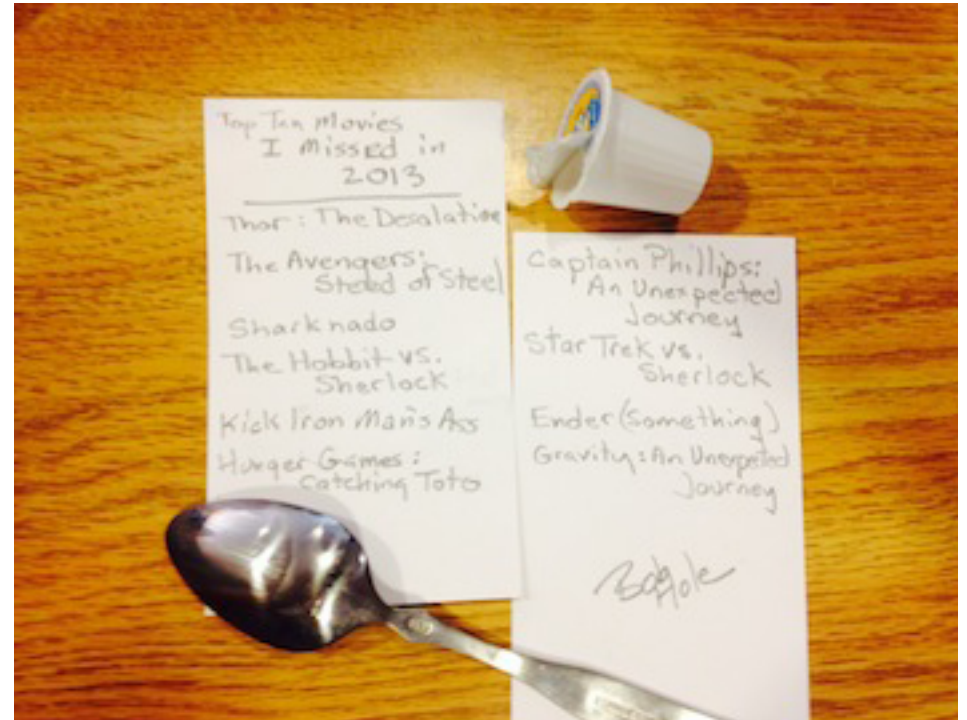




Klaus At Gunpoint 8



2013 in Review

So, 2013 is over, and this issue's a look at some of the year that happened. There are numbers (Iron Man 3 being the top-grossing film both domestically and internationally) and there are some more opinion bits. There are a couple of reviews, a look at what's going on in film, and more!

The next issue is all about the Cinequest Film Festival's short film program! We've got a great line-up and we're hoping that this'll help folks get better acquainted with the films and the filmmakers.

I went to the Star Wars exhibit at the Tech Museum of Innovation in Beautiful Downtown San Jose. It's a wonderful exhibit, full of models and costumes and educational bits. The place wasn't overly packed, one of the benefits of being a timed-ticket event, and it was nicely laid-out. The entire thing was a lot of fun, and as always, I took far too many pictures. Pictures of objects, pictures of people, people taking pictures of objects.

That cover, by the way, is by the brilliant and tall Robert Hole! I was hoping to include it in last issue, but alas, things got shuffled around, as often happens. It's all a part of the great melange, no?

In other news, the 2014 films are stacking up and the first big release of 2014 has to be The Monuments Men. I'm excited, though I'm not a big Clooney fan. It's got Bill Murray and Jean DeJardin in the same film with Bob Balaban! How can you go wrong?



Directing in an Animated Feature Production

Rich Moore 'Wreck-It Ralph' – Walt Disney Animation Studios

Music in an Animated Feature Production

Henry Jackman, Adam Young, Matthew Thiessen, Jamie Houston, Yasushi Akimoto 'Wreck-It Ralph' – Walt Disney Animation Studios

Production Design in an Animated Feature Production

Steve Pilcher 'Brave' – Pixar Animation Studios

Storyboarding in an Animated Feature Production

Johanne Matte 'Rise of the Guardians' – DreamWorks Animation

Voice Acting in an Animated Feature Production

Alan Tudyk as King Candy 'Wreck-It Ralph' – Walt Disney Animation Studios

Writing in an Animated Feature Production

Phil Johnston, Jennifer Lee – Wreck-It Ralph – Walt Disney Animation Studios

Editorial in an Animated Feature Production

Nicholas A. Smith, ACE, Robert Graham Jones, ACE, David Suther 'Brave' – Pixar Animation Studios

JURIED AWARDS

Winsor McCay Award – Oscar Grillo, Terry Gilliam, Mark Henn

June Foray Award – Howard Green

Ub Iwerks Award – Toon Boom Animation Pipeline

2013 Annie Awards (Film Categories Only)

Best Animated Feature

Wreck-It Ralph — Disney

Annie Award for Best Animated Special Production

Despicable Me: Minion Mayhem – Illumination Entertainment

Best Animated Short Subject

Paperman (Disney)

Best Student Film

Head Over Heels – Timothy Reckart

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT CATEGORIES

Animated Effects in an Animated Production

Andy Hayes, Carl Hooper, David Lipton – Rise of the Guardians –
DreamWorks Animation

Animated Effects in a Live Action Production

Jerome Platteaux, John Sigurdson, Ryan Hopkins, Raul Essig, Mark Chat-
away 'The Avengers' – Industrial Light & Magic

Character Animation in a Feature Production

Travis Knight 'ParaNorman' – Focus Features

Character Animation in a Live Action Production

Erik de Boer, Matt Shumway, Brian Wells, Vinayak Pawar, Michael Holzl
'Life of Pi – Tiger' – Rhythm & Hues Studio

Character Design in an Animated Feature Production

Heidi Smith 'ParaNorman' – Focus Features

Golda R Steinberg @GoldaRSteinberg

Watching #Her and absolutely loving it. So many feelz. So many butterflies. So many tears. Absolutely one of the best movies of the year.

Maggie x Excel @MaggieTrundles

This is a real high-waisted pants situation #Her

Bill B. @billcom6

So in the near future we'll have holes in the bottom of our pockets? How does that make sense in any way? #Her #HerMovie

Kelly Hana @HelloKelHana

#Her with your 89 yr old Great Aunt leads to very interesting post movie convo and a lot of "I don't think I liked it" #generationgap

Jonny Hughes @heereeesjonny

Hey everyone, I'm about to watch #SpikeJonze's #Her Only been waiting like a year for this. Film of the year? We'll see...

