

# Sean Penn attacks Hollywood system

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**EDINBURGH, Scotland (CNN) -- U.S. actor and director Sean Penn has launched a scathing attack on the quality of Hollywood filmmaking.**

Penn, 41, who was at the Edinburgh Film Festival for a screening of his new film "The Pledge," said anyone was now capable of making a studio movie.

He told reporters he had decided to concentrate on working behind the camera after becoming dismayed at the standard of many of the directors he had worked with.

"After about 10 years of working as an actor, I realised that most directors are so bad that I thought: 'Why not give it a go?'"

"Truly, half the people in this room could work on that level. It takes enormous pressure off to know that if you put two thoughts into your movie, you're already well up on them. I actually wish I had started sooner," he said.

"I grew up in LA and I know the level of the beating down that happens to film makers. A lot of the best movie makers are now living in Disneyland in some way.

"There's a consistent beating against anything that doesn't serve the bank. It also happens to many of the European film makers who come to the United States.

"They should do what they know and what they feel and not fall into the whirlpool because it sucks so many people down."

## 'Nice party'

Penn, Madonna's former husband, also spoke of his admiration for the anti-capitalist protesters in Seattle and Genoa and said he hoped there would one day be a revolution in America.

He said he believed the demonstrations would spawn a new generation of directors committed to making thought-provoking cinema.

"We're going to start seeing directors coming out of that group. I hope there are going to be people who care about things bigger than themselves."

Penn, who earned himself a reputation as a hellraiser during the 1980s, said he hated the Academy Awards ceremony and did not care if he ever won an Oscar.

"It doesn't seem to represent anything. I won't take any particular insult or compliment from anything that happens in that building. I gather it's a new building, so at least they'll have a nice party," he said.

"The Pledge" stars Penn's wife Robin Wright Penn and Hollywood legend Jack Nicholson.

The film tells the story of a middle-aged policeman, played by Nicholson, on the verge of retirement who vows to track down the killer of a seven-year-old girl. The cast also features British actress Vanessa Redgrave.