

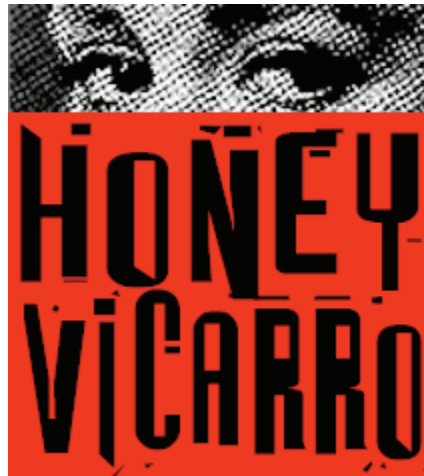
# HONEY VICARRO

IN COLOR



HONEY VICARRO

Series Concept by Daniel Knauf



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# HONEY VICARRO

by Daniel Knauf

## SERIES CONCEPT

A weekly “mockumentary” centered around a fictional 60’s television series, HONEY VICARRO, which was immediately cancelled after one episode “due to objectionable content and public outcry.” Each week features one of the “lost episodes” (meticulously restored by a small army of film preservationists) supplemented by archival footage, dailies, “deleted” scenes and commentary by surviving cast and crew, guest-stars, celebrities, pundits and media historians.

## THE “SOURCE MATERIAL”

In 1966, fabled producer Gavin Hurrell introduces the world to HONEY VICARRO, a dramatic series featuring actress Kim Carlyle in the lead role as a swinging Hollywood based private eye who works the underbelly of The City of Angels.

The series was far ahead of its time in theme, content and presentation style. After airing one episode, the network bowed to community and affiliate pressure, canceling the show (see BACKGROUND).

## CHARACTERS

**HONEY VICARRO (Kim Carlyle):** A tall, stunning, strawberry blond *magna cum laude* Vassar graduate with degrees in psychology and criminology, Honey is, as the show’s theme-song says, “cold as ice.”

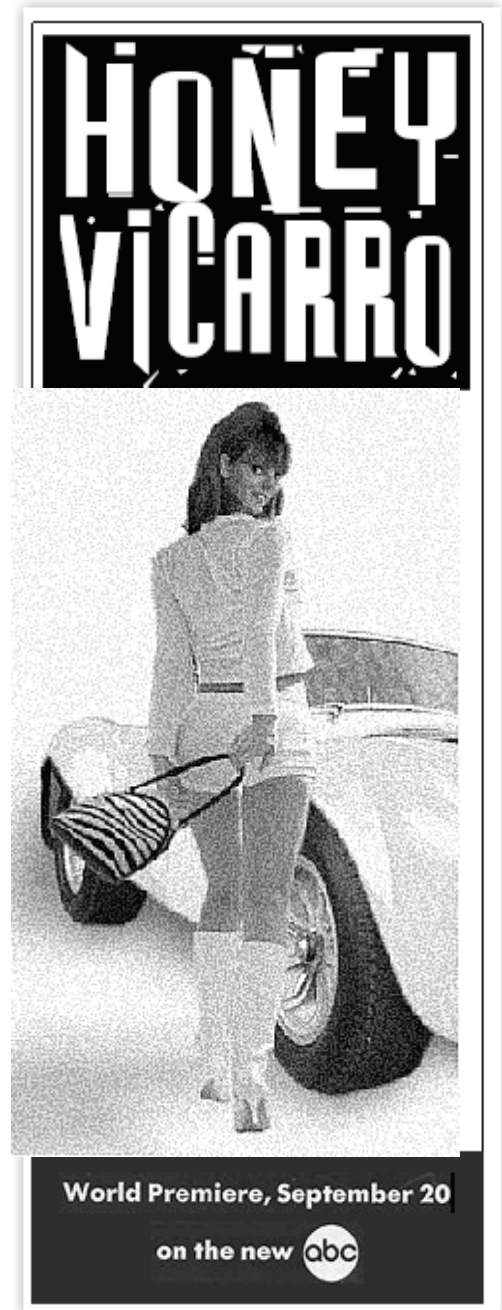
A master of Karate and Savaté <sup>1</sup>, a crack shot, and a seasoned LeMans driver, Honey’s talents are, indeed, formidable and lethal. Her most dangerous weapon? A raw sexual magnetism irresistible to both, men *and* women.

