



Presents

THE COMEDIAN

A film by Taylor Hackford
(120 min., USA, 2016)
Language: English

Distribution



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THE COMEDIAN

CAST

Jackie Burke	ROBERT DE NIRO
Harmony Schiltz	LESLIE MANN
Mac Schiltz	HARVEY KEITEL
Miller	EDIE FALCO
Jimmy Berkowitz	DANNY DeVITO
Florence Berkowitz	PATTI LuPONE
Dick D'Angelo	CHARLES GRODIN
May Conner	CLORIS LEACHMAN
Brittany Berkowitz	LUCY DeVITO
Billy Crystal	as HIMSELF
Karola	VERONICA FERRES
Miriam	LOIS SMITH

The Comedians

Jessica Kirson
Jim Norton
Jimmie Walker
Brett Butler
Richard Belzer
Freddie Roman
Stewie Stone
Gilbert Gottfried
Greer Barnes
Hannibal Buress
Bill Boggs
Sheng Wang
Ryan Hamilton
Aida Rodriguez
Dov Davidoff
Nick Di Paolo

Filmmakers

Directed by	Taylor Hackford
Screenplay by	Art Linson & Jeff Ross Richard LaGravenese Lewis Friedman
Story by	Art Linson
Produced by	Mark Canton PGA Courtney Solomon PGA Taylor Hackford PGA Art Linson PGA John Linson PGA
Co-Producers	Stephanie Caleb David Hopwood
Executive Producers	Scott Karol Wayne Marc Godfrey Robert Jones Iain Abraham Dennis Pelino Fredy Bush Mark Axelowitz Lawrence Smith Peter Sobiloff
Co-Executive Producer	Joanna Plafsky
Line Producer	Tracey Landon
Dir. of Photography	Oliver Stapleton BSC
Production Designer	Kristi Zea
Edited by	Mark Warner ASE
Costume Designer	Aude Bronson-Howard
Music Composed by	Terence Blanchard
Music Supervisor	Andy Ross
Casting by	Amanda Mackey and Cathy Sandrich Gelfond

THE COMEDIAN

Synopsis

An aging comic icon, JACKIE BURKE (Robert De Niro) has seen better days. Despite his efforts to reinvent himself and his comic genius, the audience only wants to know him as the former television character he once played. Already a strain on his younger brother (Danny DeVito) and his wife (Patti LuPone), Jackie is forced to serve out a sentence doing community service for accosting an audience member. While there, he meets HARMONY (Leslie Mann), the daughter of a sleazy Florida real estate mogul (Harvey Keitel), and the two find inspiration in one another resulting in surprising consequences. Through the alchemy of their unlikely friendship, Harmony and Jackie overcome their own emotional damage and emerge as better people.

Long Synopsis

The last thing stand-up comedian JACKIE BURKE (Robert De Niro) wants to hear when he walks onstage is the audience chanting “EDDIE! EDDIE!” Since his TV glory days starring in “Eddie’s Home” over twenty years ago, Jackie has never been able to shake Eddie or his signature line, “AR-leeeeeeeeeen!!” — the blue-collar hero’s holler for his ditzy TV wife. If the Eddie persona was loveable, the real Jackie of the present goes out of his way to be anything but. He’s an insult comic, tonight playing a half-empty Long Island club hosted by his old comedy compatriot JIMMIE WALKER (of TV “Good Times” fame). Jackie’s stoically loyal manager MILLER (Edie Falco) accompanies him to this low-pay gig and puts up with his grouching.

Jackie kicks off his set with a few lukewarm audience jabs interrupted by an obnoxious heckler (Happy Anderson) who won’t stop with the “Eddie!” taunts. Soon Jackie and the heckler are shouting in each other’s faces while the heckler’s wife films it all on her GoPro. When Jackie realizes that the harassment was just a ploy to steal material for the couple’s web series, he decks the guy.

When next we see Jacob Berkowitz (Jackie’s real name) he’s on trial for assault before a judge who is willing to let him off on probation and community service if he apologizes to the heckler—which he just can’t bring himself to do. As he’s led into jail for his 30-day sentence, Jackie is serenaded by inmates chanting the “Eddie’s Home” theme song.

A surprise awaits him, though, upon his release: his fistfight with the heckler has gone viral on the internet, and millions of new fans have been re-introduced to Jackie Burke. This accidental career re-boot gets him a meeting at “Raw TV,” run by

the abrasively hip CAROL BOCK (Beth Malone) and her posse of millennial producers. Jackie cuts short the meeting feeling more old and washed-up than ever.

Meanwhile, Jackie has community service to fulfill. He reports to the Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen in lower Manhattan where he encounters HARMONY SCHILTZ (Leslie Mann), who is also serving out an assault conviction for bodily harm to her boyfriend and the woman she caught him in bed with. Harmony is encumbered with an overbearing father, MAC SCHILTZ (Harvey Keitel), a wealthy Florida developer who smothers Harmony with love while jealously demanding her undivided attention.

At the soup kitchen, Jackie treats Harmony with uncharacteristic tact (for him) and she notices that he's a hit with the clientele: somehow, dishing out lunch to the homeless brings out the relaxed natural comic in Jackie. When she agrees to go out for a drink and sees him trading ad hoc quips with another comic (Jessica Kirson), she's impressed. They make a just-friends deal: if she'll be his wingman at the wedding of his niece, he'll accompany her to her father's birthday dinner.

The bride-to-be is the daughter of Jackie's brother JIMMY BERKOWITZ (Danny DeVito) who runs a Jewish deli on the Lower East Side with his tough-as-nails wife FLO (Patti LuPone). Jackie has ignored them for ages, and Flo loathes him, but—he needs money. Jimmy, who clearly adores Jackie but has to mollify Flo, reluctantly agrees to lend Jackie five thousand dollars on the condition that he promise to show up at their daughter's wedding.

It's a boisterous Jewish wedding-hall event for the same-sex union of BRITTANY (Lucy DeVito) and FRANKIE (Kelly McCrann). Beloved Uncle Jackie gets the celebrity treatment from Brittany, who insists that he get up to speak. He then unleashes stunningly tasteless insults about lesbians, family horrors—and Flo. Jaws drop, Flo fumes, Brittany laughs uproariously and her young friends are mostly amused, but the older crowd sits in stunned silence. Flo nearly brawls with Harmony as she and Jackie make their escape. Harmony loves it.

The next night is Jackie's turn to be the birthday present at dinner with Mac, who's a big "Eddie's Home" fan. It doesn't take long for Mac's delight at meeting Jackie to turn sour—here are two alpha males locked in competition for Harmony's attention and affection. Mac has pulled legal strings to have Harmony serve out the rest of her sentence in Florida so she can help him run his retirement facility. It's a fait accompli, and Harmony, fed up with Mac's heavy-handed manipulation, leaves the restaurant with Jackie and invites him back to her apartment, where they end up in a one-night fling. As Harmony says, "It doesn't mean anything." When Jackie wakes up the next morning, Harmony—along with all her possessions—has taken off for Florida. From then on, Jackie's texts and calls go unanswered.

His career, however, is looking up as Miller hustles him a televised Friar's Club roast for MAY CONNER (Cloris Leachman) who, at 95, is America's most beloved

comediienne. The roast is emceed by D'ANGELO (Charles Grodin), the Friar's smugly superior president, but Jackie steals the show with a hilariously raunchy ode to May. She loves it—till her fatal heart attack cuts short the roast and cancels the show.

He's now reduced to appearing as Eddie at a nostalgia autograph convention in Florida, which brings him within visiting distance of Harmony, who is helping Mac run the old folks' development. He shows up without warning at an event and is soon mobbed by elderly "Eddie's Home" fans. This leads to an uproariously vulgar stand-up routine centered around a "Makin' Poopie" song (a bawdy parody of "Makin' Whoopie"), which is a big hit among the seniors.

Harmony, though, is unsettled to see Jackie. Reluctantly, she reveals that she's pregnant, and it's his child. Jackie's reaction is not positive—he doesn't want a child—which doesn't bother Harmony because she's not expecting him to be involved. Suddenly, Jackie is defensive, demanding to have a say in the matter, which ignites Harmony's anger. Their fiery argument is interrupted by a phone call from Miller, informing Jackie that he's gone viral yet again, even bigger than his last internet sensation, with a mash-up of his "Poopie" song.

This second career re-boot wins Jackie a gig hosting a raunchy Raw-TV reality game show called "Say Uncle." This opportunity seems to be Jackie's salvation—a chance to become rich and famous again. But witnessing the humiliation of his first guest, Jackie just can't swallow the cruel world of contemporary reality TV; he turns to the camera and "says uncle"—cursing out Raw TV and quitting the job before a live audience. Just when Jackie and Miller think that he's blown his last chance at fame, his rebellious moment creates an even bigger internet presence than the ones before—Jackie's third multi-million-hit viral clip. So late in his career, Jackie's now a "thing."

