



La La Land at front of Oscar pack after win at Toronto

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

By Donald Clarke

Don't get too upset. The six-month-long Oscar season will go to sleep for a spell after the Toronto International Film Festival tidies away the bunting. But the loudest of the opening trumpets is sounded with the People's Choice Award at that festival. There was a time when the gong had little bearing on the Oscars, but, over the last decade, it has pointed to certain success at the awards that matter. Twelve months ago, Lenny Abrahamson's *Room* began its march to glory — one big win for Brie Larson and nominations in best picture and director — with a triumph by Lake Ontario. Since 2008, only one film has won (Nadine Labaki's *Where do We Go Now*) without receiving a nomination for best picture. Three of the Toronto winners in that time have converted into the Oscar itself.

It thus seemed likely that, rather than some leisurely outhouse puzzler, Damien Chazelle's *La La Land* — a musical that has been Oscar favourite ever since opening Venice — would be the honoured picture. So, it has proved. The runners up were crowd-pleasers that, if nothing else, will figure in the conversation until nomination day in January: Mira Nair's *Queen of Katwe* and Garth Davis's *Lion*. (The Academy will be delighted that, after the #oscarssowhite embarrassment and the Birth of a Nation fiasco, both films focus on people of colour.) The many Ben Wheatley fans who were a bit disappointed by *High Rise* will be happy to hear that his thriller *Free Fire* won the People's Choice for *Midnight Madness*.

There were no triumphs for the Irish at this year's Toronto. But there have been decent reviews for Gerard Barrett's *Brain on Fire* and Lorcan Finnegan's *Without Name*. The best notices among the domestic premieres seem to have been for John Butler's *Handsome Devil*. We now move on towards the Guild Awards in the winter with Awards appetite whetted (if that's what you like).

If you're interested, I have a tenner on Lion to win best picture at 25/1. No, I haven't seen the picture, but it's already come in to 20/1. So, I feel like a genius.

AWARDS AT THE 2016 TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

People's Choice Award: "La La Land," Damien Chazelle

People's Choice Award For Documentary: "I Am Not Your Negro," Raoul Peck

People's Choice Award For Midnight Madness: "Free Fire," Ben Wheatley

Platform Prize: "Jackie," Pablo Larrian

Platform Prize, Special Mention: "Hema Hema: Sing Me a Song While I Wait," Khyentse Norbu

Best Canadian Feature Film: "Those Who Make Revolution Halfway Only Dig Their Own Graves," Mathieu Denis and Simon Lavoie

Best Canadian First Feature Film: "Old Stone," Johnny Ma

Prizes of the International Critics (FIPRESCI Prize) for Special Presentations Section: "I Am Not Madame Bovary," Feng Xiaogang

Prizes of the International Critics (FIPRESCI Prize) for Discovery Section: "Kati Kati," Mbithi Masya

Dropbox Discovery Programme Filmmakers Award: "Jeffrey," Yanillys Perez

NETPAC Award For World or International Asian Film Premiere: "In Between," Maysaloun Hamoud

Best Short Film: "Imago," Ribay Gutierrez

Best Canadian Short Film: "Mutants," Alexandre Dostie

(Source: <http://www.irishtimes.com>)

Category

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2. Toronto International Film Festival

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Date Created

September 2016

Author

hollywoodglee