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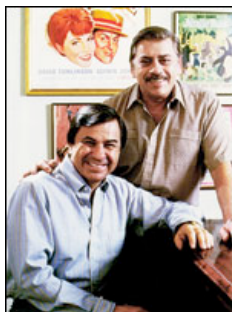
Disney reveals dark side of duo

Documentary to feature Sherman brothers

By MICHAEL FLEMING

After benefiting from upbeat Sherman brothers musical compositions for films such as "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" and the Oscar-winning "Mary Poppins," Disney is financing a documentary that will reveal the darker side of the venerable songwriting team of Robert and Richard Sherman.

Jeff and Gregg Sherman, sons of Robert and Richard, respectively, are directing "The Boys" and will produce. Ben Stiller's Red Hour will exec produce with Permut Presentations' David Permut. Steve Longi is co-producer.



Sherman brothers

Stiller hopes to use the docu as the template for a feature biopic that would allow him to play Robert Sherman. Disney has committed only to make and release the docu at this point. The picture will be ready for release late this year.

While they crafted scores of cheerful tunes such as "You're Sixteen, You're Beautiful and You're Mine," and "It's a Small World," the Shermans had a complex relationship that became so strained that cousins Jeff and Gregg didn't know each other even though they grew up just seven blocks apart.

After meeting, the cousins, who are screenwriters, decided to make a film that would explore the spectacular career and split of the Shermans.

The Sherman cousins and Permut (who is also working on a Rodney Dangerfield docu with the comic's widow, Joan) brought their work in progress to Stiller, and he quickly signed on, said his Red Hour partner Stuart Cornfeld.

"Everybody appreciates the intricacies of a collaborative relationship, and to have one so productive on a beautifully innocent level, with personal interaction that was so complicated and at times dark, is rare," Cornfeld said.

The Permut-produced "Charlie Bartlett" bows Feb. 22, and he's prepping the Miguel Arteta-directed "Youth in Revolt," starring Michael Cera.

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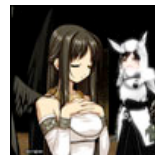
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