Her past is a mystery. It’s hard to get to know her. The only confidante she has is her black chauffeur/lover, Chad <sup>2</sup>. The two share an onscreen sexual chemistry that was unprecedented at the time. Brazen, casual and hot, their relationship is explicitly carnal.

Had they been married, the heat between these two characters would have been scandalous to audiences in the ‘60s. The fact that they were not—and had no inclination whatsoever to make such a commitment—was totally unacceptable. Add to this the interracial aspect of the relationship

<sup>1</sup> A French martial art primarily executed through high-flying kicks.

<sup>2</sup> Even Honey doesn’t know his last name.



## CHARACTERS (cont'd)

### HONEY'S THEME

(Composer: Lalo Schifrin, Lyrics: Gavin W. Hurrell)

*She's quick, she's cool,  
She's nobody's fool,  
She's Honey Vicarro,  
Honey Vicarro,  
Silky, slinky private eye.*

*With jaguar suits  
And naugahyde boots,  
A razor in her garter,  
Man, nobody's harder.  
Honey V., she's cold as ice.*

*Her Caddy Eldorado's cherry red.  
That cat behind the wheel's her chauffer, Chad.  
(Chad is bad)*

*From California to Kalamazoo  
Cheap thugs shake and quake in their shoes,  
When they hear her name,  
Honey Vicarro!*

©Copyright 1966, Gavin Hurrell Productions

In the end, the controversial subtext of the show combined with the ambiguity of Honey's sexual orientation and her decidedly B&D fashion-sense proved far too risqué for the political and moral climate of the 1960's.

**CHAD (Cliff diMarco):** Honey's driver and right-hand. African-American, ruggedly handsome, writes beat poetry in his spare time. Rarely seen in anything but formal livery. Chad keeps his past to himself. Even Honey doesn't know his last name. When questioned by his employer, he responds, "Honey, you're beautiful when you're curious."<sup>3</sup>

A man of few words, possessing the instincts and cat-like moves of a born street-fighter, Chad is not only Honey's lover and confidante, but has saved her bacon on more than one occasion. He shrugs off Honey's liaisons with other men. In fact, rather than jealousy, he regards her affairs with undisguised voyeuristic amusement.

Rock hard, tough and sexy, Chad has the street-sense of a man who's spent most of his time in penal institutions, as evidenced by the prison tattoos on his knuckles<sup>4</sup>. He can pick locks, hotwire cars, defeat alarms. Chad is bad.

**LT. QUIGLEY (Guy Warner):** LAPD. Not a bad-looker, if it wasn't for the cheap suits and skinny ties. Makes Joe Friday look like a fashion plate. Hates gumshoes—especially Honey. Speaks in a growling staccato. A total stiff, born in scuffed wing-tips. "Back off, Vicarro. You're in way over your pretty little head." Tries to come off tough. Does a reasonable job of it, but he's not the smartest cop on the force. Honey calls him "Bright Boy."

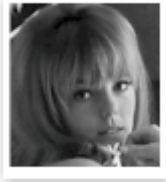
Always seems to pull the same calls Honey does. Wants to show her up. Never quite does. It's not that he's one step behind her—it's a full city block. He's married, but he definitely has a thing for Honey. Right. He and about a million other guys.

**TREVOR LE BON (Anthony Smithe-Jones):** The bartender at Honey's notorious "Club 69." A tough Cockney mod, usually decked out in love-beads and a Nehru jacket, Trevor is Honey's main source for "the word on the street." Ruggedly charming, handy in a brawl, Trev flashes his 1000 candle-watt power grin at each big tip and every pretty face (not necessarily in that order). He's got the skinny on virtually every underworld character operating on the west coast. If a crime goes down, he knows who was in on the heist before the perps have split-up the booty.

<sup>3</sup> A signature line for Chad, as in "You're beautiful when you're all tied up," "You're beautiful when you're wounded," etc.

<sup>4</sup> "D-U-K-E" on the knuckles of his right hand, "M-O-O-K" on his left.

## THE CAST



Kim Carlyle

**KIM CARLYLE:** Born in Illinois in May 1940, Kim Carlyle started her professional career as a dancer. She was spotted in a chorus-line by MCA agent, Harry Struthers, who brought her to Hollywood. The red-headed vixen was cast in B-movies, often playing the “bad girl.”

