



MADAME TUSSAUDS HOLLYWOOD TIMELINE

1761

Madame Marie Tussaud is born as Anna Maria Grosholtz in Strasbourg, France. Marie's father had passed away before she was born and her mother went to work for physician and brilliant wax modeller, Dr. Philippe Curtius in Switzerland.

1765

Curtius had established himself as a wax sculptor in Paris and in 1767 the young Marie joins Curtius in Paris. Noting her artistic talent, he trains her in the skills of wax modelling.

1770

Curtius' 'Salon de Cire' is the must-see attraction in Paris. His 'Caverne des Grands Voleurs' featuring macabre material gives way later to the Chamber of Horrors.

1778

Curtius' exhibition attracts visitors from all nations, including royalty, and reflects contemporary events. At age 17, Marie models a wax figure of Voltaire from a sitting in Paris. In 1780, Marie is invited to be the art tutor to the royal household at Versailles where she glimpses opulence and splendour.

1783

Marie models Benjamin Franklin and gives this description of him in her memoirs: "... *the frankness of his air, the wisdom of his observations, and the correctness of his conduct, made a most forcible impression upon the reflecting portion of the Parisians.*"

1787

Marie models figures of the French Royal Family - Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, Madame Royal and the Dauphin.

1789

The French Revolution begins. Revolutionaries demand the wax heads of the Duke of Orleans and Necker (the people's heroes) from Marie and Curtius, to parade in peaceful protest; however, the parade turns violent when the King's troops panic and open fire. On July 14, decapitated heads of French Governors are taken to the 'Salon de Cire'.

The courageous Marie makes death masks from the heads rather than risk the mob wrecking the exhibition if she refuses.

1793

On January 21, Marie is commanded to make a death mask from the guillotined head of King Louis XVI and in October of that year, a death mask of Marie Antoinette. Marie also goes to sketch the Queen's execution and faints.

1794

During the French Revolution Marie is imprisoned but, again, her sculpting skills save her from the guillotine and she is released in time to make Robespierre's death mask. Curtius dies bequeathing the entire Paris exhibition to Marie.

1795

Marie marries Francois Tussaud who gives her little besides two sons, Joseph (b.1798) and Francis (b.1800) and a name destined for fame.

1801

Marie has a sitting with Napoleon. As Marie takes the life cast of his face, she asks him not to be alarmed. He replies, *"Alarmed! I should not be alarmed if you were to surround my head with loaded pistols!"*

1802

At the age of 41, Madame Tussaud seizes the chance to explore new opportunities in London leaving her husband and her younger son in charge of the Paris exhibition. In 1804, Marie writes to her husband: *"my enterprise became more important to me than returning to you. Adieu, Adieu, - we can each go our own way"*. Marie never sees her husband or returns to France again.

1802-1835

A born show woman for 33 years Madame Tussaud stages her collection of the famous and infamous in the halls and theatres of every major town and city in Britain. The exhibition is accompanied by music and the figures are splendidly dressed and beautifully lit. She travels in brightly decorated caravans, using advertisements and posters to promote her exhibition. To maintain the topicality of the exhibition, Madame Tussaud continues to model contemporary personalities, royals, criminals and murderers.

1817

Francis Tussaud joins his mother and brother Joseph in London.

1822

Madame Tussaud is shipwrecked when she tries to take her exhibition to Ireland. All her possessions are lost except for one box containing miniature models. She demonstrates her entrepreneurial drive, immediately setting to work to recreate what she has lost.

1835

The exhibition finally settles at a building called 'The Bazaar' on Baker Street in London where Madame Tussaud and her sons set up the "Chamber of Horrors", exploiting her experiences of the French Revolution. Marie continues to add to her collection of relics and in 1840 purchases the coronation robes worn by King George IV.

1842

Madame Tussaud creates her final figure, a self portrait, at the age of 81.

1850

On April 15 at 89 years old, Madame Tussaud passes. The exhibition continues under the control of her two sons Joseph and Francis.

1884

Madame Tussaud's grandsons move the exhibition to new premises in London, the current UK site. The new exhibition is reputed to have cost £80,000.00 (just under £4 million or \$5.5 million today!)

1886-87

In 1886, Harvey Henderson Wilcox buys 160 acres of land. The following year Wilcox files the grid map for a town with the county recorder's office, the first official appearance of the name Hollywood.

