



BRITT RENTSCHLER

ACTOR. FILMMAKER.

BIOGRAPHY



Britt Rentschler is multi-hyphenate storyteller who is making her impact on the industry as an actor, filmmaker, writer, producer and director.

The Alabama native is best known for her roles in the Emmy Nominated/Sundance Alum *Uncle Frank*, opposite Paul Bettany, Steve Zahn, and Judy Greer (Amazon), Netflix's *Pain Hustlers* opposite Emily Blunt and Chris Evans, *Instant Family*, opposite Rose Byrne, and Mark Wahlberg (Paramount), and *Shots Fired*, opposite Richard Dreyfuss (FOX). Additional performance credits include: *The Detour*, opposite Jason Jones, and Natalie Zea (TBS), *Lodge 49*, opposite Wyatt Russell (AMC), *Long Slow Exhale*, opposite Josh Lucas, (Spectrum), *Instant Mom* (Nickelodeon), *Castle* (ABC), *Drop Dead Diva* (Lifetime), *Daytime Divas* (VH1), *SIX* (A&E), *The Resident* (FOX), and *NCIS:LA* (CBS).

As a filmmaker, Britt has been making stories since she was knee high, stealing her dad's camcorder to invent everything from "new" SNL skits to gold medal living room ice (carpet) skating. After making her directing debut on the stage with "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer", Britt continued to direct and perform in regional theater, until her move to Los Angeles, where she picked up the camera, once again. After producing and writing a series of award-winning festival circuit shorts, *Pretty Problems* is her debut feature, which has gathered accolades as the 2022 SXSW Audience Award Narrative Spotlight Winner, Sonoma International Grand Jury Award, and the ReFrame Stamp of Recognition for gender equity in production, awarded by IMDB Pro, Women in Film, and the Sundance Institute.

Britt received her MFA from the University of Central Florida in Partnership with The Orlando Shakespeare Theatre and grew up on the stage and in the rehearsal hall. After studying abroad with the Royal Shakespeare Company and performing in various regional theaters in the Southeast, Britt made her way West, to begin a career in television and film.

She is member of MENSA, Women in Film, and a practicing Reiki Master and Artistic Coach, working with everyone from Academy Award Winning Actors, to brand new faces. An advocate for the power of storytelling and freedom of expression at all ages, she is a volunteer for Young Storytellers, and the LA LGBT center."

THE PRESS IS TALKING...

The New York Times

"It's laughter at first sight..."

Forbes

"It's very funny, verging on uncomfortable to watch sometimes in the same way that *The Office* because of that mix of humor and pathos. The deft blend of the absurd and the everyday made *Problems* a standout at SXSW"



"This is the kind of intimate little indie that I wish we got more of."

IndieWire

"*Pretty Problems*" is the kind of film we don't see nearly enough of: a competently executed, unapologetically adult comedy that never takes itself too seriously yet refuses to phone it in."

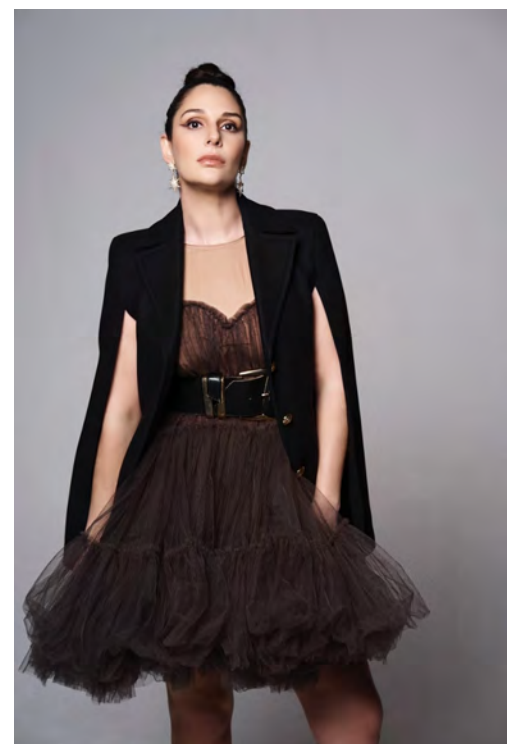
VARIETY

"It is much to the credit of first-time feature screenwriter Tennant and story work by Rentschler that the amusingly outré situations never quite exceed plausibility, and that characters close to deft caricature likewise keep revealing themselves as more complicated"

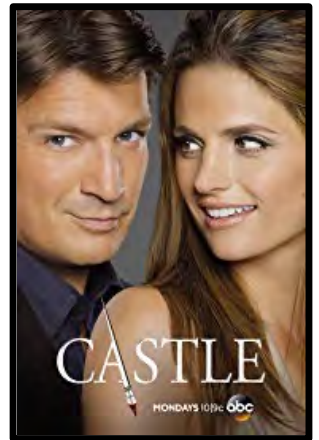
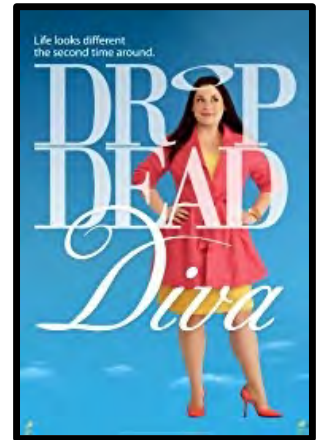
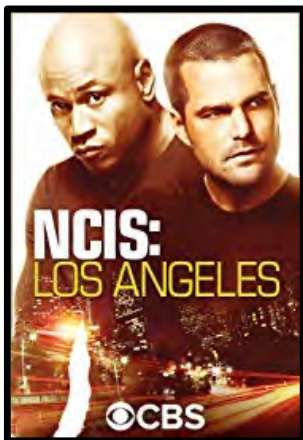
**BUFFALO
SPREE**
The Magazine of Western New York

"Star Britt Rentschler gave one of the festival's best performances."

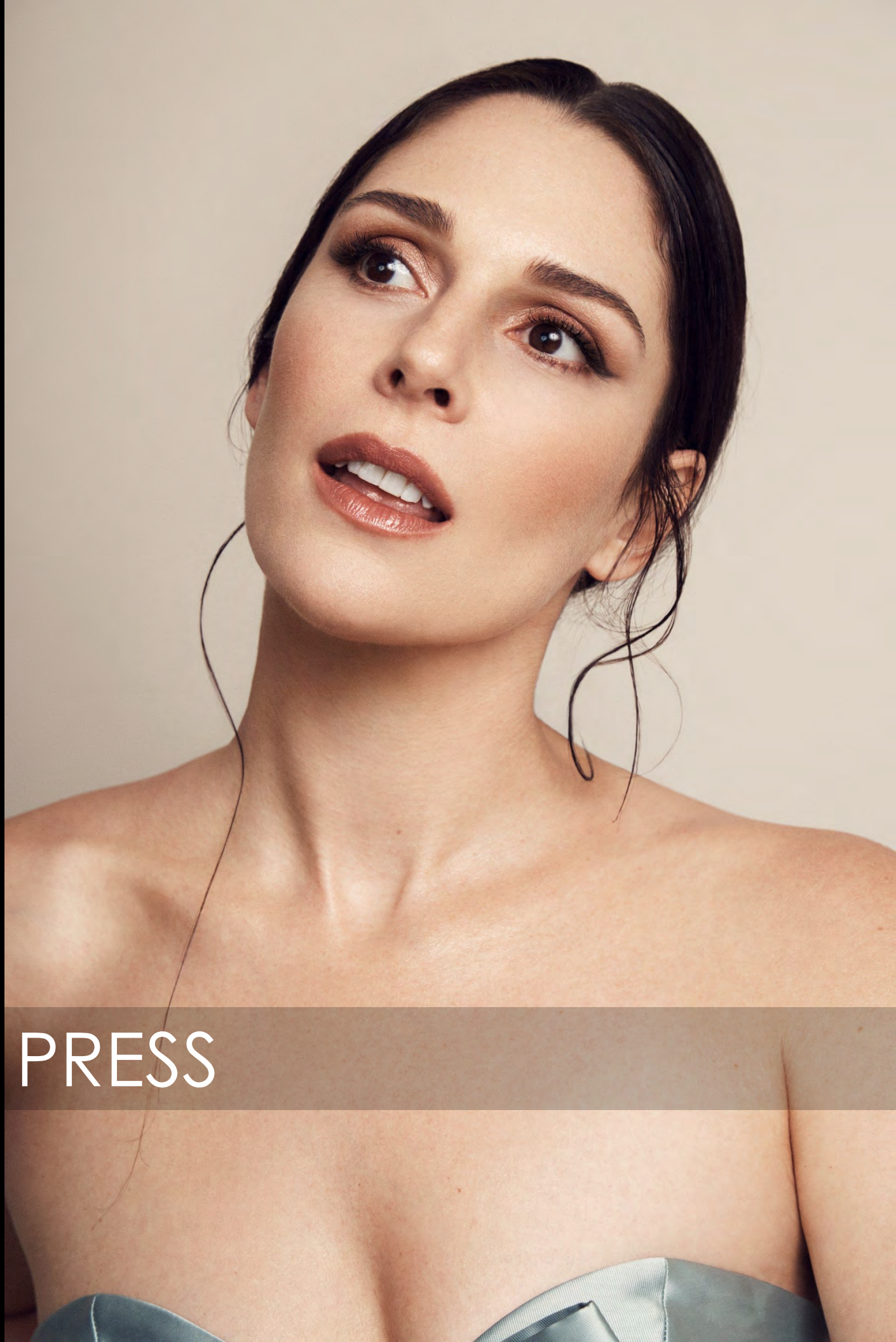




PROJECTS







PRESS

From Acting To Mensa: How This Actress Balances Hollywood Life



Britt Rentschler, Hollywood actress, is now a part of the elite Mensa community which is the largest and oldest high IQ society in the world. She's known for reoccurring roles in the *Detour* and the *Resident*, and most recently her role as Linda in the hit movie *Instant Family* starring Mark Wahlberg.

Instant Family is a story based on two parents who adopt three young children. "Working on *Instant Family* was so wonderful," Rentschler smiles. "It started at the top with our director, Sean Anders, and his writing partner, John Morris. They did such a beautiful job with the story. It's actually Sean's story. His idea of having the story be fun but also heartfelt trickled down. It felt like all of these stars that came on board, came because they loved what Sean and John were doing...the story could bring a lot of exposure to what can be a forgotten world."

Rentschler's goal wasn't always to appear on the big screen. Her career as an actress started in theater where she participated in theater competitions. It wasn't until she attended graduate school that her desire to be in Hollywood developed. "When I finished undergrad," she explains, "I found myself unsure of where to go next. 'Should I go to New York? Or should I try to do regional theater?'" She decided to obtain her master's degree which would enable her to stay in her field, be able to conduct research within the theater realm and be able to stay involved. While juggling writing her thesis and still acting, Rentschler also taught at the university level. However, she knew she wanted to step out of her comfort zone.

"I had this idea that I have been in my world for so long," she states, "that I hadn't seen outside of it. I was very comfortable in it, and I really loved it. I thought if I wanted to try something different this was the time to do it. As soon as I finished my master's degree I traveled for a couple of months in Europe. When I came back I decided to go to California. I didn't know what the industry was going to be like but I felt like it was a different type of storytelling that I've never tried before; it was a totally different industry that I wanted to experience before I stayed the course that I had been on for so long."

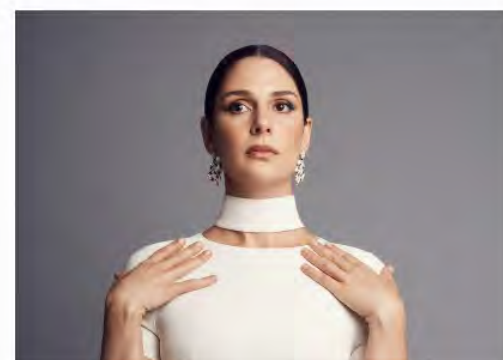
Backpacking across Europe helped her fully develop her confidence to try something new and different. "Something about developing that sense of trust with yourself and with your outside environments was really key for me," Rentschler comments, "to stay on the course for me going to California."



Britt Rentschler, Gustavo Quiroz, Sean Anders, Mark Wahlberg, Rose Byrne, Tig Notaro, Julianna Gamiz, Isabela Moner, Octavia Spencer, Margo Martindale and Julie Hagerty gather as Paramount Pictures presents a special screening of "Instant Family" at the Regency Village Theatre on Sunday, November 11, 2018 in Los Angeles, CA (Photo: Alex J. Berliner/ABImages) ALEX J. BERLINER

Once in Hollywood, she faced a new world: a world compiled of rejections. In order to stay on course, she had to have a strong sense of self-worth. "I developed a lot of trust for which was my academic brain. I researched schools and I made sure I was at a studio. I interviewed a lot of people and found a common denominator. I was satisfying a part of myself that I was very familiar with, very comfortable with academics, while I partnered that with taking risks that I had never taken before. I tried to find a balance between those two things...There were moments when I thought I was doing it all wrong. I had to learn a whole new set of skills to adjust to the medium. People would be talking about agents and managers and heads of studios. I thought to myself 'what am I doing?' I could talk about Chekhov, the Russian playwright, all day long but I didn't know who ran CBS. Allowing myself to be scared and understanding I was learning a new set of skills while being able to find a balance between the two kept me excited and focused."

Rentschler aims to remain multi-faceted. With her recent induction into Mensa, she's proving to the industry that she has more to offer than portraying characters on screen. "Academics have always been a cornerstone in my life; it was about the books and the arts. My heroes are women like Geena Davis and Hedy Lamar who haven't been defined by one thing. Being a part of Mensa thrills me, because if it can empower or inspire another little girl to feel both smart and beautiful in her own skin, then I would say it is one of the highest honors."



Actress Britt Rentschler BEILJO ARWAS

With each new role and transition Rentschler focuses on these three steps:

- Research as much as possible. Information is such a powerful weapon that you can lean back on when you feel fear creeping up.
- Trust yourself and the people you're surrounding yourself with; take stock of your environment. Are these people feeding your fears or are encouraging you and lifting you up?
- Have a good practice of either meditation, yoga or energy work. The more tools you have to keep you balanced, the more joyful evolving is.

"My vision, as my visibility grows in my acting career," Rentschler concludes, "is to be an Oprah. Making sure wellness is as important as entertainment. When my clients come to me for coaching, I don't believe it's just about the acting. I believe it's being in your body, being in your voice and being in your wellness and what you have to contribute to the world."



F L A U N T

BRITT RENTSCHLER | FROM AL TO LA

Britt Rentschler is far more than just an actress, she's a creative in her own right. The producer, writer, director, and reiki healer carries a love for mystical things, with an unerring passion when it comes to her art and talents. Describing herself as "a nerdy theatre kid who worked her way into film and TV," the Alabama-bred, Los Angeles-based firecracker states, "as long as it's creative, I'm in there."

You may have recently seen her as Charlotte in the Amazon Studios drama *Uncle Frank*, as Britt pulls inspiration from real-life experiences—specifically through the lens of her aunt in the '70s, in a time where those in same-sex relationships felt they needed to hide themselves from society, her aunt played the role of "companion" for her gay friends who hid their true selves to prevent discrimination.

If you love comedies, Rentschler kills that genre too. Fans may recognize her role as Linda on the big screen in Paramount's comedy *Instant Family*, alongside Mark Wahlberg and Rose Byrne. But her biggest accolade to date arrives in her philanthropy and desire to give back, with the movie sparking her passion for adoption and foster care. Being a reiki master also comes with its own perks, exuding nothing but good energy in all facets of her life.

Flaunt caught up with Britt via Zoom to discuss her move from Alabama to Los Angeles, her love for acting, how her aunt influenced her role in *Uncle Frank*, how she got into reiki, the power of meditation, her passion for adoption and foster care, pushing the importance of voting, and more!

Being from Alabama, how does that play into your life and career?

It was a really big shift moving into the West Coast. There are really wonderful things about Alabama I picked up on that I'm glad I kept. I love being really friendly, open, neighborly, all that good stuff. A lot of culture down there. Especially if you're a woman, you need to be smaller. I noticed when I went to the West Coast, my voice jumped almost an octave when I'd pick up the phone. "Hello!" [high-pitched voice] What am I doing? Why am I making myself so pleasant for this person on the other end of the line? Learning to ground my voice and take up space was a big transition for me.

At what point did you realize you wanted to act?

