

## THE BOSS (2016) - RT: 1 hr 39 min

- Released April 8th 2016
- Ben Falcone directed
- 29 million budget
- Universal Pictures
- Produced by Melissa McCarthy, Ben Falcone, Will Ferrell, Adam McKay
- Rated R

## QUICK OVERALL THOUGHTS

- **MARISA:**
  - Even though Melissa McCarthy has now done so many of these types of roles, she's STILL FUNNY. I loved her in Gilmore Girls before she blew up, and I still love her now. This movie was fun and ridiculous, but mostly fun, and that's what we want when we go to see film.
- **PHIL**

## DEVELOPMENT

- Melissa portrayed Michelle Darnell character 15-16 years ago at the Groundlings Theatre (Improv). Character stuck with her. Wanted to write out her story more.

## WRITING (Ben Falcone, Steve Mallory, Melissa McCarthy)

- Ben Falcone & Melissa McCarthy are married. Writing partners for 16+ years.
- Wrote with fellow Groundlings alum Steve Mallory
- Wrote a detailed outline 7-8 years ago. No one wanted their pitch
- Steve Mallory is primarily an actor (*Tammy*, *Identity Thief*, *Gamers*)
- In both films, the premise is solidly rooted in the common frustrations of thoughtless bosses and dead-end jobs. Tammy's midlife crisis was partially prompted by a meltdown with her fast-food manager (played by Falcone), but in "The Boss," Bell's Claire is the one suffering under tyrants

## STORY/CAST

- Real life daughter played 7 year old version of Michelle. Daughter begged to be in the movie.
- A spiteful film made for the Trump era
  - *The Boss* is the Hollywood comedy Donald Trump supporters have been waiting for, and McCarthy is a perfect fit. She has always played characters that reflect America's most abrasive, even self-indulgent traits—trash talking, trash eating, uncouth and uncompromising
  - Here she's traded the underdog status of *Tammy* for a wildly successful businesswoman named Michelle with a crazy hairdo, a straight-talking, eccentric squillionaire who won't take no for an answer. Sound familiar?
  - Insider trading isn't just illegal, but ethically dubious. You wouldn't know that from *The Boss*. Instead of contemplating Michelle's subpar moral compass when it comes to making money, it instead positions us to cheer Darnell as she makes her financial comeback on the backs of the Dandelions.
  - "First rule of business: Pretend to negotiate, then take what you want."
- POINT OF DISCUSSION: Fight scenes - Street Fight; Michelle vs Renault
- POINT OF DISCUSSION: Why go for a rated R?

- A way to soften her language could have helped, too. While the R rating is earned, “The Boss” could exist with a PG-13 by reworking a few choice phrases. The concept has kid appeal and an opportunity for sequels
- POINT OF DISCUSSION: Why was she given back by all parents (was she always mean or people were just that bad?)
- POINT OF DISCUSSION: Raunchiness of women in film vs men
- POINT OF DISCUSSION: What was the final message of the film?
  - Why can't our heroes have it all? Why should rich people need to give up money to learn about love & family?
- POINT OF DISCUSSION:

### **MELISSA MCCARTHY** (Michelle Darnell)

- “Michelle is completely unapologetic of her attributes.”- McCarthy
- Based her character on Leona Helmsley
- Known for *Gilmore Girls*, *The Heat*, *Identity Thief*, *Ghostbusters*, *Mike & Molly*, *Spy*, *Bridesmaids*)
- Comparing her rise as a star - *The Heat* (2.5 million) vs *Ghostbusters* (14 million)
- She's feisty in ways we couldn't imagine, profane at levels even Martha Stewart may not have reached
- “There is a lot [of improv], mostly from Melissa's end.”- Kristen Bell
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### **KRISTEN BELL** (Claire)

- Known for *House of Lies*, *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*, *Zootopia*, *Veronica Mars*, *Frozen*, *Gossip Girl*, *Get Him to the Greek*, *Heroes*, *Reefer Madness*
- Aspires to be a stand-up comic
- Bell is excellent, a great “straight guy” foil to McCarthy's silliness. She's funny purely by brushing McCarthy off and keeping a straight face the whole time, but her character is still sadly underdeveloped and she never quite feels like she matters.
- I saw the script and knew they were looking for someone possibly like me. I had secretly always dreamed of working with Melissa [McCarthy] and Ben [Falcone]. My husband has known them for 20 years. They grew up in comedy together. They were in *The Groundlings*, performing at weird black box theaters. I was always very jealous of that. I would always say to him, “I want to work with Ben and Melissa!” So I auditioned one night at their office and got a call the next day.
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### **PETER DINKLAGE** (Renault)

- Known for *Game of Thrones*, *X Men Days of Future Past*, *Ice Age*, *Pixels*
- [Quote on short stature] When I was younger, definitely, I let it get to me. As an adolescent, I was bitter and angry and I definitely put up these walls. But the older you get, you realize you just have to have a sense of humor. You just know that it's not your problem. It's theirs.
- Often plays highly intelligent and moralistic but flawed characters

### **KATHY BATES** (Ida Marquette)

- The third collaboration between Melissa McCarthy and Kathy Bates. They previously appeared together on *Tammy* (2014) and *Mike & Molly* (2010)

- Known for *Titanic*, *About Schmidt*, *Misery*, *Harry's Law*, *American Horror Story*, *Midnight In Paris*
- Often portrays kind-hearted or cold-hearted characters
- Often plays characters who are frequently tough-talking and outspoken

**CECILY STRONG** (Dana Dandridge)

- Known for *Saturday Night Live*, *Staten Island Summer*
- Funny to have such a dislikeable boss be in love with another dislikeable boss.