Mandana @MandanaW

#Her is a cinematic triumph. I'll see it again! This has has be the best year for Hollywood features in quite some time. @AnnapurnaPics

Kelly Clearwater @Kelly_Clearh2o

Yea I'm basically in love with my phone too but I don't see anybody making a movie about it. #Her

Jason Yarc @JasonYarc

Samantha's a lying, cheating whore #Her #TalkingAboutTheMovie

Matthew Smith @smithey253

He's clearly deranged to turn down Olivia Wilde. #her

Kendra Peters @KendraPeters8

Every time I see the trailer for "Her," I think about Plankton and Karen off of Spongebob. #computerwife #Her

#TwiTtersSpeaks - #Her



9) THE LORDS OF SALEM: Rob Zombie goes witchcraft. After taking Michael Myers as far as he could go in his HALLOWEEN remake series, Zombie switches gears in this eerie, surreal and disturbing film. Sheri Moon Zombie portrays Heidi Hawthorne, a local radio station DJ, receives mysterious wooden box containing a vinyl record. She plays it and then experiences a flashback to a past trauma. Then things really start getting weird! Sheri really goes for it as Heidi, and Zombie changes his style of directing and goes for a more dramatic, art house look and feel. But remember, this is a Rob Zombie film so expect the unexpected. A really underrated horror gem of a flick.

10) THE BLACK DAHLIA HAUNTING: I had the privileged of seeing the film last year at Miss Misery's Days of Terror Convention. With the release of the film on the home market, I was so excited to watch it again and again. The film's about a young woman named Holly Jenson (Devanny Pinn) who's investigating the murder of her father by her blind younger brother Tyler (Noah Dahl). During her investigation, she accidentally awakens the spirit of Elizabeth Short (Alexis lacono), better known as the infamous Black Dahlia. Soon Tyler's physician Dr. Brian Owen (Britt Griffith) begins to suspect something different about Holly, which triggers a deadly secret from his past. Written and directed by Brandon Slagle, the movie is a great indie horror gem that all of you should definitely see!

And that, my fellow children of the night, is a wrap! I sincerely hope you enjoyed my Top Ten Horror list and I really hope this encourages you all to check out these incredible fright flicks! Remember, if you get scared from watching these cinematic nightmares, keep repeating yourself: It's only a movie...only a movie...only a movie...only a movie....BOO!!

Thanks for reading and enjoy the screaming.

Toby Herman @tobyherman27
Two hours of day drinking before three hours of #wolfowallstreet with @cvetkovladimir seems about right for us. #blessed

Gemma Sudra @love_grook
#WolfOfWallStreet - what a screenplay :) Scorsese didn't want to leave out a single detail; all the deleted scenes are already included!

kay @kayrontvVOL
@LeoDiCaprio just won an oscar. Congratulations. #wolfowallstreet

Luke Cervino @cervinlj
Wolf of Wall Street is Online and it's INSANE! #wolfowallstreet

Allie Calvanese @aye_calvo
If @JonahHill is not at least nominated for an Academy Award this year for #wolfowallstreet I will be incredibly disappointed.

Michele @MeanderingTales
@baldjoe I'm thinking that's a better idea than spending money to take a 1.5 hr nap. Lol #wolfowallstreet

Mitch Cairns @MitchCairns
3 hours of my life I'm never getting back #wolfowallstreet #wasteoftime

Raymond Frenken @RaymondFrenken
Saw #WolfowallStreet tonight, delirious flick promoting financial fraudsters, must-watch for financial hacks from the #Telerate era

Secret Place Films @SecretPlaceFilm
#wolfowallstreet was the biggest cheating, lying, failing disappointment of all time. How dare they make such a good trailer to deceive!

Rachel Humphreys @rachel_hump
@talialapidus I'm telling you I did not fucking mind that fucking film being fucking 3hours long (sorry I'm in character) #wolfowallstreet



6) **EVIL DEAD**: Producers Sam Raimi, Bruce Campbell, and Robert Tapert revisit their horror roots by remaking their original **EVIL DEAD**. This time they turn the directing reigns over to newcomer Fede Alvarez as he just paints the silver screen blood red! Young Mia (Jane Levy), is a recovering drug addict who, along with her brother and friends, heads to the old remote family cabin in the woods. While there the kids discover the Book of the Dead in the basement, read some of the passages, and summon the dormant demons that live in the woods. One by one the kids are picked off until there's only Mia left to fight off the evil dead spirits. The film is a fun-filled gorefest ride of death that will please fans of the original.

7) **HATCHET III**: Victor Crowley returns one last time in this, the final installment of the series! Creator and director Adam Green turns the directing duties over to BJ McDonnell, who was his cinematographer for the first two films. Danielle Harris reprises her role as Marybeth Dunston, who must travel back to the Honey Island Swamp with an armed SWAT team to take down Victor Crowley (once again portrayed by the icon Kane Hodder). The action comes fast and so does the bloodshed! The climatic ending is one that fans of the series will go crazy over! Harris once again turns in an excellent performance, and to see Kane Hodder take on Derek Mears, the new Jason Voorhees from the **FRIDAY THE 13TH** remake, you've got yourself one awesome horror movie!

8) **ALL THE BOYS LOVE MANDY LANE**: Originally this fright flick was filmed in 2006 and it premiered at several film festivals shortly thereafter. The movie was going to be released in 2007 by the Weinstein Company, but because of the failure of **GRINDHOUSE** at the boxoffice, they sold the film to Senator Entertainment US. However, that company went out of business and the film was stuck in limbo. Thanks to the blockbuster success of director Jonathan Levin's recent film **WARM BODIES**, the film was finally released to theaters. The entire cast turns in a fantastic, but it's Amber Heard who really shines in the film, who was only 20 years old at the time! She's gone on to act in films like **THE RUM DIARY**, **DRIVE ANGRY** and **THE WARD**.

