

PUPPETRY ARTS INSTITUTE



Volume XVII, Issue IV

Founded 2001

Fall 2017 Edition

Kraig's Story Puppetry Arts Institute, A Place for Kids



Anitra Steele gives orientation to Independence School District Kindergartners prior to a puppet-painting workshop at PAI.

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We have held puppet-making workshops for over 1450 students from the Independence School District from September to mid-November this year. Two sessions were held each week day. As each bus load of twenty-five students arrived, they entered wide-eyed into the Hazelle museum area with Anitra Steele, who told them the history of the Hazelle factory, the largest marionette factory in the world, and gave them instructions for the workshop. (See photo.) Since this was a new experience for them, many would quickly say "Puppets are creepy!" However, after seeing a marionette perform, designing their own puppet head and being a part of an interactive hand puppet show—they all were mesmerized and became PAI puppet fans.

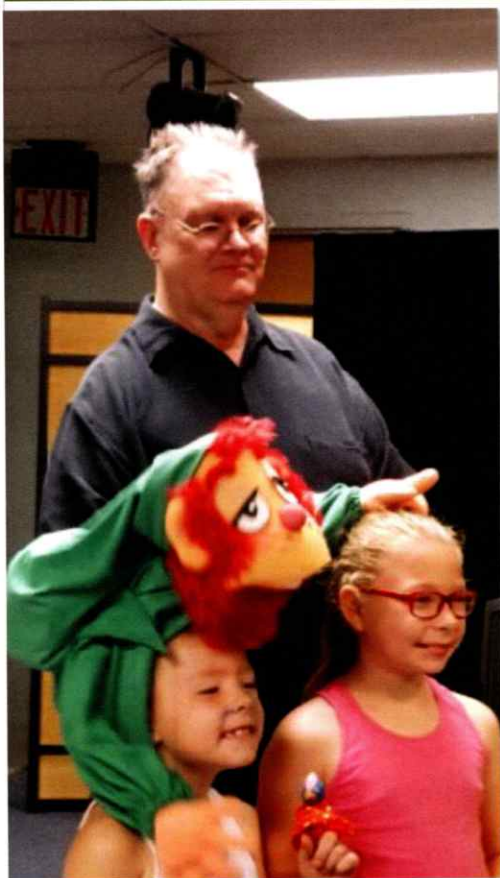
To many of these young people, painting the vinyl head was their first real hands on opportunity to be creative. The volunteer is only there to offer guidance and allow them the freedom to paint their chosen puppet any way they wanted. You could observe how offering choices sparked their imagination and self-expression.

Once the appointed head was done, they picked a costume from the many hand sewn options by Joyce Stone. Then the volunteers sewed the costume to the head. Each child displayed great inventiveness at their choice of names and pride in their completed character.

I will long remember a little guy named Connor who was joyfully painting his rainbow colored whale puppet. Fully into the artistic process he innocently blurted out, "This is the best day of my life!" I was glad I could assist.

Free Story Books with Shows

By Ann Ragan



The Missouri Humanities Council in association with the National Endowment for the Humanities awarded PAI a grant for our October and November shows, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and *The Wizard of Oz*. They agreed to provide free storybooks to distribute to those attending these shows, as well as fund half of our production costs, and half of our advertising. Kathy Rohr and Kathy Vest pursued this opportunity to spark a desire to read.

Jack and the Beanstalk was presented on October 14th and 21st and the children were delighted to take their own book home. They were possibly surprised to find that in Kraig Kensinger's version of the show the giant, Percy, is a lovable comedian (and vegetarian) who advocates generosity and sharing rather than stealing.

The Wizard of Oz was presented on November 24 and 25.

