

= David Schwimmer =

David Lawrence Schwimmer (born November 2 , 1966) is an American actor , director , producer and comedian . He was born in Flushing , Queens , New York , and his family moved to Los Angeles when he was 2 . He began his acting career performing in school plays at Beverly Hills High School . In 1988 , he graduated from Northwestern University with a Bachelor of Arts in theater and speech . After graduation , Schwimmer co @-@ founded the Lookingglass Theatre Company . For much of the late 1980s , he lived in Los Angeles as a struggling , unemployed actor .

He starred in the television movie A Deadly Silence in 1989 and appeared in a number of television roles , including on L.A. Law , The Wonder Years , NYPD Blue , and Monty , in the early 1990s . Schwimmer later gained worldwide recognition for playing Ross Geller in the sitcom Friends , for which he received a Primetime Emmy Award nomination for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series in 1995 . His first leading film role was in The Pallbearer (1996) , which was followed by roles in Kissing a Fool (1998) , Six Days Seven Nights (1998) , Apt Pupil , and Picking Up the Pieces (2000) . He was then cast in the miniseries Band of Brothers (2001) as Herbert Sobel . After the series finale of Friends in 2004 , Schwimmer was cast as the title character in the 2005 drama Duane Hopwood . Other film roles include Melman in the computer animated Madagascar films , the dark comedy Big Nothing (2006) , and the thriller Nothing But the Truth (2008) . Schwimmer made his West End stage debut in the leading role in Some Girl (s) in 2005 . In 2006 , he made his Broadway debut in The Caine Mutiny Court @-@ Martial . Schwimmer made his feature film directorial debut with the 2007 comedy Run Fatboy Run . The following year he made his Off @-@ Broadway directorial debut in the 2008 production , Fault Lines . In 2016 , he starred as Robert Kardashian in American Crime Story , for which he received an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Limited Series or Movie .

= = Early life = =

Schwimmer was born in Flushing , Queens , New York City , to attorneys Arthur and Arlene Coleman @-@ Schwimmer . He has an older sister named Ellie (born 1965) . His family subsequently moved to Los Angeles , where Schwimmer had his first experiences of acting at the age of 10 when he was cast as the fairy godmother in a Jewish version of Cinderella . In 1979 , Schwimmer went to a Shakespeare workshop given by English actor Ian McKellen in Los Angeles . He recalls that he was riveted by the experience . Schwimmer then entered a contest in the Southern California Shakespeare Festival three years in a row , winning two first prizes .

Following his mother 's successful career as a divorce lawyer , the family moved to Beverly Hills , where Schwimmer attended Beverly Hills High School . Schwimmer admitted to being an outsider during his time at the school , recalling , " When I was there I always felt : ' This is not me , I 'm surrounded by people with a different value system . And I just wanted to get out of California . ' " He was best at the subjects of science and math and thought he would become a doctor . Schwimmer enrolled in a drama class , where he appeared in stage productions . Encouraged by his school drama teacher to further his acting , he flew to Chicago for an acting workshop . He noted that the experience was both " enlightening and exhilarating " . In 1984 , Schwimmer graduated from Beverly Hills High and wanted to go straight into acting , but his parents insisted he go to college first so he would have something to fall back on . Schwimmer moved to Chicago to attend Northwestern University , where he had attended a summer drama course when he was 16 years old . At the university , he studied theater was in an improv group with Stephen Colbert , the No @-@ Fun Mud Piranhas . After graduating in 1988 , with a Bachelor of Arts degree in theater and speech , Schwimmer co @-@ founded the Lookingglass Theatre Company . Subsequently , he returned to Los Angeles to pursue an acting career .

= = Career = =

== 1989 ? 1994 : Early work ==

After his supporting role debut in the ABC television movie *A Deadly Silence* (1989) , Schwimmer followed this with roles on the legal drama *L.A. Law* in 1992 , and the comedy @-@ drama series *The Wonder Years* . He made his feature film debut in *Flight of the Intruder* (1991) , had a recurring role as a lawyer @-@ turned @-@ vigilante in *NYPD Blue* before auditioning , unsuccessfully , for a series pilot called *Couples* . He landed his first regular series role as the liberal son of a conservative talk show host (*Henry Winkler*) in the sitcom *Monty* .

