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ENVELOPE ENTERTAINMENT

The Envy's: The film awards you didn't see coming

By RANDEE DAWN FEB 15, 2019 | 3:30 AM



Hugh Jackman, center, stars in Columbia Pictures' "The Front Runner." (Sony Pictures)

Faces and films change every year at the Oscars, but only rarely do we see an award added. This means that the number of overlooked props, tropes and performances that go unheralded (or un-chastised) continue to pile up. In our annual effort to make sure everybody has a chance at a prize, we present the overlooked masterpieces and serious slip-ups that deserve shout-outs this awards season. Behold: The Envy Awards!

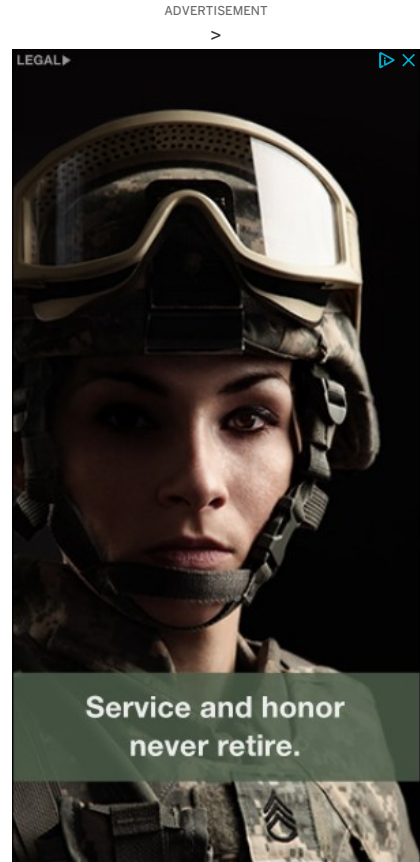
Champion Shout-Out Award

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“The Front Runner”

Eagle-eyed audiences might have noticed Robert Zemeckis clearly winking at his “Back to the Future” flaming DeLorean skid marks in “Welcome to Marwen,” but the callback prize goes to “The Front Runner,” for which director Jason Reitman said he used 1972’s “The Candidate” as a “North Star.” In “Runner,” a reporter on the phone says, “This is Mike Ritchie calling from Texas” — a nod to “Candidate” director Michael Ritchie.



After-School Special Trend Prize



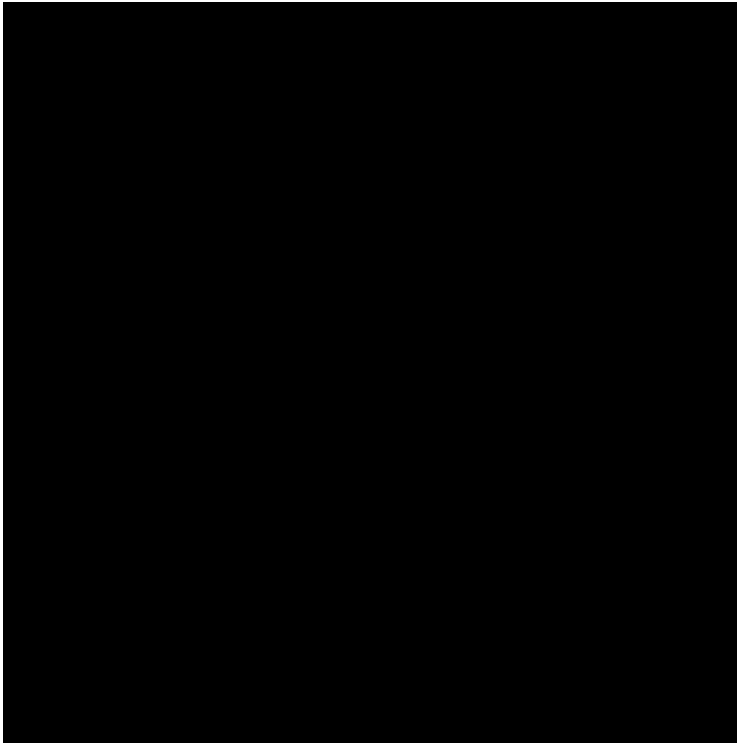
"Green Book," "Beautiful Boy" and "Boy Erased." (Universal Pictures | Amazon Studios | Focus Features)

Three-Way Tie: “Green Book,” “Beautiful Boy,” “Boy Erased”

Awards season is naturally a time to bring out the big guns and the big topics. But putting A-list actors into surface-level retellings of real-life stories amounts to scripts that feel like classic “Afterschool Specials.” “Green Book,” “Beautiful Boy” and “Boy Erased” all tried

to re-educate us this season with simple takes on racism, addiction and homosexuality. Only “Green Book” made it into the Oscar race — but all three tie for this particular Envy Award.

