

Natural Selections

A NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

A Tale of Two Meals: Profile of New Sichuan Restaurant, Hui

EMILY ATLAS AND DONNA TALLENT

Emily Atlas:

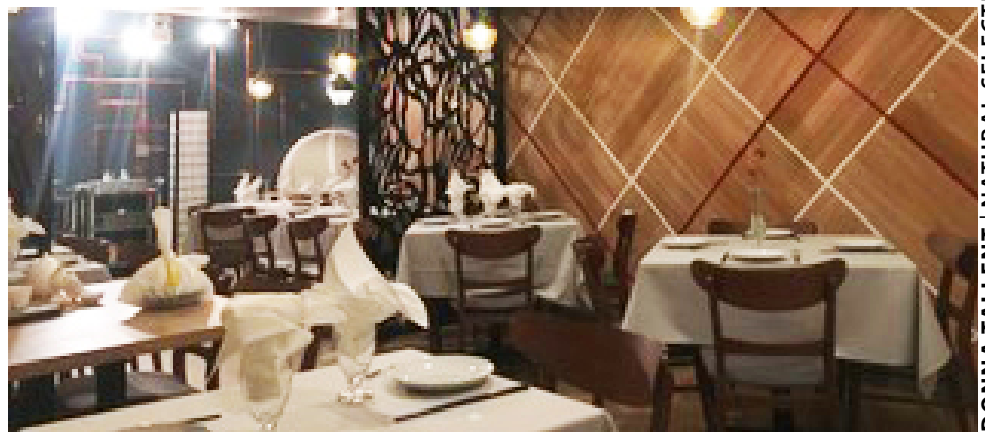
Donna and I recently met at a *Natural Selections* interest meeting and learned that we both love food and exploring the various food options of the Upper East Side and beyond. Although some friends have told me that the Upper East Side has limited interesting food options, in my two months so far as a student at Rockefeller, I have found that this is not entirely true. We heard about a new Sichuan restaurant called **Hui** that opened about three months ago and thought it would be fun to share a meal together, try a few dishes, and then tell a *Tale of Two Meals*.

Donna Tallent:

If you're walking up 70th Street toward Second Avenue, it's hard to miss this ground-floor spot with its large maroon awning. Hui is situated in the Lenox Hill neighborhood, equidistant from Hunter College and Weill Cornell Medical College, and three short blocks from The Rockefeller University. Even at 5:30 p.m. on a Friday, which is an early dinner hour for most New Yorkers, I observed a steady stream of pedestrian traffic heading inside or pausing to check out the menu as I stood out front waiting for Emily to arrive. One woman, someone who I imagined was local to the neighborhood, stopped and addressed me where I stood, as if I were some sort of an ambassador for the restaurant: "Grand Opening...Is this a new Chinese restaurant?", she asked.

EA:

We had a 5:30 p.m. reservation at Hui. Having just come from an interesting Friday Lecture, I hustled to Hui, a 5-10 minute walk from Rockefeller's campus. As I walked, I thought about how I had not yet found many Chinese restaurants near Rockefeller. In fact, before going to Hui, I had only been to Xi'an Famous Foods, a



small shop on 78th Street that serves thick hand-pulled noodles, famously spiced with cumin. Delicious as it may be, Xi'an Famous Foods focuses mostly on noodles and regional specialties from the Xi'an province of China. While I am excited about the uptick of more authentic and regional Chinese restaurants in New York City, my childhood memories of Chinese food consist mostly of Chinese-American versions of Sichuan and Shanghaiese food, and I still crave many of those dishes.

DT:

Hui, with its white tablecloths, attentive staff, and family-style portions, reminded me of the Chinese restaurants my family frequented when I was a child, but with much more of a modern-day feel. The exposed brick walls, grey wood floors, and sculptured metalwork décor give the restaurant a polished yet comfortable and inviting vibe. There's also a lovely yet sleek, soft-lit, fully-stocked bar if you're looking

DONNA TALLENT | NATURAL SELECTIONS

CONTINUED TO P. 2

for a cocktail and a quick nibble. Hui is a place to have an after-work drink, an intimate meal with a friend, or a large family gathering.

EA:

The first thing I noticed was that the décor shows a lot of attention to detail. This is a place to go for a sit-down meal in a way that Xi'an Famous Foods is not. The restaurant was a tad empty at 5:30 p.m., but it filled up over the course of our meal, and was near capacity by 7:00 p.m.

The attentive wait staff quickly informed us that it was Happy Hour (every day from 5-8 p.m.). I ordered a glass of a dry Riesling (\$6 at Happy Hour), a good wine to pair with Chinese dishes.

The menu had a near-overwhelming array of choices. Luckily, Donna and I agreed to share our dishes, so we could try as much as possible. We decided on scallion pancakes (six pieces for \$7.95) and pork steamed buns (six soup-filled buns for \$9.95). We also ordered the spicy and sour beef pot (\$21.95) and the spicy and sour shredded potatoes (\$13.95). Scallion pancakes and pork steamed buns (also known as pork soup dumplings, juicy pork buns, or *xiaolongbao* [shau-long-bau]) are two familiar dishes I try, if available, to get a sense of any new Chinese restaurant I check out.

When the scallion pancakes arrived, I wasn't sure whether I would like them. I tend to look for crispy, browned, bubbly scallion pancakes with only a slight sheen of oil. These particular scallion pancakes were not browned, and frankly looked a little greasy. However, I was struck by how delicate they were. They were both crispy and chewy and paired perfectly with the dipping sauce of soy sauce, ginger, and rice vinegar. The pork steamed buns arrived piping hot in a bamboo steamer. The soup inside the buns was flavorful and rich and the pork was well seasoned. I was most impressed with the dumpling dough, which was delicate and cooked perfectly. You could tell that the dumplings were freshly made.

