

The Ultimate Oscar Nominees Test

Are you caught up on the films in the running for the coveted golden statuette? Assess your knowledge of *The Brutalist*, *A Complete Unknown*, *Anora* and more
BY CRAIGH BARBOZA

1 One of the most talked-about images of awards season is the low-angle shot of an upside-down Statue of Liberty in *The Brutalist*. From which film did director Brady Corbet say he “ripped off” the idea for this shot?

- A *Do the Right Thing*
- B *The Shining*
- C *The Red Shoes*
- D *Rebel Without a Cause*



2 Before Coralie Fargeat came up with the story for *The Substance*, or even knew who her main character was going to be, she wrote this scene in full, the way it appears in the film.

- A The lab test in which a raw, uncooked egg is injected with a mysterious concoction that causes the egg to duplicate itself
- B The in-movie advertisement for a mystery drug promising a better version of yourself
- C The scene in the restaurant where Elisabeth (Demi Moore) is told that she’s being replaced by someone younger and hotter by her producer (Dennis Quaid), as he stuffs his face with shrimp
- D The birth sequence where Sue (Margaret Qualley) grows

out of the back of Elisabeth, after she injects herself with the fountain of youth drug

3 *A Complete Unknown* star Timothée Chalamet first connected with Bob Dylan through his music. Which song did the actor name as his way into the role?

- A “Ballad of a Thin Man” (1965)
- B “Blowin’ in the Wind” (1963)
- C “Mr. Tambourine Man” (1965)
- D “Like a Rolling Stone” (1965)

4 Witch — sorry — which of the following is not true about *Wicked*?

- A Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo sang live, effectively turning the film set into a recording studio — one that required 6,000 lighting cues
- B Emerald City was built on two backlots and references the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair
- C The Wizard’s massive mechanical head, which had 65 moving panels, was operated by a dozen puppeteers
- D Costume designer Paul Tazewell re-created the iconic pointy black hat, giving it crooked

tiers that form a tornado when turned upside down

5 There are multiple sex scenes in *Anora*. The most nerve-racking for Mikey Madison was the movie’s finale, when she and Igor (Yura Borisov) are parked outside her apartment. What did the actress do to get herself to that raw place?

- A She read posts from online trolls
- B She watched *Lost in Translation*
- C She listened to an old voicemail from her father
- D She re-read passages from *The Fault in Our Stars*

6 This acting nominee did zero homework for the role: “I literally would not say the dialogue out loud until we were shooting.”

- A Isabella Rossellini (*Conclave*)
- B Colman Domingo (*Sing Sing*)
- C Fernanda Torres (*I’m Still Here*)
- D Kieran Culkin (*A Real Pain*)

7 TRUE OR FALSE: For a film about a young, perpetually tan Donald Trump (Sebastian Stan) getting sensei-d in the dark arts by Roy

Cohn (Jeremy Strong) — a former McCarthy investigations aide who was famous for saying, “You could never be too rich or too tan” — you want to get the skin tone just right. That’s why *The Apprentice*’s makeup team kept a tanning bed on set.

- A True
- B False

8 Emilia Pérez director Jacques Audiard envisioned his protagonist as whom at the beginning of the movie (for Manitas) and then whom after experiencing a transformation (for Emilia)?

- A Javier Bardem and Catherine Zeta-Jones
- B *The Wrestler*’s Mickey Rourke and Sigourney Weaver
- C Gérard Depardieu and Rosario Dawson
- D *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and Catherine Deneuve

9 For connoisseurs of papal intrigue, of course, the robes and accessories in *Conclave* are not a perfect match. (Costume designer Lisy Christl used a different fabric and the color red is much deeper.) The film’s catty cardinals have this to thank for that.

- A Francisco de Zurbarán’s paintings of monks’ robes
- B The spring 2020 Balenciaga couture show in Paris
- C The Yale University Divinity School
- D Influencers, Instagram “It” brands and Prada Pope

10 *The Wild Robot* was considered groundbreaking for its seamless blend of cutting-edge CG elements





The Apprentice



The Substance

and soft, painterly backdrops. To design Roz (voiced by Lupita Nyong'o), animators turned to visual futurist Syd Mead, whose credits include *Blade Runner* and *Aliens*. Where did they draw inspiration for the film's impressionistic treatment of nature?

