

TERRY FATOR™

THE **VOICE** OF ENTERTAINMENT

IT STARTS TONIGHT

ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT

TERRY FATOR™

One might think that with finding success after 25 years of performing at county fairs and oddball venues, the moral of singer-comedian-celebrity impressionist Terry Fator's story might be the cliché of: Never give up on your dreams. But when it comes to Fator's story of success after 40, that old adage doesn't quite ring true.

"I actually don't believe in not giving up," laughs Fator, 48, who was recently ranked No. 2 on Forbes' list of the top-earning comics just behind comic legend Jerry Seinfeld. "It's okay to give up because I did. I worked for 25 years playing every fair, small club, and kids' party I could and it just felt like it wasn't going to happen. I resigned myself to just playing kids parties. That was okay for me. But, I didn't stop working doing the thing that I love to do and getting better at it. Once I did that, something finally happened for me."

That "something" was NBC's hit competition show, "America's Got Talent." After turning down a chance to compete on the first season of the show, his fans wrote the show saying they just had to have Fator on. Producers called Fator and invited him to audition. After seeing, and liking, Season

1 of the show, Fator went for it, and in 2007 the then 42-year-old comedian became the "America's Got Talent" Season 2 champ, taking home the \$1 million prize and title of "Best New Act in America." "It was the big break I had worked for my entire life," he says.

It wasn't long before Sin City would recognize Fator as the headlining act he was destined to be. In 2007, he signed a \$1.5 million deal to perform at the Las Vegas Hilton. The following year had Fator signing what has been described as "one of the largest entertainment deals in Las Vegas history" to headline his own show, "Terry Fator: The VOICE of Entertainment," at the Mirage Hotel & Casino, which now runs through 2016.

"I'm grateful that I didn't find success until my 40s," admits Fator, who hails from Dallas, Texas. "I'm not sure I could've handled success at a younger age. It can screw your brain up. Just look at a lot of today's young stars. But at 42, you have perspective and you're more grounded so that when the time comes that all of a sudden millions of people see and like what you do, it doesn't go to your head too much."

Fator's story began long before "America's Got Talent." His first taste of entertainment came at age 8 when he tried his hand at magic with the help of a hypnosis book. "I unsuccessfully tried to hypnotize my friends, but then in fifth grade I found a book on ventriloquism and that came pretty quickly for me. I was always fascinated with all forms of entertainment, but especially magic and puppets. But other kids in school were doing magic, and I wanted to be original so ventriloquism became my thing," says Fator, who rounded out his creative endeavors by taking on the lead in many school and church plays as a kid, and later fronted the band Texas the Band from the late '80s through 2001. He was this close to signing a record deal with Warner Bros. until they told him he had to take the ventriloquism out of his band performances. That was a deal-breaker for the entertainer.

As a young kid, Fator would practice talking without moving his lips in the privacy of his closet and while he was working odd jobs, hiding his rehearsals from his unsupportive father. At age 10, he bought a \$20 puppet from Sears, but its head and eyes didn't move, making it hard to really get his act down. His mother,

who, on the contrary, was quite supportive, took the puppet apart, gave him a whole new body, and slapped a wig on his head, and Fator was on his way to practicing with a real puppet that he named Josh. He soon graduated to a semi-professional puppet, which he used until age 18, and onto his first real professional puppet that he named Walter T. Airedale, a country singer, which is still a part of his act today. Little by little Walter was joined by an eclectic cast of characters, including Winston the Impersonating Turtle, Julius, the soul singer, Maynard Thompkins, the Elvis impersonator, Monty Carlo, a lounge singer, Emma Taylor, the little girl with the big voice, Dougie the annoying neighbor, Vikki, the Cougar, and many others.

