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'Pirates' plunders visual f/x awards

'Chest' takes six VES trophies

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"Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" raided the Visual Effects Society Awards Sunday night and sailed off with six wins, including the two top awards: outstanding visual effects in a visual-effects-driven picture and single visual effect of the year.

The box office blockbuster, with effects by Industrial Light & Magic, entered the night with the most nominations, and won every category for which it was nominated. Other wins for "Pirates" were animated character in a live-action motion picture (for pic's villain, Davy Jones); created environment in a live-action motion picture; models and miniatures in a motion picture; and compositing in a motion picture.

"Flags of Our Fathers," from Digital Domain, took honors for supporting visual effects in a motion picture. In the special effects category, in a battle of brothers, "Casino Royale" and Chris Corbould beat out "Superman Returns" and Neil Corbould.

Presenter John Landis told the aud that when he started in movies, exploitation pics were often pretty good until the monster or spaceship showed up. "Today," he said, "you see absolutely amazing (VFX) work. The difference is the movies are shit."

On the television side, "Battlestar Galactica" took two kudos, for visual effects in a broadcast series and models and miniatures in a broadcast program. "ER" took honors for supporting visual effects for its episode "Scoop and Run."

The Travelers insurance commercial "Snowball" also took two awards.

One category, pre-rendered graphics in a videogame, was dropped from the competish when it was discovered the entries were ineligible. The VES says the category will return next year.

ILM had plenty of reason to celebrate at the banquet. Besides its six wins for "Pirates," George Lucas' San Francisco-based visual f/x titan saw longtime supervisor Dennis Muren feted with the VES' lifetime achievement award, presented by Lucas.

Besides Lucas, among those saluting the eight-time Oscar winner were Steven Spielberg and James Cameron, who sent regards on tape. Spielberg called his work with Muren on "E.T.," "Jurassic Park," and "War of the Worlds" "a match made in heaven."

In thanking the VES, Muren said that among his current activities is a project with Pixar that would be "a dramatic synthesis of effects and animation."

This was the first year for the VES Awards at the Kodak Grand Ballroom in Hollywood and saw the biggest attendance yet at the rapidly growing event.

And the winners are...

Outstanding Visual Effects in a Visual Effects Driven Motion Picture

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest

John Knoll

Jill Brooks

Hal Hickel

Charlie Gibson

Outstanding Supporting Visual Effects in a Motion Picture

Flags of Our Fathers

Michael Owens

Matthew Butler

Bryan Grill

Julian Levi

Outstanding Visual Effects in a Broadcast Miniseries, Movie or Special

Nightmares and Dreamscapes - Battleground

Eric Grenaudier

Sam Nicholson

Mark Spatny

Adalberto Lopez

Outstanding Visual Effects in a Broadcast Series

Battlestar Galactica - Episode 303b "Exodus"

Gary Hutzel

Michael Gibson

Alec McClymont

Brenda Campbell

Outstanding Supporting Visual Effects in a Broadcast Program

ER - "Scoop and Run"

Sam Nicholson
Scott Ramsey
Adam Ealovega
Anthony Ocampo

Outstanding Visual Effects in a Commercial

Travelers - Snowball

Dan Lemmon
Eileen Moran
R. Christopher White
Paul Story

Outstanding Visual Effects in a Music Video

U2 and Green Day - The Saints are Coming

Matt Winkel
Ben Loram

Wayne England
Graham Fyffe

Best Single Visual Effect of the Year

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest-Flying Dutchman Sequence

John Knoll
Ned Gorman
Jakub Pistecky
Tom Fejes

Outstanding Real Time Visuals in a Video Game

Fight Night Round 3 for PS3

Christopher Sjöholm
Kat Kelly
Hayduk
Rob Hilson
Celia Jepson

Outstanding Visual Effects in a Special Venue Project

Roving Mars
Alan Markowitz
Dan Maas
Jeremy Nicolaidis
Johnathan Banta

Outstanding Animated Character in a Live Action Motion Picture

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest

Davy Jones
Steve Walton

Jung-Seung Hong
Marc Chu
James Tooley

Outstanding Animated Character in an Animated Motion Picture

Cars - Mater
Larry The Cable Guy
Mike Krummhoefener
Tom Sanocki
Nancy Kato

Outstanding Animated Character in a Live Action Broadcast Program, Commercial or Music Video

Geico - Chat
David Hulin
Seth Gollub
Andy Walker
Jenny Bichsel

Outstanding Created Environment in a Live Action Motion Picture

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest
Chris Stoski
Susumu Yukuhiro
Jack Mongovan
Greg Salter

Outstanding Created Environment in a Live Action Broadcast Program, Commercial, or Music Video

Elisabeth - Episode 1
Dave Bowman
Jimmy Kidell
Russell Horth
Gurel Mehmet

Outstanding Models and Miniatures in a Motion Picture

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest
Bruce Holcomb
Ron Woodall
Charlie Bailey
Carl Miller

Outstanding Models and Miniatures in a Broadcast Program

Battlestar Galactica - Season 2, Episode 218 "Resurrection Ship, Part 2"
Steve Graves
Jose Perez

Mark Shimer
Chris Zapara

Outstanding Compositing in a Motion Picture

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest

Eddie Pasquarello
Francois Lambert
Jeff Sutherland
Tory Mercer

Outstanding Compositing in a Broadcast Program, Commercial, or Music Video

Travelers - Snowball

Laure Lacroix
Lyse Beck
Steve McGillen
Matt Holland

Outstanding Special Effects in a Motion Picture

Casino Royale

Chris Corbould
Peter Notley
Ian Lowe
Roy Quinn

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