

BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN



BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN is an American actor who most recently starred in the 2018 CW Seed/ Blue Ribbon Entertainment reboot of *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory*, inspired by the Broken Lizard cult classic film, "Beerfest." Blake recently received significant critical acclaim for his brutal portrayal of 'Bill Bradley' in the civil rights drama and feature film, *Love Is All You Need?* Known for roles on popular primetime shows like AMC's *Preacher*, USA's *Necessary Roughness*, and TNT's *Major Crimes*, Griffin's notable film work includes D.J. Caruso's *Standing Up*, Helen Hunt's *Ride*, and *Life of a King* where Blake starred opposite Cuba Gooding Jr. Other noteworthy television credits include: *House of Lies*, *Jessie*, *Castle*, CW's *90210* reboot, *Greek*, *Mad Love*, *NCIS: LA*, and the 2017 made-for-TV rom-com, *Do I Say I Do?* A graduate of the distinguished School of Drama at the North Carolina School of the Arts, Blake has performed on some of Los Angeles's most respected stages including the Walt Disney Concert Hall, The Geffen Theatre, the Skylight Theater, and the Theater at Boston Court. In addition to his acting career, Blake routinely lends his voice to progressive causes. He made international headlines as a vocal surrogate for Hillary Clinton's 2016 Presidential bid, giving speeches in battleground states for the former Secretary of State. Additionally, the actor is passionate about eliminating bullying in schools and teamed up with NPR to create a 'listening kit' that examines the origins of bullying in depth. Blake resides in Los Angeles.

AVANTE

BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN





INTERVIEW

1. When did you start the acting profession?

I started acting as a little kid — in my backyard. I would memorize books my parents read to me before bed. They thought I was a genius because I would recite the story word for word while looking at the pages of the book; so, it seemed like I was reading as a four year old. Nope. Just memorizing. I would then turn those stories into plays where I would act out all the parts. I would use our deck as a stage. But I got serious about acting in college when I went to a Drama conservatory — the North Carolina School of the Arts. Right after graduating, I moved out to Los Angeles and started auditioning.

2. Who do you consider iconic directors? What makes a great film?

There are so many. Mike Nichols comes to mind as one of the greats. From *The Graduate* to *Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf*, he possessed an astute ability to create real, raw human relationships. That's what I want to see when I go to the movies. I want to get caught up in

the relationships I see on film—the relationships that characters have with others and the relationship the characters have with themselves.

3. Tell us about the process of getting cast for *Beerfest*; how was the chemistry on set?

I was cast in *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory* a couple days before shooting began, so the casting process was super quick. I had to jump right in when I got to set. I think that's good sometimes because you don't have time to get in your own way. This movie is all about fun and my character Scott is a goofy, hilarious, 'heart on his sleeve' kind of guy; so, working off impulse really suited the project and the character. I was lucky to work with such a talented group of people as the *Beerfest* cast and crew. It's pivotal to the story that we have the chemistry of people who have known each other for years. I think we achieved that because we all just focused on making each other laugh. Laughing really brings people together.

4. Do you feel that the film industry is a direct reflection of society's values?

I can't speak for the film industry as a whole. I think work needs to be done to lift new and diverse voices so that new stories can be highlighted. The film industry has a great power — the power to bring issues and circumstances that people face to the forefront. Through storytelling we can do so much. We learn more about the realities and the struggles of other people. Storytelling has the power to promote empathy— that's a big reason why I am constantly excited about the craft of acting.

5. Would you ever consider directing or producing a film?

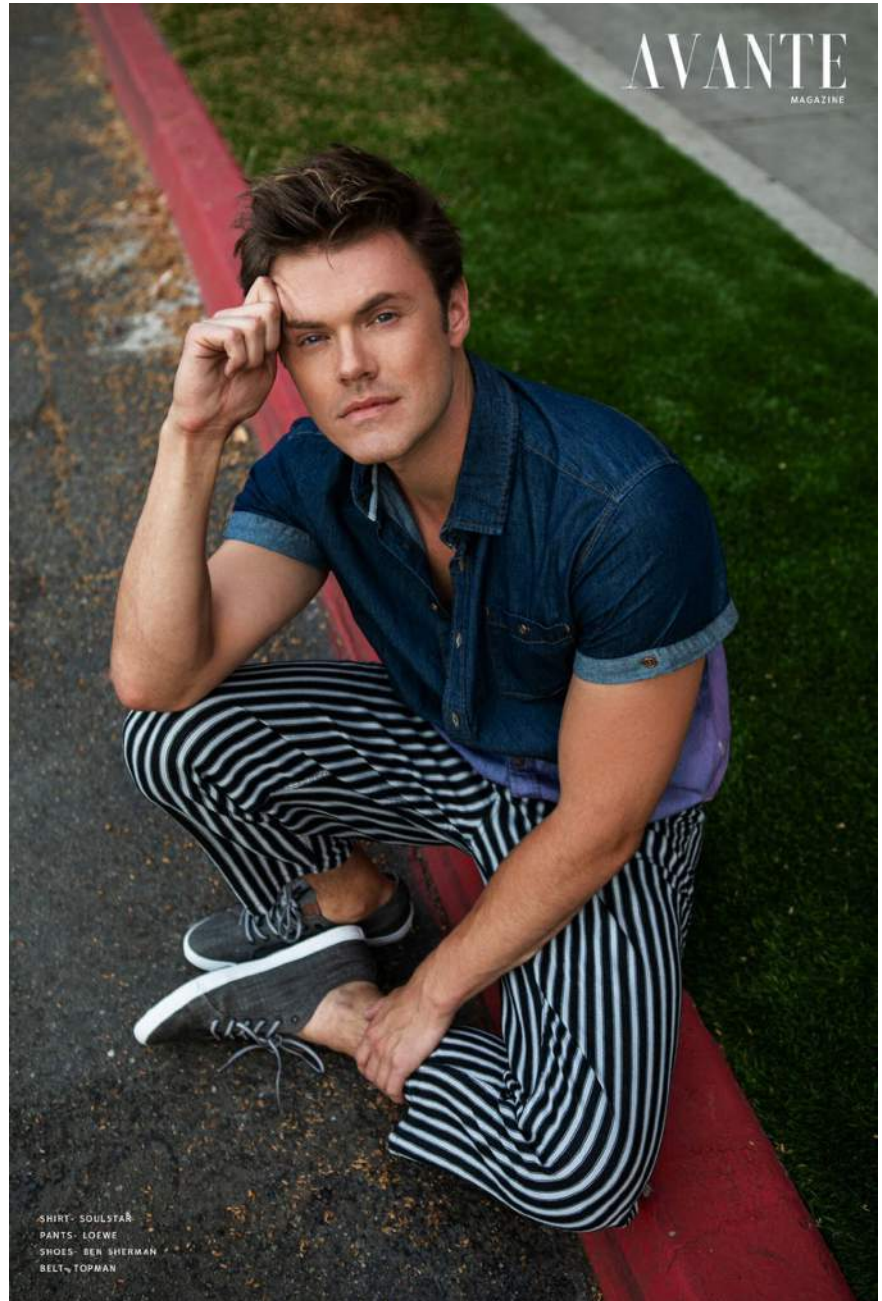
Yes. An actor is responsible for his or her piece of the story through character. The director and producers must hold the entirety of the story. I'd love to explore those avenues someday. I also like writing. I've been collaborating with my talented actress friend Kim Shaw; together, we've been developing content about a story we want to tell.

6. What things do you do to keep evolving and growing within the film industry?

I focus on growing as a person. There's a direct correlation between evolving personally and evolving as an artist. I read things that interest and challenge me, I watch the news, I volunteer when I can, I keep regular coffee dates with friends, I listen, I love my family, I love my dog, and I try to have patience with myself, others, and the world.

7. Woody Allen or Steven Spielberg?

Steven Spielberg. I just re-watched *E.T.* for probably the fifteenth time last week.



8. How do you feel about under representation within the film industry?

Under representation is still a big problem. And while I'm heartened when I see progress, there is clearly much more that needs to be done. I hope that the industry keeps evolving— all people and voices should be represented in storytelling. Art has the great power to move us forward, to unite us, to teach us— which is why it's so important that everyone have a seat at the table. We can learn from each other.



Blake Cooper Griffin @blakecoopergriffin

Photography by Mila Zvereva @mila_zvereva | Grooming Elisa Lara @glambyelisalara | Styled by Sky Naval @sky_is_dlimit & @stl_rtists | Cinematography/Editing by Evan Galeano @evan_galeano | Interview by Ashira Provost @_ashiraprovost



BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN

September 10, 2018

No stranger to the spotlight, actor and Hollywood heartthrob *Blake Cooper Griffin* has much to be celebrating these days. We sat down with him to get even more personal on what's important to him and where he came from.



Hailing from South Carolina, the North Carolina School of the Arts graduate first got his start on stage. Most notably performing on Broadway as *The Prince* in the first ever on-stage production of *Snow White* alongside actress Ashley Brown. Hoping to one day return to theater and get back to his roots, Griffin shares, “that’s where I learned the ropes and what made me want to be an actor. When I get the chance to do theater, that ‘first love’ feeling comes rushing back. It’s truly thrilling.”

Touching on roots, although Griffin doesn’t get back down to the south as often as he’d like, he claims his dad as one of the smartest people he knows, his mother as hilarious and his sister his best friend. Quality time with family includes late night karaoke, watching college football, cruising the neighborhood in his parents’ golf cart and visiting both of his 94-year-old grandmothers.

Moving often as a child due to his dad’s job, he often found himself a victim of bullying and felt as an actor with a platform the importance of becoming involved in several anti-bullying campaigns. After having the opportunity to work with NPR (National Public Radio), a “listening kit” was created around the origins of bullying. He attended several screenings for his film *Love is All You Need*, where he portrayed an epic bully, giving him the chance to hear firsthand other stories that he could relate to.

Playing Scott in his new film *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory*, Griffin’s character struggles during post college life and attempts to navigate the ups and downs of work and relationships. “While I’m not the biggest beer drinker – more of a tequila fan – I really related to Scott. He’s goofy but well intended, competitive but loves his friends and he’s a romantic but not great at dating. Getting the chance to do this zany comedy with a bunch of actors I respect, and a creative team that were a blast to work with, was a dream come true,” he says.

BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN

photographer: Teresa Janakova @ ADB Agency editor: Tull Lantova
producer: Veronika Bobova story: Amanda Stozembars



Art by: Stage by Stage.com

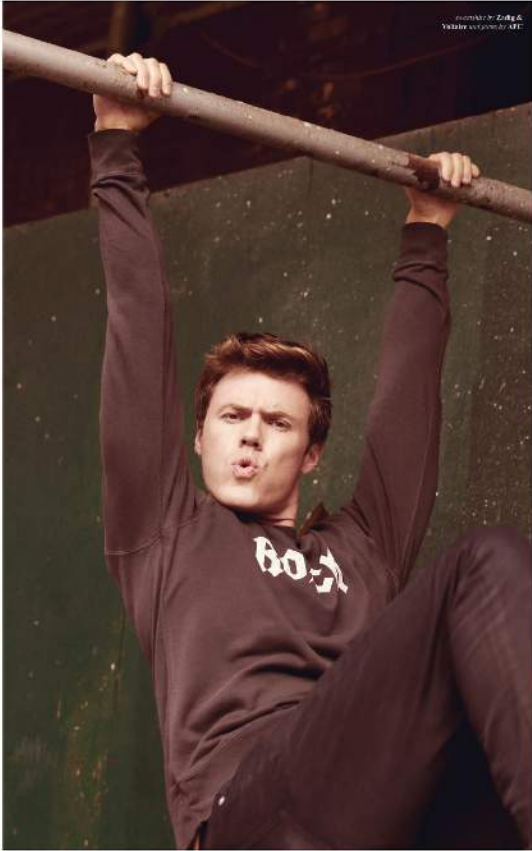
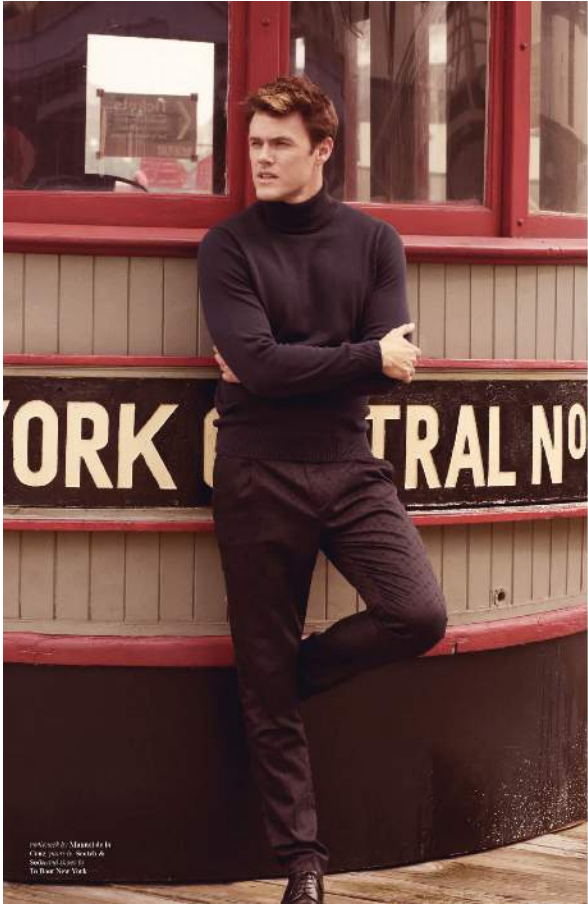


Along with being in the public eye, you can at times make yourself vulnerable to criticism and social pressure. When asked how he handles situations like that, he had this to say, "I try to keep things in perspective, and more and more try to make time to do things I enjoy. From watching football with a buddy, taking a challenging gym class, seeing a friend's comedy show or hiking with my dog – I try and keep time for life stuff. I love my acting career and hope it's a long successful one, but it's not the only part of me."

Having played diverse characters in such a variety of shows and films over the years, Griffin places his initial inspiration for acting with having a love of stories. "I've always been curious. As a kid I wanted to know every detail," he says. Offering advice to the next generation of thespians, "learn as much as you can – you have to know about the world. The more you know, the more you can understand where someone is coming from. Be unafraid of the word 'no', in most cases the response has less to do with you than how you feel at the time."

Continuously pushing himself and exploring what intrigues him, Blake Cooper Griffin is a name backed with beautiful stories and a desire of interesting, transformative characters. Using the mantra "never let anyone tell you who you are," the world is excited to see more of this humble, hard-working heartthrob.

Check out *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory* out now on CW Seed and follow Blake at @blakecoopergriffin or Twitter @TheGriffster





The star of CW Seed's *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory*, tells *In Touch* he gets physical first thing in the morning: "I usually hike with my dog or hit up Barry's Bootcamp with a buddy."



A Thirst for More Than Just Victory With
Blake Cooper Griffin

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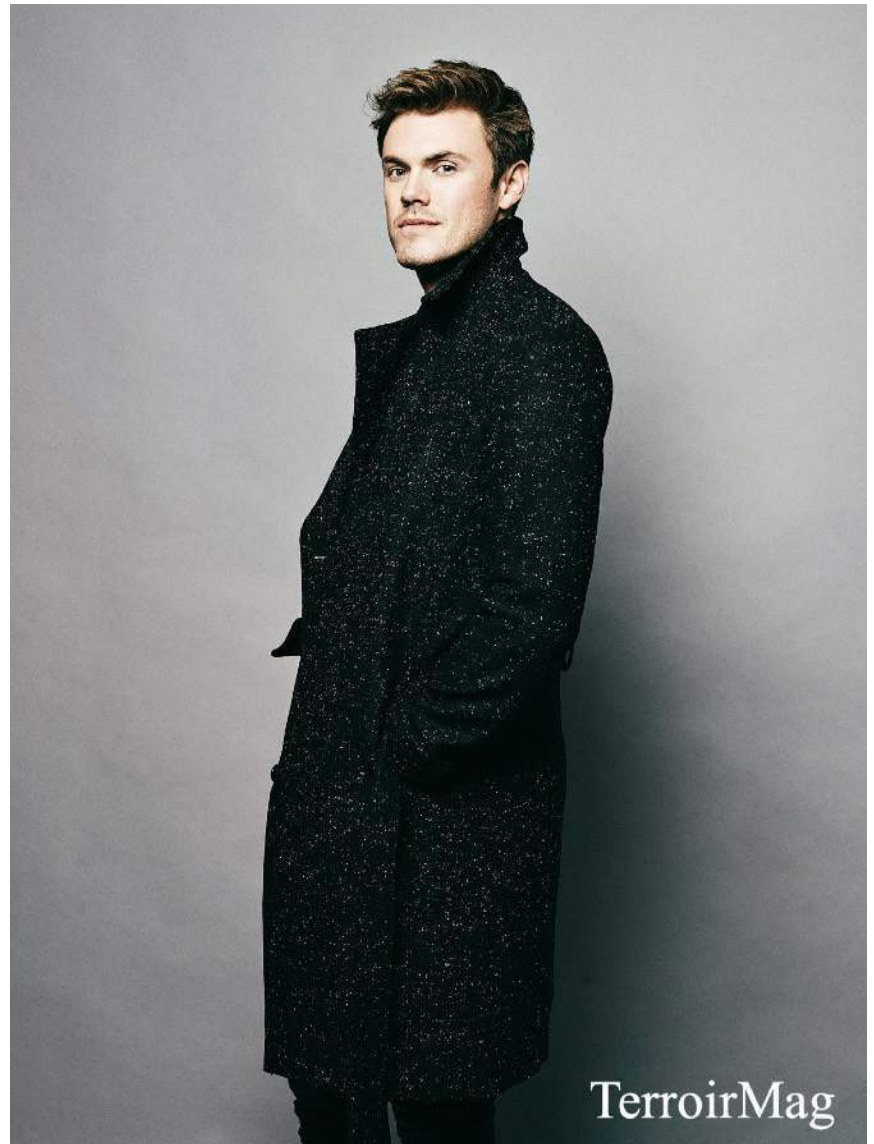


Blake Cooper Griffin was born with an active imagination and penchant for storytelling. Evident in his performances on the silver screen, everyone from his family members to his kindergarten teacher were able to see his abilities at such a young age. "My mom recently reminded me that in kindergarten, on my report card, the teacher wrote, *Blake is our little actor.*"

Despite being born with the love of acting and the strong will to do it, not everything was smooth sailing for the South Carolinian. Graduating from North Carolina School of the Arts, School of Drama, Cooper Griffin made the actor's pilgrimage to Los Angeles. Facing huge changes in lifestyle, Blake managed to take everything in his stride. "I grew up in small towns where there was no such thing as traffic. Traffic in South Carolina is when you have to wait for the light to change twice before you go through it."

It was a turning point for him, reaching an age where decisions had to be made, and one thing was steadfast in Cooper Griffin's mind – he was always going to be an actor. "Coming to Los Angeles was also paired with graduating college, so I had a lot to figure out. That's a time in everyone's life where you're just trying to get on your feet. The added challenge for me was that I didn't know anyone and I was entering such a competitive business. Those early days were simultaneously rough and very simple." Taking each day as it came, Blake made the best out of those initial days in LA. "I ate a lot of Ramen! I was lucky to meet a group of friends that really took me in."

When Blake first entered the industry his expectations were placed on other people making the decisions. Then his thought process changed and things began to click. "I thought everyone else had all the answers. I was looking outside of myself for a stamp of approval. It's true that other people make decisions about casting and who gets what job. And most of the time, that has nothing to do with you. But, you don't need to look outside to find the answers that you are most seeking. Those answers— as an actor, artist, or a person — those answers lie within you."





Preparing for each role takes a different path. Creatively Cooper Griffin likes to keep himself open to whatever inspires him most. "I'm a big believer that you use whatever helps. Sometimes I listen to music that takes me on a journey. Often, I go on long walks and imagine the story of the person I'm playing. I think about things in my own life that mirror what the character is going through." Its these processes that make his characters shine on screen. "I also have conversations with friends that I admire, about the character; talking it through with someone helps me evolve my ideas, my outlook."

Once he has prepared the role, the hardest part is letting go of all the work and preparation. "When you get to set—you let it go. You collaborate with the director and the other actors, and you trust." Says Blake. "Trust can be a tough one — in life and art — so I guess you can add 'cultivating trust' to the things I do to prepare for my work as well."

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Filming a movie that already has a loyal fanbase is sometimes harder than starting afresh, however Blake felt little of that pressure, placing his confidence in the director and other cast members to create a new take on an old classic. "90210 and *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory* are reboots of sorts. But in both cases, the director gave us a bunch of freedom. We didn't set out to remake *Beerfest* or *90210*, but the world of the originals certainly informed what we did. It's a really cool thing to be a part of—it's fun to revisit the worlds of these stories through a present-day lens."

Delving into the character of Scott in "Beerfest", Cooper Griffin found the similarities in himself and the character. "Our version of *Beerfest* is all about reclaiming the fun of college. When we meet Scott he's in a rut and he's trying to get his mojo back. I definitely relate to Scott's goofiness and love for his friends. He's a really fun loving, social, competitive guy. I relate to that. I've been known to get pretty serious about winning game night at friends' houses. One way we're different: I'm a tequila guy. Scott is all beer."