A Visit from Hazelle's Daughter and Grandchild

By Ann Ragan

Hazelle Rollins' family descendants, including her daughter Nancy Krupa and her grandson John visited the Puppetry Arts Institute on October 9th after a family reunion in Kansas City. Nancy Clark spent Monday morning taking the family on a tour of the facilities, examining the memorabilia in the museum and retelling Hazelle's story. To the grown, very much adult grandson, John, it was fascinating to learn about his grandmother firsthand, to touch and feel products from her factory, and to see the written publication and history of Hazelle for the first time in his life!

Nancy Clark shared this comment she received from the Krupas, which I share here with you:

"We very much enjoyed visiting you at the PAI. Thank you very much for taking time with us. The Hazelle Room is done beautifully and does a good job of displaying her story. Visiting the 'cave' and seeing all the various things stored there was quite interesting."

The staff wants to thank Kraig Kensinger as Artistic Director for all the good work he has put into the museum and the organization of storage items in the cave including hand puppets, professional marionette storage, and puppet parts.

Performance Schedule

THE WIZARD OF OZ

Friday, November 24

Saturday, November 25

11 a.m. & 2 p.m.

Performed by Kraig Kensinger



HOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS

Saturday, December 9

Saturday, December 16

11 a.m. & 2 p.m.

Performed by Kraig Kensinger



Saturday, January 20, 2018

Monday, January 22, 2018

THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA, AND OTHER TALES

Performed by Anitra Steele

of Two Frogs and a
tle Puppet Co.

11 a.m. & 2 p.m.



Tur-

THE BEAR NECESSITIES

Saturday, February 17, 2018

Monday, February 19, 2018

11 a.m. & 2 p.m.



Performed by Kraig Kensinger

Please call to confirm shows, dates
and times, as they are
subject to change.
Reservations are requested.

Honduran Teachers Visit Puppetry Arts Institute

By Kathy Vest



Anitra Steele and Kathy Vest share how to use Hazelle hand puppets in the classroom to a visiting group of teachers from Honduras.

Friends United began over twenty years ago when three teachers from Independence decided to visit Honduras during their summer vacation to see how they could help in the schools. Over the years, an annual exchange program was developed and school supplies shipped yearly through a complicated process. Local teachers visit Honduras to share ideas and work on physically improving the schools. Honduran teachers journey to Independence for training sessions and cultural experiences. The teachers love PAI and always request a workshop here where they can paint puppets to use in their classroom. These warm, loving women are so gracious, kind and generous. In fact, in order to come on this trip, each teacher paid a substitute teacher out of her own paycheck to be in her classroom while she is gone.

PUPPETRY ARTS INSTITUTE

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*And a very special Thank You to all of
our Supper Club Participants!*

SPECIAL THANKS FOR THE GENEROUS GRANTS PROVIDED BY:

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From Our Board President



The photo at left shows Artistic Director Kraig Kensinger talking to visitors to the PAI booth at the Independence Wine Fest on September 9. The East Independence Rotary Club Wine Fest at the historic Bingham Waggoner Estate was an excellent opportunity for visitors to introduce themselves to the shows, workshops and museum activities at Puppetry Arts Institute. The booth featured musical acts performed by Kraig Kensinger with marionettes such as clowns, show girls, and jugglers, not to mention a giant ten-foot-tall street puppet, Pinocchio, manned hourly by volunteer David Ragan for picture taking opportunities.

The PAI scheduled over 1,450 kindergartners to make hand puppets in our workshops this fall. Their interaction with puppets helped them learn social skills, including cooperation with teachers and peers. It is perhaps the first

time that many of them have realized how important their words and actions are and how it will affect others.

Anitra Steele hosted the final stop of a mystery tour at PAI sponsored by the Aldergate Village Retirement Center from Topeka, Kansas. PAI gave a dinner program to the Santa Fe Trails Doll Club of America at the Bingham Waggoner as well.

You have an opportunity to support these programs through your gifts each year. We urge you to fund a puppet show for \$500, buy supplies for our workshops, or give a gift of your time and talent to support any of these projects. We thank you so much for your help.

Happy New Year,

Ann Ragan

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