

Filed in: [Awards](#), [Events](#), [Featured](#), [News](#), [Visual FX](#)



## Social Media



## Voice of the Crew

KUBO AN...



Kubo and The Two Strings:  
Creating The VFX  
Masterpiece

## Sections

### Awards

Contender Portfolios  
Emmy Watch  
For Your Consideration

### Columns

Director Series  
Facility in Focus  
Union Roundup

### Community

Events  
Film Trailers  
Obituaries  
The Student Lens  
Who's Where?

### Crafts

Animation  
Art Direction  
Camera  
Costume Design  
Direction  
Editing  
Makeup  
Postproduction  
Sound  
Visual FX

### Gear

Industry Sector  
Commercials  
Film  
New Media  
Television

### News

Reviews  
Book Reviews  
Film Releases

Screening Series  
Sponsored Content

# Star Wars, The Revenant and Game of Thrones Take Top Honors at the VES Awards

February 3, 2016 | By [Mark London Williams](#)

Star Wars: The Force Awakens

Many years ago, I had the pleasure of running into the late **Hunter S. Thompson** in the press room of the Democratic convention. That particular year, the Republican incumbent was heavily favored to win re-election. So, I asked the good Doctor,

why are you here?

"I'm here for the odds," he said.

If you attended the 14th annual edition of the **Visual Effects Society** awards for the same reason, you might have left sensing the odds favored the latest *Star Wars* installment to walk away with visual effects honors at the Oscars at month's end, because it was *The Force Awakens*, along with some *Game of Thrones*, a sociable orangutan, a virtual bear, a couple of animation upsets, and the mangling of **Ridley Scott's** name, that dominated the evening.

Disney's sequel to **George Lucas'** cultural icon copped the evening's main prize, winning outstanding visual effects in a photoreal feature, a rephrasing of VES' former top category that attempts to keep up with **Salman Rushdie's** observation from the early 2000s that essentially all films now – given the amount of rendering that goes on – are animated to one degree or another.

And therefore, all equally photoreal regardless of how much was actually photographed.

The top award would seem to give the Skywalker clan the leg up when Oscar announces its own VFX favorite. But the intriguing sub-plot to the Oscar noms – the fact that the photoreal bear in *The Revenant* was also given a nod – stayed alive at VES as well, winning a total of three awards (to *Star Wars'* 4) including outstanding animated performance in a photoreal feature.



The Revenant

Is anything *not* photoreal anymore?

## Latest Headlines

November 17, 2016

- Director Anna Biller on Working Multiple Magic for *The Love Witch*

November 17, 2016

- Humanity & Frustration in *Toni Erdmann*

November 17, 2016

- Artel Video Systems Welcomes Chris Riello as Vice President of Product Development

November 17, 2016

- Panel Featuring Borderline Collaborators Brady Corbet & Christopher Abbott to Kick-Off Previously Announced Retrospective at the Museum of the Moving Image

November 16, 2016

- Emmy-Nominated Make-Up Artist Leonard Engelman & Oscar-Nominated Hair Stylist Barbara Lorenz to Receive Lifetime Achievement Awards at 2017 Make-Up Artists & Hair Stylists Guild Awards

November 15, 2016

- Stonestreet Studios Celebrates 25 Years of Filmmaking With Alumnus Miles Teller, Releases Six New Webseries

November 15, 2016

- Archion's EditStor Omni Media Storage Certified For Blackmagic Design's DaVinci Resolve And DaVinci Resolve Studio

[View More Headlines](#)

## Screening Series Upcoming



MISS SLOANE w/  
Q&A, LOS  
ANGELES, Extra  
Screening Opportunity  
Nov 19th, 2016

## Video of the Day: "A Revolution in Motion"

A Revolution In Motion



Well, perhaps films designed overtly as animation. In that regard, while the general favorite in Oscar's own animation category, *Inside Out*, grabbed a best animated character award, **Pixar** found itself in the strange circumstance of being upset by... Pixar. That was for outstanding visual effects in an animated feature, where *The Good Dinosaur* – not even an Oscar nominee – managed to trump the highly regarded tale of a teenage girl's psyche.

In non-feature film categories, there were a handful of awards for *Game of Thrones*, spread among different episodes, and accolades for the British energy company SSE, whose commercial, *Pier*, showed a rendered orangutan having a night adventure scored to a Nat King Cole tune.



Game of Thrones City of Volantis

**Patton Oswalt** once again hosted, becoming the VES analog to **Johnny Carson**, or perhaps Billy Crystal, in terms of familiarity, reliability and durability.

There was also hilarity. When Oswalt was mentioning the credits of designer **Syd Mead**, given a Visionary Award by VES for his work in films ranging from *Blade Runner* to *Tron*, *Mission Impossible III*, and more, he mentioned drinking in Bar Basque, the Mead-designed upscale watering hole in NY, but said it couldn't really top the "Ray Harryhausen Road House in Texas," where, after all, a Cyclops served you your drinks.

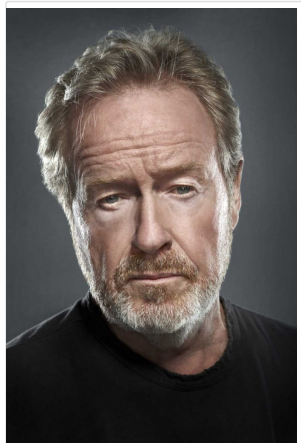
If you didn't find that immediately funny, it may be that the VES Awards weren't meant for you, to begin with.

