

Dawn of the Apes, Big Hero 6 Dominate VES Awards



The top VFX prize for *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* and a *Big Hero 6* sweep provide Oscar boosts at 13th annual Visual Effects Society confab. And J.J. Abrams talked *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* backstage.

Dawn of the Planet of the Apes took three of the top VES honors for Weta Digital Wednesday at the Beverly Hilton (including the key visual effects prize, animated character Caesar and live-action compositing). This presumably gives *Apes* a leg up on rival *Interstellar*, which earned a single award for the stunning Tesseract created environment.

However, Disney made VES history with *Big Hero 6* grabbing a record five awards in its surprising animation sweep (including animated feature, the San Fransokyo model, created environment for "Into the Portal," the animated Baymax character and effects simulation). After its disappointing showing Saturday night at the Annies, Disney upstaged DreamWorks' *How to Train Your Dragon 2* in the Oscar race for animated feature.

Meanwhile, Abrams discussed going high and low-tech: "It's been amazing how much we were able to do in-camera. Obviously, it's *Star Wars*. There are an enormous amount of visual effects that are done in CG. But what's really been gratifying is using CG to remove things and to build sets. I remember as a kid seeing [legendary matte painter] Albert Whitlock's work and realizing, among many gifts, that he had this amazing ability to understand where you should focus. And if you look at his paintings, it's amazing how loose the brush strokes get where you're not looking, and he would imply detail but not really paint it."

Read the rest at [TOH/Indiewire](#).

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