

## Bigelow stashes six Oscars in *The Hurt Locker* makes history as first female director winner

Written by Kam Williams

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Kathryn Bigelow and *The Hurt Locker* emerged victorious in what had been touted as a David vs. Goliath showdown with her ex-husband James Cameron and *Avatar*, the biggest moneymaker in box-office history. Each entered the competition with 9 nominations, with Bigelow's Iraq War saga netting 6 Academy Awards, including Best Picture, Director and Original Screenplay, as well as a trio in technical categories. Meanwhile, *Avatar* had to settle for just 3 Oscars, in Cinematography, Visual Effects and Art Direction.

Bigelow made history as the first female ever to be named best director. An obvious hint that she was about to triumph, the supposedly sacrosanct secret ballots notwithstanding, was the fact that the presenter in the category was Barbara Streisand who had herself won a golden Globe but not an Oscar for directing *Yentl* way back in 1984.

There were no surprises in the lead acting categories with veteran thespians Jeff Bridges (*Crazy Heart*) and Sandra Bullock (*The Blind Side*) both winning more for their body of work than for this particular role. Bridges, in his heartfelt acceptance speech, thanked his late parents "for turning me on to such a groovy profession." And the self-effacing Bullock was equally-gracious, thanking her mom, and acknowledging each of her fellow nominees by name. Sandra was most effusive about Gabby Sidibe (*Precious*), about whom she gushed, "I love you so much. You are exquisite. You are beyond words to me."

As for supporting roles, prohibitive favorites Mo'Nique (*Precious*) and Christoph Waltz (*Inglourious Basterds*) prevailed as expected. Mo'Nique got the last laugh after having been subjected to considerable criticism during awards season for not campaigning or kissing the ring of the Hollywood establishment. This explains why she began her acceptance remarks with, "First, I would like to thank the Academy for showing that it can be about the performance, and not the politics."

In terms of upsets, the biggest surprise arrived when Geoffrey Fletcher and *Precious* won for Best Adapted Screenplay over *Up in the Air*. However, the evening's most shocking incident was undoubtedly the reverse Kanye West moment when Roger Ross Williams, who is black, was rudely interrupted during his acceptance speech as the director/producer of Best Documentary Short Film-winner *Music by Prudence*. For midway in, this ostensibly-inebriated white woman appeared out nowhere to give him the bum's rush, just like Kanye did to Taylor Swift. Then she started rambling into the microphone like a mental patient until her voice was drowned out by the orchestra. As it turns out, Elinor Burkett apparently wasn't a complete lunatic, but a former co-producer of *Music by Prudence*, who had abandoned the movie over a year ago but now wanted back in to bask in the glory when the project turned out to be a tremendous success.

Among other Oscar lowlights were Sean Penn's mumbling presentation of the Best Actress award, a sleep-inducing, interpretative dance number choreographed to musical selections from the Best Score nominees, and Tom Hanks' failure to introduce the 10 nominees before opening the envelope to announce the Best Picture. So much for dramatic effect.

Overall, the 82nd Academy Awards Show was rather entertaining and engaging, especially how it devoted time to intimate introductions of the acting nominees, and to detailing the

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contributions made by a variety of craftsmen to the magic that is moviemaking. The festivities were capably co-hosted by Alec Baldwin and Steve Martin, whose hilarious, offhand introduction of Sandra Bullock with, "Please welcome my longtime dear friend, and by that, I mean I've never met her," was nothing short of brilliant.

### **COMPLETE LIST OF ACADEMY AWARD WINNERS**

Motion Picture: The Hurt Locker

Actor: Jeff Bridges (Crazy Heart)

Actress: Sandra Bullock (The Blind Side)

Supporting Actor: Christoph Waltz (Inglourious Basterds)

Supporting Actress: Mo'Nique (Precious)

Director: Kathryn Bigelow (The Hurt Locker)

Foreign Film: El Secreto de Sus Ojos (Argentina)

Adapted Screenplay: Geoffrey Fletcher (Precious)

Original Screenplay: Mark Boal (The Hurt Locker)

Original Score: Michael Giacchino (Up)

Original Song: The Weary Kind (Theme from Crazy Heart) by Ryan Bingham and T-Bone Burnett.

Animated Feature Film: Up

Documentary Feature: The Cove

Art Direction: Avatar

Cinematography: Avatar

Sound Mixing: The Hurt Locker

Sound Editing: The Hurt Locker

Costume: The Young Victoria

Makeup: Star Trek

Visual Effects: Avatar

Film Editing: The Hurt Locker

Documentary Short Film: Music by Prudence

Animated Short Film: Logorama

Live Action Short Film: The New Tenants