



THE OSCARS



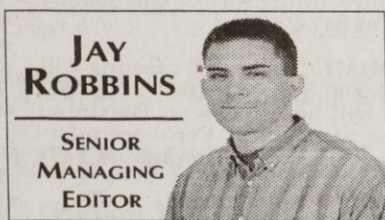
GUMP FICTION

'Pulp Fiction's' daring creativity will scare off Academy voters

"Life is like a box of chocolates ..." - *Forrest Gump*

"Oh sh-t - I just shot Marvin's face off!" - *Pulp Fiction*

The coexistence of both of these films on the list of 1994 Best Picture Oscar nominees proves that creativity and variety in art - especially movies - is indeed infinite.



JAY ROBBINS
SENIOR MANAGING EDITOR

But the films' similarities end with the Oscar categories in which they both are competing.

Tonight, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences will announce its choices for the best work in the movies last year. Besides handing out statuettes, the renowned and revered Academy will also hand down its judgment of the merit in the nominated filmmakers' efforts.

So, what will it be? The beautifully crafted, unabashedly and unembarrassingly sentimental and wildly successful *Forrest Gump*? Or, the shocking, innovative and unquestionably unique *Pulp Fiction*?

My money's invested in Bubba Gump Shrimp. The vast difference between *Forrest Gump* and *Pulp Fiction* not only represents the breadth of human creative effort, but also the chasm between traditional Academy favorites and films that are truly creative. It sets up another opportunity for the Academy to ignore originality and contribution to the artistic medium of film when picking who gets the prize.

Not surprisingly then, *Pulp Fiction* probably won't win tonight.

Movies similar in originality to *Pulp Fiction*, such as *Barton Fink*, *Boyz n' the Hood* and *Do The Right Thing* often fail to even receive Best Picture nominations, so maybe director-screenwriter Quentin Tarantino should be satisfied.

Other films that at least make the first cut by being nominated, like *The Crying Game*, never seem to get the final nod. In some cases, that's all they deserve, but at times it seems like only movies that meet a certain, set standard will get the gold-plated figurine.

At first glance, both films observed that code. *Forrest Gump* and *Pulp Fiction* both stacked up Oscar nominations for acting, direction and writing, as well as

overall picture. Both films moved beyond the realm of entertainment to become the topics of talk show and coffee break discussions.

Both enjoyed success at the box office, and both have received countless accolades already.

All those things being equal, *Forrest Gump* still has the definite edge with the Academy.

Pulp Fiction made the fatal "mistake" of going beyond using good performances and craftsmanship to make a good movie. In the Art section of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, you don't make loud noise or stomp when you walk.

Pulp Fiction finds a loud new way to do almost everything.

The movie is fast-paced when the plot is complicated and other films would slow down for the audience, sedate when many films would live up a simple scene. Drugs, addicts and dealers appear as nothing more or less than they are - substances and people, not "evildoers" and "victims."

Pulp Fiction even has the audacity to shock its audience by killing off a main character and not including a hero waiting to be given a chance to change his ways and save the world.

If a computer animator - note, in the science branch of the Academy - had completed as much pioneering work on a film as the creators of *Pulp Fiction* made in acting, writing and direction, the Academy would heap awards on the project.

Not so in the case of the non-technical awards.

It seems like the members of the Academy didn't even bother to pay much attention to *Pulp Fiction* after the first few scenes.

Although John Travolta and Samuel L. Jackson's characters both appear throughout the movie and are equally important to the plot, Travolta's Vincent is up for Best Actor, while Jackson's Jules is shoved down to the supporting category.

Perhaps the Academy's familiarity with Comeback Kid Travolta kept him from getting lost in the crowd.

A true supporting character, Harvey Keitel in a career-highlight turn as The Wolf, didn't even get nominated, probably because he didn't show up until halfway through the show.

The Academy's track record and present standing on its awards indicate it will pick the chocolate with sweet caramel in the middle. To bad they don't seem to want to start a new cuisine by biting into the chocolate-covered jalapeño.

OSCAR NOMINEES

Best Picture

- Forrest Gump*
- Four Weddings and a Funeral*
- Pulp Fiction*
- Quiz Show*
- The Shawshank Redemption*

Best Actor

- Morgan Freeman - *The Shawshank Redemption*
- Tom Hanks - *Forrest Gump*
- Nigel Hawthorne - *The Madness of King George*
- Paul Newman - *Nobody's Fool*
- John Travolta - *Pulp Fiction*

Best Actress

- Jodie Foster - *Nell*
- Jessica Lange - *Blue Sky*
- Miranda Richardson - *Tom & Viv*
- Winona Ryder - *Little Women*
- Susan Sarandon - *The Client*

Best Supporting Actor

- Samuel L. Jackson - *Pulp Fiction*
- Martin Landau - *Ed Wood*
- Chazz Palminteri - *Bullets Over Broadway*
- Paul Scofield - *Quiz Show*
- Gary Sinise - *Forrest Gump*

