



## NEWS RELEASE

### **MICHAEL DOUGLAS TO RECEIVE 37th AFI LIFE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

LOS ANGELES, CA, October 2, 2008- Michael Douglas has been selected by the American Film Institute's (AFI) Board of Trustees to receive the 37th AFI Life Achievement Award, the highest honor for a career in film, it was announced today by Sir Howard Stringer, chair of the AFI Board of Trustees.

The award will be presented to Douglas at a gala tribute in Los Angeles June 11, 2009.

"Michael Douglas is the rightful heir to the throne of the royal family of American film," said Stringer. "Though he is most beloved as one of the great leading men of the movies, Michael is also a most accomplished film producer and, ultimately, an artist whose films have been elevated in the pantheon of American film. AFI is proud to present him with its 37<sup>th</sup> Life Achievement Award, 18 years after we so honored his father, the legendary Kirk Douglas."

"I am honored and overwhelmed to be included in such a prestigious group of filmmakers. I am particularly moved to be following my father 18 years later," Douglas stated.

### **About Michael Douglas**

Perhaps no actor in Hollywood has made such a successful career out of playing vulnerable men of dubious morality. Not exactly villainous but certainly flawed, Douglas's screen personas have turned these complexities into popular leading men. And, as a producer, he has also been highly successful.

Born in New Brunswick, New Jersey, on April 25, 1944, Douglas entered the entertainment profession in the mid-1960s. It wasn't long before he made a name for himself starring in the popular television series *THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO* with Karl Malden, and appearing in such films as *ADAM AT 6 A.M.* (1970), *SUMMERTREE* (1971) and *NAPOLEON AND SAMANTHA* (1972).

It was a film Douglas produced, however, that cemented his standing in the film community. Adapting Ken Kesey's counter-culture novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975) for the screen was considered a difficult task, but Douglas turned it into a resounding smash, with the film taking home the top five Oscars—Best Picture, Best Actor (Jack Nicholson), Best Actress (Louise Fletcher), Best Director (Milos Forman) and Best Adapted Screenplay (Lawrence Hauben and Bo Goldman). *ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST* marked the beginning of a producing career that would prove at times to be as equally rewarding as his acting career.

Douglas followed with starring roles in films showcasing strong women, including the thriller *COMA* (1978), co-starring Genevieve Bujold; and *IT'S MY TURN* (1980), co-starring Jill Clayburgh.

However, Douglas would find his greatest success during this period as a producer. The masterful nuclear accident drama *THE CHINA SYNDROME* (1979) with Jane Fonda and Jack Lemmon, in which Douglas also starred, galvanized the country in the wake of the real-life Three Mile Island incident.

In the 1980s, Douglas's popularity grew. As a producer, he gave director Robert Zemeckis his first big hit with *ROMANCING THE STONE* (1984), but it was as the old-fashioned adventure film's leading man that he announced himself as a powerful star in his own right. A successful sequel, *JEWEL OF THE NILE* (1985), reuniting him with co-stars Kathleen Turner and Danny DeVito, followed. Douglas also produced the gentle alien drama, *STARMAN* (1984).

In 1987, Douglas starred in the year's two most talked-about movies, Adrien Lyne's *FATAL ATTRACTION* with Glenn Close and Anne Archer; and Oliver Stone's *WALL STREET* with Charlie Sheen. The former was a phenomenon, instantly transforming Douglas into the kind of flawed hero Hollywood loves to embrace. In *WALL STREET*, Douglas embodied the decade's greed as financial tyrant Gordon Gekko, a role for which he won the Best Actor Academy Award. In Ridley Scott's *BLACK RAIN* (1989), Douglas played a corrupt cop asked to save the day, while in the black comedy *THE WAR OF THE ROSES* he re-teamed with his *ROMANCING THE STONE* co-star, Kathleen Turner as well as Danny DeVito, who directed. Douglas showed once again that ambiguity and dark subjects could find an audience.

Paul Verhooven's *BASIC INSTINCT*, the sexually charged thriller that turned Sharon Stone into a movie star, broke

established taboos about Hollywood entertainment. Douglas' portrayal of a disgruntled aerospace worker in *FALLING DOWN* (1993) was one of the actor's most challenging roles, as well as one of his most controversial. Inflamed emotions followed with the hit adaptation of Michael Crichton's best-selling novel *DISCLOSURE* (1994), directed by Barry Levinson, in which Douglas's character accuses a woman (Demi Moore) of sexual harassment.