3) MAMA: Sisters Victoria (Megan Charpentier) and Lilly (Isabelle Nélisse), abandoned in the woods after losing both parents in tragic circumstances, are found after 5 years in horrible conditions, but when their uncle Lucas (Nikolaj Coster-Waldau) and aunt Annabel (Jessica Chastain), helped by a shady psychiatrist, take them in, the frightening truth comes out. This is one of those rare horror films that feature character development all throughout the film. Jessica Chastain performance is fantastic, and both Megan Charpentier and Isabelle Nélisse turn in outstanding performances as well. With Guillermo del Toro as executive producer, director Andy Muschietti does a tremendous job with creating some genuine chills, scares, and screams.

4) AMERICAN MARY: Mary Mason (Katharine Isabelle) is a medical student, who dreams of becoming a surgeon once she's done with school. However things are not going well, but her life gets turned upside down when she gets sucked into the underground world of surgeries that she dubs "Body Modifications," which proves to be very lucrative trade for the former starving med student. The film shows off the maturity of Jen and Sylvia Soska (aka the Twisted Twins) which is far and away a major step forward in their evolution as writers and directors. Isabelle's acting is simply captivating! Overall the film ranks as one of the best modern horror films of the past 20 years and a fine example of independent filmmaking!

5) YOU'RE NEXT: The Davison family heads out to a beautiful remote home near the woods for a wedding anniversary/family reunion. But when they come under attack by a vicious gang of masked killers, it's up to an unlikely family guest to take them all down. Originally filmed in 2011, it toured on the festival circuit and received numerous praises until it was finally picked up for distribution by Lionsgate. The film is basically a slasher film disguised as a crime thriller. But let me just state that, in my humble opinion, the movie doesn't try to be scary at all. Rather, it's very reminiscent of the old 80's slasher films I used to love to watch. Overall it's a fun, cool, gory, and entertaining flick!

Dave Houston @DaveTGA

Saving Mr Banks was such a touching, beautiful film, it really was, Tom Hanks was perfect as Walt Disney

Nick Cousin @ncousin123

On a scale of one to Drake, Saving Mr. Banks is ranked pretty high up there. Don't know if my heart can handle much more.

David Stodolny @stodoe

Finally saw #SavingMrBanks this week. Beautiful movie. Emma Thompson and @tomhanks were PHENOMINAL!!! I ran home and hugged my daughter

Rachel Wood @Ad_AgCombo

Mary Poppins wasn't a favorite as a child, but Saving Mr. Banks was wonderful! I liked Tom Hanks as Walt Disney (the man from Marcelline, MO)

Dean Ford @Dean_Machine_

Off to see Saving Mr Banks tonight. I assume it's a retelling where Mary Poppins becomes like The Bride from Kill Bill & rescues Mr Banks.

John Birdsong @johnbirdsong

Saving Mr. Banks was the worst best movie of the year. A spoonful of sugar didn't help very much.

Duncan Burt @SlamDunc888

#SavingMrBanks Not been affected this much by a film by in a long, long time #beautiful #masterpiece #letsgoflyakite

Kristen @adventurepants

Saw Saving Mr. Banks and had a lot of emotions and I didn't know I needed Ruth Wilson and Rachel Griffiths to play sisters BUT I NEEDED IT.

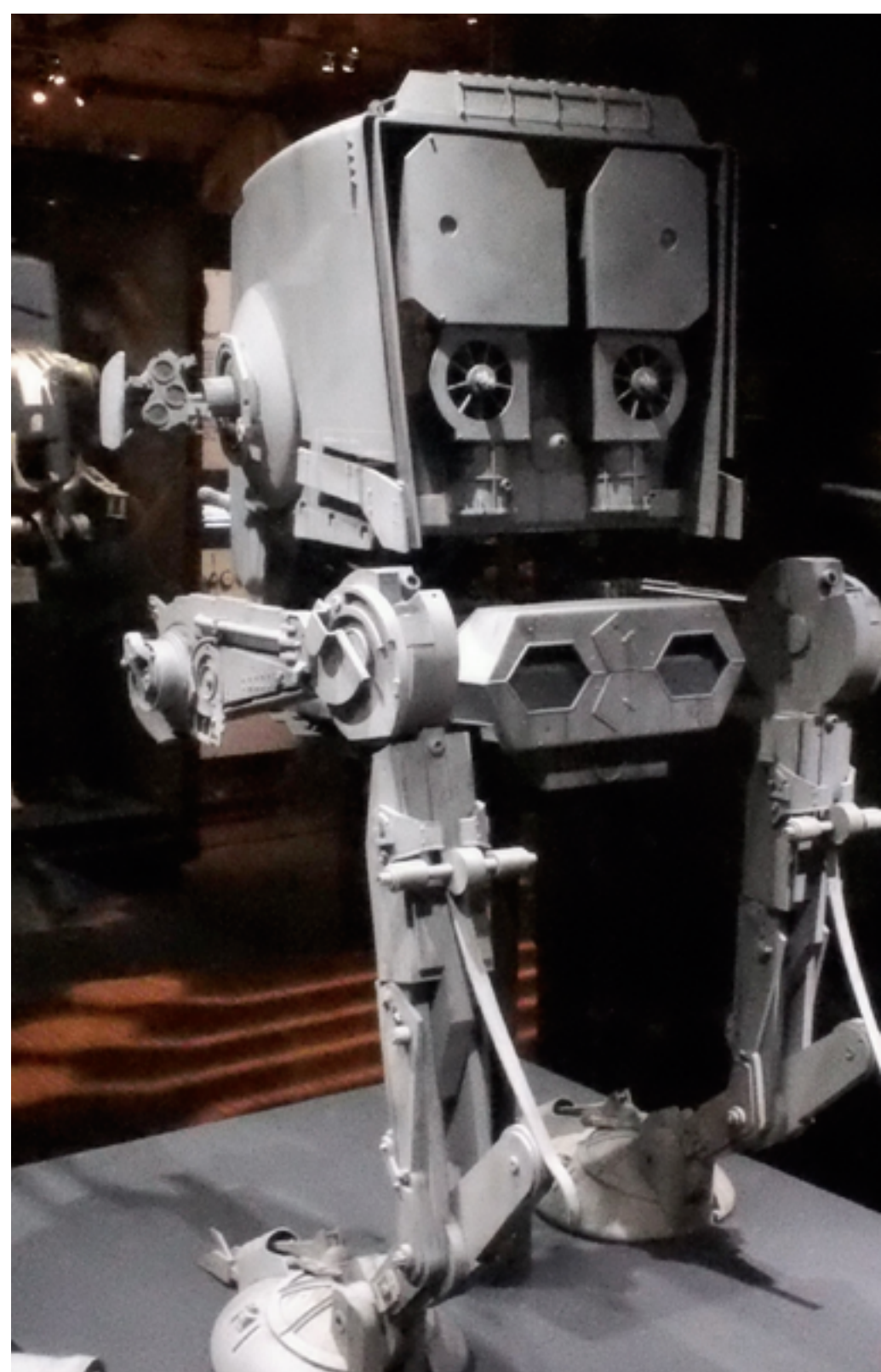
Top Ten Horror Films of 2013 by Phil Castor

