Cablefax Daily

SPECIAL ISSUE

"I am addicted...
Thank goodness for Hallmark Movies & Mysteries"
— *Southern Living*

newsy 2020

Your Vote Matters

WALK AGAINST FEAR:
JAMES MEREDITH

MasTer Minds

ULTIMATE COWBOY SHOWDOWN
WITH TRACE ADKINS

TCM
TURNER CLASSIC MOVIES
PRESENTS
WOMEN MAKE FILM
TUESDAY EVENINGS
SEPTEMBER 1 – DECEMBER 1

Dragnificent!

CFX Program Awards

Honoring the 2021 Nominees & Winners

The Cablefax Program Awards has a long tradition of honoring the best programming in a particular content niche, regardless of where the content originated or how consumers watch it. We've recognized breakout shows, such as "Schitt's Creek," "Mad Men" and "RuPaul's Drag Race," long before those other award programs caught up. In this special issue, we reveal our picks for best programming in 2020 and introduce some special categories related to the pandemic. Read all about it! As an interactive bonus, the photos with red borders have embedded links, so click on the winner photos to sample the program. — *Amy Maclean, Editorial Director*

Best Overall Content by Genre

African American

Winner: **Walk Against Fear: James Meredith — Smithsonian Channel**

This timely documentary is named after James Meredith's 1966 Walk Against Fear, in which he set out to show a Black man could walk peacefully in Mississippi. He was shot on the second day. What really sets this film apart is archival footage coupled with a rare one-on-one interview with Meredith, the first Black man to enroll at the University of Mississippi.

Nominees
- » BET Awards — BET
- » INDEPENDENT LENS "Cooked: Survival by Zip Code" — PBS
- » OWN Spotlight: They Call Me Dad — OWN

Animals/Nature

Winner: **America's Wild Seasons: Spring — Smithsonian Channel**

Spring is a time of rebirth and awakening as animals emerge from hibernation or welcome new members to their families. Smithsonian showcases the beauty coming out of every corner of America during that time of year, reminding us all to appreciate the many natural wonders in our everyday lives.

Nominees
- » Akashinga: The Brave Ones — National Geographic
- » Jane Goodall: The Hope — National Geographic
- » V-Day: Volcanic Planet — Smithsonian Channel

Comedy

Winner: **The Conners — ABC Entertainment**

The Conners shines at finding ways to make you laugh through life's struggles, whether it's financial pressures, parenthood, or, most recently, the pandemic. You could forgive a sitcom for skipping COVID-19 in its storyline, but by tackling it, The Conners shows us once again that life is messy and sometimes hard, but with love and humor, we persevere.

Nominees
- » Awkwafina Is Nora from Queens — Comedy Central
- » Central Park — Apple TV+

Cooking — How To

Winner: **30 Minute Meals — Food Network**

Let's face it. Not all of us have time to roll pasta by hand or make our own beef stock. That's why we're thankful Food Network rebooted this Rachael Ray staple. Her timesaving tips, coupled with her bubbly personality, make for compelling TV culinary fare. Ray makes it possible for those of us who didn't even know you could make a pie crust from scratch put something yummy on the table and still have time to binge our favorite shows.

Documentary

Winner: **The Life and Trials of Oscar Pistorius — ESPN+**

It would seem like every stone in the shocking story of Paralympian Oscar Pistorius and the murder of his girlfriend had been overturned, but this ESPN "30 for 30" film goes down as the definitive chronicle of Pistorius' rise and fall. Over five hours, the four-part doc takes us from Pistorius' childhood to his murder conviction with interviews throughout from those close to the story.

Nominees
» City So Real — National Geographic
» NASA & SpaceX: Journey to the Future — Discovery Channel and Science Channel
» NASCAR 2020: UNDER PRESSURE — MotorTrend
» Rebuilding Paradise — National Geographic

Education

Winner: **Brain Games — Disney+ / National Geographic**

Offering fun for the whole family, Brain Games never fails to find a creative way to illustrate what's going on in all of our heads. The show's interactive games and experiments don't skimp on the science. Rather, they mix in just enough fun to keep viewers of all ages interested in the day's lesson.

