

NOTE TO EDITORS: AFI CONSERVATORY'S COMMENCEMENT TAKES PLACE AT 4:00 PM TODAY (Wednesday, June 9, 2004). EVENT COVERAGE NOT AVAILABLE.

PHOTOS will be available online at 6:00 p.m. (PST)/9:00 p.m. (EST), Wednesday, June 9, 2004, at <http://www.AFI.com/commencement04>



NEWS RELEASE

DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF FILM COMMUNITY
PARTICIPATE IN AFI CONSERVATORY COMMENCEMENT;
CELEBRATE EXCEPTIONAL YEAR

Roger Ebert, Frank Pierson and John Warnock
Received Honorary Degrees

Graduating Fellows Recognized for Excellence

LOS ANGELES, CA, June 9, 2004—The American Film Institute (AFI) Conservatory bestowed Master of Fine Arts degrees and certificates of completion upon 114 men and women at its annual Commencement ceremony today. Held at AFI's Campus on the Commencement Glade, the private event included remarks by AFI Director and CEO Jean Picker Firstenberg and AFI alumnus and Board of Directors chair, Jon Avnet.

Honorary Degrees were presented to world-renowned film critic and journalist Roger Ebert; President of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences /award-winning screenwriter Frank Pierson; and technology pioneer and Adobe Systems co-founder John Warnock. Distinguished participants in the ceremony included screenwriter/producer/director and President of the Writers Guild of America, west, Dan Petrie Jr., who presented Roger Ebert with his honor. Actor Troy Garity presented Frank Pierson with his honorary degree. John Warnock was presented his honor by director John Badham.

Among the previous recipients of AFI Honorary Degrees are Sherry Lansing, Richard

Schickel, Robert Altman, Maya Angelou, Michelangelo Antonioni, Steven Bochco, Roger Corman, Robert Daly, Lee Grant, Chuck Jones, Ray Harryhausen, John Lasseter, Karl Malden, Gena Rowlands, Thelma Schoonmaker, Jack Valenti, Haskell Wexler and Alfre Woodard.

During the ceremony, the AFI graduating Fellows, guests and the honorary degree recipients also celebrated the Conservatory's stellar year, which included Student Academy Award® nominations, Student Key Art Award wins and critically acclaimed alumni films including MONSTER and SAVED! Among this year's highlights:

- DGA (Directors Guild of America) Student Film Award winners: Best Latino Director winner Gustavo Hernandez Perez for THE MEXICAN DREAM and Best Female Director winner Michelle Oznowicz for SOUR MIX.
- Alumni Film DIG! Winning 2004 Sundance Grand Jury Prize for Best Documentary, alumnus Vasco Lucas Nunes, co-producer and cinematographer.
- ASC (American Society of Cinematographers) presented their coveted letters of accommodation to student filmmakers Ji Yong Kim and Jitsu Toyoda

The AFI Conservatory, established in 1969, is dedicated to the vision of the artist as storyteller, providing an environment renowned for creativity and practical hands-on training. The Conservatory program offers a Master of Fine Arts degree and certificate of completion in Cinematography, Directing, Editing, Producing, Production Design and Screenwriting.

About AFI:

AFI is the preeminent organization dedicated to advancing and preserving the art of film, television and other forms of the moving image. AFI trains the next generation of filmmakers at its world-renowned Conservatory, provides film preservation leadership and explores new digital technologies in moviemaking. AFI's New Media Ventures programs bring together the creative and digital communities, as the department seeks to develop a literacy program for the 21st century, helping young people learn to read and write screens of all sizes-cinema, television, computer and the Internet. With AFI ON SCREEN, the institute is the largest non-profit exhibitor in the U.S., with programs at the AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival (AFI FEST); the AFI National Film Theater at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.; and the AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center in Silver Spring, Maryland. A 49,000 square foot complex with three theatres-one historic, two new state-of-the-art stadium-style theatres-the AFI Silver exhibits film and video generally unavailable elsewhere in the region. AFI's annual almanac for the 21st century, **AFI AWARDS**, honors the most outstanding motion pictures and television programs of the year. **AFI's 100 Years . . . 100 Movies, 100 Stars, 100 Laughs, 100 Thrills, 100 Passions and 100 Heroes &**

Villains have ignited extraordinary public interest in classic American movies. During the past 31 years, AFI's Life Achievement Award has become the highest honor for a career in film. More information about AFI can be found by visiting its Web site, located at www.AFI.com.

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