

THE CampChuck REVIEWER

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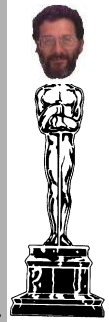
THIRTY EIGHTH ANNUAL EDITION

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Editor, critic, layout, distribution, and general factotum ...



Meryl Streep Banned by Presidential Executive Order

page 9

The 89th ANNUAL ACADEMY AWARDS Nominations

Oscar Night: Sunday, Feb. 26

Best Picture

Arrival
Fences
Hacksaw Ridge
Hell or High Water
Hidden Figures
La La Land
Lion
Manchester by the Sea
Moonlight ← what should win →

Best Director

Denis Villeneuve

Mel Gibson

Damien Chazelle

Ken Lonergan
Barry Jenkins

Best Actor

Casey Affleck *Manchester by the Sea*
Andrew Garfield *Hacksaw Ridge*
Ryan Gosling *La La Land*
Viggo Mortensen *Captain Fantastic*
Denzel Washington *Fences*

Best Actress

Isabelle Huppert *Elle*
Ruth Negga *Loving*
Natalie Portman *Jackie*
Emma Stone *La La Land*
Meryl Streep *Florence Foster Jenkins*

Best Supporting Actor

Mahershala Ali *Moonlight*
Jeff Bridges *Hell or High Water*
Lucas Hedges *Manchester by the Sea*
Dev Patel *Lion*
Michael Shannon *Nocturnal Animals*

Best Supporting Actress

Viola Davis *Fences*
Naomie Harris *Moonlight*
Nicole Kidman *Lion*
Octavia Spencer *Hidden Figures*
Michelle Williams *Manchester by the Sea*

(Underlined nominees equal CampChuck predictions)

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America's Juice Is Still Race

Did OJ Simpson murder two people? Why is this fodder for an Academy Awards newsletter? In May 2016 "OJ: Made in America," a five-part, made-for-television movie was first released to a couple of movie theaters. Therefrom, it qualified for the Academy Awards, and it's going to win the Best Documentary Oscar.

Set aside discussions of fairness or acceptability in the halls of awards reckoning. Swipe aside the fractured categories and channels that is the media landscape. ESPN's "OJ: Made in America" is an excellent documentary.

This 8-hour mini-series contains unavoidable rehashing of tabloid-fueling elements, including aspects of The Trial of the Century. Part of the artistic triumph of this cinematic journalism is how deftly the major theme of race in America drives the story of the OJ phenomenon.

Race in Los Angeles. Race in courts of law, courts of public opinion. Race-irrelevance in OJ the groundbreaking athlete, celebrity, spokesperson, quasi-actor, role model...until everyone's spectacle saw Black.

See "OJ: Made in America." Meanwhile, not incidentally, two of the other Best Documentary nominees examine race: "13th" (amendment abolishing slavery) and "I Am Not Your Negro" (a James-Baldwin-eye view on the history of race in America).

Best Supporting Actor

breakthrough and his “Best Exotic Marigold Hotel” exuberance, Patel is finding his way toward leading man status. “Lion” gives him a star-sized role leveraged into the Best Supporting Actor category. While he pleases in a youthful, earnest way, he needs to travel a bit further in his evolution as an actor than the enlightened sentimentality of “Lion.”

The supporting actor that’s grabbing all the attention is Mahershala Ali. I would maintain that “Moonlight’s” brilliantly implemented ensemble approach reflects light away from Ali. He doesn’t even appear after the first third of this three-part delving.

That said, Ali delivers an essential supporting chemistry in “Moonlight”: his character rescues a child; stands him up to face his teen years; and lives inside the adult the boy becomes. Ali humanizes – which is not to say excuses – the ghetto drug dealer he plays. His depiction of toughness, sensitivity, and life choices stages the tone that makes the main character in “Moonlight” a life to follow.



All five nominees have a path to sneak away with an Oscar this year. It will be the look and sound and effect of Mahershala Ali in a prestige movie that walks off with Gold on Oscar night. It isn’t going to hurt that Ali plays a handsome, model soldier and love interest in another Oscar nominated Best Picture (“Hidden Figures”).

Manufactured Mailbag

Dear Editor,

Why? Why did you demystify the whole prediction thing? You not only ruined however much I was into you examining and comparing everything for your predictions. You made it so all I need to do is look up a couple award results, and Oscar night is barely a surprise.

Cal DeCalc, Saginaw, MI

Dear Cal,

I had fun admitting it, and there’s still surprise seeing what happens. This includes the times when personal aspects flavor the cinema atmosphere.

