

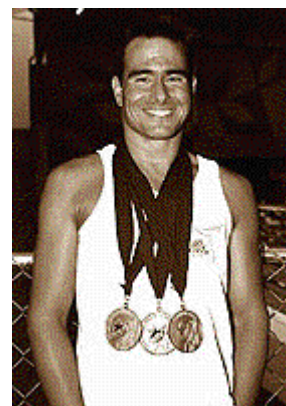
Head office:  
ICMI Speakers & Entertainers  
ABN: 42 114 669 224

(PO Box 2311)  
Level 2, 159 High Street  
Prahran, Victoria 3181

Ph: 61 (0)3 9529 3711  
Fax: 61 (0)3 9529 4573  
Toll Free: 1800 334 625  
Email: [icmi@icmi.com.au](mailto:icmi@icmi.com.au)  
Web: [www.icmi.com.au](http://www.icmi.com.au)



*Incorporating Olympic Communicators  
Under licence from the Australian Olympic Committee*



# GREGORY BURNS

## Artist, Writer, Motivational Speaker, and Paralympian

Gregory Burns is a seasoned motivational speaker, having presented to dozens of corporations, schools and private organisations over the past 20 years throughout the U.S.A. and Asia.

Before audiences of up to 3,500, Mr. Burns has shared his life's experiences, moulding his unique message so as to address the specific needs of his listeners.

Sharing the trials and tribulations of capturing a half dozen gold and silver medals at the Barcelona, Atlanta and Sydney Paralympic's and a life most able-body people would envy, Mr. Burns' message encourages listeners to look within themselves and adopt a winning attitude for dealing with life's challenges.

By compiling background information, Mr. Burns ensures that his talks are crafted around the theme and messages of his client's conferences. As such, he works closely with conference organisers in order to address the specific objectives of the conference.

It is Mr. Burns' ambition to inspire and motivate his audiences to achieve their goals and be the best that they can be.

Besides bringing a motivational message to his listeners, Mr. Burns encourages audiences to look towards their inner strengths, whatever they might be.

"Arguably, due to a disability that constantly motivates me to scale new mountains both literally and metaphorically, I border on being an over-achiever. Perhaps it all started when, petrified at the age of four, I would ride the roller coaster simply because my older brother wouldn't. In time, I graduated to climbing mountains, competing internationally as a swimmer and backpacking overland throughout Asia for 16 months at a stretch. No doubt part of it is comes for a need to overcompensate or a need to prove myself. I've never been sure of how much is too much, as I have never had any role models. But more importantly, I've just done the things I wanted to do."

*"I contracted polio as an infant while our family was stationed in Jerusalem. This zapped most of the motor nerves from my waist down but fortunately only affected my left and right legs. Instead of American football, I've experienced a life of painting, travelling, trekking, swimming, scuba diving, producing documentaries, addressing large audiences as a motivational speaker, working as a regional Marketing/PR manager for PepsiCo Restaurants International."*

**Greg Burns is a professional Artist exhibiting all over the world. As a writer and documentary producer he has spent many years travelling extensively with a particular focus in Asia Pacific.**

NSW Office (Crows Nest):  
Ph: (02) 9688 6800  
[diana@icmi.com.au](mailto:diana@icmi.com.au)

NSW Office (Artamon):  
Ph: (02) 9686 7714  
[steve@icmi.com.au](mailto:steve@icmi.com.au)

QLD Office:  
Ph: 1300 663 966  
[gerry@icmi.com.au](mailto:gerry@icmi.com.au)

SA Office:  
Ph: (08) 8377 3400  
[sue@icmi.com.au](mailto:sue@icmi.com.au)

WA Office:  
Ph: (08) 9472 5065  
[corina@icmi.com.au](mailto:corina@icmi.com.au)

TAS Office:  
Ph: (03) 6236 9976  
[paula@icmi.com.au](mailto:paula@icmi.com.au)

