

= Jennifer Connelly =

Jennifer Lynn Connelly (born December 12 , 1970) is an American film actress who began her career as a child model . She appeared in magazine , newspaper and television advertising , before she made her debut role in the 1984 crime film *Once Upon a Time in America* . Connelly continued modeling and acting , starring in films such as the 1986 film *Labyrinth* and the 1991 films *Career Opportunities* and *The Rocketeer* . She gained critical acclaim for her work in the 1998 science fiction film *Dark City* and for her portrayal of Marion Silver in the 2000 drama *Requiem for a Dream* .

In 2002 , Connelly won an Academy Award , a Golden Globe Award and a BAFTA Award for her supporting role as Alicia Nash in Ron Howard 's 2001 biopic *A Beautiful Mind* . Her later credits include the 2003 Marvel superhero film *Hulk* where she played Bruce Banner 's true love Betty Ross , the 2005 horror film *Dark Water* , the 2006 drama *Blood Diamond* , the 2008 science fiction remake *The Day the Earth Stood Still* , the 2009 romantic comedy *He 's Just Not That into You* and the 2009 biographical drama *Creation* . She re @-@ teamed with her *Requiem for a Dream* director Darren Aronofsky and *A Beautiful Mind* co @-@ star Russell Crowe for the 2014 biblical epic *Noah* .

Connelly was named Amnesty International Ambassador for Human Rights Education in 2005 . She has been the face of Balenciaga fashion advertisements , as well as for Revlon cosmetics . In 2012 , she was named the first global face of the Shiseido Company . Magazines including *Time* , *Vanity Fair* and *Esquire* , as well as the Los Angeles Times newspaper have included her on their lists of the world 's most beautiful women .

= = Early life = =

Connelly was born in Cairo , New York , in the Catskill Mountains . She is the daughter of Ilene , an antiques dealer , and Gerard Karl Connelly (1941 ? 2008) , a clothing manufacturer . Her father was Roman Catholic of Irish and Norwegian descent . Her mother was Jewish and was educated at a yeshiva ; Ilene 's family had emigrated from Poland and Russia . Connelly was raised primarily in Brooklyn Heights , near the Brooklyn Bridge , where she attended Saint Ann 's , a private school specializing in the Arts . Her father suffered from asthma , so the family moved to Woodstock , New York , in 1976 to escape the city smog . Four years later , the family returned to Brooklyn Heights , and Connelly returned to Saint Ann 's .

= = Career = =

= = = Child modeling and early film appearances = = =

When Connelly was 10 years old , an advertising executive friend of her father suggested she audition as a model . Her parents sent a picture of her to the Ford Modeling Agency , which shortly after added her to its roster . Connelly began modeling for print advertisements before moving on to television commercials . In an interview with *The Guardian* , she revealed that , after having done some modeling , she had no aspirations to become an actor . She appeared on the cover of several issues of *Seventeen* in 1986 and 1988 . In December 1986 , she recorded two pop songs for the Japanese market : " Monologue of Love " and " Message of Love " . Connelly sang in phonetic Japanese as she did not speak the language .

Her mother started taking her to acting auditions . At once , Connelly was selected for a supporting role as the aspiring dancer and actress Deborah Gelly in Sergio Leone 's 1984 gangster epic *Once Upon a Time in America* . The role required performing a ballet routine . During the audition , Connelly , who had no ballet training , tried to imitate a ballerina . Her performance , and the similarity of her nose to Elizabeth McGovern 's , who played the character as an adult , convinced the director to cast her . Connelly described the movie as " an incredibly idyllic introduction to movie @-@ making " . While *Once Upon a Time in America* was being filmed , Connelly made her first television appearance , in the episode " Stranger in Town " of the British series *Tales of the*

Unexpected .

Her first leading role was in Italian giallo @-@ director Dario Argento 's 1985 film Phenomena , as a girl who uses her psychic powers to communicate with insects , in order to pursue the serial killer of students of the Swiss school where she has just enrolled . She next had the lead in the coming @-@ of @-@ age movie Seven Minutes in Heaven , released the same year .

Of her early career , she said , " Before I knew it , [acting] became what I did . It was a very peculiar way to grow up , combined with my personality . " She described feeling like " a kind of walking puppet " through her adolescence , without having time alone to deal with the attention her career was generating .

