

Lbs.



STARRING

Michael Aronov, Miriam Shor, Sharon Angela, Lou Martini, Jr.,
Susan Varon, Fil Formicola and Introducing Carmine Famiglietti

DIRECTED

by

MATTHEW BONIFACIO

WRITTEN and PRODUCED

by

CARMINE FAMIGLIETTI and MATTHEW BONIFACIO

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

MARC EVAN VICTOR

PRODUCTION NOTES:

Running Time: 100 Minutes,
Super 16MM, 1:85, Color

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Tag Line: Monday came.

Short Synopsis:

At 27-years-old, Neil Perota lives at home with his parents in Brooklyn, works for his father driving a school bus and weighs over 300 pounds. Just two days before his sister's wedding, he suffers a heart attack, creating family chaos and forcing Neil to re-evaluate his life. The next day, he heads upstate and buys a dilapidated trailer in the middle of nowhere with plans to kick his addiction to food in isolation. Two hundred miles from the comforts of home, Neil learns how to compromise, love, and survive – and that change – real change – comes from within.

Long Synopsis:

Neil Perota (Carmine Famiglietti) is seriously overweight. At twenty-seven years old, he weighs over 300 pounds, lives at home with his parents in Brooklyn, and is obsessed and controlled by food. When he suffers a heart attack two days before his sister's wedding, he is ordered to follow a strict diet, yet still cannot kick his habit.

Two months later, when Neil's sister (Sharon Angela) finally has her rescheduled wedding, it is not the \$50,000 fairy tale she originally planned, but a \$10,000, rain-soaked fiasco in her backyard. Disappointment leads Theresa's drunken husband (Lou Martini), who has caught Neil cheating on his diet, to expose Neil in front of all their guests. The humiliation gives Neil the wake-up call he really needs, and he decides that he has to leave home if he wants to make a real change.

He moves out of the city and 300 miles north into a dilapidated trailer in the country to try and shed the excess pounds. His childhood friend Sacco (Michael Aronov), a drug addict, soon visits Neil, and decides to stay with him in the trailer so they can battle their addictions together. But after a difficult confrontation between the two, Sacco leaves Neil to face the mission of saving himself on his own.

Over one year in isolation, Neil learns how to compromise, survive and falls in love for the first time with a local waitress (Miriam Shor). The lessons he learns are at the heart of this truly funny, touching and inspirational work.

The Team:

Marc Evan Victor (*Partner, Managing Member, Producer/Exec. Producer*) Mr. Victor was born in Hollywood, California and resides in Calabasas, California with his wife, two children, and two dogs.

A successful American business entrepreneur, Mr. Victor's financial success and keen eye for discovering talent and capitalizing on opportunity led him to becoming the new partner and Managing Member of the Brooklyn-Queens Experiment, LLC in 2008.

Originally making his mark as an internationally-celebrated clothing manufacturer in the 1970's and 80's, Mr. Victor went on to be triumphant in the literary market, involved with numerous works including *New York Times* bestselling author Kathleen McGowan's *The Expected One*. Then tackling the music industry, he fostered relationships with Kenny "Babyface" Edmond, as well as the Principals of Underdog Entertainment who produced the Grammy Award®-winning *Dream Girls* soundtrack and American Idol® singers over the past several years.

Mr. Victor is active in real estate and has served as an investment advisor to the owners of the St. Louis Blues and various celebrities and, in early 2000, became an owner and landlord of CarMax stores across the United States. His primary association with the entertainment industry began as a producer on such films as *Benji*, and involvement in *The Towering Inferno* and *Hatchet*. He also remains Executive Producer of numerous reality television programs through 8th Wonder Entertainment, including "Elected," the story of two African-American politicians who are redefining American government.

For BQE, he has not only been integral in managing the upcoming release of *Lbs.*, but has also optioned the motion picture rights to the true-life story of cancer victim Jason Vale. He is also the owner of a large international memorabilia company called *Joe Baseball*.