Ed.

Dear Editor,

The little boy in “Lion” is so adorable. He’s so adorable. It makes me wonder who you think are the most adorable kids ever in movies.

Q.T. Nuzzel, Dear Creek, MI

Dear Q.T.,

Kids on screen can melt you that way. Past a certain transition zone, it’s more about how well they’re acting than using the adorable factor. Perhaps the best use of adorable is “In America” (2002), the younger sister, with transition zone adorable from the older sister. Kids who get Oscar nominations, to large extent, have left adorable behind.

Ed.

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Email: jaffee@startlets.com
(that’s three “t’s” in startlets).

Dear Editor,

I don’t really want you wasting CampChuck space on it, but I can’t help asking when you think a penetrating dramatic movie will be made about Donald J. Trump?

Simon Trombo, Norfolk, VA

Dear Simon,

I’m reminded of the virtually unheard-of documentary “You’ve Been Trumped” that came out in 2012. I thought then that it wasn’t good enough film making about bullying, billionaire slime to warrant giving Trump that much attention.

Consider seeing “Primary Colors” (1998). It will be a tall order to come up with that kind of quality storytelling veiling a fiction about the making of The Donald.

Ed.

Dear Editor,

What is with all the numbers, man? 90% this 85% that. 7 times this; 21 years that?

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend,

Thanks for affording me the opportunity to mention that one year after all the brouhaha of zero Black actors receiving Oscar nominations (two years in a row), six of twenty nominations went to Blacks. (Likely, two will win.)

Attention to numbers matters. This includes vigilance over influencers who lead people to follow arithmetic where two plus two equals five.

Ed.

If We Must Serve the “Self-Licking Ice Cream Cone” ...

Donald J. Trump. President Donald J. Trump. Aargh. Scrutinize, yes. Hold accountable, definitely. Office of The President, fgaahdsakes. Here’s the thing. IT ISN’T about Donald Trump (which is all he’s ever wanted it to be). IT IS – to mention the single biggest thing on a long, serious list -- about global climate change.

A clever phrase, “self-licking ice cream cone,” was coined about systems that act only to sustain themselves. While amusing (or terrifying), such cannot sustain themselves. Neither can such be wished away. Mustn’t we treat sustainability with enlightened respect?

No intractable issue encompasses more issues than responding **B I G T I M E** to global climate change and the natural resource concerns that rail alongside. I’ll not enumerate. Call up your own list. All issues will be shriveled and submerged by dawdling beyond two degrees of global temperature rise. (We’re already past one degree; our current behaviors assure we’ll reach two degrees.)

However we act, results notwithstanding, we serve up our own just desserts.

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(translated from the
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CampChuck Predictions (as also indicated by underlined nominees on page one)

The Directors Guild of America award for Damien Chazelle cinches the good-feeling, industry hype for him and his film “La La Land.” They’ll win the highly-correlated Best Picture, Best Director Oscars. Emma Stone rides the same wave for Best Actress with no salient competitor to knock her out of that box. Casey Affleck playing withdrawn characteristics wins in a coin toss for Best Actor over the big theatrical strokes of Denzel Washington’s character. Viola Davis’s quintessence of committed woman/wife/mother is a Best Supporting Actress sure bet. Best Supporting Actor, Mahershala Ali: he helps rev the special sensitivity in “Moonlight.”

Picture and Director:	<i>La La Land</i>	Damien Chazelle, <i>La La Land</i>
Actress and Actor:	Emma Stone, <i>La La Land</i>	Casey Affleck, <i>Manchester by the Sea</i>
Supporting Actress & Actor:	Viola Davis, <i>Fences</i>	Mahershala Ali, <i>Moonlight</i>

Best Supporting Actress

The Oscar for Best Actress goes to Viola Davis in “Fences.” Wait. Even though she deserves to win in that competitive field of nominees, Davis is cleverly nominated in the Best *Supporting* Actress category. (No rules say why someone must be pegged for one or the other list.)

The level of Davis’s Best Actress presence locks her into Best Supporting Actress Gold. The all-



American gravitas of her performance is so woman, so wife and mother, so struggling lower-middle-class real, this Academy

Awards honor will not pass her by.

She builds on the “regular person” resilience and strength she shaped in “Doubt” and “The Help” (both Oscar nominated roles). She’s transferred her “Fences” turn in an august Broadway play to a stellar reprise in a moving motion picture.

