

# L.A. LIFE

Daily News

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"Bugsy" rates a 10  
Beatty epic leads the Oscar mob



Belle in "Beauty and the Beast"

## Highlights box:

- Streisand snubbed
- "Beauty," Singleton make history
- Category-by-category analysis
- List of nominees
- Full coverage begins on page 20

Annette Bening and Warren Beatty in "Bugsy," which led all films with 10 Oscar nominations.

## New tune

Any way you slice it, Popeil will sing about it

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## Fashion

Women right in style with that menswear look

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## Television

'Simpsons' again denied shot at comedy category

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## Hollywood

Geraldo delves into Natalie Wood's death

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## Music

John Mellencamp performs blah set to adoring fans

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Page 3 Talk Line

We're sure the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences folks are sleeping in this morning after Wednesday's 5:30 a.m. command performance.

But Page 3 Talk Line callers can't be caught napping.

You were right on top of the academy, castigating voters for slighting Barbra Streisand, heaping praise on "Beauty and the Beast," "JFK" and "The Prince of Tides."

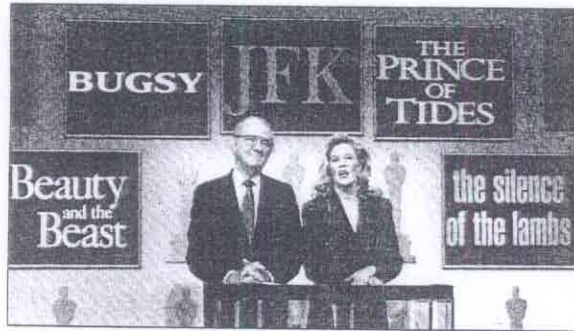
The list of nominees and post-announcement analysis by the experts can be found in L.A. Life's cover story, starting on Page 20.

But these are the people's choices. OK, academy, the people have spoken.

I think "JFK" was the best movie of '91, and I think that Gary Oldman would win an Oscar for his performance in it.

— Emily Fuller Sylmar

How can "The Prince of Tides" be so far Best Picture, Nick Nolte (for Best



Bob Halverson/Daily News

You have to get up pretty early in the morning to announce Oscar nominees. Academy president Karl Malden and actress Kathleen Turner give it their best shot.

Actor, (Kate Nelligan) for the Best Supporting Actress, and Barbra Streisand not be up for best director? Is this a popularity contest, or what?

— Colleen Garner West Van Nuys

I think "Beauty and the Beast" is the best movie of the year, and no one deserves to win more. My husband even went to see it twice.

— Reannie Rodriguez Sylmar

Who could can forget the heartwarming story of a conniving slimy drifter and his ever so cute "I could have played Annie on Broadway, if I had a better agent father" in "Curly Sue." The only downside of the picture was that Brian Dennehy wasn't in it.

— Harvey Fleckman North Hollywood

"JFK" represents the loss of innocence and the last of the great films. I think it deserves to win.

— Stella Perez Santa Clarita

The choices are pretty predictable, although I was a little surprised Streisand wasn't nominated. But with her personality toward fans, I'm happy she wasn't.

— Janet Anderson North Hollywood

Serial murders, government corruption, dysfunctional family life, the Mafia, and oh, yes, a fairy tale. Thanks for the beautiful selection, academy.

— Tim Plantanida North Hollywood

Sign of the times

Last year it was Desert Storm; this year it's Domestic Storm. We're talking wear shirts, and the latest wearable message says, "Domestic Storm — Buy American Made."

The colorful shirts sporting a patriotic age design are \$24.95 at California Cosmetics Inc., 2100 Lassen St., Chatsworth. Call (800) 366-8243.

And for those companies (we think General Motors and Boeing could use them) that order six dozen or more,



they'll put the company name on the back for no extra charge.

A stitch in time

Baby boomers will remember the joys of seventh-grade sewing class, but, alas, they're a thing of the past.

These days, it's up to you to teach the kids how to make an apron and gym bag.

