

Is Hollywood acting its age? Award winners announced for "Movies for Grownups"™

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Winners of the sixth annual "Movies for Grownups" Awards announced; Kathy Bates and Martin Sheen to host Feb. 6th awards gala in Los Angeles

AARP The Magazine, the world's largest circulation magazine, today announced the winners of its sixth annual Movies for Grown-ups Awards. From Best Movie to Breakaway Accomplishment to Best Actor and Actress, AARP The Magazine's Movies for Grown-ups Awards honors a range of cinematic accomplishments in 13 categories, all of which are featured in the March/April issue, available February 1, 2007.

Top honors went to *The Last King of Scotland* -- an unblinking look at the rise and brutal reign of Uganda strongman Idi Amin -- which was named this year's Best Movie for Grownups.

"It's great that Hollywood is finally realizing that actresses 50 and over can be as compelling, fierce, and sexy as stars half their age," said Bill Newcott, film editor of AARP The Magazine and host of AARP's weekly "Movies for Grownups" radio show. "With nearly half of all movie tickets bought by people 40 and over, I hope we'll continue to see more great parts for veteran actresses, along with more grownup romance stories. And if people want to credit the Movies for Grownups awards with raising that awareness, well, we're not about to argue with them."

Donald Sutherland was awarded Best Actor 50 and Over for his role as a defiant Parkinson's patient in *Aurora Borealis*. And Helen Mirren, starring as Queen Elizabeth in the days surrounding the death of Princess Diana in *The Queen*, was named Best Actress 50 and Over. Clint Eastwood took the top honor as best director for his two-part World War II saga, *Flags of Our Fathers* and *Letters from Iwo Jima*.

The 2007 Movies For Grown-Ups Award winners will be presented with the coveted La Chaise d'Or trophy -- The Golden Chair -- a whimsical trophy in the shape of a Barcalounger, at a private gala awards dinner held at the Hotel Bel-Air in Los Angeles on February 6, 2007. The event will be hosted by Oscar winner Kathy Bates (*Misery*) and Golden Globe winner Martin Sheen (*The West Wing*), with Blythe Danner, Louise Fletcher, and Lassie among those confirmed to attend and accept awards. Terry Bradshaw (*Failure to Launch*) will accept his award via video.

The 2007 Movies For Grownups (R) Award winners are as follows:

Best Movie for Grownups: *The Last King of Scotland*

With Forest Whittaker's ferocious performance as Idi Amin, director Kevin Macdonald challenges us to stare into the face of evil-and makes us hope we'd never be seduced by the lure of proximity to power.

Runners-Up:

-- Aurora Borealis: This intimate portrait of a devoted older couple and their struggling grandson is the most life-affirming movie featuring a Parkinson's patient you'll ever see.

-- Flags of Our Fathers and Letters from Iwo Jima: Amid the carnage, director Clint Eastwood discovers the shared humanity of World War II foes.

-- The Illusionist: This magical mystery unfolds with the deliberate patience of a confounding card trick.

-- Little Miss Sunshine: This is the funniest movie of the year.

-- The Queen: This terrifically authentic look at what happens behind closed throne-room doors allows us to better understand Queen Elizabeth II's stoicism after the death of Princess Diana.

Best Actor: Donald Sutherland, Aurora Borealis

He plays a prisoner of Parkinson's Disease with such smoldering fire that even as his character disappears into himself he remains defiant, compassionate, and surprisingly triumphant.

Runners-Up:

-- Gabriel Byrne, Wah-Wah: As a divorced dad living in Africa with a deeply troubled son, he's a man cast adrift at home and in the world.

-- Samuel L. Jackson, Freedomland: Beneath rumpled clothes and an ill-fitting hat, he brings new life to one of the movies' most durable characters, the world-weary cop.

-- Peter O'Toole, Venus: The "ick" factor could be high in this tale of an aging thespian smitten with a twentysomething cutie, but O'Toole's charm renders him bulletproof.

-- Jack Nicholson, *The Departed*: As a bad-to-the-bone hood he's simultaneously irresistible and repelling, this year's poster boy for casual brutality.

Best Actress: Helen Mirren, *The Queen*

Subtly revealing the passions of the passionately reserved, she commands the screen as a Queen torn between a thousand years of tradition and expectations of a monarch in the Media Age.

Runners-Up:

-- Judi Dench, *Notes on a Scandal*: She delivers shivers as a lovesick, yet cold-blooded, stalker.

-- Catherine O'Hara, *For Your Consideration*: As an actress facing the remote possibility of an Oscar nod, she moves from aching funny to heartbreakingly poignant.

-- Meryl Streep, *The Devil Wears Prada*: Great acting as great comedy -- she seems to be playing her hard-boiled fashion exec for laughs ... until she peels back the layers of sorrow and desperation that define her character.

-- Maggie Smith, *Keeping Mum*: She brings unexpected warmth to her role as a murderous housekeeper.

Best Director: Clint Eastwood, *Flags of Our Fathers* and *Letters from Iwo Jima*

Monumental in conception and achievement, these two films chronicle first the American, then the Japanese experience in one of World War II's bloodiest battles. Beyond a landmark personal achievement, together they comprise two of the most nuanced and striking war movies ever made.

