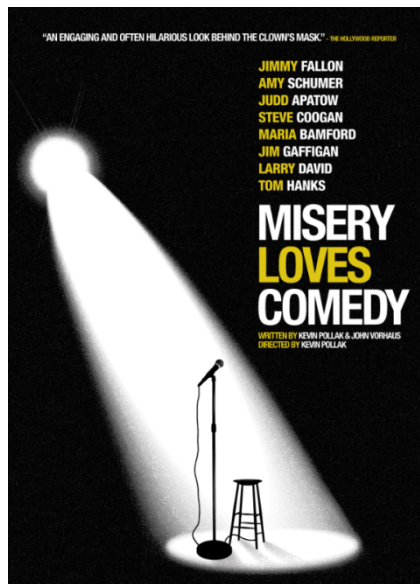




Presents

MISERY LOVES COMEDY



A Film by Kevin Pollak

Select theatrical release begins April 24, 2015
Available on VOD, iTunes, and other on demand platforms April 14, 2015

****Please hold all reviews until April 24, 2015****

Press site:

<http://tribecafilm.com/press-center/tribeca-film/films/54e64e73a32a61deca000001>

Running Time: 95 minutes | Not yet rated

Distributor:
Tribeca Film
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New York, NY 10011

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SYNOPSIS

Jimmy Fallon, Tom Hanks, Amy Schumer, Jim Gaffigan, Judd Apatow, Lisa Kudrow, Larry David, and Jon Favreau are among over 60 famous funny people featured in this hilarious twist on the age-old truth: misery loves company. In-depth, candid interviews with some of the most revered comedy greats who each share their unique path and a life devoted to making strangers laugh.

With arresting anecdotes and insights from the comedy underbelly that reveal a performer's deep desire to connect with audiences, Kevin Pollak's *Misery Loves Comedy* is the definitive master class on the art of humor that details a comedian's rare ability to help us understand life as only they can.

Q&A WITH KEVIN POLLAK

1. Tell us about the origins of *Misery Loves Comedy*?

I had started working with the CEO and founder of Heretic Films, Burton Ritchie. We were developing a script of mine, for me to direct. Becky Newhall of NewAley Pictures had conceived and began developing a documentary about comedians who suffered from depression, called *Misery Loves Comedy*. She mentioned it to Burton, and in turn he suggested I might be right to helm it, and Becky agreed. They brought the project to me, suggesting that my 40 years in stand-up comedy and my relationships with a great array of comedic talent, as well as my interest in directing, made it a perfect fit. I instantly agreed and we began work as a team in August of 2013.

2. What is it about comedy that breeds misery?

It's not that comedy breeds misery, it's that naturally funny people find writing or performing comedy to be the best possible outlet to release their misery, anger and/or depression. The result, thankfully, is one of the historically effective medicines for them AND the audience.

3. How would you describe the tone of the film?

It's definitely intended to be a comedy. The thesis may be "Do you have to be miserable to be funny?" but the message and delivery of that message is comedic. When I set out to cut 70 hours of interviews into a 90 minute film, I needed to create a narrative. As luck would have it, I instantly discovered that even when comedians talk about their pain and misery, they can't help but be deeply funny.

4. Describe your back ground in comedy and what made you fall in love with it?

I started performing stand-up for the family, relatives and then kids at junior high school at the age of 12. I collected stand-up comedians by name in the same way my friends collected baseball cards and comic books. There was never a point after I entered high school when it wasn't apparent to all that I would be a professional one day. I lasted only 9 months in

University, in fact, because I had already started working as a comedian in bars at age 17. It's been a hell of a run so far, with zero chance of slowing down any time soon. A life in the pursuit of the attention and appreciation from total strangers may sound odd, but it's what has made my life so truly worth living, and is what will make my film memorable, if (!!), in fact, it is.

5. You assembled an amazing cast of comedy veterans, tell us about working with these actors.

The great irony about the astonishing list of talent that we were crazy lucky to get is that if I paid any of them to be in a fiction film of mine, I couldn't get more than a couple, at best. Turns out that it's true that misery loves company, and fortunately the company I keep is instinctively hilarious. I had an unfairly amount of laughter and surprise working with most of them. Let's not get bogged down with which ones were not, ok?

6. With all your relationships how did you choose which comedians would be included in your film?

We only had 4 weeks to shoot; one in New York followed by 3 in Los Angeles. I threw the invite net mighty wide, and when we started our tight 4-week shoot we had about 25 on-camera talent scheduled. I was thrilled. Then, as we filmed, people kept saying "Yes," and by the end, we had shot over 60. Very few did not make the final cut, and all of those that did not were just as great. I just didn't like them personally. No, it's typical of any film edit, which is why the otherwise hideous term for this kind of process of elimination is literally called "killing babies." As in, there's nothing worse.

7. With the success of your Kevin Pollak's Chat Show, what techniques and aspects of that did you bring to this film?

Well, for almost 6 years now, I've always booked the show myself, with the exception of a few. So, the difficult task of booking talent was something I had developed, and it's never easy, but you do get better at it. In terms of how to make the on-camera talent feel safe and at ease, I've certainly gotten better at that as well after 225 interviews, which on my show also means over 600 hours of conversation. It also helps that they know that their talking to someone who's been in the trenches of this particular war for many decades and lived to tell the tales.

