

10<sup>th</sup> Annual VES Awards

# VES AWARDS POLICIES

Submission Year 2011





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## **ABOUT THE VES**

The Visual Effects Society was formed in 1997 and is the entertainment industry's only organization representing the full breadth of visual effects practitioners including supervisors, producers, artists, technologists, model makers, educators, studio leaders, and PR/marketing specialists in all areas of entertainment from film, television, and commercials to special venues and games.

Comprised of a diverse group of more than 2,000 global members, the VES strives to enrich and educate its own members and members of the entertainment community at large through a multitude of domestic and international events, screenings and programs.

<b>The VES Mission Statement</b>
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The Visual Effects Society (VES) is a professional, honorary society, dedicated to advancing the arts, sciences, and applications of visual effects and to improving the welfare of its members by providing professional enrichment and education, fostering community, and promoting industry recognition.

The VES Awards recognize the achievements of the visual effects community for the most outstanding work being created in the field of visual effects around the world, with the intention to promote creative and technical excellence, share knowledge, and to bring together both individuals and companies that make up the world of visual effects.

## **Section 1: NAMING OF KEY VFX PERSONNEL**

It is the spirit of the VES awards to honor not only VFX artists, but also members of the management team that are *primarily* responsible for accomplishing the work that we honor. For this reason it is a fundamental policy of the VES that both the **overall project VFX Supervisor** and **VFX Producer** (or their equivalents in the gaming and animation sectors, respectively) shall be named as the first two entrants in any General Category entry.<sup>1</sup> They are considered **key personnel**. No substitutions will be allowed for either of these positions. In the absence of either of these individuals on the project, no other individual may be nominated in their place and their spot on the entry shall remain empty.

The choice of the other two individuals who may be named in a General Category entry is at the discretion of the VFX Supervisor or VFX Producer. There is no requirement to name additional people. However, any additional individuals being named must have personally contributed significantly to the visual effects of the project in a creative or technical, role. This should include the Special Effects Coordinator when the special effects made a particularly significant contribution to the visual effects of a project.

**Facility** VFX Supervisors and VFX Producers are **not** considered 'Key VFX Personnel' within the meaning of these Awards *unless they were also the project's overall VFX Supervisor and VFX Producer*. However, they would be eligible to be entered as one of the two additional entrants at the discretion of the overall VFX Supervisor or VFX Producer.

## **Section 2: SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

Entries may be submitted by:

- The VFX Producer
- The VFX Supervisor
- The project's Producer(s)
- The project's Director
- Any individual who meets the eligibility requirements specific to each category
- Studios, production companies, and visual effects facilities may make a submission on behalf of anyone listed above
- Next of kin may make a submission on behalf of a disabled or deceased relative

When it is unclear which category a submission is properly eligible for, the Awards Committee reserves the right to question the choice of category. The Committee will then discuss the matter with the submitter and may direct the entry to be moved into a category where it is eligible. The VFX Supervisor or VFX Producer (or their respective equivalents in the animation or gaming fields) shall then have the discretion to move the entry per the Committee's request or withdraw the entry.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see the **Rules & Procedures** for a complete list of General and Specific Arts Categories

### **Section 3: SIGNATURES**

Signatures are required on the Submission Form from two individuals: the person completing the form, and either the overall VFX Supervisor, VFX Producer or Producer of the project. By signing the form, these individuals agree to abide by the rules of the Awards and attest to the accuracy of the information supplied and the eligibility of the entrants named on the submission.

Further, by signing the Submission Form, the overall VFX Supervisor or VFX Producer declare that they have the authority to resolve any disputes arising from the choice of entrants named on the submission. This provides an opportunity for facilities and entrants to be fully aware of and to resolve any conflicts and errors BEFORE submitting an entry. Entrants and submitters agree to hold the VES free of any liability in case of disputes arising from an entry.

The VES will not arbitrate disputes concerning who deserves to be named on an entry. However, the VES reserves the right to verify the qualifications of an entrant if it has reason to believe that the entrant is ineligible. If an entrant is found to be ineligible on the basis of credible information, he or she may be disqualified by the Awards Committee at any stage of the awards process up to the presentation of awards.