They were meant, however, for **Sir Ridley Scott**. When his name was surprisingly mangled at evening's outset, it became a running gag for Oswalt, talking about Ridley "Scoot," among other variations.

As for Sir "Scoot," when he received the Lifetime Achievement Award, he gave a long-yet-amiable overview of his work with visual effects, going back to *Alien*, and all the way through the currently nominated *The Martian*, reminding the audience that "mathematics and science are art too."

They certainly were at the VES Awards, or as Mead put it, "the expertise in this room is the best in the world."

That expertise may extend to cementing the odds for further FX awards later this month. Regardless, expect things to keep getting more and more photoreal, whether they are set in space, a lost American frontier or even in Ray Harryhausen's road house, somewhere in Texas.



Ridley Scott (Photo by Scott Council)

The winners of the 2016 VES Awards are:

#### Outstanding Visual Effects in a Photoreal Feature

*Star Wars: The Force Awakens*

Roger Guyett

Luke O'Byrne

Patrick Tubach

Paul Kavanagh  
Chris Corbould

**Outstanding Supporting Visual Effects in a Photoreal Feature**

*The Revenant*  
Rich McBride  
Ivy Agregan  
Jason Smith  
Nicolas Chevallier  
Cameron Waldbauer

**Outstanding Visual Effects in an Animated Feature**

*The Good Dinosaur*  
Sanjay Bakshi  
Denise Ream  
Michael Venturini  
Jon Reisch

**Outstanding Visual Effects in a Photoreal Episode**

*Game of Thrones*, “The Dance of Dragons”  
Joe Bauer  
Steve Kullback  
Eric Carney  
Derek Spears  
Stuart Brisdon

**Outstanding Supporting Visual Effects in a Photoreal Episode**

*Vikings*, “To the Gates”  
Dominic Remane  
Bill Halliday  
Paul Wishart  
Ovidiu Cinazan  
Paul Byrne

**Outstanding Visual Effects in a Real-Time Project**

*The Order: 1886*  
Nathan Phail-Liff  
Dana Jan  
Anthony Vitale  
Scot Andreason

**Outstanding Visual Effects in a Commercial**

SSE, “Pier”  
Neil Davies  
Tim Lyall  
Hitesh Patel  
Jorge Montiel

**Outstanding Visual Effects in a Special Venue Project**

Fast and Furious: Supercharged  
Chris Shaw  
Alysia Cotter  
Ben White  
Diego Guerrero

**Outstanding Animated Performance in a Photoreal Feature**

*The Revenant*, The Bear  
Matt Shumway

Gaelle Morand  
Karin Cooper  
Leandro Estebecorena

**Outstanding Animated Performance in an Animated Feature**

*Inside Out*, Joy  
Shawn Krause  
Tanja Krampfert  
Jacob Merrell  
Alexis Angelidis

**Outstanding Animated Performance in an Episode, Commercial, or Real-Time Project**

SSE, "Pier," Orangutan  
Jorge Montiel  
Sauce Vilas  
Philippe Moine  
Sam Driscoll

**Outstanding Created Environment in a Photoreal Feature**

*Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, Falcon Chase/Graveyard  
Yanick Dusseault  
Mike Wood  
Justin van der Lek  
Quentin Marmier

**Outstanding Created Environment in an Animated Feature**

*The Good Dinosaur*, The Farm  
David Munier  
Matthew Webb  
Matt Kuruc  
Tom Miller

**Outstanding Created Environment in an Episode, Commercial, or Real-Time Project**

*Game of Thrones*, City of Volantis  
Dominic Piche  
Christine Leclerc  
Patrice Poissant  
Thomas Montminy-Brodeur

**Outstanding Virtual Cinematography in a Photoreal Project**

*Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, Falcon Chase/Graveyard  
Paul Kavanagh  
Colin Benoit  
Susumu Yukuhiro  
Greg Salter

**Outstanding Models in a Photoreal or Animated Project**

*Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, BB-8  
Joshua Lee  
Matthew Denton  
Landis Fields  
Cyrus Jam

**Outstanding Effects Simulations in a Photoreal Feature**

*Mad Max: Fury Road*, Toxic Storm  
Dan Bethell

Clinton Downs  
Chris Young

**Outstanding Effects Simulations in an Animated Feature**

*The Good Dinosaur*  
Stephen Marshall  
Magnus Wrenninge  
Michael Hall  
Hemagiri Arumugam

**Outstanding Effects Simulations in an Episode, Commercial, or Real-Time Project**

*Game of Thrones*, “Hardhome”  
David Ramos  
Antonio Lado  
Piotr Weiss  
Félix Bergés

**Outstanding Compositing in a Photoreal Feature**

*The Revenant*, Bear Attack  
Donny Rausch  
Alan Travis  
Charles Lai  
TC Harrison

**Outstanding Compositing in a Photoreal Episode**

*Game of Thrones*, “Hardhome”  
Eduardo Díaz  
Guillermo Orbe  
Oscar Perea  
Inmaculada Nadela

**Outstanding Compositing in a Photoreal Commercial**

SSE, “Pier”  
Gary Driver  
Greg Spencer  
Grant Connor

**Outstanding Visual Effects in a Student Project**

*Citipati*  
Andreas Feix  
Francesco Faranna