Upcoming film projects include, *The Jason Vale Story*; *Bloom*; *I Live in Brooklyn*, *Got Three Kids in Detroit*; *Big Guys* (a half-hour TV sitcom) and various other projects to be announced.

Matthew Bonifacio (*Partner; Director, Producer & Co-writer of "Lbs."*) Mr. Bonifacio was born, raised and resides in Brooklyn, New York.

His directing, writing and producing feature debut, *Lbs.*, premiered at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival and was nominated for the Alfred P. Sloan Award. *Lbs.* screened at many festivals, winning Best Feature Film awards at the Deep Ellum Film Festival and Avignon/New York Film Festival.

At the 2006 Tribeca Film Festival's first annual Tropfest@Tribeca, co-jurors Matt Dillon and Naomi Watts awarded Mr. Bonifacio's short, *The Watering Hole*, the Grand Jury Prize. Mr. Bonifacio directed, co-wrote and produced the film. The award jury also

included Darren Aronofsky, Caroline Baron, Famke Janssen, Anthony LaPaglia and Charles Randolph.

Mr. Bonifacio directed and produced his second feature film, *Amexicano* which made its world premiere at the 2007 Tribeca Film Festival. *Amexicano*, acquired by Maya Entertainment Group, was theatrically released in the fall of '08. The film received positive reviews in *The New York Times*, *New York Daily News* and *Variety*. *Amexicano* is now available on DVD online via Amazon, Netflix, Blockbuster, Walmart and Target.

Short film credits include: *From Woodside, Queens* (Oscar®-qualifying Aspen Shortsfest 2004); *Bagelized!* (Oscar®-qualifying 2006 Palms Springs Shortsfest, Oscar®-qualifying Aspen Shortsfest 2005) and *New Boobs* (Seattle International Film Group's 2006 1 Reel Film Festival at Bumbershoot), which was one of six projects commissioned by AtomFilms Studio. With over 1 million plays, *New Boobs* is the most viewed commissioned short by AtomFilms of all-time. AtomFilms partners include Comedy Central, Spike TV, and is a service of MTV Networks.

Mr. Bonifacio has directed and produced commercials for Major League Baseball/Verizon, DRI (starring Sugar Ray Leonard), Ad Council's Campaign For Freedom, HSBC, Vonage and others. He directed, wrote and produced, *Open Up*, an Anti-Racism PSA, which won a Telly Award, Cine Golden Eagle Award and at the Intercom/Chicago International Film Festival he won a Special Achievement Award for Direction.

Mr. Bonifacio served on the award jury at the 2nd Annual Tropfest@Tribeca 2007 with Josh Lucas, Griffin Dunne, Rose Byrne, Tom McCarthy, Mary Harron and Bennett Miller.

Mr. Bonifacio directed, wrote and produced with Lupe Fiasco, "My Radio is Bigger Than Yours," for Atlantic Records, a short comedy promoting music by Grammy®-Nominated Lupe Fiasco.

Currently in post, he directed, wrote and produced, *For Customers Only*, a new short starring Carmine Famiglietti, Neil Jain and Federico Castelluccio.

Upcoming film projects included, *The Jason Vale Story*, *Bloom* and *I Live in Brooklyn, Got Three Kids in Detroit*.

Carmine Famiglietti (*Partner; Writer, Actor and Producer of "Lbs."*) made his feature acting, producing and writing debut in *Lbs.*, which made its world premiere at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival and was nominated for the Alfred P. Sloan Award. *Lbs.* screened at many festivals, winning Best Feature Film at the Deep Ellum Film Festival and Avignon/New York Film Festival.

He is an accredited comedy writer from Queens, New York and headlined regularly at New York's premiere comedy club, Caroline's on Broadway. In 1999, Mr. Famiglietti signed with Alphabet City Records/Madacy Entertainment as a member of the comedy

duo, The HaYa Doin' Boys. Their songs "The 12 Days of a Guido Christmas" & "HaYa Doin!?! Yankees" have been #1 requested songs on major NYC radio stations for the past nine years.