In 1960, she starred in Republic Films PARTY GIRL as a wayward teen. In the same year she married Struthers<sup>5</sup>. She caught the eye of producer, Gavin Hurrell, in 1964 when she was a featured guest star on ROUTE 66. The two began a contentious love-hate relationship that continued until Carlyle’s death in 1966.

After her divorce from Struthers in 1965 for “mental cruelty,” Carlyle was romantically linked with a number of celebrities—Peter Lupus, Troy Donahue, Ringo Starr, Sandy Koufax and Jimmy Hoffa to name a few. She remained in demand throughout the early sixties, working in both, television and films, culminating with her being cast as the lead in HONEY VICARRO, a vehicle tailored specifically for Carlyle by paramour, Hurrell.

Though she was, by all accounts, on a fast career-track and could have easily bounced back from the cancellation of HONEY VICARRO<sup>6</sup>, Carlyle subsequently fell into a deep depression exacerbated by an addiction to prescription painkillers, tragically dying of an overdose at age 26 at her Malibu home on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1966.<sup>7</sup>

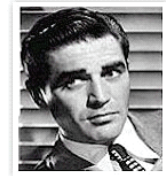


Cliff diMarco

**CLIFF DI MARCO** – DiMarco, born in Mesa, Arizona in 1929, was active in the world of bodybuilding in the early sixties, winning the title “Mr. Olympia” in 1963.

He subsequently launched his film career with several B sword-and-sandal films, segueing to a few television guest spots—most notably on THE UNTOUCHABLES and DRAGNET—before landing the role of Chad in HONEY VICARRO.

His career was short-lived, ending with several arrests in the late sixties for possession of marijuana and a stint in Folsom Prison for assault on his ex-wife, actress Carol Lynley (DARK SHADOWS, THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE). He was paroled for good behavior in 1979. Apparently rehabilitated, diMarco settled down and sold real estate in the Phoenix, AZ. Area from 1980 through his retirement in 1994. He now resides in San Juanito, a small, coastal expatriate community in Costa Rica.



Guy Warner

**GUY WARNER:** Born in 1925, a veteran actor of dozens of A and B pictures, as well as countless TV appearances. Best known in for roles in cult horror classics such as I WAS A TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN (1958) with Gary Conway and THE BLOB with a young “Stephen” McQueen.

After the cancellation of HONEY VICARRO, Warner continued in television with guest and recurring character roles in such fare as BEN CASEY, STAR TREK and EMERGENCY. For most of his life, he suffered with congenital arrhythmia and, in 1983 on the set of FANTASY ISLAND, he collapsed and died due to heart failure.

<sup>5</sup> Truly a May-December romance. Struthers was 64 years old at the time, Carlyle, barely 20.

<sup>6</sup> Just prior to her untimely death, Carlyle was, in fact, cast as the original Neely in the hit, Jacquelin Susann's VALLEY OF THE DOLLS, a role ultimately played (or, as some critics would say, botched) by Patty Duke. Given her prior work and established range, there is no doubt that Neely would have been the role that would catapult her to stardom.

<sup>7</sup> Although ruled a suicide by L.A. Coroner Thomas Naguchi, there has been a significant amount of conjecture regarding Ms. Carlyle’s manner of death, largely centering around her alleged sexual relationship with a cabinet-member in the Johnson Administration.

## THE CAST (cont'd):



Smythe-Jones

**ANTHONY SMYTHE-JONES (Trevor le Bon):** Born in 1943 in working-class Manchester, Smythe-Jones displayed an early talent for music. By the time he was seventeen, he was playing bass guitar in his first band, The Dover Souls. The band produced a number of minor hits, including Marmalade Morning and Luv 'n' Lollipops.

Smythe-Jones dabbled in acting through the early sixties, garnering critical praise for small but featured roles in *THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG DISTANCE RUNNER* and *TO SIR WITH LOVE*.

Upon the cancellation of *HONEY VICARRO*, Smythe-Jones returned to his rock 'n' roll roots. In the last of a series of disastrous "come-back" tours, a tragic plane crash outside of Clovis, California in 1977 claimed the lives of Smythe-Jones and the other two remaining Dover Souls.



