

Interview: John Krasinski Turns Toward Family in ‘The Hollars’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on September 1, 2016 - 12:01pm

- [Aloha](#) [2]
- [Anna Kendrick](#) [3]
- [Charlie Day](#) [4]
- [Emily Blunt](#) [5]
- [Family](#) [6]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [7]
- [Interview](#) [8]
- [John Krasinski](#) [9]
- [Josh Groban](#) [10]
- [Margo Martindale](#) [11]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [12]
- [Richard Jenkins](#) [13]
- [Sharito Copley](#) [14]
- [Sony Pictures Classics](#) [15]
- [Steve Carrell](#) [16]
- [The Hollars](#) [17]
- [The Office](#) [18]

CHICAGO – Any story involving family interactions is ripe for exploration, and John Krasinski (“The Office”) performs in and takes the director’s chair for the new film, “The Hollars.” This is his second directorial effort, looking at the somewhat dysfunctional title family during a medical crisis involving the mother (Margo Martindale).

John Krasinski is a well known affable guy, mostly for his role as Jim Halpert in the long-running sitcom “The Office.” He was born near Boston, and graduated from Brown University. He’s had a notable film career as well, with supporting roles in “License to Wed” (2007), “Leatherheads” (2008), “Away We Go” (2009), “Something Borrowed” (2011) and “Aloha” (2015). He broke his character mold this year in the Benghazi-inspired “13 Hours,” and now stars in and directs his second feature film, coming after “Brief Interviews with Hideous Men” (2009). He also became part of an official Hollywood “IT” couple, with his marriage to actress Emily Blunt in 2010.



John Krasinski Performs and Directs ‘The Hollars’

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Classics

In person, Krasinski is the type of person that exceeds expectations, relishing and appreciating the opportunities he has had in his career. He sat down with HollywoodChicago.com for straight talk about his new film and career.

HollywoodChicago.com: What part of ‘The Hollars’ family did you love the most, after indulging yourself for months regarding every little aspect of them?

John Krasinski: For me, it was the ability to to be dedicated to each other, after identifying each other’s flaws for so long. One of the things I love about this film is that it’s a real take on family, it doesn’t feel manipulative to me, and that was all in Jim Strouse’s script. Whether you love your family or not, there is an existential magnet that you have to them, and you will always be pulled closer to them than anyone you know. There is a beauty in that, and whether or not you are close, there can be an opportunity to try.

HollywoodChicago.com: This is your second feature...what did you learn on ‘Brief Interviews with Hideous Men’ that made ‘The Hollars’ an easier assignment?

Krasinski: ‘Brief Interviews’ was a very different film. I look at it as an art house type of cinematic experience, but I learned so much there because I hadn’t done it before. It was all a very terrifying crash course. So for ‘The Hollars,’ I was a bit more calm, prepared and confident, and I took everything in stride as it came up. There is something about moviemaking that definitely ‘up in the stars,’ so you let it ride when something happens.

HollywoodChicago.com: The cast was amazing. Which of those highly qualified performers surprised you in a small touch they brought to a character, that in the end made it better than you expected?

Krasinski: Margo Martindale is one of the greatest actors I know, and I knew she would bring that greatness to every single place in her character. I knew the whole cast would do that. The old adage is 90% of the director’s job is done when you cast the right people. We had the right people.

There was one moment I remember, it was tiny, but it was Richard Jenkins when he was sitting in the back of truck, lamenting that ‘I tried, you’ve got to know that I tried.’ That to me was so moving, because it was a conversation that if you haven’t had with your mother and father, you will hope you will. There is something honest about the realization that your parents aren’t superheroes anymore, they’re just real people. That was beautifully played.

HollywoodChicago.com: What impressed you about Jim Strouse’s previous work once you encountered the script for ‘The Hollars’? What quality of his writing did you want to make sure was communicated in the film?

Krasinski: I’ve loved Jim’s work for awhile, from his first script called ‘Lonesome Jim.’ Of course there was also ‘Grace is Gone’ and ‘The Winning Season,’ that Margo was also in. I think Jim writes in a way that few people do, making a hairpin turn between emotion and comedy. Movies allow you to build into a joke, movies allow you to slide into sadness or drama. Jim knows you can’t prepare for the good or bad times, they just happen to you. That’s why I wanted to make sure that the whole movie felt organic, it had to feel like real life.

HollywoodChicago.com: Is there a secret in your own family tree that you think would rival ‘The Hollars’ story, and how would you direct that story?

Krasinski: Hilariously, and counter to the film, I come from a very tight-knit and beautifully loving family. Interestingly, when I went through the script for the first time, I still thought, that is my family. I don’t know how Jim Strouse pulls that off, but there is something very universal about that family on the screen, that stops being fictional and reminds us of the projections of your own family – whether you’re close to them or not. I know there is no dark secrets in my own family, but at the same time I saw them all over the Hollars.



