

Film Feature: HollywoodChicago.com's 2015 Oscar Predictions

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on February 21, 2015 - 4:58am

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CHICAGO – Oscar! Oscar! Oscar! Say it three times to win it, and you'll win every Academy Award pool you enter – at least for the nine categories covered here – if you follow the advice of the HollywoodChicago.com “experts.” We have the Oscar magic, so if you believe in it, then we deliver.

Three film writers of HollywoodChicago.com – Patrick McDonald, Nick Allen and Spike Walters – will not only predict Sunday's big night, but will suggest choreography to Neil Patrick Harris for his opening number. The crew will opine on BEST Picture, Actor, Actress, Supporting Actor/Actress and Director. As in previous years, the prognostications are broken down into thoughts on who WILL WIN, SHOULD WIN and SHOULD HAVE BEEN NOMINATED (for one last gasp of dissent). The predictors will also take on a wild card guess for several other categories, and the latest odds on the rest of the field will be highlighted to fill out your ballot for Sunday.

PREDICTOR GUIDE: Patrick McDonald = PM, Nick Allen = NA and Spike Walters = SW

BEST PICTURE

Will Win: “Selma” (PM), “American Sniper” (NA), “Birdman” (SW)

Should Win: “Selma” (PM, NA), “Boyhood” (SW)

Should Have Been Nominated: “Under the Skin” (PM), “Life Itself” (NA) “Inherent Vice” (SW)



Boyhood

Photo credit: IFC Films

Wow, we're right out the gate with a difference of opinion on which film takes “Best Picture.” *Here's the deal, votes will have been split between 'Birdman,' 'Boyhood' and 'Sniper,' which puts Selma on top – I hope.*” (PM) “*Eastwood's war film has the box office numbers that will dazzle them more than anything else on this list. 'Life Itself' is still the best movie of 2014, no bias needed, hands down, end of story – that*

the Academy can sometimes nominate animated films for “Best Picture” but pretend that documentaries don’t exist is an insult to all.” (NA)
“‘Boyhood’s’ nuance is nearly unheard of in modern American cinema, but they’re not quite as flashy as Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu’s stylish pseudo-comedy that takes on Hollywood’s favorite subject: itself. Birdman wins by a beak.” (SW)

BEST ACTOR:

Will Win: Eddie Redmayne “The Theory of Everything” (PM, SW), Michael Keaton “Birdman” (NA).

Should Win: Michael Keaton, (PM, SW), Bradley Cooper, (NA)

Should Have Been Nominated: David Oyelowo “Selma” (PM, NA), Chadwick Boseman “Get on Up” (SW).



Eddie Redmayne in ‘The Theory of Everything’

Photo credit: Focus Features

Wide open between Redmayne and Keaton, but Redmayne seems to be getting the most love lately. *“I was backstage with Trai Byers, one of the co-stars for ‘Selma,’ when the Oyelowo snub occurred. He said that the award that David won was in the gift of his performance.” (PM)*
“Oyelowo’s turn as MLK was hands down the best performance in a year in a roster that celebrated real lives, and the most magnetic. Cooper has my vote for the subtlety in his creation of a polarizing figure.” (NA) *“ There’s some hope his performance in ‘Jupiter Ascending’ will have a sort of ‘Norbit’ effect on the race, but Eddie Redmayne’s spin in Hawking’s wheelchair is the sort of Oscar catnip the Academy can’t seem to resist.” (SW)*

BEST ACTRESS:

Will Win: Julianne Moore “Still Alice” (PM, NA, SW)

Should Win: Julianne Moore (PM), Marion Cotillard “Two Days, One Night” (NA), Rosamund Pike, “Gone Girl” (SW)

Should Have Been Nominated: Scarlett Johansson “Under the Skin” (PM), Marion Cotillard “The Immigrant” (NA), Emily Blunt “Edge of Tomorrow” (SW).