Mr. Famiglietti also starred as Dino Conditto, the lead role in the feature film *Chooch*, which had a limited theatrical release in the summer of 2004. *Chooch* was recently released on DVD and can be found in Blockbuster Video, as well as other DVD outlets across the country.

Mr. Famiglietti has produced TV spots for HSBC, Major League Baseball/Verizon, the Ad Council's Campaign For Freedom, and *Open Up*, an Anti-Racism PSA.

Mr. Famiglietti produced the award-winning short film, *From Woodside, Queens* and then went on to star, co-write and produce *Bagelized*. Both films made their world premiere at the Oscar®-qualifying Aspen Shortsfest in 2004 & 2005. In 2006, Mr. Famiglietti produced *New Boobs*, which was one of six projects commissioned by AtomFilms Studio and currently has over 1 million plays. AtomFilms partners include Comedy Central, Spike TV, and is a service of MTV Networks.

At the 2006 Tribeca Film Festival's first annual Tropfest@Tribeca, co-jurors Matt Dillon and Naomi Watts awarded *The Watering Hole* the top prize, in which Mr. Famiglietti starred and produced.

Mr. Famiglietti wrote, produced and starred in his second feature film, *Amexicano*, which made its world premiere at the 2007 Tribeca Film Festival. *Amexicano* has also screened at the HBO New York International Latino Film Festival, Jacob Burns Center, Atlanta's High Museum of Art (22nd Annual Latin American Film Festival), Cucalorus Film Festival, Vallarta Film Festival, Sonoma Valley Film Festival (Grand Jury Prize – THX Winner), and others. *Amexicano* was acquired by Maya Entertainment Group and released theatrically on September 19th, 2008 and on DVD January 13th, 2009.

Atlantic Records hired Mr. Famiglietti and director Matthew Bonifacio to produce & co-write Lupe Fiasco's "My Radio is Bigger Than Yours," a short comedy promoting music by Grammy®-Nominated Lupe Fiasco.

Most recently, Mr. Famiglietti produced the feature film *When the Evening Comes*, starring Tony® Award-Winner Philip Bosco and Emmy®-Nominated Anne Meara.

Upcoming projects include *The Jason Vale Story*, which is the true story of a World-Champion Arm Wrestler who served five years in prison for distributing apricot seeds to fight cancer, *Bloom*; *I Live in Brooklyn*, *Got Three Kids In Detroit*; and *Big Guys*, a half-hour TV sitcom.

Julianna Gelinis (*Director of Operations and Marketing*) Ms. Gelinis handles marketing, press, educational outreach, sponsorships, branding and business operations for BQE, focusing currently on the upcoming theatrical and DVD release of *Lbs*.

Prior to joining BQE, Ms. Gelinas was the Marketing Coordinator at City Lights Home Entertainment, where she coordinated the release of 20 titles in 28 months, some of which include *Descent* (starring Rosario Dawson), *The Year My Parents Went on Vacation* (Brazil's official selection for the 2008 Academy Awards®), the Sundance Award-winning documentary *Manda Bala*, David Wain's *The Ten*, and the Academy Award®-winning classic *Kiss of the Spider Woman*.

Ms. Gelinas was born and raised in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and is a graduate of Drew University, where she received a B.A. in Political Science and Theater. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Director's Statement (as seen in FLM Magazine, the official magazine of Landmark Theaters):

In 1990, when I was 17, my father passed away from diabetes. It was a week after his 53rd birthday and he had battled with the disease his entire adult life until his weight and poor eating habits overpowered him. He was a longshoreman and I still remember how he would take me down to the Brooklyn piers. I would hold his clipboard and look out across the East River at the New York skyline in the distance. I would proudly watch as he took charge and directed his workers on the waterfront. I just thought he would live forever. But then he was gone. Little did I know that one day his passing would be part of my motivation for directing a movie about food addiction, compulsions and fighting to save one's life.

I learned from what happened to my Dad that life is short so I have always followed my dreams. At a young age I became fascinated with movies and realized that I wanted to be an actor. In 1991 I was cast as an extra in Spike Lee's *Malcolm X*. On set I met a fellow actor who would forever change my life, a young man from Queens, New York -- Carmine Famiglietti. He was funny, outgoing and confident, looked like Ben Affleck and at the time weighed only 185 pounds. We immediately formed a deep friendship and working relationship that has lasted for over 15 years.