Since I am a horror fanatic, I decided that I would also give you, my fellow horror hounds, my list of my favorite horror films that I saw last year. Now this was really a daunting task, due to the fact that there were some truly incredible and remarkable films that I saw both in theaters and on DVD/Blu-Ray. So boils and ghouls, here is my Top Ten Horror Films of 2013!

1) **THE CONJURING**: Based on true events, the film's about married couple and paranormal investigators Ed (Patrick Wilson from *THE WATCHMEN* and *INSIDIOUS*) and Lorraine Warren (Vera Farmiga from *ORPHAN* and *SOURCE CODE*), who must help a family in Harrisville, Rhode Island from being haunted by a demonic spirit. Director James Wan (*SAW*, *DEAD SILENCE*) employs some of the old traits of filmmaking that were used back in the 1970's to make the film look and feel like it was made in that decade. With its smart script and outstanding acting, *THE CONJURING* is, without a doubt, *THE* best horror film of 2013!! If you're sick and tired with the recent bombardments of crappy remakes, re-imagines, and reboots, then you're gonna love this film!

2) **INSIDIOUS: CHAPTER 2**: Another James Wan film! The haunted family Lambert have moved into the home of dad Josh's (Patrick Wilson) mother Lorraine Lambert (Barbara Hershey), after he plunged into the eerie netherworld *The Further* to pluck back his son Dalton (Ty Simpkins) from the clutches of the infernal Mother Crane. But wife Renai (Rose Byrne) believes that her husband did come back and thinks something else has possessed Josh. Wan has done his homework, lifting the good ol' thrills and chills from classic horror films from the past. The movie continues to showcase his ability to really creep the audience out with simple things such as eerie sounds, long pauses of silence, and scares that will get under your skin.





Her - Something of a Review

I was awake at 3:14am in my little bedroom in Silicon Valley, staring at a bookcase, thinking about movies. This happens a lot, and all too often it's thinking about how much I messed up something or another with one woman or another, and how such-and-such a movie basically explained it in such a way that made me feel everything all over again.

Watching Spike Jonez's *Her*, I rather quickly came to realise that it is a film that can only be understood by emotionally crippled thirty-somethings.

The premise is almost as old as Science Fiction itself. Joaquin Phoenix plays Theodore, a writer of personalized letters for the website beautifullyhandwrittenletters.com. Basically, people pay the company to write and mail letters that appear to be handwritten for them. This, much like the various companies in Jonez's other films, is strange, but makes a certain amount of sense. Theodore buys a new, artificially Intelligent operating system for his computer - OS One.

Now, I'm a computer historian by trade, and the idea of an OS that is artificially intelligent isn't strange at all. In fact, to a degree, Windows and the MacOS both use limited forms of AI for various sorts of operations. OS One is an operating system that basically puts a Turing-Complete personality in charge of your computer. It combines speech synthesis with voice recognition, video processing, and varying forms of communication. AI has made great strides in all these directions, but they are nowhere near the point of releasing these sorts of technologies combined as a single software project. At installation, Theodore asks what his OS's name is, and she chooses Samantha.

Not to mention the fact that, as time goes by, the OSes seem to gain sentience.

As time goes by, Theodore falls in love with Samantha. He's just getting over the dissolution of his marriage and he's damaged in every possible way emotionally. He has trouble interacting with others, he communicates weakly, he goes all emotional turtle when things get difficult. These are his problems with humans, and that's why he's so excited to discover Samantha. As the movie goes on, Samantha becomes more and more human, and that leads to the inevitable problems that Theodore has in communicating and sharing.

It's impossible for Theodore to not make the mistakes he's made in the past with Samantha. No matter how much he tells himself things are different, he makes the same mistakes. Why? I've done the exact same thing, time and time again. It's not the person who changes to make things work, but the situations they are put in. Perhaps Theodore understands this, and perhaps that's what puts him in the arena where he can emotionally interact with Samantha. There's a scene that actually addresses this between Theodore and a young woman he is set up with played by Olivia Wilde. They have a good time on the date, laugh a lot. She's a fun girl, and they get some alone time that allows them to get frisky. When she says that she doesn't want this to be another situation where they have sex and don't go out again. Theodore recognises that this is exactly what happens, maybe not to him exactly, but it is the path that happens with her. There is no other road; the situation is the same, and thus the outcome will be the same. He turns her down (the SINGLE MOST UNBELIEVABLE THING THAT HAPPENS IN THIS MOVIE!) and she gets angry, because that's what she does. She's programmed for that anger in the same way that the guys she's slept with are programmed not to call.

Oh, did I slip up and give away my central metaphor?

Theodore is far more strictly programmed than Samantha. He is input-dependent; never straying from the programmed response to received input. His output is amazingly honest, it's pure, joyous, dark, intellectual, maybe. He is so very emotionally open, something so many guys of my generation will totally understand. We were the generation told to open up to our feelings, to not be our fathers with the stern, cold exteriors (something that I never dealt with: my Pops was a madly emotional being!) and that showing emotion, sharing joy and pain was to be encouraged. Watching how he takes Samantha out with him, on vacation, on dates, it's incredible the amount of joy he displays. This is actually huge for Phoenix, as I often find his performances rather calculated and joyless. Here, he's positively buzzing with joy, and the pain as well.

The scenes where we see his relationship with Catherine (played with a certain bi-polar grace by Rooney Mara) are among the best in the film because they turn on and off as quickly as you can imagine. Fast-cut moments between them, some beautiful memories, some painful, and the interpersonal interaction between the two at a lunch where they're signing their divorce papers, make the pair seem so perfect for each other.

