

# JOHN WATERS

b. April 22, 1946

Affectionately dubbed “The King of Sleaze,” John Waters is an award-winning screenwriter and director.

*“To me, bad taste is what entertainment is all about.”*

John Waters is an award-winning screenwriter and director known for his obsession with the seedy side of life. Affectionately dubbed by critics “The Pope of Trash” and “The King of Sleaze,” Waters’s work includes a string of independent cult classics, blockbuster movies and Broadway shows.

Waters grew up in the 1950’s in Lutherville, Maryland, a suburb of Baltimore. During the 1970’s and early 1980’s, he began making films with local actors and a production team called the Dreamlanders. With the Dreamlanders, Waters created the Trash Trilogy: “Pink Flamingos,” “Female Trouble” and “Desperate Living.” Many of his movies are set in the 50’s and 60’s in Baltimore.

Waters introduced “Odorama” in his film “Polyester” (1981), which costarred Divine and Tab Hunter. Scratch and sniff cards with numbered spots were distributed with each ticket. When a number flashed on the screen, viewers were prompted to scratch the appropriate spot and smell the aroma.

While his earlier projects defined his style, it was “Hairspray” (1988) that brought Waters mainstream success. The film was adapted into a Broadway musical (2002), grossing over \$200 million and winning eight Tony Awards, including Best Musical in 2003. His film “Cry-Baby” (1990) became a hit Broadway show, receiving four Tony Award nominations in 2008.

A remake of “Hairspray” (2007) was a box office bonanza. The movie, featuring John Travolta, Michelle Pfeiffer and Queen Latifah, was the third highest grossing musical film in American cinema history.

Waters is an advocate of GLBT civil rights. In 2004, he received the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) Stephen F. Kolzak Award for his work combating homophobia. In 2008, he received a New York Leadership Award from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.



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hairspray