After decades of performing, Fator felt at the end of his creative rope. "it was just so discouraging because I felt I had something big to offer that millions would want to see, but I couldn't find that break. Even five months before 'America's Got Talent,' I did a show in 1,000-seat theater and only one person showed up. I was

so down. I thought, 'Why am I doing this? It's never gonna happen. I'll never have millions of people that enjoy my gift.' But then I thought, 'Wait a second. I'm lucky that I get to do what I love and I do love this. So what if I always have to play for first graders or kids parties or county fairs? I'm still doing what I love and I'm not going to stop. It's better than going to work at a real job just to pay the bills,'" says the showbiz journeyman.

Today, Fator impersonates more voices than he can count with the help of more than a dozen puppets singing everything from Etta James, Elvis Presley, and the Temptations to Cher, Barbra Streisand, and Michael Jackson to Adele, Justin Timberlake, and Justin Bieber.

And, he finally has that audience of millions who enjoy his hard work through his sold-out and award winning live show, multi-platinum selling DVDs (his debut DVD, "Terry Fator: Live From Las Vegas" has recently gone four times platinum), and numerous memorable television appear-

ances. The industry has certified him a bona fide superstar, as well, with Simon Cowell declaring Fator to be "one of the best entertainers in the world" and The Best of Las Vegas Awards honoring "Terry Fator: The VOICE of Entertainment" with awards for Best Show, Best All-Around Performer, Best Impersonator, and Best Overall Show.

"The best thing about all of this is that now my creativity is not shackled by my lack of finances any more. Now, if I have an idea I can actually do it and do it right," he says. On his immediate creative horizon is a series of forthcoming projects, including a DVD of his Mirage show, a country music album titled "It Starts Tonight"; a novel, which is an allegory of life; a memoir; and a series of children's books that tell the story of the life of Jesus Christ as told through the eyes of his cat.

What's next? "I just always want to entertain. That's it. I never had fans before and now that I do I just want to keep them smiling and laughing," he adds.

One Paragraph Boiler Bio

Terry Fator became a household name in 2007 when he won Season 2 of "America's Got Talent" with his unique brand of entertainment that combines singing, comedy, and unparalleled celebrity impressions. After 25 years of honing his skills at county fairs and venues across the country, the Dallas-bred entertainer's big "AGT" win at age 42 catapulted him into the upper echelon of entertainers, landing him at No. 2 on Forbes' list of the top-earning comics behind Jerry Seinfeld in 2013. The feat is due largely to his multi-million dollar deal with the Mirage Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas where his award-winning show, "Terry Fator: The VOICE of Entertainment," has been running since 2009. With a cast of characters including Winston, the Impersonating Turtle, Emma Taylor, the little girl with the big voice, Maynard Tompkins, the Elvis Impersonator, Monty Carly, the lounge singer, and many others, Fator has been raking in awards, accolades, and industry admiration ever since. Recent projects include a DVD, a memoir, a novel, a children's book entitled "Lamu" and a country music CD titled "It Starts Tonight". Upcoming projects still to come include an updated biography and the second installment of "Lamu".

PUPPET DESCRIPTIONS



Berry Fabulous

HIP HOP DIVA

Berry Fabulous has a secret that he's ashamed of – he is a recovering lawyer. But he is thrilled to have left that career as he begins his around-the-world tour as the world's most famous male diva, performing the songs of all the greats from Cher to Babs. In Berry's words, "Terry needs me, his show needs more fruit and less cheese." Berry knows better than anyone that the #1 reason to come out of a closet is to make room for more fabulous clothes.

Duggie

THE ANNOYING NEIGHBOR

Whoa, dude! Like, welcome to everyone's favorite annoying neighbor, a heavy metal head trip who's been there, done that and... can't remember any of it. From his unrepentant mullet to his unbridled passion for both kinds of music (rock and roll), **Duggie** is one supremely cool party animal, the kind you'd love to hang with – but hate to have living next door.



Emma

THE LITTLE GIRL WITH THE BIG VOICE

Big things coming in small packages. Emma may be tiny, but she has the voice of a giant. In fact, it was her rendition of the Etta James classic "At Last" that blew the judges away during Terry's America's Got Talent debut. Sweet and shy, Emma may not say much, but when she sings – it's magic!

