

CALLING ALL THE SHOTS

With *Wonder Woman*, Patty Jenkins becomes the first woman to direct a major superhero film. It's the movie she's wanted to make her entire life. **BY NICOLE SPERLING**

ON MARCH 20, *THE NEW YORK TIMES* published a brief Metropolitan Diary entry about a group of octogenarians taking an escalator up to a movie theater near Union Square. The women, on their way to a screening of *Fences*, were chatting about the future. "I hope I live until summer," said one. "Why?" replied the another. "Because your granddaughter is getting married?" "No!" the first woman said. "Because I want to see the *Wonder Woman* movie."

The anecdote buoyed *Wonder Woman* director Patty Jenkins as she was putting the final touches on her blockbuster. "It brought tears to my eyes," she says. "Because I love *Wonder Woman*, I have grown up seeing who else loves *Wonder Woman*, and I know there is this huge swath of women—and men—who love *Wonder Woman* in this old-school way because of what she stood for all those years."

What the character stands for—core values like freedom and equality—aren't too far removed from Superman's principled pursuit of truth, justice and the American way, and it was Richard Donner's landmark 1978 film starring Christopher Reeve as the Man of Steel that sealed Jenkins's passion for superhero cinema. "It was my *Star Wars*," she says.

Still, it took more than a decade for her to find her way to the *Wonder Woman* director's chair. "It's part of the reason why I'm in such a good mood," she says. "This is a movie I've wanted to make my entire life."

In 2003 Jenkins rocketed to indie-world stardom with the grim real-life drama *Monster*, which she wrote and directed and which earned Charlize Theron a Best Actress Oscar for her starring turn as Florida serial killer Aileen Wuornos. After that early success, Jenkins lobbied Warner





Director Patty Jenkins on the set of *Wonder Woman*.