
From: Peggy Siegal [REDACTED]
Sent: 3/7/2013 2:03:11 PM
To: jeevacation@gmail.com
Subject: Fw: Oscar Diary

Importance: High

I am struggling thru this. It is so late already. I am so stressed out. Will finishe is in a day or two.. I can not write about the Katzenberg party. Maybe can just mention is happened in my hotel. But the reason to go was to support Katzenberg and network. More to come. Peg

----- Original Message -----

From: Peggy Siegal
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 08:51 AM
To: Peggy Siegal
Subject: Oscar Diary

It's Thursday morning on Wilshire Boulevard and the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences has just opened it's doors for ticket pick-up for the 85th Oscar telecast.

Forty voting members, the distinguished director Norman Jewison and I are on a long single file line that snakes thru the lobby patiently waiting to go upstairs to pick up our tickets. My seats were awarded via a lottery system. We clutch our photo I.D.

Suddenly, a messenger slips in wearing a smart khaki windbreaker and cuts through the line. He announces to the uniformed guard in a stage whisper, "Dreamworks", and as if Steven Spielberg himself had just delivered the Gettysburg address, is ushered upstairs. That is the final act of social justice of the "Lincoln" campaign.

I am sleep deprived and jet lagged having just spent six hours on a flight sitting next Paula Wagner who is Tom Cruise's ex-agent turned Broadway producer for Jessica Chastain's "The Heiress". We discuss Jessica's not so great chances to beat Jennifer Lawrence for Best Actress. I mention Harvey Weinstein's concern about Emmanuel Riva's last minute surge. The French phenomena doesn't speak English, has never been to L.A. and it's like voting for a ghost, even on her 86th birthday.

This is the year I got phone calls in September from top studio executives announcing each are winning the Oscar. Their euphoric giddiness is due to the quality of the films resulting in the priciest oscar campaigns on record and astounding audience support at the theaters.

Seven of the nine best picture nominees have taken in well over \$100 million at the domestic box office to date, but it's the worldwide numbers in the millions that are staggering.

Twentieth Century Fox's "Life of Pi" caused a tsunami at \$595, Universal's "Les Miserables" scored \$412, the Weinstein Cos.' "Django Unchained" whipped up \$395, DreamWorks' "Lincoln" delivered at \$254, Warner's "Argo" captured \$219, Weinstein's "Silver Lining Playbook" danced to \$187 and Sony's "Zero Dark Thirty" killed at \$107 million.

In comparison, Sony Classics' "Amour" received \$19 and Fox Searchlights' "Beast of the Southern Wild" worked up \$19 million.

Hugh audiences having actually seen the films this year have an ear for the nuances of the Oscar race and everyone including Ben Affleck follow the bloggers religiously.

So by Thursday morning on line at the Academy the informed buzz was as follows: "Argo" takes best picture because is was most entertaining. The director snub to Ben Affleck was a Godsend as George Clooney's advice came from far away Berlin where he was in pre-production on "The Monuments Men". Warner's president Sue Kroll kept the campaign clean and calm on the home front.

"Lincoln's" victory is Daniel Day Lewis from day one of shooting, no pun intended. The suggestion that Obama is our answer to Lincoln was interesting. Voters knew Obama secretly hosted three screenings in the White House, but they weren't invited. The Hollywood Foreign press were the biggest winners with Bill Clinton's surprise appearance on their broadcast. DreamWorks' ran an impeccable patriotic campaign that the media ate up.

The best director race had the most drama. Hollywood dreaded Spielberg loosing to Ang Lee. (Eventually everyone was thrilled Steven was anointed president of the Cannes Jury for 2013 the day after the awards show.)

The voters knew beloved Ang Lee's three year boat ride was the technical miracle. Fox's \$595 million international box office blew in the win.

Harvey Weinstein having three horses running is always the most talked about. His loquacious Quentin Tarentino was a lock for screenplay. Best supporting actor was a total toss up with a sentimental edge

to Robert DeNiro. We even applauded Bob putting his handprints in cement in front of Grauman's Chinese Theater.

The conversations continued about how our government put the cabasch on "Zero Dark Thirty" with their arrogant denial of enhanced interrogation. Even MPAA President Chris Dodd could not help Mark Boal, Katherine Bigalow and Amy Pascal.

Additional chatter was the renewed last minute love for "Les Miserables". Clearly the most polarizing film in the race, this 27 year old theatrical musical seen by 60 million fans is now the talk of the Oscar weekend.

Hugh Jackman, Anne Hathaway, Russell Crowe, Amanda Segfried, Eddie Redmayne, Sasha Baron Cohen, Helena Bonham Carter and Samanthe Barks are making an historic one time live performance as part of Sunday's television broadcast. Producers Craig Zadan and Neil Meron's will attempt to razzel dazzel us with an homage to movie musicals for three plus hours at the Dolby theater.

Barbra Streisand, Adele and Shirley Basse's appearances also create high anxiety and a blood bath for tickets...hence the hysteria created by DreamWorks' messenger cutting the line.

After checking into the iconic Beverly Hills Hotel, my home away from home for 30 years of Oscar weekends and meticulously laying out all the ensembles sent from Valentino and Ralph Rucci, I hit the party circuit overdressed for life.

Daisy... I can do this...fairly easily now...but I have a lunch at 12:30pm and important meetings. I am so distraught about all this pressure. I am calling you now. Peggy