

Vodka, Art and Fashion

A Documentary by Irene Langemann

In the 1950s, Vodka began its ascent in the West. Smirnoff soon becomes the largest Western Vodka brand. After the family's flight from the Bolshevik, the son Vladimir refloats the company Smirnoff in Paris. After a hard slog, he sells the Smirnoff brand to the firm of Heublein (U.S.) in 1939. The new owner, John F. Martin, has the brilliant idea to market Vodka as the basis for mixed drinks. Martin's concept to mix Vodka with orange juice or ginger ale turns out to be a huge success. Thanks to James Bond, the brand becomes famous all around the world. That is because Agent 007 mixes his legendary Vodka Martini with Smirnoff Vodka. However, in the latest Bond movie, "Die Another Day", Smirnoff has been replaced by Finlandia Vodka, because Smirnoff intends to concentrate on a younger consumer group. Today, Smirnoff Vodka is sold in 150 countries. The roots of Absolut Vodka, the third largest brand in the world, lay in 15th century Sweden. It has been called Absolut vodka ever since 1879. The first bottle intended for export was not produced until 1979. The most important markets are the U.S. and Canada. Now as ever, the manufacturing plant is in Åhus in Southern Sweden. Up to today, the company has run a most successful ABSOLUT-ART advertising campaign featuring famous names such as Andy Warhol. More than 500 artists, designer and photographers all over the world have created works of art for the company's art collection. Gorbatschow Vodka is by far the best-selling vodka in Germany. Michail Gorbachev's rise offered up marketing opportunities for this vodka that its competitors could only dream of. The slogan "The vodka of Friendship" introduced it to the international markets in 1987. Nowadays, Gorbatschow Vodka belongs to the champagne cellars of Henkel & Söhnlein. The film will concentrate on younger people and their relation to vodka. Accordingly, the film will use a young filmic language.

Running time: 30 min.