A contrite Jackie returns to Florida to visit a very pregnant Harmony and tells her he would like to be part of the child's life, but only as much as Harmony wishes. Making no demands, he leaves her with a box of mementoes in case the child ever wants to know about him: childhood photos, letters, a vinyl LP from his early comedy days. She is touched.

Now that Jackie has gone massively viral for the third time with the "Say Uncle" mash-up, his career is truly reborn—not as a mainstream TV celebrity, but instead as a true comedian. He's invited to take the stage at the West Village comedy mecca, The Comedy Cellar, a top venue he hasn't played in years—performing to a hip, contemporary comedy audience that loves his comedy—and they're shouting "Jackie! Jackie!" instead of "Eddie! Eddie!"

THE COMEDIAN

Production Notes

Jackie Burke, embodied by ROBERT DE NIRO in THE COMEDIAN, has been struggling for years to get back to the place he most wants to be—at the mic in a club where the comedy is cutting edge and the audience is hip and appreciative. Like its central character, THE COMEDIAN is a triumph of tenacity. Back in 2009, the original concept sprang from conversations and ideas shared by De Niro and his friend and colleague ART LINSON, screenwriter and producer of THE COMEDIAN. Today, director TAYLOR HACKFORD's new drama about comedy illuminates Jackie's journey.

"When a comedian gets up and does a 25-minute set," says Hackford, "if they tell a joke and nobody laughs they have to tell another and another. They say "I died up there tonight." And if they go up there and everybody is crying with laughter, they "killed." That's the world of a comic, dying or killing, one or the other. Here's Jackie in the latter part of life, refusing to give up and still fighting—tilting at windmills but still out there, still tenacious. He comes upon another person who's also lost," — Harmony, played by LESLIE MANN—"and they somehow click and help each other move forward. The journey is what this film is about. I think of the film as a dark drama with comedy—somebody else may see a dark comedy with drama. There are jokes, but it's really watching a man confront his reality at the latter part of his life, moving beyond being a failure in his own mind."

De Niro, legendary for immersing himself in his characters and their environments, transformed himself into a veteran stand-up performer through intensive and physical training, coaching and practice. With characteristic understatement, De Niro says simply, "Actors aren't comics. It's a very different way of performing. Working with comics was very helpful—getting the timing and movement right, the mic handling, working on delivery."

Hackford elaborates: "We've never seen Robert De Niro like this before. From the very first club scene, if the audience doesn't believe that he's a comedian, there's no movie. We took Bob out to comedy clubs every night during rehearsal, and we settled on the Comedy Cellar in Greenwich Village which, in my opinion, is the best comedy club in the country." Hackford is a comedy fan and once owned a comedy club in New Orleans himself.

He continues: "Bob was working on developing the stand-up routines with LEWIS FRIEDMAN, a comedy writer" (who wrote most of Jackie's routines and is credited as one of the writers) "and we wanted him to see a lot of different styles. We were watching JESSICA KIRSON perform, and Bob said, "I like what she does." We invited her to work with us, and she was joined later by JIM NORTON, and through the

rehearsal period and most of the shoot Bob would spend hours with them nearly every day, often on very little sleep with an early-morning turnaround.” Kirson and Norton both appear in THE COMEDIAN onstage at the Comedy Cellar.

The character of Jackie—a flawed, foul-mouthed, aging anti-hero, principled in his own way—grew out of the long-term friendship between De Niro and Linson: as De Niro recalls, “Art and I are about the same age, and we talk about what it’s like to get older, the problems that come with aging and the change in your viewpoints.” Jackie also suffers an enduring association with the popular sitcom character he played decades ago—the “Eddie” that he longs to leave behind forever.

As Linson puts it, “We imagined a character study, a comedian who used to be a big deal, whose star had waned but who was still trying to stay relevant. Hanging on for dear life, trying to shake off the oldies nostalgia circuit. The heart and soul was inspired by the John Osborne play The Entertainer; Tony Richardson directed the movie version with Laurence Olivier. The themes in The Entertainer are very much the themes that led me through writing this thing: the Olivier character had been a music-hall star but his days were passing him by and he behaved badly. It set up the underlying motivation for the Jackie character.”

Linson continues: “We conceived of Jackie as a caustic, biting comic because he’s a discontented guy. He’s angry that he wasn’t bigger than he was, he’s sick to death of being called Eddie, and he’s still trying to redefine himself. I took a crack at the screenplay, and it was a struggle. Just as Bob saw how hard it is to perform comedy, I underestimated how hard it is to write comedy. I wasn’t happy with the stand-up that I wrote; it was too generic. I went to JEFFREY ROSS, who is a comic who specializes in insult roast humor, and he worked on the routines and is credited as one of the writers. It finally took about a year to write, and Bob loved it.”

The vagaries of film production, some false starts, and the leading man’s nonstop schedule kept the COMEDIAN project unrealized till MARK CANTON entered the picture with Cinelou, his ambitious and prolific production partnership with COURTNEY SOLOMON. “We were excited by the prospect,” says Canton, “because this was Robert De Niro in a really vivid, bucket-list role that was compellingly funny but really emotionally connected, with room to cast a lot of other great actors as well.”

Some six or seven years after the genesis of Linson and De Niro’s “passion project,” as producer Solomon calls it, THE COMEDIAN swung into high gear when Taylor Hackford came on board. “I was fortunate to be asked to facilitate this vision of Jackie Burke and his journey,” says Hackford, “and also fortunate that Cinelou supported me putting together a wonderful production team. The schedule was grueling—27 days—but everyone succumbed to the passion of Bob DeNiro! This is very much an independent film—but an extraordinarily high-quality independent film in terms of ambition and cast and production values. It doesn’t have a lot of special effects, it’s about humanity and people interacting both in a professional and

personal way. I just had to drive everybody relentlessly to be able to get that much material on the screen, running all over New York, squeezing into the clubs, sending OLIVER STAPLETON (director of photography) out by himself in the rain to catch street footage—and everybody gave it their all, Bob De Niro first and foremost. He was ready for anything and he set the tone.”

Leslie Mann was impressed with the dedication, energy, and stamina that went into the tight shoot: “Taylor, Bob and Harvey were all so passionate about this project. I went into this thinking we’d have shorter days because they’re all older and I was so wrong! They worked twice as long and twice as hard as anyone half their age. The whole experience was like a master class, an amazing education.”

De Niro’s Jackie is surrounded by characters as boldly drawn and expertly played as he is, starting with his combative family: brother Jimmy, played by DANNY DEVITO, scowling sister-in-law Florence (PATTI LUPONE), and their daughter Brittany, the bubbly bride played by LUCY DEVITO, Danny’s daughter. Proving that the young have no monopoly on bawdy comic edginess, CLORIS LEACHMAN parries gamely with De Niro as the guest of honor at the fatal Friars Club roast emceed by a supercilious CHARLES GRODIN. As Jackie’s manager Miller (not “Miller the Killer” like her father, not [first name] Miller, just deadpan, one-named Miller), EDIE FALCO holds her own in the merciless comedy world.

“When you go to really wonderful well-known actors like this cast,” says Hackford, “You’ve got to make sure that when they come on the screen you’ve given them the space to do their stuff. These are all really strong, nervy characters that establish and define Jackie’s history. Nobody acts alone. You might think—Danny DeVito and Robert De Niro brothers? Does that work? But it does. We shot the deli scenes in a place called Ben’s Best Deli in Queens” (located in lower Manhattan in the film), “and on the wall is a painting of Ben, the original proprietor. We used that painting because, just by fortuitous accident, he looks like an amalgam of Jimmy and Jackie. We were attuned to that kind of serendipity.”

“I dig him and he’s my brother,” says DeVito about the Jimmy and Jackie relationship, “but Jackie has put himself in a very distant spot, and his obsessions were always too big for any relationship. I think he’s a little crazy but my daughter adores him and her generation enjoys his abrasiveness. That highly charged family dynamic made playing off Bob, Patti, and Lucy exciting.” Taylor Hackford actually cast Lucy DeVito before adding her father Danny to the cast. Says Danny, “Lucy’s very dedicated and inventive, I’m proud of her—and it just shows, be nice to your kids, they’ll be getting you jobs someday!”

Leslie Mann recalls: “My first day shooting was the wedding scene. Patti Lupone’s character and mine have a bickering match that gets a little out of control. So on day one, I’m fighting with Patti Lupone. And I’m acting tough because Harmony is tough! But in my head, I’m thinking: this is Evita, and I’m actually terrified!”

As LuPone relates, “Taylor assembled a phenomenal cast to support Bobby. It didn't bother me that it was a breakneck schedule. Taylor is a master and each day the pages got done, and I would rather be shooting than sitting in a trailer. I had a blast—a career highlight for me.”

Launching off Art Linson's original screenplay and the stand-up writing work done by Jeffrey Ross and Lewis Friedman, Hackford brought in RICHARD LAGRAVENESE to hone the drama. “I was one of four different writers on this project,” says LaGravenese. “My job was to enhance Art's and Bob's vision, and when you put brilliant actors in there and give them really terrific words to say you trust them. Jackie's a big character, and the supporting characters are not—shall we say—mumblers. There's an emotional reality with them that, I hope, comes through.”

