

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

The Artist and Hugo Win Big at Oscars

Spencer wins for role in 'The Help'

(AP) — Nostalgia ruled at the Oscars, with the classic film homages "The Artist" and "Hugo" dominating with five awards each, and Meryl Streep winning her first best-actress prize in nearly three decades.

"The Artist," a black-and-white love letter to silent film, won best picture, best director for France's Michel Hazanavicius and best actor for Jean Dujardin as an actor who finds his career in danger with the arrival of the talkies. It also earned prizes for costume design and original score.

"Hugo," Martin Scorsese's 3-D mixture of family adventure and plea for film preservation, collected its prizes in the technical



Octavia Spencer (left) with the Oscar for best actress in a supporting role for "The Help," and Meryl Streep with the Oscar for best actress in a leading role for "The Iron Lady" pose at the Governors Ball following the 84th Academy Awards on Sunday in Los Angeles. (AP photo)

categories: cinematography, art direction, sound mixing, sound editing and visual effects.

Streep, the most celebrated actress of our generation, found herself in the unusual position of playing the sentimental, underdog favorite. Many had chosen Viola Davis as the likely favorite to win best actress for her formidable portrayal of a maid in the 1960s South in "The Help." But Streep, who's been nominated more than any other actor in Oscar history — 17 times — hadn't won since 1982's "Sophie's Choice."

The glittering crowd in the theater erupted in gasps and cheers when Streep's name was called for her uncanny performance as former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in "The Iron Lady." Streep was quick to thank her longtime makeup artist J. Roy Helland, who was also a winner Sunday night, for transforming her

for the past 37 years.

Christopher Plummer earned his long overdue Oscar for supporting actor for the romantic comedy "Beginners," in which he plays a 75-year-old man who finally comes out as gay. At 82, he's the oldest actor to ever win.

His supporting-actress counterpart Octavia Spencer, also has been a repeated winner throughout awards season. She plays a sassy, subversive maid who dares speak her mind in "The Help," and drew a spontaneous standing ovation as she walked on stage for her tearful acceptance.

Afterward, she told reporters: "I was just trying not to fall down 'cause I had an incident where I fell at an awards show."

"This is one of those evenings in my life that I'll never forget," she added.

Exploring Art and History

In celebration of Women's History Month, Portland Community College welcomes poet Nikky Finney to its Cascade Campus in north Portland.

The 2011 National Book Award winner for poetry will give a reading and sign books at 1 p.m., Thursday, March 8, in the Moriarty Auditorium, 705 N. Killingsworth St. Sponsored by the Cascade Women's Resource Center, the event is free and open to the public.

Finney was born in South Carolina and was a child of activist parents.

She came of age during the civil rights and black arts movements.

At Talladega College, nurtured by Hale Woodruff's Amistad murals, she began to understand the powerful synergy between art and history. She has authored four

books of poetry: "Head Off & Split" (2011); "The World Is Round" (2003); "Rice" (1995); and "On Wings Made of Gauze" (1985).



Nikky Finney

Finney, a professor of English and creative writing at the University of Kentucky, has also authored "Heartwood" (1997), edited "The Ringing Ear: Black Poets Lean South" (2007), and co-founded the Affrilachian Poets.

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