I was a kid, my aunt lived in New York City. My parents took us to see a production of *Cats*, the longest-running show on Broadway for a long time. I absolutely loved it. I had an aisle seat. At the beginning of the show, the actress crinkled all over the balcony and in through the aisles. They have these masks on with glowing eyes, this cat came right in my face and stared at me, then crinkled down to the balcony onto the stage. I'm like, I'm in! This is what I want to do. This is it, there's nothing better. At that time, that live connection of performance was so electrifying for me.

As I started to do more TV and film, I found a difference in electricity and the collaboration that happens on set between all the departments. Everyone hyper focusing on getting this one thing on film in the way we want it to be, then having that reflect out globally. I think about *Uncle Frank* being on Amazon, we're in people's living rooms, kitchens, bedrooms, iPhone screens. That's huge, that's black box theatre to the infinite level.

How was your time studying Master of Fine Arts at the University of Central Florida?

My parents are teachers so I definitely was geared up to wanting to get a Master's Degree and thinking about teaching. For me, I got my Theatre degree in undergrad. I also got a Public-School degree and thought about going to law school for a little bit, then decided I wanted to be creative. I thought "okay I'll go do my Master's, then if I teach, I know I'll always be involved in the art form that I love." That was my plan B or backup plan in a way. What it really came to be was incorporating so many different ways of looking at the art form because if I'm teaching, I'm inside the story in a different way than if I'm performing. It was all plan A at the end of the day.

How was your move to Los Angeles?

I've never been to Los Angeles when I decided to move, but I'd been to New York. My aunt lived there so I've been many times. I was a big fan of the city, but I got this crazy feeling I needed to try Los Angeles. I knew I loved New York and I wanted something really radically different. I moved out eight months, found an apartment, and thought "I'll give it a year, see what it's like." Turns out California is pretty great. [laughs] Lots of sunshine. I love to travel. There are so many places I can drive. Within 2 hours, you can be in the desert, the mountains, the beach. I really enjoyed the laid-back feeling. New York's so plugged in all the time. As much as I feel that motor running inside of me as a creative, it's really nice to have some wide-open space to relax. Los Angeles encouraged me to find my own space.

Talk about playing Charlotte in the Amazon Studios' *Uncle Frank* and tying in your aunt's experience from the 70's.

That's how I approached it. The role came, it was an audition. You never really know, you don't always get the full script. You meet the material where it is with the information you have, then that next level of creativity is yours. My Aunt was an editor, she was a pretty quiet person—unless she was singing out a show tune. She was President of the Women's National Book Association for a while, and she had wonderfully different friends, she's the first person to introduce me to an openly gay couple. I ate words there for the first time, she was introducing me to culture in a totally different way.

Charlotte has this big personality. My aunt's an editor, she's a pretty quiet person. What I stole from her was this vague idea that you could change your life, be whoever you wanted to be, and make your own chosen family. That's what I brought to Charlotte. She's there for Frank, pretending to be his girlfriend. She does it for Wallie also, pretends to be his wife. Not actually very good at it, but her heart's in the right place. [laughs] Thinking about my aunt needing to do public speaking or some things she didn't necessarily love but felt compelled to. She's the President of the National Women's Book Association for a while, she was a big feminist. She always stepped up to the plate for things when it was important and I definitely think Charlotte did that.

Before your aunt passed, you saw a Broadway show with her called *The Inheritance* about gay rights and the AIDS epidemic. How did that affect you?

I'd already filmed *Uncle Frank* at that point, but it wasn't released. I couldn't show her. I could only tell her about it. We went to New York together in October, the last time I saw her. We saw a bunch of shows, *The Inheritance* was one. It's about the multi-generations of gay men dealing with the AIDS crisis, relationships with each other, relationships with their families and parents that didn't accept them—which were all the themes of *Uncle Frank*. Seeing that with her was such an incredible experience because we got to talk about the movie, even though she hadn't seen it yet.

It became very important to me because she did pass away before the film came out. I told her I booked the part. I was sending her pictures from set of these vintage checkered collars that I knew she'd get a kick out of because she remembered that time period. I shared with the wardrobe designer a picture of her on her wedding day, she had this fabulous turban. She got married at the Plaza Hotel. We're toying with the idea of doing a turban for Charlotte. It didn't work out for the camera angles but she was a part of the process in so many ways. Since she had passed away earlier in the pandemic and I wasn't able to see her, it ended up being a really special part of this whole project.

How did you fall into reiki healing? How important is energy and mental health?

Absolutely. I came by it through theatre, learning the power of expression, really using your body and your voice. We always make fun of the theatre kids you get on the floor and pretend you're a different energy or a different animal. All that weird stuff they have you do in grad school, but it really gets you. You start making sounds you don't normally make, you use your body in different ways. You start noticing your energy or your emotions shift, really dropping into personal stories that affect your creative work.

Even in a performance, how all of a sudden watching a movie can make you feel completely different. There's an energy exchange that can happen in a second. [laughs] I got really fascinated by that which led me to reiki, the study of energy shifts and movement in the body—if you're focusing on how you can help do healing work. For me being able to bring in voice, body, and energy, it felt like all part of the same thing. That drove me to the arts in the first place.

What are some things you do for self-care?

I'm a big meditator, big believer in meditation. It helps me so much even when I'm kicking and screaming. Sometimes the thing you need to do the most is the last thing you want to do, even when you know it's going to help you. [laughs] This year has been really challenging because we're in these small spaces for most of the time. So, thought going into the pandemic was I'm going to have so much time. I'm going to meditate all the time, I'm going to do all these dance videos. It turns out it's been really hard, at least for me to be motivated creatively. I'll set a timer for 2 minutes and say "all you have to do is meditate for 2 minutes and that's it."

It's crazy how long 2 minutes can be.

Right. Once I start it, I'll fall into it. Then it'd be 3, or 4, but getting started is the hard part. Maybe in the long run, setting a timer is my greatest sense of self-care. [laughs] It's how I manage that inner child of me when it rebels when I'm trying to take care of myself. You cheat out the kitchen? No, I don't want to do it. Set the timer for 2 minutes, see how much you get done.

How did your role on *Instant Family* fuel your passion for adoption and foster care?

Instant Family was such an incredible experience. Such a personal story for the director. We got to meet his children the story was based off of. We had an incredible social worker on set that really walked us through all the important things we needed to know so the story could feel really authentic. I got very involved. Together we live with one of the biggest partnerships I fell into afterwards. I was so touched by what they do, they're someone I donate to and continue to stay in touch with. They did Christmas stockings, people can donate or you can sponsor one. They make sure a foster child gets a complete Christmas stocking on Christmas day.

What does it mean to volunteer for Young Storytellers?

The power of storytelling is what I have my whole life off of. The younger you have access to it, the more powerful it can be. Sitting in the classroom with these kids and asking them "what stories do you want to write?" Teaching them how to use the computer program, how to type up their script. They come up with things about being bullied, relationships with their parents or siblings, things they don't necessarily know how to talk about any other way. These plays get to be performed with real actors. It's an incredible sense of accomplishment for the kids but it's really moving for the adults too. It reminds us how deeply important it is to share our stories with each other.

Talk about being so passionate about getting out and voting, and volunteering to be a poll worker during the 2020 election.

I was a Public-School major, so it's always been really important to me to be aware of what's going on in our government system: small, local, big, federal, all of it. The biggest issue I've seen being the young person and moving into these different elections was people not believing that their voices mattered. The efficacy of the vote felt very low, the sentiment around it. I spent a lot of time this election reaching out to Georgia voters in particular, you could adopt a state with Vote Safe America. I did South Carolina and Georgia because I have those Southern roots I wanted to connect with. Writing letters encouraging people to get to the polls, letting them know that their vote really mattered. I'm doing the same thing for the Senate race. I've got phone banking tomorrow to call, with the LA LGBT Center and Georgia Equality. We're trying to get people on the phone and out to the voting booth.

What are you most excited for in the new year?

I'm most excited for the world to start feeling as healthy as possible, a lot of people are excited to get back to work. I had a feature film co-write and was producing and starring in meant to shoot for April, of course, we had to push it back. I'm really excited to get back, we have an incredible director named Keirra Putera. She had a film called *Mother's Little Helpers* at SXSW. She's incredible, we got a great crew together. We're so ready to go as soon as we can get everybody healthy and in the same place with the protocols up. I'm most looking forward to being able to wear a bunch of different hats on that production in 2021.

Laughter

is the best

medicine.



The art of Storytelling by Britt Rentschler

Photographer
Tiziano Lugli

Stylist
Adrien Rabego

Makeup Artist
Sasha Borax

Meet Britt - actress - now producer and filmmaker of
her first movie **PRETTY PROBLEMS**

When it comes to movies and cinema, Britt Rentschler has a long relationship with them. Growing up in Alabama, she was always dreaming about different horizons and sceneries. Not that she was unhappy in the city she is coming from. It was more out of curiosity and an eagerness to discover the world - that has been given partly by her parents. This desire to explore led her to develop a strong attachment to storytelling. For her, it is about "nurturing a sense of curiosity and exploration" she explains. Movies have always been an important part of her life while she was a child. She remembered waking up at the crack of dawn to be able to sit and watch films before her parents were awake.

Her parents were both teachers and they were also inspiring personalities that gave her the first tools to production and filming. Her dad's camcorder was the first introduction to this universe full of possibilities. Britt claims that "as time has gone on, technology has continued to become more accessible to creators." However she will never forget the first time she was able to direct behind the camera.

Years later, it led to her first feature as a filmmaker: 'PRETTY PROBLEMS' is a comedy that follows a flailing couple on a getaway trip with affluent strangers: down the rabbit hole, and into the most unhinged weekend of their lives. The movie has won the Audience Award at SXSW and obtained many good reviews in the media.

For Britt, the inspiration is coming from different sources and it is about transforming reality and being able to tell impactful stories - with always a lot of humor. Because "laughter is the best medicine" as she cleverly affirms.

Tell us more about yourself and your professional path

Being a wild child from the south, I had hopes and dreams of cutting out to the bigger coasts to be on the stage, or on the screen, from as soon as I can remember. My parents were school teachers, so we were very rooted to the city where they taught for most of the year. But they would take us camping in the summer, all over the country, and it helped me develop my desire to keep exploring. And to me, that's what storytelling is, nurturing a sense of curiosity and exploration. It's what led me to where I am today. I'm a professional storyteller.

You have a long history with cinema. Could you tell us when it started and how it evolved through time?

I loved waking up early, before my parents, and peeping in tapes to watch. Movies took me places, places I couldn't normally go. I was also an avid reader, and books did the same for me — expanding my horizons, and knowledge of the world. Books, Film, the Stage — any kind of narrative that invites you to step outside your everyday life and see things differently — it started, right off the bat, as a strong innate draw and desire for me, and my commitment to that is what strengthened over time. I decided to dedicate my life to it.

You started very early to film with your Dad's camcorder and make up stories and scenarios. How do you feel about your debut as a filmmaker and producer of **PRETTY PROBLEMS**?

I have been overwhelmed with gratitude. My father had a camcorder because he was a leading force in bringing multimedia into the schools, as was my mother. I got the privilege of exploring storytelling with that tool. And as time has gone on, technology has continued to become more accessible to creators — and the support we have received for taking a risk to make our own story, to do it our own way, without studio financing or any celebrity behind us — it feels a bit like it did when I was a kid: "Just go make your thing!" And SXSW gave us a huge launching pad, they gave us a shot. It changed the trajectory of this film. It also led us to IFC, which has been the most amazing home for our story. Our dream has been so supported by so many.

Speaking of this movie, what inspired you for this story?

I think it's very relatable, to look around and think you might want a different life. To fantasize or wax poetic about the comparison of riches. The inspiration that kept leading us was a thread of relatability, in that regard, and to be able to poke at the cracks in the facade, but with laughter. Laughter is the best medicine.



Britt Rentschler On How Hope Carries ‘Pretty Problems’



At SXSW this year, indie comedy *Pretty Problems* took home the Audience Award and now the winning film is finally coming to your screen. Hitting select theaters and video-on-demand services on Oct. 7, *Pretty Problems* follows Jack and Lindsey, a couple who are in a rut in careers, romance and finance. Suddenly whisked away on a luxury weekend in Sonoma, Jack and Lindsey take on an unhinged weekend that puts their relationship to the test.

Ahead of *Pretty Problems*' wide release, star, writer and product Britt Rentschler dove into making an indie film about the ultra rich, her balancing act and the power of comedy.

On Instagram, you said "we made this movie from the ground up." What was that process like?

We really wanted to write something and make something ourselves. So Michael Tennant, my writing and producing partner, came to me. It was actually after his birthday dinner, and he was like, "You know what, I was just sitting around the table looking at everybody and thinking why can't we do this together?"

We have really remarkably talented friends that we wanted to see on screen and they were not getting the opportunities that we felt like they deserved. They're fighting for a couple lines on television. And so we thought, "Well, what if we write something and what if we just try to make it? Let's just do this as an experiment." Our location was donated to us, which was an incredible indie film boon. We actually had several locations that were donated to us. People cut us camera deals because of connections. Our amazing wardrobe supervisor came in and she'd never done a narrative film; she didn't even take a paycheck. We just caught her something on the back end, which on an indie film is a real gamble. But everybody just came to task under the banner of "let's do it ourselves. Let's see if we can do it. And let's see what happens." There seems to be a method to making an indie film and getting into festivals and it usually involves celebrity, and we thought we would try to do it a different way and really celebrate our grassroots resources all across the board.

It turned out that this family was going to be in Europe, and so they let us borrow their property while they were in Europe. So we started to think "OK, well what would it really be like 'We don't belong on this property.'" That's how I felt. I would never belong on this property. So what is it like if you go to a place like this and you struggle with those internal feelings about worthiness?

Did playing Lindsey have a personal impact on you?

I did not want to play Lindsey and I will say that with full gratitude that I did and that I'm on the other side of it. But I tend to play more character-type roles, so something like Cat was more exciting to me. But at the same time, Michael and I creating this project together, at the end of the day, especially when it's indie, we knew that we would care the most about it. And we felt like we had to play the central characters because no one was going to show up with blood, sweat and tears in the same way. They couldn't possibly; it was our creation.

esteem and really where I want to be. And Lindsey is so clear in the movie about what she wants and being needy, but to me that neediness is not a good feeling and it's not necessarily something that is easy to confront. So to dive into that and to let it be really visible was definitely a challenge for me. But I was happy to do it because it was important. That's something I kept telling myself. Michael and I had this mantra we are like, "We don't have to be likable, we have to be relatable."

Michael and I spent the first two days shooting all of the bedroom scenes. So that's where most of the drama happens. It was like, "Oh my gosh, what are we doing? Why don't we do this to ourselves? This isn't the fun part." And for me in particular, it really drew out the yuckiest parts of myself that I really didn't want to necessarily reckon with—those feelings of self doubt and self

What was it like balancing your roles as star, writer and producer?

The thing I would say that I was really proud of as a producer, in particular, was looking around at everyone working. COVID had shut us down. We were supposed to shoot in April of 2020. We did not get to start shooting until April of 2021. And this was, I think, everyone's first job back. And just seeing everybody working every day, back doing what they loved and feeling really fulfilled and excited made me really emotional because every time I thought the script isn't good enough or we're never going to be able to do this... it didn't matter because we did it and everybody is working right now. And it's because we got through those things. That's what I'm taking away from being the producer. I don't think I'll ever produce and play the lead again unless we have a much bigger production team because there were times where I felt like I wasn't being a good enough actor or I wasn't being a good enough producer because I was having to juggle both things. But on the other side of it, I wouldn't trade it because the experience was incredibly valuable to be able to see so many sides of what a production needs to run successfully.



Why was a comedic lens the right way to approach this story?

I think laughter is the best medicine. And I wanted to be able to approach these yucky issues with a spoonful of sugar. I think we tried very hard not to preach about anything, but we hope that the audience got to make up their own minds when they leave the film. They get to laugh really hard all the way through and then at the end, they can make their own decisions about how they want to maybe reassess or reapproach their gratitude for their partnerships or their life.

Comedy, to me, is the most accessible way to do that. Also, very naturally, we all love to laugh together and I knew the voices of the actors I was writing for, as did Michael. So it was really fun to envision them shining in their talents and I knew that they could all be really funny but also have depth. And I think that's what's great about comedy is you can be laughing one second and then all of a sudden get punched in the gut. And that's a really powerful dynamic.

What else do you want audiences to take away from watching *Pretty Problems*?

