

Oscar Predictions 2017: Your Guide to the Academy Awards

By Kam Williams
For The Skanner News

Will “La La Land” make history by eclipsing the record of 11 Academy Awards? Damien Chazelle’s magical homage to the Hollywood musical definitely has a decent shot. After all, it’s a lock to win in 5 categories: Best Picture, Director, Score, Original Song, and Sound Mixing. And it’s the heavy favorite in another 5: Lead Actress, Cinematography, Costume Design, Production Design and Film Editing.

That leaves Sound Editing, Original

“Denzel Washington might upset Affleck, if the Academy decides to overcompensate for its complete snubbing of minority actors the last two years

a record-breaking dozen times.

The Envelope Please

Who Will Win, Who Deserves to Win, Who Was Snubbed

Best Picture

Will Win: “La La Land”
Deserves to Win: “La La Land”
Overlooked: “Deadpool”

Best Director

Will Win: Damien Chazelle (“La La Land”)



‘Moonlight’

Screenplay and Lead Actor. La La’s best shot at tying the record will be by beating the World War II epic, Hacksaw Ridge in Sound Editing.

If successful there, it has two paths to 12. Unfortunately, Ryan Gosling is unlikely to win for Lead Actor because he’s up against some very stiff competition in Casey Affleck and Denzel Washington. That leaves Original Screenplay where “Manchester by the Sea” has the advantage by virtue of its being a super-realistic drama as opposed to an escapist musical fantasy.

Nevertheless, I’m optimistic that the Academy voters will pull the lever for the very-deserving “La La Land”

Deserves to Win: Damien Chazelle
Overlooked: Denzel Washington (“Fences”) and Theodore Melfi (“Hidden Figures”)

Comment: Wunderkind Damien Chazelle, at 32, becomes the youngest Best Director winner in history.

Best Actor

Will Win: Casey Affleck (“Manchester by the Sea”)

Deserves to Win: Casey Affleck
Overlooked: Ryan Reynolds (Deadpool)

Comment: Denzel Washington might upset Affleck, if the Academy decides to overcompensate for its complete

snubbing of minority actors the last two years. And Ryan Gosling has a puncher’s chance of prevailing if “La La Land”’s sweep turns out to be a record-breaking tsunami.

Best Actress

Will Win: Emma Stone (La La Land)
Deserves to Win: Emma Stone
Overlooked: Amy Adams (Arrival) and Annette Bening (“20th Century Women”)

Comment: Stone is a shoo-in for three reasons. First, Viola Davis opted to compete in the Supporting Actress category. Second, it was an off-year for perennial-nominee Meryl Streep

whose performance in Florence Foster Jenkins was undeserving. Third, Amy Adams wasn’t even nominated. Fourth, Emma’s the only Lead Actress nominee whose movie was also nominated for Best Picture.

Best Supporting Actor

Will Win: Mahershala Ali (“Moonlight”)

Deserves to Win: Mahershala Ali
Overlooked: Andre Holland (Moonlight) and John (La La Land)

Comment: 2016 was a breakout year for Mahershala Ali who was only on screen in Moonlight for about 20 min

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