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Oscar Backstage—Wit, Grace, Elation

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Moods and manners of Oscar winners were varied as they stepped off the Academy Awards stage to strike victory poses for waiting photographers last night at the Music Center.

Most subdued was John Wayne, named best actor for his role as the one-eyed sheriff in "True Grit."

But when Barbra Streisand obeyed a press aide's suggestion that she give Wayne a kiss "for the photographers" as they posed with his golden statuette, Duke jokingly slipped back into character to say:

"Aw shucks, now how about doing that again . . this time just for me."

Alice Ghostley, who accepted the best actress award for the absent Maggie Smith, gave this explanation of how she was chosen to carry the Oscar:

"The only reason they selected me was that I'm a good friend of Maggie's. Other than that, I have no distinction at all."

Pulchritudinous Raquel Welch did not know for sure why they asked her to pick up Goldie Hawn's Oscar, but she said she thought that it was "because we are built alike."

Most elated of the winners was Burt Bacharach, a double winner with his efforts on "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid."

When Bacharach came back into the special photo room with his second Oscar, he said:

"I can't tell you how happy I am to see all of you again."

Bacharach also may have been the most gracious, too. As wellwishers swarmed around him, he went out of his way to go through the crowd to give his congratulations to Mrs. Arthur Rubinstein, who was on hand to accept an Oscar for her husband.

The great pianist was honored for best achievement in feature documentary production for his participation in "Arthur Rubinstein—The Love of Life."

Rivaling Raquel's remark for the funniest one-liner of the evening was Ward Kimball, who is the leader and trombone player of the Firehouse Five Plus 2, when not animating cartoons for Disney Productions.

Posing with his Oscar for "It's Tough To Be A Bird," winner in the best short subject, Kimball queried:

"Where do you wind this thing up?"