



Under Barry Levinson's direction, Dustin Hoffman was able to project a superb study of an autistic person in "Rain Man."

'Rain Man' has the ingredients to be best film

By Dan Greenberg
staff writer

And now for the big one, the envelope please. The Best Picture of 1980 is . . .

There are numerous studies which prove most is best. Despite valid arguments against such projections, "Rain Man's" eight nominations may be a good indication of the Academy's thinking.

But the other four contestants for Best Picture also received major as well as minor nominations: "Mississippi Burning" and "Dangerous Liaisons" have seven each, while "Working Girl" garnered six and "Accidental Tourist" four.

Here's how they line up in the top six categories — two more than you need to win the AMC/Observer & Eccentric Oscar Contest. "Rain Man" and "Mississippi Burning" topped the big three — best picture, director and actor, while "Working Girl" matched that only substituting best actress for actor. Our diligent "Girl" also picked up two in the supporting actress category. Joan Cusack and Sigourney Weaver. "Dangerous Liaisons" has Michelle Pfeiffer in that crowd as well as Glenn Close as best actress, but missed on director.

Let's eliminate "Accidental Tourist" right now with only two major nominations, best picture and Geena Davis as best supporting actress.

BESIDES LIMITED nods, the picture was too literary with a lead who was hardly convincing as a corporate success story. As noted earlier in this series, the film's overall impact and the behavior of its leads was docile and unpleasant, a fact that works against its overall image.

Which brings us to the big two, "Rain Man" and "Mississippi Burning." Both deal with unpleasantness, mental illness, and family problems in the first case, and Ku Klux Klan oppression of blacks in the south in the second. But both have rewarding, positive conclusions, no matter how much distress along the way.

If we're going to stick to the numbers game, "Mississippi Burning" wins, having more (four of six) in the top categories. Besides those, "Burning" also was tapped for cinematography, editing and sound.

IT'S INTERESTING — and significant — that "Burning" and "Rain Man" shared nominations in the top three categories and in cinematography and editing as well. After all, what determines a motion picture's overall impression? Many things of course, but photography and editing — the way images are joined — head the list.

So the two top contenders for best picture are head-to-head in five important categories, the big three plus those two very important crafts — photography and editing.

Running down the list of minor awards, "Rain Man" competes for original score with "Accidental Tourist" and "Dangerous Liaisons" as well as for art direction with the latter. "Rain Man's" eighth is for original screenplay, a category not populated by any other contender for best picture.

Well, since "Mississippi Burning" can't share this Oscar, let's look at the other set of numbers that "Rain Man" has going for it: the dollar numbers. As the best seller among the top Oscar contenders — more than \$125 million at last report — it is clearly in position to impress Academy ballot-casters with its success.

Frankly, I'm as impressed as I think the Academy will be with all that success. As much as I liked the film and appreciated its fine art and craft, it's surprising that so many people have paid to see it.

WHAT DOES that say about "Rain Man"? That under Barry Levinson's direction, Dustin Hoffman was able to project a superb study of a mentally ill person, a characterization that everyone could watch comfortably. That Tom Cruise hit his person into that scheme of things and effectively presented the mainstream hustler in us all while also depicting the human ability to learn compassion when the chips are down.

If that's not enough, the other departments also are extremely well done, so "Rain Man" comes out on top as best picture of 1980.

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While she may prefer working on canvas, give Pam Jablowski a dozen denim jackets, a set of acrylic paints and a paint brush any day.

What started out as a fluke is now a happy pastime for the 25-year-old Birmingham resident. Her jackets can be found at the Rumors hair salon in West Bloomfield.

"Last February I went with my Dad to Boston and saw these really neat jackets in a cute boutique," she recalled. "What I saw was denim jackets with very little artistic work on them but with large price tags."

Needless to say, Jablowski came back home and began creating her own hand-painted denim jackets. She calls her work L'art de la Vogue/Creative Artistic Gard by Pam.

AND EVEN though she lacks any artistic ability, it hasn't stopped her from creating dozens of unusual jackets.

A friend suggested she try to get them into the beauty salon she goes to, and "when I took them over, a few of the hair stylists asked if I could make them one with their names painted on," she said.

"I did a really neat one for the manicurist," she said. "I had one hand coming up the bottom of the jacket and two hands coming down over the shoulders. I also painted each nail, some with sequins, others with stripes, flowers and other unusual designs."

Prices for already completed jackets range from \$125 to \$250. Custom art designs are \$75, if you bring your own jacket. Current creations sport the late Andy Warhol, street scenes and other abstract works of art. The painting takes between three and eight hours.

