



The Unknown Oscars

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Oscar night is a night of many pleasures. There's the surefire hilarity of the musical performances. The righteous certainty that the least deserving film will win Best Picture. The unbridled delight of the world's most beautiful women engaging in a cleavage contest.

Better than all those things, though, is when the audience pretends to show interest as a movie no one's seen wins an award no one cares about. While Martin Scorsese will probably leave this year's ceremony with another acceptance speech in his suit pocket for his dry cleaner to dispose of, Corinne Marinnan and Eric Simonson both picked up statuettes in 2006 for their short documentary *A Note of Triumph: The Golden Age of Norman Corwin*. (To be fair, my friends who saw the documentary really enjoyed it. Of course, those would be my imaginary friends.)

To celebrate this obscurity, we at *FLYMF* have taken one real nominee from the filler categories—documentary feature, documentary short, foreign language feature, short film (live action), and short film (animated)—and surrounded it with three fake ones. Your challenge, should you choose to accept it, is to identify the genuine article from the descriptions provided. Should you succeed, we commend you on your good taste. Should you fail, well, we hope you can front us some venture capital because we might have an Academy Award winner on our hands!

And here are...your nominees:

Short Film (Live Action)

West Bank Story

Full Synopsis: A musical comedy set in the fast-paced, fast-food world of competing falafel stands on the West Bank.

Overdue

Full Synopsis: A visit to the library has a man discover that, instead of letting him check out books, his library card instead lets him relive past memories.

The Pastor of Kansas

Full Synopsis: The Scarecrow, Tin Man, and Cowardly Lion are all sucked into a tornado and delivered to Kansas, where they're persecuted for violating Biblical literalism.

Razor Burn

Full Synopsis: Disorder results when all the men in a small town decide to shave their beards on the same morning, resulting in no one being recognizable.

Documentary Feature

Full Nelson

Film Synopsis: Tammy Hargrove, a massage therapist from Baker, California, balances single motherhood with martial-arts training as she seeks to break the Ultimate Fighting Championship's gender barrier. Dreams clash with reality when fight organizers conspire to exclude her from qualifying tournaments and longtime boyfriend Trevor Burton begins to harbor doubts about being with a woman who seems born to fight.

Deliver Us From Evil

Film Synopsis: Ex-priest Oliver O'Grady becomes the face of the child-molestation scandal that has rocked the Catholic Church in this examination of pedophilia among priests and the Church's high-level attempts to suppress it. Through interviews with O'Grady and several of his victims, a portrait emerges of a molester still unwilling to accept the full measure of his own guilt.

The Best Is Yet To Come

Film Synopsis: As sectarian warfare rages throughout Iraq, Musharraf Sarim, a Shiite laborer from Basra, pursues his dream of becoming a successful lounge singer. Sequined suits, faulty sound systems and the constant threat of the nation's roadways all interact to form a portrait of how normality can persevere in wartime.

Checkmate

Film Synopsis: Oscar Mayerson, an autistic man in middle age, finds the expression he is unable to express verbally in the creation of exquisite, handcrafted wood carvings. As he embarks on his most ambitious endeavor—staging the world's largest chess game using towering pieces of his own design—we gain a closer look at the man's immense talent and profound limitations.

Short Film (Animated)

First to the Finish Line

Full synopsis: As day turns to dusk, the characters from a child's favorite storybook conduct a race to determine which one will be featured in the night's story.

The Jolly Roger

Full Synopsis: Pirates brave the peril of the Sea of Dreams to find sunken treasure located beneath the depths.

Maestro

Full Synopsis: A singing bird sits in front of a dressing room mirror as a mechanical arm prepares him for his grand performance.

The Nod Squad

Full Synopsis: A sports fanatic's bobblehead collection comes to life to play their games while he's sleeping.

Documentary Short

Two Hands

Film Synopsis: When pianist Leon Fleisher lost the use of his right hand in 1965, he began a decades-long struggle to find a cure for his mysterious ailment while reshaping his career to accommodate his loss.

The Lone Eagle

Film Synopsis: Double amputee Richard Hornswog attempts to reenact Charles Lindbergh's 1927 crossing of the Atlantic with a Spirit of Saint Louis replica modified to fly via hand controls.

Full Swap

Film Synopsis: The Kinsey Connection, a swingers club in Hartford, Connecticut was founded nearly 30 years ago by a group of six couples, each of whom remain active participants today, challenging our stereotypes about love, lust and aging.

Hitting Your Mark

Film Synopsis: The Straight Shot Foundation endeavors to help troubled inner-city youth turn their lives around through the discipline of competitive archery, but while some teens flourish under the program's structure, others find old habits hard to break.

Foreign Language Film

A Unified Voice (South Korea)

Film Synopsis: The arrival of a karaoke machine at a distant outpost in the DMZ provides soldiers on both sides of the border with relief from the tensions that threaten to engulf them. Conflict turns to camaraderie as each side sends their best singers forward to compete for the karaoke crown.

After the Wedding (Denmark)

Full Synopsis: When Jacob, the head of an Indian orphanage, returns to Copenhagen at the request of a potential benefactor, he is persuaded by the man to attend his daughter's wedding. There, he meets the donor's wife, Helene; an encounter that reawakens difficult memories from Jacob's past.

Sergei Knows It All! (Russia)

Film Synopsis: Impoverished by the dissolution of the Soviet Union, former gulag town Magadan rallies under the leadership of Sergei, an entrepreneur who develops the idea of selling authentic "camp visits" to thrill-seeking tourists. When a mining company seeks to build a new facility on top of the camp's reeducation center, the town has to rally together to save their livelihood.

Call Me (Kenya)

Film Synopsis: Given responsibility for his village's satellite phone, Entubu, a young Masai male, is forced to cover up the fact that he's used all of the phone's minutes talking to a beautiful young lady visiting from Nairobi. As his lies begin to pile up, Entubu is forced to dig deeper as he endeavors to keep the truth from the villagers and get the girl.

Answers: 1, 2, 3, 1, 2