John Krasinski and Anna Kendrick in ‘The Hollars’

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Classics

HollywoodChicago.com: How careful were you with strategy regarding your first few roles post-Jim-from-The-Office or were you not thinking strategy and just taking what interested you? Do you find that situation ever-evolving?

Krasinski: It’s absolutely ever evolving, but I’m going to be honest with you, I’m a realist. I fully understood the position I was in when I portrayed somebody like Jim from ‘The Office,’ because it was the greatest honor I will ever have, there will be nothing better than that experience ever in my whole life. Because it was my first experience in show business, it was a beautiful experience and it has given my everything since then. It was never something I was running away from, but it’s something I had to understand.

I did think I wanted to do something different, and I thought if the audience can’t see me as anything but the Jim persona, then I’ll stop. And I also thought after ‘The Office,’ I had one shot to do something different. I don’t think I was strategizing, just being aware of it. I was lucky enough after the show to have the opportunity to do something that excited me, so ‘13 Hours’ was probably the biggest transitional movie for me – both career wise and physically. [laughs]

HollywoodChicago.com: Why that film in particular?

Krasinski: Not only did allow audiences to see me and accept me as something different, but it really allowed me myself to see me as something different, and that was huge.

HollywoodChicago.com: I was a proponent of the film ‘Aloha,’ and I wonder if you were perplexed with all the backlash the film received. What do you think people didn’t understand about it?

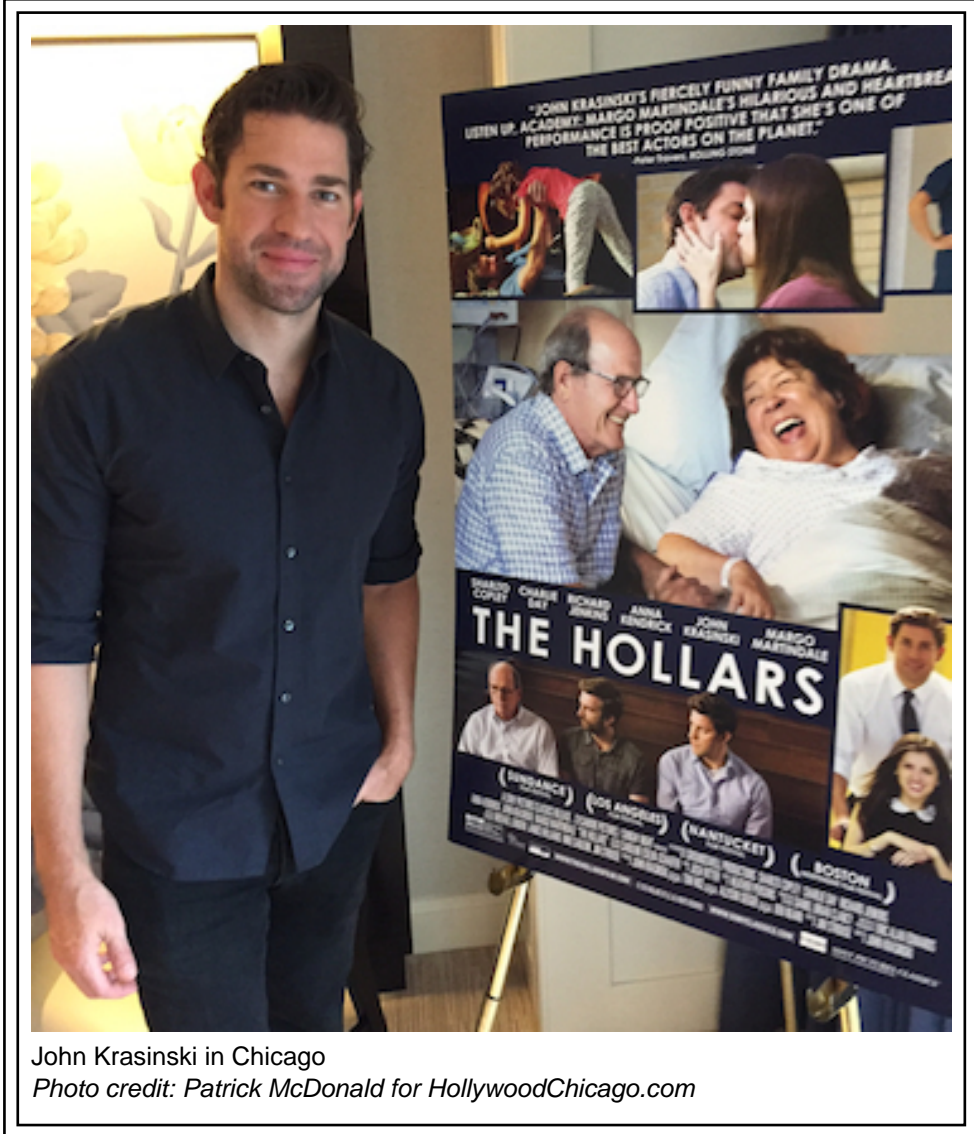
Krasinski: To be honest with you, I’m perplexed about horrible backlash regarding any movie. There should be an understanding that every movie is different, and from my observation there seems to be too much of ‘this movie needs to belong in a certain category.’ instead of reviewing them as an individual experience.

