



HISTORY OF THE CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

ORIGINS

The International Film Festival was created on the initiative of Jean Zay, Minister for Education and Fine Arts, who was keen to establish an international cultural event in France to rival the Venice Film Festival.

The first edition of the Festival was originally set to be held in Cannes in 1939 under the presidency of Louis Lumière. However, it was not until over a year after the war ended that it finally took place, on September 20th, 1946. It was subsequently held every September – except in 1948 and 1950 – and then every May from 1952 onwards.

The Festival de Cannes, which is managed by a Board of Directors, was registered as an “Association loi de 1901” (or non-profit association in France) in 1972.

GAINING RAPID INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION

While early editions of the Festival were primarily a social event from which almost all of the films went away with an award, the appearance of stars from around the world on the Festival's red carpet and increasing media coverage quickly earned it a legendary international reputation.

In the 1950s, the Festival became more popular thanks to the attendance of celebrities such as Kirk Douglas, Sophia Loren, Grace Kelly, Brigitte Bardot, Cary Grant, Romy Schneider, Alain Delon, Simone Signoret, Gina Lollobrigida, and many more.

DISCOVER, PROMOTE, SUPPORT

Awarded for the first time in 1955 to the film *Marty* directed by Delbert Mann, the Palme d'Or replaced the Grand Prix, which had been awarded to the best film in Competition until then.

In the 1960s, two independent selections were created in parallel to the Official Selection: the Semaine

Internationale de la Critique in 1962 and the Directors' Fortnight in 1969.

Before 1972, the films that competed in the selection were chosen by their country of origin. From 1972 onwards, however, the Festival asserted its independence by choosing the films that would feature in the Official Selection for itself.

In 1978, Gilles Jacob was appointed General Delegate. That same year, he created the Un Certain Regard selection and the Caméra d'Or award, which goes to the best first film presented in any of the selections.

The Leçon de Cinéma (Film Masterclass) was delivered for the first



Palme d'Or Award

time in 1991 by Francesco Rosi. Since then, a number of other famous directors have taken their turn to talk about their artistic career and their views on film. Similarly, the first Leçon de Musique (Music Masterclass) was given by Nicola Piovani in 2003 and the first Leçon d'Acteur (Acting Masterclass) was delivered by Max Von Sydow in 2004.

In 1997, on the 50th anniversary of the Festival de Cannes, the world's greatest directors came together on stage to award the Palme des Palmes to Ingmar Bergman.

In 1998, Gilles Jacob created the Cinéfondation, a selection for short and medium-length films produced by film

schools from around the world. This entity grew in 2000 with the opening of the Résidence, a place where young directors can come to work and complete their screenplays. It expanded further in 2005 with the creation of the Atelier which helps some twenty directors to secure funding for their films each year.

Important heritage films, which used to be screened as thematic retrospectives, have, since 2004, been presented at Cannes Classics, a selection that presents restored copies, tributes to filmmaking and documentaries about cinema.

In 2007, to celebrate 60 years of the Festival de Cannes, 33 of the world's great-



Thierry Frémaux - Cannes Festival Director

est directors were invited to take part in the anniversary film, *To Each His Own Cinema*, each shooting a 3-minute short film about the rooms in which films are projected in cinemas. Since its creation in 2010, the new section entitled Cannes Short Film has grouped the Short Film Competition and the Short Film Corner in a complementary dynamic that aims to offer an overall view on the worldwide production of shorts.

BRINGING FILM PROFESSIONALS TOGETHER

With the creation of its Marché du Film in 1959, the Festival took on a professional dimension that encouraged networking

and interaction between all those involved in the film industry. Also worthy of mention are the Producers Network, which provides producers from around the world with a forum for discussing their projects, and the Short Film Corner, an area dedicated to short films, both of which were launched in 2004. Also, in continuing the same tradition as Documentary Brunch, acclaimed since its inception in 2008, Doc Corner was inaugurated in 2012.

The Marché initially attracted a few dozen participants and offered a single screening room. Today, 10,500 buyers and sellers from around the world flock to Cannes every year, making it the number one international market for film professionals.

When it opened back in 2000, the Village International, which showcases film industries from around the world, hosted 12 countries and 14 pavilions. Twelve years later, it accommodated 60 countries in 65 pavilions located around the Palais des Festivals.

HEADING UP THE FESTIVAL

In 2000, Gilles Jacob was elected President of the Festival by members of the Board of Directors. He replaced Pierre Viot, who had been in the role since 1985 and who had himself taken over from Robert Favre-Le Bret. From 2001 to 2005, Gilles Jacob was supported by Véronique Cayla, the Managing Director, and Thierry Frémaux, the Artistic Director. In July 2007, Thierry Frémaux was appointed General Delegate by the Board of Directors.

On 14 January 2014, Pierre Lescure was elected President of the Festival de Cannes by the Board of Directors. He will take up his functions from 1st July 2014, taking over from Gilles Jacob, who has been appointed Honorary President.