It's not all sunshine and beer competitions though, Blake has a thoughtfulness to him that belies his age and career. "Transformation is often the most fun part. Sometimes that means transforming physically. I was on the USA Network show *Necessary Roughness* for a while and I got to have purple hair and piercings."

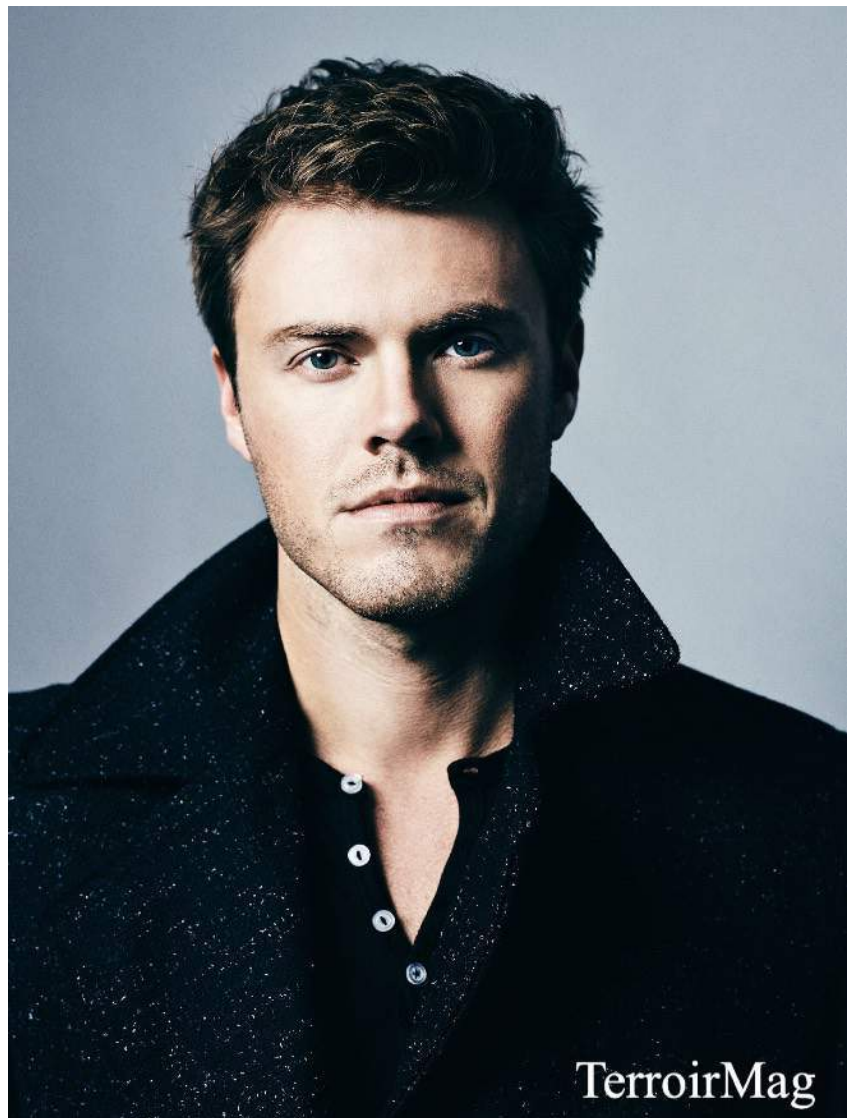
The process for Cooper Griffin is all about collaboration and empathy. "I love the art of acting. There's a present moment, collaborative, creative high that it gives me. I also think the stories we tell, the stories we highlight, move us along personally and as a society."

His insight into humanity goes beyond portraying different people on screen. "Movies, shows, and plays remind us that we all feel the same emotions no matter our differences. Man, do we need that reminder now more than ever."

Blake publicly supported Hillary Clinton during her campaign, and has written several impassioned opinion pieces on her crusade, which appear online at medium.com "Hillary Clinton has fought battles that no other politician has had to face— from First Lady to Senator, to popular vote winner in a Presidential election without assuming that office. She fought sexism, double standards, insane and illogical attacks and she just kept going. How could I not be inspired by her?"

His fervor for kindness and equality in the world, is admirable in the way he speaks about being tolerant of others. "I owe it to her [Hillary Clinton], to my country, and to myself to keep going, keep standing up for what I believe, to keep listening to others even if they have different views from my own and to keep believing that fighting for what is right is worth it."

Apart from his fight for equality, Blake Cooper Griffin also has hopes of playing unique characters on screen. "Exploring different time periods or altering your speech opens up a lot of opportunities for accessing different characters, different points of view too. So, moving forward, I'd love to do a period piece or get a chance to use an accent. I do several!"





PICKING UP THE TORCH

Let the games begin, especially for the college students. It's time to revisit Broken Lizard's 2006 comedy *Beerfest* with a new reboot of the film, *Beerfest: Thirst For Victory*, the first original full-length feature film on CW Seed. One of the stars of the new film, Blake Cooper Griffin, is taken Hollywood by storm, having taken on a variety of different roles in both film or television, along with being a strong advocate against bullying, being a voice for some of the victims. We chatted with Blake Cooper Griffin about his character, Scott, and the key takeaways and the message from the new *Beerfest* film. BY JUSTIN GRANT

Cliché: First off, I can't imagine the feelings, and especially the vibe that you got, when you first heard of the amazing news that you'd be starring in CW Seed's first original full-length feature film, *Beerfest: Thirst For Victory*. What exactly was racing through your mind when you heard of getting a lead role in the movie?

Blake Cooper Griffin: Well, it was funny Justin, because just a few weeks before I found out that I was going to be even auditioning for it, I watched the original by Broken Lizard, and it sort of felt like it was meant to be. When I got the part, one of the things that I was really excited about was that it's a fun comedy. It is just a pure joy to be a part of this film, the script was fantastic, and the people involved were so great too. Especially getting to work with CW Seed, then with Kids at Play, which were some of the other producers on it, as well as Blue Ribbon Entertainment, all those were places that I always wanted to work with. So the idea that I was getting to do that was really exciting and getting to play Scott was just a dream come true. It was just a really fun part to play.

Were you a fan of the original *Beerfest* before landing this role? Did you watch it for any inspiration before shooting?

Yes, I was totally a fan. It has some amazing comedic actors in it, it's hilarious, and it's about beer drinking. Which you know? If there is one thing that people can agree on is that they like beer drinking. So I thought it was so great. And so many people that were in that movie have had such great careers so I was a total fan of it.

Of course we are not trying to do the same thing; our whole incarnation of it is inspired by it. It's the appreciation and love of the movie that we see a new cast of characters picking up the torch and seeing it all in 2018. The thing that I like so much about the original and also our version is the fun of competing with your friends. My character, Scott, is stuck in a rut. He's the ringleader of the group, and he's looking to get his mojo back. He's struggling with what it's like being outside of college, trying to put his life together, and wondering, 'How can I make it as an adult?' and he's going, 'This is not that fun.' I think what he realizes is that he has gotten away from some of the things of college that are really important to hold onto, which are relationships with your friends, always finding ways to have fun in your life, no matter what stage of life you're in, so I really connected to that part. Everyday, life can be very tedious and hard, I knew what that was like right after college, and trying to figure out how to make ends meet. I also had to juggle starting out in an acting career, getting my first apartment, and having to do jobs that you didn't necessarily want to do. I think what the movie does is that it shows that no matter what you're going through, if you have your friends, if you're connecting with things in your life that you enjoy, then you can have a happy life. And I think that's what Scott finds throughout the movie.

Can you tell me about your character, Scott? Did you relate to him at all?

I did. Oh my gosh. I mean, sure. Scott is goofy. I can be goofy too. I think Scott really loves his friends, which I really love

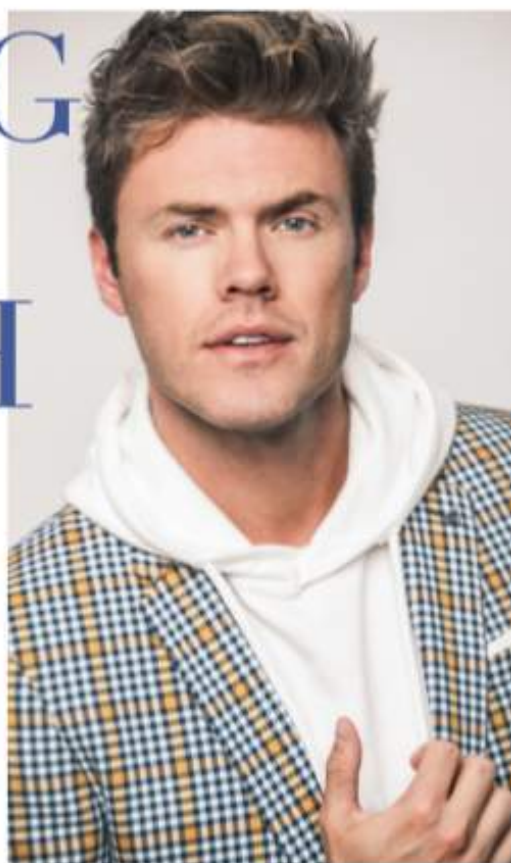


Photo Credit: Vince Trupin

I think that no matter what you do in life; your life or my life has always been infinitely better when I pursued the things in my heart that felt important and something that I would want to get up and do everyday.

my friends. And like I said, we all have had those moments in our lives where we think, 'Man, this is not where I want to be,' so I think Scott is going through that in the movie. I mean, his girlfriend just broke up with him, he is in a job that he really doesn't like, and he's trying to figure out how to make things better. I definitely had times like that in my life. Also, one other thing, Scott is very competitive. I have to say, I am pretty competitive too. I love game nights. I play game nights with my friends and it can get a little intense. I like to win. So I connect to that part of Scott as well.

How does he fit into the movie?

I think Scott's main function in the movie is getting everybody back together. I think that the main core group of friends have sort of strayed a little bit since college, meaning that they don't see each other everyday, or see each other every week. But Scott is the one that realizes, 'Hey, we have all turned into something that we said we would never be, and I think that is boring.' I think he's thinking, 'Gosh, we have gotten so boring,' and he's sort of the catalyst for getting everyone back together. He's also the person throughout the story who makes a mistake, and maybe gets a little too competitive. Then he has to come back to realize that the whole mission of re-entering *Beerfest* was to reconnect as a group, and I think that was the main function for him in the story.

What do you think the message of the movie is and what are some of the key takeaways that fans should be looking out for in the film?

Well I think that the great thing about *Beerfest* is that it's pure joy. It was pure joy to shoot, it's pure joy to watch, it's a good time. *Beerfest* is really about reclaiming the fun of college, it's ultimately about five friends, who reconnect and get together. Scott is also recently single and he's trying to figure out if he can get back with his girlfriend, Angie. And I think the key takeaway from the movie is that sometimes you have to revisit your past to get your mojo back.

How did you get involved with acting?

I really attribute my ability to enter the career as an actor to going to the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. I am from a small town in South Carolina originally and I never had anyone in my life who had become an actor or who was involved in the entertainment industry at all. So when I started doing plays in high school and I realized that I really liked it, I had an opportunity to audition for the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. I think what that did was that it put me in a community of people that were all pursuing the same thing. They were doing it in a very serious way. And you had such great teachers there whose mission was to help you be the best version of an actor that you can be. They would help you figure out different parts of yourselves that you can turn into different characters. So I have a lot of supporters there at the School of Arts, one of which is one of my biggest supporters, an acting teacher named Tanya Belov. She even supports me today. She will call me, and I will be like, 'Oh, I am stuck on this character.' I am trying to find a way in or I am trying to figure out how I can find a commonality with this character. Then we would talk about it. And to have a teacher like that, that has been so dedicated to you is priceless. So I really attribute that as to helping me get into acting, because at the end of the four years at the School of the Arts, you go and do a showcase in New York and in Los Angeles. And it was there that I signed with my first agent and managers, and then moved out and just started auditioning.

What advice would you give others looking to pursue it?

Don't let anyone else tell you who you are. Or, don't let anyone else tell you how big you should dream. I think that no matter what you do in life; your life or my life has always been infinitely better when I pursued the things in my heart that felt important and something that I would want to get up and do everyday.

What are some future projects that you are working on?

Well, I just finished a little film project

which I am excited about and I did a little television project that has not come out yet. But one thing that I am really excited about is that I am developing some content for a show with an actress named Kim Shaw, which we are very excited about, having the ability to write our own project. Kim and I have worked together in the past on different film projects and it's really fun for us to get to write something for ourselves. So I don't want to get ahead of myself by giving away too many of the details, but I can tell you that hopefully you guys will be able to see that in the very near future.

Over the years, you have participated for charity causes helping people who have been victims of bullying and showing your support. How has dealing with this growing problem today touched you and what pushed you to want to be a voice for these victims?

Well, first of all, bullying is a huge problem. It's something that breaks my heart, and honestly, it makes me very emotional to think about people who are harassed, victimized, treated unfairly, or don't feel safe in their school for whatever reason. So it's not something that I have been really interested in. I got involved in it, when I did a movie called *Love Is All You Need?* It was a movie about bullying, and I actually played the bully in the film. But it was at that time that I really started to realize by talking to other people when we would show the movie, people would come up to me after the movie and tell me their stories. And after hearing their stories, it really touched my heart, so I decided that I would get involved. One of the non-profits that I work with is an organization called Boo2Bullying. I have been finding out ways to do events with them, to raise money, but also to do practical things, like going out and speaking to a boys and girls home. I would be talking about self-esteem, feeling good about yourself and treating others fairly. I think right now in our country, it is so important that we think about that, that we should treat everyone with respect no matter who they are, where they come from, or who they love. Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect.

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MAGAZINE

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

BLAKE COOPER
GRIFFIN



Check our interview with talented actor Blake Cooper Griffin who is taking Hollywood by storm. Having already garnered huge successes in the past couple of years with key roles opposite Hollywood A-listers including Helen Hunt and Cuba Gooding Jr., Griffin excels at taking on a variety of different roles, in both film or television, transitioning seamlessly between every medium he enters, including his current role as the star of CW Seed's first original full-length feature film, **BEERFEST: THIRST FOR VICTORY**.

In **BEERFEST: THIRST FOR VICTORY**, a group of twenty-something friends, struggling to recapture the rowdy glory of their college days, reunite to compete in an underground drinking competition and take down the tournament's evil CEO. Inspired by the 2006 cult classic movie, "Beerfest," the digital feature follows Scott, Rob, Adam, Doberman, and Melanie as they attempt to master the American competitive drinking circuit.



NALUDA

Hi Blake please tell us a little about you?

Hey, nice to talk with you. I'm originally from South Carolina. I went to acting school at the North Carolina School of the Arts, moved to Los Angeles, started auditioning. I'm crazy about dogs especially my terrier/schnauzer/poodle mutt mix. I love sweet potato fries and coffee. I think that about covers it.

Describe yourself in 3 words?

Curious. Passionate. Funny.

Who is your biggest supporter?

My mom. She lives on the other side of the country, but I talk to her every day. No one makes me laugh as hard as she does, and she has the unique power of making me feel better no matter what is going on.

How did you get started in the industry?

I pretty much decided I wanted to pursue acting when I was in high school. I went to a performing arts boarding school during the latter part of high school, and

then for college I went to an acting conservatory that was very rigorous. At the end of the four years, I did a showcase with my classmates on both coasts and decided to move to Los Angeles.

What was your first acting role?

When I was in the fourth grade, I played the "Father" in The Best Christmas Pageant Ever. I was tall for a fourth grader, so I always had to play the adult parts.

What is the best and worst part of being an actor?

There are lots of best parts, like working with people you admire and learning about different perspectives! The downside is you don't have a ton of control over your schedule; there's not a lot of certainty.

Best advice ever given?

"Never let anyone tell you who you are."

Tell us about your character?

Scott is the ring leader of the group. He's a couple years out of college and he's coming to terms with what it's like to be a full-time adult. Somewhere between college and making it in the real world, Scott has lost some of the fun and spontaneity that once defined him. When he realizes this, he decides to enter Beerfest in hopes to get some of his mojo back. He convinces his friends to come along for the ride.

What has been your most memorable experience from the set so far?

Showing up at the table read on the first day and realizing that my friend Lili was also in the cast was a big surprise; the casting process was so fast, we had no idea.

What other projects have you been part of?

I've been quite lucky to do a lot of different genres and characters in both TV & Film. I've played everything from a the purple-haired, pierced boyfriend on Necessary Roughness to the world chess champion opposite Cuba Gooding Jr., to a radical, tortured frat guy villain in a movie called Love is All You Need? For me, the joy of acting is transforming and entering a new world. Recently, I wrapped a rom-com TV movie and went straight to work on an episode of the show Preacher on AMC. That variety keeps me going.

Which project is still on your bucket list?

There are so many TV shows I'd love to be on — Veep, Episodes (I know the show is over, but one can dream). And there are a lot of directors I'd love to work with like Baz Luhrmann or Patty Jenkins.



Who is your favorite Actor/Actress? And why?

I'm such a big fan of Leonardo DiCaprio and his career. He's played every type of part. He's a leading man type that still gets to play character roles. He also does phenomenal work for the environment. I also love watching Viola Davis. Anything she does is a master class in acting.

What would be the dream holiday, and who would you go with?

I would charter a boat and take eight of my best friends to the South of France.

3 things you can't leave your house without?

My phone, coffee and some idea of what's happening in the world.



What music do you like?

Really into Post Malone right now, but you'll also find Fleetwood Mac, Beach Boys, Rihanna, The Temper Trap, and Coldplay all over my iTunes.

Your idea of a perfect Sunday is?

Sleeping in and taking the day slowly. I'm a coffee in bed guy. I like to watch House Hunters and chill with my dog.

Something people don't know about you?

I will eat all the Sour Patch Kids in the world (except for the green).

How's a normal day in your life?

Define normal. I feel like things are always changing! On a day I'm not working, I get up and try to break a sweat of some kind — sometimes that's just a walk around the neighborhood or a hike. Other times, I make it to gym class. Then I usually read a script and answer emails. I have an afternoon coffee, and then, I always watch the evening news.

If you could meet someone living or dead, who would it be?

Chip and Joanna Gaines. The Royal Family of America.

What is your favorite healthy food?

Cauliflower because with buffalo sauce it tastes so good!

And your favorite cheat food?

Hard choice between nachos and pizza. But, nachos.

How do you see yourself in 5 years?

Hopefully working on another really awesome project. I'm also getting more into writing my own content. So, I'd love to see some of that work produced.

Do you support any charities?

Yes, I have volunteered for several anti-bullying charities. One of them, Boo2Bullying, I care deeply about and am looking forward to some of the events and projects it has coming up.

Where we can follow you?

Instagram- [@BlakeCooperGriffin](#)

Twitter: [@TheGriffster](#)

Facebook: [Blake Cooper Griffin – Actor](#)

Snapchat: [@BCG4Pres](#)



Favorite Music: Anything I can blast in the car that makes my day better.

Quote: "What doesn't kill you, makes you stronger."

Holiday Destination: Palm Springs, Hawaii, or Cabo!

Drink: Tequila, soda, splash of lime juice.

Celebrity Crush: Julia Louis-Dreyfus. I think she is one of the funniest, most talented people alive.

Song: Right now it's "Your Love" by The Outfield.

Sports Team: South Carolina Gamecocks

Movie: Beerfest: Thirst for Victory on CW Seed!

Tell Us About Yourself(ie): Blake Cooper Griffin

The actor takes our Q&A!



BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN

What's the wallpaper on your phone and/or computer?

My dog. I have serious separation anxiety.

When you walk into a bar, what do you typically order?

Tequila, club soda. Lime.

What's the one word you are guilty of using too often?

"Buddy!" I use it with all my friends and... if I can't remember someone's name.

What is the last thing you searched for on Google?

"Is Ebola still happening?" You can never be too informed.

What was the last awkward situation you were in and how did you handle it?

Holiday political discussions...Special thanks to white wine and denial for pulling me through.

When is the last time you went to a theater?

The last time I saw a live show was "Fairy Tale Theatre, 18 and Over" written, directed by, and starring Michael Feldman. It's fairy tales with life lesson for adults. Hands down, one of the funniest things I've ever seen.

What TV show should everyone be watching?

Grace and Frankie!!

And what is your TV guilty pleasure?

C-Span.

What's the first CD you bought?

Mmmmbop..Hanson? Who's Hanson?

What is the one food you cannot resist?

I will eat all of the pizzas.

What music are you currently listening to?

Favorite new song: "Lean On" by Major Lazer and DJ Snake. Also currently blasting Hozier, Death Grips, Fleetwood Mac, and Talking Heads.

What movie makes you laugh the most?

Waiting for Guffman. Anything Christopher Guest.

What drives you absolutely crazy?

When people question if global warming is real. Guys, it's HOT!!!!

What's your favorite day of the year?

Fourth of July. Everyone's in a good mood on the Fourth. Plus, fireworks.

What was your first online screen name?

'boyofrealworld' I was deep.

What's your favorite emoji?

I go back and forth between the fist bump and hand clap.

Pick one: Kittens or puppies?

Puppies. #adopt

New York or Los Angeles?

LA with long stints in NY.

Comedy or drama?

One in the same.