1902

The first section of the Hollywood Hotel, the first major hotel in Hollywood, is opened.

1903

John Theodore Tussaud organizes a Madame Tussauds & Sons Centennial Dinner to celebrate 100 years since the arrival of Madame Tussaud in England.

1903 – 1910

The Hollywood community is incorporated as a municipality in its own right. Movie production companies move to California because the reliable natural light makes it an ideal location. The first movie studio in the Hollywood area was Nestor Studios, opened in 1911.

1922

Short films were hand tinted to create color in the early 1900s, but in 1922 the first color feature film ever to be made in Hollywood is released, *The Toll of the Sea* (1922), produced by the Technicolor Motion Picture Corporation and released by Metro Pictures.

1923

The famous Hollywood sign, which originally read "Hollywoodland", is erected. By the mid-1920s there were 5 big studios in Hollywood: 20th Century-Fox, RKO, Paramount Pictures, Warner Brothers, and Loews (MGM).

1925

Madame Tussauds London attraction is seriously damaged by fire. The attraction is rebuilt three years later with the addition of a cinema.

1926

The El Capitan Theatre opens as "Hollywood's First Home of Spoken Drama".

1927

Grauman's Chinese Theatre opens to the public in what is described as the most spectacular theatre opening in Hollywood history. Thousands of people lined Hollywood Boulevard to catch a glimpse of their favorite movie stars and celebrities.

1929

The first Academy Awards© ceremony takes place at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel. The first feature length 'talkie' *The Jazz Singer* (1927), and [Charlie Chaplin](#) for *The Circus* (1928) receive Honorary Awards.

1930s – 1940s

During Hollywood's Golden Age of the 1930s and 1940s 20th Century Fox, Warner Bros., Paramount, Columbia, Universal and Walt Disney Studios were the important movie production and distribution companies.

1940

A World War II bomb destroys the cinema and 352 irreplaceable head moulds at Madame Tussauds London; however Adolph Hitler's mold survives.

1940s

Advances in sound recording, lighting, special effects and color mean that movies offer patriotic, escapist entertainment. Alfred Hitchcock's spy thriller, *Foreign Correspondent* (1940) ends with a plea to the U.S. to help Europe against the Nazis, and *Casablanca* (1942) is awarded Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Screenplay making Humphrey Bogart a Hollywood star. Hollywood actors contribute to the war effort; Audrey Hepburn is a courier for resistance fighters in Holland, Clark Gable enlists in the U.S. Air Corps at Los Angeles and Steve McQueen joins the U.S. Marine Corps.

1949

The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce removes the "land" from the Hollywood sign and repairs the letters.

1958

The Hollywood Walk of Fame is created. The first eight inductees were Olive Borden, Ronald Colman, Louis Fazenda, Preston Foster, Burt Lancaster, Edward Sedgwick, Ernest Torrence and Joanne Woodward.

1968 - 1969

A wealth of Hollywood history with its cement handprints and footprints, Grauman's Chinese Theatre is declared a historical and cultural landmark in 1968. The Charlie Chaplin Studios, built in 1917, is named a historical cultural monument by The Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Board in 1969.

1970

Madame Tussauds Amsterdam opens and the company celebrates its Bicentennial.

1973

The Hollywood sign is declared a historical monument. Gloria Swanson is present at the unveiling which is staged in the style of a movie premier.

1980s

Blockbuster movies by directors Steven Spielberg and Martin Scorsese characterize this era with films such as *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial* (1982), *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981), *Raging Bull* (1980) and *The Color of Money* (1986). Developments in technology, cable TV and VHS tapes, encourages broader distribution of films. In an influential decision, the Supreme Court ruled that home video-taping for personal use was not a copyright infringement.

1997

In the tradition of Madame Tussaud's original touring exhibition, Tussauds takes waxwork figures all over the world, including Melbourne, Sydney and Singapore finally settling in Hong Kong.

1999

Madame Tussauds Las Vegas opens.

1999

The long awaited Hollywood extension of the Metro Red Line subway opens.

2000

Madame Tussauds opens attractions in Hong Kong and New York.

2001

The Kodak Theatre opens on Hollywood Boulevard and is now the new home of the Oscars®.

2006

Madame Tussauds Shanghai opens.

2007

Madame Tussauds Washington D.C. opens.

2008

Madame Tussauds Berlin opens.

2009

Madame Tussauds Hollywood opens.

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