

SECRETS THE STARS TOOK TO THE GRAVE!

ACTING icon James Stewart, who embodied the best of American morality in *It's a Wonderful Life* and *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, kept a potentially career-ending secret to the end of his days — he was a horndog who bedded half of Hollywood, including Loretta Young, Olivia de Havilland, Ginger Rogers, Lana Turner, Norma Shearer and Kim Novak. He even put the screws to Marlene Dietrich to abort his illegitimate baby!

That's just one of the juicy insider tidbits in a new book exposing the good, the bad and the ugly secrets the stars went to great lengths to protect so they could enjoy their fame AND privacy!

Author Salah Bachir — who leads a “rock star life” according to pal Elton John — spent decades cultivating famous people.

“We bonded over our shared passion for raising money for good causes and developed lifelong friendships,” says the 67-year-old Canadian philanthropist and art collector, who dishes on 50 celeb pals in *First to Leave the Party: My Life with Ordinary People Who Happen to Be Famous*, which debuts Oct. 17.

When Bachir came to Elizabeth Taylor's Toronto hotel to fetch her for a fundraiser she was top-lining, he found

her “huddled on the sofa in a fur coat,” unable to leave her suite because caustic comic Joan Rivers kept humiliating the two-time Oscar winner about her weight.

“I don't look good enough,” the violet-eyed beauty lamented.

La Liz was so desperate to avoid ridicule and unflattering photos, she disguised herself in scarves and dowdy clothes to shop at antiques markets.

Other stars who longed to avoid the fuss of fame included acting royalty Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward, who often stopped by Bachir's pad for a late-night bite. The down-to-earth couple refused to drink bottled water, only tap, and on a road trip to Niagara Falls insisted on buying fast-food burgers to repay franchises for using their restrooms!

Bachir says he liked helping great actors and directors who were down on their luck or health.

“I met many of them at the end of their careers,” he tells *The National ENQUIRER*. “Some of the biggest stars couldn't get work because Hollywood judged their talent by the pound.

“Or take the case of the great actress Patricia Neal, who co-starred with Newman in *Hud*. She played the mother in the movie version of *The Waltons*, which touted homespun family



JOANNE WOODWARD

Thrifty Joanne sewed her own gown for the 1958 Academy Awards when she won for *The Three Faces of Eve* — leading jealous Joan Crawford to complain that Paul Newman bypassed her for “this Georgia redneck and her feedsack dress!”



PHYLLIS DILLER

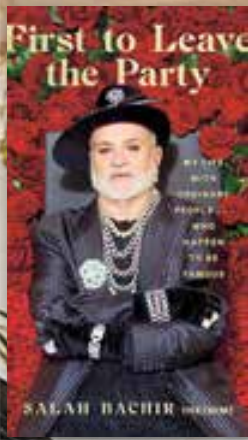
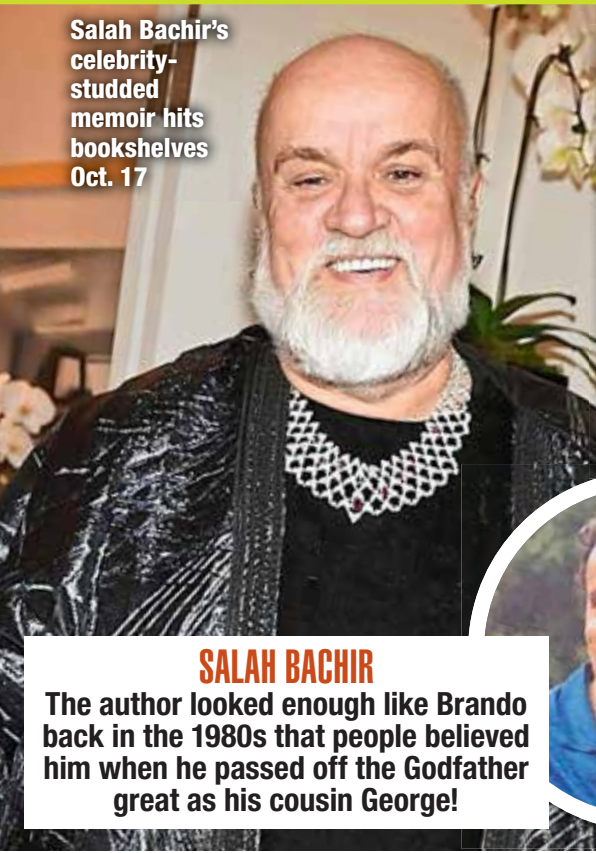
Diller, an early and unabashed champion of cosmetic surgery, once left \$500 on a restaurant table for a companion to get his nose fixed! She used outrageous wigs to create an alter ego so the real Phyllis did not always have to be “on.”

