



BRITISH ACADEMY VIDEO GAMES AWARDS

BAFTA CONFIRMS DATES, VENUE AND CATEGORIES FOR ITS BRITISH ACADEMY VIDEO GAMES AWARDS AND CALLS FOR ENTRIES AND SHORTLISTERS

Monday 11 August 2008: The British Academy confirmed today that the next British Academy Video Games Awards will be staged at the London Hilton on Park Lane, on March 10 2009. It also confirmed the categories and extended deadlines as well as launching a new initiative to further the profile and understanding of video games as a creative art form.

Commenting on the new time of year for the Awards, **Chairman of the Academy's Games committee, Ray Maguire said "After extensive industry consultation, it was agreed that March would be the best time for the Awards, enabling the industry to enter all the major releases of the year".**

There are 13 award categories: *Action & Adventure, Artistic Achievement, Casual, Gameplay, Multiplayer, Original Score, Sports, Strategy, Story & Character, Technical Achievement, Use of Audio* and of course *Best Game*. BAFTA also announced a new *Handheld* category which includes games for mobiles phones, Sony PSP, Nintendo DS and Nintendo GBA.

Other prizes on the night will include the prestigious *Fellowship* which is the highest accolade the Academy can bestow on an individual for outstanding achievement and contribution to the industry through a body of work; the *BAFTA Ones To Watch Award in association with Dare To Be Digital* which recognises new talent; and another *Gift of the Academy Prize for games or gaming technology worthy of special recognition*.

While the games will be judged by industry experts and not the gaming public, part of the Academy's charitable remit is to promote and champion games as an art form and that means showcasing the games being considered for BAFTA consideration to as wide an audience as possible. To achieve this, BAFTA is encouraging developers & publishers to support individual entries with short films that contain footage about the making of the game. These will be posted on the BAFTA website as well as general games websites, to raise awareness of all the titles being considered for this year's Awards, and to promote a wider understanding of games development. Commenting on this new initiative, Maguire said **"We are keen to see the new filmed support material be developed by each nominee, as this is the sort of initiative that helps the wider world understand that the creation and development of video games is an art form, often with teams of hundreds of people and budgets on a par with feature films."**

BAFTA's role and charitable remit is to support, develop and promote the art forms of the moving image by identifying and rewarding excellence, inspiring practitioners and benefiting the public. It focuses attention on the highest achievements in video games released in the UK each year in order to motivate and inspire those who make them and to educate and develop the tastes of those who play them. Ray Maguire commented on the unique nature of the Awards: **"One of the many strengths of the British Academy Video Games Awards is that the focus is on creativity and innovation as opposed to a simple measure of commercial success. This enables niche but highly creative work to be recognised and rewarded."**

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Voting in the Awards entails two stages; the first vote involves qualified industry professionals and BAFTA games members. Their top votes comprise the shortlist for the category juries. Potential first stage voters (shortlisters) are invited to register their interest by emailing the Games Awards officer Kelly Smith at kellys@bafta.org

The highest-scoring titles go to individual category juries that are chaired by a member of the BAFTA video games committee. BAFTA juries judge the shortlisted titles and decide on the nominated games and winners. The nominations will be announced on **10 February** and the winners unveiled on **Tuesday 10 March** at the British Academy Video Games Awards.

Entry forms detailing the deadlines - along with information on how to become an industry shortlister - are available now from the BAFTA website www.bafta.org/games. The entry deadline is **10 October 2008**.

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Notes to editors:

About BAFTA

With an expert industry membership of more than 6000 individuals globally, the Academy focuses attention on the highest achievements of films, video games and television programmes shown in the UK each year in order to motivate and inspire those who make them, and to educate and develop the taste of those who watch or play them.

The BAFTA 'Ones To Watch' Award in association with Dare To be Digital

Dare to be Digital is the UK's premier computer games design competition for students. The three winning student teams of games designers from this year's Dare to be Digital competition will comprise the shortlist for the BAFTA *Ones to Watch* Award.

The Fellowship

The Fellowship is the highest accolade the Academy can bestow for outstanding achievement and contribution to the industry through a body of work.

Giff of the Academy Prize for games or gaming technology worthy of special recognition. The winner of this new prize will be decided by the British Academy Video Games Committee.

Attached: the full list of categories