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1226 N Salsipuedes Unit C 1(805)704-5994 |https://hollywoodglee.com Larry@HollywoodGlee.com



AFI AWARDS EVENT CELEBRATES THE POWER OF ART TO HEAL, INSPIRE AND UNITE

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

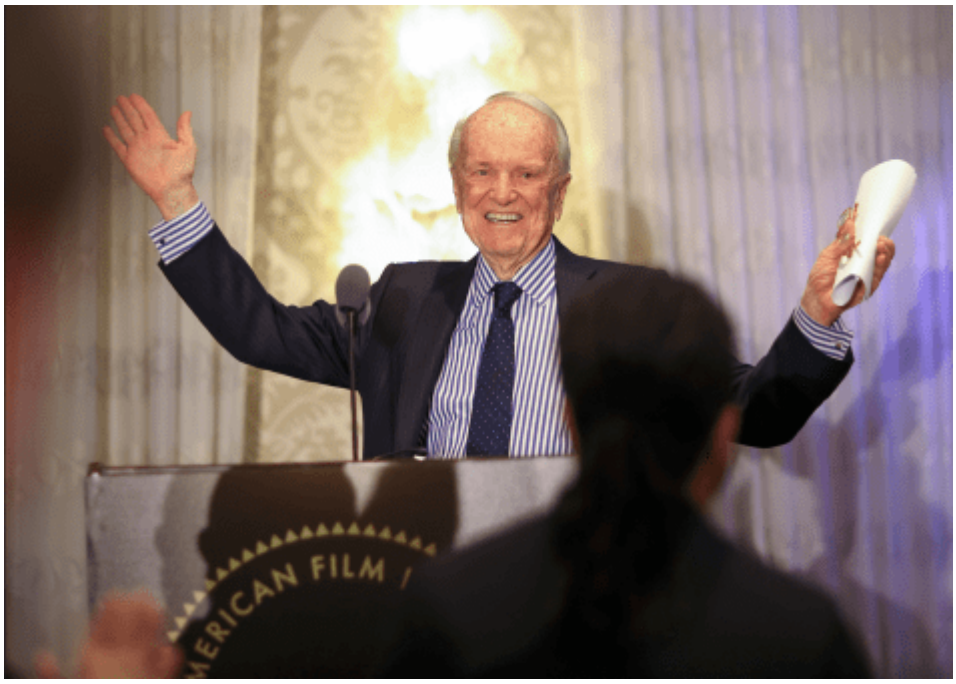


AFI AWARDS EVENT CELEBRATES THE POWER OF ART

TO HEAL, INSPIRE AND UNITE

Sean Baker, Adrien Brody, Quinta Brunson, Jon M. Chu, Colman Domingo, Jesse Eisenberg, Cynthia Erivo, Colin Farrell, Ralph Fiennes, Harrison Ford, Jodie Foster, Ariana Grande, Edward Norton, RaMell Ross, Zoe SaldaÃ±a, Denis Villeneuve and Michelle Yeoh Among Guests

AFIâ??s Founding Director George Stevens, Jr. Delivered Benediction



Richard Frank Scholarships Named in Honor of AFI AWARDS Recipients

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, Los Angeles, CA, February 6, 2025 â?? Today, the American Film Institute (AFI) celebrated the 2024 AFI AWARDS honorees, bringing together the creative community to honor excellence in the art of the moving image. Held at the Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles at Beverly Hills, AFI AWARDS is the only national program that honors creative teams as a whole, recognizing the collaborative nature of the work by embracing those in front of and behind the camera.

In opening remarks, AFI President and CEO Bob Gazzale spoke about the power of art to inspire empathy and hope, and how AFI AWARDS is a unique opportunity for everyone to appreciate and show their love for each otherâ??s work. â??Itâ??s about community, itâ??s about camaraderie â?? never about competition.â?•

AFI then revealed its official rationales, provided below, for all 21 honorees, providing the cultural and artistic context to mark these outstanding creative endeavors as the yearâ??s notable milestones. AFI AWARDS honorees include 10 outstanding motion pictures and 10 outstanding television programs deemed culturally and artistically representative of this yearâ??s most significant achievements in the art of the moving image. An additional honoree was selected for an AFI Special Award, designated for works of excellence that fall outside of AFI AWARDSâ?? eligibility criteria. All the honored works advance the art of the moving image, inspire audiences and artists alike and enhance the rich cultural heritage of Americaâ??s art form.

