

For real Oscar-caliber films, check out winners from the past

By John Mabry

If you've already seen all of this year's Oscar-nominated pictures and, like me, you're a little disappointed in what is supposed to be the best of what the cinema had to offer for 1990, the local video store has a generous selection of films awarded the "Best Picture" Oscar that are truly among the greats of American film. Some of the best include:

1. **All About Eve** (1950). Bette Davis, Anne Baxter and George Sanders try to outbitch one another in this marvelously witty and observant film about life in the New York theater. The picture is a four-star among four-star films: superb casting, excellent direction and an intelligent, talky script convinced Academy voters to give "All About Eve" more Oscars than any other film in cinema history.

2. **Casablanca** (1942). Probably the most romantic film ever made, *Casablanca* is the story of the choice between love and honor in intrigue-filled World War II Morocco. Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman and Paul Heinreid are caught in a love triangle that doesn't resolve itself until the hands-down best ending ever recorded on film. And who can forget Max Steiner's incredible

score — anyone who's seen "Casablanca" must remember this.

3. **Terms of Endearment** (1983). If you didn't catch this recent tear-jerker about a touching mother/daughter relationship, it's a must-see. Based on the novel by Larry McMurtry (author of "Lonesome Dove"), the film is funny, sad, poignant and brilliantly real in director James L. Brooks' treatment of the screenplay by McMurtry. It also showcases super performances by some of the best actors and actresses of the '80s — Debra Winger, John Lithgow, Jack Nicholson and Shirley Maclaine.

4. **My Fair Lady** (1964), 5. **West Side Story** (1961), 6. **Gigi** (1958), and 7. **The Sound of Music** (1965). In the era of the big Hollywood musicals, these are at the top of the list. Classics of the American theater, the film versions are exceptionally crafted extravaganzas featuring top directors, casting and design.

8. **On The Waterfront** (1954). One of the first harshly realistic films that were forerunners of masterpieces like "The Godfather" series and "Taxi Driver," this film is a poetic and intense look at the inner lives of America's blue-collar class.

The film stars Eve-Marie Saint and Marlon Brando at his Method Acting best.

9. **Hamlet** (1948). Here's some advice: If you really want to see Shakespeare's classic in its finest treatment, rent this instead of seeing Mel Gibson. This version is actually much more accessible and an all-around better movie. Laurence Olivier will always be associated with the role of Hamlet for his Oscar-winning performance in this film.

10. **Some Like It Hot** (1959). OK, so this film didn't win the Best Picture Oscar, but it *should* have, so I'm including it. This film rates with critics and audiences alike as one of the greatest comedies ever made. Jack Lemmon and Tony Curtis star as two jazz musicians who dress up as women and head to Florida to escape being knocked off by the mob. Writer/Director Billy Wilder ("Sunset Boulevard") creates some of the most hilarious goings-on ever recorded on film. Lemmon is brilliant. The film also features Marilyn Monroe's best film performance.

Can't find them? Then look for great winners like "Annie Hall" (1977), "The Apartment" (1960) and "Midnight Cowboy" (1969).

1991 Oscar Nominees

PICTURE:

Awakenings, Dances With Wolves, Ghost, The Godfather Part III, GoodFellas.

ACTOR:

Kevin Costner, Dances With Wolves; Robert De Niro, Awakenings; Gerard Depardieu, Cyrano de Bergerac; Richard Harris, The Field; Jeremy Irons, Reversal of Fortune.

ACTRESS:

Kathy Bates, Misery; Anjelica Huston, The Grifters; Julia Roberts, Pretty Woman; Meryl Streep, Postcards from the Edge; Joanne Woodward, Mr. & Mrs. Bridge.

SUPPORTING ACTOR:

Bruce Davison, Longtime Companion; Andy Garcia, The Godfather Part III; Graham Greene, Dances With Wolves; Al Pacino, Dick Tracy; Joe Pesci, GoodFellas.

SUPPORTING ACTRESS:

Annette Bening, The Grifters; Lorraine Bracco, GoodFellas; Whoopi Goldberg, Ghost; Diane Ladd, Wild at Heart; Mary McDonnell, Dances With Wolves.

DIRECTOR:

Kevin Costner, Dances With Wolves; Francis Ford Coppola, The Godfather Part III; Martin Scorsese, GoodFellas; Stephen Frears, The Grifters; Barbet Schroeder, Reversal of Fortune.

ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY:

Woody Allen, Alice; Barry Levinson, Avalon; Bruce Joel Rubin, Ghost; Peter Weir, Green Card; Whit Stillman, Metropolitan.

ADAPTED SCREENPLAY:

Steven Zaillian, Awakenings; Michael Blake, Dances With Wolves;



Robert DeNiro earned a Best Actor Nomination for his role in Awakenings. The film also received a bid for Best Picture and nominations in two other categories.

Nicholas Pileggi and Martin Scorsese, GoodFellas; Donald E. Westlake, The Grifters; Nicholas Kazan, Reversal of Fortune.

FOREIGN FILM:

Cyrano de Bergerac, France; Journey of Hope, Switzerland; Ju Dou, People's Republic of China; The Nasty Girl, Germany; Open Doors, Italy.

ART DIRECTION:

Cyrano de Bergerac, Dances With Wolves, Dick Tracy, The Godfather Part III, Hamlet.

CINEMATOGRAPHY:

Avalon, Dances With Wolves, Dick Tracy, The Godfather Part III, Henry and June.

COSTUME DESIGN:

Avalon, Cyrano de Bergerac, Dances With Wolves, Dick Tracy, Hamlet.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE:

American Dream, Berkely in the Sixties, Building Bombs, Forever Activists: Stories From the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, Waldo Salt: A Screenwriter's Journey.

DOCUMENTARY

SHORT SUBJECT:

Burning Down Tomorrow, Chimps: So Like Us, Days of Waiting, Journey Into Life: The World of the Unborn, Rose Kennedy: A Life to Remember.

FILM EDITING:

Dances With Wolves, Ghost, The Godfather Part III, GoodFellas, The Hunt for Red October.

MAKEUP:

Cyrano de Bergerac, Dick Tracy, Edward Scissorhands.

MUSIC ORIGINAL SCORE:

Randy Newman, Avalon; John Barry, Dances With Wolves; Maurice Jarre, Ghost; David Grusin, Havana; John Williams, Home Alone.

MUSIC ORIGINAL SONG:

"Blaze of Glory" from Young Guns II; "I'm Checkin' Out" from Postcards from the Edge; "Promise Me You'll Remember" from The Godfather Part III; "Somewhere in My Memory" from Home Alone; "Sooner or Later (I Always Get My Man)" from Dick Tracy.

ANIMATED SHORT FILM:

Creature Comforts, A Grand Day Out, Grasshoppers (Cavallette).

LIVE ACTION SHORT FILM:

Bronx Cheers, Dear Rosie, The Lunch Date, Senzeni Na? (What Have We Done?), 12:01 p.m.

SOUND:

Dances With Wolves, Days of Thunder, Dick Tracy, The Hunt for Red October, Total Recall.

SOUND EFFECTS EDITING:

Flatliners, The Hunt for Red October, Total Recall.

(Courtesy of the Associated Press)