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'Supernatural' actor Jensen Ackles has been to hell and back, but is he ready to be Bacchus?

BY SUE STRACHAN | sstrachan@theadvocate.com FEB 28, 2019 - 11:31 PM

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Bacchus LI Jensen Ackles arrived by motorcycle escort to the Hilton Hotel on Thursday, February 28, 2019, and was greeted by fans and a performance by the Warren Easton Charter High School band. Ackles portrays “Dean Winchester” in “Supernatural.”

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Advocate Staff photo by CHRIS GRANGER

As Dean Winchester in “Supernatural,” Jensen Ackles has been possessed by the Archangel Michael, turned into a demon and almost a

vampire, and had the mark of Cain put on him. He has died and been resurrected an estimated 111 times, and has been to hell and back.

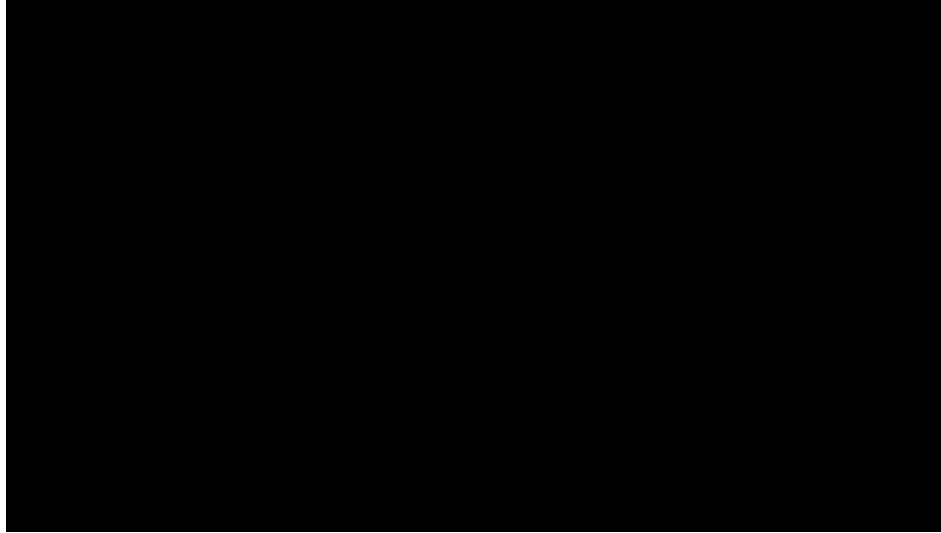
But nothing could prepare Ackles for being Bacchus.

“I’m a little nervous and excited,” said Ackles, on the phone from the “Supernatural” set in Vancouver, British Columbia. For those uninitiated in the “Supernatural” phenomenon, this TV show on the CW Network follows brothers Dean Winchester and Sam Winchester, portrayed by Jared Padalecki, who hunt demons, ghosts, angels and monsters and other supernatural beings. The show is now in its 14th season.

Although Ackles had heard about Mardi Gras from his wife, actress Danneel Ackles, he had never been to it. Danneel Ackles is from the Lafayette area; her name was inspired by the street in New Orleans. She has been part of the “Supernatural” cast for two seasons.

“I have always wanted to go,” said Jensen Ackles. “My wife has wanted to take me. So what better way?”

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As Bacchus LI, Ackles is joining the regal ranks that include J.K. Simmons (2018), Jim Caviezel (2017), New Orleans native Anthony Mackie (2016), and going all the way back to the first Bacchus, Danny Kaye (1969). The parade, which first rolled in 1969, is the second Sunday of Mardi Gras.

