



## **Puppetry in 3D**

**by**

**Steven Widerman**

The Puppet Company & Heart Strings Media

### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this workshop is to recognize and promote awareness of the special relationship between the art of Puppetry and 3D stereoscopy, as being developed and pioneered by Heart Strings Media.

The workshop demonstrates a technique for recording Puppetry in 3D based on the common industry technique of observing a monitor while performing. At Heart Strings Media we are using hand puppets, marionettes (sometimes interfacing with humans); and performing both on set and on location. By performing before a 3D camera while observing a 3D display, we have been able to integrate the manipulation of depth into the dramatic performance. This portends a quantum leap for the art form.

## **BACKGROUND**

As an example for demonstrating the use of the new emerging technologies, and showing the potential for content creation using the art of puppetry, this workshop uses Heart Strings Media's development of a marionette musical trio (The Gum Rappers: Sloop, Yo-Yo, Thin Ice) recorded using new technology in 3D.

Our effort builds upon the foundation laid in television and film puppet performance pioneered by Jim Henson and The Muppets. The advent of dual lens video cameras enables the streaming of a 3D image to a 3D display in real time. Employing this technique, the depth dimension becomes integral to the puppeteer's dramatic performance. This transforms Puppetry into a unique source of content for 3D film, 3D television and virtual reality. It also distinguishes it from computer generated imagery. We will also address the differences between hand puppetry and marionettes and the inherent challenges of filming marionettes.

**Heart Strings Media is a start-up production company comprised of:**  
Steven Widerman, Mark Coelho, Michael Gregory Jackson, Paul Widerman

### **Websites with Bios and contact:**

Heart Strings Media and The Gum Rappers: <http://gumrappers.us/>

The Puppet Company: <http://thepuppetcompany.org/>

Contact Steven Widerman: [www.Widerman@aolcom](mailto:www.Widerman@aolcom)

## **DISCUSSION POINTS**

- The State of the Art – Puppetry in 3D
- The future, 3D without the glasses – auto-stereoscopy
- Virtual Reality – Google Cardboard
- “Foodini in Four Dimensions” (1953) by Maury Bunin – the lost reel
- What you can do

## EQUIPMENT

Sony BDP-BS59 3D blu-ray player with remote  
Panasonic 3D camera HDC-Z10000  
Samsung 3D Television - Series 7 UN40JU7100F  
Samsung 3d glasses SSG-3300GR  
3D compliant HDMI cable

## EXAMPLES of CURRENT WORK FROM HEART STRINGS MEDIA

“Dungeon Scene” from “String Theory” pilot by Heart Strings Media  
Montage of “The Gum Rappers” by Heart Strings Media  
“Davy Jones’ Locker” (1995) – featuring Bil Baird’s Marionettes, 3D remaster disc provided with permission by Joe Jacoby  
“Thriller” (2009) Michael Jackson – from “This is It” 3D edition, Kenny Ortega, Dir.

## SCREENING SUGGESTIONS

“Wizard of Oz” (1939) – Victor Fleming, Dir.  
“Avatar” (2009) – James Cameron, Dir.  
“Hugo” (2011) – Martin Scorsese, Dir.  
“ParaNorman” (2012) – Chris Butler, Dir., Laika  
“Gravity” (2013) – Alfonso Cuarón, Dir.  
“Pina” (2011) – Wim Wenders, Dir.  
“Cirque du Soleil: Worlds Away” (2012) – Andrew Adamson, Dir.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Billy Barkhurst  
Moritz Fortmann  
Bob Furmanek  
Steven Golden  
Joseph Jacoby  
Timothy LaGasse  
Rick Lyon  
Tom Strelau  
Chicago Stereo Camera Club

## ON-LINE REFERENCES

3D Film Archive by Bob Furmanek

<http://www.3dfilmarchive.com/>

Making of "Get a Horse"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bd77ue9xPXc>

New York Stereoscopic Society

[http://www.ny3d.org/2010/07/classic\\_3d\\_at\\_film\\_forum\\_1.html](http://www.ny3d.org/2010/07/classic_3d_at_film_forum_1.html)

International Stereoscopic Society

<http://www.isu3d.org/>

National Stereoscopic Association

<http://stereoworld.org/>

Stereo Club of Southern California

<http://la3dclub.com/>

Chicago Stereo Camera Club

<https://www.ChicagoStereoCameraClub.org>

Real or Fake 3D

<http://realorfake3d.com/>

Taiwanese Wulin Warriors and Thunderbolt Fantasy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiJEdqxf7R4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1muOeJ4fBps>

3D-Con

<http://www.3d-con.com/>