

## The Morning After: Upcoming Projects For 2009 Oscar Winners

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on February 26, 2009 - 12:56pm

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CHICAGO – The legacy of Oscar winners following their wins with horrible career choices is long and well-recorded. Perhaps the best piece of news about this year’s Academy Award winners is that they are unlikely to produce a “Snow Dogs,” “Gothika,” or “Aeon Flux” any time soon. The upcoming projects for 2009 Academy Award winners is a more promising slate than most years.



Of course, the most well-documented post-Oscar career choice for this year’s winners is that of “[The Dark Knight](#) [16]”’s [Heath Ledger](#) [17], who will have only one more film released, [Terry Gilliam](#) [18]’s “[The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus](#) [19]”. From the visionary director of “Brazil” and “Twelve Monkeys,” “Parnassus” will be the epilogue for Ledger’s filmography, another brief glimpse at this excellent actor who left us far too soon.

Ledger was midway through filming the fantasy movie when he passed away and his role was recast with [Johnny Depp](#) [20], [Jude Law](#) [21], and [Colin Farrell](#) [22] portraying a character whose exterior changes as he travels through different dream worlds. All three actors will reportedly redirect their wages from the film to Heath Ledger’s daughter, Matilda. Good, bad, when we do see Heath’s final part and the memoriam credit comes up at the end, there’s unlikely to be a dry eye in the theater.

The projected release date for “The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus” is September 24th, 2009.

The winner for Best Actor, [Sean Penn](#) [12], won’t be seen in this month’s “[Crossing Over](#) [23]” (he was notoriously cut from the ensemble film) but does have one major project already scheduled for this year - Terrence Malick’s “[The Tree of Life](#) [15]”.





The Tree of Life  
Photo credit: Playlist

Penn co-stars with someone he beat for the Oscar this week, [Brad Pitt](#) [24], in a drama that any good movie fan should be highly anticipating. Heath Ledger was reportedly in talks to take the Pitt part in late 2007.

To be fair, don't expect Pitt and Penn to share any screen time. Pitt plays the father of a family dealing with a devastating loss in the '50s. Penn plays the adult version of one of his sons. Shot by the amazing Emmanuel Lubezki, designed by Jack Fisk, and with a score by "Button" composer Alexandre Desplat, this should be on anyone's "top ten most anticipated films of 2009" list. Can Sean Penn win two years in a row?

"The Tree of Life" won't be released until late 2009 but will reportedly play at the Cannes Film Festival in May.

As for beyond "The Tree of Life," it's unclear where Sean Penn will go next but we should report that one of the best actors of his generation has been rumored to play Larry in The Farrelly Brothers' update of "[The Three Stooges](#) [25]". An actor as talented as Penn can clearly do anything he sets his mind to, but we'll believe that one when we see it.

Best Actress winner [Kate Winslet](#) [7] has not committed to a post-Oscar project yet, but one of the hardest-working actresses of her generation has one of the best resumes of the last decade. She makes very smart decisions and it seems unlikely that she'll make "Catwoman 2". Yes, we're looking at you [Halle Berry](#) [26].



Broken Embraces  
Photo credit: Pathe

The Oscar winner with arguably the most impressive list of upcoming projects has to be Best Supporting Actress winner [Penelope Cruz](#) [11]. Penn certainly has to be in the conversation of 2009 winners who may be there in 2010 too just for "Tree of Life," but Cruz has two projects that also seem to have Oscar written all over them.

The first will be the newest film from [Pedro Almodovar](#) [27], the highly anticipated "[Broken Embraces](#) [4]". The last time Pedro and Penelope got together, they made the incredible "Volver," which netted Cruz a nomination and worldwide acclaim. Very little is known about the plot of "Embraces" but it will reportedly open soon in Europe. American audiences will have to wait until November 6th, 2009.

Just a few weeks after "Broken Embraces" opens stateside, Penelope Cruz will be seen again in "[Nine](#) [9]," the highly anticipated musical from "Chicago" director [Rob Marshall](#) [28]. With NINETEEN Oscar nominations and nine wins with only two movies (his sophomore film was "Memoirs of a Geisha"), anything Rob Marshall has in production has to be taken very seriously and this one has Oscar potential written all over it.

"Nine" co-stars an amazing SIX Oscar winners. [Daniel Day-Lewis](#) [29] plays the lead with [Nicole Kidman](#) [30], [Marion Cotillard](#) [31], [Judi Dench](#) [32], [Sophia Loren](#) [33], and Penelope Cruz in supporting roles. [Kate Hudson](#) [34] and [Fergie](#) [35] also play supporting parts in the adaptation of the Tony Award-winning musical of the same name based on Federico Fellini's autobiographical "8 1/2".





Penelope Cruz rehearses for Nine  
Photo credit: The New York Times

“Nine” will open on November 25th, 2009 and has to be a very early frontrunner for most Oscar-likely contender at next year’s awards. It seems like Penelope Cruz is making all of the right career decisions.

To be fair, fans of Cruz will be able to hear her before they see her, as the animated “G-Force” opens on July 24th, 2009.

What about the Oscar winners behind-the-scenes? Best adapted screenplay winner for “[Slumdog Millionaire](#) [36],” Simon Beaufoy has a script called “[Leap Year](#) [37]” in pre-production with [Amy Adams](#) [38] and [Matthew Goode](#) [39] reportedly set to go in front of Anand Tucker’s camera. Winner for “Milk,” [Dustin Lance Black](#) [40] has no upcoming credits listed on IMDB, but he is a producer and regular writer on “[Big Love](#) [41],” which continues on HBO.

Cinematographer Anthony Dod Mantle, who won for his camera work on “Slumdog Millionaire,” is reportedly shooting Lars Von Trier’s “Antichrist”.

Two of the more acclaimed directors at this year’s Oscars - [Danny Boyle](#) [42] and “[WALL-E](#) [43]”’s [Andrew Stanton](#) [44] - have potential projects that could really get fans excited.

Boyle has talked about making “[28 Months Later](#) [2]” for a while and when I spoke to him last Fall, he said that he had a good idea for it that was quite complex and required a bigger budget than the last two films. They were working out the economics, but one would think an Oscar makes any potential project easier to greenlight. If I had to bet, I’d bet “28 Months Later” is Boyle’s next project.

As for Andrew Stanton, Pixar has “Up” coming out later this year but Andrew may move into live-action with the long-in-development adaptation of “[John Carter From Mars](#) [45]”. IMDB even lists the film as officially happening for a 2012 release. I spoke to Andrew last summer and he was spending all of 2008 with co-writer Mark Andrews on the story, unsure even if it would be live-action or animation until they got that right, but it seems pretty likely to be Stanton’s next film.

From “Milk” to “The Tree of Life,” “Vicky Cristina Barcelona” to “Nine,” “The Dark Knight” to “The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus,” and many more, it seems like the 2009 Oscar class has a more exciting slate of upcoming projects than in many former seasons. We may be writing about them all again in twelve months time.



[46]

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