



## 'Lord of the Rings' crowned with 11 Oscars

### Acting categories attract first-time winners in 2004

By David Germain  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King" won a record-tying 11 Academy Awards on Sunday, including best picture and director and becoming the first fantasy to win the top Oscar.

In the acting categories, all the winners took home their first Oscars: Charlize Theron won best actress for her transformative performance as serial killer Aileen Wuornos in "Monster," and Sean Penn was named best actor for playing a vengeful ex-hoodlum who falls back on his criminal ways in "Mystic River."

Tim Robbins won the supporting-actor prize for his performance as an emotionally crippled murder suspect in "Mystic River," and Renee Zellweger took supporting actress as a hardy Confederate survivor in "Cold Mountain."

After the first two installments of the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy were shut out of major awards, "Return of the King" swept all 11 categories in which it was nominated. It matched the record 11 wins of "Titanic" and "Ben-Hur" and became only the third movie to sweep every nominated category, following "Gigi" and "The Last Emperor," which both went nine-for-nine.

"I especially just lastly want to thank our wonderful cast who just got their tongues around this rather awkward text and made it come to life with such devotion and passion and heart," said "Lord



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Members of the MSC Film Society gathered for the group's first Oscar Gala held on the second floor of the Memorial Student Center Sunday night. The society provided snacks and refreshments for the public and its members.

### MSC Film Society hosts gala for students

By Sonia Moghe  
THE BATTALION

Charlize Theron, Sean Penn and "The Lord of the Rings: Return of the King" were the big winners at last night's Academy Awards.

The 76th annual Academy Awards were presented by Billy Crystal, who has hosted the program for eight years.

"(Crystal) did an OK job," said Vincent Prendergast, a senior marketing major and a member of the Memorial Student Center Film Society. "I preferred Steve Martin (as a host)."

Prendergast said this was the first time he had seen the Oscars all the way through.

He was in attendance at the Oscar Gala, sponsored by the MSC Film Society, which provided members with the opportunity to watch the awards on a big screen with snacks and beverages. During commercial breaks, the students had opportunities to answer trivia questions and win prizes, as well as present impersonations of memorable acceptance speeches.

One flaw Jodi Whitaker, director of administration for the MSC Film society, sees with the Oscars is that many honorees' acceptance speeches are cut short, while Hallie Gardiner, a senior political science major, doesn't like the fact that award winners voice their political opinions during acceptance speeches.

"I get extremely annoyed when people make political statements at award shows," Gardiner said. "If I want that I can just go to class — I'm watching for the entertainment." Students such as Prendergast disagree, saying celebrities have the right to say what they want to say.

Jessica Sahm, a senior at A&M Consolidated High School, said seeing what stars are wearing on the red carpet beforehand is an integral part of the Oscars.

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## NASA Mars rover team member lectures at A&M

By Amelia Williamson  
THE BATTALION

Audience members who attended the NASA Mars Rover Discoveries presentation given by Mark Lemmon Saturday afternoon may have been sitting in their seats in Rudder Auditorium with 3D-glasses on, but felt as if they were actually looking around on the Mars' surface.

Every martian morning, Lemmon goes to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, Calif., along with other NASA Mars Rover Team members, to explore Mars' surface using the two rovers, Spirit and Opportunity. He works on Mars time because the rovers are solar-powered and can only be driven around during the martian day.

"In the building (where the NASA Mars Rover Team members work), we cut out all sunlight and all signs of Earth, and in that building, we're on Mars," Lemmon said. "We see the environment around us through the eyes of the rovers, and we sense the environment around us through the instruments on the rovers."

The main goal of the Mars Rover Mission is to search for signs of past or present water on Mars, Lemmon said.

The rovers were launched from Earth in summer 2003 and made their way to Mars on a seven-month journey through space that ended in January 2004.

"After the first bounce, we still had a signal, (and the Spirit rover) was alive on Mars," Lemmon said. "Then the signal went away, and all of us knew full well that it didn't just have to survive one bounce, it had to survive every single bounce."

The lander bounced about 25 times and finally rolled to a stop about nine minutes after impact, and the signal was restored, Lemmon said.

Each rover carefully drove off of the lander and rolled onto the martian surface.

"Once we have gotten off the lander and once we start moving

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## Week celebrates cultural differences

By Jason Hanselka  
THE BATTALION

Julio Jana, a senior agricultural economics major from Brazil, said by age 17 that most high school graduates in Brazil know what they want to do with the rest of their lives.

"They usually go to law school or medical school," he said. "There isn't really any undergraduate study."

Jana, president of the International Student Association, said after coming to Texas as a high school exchange student, that his host family convinced him to return and go to college in the United States.

"I visited many colleges in Texas," he said. "When I came to Texas A&M, I fell in love with it."

Jana and many other international Aggies will come together to display their different cultures this week during International Week 2004.

