

# THE CampChuck REVIEWER

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THIRTY NINTH ANNUAL EDITION

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*Charles N. Jaffee*

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



**Tom Hanks to Star in Streep Directed “Sophie’s Choice” Sequel** page 9

## The 90th ANNUAL ACADEMY AWARDS Nominations

Oscar Night: Sunday, March 4

### Best Picture

*Call Me by Your Name*

*Darkest Hour*

*Dunkirk*

*Get Out*

*Lady Bird*

*Phantom Thread*

*The Post*

*The Shape of Water*

*Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*

### Best Director

Christopher Nolan

Jordan Peele

Greta Gerwig

Paul Thomas Anderson

Guillermo Del Toro

### Best Actor

Timothée Chalamet *Call Me by Your Name*

Daniel Day-Lewis *Phantom Thread*

Daniel Kaluuya *Get Out*

Gary Oldman *Darkest Hour*

Denzel Washington *Roman J. Israel, Esq.*

### Best Actress

Sally Hawkins *The Shape of Water*

Frances McDormand *Three Billboards*

Margot Robbie *I, Tonya*

Saoirse Ronan *Lady Bird*

Meryl Streep *The Post*

### Best Supporting Actor

Willem Dafoe *The Florida Project*

Woody Harrelson *Three Billboards*

Richard Jenkins *The Shape of Water*

Christopher Plummer *All the Money in the World*

Sam Rockwell *Three Billboards*

### Best Supporting Actress

Mary J. Blige *Mudbound*

Allison Janney *I, Tonya*

Lesley Manville *Phantom Thread*

Laurie Metcalf *Lady Bird*

Octavia Spencer *The Shape of Water*

(Underlined nominees equal CampChuck predictions)

Manufactured Mailbag	2
Which Time Is Up?	3
Best Supporting	4
Best Picture / Director	5-6
Instead of a Top Ten	7
Best Actor / Actress	7-8

## Does Big Box Office Win Best Picture?

The Best Picture Oscar for 2003 went to “Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King.” It couldn’t have been because it was the Best Picture nominee. Maybe ticket sales more than \$375 million domestically mattered? Maybe it mattered being the third of a trilogy, each a Best Picture nominee, each grossing over \$300 million?

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, three other Best Picture Oscars went to the top grossing film among the nominees: “Argo” for 2012, “Slumdog Millionaire” for 2008, and “The Departed” for 2006. Each of these grossed merely in the \$135 million range. Since 2001, four other of the Best Picture winners topped what might be termed eyebrow-raising revenues over \$100 million (including two that were by far the highest grossing nominees after ignoring the first and second “Lord of Rings” films).

Might we call it a new trend that 6 of the last 8 Best Picture winners saw ticket sales under \$60 million? Two of those were “Moonlight” for 2016, under \$30 million and “The Hurt Locker” for 2009, under \$20. Rounding out the 16-year field are two other films grossing way under the \$100 million “big box office” threshold.

Without bogging down in other analytical details, you might call the answer a 50-50 split (and it isn’t much over 50-50 since 1978). At this year’s Oscars, only “Dunkirk” and “Get Out” are blockbusters, with about 3 times higher sales than each of the other 7 nominees.

## Best Supporting Actor

including the angst of being gay in the 1950s, Jenkins balances, even catalyzes the fanciful, romantic, and confident lines of the story. He portrays a timid man in a way that enriches this kind of imaginative storytelling.

Sometimes the best reason for a Best Supporting Actor nomination is the sideways opportunity to encourage seeing a film like “The Florida Project.” Willem Dafoe does the part right. He’s a motel manager, trying to do a good job, trying to be a good guy, a caring guy for his economically marginal long-term renters.

“The Florida Project” is a pretty much nonjudgmental look at a seedier side of society. The single mom doing the best she can, is she a bad mom? Could a bad mom have such a mischievous, resilient, joy of a six-year-old? It’s a good film, and Brooklyn Prince is the top reason to see it.

There’s only one unimpressive nominee for Supporting Actor this year, Christopher Plummer. Oh, he does solid work as J. Paul Getty in “All the Money in the World.” Getty is only interesting because of the tight-fisted, unkind way he is absurdly rich but not rich enough.

Based on a true story, Getty clearly loved money more than he loved his kidnapped grandson. Plummer, already the oldest actor to win an Oscar (“Beginners” at age 82), should feel honored enough, at 88, just being the oldest Oscar nominee.

