

Irish teen wins Best Young Actress at Cannes World Film Festival for first-ever role

By Rebecca Dore - 06/07/2021



North Dublin has a new rising star on the global stage as a young actress has scooped a top award at the Cannes World Film Festival – Remember the Future.

17-year-old Abbie Stacey, from Glenshane in Tallaght, was awarded Best Young Actress in a Short Film for her performance in *Wanna Hang Out?*

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The short, which was penned by 18-year-old Cormac O'Toole from Ballymun and was funded by the Ballymun Regional Youth Resources, focuses on bringing to light the harrowing reality of online grooming when a young girl with down syndrome is singled out by an online predator.

Abbie, who is a student of Mount Seskin Community College, took the lead role in the award-winning short playing, Beth, who accepts a friend request from someone she doesn't know online.



Abbie Stacey, Pic: Supplied

The film, which was directed by Andrew Keogh and produced by Jeff O'Toole of Bread and Circus Productions, has been entered into a number of Irish and international festivals and also took home a second award at Cannes, for Best Narrative Short Film.

This was Abbie's first-ever film and her proud father Frank described the excitement in the Stacey household when news of the Cannes nomination reached them.

'When we heard that the film was nominated at the Cannes film festival we were so happy for all involved as that was a major achievement in itself', he tells EVOKE.

'Then when it came down to the final three we were in disbelief as it was Abbie's first film. To hear that Abbie won best young actress we were shocked so happy and so proud of Abbie.'



Abbie in action. Pic: Aoife Raeside Photography

Andrew Keogh, the director of the Cannes-winning winning short film, also told EVOKE that Abbie was a true natural in front of the camera.

'I couldn't be happier for Abbie. It's a great achievement. Abbie is a natural performer and has a real flair for acting.'

He continued: 'To put it in context, we managed to shoot a 12 minute short film across three locations in dark December under Covid restrictions with a first-time actor in a lead role in one day.'



Abbie Stacey in Wanna Hang Out? Pic: Aoife Raeside Photography

'That's testament to what Abbie brought to the project, she was so focused and determined during every take, especially during the difficult end-of-day scenes outside in the dark and the cold.'

'It was very intentional that we put "introducing Abbie Stacey" in the film credits and I very much hope we see Abbie in many other productions.'

Irish actor Kieran O'Reilly, whose previous credits include Love/Hate and the Emmy award-winning television series Vikings, also stars.

For more information on Wanna Hang Out? head to the [Bread and Circus Productions Facebook page](#).



Abbie Stacey in Wanna Hang Out? Pic: Aoife Raeside Photography



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