

# Gene LeBell, iconic Hollywood stuntman and legendary WWE and UFC godfather figure, to live on in bio and film/tv project

*Veteran journalist and author Mark Jacobs and producer Mike Flint commit to LeBell's legacy*

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATE, September 1, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- We've not heard the last from Gene LeBell, the world-famous grappler and iconic Hollywood stuntman who was the basis for Brad Pitt's character in *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*. LeBell passed away August 9 at age 89, but his extraordinary accomplishments will live on through an upcoming biography and planned television special or feature film, according to producer and talent manager Mike Flint. Even [The Hollywood Reporter](#) and NY Times did obituaries for \*LeBell.

(\*<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/19/movies/gene-lebell-dead.html> and <https://nytimes.pressreader.com/article/282046215893876>).

A book 30 years in the making, the forthcoming biography had its genesis when journalist Mark Jacobs penned an article for [Sports Illustrated](#) on the stuntman who was also an icon in the worlds of martial arts and pro wrestling. "At the urging of those who knew LeBell and thought the full story of his life needed to be told by a



Gene LeBell



Mike Flint

professional author, Jacobs will look to encapsulate a man who was a giant in multiple worlds. As a martial artist, he was considered 'the toughest man alive,' a legendary champion who taught the likes of Chuck Norris and Ronda Rousey. As a pro wrestler, he literally grew up in the business at the feet of his mother, the world's first female fight promoter. Over the course of nearly 60 years, as a renowned stuntman and occasional actor, he worked on more than a thousand films and TV shows with everyone from John Wayne and Bruce Lee to Sylvester Stallone and Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson," says Flint, who helped form—and served as president of—LeBell's World Grappling Federation.



Gene LeBell and Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson

"Affectionately known as the 'Godfather of Grappling' " according to a well-researched obituary in The Hollywood Reporter, "with his legendary strong handshake, red hair, weathered face, and battered nose, LeBell was universally admired by fighters and wrestlers around the world."

He was also one of the most prolific stuntmen of all time, from the Golden Age of TV on the Jack Benny Show and Blue Hawaii with Elvis Presley to Bruce Lee in the Green Hornet, and on The Planet of the Apes, Men in Black, and as a Klingon in the Star Trek films. Says Flint, "Yet, for all his achievements, he rarely if ever boasted. He was honest and straightforward and had a unique sense of humor that will be missed. He was loved by just about everyone. The world has lost a true legend, the GOAT of Grappling, and I will miss him dearly."

LeBell died at home in Sherman Oaks, the Los Angeles neighborhood where he was born. In the aftermath of his passing, memorials and tributes were widespread from publications, television stations, websites, blogs, radio stations, and other media outlets, and from the WWE and UFC, as well as from Hollywood individuals and organizations.

Jacobs, who is authoring the upcoming bio, is a veteran journalist whose work has appeared in Sports Illustrated, Men's Health, Ring Magazine, New York Newsday, and the Miami Herald, among other publications. He's the author of the novels Pascal's Wager and A Bittersweet Science, as well as the acclaimed martial arts book The Principles of Unarmed Combat and the instructional text How to Break into Pro Wrestling, co-authored with LeBell. He currently serves as a contributing editor for Black Belt Magazine and Blackbeltmag.com, both of which [published his obituary on LeBell](#).

Jacobs and Flint carry on LeBell's legacy along with all those who knew and respected "the toughest man alive" as one of Hollywood's greatest icons.

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