Finally, our main dishes arrived. The waitress had told us earlier that the sour and spicy shredded potato dish was one her mom used to make for her when she was a child, and eating the dish evoked nostalgic feelings of home for her. I dove right into the potatoes, which were very thinly julienned and crisp, with a vinegary tang. There were many thinly sliced red chilis



DONNA TALLENT | NATURAL SELECTIONS

and the dish was extremely spicy. I have a very high spice tolerance and I enjoy spicy foods, but by the end of the meal, my lips were definitely feeling the effects of the capsaicin. The spicy and sour beef pot was less spicy, but still flavorful. Donna seemed to prefer this dish, but I found it hard to enjoy the subtler flavors after digging into the potatoes; that is one of the perils of highly spiced foods.

DT:

Emily and I ordered beer and wine from the almost-half-price happy hour menu (beer is \$4 a glass, wine is \$6 a glass) and then pored through pages and pages of glossy menu items, including full-color photos of dishes from ten different categories: Cold Appetizers, Hot Appetizers, Soup, Salad, Vegetables, Entrees, Rice and Noodles, Special Clay Pot, Chef Specialties, and Desserts.

It didn't take us long to pick out several items we felt were worth sampling: From Hot Appetizers, juicy steamed buns and scallion pancakes. Emily showed me how to eat the steamed buns, piping hot and full of luscious, savory broth, by gently balancing a bun on your spoon, nibbling the top until the broth trickles out, and then slurping up the broth. I attempted to be graceful with the first dumpling, but by my third, I began to shove them into my mouth whole. The scallion pancakes were light, crisp, and flaky. I imagined they received a quick, delicious dip into a shallow pan of oil and told Emily I could just eat an entire plate of only them. From Vegetables, spicy and sour shredded potatoes, which were too spicy for me but Emily seemed to love; and from



Jim Keller
Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor

Sarah Baker
Associate Editor, Webmaster, Distribution

Megan Elizabeth Kelley
Associate Editor, Copy Editor, Communication

Emma Garst
Editorial Assistant, Copy Editor

Nicole Infarinato
Copy Editor, Distribution

Melissa Jarmel
Copy Editor, Website Traffic

Johannes Buheitel
Copy Editor

Guadalupe Astorga
Nan Pang
Designers

selections.rockefeller.edu
nseditors@rockefeller.edu

Chef Specialties, the spicy and sour beef pot. Now this specialty dish was the plate of food that will make me return to Hui. A generous pile of shredded beef lay on top of rice noodles, which swam in a perfectly seasoned beef broth. I left my to-go box on the table and truly mourn for my abandoned, uneaten leftovers.

EA:

All in all, I had a great meal at Hui with Donna and would definitely return! Hui has a reasonably priced lunch menu and it would be a good break from my usual Collaborative Research Center or Weiss lunches. ■

Hui Restaurant and Bar

314 E 70th Street, between First and Second Avenues

(646) 869-0339

Lunch specials served Monday-Friday, 11:30-3:30 p.m.

According to Web site, online orders are 10% off until December 31, 2018

Visit Web site for hours and additional daily specials.

Time is of the Essence: Limited Engagements Closing Soon

MELISSA JARMEL

As the new year approaches, I wanted to draw your attention to three limited engagement plays that hit Broadway this fall and are set to close in January: *The Lifespan of a Fact*, *Waverly Gallery*, and *American Son*.

The most lighthearted among the three is *The Lifespan of a Fact*. This play features Daniel Radcliffe as an intern at a magazine whose superior, played by Cherry Jones, assigns him to fact-check an article by a writer who prefers “truthiness” to truth (though this writer, played by Bobby Cannavale, would immediately correct me to say that he wrote an essay, not an article, and that there isn’t really a difference between truth and “truthiness” or maybe that “truthiness” has more truth). With this highly topical play, you’re in for ninety-five minutes of absurd humor that considers the value of facts and the role the media has in telling the truth.

If you prefer to trade in the absurd for something that grounds itself in terrifying realism, you should make sure to see Kerry Washington (famous for *Scandal*) and Steven Pasquale (from *Rescue Me*) play parents of a biracial teenager caught up in a police incident in *American Son*.

While the play focuses on one incident with one particular family in the middle of the night in a police station in Florida, Christopher Demos-Brown’s writing and Washington’s emotional performance excellently portray how her character’s frustrations and worries about her black son are the worries of many black mothers in America, sentiments that her estranged white husband fails to grasp for the majority of the play. The dynamic portrayed by this couple also delves into some of the challenges of interracial marriage and raising biracial children to have a cohesive identity in a world that won’t see them in their entirety. It’s a lot to tackle in ninety minutes, but this cast will keep you engaged and in suspense until the lights go out.

The Waverly Gallery is also based in realism but can often feel surreal as you are drawn in by Elaine May’s masterful performance of a feisty New Yorker facing Alzheimer’s disease. May returns to Broadway after fifty years to portray Gladys Green, a liberal activist in her eighties with Alzheimer’s who has been running a small art gallery for many years, from which the play takes its name. While the

gallery isn’t thriving at the time the play begins, it is still serving as a familiar place for Gladys to remain engaged as her dementia progresses. This play explores how a person with dementia and their family cope as Alzheimer’s takes its course. Although a heartbreaking topic and portrayal, you’ll find yourself laughing throughout at the odd relationship Gladys develops with a young artist, played by Michael Cera, and maybe some all-too-familiar family dynamics.