PUPPET DESCRIPTIONS

Hyphen

THE DELUSIONAL BRITISH ROCK'N ROLLER

With his mop-top hair and his lilt-ing Liverpudlian accent, **Hyphen** has a very special connection to the Fab Four. Though he's never been chased down the street by throngs of screaming girls (he has always imagined screaming girls in thongs) or lived beneath the waves in a yellow submarine, Hyphen certainly has a way around the Beatles music. Ready for a second British Invasion? Here comes Hyphen. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.



Maynard Thompkins

WORLD'S GREATEST ELVIS IMPERSONATOR

Maynard Thompkins brings new levels of meaning to the word "delusional." His claims of being the world's greatest Elvis Presley impersonator are severely undermined by the fact that he doesn't actually know any Elvis songs. Every night onstage stumbling and stuttering, the painfully shy Maynard experiences a metamorphosis that rivals that of a caterpillar into a butterfly... A delusional butterfly... In a white jumpsuit.



Julius

THE SOUL SINGER

What **Julius** does with a song is so soulful, you can just close your eyes and feel like you're in heaven. Whether crooning like Nat King Cole or groovin' like James Brown, Julius really knows his way around a tune. In a city of 100-degree temperatures, Julius always maintains his cool. In fact, if he were any cooler, he'd give Terry's hand frostbite.



PUPPET DESCRIPTIONS



Monty Carlo

THE LOUNGE SINGER

Monty Carlo is a career lounge singer who has never quite made it to the top. He drinks like Dean and swaggers like Frank but he is to the Rat Pack what Hoboken is to New York City. Monty has joined Terry's show to prepare for his audition for America's Got Talent. As Monty says, I'm either gonna have a #1 hit or hire a hitman to take care of the guy who does.

Vikki

THE COUGAR

The scariest predator one can ever come face to face with is a cougar – a Beverly Hills cougar named Vikki. During the last recession she single-handedly kept the cosmetic surgery industry from collapsing in an effort to keep herself from collapsing. Grrrr, this man-eater has claws, and she's always stalking the next handsome young man who's half her age – but twice her tax bracket.



Walter

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

Walter is a legendary country singer and an even more legendary ladies' man. When Walter sings, security has to put up a barricade to keep his female fans from rushing the stage. The man gets women so hot the EPA named him the #1 cause of global warming. He gets the women in the audience more excited than a fat man at the all-you-can-eat buffet. Walter wows them with impressions that are so good, he could be charged with identity theft.

PUPPET DESCRIPTIONS

Winston

THE IMPERSONATING TURTLE

If you ask **Winston**, he was the one who won America's Got Talent. In other words, he's the star that made Terry a star. Rather than leave his old pal behind, Winston felt so attached to Terry, he made him part of the act. Success hasn't spoiled this turtle, but it has made him a regular at Vegas nightspots. He's a real lounge lizard who knows his way around The Strip and isn't afraid to come out of his shell – especially after a grasshopper or two.



Kani

THE BROTHER-IN-LAW

Kani Kapila is here to stay at Terry and Taylor's house, that is. Kani is Terry's eternally hungry brother-in-law from Honolulu. He came to visit Terry and Taylor for Christmas week in 2009. That week turned into several years. When Terry asked Kani how long he planned to stay, he replied how long is your deal at The Mirage?" Kani loves The Mirage buffet but, even more, loves the free buffet at Terry and Taylor's. Kani is a master musician and singer who loves to chillax and jam on his ukulele.



Wrex

THE SAFETY EXPERT

This guy has what it takes – and gets it from all sides! Ka-baaaam! But whatever you do, don't call **Wrex** a crash test dummy – he's an "Impact Assessment Consultant." Either way, Wrex is a real pro, a guy who knows how to keep himself together – even if it does take a whole lotta duct tape, bailing wire and mondo-bondo plastic wood.



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