Nominees
» Family Central Explorer — Condista — Kids Street
» She the People — Votes for Women — Smithsonian Channel

Family Friendly

Winner: **Into the Unknown: Making Frozen 2 — Walt Disney Animation Studios**

When you have a blockbuster like "Frozen" on your hands, you can't simply 'Let it Go…' Rather than just creating a promotional puff piece for the sequel, Disney put together a riveting six-part documentary series that shows how Disney Animation completes such a massive project. This series has something for the entire family as viewers watch the team race against the clock, all while keeping creativity and artistry paramount.

Nominees
» Expedition Unknown — Discovery Channel
» Family Central Explorer — Condista — Kids Street
» Tubi Kids — Tubi

Food

Winner: **Gordon Ramsay: Uncharted — National Geographic**

This thought-provoking adventure series sees viewers in just as much uncharted territory as Chef Ramsay. When the apron's off and the kitchen is abandoned, he's willing to experience laughter at his own expense and show people a different side of the celebrity chef we know. In an adrenaline rush of bull-riding, caiman hunting, grilling tarantulas and more, Ramsay offers a new perspective on the world and cooking.

Nominees
» Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives — Food Network
» Guy's Ranch Kitchen — Food Network

Food Competition

Winner: **Guy's Grocery Games — Food Network**

Guy Fieri brings a fun twist to food competition that's true to his brand. Unexpected doesn't even come close to describing how Guy's little games make the bigger matches more difficult. Chefs learn a compelling lesson underneath it all—to be the best, you have to start taking yourself a little less seriously.

Nominees

» Buddy vs. Duff — Food Network
» Holiday Baking Championship — Food Network
» Masterchef Junior — FOX
» Nailed It — Netflix

Game Show

Winner: **Master Minds — Game Show Network**

Everyone loves a good trivia game, and "Master Minds" takes the genre to new heights. Three contestants get the chance to test their knowledge while going up against well-known game show champions like Ken Jennings and Muffy Marracco. A winning contestant walks away with more than the $10,000. They forever join the ranks of the Master Minds, scoring future appearance opportunities on the show.

Nominees

» Don't — ABC
» Unfiltered — Nickelodeon

Home

Winner: **Listing Impossible — CNBC**

When your luxury mansion in L.A. isn't selling, better call Aaron Kirman and his team. What makes this CNBC series so fun—and authentic—is that sellers don't always want to hear the truth about why their homes aren't attracting offers. It's a master class in the art of compromise—and a reminder that money doesn't always buy good taste!

Nominees

» Fixer to Fabulous — HGTV
» Million Dollar Listing Los Angeles — Bravo
» Selling Sunset — Netflix

Latino

Winner: **Ahí Viene el Toro — Mexicanal Producciones S.A. de C.V**
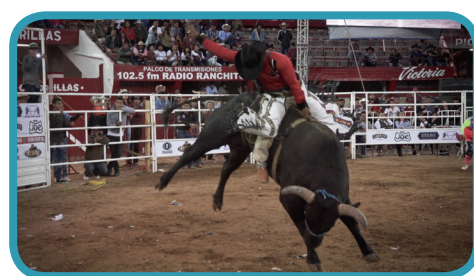
Bull riding is the third most popular sport among Mexicans after soccer and wrestling, so if you're going to talk jaripeo, you better know your stuff. This weekly series delivers with a mega helping of the best rides, top performers and expert analysis from specialist Luis de A. It's an adrenaline-driven series that keeps a sport developed five centuries ago alive and kicking.

Nominees

» El Auto de mi Vida — Mexicanal Producciones S.A. de C.V
» Las Cantinas de Cornelio — Mexicanal Producciones S.A. de C.V
» White Lines — Netflix

LGBTQ+ Focused

Winner: **Out — Disney+**

This short film has the beautiful animation you'd expect from Pixar, but it breaks new ground by telling the story of a man who has trouble coming out as gay to his parents. He gets some help from a fairy dogmother. Short and powerful, Out gives us some laughs while pulling on the heartstrings.

