

# Sally Potter

Sally Potter left school at sixteen to become a filmmaker, joining the London Film-Makers' Co-op and starting making experimental short films, including *JERK* (1969) and *PLAY* (1970). She later trained as a dancer and choreographer at the London School of Contemporary Dance, making both film and dance pieces, including *COMBINES* (1972), before founding Limited Dance Company with Jacky Lansley.

Potter went on to become an award-winning performance artist and theatre director, with shows including *Mounting*, *Death and the Maiden* and *Berlin*. In addition, she was a member of several music bands (including *FIG* and *The Film Music Orchestra*) working as a lyricist and singer. She collaborated (as a singer-songwriter) with composer Lindsay Cooper on the song cycle *Oh Moscow* which was performed throughout Europe, Russia and North America in the late 1980's. (Potter's music work continued later when she co-composed with David Motion the soundtrack to *ORLANDO*, and produced the score for *THE TANGO LESSON*. Her most recent music work is as producer and co-composer with Fred Frith of the original tracks for *YES* and *RAGE*.)

Potter returned to filmmaking with her short film *THRILLER* (1979) which was a hit on the international festival circuit. This was followed by her first feature film, *THE GOLD DIGGERS* (1983), starring Julie Christie; a short film, *THE LONDON STORY* (1986); a documentary series for Channel 4, *TEARS, LAUGHTER, FEARS AND RAGE* (1986); and *I AM AN OX, I AM A HORSE, I AM A MAN, I AM A WOMAN* (1988), a film about women in Soviet cinema.

The internationally acclaimed *ORLANDO* (1992) brought Potter's work to a wide audience. Starring Tilda Swinton, the film was based on Virginia Woolf's classic novel and adapted for the screen by Potter. In addition to two Academy Award nominations, *ORLANDO* won more than 25 international awards, including the Felix awarded by the European Film Academy for the best Young European Film of 1993, and first prizes at St Petersburg, Thessaloniki and other festivals.

Her next film was *THE TANGO LESSON* (1996), in which she also performed, with renowned tango dancer Pablo Veron. First presented at the Venice Film Festival, the film was awarded the "Ombú de Oro" for Best Film at the Mar del Plata Film Festival, Argentina, the SADAIC Great Award from the Sociedad Argentina de Autores y Compositores de Música, as well as receiving Best Film nominations from BAFTA and the US National Board of Review.

*THE MAN WHO CRIED* (2000), starring Johnny Depp, Christina Ricci, Cate Blanchett and John Turturro, premiered at the Venice Film Festival.

YES (2004), with Joan Allen, Simon Abkarian and Sam Neill, premiered in Telluride, Toronto and Havana and was nominated for a British Independent Film Award.

In 2007 Potter directed Bizet's Carmen for English National Opera at the London Coliseum, starring Alice Coote and designed by Es Devlin.

Potter's most recent film, RAGE (2009), was the first feature ever to premiere on cell-phones. The cast includes Judi Dench, Steve Buscemi, Lily Cole and Jude Law. RAGE was in competition at the Berlin Film Festival in 2009 and nominated for a WEBBY for Best Drama in 2010.

Potter has had full career retrospectives of her film and video work at the BFI Southbank, London, and Filmoteca, Madrid, in 2009, and MoMA, New York, in 2010.

Potter has a blog and message board at [www.sallypotter.com](http://www.sallypotter.com).