

Comforty

MEDIA CONCEPTS

Programs that Inform and Inspire

**Multilingual
Multicultural
Multidisciplinary**

Comforty Media Concepts

USA

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web sites

www.comforty.com
www.theoptimists.com
www.inclusionseries.com
www.earlychildhoodmedia.org
www.edu-media-bg.com
www.Balkan-jazz.com

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YouTube

www.youtube.com/user/JackyComforty



COMFORTY MEDIA CONCEPTS

Comforty Media Concepts, produces award winning documentaries, educational, and narrative movies for museums, schools, universities, institutions, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and for broadcast.

We have vast experiences working on complex content and in situations that require awareness, consideration and multiple sensitivities.

Our Programs are real, humane, rich in content and have artistic qualities. They represent a multicultural, multilingual, and multidisciplinary vision. Our movies never grow old or get outdated. They stay fresh and can be viewed time and time again.

SPECIALIZATION

- Video programs about social issues, education, public health, history, anthropology, arts, sciences, and ethics.
- Multimedia programs and installations for museums.
- Interviewing expertise and oral history based projects.
- Styles and Formats: documentary, dramatic, comedy.
- Production for general or special interest audiences.
- Multicultural perspective, multilingual, multidisciplinary.
- Comprehensive research and analysis.
- Script development and writing.
- Research and use of archival photos and film.



AWARDS

The Communicator Crystal Award, 2002

CINE GOLDEN EAGLE Award
Three Time Winner, 2001, 1998, and 1997

Berlin International Film Festival
Co-Winner of the Peace Prize, 2001

Jerusalem International Film Festival 2000
First Prize, "Jewish Experience" Category

Karlovy Vari International Film Festival
"Distinguished Selection," 1999

Flagstaff International Film Festival
Bronze Award, 1998

INTERCOM
Chicago International Film Festival
Gold Hugo Award, 1997

National Educational Media Network
Bronze Apple Award
Educational Adult Audience Category, 1997

American Association of Museums
First Prize, Arts: Artists Category Muse Awards, 1995

The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, Illinois TASH Media Award, 1993

GRANTS

DAAD Fellowship
(German Academic Exchange Service),
Artist-in-Residence in Berlin, 2002

Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture
Fellowship, 1998

Evanston Arts Council
Cultural Fund Grant, 1996

The Moris Amado Foundation,
Major production Grant 1992

Illinois Humanities Council
Development and Production Grants, 1991, 1994

Iowa Humanities Board,
Script Writing Grant, 1992

Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Production Grant, 1992

Israeli Ministry of Trade and Industry
Development and Production Grants, 1990, 1989

THE OPTIMISTS



Rachamim Comforty and His Two Wives

Bulgarian Jews saved from the Holocaust. From *The Optimists*, an award-winning documentary film about the survival of the Bulgarian Jewry



Music from the Front: WW I

A photo postcard sent by the soldier on the right to his sweetheart in Bulgaria in 1917. From *The Optimists*

“The Optimists is a wonderful film. The title refers not only to a Bulgarian jazz band, but to how the audience feels after watching such a moving testament to human decency.”

— **Annette Insdorf, author of *Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust***

“This is a film that celebrates the human spirit. It offers hope that people of different races and religions can learn to live together in peace.”

— **Leora Eren Frucht, *Jerusalem Post***

CLIENTS

Elliot Pearson Department of Child Development, Tufts University, Boston. MA

Department of Education, City of Varna, Bulgaria

The Psychological Consulting Unit at the Israeli ministry of Education, Jerusalem

Ashalim, Association for Planning and Development of Services for Children and Youth at Risk and their Families, Jerusalem, Israel

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC

Chicago Public Schools, Chicago, IL

St. Louis Holocaust Museum and Learning Center, St. Louis, MO

Holocaust Memorial Council of Illinois, The Illinois Holocaust Museum, Skokie, IL

Illinois State Board of Education, Project CHOICES, Naperville, IL

The USA State Department. Washington, DC.