American Hustle: A Review in Five Acts (Issue 7)
The 2013 Additions to the National Film Registry (Issue 7)
Except for US review (Genre Short Film Issue 7)
The House at the Edge of the Galaxy (Genre Short Film Issue 7, also Highlighted Review at <http://klausatgunpoint.weebly.com>)
LiFi review ((Genre Short Film Issue 7)
Spin Control review (Genre Short Film Issue 7)
Last of You review (Genre Short Film Issue 7)
Present Tense review (Genre Short Film Issue 7)
Another Happy Anniversary review (Genre Short Film Issue 7)
Cochemare review (Genre Short Film Issue 7)
A Night to Remember review (Genre Short Film Issue 7)
100 SciFi Classics Reviews - <http://klausatgunpoint.weebly.com/100-sci-fi-classics.html> and <http://klausatgunpoint.weebly.com/100-sci-fi-classics---the-back-50.html>

Tassoula Kokkoris

2 Documentary Reviews (issue 3)

Steve Rhodes

Rent-A-Person review (Issue 4)

Pablo Vazquez

Validation review (Issue 4)

Jason Wiener

2012 - In Defense of Black & White Film with Help from Cinequest (issue 1)

Jason Goes to Cinequest - Opening Night (Issue 2)

Animated Worlds Shorts Program (issue 2)

The Battles We Fought Shorts Program (issue 2)

Jason Goes to Cinequest - Closing Night (issue 2)

Jason Watched the Hitchcock 9 (issue 3)

Christian Fitzharris

The Incredible Burt Wonderstone review (Issue 4)

Christopher J Garcia

Wes Anderson's Homes for the Wayward Soul (Issue 1)

Lullaby for Lucious and Sumar (Spotlight on Genre Shorts, Issue 1)

LIFELESS #beingkindadeadsortasucks (Spotlight on Genre Shorts, Issue 1 also Highlighted Review at <http://klausatgunpoint.weebly.com>)

2076 - (Spotlight on Genre Shorts, Issue 1)

Retrocognition (Spotlight on Genre Shorts, Issue 1)

Other O.S. (Spotlight on Genre Shorts, Issue 1)

Office Hours (Spotlight on Genre Shorts, Issue 1)

Conersations about Cheating with my Time-Traveling Future Self (Spotlight on Genre Shorts, Issue 1)

Cinequest 2013 (Issue 2)

Must Have Been Love Review (En Som Deg) (Issue 2)

The Space Jockey Pursuit review (Issue 2)

Twenty Million People review (Issue two, also Highlighted Review on <http://klausatgunpoint.weebly.com>)

The Wound review (Issue 2)

A Night at the Office review (Issue 2)

Chris Garcia Tiny Reviews on an 11pt Scale (issue 2)

The Internship Meets the Middletons (issue 3)

On Les Blank (1935 - 2013) (issue 3)

On Les Blank's Burden of Dreams (issue 3)

The San Francisco 48 Hour Film Festival review (Issue 4)

A Staged Reaing of A Computer Simulation of God Review (Issue 4, also Highlighted Review at <http://klausatgunpoint.weebly.com>)

Featured Filmmaker - Kurt Kuenne: An Intro (Issue 4)

Drine-In Movie Memories review (Issue 4)

Suffle review (Issue 4)

My Person Registry (issue 5)

Chris Garcia's Trip Report: London Film Museum (issue 6)

His problem is he's a robot: her problem is she has no programming. She's gone emotionally rogue. Mara will be completely over-looked in this film, her part is relatively tiny, but she's so damn good. I really want to watch a film of just her and Theodore fighting and making up and such.

Everything in the production of *Her* is absolutely top-notch. Cinematography is glorious, actually reminding me of Sophia Coppola's *Lost in Translation*. The music is exactly what I'd expect from a Spike Jonez film, and perhaps most impressively, the voice-acting is really good. Yeah, it's hard to believe that a computer could do the vocalizations that Samantha does, but not only is her voice-acting superb in getting across the emotional (or programming) of the OS, but it also imparts a fascinating sort of struggle within the film. Theodore's layer is rather flat unless he's actively on the fun horse, while Samantha is alive, inflected, tonally satisfying. All the other voice acting is good as well, which is a plus. It's always good to hear from some of the voices like Brian Cox and Bill Hader, even if they only briefly appear.

Perhaps what's so amazing about *Her* is how it gets the subtle things absolutely right. Little things like watching how Theodore controls a video game. It's a simple series of repeated motions of his fingers. It is completely how we'll be controlling those kinds of games! There's the ways in which eeryone is interacting with their OSs in the world. There's the big safety pin that Theodore pins to his pocket, making it possible for the camera on Samantha's interaction fold to 'see' the world. Even the way they travel is so realistic. It all makes sense, and that is the most important thing when it comes to making

There's so much to this film, and the biggest problem is the length. At a smidge over two hours, it does have a bit of a puttering. There are a few small stories told, such as the scene of a surrogate to allow them to actually make love to Theodore with Samantha 'participating' that could have gone to tighten it up. Amy Adams is great as a down note character in this one, but she barely registers in the emotional impact. Tighter could it have been? Yes. Would that have effected the flavor of the film? Yes.

All in all, this message is probably the hardest you'll ever see. Men in their 30s today are damaged, for the most part, and in so many different ways. We're all looking for a way to change the input, to get that different outcome by rearranging the situation, because we know that it's merely stimulus and response, and there ain't a damn thing we can do about it.

The 2013 Klaus Index

Our first year. It was a fun one, and sometimes challenging. e'd hoped for at least four issues, we ended up with 7. We'd hoped to cover three major film festivals, we ended up doing one. We watched a lot of movies, re-launched the Silicon Valley Science Fiction Short Film Festival (for more info check out <http://SVSFSFF.weebly.com>) and basically wrote stuff. Yeah, one writer tended to create most of the content, but the stuff we've got from other contributors, including such a diverse crowd as to make my head spin, has been wonderful

Here's a guide to the writers and their writings in Klaus at Gunpoint:
Year One

Miss Banshee

Les Miserables Review (Issue 1)

James Bacon

Isolates Review (Spotlight on Genre Shorts, Issue 1)

Plurality Review (Spotlight on Genre Shorts, Issue 1)

Adam Beaton

Disarm - A Haiku Review (Genre Short Film Issue 7)

Ric Bretschneider

FUBAR & FUBAR Redux review (Genre Short Film Issue 7)

