

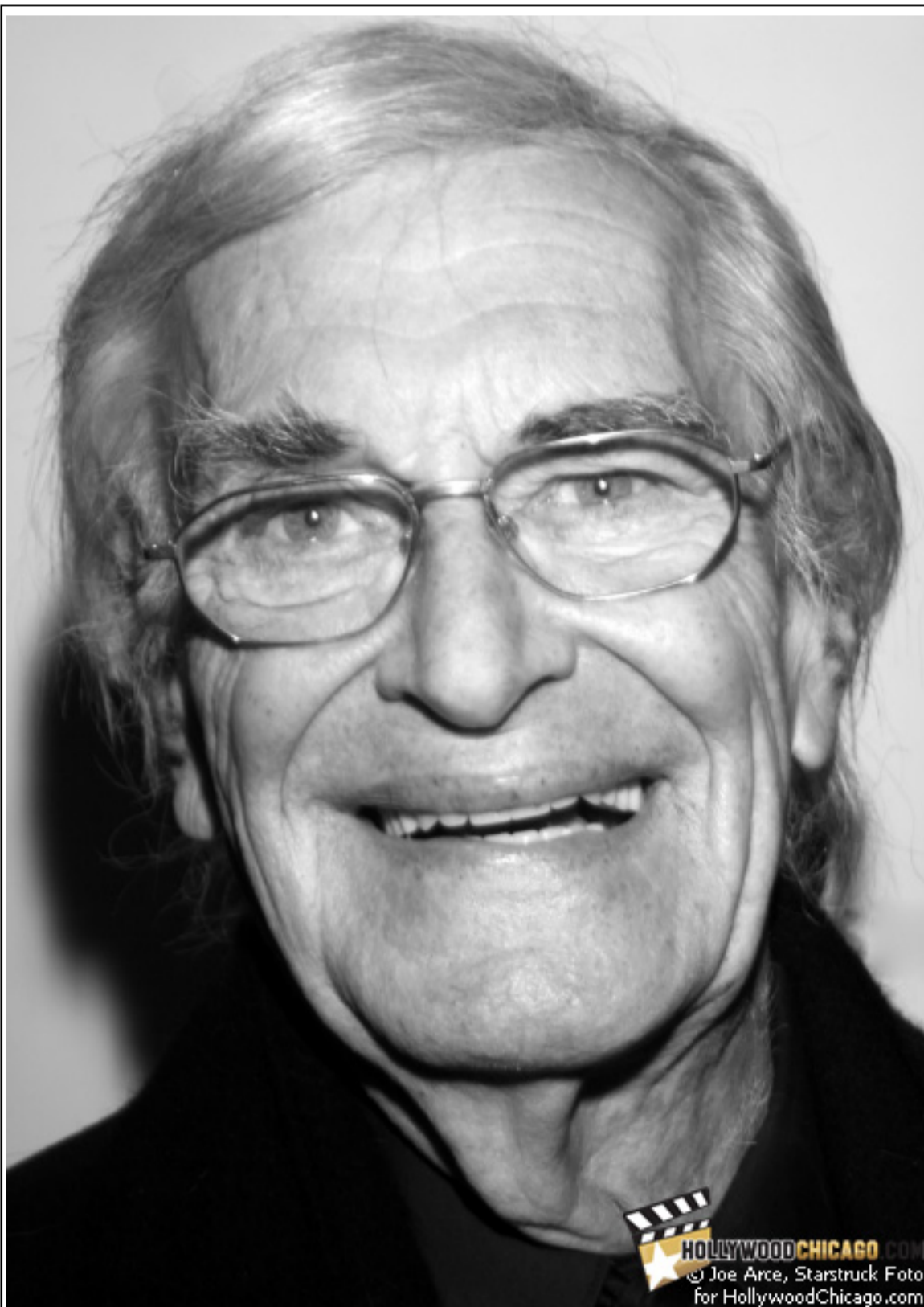
2009 Chicago International Film Festival Awards: Martin Landau Speech, Young Filmmaker Interviews

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CHICAGO – Film and TV icon Martin Landau accepted his Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2009 Chicago International Film Festival in the same hotel he stayed at while filming Alfred Hitchcock’s “North by Northwest” in 1959.

The famous film also has scenes shot at the Ambassador East Hotel, and HollywoodChicago was at the awards ceremony in the Pump Room there.



Martin Landau at the Chicago International Film Festival Awards Ceremony in the Pump Room at the Ambassador East Hotel, October 17, 2009.
Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

Landau began his acceptance speech by reminiscing about filming North by Northwest in Chicago, relating how he shared a meal in the Pump Room with fellow cast members Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint, James Mason and the “Master of Suspense,” director Alfred Hitchcock.

The remarks continued with Landau’s concern for Hollywood today, and the dearth of character driven themes in films. He emphasized that a knowledge of the past glories of Hollywood history was necessary for maintaining substantial roles for actors in the industry today.

Martin Landau finished his acceptance by saying that, “this may be a Lifetime Achievement Award, but I am not finished.”



Writer/Director Nicholas Fackler of Martin Landau’s festival film, ‘Lovely, Still’

Energetic and spiritual, Nicholas Fackler is the writer and director of “Lovely, Still,” starring Martin Landau and Ellen Burstyn. He spoke briefly about that unique production experience.



Nicholas Fackler at the Chicago International Film Festival Awards Ceremony.
Photo credit: Patrick McDonald for HollywoodChicago.com

HollywoodChicago: What was it like working with film legends Martin Landau and Ellen Burstyn?

Nicholas Fackler: Working with them was a gift. I never went to college but going to the set everyday, I learned what it was like to work with artists. Before I never thought of acting as artistry, I didn’t understand it, but working with Martin and Ellen, they are two artists. They completely transformed themselves and it was one of the most amazing experiences I had in my entire life.



Jodie Markell, Director of ‘The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond’

Fans of HBO’s “Big Love” may recognize Jodie Markell, who portrayed Wendy Hunt in that popular series from 2006-07. She made her directorial debut after discovering a Tennessee Williams screenplay that was never produced, and brought the film, starring Bryce Dallas Howard, to the Chicago International Film Festival.





Jodie Markell at the Chicago International Film Festival Awards Ceremony,
October 17, 2009.

Photo credit: Patrick McDonald for HollywoodChicago.com

HC: How did you find the Tennessee Williams screenplay and get it to a producer for you to direct?

Jodie Markell I grew up in Memphis, Tennessee, and by the age of sixteen I had read everything that Williams had written. In acting school one of my teachers showed me a collection of his screenplays. I never could believe *The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond* had never been made, so years later I met up with a producer who bought the rights and I directed it.

HC: What attracted you to the story?

JM: The lead character, she's a person who feels that conventional society is keeping her down. Williams is really interested in anyone who is different, more defensive, more creative and more vulnerable. The characters had that.

HC: Tell me about working with that tremendous cast [Bryce Dallas Howard, Ann-Margret, Ellen Burstyn] you gathered.

JM: We had such a great time. Many of them told me it was the best experience on-set that they ever had. I love actors and I love to help them make discoveries.

HC: What do you think is your best characteristic for keeping a set relaxed and comfortable for everyone?

JM: I guess you have to ask other people that question (laughs). What I try to remember is that being kind to people is as important as getting the right shot. Surprisingly, a lot of people aren't used to that.

["Best of the Fest" is tonight, October 21, 2009.](#) [15] *The Chicago International Film Festival runs until October 22th.* [Click here for details.](#) [16]



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By [PATRICK McDONALD](#) [18]
Senior Staff Writer
HollywoodChicago.com
pat@hollywoodchicago.com [17]

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