



Oscar Winning Sound Editor/Designer Eugene Gearty to Receive Conroy Lifetime Achievement Award at BIFF □

Story & Photos by Mark Shaffer, Editor at Large

There is a moment in Martin Scorsese's period epic *Gangs of New York* □ where Daniel Day Lewis' Bill "The Butcher" Cutting is confronted by Jim Broadbent's Boss Tweed for his very public murder of the local sheriff. The lord of the Five Points may be a homicidal maniac, but he is a man of principle who long ago cut out his own eye to prove his self-worth. He's slicing up a steak with a very sharp knife, seething in rage. The tension is palpable as Tweed declares, "You don't know what you've done to yourself!" Bill glares up at him then slowly taps his glass eye with the point of his blade.

Tink, tink, tink, tink, tink...

"That was pretty cool, right?" says Eugene Gearty. He's the guy who put the *tink, tinkin* Bill's eye. What comes after that moment, courtesy of the incomparable Day Lewis, is raised to a different level by Gearty's simple sound effect. Both of them got Oscar nominations.



Gearty is a distinguished alum of Boston's prestigious Berklee College of Music, class of '82. But his focus on music gave way to a fascination with the emerging technology of digital recording. He took a degree in audio engineering with his sights set on landing a studio gig recording rock or jazz, but was soon drawn to brand new frontier. "I realized music is great," he says, "but it's one component of sound and that's really when I fell in love with the idea of doing soundtracks for film that involved sound effects and everything." He became one of the first digital sound editor/designers in the film industry, pioneering sound effects for A-list films like *Men in Black*□

(he created the SFX for the Neurlyzer and the Noisy Cricket)

. He was also forging creative bonds with colleagues in his field and top directors like Oscar winners Spike Lee, Joel & Ethan Coen, Ang Lee and the master, Martin Scorsese. His work with these last two visionaries is both prolific, unique and decades long. He scored Academy Award nominations for Lee's

Life of Pi

and Scorsese's

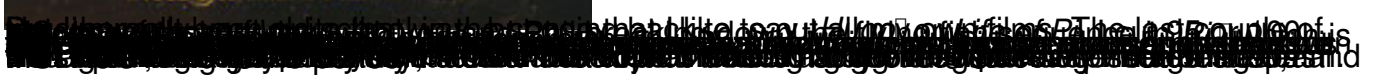
Gangs of New York,

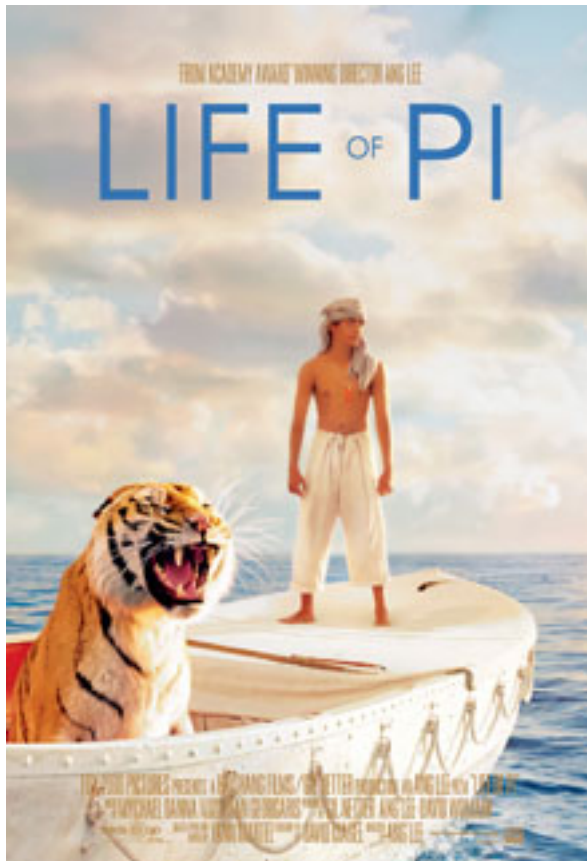
winning the Oscar for Best Achievement in Sound Editing for Scorsese's

Hugo

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Written by Mark Shaffer, Editor at Large
Monday, 17 February 2020 14:20





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