== 1994 ? 2004 : Breakthrough ==

In 1994 , Schwimmer was cast as Ross Geller in NBC 's situation comedy *Friends* , a series that revolved around a group of friends who live near each other in Manhattan . He played a hopeless @-@ romantic paleontologist who works at a museum and later becomes a professor at a university . Schwimmer initially turned down the role as Ross , but accepted afterwards . Executive producer Kevin S. Bright said that he had previously worked with Schwimmer , the character of Ross was written with him in mind , and he was the first actor cast . Schwimmer based Ross on Nicolas Cage 's role of Charlie from the 1986 film *Peggy Sue Got Married* . The show debuted on September 22 , 1994 , and was watched by almost 22 million American viewers . *Friends* quickly developed a loyal audience , with the show and Schwimmer receiving strong reviews . The *Pittsburgh Post @-@ Gazette* was complimentary of Schwimmer , calling him " terrific " . *Variety* 's television reviewer , said : " All six of the principals , especially (*Courteney*) *Cox* and Schwimmer , appear resourceful and display sharp sitcom skills " . For this performance , he earned an Emmy Award nomination in the category of Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series in 1995 .

Schwimmer starred in his first leading film role in the 1996 romantic comedy film , *The Pallbearer* with Gwyneth Paltrow . In the film , Schwimmer plays a man asked to deliver the eulogy for a high school friend he cannot remember , and begins an affair with the friend 's mother . Critics dismissed *The Pallbearer* as a poor imitation of the 1967 film *The Graduate* . *Variety* 's film reviewer complimented the actor , writing that he had enjoyed his performance , stating that he displayed " a winning , if rather deadpan , personality along with good comic timing " . It also concluded that Schwimmer had a " promising bigscreen future " . Janet Maslin of *The New York Times* cited that his first film " relegates him to a drab role " . When asked why he decided to accept the role , Schwimmer admitted the decision was to " make an effort to find roles that are as far away from the character of Ross as possible " . He was offered a role to star alongside Tommy Lee Jones in the 1997 science @-@ fiction comedy *Men in Black* , but turned it down in favor of starring in *The Pallbearer* , explaining , " This is an opportunity to grow rather than go for the quick cash " .

His next film roles in 1998 were *Kissing a Fool* , *Six Days Seven Nights* , and *Apt Pupil* . In *Kissing a Fool* , a romantic comedy , Schwimmer played Max , a dapper , smart @-@ mouthed ladies ' man . Mick LaSalle of the *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote , " Fans of the sitcom *Friends* may be surprised by David Schwimmer in *Kissing a Fool* . [...] Take it from someone who has never seen *Friends* and comes at Schwimmer with no preconceptions : He does just fine . As a TV sports reporter in *Kissing a Fool* , he oozes the command and self @-@ satisfaction of a young , successful man " . The film was critically and financially unsuccessful . In *Six Days Seven Nights* , he played the boyfriend of Anne Heche 's character . In *Apt Pupil* , adapted from a novella of the same name by Stephen King , he had a supporting role as a school guidance counselor . " I was scared of the part " , Schwimmer said , " but I wanted to be part of the movie " . At the time , he noted it was a " little frustrating " that people would typecast him due to his role on *Friends* . He subsequently appeared opposite Woody Allen and Sharon Stone in Alfonso Arau 's straight @-@ to @-@ cable comedy *Picking Up the Pieces* (2000) .

In 2001 , Schwimmer played Captain Herbert M. Sobel in Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks ' HBO World War II miniseries *Band of Brothers* . The television miniseries is based on the book of the same title written by historian and biographer Stephen Ambrose . Although *Band of Brothers* was met with largely positive reception , Schwimmer 's performance was criticized ; the BBC News

concluded , " Part of the problem ... may have been the ridiculous fact that Friends favourite David Schwimmer plays the hard and cruel Captain Herbert Sobel . The only thing believable about Schwimmer 's acting is when he cowers in the face of true battle . His puppy dog eyes make him appear even more pitiful " . Later that year he portrayed Yitzhak Zuckerman in the war drama Uprising , based on the true events of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1943 .

