

THE OSCARS



THE CAST and creators of “Oppenheimer” take the stage Sunday at the Dolby Theatre for the best picture win. The film grossed nearly \$1 billion globally and claimed key victories all throughout the awards season.

Photographs by MYUNG J. CHUN Los Angeles Times

POWERED BY HISTORY’S PULL

‘Oppenheimer’ dominates with seven awards amid an emotional ceremony that saw a return to tradition

By JOSH ROTTENBERG

“Oppenheimer” may have been bested by “Barbie” in last year’s much-hyped box office match-up, but in the battle of the bomb vs. the bombshell, the Oscars told a very different story.

Director Christopher Nolan’s sweeping drama about the development of the atomic bomb dominated the 96th Academy Awards on Sunday with seven prizes, including best picture. Meanwhile, its pink-hued counterpart in the “Barbenheimer” phenomenon, which set box office records last summer and sparked a watershed cultural moment, earned just one, for original song.

The strong showing for “Oppenheimer” hardly came as a surprise. Nolan’s film, which grossed nearly \$1 billion worldwide and led the field with 13 nominations, had set off a chain reaction throughout Oscar season, claiming key victories at the Golden Globes



STEVEN SPIELBERG, left, hands the directing award to first-time winner Christopher Nolan.

BEST PICTURE
“Oppenheimer”

DIRECTOR
Christopher Nolan,
“Oppenheimer”

ACTRESS
Emma Stone,
“Poor Things”

ACTOR
Cillian Murphy,
“Oppenheimer”

Full list of winners, [A12](#)

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The best moments, from red carpet to finale. [E1](#)

and major guild awards.

Accepting the award for directing, Nolan, who was nominated for 2018’s epic “Dunkirk” but had never won the prize, noted that cinema, for all its current challenges, is still a relatively young art form. “Imagine being there 100 years into painting or theater,” he said. “We don’t know where this incredible journey is going from here. But to know that you think that I’m a meaningful part of it means the world to me.”

Even as the industry was brought to its knees by a devastating dual strike of actors and writers, 2023 was widely considered an unusually strong year for movies. Many of this year’s Oscar contenders, including the Holocaust drama “The Zone of Interest,” the gonzo fable “Poor Things,” the pointed satire “American Fiction” and the period epic “Killers of the Flower Moon,” grappled with weighty themes of power, race and the banality of evil. Even “Barbie,” for all of its [See [Oscars](#), A12]

More parents postpone kids’ vaccinations

Doctors warn delays leave babies and toddlers vulnerable to diseases, particularly as measles cases rise.

By JENNY GOLD

As measles cases pop up across the country this winter — including several in California — one group of children is stirring deep concerns among pediatricians: the babies and toddlers of vaccine-hesitant parents who are delaying their child’s measles-mumps-rubella shots.

Pediatricians across the state say they have seen a sharp increase recently in the number of parents with concerns about routine childhood vaccinations who are demanding their own inoculation schedules for their babies, creating a worrisome pool of very young children who may be at risk of contracting measles, a potentially deadly yet preventable disease.

“Especially early on, when a parent is already feeling really vulnerable and doesn’t want to give something to their beautiful baby who was just born if they don’t need it, it makes them think, ‘Maybe I’ll just delay it and wait and see,’” said Dr. Whitney Casares, a pediatrician and author who has

written on vaccination for the American Academy of Pediatrics. “What they don’t realize is if they don’t vaccinate according to the recommended schedule, that can really set their child up for a whole lot of risks.”

It is difficult to know how widespread such delays have become. California keeps careful track of the rate of kindergartners who have been vaccinated against measles but does not have comprehensive data for children at younger ages.

Dr. Eric Ball has seen the shift firsthand. At his Orange County pediatric practice, Ball said, he has noticed an increase in parents asking about delays since the COVID-19 pandemic, as politicization of and misinformation about that vaccine have seeped into discussions about routine childhood vaccinations, including measles-mumps-rubella, known as MMR.

Rather than an outright refusal, however, these vaccine-hesitant parents express a softer kind of reluctance, asking whether it’s possible to use an “alternative schedule” of vaccines, rather than sticking to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s recommendations. Sometimes they seek to delay the shots by a few months, and sometimes by several years.

“I have patients who have [See [Vaccinations](#), A6]

Microplastics may harm heart health

The fossil-fuel-based particles are linked to cardiovascular disease risk in a new study.

By SUSANNE RUST

Add one more likely culprit to the long list of known cardiovascular risk factors, which include red meat, butter, smoking and stress: microplastics.

In a study released Wednesday in the New England Journal of Medicine, an international team of physicians and researchers showed that surgical patients who had a build-up of micro and nanoplastics in their arterial plaque had a 2.1 times greater risk of non-fatal heart attack, nonfatal

stroke or death from any cause in the three years post surgery than those who did not.

It’s the first study to show that these ubiquitous and pernicious fossil fuel-based particles are having a direct effect on human health, said co-author Antonio Ceriello, head of the diabetes department at IRCCS MultiMedica, a research hospital in Milan.

And it should serve as a caution to all people, governments and corporations that plastic is not just a nuisance and blight in the environment but is also harming human health, he said.

As government officials, negotiators, environmental activists and corporate representatives get ready to [See [Plastics](#), A6]

USC women win Pac-12 crown

McKenzie Forbes scores 26 points and No. 5 Trojans beat No. 2 Stanford 74-61 to win the tournament title. [SPORTS, D1](#)

Can utilities be climate heroes?

A new commentary from Warren Buffett puts a surprising twist on the power company question. [BUSINESS, A7](#)

Weather

Clouds and some sun. L.A. Basin: 65/52. [B6](#)

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Cartels have a new weapon on ground

With land mines in wide use, drug conflict in Mexico has come to resemble actual war.

By KEEGAN HAMILTON AND KATE LINTHICUM

MEXICO CITY — In one moment, a column of soldiers and military pickups creeps along a dirt road in western Mexico. In the next, a massive explosion sends debris and a body flying.

The ground where a soldier stood seconds earlier is a gaping hole, the aftermath of an improvised land mine

planted by one of the region’s warring drug cartels.

That soldier was killed and four others were injured in the January explosion, which was captured in a grainy video that circulated on social media. Then last month, four more soldiers died and nine others were wounded when another explosive device detonated in the same region.

Last week, three laborers were killed and two others injured by yet another mine, leaving a truck split in half and human remains scattered across a dusty road.

The series of blasts in Tlerra Caliente — an area [See [Mexico](#), A4]



ALFREDO ESTRELLA AFP/Getty Images

A SOLDIER dons protective gear in Aguillilla, Mexico. Records show the military deactivated 2,241 homemade explosive devices between August 2021 and July 2023.



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