All three plays have [rush policies](#) (listed below) and have recently been listed for same-day discounts at the [TKTS booths](#). ■

[The Lifespan of a Fact](#)

Closes January 13, 2019

\$40 General Rush

[American Son](#)

Closes January 27, 2019

\$35 Student Rush

[Waverly Gallery](#)

Closes January 27, 2019

\$40 Student Rush

Natural Expressions

Music

Brian Dougherty of The Rockefeller University’s President’s Office will be singing with the Musica Sacra Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. His performance of Handel’s Messiah will take place at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 19, and tickets can be purchased [online](#).

On Thursday, December 20, Collette Ryder of the Office of Sponsored Program Administration at The Rockefeller University will be singing A Ceremony of Carols with the NYChoral Chamber Ensemble. This holiday concert will be held at 7:30 p.m. at St. Peter’s Church and tickets are

\$40. More information can be found [online](#).

Digital Events

Bernie Langs has recently recorded a medley of his original composition “I Didn’t Tell Anyone” and two cover songs by Mick Jagger/Keith Richards, “Till the Next Time We Say Goodbye” and “You Can’t Always Get What You Want.” Check out the release on [SoundCloud](#).

Email Megan E. Kelley at mkelley@rockefeller.edu to submit your art/music/performance/sporting/other event for next month’s “Natural Expressions” and follow [@NatSelections](#) on Twitter for more events.

Editorial Note

This month, the *Natural Selections* Editorial Board bids farewell to Jim Keller. We would like to thank him for his interminable dedication to *Natural Selections* over the past seven years. Jim first joined *Natural Selections* as a contributor and copy editor in October 2011, and he became Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor in July 2013. Jim’s love of film is evident if you’ve read his “For Your Consideration” column that has shed light on contentious Oscar races and given us insight into the best performances each year; luckily for our community, this column will have future editions. For the past five and a half years, Jim has been the fearless leader of *Natural Selections* as Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor, making the publication the success that it is today for the Rockefeller and Tri-I community. Jim has made a permanent impact on the Editorial Board, and we will do only our best to try to emulate his success in the years to come. We wish him all the best and will miss having him on the team! ■

For Your Consideration – Ones to Watch, Vol. 3 Edition

JIM KELLER

With Thanksgiving all a faded memory, it's time to close out the *Ones to Watch* series with the Best Supporting Actor and Actress races. The nominees for both categories can be unpredictable but last year was the second year in a row where the Best Supporting Actor winner was essentially decided early on during the precursor awards circuit. Conversely, it has become very easy to predict the winner of the Best Supporting Actress race for the past six years. Often a film's narrative can decide who will receive a nomination for the supporting races. Last year was a bit different, as you can see from the outcomes below. But the Academy clearly used other parameters in their decision to nominate Melinda Dillon for *Absence of Malice* in 1982 and, more recently, Rachel McAdams's for *Spotlight* three years ago. In the former, Dillon's character famously skipped across lawns picking up newspapers and McAdams does nothing outside of make a few pensive "Mmm" sounds. Therefore, I use a different format when discussing the supporting than with the leading races. Instead of laying out each actor's accomplishments and whether I would bet on them for a nomination, I have broken down the various circumstances these actors found themselves in because of the film's narrative, and how that may influence Oscar voters to pencil them in for nominations.

Various critics groups, including the National Board of Review (NBR), the New York Film Critics Circle (NYFCC), and the Los Angeles Film Critics Association (LAFCA) have announced their respective winners, and The Broadcast Film Critics Association (BFCA), Hollywood Foreign Press Association (Golden Globes), and the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) have announced their respective nominees. These announcements, and the events associated with them, help to form a consensus of Oscar nominees and make the acting categories clearer as we approach nominations on January 23. In effect, they signal the start of the Oscar race's second leg.

~THE GENTS~

Last Year's Best Supporting Actor Results:

- **Mark Rylance — *Dunkirk*:** Because the film was still considered a Best Picture frontrunner at this time last year, it made sense that Rylance could be pulled along, but despite eight nominations for the film, including Best



Mahershala Ali in "Green Book."

Picture and Best Director, that was not the case.

- **Ben Mendelsohn — *Darkest Hour*:** Even though the film landed six Oscar nominations, Mendelsohn was not one of them.

- **Willem Dafoe — *The Florida Project*:** Dafoe was the film's sole nomination, and the race came down to him and Sam Rockwell.

- **Armie Hammer — *Call Me by Your Name*:** Sadly, despite Broadcast Film Critics Association (BFCA) and Golden Globe nominations, Hammer was unable to muscle his way into the top 5.

- **Michael Stuhlbarg — *Call Me by Your Name*:** Same here, Stuhlbarg was unable to find Oscar love despite a BFCA nomination.

- **Sam Rockwell — *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*:** As I mentioned above, the race came down to Rockwell and Dafoe, with Rockwell collecting trophies from most of the precursors, including the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA), BFCA, Golden Globes, and SAG and eventually went on to win the Oscar.

- **Woody Harrelson — *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*:** After his SAG nomination, Harrelson gained some traction and was nominated. This was a real two for one for the film with Rockwell's nomination and win.

- **Michael Shannon — *The Shape of Water*:** Although the film did extremely well in overall nominations and went on to win Best Picture and Best Director, the Academy snubbed Shannon's villain.

The category was rounded out by Richard Jenkins, the good guy in *The Shape of Wa-*

ter, and Christopher Plummer, the bad guy in *All the Money in the World* (who replaced an even worse guy who originally played the role, Kevin Spacey). When Spacey was caught up in the #MeToo tide following sexual misconduct allegations, Plummer was tapped to refilm his scenes and take the role.