However, if you have a 10-year-old, you're in luck. Pierce College Extension, 6201 Winnetka Ave., Woodland Hills, is offering a basic hand-sewing class for this age group only, beginning Saturday.

Participants will create their own stuffed animal or pillow, plus learn how to sew buttons.

Class time is 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. for six consecutive Saturdays, and the fee is \$36. To register, call (818) 719-6425.

— Barbara DeWitt

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

★ From the Police Reports column of the Glen Ellyn (Ill.) Press of Dec. 19: Eric Hoyt, 21, and Peter A. Thordason, 25, were charged with stealing Christmas trees from a food store lot.

However, the two denied they intended to steal the trees: "Thordason allegedly told police he wanted to see how long it would take him to run around the building carrying the tree while Hoyt timed him."

★ Michael Stohr, 26, was arrested for counterfeiting in Madison, Wis., in September after clerks at a printing supply store tipped off federal investigators about a man who had been browsing around.

Clerks said the man lingered in the store holding dollar bills up to a color chart and finally placing an order for a particular shade of green. ink. — Chuck Shepherd

GR8 PL8

Chicago baseball fans everywhere will recognize the plaintive pennant plea offered on this car, seen in a Ventura Boulevard parking lot in Woodland Hills:



We don't make this stuff up (honest!)

Here's a real excerpt from a trial transcript, collected by lawyer John Haugh and sent to us by Margie Boule of the Portland Oregonian.

We love this one. It reads like an Abbott and Costello routine:

Lawyer: Do you know whether your daughter has ever been involved in voodoo or occult?

Parent: No, I don't know if she practices.

Lawyer: Do you know if she buys publications of voodoo?

Parent: We both do.

Lawyer: Voodoo?

Parent: We do.

Lawyer: You do?

Parent: Yes, voodoo. I read a lot on it, yes.

— Doug Robarchek Charlotte Observer



Page 3 by Janet Firestein Noonan and Karin Dominello

# ARTS

& ENTERTAINMENT

## BEST BET



Italian piano virtuoso Beneditto Lupo, above, makes his Los Angeles debut at 8 tonight at the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena. As one of the fastest-rising stars in the piano world, Lupo won the bronze medal at the eighth Van Cliburn International Competition in 1989. Ambassador Auditorium is located at 300 W. Green St., Pasadena. (818) 304-8181 or (800) 286-2378.

## IN BRIEF

"Easy Chair, Electric Chair," by Anne Bray and Molly Cleator, is exhibited from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. today at the Santa Monica Museum of Art, Edgemar, 2437 Main St., Santa Monica, Calif. (310) 399-0433.

"Color — Two Perspectives," paintings by Michael Jacobs and Leeanne Lidz, are showcased from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. today at the USC Hillier Gallery, 3300 Hoover Blvd., Los Angeles. Call (213) 747-9135.

"Cosmic Fields, Dancing Particles," paintings by Gerard Costa, are on view from 1 to 5 p.m. today at the Tah Gallery, 1015 Mission St., South Pasadena. Call (818) 441-8848.

"Holocausts," paintings, drawings, sculpture and photography, may be viewed from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. today at installations One Gallery, 15821 Ventura Blvd., Encino. Call (818) 981-9422.

"Watercolor and Beyond," a group show of watercolors and collages, is on view from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. today at the Finegood Art Gallery, 22822 Vanowen St., West Hills. Call (818) 772-0809.

# What about Barbra?

'Tides' fails to sweep Streisand into directors' club

By Bob Strauss  
Daily News Film Writer

**W**hy can't the big boys play nice? Sure, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' directors branch had every reason to exclude Barbra Streisand from its five Oscar nomination slots.

"The Prince of Tides," when it wasn't awash in simple-minded, picture-postcard compositions, was usually ineptly framed; it had all the subtlety of an elephant stampede and the drippiest score in a movie year topped with syrupy soundtracks.

## COMMENT

But since when have those been grounds for an Oscar snub?

The academy usually interprets that kind of stuff as outstanding achievement, especially when it works for audiences, as "Prince of Tides" definitely has. It has for most academy voters, too; if they're going to give the thing seven other nominations, including one for Best Picture, why not acknowledge the sensibility responsible — Streisand's?

