

ENTERTAINMENT

Markham Movie Scene

Significant movies often overlooked

By TOM NEWALL
How did you manage in the Oscars? Did you select the Best Picture? Best Actor? You remember my choices; if I look over past ceremonies I find that many great favorites were overlooked.

A Place In The Sun, George Steven's splendid recreation of Theodore Drieser's novel An American Tragedy, failed to displace An American In Paris in 1951. In 1952,

Opry North taped here

The CFGM Opry North Show will be taped at the Sherwood Park Steakhouse and Tavern on Sunday, April 17.

The tavern was changed from disco to country and western at the beginning of March in an attempt to increase its business. Rick Johnson, co-ordinator of the new format and a country singer, said the Opry North Show is recorded every month in different locations throughout Canada. "We were very lucky to get it in Markham," he said.

The show will be broadcast live on CFGM and will be played once each week during the next three weeks.

The two-hours of live entertainment will include performances by Marie Bottrell, Gary Sunmison and Stage Coach, Myrna Lori, Cliff Edwards, Karen McCall, Shotgun and Rick Johnson and the County Band.

The show will run from 4-7 p.m. and costs \$10 per person, including a roast beef dinner. Tickets are limited and are available at The Sherwood and Cosmos Music in Richmond Hill.

On April 24, the Rick Johnson County Jamboree Show will be taped at the Sherwood. Mr. Johnson said the show will be a pilot for either CBC or Global TV.

Singin' In The Rain, considered by many today to be the finest film musical ever produced, failed even to be nominated, while The Greatest Show On Earth, Cecil B. DeMille's circus affair was named Best Picture. Bonnie and Clyde (1967) and Citizen Kane (1941), both milestone films, missed out!

Then, again, several years saw great features released at once. In 1939, Gone With The Wind, one of Hollywood's classics succeeded, but are you aware of the competition—The Wizard Of Oz, Stagecoach, Dark Victory, Mr. Smith Goes To Washington, Wuthering Heights?

Or how about 1942—Mrs. Miniver being selected ahead of the magnificent Ambersons, Yankee Doodle Dandy, For Whom The Bell Tolls or The More The Merrier? Can you imagine having to cast a vote under these circumstances? Once you begin to examine the statistics you realize why some splendid films and screen performances are passed by.

Much the same thing applies to the performers as well. Gloria Swanson's unforgettable Norma Desmond in Sunset Boulevard and Bette Davis' greatest role, that of Margo Channing, the Broadway star of All About Eve were not enough to stop Judy Holiday from scoring in her first movie, Born Yesterday, in 1950.

Deborah Kerr, one of the screen's most versatile performers, has been nominated six times, most noticeably as the torrid adulteress in From Here To Eternity in 1953, but has never received a statuette.

Similarly Montgomery Clift has etched an unforgettable series of performances in such films as The Search (1948), A Place In The Sun (1951), From Here To Eternity (1953), and Judgment At Nuremberg (1961), but his award collection never included an Oscar.

Nor did Marlon Brando for his definitive Stanley Kowalski in 1951's Streetcar Named Desire. And did you realize that Alfred Hitchcock was never chosen Best Director if you can believe it?

Then there are winners who, today, one recognizes with caution. Whatever encouraged the Academy to select In The Heat Of The Night in 1967 when they could have chosen Bonnie and Clyde? Does anyone remember Louise Fletcher in 1975? Or Shirley Jones as a prostitute in Elmer Gantry in 1960? And how did Ali McGraw ever get into the running in 1970?

Jennifer Jones, with the assistance of husband David Selznick, parlayed an

Oscar performance in The Song Of Bernadette (1943) over Greer Garson and Ingrid Bergman in Casablanca into a series of films like Carrie and Duel Under The Sun.

Today they all seem dated and static. Even more noticeable, and more artificial, is the work of Norma Shearer, the award winner in 1930. Where would she have been without Irving Thalberg? There's more to Oscar than a film's performance, believe me!

Certainly the aura of the Oscars has become increasingly tainted. The voting system has come under fire as being influenced more by publicity and sentiment than by quality. Many voting members have been inactive for years and few get to see all the films nominated.

Studio block voting remains a consistent dilemma. Nevertheless, the Academy Award continues to influence box office returns. The Best Picture award is worth as much as \$10 million extra in revenue and an individual Oscar can do wonders for a performer or filmmaker negotiating a contract. Look at what happened to the attendance figures after Charlots Of Fire won last year!

And so, although you may not have agreed with the eventual winners, recognize that you are in good company—just start tallying your lists for next year. For

example can there be a better supporting actress performance than that given by Diane Wiest in Independence Day? Tune in next April and find out!

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