In the case of multiple entries from the same submitting organization, the overall VFX Supervisor, overall VFX Producer (or the equivalent to these job titles in the gaming and animation sectors), or member of management may submit a single signed letter to the Awards Committee covering all of the award submissions they are authorizing, rather than sign each individual entry submission form. This letter must **include each individual Submission Number they are signing for**. To avoid confusion, this letter should be submitted to the VES office at the same time as the entries it is authorizing.<sup>2</sup>

Submission forms must be physically signed by the submitters. Electronic signatures are not acceptable.

### **Section 4: PAYMENTS; REFUNDS**

All financial transactions are handled by the VES Office. Please address your inquiries to [awards@visualeffectssociety.com](mailto:awards@visualeffectssociety.com).

As a general rule, no refunds will be given except when a category is eliminated *in its entirety*, or in case of an error on the part of the VES Office or the Awards Committee that causes an entry to be lost or disqualified through no fault of the submitter.

Refunds will specifically *not* be given for:

- Late receipt of entry materials
- Submission of faulty viewing materials
- Voluntary withdrawal of an entry
- Failure to make timely corrections to an entry after having been advised by the Committee of a problem entry

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<sup>2</sup> Please see **Rules & Procedures**, Section 2.3 - Signatures

## **Section 5: VETTING**

### **Viewing Materials**

The Awards Committee screens all viewing materials in their entirety to confirm that the submission meets entry requirements. When an entry is found to have a problem, the Committee will advise the entrant via e-mail of the problem and give the entrant a deadline for making the required corrections. If the corrections are not made in a timely manner the entry may be disqualified.

### **Entrant Eligibility**

If a question concerning an entrant's eligibility arises based on his or her true function and/or length of service on a project, the VES Awards Committee will verify the individual's actual role. If, after due investigation, the Committee finds that the role of the individual in question is not in conformity with the eligibility rules of a given category, the entrant may be disqualified.

### **Project Eligibility**

If a question of a project's eligibility arises, based on premiere date, type of production (for example, whether a broadcast program is part of a series or a Special), or any other valid reason, the VES Awards Committee will verify the project's details. If, after due investigation, the Committee finds that the production in question is not in conformity with the eligibility rules of a given category, the project may be disqualified.

Corporate IDs or marks and company logos of the company or companies or individuals involved in the production of any entry may not appear in viewing or written materials. Violation of this policy may lead to the disqualification of the entry.

## **Section 6: NOMINATING PROCEDURES**

### **Nominating Criteria**

**SUBMISSIONS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR AN AWARD ONLY IF THE WORK MERITS AN AWARD BASED ON CURRENT STANDARDS OF THE INDUSTRY** as determined by the judging panels. Nomination judging panelists may choose not to bestow a nomination in a category should they determine the work submitted not to be worthy of a nomination in their expert and qualified opinion. The decisions of judging panels are final.

Peer judging panels screen all qualified entries in their respective categories and may nominate a **maximum of five** entries in categories 1 through 9 and **up to four** entries in all other categories. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

Nominations balloting occurs in two phases:

1. After all entries in a category have been screened, the nominating panel shall hold an open vote to determine whether the category merits an award. A majority vote shall be required.
2. Assuming that this vote is affirmative, judges shall then cast a secret ballot to determine the nominees.

Should there be a tie for the last entry in any one category, a re-vote will be held until all ties are broken. The five entries (or four in categories limited to four entries) receiving the highest number of votes will become official nominees.

## **Categories with Only a Single Entry**

If there is only one entry in a category, the peer judging panel must vote that the entry is worthy of a nomination by a two-thirds (2/3) majority. The vote shall be open, and votes shall be counted and recorded by the room monitor. Should the lone entry not get a two-thirds majority vote, then the category will be eliminated from the Awards for the current year, and the entry fee shall be refunded to the submitter. (Please see SECTION 9: FINAL VOTING, for more information on how the vote for a category with a single entry is handled.)

## **Elimination of Categories**

Any category that has three or fewer valid submissions for two successive years will be reviewed by the Awards Committee and considered for elimination from the awards until such time that the Committee sees strong evidence of sufficient interest in the category to revive it.

## **Challenges to Nominations**

Nominations may be challenged for **just cause** for up to one week **after** nominations are publicly announced. Challenges may be brought only by nominees, by non-nominated VFX artists who worked on a nominated project and can document their participation, or by a company that can demonstrate a direct interest in the outcome of a challenge.

Challenges to nominations will be reviewed by the Awards Committee upon receipt, in writing, of the detailed and significant reasons for the challenge. If the challenge is found to have merit, the Awards Committee will take actions it deems to be appropriate to correct the situation at its sole discretion. Such actions will only be taken under extraordinary circumstances.

