



THE ACADEMY
OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES

84th Academy Awards Nominee Questionnaire

Bill Pohlad / Nominated for: Best Picture for The Tree of Life

What is your hometown?

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Where did you go to school?

Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington

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

I'm not sure that I remember my absolute first movie, but it was probably either a film called "Babes in Toyland" or a Disney film with Haley Mills called "In Search of the Castaways". I know that I was quite taken with these films because I remember that I saw both of them in the range of eight or ten times. All in the theater, of course. Movies made up a great part of my childhood. I remember my Dad taking us to the movies every Sunday morning after church and, later, my Mom dropping me off at our local theater every Saturday morning.

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

Yes, I remember us watching the Oscars when I was growing up and it was a family experience. I have some memory of the shows in the late 60's. Audrey Hepburn, Bob Hope and Johnny Carson. I seem to remember "A Man for a All Seasons" winning for some reason. But I suppose I didn't get really serious about it until the early 70's. I remember being quite torn about whether "The Godfather Part II" or "Chinatown" should get the award.

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

I'm not sure precisely when I decided I wanted to make movies. I'm sure sitting in the theater on all those Saturday and Sunday mornings was a good indicator. But I do remember making some little horror movies when I was very young on our Super 8 camera, and I clearly remember a time when our third or fourth grade teacher went around the room asking what we all wanted to be when we grew up and me saying "a Hollywood playwright". As far as influences go, early on it would certainly have been more mainstream movies. "A Hard Day's Night", "Thunderball", "Rear Window", "Vertigo", "Splendor in the Grass", "Breakfast at Tiffany's", "Grand Prix". And then later, Coppola, Pacino, Woody Allen, Warren Beatty.

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

My father's advice on the industry was my first and probably the best. Overall, he was very skeptical about the industry and those inside it, but he was attracted to it too. And he had a lot of opinions about it so it would be hard to single out just one. "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is" underlies a lot of it though.

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

The biggest challenge probably was balancing my judgement with those of our filmmaker.

When you are working with one of the most respected artists of the day, it's a real challenge to find the balance between arguing for your own instincts and letting him go with his. Every filmmaker, no matter how great, needs restraints and other disciplines. The challenge is knowing how hard to push in order to best serve the film itself.

What was your most memorable moment on this movie?

On a movie this size and with this cast of characters, there are MANY memorable moments. The first day on set would be one though. I remember clearly standing in the O'Brien House living room, with some fair amount of anxiety about what it might actually be like to be on set on a film with Terry, who I knew as a friend but had never worked with. This was the great, reclusive, mysterious and by some reports "difficult" Terrence Malick. And there he was sitting in one of the old-fashioned lounge chairs, laughing with Chivo and the rest of us, completely relaxed and easy-going. Like an athlete on the top of his game, it felt so easy.

What would be your dream movie project to work on?

I'm actually working on it now. A script based on a true story that I witnessed first hand when I was in my late teens. A love story and a story of friendship. It was the first script that I ever tried to write back in the early eighties and now I'm back at it. We'll see.

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

I can't say.

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

I'm embarrassed to say that I don't. But I'm sure I will someday.

Dede Gardner / Nominated for: Best Picture for The Tree of Life

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

Chicago, IL St. Georges School Newport, RI
Columbia University NY, NY

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

My Dad taking me to the "BZ" movie theatre to see "The Spy Who Loved Me" — realizing I could see the world on a screen, sparked a

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

Not really

glamora one, but who more do a 10 year old girl want.

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

In college, after working on a student film and being shown "The World of Henry Orient" in a class I took taught by Andrew Sarris.

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

And the advice I gave myself everyday -
only do it if you love it.

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

HA! Listening only to the film - letting the film have
the loudest voice - that it would tell us when it
was complete.

What was your most memorable moment on this movie?

Watching Terry and Chivo roll ^{film} everyday before crew call
and being upstairs in a very hot church in the scene
when Mr. O'Brien plays the organ and thinking I was
about to give birth to my daughter.

What would be your dream movie project to work on?

They should all be dream projects - - but short of
that, a Pixar movie.

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

That I am shy.

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

NO! Talk to people instead!

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

NO!