# Oscars to introduce new stunt category in 2028 recognising choreographed action and safety innovations



As the 100th Academy Awards approach, the Oscars have announced that the 2028 ceremony will introduce a new category specifically recognising stunts in film. This marks a significant milestone for stunt professionals who have long played an essential role in the filmmaking process, providing the physical prowess and choreography that underpin not only action blockbusters but also moments in diverse genres from teen dramas to romantic comedies.

The inclusion of a stunt category honours the contributions of legendary figures such as Buster Keaton, Jackie Chan, and contemporary stunt coordinators turned directors like Chad Stahelski and David Leitch, whose work with teams such as 87Eleven has been pivotal in shaping modern action cinema exemplified by the John Wick franchise. Despite this, the precise details regarding eligibility criteria for the stunt category will not be disclosed until 2027, and it remains uncertain if the award will be featured prominently during the live broadcast.

The recognition of stunt work by the Academy has historical precedence, with Yakima Canutt, a pioneering rodeo rider turned stuntman, having received an Honorary Award for safety innovations. Canutt invented harnesses, cable rigs, and wagon releases that enhanced the safety of actors and horses during Western action scenes. This emphasis on safety is a component that the Academy is expected to continue prioritising, signalling a potential push towards safer practices industry-wide.

Calls for stunt recognition from the Academy date back to the early 1990s but have gained considerable momentum recently, driven by the escalating complexity and artistry of action sequences in franchises such as Fast and Furious, Mad Max: Fury Road, and John Wick. Chad Stahelski, speaking to The Hollywood Reporter in 2023, highlighted the longstanding use of real firearms in Hollywood productions and the resistance to adopting safer alternatives. He stated, "for the last 100 years, Hollywood’s been using real firearms. And for prop houses, armorers or supply houses to switch over, it would make their entire stock of real firearms useless. It comes down to the fact that it would cost certain people a great deal of money to switch over. No one wants to say that, but that’s the real reason. You don’t need firearms. The alternative is just going to cost you more money."

This comment underscores the financial challenges involved in implementing improved safety measures, especially regarding the use of firearms on set. The recent tragic deaths of stunt performers Brandon Lee, who died during the filming of The Crow, and cinematographer Halyna Hutchins on the set of Rust have reignited urgent conversations about production safety. Both incidents involved live firearms or faulty ammunition, highlighting potential areas for reform.

By introducing a stunt category at the Oscars, the Academy could influence industry standards by incentivising producers to invest in enhanced safety protocols, including the adoption of gun-free sets and reliance on CGI and prop alternatives. Rather than rewarding individual stunt performers, the award is expected to recognise stunt designers and coordinators, further mitigating the risk of encouraging dangerous behaviour.

Stunt professionals are trained artists who approach their craft with meticulous attention to detail, managing not only the physical execution of complex sequences but also accommodating variables such as weather, set changes, and human error. The Screen Actors Guild‐American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) has established safety protocols and training programs to support stunt performers and ensure high safety standards during productions.

The introduction of the stunt category at the Oscars is viewed as an important advancement in acknowledging the artistry and essential contributions of stunt professionals within the broader filmmaking community. It also presents an opportunity to enhance safety practices in film production, potentially reshaping industry approaches to stunt work as the category debuts in 2028.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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