

Catholic Media Association Presents Filmmaker Sean McNamara With Voice of Gabriel Award at 59th Annual Gabriel Awards

McNamara Honored For His Unwavering Dedication to Storytelling that Uplifts and Unites, Including His Upcoming Features 'Bau, Artist at War' and 'Soul on Fire'

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, July 2, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On June 26th, the [Catholic Media Association](#) held the 59th Annual Gabriel Awards, a premier program honoring excellence in film, broadcast and digital media productions released in the United States and Canada. The Gabriel Awards have been a beacon of inspiration since their inception in 1965, encouraging media professionals to create works that serve, enrich, challenge and uplift audiences.



Sean McNamara accepts Voice of Gabriel Award

“

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Sean McNamara

Winners were announced during a special evening celebration on Thursday, June 26, 2025, at the Renaissance Phoenix Downtown Hotel in Phoenix, Arizona, as part of the Catholic Media Conference. This year also marks the debut of a new distinction: the Voice of Gabriel Award, honoring a media professional whose career reflects the Gabriel values through an unwavering dedication to storytelling that uplifts and unites.

The Voice of Gabriel Award celebrates professionals in film, broadcast or digital media whose work exemplifies

leadership that fosters community and understanding; creative excellence that challenges and inspires; a steadfast commitment to dignity, justice, and compassion; and media that elevates the human spirit and reflects a true vision of life.

During the ceremony, acclaimed director, writer and producer [Sean McNamara](#), was named the first recipient of this prestigious honor. McNamara is known for his emotionally resonant films such as *Soul Surfer*, *Spare Parts*, *The Miracle Season*, and *Reagan*, as well as the soon-to-premiere features [Bau, Artist at War](#), and *Soul on Fire*, all of which bring to life powerful stories of faith, courage, and perseverance.

“Sean McNamara has spent his career telling stories that move hearts, lift spirits, and bring light to the human experience,” said Rob DeFrancesco, Executive Director of the Catholic Media Association. “His work consistently reflects the values we hold dear: dignity, courage, compassion and faith. We’re honored to recognize him as the first-ever recipient of the Voice of Gabriel Award, and to celebrate the impact his storytelling has had on audiences.”

“I’m deeply humbled to be honored with the first ever Voice of Gabriel Award,” commented McNamara. “My work spans all faiths and cultures, so this award is extra poignant to me, as it recognizes my latest film *Bau, Artist at War*, which chronicles the love story of Holocaust survivors Joseph and Rebecca Bau.”

In 2025, McNamara brings two major releases to theaters; *Bau, Artist at War* (Paramount), a true story of survival and love during the Holocaust, starring Emile Hirsch and Inbar Lavi, premiering September 26, 2025; and *Soul on Fire* (Sony AFFIRM), the inspiring biopic of John O’Leary, starring William H. Macy and John Corbett, debuting October 10, 2025.

McNamara’s storytelling legacy spans 45+ feature films and over 500 episodes of television across major networks and platforms, including Netflix, Disney Channel, Hulu and CBS. He is a BAFTA winner, five-time Emmy nominee, and has received



Poster Bau, Artist at War



Inbar Lavi and Emile Hirsch as Rebecca and Joseph

accolades from the DGA, Imagen Awards, and numerous film festivals. He co-founded Brookwell McNamara Entertainment in 1998 with producing partner David Brookwell. Now in its 27th year, the company continues to develop acclaimed content for global audiences.

“The Gabriel Awards exist to highlight the kind of storytelling that changes hearts and minds,” said DeFrancesco. “This year’s finalists exemplify that mission in extraordinary ways. We’re also thrilled to introduce the Voice of Gabriel Award and to honor Sean McNamara for a body of work that speaks directly to the values we strive to lift up in the media.”

This year’s finalists, representing productions released during the 2024 calendar year, showcase the breadth and depth of talent across the United States and Canada. A full list of winners can be found on the organization’s website: <https://www.catholicmediaassociation.org>



Sean McNamara on set



Emile Hirsch and Inbar Lavi

Official Trailer Link, Bau, Artist at War: <https://youtu.be/Db89hhwUslI> For more information visit: www.baumovie.com

The Catholic Media Association is dedicated to supporting Catholic media professionals in their mission to share the Good News. Founded in 1911, the CMA connects more than 900 professionals from 364 member organizations across North America. Through professional development, networking and recognition programs like the Gabriel Awards, the CMA champions excellence in faith-based storytelling.

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Nicole Muj

Kultura PR International LLC

+1 310-804-0964

[email us here](#)

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