## Manufactured Mailbag

Dear Editor,

In the climate of “MeToo” and “Time’sUp,” is it worth asking why there isn’t a “Best ActPerson” Oscar instead of separate categories for men and women?

Jan Chromoxy, Samesby, AL

Dear Jan,

“ActPerson”? Worth asking? Sure, though it’s peripheral to the heightened attention that harassment, abuse, and inequality deserve. The high stakes visibility of movie making is a valuable crucible for culture change, but merging men and women into fewer award categories probably needn’t be a priority in the ticket-selling celebrity game.

Ed.

Dear Editor,

Oh, my God. Even though it’s a year later, I still can’t get over them announcing “La La Land” as Best Picture when “Moonlight” was the actual winner.

Muffy Gletch, Pittsfield, MA

Dear Muffy,

I hope you can gather some composure knowing that this entertaining live TV moment was corrected in a minute and no one died because of this biggest mistake in Oscar history.

Ed.

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

Dear Editor,

Don’t you think the Academy Awards executives should have fired PriceWaterhouseCoopers? Don’t you think that this accounting firm should have fired employees who messed up the Best Picture announcement?

May Kumpay, Ketchum, ID

Dear May,

For the highest visibility error that those entrusted could have made, PwC’s Cullinan and Ruiz are banned from Oscars insider limelight. Is that enough of a message and punishment? How awful was Cullinan’s pattern of being too casual about his responsibility? Was the mistake consequential enough to break off an 80+ year business relationship? How about we focus our “you’re fired” fervor on someone who demonstrates a more disreputable character, a more dangerous incompetence, a more unethical core, a more impeachable pattern of behavior?

Ed.

Dear Editor,

Ha, ha. Man, I loved watching over-the-pretty-people-hill Beatty and Dunaway fumble over the wrong Oscar envelope.

A friend, Los Angeles

Dear friend,

You exhibit a flare for unkind satisfactions. Actually, Beatty and Dunaway – victims of the mistake – showed remarkable poise under the circumstances.

Ed.

## Which Time Is Up?

Global climate change is the most pressing, most enveloping issue we should be tending. Race continues to be the most iconic issue testing the American experiment. Shortchanged voting rights (perhaps most notably, gerrymandering) crystallizes the most fundamental political affront to “we the people.” Gun havoc, yet again, killing lots of kids at a school.... There’s more than plenty vying for top societal nightmares. (Have a nice day.)

With all these matters seismically prodding our complacency, an unexpected spotlight – a good deal of which emanates from Hollywood – sheds “Time’sUp” light on all too common sexual harassment and abuse. Could this be a moment, a momentum, a movement that will carry a “way it’s been” closer to a long overdue “how it can be”?

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### **(new→) Futures Without Violence** (one of its notable programs is **Workplaces Respond**)

The TimesUpNow.org website points to this as a trusted 30-year-old organization. It provides resources, training, and technical assistance to prevent and respond to sexual harassment, violence, and more. It helps increase the safety and economic security of vulnerable workers by building innovative partnerships between anti-violence advocates & service providers; and companies, unions & worker associations.

## **CampChuck Predictions** (as also indicated by underlined nominees on page one)

Director’s Guild winner Guillermo del Toro and his “The Shape of Water” will win the Best Director and Picture Oscars. More fully realizing its more imaginative and challenging vision, it will outstrip major contender, “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri.” “Three Billboards” will grab Best Actress for Frances McDormand and Best Supporting Actor for Sam Rockwell. Academy voters will enjoy giving Allison Janney Best Supporting Actress for her offbeat, grating qualities in “I, Tonya.” There’s only one sure bet this year: Gary Oldman, playing Winston Churchill in “Darkest Hour.” He booms Best Actor Oscar.

**Picture and Director:** *The Shape of Water* Guillermo Del Toro, *The Shape of Water*  
**Actress and Actor:** Frances McDormand, *Three Billboards Outside Ebbings, Missouri* Gary Oldman, *Darkest Hour*  
**Supporting Actress & Actor:** Allison Janney, *I, Tonya* Sam Rockwell, *Three Billboards Outside Ebbings*

## Best Supporting Actress

I like Octavia Spencer. An Oscar for “The Help,” great; an Oscar nomination for “Hidden Figures,” cool. But an Oscar nomination for playing Sally Hawkins’s buddy at work, not so much. “The Shape of Water” is the year’s Best Picture, but Octavia Spencer’s character is the least special role.