In March 2004 , Schwimmer appeared as himself on HBO 's comedy series Curb Your Enthusiasm . During the lengthy run of Friends , Schwimmer directed ten of the show 's episodes . The show 's tenth and final season ended on May 6 , 2004 .

= = = 2004 ? 2010 : Directing = = =

After Friends , Schwimmer starred in the 2005 independent drama Duane Hopwood , as the title character , who is an alcoholic whose life is spiraling downward rapidly after a divorce and is looking to turn his life around . The film received ambivalent reviews . Despite the reception , Schwimmer 's performance was favored by critics ; Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun @-@ Times reported that the role was Schwimmer 's " career @-@ transforming performance " . Duane Hopwood was screened at a special presentation at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival . Furthermore , in the same year he voiced Melman , a hypochondriac giraffe , in the computer animated film Madagascar (2005) . The Washington Post noted that Schwimmer is particularly appealing as Melman . Despite the mixed response from critics , the film was a commercial success , earning US \$ 532 million worldwide , making it one of the biggest hits of 2005 .

Schwimmer starred on the London stage in May 2005 , with Catherine Tate , Lesley Manville , Sara Powell , and Saffron Burrows , in Neil LaBute 's Some Girl (s) at the Gielgud Theatre . In the production , he plays a teacher who is ready to settle down and marry , but decides to visit four ex @-@ girlfriends first . For his performance , Schwimmer received critical reviews . The Independent wrote that Schwimmer " is not called upon to extend his range nearly as far as one might have expected in Some Girl (s) . [...] Schwimmer remains bland , competent , and boyish ? though not fatally boyish in the manner that appears to have turned these women on " . However , Charles Spencer of The Daily Telegraph praised Schwimmer , reporting he " proves inspired casting . He takes to the stage with ... his endearing gaucheness seems designed to ensure our continued sympathy . Schwimmer mercilessly lays bare his character 's opportunism , casual cruelties , and chronic self @-@ deception " .

In 2006 , he made his Broadway debut in Herman Wouk 's two @-@ act play The Caine Mutiny Court @-@ Martial . Schwimmer played the role of Lieutenant Barney Greenwald in the production , which was directed by Jerry Zaks . In an interview with New York magazine , he revealed that he had wanted to try Broadway , however said " a couple of things came up that just never quite felt right . Either because I liked the play but wasn 't hot on the director , or there was another star attached that I wasn 't jazzed about working with " . He further added that when showed a copy of Wouk 's novel " ... I was shocked at how good the writing was " . His next film role was in the 2006 black comedy Big Nothing , in which he played a bitter , unemployed scientist .

Schwimmer made his directorial feature debut in the 2007 British comedy film Run Fatboy Run . The film stars Simon Pegg as a man who signs up for a marathon (he is out of shape) to convince his former fiancée and five @-@ year @-@ old son that he has turned his life around . When asked why he decided to direct the film , Schwimmer said : " As a director , I was struck by the challenge that I thought the script presented , which was that it was kind of three films in one . You had some great , big physical comedy , and I thought funny dialogue and characters . And then there was some real emotion to it with the relationship between the father and the son and the romance aspect " . Run Fatboy Run garnered mixed reception , with the New York Daily News rating it one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half out of five stars and writing , " Most disappointing is how Schwimmer ? who spent 10 seasons on a sitcom filled with hypervocal characters ? manages to bumble ' Fatboy 's ' tender moments " . USA Today , however , was favorable towards Schwimmer , reporting he possesses filmmaking finesse " having wisely chosen strong comic material for his debut behind the camera " . For his directorial work , he was nominated for a British Independent Film Award in the category of

Best Debut Director .

On November 8 , 2007 , Schwimmer made a guest appearance in the second season of the television series 30 Rock , where he played Greenzo , an NBC environmental mascot . The following year , he was part of an ensemble cast that included Kate Beckinsale , Matt Dillon , Alan Alda , Angela Bassett , and Noah Wyle in the thriller Nothing But the Truth (2008) . The movie received generally favorable reviews . The success of Madagascar led Schwimmer to return to the role of Melman in the 2008 sequel , Madagascar : Escape 2 Africa . The film earned US \$ 603 million at the international box office . Schwimmer took part in directing in @-@ studio segments for Little Britain USA , an American spinoff of the British BBC television series Little Britain . In regard to this , he commented that he had " a good time directing episodes " for the show .

