

This week

Behind the Smiles on Oscar Night!

THE THRILL OF VICTORY ISN'T ALWAYS WHAT IT APPEARS TO BE. A NEW BOOK REVEALS THE RELATABLE STRUGGLES OF SOME OF OUR FAVORITE STARS DURING THEIR WINNING MOMENTS

BY ANDREA MANDELL

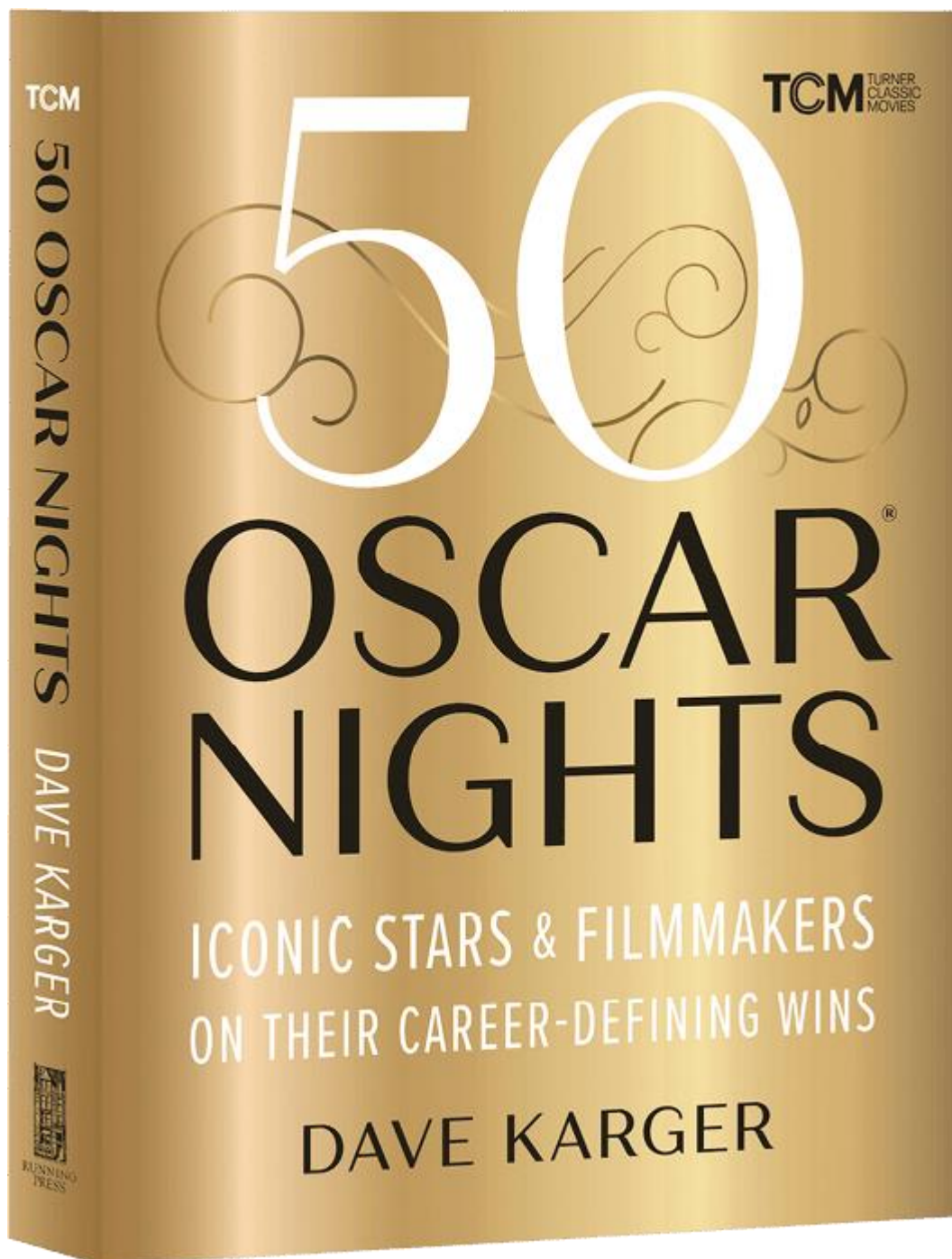


Nicole Kidman won Best Actress for *The Hours* in 2003, a year after scoring her first nomination, for *Moulin Rouge*! She began dating husband Keith Urban (below) in 2005.





