



The RISE & FALL of Hollywood 2004



Just when we thought we had seen it all, and nothing else could surprise us — along came 2004. Once again, we were in awe of the year's successes and failures. The Hollywood Reporter looks back and weighs in on the town's current mobility

By Chris Koseluk

MOTION PICTURES



↑ Michael Moore

His June release "Fahrenheit 9/11" wins the Palme d'Or at the Festival de Cannes, tops the U.S. boxoffice on its opening weekend and goes on to earn more than \$119 million domestically, becoming the most successful documentary in film history. And the more conservative pundits attacked it, the more successful it became. Who would have thought the right wing would find someone in Hollywood to hate more than Barbra Streisand?

↓ Miramax

Rising employee layoffs and an ongoing squabble with parent the Walt Disney Co. have some predicting the end of indie's premier boutique. But no need to worry: If Miramax learned anything during its stint in the studio system, it's already planning a sequel.



↑ 'Shrek 2'

The May sequel becomes the year's top grosser — ensuring the big, green guy will be with us for years to come. Hey, like it's the first time either an ogre or an ass has hit it big in Hollywood!

TALENT



↓ Faux Celebrities

Paris Hilton, Nicole Richie and Victoria Gotti and sons are a few "personalities" becoming household names. Five minutes have never felt so long.



↓ Halle Berry

"Gothika" fails to thrill filmgoers, and "Catwoman" fares even worse. We can forgive two bad movies, but we draw the line at fondling a hood ornament in a Jaguar commercial.



↑ Donald Trump

Although his market might already have peaked, NBC's "The Apprentice" has made the real estate magnet this year's hottest reality star and turned "You're Fired" into a national catchphrase. Best of all, he's been named "Man of the Year" by the National Society of Bad Hair Joke Writers.



↑ Dave Chappelle

The red-hot comedian inks a deal with Comedy Central said to be worth about \$50 million. Never underestimate the power of doodle jokes.

TELEVISION



↑ Cable Original Series

"Curb Your Enthusiasm," "Dead Like Me," "Deadwood," "The L Word," "Monk," "Nip/Tuck," "Rescue Me," "The Shield," "Six Feet Under" and, of course, the grand master, "The Sopranos," are some of the reasons people are getting their episodic entertainment away from the main dial. Well, sure, anybody can produce a hit series if they're going to resort to originality and quality.



↑ Copycat Programming

"The Apprentice" begets "The Benefactor" and "The Rebel Billionaire: Branson's Quest for the Best." "The Contender" punches it out with "The Next Great Champ." "The Swan" looks like "Extreme Makeover." And don't get us started about "Wife Swap" and "Trading Spouses" or "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" and "Renovate My Family." What were we saying about originality and ... um ... quality?



↑ Series Franchises

NBC airs three versions of "Law & Order" (with a fourth in the works), as "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" is quickly becoming the "C" in CBS. How long before the new primetime slogan becomes "I see dead people?"



↑ Sitcoms

With "Frasier," "Friends" and "Sex and the City" now history, and "Everyone Loves Raymond" soon to join them, the genre is slowly becoming MIA in primetime. And no one's laughing ... except, of course, the laugh track.



↑ Indecency Fines

In its quest to clean up the airwaves, Congress initiates a bill to increase the fine for raunchy broadcasters, upping the maximum FCC penalty to \$500,000 (chairman Michael Powell is pictured). But is anybody monitoring C-SPAN?

EXECUTIVE SUITES



↓ Michael Eisner

The Walt Disney Co. CEO botches the Pixar negotiations, pisses off Harvey Weinstein, barely avoids a takeover by Comcast and gets raked over the coals at Disney's stockholder meeting. No wonder Eisner has announced he's going to Disneyland, effective 2006. Ever eager to please shareholders, Disney will unveil its newest attraction, "Mr. Eisner's Wild Ride."



↓ Pixar

After talks collapse with the Walt Disney Co., entertainment's hottest animation house announces it's in search of a new distributor. In a related story, the song "You've Got a Friend in Me" has been banned on the Buena Vista lot.



