

PUPPETRY ARTS INSTITUTE



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Holiday Season at PAI

by Kraig Kensinger

Puppet characters from PAI brought cheerful times during the recent holiday season. Our December show "Holly Jolly Christmas" featured marionettes by the late Robert Leroy Smith. Large audiences attended the performances and drew numerous new families who experienced PAI for the first time. Kraig Kensinger and his marionette elves were included in the PAI living window during the Mayor's Christmas Tree lighting ceremony in Independence. The marionette workshop of Santa's elves performed for the evening. Hundreds of people turned out and shared an old fashioned treat due to nice weather.

As part of our community outreach, a free holiday puppet show was held at the Palmer Center for senior citizens in Independence. The grown-up audience was captivated by the vintage marionettes and Yuletide songs from the 1950s.

A few days before Christmas, a traveling version of "Holly Jolly Christmas" was presented at a local shelter for women and children. The festive performers brought merriment to those in time of need. The gift of puppet joy was appreciated by all.



The "living window" display by Puppetry Arts Institute, as part of the Mayor's Christmas Tree lighting ceremony in Independence.

PUPPETRY ARTS INSTITUTE

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Stars on Strings, March 16th!

Performance Schedule



Puppetry Arts Institute is presenting "Stars on Strings" featuring a local musical group from Kansas City metro area called Tiny Flowers in our 2018 fundraiser and show on Friday, March 16th at 7 p.m. at the Sermon Center. These popular folk musicians with Kelly Werts on the guitar, Diana Werts on the accordion, and Alan Winkler on percussion, is enough to set every toe tapping and animate even the largest of marionettes. Kelly is a two-time finalist in the Walnut Valley Festival National Finger Picking Championships. Diana plays French, Scottish, Cajun and Country-Western. Some of the marionettes appearing with Kraig Kensinger were originally designed by Pady Blackwood to be presented on the Broadway stage. Others were created by Robert Leroy Smith. Every singer and dancer on the Sermon Center stage can be viewed with ease in the theater giving back to you the aura of Broadway where many of these marionettes made their debut. (Challenge: See if you can identify famous entertainers of the past like Tallulah Bankhead!) The performance will be preceded by a gourmet dessert bar and beverages, a mighty sweet treat! A raffle for fantastic prizes will be held prior to the show. If you have never joined us for our PAI at Night entertainment for adults you will be in for an evening of fun for only \$25. Reservations required.

If you would like to help us grow, we are a 501(c)3 organization and we will send you a statement for tax purposes. Please mail your donations to:

Puppetry Arts Institute
11025 E. Winner Road
Independence, MO 64052

You may also contact us at 816-833-9777 or pai@att.net

Saturday, March 24,
11 am & 2 pm
PETER AND THE WOLF
Performed by
Piccadilly Puppets



Saturday, April 21
11 am & 2 pm
**REUBEN, THE
JEALOUS LION**
Performed by
Papa & Jackie Wright

Saturday, May 19
11 am & 2 pm
**MOTHER GOOSE'S
NEIGHBORHOOD**
Performed by
Angela Polowy, of Eulenspiegel Puppets



Atlas Obscura

Puppetry Arts Institute has been listed in Triple A and Rand McNally for several years. But when asked how visitors have found their way to PAI, many have recently told us they were referred by Atlas Obscura. The book *Atlas Obscura: An Explorer's Guide to the World's Hidden Wonders*, was created in 2016 by Joshua Foer, Dylan Thurus and Ella Morton. It was written for explorers, not just travelers as with other atlases. Its intention is to guide you to the strange and the marvelous locations in this world. Don't rush to check this out, because what they really meant was they picked up a PAI brochure at the "Kansas City Electric Park Revival Celebration" on November 10, 2017, which was intended to advertise the book. Our artistic director, Kraig Kensinger, passed out brochures after his performance there, with PAI depression era marionettes from our caves at the Geospace Storage Center. Kraig took representatives of the Atlas Obscura to our storage area on one of their previous visits. Stay tuned to find out if PAI finds a place in the Atlas!

Our Sponsors and Donors

IN APPRECIATION OF THEIR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS:

Bob Abdou * Katie Adams
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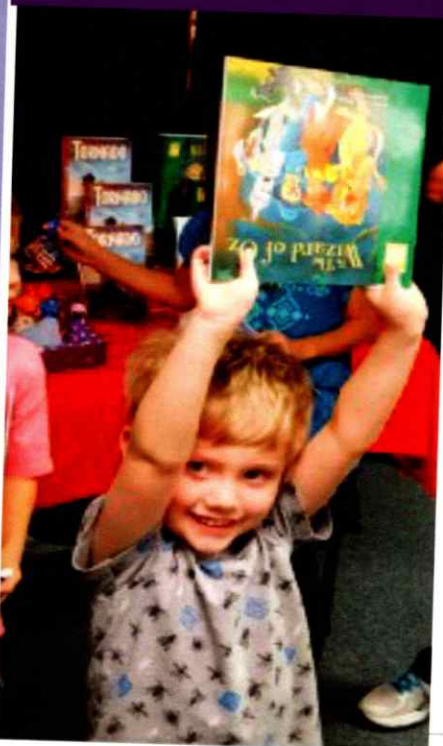
Roxie Brennan
 Ray & Nicki George
 Geospace Center
 Carol Giancola

Anitra Steele's Amazing Talent



Anitra continues to share her talent at performing to preschool age children with her sense of humor understood and enjoyed enormously by this age group. Pictured are some of the preschool audience she entertained at our recent *Princess and the Pea* show. Her experience with children at our public library certainly has made a difference. Here Anitra concludes her trilogy with an up front and personal conversation with this alligator about his behavior.

"Thanks for My Book!"



It has been a thrill to watch Puppetry Arts Institute children excitedly pick up their own book at our puppet shows to take home. If you read the last newsletter you noted that the books we gave children were related to classic stories funded by the Missouri Humanities Council in association with the National Endowment for the Humanities. Kathy Vest and Kathy Rohr's teacher's intuition correctly anticipated that this would promulgate mothers reading with their children at home. This photo shows one young man who may be one of the beneficiaries!



Letter from our President

Our financial situation in January is in good shape because of your generosity. Some of you have opened charitable funds at Truman Heartland Community Foundation (THCF), and designated the Puppetry Arts Institute as recipients of a Truman Heartland grant. I have personally opened an account there to assist with meeting the new tax regulations. THCF will keep track of all of your giving to non-profit organizations and provide a record for you year after year. All it takes is a phone call to designate which charity should receive your check.

In 2016 Puppetry Arts Institute started a fund called the Capacity Building Fund to support the hiring of an Executive Director. Although we requested a goal of collecting \$100,000 before we would hire a new executive director, after much deliberation, we decided to begin working with an Artistic Director when we only had \$35,000. We are glad that we did, because Kraig Kensinger has made a positive difference in this role. We actually qualified for grants which we otherwise would not have gotten. But we cannot continue to support this position without your help. It is vital for a healthy financial position. The first \$5,000 in this fund this year will be matched. Please specify if you wish to donate to this fund.

Last year a total of eight Nunsense puppets were sold and 3 rented to stage productions around the world. Amazingly, the month of January 2018 has already netted a total of three sales and three rentals for a total of \$1,470. We are grateful to our "Nunmaker" Nancy Clark, for continuing to recreate Pady's Blackwood's "Mary Annette", the original puppet from the Broadway production.

Ann Ragan



Pady Blackwood's Sister Mary Annette, from *Nunsense*, now lovingly recreated by Nancy Clark.

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