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Tales Of The Warner Brothers

By Stephen Schochet

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The four Warner Brothers, which included the womanizing Jack, the conservative Harry, the quiet Albert and the visionary Sam, had risen from obscurity with *The Jazz Singer* (1927) the first famous and financially successful talking movie ever made. Tragically, Sam Warner, the real brains behind the whole project, died of a brain tumor two days before *The Jazz Singer's* debut. Jack was thrilled by the film's success, but crushed by his brother's death. He became difficult to deal with for the rest of his life. His older and more conservative brother Harry and he fought constantly over money and Jack's womanizing ways. One time Harry chased Jack through the studio with a two by four threatening to kill him. The feud became so bitter that Jack opted to play tennis rather than attend Harry's funeral in 1958. One time Jack met Albert Einstein, "Mr. Einstein, I have my own theory of relativity. Don't hire them."

Warner was fascinated by Einstein especially the physicists detailed descriptions of stars. After he left Jack told a staff member, "Sign this Betelgeuse guy to a contract. Einstein think he has potential."

Despite or maybe because of his aborted singing career, Jack Warner seemed to resent similar ambitions in others. One day her was strolling through the studio lot when he heard a young man singing with a beautiful voice. It was coming from the security guard shack. Curious, the mogul walked up to question his startled employee.

"Young man, was that you singing?" "W-why yes Mr. Warner." "Young man you have a beautiful voice." "Oh thank you Mr. Warner." "MM. Tell me, young man, what would you rather be? A security guard or a singer?" "Oh Mr. Warner, I dreamed of being a singer." "Ok young man. You're fired!"

Jack Warner treated all of his employees with derision, but none worse than the writers. Many of them although better paid at the studio than they ever were writing novels, resented the nine to five routine they were forced to adhere to at the Warner's factory. Where the actors were free to leave the studio at lunch the writers had to be "chained" to their typewriter. One time Warner called a writer into the studio

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screening room for his suggestions on how to fix a weak script." I'm sorry Mr. Warner. I have no ideas after five."

Another time Jack called in a writer to his office. "Look pally, I got to fire you because I heard you were a communist. " "Mr. Warner, please! I'm not a communist, I'm an anti-communist!" "I don't care what kind of commie you are! You are out of here!"

Well after *The Jazz Singer's* success, Jack remained sensitive to religious matters. When he hired a stage actor named Jules Garfield, he told him, "Ok, we have to change your name. How about James Garfield?" "Mr. Warner I don't want to change my name. Anyhow James Garfield was a President. Why don't you change my name to Abraham Lincoln?" "Forget it Garfield. Abraham's too Jewish. We're not going to give the wrong impression." After much arguing they compromised with John Garfield.

Warner's actors gave as well as they got. Humphrey Bogart called him a creep. Errol Flynn actually

threatened to kill him. James Cagney, after driving down the road and seeing Pat O'Brian's name billed above his on a movie marquee sued him for breach of contract and won. Betty Davis, constantly complaining about the films she was cast in, fled to England to perform on the stage only to have Warner track her down and legally compel her to return. But perhaps the toughest of all his battles was with actor George Raft. Raft, who hung out with gangsters like Bugsy Siegel in real life, was loath to be cast as a thug on the screen. He turned virtually every role he was offered. Finally, Jack decided to buy George out of his contract. "Will \$10,000 do it?" He asked George wearily. To Jack's astonishment, George pulled out his own checkbook, promptly paid his boss \$10,000 and stormed out of the office!

Stephen Schochet is the author and narrator of the audiobooks *Fascinating Walt Disney* and *Tales Of Hollywood*. The *Saint Louis Post Dispatch* says, " these two elaborate productions are exceptionally entertaining." Hear realaudio samples of these great, unique gifts at

www.hollywoodstories.com

orgofhlly@aol.com

Review On Bravo's Work Out

By Edward Charkow

Work Out, a fitness-based docu-drama featuring trainer to the stars, Jackie Warner and the opening of her new workout facility, was Bravo's sleeper hit of the summer of 2006. *Work Out* gained viewers near the end of its short television run, drawing in an audience of close to one million for its finale. The finale was above and beyond the most viewed episode of the show, inspiring Bravo President, Laura Zalaznick, to consider another installation of the series.

Zalaznick states, "We are doing jumping jacks in the halls today at Bravo. With Work Out we've introduced a dynamic new personality, Jackie Warner, who has connected and inspired viewers with her passionate and focused approach to life."

Jackie Warner, owner of Sky Sport and Spa in Beverly Hills, California, is an out and proud lesbian who engaged viewers with an honest look at her professional and personal life. Much of the reality series focused on Jackie's love relationship with then girlfriend Mimi, a woman 10 years Warner's junior. Warner opened Sky Sport and Spa in 2004, coming to the attention of Bravo after a cameo appearance in Jonathan Antin's reality series Blow Out. The source of most of the show's success is the rollercoaster of a relationship between Warner and her younger girlfriend, both of whom battle for control of each other. As Sky Sport develops as a celebrity work out center, media and public attention grows tenfold for Jackie, who travels all over the country to train famous and wealthy clients. Mimi responds to the frequent trips with anger and jealousy; in fact, her jealous rages included throwing a drink at Warner in a bar, biting Warner's hand until she drew tears, and stomping on pictures of Sky Sport's female clientele. The finale brings the relationship problems to a new level, as Mimi is carried out of Warner's celebration by security. Warner was left with no choice but to accept that the relationship does not fit her professional lifestyle.

Work Out gave its viewers an unfettered glimpse into the 24/7 life of a professional woman who identifies as a lesbian. Another central issue during the series was the strife between Warner and her mother, a highly religious woman who shuns her daughter's personal life. All audiences, straight and gay, male and female, can relate to Warner's unbridled passion for success and her quest to live a well balance life of career, family and personal growth. Audiences hope to see Work Out return for another run on Bravo in 2007.

Find more out about Bravo's Work Out and the entire reality t.v. world at

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