

Television Week

Local Listings For the Week Of December 3-9, 2011

Oscar Race Remains Unclear

BY STEVEN ZEITCHIK AND NICOLE SPERLING
© 2011, Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — As the fall season's first wave of film awards and nominations roll in, the Oscar picture continues to be a murky mass of contenders and question marks.

On Tuesday, "The Artist," a black-and-white silent film from the French filmmaker Michel Hazanavicius, picked up momentum with top prizes from the New York Film Critics Circle and five nominations for the Los Angeles-based Spirit Awards, which honor independent movies.

The accolades established "The Artist," a Weinstein Co. release about a silent film star who fades with the advent of the talkies, as the closest thing to a front-runner in this chaotic season.

Critics' awards and the Spirits have a spotty record for predicting Academy Award winners, but they can help define which films and performances will be in Oscar contention. And this year it still seems anyone's game.

"There are still pictures that haven't played yet," said Sony Pictures Classics chief Tom Bernard. "There is a lot of diversity in the field that has yet to hit the spotlight."

Among the movies that have yet to be seen even by academy and guild members, critics and other tastemakers is Stephen Daldry's adaptation of the Sept. 11 novel "Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close." Daldry has Oscar nominations for best director for all three of his previous films and his cast includes two-time winner Tom Hanks and Sandra Bullock in her first film since she won the lead actress award in 2010. In addition, "War Horse," the World War I epic by academy favorite Steven Spielberg, is just beginning to screen.

Meanwhile, a number of heavyweights have taken some lumps. Clint Eastwood's historical biopic "J. Edgar," for instance, divided critics and has performed modestly at the box office, slowing awards momentum. The New York critics group delayed its voting for a screening of David Fincher's much-anticipated crime thriller "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo," then didn't give it any prizes.

Even a critical favorite such as the Alexander Payne-directed "The Descendants," which stars George Clooney, failed to land a single prize from the New York critics on Tuesday, although it netted four Spirit nominations.

Meanwhile, some dark horses may be emerging. The gay family drama "Beginners," a little-seen June release, was nominated for best feature by the Spirits and shared the top prize Monday from a third group, the independent-film-centric Gotham Awards. The Spirits also nominated for best feature "Take Shelter," a moody drama from the young filmmaker Jeff Nichols that has failed to gross even \$2 million at the box office.

"These things are kind of like the lottery. There's no rhyme or reason to this," Nichols said in an interview, citing a thought he said the director David Cronenberg shared with him at the Gothams ceremony.

"Beginners" was such a surprise that, when it tied with "The Tree of Life" for the top prize at the Gothams, it prompted director Mike Mills to tell the Los Angeles Times that he was just "really happy to be remembered and invited to the party." (Both he and Nichols were also nominated for best director by the Spirits.)

The lack of clear favorites could also open the door for hits from earlier in the year, such as Woody Allen's "Midnight in Paris" and the civil rights drama "The Help." There is precedent for such a turn: Six years ago, the Paul Haggis race drama "Crash," a spring release that had been on a race devoid of front-runners and walked away with Oscars' best picture prize.

And "Tree" remains an intriguing x-factor. In addition to the Gothams, stars Brad Pitt and Jessica Chastain were cited by the New York critics group. "Anything that makes noise is good — especially for a film that was released so early in the year," said Nancy Nutley, co-president of Fox Searchlight, which released the film.

In the acting categories, Pitt

SATURDAY PRIMETIME/LATE NIGHT DECEMBER 3, 2011

BROADCAST	STATIONS	3:00	3:30	4:00	4:30	5:00	5:30	6:00	6:30	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	1:00	1:30	
PBS KUSD 2 8 (2)	Victor Borge: Comedy in Music! A collection of the pianist's skits. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	A Classic Gospel Special: Tent Revival Homecoming Spirit of tent revival meetings. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	Great Performances Singer Jackie Evancho. Ⓢ	60s Pop, Rock & Soul (My Music) Artists and groups from the 1960s. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	Santana - Live at Montreux 2011 Carlos Santana performs. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	Journey of the Universe Cosmic and Earth evolution. Ⓢ	Globe Trekker	Ebert at Movie	Michael McDonald															
KTVI 4 4 (4)	Golf	Paid	News	News	Insider	**** "It's a Wonderful Life" (1946) James Stewart. Ⓢ	News (N)	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Dilemma" (2011) Vince Vaughn, Kevin James. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Saint" (1997, Suspense) Val Kilmer, Elisabeth Shue. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	**** "The Adjustment Bureau" (2011) Matt Damon. Premiere. (In Stereo) Ⓢ

SUNDAY PRIMETIME/LATE NIGHT DECEMBER 4, 2011

BROADCAST	STATIONS	3:00	3:30	4:00	4:30	5:00	5:30	6:00	6:30	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	1:00	1:30
PBS KUSD 2 8 (2)	Alone in the Wilderness, Part 2 Alaska wildlife and scenery. Ⓢ	Daniel O'Donnell Live From Nashville The singer performs country and Irish melodies. Ⓢ	Lawrence Welk's Big Band Splash Big Band music from the 1920s-1950s. Ⓢ	Great Performances Singer Jackie Evancho. Ⓢ	Rock, Pop and Doo Wop (My Music) Popular songs from the 1950s and 1960s. Ⓢ	John Sebastian Presents: Folk Rewind (My Music) Artists of the 1950s and '60s. (In Stereo) Ⓢ	Yellowstone: Land																
KTVI 4 4 (4)	Golf	News	News	Football Night	NFL Football Detroit Lions at New Orleans Saints. (N) (In Stereo Live) Ⓢ	News (N)	Entertainment 'Night	Without a Trace	News	Dateline													