Jablowski uses acrylic paints that last for months without cracking or fading.

She has taken numerous art courses at the Center for Creative Studies and Oakland Community College. Although she enjoys painting, she said fashion photography is her latest goal.

While Jablowski aspires to be a photographer, Peggy Jo Marcuse has already been down that path.

In the late 1970s, the Huntington Woods resident owned an art and photography studio in Highland Park. There she designed album covers for Neil Diamond, Helen Reddy and Andy Williams.

NOWDAYS, Marcuse can be found in her living room where she creates "Happy Feet-Sneaker Art by Peggy Jo."

The fun footwear designs are hand painted gym shoes for boys, girls, men and women. To date, actress Lily Tomlin, composer Leonard Bernstein and Barbara Smith, wife of General Motors chairman Roger Smith, all have a pair.

The former elementary art school teacher started the endeavor last summer after experimenting with a pair for her youngest son.

"I've always been very creative," she said. "All through school, I was always keeping up with the latest trends — studding clothes, painting on them, tie dying things."

Today, her shoes can be ordered at Saks Fifth Avenue, Smart Alices and Twigs in Birmingham and through her personally.

Each pair is \$50 (\$45, if you bring your own) and come in their own personalized decorated shopping bag. All shoes are unique and have their own designs, patterns and names. Using special markers, she draws on flowers, dinosaurs, Indian prints and animals among other things.

"Each shoe is a work of art in itself," she said. "No two pairs are ever exactly alike."

Marcuse said her long range plan for Happy Feet is "to become the Mrs. Field's (chocolate chip cookies) of decorated gym shoes."

Possibly, the Mrs. Field's of hand-painted scarves is Gloria del Piano of Philadelphia.

Del Piano's chic silk scarves can be found at Kathryn Post, a new high fashion, upbeat accessory boutique in Southfield. The store carries high fashion jewelry, designed by Post and other jewelry designers.

DEL PIANO is a good friend of Post's who lives in California. Post is credited with designing the jewelry for such feature films as "Coming to America," "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" and numerous others.

The store's owner, Cathy Marriott, said she decided to showcase del Piano's scarves because "they're beautiful, feminine, fun and very stylish."

Marriott said that while hemlines, necklines and waistlines are forever changing in fashion, one thing remains constant, the need for scarves. Pieces of fabric to complement the fashions of the day.

Women have fulfilled their need for something to accompany their clothes with Gloria Piano scarves and evening wraps. The hand-painted designs are each unique and unique. The combination of original color schemes, designs, size and

Wearable art

Creations to cover from head to toe



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Gloria del Piano has come up with a hand-painted line of scarves in a choice of imported

silks and evening wraps and stoles made from fine fabrics like silk, velvete and taffetas.



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

Peggy Jo Marcuse guarantees that no two pairs of shoes are alike. She's the creator of "Happy Feet-Sneaker Art by Peggy Jo," fun footwear designs hand painted gym shoes for boys, girls, men and women.

choice of imported silks is rare in the U.S. marketplace.

The varied floral patterns, jungle scenes and abstract designs are all hand-painted by award-winning designer del Piano in vibrant and iridescent colors. Every design is different from the next. Each hem is hand-rolled. Pieces retail for \$250 to \$450.

Del Piano's other line is composed of evening wraps and stoles made from fine fabrics like silk, velvete and taffetas, all with original shapes and details, but the items aren't hand-painted.

The line also includes wool fashion scarves and more moderately priced

'My people are from other lives, theirs and mine. They appear as archetypes for people who are ambiguous in time, representing a universal person, a person whose actions and interactions are timeless.'

— Deborah Kashdan

because of actress Shirley McLain.

Miner's Den, with locations in Traverse City, Royal Oak and Franklin, carries numerous forms of crystals, ranging from lapus to quartz.

"It's said that some bring money, health and a better love life," he said. "People feel very strongly about their crystals."

Most people opt to place their crystals in ring or pendant settings — "They want to keep them close to their bodies."

Miner's Den can design and cast jewelry for all types of crystals. — "We can do more than just add little silver caps to crystals. We can do anything."

Prices for crystals start at \$5 and up, depending on the gem quality. Setting and design work prices depend on style. Simple mountings start at \$45.

day wear pieces that retail for \$100 to \$350 each.

Closer to home, jewelry designer Mike Showalter of Miner's Den creates some pretty unusual pieces of jewelry incorporating crystals.

"THERE USED to be a time when people just carried the crystals in their pockets," he said. "Today, more and more people are putting them in settings and wearing them as jewelry."

Showalter said crystals date back to the Egyptians who used them for therapeutic value. They regulated their popularity about two years ago