George Stevens, Jr., filmmaker, author and AFIâ??s Founding Director, delivered the official benediction. In his address, Stevens remembered the unique artistry of David Lynch (AFI Class of 1970), who passed away earlier this year. Addressing the honorees and guests, Stevens said, â??Letâ??s remember the remarkable legacy of cinematic creativity that David left for us â?? the mystical beauty we found in living his dreams. And as we leave this ceremony with David in our hearts, let us dedicate ourselves to restoring our devastated movie capital â?? and to making certain that â??the moviesâ?? in all their forms â?? not be afraid of grace and beauty and rise to new heights to

entertain and enlighten the world.â?•

AFI also announced that the Richard Frank Scholarship Fund at the AFI Conservatory, which was established in 2024, will award scholarships to AFI Fellows in the name of each of the 21 AFI AWARDS honorees. The scholarships will provide financial assistance to empower and amplify the voices of young storytellers.

The AFI AWARDS luncheon also featured the Instituteâ??s signature March of Time montage â?? a unique cross-section of cinematic milestones from decades past, which places the motion picture and television program honorees into a historical context and provides a perspective on the evolution of the narrative arts.

View March of Time Video

Guests in attendance at the AFI AWARDS luncheon included Rose Abdoo, Pam Abdy, Lucia Aniello, Jacques Audiard, Sean Baker, Stephanie Beatriz, Kristen Bell, Edward Berger, Alan Bergman, Lionel Boyce, Adam Brody, Adrien Brody, Quinta Brunson, Camille, Matt ChessÃ©, Jon M. Chu, Dylan Clark, Carl Clemons-Hopkins, Robert A. Daly, Mike De Luca, Colman Domingo, ClÃ©ment Ducol, Ayo Edebiri, Jesse Eisenberg, Mary Elizabeth Ellis, Cynthia Erivo, Lilah Richcreek Estrada, Colin Farrell, Mona Fastvold, Rhenzy Feliz, Ralph Fiennes, Jean Picker Firstenberg, Harrison Ford, David Foster, Erin Foster, Jodie Foster, Sara Foster, Richard Frank, Jomo Fray, Petra Fried, Dede Gardner, Lesli Linka Glatter, Jeff Goldblum, Neil Goldman, Brett Goldstein, Ariana Grande, David Greenbaum, Jennifer Grey, Jessica Gunning, Justin Halpern, Fred Hechinger, Ethan Herisse, Boyd Holbrook, Moeka Hoshi, Pearlena Igbokwe, Mark Indelicato, Sean â??Dinoâ?? Johnson, Rachel Kondo, Peter Kujawski, Greg Kwedar, John Landgraf, Donna Langley, Bill Lawrence, Issa LÃ³pez, Justine Lupe, Clarence Maclin, Leonard Maltin, James Mangold, Justin Marks, Nava Mau, Christopher McDonald, Ted McGinley, Yariv Milchan, Cristin Milioti, Hiro Murai, Edward Norton, Deirdre Oâ??Connell, Adriana Paz, Marc Platt, Samantha Quan, Edgar RamÃrez, Matt Reeves, Kali Reis, RaMell Ross, Zoe SaldaÃ±a, Hiroyuki Sanada, Ted Sarandos, Patrick Schumacker, Michael Schur, Jason Segel, Helen Shaver, Francesca Sloane, Megan Statler, George Stevens, Jr., Christopher Storer, Peter Straughan, Luke Tennie, Jackie Tohn, Vache Tovmasyan, Michael Urie, Jon-Adrian â??JJâ?? Velazquez, Denis Villeneuve, Jeremy Allen White, Jessica Williams, Brandon Wilson, Michelle Yeoh, David Zaslav and more.

AFI AWARDS 2024 OFFICIAL RATIONALES:

AFI MOTION PICTURES OF THE YEAR

ANORA fractures the modern fairy tale with an explosion of originality. Sean Baker continues his pursuit of the untold stories of America, driven forward with force by Mikey Madisonâ??s Brooklyn sex worker. This breakout performance shatters stereotype in a complex embodiment of hilarity and heartbreak while providing a crisp look at the modern worldâ??s obsession with money, class and power â?? and the elusive nature of happily ever after.

THE BRUTALIST forges an upside-down American dream on the layered foundations of love, class and the darkest pains of the past. Brady Corbetâ??s opus stands as a monument to the power of the art form â?? brilliantly manifesting the age-old clash between artistic expression and the greed inherent in capitalism. At the cornerstone of this epic tale are tour-de-force performances from Adrien Brody, Felicity Jones and Guy Pearce, who demand audiences answer the question: is the destination worth the journey?

