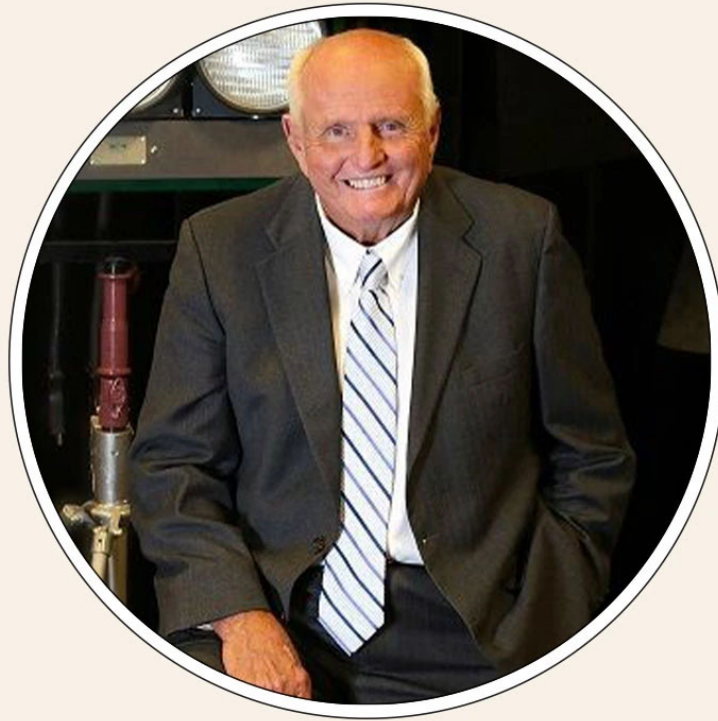


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Gray Frederickson, Oscar-Winning 'Godfather Part II' Producer, Dies at 85

The Oklahoman and Francis Ford Coppola confidant guided all the films in the famed trilogy, plus 'Apocalypse Now,' 'One From the Heart' and 'The Outsiders.'



Gray Frederickson *Courtesy of Karen Frederickson*

Gray Frederickson, the Oscar-winning producer who worked alongside [Francis Ford Coppola](#) on the *Godfather* trilogy, *Apocalypse Now* and *One From the Heart* in a collaboration that spanned more than four decades, has died. He was 85.

Frederickson died Sunday at his home in Oklahoma City after a battle with prostate cancer, his wife, Karen, told *The Hollywood Reporter*.

Frederickson shared the best picture Oscar in 1975 with writer-director-producer Coppola and producer Fred Roos for [The Godfather Part II](#) — the first of just two sequels to take the big prize — and the trio (and Tom Sternberg) were nominated again for *Apocalypse Now* (1979).

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"I got on a winning horse. I was with Francis Coppola, who's no slouch. I was lucky enough to be carried along with him," Frederickson told *The Oklahoman* in a 2021 interview. "I got lucky with him, but he says he got lucky with me. So, maybe that's good."

Frederickson also produced four other Coppola-directed features: the musical *One From the Heart* (1981), the Oklahoma-set *The Outsiders* (1983), *The Godfather Part III* (1990) and *Distant Vision* (2016), and he worked on Eleanor Coppola's *Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse* (1991) and [Sofia Coppola's](#) *The Virgin Suicides* (1999) as well.

His producing credits also included "Weird Al" Yankovic's *UHF* (1989), which filmed in Tulsa; the Sidney J. Furie-directed *Ladybugs* (1992), starring Rodney Dangerfield; and *South of Heaven, West of Hell* (2000), starring [Billy Bob Thornton](#).

Born in Oklahoma City on July 21, 1937, Frederickson worked as a teenage usher at the Lakeside Theater in his hometown and attended Casady School, the University of Oklahoma and the University of Lausanne.

In Italy, he was a producer on *Nakita* (1963) and a production manager on Sergio Leone's *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (1966), then served as an associate producer on *Little Fauss and Big Halsy* (1970) and the Peter Bart-penned *Making It* (1971), both produced by Al Ruddy. The two would produce *The Godfather* (1972) next.

Frederickson came back to Oklahoma with Coppola to make *The Outsiders*, based on a 1967 book by Tulsa-born author S.E. Hinton. (The filmmaker introduced Frederickson upon his induction into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame in November 2019.)

He and Ruddy received story credit on the 1994 Western *Bad Girls*, and he received a local Emmy for producing the 2007 telefilm *Dream No Little Dream: The Life and Legacy of Robert S. Kerr*.

Frederickson returned to the Sooner State in 1999 and a year later joined Oklahoma City Community College to launch its film production program. "He was loved by everyone who he has touched throughout the years by teaching kids how to make movies in his production business class at OCCC and inspiring feature filmmakers," his son, Tyler, said.

Rachel Cannon, co-founder and co-CEO of Prairie Surf Media studios in Oklahoma City, called Frederickson "the godfather of Oklahoma film — absolute pun intended." A stage at her place is named in his honor.

In addition to his wife and son, who works at Prairie Surf, Frederickson is survived by his daughter, Kelsey, a production coordinator at Media Res in Los Angeles.

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