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**JILL KARGMAN
& ABBY ELLIOTT**

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ON ABBY: DRESS BY ST JOHN

A Satirical look at New York's Upper East Side

JILL KARGMAN & ABBY ELLIOTT

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By most accounts Jill Kargman can be considered to be a 21st century social anthropologist with a penchant for dissecting the raffish world of New York's grounded Upper East Side. A native New Yorker who grew up in this world, Kargman has a wit that's as sharp as a Samurai's sword and she humorously captures the extremes of this echelon of society in Bravo's hit show *Oh My God* which debuts their second season on June 21. Jill plays a satirical version of herself, a clown to earthy mom who married into wealth and suddenly finds herself thrust in the super rich yet competitive society that resides on the Upper East Side. Preferring goth over pearls and pastels, Jill Weber's self-styled wardrobe is a testament of her disdain for the very society she found herself thrust into. At the polar opposite of the spectrum is the catty and pretentious Brooke, a member of the swirly blonde old money establishment Jill finds herself up against. From outrageous antics of one-upmanship to ostentatious displays of conspicuous consumption *Oh My God* is a scripted and satirized look at the gilded world of Manhattan through the eyes of a grounded soul. *Home* Resident Magazine spoke to the hilariously sarcastic and best-selling author and actress Jill Kargman who plays Jill Weber and *SNL* alum and comedian Abby Elliott who plays the super competitive Brooke Von Weber, as they took a break from filming their second season of *Oh My God* and dressed in their respective characters for this photo shoot.

Q&A WITH JILL KARGMAN

Q: AS YOU GREW UP IN THE UPPER EAST SIDE DID YOU ALWAYS FEEL KIND OF SARCASTIC TOWARDS IT?

Jill: No I grew up in the seventies, it sounds weird but it was the Upper East Side so it was nice but people were breaking into cars, Madison Avenue had boutiques, it is not what it looks like now. It was way more down to earth, the conspicuous consumption that I tend to satirize is more of a recent, in the last 20 years kind of phenomenon. I didn't grow up with that at all. Everyone sort of knew the value of the dollar more, I went to Spence and then I went to boarding school then I moved back the day after college and I never left.

Q: WHAT WERE THE INFLUENCES OF YOUR PARENTS?

Jill: I grew up in a rental apartment. My dad is not the owner of Chanel, he is the hired gun, and before that, he was in advertising. I feel like we were pretty normal but we were in a rental, it wasn't like we were in a penthouse on the park or anything. I definitely saw the type of kids that had that lifestyle but it wasn't really at a point where I felt that everything was so flashy. Most of my friends are really down to earth.

Q: SO YOU GREW UP WITH A LOT OF THE PEOPLE THAT YOU SATIRIZE?

Jill: No the people that we examine in the show are not natives. I find the natives to have a pretty great sense of humor, to be pretty cool about it, I think sometimes it's the red state transplants who read a book "How to be a Rich Person," or "How to be a New Yorker." They're actually more competitive than the natives, I find the natives to be pretty chill. I think the most competitive person is a southern girl who now lives in Manhattan.

Q: WHAT GAVE YOU THE IDEA OF THE SHOW?

Jill: NBC mentioned my book *Mean/No* a year after it came out. Then they had a writer from *Friends* try to adapt it, it was just in turn around, it wasn't going to get made. I've written other books since then and I was doing copywriting and my boss there was very supportive and thought I should reexamine TV. To answer your question, I had these kids in four years so that was mostly what I was doing but I wrote a book a year. I write pretty quickly, it's not like I'm writing historical fiction.

They're beach reads and I am not aspiring to win a Pulitzer Prize or anything. So once my son was a little older, I just felt like I wanted to be busier and get more freelance work so I went to Bravo to meet these producers and they said we're going to get you a meeting with Andy Cohen. Originally he wanted me to do some kind of reality show which I was not open to and then he said oh I would love to do something together, what can we do. I met with Lara Spotts, his successor as Head of Development and essentially *Oh My God* was mixture of my manifesto book and *Marmala* in a blender.

Q: HOW HAVE YOUR FRIENDS EMBRACED THE SHOW?

