

FEATURES



Actress Peyton List attends the Lincoln Center Corporate Fund Gala.



Actress Julianna Margulies



Actress Emily Robinson



Model Romee Strijd

CAROLINA HERRERA SAYS IT'S AN HONOR TO DRESS MELANIA TRUMP

While a few designers have made news saying they would not dress the future first lady, Carolina Herrera said she'd be honored if Melania Trump wore one of her outfits. The famed designer spoke about Trump on the red carpet before she received an honor of her own Monday night from the Women's Leadership Council at Lincoln Center. Who might dress the wife of President-elect Donald Trump has become an issue after designers Sophie Theallet and Tom Ford, who have both dressed first lady Michelle Obama, said they wouldn't do so for Mrs. Trump, a former model.

But when asked if she would, Herrera said, "Of course I will, as the first lady of this country I will. Of course." She added, "It is an honor to dress the first ladies of the country and it's something to do

for the United States. It's not for myself. It's for the public." Obama has worn Herrera while in the White House. Herrera was lauded at the event for her 35 years of fashions by Emmy Rossum and Seth Meyers, among others. Diana Ross sang a mini-concert in Herrera's honor, including hits like "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" and "I'm Coming Out."

Rossum and Meyers both used wedding dress tales to testify about the greatness of Herrera. The "Shameless" actress said Herrera, whom she called "the chicest women alive," was the first to design for her on the red carpet, and over the years, helped her get out of her comfort zone. "She persuaded me to embrace increasingly bolder and brighter prints," Rossum said. "She dared me to stand out." Rossum said she excitedly called

Herrera to design her gown for her upcoming wedding. "I knew without question that only she could make the wedding dress of my dreams, and she has approached that task with the same care, elegance and enthusiasm that only she can," Rossum said. "I couldn't be more honored at the thought of wearing her dress on my big day."

Meyers' wife also wore Herrera for their wedding. On the day, the late-night comedian recalled how his wife came down with food poisoning and had to go to the hospital, but rallied for the ceremony. "I was still concerned as to how she would look as she walked down the aisle, because I have to be honest, she did not look great in the hospital," he said to laughs. "It was problematic, because I put on the tuxedo, I looked fantastic." But his fears were allayed when she put

on her Herrera gown. "I cannot tell you how much it meant to me and how in awe I was when my wife walked down the aisle after she had been lying on that gurney, on those fluids, and it was all such a credit to this Carolina Herrera wedding gown she was wearing," he said. "She was completely transformed." — AP

Fashion designer Carolina Herrera attends the Lincoln Center Corporate Fund Gala honoring Carolina Herrera at Alice Tully Hall in New York. —AP photos



Daniele Watts

Cop accused of racism by 'Django' actress fined

Now-retired Los Angeles police officer, who grabbed headlines over the detention of a "Django Unchained" actress, was fined \$500 Tuesday by an ethics commission for leaking audio of the incident. Sergeant James Parker had faced a \$10,000 fine but members of the Los Angeles Ethics Commission said a lower nominal penalty was more appropriate. In a highly unusual move, Parker was accused of violating city ethics rules after he leaked audio of his September 2014 encounter with African-American actress Daniele Watts. Parker's attorney, Lawrence Hanna, expressed outrage at the ethics commission ruling, blasting panel members as "cowards" and vowing an appeal.

"This is the first police officer they've ever done this to... and they are trying to make an example out of him," he told AFP. "They are cowards because they just feel that they have to do something and to show that they're being tough rather than backing a police officer and doing what's right." In the 2014 incident, Watts was briefly handcuffed and detained by police who were responding to a report of a couple having sex in a car parked in Studio City, an upscale neighborhood of Los Angeles. She had refused to show any form of identification to the responding officers and was released after her boyfriend, Brian James Lucas, gave police her ID.

The actress-who played Coco in Quentin Tarantino's Oscar-winning 2012 film "Django Unchained"—and Lucas initially claimed that the police action was racially motivated. Lucas wrote on his Facebook page that officers acted as though the pair were engaged in prostitution as he is white and Watts is black. Parker defended his actions, which gained national attention, by releasing an audiotape of the encounter to the celebrity website TMZ, prompting a backlash against the couple. He was not paid for the tape, his attorney said. Lucas and Watts subsequently pleaded no contest to disturbing the peace and were ordered to apologize to police officers. As part of their deal with prosecutors, charges of lewd conduct were dropped.—AFP

DiCaprio, former Kremlin aide competing for ivory documentary Oscar

Hollywood heartthrob and environmental activist Leonardo DiCaprio is competing for another Oscar against an unlikely rival—a former top aide to Russian President Vladimir Putin. Critics are touting DiCaprio's "The Ivory Game," about Africa's illegal ivory trade, for a prestigious Academy Award in the documentary film category along with a film on the same subject by Sergey Yastrzhembsky, the Kremlin's best-known spokesman in the West for more than a decade. The silver-haired ex-diplomat spent most of his working life deflecting media criticism as Putin's spokesman on Chechnya and special envoy to Brussels, and earlier as the Kremlin's mouthpiece under the late Boris Yeltsin.

Now Yastrzhembsky is trying to cause a stir with his "Ivory A Crime Story", which names and shames top ivory buyers such as China, the Vatican and Buddhist monks in Thailand. It highlights how the population of elephants in Africa has dropped to less than 500,000 from 1.5 million in the past 30 years and that every 15 minutes an elephant is slaughtered by poachers for its ivory. The price of ivory soared to \$3,000 a kilo from \$6 some 35 years ago, according to the documentary.

