht Roser's Belly Dancer String Academy in Buoch, Germany. As Roser taught his innovative inner stringing technique in German, his partner Ingrid Höfer translated, creating an immersive experience for this first time world traveler. ... to travel and study with such incredible people as Albrecht and Ingrid has led me in turn to emanate their virtues in my life. Thanks! Happy 50th UNIMA-USA! –**Sarah Frechette**

Learning the art of mask making from Donato Sartori himself was a once in a lifetime opportunity. The techniques he shared with us and the materials he introduced us to took my mask and puppet building to a new level. –**Emily Wilson**

I attended the international workshops in Charleville-Mézières twice... The work with Philippe Genty, which centered on the relationship between the puppeteer and the puppet, went on to influence all of my following creations. Learning from a master director like Josef Krofta also influenced my own self-direction. ... Oh, and my French got much better.

–**Preston Foerder**

UNIMA USA sent me to Prague and to Germany.

Today's inspiring tip for artists:

The whole world is your oyster if you want to find pearls of wisdom. In every corner there is beauty, nature, elegance, and grace: mostly from puppeteers who are your brothers from another mother. They exist in every location and will always roll out the welcome mat for you, blood brother and sister. United by a burning fire of passion to know every joint and every thread stringing and every control mechanism, these are the inner workings unto late nights, painting faces, building bodies, designing emotional palates, creating costumes, and opening yourself up hoping you just don't die, you love it so much. All it takes is to ask, fervently ask, over and over, without reservation, for help and welcome, and the road is yours. ... As puppeteers, we are graced beyond reason, hopelessly blessed, magically endowed, and seeking – forever seeking – without satiation, our true love. –**Yvette Edery**



## And the winner is...

Hollywood has the Oscars and the Emmys, Broadway has the Tonys, Off Broadway has the Obies and occasionally, puppeteers are represented among the winners. Puppetry has its own award, though: the Uni.

## The UNIMA-USA Citation

for excellence in the art of puppetry has been awarded since 1975. It is recognition for productions that, in the estimation of at least three reviewers, touch their audiences deeply, that “engage, enchant and enthrall.” There is no element of competition involved; the award is solely based on the judgment of reviewers. It is intended to bring attention to the best shows being produced in North America, and to make it easier for them to find an audience and tour. What does getting an “Uni” mean to its recipients?

In the world of puppetry, where a typical audience might include a sea of screaming toddlers and their distracted parents with one eye on their child and the other on an I-phone...it’s nice to know there are some “UNIMA spies” out there, watching shows and presenting awards that give a sense of legitimacy for the work puppeteers do. We were incredibly honored to receive an “Uni,” and having that stamp of approval has been very helpful with booking shows in new venues. Thanks UNIMA!

**Erik Torbeck,**  
Frogtown Mountain Puppeteers

Puppeteers are a marginal, rarely understood community of artistic souls, so it’s important that we celebrate each other’s achievements. We proudly crow about our “puppetry Oscars” to the larger world (which is clueless, of course), but it’s the respect of our peers that gives the awards real meaning for us.

**Carol Farrell,**  
Figures of Speech Theatre

A full list of winning productions from the past 40 years, as well as more information on the history of the award, judging criteria and more can be found on our website:

[unima-usa.org](http://unima-usa.org)

## CURRENT CITATION WINNERS



**HAND TO GOD**  
Robert Askins



**THE NARRATIVE OF VICTOR KARLOCH**  
Spirit Cabinet Films



**BEING ELMO**  
Constance Marks Productions  
Directed by Constance Marks