



THE ACADEMY
OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES

84th Academy Awards Nominee Questionnaire

William Joyce / Nominated for: Animated Short category for THE FANTASTIC FLYING BOOKS OF MR. MORRIS LESSMORE

What is your home town? Where did you go to school?

Shreveport, Louisiana. Southern Methodist University, B.F.A. Film

What was your first movie-going experience, and how did it affect you?

The Wizard of Oz. It changed my genetic structure. I was 5 years old.

Did you watch the Oscars growing up? Was it a family experience? Do you recall a particular favorite Oscar moment?

My family and I watched it every year. Usually at my insistence. I think the loveliest, most haunting moment I've seen was when Charlie Chaplin received his special Oscar in 1971. He'd been in exile since the 50's. He seemed all but forgotten. They showed clip after masterful clip of his films. They were still showing them when he walked on stage, tiny, stooped, in his 80's. The standing ovation went on and on. The audience seemed to be saying "Thank you for helping invent this thing we love. Thank you for coming back."

When did you decide that you wanted to make movies? What influenced you? Who or what inspired you along the way?

When I was 5 I saw the Wizards of Oz, King Kong, Old yeller, National Velvet, The adventures of Robin Hood and Shane at the Saturday kids matinee in the old movie palace downtown. It felt holy as you walked into this gilded temple of possibilities. Then the lights went down and the heavenly light began to flicker and the dreams flooded the theater and we all lost our minds over the wonders that enveloped us. Imagine a thousand kids whose suspension of belief was total. We lived those stories. We screamed and cheered and tried to hide our tears. Get home Dorothy! Come back, Shane! Don't die, Kong! I've never gotten over it. It guides me to this day. And it will till I die.

What's the most valuable piece of advice you ever got in your career?

It's a quote from John Huston "Money's only good for making movies and throwing off the back of trains."

What was the biggest challenge you faced on the movie for which you are nominated?

Not giving up.

What was your most memorable moment on this movie?

We were shooting our miniature sets on a fairly large soundstage. We had five camera crews shooting simultaneously. My co-director and I were running between crews, directing the lighting, composition, set dressing. We were like madmen. Totally possessed and obsessed. We did 375 set ups in 5 days. It nearly killed us all and it was the most fun I've ever had.

What would be your dream movie project to work on?

The next one.

What's the one thing that people would be shocked to know about you?

I work in computer animation and I don't own a computer.

Do you use social media? If you tweet, what is your Twitter name?

Dude, I don't even have a computer.

If you have a Facebook fan page, please let us know what it is called.

Just go to www.moonbotstudios.com

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Brandon Oldenburg / Nominated for: Animated Short category for THE FANTASTIC FLYING BOOKS OF MR. MORRIS LESSMORE

What is your hometown? Where did you go to school?

Fort Worth, Texas. Holiday Heights Elementary, Fort Worth Christian, Richland High School, Ringling College of Art and Design

What was your first movie-going experience, and how did it affect you?

My Mom liked to tell me how the Apple Dumpling Gang stole my bottle. There are some who say it fell to the floor of the theater and rolled down to the front, but at the age of two, I knew better -- movies were real and alive. This story is indicative of how much my family loves cinema – they were willing to sit through this film and allow this travesty to happen. On the upside, apparently, I was weaned from the bottle that day.

The first film I remember leaving a changed boy was Raiders of the Lost Ark. My Dad made sure we sat through the credits of every John Williams' scored film. As we sat in the dark and listened, the moment became ethereal. I burst through the theater doors into that summer night knowing what I wanted to do for the rest of my life – and it wasn't archeology. The next day Dad took me to a used camera shop where we found a dusty Super 8 camera. You can imagine what happened next.

A few years ago, I did a one-man show of paintings, sculpture and performance art as homage to all the Steven Spielberg films I grew up with. Here is a link to a blog with some photos from the show. www.thelostpark.blogspot.com

Did you watch the Oscars growing up? Was it a family experience? Do you recall a particular favorite Oscar moment?

Every year my family would host an Oscar watching party in North Richland Hills, Texas. I was the designated red carpet front door boy. My responsibilities included greeting our guests and handing out and collecting the ballots. We would have on average 30 to 50 people in our tiny 70's ranch style home. Friends would bring T.V.s so we could utilize each room. In 1980, my older brothers found a way to borrow a huge satellite dish from a local distributor. Parked on a trailer in our front yard the satellite dish delivered an unfiltered feed, no commercials. We truly felt like we were there.

When did you decide that you wanted to make movies? What influenced you? Who or what inspired you along the way?

With the help of my best pals, I started making movies in 4th grade. That film JJ Abrams did this past year felt very biographical for me (minus the aliens eating people part). It's important to note, we accidentally burned down a barn and several acres of farmland for an effects shot requiring a rocket launcher -- it's best to avoid working with pyrotechnics during the middle of an August summer in Texas, especially without any adult supervision.

Lucy, a close family friend, would sometimes take care of me when my parents had to go out of town. She had one of the first Betamax players. One of the first things to come out on Betamax was The Making of The Empire Strikes Back. She had an amazing mid-century modern home and in the center of the drop down living room they had an Ovalia "Egg" chair. Here is where I sat and absorbed every aspect of the Mark Hamill hosted behind-the-scenes. I watched it over and over and over again -- poor Lucy.

What's the most valuable piece of advice you ever got in your career?

"You're crazy if we don't move to Shreveport." – my wife

"Take chances and always bet on yourself first!" – a dear friend

What was the biggest challenge you faced on the movie for which you are nominated?

Some things are too hard to talk about. Words fail to capture the pain and sacrifice. We seek to honor those who came before, those who we lost during and after production. Their stories inspire us and thus we must pay it forward by telling our own stories no matter what.

What was your most memorable moment on this movie?

We had yet to build our miniature sets. Animation production had yet to begin. All we had was our story reel and the time had come to watch it from beginning to end in it's completed sketchy form. When the reel had finished, I look around the room at our tiny crew. I had tears in my eyes and I saw that I wasn't alone. We were all crying (In a good way). This was when I knew we had made something truly special.

What would be your dream movie project to work on?

The film would be based on a Bill Watterson story. Kathleen Kennedy would produce. The Coen brothers would draft the script. Emmanuel Lubezki would do the cinematography. Sir. George Martin would produce the sound track. Moonbot Studios would storyboard and animate. David Lynch would do sound design. Bansky would create the marketing campaign. Shepard Fairey would do the movie poster. Chris Ware would design the opening titles and Steven Spielberg's Mom would bake cookies for the crew each afternoon.

What's the one thing that people would be shocked to know about you?

In 1982 I auditioned for Terms of Endearment. I got a call back while I was at church camp. My parents offered to drive me home all the way from New Mexico. I said, "Is that the one with the scene where I have to cry?" when they said yes, I made the obvious 9 yr. old choice, stay at camp!

Do you use social media? If you tweet, what is your Twitter name?

@MorrisLessmore – The main character of our film is a twitter fiend.

@BrandonBot – This account is actually my own twitter feed.

@MoonbotStudios – keep up with the whole Krewe responsible for Morris.

www.morrislessmore.com

www.moonbotstudios.com

If you have a Facebook fan page, please let us know what it is called.

<http://www.facebook.com/morrislessmore>

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