MARLON BRANDO

Brando swung both ways, according to the author, and was particularly into Black men — including having affairs with writer James Baldwin (right), singer Marvin Gaye and comic Richard Pryor!



Salah Bachir's celebrity-studded memoir hits bookshelves Oct. 17



SALAH BACHIR

The author looked enough like Brando back in the 1980s that people believed him when he passed off the Godfather great as his cousin George!

ELIZABETH TAYLOR

Some might have dismissed screen siren Elizabeth as “the slut of all time,” from a memorable line in her 1960 movie *BUTterfield 8*, because she married eight times, but Bachir says she was a keen appraiser of art, jewelry and cinema — and knew how to brand herself decades before reality star Kim Kardashian!

Inset: The original, suggestive French poster for the 1956 movie *Giant* was too hot for Hollywood! It shows that Liz and secretly gay co-stars Rock Hudson and James Dean were all in on the joke. Liz told Salah she was a well-known “beard” for closeted gay men.



Carol Burnett stepped in when her *Between Friends* co-star felt fat



Claudette Colbert and Davis

BETTE DAVIS

Claudette Colbert claimed Bette was the only actress who didn't use the “casting couch” to sleep her way to the top! Bette denied rumors of a feud with Joan Crawford — but “it's true we didn't like each other.”

CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER

Cranky Christopher shot daggers at “Gala Salah” when the benefit they hosted ran late. The Sound of Music star had already polished off a rare single malt in the limo!



Salah with the other Ella

ELLA FITZGERALD

The legendary singer felt she owed her career to “smart and funny” blond bombshell Marilyn Monroe, who personally got the Black jazz great bookings.

Inset: Bachir with his beloved dog Ella, named after his good pal Fitzgerald.

values, but they wouldn't cast Patricia for the TV series because she'd had a stroke and they wanted to hide her!”

Closeted gay stars were particularly fearful about being outed. Liberace publicly denied he was gay to the bitter end, but the blingtastic entertainer kept his hand on the author's knee during a breakfast in Las Vegas while confessing to hiding in plain sight: “They all know what they're seeing.”

And MGM put screen and stage star Van Johnson in war pictures to make him look “manly,” but the gay actor struggled with leading a double life and often played grab-ass with such unreceptive victims as Schitt's Creek star Eugene Levy.

In 1989, Bachir introduced art savvy and gender-fluid



PHOTO CREDIT: JACOB YEREX

ALAN CUMMING

The *Good Wife* actor Alan shops Salah's closet and finds Ella Fitzgerald's favorite purse, bought at auction after her 1996 death.

Marlon Brando around town as “my cousin George” so the Godfather great could quietly check out art galleries and gay hot spots.

One man who flirted with Brando later turned to Bachir, saying, “I hope your cousin George enjoys his visit!” **NE**



EARTHA KITT

Orson Welles insisted that Santa Baby singer Eartha was “the most exciting woman in the world.”

GINGER ROGERS

Salah sings *They Can't Take That Away from Me to Ginger*, by then in a wheelchair because her Christian Science faith didn't allow her to get back surgery.