A COMPLETE UNKNOWN enters the American cinematic songbook through the mind and music of Bob Dylan. At the heart and soul of James Mangoldâ??s time capsule stands TimothÃ©e Chalamet, whose embodiment of Dylanâ??s superhuman genius â?? and his human frailties â?? brings electric life to an iconic enigma. Explosive inner conflicts are grounded in the masterful supporting performances of Edward Norton, Monica Barbaro and Elle Fanning, each of whom answer the question with their eyes â?? â??How does it feelâ?¦to be on your own?â?•

CONCLAVE sends convention up in smoke in this pulse-pounding papal thriller. Edward Bergerâ??s deft direction proves taut, smart and subversive, as Roman whispers drive this robe and dagger drama forward with force. Rare is the film that endlessly entertains while posing thorny theological questions about faith and doubt â?? delivered in powerhouse performances from the holy alliance of Ralph Fiennes, Stanley Tucci, John Lithgow and Isabella Rossellini.

DUNE: PART TWO unleashes all the powers of the art form to fulfill the prophecy of its predecessor. Denis Villeneuveâ??s peerless vision for the epic big screen provides an unparalleled immersive experience where audiences are first-hand witness to both pulse-pounding action and spell-binding artistry. TimothÃ©e Chalamet and Zendaya lead the army of artists who imagine these worlds beyond spectacle and, perhaps most daringly, touch the heart of what is human.

EMILIA PÃ?REZ smashes the convention of the cinematic crime saga â?? with song and dance, murder and mayhem, and a thoughtful examination of gender and identity. Defying genre with every fresh step, Jacques Audiardâ??s stylishly provocative thriller continually explodes its narrative with powder keg performances from Zoe SaldaÃ±a, Karla SofÃa GascÃ³n and Selena Gomez â?? a true triple threat of todayâ??s top talent.

NICKEL BOYS opens our eyes to America â?? both its capacity for cruelty and its strength and perseverance in the face of adversity. Adapting the acclaimed novel by Colson Whitehead with infinite intimacy, RaMell Ross shines a lyrical light on atrocities in the all-too-recent past. Experiencing the narrative through a floating, first-person lens proves a cinematic magic trick that both breaks and then remakes the rules of the art form â?? ultimately, illuminating the poetic power of movies as engines of empathy.

A REAL PAIN is a true joy â?? finding the power of family and friendship amongst the ruins of an inhuman past. Jesse Eisenberg presents this odd couple odyssey as a comic-tragic Kvetch-22, an emotionally impossible journey that finds its way forward through the wildly oscillating moods and manners of Kieran Culkinâ??s hilariously charismatic performance. Audiences will laugh aloud â?? and never forget.

SING SING sings a song of Shakespeare within the kingdom of incarceration â?? proving the capacity of creativity to restore and inspire those who suffer â??the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.â?• Greg Kwedar unlocks the talents of an extraordinary cast, led by Colman Domingo and an

unprecedented ensemble of professionals and ex-prisoners who remind audiences, most powerfully, that it is art that will set you free.

WICKED ~PART I~ soars into the stratosphere of cinema history â?? a modern classic born from an evergreen concoction of cultural landmarks. The screen has rarely seen â?? or heard â?? towering performances like those delivered by Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande, leaving audiences Oz-struck across generations. And with Jon M. Chu the wizard behind the curtain, a brilliant creative ensemble creates an immersive world where one fights for what is right while encouraging us to believe we all can fly beyond the rainbow.

AFI TELEVISION PROGRAMS OF THE YEAR

ABBOTT ELEMENTARY graduates into its third year raising the curve for contemporary comedy. Quinta Brunsonâ??s endearing series unites the most familial and familiar of quick-witted characters and also stands tall as a timely monument to public school teachers and their personal devotion to a brighter future.

THE BEAR earns another AFI star in a season marked by an ever-simmering, often scorching tension between families, finances and fine dining. As temperatures rise in the pursuit of perfection, Christopher Storerâ??s masterful series calls upon the talents of an extraordinary front and back-of house ensemble to prove the showâ??s place in the pantheon as a â??non-negotiable.â?•

HACKS raises the curtain on its third year with an audacious ambition â?? to bring new challenges, new life and new laughter to comedic characters that had fully-evolved in their journey to success. The results are triumphant. Lucia Aniello, Paul W. Downs and Jen Statsky have created a combustible alchemy in the relationship between Jean Smart and Hannah Einbinder, who prove yet again that theyâ??re stronger together, in spite of themselves.

A MAN ON THE INSIDE retires old notions about the elderly by injecting a mature mystery into the everyday of a senior living community. Ted Danson proves the value of vintage, bringing an easy, intoxicating charm to Michael Schurâ??s delightful caper â?? a wholesome whodunit both light-hearted and life-affirming.

