



Diablo, Hell on Wheels and Fargo win big at the Alberta Film and Television Awards

ERIC VOLMERS, CALGARY HERALD



Awards at Host Jebb Fink speaks during the Alberta Film and Television Awards at the Hyatt in Calgary. LEAH HENNEL/POSTMEDIA

Fargo and Hell on Wheels, two of Alberta's highest-profile, Calgary-based television series, took home major hardware at the 42nd annual Alberta Film and Television Awards, while Calgary native Lawrence Roeck's existential western Diablo picked up the big win for best feature film.

The award show, hosted by comedian Jebb Fink, took over the Hyatt's Imperial Ballroom, as hundreds of Alberta's film and TV workers dressed to the nines and competed in 55 categories. It was a glitzy evening that also found many Alberta film workers, actors and government officials paying sombre homage to the victims of the devastating wildfires near Fort McMurray that continue to rage.

Diablo, starring Scott Eastwood, took home the statue for best feature film, beating out 40 Below and Falling, Figurine, The Northlander, Emyrean and The Wizard's Christmas: Return of the Snow King.

Roeck, who was born in Calgary but grew up in California, said he almost didn't make it to the awards after falling ill in Mexico while scouting locations for his next film.



In this image released by FX, Patrick Wilson, left, and Keir O'Donnell appear in a scene from Fargo. It won a Rosie Award Saturday evening for best mini-series.

CHRIS LARGE / AP



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Scott Eastwood in Diablo, which picked up the win for best feature on Saturday at the

“I brought back the worst part of Mexico, Montezuma’s revenge, and have been very ill for the past few days,” Roeck said Saturday night after the awards. “Finally yesterday I started to feel better so I bought a ticket right away, hopped on a flight and figured I’d come here on a wing and a prayer and just attend the event and cheer on my fellow (filmmakers).”

Roeck filmed *Diablo* in the summer and fall of 2014 with Eastwood, Danny Glover and Walton Goggins.

“It was great to come back to Alberta, live here for the two years and make the movie with an incredibly talented crew and work with a lot of the actors here and be able to find people from Alberta that I can integrate into my production crew permanently,” he said. “That was the real bonus for me. I feel like I have a team now and I can work with these people for the next 20, 30 years.”



From Season 5 of *Hell on Wheels*. **CHRIS LARGE/AMC**

It was a good night for westerns, as Nomadic Pictures' *Hell on Wheels*, which begins its final seven-episode run on June 11 on AMC, picked up the win for best dramatic series for the fifth year in a row. FX's Emmy-winning *Fargo*, also co-produced by Nomadic Pictures, took the win for best dramatic made-for-TV movie or miniseries over *Away & Back* and *The Reckoning*. (Both made-for-TV movies that were also produced by Nomadic.)

Chad Oakes, co-chair of the Calgary production company, said the third season of *Fargo* is still planned for Calgary. He is currently in Vancouver shooting *Van Helsing* and said Nomadic's next TV series will also likely be shot there because "the current tax rebates for TV series in Alberta are not as favorable as it once was."

"We are having ongoing dialogue with (Culture minister Ricardo Miranda) to see whether or not we can bring our next TV series back home to Alberta," Oakes said.

As for Hell on Wheels, its fifth consecutive win for Best Dramatic Series had Oakes feeling nostalgic for a series that will come to an end this summer in its fifth season.

“It’s been such an incredible ride,” he said. “I still remember that first phone call back in the summer of 2009 and AMC said ‘We’re thinking about getting back into the western genre. We have a script, can you give it a read?’ Those phone calls you never forget.”

Young Drunk Punk, Bruce McCulloch’s sitcom life in 1980s Calgary, picked up the win for best comedy production or series, defeating One Hit Die: Legend of the Lich Lord, The Wilmore Boys and Tiny Plastic Men.

The big acting awards, though, went to thespians in Edmonton productions, who bested some heavy hitter in the Alberta industry. Mark Meer of the comedy series Tiny Plastic Men beat out co-star Chris Craddock, Blackstone’s Julian Black Antelope, the Northlander’s Nathaniel Arcand, Heartland’s Shaun Johnston and Tug’s Chris Austman for best actor.

Blackstone’s Jordyn White defeated Heartland’s Amber Marshall, Delmer and Marta’s Patricia Zentilli, The Reckoning’s Valerie Planche and three-time Rosie winner Michelle Thrush, who was nominated for both Blackstone and the sci-fi film The Northlander.

Elder in the Making, Chris Hsiung’s exploration of Alberta’s Blackfoot nation and the impact of Treaty 7, took home the win for best documentary over 30 minutes, defeating A Little Cabaret, Rodeo: Embracing the New Frontier, the Caravan and Trevor Smith’s the smalls: forever is a long time.

Smith, however, took home the win for best documentary director, while his film also picked up wins for Sean Smith and Brett Manyuk for best cinematography in a non-fiction film; Ken Filewych and Sean Smith for best editing and Justan Ross, John Laquinta and Jason Borys for best overall sound.

The evening also honoured the CBC with a special “friend of the industry award” and ACTRA Alberta, a labour union representing performers celebrating its 50th anniversary in the province.

There were also some poignant moments. Early in the show, actor, musician and Canadian Red Cross ambassador appealed to the crowd to continue helping those impacted by the wildfires in Fort McMurray. Makeup artist Gail Kennedy paid tribute to the late Rachelle Parrent, who passed away in 2014. Parrent and Kennedy were part of the team that picked up the Rosie for best makeup for their work on the western Forsaken. Hsiung paid tribute to artist and Blackfoot elder Narcisse Blood, who passed away in 2015 and was a key subject in Elder in the Making. Blackstone creator Ron E. Scott, upon receiving the award for best production reflecting cultural diversity award, honoured Metis filmmaker Gil Cardinal, who also passed away in 2015.

Other wins on Saturday for Calgary-based productions included:

Benjamin Ross Hayden for best screenwriter for the Northlander

Craig Wroblewski for best cinematographer for Fargo

Bridget Durnford for best editor for Hell on Wheels

Jung People for best original musical score for Empyrean

Kris Demeanor and Anders Hunter for best musical score (non-fiction) for Elder in the Making.

Bill Ives for best production design for Fargo

Carol Case for best costume design for Hell on Wheels.

Gail Kennedy, Jojo Preece, Rochelle Parrent and Jo-Dee Thomson for best make-up for Forsaken.

Tales of the First People by Colin Curwen and Darren Senter for Best Children's Program or Series.

14-year-old Angel Berry for best narrator for Clouds Animation.

George Tarrant, Jesse Sanderson and Les Pahl for best overall sound for Heartland.

For a full list of winners visit ampia.org.