

REVIEW: Oscar-nominated 'No Other Land' is a bitter tale of occupation



CHENNAI: In the running for the Best Documentary Feature at next week's Academy Awards, "No Other Land" is a gripping work directed by a collective of four Israeli and Palestinian filmmakers.



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Helmed by Basel Adra, Hamdan Ballal, Yuval Abraham and Rachel Szor, the film marks their directorial debut and follows the story of Adra, a young Palestinian activist from Masafer Yatta in the West Bank, as he fights against the mass expulsion of his

community by Israeli forces. Since childhood, Adra has documented the demolition of homes and displacement of residents in his region under military occupation.

It is not sensationalist, it is not overdramatic, but it is as powerful as they come. The documentary traces everyday life in an area where generations of farming men and women have been resisting not only Israeli control but also the violence unleashed upon them by its military forces and settlers.

The documentary begins in 2022, with an Israeli court ruling in favour of eviction and a lot of the 95-minute work captures details of the misery brought about by the occupation in Arabic and Hebrew. There is graphic footage of homes being razed to the ground and operators going about their ruthlessness with faces that show not even a trace of remorse. Families with babies have to take refuge in caves, members huddled against each other trying to create a bit of warmth in the biting cold. “We have no other land, that's why we suffer for it,” says an old woman whose home has been destroyed. Later, her son is shot and paralyzed.

“No Other Land” is a harsh, bitter documentary that, perhaps unsurprisingly, has not yet secured a US distributor.