## SELECTED CLIENT LIST

- ◆ Euphonix, USA
- ◆ Trane National Accounts, USA
- ◆ Kiawanis Club, USA
- ◆ Linguaphone, Hong Kong
- ◆ Lions Club, Hong Kong
- ◆ Life Underwriters Association, Singapore
- ◆ SAP Asia (Systems, Applications and Products in Data Processing), Singapore
- ◆ Prudential, Singapore
- ◆ AIA, Singapore
- ◆ Singapore National Swim Team
- ◆ Saint Joseph's Institute, Singapore
- ◆ Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Singapore
- ◆ HBO Asia, Singapore
- ◆ Johnson & Johnson, Thailand
- ◆ Allied Domecq, England
- ◆ Allied Domecq, Singapore
- ◆ Taipei School for the Blind, Taiwan
- ◆ Trane, Asia Pacific, Malaysia
- ◆ Trane, Latin America, Puerto Rico
- ◆ Singapore Olympic Academy

As a motivational speaker, Gregory has spoken throughout the USA and Asia before a variety of audiences including numerous multinational corporations, schools and private organisations.

## GREGORY BURNS: ATHLETE AND ARTIST

In a world where sports and the arts often seem so very far apart, Gregory Burns proves daily that the two can co-exist on the highest levels. Mr. Burns is a world champion swimmer who has won gold medals and broken world records in the three last Paralympic Games. He is also a world-class contemporary artist, whose paintings and exhibitions have received attention from former presidents in both America and Singapore and sponsorship from the likes of Rolex, Nike, DHL and BMW.

Polio, a disease long considered eradicated, is what has made it possible for Gregory Burns to lead such a remarkably active set of dual careers. A child of U.S. Foreign Service parents, Burns contracted the disease while they served in the Middle East during the late 1950s. Since then, he has used crutches and braces to support his polio-weakened legs, which have carried him to gold medal podiums, mountain summits and backwater villages across the globe.

So Gregory Burns is, in fact, an old-fashioned hero. He is the sort of exemplary role model that one usually encounters only in Hollywood films, not in real life.

Though diagnosed with polio at the age of ten months, Burns has not allowed the disease to darken the colors of his life or palette. "While Kennedy was President, by an interesting twist of fate, I was able to swim in the White House pool in Washington D.C. where I took my first swimming lessons and played Cowboys and Indians with the secret service. This was also the time when my creative streak led me to experiment with my mother's red lipstick on the walls of our whitewashed townhouse." In 2000, while visiting former President Bill Clinton at the White House with fellow Olympians and Paralympians, Burns

presented the President with one of his "swimming" paintings. Later, Burns was escorted to the White House Press Room and encouraged to look below the floorboards through a small portal where he instantly recognized the lime-green tiles of the long since drained White House pool.

Life for Gregory Burns is filled with ironies. Worldwide travel experience is one of those, because, as Burns notes, "I am more mobile than many folks because I've always had the urge to visit the unknown and do what others thought I couldn't accomplish. In fact, I find it more difficult to stay put." After graduating from university in California, he spent ten months in a Taiwan university studying Chinese painting, calligraphy and language. Not wanting to miss his chance, Burns set off on a sixteen-month solo-backpacking trip that saw him traveling overland through China, Tibet, Nepal, India and Pakistan before returning to Taiwan to exhibit the paintings he painted en-route.

An outgoing personality and a motivational speaker, Burns believes that rather than hindering his creative nature, being stricken with polio allowed him to concentrate on developing areas of his character that enhanced his artistic talents. Speaking before international audiences of up to 3,500, Burns stresses that the setbacks in our lives are really what push us forward and bring us strength.

Thus far in his 22-year career as an artist, Burns has specialized in painting contemporary pieces abstracted from the landscapes and architectural images that he has observed on his extensive travels throughout Asia, Europe and the Americas. But after more than eighteen years of living in Asia and exhibiting his artwork in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, Indonesia and Australia where he received his MFA, Mr. Burns now spends part of each year in his native Northern California where he trains for swim meets and paints with the characteristic intensity and vigor that has made him a world champion swimmer.

Gregory holds an undergraduate degree in Communications Studies from the University of California and a Master of Fine Art from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Gregory is an accomplished artist, having exhibited internationally, while his paintings hang in numerous corporate and private collections including that of Bill Clinton.