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Oscar's Favorites

By Cecily Hall

This year's best actress and supporting actress Academy Awards nominees ranked by their overall appeal.

Sunday looks to be an interesting race for the Academy Awards' ladies, with a mix of legendary names and relative newcomers nominated in the best actress and supporting actress categories. Los Angeles-based E-Poll Market Research has ranked the nominated actresses by their overall appeal. The firm asked 1,100 men and women whether they were aware of the actress and, if they were, then asked them to state if she was appealing. Gerry Philpott, president and chief executive of the firm, pointed out that much of each actress' appeal is actually reflected in their films and their roles. "People really liked Ellen Page's role, they think she is accessible as a person, someone who seemed very real to them." Still, he noted appeal percentages are reasonably high for all the nominees. "These women are all likable actresses, even those who may not be as well-known."

BEST ACTRESS IN A LEADING ROLE

1. ELLEN PAGE, "JUNO"

Overall appeal: 70 percent

She's the "It" girl of the moment thanks to her starring role of pregnant teen Juno MacGuff in "Juno," and 20-year-old Page is taking it all in stride. Up next: Page will appear on Barbara Walters' annual Oscar night special, will be the host for the March 1 episode of "Saturday Night Live" and will be seen in theaters alongside Dennis Quaid and Sarah Jessica Parker in "Smart People," opening April 11. For the Screen Actors Guild Awards in Los Angeles in January, stylist Samantha McMillen dressed Page in a little black dress from Zac Posen, Manolo Blahnik shoes and a bag from Anya Hindmarch.

2. LAURA LINNEY, "THE SAVAGES"

Overall appeal: 55 percent

Linney gained stardom as an overwrought sister in "You Can Count on Me" in 2000, and stole plenty of scenes as Annabeth Markum, Sean Penn's character's devoted wife, in Clint Eastwood's "Mystic River" (2003). In "The Savages," she stars as neurotic playwright Wendy Savage, who battles with her brother (played by Philip Seymour Hoffman) as they guide their father through his final months. On the red carpet, the 44-year-old has donned gowns in recent awards seasons from designers such as J.Mendel, Prada, Valentino and Vera Wang. Next up for Linney: "The Other Man," in which she plays a wife suspected of adultery.

3. CATE BLANCHETT, "ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE"

Overall appeal: 54 percent

The Oscar winner and five-time nominee has attended her fair share of awards ceremonies over the past several years. She's now the first woman in Oscar history to be nominated twice for playing the same role, having been tapped for her original performance as Queen Elizabeth I in 1998's "Elizabeth." In addition, the actress picked up the Oscar in 2005 for her role as Katherine Hepburn in "The Aviator" and another nomination for her work in 2006's "Notes on a Scandal." The 38-year-old Aussie aligns herself often with Giorgio Armani these days, but her choice of designers in the past has included Givenchy, Rodarte, Valentino, Versace, Alexander McQueen and Yves Saint Laurent. In January, the pregnant mother of two wore a floral Balenciaga gown to the SAG Awards.

4. MARION COTILLARD, "LA VIE EN ROSE"

Overall appeal: 47 percent

This 32-year-old French actress' awareness has certainly been on the rise thanks to her British Academy of Film and Television Arts- and Golden Globe-winning performance as Edith Piaf in "La Vie en Rose." Prior to this, she was seen in Tim Burton's film "Big Fish," opposite Billy Crudup and Albert Finney, along with 2004's "A Very Long Engagement," which also starred Audrey Tatou. WWD reported in January, "Best actress nominee Marion Cotillard, who doesn't work with a stylist, has worn her fair share of Chanel, a house known for locking down actresses early in the game. But she was in Nina Ricci at the recent Critics' Choice Awards here and wore Giorgio Armani to the European Film Awards in Berlin."