Best Use of a Dollhouse or Dollhouse-Like Structure



Dollhouse (Chris Morris / For The Times)

“Hereditary”

Miniature worlds helped illuminate characters in everything from “Hereditary” to “Welcome to Marwen” to TV’s “Sharp Objects,” proving dolls and dollhouses in the hands of adults are kind of creepy, even when well-intentioned. The award goes to “Hereditary,” which gave us almost too much foreshadowing in the lives of the little people living in those Toni Collette-constructed homes.

Outstanding Use of a Bathroom Fixture

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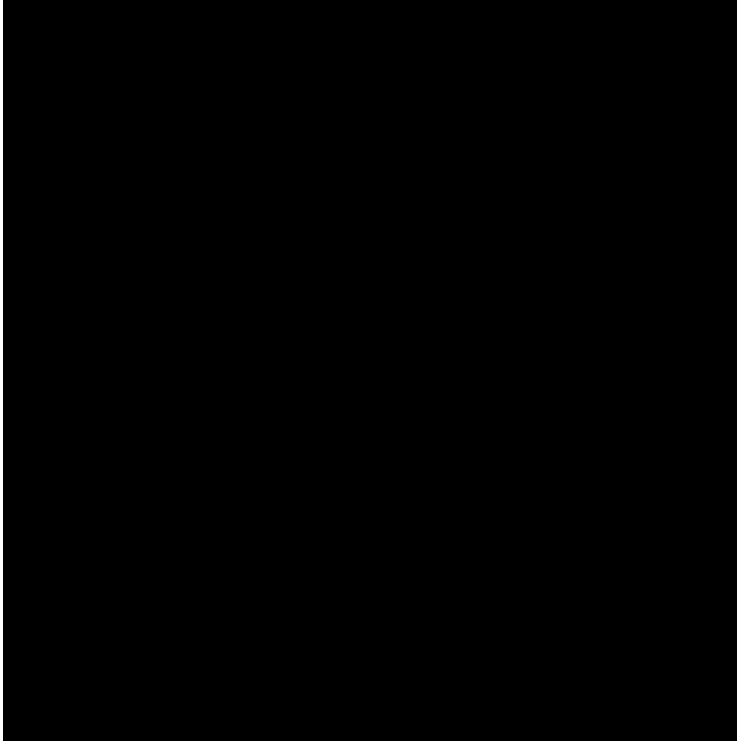


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2019 Oscars: Here's everything you need to know



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Bathtub (Chris Morris / For The Times)

Emily Blunt

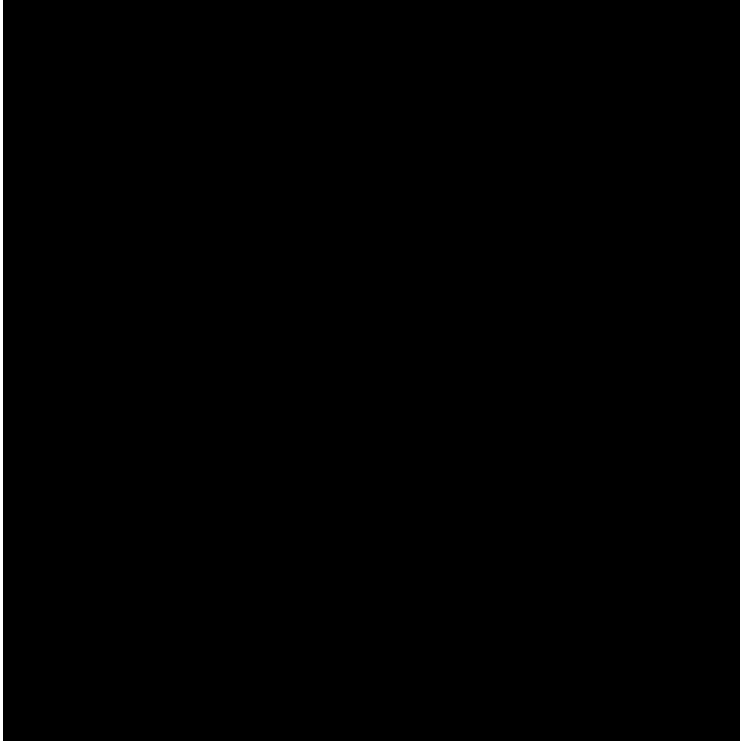
Until 2018, “Psycho” had us convinced that the creepiest place in a bathroom was the shower. But thanks to both Emily Blunt’s “Mary Poppins Returns” and “A Quiet Place,” we now know the *bathtub* is where the real action happens. In one film she used the tub as a portal to an underwater seascape (and musical number); in the other, she silently gave birth in the bathtub and escaped a monster. You try to decipher which scene goes with which movie.

