

Oscar zigs where effects org zags



DIFFERENT STROKES: "Star Wars" and "Harry Potter" led in Visual Effects Society noms, but the org gave Oscar nominee "War of the Worlds" only two.



By **THOMAS J. McLEAN**

Awards season exists to give multiple answers to the same, unanswerable questions. But rarely are two groups' answers reverse images of each other as much as this year's noms for the visual effects Oscars and the Visual Effects Society.

"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" led the pack in the fourth annual VES Awards with five noms, followed by four each for "Star Wars: Episode III — Revenge of the Sith" and "King Kong." "War of the Worlds" took three noms and "The Chronicles of Narnia" got two.

While the Academy is working off the same list, it seems to be starting from the opposite end, giving its three nominee spots to "Narnia," "War of the Worlds" and "King Kong," leav-

Tip sheet

WHAT: 4th Annual VES Awards
WHEN: 7:30 tonight
WHERE: Hollywood Palladium

ing out "Star Wars" and "Harry Potter."

This isn't the first time the orgs have had a difference of opinion. The VES recognized last year "The Day After Tomorrow" with the best single visual effect and a nom for best effects in an effects-driven film. The Academy preferred "I, Robot," which had one VES nom for created environment.

The VES also recognized "The Matrix Reloaded" and "The Matrix Revolutions" in 2004. Neither film even made the Academy's bake-off list of semifinalists.

The largest difference between the orgs is size. VES has 1,300 members and gives eight motion picture awards. The

Academy's vfx branch has about 260 members and gives out one trophy. Best guesses are that about 75% of Academy's vfx branch members are also VES members.

The larger membership gives the VES a broader base of expertise, and its multiple categories give it the opportunity to recognize the various individual areas of expertise the field has developed.

"We break things down for all the levels that people actually work at on these films," says Tim McGovern, co-chairman of the VES' awards committee. "Those are things that those guys will never get an Academy Award for."

The purview of the Academy's vfx branch is different, as it has to narrow its choices to the three best films for the org's entire membership to vote on.

The orgs' nominating processes are similar on the surface but differ in the details.

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ZIGS

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VES starts by convening a panel of seven to 15 judges to choose the nominees for each category. The Academy assembles a steering committee representing all the major effects houses and areas of discipline to whittle down the full list of Oscar-eligible films. The panel votes on an abbreviated list, and the top seven vote-getters move on to the bake-off.

To vote for nominees, mem-

bers of the Acad's vfx branch must attend the bake-off and view all the presentations. Presentations must consist of final effects scenes from a release print.

About 170 of the branch's 260 members voted at this year's bake-off, which was held Jan. 25.

The VES Show-and-Tell, by contrast, allows nominees to present progressions showing the individual elements used to create the final shot.

Voting for VES winners occurs online. McGovern says that at least 50% and as much as 65% of the org's membership votes.

THE NOMINEES

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A VISUAL EFFECTS- DRIVEN MOTION PICTURE

"The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe" Dean Wright, Randy Starr, Bill Westenhofer, Jim Berney

"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" Jim Mitchell, Theresa Corrao, Tim Alexander, Tim Webber

"King Kong" Eileen Moran, Joe Letteri, Christian Rivers, Eric Saindon

"Star Wars: Episode III — Revenge of the Sith" John Knoll, Roger Guyett, Rob Coleman, Denise Ream

OUTSTANDING SUPPORTING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A MOTION PICTURE

"Jarhead" Pablo Helman, Jeanie King, Grady Cofer, Brett Northcutt

"Kingdom of Heaven" Wes Sewell, Victoria Alonso, Tom Wood, Gary Brozenich

"Memoirs of a Geisha" Robert Stromberg, Julia Frey, Paul Graff, Adam Watkins

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A BROADCAST MINISERIES MOVIE OR SPECIAL

"Comet Collision!" John Gross, Nick Black, Christian Bloch, Casey Benn

"Superbowl XXXIX" Benoit Girard, Jason Crosby, Jerome Morin, Chris Del Conte

"Walking With Monsters" Tim Greenwood, Jo Nodwell, Neil Glasbey, Darren Byford

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A BROADCAST SERIES

"Invasion," Episode "Origin of Species" Armen Kevorkian, Matt Scharf, John Karner, Neil Sopata