Before we dive into this year's list of contenders, let me touch upon some of the phenomena we often see in the supporting races:

Two for one: A film can often have multiple supporting nominees. The precedent was set in both supporting categories back in 1939 when Hattie McDaniel and Olivia de Havilland competed against one another for *Gone with the Wind*, and Harry Carey and Claud Rains were nominated for *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. In the ninety years of the Academy Awards, we have seen this play out twenty-nine times for Best Supporting Actress and only seventeen times for Best Supporting Actor. Last year we saw the end of a twenty-six-year streak of no double nominations in Supporting Actor with the nominations of Rockwell and Harrelson for *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*. The last time this occurred was in 1991 when Harvey Keitel and Ben Kingsley were nominated for *Bugsy*. Conversely, we only have to go back to 2011, when Octavia Spencer won and Jessica Chastain was nominated for *The Help*, for the last instance in Supporting Actress. Many Oscar watchers believe that double nominations for a film effectively cancel both actors out;

CONTINUED TO P. 5

though it's worth noting that Rockwell's recent win should show that this belief is more superstitious than factual.

Ride Along: A Best Picture nomination can often yield supporting nominations for the film's actors, e.g., Lucas Hedges (*Manchester by the Sea*) and Lesley Manville (*Phantom Thread*).

Category fraud: When there are too many high-quality performances to choose from in a given year, Academy voters have been known to fill lead performance slots with supporting roles and vice versa. Lookout for Mahershala Ali to pop up in supporting for *Green Book* for the men and Emma Stone in *The Favourite* for the women this year.

Eyes on the newcomer: Voters for precursor awards often rally around a newcomer to the Oscar race and anoint them the prom king/queen, i.e., they win most of the races leading up to the Oscars so that by the time the Oscars roll around, it is a given that they will win that too. See Sam Rockwell in *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri* and Allison Janney in *I, Tonya* just this year.

Guide to the precursor awards and nominations standings: BFCA (*), LAFCA (+), NBR (-), NYFCC (^), Golden Globe (#), and SAG (\$). The symbols appear after the contender's names below.

Zeitgeist

Mahershala Ali (*Green Book*)* # \$, **Adam Driver** (*BlacKkKlansman*)* # \$, **Richard E. Grant** – (*Can You Ever Forgive Me?*)^ * # \$, and **Timothée Chalamet** (*Beautiful Boy*)* # \$:

Last year we saw three films vie for Best Picture that comment on the Trump regime: *Dunkirk*, *Darkest Hour*, and the eventual winner, *The Shape of Water*. This year, that trend continues. For this reason, it comes as no surprise that most of this year's Best Supporting Actor contenders come from films that capture the zeitgeist. First up is *Green Book*, which recounts the true story of a New York bouncer (Viggo Mortensen) who drove a Jamaican-American classical pianist (Ali) on a tour through the 1960s' American South. Although billed as a comedy, much of the South was steeped in racism back then, and without spoiling the film, much of what unfolds is far from laughable—though the director, Peter Farrelly handles the subject matter with kid gloves, thereby avoiding that it becomes the film's focus, much the way it was handled in 1990's Best Picture winner, *Driving Miss Daisy*. The film, which has seven BFCA nomi-



Timothée Chalamet in "Beautiful Boy."

Photo Courtesy of Amazon Studios

nations, examines race relations in pressure cooker situations, such as the division we currently see in America. Ali's performance is widely regarded as the one to beat.

Metacritic score: 70

A second film focused on race relations is Spike Lee's fantastic *BlacKkKlansman*. This film is also based on a true story where Ron Stallworth, an African American police officer from Colorado Springs (John David Washington), sets out to infiltrate and expose the local Ku Klux Klan branch. Driver plays Stallworth's Jewish partner and the decoy for the operation. The depiction of two men of different races who can work together in harmony to bring down evil is a bit of a metaphor for combatting the aforementioned division in the U.S. I would be remiss not to mention that Lee ties in past events to deliver a searing indictment of the Charlottesville, VA rally last August. Regardless of how the awards season turns out, the film is a must see with a powerful impact as it will forever mark a dark time in America.

Metacritic score: 83

There are two other films this year that capture the zeitgeist in different ways. *Can You Ever Forgive Me?* is based on Lee Israel's memoir of the same name and tells the true story of best-selling celebrity biographer Israel (McCarthy) who resorted to forgery to revitalize a failing writing career. Swazi-English actor Grant plays Israel's sidekick Jack Hock who gets embroiled in her schemes and leads to her undoing. The beauty of Hock is that he is a character who happens to be gay. His sexuality is not examined under a microscope or even discussed at all. Instead, Israel and

Hock are kindred spirits who find comfort in one another as people who are largely rejected from society, and who do not have a definitive path forward. Grant lights up the screen opposite McCarthy and looks to be a lock for a nomination.

Metacritic score: 87

Beautiful Boy is based on a pair of memoirs from father and son David and Nic Sheff chronicling the experience of survival, relapse, and recovery in a family coping with drug addiction over many years. Chalamet mesmerizes as Nic, a teenage boy whose drug experimentation sends him down the slippery slope of addiction. The film is one of three films this year exploring addiction; the others are *A Star Is Born* and *Ben Is Back*. It's no surprise that three films tackling the same subject matter were released in a year that saw drug overdoses become one of the leading causes of death in adults under the age of fifty-five.