Pure sexism, that's why. No American woman has earned an academy directing nomination; the only female in history who has is Italy's Lina Wertmüller (for "Seven Beauties," 1976). And this year's omission is not simple, deserved Streisand-bashing (although she also lost out in the lead-actress category, where even "For the Boys'" Bette Midler got a berth).

If it were, why was Martha Coolidge, who directed Diane Ladd and Laura Dern to the first-ever mother-daughter tandem acting nominations in last year's excellent "Rambling Rose," passed over too? And Agnieszka Holland, whose celebrated "Europa, Europa" was squeezed out of the Best Foreign Film competition by arcane academy qualification rules and weird Teutonic attitudes (the Germans refused to submit it), only got mentioned for her adapted screenplay, not her direction.

The last time a director was so unceremoniously Streisanded for a film that garnered oodles of other nominations was two years ago, when they forgot that Bruce Beresford must have had some hand in Best Picture winner "Driving Miss Daisy's" success. But the more germane comparison with the current competition is the 1985 race, when Steven Spielberg was ignored for his laughable, but otherwise multino-



Was it pure sexism that kept Barbra Streisand from being nominated for a directing Oscar for "Prince of Tides"?

minated, attempt at adult filmmaking, "The Color Purple."

The academy's big-boys club obviously doesn't like little boys any more than girls; eternal child Spielberg was left out of the directing race again this year, although his "Hook" garnered a pretty good five minor nominations.

If a kid can convince them he's grown-up enough, though, the big boys will let him into the club. John Singleton, now 24, is not only the first black man to win a directing nomination; "Boyz n the Hood's" creator also is the youngest person in history to do so, breaking the record set by "Citizen Kane's" 26-year-old Orson Welles in 1941.

Similarly, "Beauty and the Beast," the first animated feature ever nominated for a Best Picture Oscar, did so in large part by convincing people it wasn't just kid stuff.

With its pretensions to literacy (the heroine reads cheap adventure stories, but at least she reads) and up-to-the-minute role reversals (drawn from a 400-year-old fairy tale), it has persuaded a lot of people that cartoons have matured — at least to the arrested adolescent le-

vel of contemporary Hollywood entertainment, anyway.

Their sexism aside, the directors acquitted themselves rather admirably this year. Besides Singleton and perennial nominees Barry Levinson (for nomination front-runner "Bugsy") and Oliver Stone (for media event "JFK"), the race includes two highly deserving, first-time competitors: "The Silence of the Lambs'" Jonathan Demme, a longtime critical favorite for such quirky charmers as "Something Wild" and "Melvin and Howard"; and "Thelma & Louise's" Ridley Scott, for the finest work of an until-now interesting but flawed career ("Alien," "Blade Runner").

Two films, "Beauty" and "Tides," are competing for Best Picture without running in the directing race ("Bugsy," "JFK" and "Lambs" are the other three). This is unusual — the academy tends to include, at most, just one non-directing nominee in the main event, if only to avoid snide comments in articles like this one.

But AMPAS had better start clenching its collective gut. At this point, it appears, another "Daisy" situation will occur on March 30;

## MULTIPLE NOMINEES

"Bugsy".....	10
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"Beauty and the Beast".....	6
"Thelma & Louise".....	6
"Terminator 2: Judgment Day".....	6
"The Fisher King".....	5
"Hook".....	5
"Backdraft".....	3
"Barton Fink".....	3
"Boyz n the Hood".....	2
"Cape Fear".....	2
"Fried Green Tomatoes".....	2
"Rambling Rose".....	2
"Star Trek VI".....	2

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we fearlessly predict that the heavier-themed pictures will cancel each other out vote-wise, and "Beauty and the Beast" will win the Oscar for Best Picture of 1991.

The acting categories came out pretty much as expected. The Midler and Dern-Ladd nominations were the biggest surprises, and those weren't exactly impossible to predict.

