

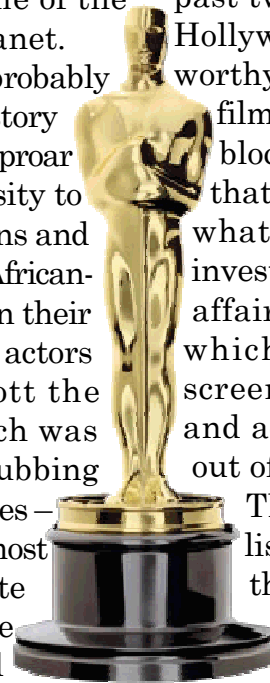
CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter March, 2016

THE ACADEMY AWARDS

February 28th witnessed one of the most talked-about and photographed events of the year, the annual extravaganza widely known as the Oscars. The 88th Academy Awards were held, as usual, in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in downtown Los Angeles and attended by some of the most famous celebrities on the planet.

This year's event was held after probably the most controversial run-up in history to the yearly awards ceremony. The uproar centered on the Academy's propensity to distribute awards to white Americans and largely ignore other ethnic groups. African-Americans were particularly vocal in their criticism, with many famous black actors and actresses deciding to boycott the ceremony. Interestingly, not much was reported about the Academy's snubbing Asian filmmakers, actors and actresses – a trend that has been ongoing for almost the entire history of the event. Despite all the hoopla in the lead-up to the ceremony, the occasion was considered a success. It was hosted by renowned African-American comedian Chris Rock, who made light of the race issues surrounding the ceremony by taking aim at all the ethnicities involved. Of course, this served to raise the ire of some commentators who felt slighted.



The awards themselves were a largely predictable affair. Most film reviewers acknowledged that 2015 was a particularly weak year for movies. Though it could be said that there's been a steady slide in the caliber of movies up for awards over the past twenty or thirty years, recent trends in Hollywood have almost assured that Oscar-worthy movies are few and far between. Big film studios direct most of their budgets to blockbusters, especially movie franchises that spawn sequel upon sequel. Moreover, what's left of the studio money is usually invested, these days, in low-risk, low-budget affairs. Hence, those movies of yesteryear which featured top-class directors and screenwriters, as well as talented actors and actresses, have mostly been squeezed out of the picture.

The upshot of these recent trends was a list of very average movies contending for the coveted award of Best Picture of 2015.

The pre-show favorite was the visually impressive but clichéd *The Revenant*, starring Leonardo di Caprio in an Oscar-winning performance as a man out for justice in the Wild (snowy) West. Thankfully, in the eyes of many movie fans, this pedestrian effort didn't win Best Picture. Unfortunately, the winner – *Spotlight* – was itself not up to scratch. This tale of heroic white journalists exposing white priests' systematic abuse of white kids is the type of self-congratulatory fodder that Hollywood likes to bestow awards upon. The problem is that it's just not a good movie. Nevertheless, it might have been the best of a bad bunch. Long gone are the days of masters such as Kurosawa, who predictably enough was only nominated once.

Article by Colm

Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons on the net!*

At this site you can scroll back to see all the Oscar results starting with the first awards in 1929:

<https://www.oscars.org/oscars/ceremonies/2016>

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua Says: Can you imagine being able to speak all of the world's languages? Well, according to one theory you once could! The theory, by Professor Charles Yang, says that at birth we are already "hardwired" to do so. A universal "language template" onto which any language can be grafted is passed down to all of us through our DNA, but in the process of "learning" our mother tongue, the under-used parts of this template are discarded and neglected. Just imagine what we could do if we could reawaken the unused parts of this template.....

Junko Says: I'm sure some of you have seen the TV commercial about Nescafé's coffee machines. This commercial stayed in my mind because we supply coffee and tea to everyone here at Crossroads. I finally had the chance to taste the coffee made with these machines the other day. We have now decided to set these machines up at Crossroads along with Nescafé's special tea-maker. I hope our new coffee is an improvement and that you will enjoy it.



Mark Says: One of my favourite pastimes is watching TV. While I enjoy films, I prefer the character and story development that a long run TV drama allows. One of my favourite shows is *The Walking Dead*, a drama about survival in a post zombie apocalypse world. I regularly discuss the latest story-lines with current and former students as well as former colleagues who are fans themselves. Please check it out.

Colm Says: As the weather picks up, the *hiki-nige* shuffle is in full effect in Matsuyama. Whether you're a driver, a cyclist or a walker, watch out for cars and bicycles merrily navigating routes in whichever ways take their fancy. If you're not on your toes, you'll soon be on your nose after being ploughed into. As you pick yourself up, the perpetrator will be off in the distance.



Danielle dit: Alors que je passe devant quelques fois par semaine depuis plusieurs mois, j'ai découvert récemment un magasin de crêpes japonaises près de l'université d'Ehime. Etant très gourmand, j'aime beaucoup les crêpes et en particulier les crêpes japonaises dans lesquelles sont souvent mixées plusieurs choses. Cependant, si vous en avez l'occasion, essayez donc les crêpes à la française dont ils existent beaucoup de variantes, sucrées ou salées.

ACROSS

- 4 loud noise and confusion
- 6 overly sensational promotion of an event
- 8 tendency, inclination
- 9 anger in response to a grievance
- 10 someone who returns after a long absence
- 13 disrespected
- 14 refuse to deal with or be part of something
- 15 give or share out
- 16 spectacularly stage entertainment

DOWN

- 1 level of excellence
- 2 coarse food (especially for livestock)
- 3 fail or refuse to notice
- 5 give as a right, title, reward or gift
- 7 in great disagreement
- 11 reject, refuse to acknowledge
- 12 result caused by a previous event

Play A Game!

