

Biography

Gary Friedman : Puppetry/ Education/ Film



In 1987, after six years of puppetry studies in Charleville-Mézières in France, including a film and television puppetry course with the late-Muppet master Jim Henson, Gary Friedman started a non-governmental organisation with '**Puppets Against Aids**' to educate communities in Southern Africa. This project soon spread through Africa, Canada, Europe, Australia and the Pacific Islands and is still running many years later.

In 1994 Gary was commissioned by the South African national broadcaster to cover the first historic post-Apartheid elections. His puppets interviewed President Nelson Mandela and other politicians for '**Puppets for Democracy**'. This was soon followed by '**Puppets in Prison**', an education program in South African prisons, as well as programs such as '**Puppets Against Corruption**' in Kenya and '**Puppets Against Abuse**' in South Africa.

After 20 years of adult educational projects, Friedman took on the production of children's television shows, including a two-hour daily show for South African Television called "**School TV**".

In early 2002, Friedman was awarded a '**unique talent visa**' by the Australian Government to reside in Australia. Here, Friedman began teaching '**Puppetry for Film and Television**' at Sydney Film School and '**Puppetry in Education**' at TAFE.

In 2005-2008, together with Occupational Therapist, Sharon Gelber, Friedman conducted puppetry & creativity workshops for all ages, in Europe, Canada and the United States; while developing a historical documentary film and educational theatre production, '**Looking for a Monster**'.

In 2009, Friedman launched **Corporate Creatures** in Australia, together with a team of experienced corporate writer-entertainers and a highly skilled team of puppeteers, designers, and production crew. **Corporate Creatures** won the **Best New Product of the Year Award** at the Australian Business Events Expo 2009 and is attracting much attention due to its unique concept of combining puppetry and humour to communicate in the business environment.

From 2010, Friedman and Gelber embarked on a '**puppetry for literacy education**' program in both primary and high schools in Australia. This was closely followed by international workshop tours of Europe, the Middle East and South East Asia, where they implemented a highly successful workshop program at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore. In 2012, they relocated to Melbourne, from where they now operate an international puppetry, therapy and documentary film consultancy. For further information, kindly get in touch!

www.garyfriedmanproductions.com