



Sunday, 5 May 2013

Carnegie Benny

He had a reputation as the cheapest guy in the world, but it's impossible to say how much Jack Benny helped raise for charity through his numerous violin concerts all over North America.

The calculation was \$2,000,000 when he was honoured in a TV special in 1961—and many more years of recitals (Jack would like that word) followed. *TV Radio Mirror* gave what amounted to a two-page publicity spread for the special, with one page taken up with a photo of Jack in action on stage as a serious musician. The story was as follows:

JACK BENNY

A fiddle player who's cutting the deficits without cutting the comedy by BILL KELSAY

September 27, CBS telecasts the Carnegie Hall tribute to Jack Benny—complete with such ranking members of the musical elite as Isaac Stern, Van Cliburn, Roberta Peters, the Benny Goodman Sextet, Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra . . . pretty heady company for a performer whose violin has been little more than a prop for a running joke on TV! Actually, the tribute—and the awards given Benny for his symphonic efforts—have not been in recognition of a great musical talent . . . but because Jack has turned his other talents to the practical side of the preservation of good music. In more than a score of benefit concerts—New York to Honolulu, Toronto to New Orleans—he's raised in excess of two million dollars for charity and various orchestra funds.

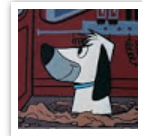
"It all started with one of my regular television shows," says Jack. "I was supposed to have had a big fight with my sponsor. I went home mad and said, 'I should have stuck with the violin!' Then I fell asleep and had this dream where I was the guest soloist with the Los Angeles Symphony. . . . In a situation like this, you cannot play badly to get laughs. The fact is, you surprise your audience by being able to get through Mendelssohn. The humor comes from small, annoying things that happen or through other musicians trying to take the play away from you. . . . I hadn't really played the violin for years. So, for a month before this show, I had to practice several hours a day. Let's face it—I'm not thirty-nine anymore and my fingers weren't supple and I had lost the touch."

Meanwhile, in New York, Carnegie Hall was about to be torn down and a committee had been formed to save it. They asked Jack to help raise funds by appearing as guest soloist with the Philharmonic in an act similar to the one on TV. . . . Jack was in Houston attending the convention of the Retarded Children's Society, of which he was honorary president. There, a leading citizen from Oklahoma suggested he break in the concert act with the Oklahoma City Symphony to raise money for the society. The pattern for Jack's concert appearances was first set in Oklahoma City: The comedy involves primarily the concertmaster, assistant concertmaster and cymbalist, and reflects the same type of humor Jack has perfected in radio and TV. He is "the fall guy" trying to live up to an image he has of himself and never quite succeeding.

"The big job in these concerts is preparation," says Irving Fein, president of Jack's production company. "For most of the people we are working with, it is their first experience with this sort of thing. I begin with letters telling them how to sell tickets, what to use for advertising, how to set up committees. After all, they want to make money for their particular cause, and there's no point in having Jack play to a half-empty house. . . . We arrive in town at least a day or two before the concert. We have our first rehearsal with the key men involved, in Jack's suite, so that, when we get on the stage, their parts are perfect



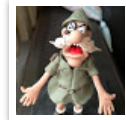
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Spencer Jordan's amazing work... we are hoping artists like Ian

Knox...and families of these comic artists can see these gems... - made with fimo clay I had ago and its not very easy to do...

3 hours ago

Fernando Liera Blog Cartoons



Vehicle Verification Centers of Mexico City will reopen in August with COVID

safety measures. - ©2020 fernandollercartoons.com

4 hours ago

Movies with Michael



Cowboy Church #67 - Hello my friends and welcome back for another

service of cowboy church. Today's musical selection begins with Gene Autry singing "Dear Hearts and Gentle Pe...