## GUEST STARS:

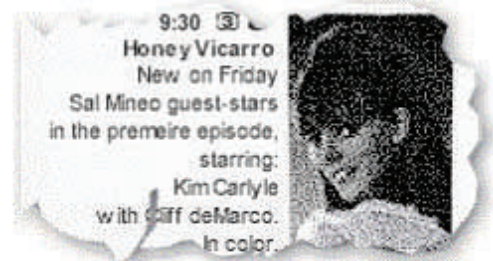
*HONEY VICARRO* stands as a testament to Gavin Hurrell's legendary eye for talent. Many of the actors featured in guest-starring roles went on to major film and television stardom.

Among the more memorable characters was **DUSTIN HOFFMAN** as the young scion of a department store magnate (**WILLIAM WINDOM**) who is being blackmailed by a ruthless male prostitute. **RICHARD PRYOR** appeared as a heroin addicted sax player framed for murder by a crooked LAPD detective. **WILLIAM SHATNER** starred as a

desperate married businessman, a multiple personality who hires Honey to follow his "dark half." **JULIE CHRISTIE** as a young school-teacher who's trapped in a nightmare of drugs and white slavery.

As far as notoriety goes, in episode #4, "Pop goes the Weasel," if you look carefully at the combo in the Blue Moon Lounge, you might find the scruffy, guitar-playing folk-singer familiar. His name? **CHARLES MANSON**.

Furthermore, Hurrell cast many of his friends, seasoned stars like **SAL MINEO**, **SAMMY DAVIS, JR.** and **ERNEST BORGNINE**. In one especially poignant episode, **LON CHANEY, JR.** guest-starred as a deaf-mute, down-and-out boxer who's willing to die in the ring to win a purse to pay for a life-saving operation for his only friend—a little girl who lives in his tenement.



## BACKGROUND:

In 1965, production of a radical new television program, HONEY VICARRO, was initiated. The show was plagued from the outset by production problems, culminating in the death of its sex-vixen lead, Kim Carlyle, from a prescription drug overdose.

Its creator, Gavin Hurrell, at the height of his career, pitched HONEY VICARRO as a standard action series (albeit one featuring a female protagonist).

Riding on the wild success of NAKED CITY and SECRET AGENT, Hurrell received a deal-point unprecedented in the industry—the right to shoot all twenty-three episodes without executive oversight. The only requirement ABC received in return was that the series comply with “standards and practices.”

Under the cloak of this arrangement, Hurrell began shooting episodes<sup>8</sup> whose themes pushed well outside the envelope—from Honey’s brazen bisexuality to her sensual relationship with her chauffeur, Chad (Cliff diMarco).

Even her wardrobe—skin-tight black leather body-suits, leopard-skin matinee jackets, Ray-Ban Cats, spike-heeled boots—oozed an in-your-face sexuality informed by a less-than-subtle B&D sensibility (virtually every episode, for instance, featured a scene in which Honey was bound and gagged—often wearing nothing but panties and brassiere).

Likewise, the stories were cutting edge, focusing on drug abuse, homosexuality, incest, police corruption, interracial sex, pornography and other issues rarely addressed in prime-time.

Only one of its original twenty-six episodes would ever be aired (the relatively tame “Brighter Shade of Pale,” guest-starring Sal Mineo). Due to public outrage, anger among affiliates (particularly in the South) and the condemnation of the Roman Catholic Church as well as virtually every other organized religious group<sup>9</sup>, the show was abruptly cancelled and replaced with reruns of THE FARMER’S DAUGHTER.

His career in ruins, Hurrell subsequently retired, rarely setting foot outside his Benedict Canyon estate until his death in 1992.



Billboard advertisement on Sunset Strip, c. 1966

<sup>8</sup> Although Hurrell credited a number of staff writers, he wrote or extensively rewrote virtually every script and served as the series director (highly unusual today, unheard of in the 1960’s).

<sup>9</sup> Rev. Donald Wildmon, founder of television watchdog group, the American Family Association, credits HONEY VICARRO with igniting his lifelong “mission” to clean up television.

Meanwhile, fed by stories related by the few executives, cast and crew who had been involved in its production, HONEY VICARRO evolved from its status as a brief footnote in television history into the cult-legend it is today.

The “mysterious” disappearance of the negatives from the studio vault<sup>10</sup> fanned the flames of rumor. The show’s reputation grew, largely due to the internet gossip-mill. A few surviving partial scripts, the opening theme and a handful of production stills provided an ample blank screen upon which fans of the show could project their own speculations and theories regarding its nature.