Julianne Moore in ‘Still Alice’

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Classics

Mr. Allen has a serious Marion crush, as the three prognosticators come together on the “SHOULD WIN” side. *“Julianne Moore’s performance*

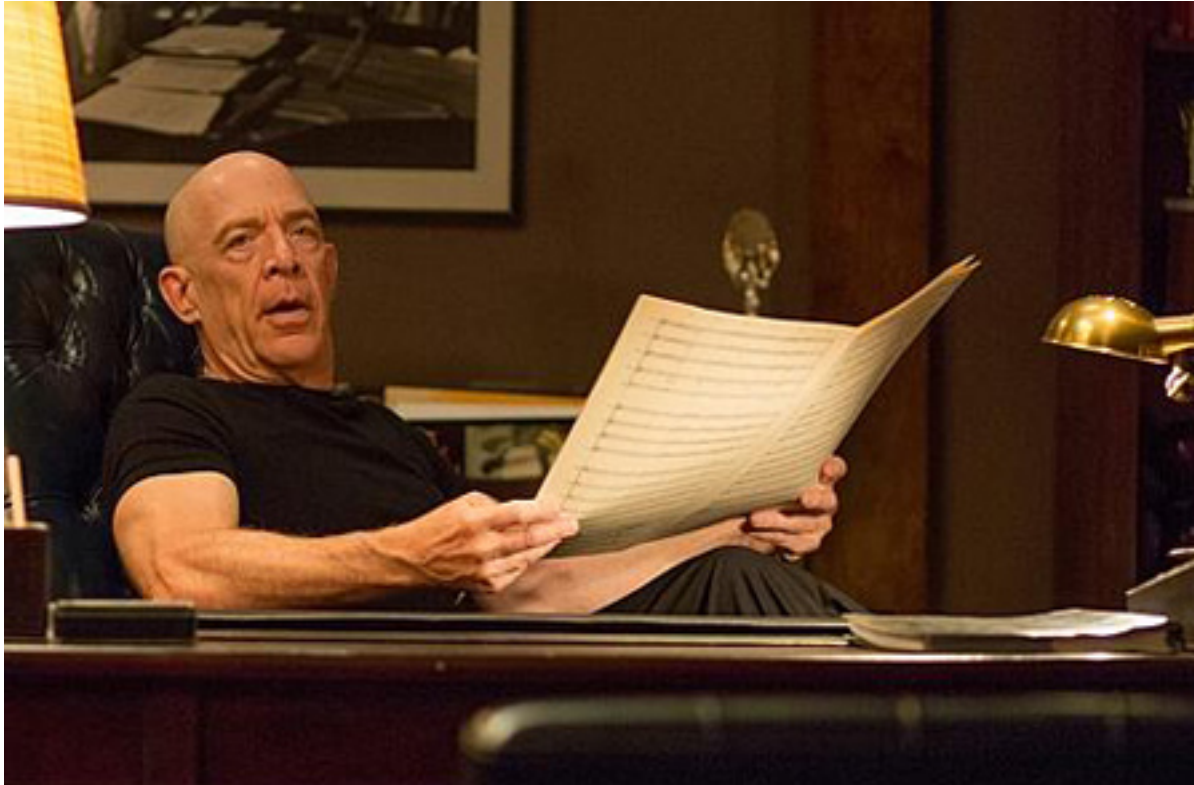
was devastating and unforgettable, and the condition she interpreted could happen to anybody.” (PM) “All signs point to Moore winning for “Still Alice” and an indeed great performance, but 2014 was the year of Cotillard. ” (NA) “It’s unusual for Oscar to acknowledge action pictures – but Emily Blunt held her own, and even bested her co-star Tom Cruise, in one of the summer’s most purely entertaining pictures.” (SW)

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR:

Will Win: J.K. Simmons “Whiplash” (PM, NA, SW)

Should Win: J.K. Simmons “Whiplash” (PM, NA, SW)

Should Have Been Nominated: John Goodman “The Gambler” (PM), Michael Fassbender “Frank” (NA), Josh Brolin “Inherent Vice” (SW)



J.K. Simmons in ‘Whiplash’

