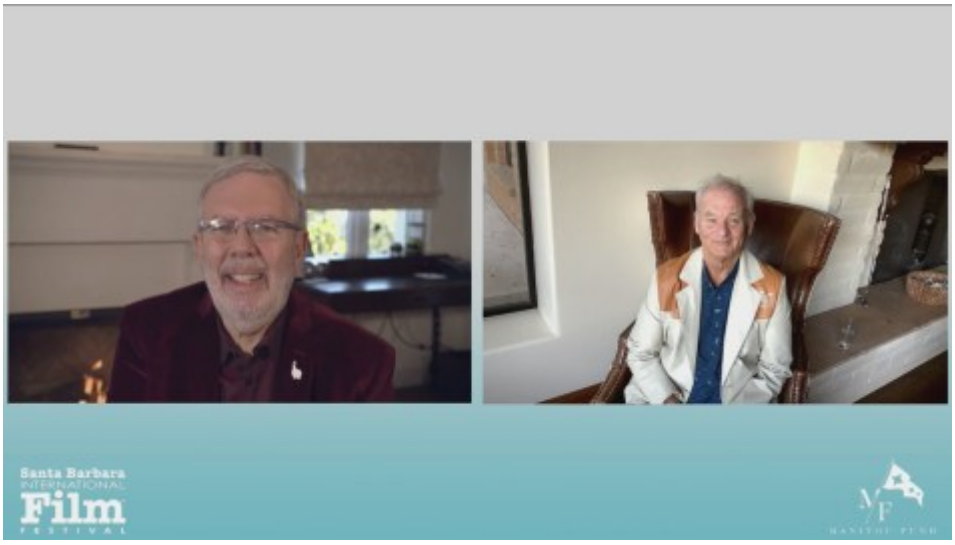


BILL MURRAY ACCEPTS MALTIN MODERN MASTER AWARD AT THE 36TH ANNUAL SANTA BARBARA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, PRESENTED BY SOFIA AND ROMAN COPPOLA

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

The 36th Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival presented by UGG featured a tribute to Academy Award-nominated actor and American film legend Bill Murray, who received the prestigious Maltin Modern Master Award, presented by Sofia and Roman Coppola. Murray was recognized for his long-standing contributions to the film industry, most recently in the role of Felix Keane in Coppolaâ??s On the Rocks opposite Rashida Jones and Marlon Wayans, for which he received Golden Globe and Criticâ??s Choice nominations.



Murray, above right, virtually sat down with Leonard Maltin, who returned for his 31st year to moderate the evening for an insightful conversation and look back at his career.

Highlights from the conversation included:

On who he enjoyed watching when he was younger: â??To me it was more interesting was the people that I really didnâ??t quite understand when I was younger that later I got to really like. The person that jumps into my mind is Jack Benny who I thought was a little bit dry for a 10 or 12 year old, but later when I watched him I saw that he was daft. His timing was so precise, his face was such a beautiful photograph that I would turn on the TV and record him just to go back and watch him. I didnâ??t really care for John Wayne much when I was a kid. I thought he was kind of stiff but later I got to like him and watched him more. I thought he had extraordinary self control; he didnâ??t push it, he let the story come to him. Cary Grant is another one where people thought â??well heâ??s just a really good looking guy,â?? but I can watch, like most of the world, North by Northwest at any hour of the day. If itâ??s on the TV, I canâ??t not watch it. Part of it is Hitchcock, but Cary Grant is just stunning in that role and he does so many things. He is funny, heâ??s romantic, heâ??s heavy, heâ??s frightened. Itâ??s a really nice performance and he did it all the time. Unfortunately, he had this beautiful body and handsome face and people didnâ??t take it seriously.â?•

On transitioning from improv comedy to film: â??The most difficult thing is that when you tell a joke or say something funny and no one laughs for nine months, you forget and you have this incomplete feeling in your gut that somethingâ??s wrong. And when you go to the movie and you realize that I said something funny a long time ago and no one laughed. And then when you see it with an audience you think â??oh thank God thatâ??s over, what a relief that was.â?•

