



The American Film Institute

AFI AWARDS 2014

Each year, AFI AWARDS honors the 10 films and 10 television programs deemed culturally and artistically representative of the year's most significant achievements in the art of the moving image. This is the first time in AFI AWARDS history that the voting procedure — including tiebreakers — has resulted in the inclusion of 11 motion picture honorees.

The 2014 honorees are below.

AFI MOVIES OF THE YEAR



AMERICAN SNIPER is a living memorial to a military hero — and to the power of cinema to honor all men and women who serve in our nation's armed forces. Clint Eastwood adds another medal to his storied place in American history with this adrenaline-fueled exploration of the deep complexities that come with combat. Bradley Cooper's performance as the legendary Chris Kyle captures the conflict inside the man with a lethal legacy, one torn between his family at home and his brothers-in-arms. [Read the AFI Catalog entry](#)



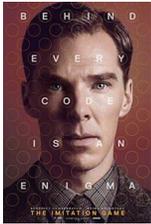
BIRDMAN OR (THE UNEXPECTED VIRTUE OF IGNORANCE) sings of the wide divide between artist and celebrity — and the unifying force to feel beloved on the earth. Alejandro González Iñárritu and his brilliant creative ensemble provide a backstage pass into the worried minds behind a Broadway show, asking audiences to consider what is art and what is artifice. Emmanuel Lubezki's camera is fluid in flight, following Edward Norton, Naomi Watts and Emma Stone as they hit the boards with star wattage, and Michael Keaton's tour de force performance soars into the history of cinema as a celebration of both humility and hubris. [Read the AFI Catalog entry](#)



BOYHOOD frames the snapshots of a life lived, presenting an intimately epic coming-of-age tale unique in the history of the art form. With the commitment to an on- and off-screen story that spans more than a decade, producer/director/writer Richard Linklater stacks slices of life into a layered and emotionally affecting narrative, with enduring performances from Patricia Arquette, Ethan Hawke and Lorelei Linklater as the film family to the story's star Ellar Coltrane. In a world consumed by "selfies," BOYHOOD looks outward to ask, "Do we seize the moment. Or does the moment seize us?" [Read the AFI Catalog entry](#)



FOXCATCHER paints a complex, haunting portrait of America — from the gilded halls of the du Pont estate to the sweat-stained wrestling mats that serve as the stage to win Olympic gold. Their deadly intersection is charted with a deft touch by director Bennett Miller, who explores singular truths in a symphony of delusion. Steve Carell's transformational performance is paired with remarkably real turns by Channing Tatum and Mark Ruffalo, who bring the film to its feet and prove the power of stories to ask a nation what it is to "win" and to consider the price of the prize. [Read the AFI Catalog entry](#)



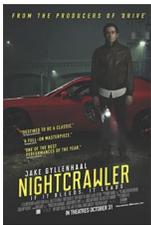
THE IMITATION GAME reveals a new piece in the puzzle of the Allied victory in World War II. With a gift for storytelling both pulse-pounding and pensive, director Morten Tyldum celebrates the story behind the iconic wartime images by telling the tale of the unlikely team who cracked Nazi Germany's Enigma code. The power of the film is embedded in the triumphs and tragedies of Alan Turing, an enigma himself brilliantly deciphered by Benedict Cumberbatch. With a stellar ensemble cast set aglow by the radiant Keira Knightley, the film elevates Turing's inimitable accomplishments to a proper place in history. [Read the AFI Catalog entry](#)



INTERSTELLAR is proof on earth that artists provide our strongest voice to rage against the dying of the light. Christopher Nolan illuminates the darkness of deepest space with the brilliance of his singular creative vision, while grounding the cosmos in a deeply emotional tale of fathers and daughters. This is cinema at its most ambitious, with Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathaway and Jessica Chastain providing the beating heart to this awe-inspiring work that reaches across time and space to find meaning in the unexplainable. [Read the AFI Catalog entry](#)



INTO THE WOODS cuts deep into the myths of our most classic fairy tales, inviting audiences to ask the reflection in a fractured looking glass: "Are you certain your wish is what you want?" Rob Marshall and a spellbinding ensemble led by the eternally bewitching Meryl Streep bring Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's beloved musical to the light of a silvery screen. Midnights mark the time in a world where people make mistakes, nice is different than good, and love and loss abound in the story that follows happily ever after. [Read the AFI Catalog entry](#)



NIGHTCRAWLER digs deep into the shadows of a news machine fueled by the morbid maxim: "If it bleeds, it leads." Jake Gyllenhaal's turn as opportunistic videographer Lou Bloom is both bold and bravura, his sociopathic stare masked only by the camera he hides behind. This modern noir from writer/director Dan Gilroy illustrates the fine line between breaking news and making news, and Rene Russo is formidable as both victim and accomplice to Bloom's mesmerizing violation of all boundaries in pursuit of the dark side of an American dream. [Read the AFI Catalog entry](#)