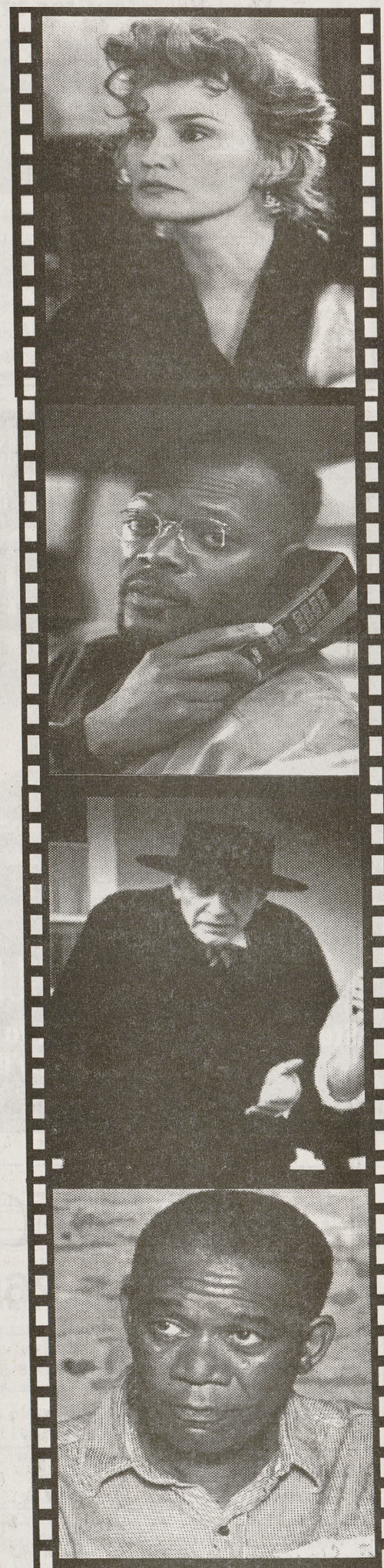
Best Supporting Actress

- Rosemary Harris - *Tom & Viv*
- Helen Mirren - *The Madness of King George*
- Uma Thurman - *Pulp Fiction*
- Jennifer Tilly - *Bullets Over Broadway*
- Dianne Wiest - *Bullets Over Broadway*

Best Director

- Woody Allen - *Bullets Over Broadway*
- Robert Zemeckis - *Forrest Gump*
- Quentin Tarantino - *Pulp Fiction*
- Robert Redford - *Quiz Show*
- Krzysztof Kieslowski - *Red*

Best Picture Nominees from left: *Forrest Gump*, *The Shawshank Redemption* and *Quiz Show*. Supporting acting nominees below: Jessica Lange, Samuel L. Jackson, Martin Landau and Best Actor nominee Morgan Freeman.



Rapper Eazy-E dies of AIDS complications

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Eazy-E, whose pioneering "gangsta" group N.W.A. helped bring the rawness of inner-city rap to suburbia, died Sunday of AIDS complications. He was 31.

The rapper, whose real name was Eric Wright, died at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, where he was hospitalized Feb. 24 with asthma, the hospital said.

"Eazy made an impact on rap music and hip-hop culture that will always be felt," said Sheena Lester, executive editor of the magazine *Rap Pages*.

Despite his gangster image and the harsh lyrics of his music, Wright was known among his friends as a kind and generous man, she said.

In announcing his condition on March 16, Wright said he didn't know how he contracted AIDS but wanted to warn "all my homeboys and their kin." His hospitalization prompted so many well-wishing telephone calls the hospital had to hire more operators.

"I've learned in the last week that this thing is real and it doesn't discriminate. It affects everyone," Wright said in a statement read by his attorney.

Wright's attending physician, Dr. William Young, said he went on life support on March 15, and lost the ability to communicate several days before he died, with his wife, Tomika, and his mother, Kathie Wright, at his side.

A former drug dealer who claimed to have fathered seven children by six different women, Wright brought a brutal vision of Los Angeles-area ghetto life to popular art.

N.W.A., which stands for Niggaz Wit' Attitude, scored a hit in 1988 with "Straight Outta Compton," using a thumping beat to tell crude tales of drive-by shootings, drugs and police harassment in the tough Los Angeles suburb.

The album's foul-mouthed, hardcore themes knocked softer rap off the charts and sold more than 2 million copies despite lack of radio play.

Wright's high-pitched voice anchored the song "F--- Tha Police," which prompted an FBI protest that it advocated violence against law enforcement. The view of police as racists came years before the 1991 Rodney King beating.

N.W.A.'s follow-up record, 1991's "Niggaz4Life," sold nearly 1 million copies in its first weeks of release to become the first hardcore rap album to hit No. 1 on the charts.

N.W.A. eventually broke up amidst artistic and money disputes but proved hugely influential.

Former members Ice Cube and Dr. Dre went on to successful solo careers, and gangsta rap spread into the white, suburban teen-age market to become mainstream.

Wright went on to record the 1993 solo album

"It's On (Dr. Dre) 187um Killa."

His Ruthless Records produced and supervised several other acts, including Above the Law, Thugs in Harmony, Blood of Abraham, MC Ren and Hoes With Attitude.

Critics called gangsta rap violent and sexist for its portrayal of police as targets, women as "bitches" and whores, and its celebration of drugs and gunplay. Some said it promoted criminal violence.

Supporters argued that it merely presented the grim reality of the inner city.

"The way I see it, most kids nowadays like listening to stuff that's real," Wright said last year. "They wanna be hip, they wanna be down. They wanna know all the street slang, everything that's going on. Both black and white."

Like other rappers, Wright occasionally was in trouble with the law. In 1993, a judge found he had fathered a 2-year-old Nebraska girl and ordered him to pay about \$58,000 a year in what a prosecutor said was the largest child support order ever handled by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office.

Wright recently was married to Wood and the couple has a 1-year-old son, Dominick, the youngest of his children. Both Wood and the son tested negative for the AIDS virus, Wright said.

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