

## PREFACE

By Aubrey Day, Editor-in-Chief, *Total Film* and *Sky Movies*

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Turn up at a dinner party and tell people you're a film journalist and one line of inquiry comes up again and again. And, no matter how many directors, producers, writers, or sundry other bright and beguiling studio folk you have ever interviewed, it won't concern any of them. No, the questions you'll face go something like this: 1. Who's the most famous actor you've met? 2. What were they like? 3. Did they look as good in real life? 4. Who's the nicest? 5. Who was the biggest pain to deal with?

The truth is, pretty much *everyone* shares a fascination with movie stars. Hollywood knows this, which is why film producers there pay such big bucks to have a Will Smith, a Jim Carrey, or a Tom Cruise in their movie. Got a questionable rom com script? Add Smith and suddenly it's a \$200 million box-office success. Not sure whether a chick flick will draw them in? Reese Witherspoon's name above the title will probably make it a safe proposition.

It has always been this way. Paul Newman, Steve McQueen, Marilyn Monroe . . . names that

still make you more likely to sit in front of the box and watch a movie when you might otherwise find something else to do.

Over the course of these pages, you'll find colorful details of some of the finest movie stars—from all over the world—ever to grace the silver screen. From the silent era shenanigans of Charlie Chaplin to the rebel yell of James Dean. Timeless legends (John Wayne, James Stewart, Humphrey Bogart) rub shoulders with method icons (Marlon Brando, Dustin Hoffman, Robert De Niro) and modern greats (Leonardo DiCaprio, Johnny Depp, Nicole Kidman).

Best of all, there are plenty of great actors who rarely get celebrated these days but should. Montgomery Clift, Jessica Lange, and Gene Hackman being just three of several dozen names I could mention.

Oh, and finally, in case we never meet at a dinner party, here are my answers: 1. Clint Eastwood or Jodie Foster. 2. Charming (both of them). 3. Um, yes. 4. George Clooney. 5. I couldn't possibly say . . .



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## INTRODUCTION

By Steven Jay Schneider, General Editor

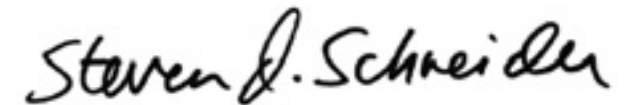
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Oh, to be a movie star. Sure, some people say—and usually too loudly—that they'd *never* want to be one . . . but we all know what those people are full of. Come on, admit it! You and me, each and every one of us, would gladly take the downside—nasty rumors, vicious gossip, invasions of privacy (there must be other negatives, but I can't seem to think of any at the moment)—for that oh-so-glorious upside. Global adoration and adulation. Fame. Fortune. Friends. If not friends, then at least fans. Lots and lots and lots of fans. Constant catering. First-class travel all around the world . . . The list goes on and on.

Best of all, movie stars get to star in movies under the ultimate spotlight. To live out larger-than-life lives (not to mention overdramatic deaths) on the grandest of all stages, the cinematic one. Upon initial release, simultaneously appearing on thousands of movie screens in hundreds of cities across dozens of countries . . . and that's to say nothing of the eternal afterlife on TV, VHS, DVD . . . and don't forget all those sleazy-yummy tabloids.

Yep, let's face it, all of us in our heart of hearts want more than anything to be a movie star. (Quite a few of us would evidently settle quite happily for becoming a reality TV star instead.) And the delicious fact of the matter is that there's no formula for success here. Physical beauty helps, sure, but perfect symmetry is boring and an actor who looks flawless is more often than not destined to wind up on the daytime television soap opera circuit. Sex appeal's a definite plus, but not if you want to be taken seriously during awards season. Brains? Uh, sure . . . Talent? Never hurts—but let's face it, we're talking about motion pictures here, not musical theater.

Ingredients for becoming a movie star surely include some (probably never all) of the above. Add a smidgeon of luck, a pinch of timing, a touch of *je ne sais quoi* . . . and a healthy dose of magic. Shake well and hire a good publicist. Now if, like most of us, you're unwilling to follow this admittedly asinine recipe, we hope and trust this rich book you're now holding will satisfy even the most ravenous star craving. *Bon appétit!*



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