An even milder surprise was Robert De Niro's inclusion in the leading actor race. Not because the greatest actor of his generation doesn't essentially live in the category, but because his cheek-and-scenery chomping performance in "Cape Fear" was part of a slightly disreputable, upscale slasher film.

It was a feeble argument for exclusion in the first place. Nobody ever questioned Anthony Hopkins' certain nomination in the same category, although his toothsome "Lambs" turn served essentially the same purpose as De Niro's "Fear" frolics.

It's nice to see both Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon recognized for their delightful and complex portrayals of Thelma and Louise. If a double win ever was called for, their symbiotic interplay was a clarion trumpet.

It's also encouraging that "T&L's" creator, first-time writer Callie Khouri, got nominated for her original script. Which proves, I guess, that they will too let girls into the big-boys club — so long as they write women who act like men.

# Beatty is 'less lonely'

Daily News Staff and Wire Services

Here are some of this year's major Oscar contenders' reactions to Wednesday's nominations:

□□□  
 "It gives you a very good feeling to know that somebody gets the point. I don't think of it as a competitive thing. I think of Oscars in the same way that I think of film criticism: You appreciate people's interest in the movie because that's your work. It makes you feel less lonely.

"But there's nothing that compares with fatherhood. You don't want to pass it up."

— Warren Beatty, leading actor and co-producer of "Bugsy" and recent, first-time parent

□□□  
 "... Something is missing. It is truly shocking that Barbra Streisand was overlooked as a Best Director nominee for "The Prince of Tides." ... Obviously, we think this is Barbra's movie and that she deserves recognition for the absolutely vital role she played in every aspect of making this film. ... This oversight for a Best Director Academy Award nomination (is) particularly hard to accept."

— Mark Canton, chairman of Columbia Pictures

□□□  
 "I feel fine and I am grateful. I didn't anticipate it. The work is most important to me. You do your best in every picture. Yes, I am grateful."

— Nick Nolte, leading actor in "The Prince of Tides"

"I'm very pleased to be honored with all of these wonderful actors, but I'm most pleased that Geena and I have been honored together. I never would have gotten in the car without her."

— Susan Sarandon, co-star (with Geena Davis) of "Thelma & Louise"

□□□  
 "It's great just to be recognized by people I look up to. I think it's great for me. It's a great start for what I think is going to be a really long career."

(On how he found out:) "I was half asleep (in a Las Vegas hotel room) with my head on the pillow. The first name they called was mine, and I sprang up. And we got writer, too. I said, 'Wow, I'm just starting.' I'm just in awe. If somebody had told me three years ago this was going to happen, I'd have said they were crazy. But, wow!"

— John Singleton, 24-year-old writer-director of "Boyz n the Hood"

## BEST PICTURE

**Nominees:** "Beauty and the Beast," "Bugsy," "JFK," "The Prince of Tides," "The Silence of the Lambs."

**Surprises:** None, though "Beauty and the Beast" is the first animated film to be nominated for a Best Picture Oscar, and the nomination for "The Silence of the Lambs" proves for the first time in a long while that the academy actually can remember films released before fall.

**Overlooked:** "Thelma & Louise" had an outside chance, especially given its success elsewhere in the nominations. So did "Boyz N The Hood," though its nomination would have been more of a surprise, namely that the academy has a genuine commitment to socially important films.

**Comment:** There has been much discussion suggesting that since there has been no clear Oscar front-runner, it was a crummy movie year. But maybe the tight competition suggests that there were a greater-than-average number of quality movies — don't expect any major sweeps this year. But, yeah, overall it was a pretty crummy movie year.

**Prediction:** "Bugsy" led the



Warren Beatty, who was nominated for Best Actor, and Annette Bening, who did not receive an Oscar nomination, starred in "Bugsy," which is in the running for the Best Picture award.

pack with 10 nominations and won a Golden Globe, but it is the least successful film of the five nominees at the box office, and the academy does pay attention to that. "Beauty and the

Beast" seems to be the only film that doesn't have a vocal group of detractors. And honoring it would be a good way for the academy not only to show it is not too stuffy to break from tra-

dition, but also to pay tribute to the late Howard Ashman and finally address the growing issue of AIDS. (Ashman died as a result of AIDS.)

