

64th AWARDS - VISUAL EFFECTS NOMINATING COMMITTEE MAIN MEETING

Thank you all for coming here this evening, especially those of you who have come from afar to assist with this very important process. I'm Jonathan Erland, Chairman of the Visual Effects Nominating Committee, and with us also tonight we're honored to have Linwood Dunn, Vice Chairman of the Committee,.... stand up Lin, if you would.

As some of you are here for the first time, either as Members, or as guests of Members, I'm going to take a few minutes to describe what this process is all about.

Firstly, this is the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. You may have passed a notice to that effect on the door as you came in, although we tend not to make a fuss about it.

This Academy was formed in 1927, and like other academies, had, as its goal, the pursuit of excellence of its chosen constituency: in this case, the art and science of motion pictures.

Most other academies accomplish this task by gathering the best practitioners their discipline has to offer and providing instruction for the next generation.

With our industry, such a function was somewhat impractical. This particular art and science doesn't lend itself to a gathering of learned old men and women counseling a younger generation. So, while the Academy does provide a multitude of services, such as the new Herrick Library and Research facility, it does not perform a teaching function per se.

However, in a stroke of sheer genius, the Academy's founders hit upon a way to foster the pursuit of excellence in a manner in which few professional academies have succeeded so well. It elected to recognize excellence with Awards of such prestige that working professionals in our art and science would lie awake at night dreaming of how they might win one of these.....

(produce Oscar)

They succeeded so well that it's probably fair to say that only the Nobel Prizes take precedence in the minds of most people on this planet.

To achieve this end a fairly rigorous process was set up by which the work of virtually every art, trade, craft, or other expertise in our industry was reviewed by a peer group. And let's bear in mind that the phrase "peer group" means; your professional and commercial competitors, capable of very severe judgement.

To begin with, the membership of the Academy itself, which is by invitation, is restricted to those who have achieved a level of distinction sufficient to satisfy their particular peer group. Then, within the Academy, the various crafts, arts and sciences break down into "branches".

Each branch is charged with the responsibility to pass judgement on applicants for membership in the Academy as well as the formidable task of nominating its peers for Award recognition by the whole Academy body.

So, for example, the Actors' branch has to wrestle with the task of selecting five of its members to present to the whole Academy body for Award consideration each year.

The entire activity is overseen by a Board of Governors made up of three representatives from each of the branches. The system, while not perfect, demonstrably works.

Thus, against the background I've just described, let's move on to the purpose of tonight's meeting, which is to provide to the full voting Academy membership the recommendations of this, the Nominating committee for the Visual Effects Award.

We, the Visual Effects Nominating Committee, are not the Award voting body itself! According to the rules, that privilege is the duty and obligation of the whole body of active and life members of the Academy, and we must be careful that we do not pre-empt the privilege of our peers and colleagues in this very important deliberation.

Now, the reason that I stress this point is that our nominating voting procedure is such that it *can* preclude our fellow members from exercising their voting privilege. On occasion this has happened in the past, and it results from a simple confusion about the nature of this evening's vote.

The judgement we are gathered to render here this evening is quite simple: are the productions presented this evening worthy of **nomination** for an Award? What we should avoid, for this evening's vote, is trying to determine which of these productions should be the recipient of the Award itself.

If we fulfill our obligation properly tonight, we will all get the opportunity to cast our vote for the Award itself, together with our peers and fellow Academy members, sometime after February 19th. when these nominations are announced.

If we confuse our duty this evening, we risk short-circuiting the Award process and, in effect, disenfranchising our fellow members of their privilege to vote on this matter.

So, as you peruse your ballot forms this evening, consider that you are **not** in fact voting that this or that production is better than some other but rather, how each individual production measures up to a constant standard of worthiness to be considered for **nomination** for an Award.

It follows then, that you could find that each and every production submitted to us this evening measures up to such a standard. And I can tell you that the deliberations of the

Steering Committee, that produced the seven productions we shall consider this evening, was such that every production you will see tonight contains exceptional and meritorious work.

Indeed, over the past fifteen years or so, the art and science of visual effects have become so basic to motion picture production that it is virtually inconceivable that there would not be several productions worthy of a Visual Effects Award nomination.

However, you need have no fear that we could wind up nominating seven productions for the whole Academy membership to vote on; our deliberations this evening will definitely not do that. But do bear in mind that on this ballot you are entirely justified in rating two, three, four, or more productions with a score of ten, or eight, or whatever.

