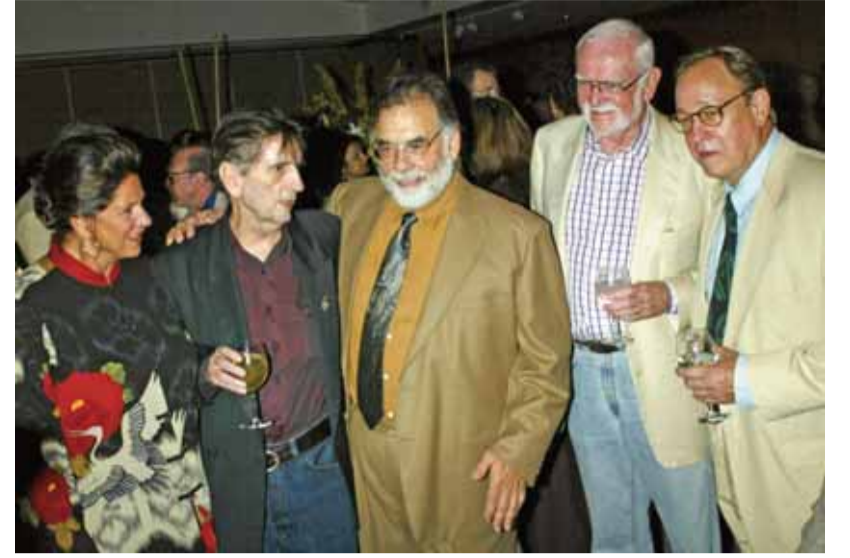




In this May 19, 1984, file photo, American actor Harry Dean Stanton, left, and German actress, Nastassja Kinski embrace during a photo session at the 37th Cannes Film Festival.



In this Jan 14, 2009, file photo, actor Harry Dean Stanton, left, a cast member in the HBO series "Big Love," lights a cigarette as fellow cast member Melora Walters poses on the red carpet at the show's third season premiere in Los Angeles.



In this July 18, 2003, file photo, from left, Lainie Kazan, Harry Dean Stanton, Francis Ford Coppola, Frank Pierson and Frederic Forrest have a reunion during a reception for the screening of the 1982 movie "One from the Heart," at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills.

Beloved character actor **Harry Dean Stanton** dies

For more than 60 years, Harry Dean Stanton played crooks and codgers, eccentrics and losers. He endowed them with pathos and compassion and animated them with his gaunt, unforgettable presence, making would-be fringe figures feel central to the films appeared in. The late critic Roger Ebert once said no movie can be altogether bad if it includes Stanton in a supporting role, and the wide cult of fans that included directors and his fellow actors felt the same.

"I think all actors will agree, no one gives a more honest, natural, truer performance than Harry Dean Stanton," director David Lynch said in presenting Stanton with the Inaugural "Harry Dean Stanton Award" in Los Angeles last year. Stanton died Friday of natural causes at a Los Angeles hospital at age 91, his agent John S Kelley said. Lynch, a frequent collaborator with the actor in projects like "Wild at Heart" and the recent reboot of "Twin Peaks," said in a statement after Stanton's death that "Everyone loved him. And with good reason. He was a great actor (actually beyond great) - and a great human being."

Widely loved

When given a rare turn as a leading man, Stanton more than made the most of it. In Wim Wenders' 1984 rural drama "Paris, Texas," Stanton's near-wordless performance is laced with moments of humor and poignancy. His heartbreakingly stoic delivery of a monologue of repentance to his wife, played by Nastassja Kinski, through a one-way mirror has become the defining moment in his career, in a role he said was his favorite.

"Paris, Texas" gave me a chance to play com-



In this Feb 4, 2008, file photo, actor Harry Dean Stanton arrives at a celebration for actress Marion Cotillard in West Hollywood. — AP photos

passion," Stanton told an interviewer, "and I'm spelling that with a capital C." The film won the grand prize at the Cannes Film Festival and provided the actor with his first star billing, at age 58. "Repo Man," released that same year, became another signature film: Stanton starred as the world-weary boss of an auto repossession firm who instructs Estevez in the tricks of the hazardous trade.

He was widely loved around Hollywood, a drinker and smoker and straight talker with a million stories who palled around with Jack Nicholson and Kris Kristofferson among others and was a hero to such younger stars and brothers-in-partying as Rob Lowe and Emilio Estevez. He appeared in more than 200 movies

and TV shows in a career dating to the mid-1950s. A cult-favorite since the '70s with roles in "Cockfighter," "Two-Lane Blacktop" and "Cisco Pike," his more famous credits ranged from the Oscar-winning epic "The Godfather Part II" to the sci-fi classic "Alien" to the teen flick "Pretty in Pink," in which he played Molly Ringwald's father.