Bacon or Nutella?

Bacon.

Coffee or tea?

Coffee. More specifically... Red eye, light cream, brown sugar.

'80s or '90s?

'90s!!

Britney or Christina?

Gotta go with JAY Z.

NSYNC or BSB?

I may or may not have stolen Nick Carter's hairstyle in middle school.

Beyonce or Rihanna?

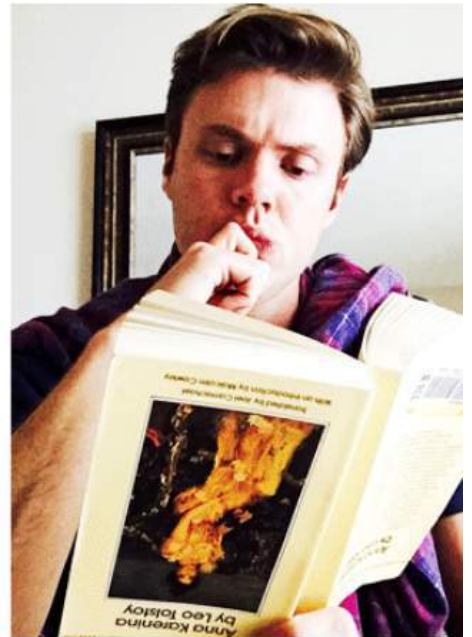
Now you're just trying to start a fight.

Hannah Montana or Lizzie McGuire?

There's a woman in my apartment building named Lizzie McGuire.

And finally: tell us a secret.

I often cancel plans to hang out with my pup and watch House Hunters.





MEAWW

Blake Cooper Griffin talks bullying, Hillary Clinton, gay rights, and his latest movie 'Beerfest: Thirst for Victory'



By [Vidisha Joshi](#) · Published On : 14:13 PST, 2 Aug 2018

Blake Cooper Griffin is taking the entertainment industry by storm. He has garnered substantial successes in the past couple of years with key roles opposite Hollywood A-listers including Helen Hunt and Cuba Gooding Jr.. He has aced different roles, in both film and television, transitioning seamlessly between mediums. These attributes are on ample display in his current role as the star of CW Seed's first original full-length feature film, 'Beerfest: Thirst For Victory', which is currently streaming on their digital platform.

In 'Beerfest: Thirst for Victory', a group of twenty-something working friends, struggling to recapture the rowdy glory of their college days, reunite to compete in an underground drinking competition and take down the tournament's evil CEO.

Inspired by the 2006 cult classic 'Beerfest,' it follows Scott played by Griffin, Rob, Adam, Doberman, and Melanie as they attempt to master the American competitive drinking circuit. Along the way, they rediscover their original, raucous friendships and are reminded that life happens outside of the office cubicle.

Griffin, a South Carolina native, has ample space to display his comedic chops in 'Beerfest'. But that's not all. In his conversation with Meaww, he speaks about BTS moments from the movie and also gives his own perspective of the socio-political scenario and happenings during the timeline of the shoot.



MEAWW



Blake Cooper Griffin attends the Los Angeles premiere of 'The Last Movie Star' at the Egyptian Theatre on March 22, 2018 in Hollywood, California.

Did you have fun being a part of 'Beerfest'? Was working in the movie as much fun as it looks on the screen?

I have to tell you, it was a great experience working on 'Beerfest.' With these things, it's all about who you're working with, like the cast, the producer, and the director Matt Johnson, everybody, just from the very beginning was ready to have fun, ready to jump in, and the story, along with the script, it's just pure fun. The story is all about reclaiming the great times that people had in college. It was also fun because the story is about these five friends and I really think that we all became friends and really close during the shooting process, so it was really fun for me to sort-of reconnect with what it was like to just be carefree and have a great time.

We had some early call times though. We were renting out bars all over Los Angeles, so that came with its share of time constraints because some of the bars would open later in the evening. So, as a result, we had to get up so early, that I, at times, had to get up at 2 am for the shoot, and the cameras would start rolling by 4 am. So yeah, there was early calls times and lots of coffee, but you would have never known that were shooting so early in the morning because everybody was having so much fun.



MEAWW

Do you and your school friends have traditions like the beer fest depicted in the movie?

I went to a drama school, so I never really got to go to a traditional college. So my conservatory that I went to was pretty full-time since I was studying at the North Carolina School of Arts. It was a pretty rigorous program, so we were in class from 8 am to 11 in the night, and we even had either classes or rehearsals on Saturdays.

So I didn't get a lot of free time, but I did have a good time when I started living in Los Angeles, and I do like to have a good time. But I didn't really get to have that college experience that they did in 'Beerfest'. So, I'd like to think that me doing the movie was a way to do that. Going to a touch school was like one of those things that I am really grateful for, but now I look back and think that I play a lot of such guys (college guys), and I remember thinking, "Man, these guys have a lot of fun!"

With regards to your role in 'LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED?' wherein you play a gay character. Was there any additional responsibility on your shoulders in playing the character because you are representing a minority community? How did you ensure you portrayed a 3-dimensional character rather than a caricature or a stereotype?

In 'Love Is All You Need', it actually is a scenario where the worlds are all flipped; where gay is straight and straight is gay. So that meant that the majority were gay characters and what that meant was to shine a light on what it would be like if you put yourself in somebody else's shoes. So, I was really grateful to be a part of that movie, and I was pretty blessed to have a director who has a really big heart and felt that she was really on a mission to help spread tolerance, equality, and compassion, really.



Blake Cooper Griffin attends the Colgate Optic White Beauty Bar Day 1 at Hudson Loft on February 13, 2016 in Los Angeles, California.



MEAWW

I think that movie was so great because we wanted to spread empathy. One of the things I really zeroed in on and felt a responsibility towards, was to help move that idea along which says that everybody has the right to be free from persecution. Everybody has the right to love who they wanna love, and be who they are without there being any harassment against them.

In the movie, I actually play the bad guy, and what was really very fulfilling for me was that when we went out on the road, a lot of people seemed to share the story of the bully, and that really touched my heart. And that is part of why I wanted to be an actor because I feel that actors have an ability to tell stories that we can relate to, whether or not those are our circumstances. I think, often stories teach us what its like to be other people. And I think that 'Love Is All You Need' is a movie like that, I am very very proud to be a part of it.

You are known for your support towards the cause of anti-bullying. Is it something close to your heart because of some memory or experience in your past?

Well I originally got involved in the organization I have been working with, because of the story that I was learning from going on the road with the movie (Love Is All You Need), and I was really touched by that. When I was younger, we moved a lot, and I was the "new kid" at school, so I definitely experienced some bullying. But luckily, I have a wonderful family who is very supportive and everything kind of worked out; so I guess I got kinda lucky there.

But there are a lot of people that face something like bullying on a daily basis. I think there is a statistic (pardon me if I didn't get it right) which says that close to 3 million kids get bullied every single day, and I feel that shouldn't happen in our society. So in any way that I can, I want to be supportive of people who need a lift, and any amount of programs, outreach, or support groups who do that for such people. So yeah, I am very proud and glad to support any anti-bullying causes that I can.



Actor Blake Cooper Griffin attends the Premiere of Substance Over Hype's 'Two Bellmen Two' at the JW Marriott Los Angeles at L.A. LIVE on February 4, 2016 in Los Angeles, California.

What was it like, campaigning for Hillary Clinton? Were you disappointed at her loss at the time?

First of all, I would like to say that campaigning for Hillary was one of the greatest experiences and honors of my life. I think she is so impressive and such an amazing public servant, that I feel that I owe her a great deal of gratitude for all the service that she has done for the United States of America. And campaigning for her was, you know, like any other campaign trail is! Now I'm an actor, I'm not a politician, but then I'm also a citizen, and I think that citizens should make their voices heard.

So, I got on the campaign trail for her, and I made speeches in the battleground states because I really felt and believed that she was the right person to be president. And it was great, and a great deal of fun! It was very different than going to work on a set, but I felt really passionately about it. And of course, I was very disappointed when she didn't win the elections. It was tough, and every day, I think to myself what an amazing president she would have been. Thankfully, we still have her voice speaking out and doing things that she cares about. So yeah, it was a great honor to be able to campaign for her.



HRC volunteer and actor Blake Cooper Griffin (L) from Los Angeles, California and other supporters watch as results are displayed on a television during the caucus night event of Democratic presidential candidate former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in the Olmsted Center at Drake University on February 1, 2016 in Des Moines, Iowa. Clinton, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Martin O'Malley are competing in the Iowa Democratic caucus.



HRC volunteer and actor Blake Cooper Griffin from Los Angeles, California watches as results are displayed on a television during the caucus night event of Democratic presidential candidate former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in the Olmsted Center at Drake University on February 1, 2016 in Des Moines, Iowa. Clinton, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Martin O'Malley are competing in the Iowa Democratic caucus.

You were shooting for 'Beerfest' during a time when America was gearing up for elections. What was going on in your head during the shoot?

So, this is a great story, and I don't think I have ever told this one before. First of all, let me tell you, Beerfest (the show) is total fun. We were shooting during the elections, and I think we were in the middle of shooting at the time. I went home that night (election night) from the set, and I was tired I remember. It was a tiring day with a very early call time. So I was going home, and I was going to memorize my lines, after which I was gonna go to a friend's house to watch the returns. And it turned out that the traffic in Los Angeles, as you know, is just crazy. And on especially election day, it was totally insane, like you couldn't get anywhere.

So I thought to myself, "I'm just gonna go home, and hang out and watch returns, learn my lines." I turned on the television at about 5 o'clock LA time and at that moment, it looked a lot closer than I think we thought it was going to be. And obviously, I got pretty nervous.



MEAWW

I think that this is something everyone can relate to, no matter who they voted for: anyone that you feel passionate about, when you're sitting there and you're watching, and suddenly you start to realize, "Oh, this may not go the way that we thought it would", all these emotions start looming on you and take control all of a sudden. So I decided to turn off the television and stop watching. I instead, chose to focus on my lines and went to bed, and the next morning, when I woke up, I was just praying that something had changed over the night. But it hadn't, and that was a real sobering moment for me.

I was driving to the set, listening to NPR, and I just recall thinking, "I just hope I can remember my lines today!" I was in a zone where I kept hoping that someone would come up to me (about the election results) and say, "Hey, just kidding! You know, Hillary won!" But no one did, and I reached the set where I saw a friend of mine who I'd known before she started working on the project. So the two of us went inside a room and gave each other a hug, and said to each other that "We've gotta make (through) this day. We still have a job to do."

And you know, that's the thing about acting: at the end of the day, we were here to tell a story. I have to say that I was so proud of the entire cast and crew that day: they were so nice and so cheerful, and they kept doing their work. The whole 'being in a comedy' that day came as a blessing to me, and also being able to be around people that are funny and creative and artists who support each other and want to have a good time, because I was really sad that day.



Actors Blake Cooper Griffin and Tim Rock attend Hudson Jeans Presents The Art of Elysium's Genesis Celebrating Emerging Artists at Siren Cube on September 20, 2013, in Los Angeles, California.



MEAWW



Blake Cooper Griffin and Briana Evigan attend the Colgate Optic White Beauty Bar Day 1 at Hudson Loft on February 13, 2016, in Los Angeles, California.

As an activist, how do you think celebrities can get the public involved in politics? Which is the one big issue you would wish Americans would come together to solve/eradicate?

You know, I think that I am an actor, I'm not a politician, but I am a citizen. And I believe that it is important for all citizens to be involved. And I have been supportive of causes that I absolutely believed in ever since I was a kid. That was something that I have always believed. Like, I was the guy running for the student council in school, and I think I even became the vice-president of my class. I can't speak for anybody else, nor do I want to, but I do wanna speak. And when I speak for myself, I'd say, I want the world to be a better place for everybody. And I'm going to continue to use my voice, whether its supporting anti-bullying causes, or campaigning for the people I believe in, or even being a part of any story that 'Love Is All You Need', so as to challenge some people to think about certain things differently. I'm hoping that hopefully by doing all of this, I'm adding to the conversation and helping to make the world a better place, and more so, having some fun while doing all of this.

Also, I feel very passionately about people voting. You know, one of the things I have really gotten involved with lately is getting

people registered for votes. Because no matter your belief, part of our civic duty, I think, is to vote. Democracy works only when everyone shows up (to vote). So I am very passionate about getting people registered to vote, and make their voices heard.

Most of your recent movies have been comic in nature. What are some of the other genres you would like to explore as an actor? Do you aspire to pursue other avenues such as directing or producing?

Right now, I'm loving that I'm a part of the comedy sector, because 'Beerfest' was so much fun, and the couple of movies that I have done lately have been comedic. But 'Love Is All You Need' had me playing a very serious and intense role, and then I also got to be a part of the recent season of 'Preacher', which was more like a comic book theory sort of thing. I've even done romantic comedies before, so there's that too.

One thing that I like about acting, which is also something I hope that I can keep doing, is the trans-dimensional element of it. I hope that I can get to be in different genres and do something new every couple of months because that's really the joy of it for me. The greatest thing about my job, I feel, is that I get to learn something new every single day. I get to learn about different people's lives, things that I never knew about, and I think that's really rewarding.

I think that directing or producing would be an amazing opportunity, and I would be definitely interested in that. I also dabble in writing, and one of the things that I am currently working on is some content with a friend as well as an actress that I worked in the past, Kim Shaw. So the two of us are developing this new content together, through which we hope to tell the stories that we want the world to know. Can't say too much about it at this moment, but yea, I am excited to be a part of every aspect of the entertainment industry.



Actor Blake Cooper Griffin attends the WishClouds Launch Party at Bootsy Bellows on November 20, 2014 in West Hollywood, California.

Actor Blake Cooper Griffin talks 'Beerfest: Thirst for Victory'

SPECIAL

BY MARKOS PAPADATOS NOV 17, 2018 IN ENTERTAINMENT

Actor Blake Cooper Griffin chatted with Digital Journal about his latest project "Beerfest: Thirst for Victory" on CW Seed.



In *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory*, he stars as Scott. He revealed that this is CW Seed's first original full-length feature, and it follows a group of 20-something friends struggling to recapture the rowdy glory of their days in college. It was inspired by the 2006 cult movie *Beerfest*. "I had so much fun shooting that. The cast was so great. It is a movie about reclaiming the fun of college," he admitted. "It's a comedy, and I got the chance to exercise a different muscle. I really enjoyed it."

On his plans for the future, Griffin said, "I want to keep connecting to friends and family. Professionally, I want to continue playing all these interesting characters, I want to do more comedy, and I am also writing. I love doing diverse roles."

Digital transformation of entertainment

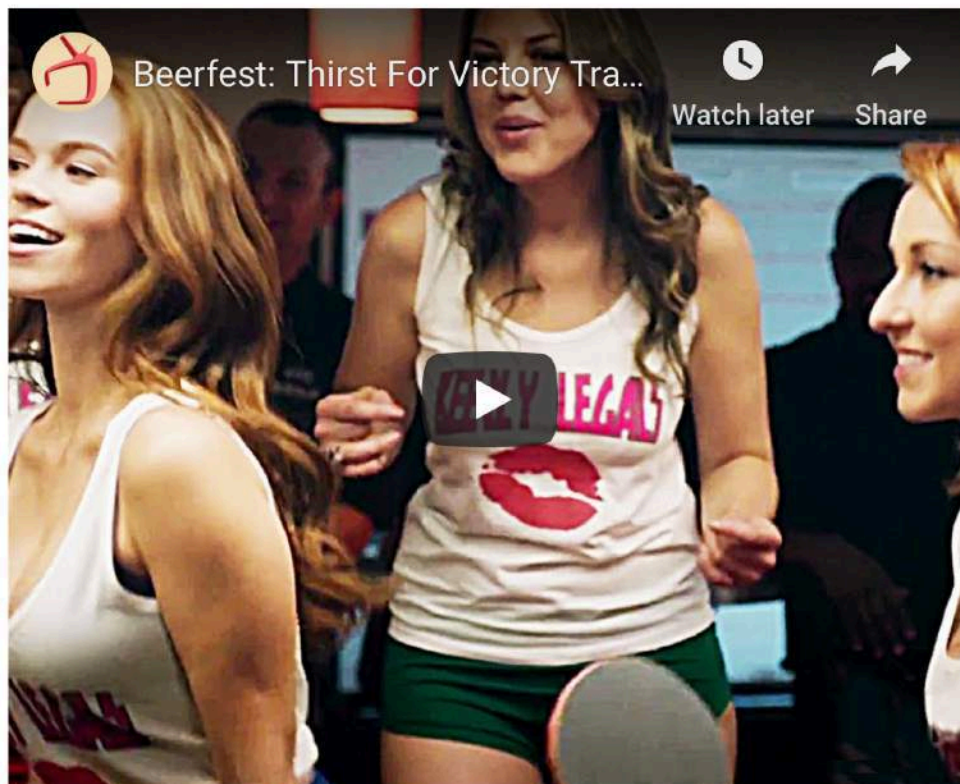
On the impact of technology on the film and TV industry, with Griffin's work, in particular, the actor said, "CW Seed is the streaming sister network of CW. I love CW Seed. You can see some of your favorite CW shows that are on TV now, and you can also see some awesome shows from the past. I love that since it really puts the viewer in control. CW Seed is like Amazon and Netflix."

He continued, "As an actor, technology created opportunities to tell a diverse amount of stories. There is so much exciting content out there. Also, social media allows people to express their views on the movie, and I get to hear their feedback."

While he enjoys having hard copies of the scripts, he acknowledged that everything these days is going into more of a digital medium. "Now, each person can cultivate their own entertainment experience based on the things that they respond to and that is really exciting," he said.

Griffin is known for his roles on such popular primetime shows as AMC's *Preacher*, CW's *90210* reboot, and TNT's *Major Crimes*, among others. His notable film work includes Helen Hunt's *Ride*, and *Life of a King* where he starred opposite Cuba Gooding Jr. He also starred in the civil rights drama and feature film *Love Is All You Need?*

Aside from his acting endeavors, Griffin regularly lends his voice to progressive causes. "I have done a lot of voter registration campaigns, where I encourage millennials to get involved in politics," he said. "I want to get people to vote and to encourage everybody to make their voices heard. That is a big part of what I do in my spare time."



CW Seed's Beerfest Actor Blake Cooper Griffin

Aug 07, 2018

Photographer : Vince Trupsin

<https://vincetrupsinstudio.com>

@ouchmagazine Editor Rhonda McKnight

1. How did you prepare for this new role?

Well, I'm admittedly more of a tequila guy, but I'm also really into games so I've played my fair share of flip cup and beer pong.

2. What kind of acting roles do you see yourself branching out to in the near future?

I'm hoping Beerfest: Thirst for Victory is the beginning of a lot more comedy. One thing I love about acting is the transformational element and I've been lucky to play a lot of different types of roles in the past. The last couple of projects leading up to Beerfest were super serious which allowed me to explore the complexity of those characters, but I'm enjoying lightening things up for the time being.

3. What acting role have you passed up that you wished you hadn't?

I was up for "The Book of Mormon" on Broadway and for whatever reason, it didn't all come together. That would have been awesome. The show is hilarious and being the lead in a Broadway show would have been a dream come true. Definitely, the one that got away.

4. Tell me a little about your character in BEERFEST: THIRST FOR VICTORY?

I play a character named Scott. The story of our version of Beerfest follows Scott's journey as he navigates the pitfalls of post-college life. When we meet Scott he's recently single and has lost some of the confidence he had in college. He reconnects with his buddies and convinces them to join Beerfest in an effort to get his mojo back.



Ouch!



5. What is your workout routine?

I find it really hard to get to the gym and do a regular work out. I always admire people that get up and go to the gym every day at the same time, but that's not me. So, I hike a lot with my dog and I go to boot camp workout classes. Having other people around motivates me.

6. What do you think of social media and are you currently active online?

I think social media is great — in doses. I'm a little worried that we are becoming a society dominated by our phones. Nothing can beat a face-to-face talk with a friend. That said, I also like the way it keeps us connected to people all over the world. I like Instagram best, so I use that one the most.

7. What is your favorite past time when not working?

Sleeping! No, really. Other than that, I like taking short trips to Palm Springs or Ojai. I also just bought a season pass to Six Flags. 8. Do you have any special skills that fans would be surprised about?

I do not cook at all, and somehow, I have

managed to survive. I feel like that's an accomplishment. Thank you to the Gelson's Deli and the cafe on my corner.

9. What other projects are you involved in for 2018 and for the new year, 2019 that you'd like to share?

I recently finished a film project so stay tuned for that. I've also been doing some writing. I'm developing a comedy series with Kim Shaw— a very talented actress/writer friend. I'm really stoked about what we've got in the works. Other than that, I'm still volunteering with the anti-bullying non-profit Boo2Bullying and will also be out there this fall encouraging people to get out and vote in the November midterms.

IG: @blakecoopergriffin

Twitter: @theariffster

Blake Cooper Griffin Finds Balance in Comedy and Drama

By Adrian Gomez / Journal Arts and Entertainment Editor

Wednesday, July 25th, 2018



Blake Cooper Griffin is enjoying time visiting his family in South Carolina. It's a nice break from the daily grind in Los Angeles.

The actor's profile is rising in part to roles opposite Hollywood A-listers such as Helen Hunt and Cuba Gooding Jr.