I hope they have a really good time. I think that we've been through a rough couple of years, and everybody deserves to grab a glass of wine and sit down with a partner or a bunch of friends. SXSW was the first in-person festival and to all of a sudden be in a room with 450 people who are laughing, I cried. I couldn't believe it. And I do think there's power in comedy. It's community building. So I hope that you just get to escape for a little while, enjoy it and then maybe leave a little closer to the people that you care about and a little more sure that the life that you have is probably pretty great. Even with all of its flaws, I think hope is a really important factor in comedy and drama. And I think if we're void of hope, we're in a tough situation. As heavy as that is to say about a comedy, I really do think that that was a needle we tried to thread all the way through.

FILMMAKER

“This Is as Grassroots as It Gets”: *Pretty Problems* Star Britt Rentschler, Back To One Episode 225



Britt Rentschler is the star of *Pretty Problems*, a smart and hilarious new indie adult comedy which she also produced and helped write with screenwriter and co-star Michael Tennant. In this episode, she talks about their lengthy commitment to making the story work, building their characters with depth, and the risky but triumphant decision to cast their talented friends in supporting roles rather than famous actors who might have secured more money. She describes how her apprehension toward playing the lead role of Lindsay actually benefited her performance, the ways director Kestrin Pantera brought the best out of everyone, plus much more. *Pretty Problems* is in select theaters across the US and on VOD.

Back To One can be found wherever you get your podcasts, including [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Play](#), [Stitcher](#), and [Instagram](#).

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SXSW Audience Award Winner 'Pretty Problems' Snapped Up By IFC Films



'Pretty Problems'
SXSW

EXCLUSIVE: Kestrin Pantera's satirical takedown of the rich elite, *Pretty Problems*, has been acquired by IFC Films following the pic's Narrative Spotlight Audience Award win at SXSW. The pic will hit theaters and VOD this year.

IFC is taking all global rights to the pic written by Michael Tennant, Britt Rentschler and Charlotte Ubben, who also star in the movie alongside JJ Nolan, Graham Outerbridge, Alex Klein, Clayton Froning, Katarina Hughes, Vanessa Chester and Amy Maghera. Katya Alexander, Rentschler, Ubben and Tennant also produce.

Lindsay (Rentschler) is as bored with her marriage to Jack (Tennant) as she is working in a boutique — until Cat Flax (Nolan) swoops into the store, showering her with flattery and conspicuous displays of wealth. The pair bond over a bottle of wine, and Lindsay arrives home flushed with excitement about her rich new friend. Jack reluctantly agrees to accept Cat's invitation for a weekend away, and they jump into a car and drive into another world: of butlers, gift bags, massages and astronomically expensive wine their hosts forget even buying. The movie has been described as *White Lotus* by way of *Schitt's Creek*.

IFCFilms

IFC Films

"Kestrin and her team of writers and producers have absolutely nailed the existential crisis of the young and privileged, and the aspiring angst of the people who want to be them in this joyously satirical film that all audiences will enjoy," IFC Films president Arianna Bocco said. "Its insightful and playful perspective is exactly the kind of independent cinema we want to continue to foster, and we couldn't be more thrilled to welcome them to the IFC Films family."

Rentschler added, "IFC Films is a banner that supports independent artists in the most remarkable way. To be working with them to share this film in a post pandemic world, at a time when we believe everyone needs a good laugh, is nothing short of thrilling!"

The deal for the film was negotiated by Scott Shooman, SVP Acquisitions and Productions for IFC Films, with ICM Partners and UTA Independent Film Group on behalf of the filmmakers.

Pantera's previous Sundance title, the femme dramedy *Mother's Little Helpers*, sold to Gravitas.

Pretty Problems is the second movie to get scooped up out of SXSW this year in addition to the Winona Ryder-starrer *The Cow*, which was acquired by Vertical Entertainment.



'Pretty Problems' Review: A Brief, Bruising Climb Up the Social Ladder

Director Kestrin Pantera's SXSW Audience Award winner is a wittily comedic dream-weekend-turned-nightmare that keeps upending expectations.

Class divisions that assume macrocosmic significance in Ruben Östlund's "Triangle of Sadness" remain microcosmically scaled in "Pretty Problems," another cleverly discomfiting, festival-blessed comedy hitting theaters on Oct. 7. Kestrin Pantera's third directorial feature, which won the Audience Award at SXSW, also places a less-advantaged young couple in an enclave of the very rich. Here, however, the upscale slumming is not free, but rather at their expense — a cruel-gamesmanship setup that (as our hero duly notes) suggests the usual horror-movie agenda of "They're gonna kill us."

That teased direction is not where the film eventually goes, and indeed the script (hatched by several lead performers here) manages to keep upending expectations to the end. The result is a fresh mix of social satire and relationship dissection with a saving dollop of heart. IFC is opening it on about 30 U.S. theater screens, simultaneous with on-demand platforms.

Opening with a sex scene in which both parties are fine with quitting halfway — one participant's "Good try!" sounding like a nail in the marital-bed coffin — the film immediately makes clear that all is not well between Lindsay (Britt Rentschler) and Jack (Michael Tennant). For starters, they both hate their jobs: She sells other people's clothes when she'd hoped to design herself; he hawks solar panels to residents who mostly slam their doors in his face. They're not poor, but they're not where they thought they'd be, and prospects aren't bright.

So it is extremely cheering to Lindsay when a stray patron at her unpleasant boss's shop takes a shine to her. More than that, the flamboyant, impulsive and very wealthy Cat Flax (J.J. Nolan) insists her new BFF and spouse be guests for "a weekend of wine and whimsy" at this benefactor's Sonoma County home. Jack finds the whole thing dubious. Nonetheless, they are soon pulling up to the gated rural property, which is surrounded by vineyards and crammed with expensive artwork and other luxury items inside.

Cat and husband Matt (Graham Outerbridge) are celebrating her birthday — an occasion they'd neglected to mention — with just one other couple, his prep-school bud Kerry (Alex Klein) and latest girlfriend Carrie (Charlotte Ubben). The hosts have twin children, but they have been packed off with an au pair so the grown-ups can party. Which they do with a vengeance, and not always with full advance disclosure. (That is an issue because ex-lawyer Jack got disbarred due to a criminal offense he's still on probation for, complete with regular drug testing.)

There is a very full three-day schedule of planned excesses, abetted by resident servants Becca (Katarina Hughes) and Dan (Clayton Froning), the last of whom Lindsay just happens to have known in high school. Indeed, there are many other things the Flaxes already seem to know about their less well-heeled guests. Enough to make Jack, in particular, wonder if they've been lured here as something like human toys, their minds and bodies to be played with. Certainly each bruisingly decadent day ends with the newcomers ever more at odds with each other, their secrets ferreted out and displayed for all to see.



It is much to the credit of first-time feature screenwriter Rentschler (who shares story credit with co-stars Tennant and Ubben) that the amusingly outré situations never quite exceed plausibility, and that characters close to deft caricature likewise keep revealing themselves as more complicated — even if they never reveal themselves fully. Perhaps the most surprising thing about "Pretty Problems" is that it stealthily acquires enough depth to pull off an upbeat fade-out, one that credibly rewards our protagonists rather than handing them the anticipated booby prize. That lack of cynicism is all the more pleasing for being so unanticipated in a movie that can encompass lines as snark-drenched as "You're like a clown car on the way to a Chris Gaines concert."

These actors are all very good in roles they palpably had a hand in shaping. (Some closing-credits scenes hint at a degree of improvisation involved.) For director Pantera, the expertly handled tonal shifts and smooth presentation are a big positive leap from her last feature, "Mother's Little Helpers," a clumsy 2019 dysfunctional-family serio-comedy that also premiered at SXSW. "Pretty Problems" also reps an impressive feature debut for cinematographer Alyssa Brocato, while other notable contributions in a strong overall assembly are from production designer Ken Fulk and music supervisor Rentschler.

Meet Britt Rentschler, The Alabama Native Taking The Independent Film Scene By Storm

Her debut feature film, *Pretty Problems* won the Audience Choice Award at SXSW and has been picked up by IFC Films.



Britt Rentschler is one of the lucky ones. She found her calling at a young age, fourth grade to be exact. While she was growing up in [Birmingham, Alabama](#), Rentschler couldn't wait until fourth grade. Every year at Grantswood Elementary, Melanie Palmeri's fourth grade language arts class produced a big Disney musical. Rentschler told *Southern Living* all about how when it was finally her turn, Ms. Palmeri had selected *Aladdin* for that year's production.

"I remember very distinctly that there was kind of this moment where it was like oh, if it's *Aladdin* then you have to audition to be Princess Jasmine. And I didn't really want to be Princess Jasmine, I wanted to be Aladdin because Aladdin was the lead of the play. So I think that was my very first unfiltered tug in the direction of wanting to tell the biggest stories that I possibly could." She said it was Ms. Palmeri who suggested that she just go for it and audition for Aladdin. So she did, and she outshined her male competition.

"That was the moment that I started to understand how much I loved it," she said. She was sold. She was in love with performing and telling stories and she was going to do it her way.

From that first leading role, Rentschler with the help of her parents took every opportunity she could find in the Magic City. She participated in community theater at Canterbury United Methodist church, and took in shows as the [Broadway](#) national tours rolled through the theater at the BJCC downtown. She listened to Broadway show tunes nonstop. "I actually got headphones for Christmas one year because my dad could not hear *Into the Woods* or *Phantom of the Opera* one more time. So I got my very own brand new set of Sony headphones so I could listen to the lyrics over and over again," she told us.

Rentschler continued to be involved in theater throughout high school and earned a scholarship to UAB for theater. When she graduated she headed south to [Orlando](#), having earned a scholarship to University of Central Florida to pursue a masters of fine arts for theater. As she wrapped up her program in Orlando, she weighed her options. "I just thought, am I going to go to New York and just audition and keep touring? I just lived my last year in residency at a Shakespeare theater doing regional theater. I feel like I might want to try something different just to see what it could be like elsewhere," she said.

The Alabama native knew she had to either start her next chapter in New York or California. That's where the most opportunities were at the time. She knew that New York would be a lot of trying the same things she was already doing. Auditioning for theatrical roles and working in theaters. She'd never been to California before and that presented a brand new set of challenges with possible opportunities in TV and film. "I kind of looked at it as a gap year because why not have an adventure? And film and TV were adjacent to what I was doing. I thought oh the weather will be beautiful and I'll hike around and if I hate it, I can leave. And I didn't hate it. In fact I found out I loved it so much!"

She found a brand new community in L.A. and a place where she could hone her craft while forming strong bonds with others dedicated to the same goals. She found new passion in performing in intimate spaces, small theaters, and realized that TV and film fed her love of "right there in front of your face performance." She said, "I think there is nothing more intimate than being on someone's television screen in their house or now even with smartphones, someone watching you on a plane. It's wild... That's what hooked me for TV and film and that's what's kept me going, is the power of that kind of global storytelling and the intimacy of being in so many public spaces with people while they're having private experiences is really incredible."

But much like she did in fourth grade, Rentschler eventually found a way to forge her own path. Only this time, not just for herself. "I had a group of wonderful friends that I knew from acting class and I knew from being in Los Angeles. Incredible actors. Absolutely stunningly talented people who were not getting a lot of work because they were not born into the industry, they were not already famous. And my friend Michael and I were just like, 'why don't we write something where we can showcase everyone?'"

And that's exactly what Rentschler and her friend, fellow actor [Michael Tennant](#) did.

"There is a bit of a festival tactic where you can write something and then you give yourself a smaller part and you try to hook a big fish. So you get either one or two big celebrities to either come in and do a cameo or play the leads and then people will invest in the movie because they definitely think it will sell because there's famous people in it. And we just thought, 'you know what? What if we didn't do it that way? What if we wrote a movie for all of our friends?'"

Rentschler and Tennant wrote *Pretty Problems* and they cast their friends.

"We know we all have chemistry and let's give it a shot. And if it goes nowhere, it was an experiment, right? We want it to go somewhere, we want people to see it but at least our friends will leave this movie with good footage and they'll be able to show people amazing scenes for their reels instead of trying to fight for two lines on television. And that's how it started."

Pretty Problems debuted at SXSW and it was a hit. It was the only film in their category that didn't have a famous name in the cast and they walked away from the Texas based festival with the [Narrative Spotlight: Audience Award](#). "We actually did prove that you can sell a movie and you can do it a different way from the way everyone thinks that you have to." From there, the ball was rolling. [IFC Films](#) purchased the spicy comedy and it was released in over a dozen theaters across the country this October and is currently available wherever you rent your movies.

After the success of SXSW, Rentschler brought her cast and her film back to her hometown of Birmingham for the city's [Sidewalk Film Festival](#). *Pretty Problems* was originally scheduled for a smaller venue at the festival but it sold out so quickly that festival organizers changed the plan. Rentschler's debut feature film would run closing night of the festival, in one of the largest venues, the historic, recently renovated [Lyric Theatre](#).

"I was just overwhelmed with gratitude and astonishment that it was happening that I had to stand in the back the whole time. [It was like] electricity was running through me. The house was just so responsive. There were so many laughs and giggles. And to just be able to stand in the back of the theater and receive all of that, it's the best audience that we've had. To have that happen in my hometown was a dream come true."

She added, "I don't say that lightly. Truly, as a child, I grew up in this town dreaming that I would get to do this for a living. And to create something that I did myself with my friends and have it be what brought me back in that way was the most impactful because I wasn't waiting for somebody else to give me that opportunity. We did it. We got ourselves there. And Sidewalk gave us this platform. I was a big part of my community that night. My original community and that meant everything to me."

CULTURE

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Actress Britt Rentschler

From Birmingham to the Big Screen

With a series of television roles and a silver screen debut under her belt, actress and Birmingham native Britt Rentschler is doing the city proud. **BY SARAH COOK**

BRITT RENTSCHLER first caught the acting bug from a cat. It seemed to be staring straight into her soul, Rentschler remembers. There was no turning back.

"The cats wandered around the theater during the opening number, and they had these eyes that would glow," Rentschler says, recalling a life-impacting performance of "Cats" that she saw while visiting Manhattan when she was 8 years old. "And this one cat, it came down and crouched right in front of me—eye to eye."

• CULTURE | ARTS

For Rentschler, who grew up in Birmingham off Liberty Parkway, a love of acting arrived at an early age. Theater opened a world where anything could happen. Adults could dress up as felines and crawl through theater aisles. She could take on any role she wanted. So, she did.

Now living in Los Angeles, Rentschler is actively pursuing that same childhood dream. She recently starred alongside Hollywood notables Mark Wahlberg, Rose Byrne, and Octavia Spencer in the Paramount picture "Instant Family," which was released in theaters nationwide last year and received positive reviews for its comical yet poignant portrayal of the foster care system. Playing the part of Byrne's spitfire sister, Rentschler commands her role with wit. Considering Rentschler's impressive résumé, it should come as no surprise that top film producers are noticing her talent.

She first began her career by participating in state theater competitions and school plays. From there, she studied at UAB with both academic and theater scholarships. Rentschler then received an advanced degree from the University of Central Florida and later completed a residency with the Orlando Shakespeare Theater.

After spending time in New York City in pursuit of a career in theater, Rentschler began dabbling in TV and film. Her journey was punctuated by plenty of rejection—just like any actor worth their grit experiences. For Rentschler, however, the setbacks only made her more determined.

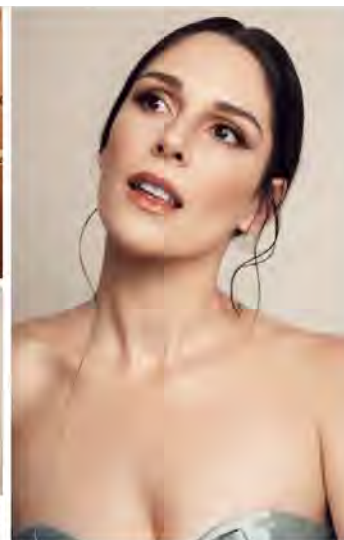
"You have to stay passionate," Rentschler says. "You have to keep that fire lit inside of you because if you wait for someone to hire you or to tell you that you're allowed to have that fire lit, then it's going to be a really hard experience."

That kind of guintion is probably how Rentschler landed appearances on hit shows like "Drop Dead Diva," "Castle," and "NCIS: Los Angeles," as well as a recurring role on the History Channel's "Six," a television drama that chronicles one of the U.S. Armed Forces' primary counter-terrorism units.

Never knowing how long her gigs will last, Rentschler is building a career not only through her many roles, but also by diligently studying her characters and learning as much as possible from the talent she has the opportunity to work with at each new job. "You could land a spot, or you could be a temporary character, which is all a part of the appeal," Rentschler says of the sometimes-chaotic rhythm of television



Top photo: Rentschler in a "Cats" Halloween costume, a nod to the play that inspired her career.



acting. "You get to go into another world, and you get to live in it as long as you can. And then you take it all down and start all over again."

