

Long kryptonite to superheroes, the Oscars begin to relent

By JAKE COYLE
AP Film Writer

Aside from the posthumous Oscar for Heath Ledger (“The Dark Knight”) and best animated film for “The Incredibles,” no superhero film has ever penetrated the top categories of the Academy Awards.

Though regular honorees for their bombastic visual effects or thunderous, wall-to-wall sound, comic-book movies have been denied the upper reaches of achievement. Marvel Studios — one of the most dominant pop-culture juggernauts the movies have ever seen — hasn’t won a single Academy Award.

But there are signs that the deep freeze for superheroes is thawing. “Logan,” James Mangold’s acclaimed final chapter of Wolverine, the long-clawed “X-Men” character played by Hugh Jackman, is nominated for best adapted screenplay at Sunday’s awards. The nod, which Mangold shares with co-writers Michael Green and Scott Frank, is the first screenplay nomination for a superhero film.

That could be read as a sign that the film academy is finally starting to give in to the era’s most bankable box-office force. Last year, “Deadpool” seemingly came just shy of scaling the Dolby Theatre walls after a quixotic awards campaign netted the hyper-violent and hyper-verbal R-rated film two Golden Globe nominations. This year, Patty Jenkins’ female empowerment blockbuster “Wonder Woman” was considered a definite contender but came up short despite a nod from the Producers Guild.

A tide may be turning just as the sensation and acclaim of Ryan Coogler’s “Black Panther” has positioned the Marvel release to be a potential heavyweight at next year’s Academy Awards. A decade after Christopher Nolan’s “The Dark Knight” was denied a best picture nomination — an omission that sparked the academy’s expansion of the best picture field from five films to up to ten —



This image released by Twentieth Century Fox shows Hugh Jackman from the film, “Logan.” Director James Mangold, along with Michael Green and Scott Frank, is nominated for an Oscar for adapted screenplay for the film.

“Black Panther” is poised to score the first best-picture nod for a superhero film, not to mention potentially a host of other categories including directing, costume design, visual effects, production design, score and, maybe, Michael B. Jordan as supporting actor.

Any shift for the academy, though, may be less about changing tastes than the rising ambitions of filmmakers — like Coogler, Jenkins, James Gunn (“Guardians of the Galaxy”) and Mangold — who are expanding the possibilities of the genre.

“It’s people opening up to consider something that might have been seen wholly as a money-making effort to see that in some cases these films might constitute more ambition than previously imagined,” Mangold said of his nomination in an

interview. “It’s a stepping stone and it won’t be the last.”

Mangold is a veteran of star-led but naturalistic character-driven dramas (“Walk the Line,” “Cop Land”). In “Logan” he endeavored to, like a revolution launched from within, invert most of the genre’s conventions. Its title bares no sequel-signifying numbers, just a simple, unadorned name. “Logan” connects to no future installment but, after a 17-year run for Jackman’s character, has the finality of death. Where other superhero films are all heroism and invincibility, the violent, R-rated “Logan” — styled after a Western — is filled with pain and vulnerability. It’s a human-sized movie in a supersized genre.

“I wanted to make my own kind of

commentary about this kind of film, the comic-book film if you will, where there’s huge amounts of casualties but they are largely unfelt by the audience,” said Mangold. “Cities fall. Planets explode. Extras fall and topple. But the actual ending of lives is not felt. In a quest for scale, lives become cheap.”

Mangold speaks with both optimism for super-hero movies that can take the mold of any genre (“There’s infinite possibility”) and derision for the assembly-line product that Hollywood has often favored that give a filmmaker little room for personal expression.

“At the point you’re locked into all the design, casting and story choices that have already been made, you’re hamstrung,” said Mangold. “It’s why films like ‘Guardians’ or ‘Black Panther’ or ‘Wonder Woman’ where they break free of some of the narrative-lock and style-lock that was coming from the previous films that I think you get the biggest sense of freshness.”

“Logan” grossed \$616.8 million, vindicating the risk that Mangold and 20th Century Fox took in deviating from formula. It was relatively cheap by superhero movie standards with a production budget of \$97 million. The film opened all the way back on March 3, after premiering at the Berlin Film Festival, with little expectation of being remembered in Oscar season.

