

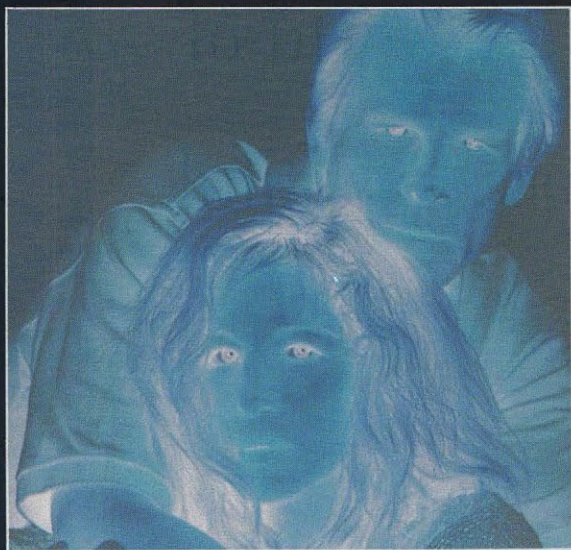
THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER®

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Oscars down to the wire



Only sure thing tonight is there is no sure thing

• **Oscar Preview special section begins on page 27.**

By Robert Osborne

Oscar's day of reckoning for 1991 has — at last — arrived.

Not a moment too soon either, because not in recent memory has an Academy Award race been less predictable or more riddled with question marks. It's anyone's ball game.

That was true when this year's potential winners were first being discussed; it's just as accurate today as the clock starts ticking right down to the Big Show itself.

If some say it's going to be the year of "The Silence of the Lambs," which won the New York Film Critics prize, just as many

See **ANALYSIS** on page 54



Survival guide for awards night

• **Map on page 48.**

By Jeffrey Jolson-Colburn

You're so nervous you can't complete a sentence, the gown's too small, you can't find the tickets, your hairdresser was snippy and the limo's running late. Welcome to the happiest day of your life.

That joyful celebration of movie-making, Oscar Day, could be one of

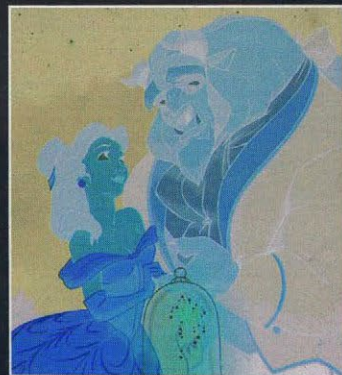
the hardest, most nerve-wracking days of your life.

But there are some tricks the seasoned pros use to survive Hollywood's big event that will come in handy for anyone going to the show.

• **Know the turf:** The Writer's Guild says roadblocks outrank writer's block as the main reason scribes don't make it to the Acade-

my Award podium. Some folks do a dry run ahead of time to find the smoothest route. Learn the best routes, including shortcuts and alternate approaches that will save the day if you're running late in heavy traffic or protesters block a specific street — a very real possibility. Keep your eyes peeled for traffic-blocking sit-ins on key sur-

See **SURVIVAL** on page 48



The five nominees vying for the honor of being named best picture at tonight's 64th annual Academy Awards presentation are, clockwise from top left, "The Prince of Tides," "Bugsy," "Beauty and the Beast," "The Silence of the Lambs" and "JFK."



HOLLYWOOD'S BIG NIGHT IS HERE!



Oscar statuette copyright AMPAS

News

L.A. film czar politics heat up

At issue: Will the film industry or mayor's office be calling the shots?

By Jeffrey Daniels

Before anyone has been named, Los Angeles' new film czar post in the mayor's office is creating a hornet's nest of controversy — both in and out of City Hall.

At issue appears to be the selection process, which some have charged has been turned over to the film industry. But the mayor's office insists that it will be calling all the shots and naming the person for the film executive post.

One source familiar with the situation called it "an extraordinarily unusual thing. Is this person going to be a lobbyist for the industry on the mayor's staff?"

Earlier this month, the Los Angeles City Council unanimously approved a proposal creating the

film post — officially known as director of motion picture and television affairs (HR 3/16). Mayor Tom Bradley has since put his signature on the measure, although the Board of Public Works still needs to approve a location permit fee hike to pay for the new position.

Also raising eyebrows has been the role of Maureen Kindel — a former Bradley appointee and lobbyist hired by the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers to push for the film post. Interestingly, Kindel has been described in published reports as a top fund-raiser for the mayor. She denies it.

"This whole situation is now more political than it's ever been,"

added the source. Another source said the process is "tainted by improper maneuvering of outsiders."

"The AMPTP and LAFDC with (Board of Public Works commissioner) Percy Duran's office and Deputy Mayor (Linda) Griego are doing the interviewing," said Herb Jellinek, president of the mayor-appointed L.A. Film Development Committee. "He (Bradley) indicated he's looking for our recommendation."

See **FILM CZAR** on page 66

Nosotros says Latinos ignored by Oscar show

By David Robb

Hispanic representation at the Oscars, particularly as presenters, "has been and continues to be lacking," according to Nosotros, the 22-year-old organization dedicated to improving the image of Latinos in the media.

In a statement released Friday, Nosotros president Marc Allen Trujillo said that "we are dissatisfied with the level of interest the Academy has shown with these concerns."

Gil Cates, producer of tonight's Oscar show, said that he is "astounded" by Nosotros' statement.

See **NOSOTROS** on page 65

WNYW cuts post of programmer

By Barry Layne

NEW YORK — FBC flagship O&O WNYW-TV on Friday joined the growing ranks of stations that have eliminated the position of a stand-alone program director, naming its head of advertising and marketing to helm a combined programming and promotion department.

Moving up the ladder as a result

See **WNYW** on page 66

'Beast,' 'Bridge' PR teams hailed

By Andrea King

Publicists for "Beauty and the Beast" and CBS' "Brooklyn Bridge" were honored Friday at the 29th annual Publicists of America Awards Luncheon held at the Sheraton Universal Hotel.

See **PGA** on page 64

FBC affils lose right to retitle shows for ratings

By Barry Layne

NEW YORK — In a blow to FBC and its affiliates, A.C. Nielsen has decided to cancel its decision to allow local FBC stations to designate the network's irregular movie offerings as local programs rather than FBC fare, sources confirmed here Friday.

The Nielsen decision deals with the retitling of program origin — a practice that would have allowed FBC's affiliates to designate, or retitle, a network movie telecast as a local program — and returns the research company's policy to earlier, long-standing terms.

Those terms were changed last October, under intense lobbying by FBC and its affiliate advisory board. (HR 10/18/91)

In a memo to its stations, a copy

of which has been obtained by the Hollywood Reporter, FBC's top research executive, Andy Fessel, wrote:

"Under pressure from competing independent stations and affiliates of the other three networks, in October 1991 Nielsen will revoke the movie titling option that Fox affiliates have been able to utilize to properly represent the integrated nature of the intermittent titles of Fox Night At The Movies and the continuing local primetime movies under a local 'umbrella' title."

FBC, Fessel's memo said, was informed of Nielsen's decision to re-revise its rules on March 17.

One critical reason for its change of heart, Nielsen indicated

See **FBC** on page 64

Comedy crowns to Crystal, Bergen

Billy Crystal got the most laughs from fellow comedians Saturday, picking up two American Comedy Awards for his work on the film "City Slickers" and as host of the Academy Awards.

Candice Bergen won as funniest actress in a television series for her portrayal of acerbic journalist "Murphy Brown." Jerry Seinfeld took the trophy for funniest TV series actor for "Seinfeld."

The nation's top comedy talents, as determined by their peers, were honored at the sixth annual

American Comedy Awards presentation at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

The awards show will air as a two-hour special on ABC-TV on May 13th.

Phyllis Diller and Johnny Carson were voted lifetime achievement awards. Penny Marshall received a lifetime creative achievement award — the only comedy award presented in a non-performing category.