Which brings us to the emotional gravity center of Jackie's journey—Leslie Mann's characterization of Harmony.

“When we first meet her,” says Leslie Mann, “Harmony is spinning out, overwhelmed by her lack of control over the people and circumstances that surround her. With a mother who abandoned her as a young child and an overbearing father who won't allow her to be her own person, she's had a lifelong struggle with identity and independence. Over the course of the movie, she evolves, with Jackie's help, into a woman with a better sense of self and purpose.”

For De Niro, “There's no question what Jackie sees in Harmony—she's smart and funny, she's sexy, she gets his humor. She would have been great for him if she had stayed—but that's not how the story played out. They end up friends, and that's realistic.”

Mann agrees: “Jackie helps Harmony grow up. He teaches her a valuable lesson about finding her own voice. With a push from Jackie, Harmony is able to face her fears and finally take a stand against her controlling father. Ultimately they're just two emotionally stunted individuals who form an unlikely friendship, overcome some tough circumstances, and come out the other side as better people.”

Producer Courtney Solomon particularly appreciates that “This is a modern story. They don't have to be the loves of each others' lives. They like each other. One night she throws him a bone. Lightning strikes but then they handle it as it would be handled in 2016. You never know what kind of chemistry you're going to get when you're dealing with a Bob De Niro and a Leslie Mann; every take was a little bit different, a lot of adlibs. Their dynamic was exciting and fresh. Bob and Leslie together give the film that other heartbeat that it really needs to have.”

“Leslie was such a godsend to this production,” says Hackford, “because she's funny and charming but she also understood that this is much more a dramatic than a comedic role. These two people, who have had a lot of failures in their lives, meet in a strange circumstance and in some way find themselves in each other. It's not

about the love of the ages. Leslie's very smart and very intuitive, and it's always interesting to watch a character onscreen that you can't predict. You think Harmony's bruised and vulnerable, but she's got real backbone."

Art Linson laughingly recalls how the character of Mac Schiltz, Harmony's demanding father played by HARVEY KEITEL, came to be imagined: "Bob and I joked about how, when older guys date younger women, if the guy meets the father and he's the same age, that's never, never okay. Harvey and Bob have a whole history of menacing each other onscreen, and in real life if Harvey had a daughter and Bob was dating her, that's exactly what it would be like."

There's one more central character that's key to Jackie Burke's persona, Hackford says, and that's the New York comedy club scene. "It was very important to me we didn't just put a movie star up on screen pretending to be a comic, we wanted to put Bob in a real world of comedy. That's why we have so many real-life comics and real comedy locations. The guys playing cards at the Friars Club, saying "C'mon Jackie, give up your dreams and come join us!" The table Jackie passes by at the Comedy Cellar—that's a very famous table in the comedy world. That's where Estee the booker, who's in the movie, holds court with the hot comics and the up-and-comers. She has a great eye and ear for the best in new comics so when you can get past Estee and get on the stage at the Comedy Cellar, it's a huge accomplishment. That's the world Jackie wants to get back into. I want to make sure that the comedians themselves and the people who work in these clubs look at this and say 'that's spot-on—that is real.'"

The original cool jazz score by TERENCE BLANCHARD resonates with that club world. The all-star ensemble features, in addition to Blanchard's trumpet, RAVI COLTRANE on tenor saxophone, KENNY BARRON on piano, CARL ALLEN on drums, KHARI ALLEN LEE on alto sax, and DAVID PULPHUS on bass.

Says De Niro, "Jackie's an old hipster."

"I love jazz and the era of Blue Note jazz, and Terence's score evokes that but is up to date," says Hackford. "That's who Jackie is—he's a child of Lenny Bruce, the next generation, Carlin, Pryor, Woody Allen, who came up in the sixties playing clubs. They weren't making HBO specials, they weren't making very much money, the height of what they could aspire to was getting a comedy album. The jazz score alludes to that era."

For De Niro, the fundamental challenge in Jackie's life is a universal one: he's getting old. "Aging changes the way you look at your life, whether you're a comedian, an actor, a businessman, anything. There are a lot of us on this movie who understand that—Taylor Hackford, Lewis Friedman, Art Linson, Harvey Keitel... So that's part of who Jackie is. The comedy world is part of who he is. But I still don't know who Jackie is. I can't sum him up. The audience will see the film, and they'll take away what they see. All we can do is put it in front of them."

THE COMEDIAN

About the Cast

ROBERT DE NIRO (Jackie Burke)

Robert De Niro launched his prolific motion picture career in Brian De Palma's *The Wedding Party* in 1969. By 1974 he had won the New York Film Critics Award for Best Supporting Actor in recognition of his critically acclaimed performance in *Bang the Drum Slowly* and from the National Society of Film Critic for Martin Scorsese's *Mean Streets*.

In 1974 De Niro won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his portrayal of the young Vito Corleone in *The Godfather, Part II*. In 1980 he won his second Oscar, as Best Actor, for his extraordinary portrayal of Jake La Motta in Scorsese's *Raging Bull*.

De Niro has earned Academy Award nominations for his work in five additional films: as Travis Bickle in Scorsese's acclaimed *Taxi Driver*; as a Vietnam vet in Michael Cimino's *The Deer Hunter*; as a catatonic patient brought to life in Penny Marshall's *Awakenings*; in 1992 as Max Cady, an ex-con looking for revenge, in Scorsese's remake of the 1962 classic *Cape Fear*; and as a father to a bi-polar son in David O. Russell's *Silver Linings Playbook*.

In 2009, De Niro received the coveted Kennedy Center Honor for his distinguished acting. He also received the Hollywood Actor Award from the Hollywood Film Festival, which he won again in 2012, and the Stanley Kubrick Award from the BAFTA Britannia Awards. In addition, AARP The Magazine gave De Niro the 2010 Movies for Grownups Lifetime Achievement Award.

De Niro was honored with the Cecil B. DeMille Award at the 2011 Golden Globe Awards. He also served as the jury president of the 64th Cannes Film Festival.

He stars as the title role in *The Comedian*, directed by Taylor Hackford. He will next star in HBO's *Wizard of Lies*, in which he stars as Bernie Madoff and is executive producer, and in Dimension Films' *War With Grandpa*.

De Niro recently starred in *Hands of Stone* from The Weinstein Company; Fox 2000 Pictures' *Joy*; Lionsgate's *Dirty Grandpa*; Warner Bros.' *The Intern*; *Grudge Match*; David O. Russell's *American Hustle*; CBS Films' *Last Vegas*; Relativity Media's *The Family*. Other recent film credits include Millennium's *The Killing Season*; Lionsgate's *The Big Wedding*; Focus Features' *Being Flynn*; Grindstone Entertainment's *Freelancers*; and *Red Lights*; New Line Cinema's *New Year's Eve*; thriller *Limitless*; *Little Fockers*, the third installment of the highly successful Tribeca Productions' *Meet the Parents* franchise; Filmauro's Italian romantic comedy *Manuale d'amore 3*; Nu Image Films' psychological thriller *Stone*; and 20th Century Fox's *Machete*.

His distinguished body of work also includes performances in Elia Kazan's *The Last Tycoon*; Bernardo Bertolucci's *1900*; Ulu Grosbard's *True Confessions* and *Falling in Love*; Sergio Leone's *Once Upon a Time in America*; Scorsese's *King of Comedy*, *New York, New York*, *Goodfellas*, and *Casino*; Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*; Roland Joffe's *The Mission*; Brian De Palma's *The Untouchables*; Alan Parker's *Angel Heart*; Martin Brest's *Midnight Run*; David Jones' *Jacknife*; Martin Ritt's *Stanley and Iris*; Neil Jordan's *We're No Angels*; Penny Marshall's *Awakenings*; Ron Howard's *Backdraft*; Michael Caton-Jones' *This Boy's Life*; John McNaughton's *Mad Dog and Glory*; Kenneth Branagh's *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*; Michael Mann's *Heat*; Barry Levinson's *Sleepers*, *Wag the Dog*, and *What Just Happened*; Jerry Zaks' *Marvin's Room*; Tony Scott's *The Fan*; James Mangold's *Copland*; Alfonso Cuarón's *Great Expectations*; Quentin Tarantino's *Jackie Brown*; John Frankenheimer's *Ronin*; Harold Ramis' *Analyze This* and *Analyze That*; Joel Schumacher's *Flawless*; Des McNuff's *The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle*; George Tillman's *Men of Honor*; John Herzfeld's *Fifteen Minutes*; Frank Oz's *The Score*; Tom Dey's *Showtime*; Michael Caton-Jones' *City By The Sea*; Nick Hamm's *Godsend*; John Polson's *Hide and Seek*; Mary McGuckian's *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*; DreamWorks's *Shark Tale*; Jay Roach's *Meet The Parents* and *Meet the Fockers*; Jon Avnet's *Righteous Kill*; and Kirk Jones' *Everybody's Fine*.

