



Hollywood: Her Story August 2025 ENewsletter The 100 Best Films of the 21st Century

The New York Times and The Upshot polled 500 individuals in the film industry to determine the 100 best movies of the 21st century. Of those 100, eleven were directed by women. Some of those eleven women directors are familiar to readers of this newsletter as Best Director Oscar winner and nominees -- **Kathryn Bigelow (winner)**, **Sofia Coppola**, **Greta Gerwig**, and **Justine Triet**. Another legendary woman director who we have profiled and who is one of the eleven is **Agnes Varda**, who was the first female director to receive an Honorary Oscar.

The women directors associated with the movies from the top 100, the ranking of the movie, the movie, and the year of the movie's release are:

- **Justine Triet**, 26, *Anatomy of a Fall*, 2023
- **Sofia Coppola**, 30, *Lost in Translation*, 2003
- **Céline Sciamma**, 38, *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*, 2019
- **Greta Gerwig**, 39, *Lady Bird*, 2017
- **Maren Ade**, 59, *Toni Erdmann*, 2016
- **Valerie Faris** (co-director Jonathan Dayton), 63, *Little Miss Sunshine*, 2006
- **Kathryn Bigelow**, 68, *The Hurt Locker*, 2009
- **Charlotte Wells**, 78, *Aftersun*, 2022
- **Céline Song**, 86, *Past Lives*, 2023
- **Agnès Varda**, 88, *The Gleaners & I*, 2001
- **Andrea Arnold**, 91, *Fish Tank*, 2010

Let's take a look at these female directors and their movies.



Although French director, screenwriter and editor **Justine Triet** did not win the Best Director Oscar for her courtroom thriller, *Anatomy of a Fall*, she did win the Best Original Screenplay Oscar for the movie. German film director, screenwriter and producer **Maren Ade's** movie *Toni Erdmann* was nominated for a Best Foreign Film Oscar. The movie is a comedy about the relationship between a father and his daughter. French director and screenwriter, **Céline Sciamma** explores gender and sexual identity in many of her films. *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* is set in the late 18th century and explores a brief affair between two women. **Valerie Faris** works with her husband, Jonathan Dayton, as co-director and co-producer. Their road comedy, *Little Miss Sunshine*, was nominated for four Oscars and won two – Best Original Screenplay and Best Supporting Actor.



Scottish director, writer and producer **Charlotte Wells'** feature film debut was *Aftersun*. Semi-autobiographical, it is based on her relationship with her father. Canadian **Celine Song** was born in South Korea. *Past Lives* was her directorial debut and was nominated for two Oscars – Best Picture and Best Original Screenplay. Like Wells' *Aftersun*, *Past Lives* is also semi-autobiographical. It tells the stories of two friends over the course of 24 years as they live separate lives and grow apart. British filmmaker and former actress **Andrea Arnold** won the Best Live Action Short Film Oscar for her 2003 movie *Wasp*. Arnold wrote and directed *Fish Tank* which is the story of an isolated 15-year-old girl and her relationship with her mother's boyfriend. The movie won the Jury Prize at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival.

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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