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Classic

As they used to say about Frank Sinatra, It’s J.K. Simmons’ world, we just live in it. “John Goodman’s mostly shirtless turn in ‘The Gambler’ should have been recognized, just because it is a sight I cannot unsee.” (PM) “Simmons has been king in the category during all other awards. That won’t change on Sunday. ” (NA) “There were plenty of charismatic supporting performances, and then there was J.K. Simmons. He makes the drill sergeant from ‘Full Metal Jacket’ look like a cream puff.” (SW)

BEST SUPPPORTING ACTRESS:

Will Win: Patricia Arquette “Boyhood” (PM, NA, SW)

Should Win: Patricia Arquette “Boyhood” (PM, NA, SW)

Should Have Been Nominated: Tilda Swinton “Snowpiercer” (PM), Rene Russo “Nightcrawler” (NA), Jessica Chastain “A Most Violent Year” (SW).



Patricia Arquette in ‘Boyhood’

Photo credit: IFC Films

Patty is cake in this category, and the three prognosticates all agree. “Both Russo and Swinton deserve more love than Meryl Streep caterwauling for ‘Into the Woods.” (PM) “Arquette does a great job in ‘Boyhood,’ but let’s hope that the acclaim she’s about to receive will get her a bigger role than the one she has in that film.” (NA) “This is a story of the right actor with the right role at the right time. It’s a tricky

proposition to pull off, because much of 'Boyhood's' emotional truths and weights lie squarely on Patricia Arquette's shoulders." (SW)

BEST DIRECTOR:

Will Win: Alejandro González Iñárritu "Birdman" (PM, SW), Richard Linklater "Boyhood" (NA)

Should Win: Alejandro González Iñárritu "Birdman" (PM, SW), Richard Linklater "Boyhood" (NA)

Should Have Been Nominated: Ava DuVernay "Selma" (PM, NA), Alan Smithee "Blended" (SW)



Alejandro González Iñárritu directs 'Birdman'

Photo credit: Fox Searchlight Pictures

Mr. Walters had a blank on his predicting slot for Best Director SHOULD HAD BEEN NOMINATED, so the rule is to write in Smithee. "*Bird, Bird, Bird, Bird is the word for Alejandro.*" (PM) "*Richard Linklater's twelve year odyssey is more than the summer camp some think it is – it's the result of a genuine vision, and wisdom that only comes with filmmaking experience itself.*" (NA) "*It's hard to argue with the ambition of Iñárritu's seamless one-take trip through show business. He is used to shuffling the deck of a narrative to the point of confusion, but this is arguably his most straightforward film – he'll probably get to finally take Oscar home.*" (SW)

WILD CARD

We took assignment on some other individual categories, just to get an idea of what other surprises await the 87th Annual Academy Awards.

BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE (Patrick McDonald)

Will Win: "CitizenFour"

Should Win: "Last Days in Vietnam"

Should Have Been Nominated: "Life Itself"

The "Life Itself" snub is horrid bad karma for the snub-happy Academy voters. A movie about the movies, featuring the most venerated film critic who ever influenced movie culture, depicting as he STILL contributed while suffering from a debilitating disease. "Yeah, we'll pass..." I hate using the following word, but it's 'literally' unforgivable.



Roger Ebert Lives Forever in 'Life Itself'

Photo credit: Magnolia Pictures

BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY (Nick Allen)

Will Win: Emmanuel Lubezki, “Birdman”

Should Win: Emmanuel Lubezki, “Birdman”

Should Have Been Nominated: Hoyte Van Hoytema, “Interstellar”

“Interstellar” may not have been everyone’s favorite genre movie of the year, but it boasted an immense scope more profound than the award-winning camerawork of last year’s ‘Gravity.’ Van Hoytema and director Christopher Nolan created a year-topping IMAX experience in a climate of dwindling tent pole films, the kind of cinema experience that makes audiences feel like they absolutely must see it on the biggest silver screen possible.