De Niro takes pride in the development of his production company, Tribeca Productions, the Tribeca Film Center, which he founded with Jane Rosenthal in 1988, and in the Tribeca Film Festival, which he founded with Rosenthal and Craig Hatkoff in 2001 as a response to the attacks on the World Trade Center. The festival was conceived to foster the economic and cultural revitalization of Lower Manhattan through an annual celebration of film, music, and culture; the festival's mission is to promote New York City as a major filmmaking center and help filmmakers reach the broadest possible audiences.

Through Tribeca Productions, De Niro develops projects on which he serves in a combination of capacities, including producer, director and actor.

Tribeca's *A Bronx Tale* in 1993 marked De Niro's directorial debut. He later directed and co-starred in *The Good Shepherd* with Matt Damon and Angelina Jolie.

Other Tribeca features include *Thunderheart*, *Cape Fear*, *Mistress*, *Night and the City*, *The Night We Never Met*, *Faithful*, *Panther*, *Marvin's Room*, *Wag the Dog*, *Analyze This*, *Flawless*, *The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle*, *Meet the Parents*, *Fifteen Minutes*, *Showtime*, *Analyze That* and *Meet the Fockers*.

In 1992, Tribeca TV was launched with the acclaimed series *Tribeca*. De Niro was one of the executive producers.

Tribeca Productions is headquartered at De Niro's Tribeca Film Center in the TriBeCa district of New York. The Film Center is a state-of-the-art office building designed for the film and television industry. The facility features office space, a screening room,

banquet hall and restaurant. The center offers a full range of services for entertainment professionals.

LESLIE MANN (Harmony Schiltz)

Leslie Mann will next star as Harmony in Taylor Hackford's *The Comedian* alongside Robert DeNiro, which will be released nationwide on January 13, 2017.

Mann most recently starred alongside Dakota Johnson, Rebel Wilson, and Alison Brie in *How to Be Single*. She will next contribute her voice to *The Croods 2*, the sequel to Dreamworks' hit animated feature which will be released in 2018. In 2014, Mann starred alongside Cameron Diaz and Kate Upton in Nick Cassavetes' *The Other Woman*. That same year, Mann continued her well-established voice performance work while reprising her role as 'Linda' in the animated blockbuster *Rio 2*. Her previous voice performances include the Oscar nominated *ParaNorman*, and Dreamworks' *Mr. Peabody & Sherman*.

In 2012, Mann's stand out performance opposite Paul Rudd as Debbie in Judd Apatow's *This Is 40* garnered her a Critics' Choice Awards nomination for 'Best Actress in a Comedy.' The movie reunites the characters from award-winning blockbuster *Knocked Up*, with Mann and Rudd reprising their roles from the earlier film.

Her other feature films include *Vacation*, *The Bling Ring*, *The Change Up*, *I Love You Phillip Morris*, *17 Again*, *Big Daddy*, *Little Birds*, *George of the Jungle*, *Timecode*, *She's the One*, *Stealing Harvard*, *Drillbit Taylor*, *Orange County*, *Funny People* and *The 40 Year Old Virgin*.

A native of Southern California, Mann studied acting with The Joanne Baron/D.W. Brown Studio and the Groundlings improv troupe. One of her first big breaks was Ben Stiller's *The Cable Guy* with Jim Carrey and Matthew Broderick. While shooting the film, she met her future husband Judd Apatow, which marked their first collaboration and the beginning of their creative professional partnership.

Mann and Apatow are longtime supporters of the non-profit organization 826LA. Founded by Dave Eggers, the organization provides free tutoring and literacy programs to students. Additionally, Mann and Apatow have been honored with the Bogart Pediatric Cancer Research Program's "Children's Choice Award" for their philanthropic contributions to support children, and their families, who are dealing with pediatric cancer. The couple has also been honored by The Fulfillment Fund at their annual benefit gala.

Mann, Apatow and their two daughters currently reside in Los Angeles.

HARVEY KEITEL (Mac Schiltz)

To pigeonhole Harvey Keitel as a master of edgy degenerates and killers would have dismissed the actor's many successes with surly husbands, benign cops and intrepid

detectives. His prolific but slow-to-ignite career began with memorably unlikable supporting roles in Martin Scorsese character studies *Taxi Driver* and *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*. An Academy Award-nominated supporting role in *Bugsy* heralded a new beginning for Keitel, and he became a favorite on the indie film scene of the 1990s through his collaboration with Quentin Tarantino cult classics *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction*. He also had several successes when he chose to tap his inner soft side in Jane Campion's *The Piano*, but by far, he was the go-to guy for potentially explosive everymen, grizzled police force veterans and G-men in both subtle indies and gun-blazing big budget adventures alike.

Keitel was raised in Brooklyn, NY where he joined the Marines at age 16 and served overseas in the Middle East. When he returned home, he began to pursue an interest in acting, training at the famed Actors Studio before eventually landing stage roles in summer stock, repertory, and the fringes of off-off Broadway and Community Theater. He made his off Broadway debut in Sam Shepard's *Up to Thursday* in 1965 and two years later began his association with Scorsese when he answered a newspaper ad placed by the then-NYU student director. Scorsese cast him in *Who's That Knocking At My Door?*, which evolved from a student short to Scorsese's well-received feature debut. Keitel went on to make a strong impression with a breakout role as the director's alter ego in *Mean Streets*.

Keitel's long list of additional films include *The Duellists*, *Fingers*, *Blue Collar*, *Eagle's Wing*, *Deathwatch*, *The Border*, *Wise Guys*, *The Pick-Up Artist*, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, *The Two Jakes*, *Thelma & Louise* (earned six Academy Award Nominations), *Bugsy*, *Bad Lieutenant* (won the Independent Film Award), *Smoke*, *Clockers*, *From Dusk Till Dawn*, *Cop Land*, *Three Seasons*, *Holy Smoke*, *U-571*, *Little Nicky*, *The Grey Zone*, *Red Dragon*, *National Treasure*, *Be Cool*, *National Treasure: Book of Secrets*, *Inglourious Basterds*, *Little Fockers*, and Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom* and *The Grand Budapest Hotel*.

DANNY DeVITO (Jimmy Berkowitz)

Danny DeVito is one of the entertainment industry's most versatile players, excelling as actor, producer and director.

The award-winning performance as Louie De Palma on the television show *Taxi* was what propelled DeVito to national prominence. He won both an Emmy and a Golden Globe. In a 1999 readers' poll conducted by TV Guide, DeVito's Louie De Palma was voted number one among "TV's Fifty Greatest Character's Ever."

On the movie screen, in 2016 he stars in Sony Pictures Classics' *The Comedian*, starring Robert De Niro and Leslie Mann, directed by Taylor Hackford. DeVito also directed, starred in and co-produced short film *Curmudgeons*, which premiered at the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival and was later seen at the 2016 Seattle Film festival and the 2016 London Film Festival. Prior to *The Comedian*, most recently DeVito co-starred in the Todd Solondz' dark comedy *Wiener-Dog*.

Onstage, in 2017 DeVito will make his Broadway debut in Arthur Miller's *The Price* in the role of Gregory Solomon. In 2012, DeVito and Richard Griffiths received rave reviews in the London stage revival of Neil Simon's comedy *The Sunshine Boys*. The following year, DeVito reprised his critically acclaimed role together with former *Taxi* co-star Judd Hirsch in Los Angeles.

On TV, DeVito returns as Frank Reynolds in FXX's acclaimed cult comedy *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*, which will be in its 12th season in January, 2017.

In 2015, DeVito was executive producer on the biographical documentary *Harold and Lillian: A Hollywood Love Story*. In 2014 he co-produced Universal Pictures' crime drama *A Walk Among the Tombstones* and starred in *All The Wilderness*. In 2012 DeVito starred in Sebastian Gutierrez's black and white crime drama, *Hotel Noir*.

DeVito will next be heard voicing Chesterfield in the animated film *Animal Crackers*. In 2012, DeVito voiced the Lorax in Universal Pictures' animated feature *The Lorax*, based on the book of the same name by Dr. Seuss. His voice was also heard in the German, Russian, Spanish and Italian versions of the film.

DeVito runs TheBloodFactory.com, an online collaboration with screenwriter John Albo of horror shorts he affectionately refers to "splatter cuts." He is also the principal of Jersey Film's 2nd Avenue, a successor company of Jersey Films. Jersey Films has produced over 20 motion pictures, including *Freedom Writers*, *Be Cool*, *Garden State*, *Along Came Polly*, *Man on the Moon*, *Pulp Fiction*, *Out of Sight*, *Get Shorty*, *Hoffa*, *Matilda*, *Living Out Loud* and *Erin Brockovich* (which was nominated for an Academy Award.)