Lily Tomlin won as funniest actress

See **COMEDY** on page 66

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The dollars and sense behind primetime tunes

(AP) — CBS' "Northern Exposure" is an eclectic series, with music to match. Sample range in one episode: Beethoven's "Pathétique" to Chet Atkins' "Gotta Travel On."

"Murphy Brown," stars Candice Bergen as the Motown-loving TV journalist, and nearly every segment has at least one Supremes or Temptations classic. ABC's "The Wonder Years" is kicked off each week by Joe Cocker's gravelly version of "With a Little Help From My Friends."

And the opening theme to ABC's "Life Goes On" is a cast rendition of the Beatles' "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da."

In primetime viewing hours, it is impossible to flip through the dial without hearing well-known versions of pop and classical songs — even jazz and opera — that function as crucial purveyors of mood and nuance.

Music is not new to television. But using original or well-known performances that require paying costly rights fees is a relatively recent phenomenon in TV production.

Prodded by MTV and the now-defunct series "Miami Vice" (called by some an extended rock video) television is increasingly looking to the music industry for programming help.

It is an expensive boost. As demand has risen for music rights, so has the cost, say television executives.

"At first it was only securing the rights to a song for free (network television)," said Doug Frank, vp of the music division at Warner Bros. Television. "If you have a show that goes on to cable, you need cable rights. If you do episodes on home video, you need video rights."

What that means in dollars and cents, Frank said, is "let's say a popular song costs \$3,000. With video and cable that price will be \$10,000."

The end result, Frank said, is less bang for a show's music budget buck. "We're not spending less," he said, "but because we need broader rights, we end up getting less music."

When ABC's now-canceled

See **TV TUNES** on page 20

Concert review

BAD II, PIL, Live

Crawford Hall
University of California at Irvine
Thursday, March 26

By Marc Pollack

MTV and its "120 Minutes," a show specifically designed to tap into the lucrative college music-listening audience, has assembled a noteworthy tour featuring four heavies on the alternative scene — established acts Big Audio Dynamite II and Public Image Limited, breakout artists Live and buzz band Blind Melon.

And, while the tour's goal is said to be to break new bands and expose alternative music to a wider audience, promoters have locked the show into colleges in obvious attempts to secure ticket sales. The tour doesn't even have a Hollywood stopover. Rightful comparisons will likely be made to last year's highly successful Lollapalooza Tour; however, MTV's "120 Minutes" is a bit more focused and a lot less spectacular.

Headliners BAD II and PIL sport the two most seasoned frontmen in alternative music — former Clash co-founder Mick Jones

and ex-Sex Pistol John Lydon (Rotten), respectively. And strangely enough, this tour is the first time the two have performed together since their punk heyday.

BAD II, the second incarnation of Jones' Big Audio Dynamite, is a successfully crafted, techno-dance, hip-hop, rock 'n' roll combo that more often than not hits its mark.

The quartet's straight-ahead, drums-guitars-bass approach embraces the sounds of house music and England's rave scene — best heard on its latest release "The Globe" as well as the hit "Rush."

Public Image Limited, touring in support of its 11th release in 12 years, performed an impressive set that not only captured the animated talent of its irrepressible frontman but allowed for the band's playing to come to the forefront.

Led by Lydon's psychotic stage pacing, PIL delivered a thorough set, albeit a bit lengthy. Opening with the extremely danceable "This is Not a Love Song," PIL prominently featured its outstand-

See **BAD II, PIL** on page 24

'Doodle'

Continued from page 8—

Edmond slips the clutches of the evil owl and his gang and joins up with Patou (Phil Harris), an old farm dog, Peepers (Sandy Duncan), a brave little mouse, and Snipes (Eddie Deezen), a dithering magpie.

They go to the city where Chanticleer has become an Elvis Presley-type rock 'n' roll star and, with the help of a bosomy pheasant showgirl, Goldie (Ellen Greene), is able to save Chanticleer from his unhappiness and the farm from rain.

