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celeb bio

Helena Bonham Carter

British cinema royalty stars in 'The Crown'

There are only a small number of actors who audiences find equally appealing whether they're appearing in a massive, genre-defining blockbuster or a low-budget artistic indie film. English actor Helena Bonham Carter is one of the rare performers who possesses that quality.

Bonham Carter was born into a distinguished family of considerable means. The Bonham Carter family can trace its lineage back to the 18th century, and the family tree includes many notable

individuals from English history, including members of Parliament, baronesses, generals and other politically important figures. Helena Bonham Carter's father was a successful merchant banker, and her mother is a psychotherapist descended from Spanish and French families who are prominent in their own rights.

Bonham Carter developed an interest in the storytelling arts early in her life, devouring books of fables and legends in her youth, and moving on to classic

novels as her tastes matured. After her family attended a performance of "Othello" starring family acquaintance Lisa Harrow, young Helena was starstruck and decided that she wanted to be an actor as well. In fact, around the age of 6, she wrote a letter to another family friend declaring that the missive should be kept safe

because she would certainly be famous when she grew up.

In her early teens, Bonham Carter used the prize money awarded to her in a national poetry contest to buy a quarter-page advertisement in the English casting directory Spotlight. That first attempt at landing acting work failed to pay off, but a little while later, Bonham Carter was cast in her first onscreen role: a television commercial.

In 1983, Bonham Carter received her first film credit for a small role in the children's television movie "A Pattern of Roses." In 1985, Bonham Carter got a surprise call from theater director Trevor Nunn, who cast her in the lead role of his film "Lady Jane." In the same year, Bonham Carter gave her breakthrough performance in "A Room With A View," a romance film based on the novel of the same name.

During the next stage of her career, Bonham Carter struggled with being typecast. She appeared in a number of period films playing pre-20th-century and turn-of-the-century characters. Notable films from this part of her career include adaptations of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" (1990) and "Twelfth Night" (1996), "Mary Shelley's Frankenstein" (1994) and "The Wings of the Dove" (1997), for which she



Helena Bonham Carter as seen in "The Crown"

Sudoku

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Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

Solution on page 20

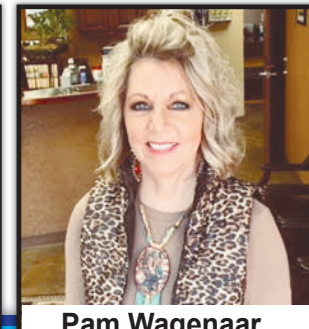
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was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Actress.

In the late 1990s, Bonham Carter began to step out of her comfort zone and gave compelling performances in edgier films, such as 1999's "Fight Club" and 2003's "Big Fish." The latter film was directed by fantasist American director Tim Burton, whom Bonham Carter had met and started dating while filming "Planet of the Apes" in 2001. The two eventually had a son and a daughter together while continuing to collaborate on most Burton-directed films, including "Corpse Bride" (2005) and "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street" (2007). In 2014, Bonham Carter and Burton amicably separated.

In the late 2000s, Bonham Carter appeared in the Harry Potter film series and in critical darling "The King's Speech" (2010). Recently, she has been part of the 2018 heist film "Ocean's 8" and the 2019 Netflix revival series "The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance." On Sunday, Nov. 17, you can see Bonham Carter in Season 3 of the Netflix series "The Crown," in which she plays the vibrant and controversial Princess Margaret.

FACTS:

- Born May 26, 1966, in London, England (age 53)
- Has never received formal acting training
- Was obsessed with English actor Jeremy Irons in her youth
- Is known for her idiosyncratic fashion sense and public event attire
- Was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 2012 for her services to drama
- Has contracted her mother (a psychotherapist) to read scripts and provide commentary on the psychology of characters

QUOTES:

"I hate this image of me as a prim Edwardian. I want to shock everyone."

"I think everything in life is art. What you do. How you dress. The way you love someone, and how you talk. Your smile and your personality. What you believe in, and all your dreams. The way you drink your tea. How you decorate your home. Or party. Your grocery list. The food you make. How your writing looks. And the way you feel. Life is art."