Throughout the 90's I continued to get deeper into acting, performing in numerous plays in Manhattan. But something new was percolating inside me -- I was becoming very interested in filmmaking. I obtained the reading lists from NYU and Columbia University Film Schools. Hundreds of books later, I was educating myself and developed a strong desire for directing.

Over the years my friendship with Carmine continued to grow. We collaborated on a variety of theatre projects -- where we would write, act, direct, produce, design the program guide, print the tickets, clean the bathrooms -- you know, indie theatre at it's best. But by the late 90's Carmine's weight had dramatically increased to 385 pounds and I was worried about the health of my friend.

With the memory of my father always on my mind, it was really difficult for me to watch as Carmine gained almost 200 pounds. Then I began to notice that he wasn't acting as much and was basically hiding behind the scenes. But Carmine was fighting his demons,

and was up to something that would soon bring him out of hiding. One day he showed me a screenplay he was writing called "The Trailer" which would later become *Lbs.* I was completely taken after I read the first rough draft. The main character, Neil Perota, was overweight and addicted to food. Neil seemed very human to me, unlike the typical overweight characters always dehumanized in movies. In the script Neil loses an incredible amount of weight and I immediately knew that the real reason Carmine wrote the script was to save his own life. I couldn't stop thinking about the story of an overweight lead character who is in a life long fight with his worse enemy -- food. When I gave Carmine my feedback, we were so in tune with each other that he asked me to direct, co-write, and produce *Lbs.* with him. I was truly touched and enthusiastic. What mattered most to me now was helping my best friend save his life. So I set out to tell Carmine's story, and the story of millions of other people who struggle with food addictions, as truthfully as possible.

Lbs. isn't a movie just for people who have weight issues. It's for anyone who has ever wanted to come to terms with themselves, their health and the need to improve their lives. *Lbs.* may not have a neat little Hollywood ending but it speaks the truth.

In the film, Carmine's character Neil says, "Monday came...and I'm getting it done" -- and he did. As for me, I think back and realize that I've also accomplished something that once I could only dream of. Hopefully, *Lbs.* will motivate a lot of people to accept responsibility for their own recovery. Now every time I pass by the piers of Brooklyn, I'm reminded that the most important thing we have is our health and we have to do everything we can to keep it.

Carmine's Statement:

My initial reason and motivation for making *Lbs.* was to save my life. In the fall of 2001, we had the first staged reading of *Lbs.* and at that time, I weighed 385 pounds. By the time shooting was finished in the fall of 2003, I weighed about 215 pounds. *Lbs.* was shot in 46 days, spread out over a 27-month period in conjunction with my weight loss.

Lbs. was going to take a great commitment from a lot of people, as we weren't exactly going to be producing it in a conventional way. It was going to need a special director. As I went through the names of the directors I knew, I realized there was only one option and that was Matthew Bonifacio. He had never directed a feature in his life and he never went to film school, but he had the three most important qualities I was looking for: trust, a commitment to the project 'til the end -- and he was a close friend. I knew I was going to have tough times during the production where my diet wouldn't be going well, and I knew I was going to need a friend to get me through. Not some cynical filmmaker looking to get a feature under his or her belt and move on as quickly as possible. By the time we started shooting, his talent and abilities became evident, and clearly the right choice was made.

I've battled with my weight my whole life, and I will probably battle it until the day I die. As a kid it was tough because other kids would make fun of me, but by the time I turned 13 I was chubby, not fat, and was lucky to have a lot of great friends in high school.

Although being overweight isn't healthy, I'm probably one of the few fat guys who didn't let it stop him from enjoying life. I still asked out girls and played sports, and didn't sit home feeling sorry for myself.