Nevertheless, what was actually shot on Stage 7 of the Raleigh studios was only a dim memory in the minds of the show’s surviving cast, crew and guest-stars. The only person who actually knew every detail of its production—its embittered creator, Hurrell—refused to discuss it on or off the record<sup>11</sup>.

HONEY VICARRO remained shrouded in mystery.

Until now.

## PRINTS RECOVERED

In 1997, after a protracted probate<sup>12</sup>, Hurrell’s estate finally reached Sotheby’s auction-block. One anonymous bidder acquired his voluminous collection of vintage pornography. In 1999, as he was cataloguing the collection, he found pristine prints of all twenty-six episodes of the original series run.

Since then, a handful of individuals—largely critics and media historians—have viewed the material. The actual content and quality of the series (including two reels of outtakes) has exceeded the expectations of even its most ardent fans.

“To say HONEY VICARRO was ‘progressive’ is a vast understatement,” opines Ronald DiMaria, Chief Curator for the Museum of Radio & Television, New York. “If anything, it’s prophetic. Hurrell was a genius. The stories are first-rate and, outside of the trappings of the period, surprisingly contemporary in tone and execution. Complex. Sexy and very, very hip.”

Thomas Knox, Curator of the Murrow Television Archive, writes, “The amazing thing is that HONEY VICARRO would *still* be too edgy for network TV. It’s tragic Hurrell didn’t have the outlet of modern cable for his masterwork.”

“What impresses me,” says noted L.A. Times critic Howard Rosenberg, “is the way it was shot. Setting aside the radically progressive and adult-oriented themes for the moment, HONEY VICARRO is amazing to watch in that it heralds a heavily nuanced style of cinematography and image-depth that didn’t grace television screens until almost twenty years later.”

Television producer-director, Scott Winant (THE X-FILES, MILLENIUM) agrees: “Rather than opting for the deep-focus, brightly lit approach typical of his contemporaries—heavy with master and two-shots—Hurrell utilized his camera as an unseen character, giving Honey’s world a deeply shadowed look more typical of films rather than television. His achievement is even more stunning when one considers its context. It’s hard to believe this show was produced in the same season that brought us GILLIGAN’S ISLAND and I DREAM OF JEANNIE.”

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<sup>10</sup> Actually, given HONEY VICARRO’s brief run, it would be extraordinary if the negatives had been preserved.

<sup>11</sup> Mr. Hurrell even refused to discuss the show with his family, although, according to his son, Steven Hurrell, he was begrudgingly amused by the show’s cult status. As he was fond of saying, “It was exactly twelve minutes and thirty-seven seconds ahead of its time.”

<sup>12</sup> Though he was married four times and sired no less than 14 children (nine legitimately), Hurrell died without a will.



**My proposal is as follows:**

We shoot the show, casting unknowns in the leading roles who are willing to sign confidentiality agreements. Guest appearances will be drawn from old footage of the aforementioned stars (i.e. Shatner, Hoffman, *et al*) and digitally (or simply editorially) inserted into the episodes, their dialogue dubbed.

In the preproduction process, various, amateurish web-sites are set up on ISPs that offer free home-pages (Yahoo, GeoCities, etc.). These will be designed to look like the work of individual ardent "fans" and will feature stills, sound-clips, MP-3's of the theme-song. These pages will carry "links" sections that will draw the viewer to the other sites.

To see a sample site, check out:



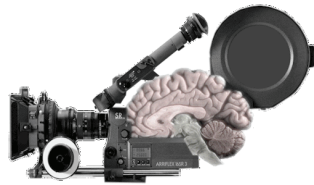
<http://home.earthlink.net/~dknauf/honey.html>

Additionally, three or four newsgroups and bulletin-board discussion groups would be established, all containing "postings" of Honey-fans from all over the world.

The pilot would consist of clips from the episodes shot up to that point, along with interviews and documentary footage of the "original" cast and crew, played by older character actors. These would be supplemented by the "guest-stars," who would "reminisce" about working on the groundbreaking series.

Then we sit back and watch the whole thing start buzzing on the net, garnering an audience and creating a surge of interest as everyone debates whether the whole thing's real or fake.

Within a couple months, it will inevitably become apparent that Honey Vicarro is a contemporary series. By then, everybody's engaged as long as we've delivered a very groovy piece of neo-retro that stands on its own quality.



u n m o v i e s . c o m