Metacritic score: 63

Best Picture Bets

Sam Elliott (*A Star Is Born*)* ~ \$, **Sam Rockwell** (*Vice*)*, and **Michael B. Jordan** (*Black Panther*)*:

The rest of our contenders represent a mixed bag. We have Elliott, a veteran actor whose first film role was in 1969's *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and who is known for his work in westerns on television and the big screen. In *ASIB*, he makes the most of little screen time, but his voice was also purposely channeled by Bradley Cooper who plays his on-screen brother who suffers from addiction

in the latest version of love and stardom. Elliott's unique voice has helped him stand out, and, in this case, is highlighted by Cooper's use of it.

Metacritic score: 88

Next is Rockwell as George W. Bush in *Vice*, a biopic of Bush's Vice President, Dick Cheney (Christian Bale). The film is the third film commenting on the Trump regime in that it examines the events of the past that made it possible. Rockwell, last year's Best Supporting Actor winner, is said to be strong, but there is a question about his screen time that could ultimately affect his nomination chances.

Metacritic score: 63

Finally, there's Jordan in *Black Panther*, who looks to join Heath Ledger as the only superhero movie performances to date to earn an Oscar nomination. The film is the first in the genre with an all-black cast, which sees the heir to the hidden kingdom of Wakanda (Chadwick Boseman in the title role) step forward to lead his people while confronting a challenger from his country's past (Jordan).

Metacritic score: 88

In all three cases, the men appear in strong Best Picture contenders, which helps their chances of a nomination.

Others who could be nominated include Steve Carrell for *Vice* and Lin-Manuel Miranda for *Mary Poppins Returns*. Ever since Carrell first played against type in 2014's *Foxcatcher* his projects have often landed squarely in the Academy's wheelhouse, and this year is no different with roles in *Beautiful Boy* and *Welcome to Marwen*. On the other hand, Miranda, a star of the stage looking to segue his voiceover career to the screen, is said to be great in the sequel to the Julie Andrews classic. It's important to note that neither of these men have appeared in the precursor awards conversation. The only other one who has is Steven Yeun for *Burning*, but it's difficult enough to land a Best Actor or Best Actress nomination for a foreign film, so it is not very likely that Yeun will connect in the supporting category.

~THE LADIES~

Last Year's Best Supporting Actress Race Results:

- **Laurie Metcalf** — *Lady Bird*: She was nominated but unable to take down Allison Janney who kept winning on the precursor circuit



Amy Adams in "Vice."

Photo Courtesy of Annapurna Pictures

and never stopped.

- **Mary J. Blige** — *Mudbound*: She was nominated thereby breaking the no acting nominations curse that Netflix had been enduring.

- **Allison Janney** — *I, Tonya*: As I mentioned, she not only was nominated, but she won.

- **Octavia Spencer** — *The Shape of Water*: My hunch was right that the Academy wouldn't be able to resist nominating her given that they recognized her twice in sprawling ensembles (*The Help* and *Hidden Figures*).

My instincts on Holly Hunter (*The Big Sick*) and Brooklyn Prince (*The Florida Project*) were also correct, and neither made the cut despite BFCA and SAG and BFCA nominations, respectively.

The biggest snub was Hong Chau who gave one of the best performances of the year in *Downsizing*. I was really hoping that the Academy would break an abysmal eleven-year streak of zero nominations for an Asian actress, but sadly it was not to be.

Good Will

Amy Adams (*Vice*)* #s

If you ask anyone who pays even the slightest attention to the awards race, they'll tell you that Adams is long overdue for a win. She was first nominated in this category in 2006 for *Junebug*, and she amassed three more nominations in the category for *Doubt*, *The Fighter*, and *The Master* in 2009, 2011, and 2013, respectively. Adams earned her first Best Actress nomination for *American Hustle* in 2014. She won the Golden Globe for Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture - Comedy or Musical for *Big Eyes*, a BAFTA-nominated role the Academy, SAG, and BFCA ignored. Just two years ago she appeared in *Arrival*, a Best Picture nominee that earned a total of eight nominations but Adams was left out despite Golden Globe, BFCA,

BAFTA, and SAG nominations and an NBR win. This year, not only does Adams have the nominations denoted above for *Vice*, but she has received double nominations from those awards bodies for her leading role in HBO's *Sharp Objects*: Best Performance by an Actress in a Limited Series or a Motion Picture Made for Television (HFPA), Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Television Movie or Limited Series (SAG), Best Actress in a Movie Made for Television or Limited Series (BFCA), giving her campaign a boost from the television side. Here she portrays VP Dick Cheney's wife, Lynne, and is once again earning rave reviews for her performance that has many saying that she could win. There's only one woman standing in her way: Regina King (see below).

Returning Champs

Emma Stone* #s and **Rachael Weisz** (*The Favourite*)* #s and **Nicole Kidman** (*Boy Erased*)*:

Oscar often retreats to what is comfortable by nominating those whom have won or been nominated before. Enter Stone and Weisz who play a pair of dueling cousins at each other's throats as they try to curry favor with Queen Anne (Olivia Colman ruling, literally) in early 18th century England. Both women have won Best Actress Oscars: Stone last year for *La La Land* and Weisz in 2006 for *The Constant Gardener*. But Stone also has a nomination for Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role under her belt for 2014's *Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)*, and, the much showier role in *The Favourite*, gives her a leg up on the competition. As does her second SAG nomination for Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Television Movie or Limited Series

in Netflix's *Maniac*. As one of the highest reviewed films of the year, the film is on track for a Best Picture nomination—will it pull both Stone and Weisz along for the ride?