As an adult I acquired a sense of humor toward my massively round stomach, but inside I had my moments of depression and the only thing that comforted me was food. How could I say no to something that made me happy and was always there for me? But no matter how down on myself I got and no matter how daunting the task seemed, I could hear that voice deep inside, telling me to change my life and get healthy. But I knew I had to do this on my own. I wasn't going to blame fast food or my mother. If things were going to change, I was going to have to take personal responsibility.

Making *Lbs.* was a way to fight back, to make a change, and to take control. Losing weight is a struggle. Food is a real addiction. This isn't only about image or how I look in a suit, or how many girls' phone numbers I can get when I'm in shape. It's about living the healthiest life I can live. That's all I've ever wanted – to find things in life that made me happier than food. And what I learned is that it's all about a single choice. Mine was *Lbs.*

The Road To Release:

In January of 2000, Carmine Famiglietti and Matthew Bonifacio had their first official production meeting for *Lbs.* Famiglietti weighed 385 pounds, his cholesterol was through the roof and his doctors were telling him he needed to make changes or suffer consequences down the road. Bonifacio was an aspiring filmmaker who only had a few independent public service announcements to his credit at the time. "I wasn't looking for the most experienced director, I was looking for a friend to help me get through the battle. I knew Matthew was a hard worker and he would learn as we went along," said Famiglietti. "It was not only the opportunity of a lifetime, but the opportunity to help my friend confront his demons," said Bonifacio.

In June 2000, Famiglietti finished a 170-page rough draft of the screenplay entitled *The Trailer*, which would later be changed to *Lbs.* Within a couple of months, another draft was complete, this time incorporating the feedback of Bonifacio.

By September 2000, *Lbs.* was ready to have its first staged reading. Michael Aronov, Lou Martini, Jr. and Sharon Angela were among the actors cast who later went on to star in the film. The reading was a success, and it was clear the project was now on the fast track to becoming a reality.

In January 2001, at a second staged reading, potential investors voiced their concerns that Famiglietti would have trouble losing the weight. A third reading was scheduled for

April, and Famiglietti had three months to prove his potential. The entire cast, including Miriam Shor, was in place and a large crowd was expected to attend. Famiglietti entered to astonished faces 50 pounds thinner, and the reading was a success. However, investors still didn't pull the trigger. Apparently this time, they were concerned of Bonifacio's inexperience as a director and Famiglietti's ability to carry a leading role. Frustrated, five months passed and Famiglietti was about to officially put *Lbs.* on hold when his parents sat him down to talk about giving their son his inheritance early. It seemed to be the only option. "I just wanted to make sure that this was something my parents could do for me without putting themselves in a financial hole. But my parents insisted, believing in the film and believing in me," said Famiglietti.

On June 28th, 2001 the principal photography for *Lbs.* began at Karen's Diner in Brewster, New York. Over the next 27 months there would be close to 50 days of shooting and Famiglietti would go on to lose over 100 pounds. Along the way, the remaining money was raised. Bonifacio's family was the first to step in after filming began, and kept the production going through the third segment. As the production moved towards the fourth and final segment, those originally doubtful investors got involved, taking the film through completion.

Along the way, Famiglietti and Bonifacio were introduced to Jim Rubino, a commercial editor working at a company then called Slingshot. Mr. Rubino had always wanted to edit a feature film, so he and Stephen Ashkinos, one of Slingshot's owners, got on board. Mr. Ashkinos had only one request from the beginning: he wanted to go to Sundance. If *Lbs.* got into Sundance, he would consider the bill paid in full. To this day, neither he nor Jim Rubino has accepted a single dollar for his efforts on *Lbs.*

Lbs. made its world premiere at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival. That year was an especially competitive year, and *Lbs.* was surrounded by films such as: *Napoleon Dynamite*, *Saw*, *Garden State*, *Maria Full of Grace*, Oscar®-winner *Born into Brothels* and *Super Size Me*. From the start, *Lbs.* was the underdog, but as the festival unfolded, *Lbs.* was one of the best-reviewed films amongst the critics.

"Fresh and entertaining...Famiglietti's performance carries the charge of real physical and emotional catharsis...Bonifacio and Famiglietti show a strong feel for believable, rough-edged characters..."

