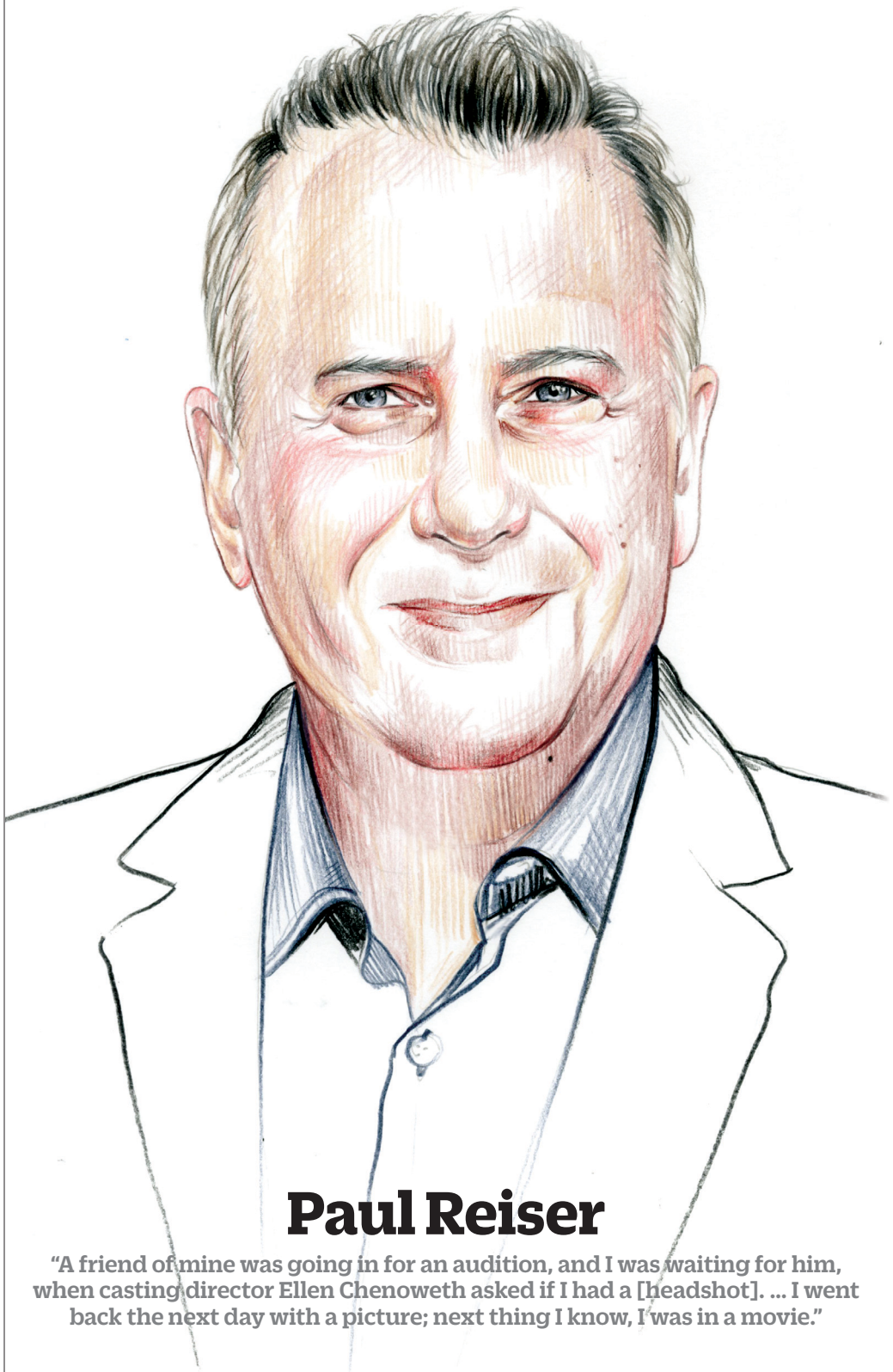


March 5, 1981

"Diner" Casting



Paul Reiser

"A friend of mine was going in for an audition, and I was waiting for him, when casting director Ellen Chenoweth asked if I had a [headshot]. ... I went back the next day with a picture; next thing I know, I was in a movie."

Paul Reiser has a slew of movies coming out this year, including "War on Everyone," "The Devil and the Deep Blue Sea," "The Darkness" and "Joshy." Also upcoming: the second season of Amazon's "Red Oaks" plus the May 3 release of the "Mad About You" boxed set, with all 164 episodes. The standup comic was first mentioned in *Variety* on March 5, 1981, when he was cast in Barry Levinson's "Diner." **SHALINI DORE**

#### What was "Diner" like?

It was my first job in show business. It was a crazy circumstance. A friend of mine was going in for an audition, and I was waiting for him, when casting director Ellen Chenoweth asked if I had a [headshot], and I said no. I went back the next day with a picture; next thing I know, I was in a movie. It was a great way to start a career — highly regarded director, (and the movie was) so well received.

#### How did you get into writing?

Barry Levinson gave me my first job and got me started writing. He said, "Here's what you do: Just start writing." And that was the first step. Part of the reason I became a writer is I don't like to pitch. Barry was an important friend and supporter. I work with a couple of writers now that I really spark with. It's what you do; you always want young fresh voices to work with.

#### Any other teachers?

For sure. In standup comedy, there was a very strong bond among all the comics who started at the same time. We were rooting for each other; with jokes, they'd say, "Does this adjustment help you?"

#### Do you ever read reviews about yourself?

I try not to, unless someone says, "You must read this lovely compliment." It's dangerous; we all wish we could be blase and "I don't care." But you do care. You don't want to read even a compliment. Something sticks.

#### Are you still in touch with your co-stars from "Diner"?

I'm still very friendly with Daniel Stern and Tim Daly, Ellen Barkin. There's a certain bond from that; we're very fond of each other. Kevin Bacon [another co-star] did a cameo on "Mad About You."

Visit [VarietyUltimate.com](http://VarietyUltimate.com) for every issue of *Variety* from 1906 to the present. Educational and research institutions, please call (323) 617-9555.

Variety, VOL. 331, NO. 7 (USPS 146-820, ISSN 0011-5509) is published weekly, except the first week in July, the fourth week in November, and the fourth and fifth weeks in December, with 40 special issues: Jan (8), Feb (8), June (7), Aug (6), Nov (5) and Dec (6) by Variety Media LLC, 11175 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90025, a division of Penske Business Media. Periodicals postage paid at Los Angeles, CA and at other mailing offices. Postmaster send address changes to: Variety, P.O. Box 15759, North Hollywood, CA 91615-5759. Canada Post International Publications Mail Product (Canadian Distribution) Publications Mail Agreement No. 40043404. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: RCS International Box 697 STN A, Windsor, Ontario N9A 6N4. Sales agreement No. 0607525. Annual subscription rates: USA, \$329; Canada, \$359 (includes GST); Europe, \$399; rest of world, \$599. Single copies are available for \$8; back issues \$11 U.S., \$15 International. A reasonable fee shall be assessed to cover handling costs in the event of a cancellation of a subscription. Subscription customer service is available by phone: (800) 552-3632 or email: [variety@pubservice.com](mailto:variety@pubservice.com). For content licensing, editorial re-use requests or custom ePrints or reprints, please email us at [licensing@variety.com](mailto:licensing@variety.com). Variety © 2016 by Variety Media, LLC. Variety and the Flying V logo are trademarks of Penske Business Media. Printed in the U.S.A.