

Joni Eareckson Tada Responds to Academy Nixing Christian Song

Joni Eareckson Tada, best known for her TV show *Joni and Friends*, was surprised at the controversy over “Alone Yet Not Alone.”

Some people in Hollywood had questioned the nomination from a Christian film that is virtually unknown. Bruce Broughton, one of the writers, is a former music branch governor of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, as well as a former chair of the music branch. claims he used his connections to gain a nomination.

The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts & Sciences went on to revoked the work’s nomination in the best original song category, deciding that the songwriter violated Oscar rules and emailed voters about submitting the song for consideration, Reuters reported. Now, Tada, who sang the song, is speaking out again.

“While I can only imagine the disappointment of music writer Bruce Broughton and lyricist Dennis Spiegel in the rescinding of their Oscar nomination, it in no way detracts from either the song’s beauty or its message,” Tada says. “I was humbled and honored to have been asked to sing it for the film, and was as surprised as anyone when I learned of the song’s nomination.”

Tada went on to say that she was grateful for the attention the nomination brought to the song and the inspirational film behind it, as well as to the ongoing work of *Joni and Friends* to people affected by disabilities. She’s taking a Romans 8:28 attitude, considering that the Academy’s decision to rescind the nomination may well bring even further attention. She

hopes it helps to further extend the message and impact of the song.

“Regarding the reasons for the nomination being rescinded, it is not my place to speculate as I have no insights into the workings of the entertainment industry,” Tada says. “I was honored to be invited to sing the song and it will always be a treasured experience.”

Alone Yet Not Alone tells the story of Barbara and Regina Leininger and their journey of faith and survival during the French and Indian War in 1755. Captured by the Delaware Indians in a raid on their home and transported across 300 miles of wilderness to Ohio, the sisters are sustained only by their trust in God and their hope of escape against all odds to be reunited with their family.

In its limited theatrical release in September, *Alone Yet Not Alone* became the highest-grossing film on opening weekend in terms of per-screen average, reaching \$13,396 per screen in its limited opening in select cities. This per-screen average surpassed the per-screen average of most other wide-release movies, including *Enough Said* (\$9,238 per screen) and *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs 2* (\$8,439 per screen), ranking *Alone Yet Not Alone* with one of the highest per-screen-averages for independently released faith-based films to date, according to an Enthuse Entertainment representative.

Gina Meeks and Jeremy Burton contributed to this report.