

# Edmonton-shot Blackstone leads Rosie nods with nine nominations; Old Trout's Naughty to Nice picks up eight



**ERIC VOLMERS, CALGARY HERALD**

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The Edmonton-shot drama *Blackstone* leads the pack for Alberta Film & Television Award nominations, picking up nods in nine categories and narrowly edging out high-profile favourites such as *Fargo*, *Heartland* and *Hell on Wheels*.

The finalists were announced in both Calgary and Edmonton Wednesday morning for the 41st annual awards, which covers film, TV, commercials, new media and music videos and those who work on them. Dubbed *The Rosies*, the awards will be handed out May 23 in Edmonton at the Shaw Conference Centre. Alberta-based productions vie for 25 awards, while film and TV workers who live in the province compete in 33 craft categories.

This year, there was a 42 per cent increase in entries, said Alberta Media Production Industries Association board chair Joe Novak. There were a record 788 class and craft entries this year.

“That says that something very good is happening in Alberta,” Novak says.

Calgary productions and artists led nominations, with 200 of the finalists coming from productions based here compared to 113 from Edmonton. The Calgary-based short film *One Night in Aberdeen*, by director Brett Ferster, and *The Old Trout Puppet Workshops’ Naughty to Nice*, produced by the National Film Board,

received eight nominations each. The FX series Fargo received six while AMC's Hell on Wheels and Heartland received seven each.

Calgary's Nomadic Pictures, which is behind TV series Fargo, Klondike and Hell on Wheels and TV movies The Dorm and Mutant World, topped nominations by producing or co-producing 24 of the finalists.

"We're only as good as the people we are working with," says producer Mike Frislev, who gave shout-outs to film workers with multiple nominations for Nomadic Pictures including editor Bridget Durnford, sound editors Mike Playfair and Frank Laratta and costume designer Carol Case.

In the best drama made-for-TV movie or miniseries category, productions from Nomadic Pictures picked up four of the five nominations with Fargo, Klondike, Mutant World and The Dorm. Calgary filmmaker Jim Durward's indie drama Fight Day is also nominated.

Calgary productions Ally Was Screaming, the yet-to-be-released sci-fi thriller Painkillers and ensemble drama The Valley Below will compete against Edmonton's Rock Paper Dice Enter and A Louder Silence and Red Deer's Year after Year for best dramatic feature. Blackstone, Heartland and Hell on Wheels are up for best dramatic series.

Julian Black Antelope, from Blackstone, Jason Cermak, from Hell on Wheels, Heartland's Shaun Johnston, Niall Matter from Ally Was Screaming and David Trimble from One Night in Aberdeen were nominated for best performance by an Alberta actor. Ilana Anderson and April Banigan, from A Louder Silence, One Night in Aberdeen's Julie Orton, Mandy Stobo and Mikaela Cochran from The Valley Below and Blackstone's Michelle Thrush are up for best performance by an Alberta actress.

The 2016 Alberta Film and Television Awards will be held in Calgary in May. Novak took the opportunity Wednesday morning to announce that the city will also host Input 2016 at the same time, an annual conference that brings together public television producers and broadcasters from around the world. This year it's being held in Tokyo.

For a complete list of Alberta Film & Television Awards Finalists, visit [ampia.org](http://ampia.org).