The University of Chicago Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Tinley Park, IL

Terra Museum of American Art, Chicago, IL

Simon Wiesenthal Center, Los Angeles, CA

Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum, West Branch, IA

B'nai B'rith International Headquarters and Klutznick National Jewish Museum, Washington, DC

Anti-Defamation League Foundation for Christian Rescuers, New York, NY

Chicago Academy of Sciences, Chicago, IL

American Refugee Committee, Minneapolis, MN

German Television Stations ZDF, BR, SDR, WDR, WDF Mainz, Munich, Stuttgart, and Cologne, Germany

German Ministry of Science and Education, Bonn, Germany

Mercedes Benz, Stuttgart, Germany

Israeli Ministry of Education, Jerusalem, Israel

THE INCLUSION SERIES



Inclusion in Action

A scene from *Step by Step: Heather's Story*, which charts the journey from "special ed" to regular school.

For the Illinois State Board of Education, Project CHOICES

"... this thoughtful, insightful production is [an]... affirmative and practical resource... excellent for staff training and community education."

Booklist

"...an inspiring experience for viewers. [Those]... wanting to 'do it right' will find guidance and inspiration here for teachers, parents, and all concerned."

School Library Journal

"The quality is exceptional, so prepare yourself..."

TASH Newsletter



PROJECTS

US HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Oral Histories

Fifty-four hours of interviews with Bulgarian Jews for archiving and future use in museum exhibitions at the USHMM in Washington, DC..

ST. LOUIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

Five permanent exhibition videos and twenty eight audio programs for this museum dedicated to Holocaust education.

TERRA MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

Through a Glass, Lightly

A video installation about the lives and work of three, self-taught, Chicago artists who create their art from bottle caps, broken glass, and other urban landscape treasures. **First Prize, American Association of Museums Museum Awards, Arts: Artists Category, 1995**

HERBERT HOOVER PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY-MUSEUM

The Full Circle: Excerpts from Survivors' Stories

Museum exhibition video interviewing individuals who benefited from Hoover's famine relief efforts during the two World Wars.

SIMON WIESENTHAL MUSEUM OF TOLERANCE

Funding for collection of 100 hours of oral histories of Bulgarian Jews and Christians in Israel, Bulgaria, Spain, and the US; for inclusion in the SWC archives.

B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL KLUTZNIK MUSEUM

Twenty-minute film for the International Conference on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Rescue of the Bulgarian Jews; photographic contributions to its Klutznick National Jewish Museum exhibition, *Everyman A Hero: The Saving of Bulgarian Jewry*.

THE CHICAGO ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

2 interactive exhibition videos for an exhibition about energy preservation

MCDUGAL LITTELL (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN)

Literature in Performance

Project design and management for this anthology of 45 great literary productions on film and video.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO CENTER FOR PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION

Leading the Rehabilitation Team

Motivational and training video addressing the needs of those who lead teams helping severely mentally ill people.

THE TIGHTENING OF THE NOOSE



Symbols

Archival photo from *Tightening of the Noose*, one of five permanent exhibition videos created for the St. Louis Holocaust Museum and Learning Center. (Courtesy BPK)

"If you were a Jew in Germany in 1933 you awoke one morning to a nightmare. Frenzied mobs across Germany, burned thousands of forbidden books. . . . From then on, law after law took away more of your livelihood, your citizenship, your civil rights."

From the opening narration for *Tightening of the Noose*



PROJECTS

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, PROJECT CHOICES

The Inclusion Series. 1993 Media Award for Contributions to People with Severe Disabilities, Illinois-TASH (The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps) Series programs include:

Step by Step: Heather's Story. Sixty-minute video documenting the journey from special education classroom to inclusion into regular school; an in-depth look at the inclusion process over time.

Families, Friends, Futures. Twenty-minute documentary video for general audiences about the need for inclusion of young people with disabilities into both school and community life.

Inclusion: Issues for Educators. Twenty-minute documentary video addressing inclusion from the perspective of teachers and administrators.

Choices. Thirty-minute documentary video profiling four students with disabilities, ages three to nineteen, included into regular classrooms.

CITY OF CHICAGO, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, CHICAGO HISPANIC HEALTH COALITION

Voices for Action and Change

Documentary report on the Chicago Hispanic Health Coalition's progress in improving medical care for Hispanic communities.

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Everykid Campaign. Public awareness campaign about the benefits of including students with disabilities into regular classrooms.

ELLIOT PEARSON DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD, TUFTS UNIVERSITY

Wellcome

As series of short videos for the department's web site for recruitment of master and doctoral students.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION THE CITY OF VARNA, BULGARIA

Inclusive Education: The Varna Example

A 25 minute educational documentary to promote inclusive education.