↓ The Writers Guild

President Victoria Riskin is forced to resign because of disputed eligibility. Her replacement, Charles Holland, is ousted because of disputed credibility. If only their writing efforts were as dramatic.



↑ Newmarket

As independent film distributors become an endangered species, the maverick start-up provides an oasis for offbeat fare with such hits as "Monster," "Whale Rider" and "The Passion of the Christ." At this rate, it'll be swallowed up and homogenized by a studio in no time.



↑ Dan Glickman

The former Secretary of Agriculture and Democratic congressman from Kansas is picked to succeed Jack Valenti as president and CEO of the MPAA. But don't worry, he has plenty of movie experience. As Glickman says, "the biggest part of the word 'agriculture' is culture!"



↑ Kirk Kirkorian

The wheeler-dealer entrepreneur scores a financial hat trick by selling MGM to Sony — making it the third time he's sold the struggling studio, reportedly pocketing billions in the process. Who needs municipal bonds when one's got a James Bond in one's retirement portfolio?



↓ **The Super Bowl Halftime Show**
Janet Jackson's "wardrobe malfunction" enrages the FCC and results in a \$500,000 fine. For their part, viewers were so appalled, it took every inch of their moral fortitude to make the incident the most-replayed footage in TiVo history.



↓ **Dan Rather**
In a rush to air a story questioning President George W. Bush's service in the National Guard, CBS' "60 Minutes" builds it around suspect, allegedly forged memos. As punishment, Rather is being made to write 1,000 times, "I will always triple-check my sources" — on an IBM Selectric.

MUSIC



↑ **Satellite Radio**
Thanks to Howard Stern, Bob Edwards, the NFL and Ople & Anthony, the broadcast industry starts to take Sirius and XM Radio seriously. The question now is will paying listeners do the same?



↑ **Fox News Channel**
The cable network lures more viewers to its coverage of the RNC than ABC, CBS or NBC. No word yet on what appealed to its audience more — the fairness or the balance.



↑ **Prince**
After years of being the "Artist" everyone wondered what happened to, the eccentric musician surges to the top with this year's must-see concert tour and the best-selling "Musicology." Of course, a majority of his fans still aren't exactly sure what to call him.



EVENTS

↑ **'The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King'**
As the trilogy comes to a close, the final installment caps its amazing success by winning almost every award given out between January and March, including the Oscar for best picture. It's no surprise — everyone knew Jackson had the precious trophies in the "Baggins."



↓ **Retail Album Sales**
Overall music sales decline for the third-straight year as more music lovers turn to the Internet for tunes. Sure, but just don't come crying to us for liner notes.



↓ **Pop Divas**
It's hard to say whose marital antics got the biggest laughs — Jennifer Lopez or Britney Spears. Either way, they're quickly gaining ground on Whitney Houston as show business' easiest punch line. Who would have thought that Mariah Carey would start looking like the sane one?

NEWS COVERAGE



↑ **The Daily Show**
The under-30 crowd considers Jon Stewart the most-trusted name in political news. It was only a matter of time until Washington's credibility would best be served by a fake news show on the comedy cable channel.



↑ **The Golden Globes**
With a shortened awards season, the TV/film fete gains momentum — drawing more than 26 million viewers to its January broadcast. Let's see — a free-wheeling, anything-goes atmosphere with no host, no pressure to win and lots of free booze ... We guess awards-lovers just want to have fun.



↓ **Mainstream Media**
A rising choir of critics faults network news and major print publications for not questioning what politicians spoon-feed them and soft-peddling coverage of the Iraq War. We were going to ask what they mean by that, but we didn't want to appear rude.



↓ **The Emmys**
TV viewers tuned out in droves as the audience for this-year's telecast declined by more than 20%, making it the least-watched ceremony in more than a decade. Note to Emmy organizers: See the above entry.



↑ **Chris Matthews**
Democratic Sen. Zell Miller of Georgia challenges MSNBC's "Hardball" host to a duel after Matthews dares question statements the senator made at the Republican National Convention. Matthews is believed to have requested pundits at 20 paces.