Although there are a few supporting characters (a bumbling owl, Hunch, voiced by Charles

Nelson Reilly, and fat rock manager, Pinky, voiced by Sorrell Booke) and vignettes, the story stays pretty simple and easy to follow. The problem is that, while the variety of types keeps each character easily recognizable, no character has the range of expression Bluth characters usually do.

Bluth also uses a paler selection of colors than he has in his past work.

Neither cripples the film, they just lessen the impact.

Always lauded for his technique, Bluth reveals here that the bedrock of his approach is a keen appreciation for emotional appeal. More a simple adventure story than he has ventured in the past, "Rock-A-Doodle" still pulls itself together at its finale and tugs all the right audience heartstrings in a sequence that goes from animation to live-action and then combines the two.

T.J. Kuenster's songs mimic old rock-and-roll and pop country styles with hand-clapping rhythms; they contribute mightily to the film's upbeat mood.

Musically, however, "Rock-A-Doodle" lacks one big signature number.

One odd note: The film is some minutes shorter than usual, its running time considerably lengthened by an unusually long closing credit crawl.

Navy pal sues Hammer for fraud

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A former Navy buddy of rap singer Hammer has filed a fraud suit against the superstar, charging that Hammer owes him 2.7% of all past and future earnings.

Vincent Williams said he gave Hammer \$5,000 in 1987 in exchange for 2.7% of all royalties, concert receipts and other earnings from his entertainment career, according to the suit filed last week in U.S. District Court. But Hammer never honored the contract, the suit states.

"Hammer has done nothing

whatsoever wrong and in fact has helped Vincent Williams and been very generous to him," said Lawrence Blake, Hammer's attorney.

Williams' attorney Richard Stratton said the money his client is entitled to could provide a "nice annual income." A notarized copy of the agreement was filed with the lawsuit.

Williams and Hammer, then known as Stanley Kirk Burrell, served together in the Navy and Williams later worked for Bust It Prods., Hammer's music company. □

BAD II, PIL

Continued from page 14—

ing musical base — guitarist John McGeoch and bassist Allan Dias.

Sporting a red pompadour and screeching in his trademark whine, Lydon glared, acted and insulted his way through the set. Just another night on the road for the perennial punkster.

MCA Records' Live, which seems to be benefiting tremendously from this tour with heavy MTV exposure, performed a short, well-received set that focused on its Radioactive Records debut "Mental Jewelry."

Comparisons have previously

been made to R.E.M. and U2, but Live has forged its own identity.

Capitol Records' biggest buzz band, Blind Melon, the only unit on the bill with no album to support (the group's currently recording its debut), proved itself to be worthy of the opening slot on this alternative tour.

Although people may not have heard of Blind Melon, notwithstanding singer Shannon Hoon's association with Guns N' Roses and his appearance in GNR's "Don't Cry" video, the band triumphantly altered any preconceived notions of what it might sound like and will prove to make its own mark in the coming year. □

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'Ladybugs'

Continued from page 8—

and the comedian has an uncanny knack of milking laughs from even the most familiar gags. He is a fine identification figure for suburban everyman, trying to grab a modest piece of the pie yet hold on to the last shreds of his dignity.

Still, the film has some weird, if unspoken, sexual implications. Every man in the film is intimidated by women and the cross-dressing scenes have a panicky tone. Most of this is buried by the laughs, but it's there all the same.

LADYBUGS Paramount

A Ruddy & Morgan Production

Producers Albert S. Ruddy, Andre E. Morgan
Director Sidney J. Furie
Writer Curtis Burch
Director of photography Dan Burstall
Production designer Robb Wilson King
Editors John W. Wheeler, A.C.E., Timothy N. Board
Music Richard Gibbs
Casting Mike Fenton, C.S.A., Valerie Massalas
Color/Dolby
Cast:

Chester Lee Rodney Dangerfield
Julia Benson Jackee
Matthew Jonathan Brandis
Bess Ilene Graff
Kimberly Vinessa Shaw
Dave Mullen Tom Parks

Running time — 89 minutes

MPAA Rating: PG-13

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