



**THE AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE HONORS MEL BROOKS WITH AN EVENING OF LAUGHTER AND SENTIMENT AT 41ST AFI LIFE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD GALA**

**BILLY CRYSTAL, LARRY DAVID, ROBERT DE NIRO, JIMMY KIMMEL  
CLORIS LEACHMAN, CONAN O'BRIEN, AMY POEHLER, CARL REINER,  
MARTIN SCORSESE, MARTIN SHORT AND SARAH SILVERMAN  
AMONG THOSE WHO PAY TRIBUTE TO BROOKS**

**Special Broadcast Will Premiere Saturday, June 15 at 9:00 P.M. ET/PT on TNT and Encore  
Wednesday, July 24 on TCM as Part of an All-Night Tribute to Brooks**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, Friday, June 7, 2013, Los Angeles, CA** – Comedy legend Mel Brooks was lauded with the 41st annual AFI Life Achievement Award – the highest honor for a career in film – in an evening of equal parts heart and laughter. Many of Hollywood's most revered luminaries turned out to pay tribute to one of America's most celebrated artists. The black tie gala was taped at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood and will premiere on Saturday, June 15 at 9:00 P.M. ET/PT on TNT and encore on Wednesday, July 24 on TCM as part of an all-night tribute to Brooks.

Among the over 1,000 guests gathered for Brooks were Conan O'Brien, Judd Apatow, Jon Avnet, Roger Bart, Richard Benjamin, James L Brooks, Billy Crystal, Sasha Baron Cohen, Stuart Cornfeld, Bob Daly, Larry David, Robert De Niro, Eugenio Derbez, Carey Elwes, Morgan Freeman, Isla Fisher, Zach Galifianakis, Teri Garr, Vince Gilligan, Marshall Herskovitz, Dustin Hoffman, Ken Howard, Jimmy Kimmel, David Kroll, Cloris Leachman, David Lynch, Richard Lewis, Leonard Maltin, Catherine O'Hara, Alexander Payne, Ron Perlman, Luana Piovani, Amy Poehler, Jay Roach, Carole Bayer Sager, Terry Semel, Sarah Silverman, Sir Howard Stringer, Dick Van Patten, Lesley Ann Warren, Steven Weber, Amy Yasbeck, Daphne Zuniga, Matthew Weiner and Edward Zwick, among others.

The tribute was built upon the humor and scope of Brooks' career as a director, producer, writer, actor and composer. In the tradition of past AFI tributes, the details of the program, along with its participants and guests, were held as a surprise to the honoree, making this event one of the most beloved experiences in the film community.

Following welcoming remarks from Sir Howard Stringer, Chair of the AFI Board of Trustees, and Bob Gazzale, AFI President and CEO, producer Stuart Cornfeld received the 2013 Franklin J. Schaffner Alumni Medal for his commitment to quality filmmaking. Cornfeld thanked Brooks, his "mentor and tormentor," for launching his career. Cornfeld worked with Brooks on *THE ELEPHANT MAN*, *THE FLY*, *HIGH ANXIETY* and *HISTORY OF THE WORLD PART 1*.

The entertainment opened with Martin Short in a musical dance piece celebrating Brooks' body of work. Heartfelt and humorously off-color comments were offered in-person from Brooks' friends and collaborators Larry David, Cloris Leachman, David Lynch, Carl Reiner and, on video tape, Gene Wilder. Master filmmakers Clint Eastwood, George Lucas, Steven Spielberg (all past recipients of the AFI Life Achievement Award) discussed important American genres of film – westerns, science fiction and historical epics – and 'what Mel Brooks did to them' in films like *BLAZING SADDLES*, *SPACEBALLS* and *HISTORY OF THE WORLD, PART 1*. Robert De Niro and Morgan Freeman (also past AFI Life Achievement Award recipients) poked fun at Brooks for irreverent references to both of them in his films. Brooks' age and influence on generations of comedians was hysterically dissected in-person by Jimmy Kimmel, Conan O'Brien, Amy Poehler, Sarah Silverman as well as Matthew Broderick, Whoopi Goldberg and Nathan Lane on video. The show concluded

with Martin Scorsese (another AFI past recipient) handing the 41st AFI Life Achievement Award to Brooks for his mastery as a filmmaker and director.

Proceeds from the AFI Life Achievement Award gala event directly support the Institute's national education programs and the preservation of American film history. Sponsors of the 2013 AFI Life Achievement Award tribute to Mel Brooks include Audi of America, Deloitte, HP and American Airlines, the official airline of the American Film Institute.

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

The highest honor given 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."

### **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](http://AFI.com) or connect with AFI at [twitter.com/AmericanFilm](https://twitter.com/AmericanFilm), [facebook.com/AmericanFilmInstitute](https://facebook.com/AmericanFilmInstitute) and [youtube.com/AFI](https://youtube.com/AFI).

### **About TNT and TCM**

TNT is television's destination for drama. Seen in 99 million households and ranking among cable's top networks, TNT is home to such original drama series as DALLAS, FALLING SKIES, FRANKLIN & BASH, MAJOR CRIMES, PERCEPTION and RIZZOLI & ISLES, as well as the upcoming KING & MAXWELL and THE LAST SHIP. The network also features dramatic unscripted originals like the upcoming 72 HOURS, COLD JUSTICE and THE HERO. In addition, TNT is the cable home to popular dramas like BONES, CASTLE, THE MENTALIST and SUPERNATURAL; primetime specials, such as THE SCREEN ACTORS GUILD AWARDS; blockbuster movies; and championship sports coverage, including NASCAR, the NBA and the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Championship. TNT's website is located at [tntdrama.com](http://tntdrama.com).

Turner Classic Movies (TCM) is a Peabody Award-winning network that presents great films, uncut and commercial-free, from the largest film libraries in the world. Currently seen in more than 85 million homes, TCM features the insights of hosts Robert Osborne and Ben Mankiewicz, plus interviews with a wide range of special guests. As the foremost authority in classic films, TCM offers critically acclaimed original documentaries and specials, along with regular programming events that include THE ESSENTIALS, hosted by Robert Osborne and Drew Barrymore, and the month-long 31 DAYS OF OSCAR® in February and Summer Under the Stars in August. TCM also stages special events and screenings, such as the TCM Classic Film Festival in Hollywood and the TCM Classic Cruise; produces a wide range of media about classic film, including books and DVDs; and hosts a wealth of materials at its website, [tcm.com](http://tcm.com).

Turner Broadcasting System, Inc., a Time Warner company, creates and programs branded news; entertainment; animation and young adult; and sports media environments on television and other platforms for consumers around the world.

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PHOTOS ARE AVAILABLE AT <http://afi.com/about/press/laa/>

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