Winning an Oscar at the end of an intense, whirlwind awards season is supposed to be the unparalleled height of a film career. But life can be as messy as movies. As the new book *50 Oscar Nights* (out Jan. 23) and the excerpts that follow reveal, when stars grasp their golden statuettes, they're often grappling with all-too-human problems, whether it's crushing romantic heartbreak or a nasty case of the flu. "The surprise of putting this book together was to learn that for many people, winning an Academy Award is not necessarily an entirely positive experience," says author and Turner Classic Movies host Dave Karger. "You'd think that reaching the pinnacle of this high-profile profession would simply feel euphoric, but a lot of these interviews showed me that for many people, it carries with it much more complex emotions than I had ever imagined."

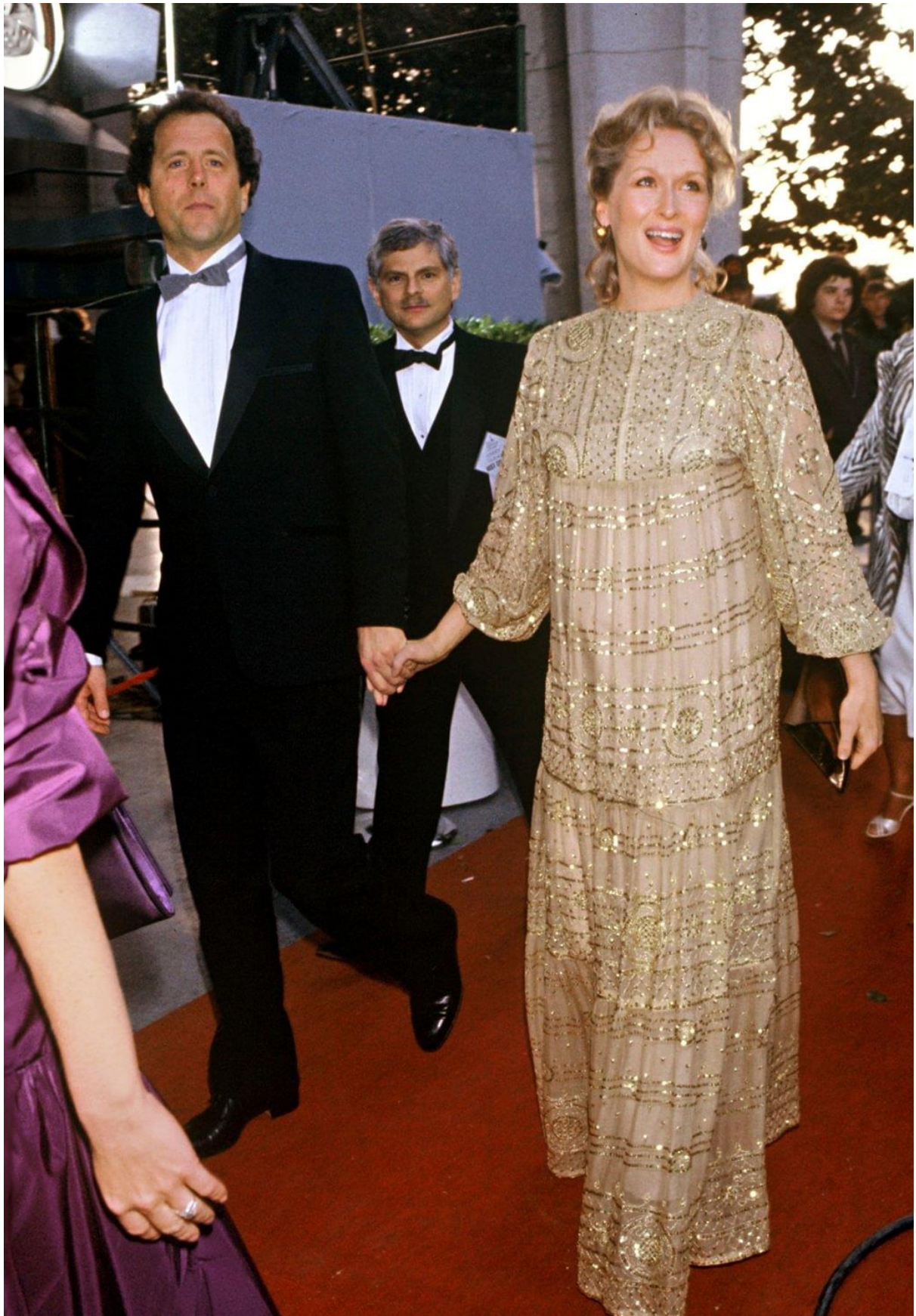


“For some Academy Award winners, the whole Oscar season was a learning experience like no other,” says *50 Oscar Nights* author Dave Karger.

A recently divorced Nicole Kidman felt lonely on her big night.

I was struggling with things in my personal life [she and ex Tom Cruise had split two years earlier], yet my professional life was going so well. That’s what happens, right? I’m not a big party girl, so I was going to skip the *Vanity Fair* party, and everyone was like, “You’ve got to go. You’ve got to walk through the party carrying your Academy Award.” I said, “That just feels like gloating, and it doesn’t feel humble.” Like, what? You can’t walk through carrying the award! That feels really inappropriate. They’re like, “That’s what you do.” So I literally walked in, carried it around, was completely overwhelmed, emotional, shaking, and I didn’t

enjoy it. I was almost apologetic, which is so stupid. I wish I could have enjoyed it more. I went home and ended up ordering takeout and eating it on the floor of the Beverly Hills Hotel. I sat on the floor of the hotel eating French fries and a burger with my family and went to bed. That's when it hit me. I went, I need to find my love; I need a love in my life. Because this is supposed to be when you go, "This is ours." I went to bed alone; I was in bed before midnight. If I ever won again, I'm telling you, I'd be out for 24 hours.



