



Hollywood: Her Story September 2019 ENewsletter Film Editors

Women film editors have excelled since the silent film era. One of the very first cutters (as editors were known in the early days), Oscar contender Viola Lawrence started her editing work in 1912 and later became supervising editor at Columbia Pictures. Oscar winner Anne Bauchens edited Cecil B. DeMille's films from 1915 until 1956. Many women followed in the footsteps of these film editing legends.

We are probably quite familiar with directors Martin Scorsese and Woody Allen but less familiar with the female editors who made their movies happen – Thelma Schoonmaker and Susan E. Morse. These Oscar contenders were much more than the women behind the men. Let's learn more about them.



Film editor **Thelma Schoonmaker** has worked for director Martin Scorsese for more than fifty years. Their first collaboration came when she edited his first feature film, *Who's That Knocking at My Door*, released in 1967. Schoonmaker has earned three Oscars in the category of Best Film Editing and garnered four additional nominations. Her Oscars came for *Raging Bull* (1981), *The Aviator* (2005) and *The Departed* (2007).

She said, "I like the creativity of it. You have tremendous control in editing. You're not dealing with a big set and hundreds of actors and huge crews, and you're not forced to make decisions under pressure and not get what you want and have to settle for something else." Of her working relationship with Scorsese she said, "From the very first moment I worked with Marty, I think he realized I was someone who would do what was right for his films, and major egos would not be a problem. . . He gradually over the years began to appreciate that and rely on that much more, and, as I became more experienced, he was able to rely on my judgment much more. . . When we work together, it's just the most amazing time. We talk about everything in the editing room; in addition to the editing we're doing. It's a very rich collaboration. Wonderful. I'm a very lucky person."



Editor **Susan E. Morse** collaborated with director Woody Allen for more than twenty years. She was nominated for the 1987 Best Film Editing Oscar for *Hannah and Her Sisters*. Morse studied film production at New York University after graduating with a degree in history from Yale University. Her first editing job was for the 1977 movie *Annie Hall*. Interestingly, she worked as an assistant with Thelma Schoonmaker to edit *Raging Bull*.

Morse has edited 32 feature films to date that have among them earned 41 Oscar nominations, winning seven Oscars. She has edited for a number of directors other than Woody Allen and for television as well as feature films.

Women in front of and behind the camera make the movies that we all welcome into our hearts and homes. Women across all the areas of movie-making from actress to animator, editor to stuntwoman, costume designer to screenwriter, producer to director have contributed to the success of the movie industry since its founding in the 1890s. Help us celebrate these women who are written into movie history in *Hollywood: Her Story*.

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