Jill: They really embraced it. I get a lot of high fives or giggles. Weirdly some people see themselves as an Abby instead of me. I've gotten a lot of support. Everyone thinks they're a good mom, everyone thinks they're a good person. So they don't really see the excessive behavior. I've been at parties where things have been really over the top and they say don't put this in your show but no one has ever said you portrayed it wrong. I've lived here my whole life, they know that I know what I'm talking about.

Q: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR PERSONAL STYLE?

Jill: One of our writers, Will Gramm, says it's Wednesday Addams meets Tim Burton meets Karl Lagerfeld. My favorite designers are Marc Jacobs and Anna Sui.

Q: WHAT'S YOUR OBSESSION WITH BOWS?

Jill: I love bows. I've always loved bows since I was a little girl and I've always loved dresses with bows. The essence I guess in addition to the Wednesday Addams/Tim Burton things is like romance and violence. I always love being feminine, I don't wear pants, I always wear dresses and I have my tattoos but it is not scary because I temper it with sweetness so I like that the medium is moose and black ink but then it's sweet looking.

Q: YOU'VE BEEN WORKING A LOT WITH DREW BARRYMORE.

Jill: Yes she is my sister-in-law and a guest star on the show. She is one of the closest people in my life. I just did a cover story on *Mean/No* on her and it was really fun. Typically we're not working together, we're just drinking wine and hanging out with all the remain because our kids are more of siblings.

Q: WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE ACTING VERSUS THE WRITING?

Jill: I really enjoy it. I was an actor before I was a writer in college. When I took my first bow when I was graduating Yale I was so sad. I thought I was never going to act again. At the time I felt like you had to blow some fat guy to get parts and you're basically the casting couch and just do misadventure things. Now I think there's more freedom, there are more female comedians who have their own looks but at the time it felt like the prettiest girl at Yale who was a senior when I was a Freshman was going to be an actress, and I was like she's going to be famous, she's amazing. I realize how difficult it was because I thought if she's not getting work, I'm not going to get work because she was the star at every play at Yale. I also feel like I'm a workaholic, I need to be busy but so much of acting is hurry up and wait for that audition. It didn't really cross my mind to get an agent and be an actress, it was just not on the cards. I wanted to be a writer, work in magazines, and have a job. I'm not wired to sit at home and stare at the phone.

Q: DO YOU HAVE A MENTOR WHETHER IT'S FOR WRITING OR ACTING?

Jill: I would say Woody Allen is my number one idol, I worship his writing, I worship his acting. I see him all the time in the neighborhood. One time at that fabulous bookstore on 71st and Lex, Bookberry's, I saw his book at the window and I went in and bought it. I walked to Park Avenue and I was walking by the Armory and he's walking towards me and I'm like this is crazy, I'm holding his book, so I said I'm so sorry to stalk here, I literally just happen to be holding your book, it's too weird can you just sign it? He was like sure. So he signed it and we parted ways. On the other end of the spectrum, I admire Trey Parker and Matt Stone, the creators of South Park. I think they're all so smart and so funny. I really think they're true geniuses.

Q: WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR IDEAS FROM?

Jill: Just life. I want to be a good mother but the time with my kids is my biggest inspiration. I hear stuff even people in the street say. I turned in a scene to Lara Spotts, our executive, and she said the scene is genius writing, and I said I can't take credit, I plagiarized it from actual people talking. I got there and all these moms were talking about disaster preparedness and how there's this website blackmhole.com where they have these \$3000 go bags that has radioactive iodine pills if there's a bomb in Union Square and this kit where you can drink your own pee. Everyone has these safe houses in their town houses, you get custom go sneakers with all the diamonds in the sole, people

are crazy. They said they have a navy seal coming to coach the kids on disaster preparedness, if there's an ebola or zika virus outbreak or a zombie apocalypse, we'll be prepared.

Q: DO YOU FIND IT EASIER TO BE SCRIPTED BECAUSE YOU'RE SO NATURAL IN THE WAY YOU PRESENT YOURSELF?

Jill: I do like it scripted because sometimes when we do the improv stuff, sometimes they're read and sometimes they're not. I'm happy to have it down on paper what we want in and then we'll do a fun run at the end if we have time. I love our writers room, my name is on four of the 10 but we really do all of them. I go over everybody's at the end and make sure that it is alright and everyone pitches in on my script, it's just a really collaborative process.