While fringe roles and films were a specialty, he also ended up in the work of many of the 20th century's master auteurs, even Alfred Hitchcock in the director's serial TV show. "I worked with the best directors," Stanton told the AP in a 2013 interview, given while chain-smoking in pajamas and a robe. "Martin Scorsese, John Huston, David Lynch, Alfred Hitchcock.

Alfred Hitchcock was great." He said he could have been a director himself but "it was too much work"

Partly Fiction

By his mid-80s, the Lexington Film League in his native Kentucky had founded the Harry Dean Stanton Fest and filmmaker Sophie Huber had made the documentary "Harry Dean Stanton: Partly Fiction," which included commentary from Wenders, Sam Shepard and Kristofferson. More recently he reunited with Lynch on Showtime's "Twin Peaks: The Return" where he reprised his role as the cranky trailer park owner Carl from "Fire Walk With Me." He also stars with Lynch in the upcoming film "Lucky," the directorial debut of actor John

Carroll Lynch, which has been described as a love letter to Stanton's life and career.

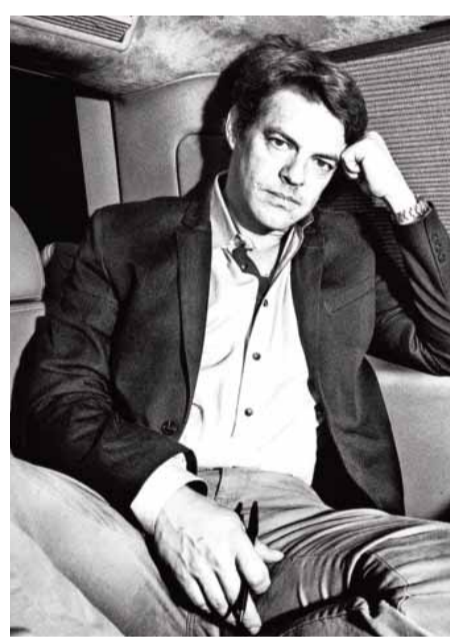
Stanton, who early in his career used the name Dean Stanton to avoid confusion with another actor, grew up in West Irvine, Kentucky and said he began singing when he was a year old. Later, he used music as an escape from his parents' quarreling and the sometimes brutal treatment he was subjected to by his father. As an adult, he fronted his own band for years, playing western, Mexican, rock and pop standards in small venues around Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley. He also sang and played guitar and harmonica in impromptu sessions with friends, performed a song in "Paris, Texas" and once recorded a duet with Bob Dylan.

Stanton, who never lost his Kentucky accent, said his interest in movies was piqued as a child when he would walk out of every theater "thinking I was Humphrey Bogart." After Navy service in the Pacific during World War II, he spent three years at the University of Kentucky and appeared in several plays. Determined to make it in Hollywood, he picked tobacco to earn his fare west. Three years at the Pasadena Playhouse prepared him for television and movies.

For decades Stanton lived in a small, disheveled house overlooking the San Fernando Valley, and was a fixture at the West Hollywood landmark Dan Tana's. Stanton never married, although he had a long relationship with actress Rebecca De Mornay, 35 years his junior. "She left me for Tom Cruise," Stanton said often. In listing Stanton's survivors, the statement announcing his death said only: "Harry Dean is survived by family and friends who loved him." — AP



(L-R) Israel Broussard, Ruby Modine, Rachel Matthews, Jessica Rothe, Christopher B. Landon and Jason Blum attend Halloween Horror Nights Opening Night Red Carpet at Universal Studios Hollywood. — AFP



Jason Blum

Dolly Parton still gets a kick out of Hollywood

Dolly Parton says she's excited to be in the Hollywood mix on Emmy Awards weekend. The 71-year-old entertainer was among the stars making the pre-show party rounds Friday with a stop at Variety and Women in Film's gathering at Gracias Madre restaurant in West Hollywood, California. "All the parties, seeing all the stars... I still get a kick out of it," Parton said. "I'm a country girl."

Wearing a skin-tight black rhinestone-studded dress, Parton said she's also excited about her gown and wig for Sunday's show. She's up for an Emmy in the TV movie category for "Dolly Parton's Christmas of Many Colors: Circle of Love." Parton's weekend was not all about fancy parties, though. She said she spent some time in the kitchen earlier Friday.

"Well, I made some sausage and biscuits for my trip home on the bus after the shows are over. And I made some chicken and dumplings, a few little groceries that I put together," she said. "See, I travel in my tour bus and I always cook my own food. So that was not very glamorous, but it was good." There's no word on whether Parton indulged in the snacks served at the party, which included mini empanadas and cheese-filled roasted figs. Viola Davis partook in the ice cream sundae bar, topping her scoop with frosted animal cookies.

