History With Oscar

If nothing else, last night's Academy Awards made a strong statement that traditional movie making is still preferable to the rise of technology…. in the eyes of the voters anyway. *Avatar* may have earned $567,890,123.45 (that figure may even be low) at the box office but I think it was ultimately the big loser this year at the awards. I really thing Dr. Doogie's kick-off to the evening was the low point, Did anyone else see his song (?) and dance? If not… you will have to hunt yourself. Honestly, I thought he was supposed to be good? But I thought Mr. Baldwin and the ALWAYS hilarious Steve Martin were wonderful!

I knew that the time had come for the first female Best Director even more so than the first African-American (forgive me if that is un-PC). But I think the fact that Ms. Bigelow and *The Hurt Locker* swept the top two categories and was the biggest winner was a bit of a surprise. However, looking back there have been other examples of David-Goliath at the Oscars. Does anyone remember 1977 when a little movie called *Star Wars* was beaten by the less groundbreaking Woody Allen pic, *Annie Hall*? Or 1982 when a little guy trying to "Phone Home" lost to *Gandhi*? So how do we possibly explain the year of the water-logged boat sinking?! A fluke!

I was happy to see *Star Trek* win in one category. It tied with *The Voyage Home* (the one with the whales… very high on my list) for the most noms by a movie in the series. Even *The Motion Picture* (zzz) got three. Last night's Make Up victory was the first win for the 44 year series.

So while I came in 4th in the pool, I did walk away with a nice gift. The ceramic teddy bear banks are adorable, thanks Carol! Always a ball worthy of the best Hollywood can throw!

I still had a difficult time voting for Sandra Bullock. Maybe

it's her low opinion of one of her first on screen performances. If you can't be happy about playing the second Bionic Woman (and I'm not talking about the unremarkable series reboot of a few seasons ago) then… and what was with the lipstick… EGAD!

And what happened to the "No thanking" policy? Not to be outdone by the endless Best Actor/Actress presentations. So much for saving time. And apparently, "research" doesn't always help, right C? []

And The Nominees Are…

This morning, the Academy Award nominations were announced. The big news this year: the expansion of the Best Picture Category from 5 nods to 10. As the list proves, this was done in order to pay homage to not only the "good" films but also to the popular films that everyday joes are likely to have seen. There is also another first among the nominees which I will get to.

And AWAAAAAAY We Go

Best Actress In A Supporting Role:

- Penelope Cruz (*Nine)*
- Vera Farmiga (*Up in the Air*)
- Maggie Gyllenhaal (*Crazy Heart*)
- Anna Kendrick (*Up in the Air*)
- Mo'Nique (*Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire*)

Best Actor In A Supporting Role:

- Matt Damon (*Invictus*)

- Woody Harrelson (*The Meesenger* not for the other big WH movie of the year: *Zombieland*)
- Christopher Plummer (*The Last Station*)
- Stanley Tucci (*The Lovely Bones*)
- Christoph Waltz (*Inglourious Basterds*)

Best Actress In A Leading Role:

- Sandra Bullock (*The Blind Side*… the sweetheart of this year's list)
- Helen Mirren (*The Last Station*)
- Carey Mulligan (*An Education*)
- Gabourey Sidibe (*Precious*…, the Dark horse in this race
- Meryl Streep (*Julie/Julia*… enough said)

Best Actor In A Leading Role:

- Jeff Bridges (*Crazy Heart*)
- George Clooney (*Up in the Air*… speculation of a Bridges/Clooney battle)
- Colin Firth (*A Single Man*)
- Morgan Freeman (*Invictus*… portrayals of historical figures, hmm)
- Jeremy Renner (*The Hurt Locker*)

Best Animated Feature:

- *Coraline* (Henry Selick, director)
- *Fantastic Mr. Fox* (Wes Anderson)
- *The Princess and the Frog* (John Musker and Ron Clements… Disney's first classic animation feature since the Pixar revolution)
- *The Secret of Kells* (Tomm Moore)
- *Up* (Pete Docter… Disney/Pixar's best to date)

Best Director:

- James Cameron (*Avatar*)
- Kathryn Bigelow (*The Hurt Locker*… Mr. Cameron's ex-wife the first time a former couple has ever been nominated

for the award… she could also come off as the first female Best Director winner)
- Quentin Tarantino (*Inglourious Basterds*)
- Lee Daniels (*Precious…*)
- Jason Reitman (*Up in the Air*)

Best Picture:

- *Avatar* (James Cameron and Jon Landau, Producers)
- *The Blind Side* (Nominees to be determined? Don't we know who produced it?)
- *District 9* (Peter Jackson and Carolynne Cunningham, Producers)
- *An Education* (Finola Dwyer and Amanda Posey, Producers)
- *The Hurt Locker* (Nominees to be determined?)
- *Inglourious Basterds* (Lawrence Bender, Producer)
- *Precious…*(Lee Daniels, Sarah Siegel-Magness, and Gary Magness, Producers)
- *A Serious Man* (Joel Coen and Ethan Coen, Producers)
- *Up* (Jonas Rivera, Producer)
- *Up in the Air* (Daniel Dubiecki, Ivan Reitman, and Jason Reitman, Producers)

There you have them. The MAJOR nominees for this years Oscar parties. Grab your ballots, make your choices, and watch ABC on March 7th when Alec Baldwin and Steve Martin co-host the 81st (or is it 82nd… conflicting details) Annual Academy Awards. Co-hosts? For the rest of the nominees, check them out at abc.com

Final Tally:

- *Avatar* and *The Hurt Locker* tied with 9 nods apiece
- *Inglourious Basterds* with 8
- *Precious* and *Up in the Air* with 6
- *Up* received 4 nominations