ASHALIN, FOUNDED BY JDC

That's my Body, & Testimony

Two video programs about people with disabilities who were victims of sexual abuse and six eited testimonials.

ASHALIN, FOUNDED BY JDC

Misikun Lesikuy

A documentary video about inclusion of toddlers into a day care center in Ashkelon, Israel.

THE FULL CIRCLE



Hoover Meets Polish Children He Helped Save

Archival photo used in *The Full Circle: Excerpts from Survivors Stories*, a museum exhibition video about President Hoover's famine relief programs produced for the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum

"It always puzzles me how some people can be so cruel, that they only know to hurt other people, while others are so kind, . . . they will share with you the last little bit that they may have."



From *The Full Circle*. Testimony by **Dr. Danuta Hutchins**, whose family was saved from starvation by Hoover's program when she was a child in post-WWII Poland.



PROJECTS

COMFORTY MEDIA CONCEPTS AND THE CHAMBON FOUNDATION *THE OPTIMISTS*

Independent documentary on the rescue of Bulgarian Jewry from the Holocaust.

Awards:

Berlin International Film Festival, Co-Winner of the Peace Prize, 2001
Jerusalem International Film Festival 2000, First Prize for "Documenting the Jewish Experience"
CINE Golden Eagle, 2001
Best Documentary, Hope and Dreams Film Festival, 2001

Grants:

Maurice Amado Foundation
Illinois Humanities Council
Simon Wiesenthal Center
Israeli Ministry of Trade and Industry

COMFORTY MEDIA CONCEPTS AND THE COLLECTED IMAGE

In the Shadow of Memory.

One hour documentary on the Catholic Czech town of Lidice destroyed by Nazis during World War II. In association with the Chambon Foundation, Los Angeles, CA.

The Communicator Award
CINE Golden Eagle
Karlovy Vary Film Festival
Jerusalem Film Festival

GERMAN STATE TELEVISION

Medical Technology, or the End of Sympathy?

Documentary about the excesses of technology in health care; part one of a nine-segment documentary series, *The Mute Dialogue*, about man and technology. Broadcast on German TV Stations NDR, BR, WDF, SWF, HR, and Swiss TV Station SR.

MERCEDES BENZ

The O-Bahn System

Thirty-minute instructional film promoting a new bus-to-rails public transportation system.

ISRAELI MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND EDUCATION

The Jerusalem International Book Fair and Prize for Literature

Series of ten, four-minute promotional spots in six languages for foreign TV stations, plus an eleven-minute report in English.

GERMAN TELEVISION STATION ZDF AND UFA STUDIOS

Keine Gondel für die Leiche (Caviar and Lentils)

Script for ninety-minute television comedy.

IN THE SHADOW OF MEMORY



In Search of Reconciliation

Jerri Zbiral, daughter of a survivor, meets a German delegation of peace educators. From *In the Shadow of Memory: Legacies of Lidice*, about the 50th anniversary of the destruction of the Czech Catholic Village of Lidice.

"It's very important to distinguish between people, between Germans. . . . It's very difficult for you to distinguish, I can imagine, but it would be very important."

From *In the Shadow of Memory*; observations by **Beate Hoffman**, writer and peace activist.



COMMENTS

"I recommend Jacky and Lisa Comforty for the quality of their work, for their complete dedication to a project and their utmost professionalism."

Roberta Gray Katz, Curator of Education, Terra Museum of American Art

"Mr. and Mrs. Comforty have filled a gap in the field of Holocaust history. The oral histories they have conducted on Bulgarian Jewry are extremely impressive and complete. . . . this film will be of great value to the public..."

Genya Markon, Director of Photo Archives, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

"[Comforty Media Concepts'] ... video is the feature presentation in our Humanitarian Gallery. ...The power of The Full Circle cannot be overstated. I have watched visitors of all ages sit, watch, and listen, barely moving a muscle. ...History, quite literally, comes alive for the museum visitors..."

Timothy Walsh, Director, Herbert Hoover Library-Museum

"... this overwhelming success [of the Inclusion Series] is due to the Comfortys' sensitivity and creative talents as filmmakers. Motivational power is one of their greatest strengths, and it makes its mark in all of their films . . . they give of themselves to their projects. . . . It is also a result of the precision with which they craft each film. Videos we do together are never cliched, slick or superficial. Without fail, each video works extremely effectively at both the dramatic and the educational levels."