Apart from his work with Jersey Films, DeVito has starred in such films as *Junior*, *Batman Returns*, *Twins*, *Romancing the Stone*, *Jewel of the Nile*, *Ruthless People*, *Tin Men*, *Anything Else*, *Big Fish*, *Renaissance Man*, *The Big Kahuna* and *Heist*. He starred more recently in *The Good Night*, *Deck The Halls*, *Relative Strangers*, *The OH in Ohio*, *Be Cool*, *Nobel Son* and *Even Money*.

DeVito attended Our Lady of Mt. Carmel grammar school and Oratory Prep School in Summit, N.J., but appeared in only one school play, as St. Francis of Assisi. After graduation, he pursued several odd jobs, always with the idea of acting in the back of his mind. He finally entered the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York. "They had fencing and a speech class," he said mockingly, "So you don't talk funny." Unable to get work, Danny bought a round-trip ticket and headed to Hollywood. After years of unemployment, he returned to New York. He called an old friend and former American Academy professor who, coincidentally, had been seeking him out for a starring role in one of three one-act plays presented together under the title of *The Man With the Flower in His Mouth*. Soon Danny was into big money (\$60 a week), and other stage performances followed. Among his credits were *Down the Morning Line*, *The Line of Least Existence*, *The Shrinking Bride* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

In 1975, under a grant from the American Film Institute, Danny and his wife, actress Rhea Perlman, wrote and produced *Minestrone*, which has been shown twice at the Cannes Film Festival and has been translated into five languages. Later they wrote and produced a 16-millimeter black-and-white short subject, *The Sound Sleeper*, which won first prize at the Brooklyn Arts and Cultural Association competition.

DeVito carries his success well. Never forgetting that there were more difficult times, he maintains a healthy sense of perspective. As *Taxi* character Louie DePalma, would say, "If you don't do good today, you'll be eatin' dirt tomorrow."

EDIE FALCO (Miller)

Edie Falco became the only actress to have won the Emmy Award for Best Actress in both the drama and comedy categories upon receiving the award for her performance in *Nurse Jackie*, having previously won for her portrayal of "Carmela Soprano" in the groundbreaking series *The Sopranos*. Falco has been nominated for a record 22 SAG Awards, and became the only actress to ever receive the Emmy, the Golden Globe, and the SAG Award in the same year for the same performance.

Onscreen, Falco stars in 2016's *The Comedian* directed by Taylor Hackford and starring Robert De Niro and Leslie Mann. Falco recently starred alongside Louis C.K. in his critically acclaimed new web series *Horace and Pete*. Early in her career, she became known to audiences for her recurring roles on the dramatic series *Oz*, *Law & Order*, and *Homicide*.

Onstage, Falco made her Broadway debut in the Tony Award winning play *Sideman*, and later starred opposite Stanley Tucci in the acclaimed revival of *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune* and was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Actress for her performance opposite Ben Stiller in *The House of Blue Leaves*.

Falco has also received acclaim for her performances in such film as *Laws of Gravity*, *Cost of Living*, *Judy Berlin*, and *Sunshine State*. Other film credits include *A Price Above Rubies*, *Hurricane*, *Bullets Over Broadway*, *The Addiction*, *Freedomland*, and *Random Hearts*.

She will soon be seen starring with Kate Mara in the upcoming film *Megan Leavey*.

PATTI LuPONE (Florence Berkowitz)

Patti LuPone is a two-time Tony Award winner for two now-legendary stage performances: as Argentina's controversial First Lady Eva Peron in the Broadway premiere of the musical *Evita*; and as Madame Rose, the mother of stripper Gypsy Rose Lee, in the most recent Broadway revival of the classic musical *Gypsy*.

Onscreen, she stars in Taylor Hackford's 2016 drama-comedy *The Comedian* as the formidable Florence Berkowitz. In spring 2017 she will return to Broadway as cosmetics pioneer Helena Rubenstein, in the world premiere of the new Scott Frankel-Michael Korie-Douglas Wright musical *War Paint*.

A founding member of both the Drama Division of New York's Juilliard School and John Houseman's The Acting Company, she is equally at home on Broadway stage as she is in front of film and television cameras. Select highlights of her stage career include performances as Lucia in *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Award nominations); Mrs. Lovett in John Doyle's production of *Sweeney Todd* (Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle Award nominations); Maria Callas in *Master Class*; Reno Sweeney in *Anything Goes* (Drama Desk Award; Tony Award nomination); Moll in *The Cradle Will Rock*; Nancy in *Oliver!*; The Reporter in *Accidental Death of An Anarchist*; and Rosamund in *The Robber Bridegroom* (Tony and Drama Desk Award nominations). A long-time collaborator of writer-director David Mamet, she starred on Broadway in his plays *The Anarchist*, *The Old Neighborhood*, and *The Water Engine*; off-Broadway in *The Woods* and *Edmond*; and appeared in his films *State and Main* and *Heist*.

In London, she was the first American actor to appear with the Royal Shakespeare Company in their production of *Les Misérables*, in which she created the role of Fantine. For that performance, as well as for a reprise of her performance as Moll in a West End engagement of *The Cradle Will Rock*, she was the first American actor to win London's coveted Olivier Award. Her subsequent West End appearances include the world premiere of *Sunset Boulevard* in which she created the role of Norma Desmond (Olivier Award nomination), and *Master Class*.

Her other New York stage appearances include her debut as guest soloist with the New York City Ballet singing the role of "Anna 1" in the company's production of *The Seven Deadly Sins*; the New York Philharmonic's concert productions of the musicals *Company* (as Joanne), *Candide* (as the Old Lady), and *Sweeney Todd* (where she first played the role Mrs. Lovett); Lincoln Center's American Songbook series concert production of *Passion* (as Fosca); and the City Center Encores! productions of *Gypsy*, *Can Can*, and *Pal Joey*.

FILM: *Parker*, *Union Square*, *City by the Sea*, *Just Looking*, *Summer of Sam*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Witness*.

TV: "Crazy Ex-Girlfriend", "Penny Dreadful" (Critics Choice Award nomination), "Girls," "American Horror Story: Coven," "30 Rock," "Law & Order: SVU," "Glee," "Ugly Betty," "Will & Grace," the Emmy winning telecasts of "Passion" and "Sweeney Todd," "Oz," "Monday Night Mayhem," "Evening At the Pops" with John Williams and Yo Yo Ma, "Frasier" (Emmy nomination), "Law & Order," "The Water Engine," "L.B.J.," and "Life Goes On."

CLORIS LEACHMAN (May Conner)

One of the most accomplished and beloved American actresses of stage, film and television, Cloris Leachman is a true Hollywood icon. The Academy Award winning actress has also won eight Primetime Emmy® Awards—more than any other performer—as well as a Daytime Emmy® Award.

Leachman is one of the most respected actresses of all time. Her long career spans films, television dramas and comedies from the Golden Age to the hottest primetime hits today. TV Guide Network ranked her as one of the Funniest Women on TV and the PBS series *Pioneers of Television* featured her as one of the funniest ladies in comedy.

Leachman has been front & center on iconic shows from *Lassie*, and *The Twilight Zone* to *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, for which she won two of her Emmys® in the role of Phyllis Lindstrom. Audiences loved Phyllis and soon she had her own spinoff series. From *Facts of Life* to *Malcolm in the Middle* (another two Emmys®) audiences couldn't get enough of Cloris. Since then, Cloris earned millions of new fans as the unforgettable Maw Maw in *Raising Hope*. She currently stars in *The 11th* for Feeln.com and will soon be seen in Starz's upcoming straight-to-series adaptation of Neil Gaiman's acclaimed contemporary fantasy novel, *American Gods*. She recently finished shooting *The Comedian* with Robert DeNiro for director Taylor Hackford and *So B. It* for Stephen Gyllenhaal.

Peter Bogdonavich cast Cloris as Ruth Popper in *The Last Picture Show*, earning her an Oscar® for Best Supporting Actress and a BAFTA Award. Mel Brooks soon came calling, casting Cloris as the unforgettable Frau Blucher in his classic film *Young Frankenstein*. They reteamed on *High Anxiety* and *History of the World: Part 1*. From *The Muppet Movie* to *Spanglish* Cloris has continued to delight audiences in over 70 films and hundreds of hours of television.

To no one's surprise, it was Leachman's star turn on *Dancing With the Stars* as the oldest competitor on the ABC hit series, which established Cloris as the coolest octogenarian of all time.

She starred in the DreamWorks animated film *The Croods* with Nic Cage and Emma Stone and the *Wedding Ringer* with Kevin Hart .

Leachman was inducted into the Television Academy Hall of Fame in 2011 and has her own star in the Hollywood Walk of Fame and was granted an honorary doctorate in 2014 by her alma mater Northwestern University.

Leachman, a dedicated vegetarian, resides in Los Angeles and spends much of her time with her children and her five grandchildren.

LUCY DeVITO (Brittany Berkowitz)

Lucy DeVito was named in Backstage's second annual list of 30 actors on "the verge of career breakthroughs" in 2013. Originally from Los Angeles, after studying theater and graduating from Brown University, Lucy moved to New York City where she currently resides.