Meryl Streep won her second Oscar, for *Sophie's Choice*, in 1983, alongside husband Don Gummer. With 21

nominations (and three wins), she is the most nominated actor in history.

A pregnant Meryl Streep had a fashion snafu.

In those days, people didn't have stylists and designers and all that stuff. I went to Saks a couple of weeks before, and I was fat—I was five months, six months pregnant, maybe more. And nothing fit. I went down to the basement to the sales rack, and they had some kind of Indian beaded sequined dresses. And I tried one. It was nice, and it fit over me, but because my belly stuck out, it was too short in the front. But it had a little train, so I wore the dress backwards and the train went over my belly. I thought I was so smart. So you'll notice in the pictures.



The activist kept her speech short after winning Best Actress in 1972 for *Klute*: “There’s a great deal to say, and I’m not going to say it tonight.”

Jane Fonda cried tears of relief—and regret.

I had the flu—I was really sick. I had a temperature of 102. I remember thanking the people who voted for me and saying exactly what my father told me to say. And then I walked off the stage, and I went in a corner backstage and cried. I was crying because of relief, because I said what I had to say, and I'd gotten off the stage, and nobody had booed. But I also cried because my dad had never won an Oscar, and it just seemed wrong. [Her father, Henry Fonda, would finally win in 1982 for *On Golden Pond*, shortly before his death.] And then I went home and collapsed in bed. I didn't go to any parties. While I was married to Tom Hayden, I wanted to play down the Hollywood part of me, so I didn't have them on display anywhere. Then I married Ted Turner, and his office was wall-to-wall trophies. I thought, He can display every frigging one of his trophies—why the hell can't I? Now I have them very prominently displayed on a bookcase in my living room.





