



View of the old harbor

# FESTIVAL DE CANNES

## PINNACLE OF GLAMOUR

BY NORAH LAWLOR

One of the oldest, most-anticipated, and sensational film festivals in the world, the Cannes Film Festival has launched the films, careers, and reputations of countless stars, directors and producers. In its 62nd year, the prestigious twelve-day event ran from May 13 to May 24. The film and media industries' crème de la crème gathered in the picturesque South of France to encourage and promote global cinematography – but that's not all. The Cannes Film Festival is known for being the peak of the



"Palais des festivals"

year's social calendar: the city comes alive and embraces the thrills, glamour and larger-than-life film festival.

This year's festival opened, with Disney's 3-D adventure "Up," the first time an animated film has had such an honor, and from day one through closing, the festivities were action-packed. The late Heath Ledger's last film, which he co-directed with Terry Gilliam, "The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus," premiered. Brad Pitt was in town, arm-in-arm with Angelina Jolie, promoting Quentin Tarantino's WWII drama "Inglourious Basterds" (The Weinstein Company). The "IB" premiere and after-party, where world famous DJ Jack E deejayed, was the hot ticket to have this year. Hot off her Oscar win, Penelope Cruz's film "Broken Embrace" (Sony Pictures Classic), directed by Pedro Almodovar, was another sought-after ticket, along with Ken Loach's "Looking for Eric" (Diaphana Distribution). World-class director Ang Lee presented his latest film, "Taking Woodstock" (Universal Pictures), starring Lieb Schreiber and Emile Hirsch. European directors again dominated the year's lineup—Danish director Lars von Trier made his return to filmmaking. His film, "Antichrist" (IFC), was so

controversial that it provoked the Daily Mail's Baz Bamigboye to demand justification from Lars about why he created such a film.

Every year, prior to the beginning of each event, the Festival's Board of Directors appoints the juries who are solely responsible for choosing which films will receive the honor of a Cannes Award. Jurors are chosen from a vast range of international artists, based on their body of work and respect from their peers. Isabelle Huppert, the President of the Jury for Feature Films, was joined this year by actress Asia Argento, director Nuri Bilge Ceylan,



Private beach

director James Gray, screenwriter Hanif Kureishi, director Chang-dong Lee, actress Shu Qi, actress Sharmila Tagore, and actress Robin Wright Penn. This year, in the Feature Films category, director Michael Haneke's film "Das Weisse Band" (or "The White Ribbon" in English) won the Palme d'Or, the highest prize awarded to competing films. "Arena," directed by João Salaviza, won the Palme d'Or in the Short Film category. Director Alain Resnais received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his work and his return to Cannes with the film "Les Herbes Folles" ("Wild Grass") fifty years after he raised a storm with "Hiroshima Mon Amour."

Then, of course, there were the parties, fundraisers and galas. Billionaire Paul Allen, philanthropist and co-founder of Microsoft, upheld tradition, hosting his exceptional party on his 400 ft. super yacht, "Octopus." Also, the stars were out for one of the most phenomenal parties of Cannes, amfAR's annual gala, the Cinema Against AIDS 2009 benefit at the Hotel du Cap. Hosted by Sharon Stone, A-listers including Robert Pattinson, Diane Kruger, Joshua Jackson, Kenneth Cole, Josh Hartnett, Emile Hirsch, Harvey Weinstein, 50 Cent, and Elizabeth Hurley were in attendance. Former U.S. President Bill Clinton was the honored guest, and his celebrated saxophone was sold at the renowned live auction portion of the evening—for more than 100,000 Euros. The late Natasha Richardson, who was a beloved amfAR Trustee, was toasted during the evening, as well.

A breeze of New York chic blew into Cannes, as Pantone

founder Larry Herbert and his wife Michele threw a magnificent soiree on their yacht, "My Colors," for Dr. James Watson, the 81-year-old co-discoverer of the double helix structure of DNA, in a Cambridge laboratory in 1953. Thanks to French publicist Yanou Collart, Dr. Watson was the rock star of Cannes Film Festival, as his historic contribution to science was also fêted on the "Octopus," and throughout the entire festival's celebration. Dr. Watson is pursuing the final daunting challenge of a remarkable career—Watson has a 38-year-old son Rufus who suffers from serious schizophrenia. Thanks to breakthroughs in genetic research, he is trying to unwrap the mysteries of schizophrenia, for Rufus.

The Cannes Film Festival has evolved into a unique show-and-tell for the film industry, set against the backdrop of one of the most luxurious locales in the world.

### 2009 Cannes Film Festival Who's Who

#### KEY PLAYERS:

**Thierry Frémaux** Director of the Cannes Film Festival  
**Bernard Brochand** Mayor of Cannes

#### THE MAN TO KNOW:

**Roger Bastoni** of Majestic Barrière Hotel, The President of International Concierge Association (Les Clefs d'Or)

#### THE PLACE TO STAY:

**Hôtel du Cap-Eden-Roc** This magnificent and unique hotel offers 121 chic guest rooms and suites. The hotel boasts gourmet dining experiences, a brilliant sunny terrace, and an ideal French Riviera location—fifteen minutes away from Cannes and only twenty minutes from Nice Côte d'Azur International Airport.

[www.hotel-du-cap-eden-roc.com](http://www.hotel-du-cap-eden-roc.com)

#### HOTTEST RESTAURANTS:

**Tetou** This legendary beachside restaurant is a star-studded hotspot on Cote D'Azur. Charming, the same family has owned Tetou since the 1920s—don't forget to withdraw cash as the restaurant does not accept credit cards.

**La Colombe d'Or** A St. Paul De Vence treasure. This internationally acclaimed restaurant is the true attraction of La Colombe d'Or Hôtel. The famous menu created by the late Chef Paul Roux has remained untouched through time proving the masterpiece menu is perfection.

[www.la-colombe-dor.com](http://www.la-colombe-dor.com)

**La Plage Keller** Located in Cap d'Antibes. Enjoy panoramic views of one of the most beautiful bays in the world, while experiencing the best of French dining. Ideal for lunch!

[www.plagekeller.com](http://www.plagekeller.com)

#### THE SOUTH OF FRANCE'S BEST KEPT SECRET:

**Chateau Saint-Martin & Spa** in Vence. This hidden treasure radiates serenity and luxury, deserving of its own Palme d'Or.

[www.chateau-st-martin.com](http://www.chateau-st-martin.com)