Barbara B. Toney, Public Information Specialist, the Illinois State Board of Education's Project CHOICES

"The Film is amazing!!! unbelievable quality!!! You successfully wove humanity, pragmatism. Love and reasonability. Congratulations."

Veselina Ivanova, Director of Special Events, Varna Department of Education

"Jacky Comforty is an artist that creates something out of nothing. His work has depth. Jacky Created for us videos about people with disabilities who were victims of sexual violence. The production required great sensitivity and communications skills with respect to the people with disabilities and the professionals. The movies are very valuable for communities, families and professionals they enact a en emotional and cognitive experience that fulfills exactly the purpose of the videos. Without Jacky's qualities as an artist, videographer, director, producer, and psychologist the film would have not be complete."

Batya Hudatov, Ashalim Founded by JDC Israel.

"I admire your patience, dedication, and fortitude"
Howard Gardner, Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education

THROUGH A GLASS LIGHTLY



Mr. Imagination and His Bottle Cap Hat

From *Through A Glass, Lightly*, an exhibit video about three Chicago outsider artists and the transformative power of art.

For the Terra Museum of American Art and the Openlands Project and Foundation

“Mr. Imagination is always using his imagination . . . see[ing] a chair with one leg, taking that chair home and not really giving it life, but bringing it back, saving it from the garbage so it won’t be tossed away.”

— Mr. Imagination, interviewed in *Through a Glass, Lightly*



THE OPTIMISTS



Bishop Boris Kharalampiev, Age 92

Bishop Boris Kharalampiev recounts how he helped thwart the Bulgarian Government’s plan to deport Bulgarian Jews.

From *The Optimists*

“Everyone is entitled to his own faith. No one should violate the intimate, Spiritual life of another.

That’s how I think now, that’s how I have thought in the past, and if I live any longer, that’s how I’ll think then.”

Bishop Boris Kharalampiev



THE OPTIMISTS REVIEWS

*"A rare documentary . . .
compact and elegant."*

- **Dana Stevens, New York Times**

"Uplifting documentary . . . fascinating story."

Ken Fox, TV Guide ★★☆☆

"A miraculous sharp movie."

- **Patrick Z. McGavin, Chicago Tribune ★★☆☆**

*"Individuals triumph over odds
in inspiring 'Optimists'."*

- **Hedy Weiss, Chicago Sun Times ★★☆☆**

*"Potent and gripping. . . .
an extraordinary set of circumstances"*

- **Sarah Madsen Hardy, Boston Globe**

*"As a human sentiment,
it's touching to behold."*

- **James Crawford, Village Voice**

*"A rare instance of humanity
during the Holocaust."*

- **Chad Frade, Time Out New York**

"A must see documentary memorable"

- **Masha Leon, Forward**

"A moving tribute to moral courage"

- **George Robinson, Jewish Week**

"Spellbinding. . .

A message of inspiration and hope." ★★☆☆

- **Bruce Ingram, Pioneer Press.**

*"The message is so powerful . . . one of the
best films of the year." ★★☆☆*

- **George O. Singleton, ReelMovieCritic.com**

*"Engaging documentary . . .
moving and heartwarming"*

- **The NYC Movie Guru**

*"A powerful and heartwarming story which
deserves to be seen and discussd"*

- **Rabbi Peter Knobel, Beth Emet,
The Free Synagogue.**

BIOGRAPHY

Jacky Comforty, Comforty Media Concepts' president and founder, has worked for 25 years in the film and video industries of the United States, Germany, and Israel. Fluent in four languages, he brings to his company a unique amalgam of experience, talents, and skills.

Jacky opened Comforty Media Concepts in Tel Aviv, Israel, in 1988 and in the Chicago area in 1991. He works in a range of genres -- from documentaries to dramatic films and comedies.

Jacky is known for the effective, sensitive, interviewing techniques he has developed for oral histories and other projects requiring on-camera discussions that are genuine, meaningful, and in-depth. His sharp analytical style, knowledge of world history and cultures, and expertise in multimedia technologies provide a powerful foundation for achieving creative goals.

A popular lecturer and keynote speaker, Jacky Comforty inspires general and special audience of all various ages and backgrounds around the world.

Among his subjects:

- The Bulgarian Jews, their heritage and their survival during WWII.
- Inclusion of all people into school and society.
- Independent film making, techniques, ethics, and media literacy.
- Multimedia and Museums.
- Political correctness: tolerance, and multiculturalism.





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