
From: Peggy Siegal [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 3, 2012 4:32 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: The Oscar backstory that can not be told...or emailed to others.

Here is my Oscar wrap up only sent to a few close friends....Steven, let me know what you think...and do not think less of me for writing about you.

Harvey Weinstein is a genius.

He kept "The Artist" campaign going from a May premiere in Cannes all the way to February.

His team told him he could win Best Picture back in France but he had to see Eastwood, Spielberg, Scorsese, Daldry, Payne and Fincher's work. We had just seen Woody Allen and Terry Malick's films in Cannes, which were contenders for nominations, but not slam dunk winners..

Any one of those six brilliant directors could walk away with the gold...and guess what? None of them handed in a film good enough to beat "The Artist" nor could their studios run an extended convincing campaign.

"The Artist" is just a delightful clever highly entertaining film...that was the best of a weak year.

Eastwood was out of the race very early. The make-up man undermining Leo and the production designer and/or the director forgetting to light the night-scenes did not help.

"Tree of Life" has the pedigree of mysterious Malick and the Palm d'Or, but never touched the American audience.

"Midnight in Paris", Woody's highest grossing film ever, could have won the Oscar in Harvey's hands with Owen Wilson working and Woody just showing up at the Oscars. If Woody had allowed Sony Classics to show voters the new 3-hour PBS documentary on his 40 films, he could have won best film. The documentary shows you Woody's astonishing depth of talent. Instead, Woody insisted voters find the documentary on TV Thanksgiving weekend. No one noticed.=20 Harvey would have secretly slipped the dvd under every voter's door.

Best Screenplay was the least the Academy could do for the recluse.

How Marty could spend 170 million on a failed visual masterpiece with no pacing is a crime. His DP (who won an Oscar) failed him by shooting and enabling endless tracking shots that stalled the story. The first 25 minutes could have been 5. Film did not pick up pace till second act. Marty personally campaigned endlessly as the revered professor of film history and a new authority on 3-D. Always bringing his adored Helen with him, who's physical condition tragically weakened everyday made everyone very sad.

Spielberg's "War Horse" has fantastic combat footage in the middle and farmhouse bookends that are too corny and slow. He told Disney to set up "epic"=film making and evoked John Ford and David Lean as his inspiration which did not register with voters. I saw the film five times and fell for it. The small amount of people who also saw the play were visually stuck with the image of theatrical puppets and would not accept anyone's cinematic vision= Kathy Kennedy confessed to me last Thursday night in LA at The Hollywood=Reporter's Oscar nominee party that she and Steven ultimately blamed themselves for casting Jeremy Irvine who was too old, too pretty and could carry=the film....completely missing the schmaltz factor and length that did the= in. Ultimately, one boy and one horse in a brutal war did not ring true.=20

Daldry's film came out too late to set up his drama properly. A few found *9=1* too painful to watch and the kid's affliction disturbing. I personally adore Daldry and think he is extraordinarily talented. He has been nominated=four out of four, a monumental feat few have accomplished.

"The Descendants" was actually number one or two to win for weeks. Their campaign fell apart after Xmas by over exposing George and sending a confusing message on tv spots...first showing Clooney crying over the dying wife that was not convincing and then showing him running around in flip flops indicating a comedy. They never recognized that the key was selling Clooney as=a father....a roll on and off the screen he never played before. As smart as George is about his own career he let bad advice get in the way...and he=also split votes with Brad. George has never won SAG in the 13 years he has been nominated starting with *ER* due to the fact starving actors think he=has it all. George was visibly shocked and hurt when he lost SAG to an unknown French man. Clooney's campaign then became a vote to make it up to him= He is now moving into directing, where he is very talented and will be taken= seriously. Next film is a thriller about Nazis stealing/hiding art.

George's posing with yet another gorgeous, very nice, bombshell ex-wrestler= Stacy for months did not help his quest for gold either because every two=years there is a new girl.

My heart told me George had a chance to win Best Actor on his popularity. My mind told me voter's take evaluating performances seriously and they honestly didn't think he deserved this particular acting award. Although Clooney knew going into the Kodak Theater that it was a tight race, it was hard for him to lose to Jean Dujardin, who barely speaks English.

Also annoying to Clooney is that Jean is a one film American sensation of the moment. Jean has no immediate intention to work in the states, is not determined to learn our language and is already filming in Europe.

Dujardin, is wildly popular in his country but not well liked by some who know him. Apparently he is a womanizer. (Odd for a French matinee idol) I found him charming...but of course my working contact was brief encounters since September.....I think the fact the Jean is the George Clooney of France did not help the real George deal with the race.

Fincher's remake had a moment of Oscar buzz just as nominating ballots went=out and Rooney Mara was sprinkled with star dust...knocking beloved Tilda =winton out. Rooney, the elegant chic ingenue did not have the charm of Audrey Hepburn on the red carpet and her sullen appearances turned the press =off.

Harvey worried for months about how to get Meryl the Oscar when he had promised it to Michelle Williams for her sensational Marilyn. As much as Meryl=wanted it, she could only bring herself to do limited publicity for a bad =ilm.

On "The Help" Disney overplayed the race card with Viola, over exposing her= She gave the same heart wrenching speech about her family of sharecropper= and maids, crying on cue since September. The voters finally tired of this especially when Viola went on Letterman 24 hours after losing the Bafta to Meryl and asking Dave if he is a member of the academy and can he please =ote for her. I immediately emailed Harvey that she finally blew it.

Harvey needed one more hat trick to push Meryl in and at the last minute set out the message that she shockingly hasn't won in 29 years. Literally the= ballots were still on the voter's desks on Monday, President's Day. TV spot= and columnists got the word out. In a day, voters instantly switched their= love to Streep who brilliantly carried every scene.

Every studio made a huge effort to win this year by taking a page from Harvey's play book and working their talent to the bone. They all ultimately failed to really ignite the emotions of the voters. That is the key, Harvey'= take on feelings, which is so ironic coming from a man who is so hard on =is own help.

And in the end, it's Woody who resigned from the Academy years ago saying it's crazy to pit talent against each other to evaluate each others work....=hat really says it all.

This is exactly how it all happened. Now I have to write my 6th Oscar Diar= and can not use a word of this very candid analysis.

xoxo Peggy

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