



**Moonlight** (2016) [111m] D: Barry Jenkins. C: Mahershala Ali, Ashton Sanders, Naomi Harris, Janelle Monae, Andre Holland, Larry Anderson.

Provocative saga spanning--in three parts--the life of a repressed homosexual black man coming of age in the slums of Miami.

Illuminating, if occasionally aloof and inert, character study will either entice with its unusual subject or frustrate as key characters are curiously unfledged. Nevertheless, this is a rare, daring, and immaculately performed film full of haunting imagery with an insightful ring of truth throughout.

Oscar winner for Best Picture, Best Supporting Actor (Ali), and Adapted Screenplay (director Jenkins; adapted from Tarell Alvin McCraney's semi-autobiographical play: *In Moonlight*

*Black Boys Look Blue.*

**Manchester By The Sea** (2016) [137m] D: Kenneth Lonergan. C: Casey Affleck, Michelle Williams, Kyle Chandler, Lucas Hedges, Gretchen Mol, Matthew Broderick.

Following the untimely death of his older brother, a solitary handyman is entrusted legal guardian to his nephew. Reluctantly he relocates to his hometown in New England where he is forced to confront his troubled past.

Deliberately paced, an act for which director and screenwriter Lonergan is typically identified, but the payoff packs a wallop. Affleck is first-rate in tailor-made role (earning him an Oscar) and is encircled by worthy ensemble with Hedges a standout. A devastating examination of lonesomeness, wounded lives, and redemption. Lonergan's masterful screenplay also won an

Oscar.



*Mark WHELAN*