Yet it's his latest role in "Beerfest: Thirst for Victory," that is challenging him. It is being streamed on CW Seed.

"It was fun for me to lighten things up," he says during a recent interview. "Getting to flex my comedic muscles and work with talented people in this whole creative team was so much fun. And the director Matthew Johnson was a thrill to work with."

"Beerfest: Thirst for Victory" follows a group of twenty-something friends, struggling to recapture the rowdy glory of their college days.

They reunite to compete in an underground drinking competition and take down the tournament's evil CEO.



Inspired by the 2006 cult classic movie, "Beerfest," which filmed in New Mexico, the digital feature follows Scott, Rob, Adam, Doberman, and Melanie as they attempt to master the American competitive drinking circuit. Along the way, they rediscover their original, raucous friendships and are reminded that life happens outside of the cubicle.

"What's so funny is that the original incarnation of 'Beerfest' is pure joy," he says. "Our incarnation is about reclaiming the fun of college."

Griffin was attracted to the project because of the script.

Having seen the original when it came out, he was a fan.

Then three weeks prior to his audition for the role of Scott, the movie was on TV again.

"It was meant to be," he quips.

Griffin snagged the role of Scott, who is the ringleader of the group.

"He's in a rut and trying to get his mojo back," he says. "We all know what the period of life is like after college. Figuring out how to make ends meet and you are trying to make your own way. When I graduated from school, it was tough because I moved all the way to the other side of the country. Scott is recently single and trying to get some of the confidence he had in college back. He has a great group of friends and I have a great group too."

The role in "Beerfest" is a complete juxtaposition from his most recent project, "Love is All You Need?", which is based off a short film.

It stars Emily Osment, Tyler Blackburn, Jeremy Sisto and Elisabeth Rohm. The drama is set in a world where being gay is the norm and heterosexual persons are bullied.

He played his most intense role yet playing Bill Bradley, fraternity president and football player who has major issues with some of the relationships.

“The thing I love about acting is the transformational element about it,” he says. “I’ve been able to play a lot of different types of roles. This movie about bullying is raw and real. I’ve gotten to weave a bunch of different genres together. I enjoy stepping into an interesting world each time.”

Griffin grew up in South Carolina and is a graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts, School of Drama, where he trained to become an accomplished acting professional.

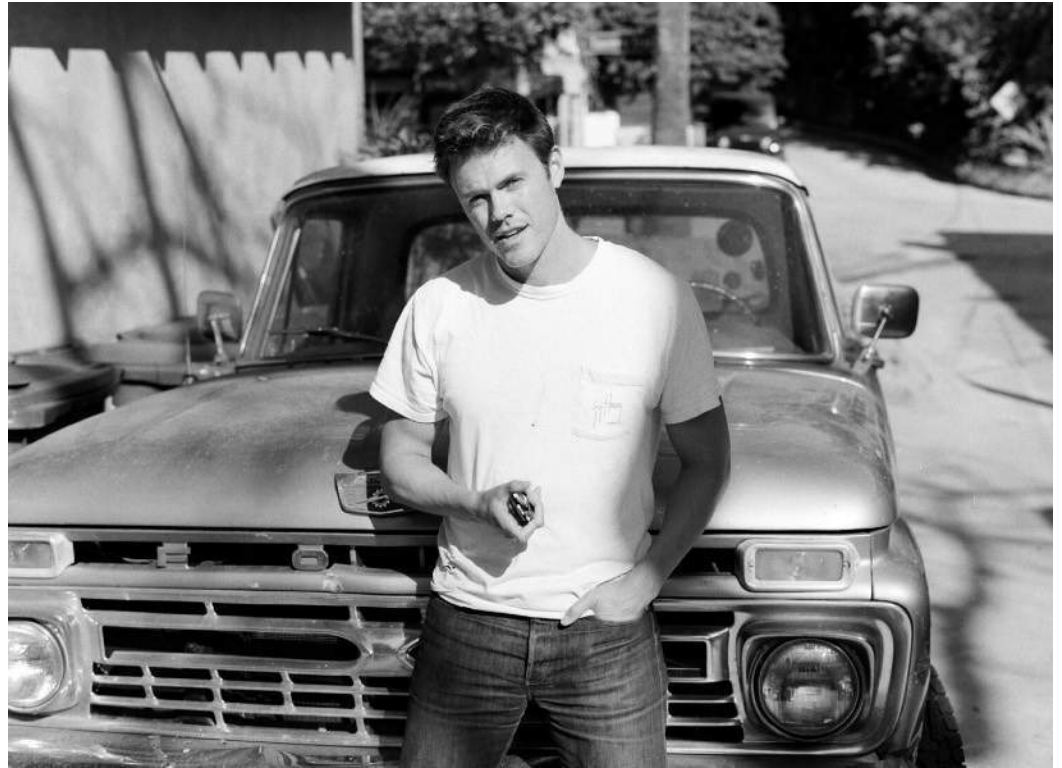
He is currently creating content with Kim Shaw of “Saving Hope” for various upcoming projects which he’s developing.



Interview: Blake Cooper Griffin Talks 'Beerfest: Thirst For Victory' – Exclusive

Blake Cooper Griffin is quickly becoming a force to be reckoned with in Hollywood. Fresh off the heels of his role in *Love Is All You Need?* alongside Emily Osment, Blake can next be seen in the CW Seed original film *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory*.

We chat with Blake about what viewers can expect from the movie, developing a television show of his own, and why it is so important to him to get involved with politics and encourage others to get out and vote.



Read on for our exclusive interview with Blake Cooper Griffin below:

What motivated you to initially pursue acting? Is there anyone who influenced or inspired you?

Blake Cooper Griffin: I think I've always been a curious person and I have an active imagination. When I watched movies as a kid I saw it as a way to escape, to imagine what it was like to live another life. That excited me and made me want to explore acting. Matt Damon and Leonardo DiCaprio's work has always inspired me. I've always admired that they are leading men who approached the work as character actors. I think that's rare. I also draw inspiration from reading the news—learning about other people's stories and wanting to shine a light on different human experiences.

You have already been able to work with some impressive names so far in your career. Is there anyone you would love to work with someday?'

How much time do you have? There are so many actors I'd love to work with. Again, Matt Damon and Leonardo DiCaprio. I'm a big fan of Ryan Reynolds, Jim Carrey, Cate Blanchett, and Kate McKinnon. I'd also love to work with Julia Louis Dreyfus! *Veep* is one of my favorite shows.

Can you tell us about your character in the CW Seed original film *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory* and what originally attracted you to the role?

Beerfest: Thirst for Victory is all about reclaiming the fun and confidence that you felt in college. I play a character named Scott. When we meet Scott, he's in a post college slump—he hates his job, his girlfriend has dumped him, and he's bored with who he's become. In an attempt to get his mojo back, Scott convinces his friends to enter Beerfest. Reconnecting with his friends turned out to do a lot of good for Scott.

I was originally attracted to the project because I loved the script. The opportunity to do a comedy that was inspired by the original Broken Lizard film was also exciting. Additionally, I related to what Scott was going through—we've all had those periods in our lives where we feel like we're stuck and looking to find the joy in life again. At the heart of Scott's character is his love for his friends. That combined with his competitiveness made him a lot of fun to play.

How was the experience working alongside the cast? Are there any fun memories that stick out for you from filming?

The cast and crew of this movie were a blast. Our director Matt Johnson and the producers made the set an easy place to work. Lili [Mirojnick]—who plays Melanie in the film—and I were friends before shooting, but we had no idea the other had been cast. It was a great surprise showing up on the first day and seeing her name on the call sheet. All my cast mates are so talented—I'm lucky I got to work with them.

What would you say viewers can expect from *Beerfest*? What are you most excited for them to see?

I think they can expect to have a good time and laugh a lot. I'm most excited for them to see how good we are at the beer games. We worked hard at it! By the end, I was so good at beer pong and flip cup, I only needed one take.



CW Seed is a new platform from the network that makes it easy to binge-watch favorites both old and new. What are some of your favorite movies and series to binge watch on a night in?

CW Seed is such an amazing platform because it puts the viewer in control. If you want to watch *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory* at 2 a.m., you can. And yes, they have lots of other fun content to watch. I've been binge-watching old episodes of *Dynasty* on there. Believe it or not, my mom watched that show and loved it so much, she named me "Blake" after the main character Blake Carrington. I also just binge-watched all seasons of *Episodes* on Showtime. The show is hilarious.

You have shown in the past that it is important to use your voice and platform for good, especially in today's world. Can you talk a little about why it was important for you to get involved in politics and encouraging others to get out and vote?



I'm an actor, not a politician, but I am also a citizen. I think it is critical that we as citizens make our voices heard. That's the backbone of democracy. I love this country, so I see it as my duty to vote. So I've been making it my mission to get all my friends and family and anyone who will listen registered to vote for the upcoming November midterm elections. Such much is at stake that will affect people's lives. There's a great website, IWillVote.com, where you can register to vote or check to make sure you are registered.

Expanding upon that, you also take the time to give back to your community. Can you talk to us about your work with anti-bullying campaigns?

I did a movie called *Love is All You Need?* that was inspired by true stories of bullying. When we went to show the film in different areas across the country, I had the opportunity to talk to people about their experiences, and it made me realize what a widespread problem bullying is. So I've volunteered with several anti-bullying nonprofits and I collaborated with NPR's Generation Listen to explore bullying and its origins in an in-depth fashion.

How has the fan support been for you so far? Do you enjoy interacting with fans on social media?

I really enjoy interacting with people who appreciate what I do or are moved by project I've been a part of. It's great hearing from people on Instagram or Facebook or Twitter. Instagram is probably my favorite. You can find me on Insta @blakecoopergriffin, and on Twitter @thegriffster.

What else are you working on? What can your fans look forward to from you next?

Up next, I'm developing a TV show with my very talented friend Kim Shaw. Kim and I have acted together in several projects and we decided we wanted to work on something where we would have total creative control. So we've been writing and developing content for ourselves. Some exciting things have been happening with it, so, stay tuned.



Thank you so much to Blake Cooper Griffin for taking the time to answer some questions for us!

Keep up to date with Blake by following him on Twitter and Instagram, and don't forget to check out *Beerfest: Thirst For Victory* on the CW Seed app.

Blake Cooper Griffin Spills Secrets From the Making of “Beerfest: Thirst For Victory”

The actor that’s taking Hollywood by storm talked to Celeb Secrets about his latest film for CW Seed.



It’s safe to say **Blake Cooper Griffin** is taking Hollywood by storm! From movie to television, the South Carolina native has had the chance to work alongside some big names, including **Helen Hunt** and **Cuba Gooding Jr.**

Now, he is the star of CW Seed’s first original full-length feature film, ***Beerfest: Thirst For Victory***, which is currently streaming on their digital platform. Inspired by the 2006 cult classic movie, *Beerfest*, the film focuses on a group of twenty-something friends, struggling to recapture the rowdy glory of their college days. They reunite to compete in an underground drinking competition and take down the tournament’s evil CEO. We could tell you more, but you just need to watch this scene from the movie to fully get it!

We had the chance to speak with Blake to learn more about the making of the film and his upcoming projects. Check it out!

CS: Can you tell me about this latest project "Beerfest: Thirst For Victory"

– what is it about? How can fans watch it?

Blake: "Beerfest is about five friends who are a few years out of college and they're kind of experiencing the pains of becoming full-time adults. I play Scott in the movie – he's the ringleader of the group, recently single, and in a rut. He persuades his friends to enter a beer-drinking competition because he's trying to get his college mojo back. Throughout the movie we sort of see these people that were college friends getting to reconnect and I think that's really fun. You also meet Scott's ex-girlfriend and he's trying to maybe rekindle his romance with her... all the while, they're playing beer games and having a blast. It's a great movie, I think it's really funny. It's obviously inspired by the 2006 Broken Lizard film which was such a fun, crazy movie too. You can watch it on CW Seed – it's CW Seed's first original movie – and if you have Apple TV, ROKU you can get the app and watch it for free. Or you can watch it on your computer at CWSeed.com!"



CS: Awesome! So at what point were you like – this is such a cool project, I want to be a part of it?

Blake: "The casting process on this was very fast. When I went in to audition, I thought it was really fun. It gave me a new opportunity because I had just come off of a really serious movie that I loved being a part of. I got really involved in going out and speaking about that film. It was a movie about bullying and it got me involved in working with a lot of anti-bullying efforts. So I went and auditioned, thought it went really well and then I got a call right before they were going to do the table read, like a day before and they were locking in casting and I was like – "let's do this!" Then we started shooting immediately. We had a great time! Matt Johnson, who is our director, and all the producers, really made it a fun set. We had a fun time shooting the film and I think the movie shows that."

CS: Do you have any favorite memories from set from making the movie?

Blake: "Well, I've become really good at beer pong! The funniest thing is we had such early calls. I was waking up every day at 2am and then cameras were rolling by 4am. The amount of coffee you drink...you have no idea how much I coffee I drank! I probably have an ulcer."

I had a scene with Amy Rutberg, who plays Angie in film, where she and I talk about what happened in our relationship and it's like the most fun, sweet, funny scene and it felt so real because everybody knows what it's like to have lost touch with somebody you liked and then finally get to get to talk about what happened. That scene was really fun to shoot."

CS: Do you have a favorite type of beer?

Blake: "I'm not going to lie, I'm actually more of a tequila guy. But we're not drinking real beer in the movie (of course). After we shot though, a buddy of mine was getting married and his bachelor party was a beer tour. So now I think I've sampled every single kind of beer in the entire world, and I'm more of a pale ale guy."

CS: You've worked in both TV and film – do you have a preference?

Blake: "Well, I like them both for different reasons. Film gives you a lot more time, there's sort of a luxury of telling a story and shooting four pages a day. You can really lean into it in. Television is so quick and immediate. You're making quick decisions – you know you've done your homework – but often running a lot on instincts and I think there's a lot of creativity that comes out of that. And I think right now is a great time for television. There are so many different outlets like CW Seed and there's the ability to tell a lot of different types of stories. I think we're really up-ing the game on the content."





CS: When did you get into acting?

Blake: "I sort of always had a bug for it. This embarrassing, but I used to put on plays in the backyard when I was 5 years old. My parents would read me books and I would act out the stories from the books. Then I got cast in a community theater play in elementary school. In high school, I really got more into it and then went to a performing arts boarding school towards the end of high school and went to a conservatory, The North Carolina School of the Arts, for college. The School of the Arts is a great institution and such a rigorous place to go. After I graduated, I did a showcase on both coasts, and then I started working with an agent/manager in LA and moved out here... that's where it all began."

CS: Any projects coming up that you can talk about?

Blake: "I'm developing some of my own content which is really exciting. I'm working with an actress I've worked with in the past, Kim Shaw. She and I are creating some comedic content that I can't say too much about it but hopefully you guys will get a chance to see that in the near future!"

CS: We're Celeb Secrets – do you have a secret you can spill with us?

Blake: "On my Instagram, it says actor and paper hoarder... when I was a kid I was obsessed with paper. I asked for people to give me paper, like, construction paper, white paper, printer paper, you know just any kind of paper, colored paper. It was really, really weird and I just kept collecting weird paper. It was just so strange, but in my defense I was like 4 or 5 years old. It didn't go on that long, but it was this weird idiocy that my parents still laugh about."

Brendan Robinson & Blake Cooper Griffin talk Beerfest: Thirst for Victory

July 16, 2018 8:00am



Inspired by the 2006 movie *Beerfest*, comes *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory*. In the new movie, a group of twenty-something friends, struggling to recapture the rowdy glory of their college days, reunite to compete in an underground drinking competition and take down the tournament's evil CEO. The reboot movie debuted June 5 on The CW's online platform, The CW Seed and stars Blake Cooper Griffin and Brendan Robinson (who you may recognize as Lucas Gottesman from *Pretty Little Liars*). YEM spoke with Brendan and Blake about the new movie:

Young Entertainment Mag: Your new movie is inspired by the movie *Beerfest*. Were you familiar with the movie?

Brendan Robinson: Yes! I saw the original movie when it first came out in 2006 and was a fan. I'm also a big fan of Broken Lizard's other movies. One of the really cool things about doing *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory* was that it was produced by Bill Gerber, who was the producer of the first film. So, I knew it would stay true to the essence of what they did in the original movie, and that was really exciting.

Blake Cooper Griffin: Yes! I loved the original. The cast is hilarious. Naturally, I was super stoked when I found out that I was going to be a part of CW Seed's version. A buddy of mine and I had actually just re-watched the 2006 movie a couple of weeks before I auditioned, so I like to think it was meant to be.

YEM: Is it hard to be a part of a movie that already has a big cult following?

Brendan: Yes and no. I think while making the film we were all well aware of the original movie's popularity, and wanted to make sure fans of the franchise would like it. However, Thirst for Glory isn't a sequel to Beerfest, but more of a companion movie that exists in the same cinematic universe. That gave us a lot of freedom to play and make the material our own. Our director, Matt Johnson, is so creative and funny, and he did a fantastic job putting his own personal touch on the film.

Blake: I think it's exciting. There's already a love for the "world of Beerfest." Our version, Beerfest: Thirst for Victory is obviously not the same as the original. There are different characters and different plot twists, but both versions capture the pure fun of competing with your friends.

YEM: Tell us about your characters.

Brendan: I play Rob. Rob's a guy who's at a crossroads. He's always lived his life to please other people, particularly his father, and is expected to become an attorney and join the family law practice. But, deep down, the law isn't his passion. He has this nice arc throughout the film where he's being pulled in several different directions by his dad, his friends, and his heart. He eventually has to make a choice to remain stifled by his father, or go outside his comfort zone to achieve happiness.

Blake: I play Scott. Scott is sort of the ring leader of the group. He's been out of college for a few years, and he kind of feels like he's lost his mojo. He's realizing that being a full-on adult is a lot of work. He's still in love with his ex-girlfriend Angie and misses being able to hang out with his friends all the time. I think he sees Beerfest as a way to connect with the "fun Scott" again.

YEM: Can you relate to your characters in any way?

Brendan: Well, both of my parents are lawyers, and I knew that's not what I wanted to do with my life. I have that in common with Rob! But, my parents are the biggest supporters of my dream, which is not the case with Rob. We also have a similar sense of humor — dry and witty. The funny thing is, I'm not a beer drinker. I'm actually not much of a drinker at all. So, Rob's love of beer definitely required some imagination on my part.

Blake: I think Scott really cares a lot about his friends and I certainly feel that way too. I'm lucky to have kind, hilarious, fun people in my life. And, I can definitely relate to the feeling of being in a rut. I think we all feel that way from time to time. Also, Scott is pretty competitive, and I have been known to get a little bit...intense.. about winning at game night. Haha.

YEM: Brendan, our readers remember you from *Pretty Little Liars*. What are some memories you have from being a part of PLL?

Brendan: Yes! PLL is very special to me because it was my first big job. I learned so much from being on that show. It was such an amazing experience to work on the Warner Brothers Studios lot everyday where there's so much Hollywood history. One of our soundstages, Stage 7, was also where they filmed *Casablanca*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Music Man* and tons of other historic films. They actually call it "the lucky stage" because more movies filmed there went on to win Oscars than any other stage on the lot.

I also have so many great memories of the people who worked on that show. Marlene King created a really special work environment where everyone was made to feel like they were an important member of "the family." She's a really kind and giving person! Everyone really liked each other and liked coming to work each day. I miss that!!

YEM: The movie premieres on The CW Seed. Is it different to be involved in a movie that is specifically on a digital platform?

Brendan: I'd say that the only thing that's different is that people can watch the film immediately on their phone or tablet. I think that's a cool thing, and that this particular brand of comedy really works well in a digital format. Everyone at the CW has been super supportive of our movie, and just wanted us to make the best thing we could. That's the luxury of digital platforms. Many of them just want their creators to make good content instead of being concerned with the kinds of things that are important to traditional networks and film studios, like numbers and target demos. It's a fun space to work in, for sure!

Blake: The CW has so many awesome shows, so it's always fun to work with a network that you already watch all the time. And CW Seed is awesome because it broadens the opportunity for new kinds of shows the network can do. One of the major advantages is that you can watch whenever you want to. CW Seed really offers a personalized experience, so if you're feeling like bingeing episodes of *Life Unexpected* you can do that, and then you can follow that up by watching our movie. I think it really puts the viewer in control.

YEM: If you could remake any movie from the 2000s (other than *Beerfest*), what would it be and why?

Brendan: That's such a great question! I tend to gravitate more toward comedy, so I'd have to go with one of those. "13 Going On 30" but with a role reversal, maybe? But then that would pretty much be a reboot of "Big." Haha! Or, how about "Big 2" but directed by Tom Hanks? Now, I'm just trying to come up with ways to get Tom Hanks involved because I would die to work with him.

Blake: How about *Catch Me if You Can*? I would play Leonardo DiCaprio's character. In fact, can I just do remakes of his entire career?

YEM: Brendan, our readers remember you from *Pretty Little Liars*. What are some memories you have from being a part of PLL?

