BAFTA 2014: The Round Up

Film lovers this morning woke up early on Wednesday morning to catch the announcement of the BAFTA's 2014 Film Awards, sponsored by EE.

As 2013 was one of cinema's greatest years in quite a while, it seems there was some stiff competition to gain a position in this years nominations.

Leading the way with 11 nods was Alfonso Cuarón's space epic, Gravity. Following closely in second, Steve McQueen's 12 Years A Slave and David O. Russell's American Hustle with 10 nominations each.

Here's a breakdown of the major categories, who's favourite to win and who is likely to walk off with the gongs on the night.

BEST PICTURE
12 Years A Slave (Director: Steve McQueen)
American Hustle (D: David O Russell)
Captain Phillips (D: Paul Greengrass)
Gravity (D: Alfonso Cuarón)
Philomena (D: Stephen Frears)

It seems to be a two horse race between 12 Years A Slave and Gravity, with 12 Years A Slave edging out slightly due to its all round critical acclaim. There's some rather noteworthy omissions in the form of Nebraska and The Wolf of Wall Street, although Nebraska's rather limited release and the latter's UK release not coming until later on in the month, its understandable that the Scorsese/DiCaprio feature wasn't appreciated by BAFTA.

BEST DIRECTOR
Steve McQueen (12 Years A Slave)

Alfonso Cuarón (Gravity)
David O. Russell (American Hustle)
Paul Greengrass (Captain Phillips)
Martin Scorsese (The Wolf of Wall Street)

It's likely McQueen will pick this one up and sweep the awards season this year, but it would be nice to see Cuarón's impeccable work appreciated. Although his large scale, wailing, CGI-filled blockbuster was mistaken by some as vacuous and poorly written, Gravity was an epic, human led drama that was reined in wonderfully by its director. Saying that, this is anyone's game with previous Oscar bait Russell and Scorsese involved.

BEST ACTOR
Leonardo DiCaprio (The Wolf of Wall Street)
Christian Bale (American Hustle)
Chiwetel Ejiofor (12 Years A Slave)
Bruce Dern (Nebraska)
Tom Hanks (Captain Phillips)

It seemed like all eyes were on Dern for his authentic performance in Nebraska, with critics hailing him the winner for months on end. That was until Ejiofor's performance was fully witnessed, meaning the British actor is more likely to take home the gong. There's no sign of Robert Redford for All Is Lost, which seems to have engrossed audiences since its release.

BEST ACTRESS
Amy Adams (American Hustle)
Cate Blanchett (Blue Jasmine)
Emma Thompson (Saving Mr Banks)
Sandra Bullock (Gravity)
Judi Dench (Philomena)

Bullock was always the bookies favourite after early screenings of Gravity engrossed critics. However, it seems

unlikely that anyone but Blanchett will take home this one. In Woody Allen's comical drama 'Blue Jasmine', she gives a career defining performance. Perhaps Judi Dench could come around as stiff competition. It would've been nice to see a nod for Brie Larson's wonderful performance in Short Term 12, or one of the female leads in Blue is the Warmest Colour (Lea Seydoux is nominated in the Rising Star category), to mix up this fairly predictable category.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
Matt Damon (Behind the Candelabra)
Bradley Cooper (American Hustle)
Barkhad Abdi (Captain Phillips)
Daniel Brühl (Rush)
Michael Fassbender (12 Years A Slave)

This category is pretty much a level race, with no clear winners. It's likely the 12 Years A Slave bug will effect this category too, giving Fassbender a great chance. The critics were also significantly impressed by Abdi's debut performance, giving him a good boost too. Surprising omission in this category is Jared Leto's unrecognisable performance in Dallas Buyers Club, for which he is tipped to take the Academy Award. It's nice to see Damon given recognition for Behind the Candelabra, although another more light hearted nod for the late James Gandolfini's performance in Enough Said would have rounded out this category nicely.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
Jennifer Lawrence (American Hustle)
Julia Roberts (August: Osage County)
Lupita N'yongo (12 Years A Slave)
Sally Hawkins (Blue Jasmine)
Oprah Winfrey (The Butler)

Perhaps the most surprising category, with only two predicted nominations in the form of front runners Jennifer Lawrence and Lupita N'yongo for her sublime performance in 12 Years A

Slave. It seems likely N'yongo will take this one with Lawrence's shower of awards last season for her lead performance in Russell's last effort, Silver Linings Playbook. Nevertheless, there could be some surprises this year. It's lovely to see Sally Hawkins receiving a worthy nomination for Blue Jasmine, as well as Winfrey and Roberts returning to the awards circuit once again. It seems unlikely any of this talented trio will beat Lawrence or N'yongo, though.

What else to look out for:

- Scotland has been wonderfully represented this year by the fantastic Paul Wright with his dramatic seaside debut, For Those In Peril. The film, which had its UK premiere at the Edinburgh International Film Festival this year, has been nominated for Outstanding British Debut.
- The festival's wonderful repertoire is also evident in the Best Documentary category, with We Steal Secrets: The Story of Wikileaks being nominated, as well as Monsters University having a Best Animation nod. Both films had their UK premiere at the EIFF last summer.
- Expect the majority of the technical awards to be dominated by the spectacle that is Gravity. It seems unlikely that anything will hold a candle to the epic, after leaving audiences in awe over the past few months.

Read the full list of nominees over at BAFTA [here](#).

What do you think has a good chance of winning? Is there anyone you felt should have been nominated that wasn't? Leave a comment below and let's talk films!