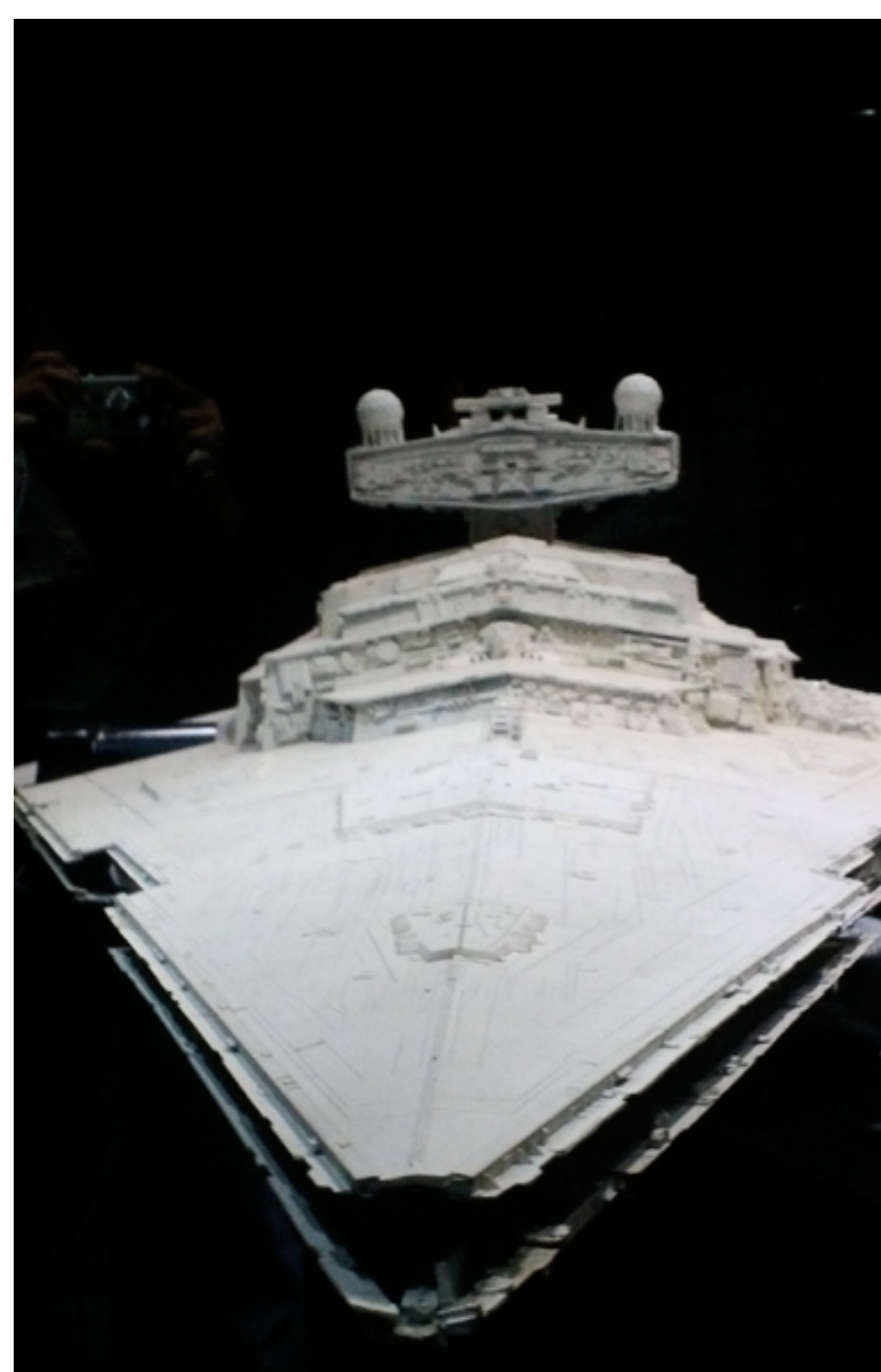
Phil Castor

Sparks review (issue 2)

The Playback Singer review (Issue 2)

Jay Crasdan

A Prose Poem on



Best Animated Short Film

Hollow Land
The Missing Scarf
Mr. Hublot
Requiem for Romance
Subconscious Password

Best Live Action Short Film

Aquel No Era Yo
Helium
Kush
Record/Play
The Voorman Problem

Best Documentary Short

CaveDigger
Fabian Debora: A Life for Art
Jujitsuing Reality
Prison Terminal: The Last Days of Private Jack Hall
Sky Burial



Best SF/Horror/Fantasy of 2013 By Daniel M. Kimmel

In many ways this was a year of disappointments. I enjoyed “Iron Man 3” and was intrigued by “Man of Steel” but thought “Thor: The Dark World” was a dud and “The Wolverine” a curio. The year’s blockbusters came and went quickly: the insipid “Oblivion,” the clumsy “After Earth,” the ultimately derivative “Star Trek Into Darkness.” I had hoped that “Pacific Rim” would save the day but it was so dark and muddled that most of the time it was just random pieces – of monsters, of robots, of the city – flying by with no rhyme or reason. As for “The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug,” it’s an extended amusement park ride which I liked more than any of the other Tolkien adaptations, probably because it was the least faithful to its source. Your mileage may vary. The arthouse offerings were no better from the self-absorbed “Upstream Color” to the heavy-handedness of “Her,” the latter impressing critics who had never read “Helen O’Loy” (1938) or seen “Electric Dreams” (1984), and so they imagined it was new and original. For better or worse, here are the genre films that I most enjoyed this year:

Gravity

The best SF film of the year and one of the best films of 2013 period. The premise wasn’t original but the effects were as was focusing on a heroine left to her own devices in an impossible situation. Sure they took liberties with the science. That’s why it’s called science fiction.

The World’s End

A hilarious cross between “The Big Chill” and “Invasion of the Body Snatchers” as a group of thirty-something friends reunite to recreate an epic pub crawl from their youth, only to find that their town has changed... a lot. Director Edgar Wright and stars Simon Pegg and Nick Frost grew up with SF and you can tell.

Frozen

To praise Disney animation in recent years has been to praise Pixar, yet this year's Pixar offering was second-rate "Monsters University." The more "traditional" animators (if anything can be called traditional these days) crafted a beautiful riff on a Hans Christian Anderson fairy tale with not one but two strong heroines, beautiful visuals, and a snow man who wants to get a sun tan.

