



NEWS RELEASE

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE HONORS TOP TALENT AT ITS STAR-STUDED AFI AWARDS 2011 LUNCHEON

**Clint Eastwood, Martin Scorsese and Steven Spielberg Come Together with
George Clooney, Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt and Many More Honorees at
Twelfth Annual Celebration of AFI Almanac**

LOS ANGELES, January 13, 2012 – America’s finest film and television artists from in front of and behind the camera were among the attendees honored by the American Film Institute (AFI) during its AFI AWARDS 2011 luncheon sponsored by Verizon Digital Media Services. The awards season event, favored by artists and entertainment executives for its intimacy and collaborative recognition, records the year’s most outstanding achievements in film and television, and is the only national recognition that honors the community’s creative ensembles as a whole.

Among the honored artists present were: **Judd Apatow** and **Paul Feig** (BRIDESMAIDS); **George Clooney** and **Alexander Payne** (THE DESCENDANTS); **David Fincher** and **Rooney Mara** (THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO); **Chris Columbus**, **Viola Davis**, **Octavia Spencer** and **Tate Taylor** (THE HELP); **Sacha Baron Cohen**, **Sir Ben Kingsley** and **Martin Scorsese** (HUGO); **Leonardo DiCaprio**, **Clint Eastwood**, **Brian Grazer** and **Armie Hammer** (J. EDGAR); **Corey Stoll** and **Stephen Tenenbaum** (Woody Allen’s MIDNIGHT IN PARIS); **Michael De Luca**, **Bennett Miller** and **Aaron Sorkin** (MONEYBALL); **Jessica Chastain** and **Brad Pitt** (Terrence Malick’s THE TREE OF LIFE); **Kathleen Kennedy** and **Steven Spielberg** (WAR HORSE); **Tim Van Patten** and **Terence Winter** (BOARDWALK EMPIRE); **Bryan Cranston** and **Vince Gilligan** (BREAKING BAD); **Jeff Garlin** and **Tim Gibbons** (CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM); **David Benioff** and **George R.R. Martin** (GAME OF THRONES); **Michelle King** **Robert King** and **David Zucker** (THE GOOD WIFE); **Claire Danes** and **Damian Lewis** (HOMELAND); **Timothy Olyphant** and **Graham Yost** (JUSTIFIED); **Louis C.K.**, **Dave Becky** and **M. Blair Breard** (LOUIE); **Steve Levitan** (MODERN FAMILY); **Rob Lowe** and **David Miner** (PARKS AND RECREATION); **Bérénice Bejo**, **Jean Dujardin** and **Michel Hazanavicius** (THE ARTIST) and **David Heyman** (the HARRY POTTER series). Both Jessica Chastain and Brad Pitt were also honored for a second film – Chastain for THE HELP and Pitt for MONEYBALL.

Sir Howard Stringer, Chairman and CEO of the Sony Corporation and Chair of the AFI Board of Trustees, delivered the benediction, acknowledging the importance of collaboration across above and below-the-line talent in bringing the best of the art of the motion picture to the screen.

Film Historian **Leonard Maltin**, a member of the AFI Jury for Motion Pictures, recognized the film honorees while **Richard Frank**, Chair of the AFI Jury for Television and an AFI Board of Trustees Vice Chair, acknowledged the small screen honorees.

Other AFI Board of Trustees attending included: AFI Board of Directors Chair **Bob Daly**, **Jon Avnet**, **Chris Dodd**, **Tracey Edmonds**, **Jim Gianopulos**, **Brad Grey**, **Marshall Herskovitz**, **Ken Howard**, **Bryan Lourd**, **Barry Meyer**, **Ron Meyer**, **Amy Pascal**, **Rich Ross**, **Tom Sherak**, **Anne Sweeney**, **Ed Zwick** and **David Rips** of Verizon.

[Verizon Digital Media Services](#) is the presenting sponsor of the event. Verizon’s sponsorship helps fund scholarships for the AFI Conservatory, which was named the # 1 film school in the world by The Hollywood Reporter and is renowned for its advanced training of the next generation of storytellers in six filmmaking disciplines: Cinematography, Directing, Editing, Producing, Production Design and Screenwriting. Nineteen AFI Conservatory alumni across 12 of the AFI Awards “official selections” were among the creative ensembles recognized, including **Keith Cunningham**, **Allison Jones**, **Janusz Kamiński**, **Heidi Levitt**, **Terrence Malick**, **Wally Pfister** and **Robert Richardson**.

Audi of America is an official sponsor of the event. Additional sponsors include Stella Artois and American Airlines, the official airline of the American Film Institute, providing travel support throughout the year.

As previously announced in December 2011, the AFI Awards 2011 official selections are:

AFI MOVIES OF THE YEAR

BRIDESMAIDS
THE DESCENDANTS
THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO
THE HELP
HUGO
J. EDGAR
MIDNIGHT IN PARIS
MONEYBALL
THE TREE OF LIFE
WAR HORSE

AFI TV PROGRAMS OF THE YEAR

BOARDWALK EMPIRE
BREAKING BAD
CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM
GAME OF THRONES
THE GOOD WIFE
HOMELAND
JUSTIFIED
LOUIE
MODERN FAMILY
PARKS AND RECREATION

AFI SPECIAL AWARDS

THE ARTIST
The HARRY POTTER Series

Additional information, video of the honorees and jury rationales for each selection can be found at AFI.com/afiawards. Event photos are available through Getty Images at gettyimages.com and from AFI at AFI.com/afiawards/gallery11.aspx as of 6:00 p.m. PT today.

About the American Film Institute

AFI is America's promise to preserve the history of the motion picture, to honor the artists and their work and to educate the next generation of storytellers.

AFI provides leadership in film, television and digital media and is dedicated to initiatives that engage the past, the present and the future of the moving image arts. AFI programs include the **AFI Catalog of Feature Films and Archive**, the **AFI Life Achievement Award**, now in its 40th year, **AFI Awards**, honoring the most outstanding motion pictures and television programs of the year, **AFI Fest presented by Audi**, **AFI-Discovery Channel Silverdocs**, **AFI Silver Theatre** and the **AFI Conservatory**, which was named the # 1 film school in the world by The Hollywood Reporter.

Additional information about AFI is available at AFI.com.

About Verizon Digital Media Services

Verizon Digital Media Services is a first-of-its-kind, end-to-end digital media solution that automates previously manual workflow processes associated with formatting, managing and delivering digital media to virtually any device or platform on a large scale. By leveraging Verizon's global IP backbone, data center infrastructure and leading managed security capabilities, Verizon offers content owners and digital media retailers superior content-to-consumer delivery and game-changing business economics.

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