On filming Ghostbusters: â??A script is two-dimensions, a script can be as good as can be, but when you enter the physical world and you have to stand, move, walk and talk, something arise thatâ??s unexpected and unaccounted for and thatâ??s where you make your bones; itâ??s what happens there. A movie that is sort of lifeless is one where sometimes the script is all you get and the actors donâ??t take into it all thatâ??s happening in the moment of the real shootingâ?¦the more alive the scene becomes and the more alive the film becomes. That movie had great cinematography. Of course, LÃ¡szlÃ³ KovÃ¡csâ?¦you know a lot of special effects movies look pretty weak nowadays but that movie [Ghostbusters] still has a real look to it. It is pretty legit, it was ahead of its time, we had great special effects people. They were really good and LÃ¡szlÃ³ was really good. The four of us, Ernie Hudson, Danny and Harold, we knew we were gonna sink or swim together so we were always looking out for each other. We were constantly making sure that everybody was pumping and all getting it. As far as improvising goes, Harold was the mind of the Ghostbusters, Danny was the heart of the Ghostbusters, Ernie was the soul of the Ghostbusters and I was the mouth of the Ghostbusters.â?•

On his introduction to Wes Anderson: â??My agent kept sending me cassettes of his [Wes Anderson] first film, Bottle Rocket. Finally, they sent me the script to Rushmore and asked me if I would like to meet him and I said thatâ??s not necessary. He knows exactly what he wants to do. When I read the script, I thought this guy knew exactly what he was going to do. My agent asked well do you want to meet him? I said itâ??s not necessary, when do we shoot? Sort of like that.â?•

On writing and directing: â??I really think of myself as I should be writing. I really do wish to be a writer. I can write dialogues and scenes, but to write a full-length anything is differentâ?¦I just havenâ??t buckled down. I really do enjoy directing, and I thought I was going to do it all the time because I liked it. I liked working with actors and I thought I understood actors, I could do that. My life changed and to direct a movie it takes a long time out of your life to make. When it was time for me to continue directing movies, I didnâ??t have that time to give.â?•

During Murrayâ??s conversation with Maltin, guests enjoyed nostalgic clips of his film career, including Caddyshack, Ghostbusters, Groundhog Day, Rushmore, The Royal Tenenbaums, Lost in Translation, St. Vincente, On the Rocks, and more.



Roman Coppola, lower left, with sister Sofia Coppola, lower right, presented Bill Murray, upper right w
SBIFF)

Following Murrayâ??s conversation with Maltin, Sofia and Roman Coppola presented him with the Maltin Modern Master Award. Sofia opened her remarks by saying: â??Iâ??m so happy to join and present Bill with the Maltin Modern Master Award. Itâ??s been fun to look at the clips from all the great films. Thank you for all the fun and love you bring to our lives through your work and as a person. Itâ??s always fun making movies with you and thank you for helping me make the movies that I wanted to make. Iâ??m happy to know you and have you in my family.â?•

Upon accepting his award, Murray said: â??Iâ??d like to say a few words before sentencingâ?¦ itâ??s really an honor to receive the Maltin Milk award. When I heard I was involved in the award, I was taken by surprise, thinking that you had passed away. I had worked up so many nice things to say about you. But I was very happy to hear you were still alive. Thatâ??s my happy-sad moment.â?•

The Modern Master Award was established in 1995 and is the highest accolade presented by SBIFF. Created to honor an individual who has enriched our culture through accomplishments in the motion picture industry, it was re-named the Maltin Modern Master Award in 2015 in honor of long-time SBIFF moderator and renowned film critic Leonard Maltin. Past recipients include Judy Garland, Brad Pitt, Glenn Close, Denzel Washington, Michael Keaton, Bruce Dern, Ben Affleck, Christopher Plummer, Christopher Nolan, James Cameron, Clint Eastwood, Cate Blanchett, Will Smith, George Clooney and Peter Jackson.

The 36th Santa Barbara International Film Festival, presented by UGG, will continue through April 10th, 2021, online and with the two ocean-front drive-ins sponsored by TOYOTA. Tickets and passes are available at SBIFF.org.



About the Santa Barbara International Film Festival

The Santa Barbara International Film Festival (SBIFF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit arts and educational organization dedicated to discovering and showcasing the best in independent and international cinema. Over the past 35 years, SBIFF has become one of the leading film festivals in the United States â?? attracting 100,000+ attendees and offering 11 days of 200+ films, tributes and symposiums, fulfilling their mission to engage, enrich, and inspire the Santa Barbara community through film. In 2016, SBIFF entered a new era with the acquisition of the historic and beloved Riviera Theatre. After a capital campaign and renovation, the theatre is now SBIFFâ??s new state-of-the-art, year-round home, showing new international and independent films every day. In 2019, SBIFF opened its own Education Center in downtown Santa Barbara on State Street to serve as a home for its many educational programs and a place for creativity and learning.

Category

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hollywoodglee