By contrast Michelle Williams, in “Manchester by the Sea,” has a role that provides important context but doesn’t represent enough of the central journey of this film. Tragedy rips a wife and husband into separate coping. One especially tugging exchange late in the film helps assure the excellence of this story. Williams acts nomination-worthy in such a sad setting, but it doesn’t touch Viola Davis territory.

Nicole Kidman’s part as the adoptive mom in “Lion” is unfairly easy to overlook. The engine of the story is so much about a child whose life was plucked from his family, culture, and home in India. It’s almost incidental energy that his adoptive parents are pretty much perfect, enlightened human beings.

There’s a gentility in the array of characteristics Kidman portrays that could have been cloying. It’d be a different movie if we got to explore more of Kidman’s character. Oscar bearing ingredients can be unfair.

Naomie Harris in “Moonlight” offers the only supporting actress performance that poses any threat to Viola Davis. On the one hand, Harris shares in a quintessential example of ensemble acting, where no one part rises above the balance among all the parts. On the other hand, Harris is the only actor in all three segments of this artistically crafted, human examination.

Harris plays the mom, afflicted by her poverty and drug addiction. Her character seems present even when not on screen. She resonates support performance in an Oscar worthy way, but at the same time, hers is the only role in “Moonlight” where we’ve seen such acting in other films.

If there was a way to say that three women in one film could qualify as a single Best Actress nominee, “Hidden Figures” would be more to talk about. Nominated by herself for Best Supporting Actress, Octavia Spencer does just what that movie needed, but it isn’t what wins Oscars.

It’s great the way Spencer plays a transcendent supervisor and math/computer geek who overcomes racist and sexist circumstances at NASA’s space program. This satisfying Hollywood rendition of a story we all need to know just doesn’t pack the dramatic and comedic tension that won Spencer an Oscar in “The Help.”

Best Supporting Actor

There’s a new sheriff in town. No, there’s two new sheriffs in town. Jeff Bridges chases his bad guys in “Hell or High Water.” Michael Shannon chases his much worse guys in “Nocturnal Animals.”

The seemingly similar roles exude West Texas lawman with a gruff, laid back yet tenacious manner. Both are wise guys. The key difference: The Bridges character may be on his last case before retiring; the Shannon character may be on his last case because he’s dying of cancer.

There’s a bigger difference. Bridges seems over-stylized. He’s still “The Dude” though and can’t be counted out for an Oscar here. Shannon presents an interesting edge and reason to root for his unorthodoxy. If it were up to me, I’d grant him the Oscar for the best performance of these five.

As good as “Manchester by the Sea” is, as good as the ensemble of actors is, Lucas Hedges doesn’t particularly make an impression beyond being a less individualized version of “Good Will Hunting” Boston-type guys.

Lucas contributes very well in his linchpin role as the teen who needs a guardian after his father dies. I’ll just point you to River Phoenix in “Running on Empty” or Timothy Hutton in “Ordinary People” if you want to see a teenaged version of Best Supporting Actor caliber.

Dev Patel is growing into his acting manhood well. Building on his “Slumdog Millionaire”

Best Picture / Best Director

Imagine the entire voting membership of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences sitting on a psychiatrist's couch saying, "So many daunting issues ... the politics ... Donald Trump ... The country, the world It's so worrying. It's so embarrassing."

"Zo, vhat is it you must do about zhis?" the doctor asks. Today, vhat is it you need to do, for you, to get you through today?"



"We have to vote 'La La Land' the Best Picture Oscar ... and Damien Chazelle Oscar for directing it."

"Zhis vill bring you some comfort, ya? It vill help you deal viss all zhese bigger problems?"

"But Doctor, 'Moonlight' is so much the better film. It was so much more of a movie-making challenge to get right. It's such a humanizing film in the difficult style and setting Barry Jenkins chose to craft it. We all know 'La La Land' is just a self-medicating throwback to romantic musicals. It's imaginative. It's entertaining. But Doc, 'La La Land' is no 'West Side Story.' It isn't 'My Fair Lady' or 'Cabaret' or 'Chicago.' Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone are appealing stars, but they're so not Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers."

"You can say somesing else nice about zhis 'La La Land'?"

"It's creative. It's Los Angeles, ha, ha, 'la la' land. It's struggling artists, career choices. It kinda feels like home to people who make films. OK?"

"Hmm. Mm hmm. Remember how vee discussed to put zhis Oscar business in perspective?"