**ELLA ANDERSON** (Rachel)

- Known for *Mother's Day*, *Unfinished Business*, *Giant Mechanical Man*
- Another horrible person. Couldn't really tell who was worse, Rachel or Michelle.

**KRISTEN SCHAAL** (Scout Leader Sandy)

- Known for *Bob's Burgers*, *Toy Story 3*, *Despicable Me 2*, *BoJack Horseman*
- Frequently plays sweet natured but unstable characters
- Often uses a high pitched voice & her lisp

**BEN FALCONE** (Marty the Lawyer)

- Known for *Enough Said*, *Bridesmaids*, *Tammy*, *What to Expect When You're Expecting*
- Often cameos with wife Melissa McCarthy
- [Quote on careers of his and collaborator/wife Melissa] We're not very far removed from having to take any job that we can find, to get a job, because you want to be working. Someone sends you a script for the craziest idea ever-it could be about, like, the Abominable Snow-Woman-and you could be like, 'I don't know, maybe we should consider it?'

**EASTER EGGS/TRIVIA**

- The film was originally titled Michelle Darnell

**DIRECTING** (Ben Falcone)

- Sophomore directorial feature
- First film was *Tammy*
- Favorite scene was directing Michelle's apology to Claire.
- "The vibe on set is so joyful. He's the most patient, lovely director. He genuinely wants the scene to be great and he genuinely wants everyone to feel good doing it." - Kristen Bell
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**PRODUCTION/CINEMATOGRAPHY** (Julio Macat)

- **STREET FIGHT:** Every move was choreographed carefully, every kid given clear instructions, and stunt people were ready to step in if necessary. The hardest part, according to Falcone, was getting McCarthy to stop apologizing to the children for cursing. "Melissa never curses in real life. She's much more of a, 'Oh fudge,' person."
- Tested Movie with audience to see how far they could go with the violence.
- Principal photography began March 12, 2015 in Atlanta, Georgia and has filmed in numerous area locations including Agnes Scott College, Crescent Avenue in Midtown, Glenwood Park, and the Buckhead Loop area

- Julio is known for *Home Alone*, *Ace Ventura*, *Wedding Crashers*, *Pitch Perfect*, *Horrible Bosses 2*
- Julio is married to Elizabeth Perkins
- Member of the American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) since 1998
- Teaches seminars on lighting to many film schools around the country, awarded the 2013 Kodak mentorship award

#### **EDITING** (Craig Alpert)

- Known for *Borat*, *The Sitter*, *Knocked Up*, *Pineapple Express*, *Funny People*, *Your Highness*, *Ride Along*, *Pitch Perfect 2*
- A lot of critics and fans site the pacing of the film as a huge problem
  - It almost feels over-produced, as if it has been polished and chopped and played with in all the wrong ways, the producers losing sight of whatever they were originally doing. All the ingredients are there, they've just been combined in a really odd way

#### **SOUND/MUSIC** (Christopher Lennertz)

- Did an interview with Anatomy of a Movie for *Horrible Bosses 2* (check it out)
- Known for *Baywatch*, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2*, *Agent Carter*, *Galavant*, *Ride Along 2*, *Supernatural*, *Wedding Ringer*
- Was named "Best New Composer" of 2002 by Cinemusic.net
- The Film Music Review named his score for Clive Barker's *Saint Sinner* (2002) one of the top ten scores of 2002
- Composed the Logo music for Davis Entertainment
- Loved Michelle dancing "All I do is win" opening

#### **MARKETING**

- In the TV spot for this movie, it featured a cameo performance of a legendary WWE wrestler David Bautista as one of the Dandilions mentors who get punched in the plums by Melissa's character
- The first sign of trouble in "The Boss" is Michelle's first night on Claire's couch bed. When she sits down, the bed violently flings her high up on the wall, a crudely brutal, digitally faked moment of poorly calibrated slapstick that seems to exist only for the movie's trailer

#### **BOX OFFICE/RECEPTION**

- Domestic: As of April 14th, **\$28,945,860**
- Foreign: \$1,091,048
- Worldwide: **\$30,036,908**
- Domestic Summary
  - Opening Weekend: \$23,586,645
  - (#1 rank, 3,480 theaters, \$6,778 average)
- Beat Batman v Superman!
- Widest Release: 3,480 theaters
- In Release: 6 days / 0.9 weeks
- IMDB: 5.0
- RT: 19%, 50% Audience
- Cinemascore: C+

- “Because she’s so strong on so many levels, McCarthy needs to work with other directors who can find what isn’t already there. She did a great job in “St. Vincent.” She steals all of Judd Apatow’s films. But now it’s time to work with someone who doesn’t rely on her facility with arms-length characters”

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**