

Palestinian short film "The Present" wins prestigious BAFTA award

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Farah Nabulsi receives her British Short Film BAFTA award for The Present virtually, during the 74th British Academy Film Awards in London. [BAFTA/Handout/Reuters]

London, April 13 (RHC)-- British-Palestinian filmmaker Farah Nabulsi's short film "The Present" has won the award for Best Short Film at the 2021 British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) awards. The two-day London-based event kicked off virtually on Saturday amid the coronavirus pandemic. The final evening of the awards took place on Sunday.

"The Present" -- Nabulsi's directorial debut -- is the story of Yousef, played by Palestinian actor Saleh Bakri, who along with his daughter travel to buy a wedding anniversary gift for his wife in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

"Amazing!" Nabulsi exclaimed in her acceptance speech. "For anyone who has seen The Present ... you would know why I dedicate this award to the people of Palestine for whom freedom and equality is long, long overdue ..." she said. Nabulsi later tweeted: "Absolutely blown away!!! A BAFTA!!!"

The Oscar-nominated film was co-written by Nabulsi and Palestinian-American poet and director Hind Shoufani. The short film is now streaming on Netflix.

Prominent Palestinians reacted with joy on social media, lauding the film for its depiction of daily life in the occupied West Bank, calling the award "well deserved". "Mabrouk Farah! Well deserved. We are so proud of you. Palestine celebrates with you," former Palestinian Liberation Organization member, scholar and activist Hanan Ashrawi posted on Twitter.

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