

# Taormina Film Festival to honour Helen Mirren

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TAORMINA — One of cinema's most acclaimed living performers is heading to Sicily this summer. Helen Mirren will be the guest of honour at the 72nd Taormina Film Festival, running June 10-14 2026, where she will receive the Taormina Film Festival Achievement Award during a special evening dedicated to Anna Magnani.

The tribute evening on June 12 marks the 75th anniversary of *Bellissima*, Luchino Visconti's 1951 portrait of working-class Rome and self-aware satire of the film industry starring Magnani herself. A newly restored print will be screened at the Teatro Antico, one of the most dramatic open-air venues in the world.

Artistic director Tiziana Rocca framed the pairing of Mirren's commemoration to Magnani's tribute night as a deeply symbolic event: "Conferring the career award in an evening dedicated to Anna Magnani represents an ideal bridge between two icons of cinema, united by a unique interpretive force and a rare ability to move audiences."

Indeed, Magnani built her career on raw emotional honesty and an refusal to conform to Hollywood's idea of feminine beauty, making her one of the most distinctive screen presences of the 20th century. Mirren has navigated her own career on similar terms. Honouring Mirren on the night dedicated to Magnani's legacy makes a clear statement: for a performance to make history, integrity matters much more than image.

#### Mirren, a career without compromises

Mirren's career spans over five decades shared between stage and screen. Her credits range from

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the Royal Shakespeare Company to blockbusters like the *Fast and Furious* franchise, with a reputation for refusing to be typecast. She remains the only performer to have won the Oscar, BAFTA, Golden Globe, Screen Actors Guild Award, Critics' Choice Award, Emmy, and Tony.

Her performance in Stephen Frear's *The Queen* (2006), which won her an Oscar for Best Actress in a Leading Role, featured Mirren in the garbs of Elizabeth II navigating the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Over seven decades, Taormina has hosted figures including Francis Ford Coppola, Sophia Loren, and Pedro Almodóvar, building a reputation as a festival where serious artistic recognition and Mediterranean spectacle thrive in unison. Receiving an award beneath the stars of the Teatro Antico, with the Sicilian coastline as backdrop, carries a cultural gravity that few festival settings anywhere in the world can match. This June, Mirren joins a lineage that is 72 years in the Italian making.

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