

Arts & Humanities

6 Oscar-Nominated Films from Columbia Graduates

Catch up on these alumni-made movies before the Academy Awards ceremony on March 27.

By

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Olivia Colman in "The Lost Daughter." (Yannis Drakoulidis / Netflix © 2021)

The Lost Daughter

An Oscar-nominated actress known for her work in *The Dark Knight*, *Crazy Heart*, *The Deuce*, and other films and TV series, Maggie Gyllenhaal '99CC took on a major role behind the camera as the writer, director, and producer of *The Lost Daughter*. Based on the 2006 [novel](#) by Elena Ferrante, the psychological drama is up for the coveted best adapted screenplay award. Olivia Colman and Jessie Buckley, who play the older and younger versions of the protagonist, are nominated for best actress and best supporting actress, respectively. **Stream on Netflix.**



Ariana DeBose (left) in "West Side Story." ©Disney

West Side Story

Playwright [Tony Kushner](#) '78CC, '10HON, famous for his 1990s tour de force *Angels in America*, took on the daunting task of writing the screenplay for Steven Spielberg's 21st-century adaptation of *West Side Story*. A moving homage to the original film, which won the 1962 Oscar for best picture, the new version also offers a contemporary eye and more nuanced characters. The musical is nominated for seven Academy Awards, including best picture, best director, and best supporting actress for Ariana DeBose. **Stream on Disney+.**



A scene from "Ascension." (Visit Films)

Ascension

Chinese-American filmmaker Jessica Kingdon '09CC produced and directed [Ascension](#), a documentary that looks at industrial productivity in contemporary China through observations of workers in everyday settings, from a training program for bodyguards to a factory for erotic dolls. Nominated for best documentary feature, the film has received international acclaim for its cinematography as well as its exploration of modern capitalism and the "Chinese Dream." **Stream on Paramount Plus.**



Left: "Encanto" (Disney / IMDb). Right: "Raya and the Last Dragon" (Disney).

Encanto and Raya and the Last Dragon

As the chief creative officer of Walt Disney Animation Studios, Jennifer Lee '05SOA, who won a 2014 Oscar as the writer and co-director of *Frozen*, oversees the production of all Disney animated films. She recently executive-produced *Encanto*, a musical fantasy about a Colombian family with magical powers, and *Raya and the Last Dragon*, an adventure movie about a warrior princess pursuing a dragon. Both films are nominated for best animated feature, with *Encanto* also competing in the best original score category. **Stream on Disney+.**



Adam Driver and Lady Gaga in "House of Gucci." (© 2021 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures Inc. All Rights Reserved / IMDb)

House of Gucci

Though it's nominated solely for best makeup and hairstyling at the Oscars, *House of Gucci* has also been recognized for its production design, costumes, and acting performances — especially from powerhouse Lady Gaga — at numerous other award shows this season. Co-written by British-Italian screenwriter Roberto Bentivegna '10SOA, the crime drama tells the story of the glamorous (and notorious) family dynasty behind the iconic Italian fashion label. **Rent on Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV, or Vudu.**

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