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# A Family Album

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## Susanmarie Cunningham's Soft sculpture presentation

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Susanmarie Cunningham's soft sculpture presentation, *A Family Album*, combines elements of costuming, storytelling, puppetry, and clowning to tell a hilariously playful, yet poignant tale about growing up. The life sized soft sculptures worn by Susanmarie and student volunteers comically address issues that are common and heartfelt to elementary and middle school students. The life skills woven into the presentation include - learning to be a good friend, tempering romance with wisdom, the importance of self reliance, and using your own uniqueness to build self esteem. A feast for the eyes, the mind, and the soul!

Susanmarie Cunningham has her BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art and her MFA from Carnegie-Mellon University. Performs *A Family Album* throughout the eastern United States.

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*Mother and Baby*  
©1979



*The Boyfriend*  
©1980



*Best Friends* ©1977



*The Bridal Train*  
©1983



*Suzette & Grace*  
©1982



*Hi Ho Daddy-O*  
©1994



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## From the Audience

## A Family Album

*In my many years producing hundreds of splendid performances for multi-aged, multi-cultured audiences, I have never known any performer to so thoroughly captivate such a vast variety of people as you did in A Family Album at the National Theatre. You and your shows are wonderful! At Saturday's children's show, kids from ages 10 months to 17 years were utterly spellbound. Their parents and grandparents were equally engaged. So was I. Even the teeniest tiny tots were awed into silence by your brilliant soft sculptures, clever vignettes, gentle humor and informative stories and explanations. They were touched and influenced by your wise and inspiring message as well.*

The National Theatre, Washington, DC

*Moms in attendance made a special point of expressing their pleasure at not only the entertaining aspects but your style of easy going conversation as you made your points concerning adolescent behavior. The pleasure on the faces of the younger school children and the excited comments from the upper grades, 6th-8th, as they told me yours was "the best" program they remember seeing.*

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, Roseland, New Jersey

*You were fantastic. Students and faculty thought you brought "morality" into the school. Faculty and students had worthwhile discussions following the presentation. Thanks.*

Ellicott City, Maryland

*Thank you for a scintillating week of sculpture presentations of A Family Album in the Rochester City Schools. In addition to marveling at the program myself, I have heard nothing but rave reviews from the schools. Your sculptures delighted and amazed, while the dramatic timing and dialogue of your presentations directly addressed many concerns of students as they mature from children to adults. The honest, straight-forward discussion of your life experiences, while fully demonstrating the sculptures, was a most unusual and effective educational approach.*

Artists-in-Residence Program, Rochester, New York

*Thank you for your superb performance at our elementary school. I, myself, thoroughly enjoyed your show. I felt your message was appropriate for all grade levels. I think you were particularly effective with the sixth grade. As you well know, there is a lot of peer pressure at this age. Your discussion on choosing friends and clothes was excellent. Your "Boyfriend Sculpture" definitely hit home with them.*

Farmingdale, New York

*Everything that I can say about your show has probably been said before. Let me just say it is the best program I have ever seen in a school; and someone else here said that in the almost 30 years she's been at Coleman, it's the best she's ever seen!*

Glen Rock, New Jersey

*Your assembly program at Friends Academy last week was just wonderful and has been a topic of conversation among parents, teachers, and students since. Everyone was very impressed both by your fantastic puppets and by the message you brought to the students concerning their own worth and abilities.*

Locust Valley, New York

*The "life skills" you presented I think had a real impact on the kids. My daughter came home from school and wanted to immediately sit down and make a list of all the things she's good at. Sometimes as a parent I find I don't focus enough on the positive aspects of my children, and this gave me a good opportunity to do that. It was a real pleasure to have a performance like yours that appealed to all ages.*

Strafford, Pennsylvania

*You made me happy today. I was surprised. You should keep it up. Second grade loved it. They laughed all through it, but most of all you are a genius.*

Sarah

*I had fun at the show. It was lots of fun. And you were funny. I like how you shared your life with us.*

Gina

*Your talent is fabulous. My talent is reading.*

Amy

*I liked your program a lot and my teacher was cracking up about the program.*

Allan

*When you said for the boys to close our eyes, we were laughing.*

Kenneth

*It was so funny that it made me giggle right out of my skin.*

Camila



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