



**\*\*\*STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL MIDDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2016\*\*\***

## **NOMINEES ANNOUNCED FOR THE 2016 EE RISING STAR AWARD**

- The EE Rising Star Award nominees for 2016 are: John Boyega, Taron Egerton, Dakota Johnson, Brie Larson and Bel Powley
- The winner will be announced at the EE British Academy Film Awards ceremony on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2016
- Nominees were selected by an influential group of jurors including actress Olivia Colman and TV personality Jonathan Ross
- Voting will open to the public at [ee.co.uk/BAFTA](http://ee.co.uk/BAFTA) at 10.30am on Wed 6th January - everyone who votes will be in with a chance to win a VIP BAFTA experience

**London, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016:** Today at BAFTA 195 Piccadilly, the nominations for the prestigious EE Rising Star Award 2016 were revealed. The nominations represent five actors and actresses who have demonstrated exceptional talent, and are destined to be bright stars in the future of cinema.

The nominees for 2016 are:

- **JOHN BOYEGA** was cast as the lead role in *Star Wars: Episode VII – The Force Awakens*, which premiered at the end of last year. Boyega had his screen debut in the critically acclaimed BBC series, *Becoming Human*, where he starred as Danny Curtis the school bully in four episodes. His first foray into feature films was playing the lead in cult sci-fi film, *Attack the Block*, which opened SXSW in 2011, collecting a plethora of international awards. From there he went on to star as the lead in HBO drama, *Da Brick*, directed by Spike Lee, he was the lead in BBC film, *My Murder*, and filmed a feature length drama, *The Whale* alongside Martin Sheen. More recently John has starred in feature film, *Half of a Yellow Sun* alongside Chiwetel Ejiofor and

several episodes of the hit TV series, *24: Live Another Day*. In 2014, he was the lead in Sundance Award Winning feature film, *Imperial Dreams* and provided the voice for Major Lazer's animated TV series.

**John Boyega, commenting on his nomination, said:** "Thank you to BAFTA and the jury. I'm honoured to be considered for the EE Rising Star Award in this company. What a great way to start the new year."

- **TARON EGERTON** trained at RADA and his first role was on stage in *The Last Of The Haussmans* at the National Theatre. He recently starred as the lead role of Gary 'Eggsy' Unwin in Matthew Vaughn's box office smash hit *Kingsman: The Secret Service* opposite Colin Firth, Michael Caine and Samuel L Jackson and in *Testament of Youth*, based on the life of Vera Brittain. Taron can be seen as Edward "Mad Teddy" Smith opposite Tom Hardy in *Legend*, a biopic feature about the Kray twins. 2016 will see Taron take the title role in the film *Eddie The Eagle*, opposite Hugh Jackman, which is due for release in the Spring. Alongside Matthew McConaughey, Egerton has lent his voice to new musical animation comedy *Sing* which will also hit cinemas in 2016. Next year he will be begin filming for the much anticipated second *Kingsman* film and opposite Ansel Elgort in a movie version of *Billionaire Boys Club*.

**Taron Egerton, commenting on his nomination, said:** "I am delighted to be nominated for the EE Rising Star Award. It is such an honour to be recognised in this way and I am proud and excited to be following in the footsteps of some incredibly talented previous nominees."

- **DAKOTA JOHNSON** played the coveted role of "Anastasia Steele" in the feature adaptation of E.L. James novel and worldwide phenomenon, *Fifty Shades of Grey*. She then landed a role opposite Johnny Depp in the Whitey Bulger Biopic, *Black Mass*. Her most recent starring role was in Luca Guadagnino's remake of "La Piscine" entitled *A Bigger Splash*, alongside Tilda Swinton and Ralph Fiennes. Johnson will star alongside Rebel Wilson in the upcoming comedy, *How To Be Single*. Dakota first burst on the scene with her performance in critically acclaimed film, *The Social Network* and went on to play roles in the feature comedies *The Five Year Engagement* and *21 Jump Street* with Jonah Hill and Channing Tatum.

**Dakota Johnson, commenting on her nomination, said:** "I am thoroughly stunned, and honoured to be acknowledged with an EE Rising Star Award nomination. Thank you, I am truly grateful."

- **BRIE LARSON** garnered numerous awards and nominations for her performance in *Short Term 12*, directed by Destin Daniel Cretton as Grace, the director of a foster

care facility. Most recently she starred as Ma in the harrowing film adaptation of Emma Donoghue's best-selling novel, *Room*. Larson was seen in the 2015 breakout hit, *Trainwreck* opposite Amy Schumer and in 2014, she co-starred in *The Gambler*, opposite Mark Wahlberg. Prior to that she was seen in *The Spectacular Now* opposite Shailene Woodley, playing Miles Teller's seemingly perfect girlfriend, as well as *Don Jon*, Joseph Gordon-Levitt's directorial debut, playing the cynical/ realist sister of Joseph's character. Larson was seen in the hugely successful film, *21 Jump Street* as the love interest to Jonah Hill, and received rave reviews for her supporting role in the Oren Moverman film *Rampart*, playing the incorrigible, defiant daughter of Woody Harrelson, a dirty cop in the Los Angeles' Rampart division. Last year, it was announced that Larson would star in *Kong: Skull Island* and in Martin Scorsese executive produced '70s crime thriller, *Free Fire*, opposite Sharlto Copley, Cillian Murphy and Armie Hammer.