**Whoopi Goldberg won Best Supporting Actress
for *Ghost* (opposite Patrick Swayze) in 1991.**

Whoopi Goldberg's *Ghost* glory started with a sweet plea.

I get a phone call from my agent, Ron Meyer, who says, "Patrick Swayze has been hired for this movie. Patrick is not going to do this if you don't do it. Can you make some time for him and the director to come up?" So they flew in, I meet Patrick, and out of the blue, we're old friends. About forty minutes go by and Patrick says, "Please do this with me." I was like, "Yeah, okay." And that's how it happened. I said yes, not really knowing what it was going to be. It wasn't until we all saw the film that we realized what we had. Patrick and I saw it at the same time. He looked over to me and said, "Do you remember making this movie?" I said, "I remember some of this, but I don't remember all of this!" It was kind of like, "Oh my God, this is great!" He was sexy and sweet and just a terrific human being to me.





Barry Jenkins won Best Adapted Screenplay before the telecast's chaotic Best Picture mix-up, which saw Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway (above) mistakenly announce *La La Land* as the winner.

After Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway mistakenly announced *La La Land* as the 2017 Best Picture winner, *Moonlight* director Barry Jenkins was rushed onstage to accept for his film.

It was just weird, man. It was actually not an awesome night. It just wasn't. [After you win] there's this whole labyrinth path you go through to get to the press room. I remember passing Warren, and there were all these people surrounding him trying to get the card from him. He said, "I didn't want to give this to anyone but you." That was important because I still had no proof that we had actually won. He handed it to me, I took a photo of it and I gave it back to him and I kept going.



Sally Field took home Best Actress for Norma Rae in 1980 sans then-boyfriend Burt Reynolds (inset, in 1979).

Sally Field went solo because her A-list boyfriend refused to be her date.

I had been dating Burt Reynolds at the time, but Burt was not happy with what was happening to me. He did not want me to go to Cannes at all. He said, "You don't think you're going to win anything, do you?" Then when the Oscars came around, he really was not a nice guy around me then and was not going to go with me. [Actor and comedian] David Steinberg was a friend of ours, and I adored him and his then-wife, Judy. I didn't know what to do, then David said, "Well, for God's sakes, we'll take you." He and Judy made it a big

celebration. They picked me up in a limousine and had champagne in the car. They made it just wonderful fun.



Marlee Matlin was just 21 when she won Best Actress in 1987.

**‘IT WAS MY TIME. IT WAS MY NIGHT’
—MARLEE MATLIN**

Marlee Matlin was shut down by her then-boyfriend and *Children of a Lesser God* costar William Hurt after her Best Actress Oscar triumph.

Bill congratulated me when I got the award. [Matlin, 21 at the time and nominated for her debut film, was the youngest-ever Best Actress winner, a distinction she still holds.] After I won, I stopped to look at the monitor to see if he had won the [Best Actor] Oscar that night. When I found out that he didn’t win, my heart sank. I was afraid to see how he was going to react later at home, the fact that I won and he didn’t.

After the ceremony, Bill held my hand, and we found our limo. We got inside, sat down, and he was just staring at me. I could see him thinking. He was very quiet. And he said, “So you have that little man there next to you. What makes you think you deserve it?” I looked at him

like, What do you mean? And he said, “A lot of people work a long time, especially the ones you were nominated with, for a lot of years to get what you got with one film.” I didn’t even dare to argue with him. I thought to myself, Is he right? I mean, he was. But was he not happy for me? I was too stunned to talk. But it made me stronger. It just bounced off my back. It was my time. It was my night. And it was the beginning of my career. So f--- off. I left him a few months afterward, on July Fourth.

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