With Mary J. Blige, it’s sort of the other way ‘round. There’s no wave to ride. “Mudbound,” a Mississippi tale, hasn’t had much limelight. Be prodded to immerse yourself in Blige’s earthy portrayal (plus director Dee Rees receiving a Best Adapted Screenplay nomination). It’s a telling American story about two soldiers, one Black, one White, returning home from World War II.

Blige plays an everywoman, a suffering, Black family woman in the poverty of the deep South. Last year, Naomie Harris, as a poor Black mom in “Moonlight” lost to Viola Davis, playing a lower middle-class Black family woman in “Fences.” For Best Supporting Actress consideration, those roles offered more acting dimension than Blige’s role. Those performances took their films to a higher level.

Laurie Metcalf has the biggest supporting actress role of the nominees, ripe with nomination-worthy facets. As the contentious, loving mom, she’s critical to the emotional journey of her teenaged daughter, “Lady Bird.”

Metcalf would win if this year’s voting slanted conventional. While Saoirse Ronan as Lady Bird feels refreshingly different yet familiar in an intriguing way, Metcalf feels a bit like a standard film-plot mom.

When it comes to the supporting-actress dynamics, Lesley Manville might be considered the one shoved unfairly away from an Oscar win. In “Phantom Thread” Daniel Day-Lewis plays, to say the least, an eccentric. His fashion-designer realm only functions because of his sister, played with intense reserve by Manville. The supporting actress resonance deepens when the sister must deal with her brother’s marriage.

Alas, this stylized period piece (even though the story’s time frame is the 1950s) doesn’t seduce you the way Merchant-Ivory films such as “A Room with a View” and “Howard’s End” do. Manville’s Oscar chances suffer from the oddness that makes this prim film worthy of much respect.



The slap-your-knee Best Supporting Actress winner is Allison Janney in “I, Tonya.” Here, oddness finds a strange form of endearing. Well, she’s endearing in a figure skating version of trailer-trash tiger-mom. She’s shines brighter because of how different she plays from her long TV runs on “West Wing” and more recently “Mom.”

“I, Tonya” is about Tonya Harding, an Olympics-level figure skater most famous for her connection to a brutal attack on a rival skater, Nancy Kerrigan. Tonya is hard to like. Her husband and his best friend are readily dislikeable. Janney, as Tonya’s mom, helps assure the savvy comedic choices made in turning this serious cubby hole of history into a deft kind of serious filmmaking.

## Best Supporting Actor

If it weren’t for Sam Rockwell winning the Screen Actor’s Guild award, not to mention the Golden Globes and the British Academy Award, I’d be able to say there are two good reasons he won’t win the Best Supporting Actor Oscar. First, Woody Harrelson is nominated in the same category in the same film, “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri.”

Second, Rockwell plays too over-the-top as a dumb yokel with only angry prejudice to sooth his inferiority. He does a great job portraying the police deputy and mama’s boy, true. However, the clever poignance and substance spun into this yarn could have been one notch better if they crafted the final reckoning without Rockwell’s character swinging from such an extreme stereotype.

“Woody Harrelson” strikes the perfect centered and central tone. It deserves more credit than Rockwell plying so close to caricature. As the police chief named on a rural billboard, Harrelson has to play off and above the locals. He has to find an even keel through compromised situations while carrying an added story burden.

Cancel each other out? Nah. Harrelson’s mere nomination will be Rockwell’s Oscar.



Maybe Rockwell’s near caricature performance is easier for Oscar to buy than the exaggerated support role Richard Jenkins plays in “The Shape of Water.” Not really. With low self-esteem issues,

(continued on page 2)

## Best Picture / Best Director

“Dunkirk” might seem to rate top contender attention with its epic proportions and eight Oscar nominations. Despite a bold filmmaking vision for dramatizing a huge event in World War II, director Christopher Nolan buried the lead focus.

Hundreds of civilian boats were called into service to save hundreds of thousands of British soldiers pinned against the sea by German forces. The hundreds-of-civilian-boats drama felt reduced, essentially, to one civilian-boat example. Granted, that was the best mini-story inside the film. The hundreds-of-thousands-of-trapped-soldiers story felt divvied up into insufficient dynamic tension.

Rather than point you to the high and wide praise that “Dunkirk” received, turn to another Best Picture nominee “Darkest Hour.” It dramatizes the challenge and substance of Dunkirk better in twenty minutes than the film “Dunkirk” does in its two hours.