— David Kronke

## BEST DIRECTOR



**Jonathan Demme** "The Silence of the Lambs" **Oliver Stone** "JFK" **Barry Levinson** "Bugsy" **John Singleton** "Boyz N the Hood" **Ridley Scott** "Thelma & Louise"

**Nominees:** Jonathan Demme for "The Silence of the Lambs" (first nomination); Barry Levinson for "Bugsy" (second directing nomination, sixth overall; he won in 1988 for "Rain Man"); Ridley Scott for "Thelma & Louise" (first nomination); John Singleton for "Boyz N the Hood" (first nomination); Oliver Stone for "JFK" (third directing nomination, 10th overall; won for "Platoon" in 1986 and "Born on the Fourth of July" in 1989, and for Best Original Screenplay for "Midnight Express" in 1978).

**Surprises:** Singleton — the only nominee here not also nominated for the Directors Guild of America award — was the only one not considered a sure thing. He is the first black to be nominated and replaces none other than Orson Welles as the youngest man (23 when the film was released) to get a Best Director nomination. Welles was 26 when he was nominated for "Citizen Kane."

**Overlooked:** Barbra Streisand's omission for "The Prince of

Tides" is the most glaring of the major nominations and proves the academy still seems reluctant to nominate a woman. Other notable omissions — Terry Gilliam ("The Fisher King"), Martin Scorsese ("Cape Fear"), David Cronenberg ("Naked Lunch") and Joel Coen ("Barton Fink") — were dark horses to begin with.

**Comment:** There seems to be some sort of unwritten law that at least four of the Best Director nominees must be white guys. But the fact that all nominees did solid work makes it harder to grouse about Streisand's omission.

**Prediction:** It is easier to predict who won't win. Stone already has won twice and isn't exactly the most popular guy around these days. Levinson has won too recently and some folks consider his film too chilly. Demme's film is too macabre, and "Thelma & Louise's" greatest strengths lie outside the direction. The DGA winner traditionally wins the Oscar, so that leaves out Singleton. Which leaves ... wait, let's start over. Oh, heck, how about Levinson, for elegant, sophisticated entertainment?

— David Kronke

### BEST ACTOR



**De Niro** "Cape Fear"  
**Williams** "The Fisher King"  
**Beatty** "Bugsy"  
**Hopkins** "Silence of the Lambs"  
**Nolte** "Prince of Tides" Associated Press

**Nominees:** Warren Beatty for "Bugsy" (fourth acting nomination, 12th overall; won Best Director Oscar in 1981 for "Reds"); Robert De Niro for "Cape Fear" (sixth nomination, won Best Supporting Actor in 1974 for "The Godfather Part II" and Best Actor in 1980 for "Raging Bull"); Anthony Hopkins for "The Silence of the Lambs" (first nomination); Nick Nolte for "The Prince of Tides" (first nomination); Robin Williams for "The Fisher King" (third nomination).

**Surprises:** Only that Karl Malden kept referring to a film called "The King Fisher" while announcing the nominees. Otherwise, business as usual.

**Overlooked:** John Turturro ("Barton Fink"), Jeff Bridges ("The Fisher King"), Joe Mantegna ("Homicide"), Sir John Gielgud ("Prospero's Books") and/or River Phoenix ("My Own Private Idaho") might have all squeaked in had the academy voters been a little adventurous.

**Comment:** Big stars in high-profile movies. Unimaginative, but, from the academy's viewpoint, unimpeachable.

**Prediction:** Even the film's many detractors agree that Nolte, in an uncharacteristic role, gave a sensitive, moving performance. But Beatty runs a very close second.

