The Big Picture (1989)

Written by

Michael Varhol, Christopher Guest, and Michael McKean

Directed by

Christopher Guest

Cast

Kevin Bacon	*Nick Chapman*
Emily Longstreth	*Susan Rawlings*
J.T. Walsh	*Allen Habel*
Jennifer Jason Leigh	Lydia Johnson
Michael McKean	*Emmet Sumner*
Kim Miyori	*Jenny Sumner*
Teri Hatcher	*Gretchen*
Dan Schneider	*Jonathan Tristan-Bennet*
Jason Gould	*Carl Manknik*
Tracy Brooks Swope	*Lori Pressman*
Don Franklin	*Todd Marvin*
Gary Kroeger	*Mark*
Alice Hirson	*Mrs. Chapman*
Grant Owens	*Mr. Chapman*
Fran Drescher	*Polo Habel*
Eddie Albert	*M.C.*
June Lockhart	*Janet Kingsley*
Stephen Collins	*Attorney*
Roddy McDowall	*Judge*
John Cleese	*Bartender*
Richard Belzer	*Video Show Host*
Elliott Gould	*Prosecutor - Trial of Janet Kingsley (uncredited)*
Martin Short	Neil Sussman - *Nick's Agent (uncredited)*

Trivia

- The song "The Whites of their Eyes" was written and performed by the movie's writer Michael McKean and writer and director Christopher Guest.

- During filming, they rented Wink Martindale's house for three days to shoot a party scene, not knowing that Charles Bronson had just purchased a house across the street. Before the three days were up, the crew had managed to accidentally kill Bronson's cat. The story is related in the book "I Killed Charles Bronson's Cat", written by the movies Location Manager Barry Gremillion. Guest and Bacon also recount this story on the DVD commentary track.
- Teri Hatcher's first movie.
- In the scene where Nick first meets Alan, the secretary announces that the next appointment, Mr. Fleckman, is waiting. The next scene, we meet Alan's wife, played by Fran Drescher, who played Bobbi Fleckman in This Is Spinal Tap.
- In the scene where Nick (Bacon) meets Gretchen (Hatcher) for the first time, the song "Midnight at the Oasis" is heard in the background performed musak style. The same song was also used in Christopher Guest's film Waiting for Guffman.
- Nick's car that he drives while working for the delivery service is a mustard yellow 1971 AMC Gremlin. Even at the height of its sales history it was considered a dorky, folk-mobile that was the butt of much humor. The company became defunct just a year before the film premiered.
- During the student awards dinner, after the segment from "Crossed Sabres of Truth" is shown, Dan Schneider has the line, "...regrettably killed while filming." This is uncomfortable, in that Jennifer Jason Leigh's father, Vic Morrow, was killed during the filming of Twilight Zone: The Movie (1983). Ms. Leigh plays Lydia in the film.
- The film has some similarities to another Christopher Guest movie, For Your Consideration (2006), as both are satirizing the movie-making business.
- This picture was in development initially at Paramount when it went into "turnaround" and was then picked up by Columbia. When the project was finished, executives at Columbia disliked the film and tried to sell its distribution rights. According to a contemporary article in the New York Times, eighteen firms viewed the movie but did not make an offer. Columbia then did a very limited theatrical release which grossed less than $120,000 and subsequently sent the picture straight to video.
- First feature film directed by Christopher Guest.
- During the student films presented for the N.F.I. award at the beginning, Jason Gould's film shows Elliot Gould, his father. His mother is Barbra Streisand, who directed Jason to critical acclaim in The Prince of Tides, 2 years after this film.