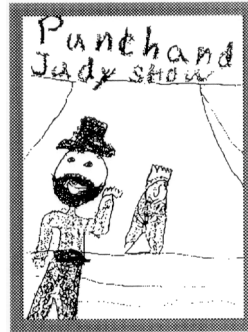


Tradition

May Fayre, Covent Garden, London, 1988. This conservative old city square has been transformed; it's a veritable metropolis of Punch booths. They stand like some demented cartoon Stonehenge, tall and upright, but splashed with glaring color: red and yellow arches, gilded curlicues, and flapping fabric stripes. The air quivers with the sounds of bells, laughter, and rasping swazzled puppet voices. It's like we've landed in the Emerald City, and the Munchkins are having Carnival! This is where I find a true sense of what a Punch performer does. Here, among the crowds, the professors (puppeteers) are in their element. Punchian cries of "That's the way to do it!" and "What a pity!" ring through the atmosphere. And everywhere, everywhere is the sound of people laughing.

~ from "An Opera Or A Huproar: The British Punch and Judy," by Diane L. Rains, *The Puppetry Journal*, Fall 1995.

Today the Punch & Judy Show is having a revival in Britain ~ it's never been more colorful, more professionally performed or more fun! In 1988, Freshwater Pearls Puppetry traveled to England to experience the phenomenon of Punch & Judy. Some of Britain's most talented Punch "professors" (puppeteers) became our friends. We returned to America with their gift to us ~ the authentic Punch & Judy Show, as it has been handed down via oral tradition for over 300 years. Historic, yet with a decidedly modern sense of humor, spontaneous, deliciously silly, and beautiful to watch ~ the Punch & Judy Show is all this and more!



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Roll Up, Roll Up!



for
Professor Freshwater's
Punch and Judy Show





History

Mr. Punch's earliest roots date back to wandering Commedia dell' Arte troupes of 14th century Italy. Pulcinella, a hook-nosed, cowardly buffoon, was a popular character in the comic plays of these actors.

During succeeding centuries, Commedia plays spread to France and then England. There the Pulcinella character merged with British glove puppet traditions to become Punchinello, or Mr. Punch. Mr. Punch acquired a wife, and by the late 17th century, the Punch and Judy Show was firmly ensconced in the annals of tradition.

By the mid-1800s, the Punch and Judy Show had entered its Golden Age. Nomadic Punchmen performed at country fairs, seaside resorts and the streets of London. Audiences included poor people of the streets, as well as the rich and fashionable upper crust.

Today Punch truly belongs to the whole world. Punchinello (England), Guignol (France), Petruk (Indonesia), Karagioz (Greece and Turkey), Kasperl (Germany) ~ all of these mischievous puppet personalities are members of the time-honored family of Punch.



Professor Freshwater's



Punch and Judy Show

With live hammered dulcimer music by the Good Professor's assistant, MR. BOTTLES

Freshwater Pearls is one of the few puppetry troupes in this country to perform the authentic British Punch and Judy Show. Since 1988, Diane Rains (Professor Freshwater) and Stu Janis (Mr. Bottles) have nimbly combined the ages-old Punch tradition with a modern sense of humor. Pokemon, Barney the Dinosaur, and politicians of the 1990s all find their way into Punch's commentary. Diane learned her technique from the best Punch performers in England. She is adept with the "swazzle," the traditional call which creates Punch's voice ~ a voice children find hilarious!

Professor Freshwater's zany cast of characters includes the irrepressible Mr. Punch; his equally pugnacious wife, Judy; their boisterous baby; Joey the Clown and his dog, Toby; some troublesome sausages; an upstanding policeman; and a crafty crocodile. Mr. Punch has a talent for getting himself into trouble. It's the audience's job to see that he doesn't get away with anything! When Mr. Punch denies his misdeeds, children and adults alike shout, "Oh, yes you did!" and all have a roaring good time!

What the Kids Say



I enjoy evry minite of Punch & Judy It was one of my favorit puppit show It was grat! ...I hop you can come bake soon I tought it was FANTASICE.
~ Andrea

You did a vary good job I ingoud the voice of the crockadial ... and I like the way you played that istermot but most of all I liked the way you said shoushges ~ Damian

Thank you for the magnifsnt show you put on... I am going to be a prefeshenl PUNCH & JUDY prafomer ~ Chris

When it was over I did not want to leave. That was a great show. I like the alagator cause of the color was nice... I wish you could stay longer.
~ Tiffany

(Quoted verbatim from letters by children at Roosevelt Elementary School, Grades 1-3)