Meanwhile, stars packed the restaurant's patio. Gabrielle Union and Dwyane Wade chatted with friends, "The Handmaid's Tale" star Samira Wiley held hands with her wife, and Kate Flannery hugged William H Macy as he and Felicity Huffman made their way through the crowd. Other guests included

Sarah Hyland, Tracee Ellis Ross, Lea Michele, Judith Light, Claire Foy and Brian Tyree Henry. The television academy also held a party Friday night for acting nominees, where John Turturro, Angela Bassett and Laverne Cox were among the guests. — AP



Dolly Parton arrives at the 69th Primetime Emmy Awards Variety and Women in Film pre-Emmy celebration on Friday, Sept 15, 2017 in Los Angeles. — AP photos

Horror maestro **Jason Blum** on scares in the age of austerity

Call most people cheap and you might expect a slap in the face, but horror film-making legend Jason Blum wears his parsimony like a badge of honor. From "Paranormal Activity" in 2007 to this year's critically-acclaimed "Get Out," the 48-year-old producer has made many of the defining horror films of the last decade — always on a shoestring.

Paying actors peanuts, but working with studios that ensure that his films get worldwide distribution, he has recouped some \$3 billion at the box office from a portfolio made for less than a twentieth of that amount. "The most important part to making a successful low-budget horror movie is the story and acting has to be great. Not the scares — the scares are less important than the story and the acting," he tells AFP.

By cutting budgets down to the bare bones — typically \$5 million for an original movie and \$10 million for a sequel — Blum has redefined genre filmmaking. Of his most recent work, Jordan Peele's "Get Out," M Night Shyamalan's "Split," James DeMonaco's "The Purge: Election Year" and Mike Flanagan's "Ouija: Origin of Evil" have grossed \$664 million on a combined budget of \$27.5 million.

An executive working for Harvey and Bob Weinstein at Miramax, Blum was briefly an independent producer at Warner Brothers before striking out on his own with Blumhouse Productions in 2000. "I was frustrated at Miramax just because I always wanted to be my own boss. I really wanted my own company. I left, I started my own company," he says. "I made seven movies no one ever saw and that was frustrating for a different reason."

Life-changing

Blum's career-defining — and life-changing — moment came when he saw an early cut of "Paranormal Activity," which had been put together for \$15,000. When no one else would touch it, he saw its potential and came on board as a producer, steering it to a worldwide gross \$193 million and making it the most profitable movie of all time. He analyzed the success of the film and realized he had a revolutionary formula that he has since repeated over dozens of low-cost titles including the "Insidious" and "The Purge" franchises.

"Paranormal Activity" taught Blum not only that low budget meant more chance of making money, but also that keeping a tight grip on the purse strings often makes for an artistically more accomplished movie. "I don't think throwing money at scary movies results in better movies," he says. "Most scary movies that are bigger budget are much worse than low budget scary movies." The Vassar College graduate, who lives in downtown LA with screenwriter wife Lauren, is in the middle of a 10-year partnership to make movies distributed by Universal. But he didn't set out to be a horror filmmaker, originally destined instead to go into the family business, an art dealership.

"I loved the holiday Halloween and I loved Hitchcock movies. But I didn't love horror more than other genres when I was a kid," he said. Over the years Blum has built up an encyclopaedic knowledge of the genre, but if he comes across as a frustrated director, nothing could be further from the truth.

'Political animal'

"I can definitely say I have zero interest. It's not my talent. I think one of the things that makes me a good producer is that I don't want to direct," he says. AFP caught up with Blum as he was visiting Universal Studios in Los Angeles to check out his latest collaboration, the "Horrors of Blumhouse" maze at the theme park's hugely popular annual Halloween Horror Nights.

Every fall, Universal's creative head honcho John Murdy — a longstanding friend of Blum's — opens numerous mazes after dark featuring authentic scares from some of the most iconic properties in the history of horror. "The Horrors of Blumhouse" combines the four films from Blum's "The Purge" franchise as well as the "Sinister" movies and "Happy Death Day," which comes out on October 13.

Always on the lookout for new opportunities outside of cinema, Blumhouse recently expanded its reach into television, and is launching a series version of "The Purge." Next up is "Secure and Hold: The Last Days of Roger Ailes," a biopic on the media mogul Blum calls the "scariest man of all," who built the Fox News empire but died in May mired in a mounting sexual harassment scandal. "I'm a political animal. I'm trying to convince John to do a Roger Ailes maze at Universal," joked Blum. "I'm not sure if that's going to happen but I'm going for that for next year. That would be the scariest maze ever made." — AFP



In this Jan 29, 2017, file photo, Dolly Parton presents the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 23rd annual Screen Actors Guild Awards at the Shrine Auditorium & Expo Hall in Los Angeles.