BEST ANIMATED FEATURE (Spike Walters)

Will Win: “Big Hero 6”

Should Win: “The Boxtrolls”

Should have been nominated: “The Lego Movie”

In a weak field where the best film didn’t even get nominated, Oscar voters will likely hit the easy button and default to Walt Disney Studios. Dreamworks Studios’ “How To Train A Dragon 2” could pose an outside chance. “The Boxtrolls” was the most inventive of the nominees, even if it also suffers from a sort of sameness that afflicts nearly all animated features these days.

ODDS FOR THE REST

To complete the rest of the categories, here are the latest Las Vegas odds for each...

BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

“Birdman” 5/4

“The Grand Budapest Hotel” 1/2

“Boyhood” 10/1

“Nightcrawler” 50/1

“Foxcatcher” 50/1

BEST ADAPTED SCREENPLAY

“The Imitation Game” 2/5

“Whiplash” 5/2

“The Theory of Everything” 5/1

“American Sniper” 16/1

“Inherent Vice” 33/1

BEST FOREIGN FILM

“Leviathan” (Russia) 7/4

“Ida” (Poland) 4/9

“Wild Tales” (Argentina) 7/1

“Timbuktu” (Mauritania) 20/1

“Tangerines” (Estonia) 33/1

BEST ANIMATED SHORT

“Feast” 2/7

“The Bigger Picture” 4/1

“The Dam Keeper” 5/1

“A Single Life” 16/1

“Me and my Moulton” 16/1

BEST LIVE ACTION SHORT

“The Phone Call” 4/9

“Boogaloo and Graham” 4/1

“Butter Lamp” 11/2

“Parvaneh” 7/1

“Aya” 10/1

BEST ORIGINAL SONG

“Glory” (“Selma”) 1/5

“Everything is Awesome” (“The Lego Movie”) 4/1

“Lost Stars” (“Begin Again”) 9/1

“I’m Not Gonna Miss You” (“Glen Campbell: I’ll Be Me”) 10/1

“Grateful” (“Beyond the Lights”) 33/1

BEST ORIGINAL SCORE

“The Theory of Everything” (Johann Joannsson) 5/8

“The Grand Budapest Hotel” (Alexandre Desplat) 5/4

“The Imitation Game” (Alexandre Desplat) 9/1

“Interstellar” (Hans Zimmer) 12/1

“Mr. Turner” (Gary Yershon) 50/1

BEST FILM EDITING

- “Boyhood” 1/2
- “Whiplash” 2/1
- “The Imitation Game” 12/1
- “The Grand Budapest Hotel” 14/1
- “American Sniper” 15/2

BEST VISUAL EFFECTS

- “Interstellar” 1/3
- “Dawn of the Planet of the Apes” 9/4
- “Guardians of the Galaxy” 7/1
- “X-Men: Days of Future Past” 33/1
- “Captain America: The Winter Soldier” 33/1

BEST COSTUME DESIGN

- “Into The Woods” 9/2
- “The Grand Budapest Hotel” 1/10
- “Maleficent” 12/1
- “Mr. Turner” 20/1
- “Inherent Vice” 25/1

BEST PRODUCTION DESIGN

- “The Grand Budapest Hotel” 1/7
- “Into The Woods” 4/1
- “Mr. Turner” 10/1
- “The Imitation Game” 25/1
- “Interstellar” 20/1

BEST MAKE-UP AND HAIR STYLING

- “The Grand Budapest Hotel” 1/7
- “Guardians of the Galaxy” 7/2
- “Foxcatcher” 8/1

BEST SOUND EDITING

- Pick ‘em...
- “Birdman”
- “American Sniper”
- “The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies”
- “Unbroken”
- “Interstellar”

BEST SOUND MIXING

- Pick ‘em...
- “American Sniper”
- “Interstellar”
- “Birdman”
- “Whiplash”
- “Unbroken”

“The 87th Annual Academy Awards” are on Sunday, February 22nd, 2015, starting at 8pm ET/7pm CT, broadcast on ABC. For more information on Oscar odds [click here](#). [21]



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