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## Stars raise RM86m at Cannes charity

**CANNES:** A galaxy of stars, including Leonardo DiCaprio, Dustin Hoffman, Nicole Kidman and Will Smith, raised more than €18 million (RM86 million) at the AIDS benefit that is the social highlight of the Cannes film festival.

The annual amfAR Foundation for AIDS Research gala dinner on Thursday saw celebrities and benefactors paying up to €466,000 for a table at the Eden Roc hotel along the French Riviera at Cap d'Antibes.

Actresses Jessica Chastain,

Milla Jovovich and former footballer David Beckham were among the other A-listers present for the auction to help the charity founded by late Hollywood legend Elizabeth Taylor.

Organisers had hoped to beat the €22 million raised at last year's dinner when DiCaprio, acting as auctioneer, sold a sculpture by British artist Damien Hirst for €3.1 million and a day with Hollywood star Kevin Spacey for half a million.

"Ending AIDS is not a fantasy. It's a goal within our reach," said

the foundation's president, Kenneth Cole.

"Our goal is a cure for 2020. You have the power to stop this pandemic that has killed 35 million people," he told the guests.

This year's lots included a week in an exclusive resort in the Maldives for 60 people and a fully-restored 1958 Jaguar XK150 sports car.

Since the galas began at Cannes in 1993, the "Cinema Against AIDS" dinners have raised more than €174 million.

**AFP**



(From left) Uma Thurman, Will Smith and Jessica Chastain at the amfAR Foundation for AIDS Research gala dinner at Eden Roc Hotel in Antibes, France, on Thursday. EPA PIC