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Pop-Culturalist Chats with Blake Cooper Griffin



Make some room, Hollywood! There's a new leading man who's delivering phenomenal performances, one after another, and his name is Blake Cooper Griffin. The talented young actor, whose credits include *90210*, *Preacher*, and *Necessary Roughness*, has starred alongside legends including Helen Hunt and Cuba Gooding Jr. This summer, he's stepping into the shoes of Scott, a recent graduate who's trying to re-live the good ole' days of college in the laugh-out-loud comedy and CW Seed's first full-length feature film, *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory*. Pop-Culturalist had the chance to catch up with Blake to chat about the project, how platforms like CW Seed put control back in the viewer's hands, and even learned about his favorite beer game from the film.

P-C: Tell us about *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory*, your character, and what drew you to this project.

Blake: I'm so excited about *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory*. *Beerfest* is about reclaiming the fun of college. It's about five friends who are a few years out of college and they're experiencing the pain of what it is to become a full-time adult.

I play a character named Scott. He's the ringleader of the group. He's recently single and in a rut. His girlfriend broke up with him and he's trying to get his mojo back. He persuades his other friends to join him in entering a beer drinking competition.

It was a blast shooting it. The entire creative team is really funny. The producers and our director, Matt Johnson, really set out to make it a set that would make us want to be funny. It was such a supportive environment.



It's inspired by the original *Beerfest* movie that Broken Lizard was hilarious in. I was so excited when I learned that I was going to get to do this film and pick up the torch.

P-C: *Beerfest* is this hilarious, raunchy comedy that doesn't hold anything back and you don't necessarily associate that with the CW. What was your initial reaction when you received the script?

Blake: I'm really excited about us being on CW Seed because I think that CW Seed gives a lot of opportunity to both the viewer and for content. It offers a lot of different opportunities to do programming that normally wouldn't be on The CW. You can try things out, try new characters, or do a reboot of something from a long time ago. I think what's really exciting about CW Seed and other streaming platforms is that it puts the viewer in control. If you want to watch *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory* at 2 am, you can. If you want to watch the old episodes of *Dynasty* before The CW's new reboot, you can do that. That's what's great about CW Seed and other streaming platforms. No matter where you are, you can access it. I'm stoked that

this is their first original movie and I was really glad to be a part of it.

P-C: Did you know going in that this would be their first full-length feature film? Did that add any additional pressure?

Blake: You know, I didn't know! A lot of times, you don't have all those details when you get the part. I actually think that's better because then you don't have all that added pressure. [laughs] I knew it was CW Seed. I just thought of it as a movie that was really funny. I focused on that. I showed up to work and just had a good time.



P-C: How does Scott's experience compare to your own?

Blake: Oh man! I think Scott had a lot more fun in college than I did. I loved my college. But I went to an acting conservatory in North Carolina. We had class from 8 in the morning until 11 at night. We had academics in the morning and then rehearsal at night. It was Monday through Saturday, so I didn't get a lot of free time in college. I had a good time but it was pretty rigorous.

I did relate to Scott coming into the real world. No one can escape the pains of having to pay your own bills for the first time, figuring out how to not just eat ramen [laughs], and how to find a job. Although I was pursuing an acting career and Scott was pursuing a job that he doesn't like that much, I do know what it's like to make ends meet.

P-C: With the film out now, what was your favorite scene to film and what was the most challenging?

Blake: Without giving too much away, there's nothing like the final contest. There's so much energy. Everybody in the cast was there. One of the actors who I think is so great is Brendan Robinson who plays Rob. He and I have a lot of funny banter. That final scene is so much fun.

The most challenging? I don't know if it was a particular scene, but we had really early call times. Our call times were every day at 4 am. I was there every day. It meant getting up at 2:30 each morning. It was pretty challenging initially because you're doing that for weeks and weeks.





P-C: Of all the beer games featured in the film, which was your favorite?

Blake: [laughs] Oh gosh! It's a tough call between beer pong and flip cup. I will say that I got really good at both during filming. When you're playing beer pong, you have to land it into the cup. By the end, I was getting it in on my own. But I'm going to go with flip cup.

P-C: Besides *Beerfest*, do you have any other upcoming projects that you can chat about at this time?

Blake: I'm very excited to be developing some content. I'm working with this incredibly talented actress, Kim Shaw. She and I are friends and we've worked together in the past. We're writing and developing a show that hopefully you'll be seeing very soon.



Pop-Culturalist Speed Round

P-C: Guilty pleasure TV show?

Blake: *House Hunters!* I can watch it for hours.

P-C: Guilty pleasure movie?

Blake: *Clueless*

P-C: Favorite book?

Blake: That's a hard one! I really like *A Home at the End of the World* by Michael Cunningham. But I also read *Letters to a Young Poet* almost every day.

P-C: Favorite play or musical?

Blake: Oh man! Again, that's really hard to pick. But I loved *Death of a Salesman* and *The Glass Menagerie* is right behind that.



P-C: A band or artist that fans would be surprised to learn is on your playlist?

Blake: [laughs] Beach Boys!

P-C: Last show you binge-watched?

Blake: *Episodes*

P-C: Favorite social media platform?

Blake: Instagram

P-C: Hidden talent?

Blake: I'm surprisingly really good at math.

Make sure to follow Blake on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), and catch *Beerfest: Thirst for Victory* on [CW Seed](#).



Actor Blake Cooper Griffin is Taking Hollywood by Storm



Having already garnered huge successes in the past couple of years with key roles opposite Hollywood A-listers including Helen Hunt and Cuba Gooding Jr., Griffin excels at taking on a variety of different roles, in both film and television, transitioning seamlessly between every medium he enters.

Griffin can be seen in CW Seed's first original full-length feature film, **Beerfest: Thirst for Victory**. In the film, a group of twenty-something friends struggling to recapture the rowdy glory of their college days, reunite to compete in an underground drinking competition and take down the tournament's evil CEO. Inspired by the 2006 cult classic movie, *Beerfest*, the digital feature follows Scott, Rob, Adam, Doberman, and Melanie as they attempt to master the American competitive drinking circuit. Along the way, they rediscover their original, raucous friendships and are reminded that life happens outside of the cubicle.

Griffin can also be seen in the drama feature *Love Is All You Need?* based off of the successful short film from Kim Rocco Shields. The provocative drama is set in a world where being gay is the norm and heterosexual persons are bullied. Griffin portrays his most intense role yet playing Bill Bradley, fraternity president and football player who has major issues with some of the relationships.

Tell us a bit about the projects you are working on.

I have a new movie out—**Beerfest: Thirst for Victory**—a film inspired by the Broken Lizard’s original version of Beerfest. I play a character named Scott. Scott is recently single and seriously struggling with the monotony of post-college adult life. He feels like he’s lost his mojo and wants to revive the spark he felt in college so he convinces his friends to join him in Beerfest—a series of beer games and drinking contests. It was pure fun to shoot. I loved working with the cast and our director, Matt Johnson. He, along with the producers, created an environment that made going to work fun. I think that shows. Oh! And you can see the film now on CW Seed on Apple TV, Roku, online, or through the CW Seed app.

With your busy schedule, what do you like to do with your downtime?

I’m obsessed with sleeping. Mostly because I feel like I never get enough. I also like to hike with my dog. Other than that, I also volunteer for voter registration and “get-out-the-vote” efforts.

When you go out to eat, where do you like to dine?

I eat out almost every meal. I love restaurants. Being in a communal space at dinner time makes the meal better. When I’m in Los Angeles, you’ll find me at Taste on Melrose or Cecconi’s for happy hour. For dinner I really like this Italian restaurant called Osteria La Buca or the French eatery Figaro. For late night eats and drinks, I go to Jones Hollywood—they have awesome pizza and special cocktails. And, Bar Ama in downtown LA, has some of the most delicious Mexican food in the city. For lunch, I hit up neighborhood spots like Basix with American fare and Continental Kitchen which serves Mediterranean cuisine.

What types of dishes do you usually order?

It depends on my mood. I love pasta. I wish I could eat it every day. I’m also a steak guy—medium rare filet is a favorite. For lunch, I order healthy—salads and wraps—that kind of thing. My friends always make fun of me, because wherever I am, if sweet potato fries are the menu, I order them. With ranch dressing!



**Do you cook?**

Not really. I wish I was better at it. That said, I make a fantastic grilled cheese and I'm pretty good at omelets. I'm also very talented at ordering food from restaurants and serving it in a way that makes it look like I cooked it!

What types of drinks do you order when out?

My go to is a tequila, soda, splash of lime juice. It's clean and refreshing. That said, I like to try specialty cocktails as well and then recreate them at home. I recently went to a bar and they had a silver tequila drink with watermelon juice, mint, and lime juice. So, I have a lot of watermelon juice in my fridge right now.

Do you prepare drinks at home?

Yes, I like to have friends over for drinks. I think it's a great way to catch up with a buddy. I find that drinks are boosted by specialty ice cubes and glasses that suit my style.

Do you own a home bar?

I do. I recently redesigned my place and one of the things that I wanted to make sure to add was a bar.

What is it stocked with?

I'm still working on cultivating it, but I always keep it stocked with Casamigos Silver Tequila, Tito's Vodka, and Bulleit Bourbon. I've got a rotating array of other tequilas that friends have given me as a gift. I also keep wine around for dinner parties. My favorite is New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc.

What is your favorite drink/cocktail?

My typical drink is tequila, soda, lime juice. But I also really like a tequila mule with extra limes.

Have you ever been a bartender?

I haven't, but I think it would be a fun and challenging job. I would love talking to all the customers, but always wonder how bartenders remember the recipe for every drink!?



Five minutes into my interview with rising actor Blake Cooper Griffin, it became apparent to me that there was something different about him. In an industry that currently seems dominated by celebrity fads and Twitter followers, Blake's combination of charm and substance is reminiscent of classic Hollywood icons like Robert Redford, Montgomery Clift, Paul Newman, and even Willem Defoe. "My goal is to play interesting characters truthfully. I like to find small idiosyncrasies in characters. My hope is, that, you know, that will impact audiences and add up to something. If I'm interested, hopefully the audience will be.. hopefully," Blake laughed as he sipped a black coffee at Palihouse Hotel in West Hollywood where we met for the interview.

"The second I finished the script, I knew I had to be in the film. I had a hunch that, you know, this was going to be something that could change lives. I became obsessed with what was underneath the character of Bill Bradley."



Blake Cooper Griffin
(photo by Benjo Arwas)

Love is All You Need? is co-written by Kim Rocco Shields and David Tillman; Shields also directs. The film examines a world where being gay is the norm and the heterosexual persons are bullied and follows a girl and a guy who falls in love on a college campus, in a world where same sex couples are the majority and mixed gender couples are the minority. The couple faces bullying once their relationship goes public. Griffin portrays the aggressive, if not bellicose, Bill Bradley, fraternity president and football player who has major issues with the couple's relationship. Blake joins an impressive young Hollywood cast that also includes Tyler Blackburn (*Pretty Little Liars*), Emily Osment (*Young and Hungry*), and Briana Evigan (*STEP UP* franchise). Jeremy Sisto (*Clueless*, *Suburgatory*) and Elizabeth Rohm (*American Hustle*, *Joy*) also star.



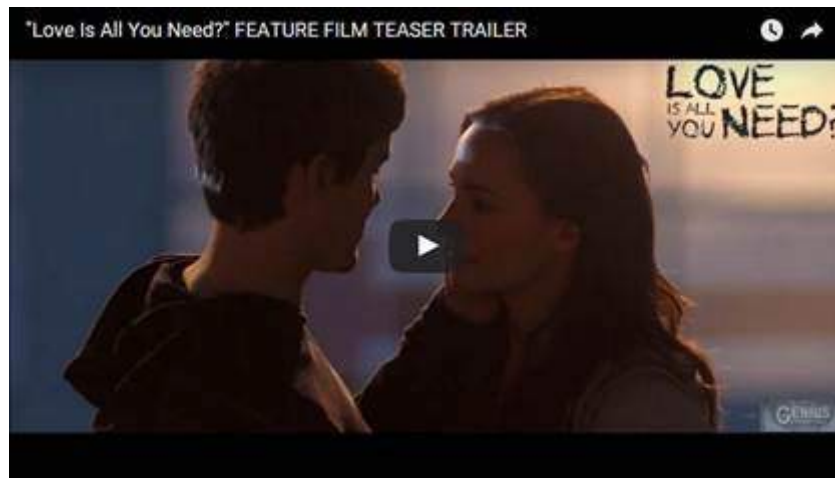
Blake Cooper Griffin
(Photo by Benjo Arwas)

Even from the film's trailer, you can see the acting chops that Griffin possesses and how fascinating the story is. Blake is very clear on the reason he believes the film works. "Rocco, our director, gave us freedom. That is the greatest gift to an actor. She trusted me. The first night of shooting, we were filming a very climatic scene for my character...which can be intimidating on the very first day," Blake smiles, "But we all were — Rocco and the cast— we were committed to telling the story. At the end of the day, that's all we can do— tell the story." His passion for the project and strong point of view seem paramount to Griffin's abilities, "I've learned to trust myself. In Drama School that was harder, because you feel like you have so much to learn. I've come to find what I needed to learn was

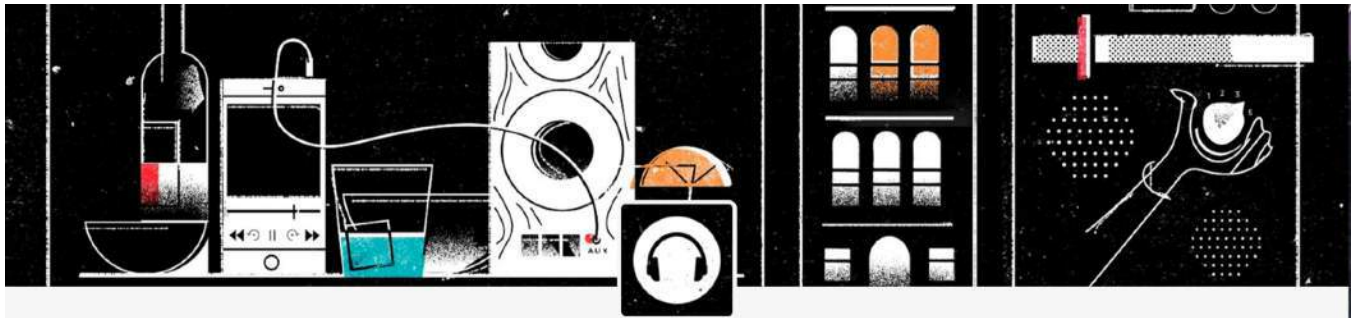
that I have the answers, I just have to get out of my own way.” It was no surprise to learn that the actor graduated from the prestigious North Carolina School of the Arts which consistently tops the list of the best Drama schools in the country.

While sitting for our interview, two women walked over who were presumably from out of town and staying at the hotel. Giggling, one of them worked up the courage to ask Blake, “Sorry to bother you, but do we know you from something? Are you famous?” Blake warmly smiled, almost embarrassed, and introduced himself in a way that revealed his South Carolina upbringing, “I’m Blake. Nice to meet you.” But something tells me, soon enough, fans will walk up to him already knowing his name.

Love Is All You Need? will premiere at Cinequest Film Festival on March 5. The film will have encore screenings at the festival on March 6 and March 9. James Franco and Rita Moreno are headlining this year’s festival.



<https://youtu.be/SPW4oFL7GBo>



NPR Generation Listen

GUEST CURATOR: BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN

This month we introduce our first guest-curated Listening Party kit. Recently, Blake gathered 15 friends in West Hollywood, CA to explore bullying and meanness. Here is his recipe for an impactful experience.

As an actor I'm constantly examining why people do the things they do. Recently, I played an epic bully in the film "Love is All You Need?" My character, Bill Bradley, does some horrific things to other people. For me, the key to this character was simple: *why?* As I delved into his motivations I became interested in what I've started to call "The Culture of Meanness" - or the idea that we seem to reward bullying behavior in our schools, media, and politics.

So, I invited a group of other artists and actors to my house for a Listening Party to explore where they think bullying behavior and The Culture of Meanness originates and go even further to look at what we can do about it.

I chose three NPR pieces: the story of a poet who had been bullied, the tale of a mother who required her daughter to confront her own subtle bullying behaviors, and a piece that examines Donald Trump's campaigning tactics. I thought these NPR pieces were interesting and important because they provided a through line that highlighted the connection between bullying on all levels - from school yard bullying to the larger Culture of Meanness that surrounds us.

Hope you enjoy this kit and learn something new and interesting about a topic that's close to my heart.

- **Blake Cooper Griffin**



Blake is an American actor, writer and political junkie in Los Angeles.





RIDE, LIFE OF A KING, AND LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED? ACTOR

BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN

On living in the moment, the icons who inspire him, and surrounding yourself with a positive support network

Interview: Robert Piper

Robert Piper: What inspires you?

Blake Cooper Griffin: My dog. She's a scrappy little rescue and probably my favorite "person" in the world. Watching the news inspires me to keep going and reminds me why I should never complain. I'm inspired by those who don't let others define them: Martin Luther King Jr., James Dean, Vincent Van Gogh, Hillary Clinton, Tennessee Williams, director Steve McQueen. They've all changed the conversation by making their voices heard.

RP: What is the hardest obstacle you've had to overcome in your life?

BCG: Learning to live with the discrepancy between my inner life, my expectations, and what is happening in the outside world. That feeling that you are ready for something and not seeing it externally yet. Remembering that life is happening now. Trusting yourself enough and believing that every action makes a difference, even if you don't see the result right now. Control what you can, let go of the rest.

RP: How do you stay healthy?

BCG: I try to stay on top of my game physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Music has a profound effect on me. I work out some, probably not enough. I have great friends. That's key for me for: surrounding myself with people who are supportive and kind.

“Trying not to fail is the opposite of art. Failure assumes the world is black and white—no gray.”

RP: How do you deal with overcoming failure?

BCG: I don't buy into the word “failure.” I used to but not anymore. Trying not to fail is the opposite of art. Failure assumes the world is black and white—no gray. I've come to find, it's all gray. However, when I get down, I remember how far I've come, the story of it all.

RP: What projects are you currently working on?

BCG: You can currently see me in the film *Life of a King* starring Cuba Gooding Jr. on Netflix, Helen Hunt's newest film *Ride*, and on Disney's *Jessie*. I also just wrapped a film called *Love Is All You Need?*, about a guy and girl who live in a world where being gay is the norm and they are bullied once their relationship goes public. The story is very powerful. I've never been more excited about a project. It's going to blow people away.

Blake Cooper Griffin is an actor who has appeared in Life of a King, Ride, and Love Is All You Need? His television roles include parts in Disney's Jessie and NBC's Castle. He graduated from the School of Drama at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

PHOTO: ROB DALY

BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN TALKS NEW MOVIE, NEW YORK CITY, CAMPAIGNING FOR HILLARY CLINTON AND MORE

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Having acted alongside Cuba Gooding Jr. and Helen Hunt in recent productions, Blake Cooper Griffin is surely an actor on the rise. In the new norm-challenging movie *Love Is All You Need?*, Blake plays Bill Bradley, an antagonistic college football player and fraternity brother. Fortunately within our Q&A for *Downtown*, there were no shades of Bill Bradley within his responses, as Blake came across as an open-minded, grateful, and reflective person.

Later this year, Blake can be seen in the film *Exit Survey*, which he appeared in with *Greetings From The Shore* star Kim Shaw, and in an episode of *Major Crimes*. To stay current on upcoming appearances and other happenings for Blake Cooper Griffin, follow him via the Twitter handle [@thegriffster](https://twitter.com/thegriffster), on Instagram as @blakecoopergriffin, and/or through Snapchat as BCG4Pres

How would you describe the movie trailer to someone who hasn't yet seen the trailer for your latest film, Love Is All You Need?

Blake Cooper Griffin: Electric. The first time I saw it, I got goosebumps. The entire film packs a powerful punch. *Love is All You Need?* is set in a world where being gay is the norm. In that world, same sex couples are in the mainstream and heterosexual couples are bullied. In the story, a guy and girl fall in love on a college campus. This couple, Ryan and Jude, face tremendous adversity when their relationship goes public.

I play Bill Bradley, who is the college quarterback and president of the fraternity that Ryan pledges. Bill has major issues with their relationship and the story continues from there. It's one of the darker roles I've taken on and one of the most interesting. The script that K. Rocco Shields and David Tillman wrote is one of a kind. This concept has never been explored before — I'm very proud of the film. It asks tough questions. How far are we willing to go for love?

What price do we as a society pay because of bullying and intolerance? And finally, how can we be more responsible and caring towards others?

Your character in Love, Bill Bradley, is a fraternity president and football player. Is there any of that in who you are off-screen?

B: I was involved in sports growing up, but I didn't play football. Instead, I played basketball and ran track. I actually traveled with an AAU basketball team for several years. We were pretty good. I'm from the South, so naturally I love college football — go [SEC](#)! Every Saturday during football season, you would find me at the sports bar by my house yelling at a TV.

As for fraternities, after high school I attended Drama School at the North Carolina School of the Arts; they don't have fraternities there. With that being said, because I've played several characters who were in fraternities, I sometimes feel like I was in one.

You were also around football on the show Necessary Roughness...

B: I played Trent Rogers, who was Lindsay's boyfriend on the show. I had purple hair and piercings. It was an awesome experience and is what I love about acting — transforming. I would personally never dress like Trent, so when I went into the audition, I bought magnetic earrings, wore skinny jeans, and piled on the hairspray. It really helped me find the character and probably helped the producers imagine me in the role.



