

## **Mike Nichols**

**Category : Who's Who:In American Theatre**

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Born in 1931, in Berlin, Nichols and his family fled Germany to come to America. He went to school at the University of Chicago and then studied with **Lee Strasberg** at the **Actors Studio**. He would eventually form a comedy act with Elaine May which relied on sketches and improvisations. By 1960 their success would be noticeable with their show *An Evening With Mike Nichols and Elaine May*, as it appeared on Broadway.

In 1963 Nichols focused on directing. His success with Neil Simons comic plays such as *Barefoot In the Park*, *The Odd Couple* and *Plaza Suite* earned him recognition as a leading director in the area of comic drama. One of his most acclaimed shows however, was *Hurlyburly*. Here, Nichols focused on modern body language as a means for actor communication. And, as a Result, he developed a markable, natural style of his own

The Development of his directing method can surely be attributed to his work with the Actors Studio. Founded in 1947 by group theatre alumni **Eli Kazan, Cheryl Crawford and Robert Lewis**, the studio is well-known for its work with the Method style of acting. Wherein physical characteristics and mannerisms play a key role in the development of character, resulting in a naturalistic, psychologically-affecting performance.

Not only has Mike Nichols earned recognition for theatre directing but film as well. His major films including *WHO's Afraid of Virginia Wolf* (1965), *The Graduate* (1968) *Catch 22* (1970) and *Silkwood* (1983). As a result of his expanded success he has won five Tony's and one Oscar. A Demonstration of yet another bridge between the theatre and film world.