Metacritic score: 91

In *Boy Erased*, based on Garrard Conley's 2016 memoir of the same name, Kidman plays Nancy Eamons, the mother of Jared (Lucas Hedges) who is forced by his parents to participate in a gay conversion therapy program. Kidman played a mother just last year in *Lion*, thereby earning her first Best Supporting Actress nomination. She has also been getting rave reviews for her performance in *Destroyer* this year, earning her a Golden Globe nomination for Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture – Drama. Like Adams, she has done well on television having won the Golden Globe for Best Performance by an Actress in a Limited Series or a Motion Picture Made for Television this year for *Big Little Lies*. The same role won her the Primetime Emmy for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Limited Series or Movie last year. Sadly, the film, my favorite so far this year, hasn't been able to build momentum, and has been largely shutout of the awards race. Because of this, a nomination for Kidman would be a nice surprise.

Metacritic score: 71

The Wildcard

Margot Robbie (*Mary Queen of Scots*):

Last year, Robbie was always in the awards conversation for Best Actress for playing the ill-fated figure skater, Tonya Harding in *I, Tonya*. So, it was no surprise when she landed her first Best Actress nomination. This year is a bit of a different story—for one, her film has mixed reviews, and second, she is just barely in the supporting race with her SAG nomination. In *Mary Queen of Scots*, Robbie plays Queen Elizabeth I opposite her cousin, Mary Stuart (Saoirse Ronan), who is ultimately imprisoned before facing execution for her attempt to grab the crown. At this stage, I am betting Robbie gets in the top five, but a win is just not in the cards.

Metacritic score: 61

Newcomers

Claire Foy (*First Man*)* * and Regina King (*If Beale Street Could Talk*)*~^*#:

Although British actress Foy is new to the Oscar conversation, she is well known for her role in the Netflix drama *The Crown*, which netted her a Golden Globe win for Best



Margot Robbie in "Mary Queen of Scots."

Performance by an Actress in a Television Series – Drama in 2017 and a nomination the following year. In 2017, Foy was also nominated for the Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series Primetime Emmy award, which she won the following year. In *First Man*, Foy plays the wife of famed U.S. astronaut Neil Armstrong (Ryan Gosling), and because she did a lot with a small role, hers somewhat overshadows the subtler performance given by Gosling. This has translated to more acclaim for Foy's performance than her counterpart, but the film's prospects are uncertain following [the controversy that erupted among conservatives](#) because of Damien Chazelle's decision to not show a flag being planted on the moon during Armstrong's history-making walk on the Moon on July 20, 1969. Given that Oscar nominations are often built Academy branch by Academy branch, if the film doesn't land a Best Picture nomination (as it most certainly should), will Foy's chances slip away? Her lack of a SAG nomination could be a harbinger of what is to come.

Metacritic score: 84

This brings us to the peculiar case of King. Up until the SAG nominations, she looked like a slam dunk for the Oscar. But when she failed to get that nomination, which many say is crucial, it set her chances of winning back—you have to go back 18 years to Marcia Gay Harden's win for *Pollack* to find a winner in this category who did not have a SAG nomination. Some say that because the film is a late breaker the nomination committee may not have seen the film, but we can never be sure. So, let's focus on what we do know: King is a revered member of the Hollywood community, having won three Primetime Emmy Awards for her work in *American*

Crime. The first two in 2015 and 2016 were for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Limited Series or a Movie, and the third this year in Netflix's *Seven Seconds* was for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Limited Series or Movie. King earned a third nomination for *American Crime* last year but did not win. This year, the BFCA nominated her for that same role in Best Supporting Actress in a Movie or Limited Series. In *If Beale Street Could Talk*, King plays the mother of a pregnant woman in Harlem who scrambles to prove her fiancé's innocence of a crime. The film is director Barry Jenkins' follow up to his 2016 Best Picture winner *Moonlight* and stands strong in the Best Picture race this year. All season, King has been the favorite to win. She will most certainly be nominated, but can she stem the tide of Amy Adams' good will?

Metacritic score: 86

For the ladies, other possibilities include Michelle Yeoh as a high and mighty matriarch in *Crazy Rich Asians*, Natalie Portman's caustic popstar in *Vox Lux*, and Rachel McAdams remarkable turn in another one of my favorites, *Disobedience*. Of course, one should never count out Meryl Streep who is said to be great in a small role in *Mary Poppins Returns*.

Similar to the men discussed earlier, none of these women have appeared in the major precursor awards conversation, though McAdams was nominated for Best Supporting Actress by the British Independent Film Awards.

With recent developments on the precursor awards circuit, this year's races are quite exciting. It just goes to show that one should never get too comfortable where Oscar is concerned. ■

When the Moon Hits Your Eye...

AILEEN MARSHALL

Quick, what is the most ubiquitous food you can think of? One that almost everyone around the world knows and loves, even if they have their own style? What is your go-to food to get when you want something quick and satisfying? I think pizza fits that bill. If you live here in New York City, you know that there is a pizza parlor almost every few blocks. How did pizza become such a pervasive and popular food?

Many ancient cultures had some form of flat bread, for example focaccia in Italy, naan and roti in India. The ancient Greeks made a bread called *plakous*, often topped with herbs, onions, garlic, and cheese. Archeologists have found evidence of baking a flat bread from 7,000 years ago in Sardinia and of pizza-making tools in Pompeii from the first century B.C. There are notations about soldiers in the sixth century B.C. Persia using their shields to bake a flat bread, and then adding cheese and dates on top.

The pizza as we know it today started in Naples, Italy. In the fifteenth century, Naples had a large working-poor population. Pizza, translated as “pie” in Italian, was a flatbread with cheese and olive oil, and sometimes vegetables. It was a popular, cheap, and quick food for these workers. In 1522, tomatoes were first imported from Peru and it was in Naples that pizza makers started adding tomato sauce to the pizza. Being a port city, many sailors and merchants spread word about pizza throughout Europe. In 1830, *Antica Pizzeria Port’Alba*, what is thought to be the first pizzeria in modern form was established in Naples and is still there today.