What's ahead for you once Love Is All You Need? has been released?

B: I'm sitting in my trailer right now doing this interview, while working on another project that I can't talk about quite yet. But just last week, I finished working on a comedic film project called *Exit Survey*, which was written by Thom Harp and [Kristyn Carey](#). Thom directed it as well, and he cast one of my good friends, Kim Shaw, as my girlfriend.



Again, I play a guy who isn't the nicest of dudes. I seem to play that role a lot, which I love. I think it's interesting to explore the parts of ourselves that we would normally want to hide. Kim and I have known each other for years, so when we found out we were going to work together, we were thrilled. It's a comedy and we kept making each other laugh between takes and sometimes, during the takes. The story takes place outdoors and at night it was freezing! It was so cold! Our teeth kept chattering, and between takes we would run and huddle by the heater. It just made the whole experience funnier. So I'm looking forward to seeing that.

I read in a BuzzFeed Q&A that you prefer Los Angeles to New York City, but ideally would be able to spend long periods of time in New York. When did you first come to New York? Was it for work?

B: The first time I visited New York, my uncle took me to see a Broadway show. It cemented for me that I would pursue acting. I also lived in New York for four months during a summer

after my first year at drama school. I had no idea what I was doing. My parents said I could do it, as long as I paid my own way. So I saved some money and I found an apartment on Craigslist in Washington Heights. My friend went with me and we took an Amtrak up to the city because she was afraid of flying. We had never seen the apartment, so when we arrived, we just gave our cab driver the address. When we got to the apartment, we realized that we weren't getting our own apartment. Instead, we ended up with a single bedroom inside of a four-bedroom apartment with people we had never met! That was a bit of a shock for a guy who had never lived in a big city, but it was one of the best experiences of my life. We had no money, but I grew so much that summer — read amazing books, listened to great music, and met so many interesting people. The drumbeat of New York made quite an impression on me. It was very difficult to return to school in the fall.

Was there something particular about being in New York that struck? A specific neighborhood or restaurant?

B: When I go to the city, I like to walk everywhere. It's something that you can't do in Los Angeles. I usually stay in Midtown, but the last couple of times I went, I stayed in Brooklyn. I used to visit a coffee shop in the West Village called DOMA and sit for hours and watch people. I also enjoy going to museums during the day. At night, I usually see a Broadway show and then grab dinner afterward at Joe Allen or Sardi's.

What does New York City offer that you wish Los Angeles did?

B: People seem to be a little more urgent about things in New York. I like that. I also love the pizza. Send us your pizza.

Aside from acting, I read that you played the Prince in the presentation of Snow White & The Seven Dwarfs with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra at the Walt Disney Concert Hall. Do you have musical aspirations?

B: That was a rush. Ashley Brown, who played Mary Poppins on Broadway, was Snow White and the rest of the cast was amazing as well. There's nothing quite like singing in front of a crowd, especially in the Disney Concert Hall. There were over 2,000 people at the concert, and I swear the way the hall was lit, you can see every face. As far as the future goes, I'm open to all things — I'd love to play Bobby in Company some day.

I understand that you have actively campaigned for Hillary Clinton in her run for President of the United States. How did you first get involved with that? Was there a particular cause or issue that inspired you?

B: Hillary Clinton inspires me. I have never been more excited by a candidate. I was actually on a bus coming back from Williamstown Theater Festival heading into the city, when I began reading her book Living History, a couple of years ago. I was so impressed. She is, in my opinion, the smartest, toughest, most tested, and most experienced candidate ever to run for president. Her resilience really moves me.

I also think her dedication to this country is impressive. I had the great honor of meeting her recently, and she was so personable and kind. I also went to Iowa to help get out the vote for the Iowa Caucus, and was there when the results came in.

When you're not busy, how do you like to spend your free time? What does an off day look like for you?

B: I like to sleep in and drink coffee in bed. I also enjoy going on hikes with my dog. I have a rescue. She's very special.

Finally, Blake, any last words for the kids?

B: Be you. That's your gold.

Exclusive: Sexy Blake Cooper Griffin talks new movies and crush



What is implied from a persons' name? Just by hearing the name of this vivacious young actor Blake Cooper Griffin, many of his fans begin to plan their first romantic date, and some their wedding night!

Blake is an American actor and heartthrob, famously known his roles in "Major Crimes," "Jessie," "Necessary Roughness," "RIDE with Helen Hunt" "LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED." He has been grooming to be an actor almost since birth, and formally training since his college days. Blake has much to offer to the acting world; brains, talent and beautiful green eyes...

Please see the exclusive interview with the Examiner about his newest movies in the interview below:

Yolanda Gibson for Examiner: Who inspired you to pursue your dream of acting?

Blake Cooper Griffin: Probably my grandmother. She would take me to plays and read stories to me. We would improv little scenes together. I remember telling her when I was young that I wanted to be actor and she got such a kick out of that idea. I've been very lucky to have people that believed in me along the way. No one I'd ever known had pursued a career in the arts, so I drew a lot upon the belief that others had in me. I still do. I'm very grateful for that. Also— Matt Damon and Leonardo DiCaprio. Watching their work growing up inspired me. They always find a way to transform into whatever character their playing, and they make such truthful, interesting choices.

You can follow Blake on Twitter: @thegriffster, Instagram: @blakecoopergriffin

Examiner: Tell us about your new movies *Love Is All You Need* and *Before You Say I Do*.

B.G.: "The two movies are very different which is why I love my job so much. These projects gave me a chance to explore very different worlds and characters. *Love Is All You Need* is a film set on a college campus in world where gay is straight and straight is gay. Heterosexual couples are outside of the mainstream. In our story, a guy and girl named Ryan and Jude (Tyler Blackburn & Briana Evigan) fall in love and are bullied as a result. I play Bill Bradley, college football quarterback and fraternity president who has some very intense feelings about the couple's relationship, and the story unfolds from there. It's one of the darkest roles I've ever played and the most interesting. Love is a modern day Romeo & Juliet, with a twist. I guess you would say that in our incarnation, I'm Tybalt, because *Love Is All You Need?* takes place in a flipped reality, the film becomes a metaphor for all types of bullying and intolerance. It's everyone's story — everybody wants the freedom to be themselves without being persecuted. We had our world premiere last week at Cinequest Film Festival, which was headlined this year by James Franco and Rita Moreno. I'm proud to say that we won the festival's top prize. I can't wait for people all over the country to get to see it."



Before You Say I Do is a romantic comedy that follows a young therapist named Jessica (Becca Tobin). I play Dr. Stephen Hower, who Jessica is in a relationship with. Things get interesting when Jessica's ex, Mike (played by Ryan Kelley) re-enters her life. I really enjoyed working on this film. TV movies shoot in a period of weeks and so you get to know the cast and crew very quickly. It was a lot of fun to be able to play a nice guy. Stephen was a funny character to work on because he tries to quantify love. He looks at love as a math problem that can be solved. *Before You Say I Do* will most likely be coming out this summer, so stay tuned.

Examiner: Who is your celebrity crush?

B.G.: It's hard to choose just one. I'm definitely a big fan of the leading ladies I've been working with— Emily Osment, Briana Evigan, and Becca Tobin.

Examiner: What do you like to watch on t.v?

B.G: House of Cards. House of Cards. House of Cards. I also love Casual and Veep. I watch a ton of CNN as well— I'm a political junky.

Examiner: How did you get discovered? I owe the kick off of my acting career to the conservatory I attended for college— the North Carolina School of the Arts. Not only is it one of the best acting schools in the country with supportive teachers and high creative standards that help you prepare for a career as actor, the school also sets up a yearly showcase for the twenty or so actors that graduate and introduces them to agents and managers in both New York and Los Angeles. I was lucky enough to secure a great team, moved out to Los Angeles, and started auditioning.

Examiner: What motivated you to attend college?

B.G: I wanted to be a well-trained actor. That was important to me.

Examiner: What would your career be if you were not an actor? It's hard to say.



B.G: Probably politics.

Examiner: Where did you grow up?

B.G: I grew up in South Carolina and North Carolina mostly. We moved a lot when I was young which sort of became an acting exercise. Always a new audience.

Examiner: What kind of kid were you?

B.G: Creative, curious, a bit of a perfectionist too. My mom also tells me that I was very persistent... that once I had an idea in my head, I wouldn't let it go. I had a sort of singular focus. I think I've remained pretty much the same.

Examiner: Is there anything else you want to say to your fans?

B.G: Be you— that's your gold.

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BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN

ON THE RIDE WITH DIRECTOR HELEN HUNT

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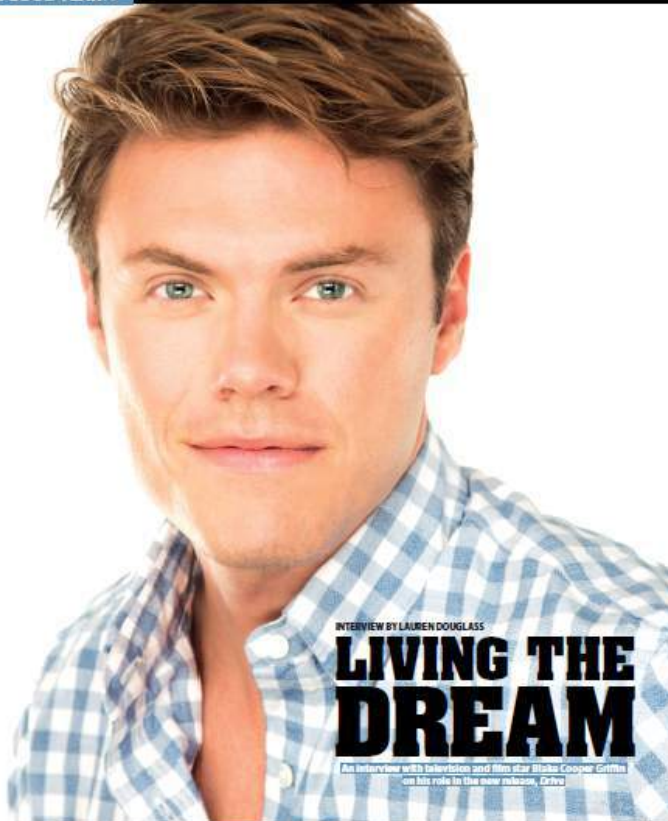
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<< A GOOD YEAR



INTERVIEW BY LAUREN DOUGLASS

LIVING THE DREAM

An interview with television and film star Blake Cooper Griffin on his role in the new miniseries, *Orphan*

2015 has been good to Blake Cooper Griffin, and the year is just getting started. With his role opposite Cuba Gooding Jr. in *Life of a King*, now available on Netflix, and his character on the final season of Disney's hit sitcom, *Jessie*, he's getting plenty of face time with home viewers around the country. Now, he's amped to hit the big screen this month with Academy Award Winner Helen Hunt in her feature directorial debut, *Ride*, and again later this year with the feature length adaptation of award-winning short film, *Love Is All You Need?*

Here, he takes time out to talk with us about what he's learned working with the stars he grew up watching, and how he plans to put those lessons to use on the set of the upcoming new films in his future.

Tell us a little about *Ride*. What is it all about?

First of all, working with Helen Hunt is a dream come true for me. I followed her career and I actually got to work with one of her costars from *Mr. Goodbye*, Cuba Gooding, Jr. earlier this year. Working with Helen, I found that I was a little nervous at first, but because she's so good at what she does, she just puts you at ease right away.

As far as working on set, I get to work by the beach – not a bad place to clock in! There's a lot of surfing in the movie, and Helen actually does her own surfing, so that's pretty cool!

How do you think you grew as an actor from working on that film?

I think that any time you're around someone like Helen Hunt, someone that's at the very top of their game, it's sort of like being a sponge – you just want to watch everything they're doing. Helen, who is starring in the movie and directing it, she's totally devoted to the truth of her moment. That's what she connects herself with – what we're doing in this scene and how that relates to the story we're trying to tell. Sort of letting everything else fall away. I think that that's what I took away. Because as an actor, the truth of the moment is all you have.

What led you to become an actor?

It's something I've wanted to do since I was five years old in South Carolina. We always been really interested in people – I always wanted to hear their stories. And I like to be in front of people. As I grew up, I did a play in middle school and I loved it – I was like this is what's up! I think my parents and everyone around me thought I was crazy because I was in the 7th grade saying, I'm going to be an actor!

What's your favorite scene in the industry choice over the last couple of years?

More platforms. I think that's the thing that's really cutting edge about what's happening right now. *Life of a King* now has a new life on Netflix, and people are tuning in to watch it when they want, creating their own schedule. I think *Ride* is also going to go on On Demand, and other movies that I've been a part of have done that. I think what that does is it allows people to tune in when they want to, on their own time, and all the avenues allow so many different types of stories to be told from so many points of view.

I think it's raised the game for content. There's serious competition and people are competing for viewers. I think we're getting really strong stories out of it.

How do you keep yourself grounded?

The business can be pretty difficult, and that can keep you grounded in a lot of ways. But also, I wanted to do this because I have a genuine interest in people and interesting characters. Just connecting to that dream of a five year old kid – that's humbling. I also have great people in my life that I'm surrounded by that keep me grounded. I have a great dog that I take on hikes. I have a well-rounded life.

Where do you see yourself going?

I want to continue to play diverse roles, which is something that I've had the great opportunity to do this year. That's what I hope I'm still doing in a couple of years. I think that as an actor, what more can you ask but to step into the shoes of interesting characters every day? I hope that I get to grow and stretch and be passionate and motivated every single day of this journey, and then also have a lot of fun doing it. This is a good life!

There's a little story your next project, *Love Is All You Need?*

It's an insanely interesting project. The director has worked so hard to tell a story that is inspired by true events, and it's a project that's really timely. Basically, it's about bullying. A guy and a girl fall in love in college in a world where being gay is the norm, and so they face bullying once their relationship goes public. It's an alternate universe – this has never been done before. It stars Briana Evigan from *Step Up*, Tyler Blackburn from *Pretty Little Liars*, and Emily Deschanel from *Kung Fu Hungry*. I play one of the antagonists in the film – a fat president who's also the college football quarterback. I think this movie has the ability to really change people's minds and really open up people's hearts. I could not be more on the about it.

What's the biggest lesson you've learned?

It's an allegory for bullying, no matter what the reason, that's what so cool about the concept – it turns everything on its side so people can see the real world impact of bullying, no matter the reason people are being bullied. You turn on the TV and you can see kids in colleges, high schools and middle schools experiencing horror stories because of this cultural divide. So I think the take-away is that through compassion and love for other people, you can accomplish far more than cutting people down.

Hollywood: Blake Cooper Griffin

Meet one of the newest Rising Hollywood Stars, Blake Cooper Griffin, an All-American boy with



Blake's charm has fast taken over the television screen when he began landing roles on a slew of notable prime-time television series including an almost unrecognizable turn as bad boy 'Trent Rogers' on USA Network's NECESSARY ROUGHNESS, GREEK, LAW & ORDER: CRIMINAL INTENT, MAD LOVE, 90210 and NCIS: LOS ANGELES. On the big screen, Griffin has appeared in the DJ Caruso directed film STANDING UP, starring Val Kilmer, SPREAD with Ashton Kutcher and the Academy Award Winning feature MILK. (Images by Brooke Mason Photography)

Dashingly good looks and talent to match, **Blake Cooper Griffin** is lining up his 2015 slate with a number of notable breakout roles both on television and in film. Currently he can be seen opposite Academy Award Winner Cuba Gooding Jr. in the drama feature LIFE OF A KING available on Netflix; May 1st he hits the big screen with Academy Award Winner Helen Hunt in her feature directorial debut RIDE; taking a step on the lighter side, Griffin also joins the cast of Disney's sensational hit sitcom JESSIE for its final season.

Last but certainly not least, Griffin will lend his name to the feature length adaptation of the critically acclaimed, award winning short film LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED? from writer/ director Kim Rocco Shields. Taking place in a world where homosexuality is normal and heteros, aka "breeders," are frowned upon, the film tackles the heart wrenching topic of bullying on an epic scale in today's youth and millennial age groups.



Beverly Hills Magazine: How did you discover acting?

Blake Cooper Griffin: Growing up my family moved 9 times, so I got used to being the new kid, and it always felt like acting to me. Then I did a play at school and discovered that it was a process of inhabiting another character and taking on a completely different perspective. I really liked it. The transformational element of acting fascinated me, and it developed into a true love and passion of mine, still today.

Beverly Hills Magazine: What is your process as a Hollywood actor?

Blake Cooper Griffin: It's different for each role. I always try to find the kernel of truth that I believe runs that character. I know all humans have the same feelings and emotions, and everyone goes through the same struggles. So I find something that connects to those deeper emotions. Once you're building a character based on truth, the character will always come to life in a natural way. I also like to find little things that are unique only to that character and

incorporate them; like a mannerism that helps me transform into this new and completely different character.

Beverly Hills Magazine: What do you think of Hollywood?

Blake Cooper Griffin: I think that no matter where you are who you surround yourself with will play an important role in your experiences, especially in Hollywood. I've been very lucky to be surrounded by great people.

Beverly Hills Magazine: What is your favorite part about the business?

Blake Cooper Griffin: When you book the part!

Beverly Hills Magazine: What is your least favorite part about the business?

Blake Cooper Griffin: Everybody struggles with doubt from time to time, but to overcome these obstacles I just always try to let my faith be bigger than my doubt.

Beverly Hills Magazine: Have you discovered a personal purpose in what you do?

Blake Cooper Griffin: It's really to live the largest expression of myself while reaching people and telling stories.

Beverly Hills Magazine: What advice would you give to other aspiring actors?

Blake Cooper Griffin: To surround yourself with good people who support you. If they're not helping you, they're hurting you. Try your best to control the things you can, and forget the rest. Always remember, the creative answers are always inside of you.

A South Carolina native, Griffin, is a graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts, School of Drama, where he trained to become an accomplished acting professional. Blake Cooper Griffin is one of those Rising Hollywood Stars who amidst his fame always remembers his true values and what matters most. His natural ability to seek truth and express real emotions gives him his innate on screen charisma. A down to earth Southern boy with irresistible good looks, we have a feeling it's just the beginning of a very big career for this young man.

Follow him on Twitter @TheGrifftser and Instagram @blakecoppergriffin.



Actor
**BLAKE
COOPER
GRIFFIN**

Instagram: @BlakeCooperGriffin
Twitter: @TheGriffster

Photo Credit: Brooke Mason
www.brookemasonphotography.com



FMM: Who or what inspires you?

BCG: Bold people who aren't defined by others such as: Martin Luther King Jr., James Dean, Vincent Van Gogh, Hillary Clinton, Tennessee Williams, director Steve McQueen... I'm inspired by smart, passionate people who have paved their own way. That and my dog-she's the best person I know.

FMM: What actors would you love to work with someday?

BCG: Where do I begin? There are so many that inspire me with their work, their choices... like Matt Damon, Robin Wright, Julia Louis Dryfus, Clive Owen, Leonardo DiCaprio, Lisa Kudrow, Kevin Spacey, Meryl Streep, Robert DeNiro, and Morgan Freeman... to name a few. Oh, and Andy Samberg-- he's hilarious.

FMM: What do you enjoy most about theatre acting versus film acting?

BCG: Theatre performances begin and end with the actor. It happens now. That's pretty freakin' cool, you know? I love film for the intimacy, the nuance and the power it has to reach so many people. There is a record of it forever. It's eternal.

FMM: Do you have any future projects you are working on right now?

BCG: I do. But nothing I can tell you about without getting in trouble.

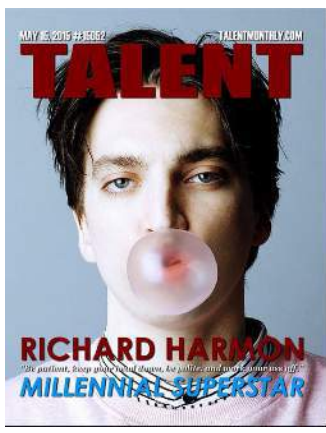
FMM: If you could travel anywhere right now, where would you go?

BCG: I'd travel back in time to the mid-1960s and go to a Simon & Garfunkel concert!

FMM: You have appeared in numerous TV shows-what was the most fun one and why?

BCG: I loved working on Necessary Roughness for USA. I played Trent Rogers, the boyfriend of Hannah Mark's character, Lindsay. I had purple hair and piercings. That was really cool. Transformation really excites me.





BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

honest look at the consequences of bullying. I wanted to play Bill so badly that after the audition I wrote a letter to Rocco and her co-writer David Tillman saying how much the script spoke to me and how fasci-



Blake Cooper Griffin and Cuba Gooding Jr. filming LIFE OF A KING.

nating the character Bill Bradley was to me. I'd never done that before, but I thought to myself, "What the hell! Go for it."

