

Dean, Smith make predictions for this year's Oscars

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Next Wednesday, the great cinematic ceremony of the year will be upon us again. The Academy Awards will grace the screens of millions of television sets throughout the free world. Your friendly film critics have once again put their heads together in an attempt to make some sense of the nominations and predict the winners.

In each category, our predicted winner is in bold type.

Though there will be no clean sweep this year in the manner of last year's "Last Emperor," each category can, as usual, be divided into those who may win and those who simply won't.

BEST ACTOR

The won'ts in this category are Max von Sydow and Edward James Olmos. Sydow receives a nod for "Pelle the Conqueror" in the same spirit as Marcello Mastroianni did last year for "Dark Eyes." An actor in a foreign language film just does not win, however brilliant the performance may be. Olmos's out-of-the-blue nomination for "Stand and Deliver," while not undeserving, also stands little chance. In a less competitive year, the award could have gone to Gene Hackman for his most memorable performance

in years in "Mississippi Burning." (Hackman, of course, won Best Actor back in 1971 for "The French Connection.")

This year's underdog is the youthful Tom Hanks, who receives a worthy nomination for the summer hit comedy, "Big." In Hanks's favor is his equally good performance in a more dramatic role in "Punchline." Last year's recipient Michael Douglas won for "Wall Street," but his "Fatal Attraction" role undoubtedly helped; the same could work for Hanks. The clear favorite, however, is **Dustin Hoffman**, whose virtuoso performance as the autistic savant in "Rain Man" is just the stuff for which Oscars are made. Should he win, it would be his second after winning in 1979 for "Kramer vs. Kramer."

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

Clearly there was a major lack of supporting roles for men in 1988, if the nominations are anything to go by. It's hard to even remember what role Martin Landau played in "Tucker: The Man and His Dream." The still-pubescent River Phoenix, who showed great promise in "Stand by Me" and "The Mosquito Coast," receives a nomination for the largely unseen "Running on Empty." He might have stood a chance, had the film been successful. Dean Stockwell

obviously had a good time with his Mafia king role in "Married to the Mob," but his character never rose above the level of a caricature. Kevin Kline had even more fun as the zany American in "A Fish Called Wanda," although his performance verged on the irritating, his comic talent was a revelation to many and may be enough to swing the vote.

But the Academy, for reasons best known to itself, has always favored veteran British actors in supporting roles. In the past three years Peggy Ashcroft, Michael Caine, and Sean Connery have all won Supporting Oscars, and in this manner **Alec Guinness** is likely to continue the tradition for his role in the seven-hour Dickensian epic, "Little Dorrit," particularly with the lack of competition.

BEST ACTRESS

Definitely the hardest category to call. Meryl Streep's performance in "A Cry in the Dark" stands out as last year's best, but it is too unglamorous a role in too small a film. And there's always the feeling that she'll probably win next year. In a more typically Streepian role, Sigourney Weaver put in her most assertive work to date as anthropologist Dian Fossey in "Gorillas in the Mist." She is, however, more likely to win in the Supporting Actress category where the competition is weaker. Melanie Griffith is undoubtedly the current media darling (remarriage to Don Johnson, pregnant, etc.), but her role in "Working Girl," while worthy, is unlikely to clinch the award.

More likely is Glenn Close for "Dangerous Liaisons." She so obviously wanted to win last year

for "Fatal Attraction," and her deliciously spiteful performance this year has its many admirers. But **Jodie Foster** gave the most startling performance of the year as the rape victim in "The Accused." The unexpected quality of her portrayal, in such a difficult role, transcends all the others, and with a little justice she should win.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

It is almost as difficult to pick a clear winner in this category, which may be due to the youthfulness of the nominees. Joan Cusack certainly gets Best Hairstyle for "Working Girl," but along with Frances McDormand in "Mississippi Burning," stands little chance. Michelle Pfeiffer had a great year. After "Married to the Mob" and "Tequila Sunrise," she gave her most accomplished performance in "Dangerous Liaisons;" the role, however, may not be outstanding enough.

