

## YAKOV SMIRNOFF IS A LEGEND IN AMERICAN COMEDY.

After escaping communist Soviet Union in the 1977, Yakov came to the United States with nothing but a dream. Before even learning the language, Yakov humbly began working as a bartender at the famous Grossinger's Catskill Resort in New York, where he started telling jokes to his customers each night. As his English improved, he quickly grew in popularity. He made a daring move to Hollywood where the owner of The Comedy Store, Mitzi Shore, spotted him and advised him to stay. She told him, "There is always a place for good and different."

His lovable view of life through the eyes of a poor immigrant captured the hearts of America. He soared to the top of the comedy world, performing on "The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson" and countless other television programs, including as a regular character on "Night Court." He became a star of his very own show, named after his famous catchphrase, "What a Country!" Yakov branched out to the big screen where he starred in movies with Tom Hanks, Robin Williams, Richard Pryor, Meryl Streep, and Jack Nicholson, to name a few. In 2016 and 2017 his TV special "Happily ever laughter" was voted "The best special" on PBS.

He has given command performances for 4 US presidents.

Yakov Smirnoff is an iconic comedian, movie star, best-selling author and most recently, an educator, when he earned a master's degree in psychology from the University of Pennsylvania, after which he became a professor at Missouri State University. His latest accomplishment is a doctoral degree in Global Leadership from Pepperdine University.

Living a life that is as exciting as ever, Yakov has married his sweetheart, currently has his very own 2000 seat theater in Branson, Missouri, and tours the world doing stand-up Comedy at performing arts centers.

Inspired by his higher education in psychology and global leadership he is currently writing a book, "Unconscious Attraction: Why does the wrong person feel so right?"

With the heart of a dreamer, Yakov Smirnoff has made the impossible possible and continues to inspire others with his message that America is still, "What a Country!" Keep an eye out for a documentary about him on Netflix by the end of this year and stay tuned for what Dr. Yakov does next!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yakov". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter 'v'.