8. What was your favorite experience in directing this project?

Surprisingly, the editing. The shoots were amazingly fun and funny as hell, but the sorting of the puzzle pieces, and trying to create a narrative that simply didn't exist until I created one was never dull and constantly surprising and enlightening. And, again, hilarious.

9. What can audiences expect from this film?

An opportunity to hear, first hand, what it actually takes to bare your soul in front of strangers and beg them to love you for it.

Who would do that?

We would, and now everyone can learn why, and find out just what the hell is wrong with us.

KEVIN POLLAK – Director & Screenwriter

Kevin Pollak started as stand-up comedian in San Francisco and was a touring pro by the age of twenty-two. After transitioning to acting in his late-twenties, Pollak's role in Rob Reiner's *A Few Good Men*, proved his ability to stand out on the big screen among cinematic heavyweights. This was forever affirmed two years later, when Kevin co-starred in *The Usual Suspects* and Martin Scorsese's *Casino* in the same year.

As the 20th century came to a close, *Variety* named its top 10 hardest working film actors, the criteria of which was that said actors had to have done at least 3 films per year, each year of the 1990's. Kevin was listed among only a handful of others.

In 2001, Kevin returned to his first love, stand-up comedy. He began touring the country and continues to, here and abroad. He was named by Comedy Central as one of the Top 100 Comedians of all Time. In 2012 his third stand-up comedy special, "The Littlest Suspect" debuted. That same year, Kevin became a published author, with his autobiography, "How I Slept My Way To The Middle."

His film career continues to thrive, having recently completed work on the 74th in his filmography.

Pollak was also a pioneer in the podcast world. His award-winning Kevin Pollak's Chat Show (described as "a fun Charlie Rose") debuted in March of 2009. A massive worldwide audience quickly embraced the show, which often garners over a million downloads a month.

As a director, Kevin makes his feature film debut with the documentary *Misery Loves Comedy*, which will have its world premiere at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival. He'll next direct a dramatic thriller set in New Orleans, which he also wrote. It's scheduled to begin filming in May.

BECKY NEWHALL – Producer

Becky Newhall has always had a passion for filmmaking; she received her Bachelor's degree in Mass Communications with a concentration in Television and Film Production at Towson University. Post college she began her career in the pharmaceutical industry. After successfully producing three amazing daughters, Becky decided to follow her life's aspiration to make movies. In 2013, she founded NewAley Pictures with the intent to produce high quality, commercially viable yet impactful documentaries that would not only entertain audiences, but educate them as well. Becky's first film, directed by Kevin Pollak, is *Misery Loves Comedy* which will premiere at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival. The film takes a look at the darker side of stand-up comedy and asks the question, "Do you need to be miserable to be funny?" Her second film, which will also premiere at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival, is "Prophet's Prey," directed by Amy Berg in which she is Co-Executive Producer. Becky is married to Ashton Newhall and together they are raising their three daughters, Aley, Sydney and Brantley in Baltimore, Maryland.

BURTON RITCHIE – CEO Heretic Films

Burton Ritchie is a film producer and lifelong, successful serial entrepreneur. His producer or executive producer credits include *Low Down*, (2014 Sundance winner, Best Cinematography), *Copenhagen*, (2014 Slamdance winner, Audience Award), *Welcome to Me*, (starring Kristen Wiig and James Marsden), *Eating Animals* (a documentary starring Natalie Portman about ethical treatment of animals) and others. Burton is a passionate advocate for sustainable energy. He also serves on the Ambassador Council of the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media and is an outspoken supporter of gender equity, civil rights and LGBT rights.

FILMMAKERS

Directed by	Kevin Pollak
Produced by	Becky Newhall Burton Ritchie Barry Katz
Executive Producers	Ben Galecki Ashton Newhall Liz Davidson Jess Ravich
Associate Producer	Dylan King
Written by	John Vorhaus Kevin Pollak
Edited by	Rob Legato Kevin Pollak Dylan King
Assistant Editors	Katie Legato Michael Legato Jonathan Fallik
Director of Photography	Adam McDaid
Script Supervisor	Jaime Fox
Line Producer	Joseph Roddey
Sound Mixers	Brett Brooke David Hocs Kahung Chu Beau Gourley
First Assistant Director	Joe Roddey

CAST

Tom Hanks
Larry David
Jimmy Fallon
Christopher Guest
Jon Favreau
Judd Apatow
Steve Coogan
Rob Brydon
Sam Rockwell
William H. Macy
Jason Reitman
James L Brooks
Kevin Smith
Amy Schumer
Nick Swardson
Lewis Black
Jim Gaffigan
Jim Jefferies
Richard Lewis
Jemaine Clement
Martin Short
Matthew Perry
Penn Jillette
Maria Bamford
Marc Maron
Janeane Garofalo
Andy Richter
Rob Delaney
Gregg Hughes
Anthony Cumia
Jim Norton
Whoopi Goldberg
David Wain
Stephen Merchant
Robert Smiget
Lisa Kudrow
Bobby Cannavale
Kumail Nanjiani
Kathleen Madigan
Freddie Prinze Jr.
Jason Alexander
Bob Saget
Paul F Tompkins
Chris Hardwick
Kevin Nealon
Alan Zweibel