If nothing is done, conservationists say the African elephant could be extinct in the wild within a generation. "We can only hope that this film will get the world to pay more attention to this sad situation regarding elephants in Africa," Yastrzhembsky told Reuters in an interview in Paris. His documentary, which took three years and cost \$1 million to make, won prizes this year at the Montreal, Rome and New York film festivals. Harsh scenes include one of an elephant being shot and then moaning as it is hacked to pieces by poachers.

Yastrzhembsky said Pope Francis saw a shortened version of his film before publicly speaking out in Nairobi against ivory poaching in Kenya. He also said he helped convince Russia's nuclear energy agency RosAtom, which he initially approached to co-finance the film, to spend money on protecting wildlife around a uranium deposit it intends to mine in Tanzania.

Yastrzhembsky said he showed a trailer to DiCaprio three years ago on the yacht of a mutual friend, the real-estate oligarch Vladimir Zemtsov, in the French resort of Saint Tropez. Yastrzhembsky said he invited DiCaprio to take part in his project financially or do the voiceover, but talks never bore fruit. "I think DiCaprio wanted to do his own film," he said. DiCaprio's "The Ivory Game" debuted at the Toronto Film Festival in September. — Reuters

Kirk Douglas at 100, still in love with soul mate Anne

Kirk Douglas, whose illustrious career has taken in some of cinema's landmark roles, turns 100 tomorrow—attributing his remarkable longevity to his "wonderful marriage" of more than six decades. The iconic actor revealed in a special essay to mark the milestone that his second wife Anne, 97, had been his inspiration in rebounding from adversity over the years. "I was lucky enough to find my soul mate 63 years ago, and I believe our wonderful marriage and our nightly 'golden hour' chats have helped me survive all things," he writes in celebrity magazine Closer Weekly. The three-time Oscar nominee will celebrate with 200 friends and family at a party in California hosted by his son Michael and daughter-in-law Catherine Zeta Jones.

The star, who was forced to retire because of speech problems after a stroke, has practiced delivering a few words on the day with the help of a speech therapist. "I am always asked for advice on living a long and healthy life. I don't have any. I do believe, however, that we have a purpose for being here," he says. "I was spared after a helicopter crash and a stroke to do more good in the world before I leave it." Douglas, the son of illiterate Russian immigrants, appeared in some of cinema's most iconic roles, from slave Spartacus and painter Vincent van Gogh to Western legend Doc Holliday. He was in more than 80 movies but, unlike stars of younger generations, never took a role in a sequel.

'Volcano'

Born Issur Danielovitch in poverty in New York to a Jewish father and Protestant mother, Douglas went to the city's Academy of Dramatic Arts. "Champion" (1949) earned him the

first of three Oscar nominations for best actor, an award that has eluded him but was finally snared by his son Michael for "Wall Street" (1987). Among his most famous films were 1956 Van Gogh biopic "Lust for Life," "Gunfight at the OK Corral" (1957), "Spartacus" (1960) and "Seven Days in May" (1964). Douglas's first marriage to American actress Diana Webster produced sons Michael and Joel before it ended in divorce in 1951. Three years later he married Belgian-American Anne Buydens, who once wrote of Douglas: "Living with my husband is like sitting in a beautiful garden right next to a volcano that may erupt at any moment."

The couple would go on to have two sons, Eric and Peter. "One hundred years old is certainly a milestone, but the facts are what dad has accomplished in 100 years," Michael Douglas writes in the Closer Weekly article. "I think his stamina and tenacity are the qualities that stand out for me," he continues. "He has taught me always to give it your best shot at whatever you take on. He's the full package."

Jewish faith

The Douglas family has been touched by its fair share of tragedy and disaster over the years. Eric, also an actor, died from a lethal combination of alcohol and prescription drugs at the age of just 46 in 2004, after years battling addiction. Kirk had already been deeply shaken by a mid-air collision between his helicopter and an airplane over California in 1991 that killed two people, prompting him to rediscover his Jewish faith. His 1996 stroke robbed him of the ability to speak entirely, although he managed to make a partial recovery after months of therapy. As his health limited his film roles, Douglas and his wife turned increasingly to philanthropy, and have expressed their intention to give most of their fortune to charity on their deaths.

The couple have rebuilt 400 school playgrounds in Los Angeles and were behind the establishment of "Harry's Haven," an Alzheimer's unit named after Kirk's father at the Motion Picture and Television Fund Home in Woodland Hills, California. Double Golden Globe winner and lifelong friend Angie Dickinson shared a bedroom scene with the legend in "Cast a Giant Shadow" (1966), which required the pair to be naked. "You couldn't ask for more than you get with Kirk," the 85-year-old actress, an ex-wife of legendary composer Burt Bacharach, told AFP. "He's just a perfect man, I must say. Everything he does is perfect." — AFP



This file photo taken on October 22, 2009 shows actress Anne Douglas (left) and actor Kirk Douglas as they arrive at the 4th Annual Kirk Douglas Award for Excellence in Film for the Santa Barbara International Film Festival at the Biltmore Four Seasons Hotel in Santa Barbara, California. — AFP photos



This file photo shows Anne Douglas and actor Kirk Douglas as they arrive to The Heart Foundation Gala at Hollywood Palladium in Hollywood, California. — AFP photos