Disney’s “Black Panther” may do even better at next year’s Oscars for many of the same reasons. It largely stands apart from Marvel’s cinematic universe. It eschews many of the typical beats of a superhero film. And it’s identifiably the work of a filmmaker.

“If it gets in, it has more to do with Ryan Coogler than it does with any of the phenomenon around it,” said Glen Weldon, author of “The Caped Crusade: Batman and the Rise of Nerd Culture.” “This film feels like the third film that a guy named Ryan Coogler would make. Though it’s part of this arc, it does feel very personal. It does feel like it’s about something.”

Big Read highlights Shakespeare

ENTERPRISE — Fishtrap’s signature winter event, the Big Read, gives a nod to William Shakespeare.

“Love, Death, and Dirty Jokes: Shakespeare and the Common Man” with Morgan Green is Thursday, March 15 at 7 p.m. The free event will be held at Fishtrap, 400 E. Grant St., Enterprise.

While many view performances of Shakespeare as highbrow theater, during his time the audience was anything but fancy. Theater-goers demanded to be entertained, and the actors performed their best in fear of being pummeled with rotten vegetables.

The Big Read’s 2018 book is “Station Eleven” by Emily St. John Mandel. It follows a traveling Shakespeare troupe as they perform for villages left in a dystopian world. It was named one of the best books of 2015 by more than a dozen publications. The novel is set 20 years after a devastating flu pandemic destroys civilization, and follows a traveling troupe of actors and musicians dedicated to keeping the remnants of art and humanity alive through their performances.

For more information, contact Mike Midlo, Fishtrap program manager, at 541-426-3623, mike@fishtrap.org or visit www.fishtrap.org.

Hey mon, reggae festival offers discounts

SANDY — Big tings are planned, including early bird passes for the 14th annual Northwest World Reggae Festival.

Set for July 27-29 in the foothills of Mt. Hood (about 14 miles east of Sandy), the family-friendly outdoor event offers music, world crafts, food, camping and vendors. Among the featured acts already confirmed are Akae Beke, Raging Fyah, Clinton Fearon and Marla Brown. The special price is \$120, which includes camping. Youths under 14 are free; those 15-17 are half price. Day passes, no-camping and RV rates also are available.

A volunteer form is available at www.nwrf.com.

Peterson’s unveils spring art, chocolate

BAKER CITY — A favorite selection of colorful, bright artwork by local and regional artists, including new pieces by Tom Diamond, Shirlee Severs and Jeannie Schroder are featured during the month of March at Peterson’s Gallery.

In addition, Peterson’s Gallery and Chocolatier is unveiling its new chocolate items from the spring menu. The public is invited to stop in and browse at 1925 Main St., Baker City. For more information, contact 541-523-1022 or mail@petersonsgallery.net.

Festivals

A Wee Bit O’Ireland

•March 16-18
•Heppner
No cover. The celebration includes lots of food, fun events, great entertainment and a chance to win a pot o’ gold.

Red to Red XC

•Saturday, March 17; noon-3 p.m.
•Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main St., Echo

No cover. Downtown vendors, food and fun for the whole family. Race information to be announced.

Prestige Wrestling 4:

•Friday, March 30; 7-11 p.m.
www.ticketfly.com
•Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center, 1705 Airport Road, Hermiston

\$20-\$50. Features the best independent talent in the Pacific Northwest as well as former WWE superstars. Matches include Filthy Tom Lawlor vs MV Young, Mike Santiago vs Julian Whyt, Sonico vs Kaine Jaiden, Guerrero De Neón vs León Negro and more matches to be announced.

Art, Museums & Authors

“A Perception of Failure”

•Monday-Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

•Betty Feves Memorial Gallery, Blue Mountain Community College, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton

Free. The first solo exhibit of artist Claire B. Jones encourage viewers to examine their ideas and experiences of failure. Gallery also open by appointment by calling 541-278-5952. Runs through March 22.

“Eastern Oregon Regional High School Art Exhibition”

•Monday-Fridays; 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

•Nightingale Gallery, Loso Hall

•Eastern Oregon University, La Grande
www.eou.edu/art
Free. Exhibit features the artwork of high school students from across the region. Runs through March 21.

Louise Bourgeois

•Friday, March 16; opening reception details TBA

•Tuesday-Fridays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturdays, noon-4 p.m.

•Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St.
www.pendletonarts.org

Free. Exhibit features works of Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010), a French-American artist whose work explores themes of childhood, domesticity, family, gender roles and sexuality. Selections are from the collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer and his family foundation. Runs March 16 through May 5.

2018 ArtWORKz Junior Art Show & Competition

•Jan. 27-March 17; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

•Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute, near Wildhorse Resort & Casino.
www.tamastslikt.org

\$10/adults, \$9/senior citizens, \$6/youths. View exhibit featuring youth artists from the region. Runs through March 17.

Spring at Peterson’s

•Tuesday-Sundays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

•Peterson’s Gallery and Chocolatier, 1925 Main St., Baker City

WHAT TO DO



West My Friend hails from Victoria, British Columbia, and presents acoustic music described as Canadian folk and indie-pop. The group will perform March 7 at Pendleton Center for the Arts.

Canadian band offers folk friendly show at arts center

East Oregonian

A Canadian band that’s been described as everything from indie-roots to chamber-folk is expected to sell-out at Pendleton Center for the Arts

West My Friend will perform Wednesday, March 7 at 7 p.m. The doors open at 6:30 p.m. at 214 N. Main St., Pendleton. Tickets are \$12 each. This show marks the group’s fourth appearance in Pendleton.

“West My Friend fits in so perfectly with the lineup of top-flight folk musicians we have here at the Arts Center,” said executive director Roberta Lavadour. “Eden and the band have always exceeded our expectations, and it just makes for a great night out.”

Hailing from Victoria, British Columbia, West My Friend presents sonically adventurous acoustic music inspired by artists such as Owen Pallett, Joanna Newsom, Bright Eyes, The Decemberists and the Punch Brothers. The arrangements of vocals, bass, guitar, mandolin and accordion draw from jazz, classical, folk, and pop influences. The group is considered a key part of a new generation of grassroots folk music, touring regularly through Canada, the United States, Europe and beyond.

Members include Eden Oliver on guitar, Alex Rempel on mandolin, Jeff Poynter on accordion and Nick Mintenko on double bass. Each bandmate also is featured on vocals, with Oliver often taking the lead.

The wealth of musical experience and classical training in the group creates an interesting backdrop for their songwriting, allowing for levels of detail, intricacy, and counterpoint balanced with moments of simplicity. Their diversity in taste and influences and a keen interest in both traditional sounds and innovation leads to constant exploration of new sounds that places them as a distinctive voice in the landscape between Canadian folk and indie-pop.

Pendleton Center for the Arts’ Pearson Auditorium offers some of the best acoustic space in the region. Also, with seating for just 100 guests, the venue presents top-flight bands with the intimacy of a house concert.

In addition, guests have an opportunity to view contemporary art exhibits and the fine craft gallery during intermission. The event is made possible through the support of Collins & Collins, LLP.

To reserve a ticket, call 541-278-9201. For more about the band, visit www.westmyfriend.com.

er City
www.petersonsgallery.net

Free. Features the work of regional artists, including new pieces by Tom Diamond, Shirlee Severs and Jeannie Schroder, as well as new chocolate items from the Spring 2018 menu. Runs through March 31.

Music

Young Artists Competition
•Saturday, March 11; TBA
•Hermiston High School

•Saturday, March 3; registration deadline
www.inlandnorthwestmusicians.com

Free. Inland Northwest Musicians seeks instrumen-

tal and voice participants up to age 25 for annual competition. (amassey@wteclink.us or 541-379-5564).

Oldies Night in Milton-Freewater

•Saturday, March 3; 7 p.m.
•Wesley Methodist Church, 816 S. Main St., Milton-Freewater.

Free. BJ the DJ spins tunes of 1963 from British and U.S. charts. Snacks available.

Worldwide Play-In

•Saturday, March 3; 7:30 p.m.

•Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton

No cover. All ages. Features the Umatilla Student String Quartet with Tyler Simpson, violin; Ithea Engum-Coral, violin; Kristen Gregg, viola; and Jenna Harrison, cello.

Aaron Crawford

•Saturday, March 3; 8 p.m.
No cover

•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

Reggaetón Party!

•Saturday, March 3; 9 p.m.
•The Pheasant Blue Col- lar Bar & Grill, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

No cover. A night of music and dancing featuring reggae, rap and hip-hop.

