

How I Broke into Hollywood



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Hollywood's survivors share their secrets to success -- where, they came from, how they made it, and how you can too In a heyday of reality television and overnight stardom, it's easy to forget that most players had to work hard to make it big. How I Broke into Hollywood brings together dozens of Tinseltown's greatest success stories, from legends Sydney Pollack and Lalo Schifrin to rising starlet Erika Christensen to über-producer Gavin Polone. Icons of their industry -- writers, actors, directors, designers, cinematographers, executives and more -- they were once outsiders themselves, and their beginnings have all the grit and glamour of the best Hollywood films. Among the figures profiled: Comedian Bernie Mac, whose earliest stand-up shows were on subway cars and at funeral parties. Actor Charles Dutton, who was convicted of manslaughter at age seventeen, then went on to the Yale School of Drama and a brilliant career on stage, screen, and television. Actor Peter Gallagher, who suffered a crippling bout of stage fright moments before leaping onstage as Snoopy -- but whose jitters moved him to a performance that brought the audience to its feet and launched his career. Superagent Jay Kanter, who started out as a mailroom guy -- before nabbing Marlon Brando as his first star client. Producer Caryn Mandabach, whose first job was making beer runs for the production guys at the Olympic Auditorium -- but who paid attention and soon was developing such hits as The Cosby

Show, Roseanne, and That '70s Show. Director John Landis, who hunted down his first job as a production assistant by buying a one-way ticket to London, then hitchhiking and hopping trains all the way to the set . . . in Yugoslavia. How I Broke into Hollywood shares the voices of nearly fifty Hollywood survivors as they revisit the highs and lows of their careers in their own words, dishing dirt and imparting the wisdom they gained along the way. We learn what drew them to the industry and what made them stay, what inspired and appalled them, and what secrets propelled them to professional stardom. (Hint: a good attitude -- and an unflappable ego -- don't hurt.) The road to success is a bumpy, angst-ridden, star-studded thrill ride -- but for these insiders, at least, it was worth every pitfall and lesson learned. Often hilarious, always instructive, How I Broke into Hollywood is an irresistible read for anyone fascinated by those who've made it big . . . and for people everywhere hoping to make it big themselves.

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