

# What Do the Golden Globes Say About American Culture?

*Time* magazine calls the Golden Globes “Oscar’s looser, boozier cousin.” Last night’s show, filled with A-list actors and those who want to be, launched the annual awards season that culminates this year with the Academy Awards on February 26.

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Let’s begin with what they don’t say. They don’t predict the Academy Award for Best Picture—*Spotlight*, last year’s Oscar winner, didn’t win a single Golden Globe. Only once in the last seven years did the Golden Globes and the Oscars choose the same Best Picture winner (*Slumdog Millionaire* in 2009). (However, from 1993 to 2003, the two were aligned on Best Picture 10 out of 11 years.)

*La La Land* won last night for Best Picture in a musical or comedy; *Moonlight* won for Best Picture in a drama. We’ll see if either wins the Oscar for Best Picture.

Here’s what the Golden Globes do say.

**There is room in our culture for grace.** The Golden Globes are decided by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA), an organization composed of 90 international movie and television journalists based in Southern California. The group awarded the first Golden Globes in January 1944. World War II was still raging, but the HFPA thought a January celebration of movie and television achievement was warranted.

Here’s why: The organization uses the event to raise funds for entertainment-related scholarships and nonprofits. In 2015, the group awarded grants totaling \$2.1 million, bringing their overall donations to more than \$21 million.

**We are looking for joy.** This year's host, Jimmy Fallon, promised that the night would be "fun, and friendly, and joyous and cool." He delivered on his promise, beginning with the opening number's spoof of *La La Land*. While the Academy Awards has an entire segment devoted to movie professionals who died in the previous year, the Golden Globes briefly noted that many celebrities died in 2016 before paying tribute to Debbie Reynolds and Carrie Fisher.

**We need hope.** Actors who played Wonder Woman, Batman and Thor all made presentations. *Deadpool* was the first live-action superhero movie to be nominated for Best Picture.

One of the screenwriters for *Captain America: Winter Soldier* offered this explanation for the popularity of superhero movies: "You went to the movies in the '50s and '60s, you went to a Western. So at this point, you're going to a superhero movie. It's taking over that same black hat, white hat myth-making surface."

Meanwhile, *La La Land* won a record seven Golden Globes. Accepting the award for best actress, Emma Stone said, "I think that hope and creativity are two of the most important things in the world, and that's what this movie is about."

Grace, joy, hope—three themes that resounded in the life and ministry of Jesus. The reason the gospel is still good news is that neither human nor divine character changes. Whether they know it yet or not, every human heart echoes the ancient cry, "Sir, we want to see Jesus" (John 12:21).

Now we are the body of Christ. Will our lost culture see his grace, joy, and hope in us today? {eoa}