

SKILLS LIKE THIS

A Monty Miranda film

88 minutes

South by Southwest Audience Award Winner

Distributed by:
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Running Time: 88 min

Format: 35 mm

Sound Format: Dolby 5.1

Trailer and official website: www.skillslikethis.com

Press Kit and Stills: www.shadowdistribution.com

SYNOPSIS

Short Synopsis

Max Solomon faces the awful truth that he will never be a writer. But that doesn't mean his creative energy goes to waste. In a desperate attempt to find his talent, he turns to crime, albeit in his own idiosyncratic and non-violent way. In this inventive comedy, three friends (and a bank teller) have their lives turned upside down when one of them realizes that larceny might be his best skill.

Long Synopsis

The day before his 25th birthday, Max Solomon faces the awful truth that he will never be a writer. In a desperate attempt to find his next artistic endeavor, he turns to crime and pulls off a great feat. His newfound talent ignites a passion within him and sends his two best friends on their own journeys. Tommy, the slacker, is inspired to enter the job market, and Dave, only too aware of the consequences of grand theft, becomes obsessed with writing the perfect apology letter. It may not be the time to fall in love, but when Max meets Lucy, it's decision time. In this inventive comedy, over the course of three days, three friends have their lives turned upside down when one of them realizes that larceny might be his best skill. "Skills Like This" is a fast and furious comic ride about the lengths to which the disaffected will go to achieve their dreams.

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CREDITS

For a full list of credits visit www.skillslikethis.com

Crew

Director	Monty Miranda
Written by	Spencer Berger
Story by	Spencer Berger
	Gabriel Tigerman
Producers	Donna Dewey
	Brian D. Phelan
	Rock Obenchain
	Paul Aaron
	Timothy Gray
Executive Producer	Greg "Freddy" Camalier
Associate Producers	Catherine J. Moore
	Judith Wahler
Line Producer	Amy Jarvela
Original Music	Andy Monley
Cinematographer	Robert F. Smith
Editor	Rock Obenchain
Casting	Corbin Bronson
	Annie Hamilton
	Chad Schnackel
Production Designer	Pamela Chavez
Art Director	Jake Newsom

CAST

Max	Spencer Berger
Tommy	Brian D. Phelan
Dave	Gabriel Tigerman
Lucy	Kerry Knuppe
Lauren	Jennifer Batter
Uncle Morris	Ned Bellamy
Rosa	Marta Martin
Cousin Jeremiah	Zach Cumer

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BIOGRAPHIES

Monty Miranda - Director

Upon graduating college, Monty started his own production company, Incite Films. Through this Denver-based company, Miranda has directed hundreds of national television commercials for a variety of diverse clients ranging from McDonalds to TIVO. Incite also created the national television series, *Twitch*, that broadcast for two seasons on the network TV!

Miranda's commercial work is known for its comedy and evocative use of music with quirky stories and realistic characters. The Cannes Film Festival, the Clio's, the Effies, the Addys, BBC's Most Outrageous Commercials and FOX's World's Funniest Commercials have recognized Miranda's commercial work, and his award winning political spots have been featured in the national press. CNN, the LA Times and the Washington Post praised the ads for their innovative approach and contribution to landslide upset victories. Miranda was a finalist in the final season of Project Greenlight.

Skills Like This is Miranda's film directorial debut. He is currently with Beachhouse Films and is working on a screenplay for his next project with *Skills Like This* writer Spencer Berger.

Donna Dewey - Producer

Donna Dewey is an Academy Award winning filmmaker who has been writing, producing and directing documentaries, commercials, series, industrials, and theatrical films for over twenty years. Dewey's documentary, *A Story of Healing*, filmed in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam, won the 1997 Academy Award for Best Documentary Short. Her film, *Chiefs*, won the documentary competition at Robert DeNiro's Tribeca Film Festival in New York City, and received a national broadcast on the PBS series, Independent Lens. Dewey also co-produced *Reading Your Rights*, which garnered an Emmy nomination.

Dewey's numerous documentaries and series have been broadcast and distributed by PBS. Her films have been invited to and have won awards in film festivals around the world, including Russia, Italy, France, and Spain, as well as numerous festivals in the United States. In 1984, Dewey and her business partner Rock Obenchain formed Dewey-Obenchain Films. The company has a reputation for high quality commercial work backed by numerous awards, including Clio nominations, Tellys, and Alphies.