Douglas went on to play the President of the United States in Rob Reiner's *THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT*, a film that combined old-fashioned entertainment with populist politics, as he romanced Annette Bening. In 1996, he returned to darker subject matter, appearing in the period adventure *THE GHOST AND THE DARKNESS* with Val Kilmer.

In 1997, Douglas produced the hugely popular *FACE/OFF*, directed by John Woo and starring John Travolta and Nicolas Cage. That year, he also starred in the complex thriller *THE GAME*, directed by David Fincher. In 1999, he narrated the Oscar-winning documentary *ONE DAY IN SEPTEMBER*, produced by Arthur Cohn and Kevin MacDonald, and starred in *WONDER BOYS* with Tobey Maguire, Frances McDormand, Robert Downey, Jr., and Katie Holmes, directed by Curtis Hanson.

In 2000, Douglas starred in Steven Soderbergh's widely acclaimed *TRAFFIC*, playing a conservative judge in America's escalating war on drugs. The film received an Oscar nomination for Best Picture. In 2003, Douglas starred in *THE IN-LAWS* with Albert Brooks, based on the original 1979 film directed by Arthur Hiller, as well as *IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY*, the story of a dysfunctional New York family and

their attempts at reconciliation. In 2006 he starred in *THE SENTINAL*, as well as *YOU, ME AND DUPREE*. *KING OF CALIFORNIA*, a comedic treasure hunt co-starring Evan Rachel Wood and directed by Michael Cahill, opened in September 2007.

Douglas will soon be seen in Peter Hyams' courtroom thriller, *BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT* and Mark Waters' comedy *GHOSTS OF GIRLFRIENDS PAST* with Matthew McConaughey and Jennifer Garner.

### **About the AFI Life Achievement Award**

The highest honor for a career in film, the AFI Life Achievement Award was established by the AFI Board of Trustees on February 26, 1973. It is presented to a single honoree each year based on the following criteria as mandated through a resolution passed by the AFI Board of Trustees:

"The recipient should be one whose talent has in a fundamental way advanced the film art; whose accomplishment has been acknowledged by scholars, critics, professional peers and the general public; and whose work has stood the test of time."

### **AFI Life Achievement Award Recipients**

Michael Douglas joins an esteemed group of individuals who have been

chosen for this distinguished honor since its inception in 1973.

1973 John Ford  
1974 James Cagney  
1975 Orson Welles  
1976 William Wyler  
1977 Bette Davis  
1978 Henry Fonda  
1979 Alfred Hitchcock  
1980 James Stewart  
1981 Fred Astaire  
1982 Frank Capra  
1983 John Huston  
1984 Lillian Gish  
1985 Gene Kelly  
1986 Billy Wilder  
1987 Barbara Stanwyck  
1988 Jack Lemmon  
1989 Gregory Peck  
1990 Sir David Lean  
1991 Kirk Douglas  
1992 Sidney Poitier  
1993 Elizabeth Taylor  
1994 Jack Nicholson  
1995 Steven Spielberg  
1996 Clint Eastwood  
1997 Martin Scorsese  
1998 Robert Wise  
1999 Dustin Hoffman  
2000 Harrison Ford  
2001 Barbra Streisand  
2002 Tom Hanks  
2003 Robert De Niro  
2004 Meryl Streep  
2005 George Lucas  
2006 Sean Connery  
2007 Al Pacino  
2008 Warren Beatty

### **About the American Film Institute**

**AFI is a national institute providing leadership in screen education and the recognition and celebration of excellence in the art of film, television and digital media.** AFI trains the next generation of filmmakers at the world-renowned AFI Conservatory, maintains America's film heritage through the *AFI Catalog of Feature Films* and explores new digital technologies in entertainment and education through the AFI Digital Content Lab and AFI Screen Nation.

As the largest nonprofit exhibitor in the US, AFI ON SCREEN encompasses the annual AFI FEST presented by Audi: AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival, AFI DALLAS International Film Festival Presented by Target, Founding Sponsor Victory Park - as well as year-round programming at ArCLight Hollywood and Sherman Oaks, and the AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center in Silver Spring, Maryland, including SILVERDOCS: AFI/Discovery Channel Documentary Festival. AFI AWARDS, the annual almanac for the 21st century, honors the most outstanding motion pictures and television programs of the year, while **AFI's 100 Years . . .** series has ignited extraordinary public interest in classic American movies. And, over the past 36 years, AFI's Life Achievement Award remains the highest honor for a career in film. Additional information about AFI is available at [AFI.com](http://AFI.com).

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