Nominees

- » Prideland — PBS
- » Smithsonian Time Capsule: Beyond Stonewall — Smithsonian Channel

Licensed Animation

Winner: **Atchoo — Condista — Kids Street**
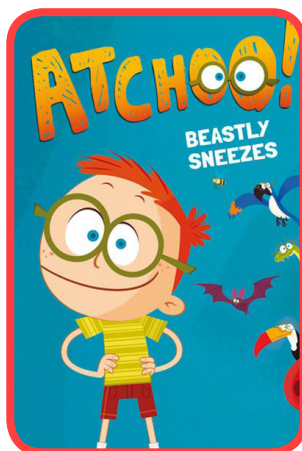
Everybody sneezes, but nobody sneezes quite like Teo. Atchoo's titular character sneezes and turns into an animal when faced with a difficult situation. Through the power of friendship, he's always able to remember who he is and return to his human form. Atchoo is a creative and downright cute way to show children how to create support systems and lean on them when times get tough.

Nominees

- » Martin Morning — Condista — Kids Street
- » Maya the Bee — Condista — Kids Street
- » Masha and the Bear — Universal Kids

Lifestyle

Winner: **Dragnificent! on TLC — Alkemy X**

"Dragnificent!" separates itself from other makeover shows by putting drag queens in charge of giving deserving women a refresh. The "queen team" made up of "RuPaul's Drag Race" alums crisscross the country to deliver advice on fashion, makeup and fabulousness—all offered up with a lot of heart. While makeover shows are typically about outward appearances, Dragnificent excels by focusing on an overall confidence boost.

Nominees

- » An American Aristocrat's Guide to Great Estates — Smithsonian Channel
- » The World According to Jeff Goldblum — Disney+ / National Geographic

Limited Series

Winner: **Barkskins — National Geographic**

We spend our lives trying to carve out our place in the world, and the dreamers in Barkskins are trying to do just that while also navigating the New World. Indentured servants, landowners, innkeeps and constables come together in this drama, and there's more than enough intrigue and deception to go around.

Nominees

- » A Teacher — FX
- » Britain in Color — Smithsonian Channel
- » Empires of New York — CNBC

Live Event Coverage

Winner: **Space Launch Live: America Returns to Space — Discovery Channel and Science Channel**

This coverage made a groundbreaking, historic event a truly nationwide one. From school kids to celebrities to families, it's hard not to get emotional when viewers watch how people from all walks of life are included. From the moment Bob and Doug are wished good luck on their journey to when they dock at the ISS and are embraced by the people who work there, this coverage evokes suspense, relief, solidarity and pride.

Nominees

- » ACM Awards — CBS
- » BET Awards — BET
- » Capital One's The Match: Champions for Charity — Turner Sports

Music/Musical

Winner: **The Disney Family Singalong — ABC Entertainment**

Disney and ABC reminded families to embrace the extra time they got with each other during the COVID-19 lockdown. This hour-long special brought together people of all ages with star-studded favorites across generations. Old and new, the teams showed viewers that the best way to bring people together is with their most cherished songs.

Nominees

- » High School Musical: The Musical: The Series — Disney+
- » Zoey's Extraordinary Playlist — NBC

New Series

Winner: **Snowpiercer — TNT**

This is a train worth boarding. "Snowpiercer" gives viewers a sci-fi thrill ride, with Earth's last survivors traveling the world continuously on the Snowpiecer train. The 1001-car train gobbles up the frozen landscape to make water and keep the survivors surviving. The wealthier you are, the nicer your train car. The gripping story coupled with tantalizing visuals makes this must-watch TV.

Nominees

- » Deadliest Catch: Bloodline — Discovery Channel
- » Lovecraft Country — HBO

Pets

Winner: **The Incredible Dr. Pol — Nat Geo WILD**

Viewers' favorite veterinarian is back in this friendly, welcoming 17th season. Dr. Pol keeps medicine feathery, furry, scaly and sweet. The campy music people know and love, a host of unusual cases, and a lineup of new patients keeps America coming back to Jan Pol's office.