"But the acting in 'Moonlight' ... so nuanced, so touching ... such a fresh way to realize a flavor of hope ... such a fine spread of ensemble acting. The subtle continuity. So much in story and tone without ever overdoing anything. Doc, 'La La Land' isn't better than *any* of the nominated films.



"Zo vhat is it you must do today, for you to do better getting you through today?"

"Oscar for Best Picture: vote for 'La La Land' and Damien Chazelle for Best Director."

The best movie of the year after "Moonlight" is "Manchester by the Sea." Its rich, character-driven storytelling may manage Best Screenplay Gold, maybe Best Actor for Casey Affleck. For Best Picture, though, it's a rather standard, familiar film.

"I can't imagine what it must feel like." People say such things about family tragedies of the kind that underpins "Manchester by the Sea." Kenneth Lonergan doesn't overcook the sadness or insight. Connectedness, coping, and responsibility show well in this film. There's much to appreciate including its amusing touches. For director Lonergan, also nominated, he has guided a taut, affecting drama.

With films like "Lion" and "Hidden Figures" they're deserving enough to shrug OK for Best Picture nominations. Neither has a chance of winning, not the least of which is noticing that the director of neither film received an Oscar nomination.

Both have obvious features that make for a very satisfying trip to the movies. Both hold the promise of good people achieving good outcomes for good reasons. Both based on true stories, they deliver their triumphs over circumstances that would stifle their hopes and dreams.

Despite the intelligence of its characters, "Lion" runs on pure sentimentality. It begins adorably sad. It brushes across insufficient good fortune and enlightenment. It milks the distance traveled and the distance unraveled. There is a cute surprise at the end but it's no surprise that Saroo finds his mommy.

"Hidden Figures" supposedly runs on the high-octane intelligence of its trio of title characters (a title with multiple meanings). In its Hollywood way, it's driven at least as much by their feisty likability. There's nothing particularly new or special in such a storytelling gambit. This kind of film doesn't toy notably with Oscar worthy, except for one thing.

No one grew up hearing this great American story. How great is it for movie makers and movie goers to share this hidden American milestone of equality for women, for Black women? See this movie. Even though it takes liberties to ensure it entertainment value, it runs true enough to the core facts to acquaint citizens with an important historical footnote about the composition of America.

Best Picture / Best Director

Two other nominees trip on the prediction point that Best Picture Oscars have only graced four films in 88 years where the director of the film was *not* nominated (most recently “Driving Miss Daisy” in 1989; “Argo” in 2012).

The unnominated director of “Fences,” Denzel Washington, is a 50/50 bet for Best Actor. Viola Davis is locked to win Best Supporting Actress. Along with the rest of its outstanding cast, what stands out is that this is more an actors’ triumph than a Best Picture. There’s no doubt that “Fences” pops with excellence, but what pops most is volumes of actor driven dialog.

Its other main strength is its other main reason for being passed over for Best Picture. This film pretty much transfers directly from August Wilson’s Pulitzer Prize winning play. It isn’t rare for movies adapted from Broadway shows to grab Best Picture Gold. However, these films tend to be musicals or else they open the physical locations significantly beyond stage sized sets.

“Hell or High Water” is very cinematic, one of those films where its location – West Texas – is in effect a character in the film. It’s the kind of thing that draws critical raves, along with praise for its anti-hero depiction of two guys who rob banks. David McKenzie, however, yielded no Best Director nom.

The lead characters are brothers, big on loyalty. They don’t quite cut it as likeable outlaws, despite a twist to their story that supposedly registers the substance of the film. Having a tried and true sheriff on the case doesn’t diminish this arty modern western. Such things just don’t lift the picture higher than the honor of an Oscar nomination.

Go figure that Mel Gibson is back on the Best Picture and Best Director map. He didn’t do much directing in the 20 years following his “Braveheart” Oscar triumph (1996). The two features he directed since then pushed his violence penchant well beyond the ample glories of “Braveheart.”

His nominations for “Hacksaw Ridge” offer some counterpoint for, shall we say, celebrity problems Gibson has had since “Braveheart.” While still heaped in graphic presentation of violence, Gibson’s film honors well a hero of World War II. That hero,

Desmond Doss, refused to carry a gun. He was a conscientious objector, a medic, who singlehandedly saved dozens on a hellish ridgetop. It’s excellent based-on-a-true-story stuff. While it’s a notch below Spielberg’s “Saving Private Ryan,” it confirms that Gibson knows what he’s doing as a director.

