

The Westword's Oscar Picks

With The Oscar's right around the corner, *The Westword* has revealed our Oscar hopefuls.

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The Oscars are awards given out to honor the best films and the work behind the scenes that went into creating them. The voting isn't done by the public, but by 13,000 film critics in The Academy.

The 97th Oscars Awards are taking place on March 2nd, 2025, and everyone is buzzing with excitement at The Academy's highly-anticipated slate of nominees for every category. 2024 was a huge year for films, with standouts like *Wicked* and *Inside Out 2* making waves.

Though, as it is with every year of the Oscars, there will be people fighting over which film truly deserves which award. This year is no different, with big names like Ariana Grande and Demi Moore being up for awards.

The most important category of the night is undoubtedly Best Picture. The films competing for Best Picture are *Anora*, *The Brutalist*, *A Complete Unknown*, *Conclave*, *Dune: Part Two*, *Emilia Pérez*, *I'm Still Here*, *Nickel Boys*, *The Substance*, and *Wicked*.

All of these movies are great in their own ways, and it's hard to guess who could win this category.

The Substance is a unique film, but it probably won't win best picture. Horror movies are rarely appreciated at the Oscars, so a movie like *The Substance* being nominated is big already.

The Brutalist is an important story about a Holocaust survivor who starts over in America, but it greatly disappoints by using artificial intelligence

for buildings in a movie about architecture.

Another movie that got into controversy over artificial intelligence usage to adapt vocals in *Emilia Pérez*, which is a musical.

This leaves only a few films, with *Conclave*, *Anora*, and *Wicked* being the most probable winners. *Conclave* is an impactful film about the process of picking a new Pope. *Anora* tells a sort of 'Cinderella story' while also exposing the true power the upper class has.

Overall, the movie most expected to win is none other than *Wicked*. It was a cultural phenomenon of its own- you couldn't scroll TikTok or Instagram without seeing another meme or advertisement of the cast.

Without a doubt, it's the one movie from this list that students have most likely watched or heard of. "*Wicked* was such a big deal. I feel like it has to win." Elizabeth Luini ('26) said.

2024 was a great year for animation, with *Flow*, *Inside Out 2*, *Memoir of a Snail*, *Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl*, and *The Wild Robot* being nominated for Animated Feature Film. *Flow* is an independent film about a flood leading to different animals surviving together on a boat. *Inside Out 2* is about a teenager's mind, and the new emotions that come with growing up.

"It was so cute and it was actually, like a good sequel." Eunia Antoine ('26) said. *Memoir of a Snail* is about a snail collector who learns to find herself after tragedy. *The Wild Robot*, on the other



hand, is about a robot living in the wilderness and being cared for and 'raised' by animals. *Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Foul* is the second movie made about the two loveable claymation characters.

The first *Wallace and Gromit* movie won a Best Animated Feature Film Oscar in 2005- which already gives the sequel a fighting chance. It is most likely to win, due to the work that went into the movie as it took five years to release.

Music plays an integral role in why movies are so special. *The Brutalist*, *Conclave*, *Emilia Pérez*, *Wicked*, and *The Wild Robot* are all up for an Oscar in Best Original Score. While the other films had good scores, it's most likely that this award will go to one of the two musicals, *Emilia Pérez* or *Wicked*, as these movies were made with the intention of making good music.

Many actors got their shining moments this year. For men in leading roles the nominees are: Adrien Brody, Timothée

Chalamet, Colman Domingo, Ralph Fiennes, and Sebastian Stan. For women in leading roles, the nominees are: Cynthia Erivo, Karla Sofia Gascon, Mikey Madison, Demi Moore, and Fernanda Torres. These are the categories where fighting over who deserves an award and who doesn't are more prominent.

All of these actors brought something to their own film, which is what makes it so hard to narrow it down. Ralph Fiennes and Adrien Brody are most likely to win, with Fiennes still not winning one despite his long career. All of the women did an amazing job, but a lot of people think Erivo will take it home. "Nobody's bringing the acting and the vocals like Cynthia did," Geovanna Ortiz (25") said.

With so many incredible nominees this year, it's anyone's guess who will actually take home the Oscars. No matter the results, it'll be a great night to see all these deserving films and actors getting honored for what they've put so much work into.



TIMOTHÉE CHALAMET pictured on the set for his Oscar-nominated film, *A Complete Unknown*. Photo via Creative Commons



ARIANA GRANDE poses in her role as Glinda in the Oscar-nominated film, *Wicked*. Photo via Warner Brothers/Creative Commons.