= = = 1980s ? 1990s = = =

Connelly gained public recognition with Jim Henson 's 1986 film Labyrinth with David Bowie , in which she played Sarah , a teenager on a quest to rescue her brother Toby from the world of goblins . Although a disappointment at the box office , the film later became a cult classic . The New York Times , while noting the importance of her part , panned her portrayal : " Jennifer Connelly as Sarah is unfortunately disappointing She looks right , but she lacks conviction and seems to be reading rehearsed lines that are recited without belief in her goal or real need to accomplish it . " Two years later , she starred as a ballet student in the Italian film Étoile , and portrayed college student Gabby in Michael Hoffman 's Some Girls .

Balancing work and school , she studied English for two years at Yale University in 1988 and 1989 , before transferring to Stanford University in 1990 to study drama . There , she trained with Roy London , Howard Fine and Harold Guskin . Encouraged by her parents to continue with her film career , Connelly left college and returned to the movie industry the same year .

In 1990 , Dennis Hopper directed The Hot Spot , in which Connelly played Gloria Harper , a woman being blackmailed . The film was a box office failure but Connelly was praised . Stephen Schaefer wrote for USA Today , " Anyone looking for proof that little girls do grow up fast in the movies should take a gander at curvaceous Jennifer Connelly [...] in The Hot Spot . Not yet 20 , Connelly has neatly managed the transition from child actress to ingenue " . During an interview with Shaeffer , Connelly commented on her first nude scene : " The nudity was hard for me and something I thought about ... but it 's not in a sleazy context " . The same year , director Garry Marshall considered her for the role of Vivian Ward in Pretty Woman , but ultimately felt that she was too young for the part .

Connelly 's next film was the 1991 romantic comedy Career Opportunities , starring alongside Frank Whaley . People magazine criticized the film for exploiting Connelly 's body . The marketing included a life @-@ size cardboard cutout showing Whaley watching Connelly ride a mechanical horse , with the caption " He 's about to have the ride of his life " . In an interview with Rolling Stone , Connelly said that a Yale professor brought it to her attention and " ... that wasn 't something I felt all that comfortable about " .

The big @-@ budget Disney film The Rocketeer (1991) followed later that year , but failed to ignite her career . She played Jenny Blake , the aspiring actress girlfriend of stunt pilot Cliff , " the Rocketeer " . New York characterized the movie as " pallid " . The review said of her performance , " Connelly is properly cast ; she has the moist , full @-@ to @-@ the @-@ cheek bones sensuality of the Hollywood starlets of that period , but she 's a little straight " . She appeared alongside Jason Priestley in the Roy Orbison music video for " I Drove All Night " the following year .

Connelly next appeared in Of Love and Shadows , a 1994 Argentine @-@ American drama film written and directed by Betty Kaplan starring Antonio Banderas . In 1995 , director John Singleton cast Connelly as a lesbian college student in Higher Learning . She next appeared in the 1996 independent film Far Harbor as Elie , a prominent person in a Hollywood studio who writes a screenplay based on her traumas .

It was followed that year by the neo @-@ noir crime thriller Mulholland Falls , which featured the murder of Allison Pond (Connelly) , mistress of General Timms (John Malkovich) , and the investigation by a group of detectives led by Maxwell Hoover (Nick Nolte) . New York magazine

wrote about a clip that reveals the link between Timms and Pond : " This footage is actually dirty . That is , it makes us feel like voyeurs when looking at it , but it 's so juicily erotic that we can hardly look away " . About nudity in the movie , Connelly said : " It kind of shocked everyone who knows me that I wound up doing this movie , because I had always been so careful about nudity , it was very much a part of this character and I couldn 't be coy or guarded or self @-@ conscious--otherwise it wouldn 't work . It was sort of a challenge I wanted to take on , I guess " .

She began to appear in small @-@ budget films which did well with critics , such as 1997 's drama *Inventing the Abbotts* , set in the late 1950s , in which she played the part of Eleanor , one of three daughters of the town millionaire , Lloyd Abbott . About her performance , director Ron Howard said , " She not only was beautiful and seductive but gave some difficult psychological moments in the film a lot of depth and complexity . She had an extraordinary combination of talent and beauty , and I guess I stored that information in the back of my brain " .

Her next appearance was in the critically acclaimed 1998 science fiction film *Dark City* , where she played alongside Rufus Sewell , William Hurt , Ian Richardson and Kiefer Sutherland . Connelly portrayed femme fatale Emma , a torch singer whose husband , John Murdoch (Rufus Sewell) , suffers from amnesia . As Murdoch is regaining his memories , Emma is kidnapped by Mr. Hand (Richard O 'Brien) and The Strangers , who alter her memories and assign her a new identity . Author Sean McMullen wrote , " Jennifer Connelly is visually splendid as the 1940s femme fatale (Emma) . "

The animated drawing of Aladdin was modelled after Tom Cruise and Jasmine was based on Connelly .

