

Nave: 'Kings Speech' will walk away with Best Picture

By Howie Nave

Hello, movie fans everywhere. Well, this is it. For those of us who love the movies, our Super Bowl has finally arrived. It's our big escape from everything going on in the world and a chance to see if our favorites will take home the statue. There's no participation trophy in the real world and there isn't one here at the Oscars.



First off, I have to say that having actors James Franco and Anne Hathaway co-hosting the 83rd annual Academy Awards is an interesting move and might be a letdown of sorts. I know I'm biased being a comic, but comedians can improvise off the teleprompter and adjust to whatever might happen in the room, whereas actors tend to play it safe and need a script, especially with all those power brokers in the room who could get them their next gig.

This is also the first time in the Academy's 83 years that representatives of each gender have been chosen to host, so I'll try and keep an open mind. Who knows, maybe I'll be pleasantly surprised, but I still wish Billy Crystal would come back.

At least there are plenty of presenters (a few with a wicked sense of humor) who may make up for any hosting shortcomings. Oscar night is this Sunday on ABC and kicks off at 5pm Tahoe Time. All right, let's get right to it, shall we? As in last year's show, the category for Best Picture has been expanded to include 10 movies. So in the category for **Best Picture the nominees are:**

“Black Swan” Mike Medavoy, Brian Oliver and Scott Franklin, producers

“The Fighter” David Hoberman, Todd Lieberman and Mark Wahlberg, producers

“Inception” Emma Thomas and Christopher Nolan, producers

“The Kids Are All Right” Gary Gilbert, Jeffrey Levy-Hinte and Celine Rattray, producers

“The King’s Speech” Iain Canning, Emile Sherman and Gareth Unwin, producers

“127 Hours” Christian Colson, Danny Boyle and John Smithson, producers

“The Social Network” Scott Rudin, Dana Brunetti, Michael De Luca and Ceán Chaffin, producers

“Toy Story 3” Darla K. Anderson, producer

“True Grit” Scott Rudin, Ethan Coen and Joel Coen, producers

“Winter’s Bone” Anne Rosellini and Alix Madigan-Yorkin, producers

Tough choices, but the top contenders seriously boil down to just two: “The Social Network” and “The King’s Speech.” Underdogs would be “True Grit” and “127 Hours.” Early on I would have given it to “The Social Network” if anything just to keep my privacy intact from Zuckerberg & Co., but after careful consideration I’m picking **“The King’s Speech” for Best Picture.**

Actor in a Leading Role nominees are:

Javier Bardem in “Biutiful”

Jeff Bridges in “True Grit”

Jesse Eisenberg in "The Social Network"

Colin Firth in "The King's Speech"

James Franco in "127 Hours"

Originally I was leaning toward Jeff Bridges who won for "Crazy Heart" in 2009 and then thought that Jesse Eisenberg might be an upset for his fine piece of acting in "The Social Network," especially when the character you're playing is still alive and probably altering your profile page as you read this. However, because he was just so brilliant in the role I'm going with **Colin Firth for Best Actor**.

Actor in a Supporting Role nominees are:

Christian Bale in "The Fighter"

John Hawkes in "Winter's Bone"

Jeremy Renner in "The Town"

Mark Ruffalo in "The Kids Are All Right"

Geoffrey Rush in "The King's Speech"

The upset here could be Mark Ruffalo who I thought was very good (and understated) in "The Kids Are All Right" or Geoffrey Rush from "The King's Speech" and he could still be the upset here. There are those (myself included) who thought Rush should have gotten a Best Actor nomination instead of a supporting one. However, after watching "The Fighter" and seeing how he again transformed both his mental and physical stature (as he did in 2004's "The Machinist") I'm going with **Christian Bale for Best Supporting Actor**.