Rentschler's roles have been diverse. She's held both weapons and a lover's gaze. Ask her about her repertoire, and you'll probably get a humble answer, though. Her goals still include honing her craft and learning from

ed her acting pursuits since day one. Hikes at Moss Rock Preserve or drinks at Chez Lulu are just some of the Magic City outings Rentschler craves when she's far away. Even in Tinseltown, Rentschler says she found a few folks who understand her love for Alabama football.

"Rock & Reilly's is the one that always has the Alabama game," Rentschler says, referenc-

ing her go-to spot to watch the Tide in L.A.

She admits that it still feels surreal at times, looking back on her journey to Hollywood. When she hears from friends who spot her on screens during lazy afternoon TV binges or while glancing up from their drink at a bar, she can't help but wonder if that little girl who

was mesmerized by a theatrical production of "Cats" so long ago is actually "making it."

"It's this crazy club that people are interested in, and it's amazing—but it can be fleeting and temporary," Rentschler says of acting. "But it's what I love, and I have an opportunity to do it on a larger scale—even a global scale." ■

"I think there's this really important duality of loving it with all your heart and also making sure you're really paying attention. Because it is a business."

—BRITT RENTSCHLER

So much of it is created in the left brain, but the other part of it is in the right brain, too."

Staying true to her roots is another pillar for the actress, who still finds time to make it back to Birmingham whenever possible. "Other than me out in California, everyone is in Alabama," Rentschler says of her family, who has support-

RIVAL

Dec 23 Sundance hit 'Uncle Frank' premieres on Amazon Prime; Actress Britt Rentschler chats with the Rival Team about the filming process and acting in 2020

The incredibly talented Britt Rentschler is an actress everyone should watch out for. With her talent, there is no wonder she landed a role as 'Charlotte' in the newest Amazon Studios drama "Uncle Frank". In this exclusive interview with Rival Magazine, Britt walks us through the process of getting cast for the show, takes us back to how she realized acting was meant to be and gives us an insight into what her future might look like.

1. What is your background and how did you get involved in the entertainment industry?

My background is in theatre, which really just means years and years of yelling out, "Hey Mom and Dad, watch this!" and luckily, they obliged. It was something that I always wanted, to be telling stories and engaging with expression.

2. Was acting something you wanted to pursue from a young age?

Absolutely. See above! My whole family, such good sports. Endless school plays. Endless.

3. Fans will be able to see you star on "Uncle Frank" at Charlotte this November. What can you tell us about your character and her involvement in the story?

Charlotte is a wine drinking, fun loving, good time pal. She's best friends with Frank, Paul Betany, and his "roommate", Wally, played by Peter Macdissi ... they all three share some secrets. Charlotte is definitely that friend who is always down to hang with you.

4. What first drew you to the story when you read the script?

I was drawn to the heart, the humor, and the incredible style with which Alan Ball writes.

5. What was the audition process like for you?

Quick and easy! They were already getting into production on the east coast, so I sent in my tape, and crossed my fingers. I was thrilled when I got the call that they wanted to invite me on board.

6. How did you react when you got the role?

Complete joy. There were a few moving parts with the role and scheduling, so I was hanging in there for a while, waiting to find out. I have always wanted to work with Alan, so it was deeply meaningful to me to be asked to work on a project that he was writing and directing. I could finally breathe!

7. What was your best memory from the set of "Uncle Frank"?

There was a late afternoon on set, when the light was changing beautifully, and we were in this tiny room of an apartment in downtown Wilmington, waiting to finish the dinner scene. Paul just pulled out a guitar and started playing and singing. Everyone went quiet, and still, and we listened together. It was complete magic.

8. What was your reaction when you found out the movie would premiere at Sundance?

Oh wow. I cried. It was a bucket list moment. When I moved to L.A, I had made a list of things I dreamed of doing. "Going to Sundance with a movie I love, in a part I am proud of." ... that was on the list. And it was happening. I called my parents and left the most easy, incoherent voicemail on their answering machine -- a couple of words and a lot of sob!

9. What are some movies that made you fall in love with acting growing up?

There's a movie not many people know, "Dangerous Beauty" -- that I for sure shouldn't have been watching at the time (my parents had rented it from Blockbuster) because it was rated R. But I had a habit of getting into things I shouldn't, and I watched it when they weren't home. I was completely taken by it. It's a story based on the real life of a courtesan in Venice, Veronica Franco, and how she became a National Hero, rebuffed the Inquisition, and had her books of poetry published in a time where most women in the city couldn't read. I was head over heels for a leading woman like that.

10. Who are some artists you would love to collaborate with in the future?

Phoebe Waller Bridge, Paul Thomas Anderson, Wes Anderson, Greta Gerwig. Top of the top, in my book.

11. What has been your biggest achievement so far?

Saying the course. There are so many reasons to let go of your dreams, but the greatest prize is betting on yourself.

12. What are some things you hope to cross off your bucket list once everything goes back to normal?

Live music and Kings! I mean, I have done those things before, but it feels like so long ago.

13. What are some causes that are dear to your heart and hope to bring awareness to in the future through your platform?

Working on Instant Family led me to finding an amazing organization called Together: We Rise, which supports children in the foster care system, and I am committed to bringing awareness to their cause -- as well as working with the LALGBT Center. Many people don't know that LGBTQIA+ young people ages 13 to 25 are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than their straight peers, and Uncle Frank definitely highlights what can happen for teenagers who have identities not accepted by their parents. I also have had rescue animals my whole life, so if anyone follows me, they will be encouraged to adopt or foster or donate to their local shelters! Oh, and intersectional feminism. Especially in the entertainment industry. Or our Government. Okay, everywhere!

14. In your opinion, what is the biggest misconception about being an actor?

It's not about "how do we memorize all of those lines?" I joke, but it is actually the question that we get asked the most.

15. What is the best advice you have gotten and from whom?

I've said this before, and I hope one day I get to tell her thank you in person, but on twitter Jenna Fischer tweeted to me and gave me the advice that she said Milly Shannon gave her... "Never Give Up." I actually have it penciled on my wall, very small, just above the door frame. Most people don't see it, but I do, every time I walk out the door.

16. What advice do you have for aspiring artists?

In your work, notice when you respond with joy. No one can take that from you, and it will steer your course. Let it guide you.

17. What do you hope to achieve through your art?

Connection. It's really as simple as that.

18. What are some things that need to change as soon as possible in the entertainment industry?

Equity. There are so many stories to tell, and the industry has the ability to give equal time. It's a decision, and it can be made by anyone hiring or buying -- they can make the choice to bring on an equal share of women, BIPOC, or LGBTQIA+ folk in significant roles on screen, in writer's rooms, or behind the scenes.

19. What is the best thing about being an actor?

My job demands that I learn, unlearn, and relearn things all of the time. Is there a part of myself that doesn't serve the character? Is there a connection here that I am missing? Is there a new skill that I get to pick up? It's the art of being curious. The art of remembering. The art of play.

20. What are your plans for the future?

Forward, always. That's the plan.

Thank you to Britt for taking the time to talk to Rival Mag. We can't wait to see what she does next. In the meantime, everyone should go and watch her as 'Charlotte' Amazon's drama "Uncle Frank".





Butterfly Skirt: Rooba-G
Top: Rooba-G
Fur Jacket: Style Barre Collection



MARCH 2019

AVANTE

MAGAZINE

BRITT RENTSCHLER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHAUN SU

MUAH BY HALI MCGOWAN

STYLED BY SKY NAVAL

INTERVIEW BY SAMANTHA STRICKLIN



AVANTE

Jumpsuit: Single
Coat: Kite Design
Sneakers: Conall & Tony
Shoes: Stuart Weitzman



Jacket: Almas Clothing
Dress: Rega
Shoes: Sam Edelman

Women in Motion: Britt Rentschler



There's something uniquely special about how a work of literature or theatrical performance can change our perspective on the world around us. Similar to the motion of a conveyor belt, our mindsets can drastically shift after leaving an inspiring show within the walls of a velvet-coated theater, compared to when we first took our seat. Britt Rentschler is no stranger to this act of fate, as the revival production of *CATS* was what inspired her to move out West. As her fascination for theatre and the arts progressed, her craft, ultimately, escalated. Now, Britt can be seen in Amazon Studio's latest drama, *Uncle Frank*, and Paramount Pictures comedy, *Instant Family*. In this exclusive interview, we had the opportunity to chat with Britt to discuss her newest role in *Uncle Frank*, an inside look into her budding career thus far, and her love for the healing arts.

MM: Now, what was your experience like filming Paramount Pictures comedy, *Instant Family*, and working with the cast?

BR: That was such a special movie to film. We really felt like a family, and everyone brought such warmth. Rose made sure Allyn and I felt like sisters, and Julie made us feel like daughters. And in the dining room scene, I got to hold Mark Wahlberg's hand for eight hours of shooting, (while we, "said the blessing"), so who's complaining about that!

MM: If you could give a piece of advice to your younger self, what would it be?

BR: Don't buy it, whatever they're selling. And they will try to sell you everything, again and again. Get quiet and follow your instincts.

MM: Where do you tend to draw your inspiration from when preparing for each role?

BR: For this role, it was from envisioning my Aunt, living in NYC in the '70s, with all of the other wonderful people she must have met. She grew up in a small town in Alabama, and she got out and made the life she wanted. I respected her very much.

MM: Have you ever experienced any notable challenges throughout your career?

BR: It's in between the jobs that you can start going bananas. Not everyone has the next ten projects lined up — in fact, almost none of us do. To keep myself creative, on my own terms, without waiting for someone to give me an invitation — this has been my savior.

MM: Do you have any exciting upcoming projects for the new year?

BR: I have a feature film that I am producing/co-writing with some wonderful creative partners, and we were set to shoot in April. We had to postpone, due to COVID, but we have some stellar filmmakers and actors on board, and I can't wait to get back on the saddle in the new year.

Megan Morgante: Did anything/anyone, in particular, inspire you to enter the entertainment industry?

Britt Rentschler: On a trip to visit my Aunt Cathy in NYC, I saw a production of *CATS*. I was in elementary school, and everything about it blew my mind — the energy of the city, the grand feeling of the theatre. I was in an aisle seat, and in the first number, a CAT walked right up to me and stared me in the face, with these glowing eyes...and then effortlessly climbed back down the balcony of the Winter Garden Theatre and onto the stage. The drama! I was hooked.

MM: Can you give an overview of your background in the entertainment industry and how it led you to where you are now?

BR: As you can tell, theatre hooked me. It was my safe place for a very long time — all throughout school. I had a place to be free. That sense of freedom led me to (sight unseen) move out West to pursue TV and film. I don't take any of it for granted.

MM: You have some very exciting upcoming projects; can you give some insight into the new Amazon Studios drama, *Uncle Frank*, launching November 26th?

BR: *Uncle Frank* is exactly what you need for the holidays. First of all, it's set in the '70s, so you get some mad style, but most importantly, family threads, with a deep message resounding around forgiveness and love.

MM: What can we expect to see from your character, Charlotte, in this upcoming film?

BR: Charlotte is fabulous. She is a free-spirited lesbian living her best life in Manhattan. She provides some wonderful humor in the film, and I adore her. You would definitely want to have her over for a glass (or bottle) of wine.

MM: Aside from acting, what would you say your other passions are?

BR: I have a deep love for the mystical. I am a Reiki Master and practice healing arts. You can find me outside, like the crazy lady hanging with the trees, or anywhere with live music. I have a life plan that involves this checklist: Good people, good food, good wine, good sounds, and good vibes.

MM: Do you feel you have a social responsibility with your growing platform?

BR: I'm certainly not telling anyone else how to live their lives, but for sure, I think it would be ignorant and irresponsible of me not to realize that thousands of people are watching my Instagram feed or reading the press that I do. I like to share good things — and to me, good things involve being compassionate, conscious, and giving from the heart. I hope what I share inspires those things for people. I also like to have fun and celebrate joy — and I hope that gets picked up, too!

MM: What would you say your personal

style is like?

BR: Oh, Millennial Bohemian. Is that a thing?

MM: Who is your ultimate style icon?

BR: Cher. Always Cher.

Britt Rentschler - Inspiring Through Stories



Britt Rentschler is an indie filmmaker and actress to keep your eye on. When she isn't creating fun masterpieces, she is dedicated to encouraging young creative minds at Young Storytellers, and passionate about our democracy, volunteering at the LA LGBT center and Vote Forward. Read on to discover more about Britt's creative process, her secret to writing compelling comedies, and the inspiring ways she gives back.

Where are you based?
I feel very fortunate to be bi-coastal, and I love getting the best of both worlds.

What inspired you to get into acting and writing? Did one come before the other?
Being encouraged to be imaginative as a child allowed me to find both at the same time - creating and embodying a story gives me so much joy.

You have done both film and theater. Do you have a preference?
Oh no! That's like making me choose a parent! I love them both, equally and differently.

Congrats! Your debut film, PRETTY PROBLEMS, was recently released. What inspired this story? How does it feel for it to come to life?
Like all good indie filmmaking, this story was inspired by... access to an incredible (free) location. My producing partner, Michael Tennant, came to me with the seeds for everything, and it was a privilege to be able to help it grow.



The trailer for PRETTY PROBLEMS leaves the viewer discombobulated. Can you tell us a little bit about the film? What do you want your audience to get from it?
Discombobulated is exactly how Lindsay and Jack feel - it's like they have been living in black and white, and then are invited into the "Land of Oz". We hope the audience can feel that they are swept up with our lead characters, and are along for the ride.

When you were writing it did you already see yourself in the role of Lindsay Simpson? What is it about Lindsay that you connect with?
I really didn't see myself as Lindsay, but as the creative process went on, it became clear that I knew her very, very well, after spending so much time with her. So it was the natural fit, as a creative, to take on a character that needed to be a backbone in the story.

Was writing a comedy difficult? How do you manage a balance between humor and depth while storytelling?
To me, there are two positions you need to regularly visit yourself: 1. Did it get a laugh? If yes, then keep it. 2. Are you telling the truth, and is it personal? If yes, then keep it. That's how you get both. It's trial and error. And it can be painful, but it's worth it.

Do you have any new projects on the horizon? Do you want to focus on film or would you like to write for theater as well?
I am working on a few film ideas right now. I have this really romantic idea that I'll write a play one day, for in the future, when I'm none of a grizzled Hemingway type. I want to earn those stripes.

We know that you volunteer with the Resistance Squad of Los Angeles LGBT Center. What inspired you to get involved with them?
The LA LGBT Center has a lot of amazing volunteer opportunities, and once you take their training, they give you so many ways to show up and help. I got involved with them during phone banking for the last midterm elections, and I am still doing that work, now. We are hoping for a great runoff in GA!



Can you tell us about your work with Young Storytellers? Why is this important to you?
My whole life was shaped by the encouragement and exposure to the arts that I received as a child. When children get the opportunity to explore the story, they are offered the chance to engage with themselves, and the world, in a whole new way. That will stay with them forever.

Midterm Election season just ended. Can you tell us a bit about your time writing for Vote Forward? Why is empowering reluctant voters important to you?
If we don't have citizens who understand the power of their own unique voice, then we don't have a democracy. It's that simple to me.

Any thoughts on the midterm results?
Relief. Pride. There's still so much work to be done, but it was encouraging to see the efforts that were made bearing positive fruit.

It has been a crazy past few years. How have you been staying positive?
My partner once said to me, "Guess what? You get to start over again tomorrow." That really helped me. The simple power of choice, and a clean slate. Sometimes you just need to rest and start again on the other side.

What is your motto in life?
"Everything is working out perfectly." That's the phrase I repeat to myself. Even if I can't understand why or how just yet, it's all perfect, and all needs are met. It brings me back to center and allows me to release worry and the need to control.

GET TO KNOW: BRITT RENTSCHLER AS SHE MAKES HER FILM DEBUT IN NEW MOVIE INSTANT FAMILY

By Sophie Knight

We got to know actress and producer Britt Rentschler who we have seen on popular TV shows, *The Detour* and Fox's, *The Resident*; as she talks her latest movie, *Instant Family*, how Mark Wahlberg gave her life lessons in how to be a true movie star and the funniest actors she has worked with that have made her day.

Britt Rentschler stars as Linda in *Instant Family*, alongside Mark Wahlberg and Rose Byrne who are a married couple that take in foster children. The movie is out in theatres across the country November 16.

Instant Family was a dream from the start. I really do feel that good vibes start at the top, and the directing/writing team, Sean Anders and John Morris, and all the producers, made the set so warm and the intuition they had in choosing a cast that would bond...wow! We were all close, very fast. We were shooting in Atlanta, and it became like being away at camp together. We had family dinners and goofed around!