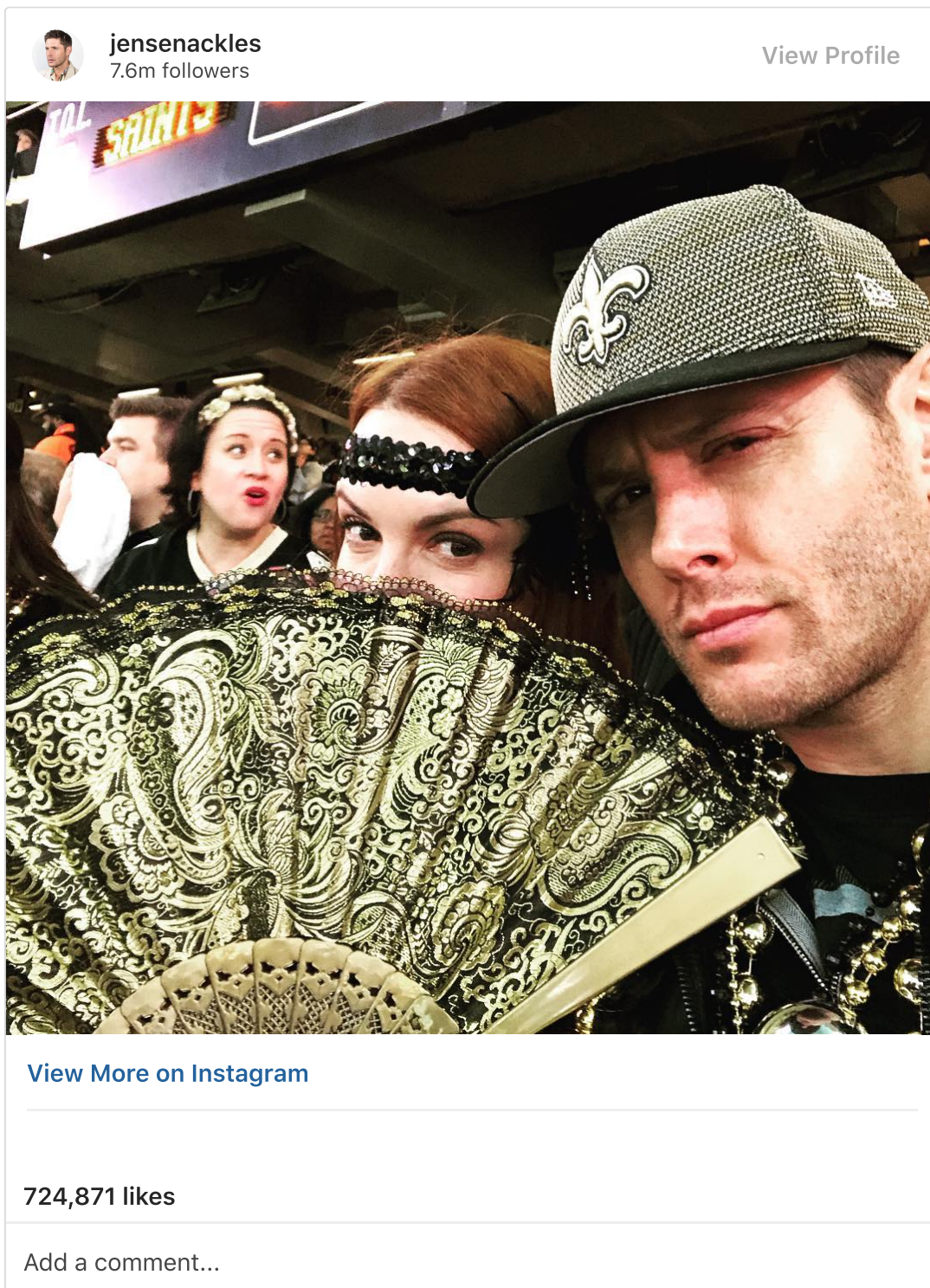
When the announcement of Ackles as Bacchus was made Jan. 23, social media, including the krewe's Facebook page, erupted with an exuberance that Bacchus captain Clark Brennan said was unprecedented. A quick look at the Twitter [#spnfamily](#) hashtag shows the worldwide interest in the parade, which will be streamed live by The New Orleans Advocate.

Ackles and his wife are fans of the city and have friends and family who live here. Their most recent visit — a moment he posted on his Instagram account — was during the NFC championship game with “that silly call,” said Ackles. He's a Saints fan, despite growing up in Dallas.

Like the rest of the Who Dat nation, Ackles was not in the best of spirits after the game.

“We were so bummed and moped back to the hotel,” he recalled. “And then I get a call from Holly (Ollis, WB studio publicist for 'Supernatural'), who said that she had found a way to turn my day around.” She told him he'd been asked to be Bacchus LI.

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Although only Krewe of Bacchus officials know what goes into choosing Bacchus each year, Danneel Ackles and Ollis made inquiries to the Bacchus organization, “officially without asking me,” said Jensen Ackles, jokingly.

In addition to the Bacchus experience, Ackles and his wife, along with their three children, will try to spend a few extra days in the Crescent City to enjoy the parades. Getting time off is hard when you're a member of the main cast of a TV show. "I had to be written out of part of an episode so I could come," said Ackles. "It is near the end of the season, so not a lot left. But I still have to go back to work."

What would Mardi Gras be like for "Supernatural's" Dean Winchester?

Ackles was amused. "Ever seen the movie 'The Hangover'?" he asked. "It would probably be like all of the 'Hangover' movies pooled into one."

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