Actress in a Leading Role nominees are:

Annette Bening in "The Kids Are All Right"

Nicole Kidman in "Rabbit Hole"

Jennifer Lawrence in "Winter's Bone"

Natalie Portman in "Black Swan"

Michelle Williams in "Blue Valentine"

The best upset in the world would be that of Jennifer Lawrence getting the statue for "Winter's Bone," but I don't think there was enough buzz on this flick or her performance. That and the fact that she also won The Golden Globe award in the same category and was excellent in her character I'm picking **Natalie Portman for Best Actress.**

Actress in a Supporting Role nominees are:

Amy Adams in "The Fighter"

Helena Bonham Carter in "The King's Speech"

Melissa Leo in "The Fighter"

Hailee Steinfeld in "True Grit"

Jacki Weaver in "Animal Kingdom"

I have to admit newcomer Hailee Steinfeld blew my mind seeing her in a role that reminded me of then newcomer Haley Joel Osment who was nominated in the Best Supporting Actor category for 1999's "The Sixth Sense." She still has to wait a little longer, I loved "Animal Kingdom" but I'm guessing nobody saw this really cool Australian import. The upset could be the usually Disney-like princess Amy Adams who urbanized her look (and performance) here in "The Fighter." I believe the Academy (and myself) will pick that other Fighter and go with **Melissa Leo for Best Supporting Actress.**

Best Directing nominees are:

"Black Swan" Darren Aronofsky

"The Fighter" David O. Russell

"The King's Speech" Tom Hooper

"The Social Network" David Fincher

"True Grit" Joel Coen and Ethan Coen

Here's where it gets real interesting and sometimes creates a split between Best Picture and this category. Personally, I want this to go to the Coen brothers for "True Grit," but it's really down to just two: Tom Hopper for "The King's Speech" but I'm going with **David Fincher for Best Director.**

Animated Feature Film nominees are:

"How to Train Your Dragon" Chris Sanders and Dean DeBlois

"The Illusionist" Sylvain Chomet

"Toy Story 3" Lee Unkrich

No contest here folks, but if I wanted to make an argument as to why it should win here is this: Were any of the others nominated here also nominated for a Best Picture? I didn't think so. So that's why I'm going with **"Toy Story 3" for Best Animated Feature.**

Short Film (Animated) nominees are:

"Day & Night" Teddy Newton

"The Gruffalo" Jakob Schuh and Max Lang

"Let's Pollute" Geefwee Boedoe

"The Lost Thing" Shaun Tan and Andrew Ruhemann

"Madagascar, carnet de voyage (Madagascar, a Journey Diary)" Bastien Dubois

Speaking all things animated, I wanted to place the category here for Best Animated Short (following the longer version). Since I only saw three out of the five but loved it out of the

three that I did see I'm going with **"Day & Night" for Best Animated Short Film.**

Writing (Adapted Screenplay) nominees are:

"127 Hours" Screenplay by Danny Boyle & Simon Beaufoy

"The Social Network" Screenplay by Aaron Sorkin

"Toy Story 3" Screenplay by Michael Arndt; Story by John Lasseter, Andrew Stanton and Lee Unkrich

"True Grit" Written for the screen by Joel Coen & Ethan Coen

"Winter's Bone" Adapted for the screen by Debra Granik & Anne Rosellini

Aaron Sorkin struck pay dirt all the way and judging by the number of people who saw this movie (plus the half billion who use Facebook) I'm going with **"The Social Network" for Best Adapted Screenplay.**

Writing (Original Screenplay) nominees are:

"Another Year" Written by Mike Leigh

"The Fighter" Screenplay by Scott Silver and Paul Tamasy & Eric Johnson; Story by Keith Dorrington & Paul Tamasy & Eric Johnson

"Inception" Written by Christopher Nolan

"The Kids Are All Right" Written by Lisa Cholodenko & Stuart Blumberg

"The King's Speech" Screenplay by David Seidler

This is probably one of the roughest categories because of the brilliant subject matter. I loved "The Kids Are All Right" and "The Fighter" which I still refer to as Mark Wahlberg's passion play. For mem movies based on true incidents are

always the most moving. That said, I am going with **“The King’s Speech” for Best Original Screenplay.**

Art Direction nominees are:

“Alice in Wonderland” Production Design: Robert Stromberg; Set Decoration: Karen O’Hara

“Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1” Production Design: Stuart Craig; Set Decoration: Stephenie McMillan

“Inception” Production Design: Guy Hendrix Dyas; Set Decoration: Larry Dias and Doug Mowat

“The King’s Speech” Production Design: Eve Stewart; Set Decoration: Judy Farr

“True Grit” Production Design: Jess Gonchor; Set Decoration: Nancy Haigh

Tough choice in this category especially since “Alice in Wonderland” and “Harry Potter” created worlds that made you feel as if you lived in those magical places. However, when it comes to a period piece where events actually happened in the real world I’m going with **“The King’s Speech” for Best Art Direction.**

Cinematography nominees are:

“Black Swan” Matthew Libatique

“Inception” Wally Pfister

“The King’s Speech” Danny Cohen

“The Social Network” Jeff Cronenweth

“True Grit” Roger Deakins

There are two that really impressed me. The first being “Black Swan” for its somber settings and dark backdrops, which mirror

the characters and the second because it was shot by the Coen Brothers. Roger Deakins has an incredible eye so I am picking **"True Grit" for Best Cinematography.**

Music (Original Score) nominees are:

"How to Train Your Dragon" John Powell

"Inception" Hans Zimmer

"The King's Speech" Alexandre Desplat

"127 Hours" A.R. Rahman

"The Social Network" Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross

It's a tie between "The King's Speech" and "The Social Network" – both period pieces and based on true stories. Music serves as the audio backdrop for both these (and other) movies and a big part of which makes them so enjoyable to watch. Tough call but the team of Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross really defined their era so it's **"The Social Network" for Best Original Score.**

Music (Original Song) nominees are:

"Coming Home" from "Country Strong" Music and Lyric by Tom Douglas, Troy Verges and Hillary Lindsey

"I See the Light" from "Tangled" Music by Alan Menken Lyric by Glenn Slater

"If I Rise" from "127 Hours" Music by A.R. Rahman Lyric by Dido and Rollo Armstrong

"We Belong Together" from "Toy Story 3" Music and Lyric by Randy Newman

He's been nominated 20 times and only won once. His style as a solo artist is pure Americana who writes both lyrics and music that evoke emotion at both ends of the human condition. There

is no better in my book and I believe he'll snag his second Oscar so let's hear it for **Randy Newman for "We Belong Together" (from "Toy Story 3") for Best Original Song.**

Film Editing nominees are:

"Black Swan" Andrew Weisblum

"The Fighter" Pamela Martin

"The King's Speech" Tariq Anwar

"127 Hours" Jon Harris

"The Social Network" Angus Wall and Kirk Baxter

The only movie nominated in this category that needed not one but two film editors. That's how involved and well paced this movie is throughout jumping from the past to the present at a kinetic pace. It's going to clean up in the technical categories especially here so it's **"The Social Network" for Best Film Editing.**

Costume Design nominees are:

"Alice in Wonderland" Colleen Atwood

"I Am Love" Antonella Cannarozzi

"The King's Speech" Jenny Beavan

"The Tempest" Sandy Powell

"True Grit" Mary Zophres

I have to go with the dazzling array of colors from another world that took me away from the surface of this planet. She made me feel as if I was late for tea with incredible designs so I am going with Colleen Atwood from **"Alice in Wonderland" for Best Costume Design.**

Documentary (Feature) nominees are:

"Exit Through the Gift Shop" Banksy and Jaimie D'Cruz

"Gasland" Josh Fox and Trish Adlesic

"Inside Job" Charles Ferguson and Audrey Marrs

"Restrepo" Tim Hetherington and Sebastian Junger

"Waste Land" Lucy Walker and Angus Aynsley

This is a tight race that boils down to two: "Gasland" because of its dead-on politics about corporations going after rural lands in the Midwest to suck up natural gas and the one I think will take home the Oscar: **"Exit Through the Gift Shop" for Best Feature Length Documentary.**

Documentary (Short Subject) nominees are:

"Killing in the Name" Jed Rothstein

"Poster Girl" Sara Nesson and Mitchell W. Block

"Strangers No More" Karen Goodman and Kirk Simon

"Sun Come Up" Jennifer Redfearn and Tim Metzger

"The Warriors of Qiugang" Ruby Yang and Thomas Lennon

I have a personal bias knowing actor Thomas Lennon, but must go with what appears to be a sure thing: **"Strangers No More" for Best Documentary Short.**

Sound Editing nominees are:

"Inception" Richard King

"Toy Story 3" Tom Myers and Michael Silvers

"Tron: Legacy" Gwendolyn Yates Whittle and Addison Teague

"True Grit" Skip Lievsay and Craig Berkey

"Unstoppable" Mark P. Stoeckinger

No contest here folks. The movie was such a mindbender in so many ways not just visually and conceptually but the sound that accompanied the trip was also amazing. Hats off to Richard King from **"Inception" for Best Sound Editing.**

Sound Mixing nominees are:

"Inception" Lora Hirschberg, Gary A. Rizzo and Ed Novick

"The King's Speech" Paul Hamblin, Martin Jensen and John Midgley

"Salt" Jeffrey J. Haboush, Greg P. Russell, Scott Millan and William Sarokin

"The Social Network" Ren Klyce, David Parker, Michael Semanick and Mark Weingarten

"True Grit" Skip Lievsay, Craig Berkey, Greg Orloff and Peter F. Kurland

What's the difference from editing? A lot. Knowing when to fade in and out and blends numerous effects in audio is a far cry from editing. Because both required the painstaking task of being able to fuse with the images (and edit too) again I'm going to pick **"Inception" for Best Sound Mixing.**

Visual Effects nominees are:

"Alice in Wonderland" Ken Ralston, David Schaub, Carey Villegas and Sean Phillips

"Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1" Tim Burke, John Richardson, Christian Manz and Nicolas Aithadi

"Hereafter" Michael Owens, Bryan Grill, Stephan Trojansky and Joe Farrell

"Inception" Paul Franklin, Chris Corbould, Andrew Lockley and Peter Bebb

"Iron Man 2" Janek Sirrs, Ben Snow, Ged Wright and Daniel Sudick

Call me superstitious (some do) but I'm going with the trifecta here because all three are like one. I'm referring to sound editing, mixing and the trinity here with visual effects. Add them all together and you get **"Inception" for Best Visual Effects.**

Foreign Language Film nominees are:

"Biutiful" Mexico

"Dogtooth" Greece

"In a Better World" Denmark

"Incendies" Canada

"Outside the Law (Hors-la-loi)" Algeria

OK, it boils down to either our neighbors from the north or south and since I only saw those two I'm picking the America's attic and going with **"Incendies" (from Canada) for Best Foreign Language Film.**

Makeup nominees are:

"Barney's Version" Adrien Morot

"The Way Back" Edouard F. Henriques, Gregory Funk and Yolanda Toussieng

"The Wolfman" Rick Baker and Dave Elsey

I'm basing my decision here (and not a very scientific one) solely on how cool Rick Baker is when it comes to applying the transformation from man to beast just based on his past work so yes, **"The Wolfman" wins it for Best Makeup.**

Short Film (Live Action) nominees are:

"The Confession" Tanel Toom

"The Crush" Michael Creagh

"God of Love" Luke Matheny

"Na Wewe" Ivan Goldschmidt

"Wish 143" Ian Barnes and Samantha Waite

You best get your hankies out for this one because it is a brilliant piece of movie making on a small scale but nonetheless leaves a huge impact. Ian Barnes along with Samantha Waite will be up there at the podium to accept the Oscar for **"Wish 143" for Best Live Action Short Film.**

There you have it. Check your scorecards, place your bets but most of all enjoy the show folks. We'll get to see how much egg was tossed in my face after Sunday night.

Howie Nave is host/emcee/manager of The Improv at Harveys. You can hear him Monday-Friday 6 to 10am on KRLT FM-93.9.