POZ Awards 2018 / Best in Film or Television

Read about the nominees, then scroll down to vote for your favorite!

October 1, 2018

Welcome to the 3rd Annual POZ Awards, which spotlight the best representations of HIV/AIDS in media and culture.

The POZ editorial staff selects the nominees, but POZ readers choose the winners.

Eligible nominees were active or were presented, published or produced between October 1, 2017, and September 30, 2018.

Be sure to vote for your favorite nominees by the World AIDS Day deadline: Saturday, December 1, 2018. DEADLINE EXTENDED: Saturday, December 8!

Here are the nominees:

1985

Yen Tan's simple, black-and-white portrait of a gay man living with HIV coming home to see his family — and quietly unearthing their conflicts and secrets — created a stir on the independent film festival circuit. The titular year will tell any long-term survivor everything they need to know about the human drama percolating beneath the film's quiet surface.

UPDATE: 1985 released in theaters this past fall and is now available on digital platforms including iTunes, Amazon Prime Video, Google Play, FandangoNOW, Vudu and more. 1985 will be available on DVD and blu-ray December 18.

The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story (FX)

While controversy surrounds the disclosure in this Emmy-winning FX limited series that Versace was living with HIV (the source material, Vulgar Favors by Maureen Orth, offers evidence that he was), we herald the fact that this is the first TV series that depicts someone living with HIV surviving near-death due to the advent of combination therapies in the 1990s. It is the catalyst for

the Versace character to gain a new lease on life. We know the feeling — and we're happy to see it dramatized.

Buddies

We have included this long-forgotten film, released in 1985, because it is the first feature film about the AIDS crisis and was rediscovered this year with a Blu-ray release and screenings around the country. The film, about a volunteer buddy visiting a man dying of AIDS-related illness, deserves to be seen more widely and appreciated for the milestone it is. The director, Arthur J. Bressan Jr., was lost to AIDS in 1987, less than two years after the film premiered.

C'est la Vie (That's Life)

Something truly remarkable is happening on African television, where this series portrays the lives of those living in Senegal and the perils of daily existence. Now in its second season, the series tackles domestic abuse, fake HIV medicines, and the tragedy of AIDS orphans. The show has become so ubiquitous that an actor who plays a villainous character was recently denied entry through a vehicle toll booth in the region.

Pose (FX)

Ryan Murphy's triumphant FX television series has been praised for its talented cast of trans actors in lead roles, and for good reason. But just as welcome — and emotionally searing — is its depiction of several main characters living with HIV in the late 1980s. The series resonates with such immediacy because we know that little has changed when it comes to the perils faced by trans women today — and that includes their HIV rates.

Sometimes (Sila Samayangalil)

This independent film from India, available now on Netflix, tells the story of seven people who are so anxious to learn their HIV test results that they bribe the clinic receptionist to get their test results early. The melodramatic setup plays out in surprising and deeply humanistic ways. Anyone who has gone through the anguishing experience of waiting for life-changing test results in the sterility of a public health setting will relate — and, hopefully, so will those who haven't.

VOTING IS NOW CLOSED!

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