Nominees

- » Critter Fixers: Country Vets — Nat Geo WILD
- » Haute Dog — HBO Max
- » The Pack — Amazon Prime

Reality

Winner: **Deadliest Catch — Discovery Channel**

For more than 15 years, this series has given viewers a behind-the-scenes look at the competitive and often dangerous world of crab fishing. New skippers and old battle each other, storms and the sea itself in their efforts to secure multi-million-dollar paydays. This time around, a drop in illegal fishing that sent crab prices skyrocketing only added more pressure to the crews.

Nominees
- Gold Rush — Discovery Channel
- Jay Leno's Garage — CNBC
- Life Below Zero — National Geographic
- Naked and Afraid — Discovery Channel

Reality Competition

Winner: **Ultimate Cowboy Showdown — INSP**

Cowboys may sound like something from a bygone age, but plenty of men and women are keeping the art alive. A dozen of those skilled individuals took part in the showdown, which included grueling physical and mental challenges that tested their perseverance and their ability to work as a team. The grand prize is the dream of any cowboy: the entire herd, the Ultimate Cowboy belt buckle and a lifetime's worth of bragging rights.

Nominees
- America's Top Dog — A&E
- BattleBots — Discovery Channel
- Legendary — HBO Max

Sports

Winner: **Long Gone Summer — ESPN**

Baseball historians remember the summer of 1998 and the mark it left on the sport. Mark McGwire of the St. Louis Cardinals and Sammy Sosa of the Chicago Cubs both chased Roger Maris's record of 61 home runs in a single season. ESPN walks us through the battle, which breathed new life into America's pastime. Its impact can still be felt today.

Nominees
- Capital One's The Match: Champions for Charity — Turner Sports
- Peyton's Places — ESPN+
- Why We Fight — ESPN+

Travel

Winner: **Las Cantinas de Cornelio — Mexicanal Producciones S.A. de C.V**

If traveling around Mexico's cantinas sounds like a dream journey, then this is the show for you. Host Cornelio García takes viewers on a pub crawl that's about much more than drinking. He connects with patrons in the country's traditional cantinas and explains the significance behind the drinks and the establishments that serve them.

Nominees
- Somebody Feed Phil — Netflix
- The Pack — Amazon Prime

TV Movie

Winner: **The Christmas Setup — Lifetime**

"The Christmas Setup" packs in all the charm, humor and drama of your favorite holiday films, but it's a little different from the classics. It is Lifetime's first holiday movie with an LGBTQ romance as its lead storyline, and the network was able to safely film it all during the COVID-19 pandemic. And, of course, it never hurts when you're able to have an icon like Fran Drescher on your cast list.

Nominees
» The Christmas House — Hallmark Channel
» The Clark Sisters: First Ladies of Gospel — Lifetime

Weather

Winner: **Hurricane Delta Eyewall Live Coverage — AccuWeather TV Network**

Hurricane Delta was the fourth storm to strike Louisiana last year, and AccuWeather was there with on-the-ground reporting as its eastern eyewall made landfall. Reporter Jonathan Petramala and videographer Andy Coates gave viewers a true sense of the storm's fury as wind gusts and storm surge surrounded them. The network kept information front and center through it all, showing radar graphics with the motion of the hurricane, as well as its strength and location.

Nominees
» Hot Mess — PBS
» World's Deadliest Weather — Weather Channel

Best Overall Content by Platform

Original Content

Winner: **30 for 30 — ESPN**

ESPN's "30 for 30" franchise has developed a reputation among sports junkies and casual fans alike for its deep dives into the people and organizations behind the business. Whether through documentary or podcast episode, 30 for 30 has never been afraid to dive into the unsavory parts of sports history and it always finds a way to make the topic engaging for all.