You star alongside Mark Wahlberg, what was it like to film with him?

It was a lesson in how to be a movie star, no joke. Mark had a smile for everyone, and never seemed rushed or overwhelmed, even with all the hats he was wearing. He always stopped and took pictures with the background actors on set, and he's a really funny, really genuine guy. It's impressive how much energy he has!

Can you give us a little bit of information about what we can expect to see from your character, Linda?

I love Linda. In a big family, especially with three sisters, you've gotta have the one that is just no bull. That's Linda. She's really comfortable in her own skin, and not afraid to jump into those family squabbles and straighten people out! What an incredible experience to play part of a family with a great group of women such as Rose Byrne, Allyn Rachel, Julie Hagerty, and Margo Martindale. Boss Ladies.

Throughout your career who have been some other fun people you have worked alongside?

Fun is such a great word, because when work is good, it is always fun. Actors that have made my days? Michelle Dockery, Richard Dreyfuss, Stephen Moyer and Jason Jones. Tom Segura kept me in stitches on this shoot. All of the cast on *SIX* would crack me up on the daily, the amount of pranks on that set were unbelievable.

We have recently seen you on Fox's, *The Resident*! What was the second series like to work on?

The Resident is such an amazing show because of how much research goes into making it. Follow Amy Holden Jones on Twitter and you will see how she guides their choices into revealing important commentary on what is happening in the medical field and in the world of insurance and politics. I'm proud to be a part of a show that has such a conscience.

Outside of acting you are involved in healing arts and coaching. Tell us a little bit about this?

Absolutely. I caught the teaching bug from my parents. They dedicated their lives to connecting with students, and I channeled that into getting a Masters in Fine Arts. Being just an actor was never doing to be enough for me, but getting to be involved in the arts myself, and having the chance to inspire and cultivate the arts in others, that is something I am excited to put my life to. That goes hand in hand with the Master Reiki training I have, which I incorporate into my arts coaching. My aim to help the people that I work with feel authentic in their own bodies, voices, and ultimately, spirits.

What can we expect to see next from you?

Lodge 49 on AMC just got picked up for a second season, so you might be seeing Beth again soon! In the meantime, *Good Behavior* Season Two just started showing on Hulu, so you can catch me there, antagonizing Michelle Dockery's character, Letty.

Here at BELLA, our tagline is Beauty Defined by You. What does Beauty mean to you?

As simple as it may be, shining from the inside out. By allowing your authentic light to shine, you inspire others to do the same. Beauty belongs to everyone.

We loved chatting to Britt and we can't wait to see this star-filled movie later this month. Follow Britt on Instagram: @opheliagrownup to see what else she is getting up to.



Britt Rentschler | Instant Family | Interview

Britt Rentschler Exclusive Interview about "Instant Family" and so much more!

JAMO magazine

We had the opportunity to have a chat with "Instant Family" Actress Britt Rentschler about Her Career, Character she plays in "Instant Family" and her love for travelling.

We are so excited to see you on "Instant Family" tell about the movie?

Thank you! Instant Family is really special because it combines a lot of humor and heart. It's the perfect holiday movie - and it's a lot of fun!

What's the best part about the movie and what can we expect?

You can expect to laugh, and to cry. It's a story about a couple (Ellie and Pete) who decide to navigate the foster care system and try to adopt three children, so it sheds light on the very real situations that come up for the families, but also brings up the funny that comes with it.

You play Linda on "Instant Family" Tell us about your character?

Linda is Ellie's sister (Rose Byrne) so she gets a front row seat in watching the story unfold. I love her because she is that great sibling who is super straight forward and comfortable in her own skin. She's not afraid to tell it like it is!

What are the similarities between you and your character Linda?

I really enjoyed getting to bring my sense of humor to the role, and my "anything goes" attitude.

What has been the experience like shooting "Instant Family" ?

Incredible. The cast bonded very quickly, and the set had this beautiful richness to it that comes from working on material that really mattered to everyone. These really big stars brought their A game, and it was a joy to be a part of that energy.

Other than acting, what you like doing?

I am a huge travel bug. Day trips, plane trips, train trips, you name it!

Which countries do you plan to travel and is Middle East one of them? I haven't made it to the Middle East, but I would love to go! Morocco has always been on my list, and I would love to hike the Inca trail. Learning about the early civilizations of a region really fascinates me.

What do you like about acting and why? I believe that when acting is used in the right way, it helps you connect to a deeper sense of humanity. To lend your skin to someone else's story gives you the opportunity to connect more deeply to your human family.

Best advice you have got in your acting career? Jenna Fischer once told me what she said Molly Shannon told her..."Never, never, never give up."

What's your message for JAMO readers? Stay true to yourself, and let the world see your uninhibited style. Nothing shines brighter than an authentic soul.

Thank you for chatting with us about "Instant Family".

Is there anything else you would like to add that we didn't cover? Thank you for having me! The movie is out in theaters Nov. 16th, so go make some holiday memories with your friends and family! It will give you those warm fuzzies just in time for the holiday season!

Make sure you Check out Britt's Social platforms to get updated from her and follow us on Instagram so you don't miss any exclusive Interviews from your favorite celebs.





Britt Rentschler – Pretty Problems



Q) What inspired you to write *Pretty Problems*?

A) Michael [Tennant] started on the idea and came to me with the first few scenes written. I was absolutely in love with the pitch, the project and exploring the growing gap between the “haves” and “have nots” — as well as the difficulties that partners can face as they try to answer the question “what do we do next?” And knowing we could make it funny and relatable, while also punching you in the gut a little bit, was something that excited both of us.

Q) Both you and Michael Tennant not only wrote the story with Charlotte Ubben (who plays Carrie), but you also play the title characters, Lindsay and Jack. How did writing *Pretty Problems* help you in developing your characters and what kinds of conversations did you and Michael have to create the natural dynamic between Lindsay and Jack?

A) Michael and I have been friends for a long time. So, we have a shorthand with each other. There is so much trust between us that we knew we could really be vulnerable and bring different parts of our own relationships to Lindz and Jack, and that we could be completely honest about the harder parts of being in a relationship. Originally, Charlotte [Ubben] was going to play Cat, so she and I worked on what version that Cat/Lindz relationship would lend itself to, but ultimately, she fell in love with Carrie. So, we recast the role with J.J. [Nolan]. It was really fun to explore how different it was, changing partners in that aspect. I felt it gave a lot of truth to how different female friendships can be, depending on the chemistry between two people. In a lot of films you see female friendship tropes, and we worked hard to be more dynamic than that — and the same goes for the Jack/Lindz relationship.

Q) I absolutely loved watching the friendship between Lindsay and Cat, who is played by J.J. Nolan. What was it about J.J. that made her the perfect actor to portray Cat?

A) J.J. has this reckless abandon to her work that we absolutely loved. She is driven by chaos but is also such a smart actor — always making sure she understands the driving force behind it all. Finding our chemistry was a really fun exploration and I always knew we could riff and play and find something really exciting.

Q) Did you have any favorite moments during the filming of the movie?

A) We filmed six days on and one day off and we were actually shooting the pool scene on Memorial Day. And I remember taking a look around and thinking about a lot of other people who were probably at a pool that day, as well, but on vacation. But here we were working. And I was completely overwhelmed with gratitude. We waited so long to be able to make this project and to be there working was such a privilege. It was a really striking parallel and it confirmed my love for the work and my role as a filmmaker.

Q) What message do you hope viewers take away from watching *Pretty Problems*?

A) I hope they take away that feeling when you’ve laughed so hard with your friends, that you start crying. And then you start to really cry because you realize how long it’s been since you laughed like that. I think *Pretty Problems* allows the audience to take what they need — to have some perspective — and, hopefully, to walk away appreciating what they have.

Q) *Pretty Problems* is your debut feature as a filmmaker. At SXSW, what were some of the reactions of viewers who had the chance to see the film?

A) I was so blown away, meeting people in the lobby, after the film. The reaction was overwhelmingly warm, and I shook a lot of hands with people who thanked us for giving them a chance to laugh and to have some reflection. We’ve all been at home, without community, for 2 years, and to get the chance to connect with strangers over the love of film was absolutely invigorating.

Q) In having the experience of writing films, how has that helped you in your acting career and the roles that you choose to take?

A) Living with a project this long, through all of its phases, has reminded me to bring that love to anything I do, even if it’s just a one-day job because the people who made it possible for me to be there working have been living with their project for thousands of hours. Love it like it’s your kid, too. Ya know?

Q) Not only are you an advocate of storytelling and expression of all ages, but you are also a volunteer for Young Storytellers and the LA LGBT Center. Why is it important to you to help others and what are some of the biggest takeaways you have gotten from your volunteer work?

A) We all need a helping hand sometimes. When my cup is overflowing, it’s time for me to share it with others. Community has to be an exchange, that’s how we help keep each other whole.

Q) Who would you love to would love to work with onscreen in the future and whom would you love to direct?

A) I would absolutely love to work with Phoebe Waller-Bridge onscreen — she’s a powerhouse and has a remarkable vision. I would love to direct alongside Ava DuVernay because, good lord, I could learn so very much.

Q) What are the upcoming projects that you have been busy working on either as an actress or a filmmaker?

A) Right now, I am recurring on “Long Slow Exhale” on Spectrum Originals and I am working on my next feature script. Grateful to be keeping these creatively itchy hands busy!

Channel Guide

magazine

VOD Spotlight: 'Pretty Problems' Is a Comic Getaway Well Worth the Trip



Courtesy of IFC Films. An IFC Films release.

Pretty Problems, a comedy from IFC Films and directed by Kestrin Pantera, is now showing in theaters and available on video on demand.

In *Pretty Problems*, a couple discovers that being in the 1% does not 100% guarantee happiness.

Lindsay (Britt Rentschler) works at a consignment boutique. Her husband, Jack (Michael Tennant), is a disbarred lawyer working as a door-to-door salesman. They both desire more out of their lives, their careers and their marriage. They'll soon learn to be careful what they wish for.

One day at work, Lindsay meets eccentric bon vivant Kat Flax (J.J. Nolan), who, despite having just met her, invites Lindsay to a weekend getaway at her home in Sonoma's wine country. Lindsay digs Kat's vibe and lifestyle — and Kat bought a ton of clothes — so Lindsay accepts the invitation. Jack, who thinks this whole thing is weird and potentially setting them up to be murdered or indoctrinated into a sex cult, grudgingly agrees to come along.

Kat and billionaire husband Matt Flax (Graham Outerbridge) welcome them to a lavish home with a spectacular view of vineyards and lots of unusual art ("This man is made of dicks!" Jack notices of a statue).

Also sharing the weekend are Matt's friend, Kerry (Alex Klein), and his girlfriend of the moment, Carrie (Charlotte Ubben), who says she's model/actress/dancer so much that it has become true in her mind.

Over the weekend, Lindsay and Jack embark on a wild, drug- and alcohol-fueled odyssey of uncomfortable conversations, unconstrained karaoke, Roaring '20s murder-mystery role-playing parties, unexpected reunions with former sex partners, spirit-cleansing shamanic rituals and a whole lot of awkward economic disparity that will put their marriage, and their images of themselves and each other, to the ultimate test.

Rentschler, who is also a writer and producer on the film, took us inside the humor, the characters and the moments of inspiration that make *Pretty Problems* a comic destination well worth the trip.

Let's Just See What Happens

Rentschler says that *Pretty Problems* got its spark from longtime friend Tennant. "We were at his birthday dinner, and he kind of had this weird look on his face," she says. "And the next day, he called me and was like, 'You know what? I think we need to make a movie. And I think we need to do it with just our friends. We're not going to hire celebrities. We're not going to try to produce something on a huge scale. We're going to write it for our people. We're going to make it with our people. And then let's just see what happens. Let's see if we can do it that way.'"



Sonoma Is The New Napa

Set mostly in California's Sonoma Valley, *Pretty Problems* was a hit at the **Sonoma International Film Festival**, where it won the jury Award for **Best English Language Feature Film**. Jokes like Sonoma being "the new Napa" definitely played to the crowd. "That joke has never paid off better!" Rentschler says. "It was such a thrill. It was so cool to see the house packed, and then by our second showing, they were turning people away at the door. It was unbelievable, and it was so cool to see people who are from that region come out and enjoy all those jokes about their homeland." That includes poking fun at the area's spotty cellphone coverage and its snooty sommeliers (Tom Detrinis delights as biodynamic wine purveyor Georges, who says that "market price" is whatever he's feeling at the moment).

Luxury On A Budget

The characters might drive a \$100,000 Tesla with \$150,000 of wine in the back seat, but *Pretty Problems* had more of a Toyota Corolla and a case of Corona production budget. Rentschler says they took the work-with-what-you-have mindset of indie filmmaking to bring the world of outrageous excess to life. "We were able to borrow this house. This family was incredible," she says. "They were going to be at one of their other properties during the time that we were shooting. They let us come in. They let us shoot. And everything that we found was there. We just kind of rearranged it."

In fact, Rentschler says that anyone can be a patron of independent cinema just by letting a filmmaker borrow their stuff. "If you have a car, if you have a store, if you own a restaurant, if you have a vacation home, and an indie filmmaker asks you if they can borrow it, please say yes. It can really be the difference between something getting made and something not getting made."

Go Grab Dick Imagery!

So that house really came included with all the penis art? "Oh, baby! We even held back! We held back on that," Rentschler laughs. "We had two cameras operating so that we could get as much footage as possible in our days because we had such a limited amount of time. Whenever it was just a single A-cam shot, Kestrin's like, 'B-cam! Go grab dick imagery!' We'd be like running around the house. We had such a good time. There was just so much phallic art."

Vape 'Em If You Got 'Em

You'll notice that Kat always has a vape pen at the ready, and discerning eyes will notice that every pen complements Kat's wardrobe. It was an element of Kat's character that was born from a serendipitous moment with Nolan. "It was actually [J.J.'s] idea!" Rentschler says. "It was one of those brilliant moments where, as a producer, as a writer, you do as much as you can to create the world and have your vision, and then you invite other people in — and they're such brilliant creatives in their own right. They add things that you never even knew could be there. She came in on the very first night, and she pulled a vape out of her cowboy boot and she hit it. And Michael and I looked at each other and were like, 'Oh, shit. This is perfect.' And J.J. was like, 'Oh! What if Kat vaped? Can I go buy a vape that matches every single one of my outfits?' And we said, 'Yeah! You absolutely can.' Nolan went out and purchased about 15 vape pens. It was a worthwhile expenditure."



Savage, Bro!

Kerry lives a life of carefree opulence and rigorous body-image maintenance. He's beneficiary of his grandfather's inventing the tater tot during World War II. Kerry's a dim but likable playboy played by Klein, who is married to Rentschler. "What I really love about what he did with Kerry, is that he didn't just keep the meme part of it," she says of her husband's role. "He mixed his own sweetness in with this guy, and that's why it ended up being so much more unique than your normal stereotype of a trust fund bro."

Not Your Grandmother's Bingo

In an early scene, Jack is trudging from house to house, making his solar-panel pitch to anyone who'll open the door. One such man mistakes Jack as being the guy from "Tittie Bingo." Wary of



Googling "Tittie Bingo" at work, I asked Rentschler about it. "**'Tittie Bingo is a real thing!'**" she says. "It happens in Austin, and you gotta go to Austin to find out. Get thee to SXSW!" Of course, *Pretty Problems* won the Audience Award at SXSW 2022.