Ender's Game

For some it wasn't easy to put aside the controversy about Orson Scott Card, the book's author, but the long gestating movie turned out rather impressively. Yes, the story was compacted, but the focus was still there with children being ruthlessly prepared for war, and the victor appalled by what has been wrought. Asa Butterfield's turn as Ender was easily the most overlooked great performance of the year.

About Time

I make no apologies for liking romantic comedies when they're good, and when they made by Richard Curtis they've very good. This whimsical romance was a lighter variation of "The Time Traveller's Wife" as if told from the husband's point of view. The lovely and talented Rachel McAdams was the wife in both movies, a definite plus, as was the appearance of Bill Nighy in a funny and poignant turn.

The Hunger Games: Catching Fire

The first "Hunger Games" movie was a disappointment. It was brilliantly cast but ineptly adapted. "Catching Fire" was a vast improvement, and makes one anticipate the adaptation of "Mockingjay" which – unfortunately – is going to be split into two movies. Other attempts to launch movie franchises this year did not fare well, perhaps because they lack the grittiness of Jennifer Lawrence as the film's protagonist Katniss.

Despicable Me 2

What can I say? I want my own team of minions. It was a delightfully silly story involving spies, secret formulas, and a villain operating out of a shopping mall, but it was the minions who put it over the top. Not surprisingly, they will be at the center of the next film called, what else, "The Minions."

Best Cinematography

American Hustle
Gravity
The Great Gatsby
Her
Much Ado About Nothing

Best Production Design

12 Years a Slave
American Hustle
The Great Gatsby
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire
Iron Man 3

Best Costume Design

12 Years a Slave
American Hustle
The Great Gatsby
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire

Best Sound Mixing / Sound Editing

(I have No Idea What These Mean...)

Best Visual Effects

Gravity
The Great Gatsby
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug
Hunger Games: Catching Fire
Iron Man 3

Best Makeup / Hairstyling

The Great Gatsby
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire
Oz The Great and Powerful
Star Trek: Into Darkness

Jonah Hill - *The Wolf of Wall Street*
Jeremy Renner - *American Hustle*
Michael Shannon - *Man of Steel*

Best Supporting Actress

Elizabeth Debicki - *The Great Gatsby*
Jennifer Lawrence - *American Hustle*
Lupita Nyong'o - *12 Years a Slave*
Julia Roberts - *August: Osage County*
Antje Traue - *Man of Steel*

Best Animated Feature

The Croods
Dispicable Me 2
Frozen

Best Documentary Feature

Blackfish
I Loves Uganda
Pussy Riot: A Punk Prayer
Tim's Vermeer
20 Feet From Stardom

Best Foreign Language Film

The Broken Circle Breakdown
The Grandmaster
The Hunt
Omar
Two Lives

Best Editing

American Hustle
Gravity
The Great Gatsby
Her
Much Ado About Nothing

The Conjuring

It was a decent year for horror films but the standout was an old-fashioned haunted house story told with a solid cast and a strong script. Imagine, the movie treated the characters as people, not simply patsies for the next big shock effect. People who were impressed with "Insidious" (2010) should see this to see how such stories ought to be done.

Elysium

One of the most exciting discoveries at the movies in 2009 was "District 9," director Neil Blomkamp's debut feature. "Elysium" wasn't in the same league, as its message about social inequality, particularly with regards to healthcare, was a little too on the nose. Matt Damon and Jodie Foster were solid but the film's message might have been better delivered in a newspaper editorial. I have no problem with message films but when the message gets in the way of telling a story then the whole thing needs to be rethought.

Upside Down

Sure it was an absurd premise: two planets so close they could nearly touch but your personal gravity is determined by where you were born. Yet Jim Sturgess and Kirsten Dunst were touching as the star-crossed – or gravity-crossed – lovers, as was Timothy Spall as someone caught up in their subterfuge. I treated this as fantasy rather than SF and thought it was lovely.

Special mention: "Much Ado About Nothing" was simply Shakespeare in modern dress but it was stylishly directed by Joss Whedon at his house, using several of his favorite actors. It's not SF/H/F but who cares? It was wonderful.

Daniel M. Kimmel's reviews can be found at NorthShoreMovies.net and the SciFiMoviePage.com. He is the author of *Jar Jar Binks Must Die*. His latest book is *Shh! It's a Secret: a novel about aliens, Hollywood, and the Bartender's Guide*.

My Dream Oscar Ballot

Best Picture

12 Years a Slave
American Hustle
Fruitvale Station
Gravity
Her
Inside Llyn Davis
Philomena
The Wolf of Wall Street

Best Director

The Coen Brothers - Inside Llyn Davis
Alfonse Cuaron - Gravity
Spike Jonez - Her
David O. Russell - American Hustle
Martin Scorsese - The Wolf of Wall Street