Nominees

» QVC & HSN's Travel, Cook and Repeat with Curtis Stone — Qurate Retail Group
» The Cowboy Way Presents: Coffee with a Cowboy — INSP

Podcast or Videocast

Winner: **TCM's The Plot Thickens — Turner Classic Movies**

This seven-part series hooks you from the beginning, detailing the rise and fall of famous director Peter Bogdanovich. The 80-year-old tells his fascinating life story with the help of TCM host Ben Mankiewicz. The Plot Thickens unravels a director who went from the zenith with films like "The Last Picture Show" to a string of flops and personal heartache along the way. TCM created a podcast to appeal to its loyal viewers, while also bringing podcast fans into the TCM fold.

Nominees

» 30 for 30 — ESPN
» Trafficked with Mariana van Zeller — National Geographic

Short (unscripted)

Winner: **For Life: On The Inside — ABC Entertainment**

This digital series offers bite-sized looks into the making of and story behind ABC legal drama "For Life." Members of the cast and executive producers are featured in the series, describing everything from the intricacies of life on set to the true story that inspired the series about a prisoner that began litigating cases for other inmates while fighting to overturn his own wrongful conviction.

Virtual Reality/ Augmented Reality Content

Winner: **Apollo's Moon Shot AR — Smithsonian Channel**
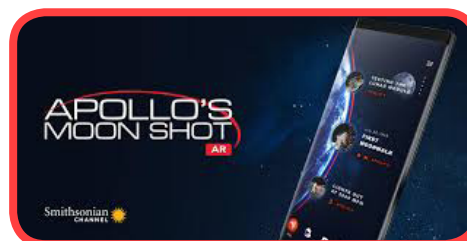
What could be better than launching a rocket and getting a history lesson from the comfort of your couch? The "Apollo's Moon Shot AR" app served as a companion to a six-part series on the Smithsonian Channel celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Moon Landing. Easy to use with a healthy mix of features, the app gave viewers a front row seat to some of the landmark moments that defined the start of the Space Age.

2020 Categories

2020 was a year that affected us all in some way, and programming was no different. That's why we created these special awards to recognize those nimble creators who found a way to work it out and create compelling content in challenging times.

COVID-19 Spot

Winner: **Alone Together — Game Show Network**

This spot featuring Ken Jennings isn't about flash, pizazz or his remarkable mind for trivia. It's about human connection, reminding everyone of some things they can do at home to ease the cabin fever that has become the norm during the COVID-19 pandemic. If it made one person feel less alone, the spot did its job.

Nominees
» Care Enough PSA (Talent Montage) — Crown Media Family Networks
» Invest in You: Ready. Set. Grow Your Future — CNBC
» State of Emergency: The State of Black America & the Coronavirus (special) — REVOLT Media & TV
» We Ride Together — INSP

Election 2020

Winner: **Newsy 2020: Your Vote Matters — Newsy**

This hour-long special gave viewers what they needed to know in terms of the November election, while skipping the partisan rancor. More than a dozen reporters helped deliver up a guide that answered questions over election security, potential legal challenges, what to do if someone has trouble voting and much more. The result was informative, factual and drama free.

Nominees
» Focus: Democracy — Montclair State University
» Nick News: Kids Pick the President — Nickelodeon

Live Virtual Event

Winner: **State of Emergency: The State of Black America & the Coronavirus (special) — REVOLT Media & TV**
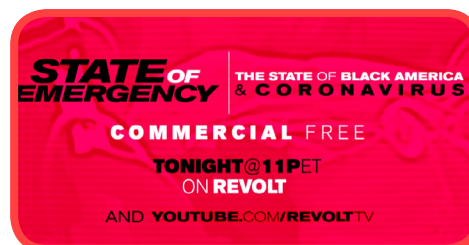
When early reports indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic was disproportionately impacting the Black community, REVOLT sprang into action. The network held a live town hall with its viewers and offered answers to questions that were relevant to their families and communities. The program, which included appearances from Van Jones and then-Senator Kamala Harris, covered everything from incarceration to economic relief and the mental toll of the quarantine.