Runners-Up:

-- Stephen Frears, *The Queen*: It could have been played as a burlesque or with mock solemnity, but Frears gets his sneak peek at Britain's Royal Family just right.

-- Peter Greengrass, *United 93*: With mind-blowing restraint, he navigates the torrent of emotion and pain from 9/11 to create the bravest movie of the year.

-- Bill Condon, *Dreamgirls*: He takes a 1980s musical set in the 1960s and infuses it with new life.

-- Martin Scorsese, *The Departed*: In pursuit of his first Oscar, he pours his lifeblood into this mind-bending cops-and-crooks story -- and sheds a few gallons of other people's too.

Best Screenwriter: William Broyles, Jr. and Paul Haggis, *Flags of Our Fathers*

Two of the screen's most accomplished writers wrangle this complex vision of Iwo Jima, depicting both the bloody battle for a rock in the Pacific and the struggle back home to sustain Americans' support for the war effort.

Runners-Up:

-- Susan Seidelman, David Kramer, and Florence Seidelman, *The Boynton Beach Club*: A boldly written romantic comedy about love and sex among the 60- plus.

-- Christopher Guest and Eugene Levy, *For Your Consideration*: Their cast improvised the lines, but the writers constructed the skeleton of this story, a fable about the persistence of dreams.

-- Richard Russo, *Keeping Mum*: Serial killers don't often make for great comedy, but Russo is a master of that unique British brand of dark humor.

-- Shawn Salvo, *Catch a Fire*: The daughter of anti-apartheid activists, she brings authenticity to this tale of South African terrorism.

Breakaway Accomplishment: Terry Bradshaw, Failure to Launch

-- "I am not a movie star!" Bradshaw protested on the AARP Movies for Grownups radio show. Still, after his turn as a riotously exasperated dad with a stay-at-home son, he may have to reconsider.

Best Documentary: 51 Birch Street

Director Doug Block's mother dies. Then Dad marries his secretary from 40 years ago. Then Block finds Mom's secret diaries. And then things really get interesting. The central question: How much do you really want to know about your parents?

Runners-Up:

-- 49-Up: Michael Apter's every-seven-years look at a group of British men and women finds them all facing middle age.

-- An Inconvenient Truth: The biggest thaw of all is in Al Gore, who's disarmingly charming in this global warming lecture film.

-- Mr. Conservative: Goldwater on Goldwater: The one-time presidential candidate's granddaughter, C.C. Goldwater, takes a fresh and surprisingly honest look at a man who changed American politics.

-- Wordplay: Crossword puzzles are exciting. Really.

Best Intergenerational Movie: Akeelah and the Bee

Some were skeptical about a movie produced by Starbucks. But if at times it's a big, sweet Venti Caramel Macchiato of a film, it's also a compelling portrait of generations pulling together to help an 11-year-old girl go from ghetto to greatness in a national spelling bee.

Runners-Up:

-- Aurora Borealis: Solemn themes of depression, dementia, and suicide permeate this story of a young man's last-ditch effort to relate to his grandfather.

-- Brooklyn Lobster: The Giorgio clan (headed by Danny Aiello and Jane Curtin) struggle to save the family seafood shop.

-- Little Miss Sunshine: A splintered family heading west for a beauty pageant puts the fun into dysfunctional.

-- Quinceanera: Rejected by their families, a pregnant Latino teen and her gay cousin find shelter in the Echo Park, Los Angeles, home of their great-granduncle.

Best Grownup Love Story: Blythe Danner and Tom Wilkinson, *The Last Kiss*

It was aimed at the young adult market, but the heart and soul of this romantic comedy starring youngsters Zach Braff and Jacinda Barrett was the nuanced relationship between the ingenue's parents. Deeply troubled themselves, each parent has a heart-to-heart talk with the youngsters, explaining the complex nature-and deepest rewards-of grown-up love.

Runners-Up:

-- Louise Fletcher/Donald Sutherland, *Aurora Borealis*

-- Sally Kellerman/Len Cariou, *The Boynton Beach Club*

-- Kristin Scott Thomas/Rowan Atkinson, *Keeping Mum*

-- Naomi Watts/Edward Norton, *The Painted Veil*

Other Nomination Categories:

Best Comedy for Grownups: Little Miss Sunshine
Runners-Up:

-- Failure to Launch

-- For Your Consideration

-- Keeping Mum

-- Thank You For Smoking

Foreign Language Film: The Lives of Others (Germany)
Runners-Up:

-- Le Petit Lieutenant (France)

-- The Syrian Bride (Israel)

-- Volver (Spain)

-- Water (India)

Best Movie Time Capsule: Hollywoodland (1950s)
Runners-Up:

-- Bobby (1968)

-- Flags of Our Fathers (1940s)

-- Glory Road (1960s)

-- The Queen (1997)

Best Movie for Grownups Who Refuse to Grow Up: Lassie
Runners-Up:

-- Charlotte's Web

-- Nacho Libre

-- Nanny McPhee

-- Night at the Museum

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