Raphael Esposito was a famous pizza maker in Naples in 1889. In June of that year he was commissioned to make some special pizzas for the visit of Queen Margherita of Italy. One pizza he made was covered with tomato, mozzarella, and basil, to mimic the colors of the Italian flag. Queen Margherita declared that version her favorite. Afterwards, people started calling that type of pizza “margherita style.”

Pizza first appeared in the U.S. in the 1800s, mostly among Italian immigrants. It surged in popularity after World War II, as many soldiers who had been stationed in Italy came home and raved about pizza. There is some contention as to which was the first pizzeria in the U.S. In 1897, Gennaro Lombardi opened a grocery store on Spring Street here in New York City that evolved into a pizzeria, receiving a city-



Slices of New York-style pizza.

issued commercial license to sell pizza in 1905. Brothers Gennero and Giovanni Bruno opened a pizzeria on the Loop in Chicago in 1903 that some claim to be the first U.S. pizzeria. Totunno's Pizzeria of Coney Island was started by a former Lombardi employee in 1924 where he sold slices for a nickel.

Several factors helped drive the surge in the popularity of pizza in the mid-1900s. Several chain restaurants started in the forties and fifties, such as Pizzeria Uno, Pizza Hut, Little Caesars, and Papa John's. The advent of frozen pizza, invented by the Celentano brothers in the 1960s, was another factor. Finally, the delivery of pizza to homes also became popular during the 1960s. The U.S. Army's military intelligence unit reportedly used pizza deliveries to spy on politicians and reporters in that decade, according to a report issued by the City University of New York.

New York-style pizza is traditionally an eighteen-inch wide pie made in a coal oven, although many places use a gas oven today, and is known for its crispy crust and foldable slices. A “regular” slice has only tomato sauce and cheese. Some say it is the New York City tap water, used in making the glutinous dough that gives it that great, distinctive taste.

Other cities are known for their own unique style of pizza. Perhaps the most famous is Chicago, known for its deep dish pizza. The format, started by Pizzeria Uno, has high edges and uses chunky tomato sauce. In California, pizza is usually a personal sized pie that is topped with local vegetables and avocado. In St. Louis, the crust is made with a yeast-free dough and topped with processed



Pizzeria Port Alba in Naples

cheese product that is a combination of cheddar, swiss, and provolone. Washington D.C., is known for its jumbo slices that can be more than a foot long and need to be served on two paper plates.

Has all this reading about the history of pizza made you hungry? The author admits to having pizza twice during the writing of this article. Luckily, in this city, there is always a neighborhood pizza parlor. In the Rockefeller area, while we have lost Sutton Pizza, there is still the popular Pizza Park on First Avenue., near 66th Street as well as Famous Ray's on Lexington Avenue and 63rd Street. What is your favorite pizza joint in the city? Next time you are there, remember the famous quote from Yogi Berra when a pizza maker asked if he wanted his pie cut into eight slices: “Better make it four, I don't think I could eat eight.” ■

Photo Courtesy of Lizard10979/Wikipedia

Photo Courtesy of Alexandra Hamer/Wikipedia

Pets of Tri-I

POOJA VISWANATHAN

This is a series to introduce the Tri-I community to the wildlife amongst us. In this issue, *Natural Selections'* Pooja Viswanathan interviews Watson Gonzales, the terrier mix who lives with Kevin Gonzales (postdoc, Fuchs Lab).

Pooja Viswanathan: How long have you lived in New York City?

Watson Gonzales: I was moved to NYC in July 2017. I remember being scared in the car ride and pooped inside my carrier. Then I met my dad and the first thing he did was pour water on me and scrub me with soap! I've been in NYC now for 1.5 hooman' years, and I still don't know why he keeps doing that to me! I've learned it's called a "bath." I'm scared of baths!

PV: Where do you live? What is your favorite neighborhood in NYC?

WG: I live in Manhattan. I like my neighborhood, the Upper East Side. I heard only snobby rich dogs live here but I'm certainly not one! All my doggie and most of my hooman' friends aren't either!

PV: If you could live anywhere else in the world, where would you live?

WG: Anywhere with a big backyard where I can run run run run like a gazelle! My hooman' brought me to Cape Cod for Thanksgiving and I love it there. Lots of space to explore! I chased and caught a mouse, but the hoomans' got angry because it didn't survive...I just wanted to play with it. :(

PV: What are your favorite foods of NYC?

WG: Hooman' food definitely! I always look at hoomans' eating with puppy eyes, and they always give me some! I love out-smarting hoomans'! Unless it's salad, celery or strawberries. Ewww!

PV: What do you miss most when you are out of town?

WG: I don't miss anything. Whenever I've been out of town, there's always a big backyard to run around in and mud to roll in!

PV: What is your favorite weekend activity in NYC?

WG: What's a weekend? My activities are eat, sleep, poop, and play. My favorite is play.



POOJA VISWANATHAN | NATURAL SELECTIONS

PV: Which human do you live with? How do they belong in the Tri-I community?

WG: I live with Kevin, he says he is a postdoc at The Rockefeller University, but I don't know what that means. All I know is he keeps doing fun things outside home and won't bring me.

PV: Besides your human roomie, who is your favorite human in the Tri-I community? (If you could share your bone with anyone in the Tri-I community, who would it be?)