Speaking of Spielberg, a science fiction film is among the Best Picture, Best Director nominees. “Arrival,” directed by Denis Villeneuve, is no “Close Encounters of the Third Kind” or “ET” but what is? “Arrival” delivers on much of its potential. It does so by concentrating on what it means to communicate effectively and appropriately with aliens (from other galaxies, that is).

The film travels shortsighted human characteristics that are a bit too typical. It also could have met a higher potential if the story found a way to avoid the woo woo that makes it all work out. Within the framework of those choices, though, it’s a sincere, imaginative, engaging project that serves well enough as a multiple Oscar nominee.

(The Academy’s psychiatrist voted for “Moonlight.”)

Top Ten and Then Some

1. “Moonlight” (fresh, effective in style & content)
2. Documentaries (a favored movie way to go):
 - “OJ: Made in America” (beyond tabloid tableau)
 - “Witness” (seeing truth in time)
 - “Sold” (real we don’t want to know)
 - “Tickled” (investigative journalism but weird)
 - “Life, Animated” (humanizing look at autism)
3. “Manchester by the Sea” (best of storytelling)
4. “Fences” (taut theater intensity brought to film)
5. “Sing Street” (fresh, teen coming-of-age film)
6. “Loving” (understated landmark story)
7. “Zootopia” (21st century yet old-school animation)
8. “Hidden Figures” (lifted by its core content)
9. “Hacksaw Ridge” (“Saving Private Ryan”-ish)
10. “Florence Foster Jenkins” (better than it could be)
 - Just outside top ten: “Lion,” “Edge of Seventeen”
 - Top tier if you take to it: “Hell or High Water”
 - Effective though too lurid: “Nocturnal Animals”
 - Very good with potential to have been better: “Hunt for the Wilderpeople”; “Arrival”; “Captain Fantastic”; “20th Century Woman”
 - Good but *so* not up to its hype: “La La Land”

Best Actor

Last year CampChuck made a confession about predicting Oscars. CampChuck relies heavily on the 90 percent correlation that the Screen Actors Guild award winner for Best Actor becomes the Academy Award winner. This time around, that would be Denzel Washington in “Fences.”

Is Denzel excellent, Oscar caliber? Yes. He does more than captivate as a larger than life, ordinary man. He does more than communicate the endurance and swallowed insufficiency of Black, lower-middle-class family life in the 1950s. He pumps “Fences” with theatrical bravado and vulnerability.

Film, though, isn’t the same as doing this August Wilson play on Broadway. Denzel’s salient theatrical strokes may work against him for Oscar. Diddle if you must whether already having two Academy Awards or being a Black actor this year affects his chances either way.



Will anyone bump Denzel away from a winning shot at the Gold Statuette? Casey Affleck will. In “Manchester by the Sea,” he also plays an ordinary guy, but the role couldn’t be more different.

Where Denzel’s character tries to puff some size into his compromised life, Casey’s character tries to shrink from the pain of a family tragedy that haunts his being. In Affleck’s Oscar caliber role, the winning edge will be that it’s tougher to pull off the kind of internal struggle he puts on screen. Call it a less-is-more kind of triumph.

Diddling some data into subjective considerations, Affleck has won overwhelmingly more awards for his 2016 role than Washington has for his, despite Washington’s Screen Actors Guild win. As he accepted the SAG award, Denzel said he thought “that young boy’s gonna win.” In the Oscar realm, Affleck is at a relative sweet-spot age for winning Oscars (Casey, 41; Denzel 62).

That “young boy’s gonna win” might have been pointing to Ryan Gosling (age 36). Probably not and thankfully so. Brushing aside Gosling’s significantly lesser showing on the awards tracking board, voters simply won’t merit him an Oscar for “La La Land.”

Voters won’t take this Oscar nomination seriously just because he crammed piano practice, dancing lessons, and valiant attempts at singing into a standard sexy star turn. Ryan is a fine actor. Check out his Oscar nominated “Half Nelson.” “Lars and the Real Girl” may be his most endearing, certainly his trippiest role. “La La Land”? Best Actor? C’mon.

Back to serious consideration. At least you can respectfully say Andrew Garfield and Oscar contender in the same breath. In “Hacksaw Ridge” he depicts a World War II soldier who refused to carry a gun. This acting generates the kind of involvement that is only incidentally enhanced by him being pleasing to look at.