"Rome," Episode 1 Barrie Hemsley, James Madigan, Duncan Kinnaird, Joe Pavlo

"Smallville," Episode "Commencement" Mat Beck, John Wash, John Han, Trent Smith

OUTSTANDING SUPPORTING VISUAL

EFFECTS IN A BROADCAST PROGRAM

"Alias," Episode "The Index" Kevin Blank, Armen Kevorkian, Eric Chauvin, Jonathan Spencer Levy

"Lost," Episode "Exodus" part 2 Kevin Blank, Mitchell Ferm, Eric Chauvin, John Teska

"Warm Springs" Camille Cellucci, Jonathan Keeton, Kirk Cadrette, John Baker

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A COMMERCIAL

Esuvee: "Keep It on All Fours" William Bartlett, Scott Griffin, Jake Mengers, Andrew Boyd

Guinness: "noitulove" William Bartlett, Scott Griffin, Andrew Boyd, Dan Seddon

Motorola: "PEBL" Eric Barba, Lisa Beroud, Janelle Crophaw, Greg Teegarden

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A MUSICVIDEO

The Chemical Brothers — Believe Ben Cronin, Rebecca Barbour, Andrew Boyd, Jamie Isles

Nine Inch Nails — Only Eric Barba, Lisa Beroud, Jay Barton, Jim Gaczowski

Rob Thomas — Lonely No More Bert Yukich

BEST SINGLE VISUAL EFFECT OF THE YEAR

"Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," Nut Room Nick Davis, Nikki Penny, Jon Thum, Ben Morris

"Star Wars: Episode III — Revenge of the Sith," Opening Space Battle John Knoll, Jill Brooks, David Weitzberg, Jeff Sutherland

"War of the Worlds," Fleeing the Neighborhood Dennis Muren, Pablo Helman, Sandra Scott, Marshall Krasser

OUTSTANDING REAL-TIME VISUALS IN A VIDEOGAME

"James Bond 007: From Russia With Love" David Carson, Darren Pattenden, Ben Wanat

"Madden NFL 2006 Football" Video Game for Xbox 360 Mark Mongie, Jim Spoto, Tommy Cinquegrano, Dale Jackson

"NBA Live 2006 Basketball" Video Game for Xbox 360 Greg Juby, Tim Tschirner, Jim Perkins, Alex Ferrier

"Need for Speed: Most Wanted" Habib Zargarpour, Luke Wasserman, Greg D'Esposito, Colin O'Connor

OUTSTANDING PRE-RENDERED VISUALS IN A VIDEOGAME

"Need for Speed: Most Wanted" Habib Zargarpour, Michael Mann, Mataio Gardi, Jason Dowdeswell

"Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones," The Battle Cinematic Jean-Jacques Tremblay, Raphael Lacoste, Kun Chang

"Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones," The Palace Balcony Cinematic Jean-Jacques Tremblay, Raphael Lacoste, Anne Mai Le Bouy-onnec

"Oddworld Stranger's Wrath," In Game Story Clips Sherry McKenna, Lorne Lanning, Raymond Swanland, Iain Morton

OUTSTANDING VISUAL EFFECTS IN A SPECIAL VENUE PROJECT

Curse of Darkastle...The Ride! Dina Benadon, Brent Young, Chuck Comisky, Mario Kamberg

"Deepo's 3-D Underwater Wondershow" Michel Heroux, Benoit Girard, Jerome Morin, Chris Del Conte

Magnificent Desolation: Walking on the Moon 3-D Jack Geist, Sean Phillips, Johnathan Banta, Jerome Morin

OUTSTANDING ANIMATED CHARACTER IN A LIVE-ACTION MOTION PICTURE

"The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe," Aslan Richie Baneham, Erik De Boer, Matt Logue, Joe Ksander

"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire," Dragon Steve Rawlins, Eric Wong, Robert Weaver, Steve Nichols