Do you have any interesting or funny stories from the set?
 "Definitely. Some of the best memories I have are on set. Because I play the world chess champion in LIFE OF A KING, the director, Jake Goldberger, wanted me to authentically be able to play chess. So, I went to chess bootcamp and learned close to 40 actual chess championship games. (In case you don't know...that's a lot of chess games to memorize!) That was an incredible experience. As for LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED, I've never been that tight with a cast and crew before. The movie also

"...pursuing a career as an actor was a natural progression."

stars Briane Evigan, Emily Oment, and Tyler Blackburn. We had a bunch of night shoots on the movie and some would go 'til 3, 4, or 5 in the morning. I remember one night at about 3:30 a.m., we were waiting for the shot to be set up and the whole cast and the director, Rocco, played a basketball game. I don't know how we had the energy to do it but it was such a blast and...I think, I won."

Tell us about working on the Disney hit, JESSIE.

"I was 100 percent unprepared for how much fun I would have on JESSIE. I loved the studio audience and working with those actors—they are all on top of their game. And very funny. It's no wonder the show is such a huge success."

What do you enjoy doing when you are not acting?

"I like politics a lot, so I'm glad to CNN during election season. HOUSE OF CARDS and VEEP are favorite TV shows of mine. I also like to hike and run. And, have I mentioned that I have the best dog in the world? She's a scrappy little rescue and I spend as much free time with her as possible. She's the best person I know."

What is the best advice you have received from any of your directors and who gave the advice?

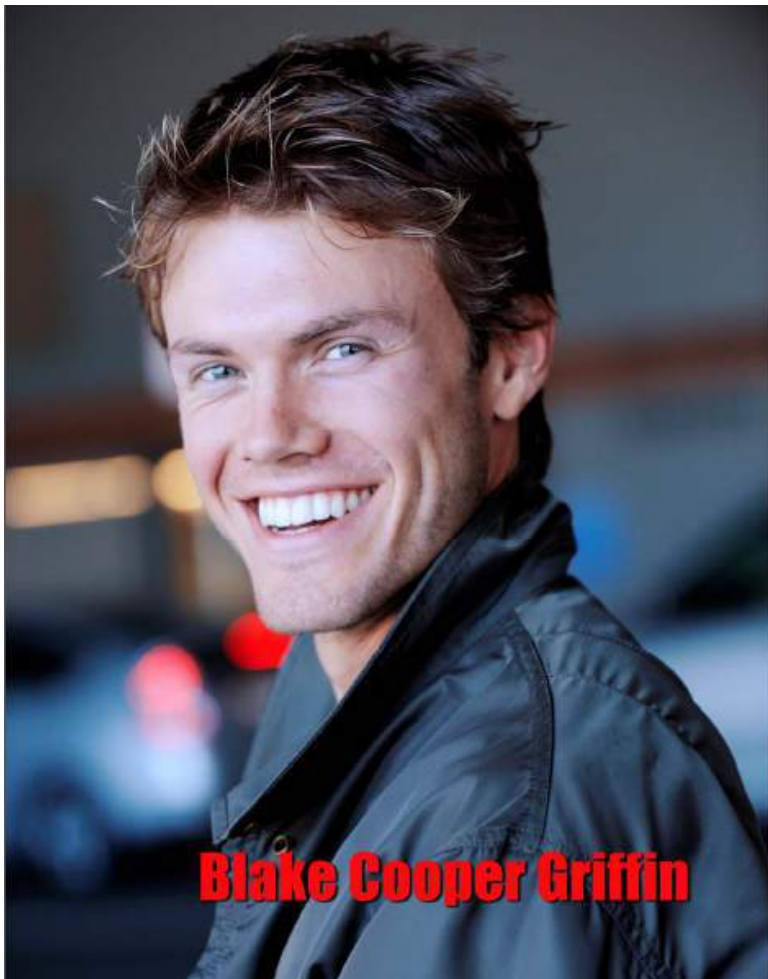
"One of my greatest mentors is one of my acting teachers who has also directed me. Her name is Tanya Babov, and I still talk to her regularly. She's given me tons of advice over the years, but one thing I think about every time I work on a script is, "It's never just about what people say. It's what's underneath those words that tells the story."

For more information about Blake Cooper Griffin, go to www.imdb.me/blakecoopergriffin or follow him on Twitter @thegriffinster and Instagram @blakecoopergriffin.

Photography by Bjorn Kammerell



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Blake Cooper Griffin

Actor Blake Cooper Griffin is best known for his roles in writer David Scott and writer/director Jake Goldberger's LIFE OF A KING and writer/director D.J. Caruso's STANDING UP. Currently he can be seen in writer/director Kim Rocco Shields' LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED.

Tell us about moving to L.A.

"My first day in Los Angeles, my car got towed. Good start. I'd just graduated from the School of Drama at the North Carolina School of the Arts. At the end of the training, we did a showcase with other conservatories like Juillard and Carnegie Mellon. I got an agent and manager that told me I should move out to L.A. My family was supportive, but no one they knew had ever pursued a career in the arts. I've never asked them, but I think they might have thought I'd be back home in 6 months or a year. Actually, probably not. Having witnessed me as a child and then a teenager, they knew how resilient my personality can be. My mom always says, "You were a very...persistent child."

What event made you certain you wanted to be a professional actor?

"I don't know that it was one event. My whole life I've walked around thinking, "What is like to be that person?" Even as a kid I was analyzing people's behavior. So in that way I've always been an actor. I would make movies as a kid with our video camera and I asked a lot of "What if" questions. In high school, I got serious about it and went to a performing arts boarding school. For me, going to a conservatory and then pursuing a career as an actor was a natural progression."



On the set of JESSIE

What was your first role? Were you nervous when you walked on set?

"One of my first big roles out here was on the CBS comedy MAD LOVE. I was really nervous, but excited because I got to work with Judy Greer and Sarah Chalke."

Do you have any interesting or funny stories from that experience?

"I found out I booked that job at 10:30 a.m., and had to be on set by 12 noon. I was at the gym when I got the call, so, I showed up on set in gym shorts and a t-shirt...and I hadn't showered."

Tell us about working with Helen Hunt on her new film, RIDE.

"Helen Hunt is the best at everything she does. And she's done it all: Comedy, drama, television, film, theatre, actor, director, writer. She is a laser focused director and she puts everyone on set at ease. When you work with someone that is at the top of their game like that, it's very relaxing. She's so specific...so dedicated to the truth of each moment. I soaked up every second I had on set watching her in action."

How did you get the part and what was your role?

"I've been lucky enough to meet and get to know Helen over the past few years. When she invited me to be part of her film I was excited to get



A scene from LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED

"Even as a kid I was analyzing people's behavior. So in that way I've always been an actor."

a chance to work with her. I have a fun little role in the film. A surfer guy named Bud, who works near the beach where Brenton Thwaites' character hangs out."

Do you have any interesting or funny stories from the set?

"There's a saying that for an actor that "the job is a vacation." It implies that all the auditioning, preparation, and waiting to get the job is the hard part. On the set of RIDE, it quite literally felt like a vacation because so much of it was near or on the beach. I definitely had some early morning swims before call time!"

You play opposite Cuba Gooding, Jr., in LIFE OF A KING. What is the film about?

"LIFE OF A KING is based on a true story about ex-felon Eugene Brown, who establishes a Chess Club for inner city teenagers in Washington, D.C. I play world chess champion J. Thomas Gaines, who serves as a foil and an obstacle to some of the other main characters. I hope everyone will check this film out. It's very uplifting and inspirational and examines one of my favorite stories: how to take life by the head and overcome incredible odds."

It must have been a little surreal to work with the cast of this film. What was it like?

"I'm such a fan of Cuba Gooding, Jr. His passion is electric. When we met the first day, I geeked out a little...telling him how his Oscar acceptance speech impacted me as a kid. I also worked with Malcolm M. Mayes on that movie. Malcolm and I just did another movie together called LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED, written and directed by K. Rocco Shields, that will be out late summer or early fall. I'm stoked for people to see LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED. It's based on a concept that has never been done before. It's about a guy and girl who fall in love in a world where being gay is the norm, but the couple find themselves lulled when their relationship goes public. I play Bill Bradley, college quarterback and frat president, who has major issues with the couple's relationship. It's a story about anyone who has felt different at some point in their life, and it takes an

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Interview: Actor Blake Cooper Griffin



Photos of Blake Cooper Griffin by Benjo Arwas

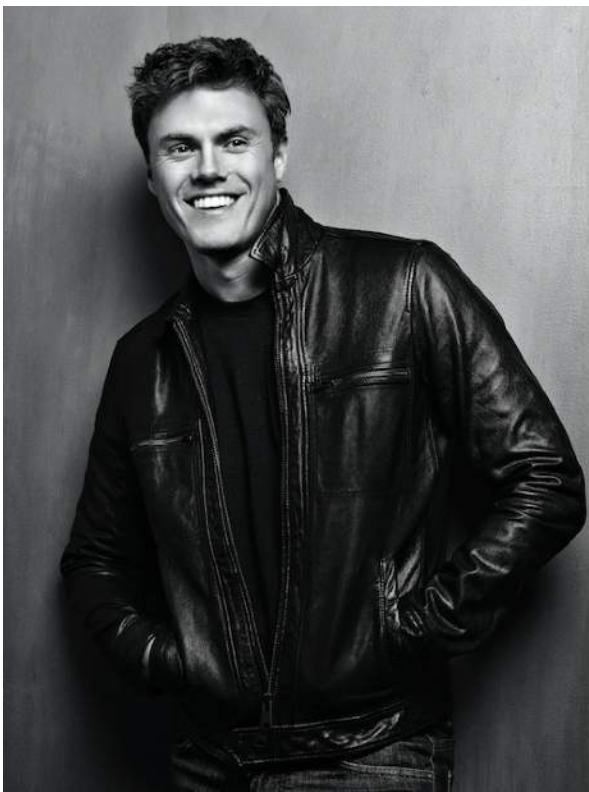
In the middle of what's already been a bizarre and historic election year, actor Blake Cooper Griffin insists Hillary Clinton is the candidate for this time and he's personally helped campaign for her over the past 12 months.

Calling himself a "very faithful supporter" of Clinton, Griffin stood behind the former Secretary of State through a contentious primary and he believes some of the coverage of Clinton's campaign has unfairly suggested there is a lack of enthusiasm.

"I completely respect and admire Bernie Sanders and his supporters and what they have been able to do. But there's a lot of energy behind Hillary Clinton as well," says Griffin, speaking with Variance in a new interview. "And I hope that as we get closer to November, we see Democrats and moderates and independents and clear-thinking Republicans unite and say, 'This election is too important.' Because the opposition is—terrifying."

While most critics cede the historical context of Clinton's candidacy as the first female nominated for President by a major party, many have also been quick to contrast her campaign with the frenzied supporters of Sanders, President Obama or even her Republican challenger Donald Trump, the latter of whom has previously had some of his press conferences censored for profanity and made discriminatory comments about Hispanics, Muslims, prisoners of war, disabled individuals, women and many others.

"I hear people say Bernie Sanders is authentic or Barack Obama inspires them or Trump speaks his mind," Griffin explains. "I get it. But Hillary Clinton inspires me beyond belief. As someone who has devoted her life to public service, I do believe she's authentic. And it inspires me that she was knocking on doors in Arkansas for the Children's Defense Fund, helping get disabled children to school. What's inspiring about Hillary Clinton is that she got 8 million children healthcare when she was First Lady.



And that before there was Obamacare, there was Hillarycare. That she helped New York rebuild after 9/11. That she went to Geneva and championed LGBT rights.”

Now in 2016, as Clinton defends marriage equality while the GOP endorses widely debunked conversion therapy, Griffin co-stars in the independent film *Love Is All You Need?*, a Romeo and Juliet-esque story taking place in a world where homosexuality is predominant and heterosexuality is outside of the mainstream.

“We have to stop politicizing human rights ... It’s not about politics. It infuriates me that so many draw party lines around these issues.”

“It’s a very human story,” says Griffin, explaining that recent progress doesn’t mean the issue is permanently settled. “It would be easy for us to say the Supreme Court ruling on gay marriage was it, that the fight is over. But the work is just beginning. In this election cycle, there is such a negative

culture, where you really do have a lot of people trying so hard to push different minority groups back, to keep them down. And it’s not just at the fringes, it’s big percentages of the population who now feel empowered to speak out or be ‘politically incorrect.’”

Pointing to Republican Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal’s decision earlier this year to veto a controversial “religious liberty” bill deemed anti-LGBT, Griffin says it’s proof there is much more that unites Americans than divides us.

“I think it’s a sign that this shouldn’t be a political issue because it’s not,” Griffin says. “We have to stop politicizing human rights. When it comes to the LGBT community, women’s equality, equal pay, a woman’s right to choose what she does with her body, how we treat any minority in this country. It’s not about politics. It infuriates me that so many draw party lines around these issues.”

Oddly enough, Griffin, who has previously worked with the likes of Cuba Gooding Jr. and Helen Hunt, plays the bigoted antagonist in *Love Is All You Need?*. His character, Bill Bradley, is a bully who is definitely not very tolerant.

Griffin says that by playing such a character, he’s been reminded that it’s not enough to embrace victims of bullying or the LGBT community or anyone else who feels helpless. “Yes, we need to make sure they don’t feel alone,” he says, while adding: “I also believe we need to address the Bill Bradleys of the world—the bullies, the people who don’t see eye-to-eye with us. We need honest conversations. We need to change hearts not just laws.”

Ultimately, Griffin acknowledges Clinton has a unique and complicated relationship with America. But he’s also confident, especially considering the opposition, the United States is also being presented with a unique decision which isn’t all that complicated.

“All of us need to be involved,” he says. “All of our voices add up and I don’t think we can take that for granted, especially not this time. I really believe this election is not about Democrat versus Republican or left versus right—it’s about America versus an unfathomable catastrophe.”

ACTOR BLAKE COOPER GRIFFIN ON WORKING IN HELEN HUNT'S FEATURE "RIDE"

By Jennifer Buonantony

You may recognize Blake Cooper Griffin from TV shows like *Castle*, *90210*, or this season of Disney's hit show *Jessie*. But if you haven't been lucky enough to catch his work yet, you can rest assured you won't be able to miss him after his recent work in Helen Hunt's *Ride* and *Love is All You Need*.

Blake's career certainly has momentum. In fact, you could say it is about to reach a pretty important peak. We sat down with Blake to talk about his journey thus far and what advice he has for fellow actors starting out. We also chatted about his obsession with *House of Cards*...we are right there binge-watching with you, but something tells us you might just appear on our screen sometime soon!

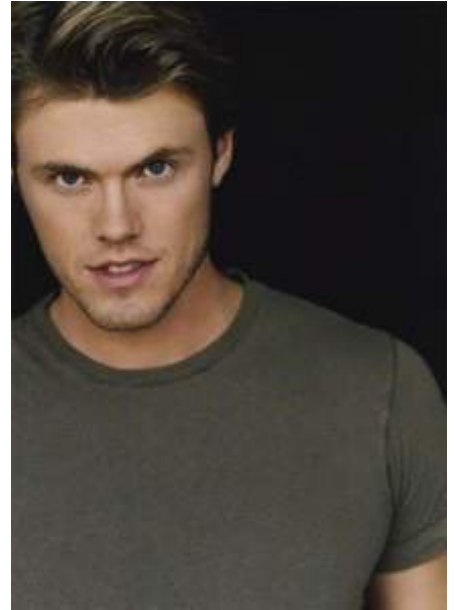
PPLA: Tell us about your journey to pursue your career in acting. What have been the biggest challenges to breaking into the business?

BCG: This past Christmas, while visiting my parents, my mom showed me something I had written in first grade. The teacher asked us to write about what we wanted to do when we grew up. I wrote: "If I could be anything I would be a character movie star actor." The sentence structure was pretty rough and I was a really bad speller, but I was definitely clear on what I wanted to do. So, I think my journey to pursue acting probably started there as a South Carolina kid who loved to watch movies and needed to practice his handwriting.

Before moving to L.A., I trained at the School of Drama at the North Carolina School of the Arts. NCSA does a showcase for its graduating seniors and it was there that I got my first agent and manager. They convinced me to move to LA and I have been out here ever since.

As far as my biggest challenge, I think that every actor struggles with doubt at one time or another. Acting requires faith. Faith in the universe and in yourself. You have to let your faith be bigger than your doubt.

PPLA: What was one of your early successes? A booking where you thought, I



PPLA: What was one of your early successes? A booking where you thought, I might be on the right track!

BCG: I have come to learn that the business of acting is about momentum. In 2011, I started to gain some traction. I was a lead in a TV movie on NBC, guest starred on several shows, and booked a couple of films. I was in heaven. I had been auditioning and auditioning with little successes here and there but all in all, it had been slow moving up to that point. The lesson was that hard work pays off. I really do believe that. Targeted, hard work.



PPLA: You recently wrapped the film *Love is All You Need*, tell us about your role and that experience?

BCG: The minute I read *Love is All You Need*, I wanted to be a part of it. After auditioning for it, I couldn't stop thinking about. When people see the movie they will know why. I ended up doing something I've never done. I wrote a letter to the director and writer basically saying I would do anything to play the role of Bill Bradley. When my manager and agent called to tell me I got the part, I screamed so loud that my landlord came over and asked me if everything was alright.

The world of *Love is all You Need* is the brain child of our fearless director, K. Rocco Shields, based on the award winning short film that she and David Tillman wrote. The short went viral with over 40 million views and was translated into 15 different languages. The story takes place on a college campus and follows a guy and a girl who fall in love in a world where being gay is the norm and find themselves bullied after their relationship goes public. I play Bill Bradley, college football quarterback and president of Omega Theta Pi, who has major problems with the couple's relationship. The film is about anyone who has ever felt different. Kids across the country are getting bullied for a countless reasons and this movie is a kind of allegory for all different types of bullying. The film also stars Briana Evigan, Emily Osment, and Tyler Blackburn. They are going to blow you away.

The best part of working on the project was that everyone was motivated by a desire to make a film that would change lives. When I went to Drama School, that's what I wanted to do— reach people. Rocco and the production team set up an environment that offered the actors tons freedom. Because of that, we all took big risks. The entire Genius Pictures production team worked in that spirit. There was this palpable responsibility that everyone felt on set to speak up for those whose voices have not been heard.

PPLA: You are also appearing on the final season of *Jessie* on Disney. What was it like working with the cast of such a hugely popular Disney show in their final season?

PPLA: How was working across Helen Hunt in *Ride*? Tell us a bit about your role and what we can expect from the film?

BCG: Working with Helen Hunt was a dream in itself. She's a role model for me because she's done everything— television, film, theater, comedy, drama, actor, director, writer. The script is really special and even though I have a small part in the film, after reading it, I knew I wanted to be involved in it. Plus, there's surfing in the movie. I had a great time getting to work by the beach! Who else gets to work with an ocean view?! Not a bad place to clock in.

PPLA: Your FAV movie? Favorite Actors? Any dream actors or directors you want to work with?

BCG: Right now, all I can think about is *House of Cards*. Kevin Spacey and Robin Wright, the whole cast— they are so interesting. I binge watch the seasons. My family was involved in politics when I was a kid so I find the whole world fascinating. *The Talented Mr. Ripley* is a favorite of mine in large part because I really admire Matt Damon's work. He's a leading man but has an ability to transform in every role that he plays. There are so many actors, actresses, and directors I want to work with that you wouldn't have enough space to print it. So, if you could just work out a role on *House of Cards* where I'm working opposite Matt Damon, that would be a good start.

PPLA: Advice for other actors hoping to pursue a career in Hollywood.

BCG: #1) I believe that who you surround yourself with can chemically change who you are. Take that seriously. Pursuing an acting career is hard enough. You don't need people around you that are not supportive. Remember, if people aren't helping, they're hurting. #2) Separate what you can control from what you can't. Do everything you can to improve what you can control, and try hard to forget the rest. #3) Remember, that all the creative answers are within you. We go to others to remind us of what we already know or to give us the courage to believe it. In that case, see #1.

LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED

🔗 ART, CELEBRITY, FEATURES, LE SOCIETY, LOVE & SEX, TALENT 🗨️ NO
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Photographer – [Benjo Arwas](#) [@benjoarwas](#)

Imagine if you will for a moment a world where the vast majority of the population is homosexual and heterosexuals are by far the minority. Sounds fabulous, right? Filmmaker Kim Rocco Shields takes a closer look at how modern society really treats its minorities in her debut feature film ‘Love Is All You Need?’, based on her short film of the same name that was an instant success on Youtube with over 3 million views in 2011. On its silver screen premiere, ‘Love Is All You Need?’ won The New Visions film award at Cinequest Film Festival, hosted by James Franco. I had the pleasure of sitting down with the film’s villain, Blake Cooper Griffin, and chatting about his challenging role, and what he calls the ‘culture of meanness’ in today’s world.

JTH – Let's talk about the message behind the film 'Love Is All You Need.' It is a very interesting premise to be sure.

Blake – The idea of Gay as Straight and Straight as Gay. It has never been done before.

JTH – The way I became aware of the film originally was by the Youtube short.

Blake – That was back in 2011 I believe.

JTH – Yes, it was.