MR. & MRS. SMITH is a killer romance. With domesticity as a false front for secrets and lies, Francesca Sloane and Donald Gloverâ??s globe-trotting thriller celebrates the pulse-pounding similarities between murder and couples therapy. The chemistry between its stars â?? Glover and Maya Erskine â?? proves explosive and as the smoke clears, demands we ask how well we know those closest to us.

NOBODY WANTS THIS is just what the world needs most â?? a smart, clever, funny romantic comedy that serves as an optimistic inspiration for divided times. Erin Fosterâ??s light-hearted love story imagines â??a rabbi and an agnostic walk into a bar,â?• and what follows lifts audiencesâ?? hearts with the undeniably effervescent chemistry of Kristen Bell and Adam Brody. Which begs a toast â?? â??Lâ??Chaim!â?•

THE PENGUIN elevates pulp comics to prestige drama. Lauren LeFrancâ??s layered storytelling frames gritty Gotham in shadow, a lawless landscape with mob families battling for power and redemption. Colin Farrell dominates the dark through the sheer power of presence, and with Cristin Milioti as his underworld rival, together they bring both fire and ice to the canon of gangster classics.

SHÅ?GUN commands an epic vision that sails beyond the boundaries of television. Rachel Kondo and Justin Marks breathe new life into the classic novel from James Clavell â?? expanding upon its subtleties with rich cultural authenticity. Standing tall at its center is Hiroyuki Sanada â?? around whose rising sun orbits a stellar ensemble that evokes emotion transcending the barriers of language as they question what it means to seize, wield and hold power.

SHRINKING delves into the complexities of everyday with a fearless smile. Bill Lawrence, Jason Segel and Brett Goldsteinâ??s series provides a couch for audiences to lie and laugh upon â?? encouraging self-reflection, inspiring discovery and, ultimately, embracing moments of unexpected joy. At the foundation of a brilliant acting ensemble stands Harrison Ford, who transcends his own blockbuster iconography to show it is his heart that has earned his place as an American icon.

TRUE DETECTIVE: NIGHT COUNTRY shines a blinding light on unknown terrors in the dark â?? and illuminates a cultural chasm that divides us. Issa LÃ³pezâ??s heart-pounding mystery makes masterful use of the unseen to immerse audiences in an other-worldly environment that haunts from within. Standing stalwart among the shadows are Jodie Foster and Kali Reis, whose powerhouse performances uncover the unembodied power of greed and its corrosion of the spirit, the soil and the soul.

AFI SPECIAL AWARD

BABY REINDEER proves unrelenting in its exploration of what is kind and what is crazy â?? and does so as one of the yearâ??s most uncompromising entertainments. Richard Gaddâ??s searing autobiographical series masks the darkest of pain with the most uncomfortable of comedy, and his brilliant performance â?? alongside Jessica Gunning and Nava Mau â?? underscores the pathos by illuminating universally authentic emotions.

The 2024 recipients join a distinguished group of previous AFI AWARDS honorees whose works define the art form and contribute to our rich cultural legacy. View past AFI AWARDS honorees.

About the American Film Institute (AFI)

The American Film Institute (AFI) is a nonprofit organization with a mandate to champion the moving image as an art form. Established in 1967, AFI launched the first comprehensive history of American film and sparked the movement for film preservation in the United States. In 1969, AFI opened the doors of the **AFI Conservatory**, a graduate-level program to train narrative filmmakers. The Conservatory, which counts Deniese Davis, Affonso GonÃ§alves, Susannah Grant, Matthew Libatique, David Lynch, Melina Matsoukas and Rachel Morrison as Alumni, is ranked as one of the top film schools in America. AFIâ??s enduring traditions include the **AFI Life Achievement Award**, which honors the masters for work that has stood the test of time; **AFI AWARDS**, which celebrates the creative ensembles of the most outstanding screen stories of the year; and scholarly efforts such as the

AFI Catalog of Feature Films and the **AFI Archive** that preserve film history for future generations. AFI exhibition programs include **AFI FEST** and year-round exhibition at the **AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center** in Maryland. **AFI Movie Club** is a destination for movie lovers from around the world to celebrate and engage with the art form every day. Other pioneering programs include workshops aimed at increasing diversity in the storytelling community, including **AFI DWW+** and the **AFI Cinematography Intensive for Women**. Read about all of these programs and more at AFI.com and follow on social media at Facebook.com/AmericanFilmInstitute, YouTube.com/AFI, X.com/AmericanFilm, TikTok/@AmericanFilmInstitute, and Instagram.com/AmericanFilmInstitute.



Press contact:

American Film Institute

Shari Mesulam, Shari@themesulamgroup.com

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