- A Tyrus Wong's watercolor paintings for *Bambi*
- B The Maurice Sendak children's book *Where the Wild Things Are*
- C Edet Belzberg's animated documentary *Watchers of the Sky*
- D Don Bluth's hand-drawn animation for *An American Tail*

11 TRUE OR FALSE: Not only was *Nickel Boys* shot from a first-person point of view, but when writer-director RaMell Ross initially sat down to work on the script — which was his first — he told the story entirely in images.

- A True
- B False

12 The angry sandworms in *Dune: Part Two* tear through the desert



at tremendous speeds, throwing up enormous clouds of sand. What did the sound team use to convey the velocity and scale of such large creatures?

- A A motorcycle engine, run in reverse through a Leslie speaker, and sand
- B Hydroelectric turbine, steel-cut oats and sand
- C Huge rocket engines, vibrating metal and lots of sand
- D Sheet metal and aboriginal rain sticks

13 How did cinematographer Jarin Blaschke shoot *Nosferatu* in color on 35mm film and make it look like black and white, with everything taking place in the constant pale glow of moonlight?

- A He coordinated with the production design and costume departments to create a monochromatic color palette
- B He desaturated the film using filters that block yellow, orange and red light
- C He asked the lab to color time the film for black and white
- D He used a vintage Mitchell BNC camera, like Gregg Toland's on *Citizen Kane*

14 TRUE OR FALSE: Mohammad Rasoulof, who directed *The Seed of the Sacred Fig*, was nowhere near the set when cameras rolled.

- A True
- B False

15 Demi Moore described *The Substance* as a cross between this.

- A Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the bizarrely funny David Cronenberg film *Naked Lunch* and *Barbie*
- B *All About Eve*, in which Bette Davis is an aging star betrayed by a worshipful fan, and *Perfect*, with Jamie Lee Curtis as a gym instructor at a high-tech health club
- C Oscar Wilde's classic *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, the loony anti-aging comedy *Death Becomes Her* and a Jane Fonda workout video
- D All the above



Emilia Pérez

16 The composers on *Emilia Pérez* wrote a half dozen versions of "El Mal," which Rita (Zoe Saldaña) performed at a charity gala full of corrupt rich people. What was their first reference for the song?

- A Bob Dylan's political protest songs
- B "Sympathy for the Devil," by The Rolling Stones
- C Los Cogelones' alternative rock songs
- D The Sex Pistols' "God Save the Queen"

16 A

15 C

14 A The film was shot in secret in Iran, and Rasoulof managed the production with the help of two assistants: one for the technical crew and another for actors and designers.

13 B "It's all just the blue layer of the film working," Blaschke said. "It's color film used in a black-and-white way."

12 C "The vibrating metal was pitched down to give even more of a sense of weight," said supervising sound editor Richard King.

11 A "I didn't know how to write a script," said Ross, a longtime fan of *Mad Max: Fury Road*, which George Miller conceived in storyboard form, before writing the script.

10 A Animators also tried to capture some of Hayao Miyazaki's atmospheric forests.

9 B After watching the Balenciaga show, Christ thought: "I love modern, forward-facing silhouette or exaggeration."

8 D *Apprentice* did have a spray booth.

7 B The makeup team on *The Apprentice* did have a spray booth.

6 D On the way to set, Cuklin would find out which scene they were filming, then quickly learn his lines. He said he wanted to just "show up because the character's spontaneous and surprising."

5 C

4 C

3 A Specifically the live version from *No Direction Home*, a documentary directed by Martin Scorsese.

2 D "the camera is underneath him," banging on the bathroom door and thought of the famous shot from *The Shining*, with Jack Nicholson's image "to the protagonist. He monument to feel like a 'revelation'."

1 B When making *The Brutalist*, Corbet needed the national monument to feel like a "revelation" to the protagonist. He thought of the famous shot from *The Shining*, with Jack Nicholson banging on the bathroom door and "the camera is underneath him."

ANSWERS