Schlatter, George (1932-) Encyclopedia Article

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Contents

Schlatter, George (1932-) Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Schlatter, George (1932—).....3

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Television producer-writer-director George Schlatter's credits are impressive. He has produced special programming featuring a Hall of Fame of entertainers, from Nat King Cole to Elton John, Frank Sinatra to Michael Jackson, Judy Garland to Bette Midler. He founded the American Comedy Awards, an annual televised event that spotlights the accomplishments of funny-men and women. Over the years he has earned more than two dozen Emmy nominations, and a quartet of Emmy Awards.

Schlatter's greatest contribution to television, however, was as co-executive producer (with Ed Friendly) during the initial—and funniest—seasons of *Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In. Laugh-In,* which aired between 1968 and 1973, was a fast-paced hour crammed with goofy, irreverent sketch comedy. While its often surreal sensibility evolved from Ernie Kovacs's pioneering television humor, *Laugh-In* itself was to alter the future of television comedy from the pacing of sitcom buffoonery to the structure and content of such sketch comedy shows as *Saturday Night Live*. The show also served as the launching pad for the careers of Goldie Hawn and Lily Tomlin.