5. JULIE CHRISTIE, "AWAY FROM HER"

Overall appeal: 45 percent

Considering the fact the legendary Julie Christie's last major role was in "Afterglow" in 1997, it's impressive to see her name once again on Oscar's list. For "Away From Her," Christie took on the role of Fiona Anderson, a beautiful, married woman in her early 60s who is placed in a nursing home after becoming consumed by Alzheimer's Disease. It remains to be seen what the 66-year-old will wear on Sunday. WWD said in January, "Julie Christie, another best actress nominee who dresses herself, is a bit of an enigma because she hasn't been a red-carpet regular of late, but she looked elegant and timeless at the National Board of Review Awards in Manhattan."

BEST ACTRESS IN A SUPPORTING ROLE

1. RUBY DEE, "AMERICAN GANGSTER"

Overall appeal: 64 percent

Mama Lucas will surely go down as one of the most noteworthy supporting characters in film for 2007. Actress Ruby Dee portrays the real-life loving mother of heroin kingpin Frank Lucas, who smuggled drugs into the country from the Far East in the Seventies — and won a SAG Award for her performance. Dee stars alongside Hollywood heavyweights such as Russell Crowe and Denzel Washington, who directed the film. She has appeared in classic films such as "A Raisin in the Sun" (1961) and "Do the Right Thing" (1988).

2. CATE BLANCHETT, "I'M NOT THERE"

Overall appeal: 54 percent

Blanchett is only the 11th actor to have received dual nominations — previous double nominees include Julianne Moore, Emma Thompson, Holly Hunter and Sigourney Weaver. In "I'm Not There," Blanchett plays the role of Jude, a Bob Dylan-like artist whose interests in new musical styles alienates many of his devoted fans during a concert tour. WWD reported earlier this month that the pregnant Blanchett is in preproduction on "The Fantastic Mr. Fox" (2009), and in postproduction on "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" and "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull," both due out later this year. After that, she told WWD, she'll take a break. "I'm not returning to acting until 2009, when I'm back on stage at the Sydney Theatre Company. We're doing a Shakespeare cycle, which should be fantastic."

3. TILDA SWINTON, "MICHAEL CLAYTON"

Overall appeal: 48 percent

The London born and bred Swinton began her acting career on stage, having worked with the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh and the Royal Shakespeare Company before she decided to pursue a career in film. Her performance as Karen Crowder in "Michael Clayton" has received numerous accolades, winning her the BAFTA Award for Supporting Actress earlier this month. The 47-year-old wore a Dior dress adorned with jet-black feathers on the red carpet that evening. She has also worn designs from the likes of Prada and Jil Sander to recent events.

4. AMY RYAN, "GONE BABY GONE"

Overall appeal: 43 percent

Prior to her role in Ben Affleck's directorial debut, "Gone Baby Gone," Amy Ryan had spent most of her career on the stage — her résumé also boasts some TV work and smaller film roles, like that of Chris Cooper's starstruck wife in "Capote." But Ryan struck the big time with this film. In it, she plays the parent of a missing four-year-old girl. Her character is also a drug user whose own behaviors contributed to her daughter's disappearance. For the Oscars, WWD reported that the 37-year-old will be working with stylist Annabel Tollman, "who has dressed Scarlett Johansson for the Oscars and is known for adventurous choices that show off her clients' best attributes."

5. SAOIRSE RONAN, "ATONEMENT"

Overall appeal: 41 percent

In the Oscar-nominated film "Atonement," Saoirse Ronan plays 13-year-old Briony Tallis, a precocious and naïve aspiring writer whose misunderstanding of her older sister's actions leads to a series of life-changing, tragic events. The role was young Ronan's big break, and next she will star in "City of Ember" this year alongside Bill Murray, and will be seen in "The Lovely Bones" next year — she plays the leading role of Susie Salmon, a murdered girl who helps her family from heaven. The movie also stars Rachel Weisz, Mark Wahlberg and Susan Sarandon.

SOURCE: LOS ANGELES-BASED E-POLL MARKET RESEARCH; E-SCORE(TM) CELEBRITY IS CONDUCTED WEEKLY AMONG A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF 1,100 RESPONDENTS AGES 13+ AND ENCOMPASSES MEASURES OF AWARENESS, APPEAL AND A DIVERSE LIST OF 46 KEY ATTRIBUTES