In 2016 she appears in Taylor Hackford's *The Comedian*, starring Robert De Niro, Leslie Mann, and Danny DeVito. Prior to that, she most recently starred in *Curmudgeons*,

directed by Danny DeVito, which screened at The Tribeca Film Festival (as well as various international festivals) and was released on Vimeo.

Lucy starred opposite Tyler Labine (playing his love interest) for two seasons in the comedy *Deadbeat* (Hulu). She recurred on *Alpha House* opposite John Goodman for Amazon and did an episode of *Girls*.

She is known for her work in movies such as *Leaves of Grass*, alongside Edward Norton, Mike Birbiglia's *Sleepwalk with Me*, *Speech & Debate*, *A Quiet Little Marriage*, *Syrup*, *Beware the Gonzo* and *Just Add Water*. Lucy has made appearances on the television shows *Girls*, *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* and *Melissa and Joey*.

Onstage, Lucy recently starred in *Steel Magnolias* opposite Elaine Hendrix, Patricia Richardson, Susan Sullivan and Jessica Walter, directed by Marsha Mason at The Buck's County Playhouse. Previously, she worked with Nora Ephron and Delia Ephron in the original readings of their play *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*. She performed the play many times in New York at the Westside Theater and in Los Angeles at the Geffen Playhouse. Other plays in which she's performed include *In Quietness* by Anna Moench, Stefanie Zdravec's *The Electric Baby*, Bruce Graham's *Any Given Monday*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, in which she played Anne, and *The Miracle at Naples*, by David Grimm. She's a member of The Ensemble Studio Theater and Morgan Gould & Friends.

About the Filmmakers

TAYLOR HACKFORD (Director, Producer)

Taylor Hackford most recently directed 2016's dramatic comedy *The Comedian*, starring Robert DeNiro, Leslie Mann, Danny DeVito, Edie Falco, Harvey Keitel, Patti LuPone, Charles Grodin, and Cloris Leachman.

Hackford began his entertainment career at KCET, the Los Angeles public television affiliate, where he produced, wrote or directed documentaries, investigative reports and music performance programs. In 1979, Taylor won an Academy Award in the category of Best Live-Action Short Film for his first dramatic effort, *Teenage Father*. He then proceeded to make his feature directorial debut in 1980 with *The Idolmaker. An Officer and a Gentleman*, starring Richard Gere and Debra Winger, was Taylor's second film and a commercial and critical hit in 1982. It received five Academy Award nominations and brought home Oscars for Louis Gossett, Jr. as Best Supporting Actor and Best Original Song. Taylor subsequently directed and produced *Against All Odds; White Nights*; the acclaimed documentary *Chuck Berry: Hail! Hail! Rock n Roll; Everybody's All-American; Blood In, Blood Out* (Best Director Award 1993 Tokyo Film Festival); *Dolores Claiborne*; and *Proof of Life*. Taylor, who has been fascinated by all things Latino since his stint as a Peace Corps volunteer in South America, developed

and produced *La Bamba*, the Richie Valens biography, still the most successful Latin-themed feature film in history. In 1996, Taylor discovered some unreleased documentary footage of the legendary Ali/Foreman title fight in Zaire shot by filmmaker Leon Gast. Taylor shot new interviews with Norman Mailer, George Plimpton and Spike Lee, and then restructured the original footage, virtually creating a new film, *When We Were Kings*, winner of the 1997 Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature. In 1998, Hackford directed the critically acclaimed, worldwide hit *The Devil's Advocate*, starring Al Pacino and Keanu Reeves. This film also introduced newcomers Charlize Theron and Connie Nielsen. Hackford struggled for nearly fifteen years to make *Ray*, a dramatic film portrait of American musical icon, Ray Charles, starring Jamie Foxx. His passion paid off when this film received critical raves and was nominated for most major film awards in 2005, including six Academy Award Nominations. Mr. Foxx won for Best Actor. More recently, Hackford produced and directed *Love Ranch*, starring his wife Helen Mirren and Joe Pesci; and *Parker*, based on Donald Westlake's celebrated literary character, starring Jason Statham and Jennifer Lopez. Hackford co-wrote, produced and directed *Louis & Keely 'Live' at the Sahara* at the Geffen Playhouse in 2009. The musical play broke all house records at the Geffen and went on to win LA's top theater award, The Ovation Award, for Best Musical. Mr. Hackford has been an active member of the Directors Guild of America for over 30 years, serving in various leadership positions, including two terms as President of the DGA.

ART LINSON (Producer, Story and Screenplay)

Art Linson is an American film producer, screenwriter, director, and author. In 2016 he produced and wrote the original story and screenplay for the comedy-drama *The Comedian*, starring Robert De Niro and Leslie Mann.

Born in Chicago, Linson grew up in Hollywood. He did his undergraduate work at the University of California, Berkeley and graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles law school.

Linson's producing credits range from such commercial and critical hits as *The Untouchables*, *Heat*, the cult classic *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, *Fight Club*, *Scrooged*, to unusual classics such as two-time Oscar winner *Melvin and Howard*, *Car Wash* and *Into the Wild*.

For television he served as executive producer with his partner John Linson on the series *Sons of Anarchy*, FX's highest rated series.

In 1995, Linson published his first book, [A Pound of Flesh: Perilous Tales of How to Produce Movies in Hollywood](#). His second book, [What Just Happened? Bitter Hollywood Tales From the Front Line](#), was published in 2002. In 2008 it was turned into the movie *What Just Happened?* from his screenplay, directed by Barry Levinson and starring Robert De Niro. Currently, with his partner John Linson, he is producing the crime drama *The Outsider*, starring Jared Leto and directed by Martin Zandvliet.

Mark Canton (Producer)

Mark Canton has been a preeminent force in the entertainment industry helping to bring hundreds of pictures to the screen in his capacity as a senior studio executive and producer. Canton controls a large number of high profile projects in various stages of development, pre-production, production and post-production.

In 2016 he produced *The Comedian* with his Cinelou Films partner Courtney Solomon and with Linson Films. *The Comedian* is a dark comedy directed by Taylor Hackford, starring Robert DeNiro, Leslie Mann, Danny Devito, and Harvey Keitel. The screenplay is by Art Linson, Jeffrey Ross, and Richard LaGravenese (Academy Award winning writer of *The Fisher King*), and focuses on the life of an aging insult comic.

In 2014 his film *300: Rise of an Empire*, the companion to the mega-hit, *300*, opened to new box office records around the world. It was written by Zack Snyder and Kurt Johnstad and directed by Noam Murro and is based on Frank Miller's latest graphic novel. In December 2014, *The Pyramid*, a horror film set against the intersection of ancient Egyptology and modern archeology, was directed by Gregory Levasseur.

More recently, Canton produced *Cake*, a dark comedy written by Patrick Tobin, directed by Daniel Barnz and starring Jennifer Aniston as an acerbic woman who becomes fascinated by the suicide of a person in her chronic pain group. *Cake* was released late last year to critical and audience acclaim. Aniston's performance garnered nominations for major awards including a Golden Globe®. *Cake* was the first project made under a new venture between Cinelou Films and China's Shenghua Entertainment. Courtney Solomon, Cinelou's CEO and Co-Chairman, produced the film with Canton.

In September 2016, Cinelou released its second film, *Mr. Church*, an emotional drama starring Eddie Murphy and directed by Bruce Beresford. It completed filming in Los Angeles in January 2015, with Lee Nelson and David Buelow producing alongside Canton and Solomon.

Other 2016/2017 motion pictures produced by Canton include:

- *Burn Your Maps* written and directed by Jordan Roberts (*Big Hero Six*) played to critical acclaim at the 2016 Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). The film stars Vera Farmiga, Marton Csokas, Virginia Madson, Jacob Tremblay and Suraj Sharma (*Life of Pi*), and focuses on an 8-year-old American boy (Tremblay) who declares to his parents that he is actually a Mongolian goat herder born in the wrong place. When he meets a similarly displaced Indian filmmaker, they journey east, seeking what they believe to be their true place in the world.

- *The Yellow Birds*, written by David Lowery and directed by Alexandre Moors (*Blue Caprice, Clash of Gods*). Based on the book by Kevin Powers, it stars Jennifer Aniston, Alden Ehrenreich (*Blue Jasmine, Hail Caesar, Beautiful Creatures*), Tye Sheridan (*X-Men*)

and Jack Huston (*American Hustle*, *The Longest Ride*) in the drama set against the Iraq war.

- *Phoenix Lights*, directed by Justin Barber is a mystery about three teens that go missing following the appearance of mysterious lights in the skies above Phoenix, AZ. TS Nowlin (*Maze Runner*) wrote the screenplay.

Films in advanced stages of development to be produced by Canton are:

- *Robotech* with James Wan (*Fast 7*, *The Conjuring*) directing off a script by Michael Gordon (*300*) for Sony Pictures Entertainment. *Robotech* is the classic anime that started in the 1980s and has fervent fans all over the world.