— David Kronke

### BEST ACTRESS



**Foster** "Silence of the Lambs"  
**Midler** "For the Boys"  
**Davis** "Thelma & Louise"  
**Sarandon** "Thelma & Louise"  
**Dern** "Rambling Rose" Associated Press

**Nominees:** Geena Davis for "Thelma & Louise" (second nomination, won Best Supporting Actress for "The Accidental Tourist" in 1988); Laura Dern for "Rambling Rose" (first nomination); Jodie Foster for "The Silence of the Lambs" (third nomination, won Best Actress in 1988 for "The Accused"); Bette Midler for "For the Boys" (second nomination); Susan Sarandon for "Thelma & Louise" (second nomination).

**Surprises:** Dern has to be considered a mild surprise because "Rambling Rose" was a modestly marketed film.

**Overlooked:** Mary Stuart Masterson was the heart of the most intriguing segments of "Fried Green

Tomatoes," which only received two nominations despite a late groundswell of support. Annette Bening ("Bugsy") had a shot at a nomination; Jennifer Jason Leigh ("Rush"); Alison Steadman ("Life Is Sweet"); and Irene Jacob ("The Double Life of Veronique") were critical favorites but obvious long shots.

**Comment:** This is the first time in a long while that the nominees all portrayed strong, assertive female characters.

**Prediction:** Davis would be a shoo-in if she had not won so recently. So let's go with Sarandon, a versatile veteran who has gone too long unrewarded.

— David Kronke

### BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR



**Keitel** "Bugsy"  
**Kingsley** "Bugsy"  
**Lerner** "Barton Fink"  
**Palance** "City Slickers"  
**Jones** "JFK" Associated Press

**Nominees:** Tommy Lee Jones for "JFK" (first nomination); Harvey Keitel for "Bugsy" (first nomination); Ben Kingsley for "Bugsy" (second nomination, won Best Actor in 1982 for "Gandhi"); Michael Lerner for "Barton Fink" (first nomination); Jack Palance for "City Slickers" (third nomination).

**Surprises:** Except for Keitel and possibly Palance, none of the other nominations were considered foregone conclusions. It was heartening to see that Lerner's private campaign for a nomination paid off.

**Overlooked:** You name it — Samuel L. Jackson for "Jungle Fever"; Larry Fishburne for "Boyz n

the Hood"; Derek Jacobi for "Dead Again"; Michael Jeter for "The Fisher King"; Steve Martin for "Grand Canyon"; Andrew Strong for "The Commitments"; John Goodman for "Barton Fink"; Ned Beatty for "Hear My Song," etc., etc.

**Comment:** This category could have gone in any number of directions, and, unsurprisingly, it went in the least interesting direction possible, predominantly honoring big-budget, high-profile films.

**Prediction:** It is probably the most pedestrian turn of the bunch, but Palance just might win for sentimental reasons. If not, Keitel's got a good shot.

— David Kronke

### BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS



**Tandy** "Fried Green Tomatoes"  
**Ladd** "Rambling Rose"  
**Ruehl** "The Fisher King"  
**Lewis** "Cape Fear"  
**Nelligan** "Prince of Tides" Associated Press

**Nominees:** Diane Ladd for "Rambling Rose" (third nomination); Juliette Lewis for "Cape Fear" (first nomination); Kate Nelligan for "The Prince of Tides" (first nomination); Mercedes Ruehl for "The Fisher King" (first nomination); Jessica Tandy for "Fried Green Tomatoes" (second nomination, won Best Actress Oscar in 1989 for "Driving Miss Daisy").

**Surprises:** Ladd — a far-left-field nominee last year for "Wild at Heart" — is a mild surprise once again, given the high-profile projects she is competing against. Dern's and Ladd's nominations mark the first time that a mother and daughter were nominated in the same year. And

though Tandy was touted as a Best Actress nominee, the academy placed her in this category.

**Overlooked:** Judy Davis ("Barton Fink" or "Naked Lunch") and Amanda Plummer ("The Fisher King") — or even Nelligan for "Frankie and Johnny," where she stole the show — generally were considered long shots.

**Comment:** Same old story — lousy women's roles in an overall disappointing year make this a fairly weak category.

**Prediction:** After the Golden Globes, Ruehl's on a roll.

— David Kronke