- DAVID ROONEY, VARIETY

"Disarmingly natural, sincere and funny...Far more thoughtful and convincing film than the thematically linked *Super Size Me*."

- JOHN ANDERSON, NEWSDAY

"Has the force of documentary in its drama...Retains an unpretentious emotional power...A very human story of self-realization."

- STEPHEN GARRETT, INDIEWIRE

Dozens of other critics from newspapers across the country raved about the film, and it was this response that led to *Lbs.* being given a six-figure offer by one of the largest cable networks in the world. Yet Famiglietti and Bonifacio felt the film deserved a theatrical release, and after many months contemplating, they walked away from their best financial offer.

In the fall of 2004, Famiglietti and Bonifacio received an offer from a distributor that would include a theatrical release. With a theatrical release date set for the summer of 2005, the distributor arranged for *Lbs.* to screen at a number of other film festivals across the country for the purposes of building momentum. However instead, after appearances in Nashville, Florida and Philadelphia, the momentum stopped. It was June and there was still no date set for the release. The distributor explained they wanted to delay the release until the spring of 2006, as they felt they could execute a larger release with more time.

Over the next nine months, a poster was created, a trailer was cut and most importantly *Lbs.* saw national exposure when stories appeared in the magazines of Regal Cinemas and Landmark Entertainment. In addition, a number of special screenings for Universities including Harvard Medical School and NYU, and organizations including the National Institute of Health were arranged to garner the support of the medical community and college campuses.

In March of 2006, only a few months before the supposed release, one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world approached Carmine Famiglietti to make him the spokesperson for their new obesity drug. Over the next few months, a series of test commercials were shot starring Famiglietti, and a plan was developed to have the release of the new drug coincide with the release of *Lbs.* Suddenly it appeared *Lbs.* was going to have a true nationwide release with millions of dollars worth of marketing. The filmmakers were on top of the world.

Three months later, however, the deal fell through when the drug wasn't government approved. This news put the release of *Lbs.* in jeopardy, as it appeared the distributor was relying on those lost funds. The release date was pushed back again.

With the now twice-delayed theatrical release of *Lbs.*, the growth of their careers was suffering and in August of 2006, Famiglietti and Bonifacio went into production on their second feature, *Amexicano*, the story of an unlikely friendship between an out-of-work Italian-American and a Mexican day laborer.

As they did with *Lbs.*, Famiglietti and Bonifacio gave the film everything they had, and the hard work paid-off. *Amexicano* went on to make its world premiere at the 2007 Tribeca Film Festival, was acquired for distribution by Maya Entertainment and went on to receive great reviews in many publications including *The New York Times*, *The New York Daily News* and *Variety* during its theatrical release.

In the fall of 2007, after *Amexicano*'s production was wrapped, Famiglietti and Bonifacio were looking for an update on *Lbs.* and were told the same story. The distributor was having trouble raising funds and weren't setting a release date. With pressure from investors mounting and the momentum of *Amexicano* coming and going, Famiglietti and Bonifacio were losing patience.

One year later, Bonifacio was interviewed by Marc Evan Victor to direct a film he was interested in producing. Victor asked to see Bonifacio's previous work, and a DVD of *Lbs.* was placed in his hand. Victor was shocked the film was never released and decided to pursue *Lbs.* instead of moving forward on the other film. His plan was simple from day one: he wanted a nationwide release so all of America would have the opportunity to witness and be inspired by *Lbs.* With Victor as a new partner, Brooklyn-Queens Experiment, LLC was formed and in April of 2009, the former distributor relinquished 100% of the rights to *Lbs.* back to the filmmakers. Brooklyn-Queens Experiment finally had the opportunity to release the film on its own terms.

After a brief celebration, Brooklyn-Queens Experiment got to work. With early interest from multiple theatrical chains, press outlets and with the obesity epidemic in America at an all-time high, it seems all of their struggles were not in vain, as the most opportune time for *Lbs.* is right now.

