

AT LARGE

Paul Eide, Editor



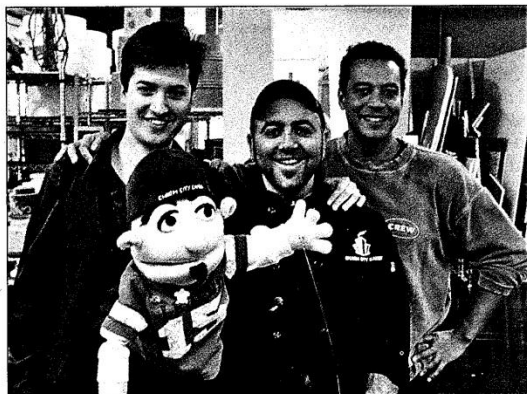
NIC LEMON PUPPETS ON ACE OF CAKES

At the age of 14 Nic Lemon co-founded a puppet company, Lemon Productions, of which he is now the sole owner. Over several years the company toured Ontario presenting live performances, sometimes to audiences of 700 or more. One feature of their live shows over the past 15 years has been the appearance of puppet likenesses of celebrities, used in their shows with appropriate permission. The first was "Weird Al" Yankovic, and after that Graceland granted them an okay to use likenesses of Elvis.

Cut to: a cable TV show on the Food Channel, called *Ace of Cakes*. Duff Goldman is a baker who established a thriving business in Baltimore, Charm City Cakes, making novelty or specialty theme cakes, not just for the usual events like weddings and anniversaries, but for any other celebration where a cake could express a theme, and then get devoured by the guests. Chef Duff's activities became the basis of a reality TV show, in which viewers could follow the processes and the drama of dreaming up and putting together one or more exotic cakes every episode. The show features a regular staff of nine bakers and decorators, and to fans of the show, they've become as familiar as the cast of any other TV show.

Cut to: Nic Lemon. With his company's experience doing celebrity likenesses, he had an idea:

We contacted Duff Goldman ... to propose our likenesses would appear on the next season of his show. At record speed we put together nine puppet likenesses of the main characters in the bakery and shipped them off to be presented, by me, shortly thereafter. On my way to the bakery in Baltimore, I stopped in New York to pick up my good friend and fellow puppeteer, Noel MacNeal, as he would be doing all puppetry for me.



L-R: Nic Lemon, Duff Goldman, Noel MacNeal



The "Ace of Cakes" crew with their puppets. Photos provided by Nic Lemon.

The puppets had their unveiling and debut on an episode of the show in which the bakery crew was creating the components of a cake that they would fly over to Hawaii and assemble on location. It was for the cast and crew of the TV series, "Lost", to celebrate their 100th episode. The cake-makers all took time out to admire and pose with their puppets.

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**Ronnie Burkett's
Billy Twinkle
Requiem for a Golden Boy** Photographs by Trudie Lee