



Z PUPPETS ROSENSCHNOZ

“Zany, wacky and for all ages. 1/2 Monty Python + 1/2 Sesame Street”
— DeBlaze and Associates

The Z Puppets Rosenschnoz Story

It began with a ping pong ball. In 1998, in the wilds of Minneapolis, street performer Chris Griffith and playwright Shari Aronson met, turned on a blacklight and suddenly discovered a great marvel of science: ping pong balls glow in the dark. Armed only with fluorescent paint and playful inspiration, the duo quickly transformed a \$3 pack of balls into a performance troupe. Foom! On went a tiny top hat, tutu, leotards and red nose and clown shoes. Woop! Up went a circus-tent puppet booth. Ba-ding! In came the organically-grown sound effects, quirky acapella score and ukelele opening number. A couple of drumrolls, one ta-da and voila... the debut of the world’s first glow-in-the-dark ping pong ball spectacular, *The Amazing Gnip Gnop Circus...* and **Z Puppets Rosenschnoz**.



“I was astounded by the life, vitality and communication they were able to give to simple ping pong balls,” says master puppeteer, Paul Vincent Davis of Boston’s Puppet Showplace Theater. Parents report that for years after seeing the *Gnip Gnop Circus*, they speak in “ping-pong ball language” and share jokes from the show with their children. Venues book the *Gnip Gnops* year after year, commenting that it is the most creative show they have ever booked. The Jim Henson Foundation and the Puppeteers of America have commended **Z Puppets** for their mix of innocence with ingenuity.

“They make everyone feel like little kids again — even the kids,” says Paul Zaloom, star of children’s television hit *Beakman’s World*.

On their mission to delight children and adults with feats of imagination, **Z Puppets** has now brought fifteen original productions and hundreds of workshops to thousands of audience members across the country, including performing arts centers, outdoors festivals, museums, schools, and libraries. From their yoga puppet rock opera starring monkey pirates, to a platypus piano musical, and a French accordion lobster farce, **Z Puppets’** unique blend of live music, zealous humor and hand-crafted puppetry makes for an extraordinary experience for families.





“I have watched audiences caught in helpless rocking, tear-rendering laughter at many of their performances in numerous locations,” says Martha Enzmann, Director of Elkland Arts Center in North Carolina. “I have also observed them rehearse and understand the hard work and rigorous standards underlying the rollicking fun.”

In addition to support from the Jim Henson Foundation and the Puppeteers of America, **Z Puppets** has won accolades for their work as artists and arts educators from the National Endowment for the Arts, the national Puppetry Journal and state and regional arts councils. However, the biggest thrills for **Z Puppets’** founders Chris and Shari come from making the audience squeal.

Recounting their top three **Z Puppets** moments, Shari and Chris cite, “A young boy with a hearing impairment coming up after a performance of the *Gnip Gnops* and proclaiming us hilarious. An audience of international students laughing together across many different languages at *A La Carte*. A five year old telling us how she uses the characters in *Monkey Mind Pirates* to help her when she gets scared.”



Shari adds, “We consider it a great honor each time parents tell us that Z Puppets is their child’s first encounter with live theater or that we made it into their child’s bedtime report and they talk about us for months afterward.” Chris agrees, “Our career highlights are the live connections we make with the audience at every performance.”

Z Puppets has charmed audiences at vaudeville houses, state of the arts performing centers, outdoor festivals, museums, schools including:



National Puppetry Festival **Walker Art Center**

KiMo Theater In the Heart of the Beast Puppet & Mask Theatre

Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art Boston’s Puppet Showplace Theatre

Sioux Falls First Night **Minnesota History Center Theatre**Tulsa

Minnesota Children’s Museum Rylander Theater

Smoky River Hill Arts Festival Perpich Center for Arts Education

International School of Boston Itasca County Fair **Grand**

Casino Minnesota State Fair **SpeakEasy** Festival of Physical Comedy