Suzanne Droleskey, executive director of international programs for students, said International Week is a celebration of culture.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about the more than 3,600 students attending Texas A&M from 120 countries," she said. "It's a nice way to sample the world without leaving Texas."

Droleskey said the theme of International Week 2004 is "Beyond Borders."

"When most people think of borders,

they think of lines that separate nations," Droleskey said. "We hope that people will go beyond the literal meaning of borders that exist between people whether cultural, religious or social."

Jana said the main focus of International Week is to promote international awareness.

"We are fortunate to be a university that is able to reach out to other people and show off the differences in cultures," he said.

International Week 2004 will include a cultural display Monday and Tuesday in the Memorial Student Center, an international buffet Wednesday on the second floor of the MSC and a talent show and dress parade Friday at Rudder Auditorium.

Taka Kanaya, a geology graduate student from Japan and director of the talent show, said the purpose of International Week is to educate people.

"I believe people don't know a lot about foreign people," he said. "Unless we show people here what we have in common it is hard to communicate well."

Kanaya said the transition from Japan to College Station was exciting.

"Lifestyle in Japan and the U.S. is not much different except for the car lifestyle," he said. "I love being here. The people are nice and very friendly."

See Cultural on page 2

### International Week 2004 "Beyond Borders"

- | Monday                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • Opening ceremony<br>10:15 a.m. to 11 a.m.<br>MSC Flagroom                                             |
| • Cultural displays by international student organizations<br>10 a.m. to 6 p.m.<br>MSC                  |
| Tuesday                                                                                                 |
| • Cultural displays by international student organizations<br>10 a.m. to 4 p.m.<br>MSC                  |
| Wednesday                                                                                               |
| • International buffet<br>7 p.m. to 9 p.m.<br>MSC                                                       |
| Friday                                                                                                  |
| • International talent show and traditional dress parade<br>7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.<br>Rudder Auditorium |

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SOURCE : INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION

## 'Monologues' meets with little controversy

By Carrie Pierce  
THE BATTALION

Although met with controversy in its first two years, this year's running of "The Vagina Monologues" went smoothly, without taking out any of the shock value, Texas A&M officials said.

On Feb. 26-28, a cast of 24 A&M students performed Eve Ensler's "The Vagina Monologues" at Rudder Theater.

Ensler first produced the monologues in 1998 on Broadway as a one-woman show, said Rose Robards-Forbes, a junior journalism major and play director.

"On Broadway, it has a rotating cast of celebrities," Robards-Forbes said. "I saw this touring campaign in 2001 and wanted to bring it here."

The performance was put on by TAMU V-Day, a student organization that raises money and awareness to stop violence against women, said Brenda Bethman, director of the Women's Center.

Bethman said that in 2002 and 2003, several people did not want the show to be performed at A&M's campus because of

its racy content.

"This year we have enjoyed more support than we once did," Robards-Forbes said. "The Memorial Student Center and Rudder have helped us out a lot, and we have more student recognition."

Robards-Forbes said the first few years were met with so much argument because of the shocking context of the monologues, like the full range of the female experience including menstruation, birth, good experiences with men, bad experiences with men, rape, domestic violence, sexuality and the everyday headaches of being a woman.

"It is about a women's sexual adulthood," Robards-Forbes said.

V-Day enjoys the freedom to perform the play free of royalties, Robards-Forbes said.

"The money we raise goes to the TAMU Women's Center and the programs in violence education," Robards-Forbes said.

Senior psychology major Jennifer

Cowart performed in "The Vagina Monologues" for her second year in a row. She said after seeing it and loving it during its first year running, that she went and tried out for the 2003 performance.

"It is important to get the message out that rape happens," Cowart said. "It happens here."

The show was met with laughs and gasps from the audience, with monologues ranging from "My Angry Vagina" to "The Smell List" to "The Woman Who Loved to Make Vaginas Happy."

Sophomore business major Derek Harris said it was his second year to attend the performance.

"I'm kind of a feminist," Harris said. "This is very empowering to women. It is something I have a lot of respect for."

Harris said he does not think that a group of men could put on a similar set of monologues about their sexuality and be as sophisticated.

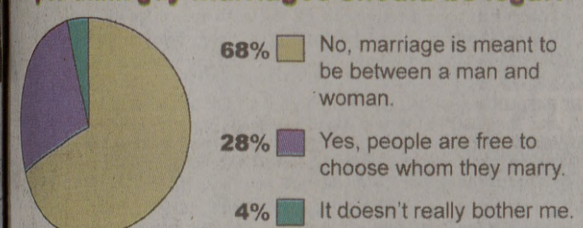
Sophomore meteorology major Andy

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### THE BATTALION Online Weekly Poll

#### Last Week's Results:

Do you think gay marriages should be legal?



#### This Week's Poll:

Should the administration make decisions affecting students without consulting them, such as closing residence halls?

Take this poll at: www.thebatt.com

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