West My Friend

•Wednesday, March 7; 7 p.m.

•Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St.
www.pendletonarts.org

\$12. Hailing from Victoria, British Columbia, the band presents sonically adventurous acoustic music falling between Canadian folk and indie-pop. Advance tickets recommended. (541-278-9201).

Lightnin’ Willie

•Thursday, March 8; 7-9 p.m.
•Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton

No cover. All ages show features a hard-swinging brand of blues music.

Gotcha Covered

•Friday, March 9; Saturday, March 10; 8 p.m. No cover

•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

The Irish Singers

•Friday, March 17; 7-10 p.m.
No cover

•Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main St., Echo

Mouth Full of Pizza

•Friday, March 16; 8-10 p.m.
•Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton

No cover. All ages show features open mic favorites.

Expertease

•Friday, March 16; Saturday, March 17; 8 p.m. No cover

•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

St. Patrick’s with the Irish Singers

•Saturday, March 17; 7-10 p.m.

•Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton

No cover. All ages show features traditional Irish tunes, with stomping and clapping required.

Night life

Karaoke w/DJ David

•Saturdays; 8 p.m.
•Riverside Sports Bar, 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla

DJ & Trivia

•Saturdays; 9 p.m.
•Midway Tavern, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston

Thirsty Thursdays

•Third Thursday; 6 p.m.

•Midway Bar & Grill, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston

No cover. Hosts a local brewery offering tastings.

LOL Comedy Jam

•Thursdays; 8 p.m.
•Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

No cover. March 8: Gabriel Rutledge, Casey McLain; March 15: Alex Powers, John Galligan

Wine tasting

•Fridays, 4-8 p.m.
•Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main St., Echo.

Karaoke w/DJ David

•Fridays; 8 p.m.
•Riverside Sports Bar, 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla

DJ and dancing

•Fridays, 8 p.m.
•The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

Karaoke

•Fridays; 9 p.m.
•Midway Tavern, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston

Cimmi’s Late Night Martini Lounge

•Fridays; 9 p.m.-midnight
•Virgil’s at Cimmiyotti’s, 137 S. Main St., Pendleton

No cover. Features martinis, mixology and music.

Theater, stage, film & lectures

“Annie”

•Saturday, March 3; 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, March 4; 2 p.m.

•BMCC Bob Clapp Theatre, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton

\$20/adults, \$10/students. College Community Theatre presents the popular musical. Early reservations are encouraged as ticket sales are expected to be high. (541-278-5953).

“Unlucky Charms”

•Saturday, March 17; 6:30 p.m.

•Milton-Freewater Community Building, 109 N.E. Fifth Ave. \$40 (\$45 at the door). This St. Patrick’s Day murder mystery dinner event features a catered meal and professional actors. (541-969-4485).

“The Last Hot Lick”

•Saturday, April 14; 3 p.m.

•BMCC Bob Clapp Theatre, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton

\$11/general, \$8/ Round-Up and Happy Canyon Hall of Fame members. Advance tickets available beginning March 12 at Hall of Fame, 1114 S.W. Court Ave., Pendleton (541-278-0815). The film, which includes scenes shot in Pendleton, Rufus, Wasco and the Painted Hills, stars Jamie Leopold and Jennifer Smeija, two Portland musicians. A person attending the screening will win a new Pendleton Woolen Mills Bucking Horse Blanket.

Hot tickets

•Blue Oyster Cult (April 20, \$24-\$59) and Hal Ketchum (May 26, \$25-\$45), at Wildhorse Resort & Casino. Buy tickets for the 21-and-older shows via the Wildhorse Gift Shop or www.wildhorseresort.com

•Eagles. May 5, Moda Center, Portland. Tickets (\$59-\$400) via www.ticketmaster.com

•Summer Concert Series: Hunks the Show (June 2, \$29-\$65); Kim Russo; The Happy Medium (June 16, \$65); Naughty by Nature, hip hop w/ Sir Mix-A-Lot & Tone Loc w/ Sir Mix-A-Lot & Ramon Ayala (July 27, \$49-\$99); and Ramon Ayala (July 28, \$49-\$129) at Wildhorse Resort & Casino. All shows are 21-and-older, except the hip hop party, which is 18-and-older. Tickets available via the Wildhorse Gift Shop or www.wildhorseresort.com