

Beat: Vips

Actor Philip Seymour Hoffman dead of suspected drug overdose

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USPA News - American actor Philip Seymour Hoffman, whose performance in the 2005 film "Capote" earned him an Oscar, was found dead Sunday in his New York City apartment, officials said, with initial indications pointing to a drug overdose as the likely cause of death. The body was discovered at around 11:30 a.m. local time on Sunday when two of Hoffman's friends went to his penthouse apartment on Bethune Street in the West Village neighborhood of Manhattan.

One of the friends was identified as screenwriter David Katz, who called 911. Upon arrival, officers found the 46-year-old actor lying unconscious and unresponsive on the bathroom floor with a needle in his arm, according to a New York City Police (NYPD) spokesperson. He said emergency medical services (EMS) also responded and pronounced Hoffman dead on arrival. Investigators said that, at a glance, the cause of death appears to be a drug overdose, but the Medical Examiner's Office is yet to determine the cause and manner of death. "There have been reports in the media that he has had issues with drugs in the past," said NYPD spokesman Lieutenant John Grimple. Hoffman's family said they were "devastated" by the sudden death of the actor, who was known as simply Phil to those close to him. "We are devastated by the loss of our beloved Phil and appreciate the outpouring of love and support we have received from everyone," the family said in a statement. "This is a tragic and sudden loss and we ask that you respect our privacy during this time of grieving. Please keep Phil in your thoughts and prayers." Hoffman, in a June 2006 interview, told CBS News that a turning point in his life was at the age of 22 when he sought help for substance abuse. "It was all that stuff, yeah. It was anything I could get my hands on. I liked it all," a laughing Hoffman said when asked whether he was using drugs, alcohol, or both. Reacting to Hoffman's sudden death, people from across the world, including many celebrities, expressed their sadness and shock. "[I'm] saddened by Philip Seymour Hoffman's tragic and untimely passing. Today New York mourns the loss of one of stage and screen's greats," said New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio. Hoffman won an Academy Award for best actor for his role in the 2005 film "Capote," in which he portrayed author Truman Capote. He also received three Academy Award nominations for best supporting actor, most recently for the 2012 film "The Master," and previously for the 2008 film "Doubt" and the 2007 film "Charlie Wilson's War." Among his most recent work, Hoffman landed a reprising role in "The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1," which is currently in post-production and set to premiere in November. He was also to star in the new Showtime series "Happyish," in which Hoffman's character was to examine people's pursuit of happiness. "Philip Seymour Hoffman was one of our generation's finest and most brilliant actors. He was also a gifted comedic talent," Showtime said in a statement. "It was a great privilege and pleasure to work with him and we are all absolutely devastated by this sudden loss. Our thoughts go out to his family at this very difficult time." Hoffman is survived by longtime partner Mimi O'Donnell and their three children.

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