Dewey has collaborated on four feature-length screenplays with her mentor, the late British director Jack Clayton (who is best known for directing *Room at the Top*, *The Innocents*, *The Pumpkin Eater*, *The Great Gatsby*, and *Memento Mori*).

Dewey is a member of the Independent Feature Project, International Documentary Association, Colorado Film/Video Association, New York Women in Film, serves on the Board of Directors of the Denver Film Society, was named 2000 Colorado Businesswoman of the Year, is a 2004 Girl Scout Woman of Distinction, has served on the Colorado Governor's Film Commission Advisory Board, and has been appointed by Denver's Mayor John Hickenlooper to serve as Chair of the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs.

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Spencer Berger – Writer, Actor

Spencer Berger began performing at the age of 9 as a member of the Metropolitan Opera's Children's Chorus, singing onstage with such greats as Placido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti in *La Boheme*, *Tosca*, *Suor Angelica*, and *Wozzeck*. After winning "Best Actor" for *Lost in Yonkers* and "Best Supporting Actor" for *Six Degrees of Separation* in the same year while attending Vassar College, Berger headed out to Los Angeles where he became a founding member (along with Skills Like This Co-Writer and actor, Gabriel Tigerman) of the three-man sketch comedy group *After School Special*. A.S.S. quickly found a home at the Comedy Central Stage, performing regularly to sell-out crowds, and garnering critical acclaim as LA Weekly's "Pick of the Week".

Skills Like This is Berger's first screenplay, as well as his big-screen debut.

Gabriel Tigerman – Co-Writer, Actor

After graduating Vassar College with co-star Spencer Berger, Gabriel Tigerman appeared in numerous TV commercials, including a popular Burger King campaign (which earned him recognition from his mail lady as the "I'm Spicy" guy).

Tigerman went on to land guest spots on *Grey's Anatomy*, *Without a Trace* and a series regular role on *Punk'd*. He has also had recurring roles on the CW's *Supernatural* and NBC's *Journeyman*. Gabe has appeared in such films as *Charlie Wilson's War* and *Something New*.

Gabe also co-wrote and starred in the *Fish out of Water* short films *Movie Night* and *The Nightmare*, both of which have appeared at the SXSW Film Festival, The Onion Presents Labrat Matinee, and *LOL* at the Upright Citizens Brigade Theater.

Gabe has continued to pursue his first love of improv, appearing in sketch shows at the Comedy Central Stage and Improv Olympic. He co-wrote and starred in (along with Spencer Berger) the sketch show *After School Special* (LA Weekly's "Pick of the Week") as well as the sketch show *Cabbage!* (LA Sketch Fest).

Brian D. Phelan – Actor, Producer

Phelan is a Denver native. Before becoming an actor he was drafted by the San Francisco Giants, but chose to play baseball for the University of Arkansas. He later transferred to the Southern Illinois University where he continued to play baseball and studied Mass Communication Media Arts.

Phelan comes from a family of filmmakers and artists and throughout his sports career he maintained a real love for film and acting. After graduation, he moved to Los Angeles to study acting. Phelan has starred in the play *Lovers and Other Strangers* at the Los Feliz Playhouse. He has also appeared in the TV movie, *Semper Fi*, and has had parts in several television series, including *NYPD Blue*, *Las Vegas*, *Boomtown*, *Friday Night Lights* and *Samantha Who*.

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In addition to playing Tommy, Phelan also served as a producer for SKILLS LIKE THIS.

Kerry Knuppe - Actress

Kerry Knuppe studied acting in Denver and performed roles in various theater productions throughout the state of Colorado before moving to Los Angeles. *Skills Like This* is Kerry Knuppe's feature film debut. Other film projects include *The Sensei* and *Yielding to a Willing Breath*.

Ned Bellamy - Actor

For over two decades on both the small and large screens, Ned Bellamy has worked with numerous Hollywood directors including Robert Altman in *The Player*, Frank Darabont in *The Shawshank Redemption*, Tim Burton in *Ed Wood*, Spike Jonze in *Being John Malkovich*, Tony Scott in *The Fan* and Simon West in *Con Air*. He has guest starred on a variety of television shows including *Seinfeld*, *The Larry Sanders Show*, *Scrubs*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *CSI: NY and Miami*, *ER*, *24* and on the new dramas *The Closer* and *The Unit*.

Bellamy can now be seen in the Harold Ramis feature *The Ice Harvest* alongside John Cusack and Billy Bob Thornton. He most recently completed work on the feature *Twilight* directed by Kathryn Hardwicke and on the Steven Soderbergh produced feature *Wind Chill* and is a recurring character in the TV series *The Sarah Conner Chronicles*.

