



Mallory Lewis

Keeping the Magic Alive

By Lynda Evjen

Mallory Lewis, writer, television producer, ventriloquist, and puppeteer, is the daughter of a beloved children's entertainer, Shari Lewis. Mallory Lewis has been deeply involved in children's entertainment her entire life.

Born as Mallory Tarcher in New York City, she is the daughter of Jeremy Tarcher and Shari Lewis (1933-1998), creator of Lamb Chop. She tells me "I was born in NYC and moved to Beverly Hills (under protest) when I was 5 years old. I returned to NY for college at Barnard College, then back to LA in my mid 20's."

For the last 23 years she has lived in Malibu. Mallory says "I spent the happiest times of my childhood on the road with my mom, and as an adult I wrote and produced her final two series, Lamb Chop's Play Along and Charlie Horse Music Pizza. "

Jeremy Tarcher had also been part of Shari Lewis's shows on PBS. After her mother's death in 1998, on the advice of family and the late Dom DeLuise, Mallory decided that Lamb Chop should live on for her many fans.

When her mom died, Mallory kept getting letters from fans asking, "is Lamb Chop dead too?" She says that she clearly could not let the answer be YES, so she picked up the mantle (or sock as the case may be). Mallory notes that "Mom and Lamb Chop represent a time in their fan's lives when things were simpler and easier... and just seeing her makes them so happy."

In 1999, Mallory Lewis started performing with Lamb Chop. It was during this time that she changed her surname to her mother's, Lewis, as an homage. While Lamb Chop may be described as "sassy," the words "please" and

"thank you" are part of the repertoire.

Lewis, who has the same hand size as her mother, said of her decision to take up the puppet: "My mom was one of the world's greatest entertainers. I do not want to challenge that. I don't think it's wise to go there. But I do want to do everything that I can do for Lamb Chop. I'll help keep her going". Lewis had never attempted to imitate Lamb Chop's voice but upon receiving a posthumous Award for Shari, Lewis performed with the puppet, discovering that she had her mother's ability to affect the voice without lip movement.

Lewis is also a writer of children's books, some of which star, ZOEY, a baby orangutan character that she also puppeteers. As an author, Mallory has penned 20 children's novels. She is also a multiple "Emmy Award Nominee," as well as an Emmy Award Winner" for "Outstanding Writing in a Children's Series."

Today, I tried to call her, but she was riding her horse in Malibu. "Like many girls, I always loved horses, but my rather protective Jewish Mama was not a fan of my riding" she told me. "When I was 18 and had moved to NY I started riding regularly at Claremont Stables in Central Park. ... and I have not stopped! I have ridden on 3 continents including across the Mara in Kenya with my bestie Susan Swope."

Her favorite trip ever was to Taviani, Fiji. "Unbelievably beautiful and romantic, (I went with my amazing hubby, Brian Cummings)!" Her most interesting vacation was a trip to Istanbul with a friend.

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Mallory has performed for military support organizations such as the USO and the Fisher House Foundation, as well as, performing arts centers, and at many state fairs around the country. Currently, she prefers to perform only at the Performing Arts Centers and for Charity Events. On August 11, Lewis will be headlining the International Fringe Puppet Festival in NYC, and on August 12, Lamb Chop and Lewis will be hosting the opening of the Museum of New York's newest exhibit, "Puppets of the City!"

"Mallory Lewis and Lamb Chop are a true class act. They appeal to both the young and old. Once you've seen one of Mallory's shows you'll walk away with a wonderful memory and feeling like you have just acquired a new best friend."

– Tonya Cook, Special Events Director, Iowa State Fair

When I asked her about the one thing that she is most proud of, she says "My son, Jamie Hood who is 22 years old." She is also most proud of being the co-founder/organizer (with my partner Kate Cooper Jensen) of a decade long series of fundraisers called "JUMP FOR THE CAUSE," a women's world record skydiving event which raised \$2 million for breast cancer research. Lamb Chop was on ALL the jumps and is the only puppet in the world to hold four world records in skydiving.

Mallory says that she is inspired by acts of kindness and great performances "and Dr. Fauci." She laughs. She relayed to me that she believes she has had a blessed life and her biggest challenge was dealing with her mom's passing.



Lewis was the co-host of the 2014 Artists Music Guild (AMG) Heritage Awards with host Billy Gilman and David L. Cook. During the broadcast she accepted the Sandy Hosey Lifetime Achievement Award presented by the organization.

Mallory Lewis has met so many people with her mom and in her career, so I asked her who she would most like to have dinner with and she said "*The Obamas! The girls as well. A nice family BBQ with my family and theirs. Hmmmmmm what should I wear?*"

Prior to her death, Shari Lewis sold most of the rights pertaining to Lamb Chop to Golden Books Family Entertainment. A series of transactions resulted in these rights being held by Classic Media (now DreamWorks Classics, part of NBCUniversal), even though Mallory still owns the live performing rights to Lamb Chop. Lewis wishes one day to put Lamb Chop back on television.

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Fans today keep her going.

One wrote: *"WOW!!! What a fantastic show, I was really impressed with how much Lamb Chop and Hush Puppy sounded just like they did 15 years ago! Your Mom would have been thrilled to watch your performance and of course so would have Dom DeLuise, who encouraged you.*

I loved your energy and the way you held both Lamb Chop and Hush Puppy, cradled in your arms, it looked natural. And like a good Ventriloquist does, you never moved your lips!! In fact, of all the present Ventriloquists in the world, you are the best without a doubt!!

Bye for now Mallory.

With Love, Ray

A Fan of Lamb Chop wrote:

"I was a fan of Lamb Chop when I was a kid, and I just got finished reading the whole story about your mom and I read about you, too. I strongly approve of your keeping Lamb Chop alive, I think that's amazing. I wish you the best of luck in your endeavors!"

Lindy – via Email

Childhood Memories

Hi Mallory,

I used to watch your mother (amazing woman) when I was a youngster – it was one of my childhood memories. I just wanted to say that it's great how you're keeping the magic alive!

Best regards

Jordan Letkemann

Yes We appreciate Mallory Lewis for keeping the MAGIC ALIVE!



Mallory's mom, Shari Lewis w/ Lamb Chop