That said, “Darkest Hour” is about Winston Churchill, Winston Churchill, Winston Churchill. The film is solidly constructed as a Best Actor vehicle that spills over into Best Picture nomination territory. Britain’s World War II crisis churns its gravitas and personality through Winston Churchill, and not incidentally through his wife. Clementine Churchill was an indispensable confidante and counterweight, well conveyed in “Darkest Hour.”

As with “Darkest Hour,” “The Post” is a Best Picture nominee with no Best Director nomination. It is a fair declaration that an average Steven Spielberg film is still better than most films.

“The Post” isn’t a special Spielberg film. Nonetheless, it depicts the handling of the Pentagon Papers, a keystone moment at The Washington Post, and one might say a keystone moment for journalism in the United States. (The Post’s coverage of Watergate unfolded about a year later.)

For kickers, “The Post” reflects thought-provokingly not only on the politics of lying to the American people (admittedly more sophisticated in some administrations), but also on how women are regarded in the workplace. Pretty good for an average Spielberg rendering.

“The Shape of Water” is a formula romance: a naive, curious girl meets an unsuitable boy. The formal infrastructure stacks against true love. The girl has an outlier friend and an insider friend who are there for her. You know what happens with true love in a formula film, even when there is a formidable bad guy in the way.

Formula movie-making frequently delivers dependable silver screen magic. In “The Shape of Water” the girl is a mute and the boy is a sea creature. Both labels are telling and woefully insufficient.

The two fated lovers offer a fresh movie-world presence – individually and as a couple. The dilemmas are uniquely steeped. The movie’s villain sports a focused meanness laced with traces of sad vulnerability. The tone that Guillermo del Toro puts into this cinematic story and gets from his actors is fantastic (both meanings of fantastic: extraordinarily good and fanciful).



Besides the special qualities experienced in the film, del Toro won Best Director from the Directors Guild of America. This plants a very high statistical marker that Guillermo del Toro and “The Shape of Water” are the Best Director and Best Picture Oscars winners.



Then there’s the small statistical matter of Martin McDonagh not receiving a Best Director Oscar nomination. Since 1933, Best Picture Gold has gone to only two films when its director isn’t even nominated (“Argo” in 2012; “Driving Miss Daisy” in 1989).

“Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri,” with its seven Oscar nominations, may be the hottest contender for Best Picture, but “The Shape of Water,” with its 13 noms, will win. More to point, del Toro fully realized a more imaginative, challenging vision than McDonagh (although McDonagh deserved the Best Director nomination “taken from him” by Christopher Nolan).

“Three Billboards,” with its edgy small-town yarn, may bump “The Shape of Water” off the original

(continued on page 6)

## Best Picture / Best Director

screenplay Oscar, but those edgy qualities line up a bit too conveniently. The bold, effective choices, scene by scene, don't play as masterfully fluid as del Toro does with the whole of "The Shape of Water." Also, some of the over-the-top supporting characters and situations in "Three Billboards" seem a wee much for a film aiming for such a real feel.

Only one of the nominated Best Pictures – also without a nomination for its director – feels a bit thin to be a top Oscars contender. That's somewhat unfair. "Call Me by Your Name" is an intentionally modest cinematic approach to an intentionally untortured coming-of-age affair.

Its strength might be considered its weakness. It's such a mature little story. Not mature as in graphic. Not like saying that coming-of-age gay needs to be labeled mature content.

It's just that this seventeen-year-old almost seems too grown up. He's intelligent, accomplished, manages his growth and vitality well. He even handles his entrance into the realm of sexuality and love with a mature proportion of angst. Not incidentally, the teen's lover seems like a decently pedigreed version of beautiful people. The girlfriend is enlightened, the well-off parents are enlightened. It's beautiful Italian countryside.

"Call Me by Your Name" is a fine motion picture that avoids all of the mistakes that a movie of this kind might have made. It's actually nomination-worthy on a list with nine Best Picture slots, but as an Oscar contender, there's an aroma of minimal challenge in its filmmaking vision.

The darling of the Oscar nominees, "Lady Bird" is a more mainstream coming-of-age film. It might be called an early frontrunner, but the feel of bestness, has faded a bit, as if the word "ordinary" applies.

Director/writer Greta Gerwig has made a fresh film from start to finish without tossing away familiar teenage themes. However autobiographical "Lady Bird's" life is, it feels genuine and personal and reflective of an unlikely star quality Gerwig seems to be carving for herself.

"What if this is the best version" of me, says Lady Bird when her mother encourages her. Lady Bird is trying to be real, trying not to be a phony, trying to be herself, whatever that is. She's trying to find her way with her unpopular best friend, with a rich and popular new friend, and with boys.