Best Actor

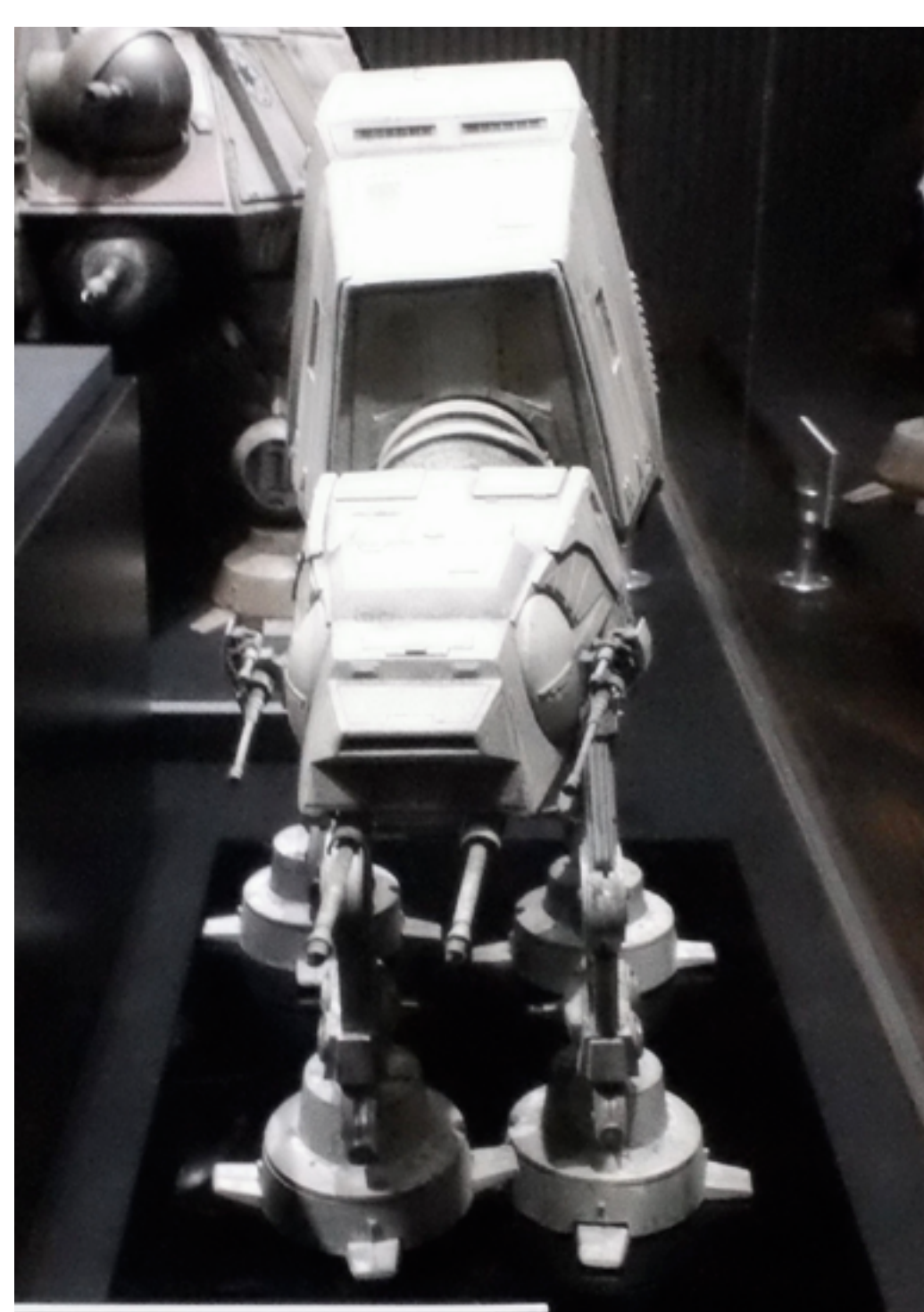
Christian Bale - American Hustle
Bruce Dern - Nebraska
Leonardo diCaprio - The Great Gatsby
Idris Elba - Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom
Joaquin Phoenix - Her

Best Actress

Amy Adams - American Hustle
Cate Blanchett - Blue Jasmine
Sandra Bulloch - Gravity
Dame Judi Dench - Philomena
Emma Thompson - Saving Mr. Banks

Best Supporting Actor

Barkhad Abdi - Captain Philips
Bradley Cooper - American Hustle



Imperial All Terrain Armored Transport (AT-AT)

Model

2013 Oscar Winners... And who SHOULD have Won by Christopher J Garcia

Best Cinematography

Life of Pi, Claudio Miranda—WINNER

Should have won - Django Unchained, Robert Richardson

Best Visual Effects

Life of Pi, Bill Westenhofer, Guillaume Rocheron, Erik-Jan De Boer and Donald R. Elliott—WINNER

Should have won - The Avengers, Janek Sirrs, Jeff White, Guy Williams and Dan Sudick

Best Costume Design

Anna Karenina, Jacqueline Durran—WINNER

Should have won - Mirror Mirror, Eiko Ishioka

Best Makeup and Hairstyling

Les Misérables, Lisa Westcott and Julie Dartnell—WINNER

Should have won - The Hunger Games (Not even Nominated!)



Best Picture

Argo—WINNER

Should have won - Zero Dark Thirty

Best Actor

Daniel Day-Lewis, Lincoln—WINNER

Should Have Won - Joaquin Phoenix, The Master

Best Actress

Jennifer Lawrence, Silver Linings Playbook—WINNER

Should have won - Jessica Chastain, Zero Dark Thirty

Best Director

Ang Lee, Life of Pi—WINNER

Should have won - PT Anderson for The Master (wasn't even nominated!)

Best Original Screenplay

Django Unchained, Quentin Tarantino—WINNER

Should have won - Moonrise Kingdom, Wes Anderson and Roman Coppola

Best Adapted Screenplay

Argo, Chris Terrio—WINNER

Should have won - Yeah, Argo.

Best Original Song

“Skyfall” from Skyfall, music and lyric by Adele Adkins and Paul Epworth–WINNER
Should have won - Skyfall

Best Original Score

Life of Pi, Mychael Danna–WINNER
Should have won - Skyfall, Thomas Newman

Best Production Design

Lincoln, Production Design: Rick Carter; Set Decoration: Jim Erickson–WINNER
Should have won - Les Misérables, Production Design: Eve Stewart; Set
Decoration: Anna Lynch-Robinson

Best Film Editing

Argo, William Goldenberg–WINNER
Should have won - Les Miserables (NOT EVEN NOMINATED!)

Best Supporting Actress

Anne Hathaway, Les Miserables–WINNER
Should have won - Anne Hathaway (as GREAT as Amy Adams was in The
Master)

Best Sound Editing

Skyfall, Per Hallberg and Karen Baker Landers–WINNER
Zero Dark Thirty, Paul N.J. Ottosson–WINNER
Should have won - Skyfall on it’s own

Best Sound Mixing

Les Misérables, Andy Nelson, Mark Paterson and Simon Hayes–WINNER
Should have won - Les Miz

Best Foreign Language Film

Amour, Austria–WINNER
Should have won - Amour

Best Documentary Feature

Searching for Sugar Man–WINNER
Should have won - Bully

Best Documentary Short

Inocente–WINNER
Should have won - Taxidermists (Not Nominated)

Best Live Action Short

Curfew–WINNER
Should have won - Death of a Shadow

Best Supporting Actor

Christoph Waltz, Django Unchained—WINNER
Should have won - Philip Seymore Hoffman - The Master

Best Animated Short

Paperman–WINNER
Should have won - Maggie Simpson in “The Longest Daycare”

Best Animated Feature

Brave–WINNER
Should have won - Brave