IN EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES, should the parties involved feel that the Awards Committee decision is unjust, they may appeal the decision to the Executive Committee of the VES. However, by doing so the entire category will be pulled from the awards until such time as the Executive Committee delivers a decision. As the Awards Program runs on a very tight deadline this may mean that the winners will be announced sometime after the Awards event itself.

## **Peer Judging Panels:**

The VES utilizes qualified peer judging panels to screen all submissions to determine the nominees in each category.

Judges are assigned to evaluate and vote on entries in their areas of expertise. All judges are screened for conflicts of interest. However, it is up to each judge to notify the Awards Committee of any potential conflicts of interest at the time of the judging.

Judges are sought out in the fall of each year. Only *active* VES members in good standing may serve on judging panels. Associate members may not serve on judging panels.

The qualifications for serving on a specific panel include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Judges must have a level of expertise in the category being judged
- Judges must not have a conflict of interest in the category they are judging. A 'conflict of interest' exists when a judge personally worked on a project being considered by the panel to which he or she is assigned. However, it is permissible for a judge to be an employee of the facility that created the work under consideration as long as he or she did not personally work on the project. In the event of a conflict of interest, a judge is required to notify a member of the VES Awards Committee and must recuse him- or herself from voting on *any* entry in that category and is strictly forbidden from attempting to influence the vote of others.

## **Room Monitors**

Every nominating panel is to be assisted by a member of the VES Awards Committee who shall act as room monitor. Room monitors shall read the category definitions to nominating panels before showing the entries, interpret the rules, and answer questions posed by panelists. However, room monitors may not express opinions on the merits of entries and are prohibited from casting votes.

## **Section 7: PETITIONS**

Under specific circumstances, an entrant may petition the Awards Committee for an exception to the rules. These circumstances are limited to:

- Substitution of one entrant or nominee's name for another
- Change in an entrant/nominees' job description or credit
- Entering an artist in a craft category normally off-limits to that individual
- Removal of an entrant's name from a submission
- Withdrawing a submission
- Request to extend a submission's deadline when circumstances leading to the request are beyond a submitter's control.

**NOTE: Unavailability of personnel to prepare submission materials in time to meet the entry deadline is *not* sufficient cause to petition for a deadline extension**

- Petitions must be in writing and the petitioner must have a ***valid submission (entry) number*** before submitting a petition
- A petition must make a clear, compelling and factual case for why it should be granted. The Awards Committee will then vet the claims being made, and if found to be valid, may make an exception to the rule *at its sole discretion*
- The Committee reserves the right to ask for additional evidence or details when a petitioner's request lacks sufficient information for the Committee to make a fair and impartial decision
- Anyone wishing to submit a petition may visit the VES Awards website, [www.visualeffectssociety.com/ves-awards](http://www.visualeffectssociety.com/ves-awards), click on the Petition Form link, and use it to state his/her case. Alternatively, a petitioner may print out the Petition Form found on page 31 of the RULES & PROCEDURES and send the completed form to the VES.

## **Section 8: REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT**

The Awards Committee reserves the right to question, review and/or ask any individual who is part of a submission or has made a submission on the behalf of others to the current awards program for further information and facts. Should this information not be forthcoming in a timely manner, the submission or individual may be disqualified.

The Visual Effects Awards Committee and its members serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors of the VES. Therefore the manner in which the Awards process is run, and all decisions that the Awards Committee makes, are subject to review and revision by the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the VES.

## **Section 9: FINAL VOTING**

Final voting takes place via the Internet on a secure website. All active and Associate VES members in good standing as of January 1, 2011, may vote in the Awards.

Voting invitations are sent out prior to the start of online voting to ***the member's email address on file with at VES office as of January 1, 2011***. This invitation contains a unique encrypted link that a voter must use to access the VES Online View and Vote System. *It is the member's responsibility to insure that their valid email address is listed with the VES.*

The VES Online View and Vote System will be available at 12:00 AM PST on January 20, 2012, and will close at 11:59 PM PST on January 31, 2012.

The VES office will send all members information on how to view the material and cast their votes online. If you have not received this information and instructions for voting by January 6, 2012, please contact the VES office for further directions. *It is the member's responsibility to contact the VES office in the event instructions are not received.*

Members will be able to view nominated entries in each category on an Internet-capable computer prior to voting, using secure media formats and procedures served by a secure web server.