- *Emperor* which follows the adventures and intrigues of Gaius Julius Caesar and Marcus Brutus as they mature from boys into young men in the powerful, sexy and dangerous world of ancient Rome. The original script is by Oscar® nominee William Broyles Jr. and Stephen Harrigan based on Conn Iggulden's historical fiction novel. Nigel Sinclair, Guy East, Gianni Nunnari and Matt Jackson are producing alongside Canton.

- *Den of Thieves*, a crime thriller about a gang of outlaws who try to rob the Federal Reserve in Los Angeles and a gang of renegade cops who try to stop them. It is written and will be directed by Christian Gudegast with Gerard Butler to star.

In the television arena, Canton is Executive Producer on *Power*, which is presently airing its ratings-winning third season, has begun production in New York City on its fourth outing. The series was developed with Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson and CBS Studios for the Starz Network, with Courtney Kemp-Agboh (*The Good Wife*) as the writer/showrunner. Additionally, Canton has entered into a first look arrangement with Starz for the development and production of cutting edge, high-concept original programming for the network.

Also in television, Canton and CBS Studios have set up *Friday the 13th* at The CW. This series reimagines the iconic Jason and the creepy town of Crystal Lake.

Amongst his most notable films are *300*, *300: Rise of an Empire*, *The Spiderwick Chronicles* and *Immortals*. *300*, based on the Frank Miller graphic novel and directed by Zack Snyder, opened to record-setting box office numbers, having grossed more than \$460 million worldwide and is the highest-grossing March release in the history of the motion picture business. The *300* DVD has set sales records around the world. *The Spiderwick Chronicles*, based on the best-selling children books by Tony DiTerlizzi & Holly Black with Mark Waters (*Mean Girls*) directing, was the highest-grossing family film of early 2008. *Immortals*, an epic mythological tale set in war torn ancient Greece, was released on 11/11/11 and has since amassed a worldwide gross of almost \$250 million.

He had two movies released in 2010: romantic drama *Letters to Juliet*, directed by the late Gary Winick on location in Verona and Tuscany, Italy, and New York City, and *Piranha 3D* directed by Alexandre Aja, which Canton describes as “*Jaws* for a new generation.” Its sequel was *Piranha 3DD*.

Canton initially joined Warner Bros. as Vice President of Production, rising to Senior Vice President and President of Worldwide Theatrical Production. During his tenure at the studio, Canton was instrumental in creating the notable *Batman*, *Lethal Weapon* and *National Lampoon's Vacation* film franchises. His creative influence brought some of today's most powerful filmmakers to the fore and some of the studio's most successful films to the screen. The latter included Tim Burton's *Pee Wee's Big Adventure*, *Batman*, *Beetlejuice*, the Academy award-winning *Driving Miss Daisy* and Martin Scorsese's *Goodfellas*. Canton also put into production such popular hits as *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*, *Purple Rain*, *Above the Law*, *The Witches of Eastwick*, *The Mission*, and *Presumed Innocent*, among others.

He departed Warner Bros. to join Sony Pictures Entertainment's Columbia Pictures as Chairman. In the ensuing years he rose to Chairman of the Columbia TriStar Motion Picture Companies, with all creative, operational and management responsibility for Columbia Pictures, Triumph Films, Sony Pictures Classics, SPE's international theatrical operations, and Columbia TriStar's strategic motion picture alliances.

Soon after joining SPE, Canton revitalized motion picture production operations, restructured the marketing and distribution companies and released a wide range of critically acclaimed action and comedy hits, among them: *A Few Good Men*, *Groundhog Day*, *In the Line of Fire*, *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, *Bad Boys*, *The Net*, *The Professional*, *The Fifth Element*, and *Jumanji*. Canton also championed a distinctive slate of dramas and romantic comedies, such as the Oscar-winning *Sense and Sensibility*, *Legends of the Fall*, *The Mirror Has Two Faces*, *A League of Their Own*, *Fly Away Home*, *Sleepless in Seattle*, *Poetic Justice*, *The Age of Innocence*, *Little Women*, *The Remains of the Day* and *The People vs. Larry Flynt*.

Also produced under Canton's aegis at Sony were the Academy Award winning *As Good As It Gets*, starring Jack Nicholson and Helen Hunt; Oscar-winner *Jerry Maguire*, starring Tom Cruise and Cuba Gooding Jr.; *Men in Black*, starring Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones; the Julia Roberts romantic comedy *My Best Friend's Wedding*; the thriller *Anaconda*; and the Wolfgang Peterson film *Air Force One* starring Harrison Ford. In addition Canton initiated *I Know What You Did Last Summer*, *Starship Troopers*, *Zorro*, *Godzilla*, and *Stepmom*, starring Julia Roberts and Susan Sarandon.

Following Sony, Canton returned to Warner Bros. to create his own production entity, The Canton Company. His first picture was the Warner Bros. Christmas classic *Jack Frost*, starring Michael Keaton (*Batman*) and Kelly Preston (*Jerry Maguire*). The next film came the following year, as Canton produced the much anticipated remake of the British cult classic *Get Carter*, directed by Stephen Kay (*Last Time I Committed Suicide*) starring academy award winners Sylvester Stallone (*Rocky*) and Michael Caine (*Cider*

House Rules) alongside Rachel Leigh Cook (*She's All That*) and Miranda Richardson (*Sleepy Hollow*). Shortly thereafter, Warner Bros released the dramatic Mars thriller *Red Planet* directed by Antony Hoffman, and starring Val Kilmer (*Heat*), Carrie-Anne Moss (*The Matrix*), Tom Sizemore (*Saving Private Ryan*) and Oscar winner Terrance Stamp.

In early 2002 he joined Artists Production Group as a partner, Chairman and CEO and in December 2003, he launched Atmosphere Entertainment MM—an entrepreneurial venture to develop, produce and finance theatrical motion pictures and television programming.

Two films produced under The Canton Company and Artists Production Group banners—*Taking Lives*, starring Angelina Jolie, Ethan Hawke, Kiefer Sutherland and Oliver Martinez, and *Godsend* starring Robert De Niro, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos and Greg Kinnear, were released in early 2004.

Canton executive produced the *Jack and Jill* TV series for Warner Bros. Television, and is presently developing new television projects at HBO, ABC, CBS, TNT and Lifetime.

A native of New York, Canton is a UCLA graduate (magna cum laude) and a member of UCLA's National Honor Society for American Studies. He delivered the 2011 commencement address at UCLA's School of History. In addition to serving on the UCLA Board of Councilors and the Deans Advisory Board for the School of Theatre, Film, and Television, Canton was Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of the American Film Institute and Founder and is Chairman Emeritus of AFI's Third Decade Council. In recent years he has co-chaired the prestigious Ischia Global Film & Music Festival and the Los Angeles, Italia Film Festival.

Courtney Solomon (Producer)

Courtney Solomon, Co-CEO/Partner in Cinelou Films, was born in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. In 1995 he started his first production company called Sweetpea Entertainment. In 2000, Sweetpea released *Dungeons & Dragons*, which Courtney produced and directed. In 2005, Courtney joined with Hong Kong-based business magnate Allan Zeman and together they founded the production company After Dark Films. For After Dark Films' first release, Courtney wrote, produced and directed *An American Haunting*, starring Sissy Spacek and Donald Sutherland. Under the After Dark banner Solomon also created an annual horror film festival featuring eight recently acquired independent horror movies all domestically distributed by After Dark Films. The first Horrorfest event was held in 2006 and continued until 2010, becoming one of the largest horror festivals in America. In 2012, he directed Ethan Hawke and Selena Gomez in the feature film *Getaway* which was released theatrically by Warner Brothers.

After a thriving career in film and having functioned successfully for six years acquiring films, Courtney made another bold business move. Production company Cinelou Films is Courtney's most recent venture, which he founded with partner Mark Canton. Cinelou's mandate is to produce three to five awards-worthy independent films a year. Prior to the 2016 completion of *The Comedian*, a dark comedy directed by Taylor

Hackford and starring Robert De Niro and Leslie Mann, Cinelou completed its first film in 2014 entitled *Cake*, starring Jennifer Aniston, Adriana Barraza, Felicity Huffman, William H. Macy, Anna Kendrick and Sam Worthington; *Cake* received an immense amount of attention and snagged SAG™, BFCA™ and Golden Globe™ nominations for Aniston. This was followed by *Mr. Church*, directed by Bruce Beresford (*Driving Miss Daisy*) and starring Eddie Murphy, Britt Robertson and Natasha McElhone. *Mr. Church* premiered at the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival™ and will enjoy a wide theatrical release in late Fall of 2016. Courtney is also in various stages of post-production on multiple other Cinelou films. These include the heartfelt and quirky adventure drama *Burn Your Maps* starring Vera Farmiga, Jacob Tremblay, Virginia Madsen, and Suraj Sharma; and *The Yellow Birds*, directed by Alexandre Moors (*Blue Caprice*) and starring Tye Sheridan, Alden Ehrenreich, Jack Huston, Jennifer Aniston, Toni Collette and Jason Patric.