Q: HOW DIFFICULT IS IT TO MEMORIZE THE SCRIPT?

Jill: It's not bad, I'm lucky, I have a photographic memory. We had one day last week where we had 11 pages so that was a little challenging but most nights I'll just get in bed and study before I go to sleep so when I wake up it's not a totally new thing. A lot of actresses I've spoken to, when you get to hair and makeup chair, they get the slides there for you and I have a thing with our AD, he gives them to me the night before so I can study.

Q: DO YOU HAVE IDEAS FOR OTHER SHOWS?

Jill: Someone wanted to meet about another show but I really just want to focus on my kids and this show. I want this show to go forever. I'll do it all I'm Old Grandma Out.

Q: FAVORITE RESTAURANTS?

Jill: Rao's in Harlem is my favorite restaurant in New York. My parents had a table so I grew up going there and I love it. In this neighborhood I love Sette Mezzi and Il Cantinai.

Q: HOBBIES?

Jill: I'm really not good at sports and I hate sports. I really love skiing and my husband skied for the United States so he's really insistent that we go with the kids twice a year. You will never find me on a tropical island.

Q: FAVORITE NEIGHBORHOOD?

Jill: I feel like Williamsburg was like my road not taken, I feel like I was born too early for that. When I just got out of college 20 years ago, I didn't feel like it was totally safe yet but in '89 I went back there and I felt like I should have moved there but I was in between relationships so I moved back with my mom and dad. If I had an alternate choice, I would do Williamsburg, it's very alive and young.



ON JILL: DRESS BY MARC JACOBS
BRACELET BY HUGO
WATCH BY CHANEL





ON ILL: DRESS BY VALENTINO,
SKIRT BY YSL, BRACELET BY HUGO,
SHOES BY JIMMY CHOO

ON ABBY: DRESS BY ST. JOHN,
BRACELET AND EARRINGS BY HUGO,
SHOES BY SANDRO MARCHESI



Q&A WITH ABBY ELLIOTT

Q: DID YOU ALWAYS KNOW YOU WANTED TO BE A COMEDIAN?

Elliot: No I wanted to be an actor. Growing up watching my dad act, I wanted to be a serious dramatic actor. I went to school for musical theater before dropping out and then I moved to LA after dropping out of Marymount Manhattan College for theater and sort of just found a community in UCB and improv school and through that I wanted to still act but do comedic acting. *SNL* happened and I couldn't say no to that. It is more of being a comedian. But now with *Get Meb Out*, I get to do whatever I wanted to do, which is comedic acting.

Q: LET'S GO BACK TO YOUR ACTING ROOTS.

Elliot: My grandfather was Bob Elliot of Bob and Ray. They were a radio team and had a live show which they did at Radio Show and they did a sketch show on NBC. My dad followed in his footsteps. He was a page at Letterman and would try to do things to make Dave laugh. Dave hired him as a writer and made him do goofy bits on the show and he met my mother there.

Q: WHO WAS FUNNIER? YOUR DAD OR YOUR GRANDFATHER?

Elliot: My mom is very funny. My dad and grandfather's sensibilities are very different. My grandfather is very dry and very witty in a kind of every man's way and my dad is very goofy and makes fun of himself. They are both very funny. My grandfather sadly just passed a couple of months ago. We were very overwhelmed with how many fans that came out to show their support to us.

Q: WHO IS YOUR STYLE MORE LIKE?

Elliot: I think it's neither. My sister is an actress as well and our style is different. My style is definitely more comedic acting and diving into characters and committing to it 100 percent and making them a little exaggerated. I think that's why my dad said his problem at *SNL* was that he liked to make fun of himself and he was sort of outside himself and looking in. For me, I was like no I want to embody Angelina Jolie, I want to become her. I think that's the difference between our impressions and characters. My sister is just so funny, she's so subtle. She was in that movie that won South by Southwest two years ago called Fort Tilden which she starred in.

Q: IS THAT A RING?

Elliot: This is a ring. The one I wear on *Get Meb Out* is a much different shape and size. I prefer this one. I got engaged in October, and our wedding is going to be in September. My fiancé is Bill Kennedy

who writes for House of Cards. We met on a movie that he wrote, Sex Ed, which is on Netflix. It was shot in Tampa and while I was there for two days I couldn't believe the party that I was walking into with the cast and crew. We met three years ago but reconnected a year ago when the movie went to the Portland Film Festival where it won. After that we were just coincidentally substituting in Williamsburg working on different projects so we had a nice little Brooklyn romance when we first started.

