



Dueling Harlows: Race to the Silver Screen

Tom Lisanti

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The fascinating backstory of the competition to get two rival film biographies both titled Harlow into theaters first that quickly turned into one of the nastiest, dirtiest feuds that Hollywood ever witnessed. In 1965, in a rare occurrence not seen before or since, two motion pictures with the same title about the same subject opened within weeks of each other. Carol Lynley was Jean Harlow in Bill Sargent's *Harlow* a quickie B&W independent production filmed in Electronovision. Carroll Baker was Jean Harlow in Joseph E. Levine's *Harlow* a big budget color extravaganza from Paramount Pictures. Both endeavored to tell the story of the legendary thirties blonde bombshell's passionate love life and her meteoric rise from bit player to super star before her death at the young age of twenty-six. *Dueling Harlows: Race to the Silver Screen* recounts the struggle it took to get these rival movie biographies into theaters first considering the almost daily war-of-words between the movies' showman producers, which almost escalated into fisticuffs at the 1965 Academy Awards ceremony; the casting problems each faced; the poor screenplays, which hampered the productions; the hurried pace to complete filming causing on-set frustration; and the law suits that followed in the aftermath. Both movies were failures at the time but have camp appeal today. This well-researched book, with 18 photos, contains new interviews from people who worked on the movies including actors Carol Lynley and Michael Dante, assistant directors Richard C. Bennett and Tim Zinnemann, casting director Marvin Paige, plus film historian Robert Osborne and producer David Permut. Also included are vintage comments from Joseph Levine, Bill Sargent, Carroll Baker, Ginger Rogers, Efrem Zimbalist, Jr., Michael Connors, and many more.



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