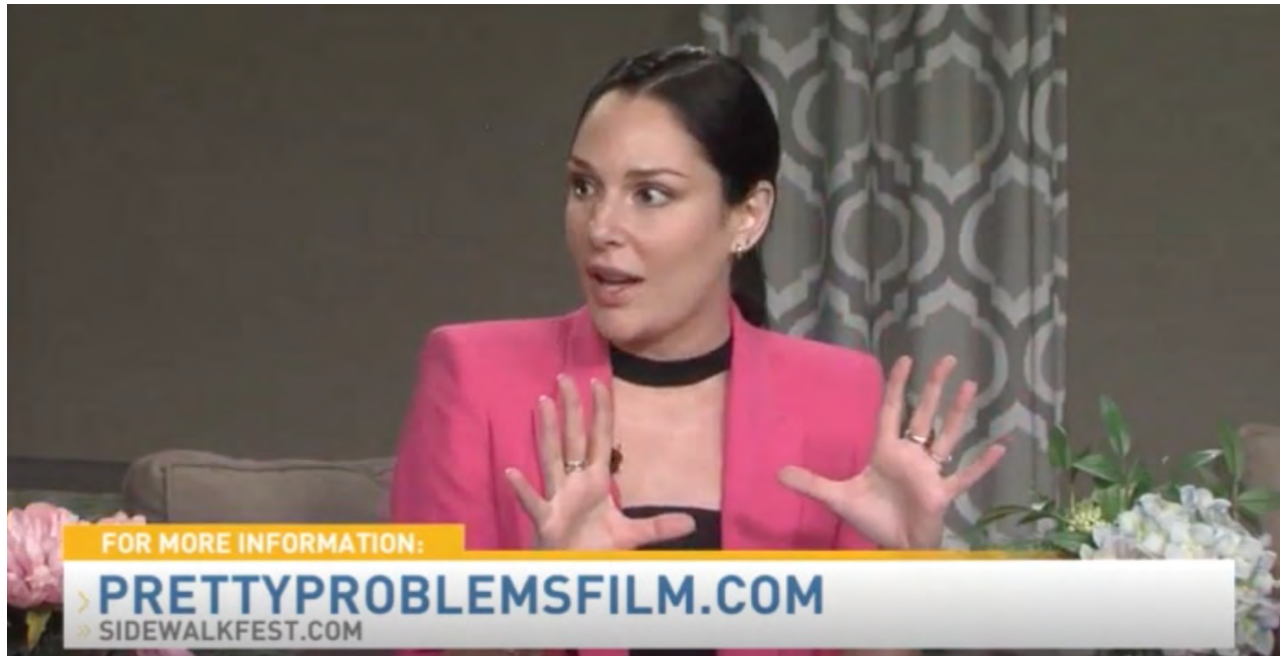
Oh, God. I Want A Milton.

Throughout the film, there are mentions of a mysterious entity named Milton who seemingly grants wishes and pulls all sorts of strings behind the scenes to make stuff happen. Milton is a force of pure benevolence, and I want one. "Oh, God. I know," Rentschler sighs. "If we ever find out where you can order a Milton, I will let you know."





Talk of Alabama | Britt Rentschler



Solis Magazine Interview – Meet the Sexy, Smart & Beautiful Actress Britt Rentschler

Actress: Britt Rentschler

Photo credit: Gerard Sandoval

Fans will recognize Rentschler from her role as 'Linda' in Paramount Picture's comedy "Instant Family" opposite Mark Wahlberg and Rose Byrne. Her first recurring TV role was on the TBS show "The Detour," appearing with Jason Jones. She continued to book recurring roles on some of the hottest shows including AMC's "Lodge 49," FOX's "Shots Fired," A&E's "Daytime Divas," TNT's "Good Behavior," FOX's "The Resident," Netflix's "Team Kaylie," Spectrum's "LA's Finest" and can be seen in the film "The Countdown."

Description automatically generated Eight years ago, Britt Rentschler moved to Los Angeles to pursue television and film after finding success in theater. From an early age, she knew she was meant to be in the arts and started out performing in musicals and plays. She attended the University of Alabama at Birmingham on an academic and theater scholarship; immediately following, she received a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Central Florida.

Rentschler has also completed a residency at the Orlando Shakespeare Theater. During her time in Los Angeles, she has expanded into directing, producing, writing, and her films have found wonderful homes on the independent film festival circuit. When not acting, she loves traveling, exploring the outdoors, and live music and festivals. She is also a Reiki Master and practices many forms of the healing arts. She is a volunteer with Young Storytellers, an active member of MENSA and Women in Film, and is also passionate about adoption and foster care since her role in "Instant Family." She is passionate about getting out and voting, and she has signed up to be a poll worker this year for the 2020 election.

Give us a brief description of your acting career so far?

My first competitive audition was for the narrator in the kindergarten play, which I lost to a classmate named Anna, but by 1st grade you better believe I had that "narrator in school play" role on lock! Ha! But seriously, I am one of those kids that loved theatre and did it all through school, got an undergrad and masters degree in Fine Arts, and then rolled into TV and Film, because I loved the intimacy of the medium. Some of my proudest moments have been sharing the screen with the likes of the legendary Margo Martindale, Julie Hagerty, Michelle Dockery, Rose Byrne, and most recently, with super star human Paul Bettany in Uncle Frank.

What other Projects have you worked on?

Paramount's Instant Family was a particularly dear project to me, and I loved recurring on AMC's Lodge 49 opposite Wyatt Russell — that was such a funny, smart, heartwarming show. Most recently I shared the screen with Gabrielle Union in LA's Finest, and that was also a highlight! I mostly bounce around in television, so getting to do a movie like Uncle Frank, with an artist like Alan Ball, was a bucket list moment.

Tell us about your Upcoming premiere for The Amazon Feature – Uncle Frank and what can we expect from the movie?

Uncle Frank is a wonderful road trip movie set in the 70's — but it starts in New York, and that's where my character, Charlotte, lives. She's a bohemian and a lover and a jokester, and I adored getting to play her. This film is perfect for the holidays, as we all get ready to jump in and handle some family dynamics, because it tackles those family secrets, personal demons, and ultimately, the theme of how powerful love can be.

What was the most challenging thing about your role in Uncle Frank?

For me, the most challenging part was staying cool under pressure. I was working with some personal heroes, some of the most incredible character actors out there, not to mention Alan Ball himself — who has been a creator I've looked up to since American Beauty. You've got to stay calm and focused, and do your job, even if you are secretly doing somersaults on the inside!

What can my reader and fans expect from the film?

Go into it ready to see some significant beauty — of the human spirit, and of the medium of film. The shots are gorgeous and the style of the period is flawless, but most importantly, the relationships will leave you feeling and thinking for days to come. And from my character, Charlotte, you can expect a little comic relief!



ETHICAL HEDONIST MAGAZINE

Britt Rentschler Talking Uncle Frank, Farmers Markets, Feminism & Her Wonderful Aunt.



Britt Rentschler is a film and stage actress to watch. She brings a chameleon presence on screen and stage that is wonderfully affecting, bold and charismatic. As Charlotte in Uncle Frank she plays a wild, exuberant, uninhibited pretend girlfriend to Paul Bettany's character Frank - and we are left wanting to see more of her character. Look out for her in Instant Family, The Detour, LA's Finest and Lodge 49.

Interview with Britt Rentschler

Q. Uncle Frank quietly and heartbreakingly examines the discrimination that was endemic in America in the seventies towards the gay community. Given your aunt's experience of acting as a 'beard' girlfriend for gay friends, how did that inform your approach to the character of Charlotte? Your aunt sounds like a fascinating character to spend time with. What will you remember most about her, the time you spent together and her life as trailblazer for women?

A. You know, I can only imagine what her life was like in New York in the 70's. I don't have any specifics on her playing someone's girlfriend or wife as Charlotte does, but she was certainly the first person who introduced me to an openly gay couple. Her best friend from college, and his partner. They came into the restaurant where I waited tables, in Alabama, and they were so kind - asked me everything about the theatre I was doing at the time and tipped me more than I had ever been tipped! It was just another small way that she opened up my world. She had a love of the arts, and love of her friends, and while I didn't get to know intimate details, the way she chose to live her life informed mine.

For example, having access to Manhattan, Broadway - that was huge. She would save me Playbills and trinkets from The Tonys, and she sent me a book of plays written by female playwrights. The first time I had sushi was in her apartment on 66th and Columbus Circle - visiting New York opened up so much for a curious child! She was such a fascinating woman. It took a lot to leave her small town in Alabama and start an entirely new life in New York, but she did it and seemed to never look back.



Trailer for Uncle Frank a Film by Amazon Studios Starring Paul Bettany

She was the National President of WNBA (Women's National Book Association) for a time - and while she was never imposing or outspoken, she actively supported my career in the arts and held such a wonderful space for me to believe that my life could be as exciting as I wanted it to be. What I will forever remember most is her unbelievable ability to remember lyrics. Any song, any musical - she knew it.

Q. What was it like to work with Alan Ball, the director who wrote the screenplay for American Beauty and to work with Paul Bettany who is wonderful as Frank. He conveys the damage he experienced in childhood as a result of his father's attitude to homosexuality with a sort of everyday nobility, humour and grace. But there is a sort of gallows humour, inner turmoil and tragic stoicism about Frank too. Do you relish being in films like Uncle Frank? What other topics would you like to explore in film or drama?

A. I absolutely relish in being in a film like Uncle Frank. I am also from the south, and that kind of short-sighted, small-minded thinking is something I grew up witnessing. I had many friends who came out to their parents and were met with resistance, because of religion, or because of simple, ignorant fear. Being different in an environment like that is like swimming upstream anyway, but then you add in sexuality, and you are absolutely gasping for air. When a story like this is written from personal experience, you can feel it. Alan's heart was in the script, and Paul's heart was in the performance. I was thrilled to be a small part of it - to play the role I've loved playing in life - a good friend. A fun, wild, and good friend.

I'm hoping I get to keep exploring relationship themes, finding love on the other side of fear, and working to keep a sense of humour through it all. And I certainly love exploring queer stories, southern stories, and films with independent female characters.

Q. There are a lot of parts for female actresses playing the cop, the best friend, a hotshot lawyer, fragile heroine, victim, doctor, wife... what would your ideal role be? Who do you long to play?

A. Ooh! Not the victim! I laugh, only because there was a time where I always wanted to play fragile. Being raised where I was, there was something so praised about being delicate, fragile, feminine, beta. I thought that it was so wonderful to get to be the ingenue. Lord, how that has changed. I'm so grateful. I had an acting teacher yell at me once, "YOU ARE SO SOCIALIZED!! I WANT YOU TO BE MEDEA, NOT CINDERELLA!" And you know what - God bless her. Because I was never Cinderella, to begin with. I was trying to do something that wasn't me, something I had learned. In my work now, I like to laugh, I like to carry ease and power, and I like to work at the top of my intelligence, or from the bottom of my heart. So wherever that character is, I'm in. But I am done playing the blushing lady.

Q. Is being a member of Mensa an asset in Hollywood or something you have to play down? Do you know the remarkable story of Heddy Lamarr? She was a film goddess and a genius who is only being given credit now for inventing wifi?

A. Heddy! A Queen! Yes. It's so wonderful to see women in power. I think if she had the same story now, it wouldn't be so taboo to be more than one thing - screen star siren AND genius inventor. But the PR back then was so controlled. I haven't felt at all that I have to play down my intelligence, but I also think that I don't consider it something so separate from myself. It's kind of like - what you see is what you get... so how can I hide one part of me, any part? I decided to try to cut that out a while back. "Tell them everything" - that's what I put on my wall in my bedroom. I would say I think that point of view has only benefited me.

Q. Why Marie Louise Parker? How does her life as an actress inspire you?

A. Marie Louise Parker is an actress I do get compared to, partially for looks, but also for her offbeat sense of humour. That's always happening when you start out. People want to place you somewhere - you can't just be Britt Rentschler, they might not know who she is. But compare me to Marie Louise - well, now they know I am an actor's actor (she came from theatre and has CHOPS) and that I am going to be present and funny and have the feel of a leading actress. I also get compared to Gal Gadot because I am tall and strong, and people pick up the Wonder Woman vibes. I am not complaining! But one day, I do hope I'll get to be my category. Marie Louise first hooked my admiration when she played Harper in Angels in America. What an incredible performance. And she opened Paula Vogel's play, How I Learned to Drive. I never saw her in it but adored the play. Theatre was my first home, so I tend to love an actor who has the same roots as I do. There's something so freaking die-hard about us theatre kids.

Q. Describe growing up in Alabama in two sentences.

A. Alabama is skinned knees, bare feet, and getting drunk by the river on magnolia, moonlight, and cicadas. It's romantic, and rotten, and complicated, and sweet.

Q. Given that you are a member of Mensa did you consider following an academic career instead of acting? Was it a hard choice?

A. You know, I did. And it was. I had a time where I was sure I was going to do law school, and go into public policy. I also have a degree in Political Science, and it was a close call. My dad is the one who really helped me see that I was making a fearful decision, though. He knew I was leading with my head, and not my heart. He had watched me love every minute of engaging with the arts, my whole life - music, dance, singing, all of it. He knew. Parents know. I am so fortunate mine encouraged me to follow the path that was the truest for me.

Q. What has it been like to live in the US in the last four years and then to volunteer during the elections? How do you feel about America as the world waits for President Biden to take office?

A. Oh LORD. It has been excruciating and paralyzing. At first, at the start of 45's first year, we marched, we petitioned, we did so much. And then I do think there came a time of fatigue when the news was just so horrid, so awful, so often - we became desensitized. It was a terrible feeling. But coming together with strangers and writing letters, sending postcards, working with phone banking - getting the word out and mobilizing people to believe that their vote counted - that was the antidote to the paralysis. I know that so many of us are ecstatic with the election results, but we can't rest. There is a runoff for 2 Senate seats in January, and we really need them to swing Blue. That's where we put in the work now.

Q. What is your idea of tuning out and taking time off?

A. Getting out into nature, cooking a meal. Live music, festivals, people laughing, talking. Meditating. Anything that is unplugged and offline, you know? So much of our time is on computers and phones, and while there is the benefit to the connection it allows, I find I am so drained by it, more often than not. Being present to what is the next step in front of me - like with cooking, or hiking. That's the good stuff.

Q. Are you someone who loves to cook and shop in markets for real food? Or do you like to be cooked for?

A. I love both! The art of the kitchen is a beautiful one! If I am receiving the meal, I love to be around in the kitchen, chatting, providing music, helping with the vibe, maybe setting the table. If it's at a restaurant, I like to take in all the details, observe and absorb. I see my job as the participator, the encourager, the enjoyer! And when I cook, I love to put time into the detail and really feel my way through the experience. It can be so delightfully intuitive. From start to finish, from the market to the dinner table, I find it really joyful.



Britt Rentschler

NYOTA MAGAZINE • MONDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2018

Our Editor in Chief got to chat with Britt Rentschler about her new movie *Instant Family* and what other projects she has on the horizon.



Photo by Benjo Arwas

What initially got you interested in acting?

I got the bug at a very early age. I always loved doing school performances and reading out loud. And then in 4th grade, I saw *CATS* on Broadway at the Winter Garden Theater and in the prologue, one of the actors (in costume) walked right up to me and looked me in the eye with her glowing cat eyes and then pranced off into some choreography and I was like...oh, WOW. I gotta do that!

Your first acting roles were all on tv, what got you interested in making the switch to movies?

Film and TV are more entertaining now than ever. It used to be that actors made a conscious choice to do one or the other, but for me, I have been fortunate enough to do both. *Instant Family* is my first box office movie, but I have been doing indie film alongside my TV roles since the start. Any time I get to be a storyteller, in any medium, it's a very good day!

How did the opportunity to work on “Instant Family” come about?

Instant Family came through as an audition, and then it took about 3 more callbacks before I found out I had the role. It's so hard to keep showing up, and then waiting, but getting that phone call that lets you know you got it -- the pay off is a dream!

What drew you to the movie and your character Linda?

I love that this movie is based on our director's (Sean Anders) real-life story about his family's experience with the foster care and adoption process. And I jumped at the chance to get to play Rose Byrne's sister -- she has been one of my favorite actresses since I saw her in *Damages*. I loved that Linda was really down to earth, and doesn't suffer fools.

What do you hope audiences take away from the film?

That really wonderful catharsis of finding laughter through tears. This movie is a wild ride of fun but paired with an emotional peek into the very big feelings that go along with foster care, adoption, and family dynamics.

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Can you discuss any upcoming projects?

I'm in the auditioning process for something I have to keep quiet, but you might see my character Beth in Season Two of *Lodge 49*, and Dr. Sarah Cooper on FOX's *The Resident* could pop up at any time!

What advice do you have for aspiring actors?

I will give you the advice that Jenna Fischer gave me, that she said Molly Shannon gave her -- Never, never, never give up.



photo by Benjo Arwas

SXSW



Pretty Problems

Low cash flow + plan B jobs + a snooze alarm sex life: Jack and Lindsey Simpson are officially stuck. But when they get invited to a Sonoma Chateau by affluent strangers, they end up on the most unhinged weekend of their lives. With the "haves," anything goes -- including their bearings on reality. Can their relationship survive this new wild west of wealth? Do they even want it to?

Smash a glass, take the ride.