The online materials are to serve as ***reminders and demonstrations*** of the steps involved in creating the visual effects shots. Whenever possible, VES members should view entries in the context or venues for which they were produced, i.e., films in a movie theater, HD programs in High Definition, etc. Members are at liberty to abstain from voting on submissions that they feel uncertain about or have not seen.

### **Categories with Only a Single Qualified Entry**

In the event that a category has only one (-1-) nominated entry, a simple majority of the members who voted in that category shall be required in order to bestow an award on that lone nominee. For example, if 200 members vote in a category with a single nominee in it, a majority of 101 votes for the nominee is required for that nominee to be honored with the award.

## **Section 10: VES AWARDS WINNERS**

Award winners will be announced at the annual VES Awards Event (February 7, 2012). The VES Award will be presented to the individual(s) listed on each entry's official Submission Form.

Each category is limited to a maximum of four individuals who may receive an award for a single category.

A nominee or the nominee's family may appoint a designee to accept the VES Award, should he or she not be able to attend the Awards Event. The nominee or his/her appointed representative should advise the VES Awards Committee if he or she *will not be able to attend* the Awards Event.

## **Section 11: NAME CHANGES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Individual nominees on an entry may withdraw themselves, but the entry and/or nomination will stand as long as at least one team member remains.

To withdraw an entire entry at any step of the nominating process, *all* members of the nominated team must withdraw the entry together and in writing via a petition to the Awards Committee.

In the event a submitter wishes to substitute another name on an entry at any time during the awards process *up to one week after nominations have been publicly announced*, the submitter must send the VES Awards Committee a petition citing:

- The entry number
- The name of the project
- The name of the person being removed
- The name and job title of the person being added, and
- The reasons for the change

Any such name substitution petition must be approved by the project's overall VFX Supervisor, VFX Producer, or senior member of management of a facility requesting the change.

Every individual who is *added* to an entry must agree in writing to be nominated. Further, every individual who is being *removed* from an entry must agree in writing to be dropped.

The cut-off for these kinds of name substitutions and/or job description changes will be one week after nominations have been announced (see above).

The VES Awards Committee has the right to challenge any name substitutions and may accept and act upon requests for name substitutions *at its sole discretion*.

The VES is not responsible for failure on the media's part to honor any name changes it grants, nor is it responsible for misspellings or any other incorrect information the press may report.

## **Section 12: PRESS RELEASES**

Press releases are issued to the media after the Nominating Event and again after the Awards are presented, listing all nominees and winners, respectively. The order that project names are listed in is determined randomly prior to the nominating event and follows the order in which entries appear on the nominating ballot.

The listing order of individual names on a nomination is determined by and follows exactly the order in which the names are listed on the entry form. Please be sure to list them correctly at the time of submission.

It is the submitter's responsibility to assure that all names and job titles on a submission are correct.

## **Section 13: VES SPECIAL AWARDS**

### **Rules Governing the Activation and Bestowing of Special Awards:**

- a) Any member of the VES may submit a candidate for these special awards. Submissions must be made in writing, either by email or US Postal Service, to the VES Awards Committee or any member of the Board of Directors no later than March 10th of the calendar year for which the candidate is being submitted.
- b) The Awards committee will submit a list of candidates to the VES Board of Directors ('BOD' or 'Board'). The Board may decide, by vote, to activate and designate a recipient for this award.
- c) Any member of the Board of Directors may submit a candidate for this award at any point up to the time of the Board of Directors' vote.
- d) A majority vote of the Board of Directors' members in attendance at an official VES Board meeting is required in order to activate and designate a recipient for this award.
- e) These Special Awards are a discretionary honor and, therefore, need not be awarded every year.

### **Lifetime Achievement Award**

The Board of Directors of the VES may choose to bestow a 'Lifetime Achievement Award' to an individual whose *lifetime body of work* has made a significant and lasting contribution to the art

and/or science of the visual effects industry by way of artistry, invention and/or groundbreaking work.

### **The Georges Méliès Award**

The Board of Directors of the VES may choose to bestow the 'Melies Award' to an individual who has **pioneered** a significant and lasting contribution to the art and/or science of the visual effects industry by way of artistry, invention and/or groundbreaking work.

### **Board of Directors Award**

The Board of Directors of the VES may choose to bestow a 'Board of Directors' Award' to any individual or group **whose achievement is significant** and does not fit within any current special award definition.

