



US actress Olivia de Havilland poses during an Associated Press interview, in Paris. —AP/AFP photos



This file photo taken on September 09, 2010 shows English actress Jacqueline Bisset (right) next to US actress Olivia de Havilland (left) posing for a photograph on September 9, 2010 at the Elysee Palace in Paris.

# Golden age Hollywood starlet Olivia de Havilland turns 100

Screen legend Olivia de Havilland, who turned 100 yesterday, is the last surviving star from "Gone with the Wind" and one of the last great stars of Hollywood's bygone golden era. The two-time Oscar winner and five-time Academy Award nominee came to embody the elegant glamour of the silver screen in the 1930s and 1940s. But she also made waves with a landmark legal battle against the Hollywood studios and a secret feud with her equally famous sister, Joan Fontaine.

The 1939 box-office blockbuster "Gone with the Wind" brought de Havilland wide acclaim for her role as the noble, long-suffering Melanie, starring opposite Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable in the US Civil War epic. Her performance as love rival to the fiery Scarlett O'Hara, played by Leigh, led to de Havilland's first Oscar nod for best supporting actress. But she lost out to co-star Hattie McDaniel, who played the character of Mammy and became the first African-American to win an Academy Award.

The film sealed De Havilland's reputation as one of Hollywood's top leading ladies, but with her doe-eyed looks she soon felt frustrated at the roles she was offered, fearful of being typecast as a sweet, innocent young thing. "Playing a good girl was difficult in the 30s, when the fad was to play bad girls," she once said in an interview. "Actually, I think playing bad girls is a bore. I have always had more luck with good girl roles because they require more from an actress."

Her screen debut had come as Hermia in "A

Midsummer Night's Dream" in 1935 after director Max Reinhardt spotted her in a local theatre production of the play. She won accolades for her role opposite swashbuckling actor Errol Flynn in "Captain Blood" later the same year, and their on-screen chemistry persuaded studio bosses to cast her alongside Flynn in seven other movies.



This file photo taken on January 01, 1939 shows US actress Olivia de Havilland playing as Melanie Wilkes, in a scene from the 1939 Hollywood epic film, "Gone With the Wind".

## Correcting 'a serious abuse'

De Havilland incurred the wrath of the bosses at Warner Bros., who at that time effectively owned their stars, by rejecting script after script. In what was a shocking move for the era, she sued the studios to be released from her seven-year contract and won, in a far-reaching 1945 ruling which gave actors the right to choose their own roles and career paths. It is still known as the De Havilland law, and the actress once said of it: "I was very proud of that decision, for it corrected a serious abuse of the contract system... No one thought I would win, but I did."

During her court case, she was blacklisted for three years and unable to work, but her legal victory kickstarted her career. The following year in 1946 she won her first Oscar for her portrayal of Jody Norris in "To Each His Own", in an edgier role as an unmarried mother and her heart-breaking struggle to stay near to the child she could never acknowledge. She won her second Academy Award for playing the socially inept spinster Catherine Sloper in "The Heiress" in 1949. In a real-life Hollywood drama, De Havilland was estranged for many years from her sister Joan Fontaine, her junior by a year and a screen legend in her own right.

Neither actress has ever spoken publicly about their feud, but in 1941 De Havilland lost out on an Oscar for her lead performance as Emmy Brown in "Hold Back the Dawn" to Fontaine, who picked up the statuette for Alfred Hitchcock's "Suspicion". The sisters remain the

only siblings in Oscar history to have both won lead acting honors.

## 'Soul-crushing'

The two girls were born to British parents living in Tokyo. In a twist of fate, De Havilland fell ill as a girl leading to an initially short stay in California that stretched into years. De Havilland became a naturalized US citizen in 1941, but in the 1950s her career began to wilt as she despaired at the growing promiscuousness in the movie world. She appeared in a few films in the 1970s and also did some television work in the 1980s. But she is said to have once pronounced: "The TV business is soul-crushing, talent-destroying and human-being-destroying."

Romantically, De Havilland was linked to John Huston, James Stewart and Howard Hughes in the 1940s, but she married novelist Marcus Goodrich in 1946, by whom she had a son, Benjamin. The couple divorced in 1953, and De Havilland later married French journalist Pierre Galante, with whom she had a daughter, Giselle, in 1956. They later divorced but when Galante fell ill, she nursed him during his final days in Paris and remained in the French capital. — AFP

## Kate Beckinsale's 'Underworld' sequel pushed back to 2017

Screen Gems has moved "Underworld: Blood Wars" back three months from its pre-Halloween slot of Oct 14 to Jan 6, 2017. Kate Beckinsale and Theo James are starring in the fifth film in its vampires-versus-werewolves franchise. German cinematographer Anna Foerster, a long-time collaborator with Roland Emmerich, is making her feature directorial debut and helming from Cory Goodman's screenplay. Trent Garrett, Tobias Menzies, Lara Pulver, Clementine Nicholson, Bradley James and Charles Dance are also starring. Lakeshore toppers Tom Rosenberg and Gary Lucchesi are producing along with David Kern, Len Wiseman and Richard S. Wright.

The four films have grossed \$460 million worldwide. The franchise launched in 2003 with "Underworld," directed by Len Wiseman and starring Beckinsale as the vampire Selene who is killing

the Lycans (Werewolves) who allegedly slaughtered her family. The next three films were 2006's "Underworld: Evolution," 2009's "Underworld: Rise of the Lycans" and 2012's "Underworld: Awakening." — Reuters



Kate Beckinsale

## French-Serbian film turns migrant crisis on its head

A new French-Serbian film portrays a migrant crisis in which tens of thousands of people are trying to cross Balkan borders illegally—but this time, they are coming from the west. "At The Border", which premiered in Serbia yesterday, is set in the year 2022 and shows hordes of people from rich countries abandoning their wealth in search of a happier life in Serbia. The crowdfunded short film was shot last year as hundreds of thousands of migrants crossed the Balkans hoping to start new lives in western Europe, having fled war or poverty in the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

In contrast, the movie shows expensive cars driven from the other direction and abandoned in fields, as smartly-dressed people wave euro notes at Serbian police beyond a razor-wire fence. Actor

Arnaud Humbert, who wrote and starred in the film, told AFP that these "people who have everything" realize they lack a sense of well-being and "they have to go out and find it". A French 34-year-old living in Belgrade, Humbert said he began writing the script in February last year, months before the real-life migrant crisis reached its peak.

"People always ask me what I'm doing in Serbia, it's not common," he said. But "so many foreigners coming to Serbia really appreciate the lifestyle here". In the film he plays a young Frenchman, also called Arnaud, who is in love with both Serbia and a Serbian woman, Jelena, but he is not allowed to cross the closed frontier.—AFP