Blake – How I went in for it, was I too watched the short. The short got millions of views on Youtube. It did really well. Kim Rocco Shields wrote it with David Tillman, and Kim Rocco Shields directed both the feature film that I am part of and the original short. So I read the script and as you know you sometimes get these things the night before you are going in because they are in castings and have to get them done. I got the script and I read the first page I kinda had an idea of what it was. This is the story about you know the bullying of gay people then I turned the page and I was like 'wait a minute what did this say?' I went back and read it again. Then I realized the concept was flipped. I thought how cool is this! This had never been done before! You know the thing about these things is that sometimes you start reading them at 8pm and you are just wanting to get through it. I sat right up and was thinking 'this is really cool' because rarely do you get to explore this.



LOVE
IS ALL
YOU
NEED?

WHAT DOES BULLYING LOOK LIKE WHEN HETEROSEXUALITY IS CONSIDERED A SIN?

INSPIRED BY TRUE EVENTS
BASED ON THE CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED SHORT FILM

GENIUS PRODUCED BY "LOVE IS ALL YOU NEED"

BRYAN EVIGAN, TYLER BLACKBURN, EMILY OSMENT, ANA GUTZ, JENICA BERGER, KATHERINE LANASA PAUL, BEN VICTOR,
KYLE KENTON, ELISABETH ROHM, JEREMY SOTO, LINDSAY GRAHAM, CSA, BOB BROWN, MELISSA
JONES, ONITA PARKER, PEGGY ECHSBAUM, TUDOR RUSSELL M. JAEGER, JESSIE SANDRA VALDE-HANSEN,
GIUSEPPE GIOVANNI CORVINO, MICHAEL J. ZAMPINO, DAVID TILLMAN, KIM ROCCO SHIELDS, KIM ROCCO SHIELDS

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JTH – The first thing I got out of watching the film was that it made the whole LGBT equal rights struggle instantly relatable to the straight community because it puts them in the position of seeing themselves getting bullied as a community.

Blake – I think what it does, and why I am excited to be part of it, is that it does the work of bringing up issues of equality for everybody. Especially the issue of bullying. Because I was able to part of the narrative of the film, I believe it delivers such a pro-tolerant message. The way that it achieves that is by flipping the story, it allows you to project so many different things onto the story.

JTH – Right I think the whole strength of the film is that it makes the struggle relatable to people who aren't in it.

Blake – What it does to is, and what was interesting about 'Love Is All You Need' when I got into the script, is that it is a story about bullying on all levels. It is about the LGBT community, certainly because that story needs to be told. People really need to, it is my belief that people need to acknowledge the totality of that. Just how harmful it has been to so many people that level of bullying. There are other instances of bullying in the film that touch other areas, whether it be bullying based on someones appearance, or whether it be that woman are meant to do certain things and men are meant to do certain things. Breaking it down and I think that is what makes Kim Rocco Shields so fucking incredible. Because she is making a ballsy movie, that she is willing to go out there and say look this is what we are dealing with and these are the kinds of pre-judgments we have. Let's take a look at it.

JTH – It is true that we as a society haven't dealt with these things. It is true that now there have been generations of LGBT people, generations of African Americans, generations of Hispanic Americans, generations of any minority, there has been no awareness of struggle and depth of the brutality of the bullying that they face on a daily basis. To call it 'Bullying' sometimes...

Blake – Not enough?



- Blake Cooper Griffin with Director K.Rocco Shields

JTH – Yes! And this film touches on that experience for everyone. It doesn't matter what 'category' you fall into, it shows the depth of harm that it causes. To break the cycle of violence, you have to be open, you have to talk about it. I didn't think in my lifetime that... I thought the race issue was done. I didn't think we would as a society need to have campaigns like 'Black Lives Matter' to the point that Beyonce added it to her Super Bowl performance. This film 'Love Is All You Need' touches on that all that. It not only speaks to it, but visually it shows that this is happening. That it isn't just happening to one sector, that it is happening to whole sections of our society.

Blake – You know we throw around the cliché that 'we are all in this together' right? We always thought out that cliché. It is a new phrase, it is a new phase for us to say. But the truth is that story like this helps show us everybody does play, either in making things better or being the subject of bullying, if we are going to use that word. Or making it worse. That is the truth. So how do we move to a world where there is more love, there is more kindness. Where there is more tolerance for all people. It is kinda funny because my character in the film is not very tolerant.



- Blake Cooper Griffin as Bill Bradley in Love is All You Need

JTH – No, your character is the antagonist, the villain, the person who likes to cause pain. In my perception your character has a sadistic twist, where he likes to cause pain and gets off on it in a sense.

Blake – I am excited for people to see it because what I think was very interesting to me in the part is to, I play this character Bill Bradley, that is the college quarterback. It takes place on a college campus. In this world, same-sex couples are the majority and heterosexual couples would be the minority. Therefore those couples, male-female couples, would be bullied, would be maligned, would be outside the mainstream. So my character, Bill Bradley, is the college quarterback, the fraternity president, that person of who we think of in our consciousness. That ‘All American’ archetype who has a major problem with this couple that we learn about. The story kinda unravels from there. What was interesting for me as an actor and what made me so excited to be a part of this, is I believe it is a very important character, I think there needs to be reality to how bad things really are. The truth is I can never, or would every want to pretend to know what someone else’s struggle is. I can’t unless I am in that person’s shoes.

JTH – But you can have empathy...

Blake – Exactly! That is what is so awesome with acting, is the art of empathy. Is that for me to go “How does this person go to become this type of person? What impact does this have on other people?” What was interesting for me playing Bill Bradley was I wanted to make sure I didn’t shy away from showing the dark sides of him. I wanted to play it truthfully. So I really had to get inside that, even from the trailer there are some pretty brutal moments. There are plenty more in the film. I feel very honored to be part of this movie and to have gotten to work with Kim Rocco Shields. We call her ‘Rocco’ and David who co-wrote it with her. I really fought for the part too. I mean I really fought for it. So the male-female couple is played by Briana Evigan and Tyler Blackburn. I originally read for Tyler’s part and I think they said “You don’t look like someone who would be bullied.” It was some reason like I was too tall or something. Plus they also wanted Tyler. He is great in the movie. They brought me back in for Bill, and I remember having read it thinking ‘this is such an interesting part.’ After I auditioned for Rocco, David and the Producers I wrote Rocco a letter. Which I had never done before, I had never written a director a letter before. I have written letters after saying thanks. But never during casting but I just thought I was itching to play the part, plus I just thought the story was important and liked the short. It was a social platform. As an actor when I went to drama school where you are making someone laugh or cry, or just making them think. Hopefully you are making some sort of impact, I felt like this movie had that chance.

So Many Questions: Actor Blake Cooper Griffin sees upcoming film as catalyst for social change

Kate Benz BY KATE BENZ | Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2015, 9:00 p.m.

For **Blake Cooper Griffin**, snagging roles in the Netflix drama “Life of a King” with Academy Award-winner Cuba Gooding Jr. and in actress Helen Hunt’s 2015 feature directorial debut “Ride” helped him cut his acting chops.

But he is passionate about his role as the antagonistic Bill Bradley in the upcoming full-length feature, “Love is All You Need?” The story is based on the 2012 award-winning viral short written by Kim Rocco Shields, which portrays a young girl whose heterosexual tendencies ignite the ire of a society where homosexuality is the norm.

Griffin's character, a college football quarterback and fraternity president, has a major beef with the girl-boy relationship rocking the community of same-sex partners.

“I think it's going to blow people away,” Griffin says, pointing out that the storyline is an allegory for all types of bullying, not just for homosexual bullying: insert different opinion, lifestyle or religious expression here. But the message is the same regardless of the context, he says. Love, compassion, empathy and treating everyone equally is the priority. The film is due out later this year.

Question: What can love not conquer?

Answer: I don't know if I can completely answer that, but I do know it can conquer most things. And I think that this movie really examines what the absence of love can do, as well.

I'm so proud to be a part of this movie; rarely do you get to be a part of something that's going to make a social change, or you hope will make a social change. I really do hope it's seen by a ton of



people so it can change people's lives. This concept has never been done before — this flipping of the worlds. So, I think it's going to blow people away.

With love, I think that we can sort out most of the world's problems and all of the fighting that's going on all across the country.

Q: Does acceptance include not judging those who don't necessarily agree with homosexuality?

A: It is extremely controversial; some teachers showed (the short) in their classroom, and I think were not asked back for the next year. And I know this is a hot-button topic. I respect everyone's religious beliefs and that sort of thing, but what I will say is that I absolutely, 100 percent personally will have to be on the side that treating everyone equally and everyone having equal rights is, for me, the priority.

And I think that this film examines what happens when we don't treat everyone fairly, and we don't have compassion. We have to have a certain amount of respect for one another and practice empathy toward one another.

Q: Are we afraid that being compassionate will somehow compromise our moral beliefs?

A: I grew up in the evangelical church, and I have so much respect for that community. And I love that community. And so, what I think is important is to say that we fashion our faith based on what we see the priorities to be. And people are going to disagree about that. But I believe that the priority is loving one another.



Actor Blake Cooper Griffin talks 'Sexy Civics' and future plans

By Markos Papadatos Jul 22, 2017 in Entertainment

Actor Blake Cooper Griffin chatted with Digital Journal about playing "The Hunk" in "Sexy Civics," which is a crash course in the Bill of Rights.



Sexy Civics was directed by Haviland Stillwell, and it had a public service announcement style to it. "That was really fun. I had no idea what to expect. They sent me a script, but I didn't know exactly what it was going to be. We had a blast. I had worked with Haviland, the director, previously, and the whole mission of that is for everybody to get involved. That is something that I really want to get behind: everybody being informed and being registered to vote and knowing their rights. That can only be better for all of us," Griffin said. "I was really honored that they asked me to do it."

On his plans for the future, he said, "For the rest of the summer, there is a chance I might go to Hawaii, so I'm excited about that. I just worked on this TV movie Before You Say I Do. It's a romantic comedy, and I got to play the nice guy, which was good. For some reason, I always get cast as the villain. I got to do that with a great actress, Becca Tobin, and actor Ryan Kelley. I also got to work on this new short film called Killer Charm, which this director and writer Thom Harp and Kristyn Carey, wrote this part for me about Prince Charming, who gets called in to the DA's office, and they wonder why these women are turning up asleep forever, and all of his past loves end up missing. We had a really good time with that, and are excited for it to come out."

The heartthrob actor reconnected with Oscar winner Helen Hunt in an episode of *House of Lies* on Showtime. He was previously directed by Hunt in her feature film *Ride*.

Griffin has several other film and television projects this year that have yet to be announced. To learn more about Blake Cooper Griffin, follow him on Instagram and Facebook.



Blake Cooper Griffin in DA MAN Magazine Young Hollywood Issue.



That's the actor Blake Cooper Griffin, who you may have seen guest-starring on TV's 90210 or Necessary Roughness. Other notable projects that Blake has been involved with include the TV movie Super Shark and the highly anticipated film The Goats, directed by D. J. Caruso (I Am Number Four) and starring Val Kilmer (The Doors, Batman Forever).

Blake Cooper Griffin, a graduate of the prestigious Drama conservatory North Carolina School of the Arts, is also a bit of a fashionisto as we found out in this exclusive fashion shoot and interview.

DA MAN: One of your most memorable experiences is...

BG: Is the day I moved to Los Angeles. I flew out with two of my buddies from North Carolina and arrived at an apartment I found on Craigslist. We had no idea what we were doing. In one day, I managed to get my car towed in the morning and crack my head open in the evening while moving furniture into the apartment; blood everywhere. But, I got my car back for half the towing rate by paying the tow truck driver cash.

DA MAN: You can't live without...

BG: My dog, Django. I rescued her two years ago and it's the best thing I ever did. She's named after Django Reinhardt, the jazz musician. .

DA MAN: Your idea of happiness...

BG: ...Is working all the time. I get a thrill out of never stopping. Also, sweet potato fries!! Doesn't get much better than those.

DA MAN: You value...

BG: Morning coffee in bed and loyal friends. I rely on both to keep me going.

DA MAN: Something that you've not told anyone is...

DA MAN: Fashion, to you, is...

BG: Deciding who I want to be that day.

DA MAN: If you were not acting, you would be...

BG: I would be really annoying, because I would have no where to put all my energy.

DA MAN: Your favorite journey has been...

BG: The one I'm on right now. It's the only one I know and it's taught me so much. I believe we learn from every experience.

DA MAN: Your motto in life is...

BG: 'What doesn't kill me makes me stronger.'



Meet Blake Cooper Griffin



Today we'd like to introduce you to Blake Cooper Griffin.

Blake, let's start with your story. We'd love to hear how you got started and how the journey has been so far.

I started acting as a little kid — in my backyard. I would memorize books my parents read to me before bed. They thought I was a genius because I would recite the story word for word while looking at the pages of the book; so, it seemed like I was reading as a four-year-old. Nope. Just memorizing. I would then turn those stories into plays where I would act out all the parts. I would use our deck as a stage.

I went to a performing arts boarding school during the latter part of high school and got serious about acting in college when I went to a Drama conservatory — the North Carolina School of the Arts. At the end of the four years, I did a showcase with my classmates on both coasts and decided to move to Los Angeles.

If you had told me when I was a kid that I was going to star in a reboot of a Warner Brothers film or be in a movie with Cuba Gooding Jr. — I don't think I would have believed you. Well, maybe I would have... I was a pretty ambitious kid. Regardless, that's the magic of this industry.

For me, at the core of acting, whether I'm working on NCIS or Major Crimes or Beerfest: Thirst for Victory, it's about exploring the human experience and the untold stories of the deeper facets of peoples' lives. That works for comedy or drama... it's important to me to find the hidden truth that brings a character to life. I relate to that, and audiences relate to that.



Empathetically stepping into another person's shoes has highlighted some important issues to me. A movie I did in 2016 called Love Is All You Need?

Examined the horrors of bullying; I was bullied as a kid, so stepping into that world was strangely cathartic for me. That experience has led me to be an advocate for those who are bullied, and I've had the opportunity to work with several anti-bullying organizations, and I even got a chance to develop an anti-bullying kit for NPR.

Connecting with people is at the heart of being an artist. Lately, I have been involved in several other philanthropic and political causes. I had the honor of traveling around the country campaigning on behalf of Hilary Clinton when she ran for president. While that didn't turn out the way that I wish it had, I'm so proud I got to advocate for someone I believe in.

Lately, my efforts have been geared toward the fight for affordable healthcare for all people, from rallies about saving the Affordable Care Act, to holding round table discussions about why protection of pre-existing conditions and providing greater preventative care is both economically sound and morally our duty.

While acting and my volunteer work keeps me busy, I have also recently stepped back into writing. I'm currently working with a previous co-star who is also a very close friend on a script that I'm really excited about. Writing is such a creative and challenging art form because you have to both honor the truth of the moments in individual scenes while remembering the larger framework of the story you are trying to tell.

Has it been a smooth road? If not, what were some of the struggles along the way?

I don't know that a "smooth road" exists in a creative life. If it does, let me know where to find it! For me, the challenge of being an actor is to remain inspired and active, even when the external world is not validating your efforts. Initially, when moving to Los Angeles, I knew no one.

So, part of my journey was creating a life in a place far from home. Work comes and goes, one's popularity ebbs and flows, and life comes at you fast. But, I try my hardest in moments when I am feeling down to remember the bigger picture: ultimately, I am a kid from rural South Carolina who decided in his backyard at the age of four that he wanted to do something. It's my job to fight for the dream of that kid while staying as hopeful as I was then.

I'm incredibly humbled by that opportunity and so deeply grateful for everyone who has been helpful along the way.

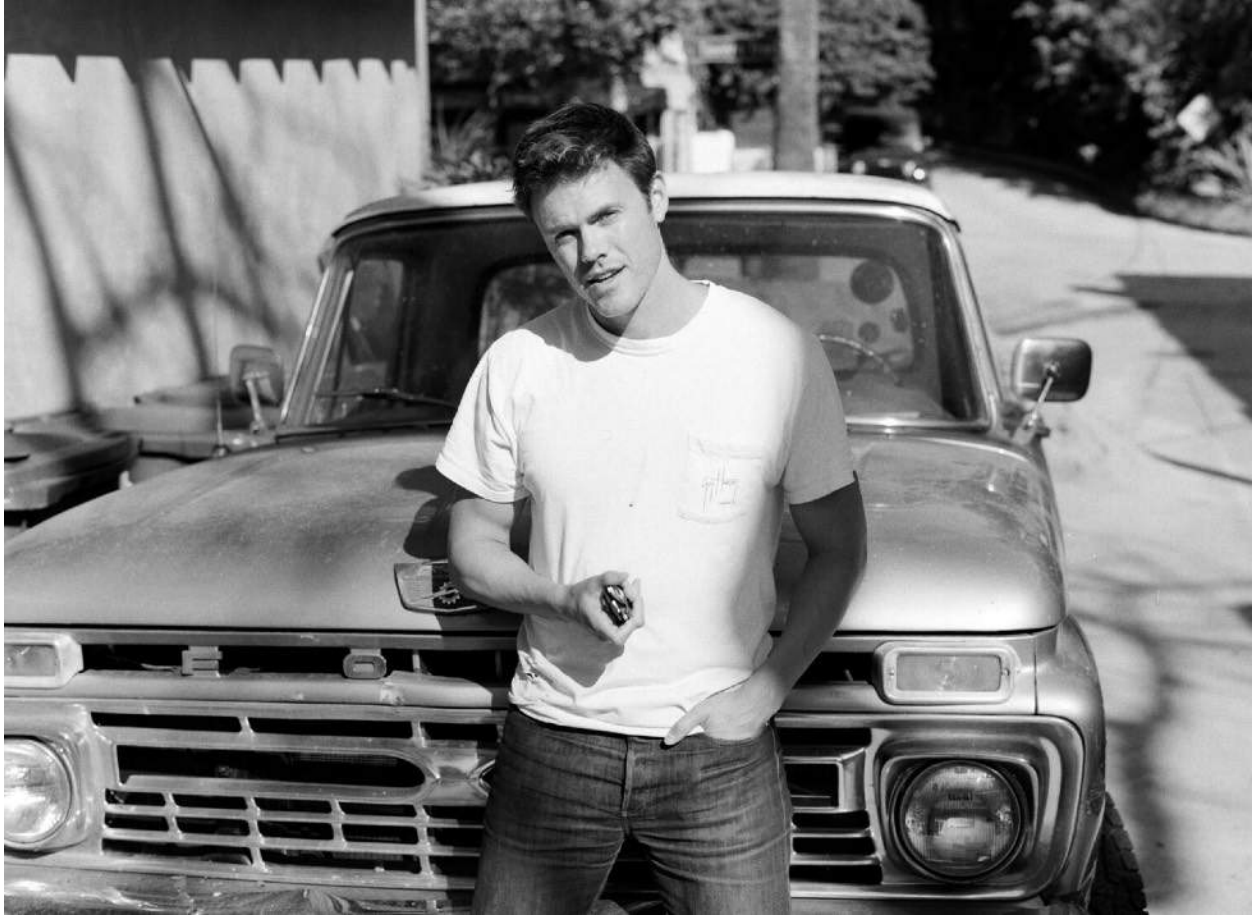
What are you known for? What are you most proud of? What sets you apart from others?

As an actor, I hope I am known for showing up committed to bringing my character to life while also being open to collaboration. It happens on the day, in the moment. I prepare myself for a role through imagining, listening to music, mining the script — but then, I just try to listen to the other actors and work with the director in a way that helps us create spontaneously together.

As a person, I hope I am known for being a good friend. I think about that a lot. I have had so many people in my life— teachers, family members, close friends, and even strangers — who rooted for me. I've had plenty of people that didn't root for me too. But for those people who have supported me through words or actions, I like to thank them by saying: your belief in me has chemically changed who I am.

And it's true— their belief helps me see what is possible and motivates me to keep going. I want to do that for other people as well. So, I'd like to be known for that. And if I am, that would make me proud, and I think it set me apart as well.





Do you feel like Los Angeles is a good place for you? If someone was just starting out, would you recommend them starting out here? If not, what can our city do to improve?

I love Los Angeles. As I mentioned, I'm from South Carolina which could not be more different from LA. But I appreciate both. Los Angeles made me an adult. As an actor and a person, I've learned a lot of hard lessons here, and I'm having so much fun. I chose to come to LA to pursue my career over starting in New York, and I sometimes wonder about that decision.

Here, I obviously focus on television and film; had I gone to New York, the emphasis would have been more on theater. I love what I've gotten to do— getting to work on dozens of network TV shows and getting to be a part of movies with actors, writers, and directors I respect and admire. The drawbacks of LA are the traffic... it really is as bad as everyone says... and that it's far from my family. I would definitely recommend Los Angeles to those starting their career with one caveat: make sure that YOU tell LA who you are, not the other way around. You are the architect of your life and identity here. In fact, you're in charge of who you want to be wherever you are.

Power Players 2018 Cocktail Party

06.26.18



Angeleno fêted its Power Players of 2018 with a chic cocktail party at the new Kimpton La Peer Hotel in West Hollywood. Guests mixed and mingled on Kimpton's sumptuous back patio, courtyard, and pool area. The hotel's uniquely chic design was the perfect backdrop for LA's influential players to network. The evening wouldn't have been complete without Lillet's iconic summer spritz, festively renamed the Lillet Power Player for the special event. Balani Custom Clothiers consulted guests on their suiting options while the Power Players were interviewed by Angeleno Publisher Chris Gialanella in the event's private whiskey lounge.