The most curious and stylized of the Best Picture nominees, not surprisingly, comes from director/writer Paul Thomas Anderson ("Boogie Nights," "Magnolia," "There Will Be Blood"). "Phantom Thread" sows a strange kind of triad between an exacting dress designer, his sister who keeps him functional, and his eventual wife who keeps vitality running through his constricted soul.

"Phantom Thread" is quite ambitious in a small-film way. Its biggest roadblock – and perhaps this is indicative of its excellence – is that it's somehow difficult to come out of a viewing saying "I like this movie." Kudos, yes; Oscars, no.

If there's a dark horse on the Best Picture / Best Director lists, it's "Get Out" and its first-time director Jordan Peele. Peele is Black, which may not be a thing to mention except he's written a horror story about a Black guy in an increasingly uncomfortable visit to his White girlfriend's family estate. Peele liked the idea of a first-ever horror film fueled by racial tension, and he walks the fence masterfully between all too real and an eerie, weird contrivance.

Peele (of Key and Peele comedy fame) has succeeded well enough to earn "First Film" awards from the Director's Guild and the New York film critics. It's a long shot that Peele's clever, substantive genre-bender could top Guillermo del Toro's fanciful triumph, but it's worth it to mention that so much Best Picture buzz is going to a horror film and a fantasy film (that isn't "Lord of the Rings").

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## Best Actor

If there's a lock in the major Oscar categories, it's Gary Oldman portraying Winston Churchill in "Darkest Hour." The field of five nominees is a rich one, but too many checkboxes point to Oldman this time around.



Oldman is a sturdy yet ranging, veteran actor. (It's a long resumé to peruse.) He has had one other Oscar nomination, a rather staid lead in "Tinker, Tailor, Soldier Spy." "Darkest Hour" provided Oldman with the plum role of his career.

He plays Winston Churchill during the height of Britain's crisis during World War II. Churchill was not only a hugely tested world leader, he was a force of nature, an unavoidable center of attention. He even had a vulnerable side, which he revealed sparingly and mostly to his wife. Oldman, almost unrecognizable under heavy makeup, struck perfect chords in an iconic part.

Big names are competing with Oldman. If he was prone to worry, it might be about Daniel Day-Lewis. Not only has he won an Oscar three of the other five times he's been nominated. He's one of those actors to whom other actors bow with unparalleled respect. And Day-Lewis has declared that "Phantom Thread" will be his last film.

Day-Lewis plays an impeccable, self-assured man with some accessible chinks in his armor. Brilliant as he is, he will not be given an unprecedented fourth Best Actor Oscar for a peculiar role in a curious, however ambitious, little film. (The only other four-time-Oscar actor is Katharine Hepburn.) Voters probably think the 60-year-old will unretire some day for a role that cannot be denied an Oscar.

The big name of Denzel Washington may have ridden his stature onto this year's list of nominees, but his title role in "Roman J. Israel, Esq." isn't a contender for Gold.

The film doesn't quite work, although Denzel gets to play an earnest oddball with an attitude and ideas worth listening to. He's a talented lawyer so long as he stays in the background where his lack of social skills (perhaps on the autistic spectrum) trip him up. Of course, the story plods him in the foreground.

The nicely appealing role in this group of five nominees (not exactly a description for an Oscar winner) is the coming-of-age teen in "Call Me by Your Name." Timothée Chalamet -- who also has a nicely appealing role in the Oscar nominated "Lady Bird" -- deserves to be well regarded for tapping the intelligence and sensitivity and balance in his character. Perhaps it's a nomination-worthy role in a keep your eye on this young man sort of way. Same as the praise for the movie, Chalamet maximizes all the pleasing, not-too-challenging choices applied to this film project.

Far more interesting is Daniel Kaluuya in "Get Out." If they remake "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner," Kaluuya would be well cast in a contemporary version of that film. He radiates characteristics that manage, even transcend, racial tension.

Meanwhile, the White people in "Get Out" know very well who's coming to dinner, and Kaluuya bumps down the not-much-funhouse corridors to horror very well.

Could Daniel Kaluuya upset Gary Oldman's sure bet for Oscar? The lesser prestige in Kaluuya's horror picture turn, even an impressive horror picture turn, will not derail Gary Oldman's trip to an Academy Award.

