

FEATURE

The Christophers name own 'Oscars'

NEW YORK (CNS) — Five movies, seven television shows and 11 books were named winners of this year's Christopher Awards, including the box-office smash "Cast Away," the TV hit "The West Wing," and the critically acclaimed book "Ordinary Resurrections."

The awards were to be presented Feb. 22 in New York.

An announcement by The Christophers, which sponsors the annual awards, said the five film winners "shine their light on vital male protagonists who are inspired to redefine their priorities through pivotal relationships with mentors, whether human, canine or Mother Nature."

Film winner "Cast Away" is the blockbuster starring Tom Hanks as a businessman who survives a plane crash that leaves him stranded on an uninhabited island for four years.

The other movie winners include "My Dog Skip," "Billy Elliot," "Finding Forrester" and "Remember the Titans."

The seven TV winners, according to The Christophers, "are true profiles in courage."

"The West Wing" was a winner for its episode "Take This Sabbath Day." The show was not the only politically themed award winner, with Christopher Awards also going to PBS' "The American Experience" installment, "Eleanor Roosevelt," and the History Channel's "Founding Fathers."

Other TV winners included PBS' "Seeing Red," TNT's "Baby" and "Freedom Song," and the HBO documentary "Cancer: Evolution to Revolution."

The Christophers said 700 books were submitted for consideration for book awards. Six books for adults and five books for young people won awards.

Besides "Ordinary Resurrections: Children in the Years of Hope," Jonathan Kozol's book on schoolchildren in the South Bronx, N.Y., the adult book winners were:

- "Dark Midnight When I Rise: The Story of the Jubilee Singers Who Introduced the World to the Music of Black America" by Andrew Ward.



20th Century Fox/CNS

Tom Hanks stars in a scene from the movie "Cast Away." The film is among those receiving Christopher Awards this year. The awards are given to shows, films and books that affirm the highest values of the human spirit.

- "Flags of Our Fathers" by James Bradley with Ron Powers.
 - "It's Not About the Bike: My Journey Back to Life" by Lance Armstrong with Sally Jenkins.
 - "Life Is So Good" by George Dawson and Richard Glaubman.
 - "With Love and Prayers: A Headmaster Speaks to the Next Generation" by F. Washington Jarvis.
- The children's book winners were:
- Preschool: "How Do Dinosaurs Say Good Night?" by Jane Yolen, illustrated by Mark Teague.
 - Ages 6-8: "The Mousery" by Charlotte Pomerantz, illustrated by Kurt Cyrus.
 - Ages 9-10: "The Yellow Star" by Carmen Agra Deedy, illustrated by Henri Sorensen.
 - Ages 11-12: "Hope Was Here" by Joan Bauer.
 - Young adult: "The Wanderer" by Sharon Creech.

This year's winners "honor tales about men and women faced with a bewildering variety of obstacles: illness, loneliness, rejection, even the overwhelming forces of nature," said Msgr. James P. Lisante, director of The Christophers.

But in all the stories, the subjects face their challenges "with courage, determination and an indomitable faith," he added.

Christopher Award winners, according to the organization, "must exhibit exceptional artistic and technical proficiency and unique vision, be significantly positioned to impact the widest possible audience within its designated age level and, above all, they must affirm the highest values of the human spirit."

The Christophers seeks to serve God and humanity through publishing, TV, radio and awards ministries, taking as its motto the ancient Chinese proverb: "It's better to light one candle than to curse the darkness."

Vampires on videocassette

NEW YORK (CNS) — The following are home videocassette reviews from the U.S. Catholic Conference Office for Film and Broadcasting. Each videocassette is available on VHS format. Theatrical movies on video have a USCC classification and Motion Picture Association of America rating. All reviews indicate the appropriate age group for the video audience.

'Almost Famous'

Poignant drama set in the 1970s about an aspiring rock journalist (Patrick Fugit) who lands a free-lance assignment at age 15 with *Rolling Stone* to interview a hot new rock band (led by Billy Crudup) as they tour the United States. Director Cameron Crowe's semi-autobiographical, coming-of-age story skillfully reflects the era, yet remains on a largely superficial level. Implied sexual encounters, fleeting nudity, an extramarital affair, some drug use including an overdose, and intermittent rough language. The USCC classification is A-IV—adults, with reservations. The MPAA rating is R—restricted. (DreamWorks)

'The Little Vampire'

Juvenile comedy-adventure in which a 9-year-old American, (Jonathan Lipnicki) living in Scotland befriends a family of kindly vampires searching for an amulet that will make them human once more. Director Uli Edel's silly but sweet fantasy overdoes on cuteness and plot contrivances but may appeal to older children. Fleeting violence and children in perilous situations. The USCC classification is A-II—adults and adolescents. The MPAA rating is PG—parental guidance suggested. (New Line)

COURIER CLASSIFIEDS

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