



Glenn Close (above, left) is a strong contender for Best Actress; "Dangerous Liaisons," the movie she starred in, is among the movies nominated for Best Picture and Adapted Screenplay.

theme from "Bagdad Cafe," "Calling You," doesn't stand a chance. There isn't much to choose between Phil Collins's Doo-be-doo-be "Two Hearts" from "Buster" and Carly Simon's labored "Let the River Run" from "Working Girl." But Carly will probably win.

BEST ORIGINAL SCORE

The irony here is that the two most renowned film composers, John Williams and Maurice Jarre, wrote the least memorable of the nominated scores (for "The Accidental Tourist" and "Gorillas in the Mist" respectively). On the other hand, George Fenton's score for "Dangerous Liaisons" and Hans Zimmer's music for "Rain Man" enhanced each film enormously. It's hard to pick a winner, since they are so different.

BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

Three excellently written comedies are nominated here: "Big," "Bull Durham" and "A Fish Called Wanda." The Academy, however, will go for Barry Morrow and Ronald Bass's script for "Rain Man." The atypical way it treats its sensitive subject matter is commendable enough. Above all, though, it proves that, as with "Tootsie" in 1982, it doesn't matter how many times a script is rewritten, it can still work.

BEST ADAPTED SCREENPLAY

"Gorillas in the Mist" and "The Accidental Tourist" can be discounted; the former is too biographical to be a real adaptation, and the latter is literal to such a degree that you can only fully enjoy the film if you've read the book. "Little Dorrit," by all accounts, is horribly unfaithful to the Dickens original. This leaves "The Unbearable Lightness of Being," which is a remarkable

adaptation given the abstract nature of Kundera's prose, and "Dangerous Liaisons," which is more likely to win. Christopher Hampton initially adapted the story for the stage, and his second rework of the 18th century novel is still sharper and better written than its competitors.

BEST FOREIGN FILM

After last year's victory with the deserving "Babette's Feast," Denmark has another strong candidate with "Pelle the Conqueror." Hungary's finest filmmaker Istvan Szabo has his new film "Hanses" nominated. Szabo has already won for his brilliant "Mephisto," and his latest work with Klaus Maria Brandauer once again in the lead, also stands a good chance. Mira Nair's "Salaam Bombay!" is an extremely welcome nomination that has been well-accepted in the United States. The favorite here, however, is "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" from the new king of Spanish cinema, Pedro Almodovar. Almodovar has had a phenomenal year, and his brilliant new comedy deserves all the rewards it can get.

BEST DIRECTOR

The nomination of Martin Scorsese for "The Last Temptation of Christ" is more of a gesture to the director's tenacity than the direction of the film. Like David Lynch's nomination two years ago for "Blue Velvet," it shows the respect and support the Academy is willing to give to such individual filmmakers. Charles Crichton's innocuous direction in "A Fish Called Wanda" is hardly worthy of this kind of praise; it seems to be yet another case of the Academy's predilection for old British men. Mike Nichols is the only past winner (for "The Graduate" in 1967), but "Working

Girl" pretty much directs itself.

Alan Parker's slick treatment of "Mississippi Burning" attains his usual level of sensationalism. This is not in itself a bad thing, but the film's subject matter needed a greater sensitivity than Parker gave it. Which is exactly the reason why "Rain Man" worked, and why Barry Levinson will win. He leaves an unmistakable impression on the film with his beautifully refined style, and makes the smallness of the film work heavily in its favor.

BEST PICTURE

Despite some excellent performances, "The Accidental Tourist" was disappointing and simply not important enough to win the major award. Similarly, "Working Girl," the only comedy, lacks the



Frances McDormand is in the running for Best Supporting Actress, while "Mississippi Burning" is up for Best Picture.

required stature to claim the honors. "Mississippi Burning" is the most controversial of the bunch, which could work in its favor. However, its message is ineptly expressed and the film as a whole lacks conviction. The battle is between "Dangerous Liaisons" and "Rain Man." Like the 1985 Winner "Amadeus," "Dangerous Liaisons" not only establishes its period with impeccable precision, but also incorporates contemporary sentiments with its sparkling dialogue.

In spite of its undeniable quality, the film's chances are sadly diminished by the fact that its director, Stephen Frears, did not receive a director's nomination; no film has ever won Best Picture without its director being nominated.

"Rain Man," therefore, will win, and not just by default. It is accessible, enjoyable, moving and extremely successful. More importantly, it contains an understated depth that raises it above the level of standard Hollywood melodrama to give it a unique and special quality.

So there are our predictions. We've used considerable logic and common sense in putting them together. So they'll probably be all wrong. Nevertheless, it'll be worth sitting through those pathetic jokes, horrible acceptance speeches and unbearable renditions of the nominated songs to find out who will win the coveted little statuettes.



Spanish producer Pedro Almodovar is favored to win in the Best Foreign Film category for his comedy "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown."