

## **ROBIN HUGHES AO MA (Syd)**

Robin Hughes was born in Sydney and educated at Fort Street Girls' High School and the University of Sydney. After graduating in Arts, she worked for a short period as a psychologist with the New South Wales Government.

In 1964 Robin was appointed a Producer with the BBC in London in the Arts, Science and Documentary Division. When she returned to Sydney in 1967, she commenced work in the newly formed ABC Science Unit.

In 1969 she joined the ABC TV Features Department and helped set up a series of social documentary programmes called Chequerboard. Robin worked first as Head of Research then as Producer and Interviewer on the series. It won many awards.

Between 1971 and 1977, freelancing as an executive producer, producer, interviewer, consultant and writer she was involved in a range of innovative radio and television projects including initiating the technically ground-breaking radio series "Investigations"

In 1977 she commenced work at Film Australia and over the next few years produced a number of films and videos including dramas documentaries and experimental films. Some of these productions won prizes both locally and internationally.

She then returned to freelance work and was engaged by a commercial television company, Transmedia, to produce a major series of social documentaries for the Seven Network. They were screened as The Willesee Specials and subsequently transferred to Channel 9. They won several television awards, including three Logies.

In 1985 she was appointed General Manager of Film Australia and undertook a total restructuring of the organisation. Under her leadership, Film Australia was established as a wholly government owned company in July 1988. Robin Hughes was appointed as the new company's first Chief Executive.

During her time at Film Australia Robin brought about profound changes in the structure and management of the organisation that led to a dramatic increase in productivity. Sales of Film Australia productions in both national and international markets increased. Major international co-productions were set up. Drama activities were expanded and high quality experimental work was undertaken.

Robin resigned from Film Australia in November 1989, believing that the foundations for a reinvigorated national film and television production house were successfully laid. She established her own production company, Robin Hughes and Associates. Its first production, the documentary series "The Opposite Sex" was screened on the ABC and internationally.

In May 1991 she became the founding Convenor of the Independent Complaints Review Panel of ABC.

In November 1991 she was appointed Chair of the Council of the Australian Film Television and Radio School and served in that capacity until November 1997.

In January 1993 Robin Hughes was made an Officer of the Order of Australia for services to film and broadcasting.

Between January and July 1996 Robin Hughes returned to radio to produce and present a series of weekly programmes about Psychology. They were called "Open Mind" and were broadcast on the ABC's Radio National.

Since 1991 she has been involved with the archival project "Australian Biography", produced by Film Australia, working over that time always as interviewer sometimes as producer /director. A series for television, made as part of the project, is being screened on SBS television. Each series consists of seven programmes.. In 1996 the book of the first series, written by Robin Hughes, was published by Harper Collins under the title "Australian Lives"

Robin is Chair of the board of the theatrical company Performing Lines, a director on the board of the Bangarra Dance Company and a Member of the Council of the Australian National University

In 2006 she formed a partnership with the director Edwina Throsby and re-named Robin Hughes and Associates as Chequerboard Productions. The new company has completed one short award winning film *Dance Like Your Old Man* and has several others in development.