= = = Early 2000s = = =

In 2001 , Ed Harris directed Connelly in the biopic *Pollock* in which she played Ruth Kligman , Jackson Pollock 's mistress . In 2000 she appeared in what critics considered her breakthrough film , *Requiem for a Dream* , directed by Darren Aronofsky and based on the novel of the same name by Hubert Selby , Jr . Connelly played Marion Silver , the girlfriend of Harry , played by Jared Leto ; the movie also starred Marlon Wayans and Ellen Burstyn . Her character is a middle @-@ class girl from Manhattan Beach who pursues the dream of establishing a dress shop . She becomes addicted to heroin and descends into a life of prostitution . Connelly prepared for the role by renting an apartment in the building where the character lived . During her time in the apartment , Connelly isolated herself , painted , listened to music that she considered that her character would , designed clothes , and used the time to reflect about addictions and their origin . Connelly also talked to addicts and attended Narcotics Anonymous meetings with a friend who was in recovery . Critics acclaimed the individual performances for the actors ' emotional courage in portraying physical and mental degradation . Connelly said she became interested in the script for its depiction of the addictions and their effects on the lives and affections of the characters and their relatives .

The critic Elvis Mitchell wrote in *The New York Times* ,

" Ms. Connelly , too , whittled herself down to a new weight class , and it 's her performance that gives the movie weight , since her fall is the most precipitous . By the end , when she curls into a happy fetal ball with a furtive smile on her face , she has come to love her debasement Her dank realization is more disturbing than anything in the novel , and Ms. Connelly has never before done anything to prepare us for how good she is here . "

During 2000 , she appeared as Catherine Miller in the FOX drama series *The \$ treet* , about a brokerage house in New York .

Also in 2000 , she appeared in *Waking the Dead* , a film based on the 1986 novel of the same name , playing Sarah Williams , an activist killed by a car bomb in Minneapolis while she was driving Chilean refugees (*Strangely* , Sarah Williams was also the name of Connelly 's character in *Labyrinth*) . Initially , director Keith Gordon was reluctant to cast Connelly in this role as he did not consider her a serious actress . Her agent Risa Shapiro persuaded him to watch Connelly 's performance in *Far Harbor* . Gordon later said : " There was a subtlety and depth even to her gaze that captured more of the relationship than I ever could have hoped for . " About her role , Connelly

said , " Waking the Dead was the first film I worked on where whatever I did felt like my own thing . I was really trying to make something of the part and threw myself into it , so that meant a lot to me " . The New York Times described her performance , " As Sarah , Ms. Connelly captures a burning ethereality and willfulness that are very much of the period . And she and Mr. Crudup connect powerfully in love scenes that convey the fierce tenderness of a relationship whose passion carries a tinge of religious fervor . "

The script of Ron Howard 's 2001 film A Beautiful Mind , loosely based on Sylvia Nasar 's 1998 biography of the mathematician John Nash , sparked her interest in the project . Connelly was invited to an audition after her agent Risa Shapiro sent the producers a tape with a clip of the yet unreleased Requiem for a Dream . She was cast by the film 's producer , Brian Grazer , as Alicia Nash , the caring and enduring wife of the brilliant , schizophrenic mathematician , played by Russell Crowe . Howard and the producers eventually chose them after being particularly impressed by their screen chemistry . The film was a critical and commercial success , grossing more than US \$ 313 million worldwide . Connelly had the chance to meet the real Alicia Nash before starting shooting and learned more about her life . For her portrayal , Connelly earned a Golden Globe , an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress , and a BAFTA for Best Actress in a Supporting Role . Time magazine critic Richard Schickel called her performance " luminous " and the actress intelligent and passionate . Roger Ebert wrote , " ... Jennifer Connelly is luminous as Alicia . Although the showier performance belongs to Crowe , it is Connelly 's complex work , depicting a woman torn by love for and fear of the same man , that elevates the film to a higher level " .