WG: All my roomie's friends think they're my favorite, especially Tati! She always kidnaps me from my home when my roomie isn't around. But she gives me biscuits, belly rubs, and takes really good pictures of

me that highlight my true beauty! I guess she isn't half-bad.

PV: Can you tell us a funny story?

WG: Once I went hiking with my hoomans' upstate, and I found a big pile of poop! I thought it smelled nice so I wanted some on my fur and rolled on it! My hoomans' made a funny face when they saw me and said, "What's wrong with this dog?" They took all the tissue paper in the car to undo my effort. Guess they don't like the smell of poop as much as I do...in the end, Kevin had to use his gym towel and Tati's water to give me a bath. Their faces were so funny; it looked like they were getting sick, not sure why. Oh wait...you said a funny story, but that one had a sad ending with me getting an actual bath. I hate baths! ■

Science (Policy) for the Benefit of Humanity

SARAH ACKERMAN

Science policy is a broad subject, which is vitally important to all scientists and members of society. It encompasses many topics ranging from NIH grant funding, to restrictions on new technologies, such as CRISPR or stem cells, to how data and science should be used when making policies about health care or the environment. These policies greatly impact scientific research and it is essential for scientists to understand these policies and to advocate for their research with society in mind.

The Science and Education Policy Association (SEPA) is a Tri-Institutional group led by graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who recognize the importance of science policy. To bring these topics to light, SEPA organizes speakers on policy issues, discussion groups, career panels, and writing workshops to educate our academic community about science policy and potential career options in the field.

On November 10, SEPA hosted the Second Annual Science Policy Symposium at the Rockefeller University. The day was sponsored by The Schmidt Foundation, The Moore Foundation, The Rockefeller University, and Weill Cornell Medicine. The goal of the symposium was to expose early career scientists to the world of science policy, provide training workshops to acquire skills used in science policy, and create a networking opportunity for like-minded scientists. The symposium attracted over 200 attendees, predominately graduate students, from all over the country.

The event was kickstarted in Caspary auditorium by Dr. Jennifer Pearl, the director of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Technology Policy Fellowship. Throughout the day we heard talks by Erin Heath, an AAAS Federal Budget expert, Dr. Frances Colon, the former Deputy Science and Technology Advisor for the State Department, and Dr. Dalal Najib, the senior program officer in the Policy and Global Affairs Division of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences. The day also included a panel titled *Rebuilding a Sustainable and Resilient Puerto Rico through Science* and a panel with representatives from different science policy fellowship programs. Six workshops throughout the day also trained attendees in skills pertaining to science advocacy, working with non-profit organizations, sci-



SARAH ACKERMAN | NATURAL SELECTIONS

ence communication, scientists in political office, and changes to STEM education. More than thirty students/student groups also participated as presenters in a poster session. The day's schedule ended with a keynote talk given by Dr. Kerri-Ann Jones, the Vice President of the Pew Charitable Trusts and the former United States Assistant Secretary of the State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs at the U.S. State Department. She discussed her invaluable experience serving as a scientific advisor in the White House.

This jam-packed symposium schedule allowed attendees to tailor the day to their interests, interact with and ask questions of high-level scientists working in the policy field, and build relationships with other early career scientists interested in science policy. The event has fostered connections and training opportunities for symposium attendees from around the country and particularly for SEPA members who organized and volunteered for the event. The magnitude of interest curated from the event encouraged attendees that there are other like-minded scientists passionate about science policy and that these interests are possible to pursue as a career. In a follow-up survey given to our attendees, 85% said that after attending the symposium they are more likely to contact someone they met at the symposium and 90% said they would attend another conference like ours in the future.

For more coverage of the day, check out our twitter hashtag #NSPNsymposium18!

For those who are interested in science policy there is more exciting news—SEPA, in collaboration with the Science Policy Initiative (SPI) from the University of Virginia, has launched the new [National Science Policy Network \(NSPN\)](#). The organization aims to connect science policy groups all over the country and come together on new initiatives. One initiative is the microgrant project. The first round of grants have been given out to science policy groups around the country for specific projects or to launch their own group at their university. NSPN's second initiative is the memo writing competition. Memo writing is a critical component for influencing policy and knowing how to write one is crucial for a successful science policy career. At the Symposium on November 10, NSPN announced the start of the memo writing competition. Winners will receive a reward and be published in the *Journal of Science Policy and Governance*.

If you are interested in being part of our memo writing team or just want to get involved please email SEPA (nyc.sepa@gmail.com). SEPA is working hard to educate our community about science policy issues and provide unique educational opportunities for scientists to be competitive for policy fellowships and jobs. Come join us! ■



Life on a Roll

ELODIE PAUWELS

<https://elodiepphoto.wordpress.com/>

Many comparisons can be made between a single day and a full year. Both are the result of the rotation of the Earth, on its axis or around the sun.

This sunset—these three pictures taken within 15 minutes of each other—offered blazing colors, as it often does at the end of the year. Happy holidays! ■



Life on a Roll

BERNARD LANGS

While vacationing in London in May, my wife and I took the train to visit Hampton Court Palace in East Molesey, Surrey. Hampton Court Palace was occupied by King Henry VIII and his many wives in the early sixteenth century, and he utilized its grandeur to demonstrate power and magnificence. Several subsequent royals added structures to the Palace and William Shakespeare's "King's Men" first performed Hamlet and Macbeth there in 1603 for James I. The beautiful gardens were expanded by William III and Mary II in the late 1600s. Queen Victoria ordered the palace open to all of her subjects in 1838. ■



Natural Selections is not an official publication of The Rockefeller University. University administration does not produce this newsletter. The views expressed by the contributors to this publication may not necessarily reflect views or policies of the University.