"King Kong," Kong Andy Serkis, Christian Rivers, Atsushi Sato, Guy Williams

OUTSTANDING ANIMATED CHARACTER IN AN ANIMATED MOTION PICTURE

"Madagascar," King Julian Rex Grignon, Denis Couchon

"Robots," Fender Robin Williams, David Torres, Mark Piretti, Ben Williams

"Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit," Gromit Loyd Price

OUTSTANDING ANIMATED CHARACTER IN A LIVE-ACTION BROADCAST PROGRAM, COMMERCIAL OR MUSICVIDEO

"Battlestar Galactica," Episode 2, "Valley of Darkness," Cylon Dustin Adair, Mark Shimer, Lane Jolly, Steve Graves

"Battlestar Galactica" Season 2, Episode 3 "Fragged," Cylon Centurion Andrew Karr, Louie Hinayo, Gary Hughes, Allan Henderson

"Surface," Episode 102, "Nimrod" Eric Hance, Robert Bonchune, John Teska, Sean Jackson

OUTSTANDING CREATED ENVIRONMENT IN A LIVE-ACTION MOTION PICTURE

"Batman Begins," Gotham City Monorail Chase Alex Wuttke, Pete Bebb, Dayne Cowan, Imery Watson

"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire," Black Lake Environment Andy Kind, Ivan Moran, Rob Allman, Justin Martin

"King Kong," New York Dawn Attack Dan Lemmon, R. Christopher White, Matt Aitken, Charles Tait

"Star Wars: Episode III — Revenge of the Sith" Jonathan Harb, Hilmar Koch, Yanick Dusseault, Brett Northcutt

OUTSTANDING CREATED ENVIRONMENT IN A LIVE-ACTION BROADCAST PROGRAM, COMMERCIAL OR MUSICVIDEO

"Into the West," Miniseries Movies I, II and III Cedric Tomacruz, David Bailey, Valeri Pfahning, Siddhartha Jayakar

Motorola: PEBL Jim Gaczowski, Daniel Thron,

Janelle Crophaw, Greg Teegarden
Nine Inch Nails — Only Janelle Crophaw, Greg Teegarden, Jim Gaczowski, Scott Edelstein

OUTSTANDING MODELS AND MINIATURES IN A MOTION PICTURE

"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire," Hogwarts School Jose Granell, Nigel Stone

"Star Wars: Episode III — Revenge of the Sith," Brian Germand, Pamela Choy, Ron Woodall, Kevin Reuter

"War of the Worlds" Ed Hirsh, Steve Gawley, Joshua Ong, Russell Paul

OUTSTANDING MODELS AND MINIATURES IN A BROADCAST PROGRAM, COMMERCIAL OR MUSICVIDEO

Ford: World Traveler Matthew Gratzner, Greg Boettcher, Enrico Altmann, Matt Burlingame

"Las Vegas," Series, Episode 308 "Bold, Beautiful and Blue" Michael Cook, Anthony Ocampo, Eugene Kim, Renaud Talon

Walgreens Giving Tree / Last Minute: Winter Neighborhood Ian Hunter, Forest Fischer, Seth Curlin, Joachim (Joe) Duppel

OUTSTANDING COMPOSITING IN A MOTION PICTURE

"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire," Voldemort's Nose Ben Shepherd, Uel Horman, Charley Henley, Nicolas Athadi

"King Kong," T-Rex Fight Erik Winquist, Michael Pangrazio, Steve Cronin, Suzanne Jandu

"War of the Worlds" Marshall Krasser, Michael Jamieson, Jeff Saltzman, Regan McGee

OUTSTANDING COMPOSITING IN A BROADCAST PROGRAM, COMMERCIAL OR MUSICVIDEO

"Empire" Miniseries Stefano Trivelli, Michele Moen, Kelly Bumbarger, Sean Wilson

"Into the West," Miniseries, Movie I, "Wheel to the Stars" Jared Jones, Jason Korber, Geeta Basantani, Ryan Doutour

Mezzo Djarum-Race Robert Nederhorst, Marc Rienzo, Feliciano di Giorgio, Maciek Sokalski