Robert F. Smith - Director of Photography

Robert F. Smith is a seven-time Emmy Award winning cinematographer with over 27 years in the motion picture/television industry. Credits include over 600 commercials, 24 features films, 16 television shows. His most recent feature is *The Undying*. Television shows include this season of *The Sarah Silverman Show* for Comedy Central, and a recently completed pilot for Fox Televisiona reality series, *On The Lot*. Smith also worked behind the scenes for Peter Jackson's *Lord of The Rings III* and *King Kong*.

A former part-time professor at USC School of Cinema; in the summer of 2006, Smith taught in Amman Jordan, in conjunction with The Royal Jordan Film Commission, USC and Steven Spielberg. Other awards/recognitions include "Best Cinematography" (as camera operator) at the 2006 Sundance Film Festival for *Right at Your Door*.

Smith was instrumental in helping to expand the burgeoning motion picture and television industry in Colorado in the 80s' and 90s' with his lighting company, Lightsmith Electrical and Grip Company with five grip trucks and lighting packages.

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MUSIC

Director Monty Miranda on creating the film's soundtrack

My hope is viewers hear the music of SKILLS LIKE THIS as the soundtrack to MAX, LUCY, TOMMY, and DAVE and the songs put you in their crazy comic world. This in many ways is also the soundtrack to my life of living in Denver. The music is not a traditional score but a score made mostly of pop songs that I've hand picked or have had created specifically for the movie.

At the very early script development stages of SKILLS LIKE THIS I was struck with the soundtrack as a character in the film serving as a non-traditional score. This movie has to have the sounds of the life that the characters inhabit. This feels to me the best way to serve this story in addition to establishing the character of the city. Rock and Roll, Punk Rock, Ska, Country and Western, Hip-Hop and Electronica make this soundtrack a rather eclectic mix and paralleling the film, I believe they share a common independent spirit.

Bands from around the world kindly contributed music to SKILLS LIKE THIS. Some songs come from well-known bands like New Order. Their song Krafty, is the song that in a lyrical sense embodies the movie for me. The Wedding Present with their badass punk rock guitar (Ringway to Seatac) and then their beautiful Max and Lucy's love theme (I'm From Farther North than You) arcs with the character of MAX. Graham Lewis, of the seminal art punk band Wired, with his new band 27/11 and their proto dark reinterpretation of the 60's Monks classic (Oh How To Do Now) follows MAX and friends in their worst moments.

Much of the music, however, is created by unsigned musicians from Denver that have been a force and inspiration to me. Bands like Halden Wofford and the Hi*Beams who play the rough and aging rock band in the bar scene, Andy Monley, who cameos in the light rail scene, with his trippy infectious roots rock, and Nathaniel Rateliff of the Wheel with his dark ethereal vocal talents create the atmosphere of SKILLS LIKE THIS. My wonderful music supervisor Shawn Amos, pushed me to explore the new artists even further and by so doing we made some great new discoveries. While not LA, NY or Seattle, Denver has an impact on the international music world. Bands like Devotchka, The Flobots, The Warlock Pincers and the Fray come from this rich Denver music scene. All of these new emerging Denver artists share a love of making music without the benefits of high pay or fame. They make music from the purest place - because they have to.

I am honored to have such a soundtrack for SKILLS LIKE THIS and I thank the musicians for all of their contributions. I truly hope people continue to laugh and enjoy the movie and are inspired perhaps to hum a new tune on their way out of the theater.

Shawn Amos, Music Supervisor - Biography

Shawn Amos has been a trusted tastemaker, content creator and custodian of pop culture for the past decade. He has been entrusted with the musical legacies of icons Quincy Jones, Herb Alpert, Solomon Burke and dozens of heritage artists. Amos has produced albums for the Dirty Dozen Brass Band and Phil Spector protégée Darlene Love. He's produced Comedy Central broadcasts for the Upright Citizens Brigade. He's directed DVDs for

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comedians Pablo Francisco & Doug Stanhope and driven CD, DVD, web and broadcast projects for hundreds of artists and icons ranging from INXS to William Shatner.

Amos most recently conceived and co-produced *In The Name of Love: Africa Celebrates U2*, a new collection of African artists interpreting songs by the Irish super group. Currently Vice President of Content at GetBack Media, Inc., Shawn is also the producer and host of GetBack's original daily web program, *Retro Minute*.

