



Kicking Through the Ashes: My Life as a Stand-up in the 1980s Comedy Boom

Ritch Shydner

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Comedian Ritch Shydner is one of America's funniest and most enduring stand-up comics, a wry observer of life around him and a survivor of the 1980s comedy boom.

Besides becoming a comic's comic over the decades, he has starred on television's "Married With Children" and won awards for his writing as a member of the "Roseanne" staff.

The book's introduction is by Bill Maher, host of HBO's "Real Time with Bill Maher."

Dozens of photos and index!

In "Kicking Through the Ashes," Shydner collects all of his 1980s life experiences -- the good, the bad, and El Brookman's -- in one hard to put down memoir. He tells stories about **Jay Leno, Jerry Seinfeld, Tim Allen, Carol Leifer, Richard Belzer, Johnny Carson, Andrew Dice Clay, Rodney Dangerfield, Tom Dreesen, Budd Friedman, Gilbert Gottfried, Bill Hicks, Sam Kinison, David Letterman, Bill Maher, Steve Martin, Jackie "The Jokeman" Martling, Rick Overton, Phyllis Diller, Kevin Rooney, Robin Williams, Richard Pryor** and more!

But don't believe his publisher; consider what some of the world's funniest people think of Shydner:

"Ritch Shydner is one of the best comedians I've ever seen. He is Seinfeld good, Kinison good, Pryor good. Ok, maybe not Pryor good, but still an absolute killer. Every time I've seen Ritch on stage, he always took the audience to a place where all the other comics in the room had no idea they could go. I'm sure this book is in a section of the bookstore with books written by other famous comedians; well, Ritch might not be the most famous but he's definitely one of the funniest." -- **Chris Rock**

"Ritch Shydner is one of my comedy heroes. I remember watching him kill in the '80s and thinking that he is one of the greatest comics ever. Though the years we have written and worked together many times. He is a fabulous writer. Ritch's journey as a stand-up is a fascinating story. I know, I was there for a lot of it!" -- **Jeff Foxworthy**, "Blue Collar Comedy Tour," host, "Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader"

"I don't think 'Comedy Veteran' really describes what Ritch Shydner is. He was a Comedy Warrior. He's been through all the battles in all the trenches of the comedy boom. Now Ritch is an aging sage, spinning his Homeric tale and the tales of others in this personal history of the job and the art of stand-up." -- **Marc Maron**, host/creator, "WTF with Marc Maron" podcast

"This book is hilarious and heartbreaking, packed with stories that move and shake, much like the author." -- **Margaret Cho**, Comedian!

"Ritch is one of the best comics I've ever seen. His descriptive gift for storytelling is what made him great onstage and now in print." -- **Billy Gardell**, star, "Mike & Molly"

"My favorite period of stand up comedy is the '70s and '80s. So many comics broke out during this time that had a tremendous influence on my love of the art and my dream to do it. Ritch Shydner is one of the comics I

watched before I became a comedian, and I'm so glad he took the time to share his stories and insights in this amazing new book!" -- **Bill Burr**, writer/co-creator, "F Is for Family"

"Kicking Through the Ashes is surely one of the best books ever written about the experience of becoming a stand-up comic and an artist. Each chapter is better than the last. Personal and provocative. A thrilling memoir." -- **Mike Binder**, writer/director

"Ritch Shydner's dad told his friends that Ritch had joined a religious cult rather than have to admit that his son was pursuing a career as a stand-up. Though an argument could be made that the two things have more in common than his dad could have imagined. Ritch tells the story of the millions of small battles and ground skirmishes he fought as he morphed from law student into real live working comedian in a compelling way. I enjoyed reading it." -- **Merrill Markoe**, author/humorist

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Flora Godfrey:

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Willie Collins:

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