

ABC's big night

Hollywood stars and action-packed drama in the Oscars and 'Whiskey Cavalier'

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TV Media

In a world of streaming and DVRs, the Oscars is still appointment television. This year, ABC cashes in on Hollywood's biggest night to launch the network's newest action-drama.

On Sunday, Feb. 24, the alphabet network presents the 91st annual Academy Awards, immediately followed by a sneak preview of the new and very promising "Whiskey Cavalier." After movie fans find out whether their favorite stars walk away with Oscar gold, they can tune in to see Lauren Cohan ("The Walking Dead") and Scott Foley ("Scandal") as a couple of secret agents out to save the world.

Foley, who also serves as the show's producer, stars as FBI super agent Will Chase, code name: Whiskey Cavalier. He's one of the bureau's best agents, but he's also a big softie who's still heartbroken over his recent breakup. Cohan portrays hard-as-nails CIA agent Frankie Trowbridge, code name: Fiery Tribune. They often clash while leading an elite team of spies on missions around the globe.

While the espionage thriller features all of the hallmarks of a typical action-drama, it has the added bonus of will-they-or-won't-they tension between Chase and Trowbridge, with plenty of lighthearted moments thrown into the mix. In fact, the show has been described as a "dramedy" by EW's Maureen Lee Lenker, who interviewed "Whiskey Cavalier" creator David Hemingson in January.

"It's funny because I sort of look at this show as 'Mission: Impossible' smashes into 'Cheers,' with basically Scott Foley as Diane Chambers and Lauren Cohan as Sam Malone," Hemingson said.

Chase is definitely the more sensitive and emotional of the two, and Trowbridge doesn't seem much interested in his attempts to crack her tough exterior, at least in the begin-



Danai Gurira as seen in "Black Panther"

ning. They work alongside an interagency team of flawed and funny fellow spies who navigate the ups and downs of friendship, romance and office politics. Ana Ortiz ("Ugly Betty") stars as FBI behavioral scientist Dr. Susan Sampson, Chase's best friend. Cohan's fellow "Walking Dead" alum Tyler James Williams ("Everybody Hates Chris") stars as rogue NSA analyst Edgar Standish, who once hacked the State Department's mainframe. Vir Das ("Shivaay," 2016) plays FBI agent Jai Datta, and Josh Hopkins ("Quantico") rounds out the main cast as Ray Prince, Chase's FBI colleague.

In addition to the talented cast, choreographed fight se-

quences and explosive special effects, the show also boasts a visually stunning backdrop: Prague. That's a far cry from the gritty settings of Cohan's most famous gig to date: AMC's "The Walking Dead." The actress is best known for her role as Maggie Greene in the horror series, and interestingly, another of her "Walking Dead" co-stars steps into the spotlight on ABC on the very same night as the "Whiskey Cavalier" premiere.

Danai Gurira, who plays Michonne in "The Walking Dead," could become part of Oscars history as one of the stars of the very first superhero film nominated for a Best Picture Academy Award, "Black Panther" (2018).

Gurira portrays Wakandan warrior Okoye in the Marvel Cinematic Universe film, which earned seven Oscar nominations in all, including nods for Best Costume Design, Best Original Score and Best Original Song.

"Black Panther" faces stiff competition in the prestigious Best Picture category as it contends with Spike Lee's "BlackKkKlansman," the rock bio "Bohemian Rhapsody," the period comedy-drama "The Favourite," the '60s-era drama "Green Book," Netflix's groundbreaking "Roma," the romantic remake "A Star Is Born" and the comedy-drama biography "Vice."

Other high-profile nominations include Lee's first nomina-

tion for Best Director for "BlackKkKlansman." Pawel Pawlikowski ("Cold War"), Yorgos Lanthimos ("The Favourite"), Alfonso Cuarón ("Roma") and Adam McKay ("Vice") are also in the running in the Best Director category.

The ever-popular acting categories feature a diverse mix of performers. Christian Bale ("Vice"), Bradley Cooper ("A Star Is Born"), Willem Dafoe ("At Eternity's Gate"), Rami Malek ("Bohemian Rhapsody") and Viggo Mortensen ("Green Book") have earned Best Actor nods. Yalitza Aparicio ("Roma"), Glenn Close ("The Wife"), Olivia Colman ("The Favourite"), Lady Gaga ("A Star Is Born") and Me-

lissa McCarthy ("Can You Ever Forgive Me?") are up for this year's Best Actress Oscar.

"Roma" and "The Favourite" earned the most nominations with 10 each, followed by "A Star Is Born" and "Vice," which each earned eight Oscar nods. A full list of Academy Award nominees can be found online at oscar.go.com.

Tune in to ABC to watch the 91st annual Academy Awards to find out who will walk away with the coveted golden statuettes on Sunday, Feb. 24. With any luck, "Whiskey Cavalier" will benefit from the Oscars ratings as viewers stay tuned to check out Foley and Cohan in the new espionage comedy-drama.