

## Bringing home the Oscars

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Maybe you recognized the background when you saw it on the silver screen.

The famous ridgeline. The bustle on Main Street.

Sometimes it's just a quick scene, but others have big parts in movies.

Santa Clarita has a long history with the movies, and as you watch this year's Oscar nominees receive their due this evening, you'll notice this year is no exception.

"A Star is Born" is up for several Oscars, including Best Picture, Best Actor (Bradley Cooper) and Actress (Lady Gaga), Supporting Actor (Sam Elliott), Writing, Music (Original Song) and Cinematography.

Maybe you recognized Bradley Cooper's rehabilitation facility? You might have if you've been to the Friendly Valley clubhouse.

"Vice" filmed many of its scenes at Blue Cloud Movie Ranch, where the location doubled as Iraq. "Vice" was also filmed at property on Pico Canyon and a warehouse in the Industrial Center.

The story about Vice President Dick Cheney, is a contender for Best Picture, Best Actor (Christian Bale), Supporting Actor (Sam Rockwell), Supporting Actress (Amy Adams), Directing, Writing, Editing, Makeup and Hairstyling.

"A Quiet Place" is a dramatic thriller about a family who must remain in absolute silence to avoid mysterious creatures, is up for an Academy Award in Sound Editing. "A Quiet Place" was filmed at a property in Pico Canyon

The Santa Clarita Valley is a great place for filming for a number of reasons, according to Evan Thomason, economic development associate for the city of Santa Clarita,

"Part of the reason Santa Clarita has been so successful in attracting filming is we have a lot of sound stages and movie ranches," Thomason said. "We also have varied looks that can double for anything from a jungle to the desert, to small town suburbia to the west side."

The city's Economic Development Office has three full-time staff members who keep track of permits, as well as manage the needs of the studios and property owners, road closures and sheriff deputies.

"We balance the needs of the production company while respecting the privacy and safety of our citizens," he added. "Overall, the town is very welcoming for production."

With more than 500 permits issued last year and more than \$30 million in economic benefits, Thomason said production companies know there are welcome in Santa Clarita. Previous Oscar contenders in the valley include "Titanic," "American Sniper," "La La Land," and "Django Unchained."

And the local ties extend to the animated universe, as well.

California Institute of the Arts alumni are no strangers to Oscar nominations.

Since the category of Best Animated Feature was introduced in 2001, 11 of the winning films were directed by alumni of CalArts' renowned animation programs.

It's no surprise at all.

Founded by Walt Disney, CalArts is ranked No. 1 of the Top 50 Animation programs in the United States by Animation Career Review.

And this year, three alumni-directed films have been nominated for Academy Awards:

"Incredibles 2" from Pixar Animation Studios directed by two-time Oscar winner Brad Bird, of "Ratatouille" fame.

"Ralph Breaks the Internet" from Walt Disney Animation Studios was co-directed by alum Rich Moore, who worked on "Zootopia," and seeking his second Oscar win.

"Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse" from Sony Pictures Animation was co-directed by CalArts alum and first-time director Bob Persichetti.

Pundits have this year's award for animated film as a race between Pixar's "Incredibles 2," which puts the focus on Helen/Elastigirl (Holly Hunter) and Sony's "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse," introducing Miles Morales as the first Spider of color, according to IndieWire. "Ralph Breaks the Internet" is predicted to come in third.

Past winners from CalArts include: last year's "Coco," co-directed by first-time feature director Adrian Molina with Lee Unkrich; "The Incredibles" (2004) and Ratatouille (2007) directed by Brad Bird; "Finding Nemo" (2003) and "Wall-E" (2008), directed by Andrew Stanton; "Brave" (2012) by alumni duo Mark Andrews and Brenda Chapman; "Up" (2009) by Pete Docter; "Frozen" by alumnus Chris Buck with Jennifer Lee and Peter Del Veche; "Inside Out" (2015) by Pete Docter with Jonas Rivers, and "Zootopia" (2016), by alumnus Rich More with Byron Howard and Clark Spencer.

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