

= Yearley Smith =

Yearley Smith (/ ʒj??rdli? / ; born Martha Maria Yearley Smith ; July 3 , 1964) is an American actress , voice actress , writer , author , comedian , and painter . She is best known for her long @-@ running role as Lisa Simpson on the animated television series The Simpsons .

She was born in Paris and moved with her family to Washington , DC , in 1966 . As a child , Smith was often teased because of her voice . She became a professional actress in 1982 after graduating from drama school and moved to New York City in 1984 , where she appeared in the Broadway production of Tom Stoppard 's The Real Thing . She made her film debut in 1985 's Heaven Help Us , followed by roles in The Legend of Billie Jean and Maximum Overdrive . She moved to Los Angeles in 1986 and received a recurring role in the television series Brothers . In 1987 , she auditioned for a role in a series of animated shorts about the Simpson family on The Tracey Ullman Show . Smith intended to audition for the role of Bart Simpson , but the casting director felt her voice was too high , so she was assigned the role of Lisa , instead . She voiced Lisa for three seasons on The Tracey Ullman Show , and in 1989 , the shorts were spun off into their own half @-@ hour show , The Simpsons . For her work as the character , Smith received a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Voice @-@ Over Performance in 1992 .

Alongside The Simpsons , Smith appeared in the sitcom Herman 's Head as Louise , and had recurring appearances as Marlene on Dharma & Greg and Penny in two episodes of Dead Like Me . She has appeared in several films , including City Slickers , Just Write , Toys and As Good as It Gets . In 2004 , Smith performed her own off @-@ Broadway one @-@ woman show entitled More at the Union Square Theatre in New York City . Aside from The Simpsons , Smith has recorded few voice @-@ over parts , only commercials and the film We 're Back ! A Dinosaur 's Story . Smith starred in and served as executive producer for the independent romantic comedy Waiting For Ophelia , which had its world premiere at the Phoenix Film Festival in April 2009 .

Smith was married to actor Christopher Grove from 1990 to 1992 and Daniel Erickson from 2002 to 2008 . She enjoys writing and painting . During the first season of Herman 's Head , Smith taught herself to paint by copying other artists . She released a children 's book titled I , Lorelei in 2009 and her story " The Race " was included in the book Just Humor Me .

= = Early life = =

Smith was born Martha Maria Yearley Smith on July 3 , 1964 , in Paris . Her father , Joseph Smith , worked for United Press International in Paris and moved to Washington , DC , in 1966 , where he became The Washington Post 's first official obituary editor . Her mother , Martha Mayor , was a paper conservator for the Freer and Sackler Galleries at the Smithsonian Institution . Smith 's parents later divorced . Smith labeled her family " upper crust and reserved " . As a child , Smith was often teased because of her unusual voice . Smith has stated : " I 've sounded pretty much the same way since I was six . Maybe [my voice is] a little deeper now . " She made her acting debut in a sixth @-@ grade play .

= = Career = =

= = = Early career = = =

Smith became a professional actress in 1982 after graduating from drama school . After appearances in a number of school plays , she joined the local Arena Stage theater group on an apprenticeship , featuring in their production of Peter Pan . She went on to star in several other plays in Washington . She moved to New York City in 1984 and appeared in the Broadway production of Tom Stoppard 's play The Real Thing alongside Jeremy Irons and Glenn Close .

Smith 's first film role came in Heaven Help Us (1985) . She then played Putter in The Legend of Billie Jean (also 1985) . The film was a box office bomb and critically panned , although Smith "

thought it would be the movie that launched my career . And then it was out at the box office about 10 days before it died . " When filming was over , she rejoined The Real Thing before being out of work for six months . Smith worried her career was over . However , the following year , she played Connie in Stephen King 's Maximum Overdrive (1986) , noting it was " truly a dreadful film , but I had a great part in it . "

Smith moved to Los Angeles in 1986 on the " semi @-@ promise " of a part in a TV film . After the audition , the role was given to another actress . Smith realized " that people don 't mean what they say . It 's not malicious . They just don 't realize how much impact they have on an impressionable actor ? and all actors are impressionable . " From then on , she decided to " just sort of build a wall around myself , " to cope with the disappointment of not getting a part . In Los Angeles , Smith appeared in theatrical productions of Living on Salvation Street , for which she was paid \$ 14 for each performance , Boys and Girls / Men and Women , and How the Other Half Loves , and played the recurring role of Louella Waters on the Showtime series Brothers . She appeared in the films The Legend of Billie Jean and Ginger Ale Afternoon (1989) as " trailer @-@ park girls " . She later spoke of her regrets of appearing in the latter in her one @-@ woman show More .

= = = The Simpsons = = =

Smith 's longest @-@ running role is voicing Lisa Simpson on The Simpsons . She has voiced Lisa since 1987 , beginning with The Simpsons shorts on The Tracey Ullman Show . Smith had initially been asked to audition for the role of Lisa 's brother Bart , but casting director Bonita Pietila thought her voice was too high . Smith later recalled " I always sounded too much like a girl , I read two lines as Bart and they said , ' Thanks for coming ! ' " Smith was given the role of Lisa , instead . She denies rumors that she almost turned down the role , though admits she had never planned a career in voice @-@ over work . Pietila stated that , having seen her in Living on Salvation Street , Smith was always her preferred choice . Smith lifts her voice up slightly to perform the role . Lisa is the only regular character voiced by Smith , although in some earlier episodes , she provided some of Maggie 's squeaks and occasional speaking parts . Smith has only voiced characters other than Lisa on very rare occasions , with those characters usually being some derivative of Lisa , such as Lisa Bella in " Last Tap Dance in Springfield " and Lisa , Jr. in " Missionary : Impossible " (both from season 11 in 2000) . Smith spends two days a week recording the show .