**Brie Larson, commenting on her nomination, said:** "Thank you BAFTA, for the EE Rising Star Award nomination in support of *Room*. I'm very honoured to be in the company of esteemed peers, past and present."

- **BEL POWLEY** most recently seen starring in the award winning, coming-of-age drama *The Diary of a Teenage Girl*. In her American film debut, Powley plays a brutally honest teenage artist living in San Francisco in the 1970s as she attempts to navigate her way through an affair with her mother's boyfriend. Powley also recently starred alongside Nicholas Hoult and Kristen Stewart romantic drama set in a futuristic utopian society; *Equals*. In 2015, she also wrapped production on *Detour*, a psychological thriller about a grieving law student who, in an act of desperation, hatches a plot to murder his corrupt and abusive stepfather. Powley plays Cherry, a prostitute who lends Harper a helping hand. She also starred in *A Royal Night Out* opposite Sarah Gadon, Jack Reynor, Rupert Everett and Emily Watson. Her previous credits include a starring role in the CBBC's show *M.I.High* and appearances on UK shows *Benidorm*, *Murderland*, *Little Dorrit* and *The Whistleblowers*.

**Bel Powley, commenting on her nomination, said:** "I've watched and respected the BAFTAs and the EE Rising Star Award since I was very young, so I can't quite believe this is happening! I am incredibly thankful to the jury and to BAFTA for recognising my work. I really love what I do."

The EE Rising Star Award is the only award at the EE British Academy Film Awards to be voted for by the public. Voting will open to the public at [ee.co.uk/BAFTA](http://ee.co.uk/BAFTA) at 10.30am on Wed 6th January. The winner will be announced at the EE British Academy Film Awards on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

Previous winners include James McAvoy in 2006, Kristen Stewart in 2010, Tom Hardy in 2011, Juno Temple in 2013 and Will Poulter in 2014. In 2015 the hotly contested accolade was won by Jack O'Connell who beat four other up-and-coming actors, all nominated for their exceptional talent. The other nominees were; Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Margot Robbie, Miles Teller and Shailene Woodley.

The jury who selected the five nominees from the hundreds suggested by BAFTA members included actress Olivia Colman, TV personality Jonathan Ross and a host of leading industry experts including producer and jury chair, Marc Samuelson; film critic James King; *Philomena* producer, Gabrielle Tana; *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *Testament of Youth* casting director, Lucy Bevan; director of *Harry Potter* and *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, Mike Newell, and renowned casting director for *Star Wars Episode VII*, *The King's Speech* and *The Imitation Game*, Nina Gold, alongside a group of esteemed film and arts journalists. The award was created in honour of Mary Selway, the highly respected BAFTA-winning casting director whose career spanned three decades and over ninety films before she died in 2004.

**Marc Samuelson, EE Rising Star Award Jury Chair, said:** "This is my first year chairing the prestigious jury, and as you can see from the quality of nominees it's going to be a hotly contested race to the title of EE Rising Star 2016. What I truly love about this award, is it gives the British public a voice in the voting process – so if you want your opinion to matter at BAFTA in 2016, get voting for one of our deserving nominees now."

**Spencer McHugh, Director of Brand at EE, said:** "The EE Rising Star Award has been identifying incredible break-through acting talent for over a decade and this year's list is one of the strongest yet. The hugely talented young stars grabbed the jury's attention with some epic work in blockbusters such as *Star Wars*, *Kingsman* and *Fifty Shades of Grey* and every one of them is deserving of the award. It's over to the public now to choose their winner and I wish them all the best of luck."

For more information on the EE Rising Star Award please visit [ee.co.uk/BAFTA](http://ee.co.uk/BAFTA)

- ENDS -

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EE is the largest and most advanced digital communications company in Britain, delivering mobile and fixed communications services to consumers, businesses, government and the wholesale market. EE has approximately 14,000 employees and 553 retail stores, and serves more than 31 million customers across its mobile, fixed and wholesale businesses.

EE runs the UK's biggest and fastest mobile network, pioneering the UK's first superfast 4G mobile service in October 2012 and is the first European operator to surpass the 10million 4G customer landmark. EE's 4G coverage today reaches more than 92% of the UK population, with unique double speed 4G reaching 75%. EE's 2G coverage reaches 99% of the population while 3G reaches 98%. EE's superfast fibre broadband service covers around 80% of the UK population, and ADSL broadband service covers 98.7% of the population.

In the last few years, EE has received extensive independent recognition, including being ranked the UK's best overall network by RootMetrics®; Best Network at the 2014 and 2015 Mobile News Awards; Best Network for Business and Best Consumer Network at the 2014 & 2015 Mobile Industry Awards; Best Network at the 2014 & 2015 Mobile Choice Consumer Awards, and Best Network at the What Mobile Awards 2014; Fastest Network at the 2014 uSwitch Mobile Awards; Best Mobile Network at the 2014 Recombu Awards, and Winners of Best Connected Gadget at the Mobile Choice Consumer Awards 2015.

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## **About BAFTA**

The British Academy of Film and Television Arts is an independent charity that supports, develops and promotes the art forms of the moving image by identifying and rewarding excellence, inspiring practitioners and benefiting the public. In addition to its Awards ceremonies, BAFTA has a year-round, international programme of learning events and initiatives that offers unique access to some of the world's most inspiring talent through workshops, masterclasses, scholarships, lectures and mentoring schemes, connecting with audiences of all ages and backgrounds across the UK, Los Angeles and

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