### Instead of a Top Ten

I highly recommend 12 of the 14 films in the major Oscar slots (see page 1). "The Shape of Water" is my #1. "Three Billboards" also impresses. "Phantom Thread" and "I, Tonya" are my odd-styled favorites. The little girl starring in "The Florida Project" is the compelling reason to see this good film.

"Coco" deserves the Best Animated Feature it will win -- a fresh, formula treat. "Abacus: Small Enough to Jail" is my favorite Oscar nominated Documentary Feature, though I've not seen "Faces Places," -- the highest rated film (95 out of 100) on metacritics.com. Note: "Dunkirk" (94) is my least favorite Best Picture nominee. All five Oscar nominated Documentary Shorts make an excellent grouping to queue up.

"Lucky" gets my nod for small gem of the year, and "The Big Sick" is the surprise satisfaction of the year.

## Best Actress

Only the best actor ever – Meryl Streep, twenty-first Oscar nomination (21<sup>st</sup>!) -- has zero chance to win in the 90<sup>th</sup> annual field of Best Actress nominees.

Streep's role as the publisher and biggest shareholder of "The Washington Post" doesn't heft the special qualities that will take home her fourth Oscar. That said, her excellence twinkles in the nuances. In "The Post" she depicts a woman discovering a new gear in her character during the Pentagon Papers crisis. We experience an estimable woman finding sound footing in a man's world.

It's almost a requirement that people see Saoirse Ronan in "Brooklyn" to appreciate how remarkable she is in "Lady Bird." It's more than the difference between a readily likable, attractive, young Irish woman in one film, and in the other, a plain-looking, plainly-endowed American teen trying too hard to be more than a plain person.

In "Brooklyn," Ronan portrays a resident confidence, building on unfolding experience. In "Lady Bird," her character pretends confidence, hoping, struggling to get to the real thing. An Oscar, however, won't be given for regarding Ronan in these contrasting roles. "Lady Bird" is a wonderful turn for Ronan. She'll do well appreciating a mere nomination this time (her third before age 24). A win likely won't take too many years to happen.

Margot Robbie could have wrecked the balance of "I, Tonya" in many ways. It's the riskiest of all the nominated acting roles. She incarnated Tonya Harding, a national champion and two-time Olympian who was never seen as the right kind of person for the figure skating world. That was before earned respect would be forever undermined by her connection to a brutal attack on a rival skater.

Robbie fires on all cylinders. She puts Harding's suffered abuse onscreen, as well as her drive and her confrontational attitude. She looks the skater part. Most of all, Robbie delivers the effective comedic vision of "I, Tonya" without the more obvious character facets that co-star Allison Janney gets to lean on. It would be well-met fun if the Academy voted Margot Robbie Best Actress.

Frances McDormand has the edge to win her second Oscar (first was "Fargo"). Forget that Best Actress Oscars tend to go to women in their twenties and thirties. McDormand (60) is one of those venerable actresses, appreciated for the pith she captures.

In "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" her character troubles over life after her daughter was raped and murdered. She behaves badly in various degrees. She causes trouble in a fictional, angry way that shape shifts well into "Time'sUp" and "MeToo" sentiments.

It's fair to label McDormand's Oscar-winning performance "timely" to sidestep stamping it as a politically aroused vote.



Sally Hawkins is more than a sentimental favorite. Seizing a rare acting challenge, she does much to assure that "The Shape of Water" wins Best Picture and Best Director. She carries the film by saying so much without speaking a word.

This doesn't feel like a gimmicky role, even with the strange nuance that she's mute but not deaf. Anyway, Hawkins embodies a woman naïve in life experience, but with heightened senses and heightened readiness for something more. Hawkins does an Oscar-deserving dive into a new shape of water that liberates her character and her audience. Alas, by a quirk of timing, she won't win this Oscar.

### 2018 Wild & Scenic Film Festival Awards:

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

Festival info at [wildandscenicfilmfestival.org](http://wildandscenicfilmfestival.org)

"Angry Inuk"	<b>spirit of activism</b> award
"Charged: Eduardo Garcia Story"	<b>most inspiring adventure</b> award
"Imagination: Tom Wallisch"	honorable mention
"Keepers of the Future"	honorable mention
"A Letter to Congress"	best short
"Mothered by Mountains"	honorable mention
"No Man's Land"	jury award ("Tenor of Our Times")
"Redefining Prosperity"	people's choice award
"Rodents of Unusual Size"	<b>best of fest</b>
"Wasted! Story of Food Waste"	jury award ("Do This Now")
"Water Warriors"	<b>best in theme:</b> "Groundswell"