Quotes From the Medical Community on *LBS.*:

"*Lbs.* is a genuine and inspiring portrayal of the disease of obesity that is rampant in America. Neil, played by Carmine Famiglietti and the director, Matthew Bonifacio a childhood friend of Carmine, provide an exceptional teachable moment in covering several years of the struggle alone with obesity, particularly weight maintenance within our obesigenic environment."

- George L. Blackburn, MD, PhD. the S. Daniel Abraham Associate Professor of Nutrition, Associate Director, Division of Nutrition, Harvard Medical School

"This groundbreaking film portrays the travails of obesity as they exist in real life: demoralizing, humiliating, addictive, all-consuming, and manageable by those motivated or capable of taking control of their lives. No blame here for fast-food or lack of physical activity as the usual culprits, but rather as the facilitators of some as yet unexplained inexorable drive to eat. For those of who are normal weight, the film allows us to enter the body and soul of the afflicted and spend a brief amount of time suffering and rejoicing with them. And for those remaining one- third of obese Americans, you will immediately identify the unashamed honesty of the morbidly obese lead who endlessly struggles with the need to be thin and the almost unstoppable urge to eat. We can all learn a lot from viewing this heart-wrenching film."

- Steven B. Heymsfield MD, Executive Director, Clinical Sciences & Metabolism, Merck & Co.

"*Lbs.* is an outstanding movie that illustrates the struggles faced by people with eating disorders and obesity. The stigma so frequently experienced by overweight and obese patients is poignantly captured in the film. The story of the protagonist's friend who suffers from drug addiction is skillfully interwoven with his story and highlights the similarities and differences between addictions and eating disorders. It is the first film that I have seen that has had a sympathetic portrait of what it is like to suffer from an eating disorder complicated by obesity."

- Pauline S. Powers, M.D., President of the National Eating Disorders Association

"I was taken with the film for it depicted graphically how one structures a binge... I was struck by the need to hibernate to turn down the intrusions which caused him to eat. I was struck by his frank discussions. The combination was the most powerful statement of the problem I have seen."

- Sasha Stiles M.D., Director of Severe Obesity/ Kaiser Permanente in San Francisco

"*Lbs.* is a powerful depiction of the personal toll and family impact of compulsive overeating. Neil is an everyman in the journey to overcome his problems and find self-acceptance."

- Diane Mickley MD, Founder and Director of Wilkins Center for Eating Disorders in Greenwich, CT

"In these days of a national obesity epidemic, the movie *Lbs.* provides an honest and consciousness raising account of a compulsive eater's struggles to normalize eating and weight. It is also a touching story of individuation in a food toxic and lookist culture."

- Lee Kern, LCSW, Clinical Director, Structure House, Weight Control and Obesity Treatment Center, Durham, NC

"*Lbs.* is a must-see film for health care professionals. After showing it to Harvard Medical students, many commented that it opened their eyes to the struggles obese patients face with their relationship to food. *Lbs.* will help these future physicians in caring for patients with obesity or other addictions, helping them find something that will 'fill the void'."

- Helen Delichatsios, MD, SM, Course Director, Preventive Medicine and Nutrition, Harvard Medical School

" *Lbs.* does an excellent job portraying the internal struggle of a man with severe obesity who has to completely leave his known world in order to break free from his addiction to food. The movie has quite humorous moments, yet is truly poignant. It shows the complexity of morbid obesity; an addiction to food in the midst of a judgmental society so consumed by excess, yet unwilling to accept its role in the creation of this problem."

- Ruth Q. Wolever, PhD, Clinical Health Psychologist specializing in Binge Eating Disorder, Duke Center for Integrative Medicine Clinic Director

"This movie put a human face on a major public health crisis. It illuminated the psychological, emotional and physical hardship experienced by millions of Americans. The take-home message of *Lbs.* is the importance of obesity prevention. Health care providers, urban planners, educators, policy makers, media, food industry, families and communities must act collectively to prevent future generations from experiencing Carmine Famiglietti's struggle."