Nominees
» AccuWeather Ready 2020 Hurricane Season during COVID-19 — AccuWeather TV Network
» Super Soul Sunday Facebook Live with Alicia Keys — OWN

Pandemic Programming

Winner: Covid: Our Lockdown in Shanghai — Smithsonian Channel

Filmmakers Yu Kung and Crystal Liu paint an intimate portrait of the COVID-19 lockdown progression in China. When viewers see the couple's interviews of their neighbors, it's impossible not to absorb these unique new perspectives on the pandemic lockdown. Across all environments and cultures themes of family, social isolation, fear, adaptation and resilience remain the same.

Nominees
- » 90 Day Fiance: Self Quarantined — TLC

PSA

Winner: We Ride Together — INSP

People learned that not all heroes wear capes, or even cowboy hats, during the COVID-19 pandemic. The voice of James Drury, one of TV's most treasured Western champions, lives on in this emotional trailer as he narrates the central characteristics of life's heroes—stand tall and do the right thing. Timeless clips come together seamlessly for a timeless lesson.

Nominees
- » REVOLT + Comcast: Black Voices on Mute — REVOLT Media & TV
- » Stand For The Arts — Ovation TV

Remote Production Programming

Winner: Love in the Time of Corona — Freeform

At a time when nonfiction remote production was all over the TV, Freeform took a different route, putting together a fictional show that explored love in the time of a pandemic. Episodes were filmed in the actors' homes and with their families, blurring the line of scripted storytelling and real-life. Creator Joanna Johnson ("The Fosters") directed each of the four episodes in a van parked outside actors' homes.

Nominees
- » 2020 REVOLT Summit x AT&T — REVOLT Media & TV
- » Home & Family — At Home With Our Family — Hallmark Channel
- » Josh Gates Tonight — Discovery Channel
- » TCM Presents Women Make Film — Turner Classic Movies

Social Justice

Winner: City So Real — National Geographic

Many have been to the Windy City, but few have spent time researching the complexities of Chicago. The five-part docuseries from filmmaker Steve James takes a multifaceted look into the soul of the community during some of its toughest times. That includes the 2019 mayoral election, the COVID-19 crisis and the social upheaval following the death of George Floyd.

Nominees
- » Black in Space: Breaking the Color Barrier — Smithsonian Channel
- » Blackfeet Boxing: Not Invisible — ESPN
- » Voices Magnified: Locked Up in America — A&E

Cablefax's Best Trailers

» When Calls the Heart Season 7 Tease — Hallmark Channel

Hallmark Channel knows you don't need suspenseful music or jump-cuts to drum up anticipation for a show return. The soft transitions between past and future seasons reminds fans of the story they fell in love with and makes non-fans wonder what they're missing.

» Together' Brand Anthem — INSP

INSP's encouraging sizzle reel rose to the challenge in a difficult year. American cinema is a powerful unifying force, and the network was able to highlight that idea and its own programs in a seamless promotion. The message was clear, as it is across many classics—people can get through anything if they do it together.

» NASCAR 2020: UNDER PRESSURE — MotorTrend

How do you capture the adrenaline of NASCAR and the legend of a five-time Daytona champion in 7 minutes? MotorTrend's graphics, transitions and footage made it real for viewers in this hair-raising trailer. Combined with the poignant clips of interviews with Jimmy Johnson, the fast pace of those clips is irresistible for any viewer, NASCAR fan or not.

» TCM Presents Women Make Film — Turner Classic Movies

Thought-provoking and engaging, this series of interviews emphasizes the impact of women in film and the importance of representation. It's not enough for only certain demographics of women or only a few women to be filmmakers—because it limits viewers' perspective on the world. The colorful settings, outfits and films throughout this reel remind the audience how our lives are all made brighter, when there are more women making film.

» Hallmark Movies & Mysteries Image Spot — Crown Media Family Networks

Hallmark captures the timelessness of mystery in this well-scored reel. The cuts are clean, but fast and suspenseful. The trailer highlighted programs from "Perry Mason" to "Morning Show Mysteries" and shows viewers that no matter who they are, there's a mystery for everyone.