Connelly said afterward , " [A Beautiful Mind] is the film I 'm really proud of and really love . " A.O. Scott of The New York Times said , " There is , for one thing , Ms. Connelly , keen and spirited in the underwritten role of a woman who starts out as a math groupie and soon finds herself the helpmeet of a disturbed , difficult man . "

In relation to previous roles , Connelly said :

" There was a period where I felt like I wasn 't quite being considered for the projects that I wanted to work on because maybe people were thinking . ' I 'm not going to cast the girl who was in that movie for this adult project . ' I 've felt for a long time that this is what I want to do so I 'm happy at this point to just take my time and work on projects that I feel really strongly about and the rest of the time just live my life . "

Connelly said that she became interested in Ang Lee 's Hulk (2003) because of his philosophical perspective on the Marvel Comics superhero . She played Betty Ross , a scientist and the former girlfriend of the main character , Bruce Banner . The film was a moderate success .

It was followed the same year by House of Sand and Fog , a drama based on the novel by Andre Dubus III . She portrayed Kathy Nicolo , an abandoned wife whose inherited house is sold at auction to the Iranian emigre and former colonel Massoud Amir Behrani (Ben Kingsley) . After reading the script , Connelly said : " (the story is) moving and beautifully written . I liked the fact that there is no good guy and bad guy . I found it really compelling that both sides do things that are morally questionable , because life is often like that . " Producer Michael London said about Connelly 's portrayal : " I think she understood Kathy and knew in her bones that she could take this character and give her the kind of dimension that she had . I don 't think there is another actress who could have played Kathy with such power and grace . " The film received worldwide critical acclaim , with a BBC reporter commenting , " [Connelly] convinces totally as a selfish , desperate and lonely woman who confesses to her brother , ' I just feel lost ' " .

= = = 2005 ? present = = =

After a two @-@ year absence from the film scene , Connelly returned in the 2005 horror / psychological thriller Dark Water , which was based on a 2002 Japanese film of the same name . She played Dahlia , a frightened young woman traumatized by her past , who moves with her daughter to an apartment in New York City where paranormal happenings take place . In his review , critic Roger Ebert wrote , " I cared about the Jennifer Connelly character ; she is not a horror heroine but an actress playing a mother faced with horror . There is a difference , and because of

that difference , Dark Water works " .

She played Kathy Adamson in an adaptation of the novel Little Children alongside Kate Winslet , a movie which focuses on the relationship between Sarah Pierce (played by Winslet) and Brad Adamson (Patrick Wilson) . Connelly co -@-@ starred in Blood Diamond opposite Leonardo DiCaprio where she portrayed journalist Maddy Bowen , who is working on exposing the real story behind blood diamonds . New York praised her performance : " Connelly is such a smart , sane , unhistrionic actress that she almost disguises the fact that her character is a wheeze . " Both Little Children and Blood Diamond were nominated for multiple Academy Awards .

Her next appearance was as Grace in the drama Reservation Road with Joaquin Phoenix and Mark Ruffalo , a film released in 2007 . After her son dies in a hit @-@ and @-@ run , Grace gradually tries to overcome her grief , while her husband Ethan (Joaquin Phoenix) becomes obsessed with discovering who killed him . By her own account , the character she played in the movie proved tougher than any of her previous roles . USA Today 's Susan Wloszczyna commented , " The strong performances of Jennifer Connelly and Mark Ruffalo ... raise the film above overheated melodrama " .

Parisian fashion house Balenciaga and Revlon cosmetics signed Connelly as the face of their 2008 campaigns . Connelly portrayed astrobiologist Helen Benson alongside Keanu Reeves in the 2008 remake of the 1951 science fiction film The Day The Earth Stood Still . Unlike the original movie , in which Benson was a secretary and her relationship with Klaatu was the focus , the remake featured Benson in a troubled relationship with her stepson , portrayed by Jaden Smith . This was followed by a role in the 2009 romantic comedy He 's Just Not That Into You , which also featured Jennifer Aniston and Ginnifer Goodwin . The film was based on the self @-@ help book of the same name . Variety praised her portrayal : " Despite its layer of darkness Connelly gives a really rich performance as a woman whose principles back her into a corner " .

In 2009 , she appeared in the costume drama biopic Creation , in which she played Emma Darwin , wife of Charles Darwin , opposite her real @-@ life husband Paul Bettany . Set during the writing of On the Origin of Species , the movie depicts Darwin 's struggle with the subject of the book as well as with his wife , who opposed his theories , and their mourning for their daughter Annie . The San Francisco Chronicle wrote , " Darwin 's wife , a religious woman who disapproved of her husband 's theories , is played by Jennifer Connelly , Bettany 's real @-@ life wife , in the kind of casting that doesn 't always work , but it does here . We believe in the Darwins ' history together , their familiarity and affection . Connelly 's English accent is also as good as Renée Zellweger 's and Gwyneth Paltrow 's . She doesn 't get just the sounds right , but also the music and the attitude " . She then voiced the character named " 7 " , an adventurous warrior in the animated film 9 .