- Lisa Sasson RD, Assistant Clinical Professor New York University Department of Nutrition Food Studies and Public Health

"The struggle of a young single obese man trying to lose weight depicts the realities that are faced when obesity is looked at as a chronic illness. The struggles of social, emotional, and psychological loneliness clearly emanate this often too real movie yet there is also the strength of human ability to overcome food addictions. Social acceptance and rejections are also beautifully handled in this movie. *Lbs.* leaves us with the ultimate question: How do I see myself in society and do I really accept me for myself?"

- Dr. Dennis Gage, M.D., Author of *The Thinderella Syndrome: A Practical Guide to Individualized Permanent Weight Loss*

Quotes from the Critics:

"Bonifacio takes this unique story and gives it a cinematic voice that is fresh, honest and entertaining."

- John Cooper, Sundance Film Festival

"Famiglietti's performance carries the charge of real physical and emotional catharsis..."

- David Rooney, Variety

"Disarmingly natural, sincere and funny...a far more thoughtful and convincing film than the thematically linked *Super Size Me*..."

- John Anderson, Newsday

"A touching, frank feature-film debut for both director Matthew Bonifacio and lead actor Carmine Famiglietti...it's the movie's sentiment and good humor that make it truly impressive."

- Brittney Gilbert, Nashville Scene

"Has the force of documentary in its drama...retains an unpretentious emotional power...a very human story of self-realization."

- Stephen Garrett, Indiewire

"A well-acted and well-written, funny and touching story."

- Dan Gross, Philadelphia Daily News

"Bonifacio and Famiglietti show a strong feel for believable rough-edged characters..."

- David Rooney, Variety

"...winning performances...here's hoping we see a lot more of Famiglietti..."

- Tod Caviness, Orlando City Beat

"Absolutely delightful and touching feature directed by Brooklyn native Matthew Bonifacio... "

- David Ling, Paper Magazine

"Strong and empathetic...(Famiglietti) holds down the emotional center of a film that doesn't get weighed down by its good intentions."

- Chris Vognar, Dallas Morning News

"Fresh and entertaining...genuine, warm spirit...a reality TV compulsiveness...appealing and unpretentious..."

- David Rooney, Variety

"Lbs. never resorts to cheap fat jokes...its pleasantly melancholic mood hits a similar note as *The Station Agent*..."

- Dan Buskirk, Philadelphia Weekly

"Bonifacio adeptly handles Neil's transformation and the heaviness of his situation with an enviably light touch."

- John Cooper, Sundance Film Festival

"You can't miss *Lbs.* ...this praised American indie tells the bittersweet story of an overweight man's attempt to change his life by trimming down..."

- Irv Slifkin, Philadelphia Magazine

"(Alexander Payne's) *Sideways* counterpart is *Lbs.* ...often heartbreaking, with just enough humor to make it go down easily."

- Robert Wilonsky, Dallas Observer

"A hearty movie with substance and realism...*Lbs.* trims the fat off clichés and platitudes."

- Brad Schmitt, The Tennessean

"...(Carmine Famiglietti) is extraordinary...an inspirational film by Matthew Bonifacio...fearlessly tackled...effectively brings the issue to the forefront..."

- Tiffany Whitney, IHIGH.com

"A wonderful performance by Carmine Famiglietti...a must-see movie."

- John Douglas, Grand Rapids Press

"...a plus-size *The Station Agent*..."

- Duane Dudek, Journal Sentinel

Critics' Pick of 10 Favorites at the 2005 Philadelphia Film Festival: *Lbs.*

- Carrie Rickey, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*

Primary Credits:

Director: Matthew Bonifacio

Screenwriters: Carmine Famiglietti, Matthew Bonifacio

Story: Carmine Famiglietti

Executive Produced by: Marc Evan Victor, Donald P. Knapp

Producers: Carmine Famiglietti, Matthew Bonifacio

Co-Producers: Stephen Ashkinos, Sophia Antonini

Cinematographer: William M. Miller

Editor: Jim Rubino

Principal Cast: Carmine Famiglietti, Miriam Shor, Michael Aronov, Sharon Angela,
Susan Varon, Lou Martini, Jr.

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