### **The Visionary Award**

The Board of Directors of the VES may choose to bestow the "Visionary Award" to an individual who has uniquely and consistently employed the art and science of visual effects to foster imagination and ignite future discoveries by way of artistry, invention and ground breaking work.

## **Section 14: RULES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PHYSICAL AWARD**

The VES Award (Statuette) is the property of the VES. All rights are reserved by the VES.

The VES Award may not be reproduced or used in any commercial manner unless specifically authorized or permitted by the VES in advance and in writing, it being understood that possession of the Award is solely for the benefit of the recipient and the recipient's heirs or successors in interest.

The VES Award may not be sold. If a recipient or the recipient's heirs or successors in interest propose to sell or otherwise dispose of the VES Award, such persons shall return the Award to the VES, which will retain the Award in storage in memory of the recipient.

Should your award be damaged or destroyed, please contact the VES office for information on repair or replacement. If the award was destroyed, you must provide proof of loss.

## **Section 15: OWNERSHIP & CLEARANCES**

All materials submitted to the VES awards program will be considered cleared only for the following uses:

- Screening by the VES staff for the purposes of vetting a submission
- Screening by the nominating panels, and associated personnel for the purposes of nominating the work submitted,
- Screening by eligible VES members for purposes of selecting the outstanding achievement in each category,
- Screening by the VES members and their guests at the VES Awards Ceremony, Archival purposes.

In the event that any other uses may be required, the VES will obtain the required rights and permissions from the copyright owner and/or distributor of the material.

The person submitting the 'materials' shall, if nominated for an award, exercise best efforts to assist the VES in obtaining, without charge to the VES, a license to use excerpts from the submitted film or broadcast program, which illustrates the nominated materials, in the VES Awards Show for domestic and international uses.

## **Section 16: CERTIFICATES AND COMMEMORATIVES**

Nomination Certificates are provided to all nominees.

Commemorative VES Awards may be purchased for:

- a) **The facility** at which the awarded work was created. In the event that multiple facilities created the awarded work, a maximum of four facilities may be eligible to purchase a commemorative award. *Only facilities that directly created the awarded work are eligible.*

The facilities selected to purchase the physical award must be:

- i) Submitted by the project's VFX Supervisor and/or VFX Producer
  - ii) Vetted by the VES office, and
  - iii) Approved by the VES Awards Committee
- b) The **production company** that produced the project containing the awarded work
  - c) In the case of commercials, the **advertising agency** under whose creative direction the awarded work was accomplished
  - d) The **network** on which the project containing the awarded work was premiered
  - e) The **studio** that distributed the project containing the awarded work

The facility, production company, advertising agency, network and studio are only entitled to one commemorative award each per category in which the work was awarded. **Commemorative VES Awards may not be ordered for individuals.**

The plaque on the commemorative physical award will read exactly as awarded. ***No name substitutions or additions are allowed.***

The words, "Facility Copy" will be added to the awards and the letter "C" will be placed before the serial number to identify it as a copy of the actual award.

## **Section 17: PROMOTIONAL SCREENERS**

The Awards Committee permits promotional screeners – including commercially released DVDs that may have 'Extra Features' on them - to be sent by studios to the VES membership.

Screening materials may not contain direct appeals for votes in any VES Awards categories.

## **DIRECTORY**

Should you require any clarification of the rules, procedures, and policies, or just have questions, please go to the Awards Website or contact the Awards Committee Co-Chairs at:

### **VES Office**

5535 Balboa Blvd. Suite 205

Encino, CA 91316

Phone: 818 - 981 - 7861

[awards@visualeffectssociety.com](mailto:awards@visualeffectssociety.com)

VES AWARDS WEB SITE

[www.visualeffectssociety.com/ves-awards](http://www.visualeffectssociety.com/ves-awards)

### **The Awards Committee Co-Chairs**

Andrew Orloff                      [aorloff@gmail.com](mailto:aorloff@gmail.com)

Chuck Finance                      [chuck.finance@gmail.com](mailto:chuck.finance@gmail.com)

Kim Lavery                          [kimlavery@earthlink.net](mailto:kimlavery@earthlink.net)

### **Awards Committee Members:**

Steve Blasini                      Bob Coleman                      Dariush Derakhshani

Dan Lobl                              Reid Paul                              Mike Ramirez

Mike Romey                        Dennis Serras                      Mark Spatny

Dawn Turner

### **Consulting and Associate Members**

Martin Rushworth

Dave Scammell