Prior to joining GetBack Media, Amos was Vice President of Music & Original Content at Shout! Factory. He worked with Shout! Factory's co-founders at Rhino Entertainment, where he produced classic historic compilations, including the GRAMMY®-nominated *Rhapsodies in Black: Music And Words From The Harlem Renaissance*; *Say It Loud: A Celebration of Black Music in America*; and *Q: The Musical Autobiography of Quincy Jones*.

In between the two positions, Amos was Executive Director of the Quincy Jones Listen Up Foundation. There, he spearheaded house building and entrepreneurship programs in South Africa. A musician and lyricist in his own right, Amos has released three albums including *Thank You Shir-lee May [A Love Story]* (2005), *Harlem* (2000) and *In Between* (2002) and contributed a song to Solomon Burke's 2006 album *Nashville*.

Music Credits

Director
Music Supervisor
Composer

MONTY MIRANDA
SHAWN AMOS
ANDY MONLEY

"BODILESS"

Performed by Jux County
Written by Andy Monley
©1998, A. Monley, C. Pearson, R. Smith
Published by Bovek Music (ASCAP) all rights reserved

"HUMAN DESTINATION"

Performed by The Upsidedown
Composed by Jason Adams
Courtesy of Artist

"RINGWAY TO SEATAC"

Performed by The Wedding Present
Written by David Gedge and Simon Cleave
Courtesy of Artist

"JEALOUSY"

Performed by Halden Wofford and the Hi*Beams
Written by Halden Wofford
Courtesy of Artist

"Big Waves on Broadway"

Written by Nathaniel Rateliff/ The Wheel
Performed by Nathaniel Rateliff/ The Wheel
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"ROAD TO OLD MEXICO"

Performed by Halden Wofford and the Hi*Beams
Written by Halden Wofford
Courtesy of Artist

"SONG FOR DAVE"

Performed by Halden Wofford and the Hi*Beams
Written by Halden Wofford
Courtesy of Artist

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"I'M FROM FURTHER NORTH THAN YOU"

Performed by The Wedding Present
Written by David Gedge and Simon Cleave
Courtesy of Artist

"HOOK.LINE.SINKER."

Performed by Shawn Amos
Written by Stuart Mayes
Courtesy of Unbreakable Records

"Tickle It"

Performed by Mocean Worker
Written by Adam Dorblum
Slugwell Music (ASCAP)
Licensed Courtesy of MOWO!, Inc.
From the Album "Cinco De Mowo"

"Payday"

Performed by Kwanzamo Roots Rockers
Written by Melzumzi Gordon Misiszi, Thulani Leon Zondo and Bruce Benjamin
Courtesy of Actual Music

"BREAK UP SONG"

Performed by Andy Monley
Written by Andy Monley
Courtesy of Artist

"SATELLITE"

Performed by Andy Monley
Written by Andy Monley
Courtesy of Artist

"OH HOW TO DO NOW"

Performed by 27 # 11
Written by David Havlicek, Gary Burger, Larry Spangler,
Roger Johnson, Thomas Shaw and Graham Lewis
Munktime Publishing (BMI)
Courtesy of Bug

"YOU ASKED FOR IT"

Performed by Sound of Sinners
Written by Justin Hackl, Chip Dziedzic, Andrew Vastola,
Matt Clark, Matt Hergenreter
Courtesy of Artist

"BEST FRIEND TYPE OF GUY"

Performed by Thank God For Astronauts
Written by Kent Phillips
Courtesy of Artist

"PAY DAY"

Performed by Isaac Himmelman
Written by Isaac and Peter Himmelman
Courtesy of Artist

"Do You Fall On Beat"

Performed by Nathaniel Rateliff/The Wheel
Written by Nathaniel Rateliff
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"EYES"

Performed by Andy Monley
Written by Andy Monley
Courtesy of Artist

"MY HANGING SURRENDER"

Performed by The Wheel
Written by Nathaniel Rateliff
Courtesy of Artist

"KRAFTY"

Performed by New Order
Warner UK
Written by New Order
By arrangement with Warner Music Group Film and TV Licensing

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"SONG FOR DAVE"

Performed by Halden Wofford and the Hi*Beams

Remixed by Anthony Marinelli

Written by Halden Wofford and Anthony Marinelli

Skills Like This

Made with independent music

Made in Colorado

In addition to highlighting Denver's eclectic music scene, it should be noted that *Skills Like This* is an entirely Colorado based production. *Skills Like This* is the first feature length film produced in Colorado, by Colorado filmmakers to be picked up for theatrical distribution.