O.K. So, to recap the nomination process so far:

Early in January the Visual Effects Steering Committee met to review all feature film product that was deemed to be eligible for the 64th. Awards year. A number of some two hundred and thirty eight films. This committee sought to identify any and all productions that contained visual effects in any significant degree.

This process revealed that some eleven films had sufficient effects in them to warrant consideration and from that group the committee selected the seven productions that contained work of sufficient merit to appear on your list this evening.

The Producers of these seven films were then contacted and asked to provide written descriptions of the visual effects work, a film excerpt from composite release print, as well as the names of the four primary individuals involved with and responsible for these visual effects.

Additionally, the Producers are invited to provide qualified representatives to attend this meeting so that committee members might ask questions and gain additional insight into the merit of the work presented.

We have a very respectable representation of such people here this evening and I'd like to express my appreciation, on behalf of the whole Committee, for their efforts in making themselves available.

From this description it must be apparent that quite a lot of work goes into making all of these preparations, so I'd like to express my appreciation to awards administrator, Rich Miller, ably assisted by Claudia Barrett and the rest of the Academy staff, for their performance of the Herculean task that goes on quietly and relentlessly throughout the process, leading up to tonight's meeting.

All right, without further ado, let us get on to the screenings. As is customary, the order in which the reels will be screened was determined by lot, and following each reel we will have our opportunity to ask questions. Microphones are provided and I urge you to use them so that everyone can benefit from the discussion.

The first reel will be "Hook," a Tri-Star Production, Kathleen Kennedy, Frank Marshall, Gerald R. Mollen, Producers. Visual Effects Supervisor, Eric Brevig will introduce this entry.

(reel)

O.K. now we have an opportunity to ask questions about this work. Besides Eric Brevig we have Hartley Jessup, Mark Sullivan and Michael Lantieri with us this evening.

- ● -

The next reel will be "The Addams Family," a Paramount production, Scott Rudin, Producer and he will introduce this entry.

(reel)

To answer questions about the work on "Addams Family," Scott Rudin will be joined by Alan Munro, Peter Kuran, Chuck Comisky and David Miller.

- ● -

We'll move on now to "The Rocketeer," A Buena Vista production, Lawrence Gordon, Charles Gordon, Lloyd Levin, Producers. Larry Franco will introduce this work.

(reel)

And now we have Larry Franco, Ken Ralston, Pat Turner and John Ellis to discuss the work on "The Rocketeer."

- ● -

Next we'll see an excerpt from Flight of the Intruder," a Paramount production, Mace Nuefeld, Producer who will introduce this reel.

(reel)

Joining Mace Nuefeld we have Mark Vargo, David Goldberg, John Hughes and Joe Lombardi to take questions about the work on "Intruder".

- ● -

And now we'll see the reel from "Terminator Two: Judgement Day," a Tri-Star production, James Cameron, Producer, and writer, and director. And he will introduce this entry.

(reel)

For "Terminator," we have with us Dennis Muren, Stan Winston, Gene Warren and Robert Skotack along with Jim Cameron.

- ● -

The sixth reel is "Star Trek Six - The Undiscovered Country," a Paramount production, Ralph Winter, and Steven Charles Jaffe, Producers. Brook Breton will introduce the Star Trek reel.

(reel)

O.K. to answer questions about the work on "Star Trek Six," we have Brook Breton, Scott Farrar, Bill George, Brad Kuehn and Jay Riddle.

- ● -

And the seventh, and last reel this evening is "Backdraft" a Universal production, Richard B. Lewis, Pen Densham, John Watson, Producers. And Richard Lewis will introduce this excerpt.

(reel)

Taking questions on the work in "Backdraft," Richard Lewis will be joined by Clay Pinney and Scott Farrar.

PRE-VOTE COMMENTS

O.K. Now turning to your ballot, which is the Green sheet in your package, you will see that you have the option of scoring each of these productions on a scale of six to ten (ten, in this case doesn't necessarily imply perfect, it simply indicates superior work worthy of Award consideration). Note that you **can** vote as much as a ten for all seven productions. Only those productions, to a maximum of three, **averaging** 8 or better, will advance to the full voting Academy body as nominations. After what we've seen this evening I'm sure you will agree that, at the very least, we have three worthy candidates.

Unlike previous years, we now have only one nominating ballot. So we won't have a tally of this ballot tonight. We'll all discover the results together when the nominations are announced here on Wednesday, February 19th. (at 5:30 A.M., at which time you will all naturally be here of course!). As a consequence, after turning in your nominating ballot you are free to depart, with our grateful thanks for your participation. We look forward to seeing you again next year!