



NEWS RELEASE

JON AVNET, KATHRYN BIGELOW & ANNE V. COATES TO RECEIVE HONORARY DEGREES FROM THE AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE

**2013 COMMENCEMENT TO BE HELD ON JUNE 12, 2013 AT 10:00 A.M.
AT THE HISTORIC EL CAPITAN THEATRE**

LOS ANGELES, CA, TUESDAY MAY 14, 2013 – The American Film Institute (AFI) announced it will confer a Doctorate of Communication Arts degree *honoris causa* upon director/producer/writer Jon Avnet, and a Doctorate of Fine Arts degree *honoris causa* upon Academy Award®-winning director Kathryn Bigelow and Academy Award®-winning editor Anne V. Coates. Avnet will be recognized for his contributions to the Institute, and Bigelow and Coates for their contributions of distinction to the art of the moving image. The honors will be given during AFI Conservatory's commencement ceremony on June 12, 2013 at the historic El Capitan Theatre.

Avnet, Bigelow and Coates join an esteemed group of filmmakers who are previous recipients of an AFI Honorary Degree: Robert Altman, Maya Angelou, Mel Brooks, Clint Eastwood, Roger Ebert, James Earl Jones, Nora Ephron, Jeffrey Katzenberg, Kathleen Kennedy, John Lasseter, Spike Lee, David Lynch, Helen Mirren, Haskell Wexler and John Williams.

Jon Avnet has been a guiding force of AFI for 25 years. He is an AFI Conservatory alumnus and currently serves as Vice Chair of the AFI Board of Trustees. As a Fellow in AFI Conservatory's Directing program, Avnet's thesis film *CONFUSION'S CORNER* featured then unknown Richard Gere. Since then Avnet has directed, written and produced nearly 60 motion pictures, television movies and Broadway plays over the last 30 years. Among them are *BLACK SWAN*, *FRIED GREEN TOMATOES*, *RISKY BUSINESS*, *UPRISING*, *THE BURNING BED*, "The History Boys" and "Spamalot." His work has won or been nominated for multiple Oscars®, Emmys®, Golden Globes®, Directors Guild of America Awards, as well as Writers Guild of America Awards, the Peabody and the Tonys® (35 nominations and 12 wins). In 1995, Avnet was awarded AFI's Franklin J. Schaffner Alumni Medal, which celebrates extraordinary creative talents and artistic achievements.

Kathryn Bigelow made film history with *THE HURT LOCKER* as the first woman to win the Academy Award® for Best Director, the Directors Guild of America Award for Outstanding Directing, the BAFTA Award for Best Direction and the Critics' Choice Award for Best Director. In April 2010, Bigelow was named on the Time 100 list of the most influential people of the year. Her films include *K-11: THE WIDOWMAKER*, *NEAR DARK*, *POINT BREAK*, *STRANGE DAYS* and *ZERO DARK THIRTY*. Bigelow won AFI Awards for both *THE HURT LOCKER* and *ZERO DARK THIRTY*.

Anne V. Coates' career spans over 40 years. She is best known as the editor of David Lean's epic film, *LAWRENCE OF ARABIA* in 1962, for which she won the Oscar® for Best Film Editing and ranks #7 on AFI's list of the top 100 movies. Coates has been nominated another four times for the Academy Award® for Film Editing for *BECKET*, *THE ELEPHANT MAN*, *IN THE LINE OF FIRE* and *OUT OF SIGHT*. Among her films are *THE GOLDEN COMPASS*, *GREYSTOKE: THE LEGEND OF TARZAN*, *LORD OF THE APES*, *UNFAITHFUL*, *ERIN BROCKOVICH*, *OUT TO SEA*, *STRIPTease*,

CONGO, CHAPLIN and WHAT ABOUT BOB? In February 2007, she was awarded BAFTA's highest honor, The Academy Fellowship.

Full bios of Avnet, Bigelow and Coates are available [here](#).

AFI Conservatory, named one of the top film schools in the world, offers a two-year Master of Fine Arts degree in six filmmaking disciplines: Cinematography, Directing, Editing, Producing, Production Design and Screenwriting. Aspiring artists learn from the masters in a collaborative, hands-on production environment with an emphasis on storytelling. Sony is a proud supporter of the AFI Conservatory.

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 **AFI Archive**, which preserve film heritage for future generations; the **AFI Life Achievement Award** – the highest honor for a career in film – now in its 41st year; **AFI Awards**, honoring the most outstanding motion pictures and television programs of the year; **AFI's 100 Years...100 Movies** television events and movie reference lists, which have introduced and reintroduced classic American movies to millions of film lovers; year-round and special event exhibition through **AFI Fest presented by Audi**, **AFI Docs presented by Audi** and the **AFI Silver Theatre**; and educating the next generation of storytellers at the world renowned **AFI Conservatory**, recognized for the quality of its instructors and speakers and its notable alumni.

For more information about AFI, visit AFI.com or connect with AFI at twitter.com/AmericanFilm, facebook.com/AmericanFilmInstitute and youtube.com/AFI.

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