Dustin Lance Black 's Virginia premiered on September 15 , 2010 , at the Toronto International Film Festival . Two years later , it was announced that the movie would receive a limited theatrical release in May 2012 . Connelly portrayed the title role of Virginia , a mentally unstable woman who has a 20 @-@ year affair with the local sheriff , whose daughter then starts a relationship with Virginia 's son . Connelly prepared for the role by watching documentaries on schizophrenia . She also spent time at the New York State Psychiatric Institute and the New York University 's Cancer Center to understand the afflictions and obstacles of her character . While she was preparing for the role , director Dustin Lance Black requested Connelly 's advice to design the set of Virginia 's house , as well as the selection of the apparel to create the character 's style .

She described the film as a " very different " and " very personal " independent film . According to Cinema Blend , " Virginia is propped up by a strong central performance , with Connelly doing some of her best work in years " .

In 2011 , Connelly starred in Ron Howard 's comedy The Dilemma with Vince Vaughn . Although the Austin Chronicle 's review noted , " Vaughn nails it , and his nicely nuanced everyguy performance is aided by the always @-@ excellent Connelly , " the movie opened to generally negative reviews . Variety remarked , " Connelly , though a shade looser and more spontaneous than usual , seems stuck at an emotional remove from the action " . Her next project , George Ratliff 's Salvation Boulevard , premiered during the 2011 Sundance Film Festival . In the film Connelly played Gwen , the wife of Carl Vanderveer (Greg Kinnear) ; the couple are members of the Church

of the Third Millennium , led by pastor Dan (Pierce Brosnan) . During the same year , Connelly recorded an audiobook version of Paul Bowles ' The Sheltering Sky , which integrates the A @-@ List Collection of Audible.com , released in March 2012 .

Her next project , starred alongside Greg Kinnear was the family drama Stuck in Love , the directorial debut of Josh Boone . Connelly played the ex @-@ wife of Kinnear 's character , with whom he is obsessed . The film was premiered during the 2012 Toronto International Film Festival .

In February 2012 , Connelly was announced as the first global brand ambassador for Shiseido , having previously worked with the company in the 1980s in a series of advertisements for the Japanese market . On August 2013 , it was announced that Connelly was cast by her husband , Paul Bettany , for his directorial debut Shelter . Connelly had a role in the 2014 film adaptation of the 1983 Mark Helprin novel , Winter 's Tale , the directorial debut of Akiva Goldsman , alongside Colin Farrell and William Hurt ; As well as starring in the English @-@ speaking directorial debut of Claudia Llosa Cry / Fly .

Working again in collaboration with A Beautiful Mind co @-@ star Russell Crowe , she portrayed Naameh in Darren Aronofsky 's 2014 biblical epic Noah . The film opened to favorable reviews . The Washington Post declared Connelly and Crowe 's performances " impressively grounded , powerful " ; The Denver Post felt that Connelly portrayed the role with " fine intelligence " . Variety deemed her appearance " solid but underused " , while Detroit News stated " Connelly has too little to do , but when she lets go , she hits hard . " Indiewire wrote that Connelly conveyed the role with a " steady hand " , while St. Paul Pioneer Press defined her interpretation as " compelling " .

= = Personal life = =

While filming The Rocketeer , she began a romance with co @-@ star Billy Campbell . They were involved for five years before they broke up in 1996 . Her first son was born in 1997 , with photographer David Dugan .

On January 1 , 2003 , in a private family ceremony in Scotland she married actor Paul Bettany whom she had met while working on A Beautiful Mind . The couple 's first child , was born the same year . She gave birth to her third child on May 2011 , in New York City .

On November 14 , 2005 , Connelly was named Amnesty International Ambassador for Human Rights Education . She appeared in an advertisement highlighting the global need for clean water , and sought donations for African , Indian , and Central American drilling projects for the non @-@ profit organization Charity : Water . On May 2 , 2009 , she participated in Revlon 's annual 5k Run / Walk for Women . In May 2012 , Connelly was named ambassador for Save the Children fund , to advocate for children 's rights in the United States and worldwide .

Publications such as Vanity Fair , Esquire , and the Los Angeles Times have ranked her among the most beautiful women in the world .

= = Filmography = =