Outstanding Use of the Lost Art of Conversation

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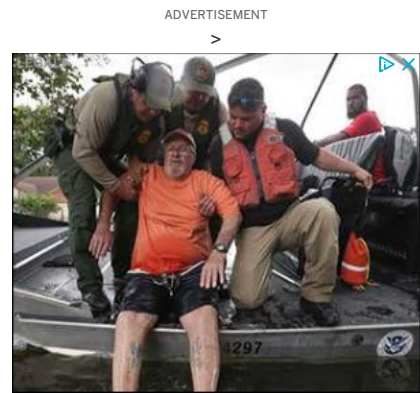
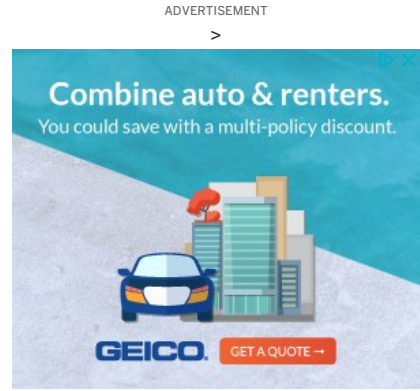


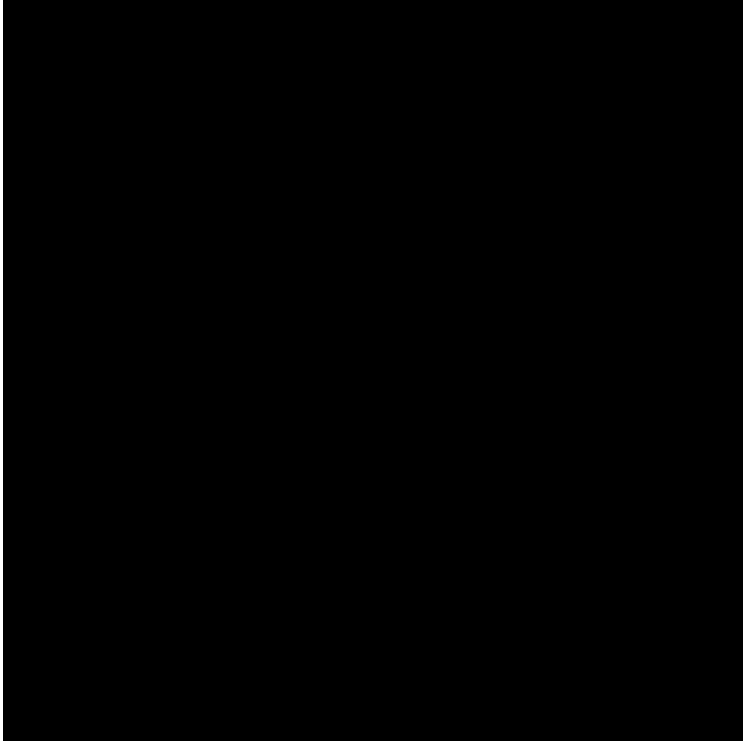
Ethan Hawke in a scene from "First Reformed" (top); and Paul Giamatti and Kathryn Hahn in a scene from "Private Life." (A24 | Jojo Whilden / Netflix)

“Private Life,” “First Reformed”

Amid a near-constant barrage of movies where style triumphs over substance and CGI and jump cuts subvert a story’s ability to be about more than just visuals, words made a comeback this season in such films as “Eighth Grade,” “Private Life” and “First Reformed.” Kayla in “Grade” might not be the most articulate junior-high student, but what she says carries weight; while the adults in “Life” and “Reformed” use words — and silences — to create effects even more devastating than a super-heroic explosion.

Most Fabulous Use of an Umbrella in a Musical Number





Umbrella (Chris Morris / For The Times)

Hugh Grant, “Paddington 2”

You were expecting something from “Mary Poppins Returns,” weren't you? Well, with all due respect to Ms. Poppins et. al, Grant’s turn as the pink-uniformed, incarcerated Phoenix Buchanan, who belts out Stephen Sondheim’s “Rain on the Roof” while surrounded by fellow dancing, singing inmates sporting pastel-colored brollies, has a spark of joy in it that would have the stern nanny applauding.

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