‘Aloha’ is a perfect example. There is no other movie like that film, because there is no other creator like Cameron Crowe. When you go into his movies, you should be hoping to get everything he wants you to feel, and then you are allowed to judge the film for the experience he was trying to give you. To judge ‘Aloha’ because it wasn’t ‘Transformers’ or a P.T. Anderson film doesn’t make sense. To me, film reviewing used to be about breaking down what the reviewer enjoyed or didn’t enjoy. It was succinct, it wasn’t about a huge hatred towards a movie. ‘Aloha’ was a very special movie for me, and I will support whatever Cameron Crowe produces.

HollywoodChicago.com: As a reporter and interviewer, I constantly hear stories about how brilliantly nice Steve Carrell on the set. I mean with everybody. Do you have a story that illustrates that truism, or are you here to bury that rumor once and for all?

Krasinski: [Laughs] No, I will be the 930,000th person to say he’s the nicest guy ever. The thing about Steve that many people don’t know is that he is not an overtly funny person. He’s funny, but mostly he’s a sweet and soft spoken guy. The reason people emphasize his niceness, is because that is how he is when he’s not performing. Then when the camera goes on, he’s the funniest person there.

HollywoodChicago.com: What story from your collaboration illustrates that nice guy point for Steve the most?



Krasinski: The moment I will never forget in my life – and Steve and I are both from the Boston area, so already had that connection – that last day he shot scenes for ‘The Office,’ was him and I saying goodbye to each other in character. And no joke, that took 17 takes, because each time ‘action’ was called, and before one word was said, we would just start crying.

Steve has done so much, he’s a huge professional and now a big star. But even through all that he still maintains an open heart, those moments mean something to him still. I look up to people who in this business realize it’s a total lucky break, and you have to be grateful everyday. Watching him get that emotional leaving ‘The Office’ gave me a great boost, because he projected that we were special to him, as he was to us.

HollywoodChicago.com: You are part of an “IT” couple in the show business world. What is the most absurd situation that you and Ms. B. have found yourselves in, as part of the wacky journey of show business notoriety? That really has to be surreal sometimes.

Krasinski: It’s totally surreal. I’ve heard in many interviews and opinions that ‘they asked for it, because they’re in the public eye!’ I guess I understand that, but we roll with the punches as we got along, but we also know we wouldn’t be where we are if the fans didn’t like what we do. We know that, but it’s also cool to have a barrier. You deserve a barrier, and I deserve a barrier. The guy sitting next to on the train should have a barrier.

I remember one time we were in New York City, on a Valentine’s Day date. I leaned across the table to kiss my wife, my total romantic move for the night, and suddenly a head popped up. This person was so close, it was almost a three way kiss. [laughs] They said, ‘I hate myself for interrupting, but could I get a picture.’ I said, ‘No you can’t, I’m trying to kiss my wife.’

HollywoodChicago.com: When you are in a creative quandary in the process as director, which director’s name do you have on your ‘What Would Jesus Do?’ bracelet, as in, what would ____ do?, and why?

Krasinski: It is George Clooney, because there are qualities about him that I adhere to mostly, and he’s an incredible guy due to the fact that he got his big break later in his career. He understands that this is a fantasy camp that we’re all living in, and nothing more. It’s isn’t reality.

He respects and loves what he does, and so I think in the hard times and the good times I think about what George would do. Because he gets through things by moving forward, and very rarely will he lash out in the press. He understands it all, so if he gets upset, a press outlet has done something really bad. [laughs]

HollywoodChicago.com: What’s next for you, what are you anticipating?

Krasinski: I just landed the role of Jack Ryan [the ‘Hunt for Red October’ character], which I’m very excited about, for a series version of his adventures. Amazon Studios has picked it up, and we start in January.

“The Hollars” continues its nationwide release in Chicago on September 2nd. Featuring John Krasinski, Anna Kendrick, Richard Jenkins, Margo Martindale, Sharito Copley, Charlie Day and Josh Groban. Written by Jim Strouse. Directed by John Krasinski. Rated “PG-13”



[19]

By [PATRICK McDONALD](#) [20]
Writer, Editorial Coordinator
HollywoodChicago.com
pat@hollywoodchicago.com [19]

© 2016 Patrick McDonald, HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on Mar 28 2024 - 5:54am):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/26783/interview-john-krasinski-turns-towards-family-in-the-hollars>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/aloha>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/anna-kendrick>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/charlie-day>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/emily-blunt>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/family>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/interview.html>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/john-krasinski>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/josh-groban>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/margo-martindale>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/patrick-mcdonald>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/richard-jenkins>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/sharito-copley>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/sony-pictures-classics>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/steve-carrell>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-hollars>
- [18] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-office>
- [19] <mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [20] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#PAT>