



INSIDE
Something fishy

W
weekender

OSCAR BOUND

Former Sioux Cityan works on Oscar-nominated documentary

MANY EVENTS THIS WEEK

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Sioux City-born, Oscar-bound

Composer Jordan Dykstra on the challenges of creating film score and what he'll be wearing on the red carpet

BY EARL HORVYK

Some of Hollywood's biggest stars will be walking down the red carpet of the Dolby Theatre, Sunday night, when Oscars are handed out at the 96th annual Academy Awards ceremonies.

In the midst of the Coopers, the De Niro and the Goslings will be Jordan Dykstra, a Sioux City native whose musical score is featured in "20 Days in Mariupol" — a documentary which revolves around a team of Ukrainian journalists trapped in the besieged city of Mariupol when Russian troops invade Ukraine.

DETAILS

WHAT: The 96th Academy Awards, live from Hollywood's Dolby Theatre and hosted by Jimmy Kimmel
WHEN: 7 p.m. Sunday
WHERE: KCATV-TV

sembling interacting with my scores, the space interacting with the sound and the audience interacting with both?"

"These moments are — and always will be — unattainable in the realm of cinema, which is why I will never fall on that sword entirely," Dykstra added.

You've written scores for both dramatic movies as well as documentaries. How do you approach writing the two very different types of films?

"The main difference in scoring narrative films and documentary films is the director's intentions. I've done a bunch of art docs where music plays a very subtle role while, on the other hand, some more conventional docs have music almost throughout. For instance, '20 Days' is 94 minutes long and features 71 minutes of music."

Tell me more about "20 Days in Mariupol." What stood out about this particular project?

"'20 Days' was such a tough film for me to work on. I can't stress this enough, I've never wept

"I feel liberated from film music when my chamber music is performed," he said. "I see the en-

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AP/FRONTLINE
Ukrainian emergency workers and volunteers carry an injured pregnant woman from a maternity hospital damaged by an airstrike in Mariupol, Ukraine, March 9, 2022. The woman was taken to another hospital but did not survive. Still from FRONTLINE PBS and AP's feature film "20 Days in Mariupol."



AP PHOTO/MSTYSLAV CHERNOV
Photographer Evgeniy Maloletka points at the smoke rising from an airstrike on a maternity hospital in Mariupol, Ukraine, March 9, 2022. Still from FRONTLINE PBS and AP's feature film "20 Days in Mariupol."

Oscar

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so much alone on the job before. I was not prepared for the impact. I muscle my way through it only to find — after a particularly intense year of scoring '20 Days' (as well as) an upcoming doc called 'Shaken' — about the bad science behind shaken baby syndrome — and then, 'Inside the Uvalde Response' — about the school shooting in Texas — that I had not properly or honestly dealt with the secondary trauma associated with working hundreds of hours with the material. I'm still working through it."

When you were working on "20 Days in Mariupol," did you think it would attract so much industry buzz? I know the movie just picked up a British Academy Film Award (BAFTA) trophy for Best Documentary of the Year a few weeks back.

"I think I can speak for the whole team in saying we knew the film was going to have an impact. But when it got into (the Sundance Film Festival), we were absolutely shocked. I can assure you, receiving an Oscar, let alone being nominated for one, was not on our minds."

I know that film composers work behind the scenes. What's it like to suddenly be in front of the cameras for a change?

"At Sundance the '20 Days' whole crew wore all black to a photo shoot. I felt a bit awkward when I showed up in a baby blue shirt."

Well, you know I have to finish with the inevitable pre-Oscar question. What will you be wearing on the red carpet?

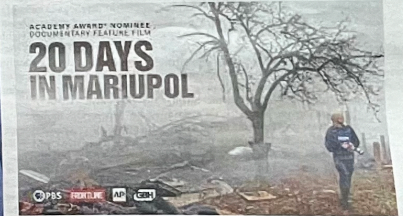
"I'll be wearing a responsible wool suit by COS as well as a beautiful off-white shirt by Another Aspect."



VIANNEY LE CAER - INVISION LINKABLE, VIANNEY LE CAER/INVISION/AP
Associated Press photographer Evgeniy Maloletka, from left, PBS editor-in-chief of Frontline and producer Ramey Aronson, director, producer and AP journalist Mstyslav Chernov, editor and producer Michelle Mizner, field producer and AP video journalist Vasilisa Stepanenko, and producer and AP vice president and head of production Derl McCrudden, winners of the documentary award for "20 Days in Mariupol," pose for photographers at the 77th British Academy Film Awards.



PBS/FRONTLINE / AP PHOTO/MSTYSLAV CHERNOV
People take shelter in a youth theater in Mariupol, Ukraine, as seen in "20 Days in Mariupol."



PROVIDED
Originally presented as part of PBS's long-running "Frontline" series, Mstyslav Chernov's "20 Days in Mariupol" (featuring a music score by former Sioux Cityan Jordan Dykstra) is up for a Best Documentary Oscar at Sunday's Academy Awards ceremonies.