Garfield pulls you into the struggle, the courage, the commitment that conscientious objector Desmond Doss represented. You watch him endure more than scorn from officers and fellow soldiers, as well as seemingly unsurvivable heroism on the battlefield. You appreciate his love of family, God, and service. This acting challenge may not rack up enough votes with Affleck and Washington on the ballot, but it’s an impressive performance to consider.

Sometimes you like to see an Oscar nomination just because it might entice more people to see the movie. “Captain Fantastic” (misleading title) provides Viggo Mortensen with a platform for an anarchist family values film. (What? That same old movie story again?)

The film didn’t deserve to do as poorly as it did at the box office. It’s off-the-grid dynamics present quite well. This includes the real-world complications of a widower dad trying to raise six kids to be top notch, physically self-reliant intellectuals.

Strangely, it’s delivered in too much of a Hollywood formula film way. The kids are too capable. The conflict plays too much like a screwball comedy. Viggo plays well as a man and a dad to reckon with, although the script potential could have given him better. Oscar nomination? Not unfounded. See the picture. It’s quite engaging. Power to the people.

Best Actress

OK, let's talk Meryl Streep first. She's nominated for the twentieth (20th) time. Her title role in "Florence Foster Jenkins" is hardly an autopilot effort from the best actor ever. As she does, Streep deals yet another foray that's fresh and challenging.

Streep injects all the realistic nuance that this over-the-top portrayal can hold. Without Streep, this film about the "world's worst opera singer" could have been a readily tossed entertainment, even embarrassing. With Streep and a fine supporting cast, plus a based-on-a-true-story "really?" it goes beyond the head-shaking humor of a seemingly deluded socialite's life.

Streep's intentionally bad singing reminds that she has woven her wonderful singing ability into many of her acting turns. Fair to say though, just being nominated this time around is the appropriate level of recognition.

Emma Stone also sings as part of her Oscar nominated role. To the extent that "La La Land" is a musical, she pairs with Ryan Gosling on the film's signature "City of Stars" and one other song. She does a solo and one number with her girlfriends.



Stone's singing and dancing are sweet but thin. The anxious earnestness of her acting does nothing to raise the qualities of "La La Land" anywhere near the level of hype that's fire-cracking around this movie. Alas, that hype translates to an Oscar to Emma before her time and after more promising showings like "The Help" and "Birdman." The other nominated actress parts won't topple the "La La" hype.

Of the more deserving nominees contending for Best Actress, Ruth Negga portrays a low-key expression of courage grounded in a best essence of married love. The film "Loving" is based on a couple whose real names were Mildred and Richard Loving. Virginia residents, it was illegal for a mixed-race couple to be married. The film is about a court case that reached the US Supreme Court, but it resonates because of the loving fact of these two people.

The stealth frontrunner is Isabelle Huppert in "Elle." Perhaps she's not so stealthy anymore, having won

Best Actress in a drama at the Golden Globes. This came after securing top honors from both the New York and Los Angeles film critics, among other awards. Might the Academy award this side stream star for playing an independent, successful, and resilient woman, who is also kinky and unlikable?

Only about 72 people in the United States have voluntarily seen this discomfiting foreign language movie, "Elle." Maybe industry insiders will be imbued with the fact that her 14 Cesar nominations for Best Actress make her the Meryl Streep of France. Rooting for the actual Meryl Streep makes more sense. Huppert won't win.

Natalie Portman stars in the title role of "Jackie" Kennedy. It's the most identifiable should-win performance. Portman encases herself in the unique sound and body language of the First Lady during the terrible time of John F. Kennedy's assassination.

Tackling the mine field of playing a public figure seared into the public psyche, it's fair to suggest that Portman never really escapes the impression that this is more of a bold exercise in acting than a transcendent creation of a film character. Such makes it easier to slip-in Emma Stone instead of hailing Natalie Portman with a second Academy Award. (She won for "Black Swan" in 2011.)

Having Viola Davis in the Best Actress category could have solved the lack of an obvious pick.

2017 Wild & Scenic Film Festival Awards:

CampChuck reviews at <http://startlets.com/filmfestivals.html>

Festival info at wildandscenicfilmfestival.org

"Boone"	(jury award)
"Can You Dig This?"	(spirit of activism award)
"Doug Tompkins: A Wild Legacy"	(honorable mention)
"Elk River"	(most inspiring adventure award)
"Fractured Land"	(best in theme: "On the Edge")
"The Good Mind"	(honorable mention)
"In Pursuit of Silence"	(people's choice & jury awards)
"The Islands and the Whales"	(best of fest)
"Pangolin"	(best short)
"Pickle"	(honorable mention)