



Ridley Scott and 'The Martian' Head for Multiple Oscars (EXCLUSIVE VIDEO)

By [Anne Thompson](#) | Thompson on Hollywood

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As Scott is tapped for the Visual Effects Society's Life Achievement Award, 'The Martian' is gaining ground in the awards race.



Ridley Scott has been at the top of Hollywood's filmmaker A-list for decades because he can deliver anything.

With a deep background in commercial directing, from his debut "The Duelist" to his classics "Alien," "Blade Runner," "Thelma & Louise" and "Gladiator," Scott has always featured strong women and sumptuous visuals. With "The Martian" Scott delivers his best effort since "Black Hawk Down" in 2001. (That was the year "Gladiator" took home Best Picture.) At age 77, he's been nominated three times ("Thelma & Louise," "Gladiator" and "Black Hawk Down") and never won. I interviewed him on the flipcam.

[READ MORE: How Drew Goddard Made 'The Martian' Smart and Why It Needed Two F-Words](#)

While Fox was expecting "The Martian" to score at the box office, the movie continues to [perform so well](#) (\$386 million worldwide) that it's knocking out rivals like "Steve Jobs," which will nonetheless contend for Oscars—against "The Martian." And Fox booked the film at festivals in Toronto and New York and Academy-friendly AFI FEST, where Scott will do a [Conversation](#). With [rave reviews](#), the movie is going to score nominations in [multiple categories](#), including [Directing](#), [Screenplay](#), [Production Design](#), [Costumes](#), [Score](#) and [Visual Effects](#). [The awards](#) were [announced](#) at the PGA and Academy screenings, who responded enthusiastically.

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Ridley Scott on 'The Martian'

In fact the Visual Effects Society is giving Scott its Lifetime Achievement Award on Feb. 2 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. They stated:

“Scott’s fiercely innovative direction of groundbreaking films, including science fiction classics ‘Blade Runner’ and ‘Alien’ and the sweeping chronicle ‘Gladiator,’ has given rise to a new era of storytelling and had a profound impact on future generations of filmmakers.”

It looks like it was a break that Scott couldn't accept the award last year; it will have more impact now. Scott has always stayed at the forefront of innovative cinema technology, shooting in 3D on such films as “Prometheus,” “Exodus: Gods and Kings” and is in top form on “The Martian.” It's hard to believe the movie was shot on the red sands of Jordan, and not a huge soundstage in Budapest, Hungary, where most of the movie was shot against green screens.

[READ MORE: How Matt Damon Met the Challenge of Ridley Scott's 'The Martian' \(EXCLUSIVE VIDEO\)](#)

It's great fun to listen to Scott dig into the filmmaking details in our video interview (above), but it should be remembered that he's also a master of working with actors, as Matt Damon delivers his best and most delicate lead performance in years as an astronaut stranded on Mars who talks to video cameras around the Mars base (and us) to keep himself pumped to survive. Scott had to make work a 20-minute section with Damon alone, until he could finally cross-cut with NASA and the crew that had left Mark Watney behind on Mars. Somehow he had to make a movie about Mars commercial --it's considered death at the box office. He also milks a close-up of the botanist's first potato leaf for maximum emotional impact, showing us Watney's vulnerability. "The Martian" is both epic and intimate, something no one does better than Scott. And much like "Argo," this movie celebrates American ingenuity. It makes us feel good about ourselves.



While he was blessed with Drew Goddard's ace adaptation of Andy Weir's bestseller, it was Scott who moved the dramatic windstorm opening from the middle to the beginning of the film, and gave Jessica Chastain's ship's captain a dramatic action scene. It's those instincts that make him one of the cinema greats.

"I'm going to have the science the shit out of this," was Goddard's line--and it's heading out to Mars on a doodle by Ridley Scott on the first page of the script.

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