In October 2008 , Schwimmer made his Off @-@ Broadway directorial debut in Fault Lines at the Cherry Lane Theatre in New York . The production won a mixed review from the Los Angeles Times , which wrote : " Based on Fault Lines ... we can 't really tell whether Schwimmer has much talent as a director . We 're surprised he didn 't try something more challenging for his debut . If not much else , Schwimmer has encouraged his actors to intense their energy levels and comic timing at all costs " . The New York Post , however , noted that Schwimmer " knows a thing or two about freewheeling banter ... and for a good while the play crackles with terrific dialogue , expertly delivered " . In February 2009 , he returned to theater in a Chicago production of Thornton Wilder 's three @-@ act play Our Town as George Gibbs at the Lookingglass Theatre . " Schwimmer ... turns in a poignant , richly textured and demonstrably heartfelt performance as George Gibbs . I 've seen a fair bit of Schwimmer 's post @-@ Friends stage work in London and New York , and I 've never seen him better " , commented the Chicago Tribune .

On August 2 , 2009 , Schwimmer played himself in the sixth season of the HBO television series , Entourage . In the episode , Ari Gold 's (Jeremy Piven) agency tries to steer his career back to television . Schwimmer directed his second feature , Trust , starring Clive Owen and Catherine Keener . The film , a drama , is about a family whose teenage daughter becomes victim of an online sexual predator . Trust premiered at the 2010 Toronto International Film Festival .

= = = 2010 ? present : Return to television = = =

On January 1 , 2011 , Schwimmer guest @-@ starred on the British comedy series Come Fly With Me starring Matt Lucas and David Walliams , whom he directed in Little Britain USA .

In 2014 , it was announced that Schwimmer has been cast as the lead in the ABC comedy pilot Irreversible . He would play " one half of a somewhat eccentric , self @-@ absorbed couple " in his first comedic television role since Friends finished in 2004 . As of January 2016 , Schwimmer is playing Robert Kardashian in the first season of the FX anthology series American Crime Story . The series is developed by Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski and is based on the novel , The Run of His Life : The People v. O.J. Simpson by Jeffrey Toobin . In January 2016 , it was announced that Schwimmer and Jim Sturgess would be starring in the new AMC crime drama , Feed the Beast . Schwimmer will be playing Tommy Moran , while Sturgess will play Moran 's best friend , Dion Patras .

= = Personal life = =

In the early 2000s , Schwimmer dated Australian pop singer Natalie Imbruglia , Israeli actress Mili Avital , and American actress Rochelle Ovitt . In 2007 , Schwimmer and British artist Zoë Buckman began a relationship . In March 2010 , Schwimmer announced their engagement and married Buckman in a small private ceremony that June . On May 8 , 2011 , the couple had a daughter , Cleo Buckman Schwimmer .

In June 2006 , Schwimmer won a US \$ 400 @, @ 000 defamation lawsuit against Aaron Tonken , a former charity fundraiser . Tonken claimed Schwimmer had demanded Rolex watches in order to appear at his own charity event , a claim that Schwimmer had denied .

Schwimmer is an active director of the Rape Treatment Center in Santa Monica , which specializes

in helping victims of date rape and child rape . He has also campaigned for legislation to ban drugs such as Rohypnol and GHB . In November 2011 , he gave the Scottish charity Children 1st permission to screen his film Trust to commemorate World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse and Violence against Children .

In 2012 he rebutted two longstanding rumors : one that he appeared as a soldier on a train in Biloxi Blues (1988) , saying , " No . I don 't know why that 's on IMDb , but I never was in that " , and the other that he is related to dancer Lacey Schwimmer , saying , " No , not at all . Please set the record straight . I guess it 's a natural assumption because we have the same last name , but no . I 've never even met her " .

= = Filmography = =

= = = Film = = =

= = = Television = = =

= = Awards and nominations = =