7 hours ago

Termite Terrace headlines



Question for All You Cartoon Collectors! - OK so I've been doing some

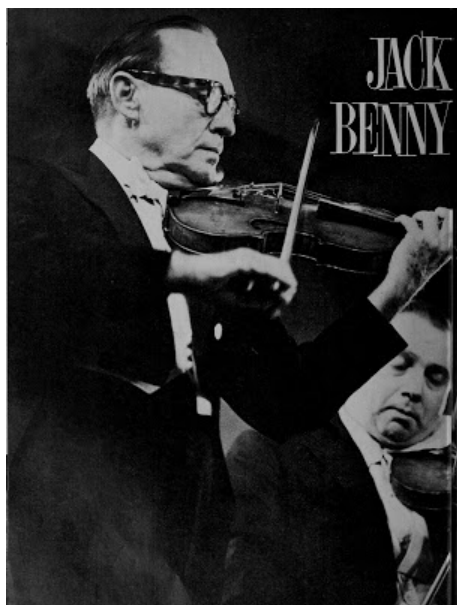
looking around. Bosko apparently had a comic book and I'm wondering if any of you know of

and we don't spend the entire symphony's time. This way, we work no more than two hours with the full orchestra. Then it's done. No problems.

"We have been a little concerned that we might run into a conductor who thought comedy was unprofessional and not suitable for the concert stage. Last year, we were worried about George Szell, who has built the Cleveland Orchestra into one of the five greatest of the world. He is a great, dedicated, and demanding conductor. . . . He couldn't have been more charming! He laughed and said to Jack, I want to rehearse this again—you know comedy, I don't.' He is a perfectionist in his field, and recognized that Jack was also a perfectionist in his."

Unfortunately, there's only one Jack Benny—and several hundred symphony orchestras. There are some four hundred requests. Jack would like to do them all but, obviously, this is out of the question. There is one in particular he would like to do. About two years ago, it looked as though he'd be able to play with the Salt Lake City orchestra. But, when he was available, their schedule was inflexible. Ever since, wherever he makes a concert appearance, he receives a telegram: "Hope you are wonderful tonight. Wish you were here!"

The accompanying photo has become tinted with age. Odd for something that is likely only 39 years old.



Posted by Yowp at [06:47](#)



Labels: [Jack Benny](#)

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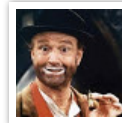
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Born on July 18, 1913 - Red Skelton - *Today's post

commences

with the Guzzler's Gin routine ...

1 day ago

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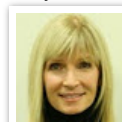
Sorry... - As far as I know, I do not have any diseases. I just have too much to deal with right now so I won't be blogging much if at all. I'm postponing all the web... 2 days ago

[Cartoon Research](#)

In His Own Words: H.T. Kalmus on Disney in Technicolor - Suspended Animation #276 Many references may be found regarding two-strip Technicolor. I have been guilty of discussing Walter Lantz's King of Jazz (1930)... 2 days ago

[AFRTS Archive](#)

Mary Turner 1985 - Mary Turner today Mary Turner really rocked the house.



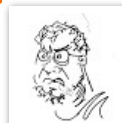
Normally when any of the jocks got a reaction, it'd be split.

The ones

that were really liked wou...

4 days ago

[The World of Knight](#)



TONIGHT, 11:54 PM. - COPYRIGHT 2020 BY MILTON KNIGHT

4 days ago

[Yowp](#)



Hanna-Barbera Birthday Did-You-Knows - 63 years ago today, some

forms were signed by George Sidney, Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera creating what eventually became the biggest TV cartoon operation i...

1 week ago

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Original animation drawing from Wabbit Twouble with color notations

for the ink and paint department. Release date: 12/20/41 Availability: Looney Tunes Gol... 3 weeks ago

Mark Kausler's CatBlog
The Lady and the Tiger - From the Cathy Hill Archive of Unpublished Comics comes "The Lady and the Tiger". This story was drawn before Cathy started the "Mad Raccoons" series. U... 4 weeks ago

What About Thad?
Cartoon Logic Podcast - And yet another distraction from this brick and mortar blog... I've entered the world of podcasting with renowned animation director and historian Bob Jaques... 10 months ago

 **Likely Looney, Mostly Merrie**
That's all, folks! - My posts have gotten thinner over the years. I'm aware of that. I've been hopeful for a long time, that I can remain active with blogging and sharing furth... 1 year ago

 **Dr. Grob's Animation Review**
The Flying Man - 'The Flying Man' is a very short absurdist film in which a man drops his coat to take a swim in mid air. Another man with a dog drops by, tries the same th... 2 days ago

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