

Marie Dressler - A Canadian Comedian and Actress

Marie Dressler was born and raised in the red-brick cottage at 212 King St W. Despite her parents' disapproval, Dressler left home at age 14 to pursue her dreams of becoming an actress. Her career spanned across various industries, from travelling theatre, vaudeville, and opera to Broadway, silent films, and talking pictures. Though it wasn't until later in life that her career hit its peak, her success was undeniable. Her performance in ***Min and Bill*** earned her an Academy Award in 1931. Sadly, Dressler passed away in 1934 at the age of 65.



Marie Dressler, 1932.

Source:

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Marie-Dressler>

Dressler's first job in entertainment was with a stock company in Michigan in 1886. She made her way up the ranks to vaudeville and then to the chorus line. Back in 1892, she made her first appearance on Broadway, and soon after became a sensation in the 1896 musical comedy *Lady Slavey*. Over the next ten years, she shared the stage with some of the most renowned performers of her time, including the comedy team Joe Weber & Lew Fields, and musical actors Anna Held and Lillian Russell. Dressler's physical wit and singing voice impressed audiences, and her biggest hit came in 1910 with ***Tillie's Nightmare***. Her debut film, ***Tillie's Punctured Romance*** (1914), was based on this production. Despite a busy acting career, Dressler took time off to support the war effort by campaigning for Liberty Bonds and entertaining American troops during World War I.

After returning to Broadway, she faced financial difficulties in the mid-1920s, but managed to secure supporting roles in silent films with the help of her Hollywood connections. Her fortunes changed with the advent of talking films, and she gave a strong performance in ***Anna Christie*** (1930) as Marthy, a waterfront barfly. At the age of 62, Dressler won an Academy Award for her outstanding work in ***Min and Bill*** (1931), continuing to be a beloved figure until her passing in 1934.



Marie Dressler and Lionel Barrymore after winning Academy Awards for best actress and actor in 1931.

Source:

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Marie-Dressler>

RESOURCES

Link to *Tillie's Punctured Romance* on Youtube - [Charlie Chaplin -Tillie's Punctured Romance \(1914\) b/w new version - YouTube](#)

Marie Dressler. Marie Dressler – Women Film Pioneers Project. (n.d.). <https://wfpp.columbia.edu/pioneer/ccp-marie-dressler/>

Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. (2023, July 24). *Marie Dressler*. Encyclopædia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Marie-Dressler>

YouTube. (2021). *Tillie's Punctured Romance*. YouTube. Retrieved September 11, 2023, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36v8vXM3RXE>.

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Vintage Film Festival. *Marie Dressler*. <https://vintagefilmfestival.ca/about-us/marie-dressler>

