Winners Conference: Supporting Actor

Captain Phillips

16 February 2014

Q. Okay. Please welcome the winner, the very popular winner, of Best Supporting Actor from Captain Phillips, Barkhad Abdi.

Q. Hello, sir. Congratulations.

BARKHAD ABDI: Thank you.

Q. Well, I should be the first to say it: you are the captain now. How does it feel to be a BAFTA winner?

A. It feels great. I am kind of in shock right now, but ...

Q. Has it sunk in?

A. It feels great. It is good to be in London. You should hold more awards in London.

Q. We should.

A. Is it heavy, because I think these things are quite heavy?

Q. Are you okay with it?

A. Yes.

Q. Good. Whenever you were nominated for an Oscar, you tweeted in caps "OSCAR NOMINATED ACTOR", so are you now going to tweet "BAFTA Winning Actor"? Is that your next tweet?

A. I think so.

Q. It has been a heck of a journey for you.

A. Oh yeah. It has been amazing. It has been amazing and I am loving every moment of it, on this place. It is quite a dream.

Q. You did an open audition for Paul Greengrass.

A. Yeah.

Q. What was it like? How many people were in that audition? Can you ...?

A. There was a lot of people there. You know, a big number of people. Like, almost
1,000 people showed up and, you know, we auditioned and, you know, we -- he just gave us a script and a sort of -- assigned me to a character. So I studied that, I came back the next day and ...

Q. So did it take a while, because 1,000 people, I imagine you were queuing up for a while?
A. It took a little while.
Q. I am glad you did.
A. Absolutely.

NEW SPEAKER: Hi. I was wondering what sort of projects you are looking at next, coming up.
A. Erm ... I am just trying to do some more acting on good stories, and so I am just reading some scripts now.

There is a slight problem, isn't there, that people might think: we are going to cast you as a Somali. But presumably you want to play more than Somalis, or Somalis in London or Somalis in New York?
A. That's right. I think of myself, as an actor that, you know, if the story fits, I can play it. You know ...

NEW SPEAKER: Congratulations.
A. Thank you.

NEW SPEAKER: I wonder whether, you know -- Lupita Nyong'o is obviously nominated as a supporting actress tonight. I wonder whether she has been a good friend on the awards circuit, because, you know, you are both going through this incredible experience in your first films.
A. Oh, yes. Lupita is a good friend of mine and we are going through these awards, and she is amazing. I wish the best for her.
Q. Have you been given advice from other people, Paul Greengrass, for example, to guide you through this whirlwind you must be going through at the moment?
A. Paul Greengrass is not only my director, he is my teacher, my friend and, you know, he helped me a lot. Yes.
Q. Yes, please. Michael.

NEW SPEAKER: Tom Hanks virtually screamed his head off. What have they been saying to you, Tom and Paul? Have you seen them tonight? Have they ...
A. You know, I wasn't hearing anything. It was like -- like really -- it is an amazing
feeling, yes.

NEW SPEAKER: So what is it like on stage, looking out at the Royal Opera House?

A. Just a lot of people.

Q. Scared. Still hasn't sunk in. Where is this going to go? On the mantelpiece or in the toilet?

A. This is going to my mum's house.

Q. Nice. Whereabouts? Will she put it on the mantelpiece, I imagine?

A. I'm not sure. (Laughs)

Q. We will see, we will see.

NEW SPEAKER: Congratulations. I was going going to ask you, what would you like to be doing in a couple of years' time? How do you see your acting career now?

A. Erm ... I want to keep acting, you know. I -- keep doing good work. That's the plan.

NEW SPEAKER: So Oscars, next stop. How do you feel about your chances of winning? I mean, you have got a BAFTA as well now.

A. I know. It's -- it's a great feeling now, you know, but it's ...

NEW SPEAKER: Come on!

A. You are right. I have a better chance, you are right. I have a much better chance now than before, but either way, we will see what happens. It's big names. My category is very difficult.

NEW SPEAKER: You won today!

A. Really?

NEW SPEAKER: Tell me about your relationship with Tom Hanks. What did you learn from him? What makes him special? What is your memory of working with him?

A. Tom is a great man and I learned a lot from him, just working with him. And you know, he is just a family man, a hard working man and, you know, he is -- there is a lot to learn from him. He is a legend. He is someone that I was a fan of and that was the reason that I became ... and -- yeah, came to the audition.

So, you know, it's really an honour to meet him and, you know, really understand what kind of person he is. So I was pleased, very ... yeah.

Q. Fantastic. Thanks, guys, for your questions and congratulations once again. Barkhad Abdi, everybody. Thank you.
Thank you.