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Oscar Cinematography Survey: The Cameras and Lenses Used to Shoot 32 Awards Contenders

IndieWire reached out to the directors of photography whose films are in 2024 awards contention to find out what they used.

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"Godland" *Juliane Lalinde*

As the fall festivals come to an end and the 2024 awards race begins to come into focus, IndieWire reached out to the directors of photography whose films are among the most critically acclaimed of the year. We wanted to find out which **cameras** and lenses they used and, more importantly, why these were the right tools to create the visual language of their respective films.



Photo : Alejandro Lopez Pineda

"Cassandra"

Dir: Roger Ross Williams, **DoP:** Matias Penachino

Format: ARRIRAW 4.5k

Camera: Alexa Mini LF

Lenses: Panavision H Series

Penachino: From the outset, it was evident that, given the script's nature as a biopic, the film should take on the characteristics of a portrait. The majority of the film featured either the main character in the frame or focused on scenes where he was actively involved, not just as an athlete but also as a man deeply immersed in the emotional turmoil of his battles, both inside and outside the wrestling ring.

To achieve this vision, we utilized the flawless and stunning H series on FF (full-frame) to emulate the aesthetics of medium format still photography in a

semi-square format. This choice also entailed setting specific parameters for camera angles and height, often maintaining a near-zero-degree angle when capturing Saúl (Cassandro) and aligning the camera's height with that of a human observer. Additionally, our camera approach drew inspiration from Roger's background in documentary filmmaking, emphasizing an observational style that allowed the audience to immerse themselves in the character's life without excessive narrative intrusion. We strategically moved the camera only when necessary, preferring to maintain a sense of stillness that reinforced our decision to portray him from an outsider's perspective.

When it came to depicting the wrestling matches, along with Alberto Ojeda the camera and steadycam operator, we devised camera movements and angles rehearsing and learning from the wrestlers, but particularly Gael, who did a tremendous job, ensuring that we remained as close as possible to the action. This approach aimed to maintain focus on the main character while respecting the unique visual language of lucha libre itself.