Until 1998 , Smith was paid \$ 30 @,@ 000 per episode . During a pay dispute in 1998 , Fox threatened to replace the six main voice actors with new actors , going as far as preparing to cast new voices . However , the dispute was soon resolved and she received \$ 125 @,@ 000 per episode until 2004 , when the voice actors demanded that they be paid \$ 360 @,@ 000 an episode . The issue was resolved a month later , and Smith earned \$ 250 @,@ 000 per episode . After salary renegotiations in 2008 , the voice actors received about \$ 400 @,@ 000 per episode . Three years later , with Fox threatening to cancel the series unless production costs were cut , Smith and the other cast members accepted a 25 % pay cut , down to just over \$ 300 @,@ 000 per episode .

Despite her world @-@ famous role , Smith is rarely recognized in public , which she does not mind , saying , " it 's wonderful to be in the midst of all this hype about the show , and people enjoying the show so much , and to be totally a fly on the wall ; people never recognise me solely from my voice . " In a 2009 interview with The Guardian , she commented : " It 's the best job ever . I have nothing but gratitude for the amount of freedom The Simpsons has bought me in my life . "

Smith received a Primetime Emmy Award in 1992 , but felt it was not worth anything , saying " there 's part of me that feels it wasn 't even a real Emmy . " The Emmy for Outstanding Voice @-@ Over Performance is a Creative Arts and not handed out during the primetime telecast and , prior to 2009 , was a juried award without nominations . However , Smith says " if I had to be associated with one character in fiction , I will always be thrilled that it was Lisa Simpson . " The show 's creator Matt Groening has called Smith very similar to Lisa : " Yeardley has strong moral views about her character . There are lines that are written for Lisa that Yeardley reads and says , ' No , I wouldn 't say that . ' " Writer Jay Kogen praised her performance on the show , particularly in the episode " Lisa 's Substitute " , as able " to move past comedy to something really strong and serious and

dramatic . "

= = = Further career = = =

From 1991 to 1994 , alongside The Simpsons , Smith was one of the lead cast members in the sitcom Herman 's Head as Louise . Her other television roles include recurring appearances as Marlene on Dharma & Greg , and Penny in two episodes of Dead Like Me . Smith has also appeared in Phil of the Future and Teen Angel . Her one @-@ scene role as pregnant checkout girl Nancy in 1991 's City Slickers earned her " more attention than all [her] previous roles combined , " and taught her " that it 's far better to have small parts in big movies that everyone sees . " In 1997 , she appeared as Lulu the palm reader in the independent film Just Write . Her other roles include parts in Barry Levinson 's Toys and James L. Brooks ' As Good as It Gets . Brooks , who is also executive producer of The Simpsons , had cast Smith in his 1994 film I 'll Do Anything (in one of the film 's musical numbers) , but her part was cut . Aside from The Simpsons , Smith has recorded few voice @-@ over parts , only commercials and the film We 're Back ! A Dinosaur 's Story . She " had a voice @-@ over agent for about two years , and I used to go out [on auditions] all the time , but it never really came to anything . Everybody said , ' Oh Yeardley , you 'll clean up , ' and that was definitely not the case . "

In 2004 , Smith performed her own off @-@ Broadway one @-@ woman show entitled More at the Union Square Theatre in New York City . Directed by Judith Ivey , the play is about her mixed feelings over the success of The Simpsons , her parents , her relationships , and her struggles with bulimia . The New York Times critic Margo Jefferson called it an " appealing if overlong show " , adding that " The career narrative needed shortening . This would involve some editing and revising but wouldn 't taint the best parts of More . It is refreshing to hear a celebrity talk cleanly about being fame @-@ driven and about not getting the degree or the kind of fame you craved . It 's fun to watch a skilled actress use her craft to the full . " She would later perform the play for three weeks in Los Angeles the following year .

Smith starred in and served as executive producer for the independent romantic comedy Waiting for Ophelia , which was released in 2009 . She funded the film , which was written by Adam Carl and based on a stage play he wrote in 2003 . She said : " I loved it . I never get to play parts like that . I always play the friend of a friend , never the lead . And the script surprised me . " Carl stated it was very unlikely she would recoup her money , but Smith decided she " believe [d] in this project , and my expectations have already been fulfilled by making the movie " , and added : " You can support art even if it 's not going to make a zillion dollars . " It premiered on April 4 , 2009 at the Phoenix Film Festival .

In 2011 , Smith starred as Ms. Miller in the movie The Chaperone alongside Triple H and Ariel Winter .

In June 2016 , the Human Rights Campaign released a video in tribute to the victims of the 2016 Orlando gay nightclub shooting ; in the video , Smith and others told the stories of the people killed there .

= = Personal life = =

Smith married English @-@ Canadian actor Christopher Grove in 1990 . They were divorced in 1992 , citing irreconcilable differences . She married Daniel Erickson in 2002 ; the marriage lasted for six years and Smith filed for divorce on May 21 , 2008 , citing once again irreconcilable differences . In a 1997 interview with The Daily Targum , Smith stated " I am shy , but I have an extroverted persona which I can draw on when I need to , " and that she is a " private " actress . In 2009 , she commented , " People have said to me that I 'm unassuming . It 's true , I 'm the worst celebrity ever . But I 'm trying to become better . " Smith had bulimia since she was a teenager . She noted " It would make me high , I would feel endorphins and this great sense of victory . "

Smith enjoys writing and painting . During the first season of Herman 's Head , Smith taught herself to paint by copying other artists . The book Just Humor Me includes a story , " The Race " , written

by Smith . She has written a children 's book , I , Lorelei , which was published by HarperCollins in February 2009 .

In 2011 , Smith launched a women 's shoe line called Marchez Vous .

= = Filmography = =

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