Moving forward, Cinelou recently launched their new distribution arm, Cinelou Releasing, with the intention of creating a platform through which captivating independent films can be delivered to audiences throughout the U.S. Cinelou Releasing's plan is to distribute four films per year comprised of both Cinelou titles and bold acquisitions that don't typically fit into the traditional studio model.

John Linson (Producer)

John Linson is an American film and television producer and co-founder of Linson Entertainment. He is known for producing films such as *Lords of Dogtown*, *Great Expectations*, *The Runaways* and creating the TV show *Sons of Anarchy*. In 2016, he will produce his original idea for the crime-drama *The Outsider*, directed by Martin Zandvliet, starring Jared Leto; and also produce the comedy-drama *The Comedian*, starring Robert De Niro and Leslie Mann.

John began his career at the age of 18 as a production assistant on the film *Casualties of War*. By the age of 21, John had produced the first ever full length concert video for Nirvana called *Nirvana Live at the Paramount* and the Guns N' Roses mini-documentary entitled *Guns N' Roses Don't Cry: Makin' F@*!ing Videos*. John also produced and directed the Porno for Pyros video *Tahitian Moon*. He went on to produce his first major film production *Great Expectations* in 1998, directed by Oscar winner Alfonso Cuarón.

Riding motorcycles since his early teens, John turned his passion for riding into the idea and creation of *Sons of Anarchy*, which became FX channel's highest rated TV series.

Jeff Ross (Screenplay)

Jeff Ross is a respected comedian, writer, and producer also known as "The Roastmaster General." Jeff's expertise in roast comedy contributed greatly to his work as a screenwriter on Taylor Hackford's 2016 *The Comedian*. Most recently Jeff produced and starred in the *Comedy Central Roast of Rob Lowe*. Jeff's other roast victims include Justin Bieber, James Franco, Charlie Sheen, James Carville and Donald Trump (twice).

Jeff's most recent comedy specials are the critically acclaimed and highly rated *Jeff Ross Roasts Criminals*, which was filmed inside a maximum security jail and *Jeff Ross Roasts Cops* which takes place during ride-a-longs with the Boston Police Department.

Jeff's recent acting credits include guest-star roles on Audience Network's *Kingdom*, ABC's *Dr. Ken*, Comedy Central's *Drunk History*, Fox's *Grandfathered*, *The Simpsons*, *Family Guy* and the feature films *Flock Of Dudes* and *Wedding Ringer* starring Kevin Hart.

Jeff is also a regular on many animated shows including *Mr. Peabody and Sherman*, *Future Worm*, *Penn Zero Part Time Hero* and will be seen as "Hook Foot" on Disney's upcoming *Tangled* TV series.

His latest TV venture is *Jeff Ross Presents Roast Battle*, a popular comedy competition show about to start its second run on Comedy Central.

Jeff sits on the board of the New York Friars Club and is involved with the many charitable endeavors including the Scleroderma Research Foundation and the USO, which supports military members and their families. Jeff is originally from Newark, New Jersey but please don't hold that against him.

www.RoastmasterGeneral.com

Lewis Friedman (Screenplay)

Lewis Friedman's work has come out of the mouths of many of our biggest celebrities and leaders. Although that sounds disgusting, he says it's really not. He has written and written/produced scores of TV specials from *Miss America* to *The Kennedy Center Honors* (Emmy nominations) to the MTV/Showtime series *Music in High Places* to contributions on the Academy Awards and Golden Globes. He has written for Nelson Mandela, the last five U.S. Presidents, and Ryan Seacrest. His movie credits include the shameful cult hit *BASEketball*. Favorite job: Writing and producing *The Dream Concert* raising funds for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. Friedman worked closely with Robert De Niro to develop the comedy routines delivered by De Niro in Taylor Hackford's 2016 *The Comedian*.

Richard LaGravenese (Screenplay)

Richard LaGravenese is a writer, director, and producer. Prior to his screenplay contribution on Taylor Hackford's *The Comedian*, he wrote: *Behind The Candelabra*, (Emmy Nomination for Best Writing in Television Movie/Mini Series, BAFTA nomination Best Screenplay); *The Fisher King* (AcademyAward®, BAFTA and WGA award nominations); *Unbroken*; *Water for Elephants*; *The Bridges of Madison County*; *A Little Princess*; *The Horse Whisperer*; *The Mirror Has Two Faces*; and *The Ref*. As Writer/Director: The indie film musical *The Last Five Years*; *P.S. I Love You*; *Freedom Writers* (Humanitas Prize); *Living Out Loud*. With co-creator Tony Goldwyn, LaGravenese wrote and produced the critically acclaimed AMC/WETv television

series, *The Divide*. He co-produced and co-directed (with Ted Demme) the Emmy®-nominated film documentary *A Decade Under the Influence*, (National Board of Review's William Everson Film History Award).

Oliver Stapleton BSC (Director of Photography)

Oliver Stapleton, BSC, has worked with a wide array of critically acclaimed filmmakers to make some of Hollywood's best stories. His career spans decades, with a diverse slate of films from *My Beautiful Laundrette* in 1984, to Anne Fletcher's *The Proposal* in 2009, to most recently, *The Comedian*, directed by Taylor Hackford, in 2016.

Stapleton's collaborations with directors like Lasse Hallström and Stephen Frears prove him a cinematic force to be reckoned with. *The Cider House Rules* from 1999 marked his first collaboration with Hallström, and they have since made a total of five films together. He has worked with Frears on seven films, beginning with *My Beautiful Laundrette*. He's also worked with Michael Hoffman five times, including the two-time Academy Award-winning epic, *Restoration* in 1995.

Stapleton has a way of touching every genre in the industry, with films like the musical *Absolute Beginners* of 1986, the Nicholas Sparks' drama *The Best of Me* from 2014, and the 1988 sci-fi comedy *Earth Girls Are Easy*, which earned him an Independent Spirit Award nomination. He began his career shooting documentaries and music videos, and won the MTV Video Music Award for Best Cinematography for his work with the band, a-ha, for *Take On Me*. He has also worked on video projects with great musicians, such as David Bowie, the Rolling Stones, Eddie Grant and The Human League, to name a few.

His approach is to treat every film as though it is his first and uncover the appropriate style for the movie in collaboration with the Director.

Mark Warner ASE (Editor)

Mark Warner was born in Los Angeles, California where he started his film career, working first in sound editing. Mark got his break into picture editing on *Rocky 3* co-editing with Don Zimmerman. He went on to edit *Driving Miss Daisy* for which he was nominated for an Oscar in editing. He was nominated for an Emmy for HBO's *And Starring Pancho Villa as Himself*, and nominated for the Australian AFI editing award for *Mao's Last Dancer*.

The Comedian is Mark's fifth film collaboration with director Taylor Hackford, including *Dolores Claiborne* and *The Devil's Advocate*.

Terence Blanchard (Composer, original score)

Real artists are originals who have a calling. The majority of people in the music world are often mere marketing confections or showcase acts, but not real artists. Acts can have hits, but usually their time in the spotlight is short-lived. Real artists have a vision and follow it for the long term, creatively expressing themselves in

abundance.

Witness Terence Blanchard who early on made a name for himself as a top-tier jazz trumpeter who has gone on to enjoy a multifaceted career both in the jazz camp and beyond. He's not only a four-time Grammy Award winner, but he's also established himself as one of the most influential jazz musicians and film score masters of his generation, a member of a jazz legacy that has shaped the contours of modern jazz today. With more than 30 albums to his credit, as a musician Blanchard is a multi-Grammy Award winner and nominee.

As a film composer, Blanchard has more than 50 scores to his credit, most recently, Taylor Hackford's 2016 *The Comedian* and Kevin Costner's 2014 *Black or White*. He received a Golden Globe nomination for Spike Lee's *25th Hour*. Other film music written by Blanchard include Oprah Winfrey's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Tim Story's *Barbershop* and George Lucas' *Red Tails*.

Add to those achievements Blanchard's recent success composing for Broadway, including the score for the world premiere of playwright Stephen Adly Guirgis's *The Motherf**ker With a Hat* starring Chris Rock and Bobby Canavale, and the Emily Mann-directed Broadway revival of Tennessee Williams's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *A Streetcar Named Desire*; his first opera commissioned by Opera St. Louis *Champion* (a poignant tale of welterweight boxing champion Emile Griffith with librettist Michael Cristofer); a speaking role as the musical voice of Louis the Alligator in the Disney-animated feature *The Princess and the Frog*; becoming the artistic director of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's jazz series; and after serving as the artistic director of the prestigious Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz for a decade since 2000, being named in 2015 artist in residence at the Berklee College of Music in Boston where Blanchard works with students in the areas of artistic development, arranging, and composition. He also participates in master classes around the world as well as local community outreach activities in his beloved hometown of New Orleans.