SXSW 2022: Comedy 'PRETTY PROBLEMS' Director Kestrin Pantera And Actors Michael Tennant And Britt Rentschler Talk About Film Premiering Monday March 14th



Pretty Problems comedically indulges in the unpleasantness of the privileged: SXSW Film Festival

THE AUSTIN **CHRONICLE**

SXSW Film Review: *Pretty Problems*

Wealth can't fill an empty soul in this class clash comedy



SXSW 2022: PRETTY PROBLEMS

A laugh-out-loud comedy about rich people problems



SXSW Exclusive Clip: Wine Tasting Escalates Quickly in *Pretty Problems*

FLIXIST

SXSW Review: *Pretty Problems*

Money doesn't solve your problems, it only makes them prettier

Script

INDIE SPOTLIGHT: An Interview with SXSW Feature Film 'Pretty Problems' Filmmakers Michael Tennant, Britt Rentschler and Kestrin Pantera

'Pretty Problems' filmmakers Michael Tennant, Britt Rentschler and Kestrin Pantera share with Script how this story idea came to fruition, the writing and collaborative process between the writers and director, the importance of table reads and more!

Jack and Lindsey Simpson are officially stuck. But when they get invited to a Sonoma Chateau by affluent strangers, they end up on the most unhinged weekend of their lives. With the "Haves", anything goes – including their bearings on reality. Can their relationship survive this new wild west of wealth? Do they even want it to?



Britt Rentschler as Lindsey and Charlotte Utter as Carrie in *Pretty Problems*. Photo courtesy RRP Productions.

Pretty Problems puts a very large magnifying glass on fading relationships and new (possible) beginnings, with a large dose of comedy. A perfect remedy for wounded hearts and for the characters in this indie film. Needless to say, I shared a lot of laughs with the creative team behind *Pretty Problems*, during our colorful conversation about landing on this specific story idea, the writing process between writers [Michael Tennant](#) and [Britt Rentschler](#), and the collaborative process with their director [Kestrin Pantera](#).

This dynamic trio shares a lot of great takeaways on being prepared, working with actors, the importance of table reads, and the editing process.

This interview has been edited for content and clarity.

Sadie Dean: Where did this initial story idea come from?

Michael Tennant: I was at SXSW in 2018, with a movie that my ex was in and produced, and we saw Mark Duplass give the second version of the *Calvary* [Just Comin'](#) speech, and I sat there and went, 'Oh shit, the *Calvary* isn't coming.' And at the time, I was working in development at an indie company in LA, and I was really unimpressed with the stuff we were making. I felt like we were just making stuff so that my boss could drive a German car, eat sushi at lunch, and be next to celebrities on set. So, I started kind of working on the outline, and I could feel my own relationship starting to fracture. I think in most relationships, unfortunately, we kind of fall in love with someone's potential a lot of the time with who we think they can be, and who we think we can be with them, versus who they are and who we really are. And I was really interested in exploring a story about a couple who had hit that ceiling of, 'Is this it?'



Michael Tennant

I also love comedy and I wanted to make something funny, and I have said this to Kestrin and Britt a few times, and I know they're sick of hearing it, but I just want to make stuff that therapists will like: I want to make stuff that's kind of funny, but also is going to punch you in the stomach. And I started working on the outline. I finished the outline. I got about 10 pages into the script, and I was out to dinner for my birthday in 2019, in the before times, with Britt, her husband, and a bunch of our friends who are all in the movie, and was just looking around the table and I was like, 'Instead of trying to package this with a bunch of semi recognizable TV actors on hiatus, what if I just went and made this movie with my chosen family?' And I knew it would be harder. And I knew I was taking a bigger risk by doing it that way.

Britt Rentschler: He called me and he was like, 'Listen, I just reread Brené Brown's *Daring Greatly*, and I am going to send you 10 pages of a script that I worked on. And it might be horrible. I don't know. I don't care. Just fucking read it and see what you think.' And so I took it to a coffee shop and I read it. And I called him immediately. In 10 pages, we knew the *crux* of the relationship: we have this couple and they're in bed together, and they can't finish and they finish separately but together. It's immediately present. And then we see where they work. We see why they want to go and they're at the gates of the house in 10 pages. And then the rest of the weekend was up for grabs. And so, I was immediately excited by it.

Michael and I have known each other for over a decade. We've watched each other go through horrible relationships in our 20s, we were at each other's weddings, we have seen each other go through a lot and I felt like what really matched up is that the couple stuff really resonated with me also. We started to develop Jack and Lindsey. It was, 'What piece of your fight do you fight for? Why can't you see it the other way? Why can't you see it this way?' And the idea of trying to bring all of that together. But also again, the most fun part was our first meeting, we just grabbed a bottle of Rose, and we're like, 'What's going to happen on this weekend? What are the wildest things that we could include to really try to rock these people?'

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Britt Rentschler

neuroses to Cat. Everybody stands to gain something from participating in this cycle, even if it's completely dysfunctional. (laughs)

Sadie: What was that collaborative process like? Were you developing specific characters and then would hand it off?

Britt: We sat down together, we got really specific about what we wanted the weekend to look like, and wild ideas for what we wanted them to go through. And then he said to me, 'OK, do you want to handle murder mystery, and I'll take like the introduction scenes of the family?' And I was like, 'OK.' At the time, I'm teaching, I'm working on a show, we're doing all this stuff. Three days later, he sends me the entire murder mystery scene and it's like, 'OK, I just went ahead and dove in because I got really excited.' And that's really how it started. Michael started this out of pure drive and love and passion. And he invited me on. And he gave me the opportunity to start taking scenes on my own. But he was so excited and he just did it. And I was lucky enough to come in, he let me get my hands on the female dialogue. I kind of worked on the female perspective, the female friendships, the female ideas, and the relationships. And then we did start with some Google Docs back and forth, especially the scenes between the women - kind of working the dialogue and pitching jokes to each other and just making each other laugh. That was really our process. It was fun.

Kestrin Pantera: Yeah, I'd like to dogpile on to Michael's extremely flexible, collaborative strengths as a writer, that he really just can deliver pages like a truck. He's like a Mack truck of writing. And there were some scenes that we looked at in 2020 that I kind of had my own female gaze thing where I was like, 'I don't think that's going to play' and he just came back and took the note, didn't get defensive, received this opportunity, and then came back and was like, 'What if there's a guy named Big Dick Dan?' and wrote this beautiful C story, or I guess technically I don't know if it's a B or C story --

Michael: We can call it a D story because it's Big Dick Dan.

Kestrin: (laughs) He wrote the D line! It was so cool that I think a lot of people could have gotten defensive, and I'm reading this book right now about negotiating and I always considered myself collaborative, because that's what people say about me. But when I was reading this book, I took a quiz and I was like, 'A three out of 11 on collaboration and was like, 'Really? I thought I was super collaborative.' And so, I looked at all the points that I scored low on, and all of them were directly calling out where we were different and what wasn't working. And that really surprised me, because I would have thought that that would have been a more competitive or a different style of communication. And I was like, 'Oh, I avoid conflict, and go really high to where we all agree.' This was a really big lesson for me in collaboration that I was able to say something that wasn't working for me and it broke the whole script through to another level and I attribute so much of that to Michael's flexibility and resilience and just creativity. And he just did an amazing job. And now it's going to change the way that I look at other scripts.

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I had a director who directed one of the biggest movies in the entire world watch this movie and we were talking a couple of months ago about his style of doing feedback with writers where you're like, 'We're 90% aligned on everything, but then what do you do with the 10% where you're off. And that's the most painful part to you. I go all the way up to where we agree. And he said, 'No, no, no. I go to what does everyone hate as quickly as possible. I try to figure out what everyone's complaining about directly as possible so that we can solve it.' And this is a lot of the time for edit, but it applies to scripts as well: let's really drill it down and get specific about what it is that you hate about this scene. And that was the first time I've done that on a script being like, 'I hate this for this reason.' And then him shitting gold and rainbows - it was amazing.



Kestrin Pantera

Michael: I will say as we were shooting, I came to Britt and Charlotte and was like, 'I am writing a female driven story and I felt a little weird telling a female story as a man.' I know that I'm not writing the female dialogue correctly. I know that this is not how women talk when they're alone together. Please help.'

We got on set and Kestrin really fostered an amazing environment. I think we shot about 75-80% of what I wrote: we would do it as written and then Kestrin would say, 'Riff, just let it go, just do your riff, make stuff up.' And for me who probably tries to be a little too charming and a little too colloquial I had a really hard time being the sad sack in the script that I regretted the entire time that I wrote myself the sad-sack role and not the fun parts - but Kestrin really created an environment where we were all kind of on our toes in a really good way the whole time we were working. Also, every time we ran into any conflict, Britt, Kestrin, and I really were able to in a very Brené Brown way work through it and talk through it. Our whole thing the entire time making this movie was best idea wins. And I feel really proud of that and I feel really good and I'm really grateful that we found Kestrin and we were able to just create this thing and kind of live and live together and make this thing. She's a real treat, after you get through the salty part of her.

Sadie: (laughs) Kestrin, how did this script get to you and what was your initial reaction and connection to the material?

Kestrin: I've written and directed two movies, and this is the first film that I've directed that I didn't write the script and a witch off of the internet, anonymously emailed me with this amazing introduction email that made it seem like definitely I wanted to do this. All the pieces were together, it had talent, and it had a location and it was all put together and ready to go they just needed this missing piece - that was me. And they had seen my last movie at SXSW called *Mother's Little Pleaser*, and they really wanted to have that level of performance reflected in their own performances. And I was like, 'Oh? And so we met and then afterwards, I found out that Britt eavesdropped on me at the airport at Sundance.

Michael: I think she stalked you. (laughs)

Kestrin: I had on a big white furry hat and a big white fur coat, and she recognized it from Instagram. And I was with a person who was being difficult at the airport.

Britt: (laughs) I was traveling alone to Sundance and you know, you people watch. And I watched this interaction happen, I'm also an empath, which is you pick up on people's things, so I was watching the situation happen and I was like, 'Oh shit, how's this gonna go?' And then I watched her manage it. And I was like, 'Oh, that was really good.' And then lo and behold, months later, Kestrin and I are meeting, we're talking about this script, we all go home. Michael and I are talking about how wonderful she is. I go to follow her socials, and I see her at Sundance in that giant fur hat and giant fur coat, and I was like, 'What, that's her! We're hiring her!' I already knew I wanted her. But I had already seen her, unbeknownst to her negotiating and making things work. And it's a collaborative nature that Kestrin has, but she also has this really strong leadership point of view. And those two together is what makes it work so sweetly.

Kestrin: So, she witched me and then she sent me the script, and the script was fucking hilarious. It was like, 'Easy, done.' I said to them, 'This is totally 90% there, there's just some tiny surgical adjustments in that 10%. Let's see if we can approach that 10% together and see how it goes.' Because, you know, it was his baby. I was ultimately in service to his vision and his story. And the 10% was really about helping him get over the finish line of what his initial vision was. The last 10% was about landing the arcs of these amazing people that he created. I actually did the math with my husband and counted up every scene that I tweaked, and it was five scenes out of 55 scenes and it literally added up to 10%. So scientifically and statistically, it was exactly 10% off. But in the moment where we were having these discussions, it felt like a fucking chasm.

Michael: I got this amazing text from Kestrin after she'd come on to the project and she said, 'This is your baby, I'm just gonna be your doula.' And I was like, 'Yep, we made a good decision.'

Britt: And Kestrin is so good about structure and that's really what it was. It's like those five arcs that landed. Michael and I would do these table reads with our friends, and we would record them and then we would listen to them and go through the absolute pain of hearing when the jokes didn't land or hearing when something wasn't working. And then particularly with Jack and Lindsey, it's like, we would work a version where everyone would be like, 'Oh, Lindsey is awful.' And we're like, we messed it up. And then we go back and they'd be like, 'Jack is the worst.' Michael said this thing where they don't have to be likable, they have to be relatable. And if they're relatable, they will be likable. And so that was a big part of it. Kestrin came in saw the other arcs that A.B.C. D stories - Big Dick Dan - and just kind of had more of a bird's eye view on let's make sure everybody's landing as well. And it really was that structural genius that helped us, it's like gymnastics, you got to land the dismount, you know what I mean? And Kestrin came in and was the finisher.

Kestrin: And Michael, as Britt said about the first 10 pages, Michael is just a killer at starting a movie. And I felt like with the last one I did, I really learned how to end a movie. I was really proud of that. But I was always kind of looking back. 'How could I have done the first 10 better?' And with Michael, I was like, 'Oh, this is great. We got our ten. I'm happy to dig deep on the last ten.' And it was all with his blessings and permission because it's his child, but it was really fun and refreshing to be able to do that. And also to learn how to have those types of creative, collaborative conversations. There's never tension in it. But I think a lot of the tension comes from the inside. I'm always afraid to say if something's not working, so I have historically danced around and been like a timid kindergarten teacher, freezing. And when we got closer to it, I was finally able to be like, 'Here's what's not working and here's why.' But that's why Michael and Britt were so great to work with because when I was able to get the balls to articulate the 'what' and 'why' they proposed these phenomenal solutions.

Britt: It was so exciting! Sadie, back to your original question about how did you guys do this? Did you pass pages back and forth? If we tried to organize how this happened, it was like: text threads at 1:30am, Google documents at 2am, meetings at the kitchen table at 10am, staying up after everybody else goes to bed, having a glass of wine, figuring things out. It was so many different formats, that I think the common thread was everybody was so excited to problem solve and collaborate. I never left those meetings feeling depleted. I never thought, 'Oh my God, we have to fucking fix this.' It was like, 'What are we going to do next? How are we going to figure it out?' And it was so wonderful.

Kestrin: And a table read doesn't lie. You don't have to have tension on set, you don't have to get to that point where everyone's all but hurt. If everyone listens to the table read, you'll know when you have a problem, you don't have a problem because someone's pissed you have a problem because no one's laughing.

DEADLINE

HOME / FILM / REVIEWS

'Pretty Problems' SXSW Review: A Comic Tale Of Wealth, Privilege, Relationships, Sex & Wine



'Pretty Problems'
SXSW

A couple have a wild weekend away in *Pretty Problems*, Kestrin Pantera's laugh-out-loud comedy premiering at SXSW.

Written by Michael Tennant, who also co-stars, it's a witty look at wealth, privilege and relationships over a couple of days of hedonism in wine country.

Lindsay (Britt Rentschler) is as bored with her marriage to Jack (Tennant) as she is working in a boutique — until Cat Flax (JJ Nolan) swoops into the store, showering her with flattery and conspicuous displays of wealth. The pair bond over a bottle of wine, and Lindsay arrives home flushed with excitement about her rich new friend. Jack reluctantly agrees to accept Cat's invitation for a weekend away, and they jump into a car and drive into another world: of butlers, gift bags, massages and astronomically expensive wine their hosts forget even buying.

Cat's married to Matt Flax (Graham Outerbridge), a self-made billionaire who's joined at the hip to his best friend Kerry (Alex Klein), a trust-fund kid who's dating Carrie (Charlotte Ubben). While Lindsay sees an opportunity to live a different life, Jack is suspicious and uncomfortably out of place, especially as he's now a door-to-door salesman, having lost his job as a lawyer. Their relationship is tested as they go from dinners to wine tastings to murder-mystery parties, where it turns out Lindsay has a connection to a member of staff.

There's a suggestion of a conspiracy, something Jack addresses head-on when he half-jokingly wonders if the weekend will be a "Purge" thing, or a sex thing. But this is propelled more by characters and comedy than mystery. There's a flavor of *Absolutely Fabulous* and *Schitt's Creek* to the farcical extravagance on display. Nolan is hilarious as the faddish, flamboyant host who makes lavish promises she's unlikely to keep — all the funnier for being a recognizable, believable character. She also reeks of boredom and dissatisfaction: There's no suggestion that money is the answer, even if we share in some of Lindsay's envy and enjoyment of their lavish lifestyle. Outerbridge and Klein are perfectly cast as jocky bros, while Ubben is an excellent comedy drunk — somewhere between Joanna Lumley's Patsy Stone and Billie Lourd's Gigi from *Booksmart*.

No line is wasted in this sharp script. Detailed comical asides range from "I was a trainer at Sea World, and I quit that when it stopped being cool," to "Titty Bingo?", uttered expectantly by a man answering the door when Jack is doing his sales rounds. Sex comes up a lot, underlining the irony that Jack and Lindsay's love life is ailing.

Director Pantera and her female-led team have delivered a film that explores the uncomfortable truths in relationships, be they marriages or new friendships — and it's also a tremendous amount of fun. This is a party you want to go to, to live vicariously, laugh a lot, and then be glad to go home to your own life.