Q: HOW DIFFERENT ARE YOU IN REAL LIFE WITH YOUR CHARACTER BROOKE?

Elliot: I am the polar opposite from my character. We're both from Connecticut so there's that. But I like to think that I'm very different from her. Brooke strives to be perfect in every way of her life and to some extent I relate to that, wanting to be in control and feel like you have your surrounding under control, she's a little meaner than I am. She definitely dresses more colorfully than I do, I don't have the same knack for pastels and pink that she does.

Q: HOW DID YOU GET CASTED?

Elliot: I saw the pilot presentation that Jill had initially made. I thought it was great and she was amazing, I couldn't believe that she had never acted before. I sat down with her in LA to talk about the role and she was just so funny, her sensibility was just so unique to anything that I've ever witnessed anywhere else. She's not UCB improv trained, she's just as unique as I definitely felt a strong connection to that and I knew immediately she was going to create a great show and a great product.

Q: DID YOUR FIANCEE READ THE SCRIPT? WHAT DID HE SAY?

Elliot: He did. He is very supportive and very excited about it and a good part for me. He is very brutally honest so that is good.

Q: HAS IT CHANGED YOUR PERCEPTION OF UPPER EAST SIDE AND THE WHOLE ECHELON HERE?

Elliot: It has. I couldn't believe the things that were in the script that were actually true. In the first season when the characters talked about a colonic juice place where you can actually get juice and go in the back and get a colonic. The Van Weber changing, where Brooke changes her name and restores the Van in it after they find out that she's actually Austrian aristocracy. She had to re-manage everything. Though my dad grew up on the upper east side, he describes it very differently, in the sixties and seventies they were like The Royal Tenenbaums because they were an artist sort of family amongst these upper east sidlers. In some extent feel that way having grown up in Connecticut because I grew up in Fairfield county and my dad

was an actor and nobody's parents were actors.

Q: SO DID THAT ENCOURAGE YOU TO GO INTO ACTING?

Elliot: Yeah, I was definitely never pushed or encouraged, if anything I was encouraged to go into college and which is why I went but later dropped out because I didn't want to be there. Seeing my dad do it, I knew that I wanted to be in the business.

Q: WHO DO YOU LIKE TO DO THE BEST?

Elliot: I love doing Drew Barrymore because she herself is a really tight fun person. I also love doing Anna Faris.

Q: ARE THERE ANY ACTORS THAT YOU WANT TO WORK WITH?

Elliot: Michael Fassbender. I would love to work with Meryl Streep. I did an impression of her on *SNL*. I did a Meryl Streep show at *ASB Comedy* which you can watch on Hulu. I loved working with Rhyce Danner. I worked with some pretty incredible people at *SNL*; I got to work with them in a pressure cooker environment and watch them do their thing.

Q: HOW MANY KIDS DO YOU WANT TO HAVE?

Elliot: As many as possible. I think three is good, or four or two, I would be happy with two too. We'll just see how many my body can handle. It's a dream to work in Manhattan. You don't have to be stuck in a stuffy soundstage in LA, just work with amazing people. Julia and Eliza the show runners are fantastic, Jill is fantastic. There is no drama, no politics. They hand me those gifts which are scripts and I feel very lucky and blessed.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?

Elliot: Right now, I'm preparing for the wedding so I'm doing low carbs. I usually cook myself and I eat eggs and spinach for breakfast with three shots of espresso with sybil which is an actual sweetener. It is supposed to be good for allergies. Lunch I usually have a salad with chicken. I love kombucha tea. I'm hooked up on kombucha tea. For places in NYC, my favorites are Claudette on 8th street and 5th avenue. For sushi I love Sushi Saki. And also Beatrice Inn, their chef, Angie Mir is a Chopped Champion.

Q: WHERE ARE YOU GOING ON YOUR HONEYMOON?

Elliot: We're going to South Africa, Botswana, and then some safari camps around Mamba followed by the beaches in Mozambique to the beach for a week. We are really excited about it. ♦



ON ABBY: DRESS BY ST JOHN