SELMA dreams of a day when America lives by the rule of its writings — that all men and women are created equal. Ava DuVernay leads this march into history with an inspired vision of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. — whose spirit is embodied by David Oyelowo in a transcendent performance. This is a film that flies the flag high for American film, inviting audiences to rise above the breathless shame of our nation's past and come together as one as we look to the future. [Read the AFI Catalog entry](#)



UNBROKEN stands tall as a monument to the American ideal embodied by Louis Zamperini. Based on the book by Laura Hillenbrand, this miraculous story of survival, resilience and redemption soars to the screen under the sure hand of director Angelina Jolie, whose classic style celebrates the timeless nature of its tale. Jack O'Connell's courageous performance of this Olympian turned World War II hero earns every ounce of respect due Zamperini, who forged a lifetime of glory by proving that if we can take it, we can make it. [Read the AFI Catalog entry](#)



WHIPLASH drums up a perfectly paced drama that crescendos with the question: "What is the line between mentor and monster?" Director Damien Chazelle conducts with both panache and restraint — never rushing, never dragging — and J.K. Simmons is instantly iconic as the black-clad, monolithic instructor who drives Miles Teller's finely tuned performance as the young musician in a bloody battle to be the best. [Read the AFI Catalog entry](#)

AFI TELEVISION PROGRAMS OF THE YEAR



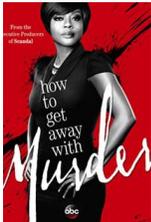
THE AMERICANS tightens the intense grip of Joe Weisberg's superb suburban spy thriller in its second year, proving that hearth and home are no respite from the Cold War. As agents undercover, Keri Russell and Matthew Rhys balance the intimacy of espionage with the audacity of parenting, and in the process, they achieve what might appear unimaginable — empathy for the enemy.



FARGO argues that murder is a dish best served cold — particularly when paired with puckish pathos in Noah Hawley's spin-off of the Coen brothers' classic film. Here, small-town warmth, embodied by Allison Tolman's Deputy Molly Solverson, gives way to the frigid Minnesota winter and the bitter chill of human depravity. Completing this macabre needlepoint are Martin Freeman's milquetoast-turned-murderer and Billy Bob Thornton's hilariously haunting hit man.



GAME OF THRONES continues to expand its epic scope in the fourth year, as masterminds David Benioff and D.B. Weiss unleash all sides in the bloody battle for Westeros, where revenge rules and kings fall. Presented on a continually unfurling canvas, the show finds the strength of its voice in the majesty of its humanity — embodied best this year by the towering presence of Peter Dinklage.



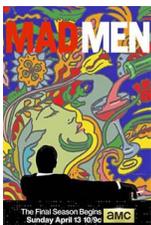
HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER is killer entertainment. Created by Peter Nowalk and produced by Shonda Rhimes, the series is a deliciously deviant master class in devil's advocacy, driven by inquiry and intellect. Viola Davis is a powerful force in any medium, here building an airtight case for the show's prominent place in America's weekly digital discourse.



JANE THE VIRGIN delivers one of the year's most delightful surprises — a modern melodrama from the telenovela mold, with lively theatrics that elevate it into a class by itself. Immaculately adapted by Jennie Snyder Urman, this romantic comedy finds humor in a tiny, beating heart — and witnesses the birth of a star with Gina Rodriguez's wide-eyed performance.



THE KNICK sparks an electric sense for the future in what first appears to be a bloody and backward past at New York's Knickerbocker Hospital. Creators Jack Amiel and Michael Begler — along with the symphonic talents of director, cinematographer and editor Steven Soderbergh — operate in a world where ambition and addiction, issues of race and reputation all collide in the masterful personification of Dr. John Thackery by Clive Owen.



MAD MEN tees up the beginning of its end by surpassing the impossibly high standards it has set as one of television's most celebrated series. Long telegraphed by the now iconic opening credits, Don Draper's prophesied fall is nonetheless filled with surprises in a world lavish with the period nuances emblematic of Matt Weiner's eye and ear for detailed perfection. Reinventing their lives and their lines with each new show is an exquisite ensemble led by Jon Hamm.



ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK locks down its place in the pantheon with a second year that surpasses its breakout debut. Creator Jenji Kohan asks more of her fierce and fantastic ensemble by creating solitary stories embedded within a complete slow-burn arc. Watching the release is a celebration of the unified emotional truths between audiences and those that society has set aside.



SILICON VALLEY is inspired comedy for an Internet age. Creators Mike Judge, John Altschuler and Dave Krinsky have found the algorithm to fuse intellect and idiocy, lampooning a start-up culture where millennial misfits work together, and even the most low-tech of audiences will find laughter in their striving to thrive.



TRANSPARENT illuminates the role of television in changing global perceptions through laughter and love. Jeffrey Tambor is transcendent as a divorced dad true to herself in Jill Soloway's emotionally universal series — one which challenges notions of genre and gender by celebrating the idea that we're all human, no matter who we are on the outside.