Michael Tennant & Britt Rentschler on Making ‘Pretty Problems’ (2022)



In *Pretty Problems* (2022), which will premiere at SXSW on March 14, couple Jack (Michael Tennant) and Lindsey (Britt Rentschler) confront their flagging relationship while on a weekend retreat at their new friend's gauche vineyard. Suddenly thrown into the realm of the super-rich courtesy of Cat (J.J. Nolan) and her husband Matt (Graham Outerbridge), Jack and Lindsey have to navigate uncomfortable discoveries about what each of them wants out of life. Joined by absurd couple Carrie (Charlotte Ubben) and Kerry (Alex Klein), the weekend pushes everyone to the limits of how they see themselves.

In addition to co-starring in the film, Tennant and Rentschler are longtime friends who co-wrote the script. I had the chance to sit down with the two of them. We chatted about their creative processes, friendship, and how they hope to help people laugh during bleak times. The following is that conversation, edited lightly for length and clarity.

Michael: I spent a lot of time the last few years producing movies, and I got really depressed because I kept watching people make movies for the wrong reasons. People wanting to get social, wanting to drink white wine, make German cars, and tell their friends that they should start to be a celebrity on set. It just made me really depressed. Then getting to do this with this group of people brought me out of it.

Devix: Nothing better than messing around with great friends at a vineyard to cure some creative blues. Speaking of which, one of the highlights of the way you both, alongside Kevin, structured the vineyard section of the film. Once Jack and Lindsey end up there with Cat and her friends, characters just off to see get to see all these personalities play up against their expectations and reservations about one another. Was that an intentional move to try and show off every facet of these people?

Michael: Yes. Short answer: Yes.



Devix: From my understanding, the two of you wrote this movie together. I want to hear about the collaboration that went into synthesizing this idea and writing the script for *Pretty Problems*.

Michael: I've been having a lot of the age moments around this about the story by thing. But, this just doesn't happen without Brittany. Like, she just was my muse. She was my inspiration. I'm sure Kay Thompson in the movie just passing the last bit three-quarters. Take it, Britt.

Britt: So Michael and I have been friends for 15 years. We met in an acting class and became very fast friends. We really love to work together, and over the years have developed a great relationship. One day he called me and he said "Listen, I'm really nervous about this but I just read Brad Pitt's *Craving* for the second time and I'm feeling really fired up right now. So I wrote this script. I have 10 pages written with you please read it for me." So I took it to a coffee shop. And I, you know, with that kind of setup, I was like, oh my God, that's so sweet. What is this gonna be? I read it, walked out of the coffee shop, and called him immediately. I was like, Michael, we have to make this. This is so great.

It was so amazing. I went over to his house immediately. We sat in his backyard, we cracked open a bottle of wine. We chatted and I was like, tell me what you what you're thinking, the script. "I want this to be a weekend. I want to be the wife. Here are the themes that I'm working with. You reach these collars in relationships, you want more you don't know what to do about it. I want to use this mentality of exception and vacation talk." We got down to it and did an itinerary for the whole weekend by thinking of the wildest, wildest, craziest things we could imagine them going through.

Over time we just kept moving the needle on this, this is how I feel in a relationship. When I'm in a fight with my partner. This is something I've wanted, this is something I've thought too. This is something I think is so useful, you know, and hopefully, throughout the movie, people side with different characters. Sometimes you're like Jack's got it. And sometimes you're like, oh, man, come on. That was really the relationship from beginning to the delivered point where Michael is just cracking up jokes and being so open to exploring things. He let us get my hands in the female dialogue. We worked on pages and the whole thing was really collaborative.

And then we hit a pandemic. We were about to shoot two weeks before the pandemic locked us down. So while we waited, we just kept going through documents and just-right text threads and kept working and working and working. And that's how it was born.



Devix: That's such a lovely story. Thank you for sharing. I want to stick with your friendship for a minute. How knowing that you've been friends for so long, I'm curious how that impacted your performances as an unlikely couple. Did your closeness and shared history make playing a couple with so much baggage easier from both a writing and acting standpoint?

Michael: One-hundred percent. And, actually, may I curve Devix?

Devix: [Laughs] Go nuts.

Michael: [Laughs] Fucking fabulous. So I used to run this bar in Hollywood as my side gig. I was doing the occasionally-fucking-work-actor thing. The first time I met Brittany was at her old apartment in Beachwood, and we had rehearsal at 12:30. I showed up and I'd been up until like, four o'clock the morning. I was a little hungover, and I was the first person to show up to the rehearsal. I'm like, I'm a little fucking hungover. And she was like, "Well, I've got coffee and bourbon and so on also it here yet." Immediately perfect. We've been friends since our 20s. We watched one another go through some really shitty relationships in our 20s. We were both at each other's weddings. We've just always had a deep connection.

So, when I had this idea I brought it to Britt like she said because the way I've always seen it is that it's her, and it's me, it's Britt. It's always you and me. There's no one else around I want to work with as much. And I was at this point where I realized we're in a friendship like the life I want. I kept asking agents, producers, and other industry people to hand me the life and the career I wanted, and I just kind of realized that I had to do it with my people. I just had to really tell stories. I started working on this outline, and my ex and I were having this conversation around "It's not the dude thing that we always do." Let's like stucco cut. TV actors that are kind of recognizable that are so iconic.

But, there were at dinner for my birthday, in the before times, and I was looking around the table at Britt, her husband Graham [Outerbridge], our friend Clayton [Frisvold], and everyone else and had a thought. What if we just go make this with our friends? Like, what if we just go make this with our family? What if we just make this with people who will show up for one another, and who will really trust one another and care for one another? It probably helped that we had gotten very drunk and Britt gave me a split with a little balance in it so I ended up being up all night thinking through it. But yeah, when I woke up I called her because she's my favorite actor on the planet and we really got to work. It was amazing because I love it so much.

Britt: I'll pick up the ball, too. In answer your question, it was easier because we already cared so much about each other, and we knew that we cared about the project. We've both been through careers where we got told no almost all the time because someone is a bigger name. Because you haven't done enough yet. Whatever reason the door is getting shut in your face. We see each other every week for class and we go through these things together. And to have a moment where we could all meet and say yes, we're going to say yes. We're all saying yes together and we're going to open this door for ourselves, and more importantly, bring each other along.



The movie's first scene is a black and white comedy sketch.

Devix: Happy to say that, at least for this version, that closeness shows through in the finished product. Turning more more to the content and what we saw acted out on screen, *Pretty Problems* has a wonderful sadness to the comedy, a proper sense of play. How did you all approach creating that tone as a cast?

Britt: Well we were super lucky to have Kevin [Purvis], agree to direct because she understood the script right away. She got the idea of drama and comedy. In terms of that sense of play you mentioned, she did this amazing thing where she made sure we got at least one usable take that was very grounded and stuck to the script. Once she knew that we had a basic service for the rest she opened up the door and let everybody touch the ball. Inspire all over the place. And again, we had a sense of trust with each other that no one was going to take the ball and run for the sake of running. Everything that everybody did was in service to the script and the story, which is why we could let everybody go.

A lot of the earlier moments, I think Michael has said, are probably 70% what was written and 30% of our wonderful friends with genuine moments coming through. And yeah, Kevin would have to come in every now and then and be like, oh, we can have it but a little more childlike. Let's take it out of American Pie just for a second. But because of that, and because of our amazing editors, I think we got to mix in the more grounded moments with the madcap ones. In essence, we didn't have to run it through the different people to get approval at the moment. We could make a decision, and then the moment would work so well, because of that freedom.

Britt: Yes, and the longer answer is, we wanted to explore a lot of complicated themes with this. But ultimately, we wanted to deliver it as a comedy. You know, so if you're thinking about these things, about the expectations, about the dynamics, about the usability, you, about all of these much bigger conversations, then we did it right. We've seen this movie before where everyone's one-dimensional. We've seen it, you know, it's not interesting if everybody only has one particular idea better than that and so Michael was very careful as he explored who said what and when, with whom, so that we could explore these different sides of people.

Michael: I actually think Carrie and Kerry are the most honest characters in the entire movie. Because they just... that's just what they're doing. I really just didn't want to paint the rich people as just assholes. I knew I wanted them to come off as assholes, but then also give them three dimensions. They're people who are they're dealing with their own life. They're just dealing with it in a way that they can jump in a private jet or buy a concert. My favorite scene in the movie is Graham and me in the pool. Graham delivers an oral monologue about feeling yourself. He's so grounded. And, that character could have come off as such an asshole but he did such a beautiful job of making him so three-dimensional. The amount of play that we saw get as all so much grace to work with.



Michael and Graham Outerbridge in a pool scene from the movie.

Devix: Well, I mean tell you, when you can have an existential conversation in a pool and there's a volcano floating in the background? You're definitely got it in a sense that I can get so bored with.

Britt: [Laughs] You're so kind of gay.

Devix: Just a particular sense of humor. Which, fittingly, also gets to the fact that this movie balances so much comedy and some really heavy topics of socio-economic inequality and crumbling relationships. How did you work to balance those tones?

Britt: A big part of the mix was to have Kevin [Purvis], agree to direct because she really knows how things are going to cut together when we're shooting them. She made sure that every scene had multiple takes that she could pause place with when she got into the editing room. That way, when we were all working together on the set, we could see what looked. We could see where we needed to pull back to push ahead and we would have a new center for each. That was also a part of everyone's availability, that ability to know that character as well and to change to the moment when it was asked of them.

Michael: I had the great fortune of producing a movie with Allison Janney a few years ago. I would watch her come on set every day and just release the fuck out of the scene, and then just be still in her first take to get the scene out. And then every scene she would do, it's as if we're laughing the scene as the color red. I would watch her hit every tone of red possible. I'm sitting there on set going my god, this is an actor's dream because this will all flow so well together.

I kept thinking of that while I was writing and then on set for *Pretty Problems*, kept thinking about how to try and hit all those shades of red. I just want to make sure that my thoughts will like if you know? [Laughs] To make sure that it would be funny but also have a little bit. I didn't want to write Marriage Story, but I also didn't want to write American Pie. So really, I'm just so so so happy with how everyone showed up and threaded the needle between the two things. It's really so improved and so grateful for all the work everyone did.

[Author's Note: At this point, my way lived but being cut Rudy cracked the interview, and Michael, Britt, and I went in a living tangent about tests, therapists, and, believe it or not, Philip Larkin's poetry. We finally got it together about 10 minutes later.]

Devix: Now that Rudy has decided to before, I want to ask you both, what you're thinking about as we get close to the SXSW premier. What are you hoping people can walk away from the movie with?

Michael: Look, I started writing this because I could feel my marriage starting to fracture, to be perfectly honest. I want people to laugh that aware of that. That's for sure. I want them to laugh. I also hope that it can help people with their relationships. You know, we got this really lovely test from J.J., who plays Cat. She shared the movie with a friend. There that friend texted her back and said, "I think that movie just saved my relationship." That meant me and made me so fucking happy. So, in a dream way, that's what I want people to walk out with. I was hoping to save my relationship with this movie, and I didn't, unfortunately. But I want people to walk out of this laughing. And also willing to forgive, love, and see that partner for the whole person they are.

Britt: We never set out to have a solution at the end of this film. We wanted people to see, I mean, we they gonna make it? We don't know. But we know that they are one to be better possible to try. It's getting of this idea of what do we really want out of life? How can I decide to make a change? It's so useful just the power in other people's hands, thinking this person is going to change my life. This trip is going to change my life. This business venture is going to change my life.

But, you are the person who has to change your life. We have you get to laugh at a time when everybody really needs to laugh. And we also want everyone to feel a little bit of hope and a little bit of purpose. You know, a little bit of like, oh, maybe I'm gonna go do that thing I always wanted.

Michael: Amen to that

2022 SXSW FILM FESTIVAL PREVIEW- 5 MOVIES TO SEE IN TEXAS



There's a bit of frustration for me heading into **South by Southwest 2022**. Prior to the festival the world was still deep into pandemic restrictions and for my job, the preparation for a baseball season, which had me make the painful choice to cover **SXSW** virtually. Had I known the pandemic would have lesser COVID numbers and restrictions would be lifted, plus the baseball season delayed an extra month, I would have been in Austin, Texas in a heartbeat. But that's just a personal gripe and no matter what, the movies, the entertaining fun of **SXSW**, it's all still going to be a blast no matter where I am. This year's fest has an eclectic group of movies and you know it's going to be fun when the opening film is the Daniel directors newest work **Everything Everywhere All at Once**, featuring the legendary Michelle Yeoh kicking some ass, in what will be another inventive piece of cinema. The other major headliners include Sandra Bullock and Channing Tatum teaming up in **The Lost City**, the newest film from Richard Linklater with **Apollo 10 ½: A Space Age Childhood**, and the Nicolas Cage love fest with **The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent**. But this year I'm not all about the headliners- sure, you will see some reviews for these other ones soon- but the purpose of **SXSW** is to give a chance to other movies you may not have had on your radar. So here is a preview of 5 movies that you can see this weekend at **SXSW**, in Austin, or from the comfort of your own home:



MOVIE: PRETTY PROBLEMS

STARRING: BRITT RENTSCHLER, MICHAEL TENNANT, J.J. NOLAN

DIRECTED BY: KESTRIN PANTERA

The name of the game at **SXSW** is independent films and work that deserves more attention than the big blockbusters that you will get to see at any theater. The movie I am highlighting and taking a chance on is the comedy **Pretty Problems**. We have been seeing a resurgence in romantic comedies these days and director Kestrin Pantera has a history of making good ones. Jack (Michael Tennant) and Lindsey (the exquisite Britt Rentschler) are invited to a getaway weekend with new friends but as soon as they arrive things become a bit more wild than they had planned for. With an youthful and energetic cast- including J.J. Nolan from *Snatchers* and Vanessa Chester from *The Lost World*- it's looking to be one movie that audiences can have a lot of fun with.

PRETTY PROBLEMS PREMIERES MONDAY MARCH 14TH, 2022 AT THE ZACH THEATER

dailymotion



last month

Fest Track On Sirk TV Interview: PRETTY PROBLEMS [South By Southwest 2022 -...

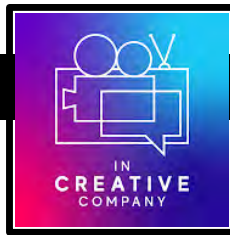
Fest Track

Follow

Co-Writers/Actors Michael Tennant & Britt Rentschler and Director Kestrin Pantera talk to Fest Track about development, thematics, timeline and performance structure in regards to their new film: "Pretty Problems" playing the Narrative Spotlight section at South By Southwest in Austin, Texas.

Read less ^







PRETTY PROBLEMS

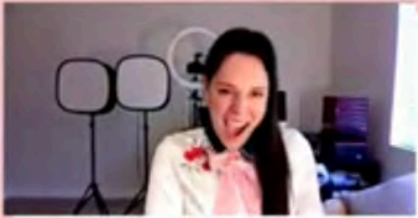


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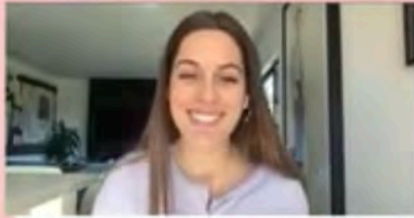
A CONVERSATION WITH STAR, CO-WRITER, AND PRODUCER
BRITT RENTSCHLER, DIRECTOR KESTRIN PANTERA AND
CO-STARS VANESSA CHESTER & AMY MAGHERA



CHERRYPICKS VIRTUAL STUDIO PRETTY PROBLEMS



Britt Rentschler
"Lindsay Simpson", Co-Writer & Producer



Amy Maghera
"Georgia"



Vanessa Chester
"Gigi"



Kestrin Pantera
Director



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Mark Wahlberg, Rose Byrne & More Gather for 'Instant Family' Premiere!



Mark Wahlberg is dapper in a suit while posing alongside co-star **Rose Byrne** at the Paramount Pictures special screening of their latest film *Instant Family* held at the Regency Village Theatre on Sunday (November 11) in Los Angeles.

The 47-year-old actor and **Rose**, 39, were joined at the event by their co-stars **Octavia Spencer**, **Britt Rentschler**, **Gustavo Quiroz**, **Tig Notaro**, **Julianna Gamiz**, **Isabela Moner**, **Margo Martindale** and **Julie Hagerty**, as well as the film's writer-director **Sean Anders**.

The red carpet was canceled out of respect for the California wildfires and the recent shooting in Thousand Oaks.

“❤️❤️❤️,” **Mark** captioned with his [Instagram](#) post with his wife **Rhea Durham** and their two daughters, **Ella**, 15 and **Grace**, 8.

Instant Family hits theaters on November 16!



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[Britt on Twitter](#)

CONTACT

MANAGERS

Aubrey Morgan
amorgan@mosaicla.com

Jeremy Berney
jberney@mosaicla.com

PUBLICIST

Laura Ackermann
laura@advantagepr.com