Geena Davis certainly stood out as the quirky dog trainer of "The Accidental Tourist." The eccentricity of her character though, while a delight, may be the reason she doesn't win. Double nominee **Sigourney Weaver's** supremely confident portrayal of the high-flying New York executive in "Working Girl" gives her the edge. Jessica Lange was nominated for "Tootsie" and "Frances" in 1982, and won for the lighter of the two roles; Weaver will probably do the same.

BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY

Although it's difficult to discard "Roger Rabbit," the competition is between Bergman cinematographer Sven Nykvist for his work on the undernominated "The

Unbearable Lightness of Being," John Seale's beautiful photography for "Rain Man" and Peter Biziou for his effective work in "Mississippi Burning." The Academy usually favors American cinematographers, however, and **John Seale** should probably win over Biziou.

BEST COSTUMES

The only reason that **James Acheson** might not win for "Dangerous Liaisons" is because he won last year for "The Last Emperor."

BEST VISUAL EFFECTS

No competition. The "Roger Rabbit" team.

BEST EDITING and SOUND

Anyone's guess.

BEST ART DIRECTION

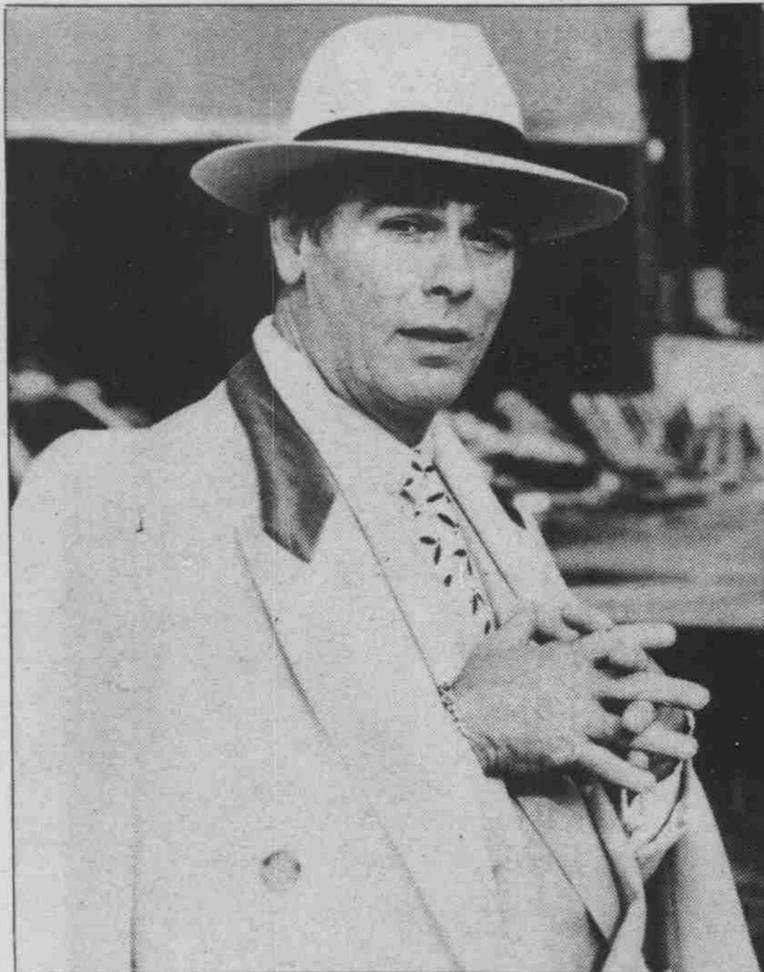
Of the nominations, only "Tucker," "Dangerous Liaisons" and "Roger Rabbit" stand out for their art and set decoration. All three are period pieces, but "**Tucker**" owes its authenticity to its art direction more than the others, which should be enough to win.

MAKE UP

The Academy usually goes for big makeup jobs, in which case "Beetlejuice" would win over "Scrooged." In "**Coming to America**," however, Eddie Murphy and Arsenio Hall's disguised cameos demonstrated a more subtle side to the art, which may get makeup wiz Rick Baker another Oscar for a dubious film after last year's "Harry and the Hendersons."

BEST ORIGINAL SONG

Terrible songs always win Oscars, so Bob Telson's haunting



Dean Stockwell (above) was one of the few capable Supporting Actors of 1988; Mira Nair's "Salaam Bombay!" (right) is in the Best Foreign Film category.