Meryl Streep, born Mary Louise Streep on June 22, 1949, in Summit, New Jersey, has established herself as one of the most esteemed figures in modern cinema. Her father, Harry William Streep Jr., was of German and Swiss ancestry, while her mother, Mary Wilkinson Streep, had English, German, and Irish roots. Streep's early life was shaped by her mother's encouragement and the confidence she instilled in her, often comparing her in appearance and manner to Dame Judi Dench. Streep's first foray into acting was in her junior high debut, and she continued to pursue this passion through her high school and college years, culminating in a BA cum laude from Vassar College in 1971, and later, an MFA from the Yale School of Drama in 1975. Streep's career trajectory took off in the 1970s, beginning with stage work and transitioning into film with her debut in 'Julia' (1977). Her breakthrough role came in 'The Deer Hunter' (1978), earning her an Academy Award nomination. She won her first Emmy for the miniseries 'Holocaust' (1978) and continued to garner critical acclaim with her Academy Award-winning performance in 'Kramer vs. Kramer' (1979). The 1980s solidified her reputation as a versatile actress with her roles in 'Sophie's Choice' (1982) and 'Out of Africa' (1985), further demonstrating her ability to master accents and inhabit her characters fully. Throughout her illustrious career, Streep has been honored with a multitude of awards, including a record 21 Academy Award nominations with three wins, and a record 33 Golden Globe nominations, winning eight. Her accolades also extend to the stage with a Tony Award nomination. Streep's dedication to her craft and her ability to portray a diverse range of characters have earned her the title 'the best actress of her generation' and a place in the hearts of audiences worldwide. In addition to her acting prowess, Streep is known for her philanthropic efforts and advocacy for the arts. She was awarded the AFI Life Achievement Award in 2004 and the Kennedy Center Honor in 2011. Her contributions to the American cultural landscape were recognized by President Barack Obama, who awarded her the National Medal of Arts in 2010 and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2014. Streep's influence extends beyond the United States; in 2003, she was made a Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French government. Streep's versatility extends to her roles on television, where she has delivered memorable performances in projects like 'Angels in America' (2003), for which she won her second Primetime Emmy, and more recently, in 'Big Little Lies' (2019) and 'Only Murders in the Building' (2023). Her ability to seamlessly transition between film, television, and stage has made her a beacon of excellence in the performing arts. Meryl Streep's filmography is a testament to her range and dedication to her craft. She reclaimed her stardom with leading roles in 'Adaptation' and 'The Hours' (both 2002), 'The Devil Wears Prada' (2006), 'Doubt' and 'Mamma Mia!' (both 2008), 'Julie & Julia' and 'It's Complicated' (both 2009), 'Into the Woods' (2014), 'The Post' (2017), and 'Little Women' (2019). Her portrayal of Margaret Thatcher in 'The Iron Lady' (2011) won her a third Oscar, showcasing her ability to embody historical figures with nuanced performances. Streep has also made her mark on the music industry with her performances in musicals and soundtracks. Her role in 'Mamma Mia!' not only showcased her singing abilities but also led to a successful soundtrack album, with her rendition of the title song charting in Portugal. Streep's contributions to film soundtracks have been recognized with multiple Grammy nominations, further highlighting her multi-talented artistic capabilities. Despite her global fame, Streep has managed to maintain a private personal life. She was in a relationship with actor John Cazale until his death in 1978 and married sculptor Don Gummer later that year. Together, they have four children, including musician Henry Wolfe Gummer and actresses Mamie, Grace, and Louisa Gummer. Streep's ability to balance her professional success with her family life has endeared her to fans as a relatable and grounded figure. An advocate for gender equality and women's rights, Streep has used her platform to support various causes. She funded a screenwriters lab for women over forty, signed an open letter urging world leaders to focus on women in their development funding priorities, and has been involved with the Time's Up initiative. Her activism extends to her work, where she often infuses her roles with feminist perspectives, subtly influencing the portrayal of women in media. Streep's legacy in Hollywood is unparalleled, with her name synonymous with exceptional acting talent. Her record-breaking nominations and awards, her ability to tackle challenging roles across genres, and her commitment to advocacy work have cemented her status as a living legend. Her impact on the film industry and her contributions to cultural and social issues have made her an enduring icon and a role model for actors and activists alike.