

Star-studded ceremony rolls out red carpet

By Anna Axelson
Web Editor

It's like prom night for celebrities: everyone's hoping to get lucky.

Decked out in your finest, you arrive on Hollywood Boulevard at the Hollywood and Highland Center and roll to a stop in a high class limousine, flash bulbs popping and the crowd screaming. After presenting your invitation — something so exclusive that only a fraction of the Academy even receives one— you shuffle through so much security that even Tom Hanks couldn't get past without a valid photo ID (true story, look it up).

Next comes the eternal red carpet, a Sid Grauman contribution to Hollywood's history, in which you smile and wave for hundreds, thousands, millions of fans and cameras as well as being taken under deep scrutiny for your right or wrong choice of attire. Interviews and posing ensue as you slowly make your way past the press and a set of bleachers holding somewhere around 500 lucky lottery winners (who after watching you strut your stuff, aren't quite lucky enough to be invited inside — however they will head across the street to the El Capitan Theatre to watch the show on the big screen).

After passing through a larger than life arch, the grand staircase laden with royal red carpet lays before you with matching red curtains to either side doing their best to conceal a deep dark secret and maintain the elegance of such a prestigious event (psst, spoiler alert: you are in a mall; you'll be lucky not to find a Pottery Barn behind one of those curtains). The stairs are wider and shorter in height than your average set, in accommodation of high heels and trailing dresses as you make your way toward an exclusive set of double doors into the five story, \$94 million Kodak Theatre.

Many take this opportunity to visit the George Eastman VIP Room, and you might as well get in on the action. With its multifaceted glass, inside and out you are offered both exclusivity and a voyeuristic view of the elite as they sip cocktails, rub elbows with their peers and await the festivities while an Oscar sits on display just feet away.

Before long, it's to your seat you go; nominees in the front row and lining the aisles, the Academy in the upper levels and everyone else filling in the blanks. Months of planning goes into this exact moment: rehearsals and contingency plans for every possible variable.

The amazing Billy Crystal opens the show (undoubtedly with a style that can't be matched) and you are captivated as the show gets underway.

Feeling parched? Don't fret, there is a fully stocked open bar on every level of the theater and a couple hundred unpaid seat fillers — under orders to only speak when spoken to— who stand ready and waiting to keep your seat warm while you duck out during commercial breaks for a nip. Definition: Small drink of something usually alcoholic.

The breakdown: the nominees, the performances, the honoring of those lost and then finally, the winners.

If you're lucky, you walk away a winner, in possession of the man himself: Oscar. Standing at 13 and a half inches and weighing eight and a half pounds, Oscar is cast from a pewter-like alloy, plated with 24-karat gold and stands upon a film reel with five spokes representing the five original branches of the Academy: actors, directors, producers, technicians and writers.

After four hours of ceremony, speeches, laughter, tears and paparazzi: it's all about the after parties.

The planning for the notorious Governor's Ball begins once the cleanup for the last one ends. A theme is chosen and meticulously planned, down to every last detail and whatever those details may encompass. Not only will you be complexly swept into whatever world an imaginative designer chooses, but Wolfgang Puck himself is the brainchild behind your exclusive, delectable, Oscar themed meal.

All in all, it's not a bad night.

What began May 16, 1929 at the Roosevelt Hotel with only 270 in attendance has now evolved into an event that now has over 3000 attendees as well as being telecast around the world to forty million viewers. Sunday night, the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for the eighty fourth time will induct a new group of stars into its exclusive club, granting them immortality in Hollywood history.

You never know, maybe even you can join that club someday.

Watch this Sunday night on ABC at 7 p.m. for the entire star studded action and reactions. You can also visit www.TheClackamasPrint.com for the complete list of nominees (with a Sunday night update of the winners) and visit www.Oscar.com for more on anything Oscar.



Illustration by Anna Axelson The Clackamas Print

The Kodak Theatre has been the permanent home of the Academy Awards Ceremonies since its opening in November 2001.

PIFF: Portland screens international films

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"There used to be a theater company called Seven Gables Cinema," said Jessica Lyness, PR and marketing manager for the NW Film Center. "For the first three years, the [NW] Film Center and Seven Gables worked on [the Portland International Film Festival] together; after that Seven Gables moved on to something else."

After parting ways with Seven Gables Cinema, the NW Film Center took control of the PIFF completely and has been successful for over 30 years. Apart from the PIFF, the NW Film Center offers film classes to the public and holds a handful of other film festivals.

"In March, we're showing a Nicolas Winding Refn series, he's the director of 'Drive,' the recent film that came out with Ryan Gosling," said Lyness.

This year the festival is 17 days in total, featuring 93 feature-length films, with six days featuring 46 short films, entitled "Short Cuts." Film screenings will be held at various venues all over the Portland area, including Regal Pioneer Place, Cinema 21, CineMagic, Newmark Theatre, Whitsell Auditorium, World Trade Center Theater, Lake Twin Cinema and Regal Lloyd Mall 8.

Viewers of the various films are asked to rate the films after each showing.

The films being shown in the festival are from

all over the world, many of which will only have one showing, though some films will have encore screenings.

The NW Film Center contains its own beautiful, single-screen theater within the Portland Art Museum, which is known as the Whitsell Auditorium. The auditorium is mainly used for festival screenings.

According to Joe Vonappen, a NW Film Center employee, the average attendance for the films at the Whitsell Auditorium has been approximately 250 out of 375 seats.

The NW Film Center is staffed by regular employees and volunteers during festival screenings. "It's very easy to get involved. You just go online to the website and fill out the form there, which takes about two minutes," said Don Bevington, a NW Film Center volunteer.

Bevington explained that volunteers are able to choose the films in which they volunteer, which is also handled through the Center's website. He and his wife have been volunteering together throughout the festival.

The final weekend of the festival will have the most screenings throughout the day. The last day of the PIFF will be Saturday, Feb. 25. Showtimes and special events for the festival, along with ticket pricing may be found on www.nwfilm.org.



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Ilana Sol, projectionist for the NW Film Center, threads the film "Footnote" on Saturday, Feb. 18 at Whitsell.