



Hollywood: Her Story July 2024 ENewsletter Cannes Film Festival - Palme d'Or and Honorary Palme d'Or

The Palme d'Or is the highest prize awarded to the film director of the Best Feature Film at the Cannes Film Festival held in France. Two women directors have received the Palme d'Or over the film festival's history – Jane Campion (1993) and Julia Ducournau (2021). The honorary Palme d'Or is awarded to directors or actors with a notable body of work who have not been awarded the Palme d'Or. In 2024, Meryl Streep received an honorary award. Over the history of the festival, five other women have received this honorary award – Jeanne Moreau (2003), Catherine Deneuve (2005), Jane Fonda (2007), Agnes Varda (2015), and Jodie Foster (2021). This newsletter focuses on three film directors honored in some way at the Cannes Film Festival – Jane Campion, Agnes Varda, and Jodie Foster.



The first woman to win the Palme d'Or, **Jane Campion** was honored for her direction of *The Piano* (1993). She was nominated in 1994 for the Best Director Oscar for that same movie, only the second woman in Oscar history to be nominated for that Award. Although she did not win the Best Director Oscar, she took home the Oscar for Best Writing, Screenplay Written Directly for the Screen. In 2022, she won the Best Director Oscar for *The Power of the Dog*, which was nominated for a total of 12 Oscars. Campion is the only woman to have been nominated twice for Best Director and the only woman to have won the Best Director Oscar without winning the Best Picture Oscar. Campion has been honored as a Dame Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit. She said, "I would love

to see more women directors because they represent half of the population – and gave birth to the whole world. Without them writing and being directors, the rest of us are not going to know the whole story."



Legendary French film director, editor, writer, and producer **Agnes Varda** received an Honorary Academy Award in 2018. She was the first female director so honored. Varda had much to say about her accomplishments and her work in the film industry. "I am a feminist, I am a filmmaker, I am a woman. That doesn't make me a feminist-woman-filmmaker. Filmmaking is specific work. I do it. I try to do it well. . . . Do you ask a man who doesn't have hair if he considers himself a bald filmmaker? He's a man with no hair, and he's a filmmaker." "My pleasure is to show women in their totality – their joys, problems, potentials. And above all, the unique rhythms by which they live their lives." "Do you know any intelligent women? Intelligent women exist, don't they? Why aren't they ever in films. There are always stories about virile male friendships . . . but not about friendship between women. The women are always motherly or tart."



Actress, director, and producer **Jodie Foster** won her first Best Actress Oscar in 1989 for *The Accused*. She has an additional acting win *Silence of the Lambs*, 1991) and three additional acting nominations. She directed her first film in 1991 (*Little Man Tate*). Foster says, "The movies 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 . . . The films I am attracted to . . . as a director . . . are about people and their interaction and how messy it is. And how there are just no easy solutions."

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*.

Jill S. Tietjen and Barbara Bridges

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