

Hollywood: Her Story December 2022 ENewsletter Horror Movies

People have a fascination with horror movies and psychological thrillers. The psychological rationales vary, but primal fears trigger adrenaline, endorphins, and dopamine. Women have contributed to some of the highest-ranked movies of all time in these genres. These movies include *The Shining*, *The Silence of the Lambs*, *Psycho*, *Jaws*, *Aliens*, and *The Exorcist*.



Stephen King's novel *The Shining* (1977) was inspired by a nightmare that he had while staying at the Stanley Hotel in Estes Park, Colorado. The movie (1980), which was based on the novel, told the story of a couple who came to Colorado for the winter to serve as caretakers at a grand old hotel. The husband is a writer and recovering alcoholic. The hotel is haunted, and the plot quickly turns menacing. Director Stanley Kubrick co-wrote the screenplay for this film with novelist and essayist Diane Johnson in just eleven weeks. Although Kubrick opted to adapt King's novel, he chose to write with Johnson whose novel *The Shadow Knows* (1974) also derived its horror from human psychology. Johnson has been a finalist for both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize for other books she has written. Italian costume designer **Milena Canonero** designed the costumes for the movie. A veteran of film, stage, and television, Canonero won her first of four Oscars in 1976 for *Barry Lyndon*. Her other Oscar wins were for *Chariots of Fire* (1982), *Marie Antoinette* (2007), and *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2015).

She has had five additional nominations. Canonero has received Italy's highest honor for her achievements and is referred to as the Dame of the Grand Cross.



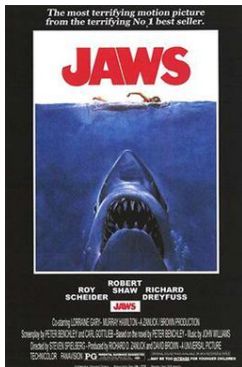
The 1991 horror/thriller *The Silence of the Lambs*, which tells the story of an FBI cadet who needs the assistance of an incarcerated cannibal killer to help catch a madman, received five Oscars, including the Best Actress Oscar for **Jodie Foster**. An actress, director, and producer, Foster said, "The movies that I make as a filmmaker are about what I've lived, who I know and what I believe in. The movies that I make as an actress are usually about who I'm not, who I've never been and who I've always wondered I might have been. A very different process." **Kasi Lemmons** also acted in the movie. A screenwriter and director in addition to being an actress, Lemmons' directorial debut *Eve's Bayou* was released in 1997. Her highest-grossing film to date has been *Harriet* (2019) about abolitionist Harriet Tubman. Acclaimed costume designer **Colleen Atwood**, who did the costumes for the movie, has been nominated twelve times for a Best Costume Design Oscar and has won four of those times. Her wins were for *Chicago* (2003), *Memoirs of a Geisha* (2006), *Alice in Wonderland* (2010), and *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2017). Her career as a costume designer started by accident when the mother of someone she met was designing sets for a movie and Atwood got a job as production assistant. She later moved to costume design working on films, more than fifty to date, as well as television. The set decorator for the movie was **Karen O'Hara** who has worked in that field for more than thirty years. She shared the 2011 Best Art Direction Oscar for *Alice in Wonderland* and was previously nominated for *The Color of Money*.

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Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 movie *Psycho* was nominated for four Oscars, including a Best Supporting Actress Oscar for **Janet Leigh**. Leigh portrays a secretary who embezzles money and then checks into an isolated hotel run by a young man who is dominated by his mother. Leigh was discovered by famed actress Norma Shearer which led to a screen test with MGM. Over the course of her career, she



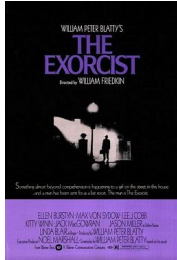
made more than fifty movies – two of them horror films that she made with her daughter, Jamie Lee Curtis.



“Mother Cutter” veteran editor **Verna Fields** probably saved the movie *Jaws*, enabling its production. She won the Best Editor Oscar for that film and served as Vice President for Feature Production at Universal Studios. Fields worked for directors Peter Bogdanovich, George Lucas, and Steven Spielberg, among others, and was nominated for a Best Film Editing Oscar for *American Graffiti*. She said, “I’m enormously proud of a lot of pictures I’ve done. By God, I saved the picture, and I’ve been given credit for it. I don’t think my creative input has ever been denied by the fact that the director has complete control.” Of *Jaws* she reported, “I was the liaison with the studio for Steven [Spielberg]. When there was thought of ditching the picture because the shark wasn’t working, I told them, ‘Keep doing it, even if you need to use miniatures.’”



Actress **Sigourney Weaver** earned her first Best Actress Nomination for her work in the 1986 movie *Aliens*. The movie featured Weaver as an astronaut trying to warn others about space predators. Her character, Ellen Ripley, whom she portrayed in four movies, is regarded as a significant female protagonist. Her subsequent nominations were for Best Actress (*Gorillas in the Mist*, 1989) and Best Supporting Actress (*Working Girl*, 1989). **Sarah Monzani** did the makeup for the movie. A makeup artist for forty years, Monzani shared the 1983 Best Makeup Oscar for *Quest for Fire*. British set decorator **Jill Quertier** shared the Best Art Direction, Set Decoration Oscar for the movie. She was nominated again in 2011 in the same category for *Quills*..



The winner of an Oscar, Emmy, and Tony, actress **Ellen Burstyn** is one of the few performers to win “The Triple Crown of Acting.” Her nomination for Best Actress for the role of the mother of a possessed teenage girl in the 1974 movie *The Exorcist* was her second. In 1975, she won the Best Actress Oscar for *Alice Doesn’t Live Here Anymore*. Her film, stage, and television career has spanned more than five decades, and she is still actively engaged in the entertainment industry.

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 moviemaking 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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